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Abstract of the Dissertation

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Notwithstanding the vast political philosophy literature on morality, empirical political

scientists have shied away from studying the extent to which people use moral judgment

in forming political attitudes. Currently, morality is either altogether neglected, or is

integrated in an a-theoretical manner. This project builds on literature from philosophy

and psychology to conceptualize moral judgment as bi-dimensional, and experimentally

tests this conceptualization by varying the accessibility of harm cues and the moral

emotion of disgust prior to moral appraisal of politics. Next, the moderating effect of

ideology and the role of moral judgment in attitude strength, political engagement and

political intolerance are examined.

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Chapter I

Introduction: The moral public

There is a voice inside of you
That whispers all day long,
"I feel that this is right for me";
"I know that *this* is wrong."
No teacher, preacher, parent, friend
Or wise man can decide
What's right for you — just listen to
The voice that speaks inside.

—Shel Silverstein

But what do you *mean* by "morality"? This is the question I was asked every

single time I expressed my view that morals play a key, and yet empirically

underexplored, role in political attitude formation. Different versions of this very

question kept haunting me every time I talked about my interest in testing the effect of

morality on public opinion or presented current empirical evidence. These questions can

be divided into four main groups, including questions about the conceptualization and

cognitive nature of moral convictions, wondering what is happening in people's heads

when in a moral state of mind; about the possible ideological bias of morality, sometimes

suggesting that conservatives are more prone to this moral state of mind; on the

operationalization of moral conviction, inquiring how can it be empirically measured; and

on the hypothesized effects of moral conviction in public opinion and political behavior.

This dissertation consists of three empirical essays. The first essay, which is chapter 2, develops a nominal and operational definition of moral conviction, validates the measures, and tests the hypothesis of ideological asymmetry. The second essay, chapter 3, experimentally tests the conceptualization of morality. The third, chapter 4, develops a theory of the effects of moralization on political behavior, and empirically tests it. This introductory chapter embarks on answering these questions in this order, but I will start by clarifying the importance of moral convictions in politics.

The importance of studying moral convictions in politics

While the success of representative democracy depends on the public's ability to develop political attitudes, seminal works in political science have demonstrated that the vast majority of Americans are politically unknowledgeable (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996), and ideologically unsophisticated (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964). However, despite this evidence, individual-level political attitudes are reasonably predictable, and public opinion is overall stable and intelligible (e.g., Page and Shapiro, 1992). Consequently, a great deal of political science literature is aimed at finding what it is that guides people in constructing intelligible political attitudes. This dissertation suggests and tests the thesis of the moral public, arguing that people are directed by moral judgment—i.e., both the controlled and automatic processes of moral assessment of objects—in forming opinions on political matters.

Indeed, political arguments on both ends of the spectrum frequently amount to a question of right and wrong. To be sure, not all political issues involve moral concerns; most people will probably not use moral judgment for constructing an attitude on policies

for funding agriculture. But underlying many central political issues, such as abortion, gay rights, affirmative action, separation of church and state, torture, and the death penalty, are moral imperatives, strong moral emotions, and a sense of fairness, justice, and harm. Accordingly, we are all familiar with the claim that moral convictions affect the tone of politics and key political processes, for instance political polarization, social alienation, and the culture war. From extreme behaviors like suicide bombing to everyday inflamed arguments on political candidates or the healthcare reform, people sometimes get highly emotional and are willing to defend their beliefs with great passion, sometimes even to death.

Nevertheless, contemporary empirical political science neglects the potential moral grounds for political attitude formation, despite extensive literature on moral judgment in philosophy, psychology, evolutionary science, and neuroscience. Unlike stylized moral dilemmas in philosophy and developmental psychology, such as the trolley problem (Foot, 1967; Thomson, 1986)[1] and Kohlberg's Heinz dilemma,[2] many everyday moral dilemmas, and most, if not all, political debates are multidimensional and complex, involving several values that need to be prioritized, uncertainty, and a dynamic informational environment. Yet, it has often been thought that to empirically study the extent to which the public relies on morals when forming political attitudes, the researcher has to identify the host of specific moral rules that people may be applying to a particular political situation.

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[1] The trolley problem, introduced by Foot (1967), presents a situation in which an out-of-control runaway trolley will hit and kill five people, unless a switch is hit that turns it into a side truck, where it will hit and kill one person. Is it morally acceptable to pull the switch?

[2] Heinz dilemma is a measure of moral judgment developed by Kohlberg. In this story, a woman was near death, and there is one highly expensive and overpriced drug that doctors thought might save her. After her husband, Heinz, is unable to raise the fee or persuade the druggist to sell the drug for less money, he considers stilling it. Should he? Participants' reasoning was coded into one of the six stages, using a standard list of answers.

And this is not an easy task. While the purpose of ethical theory, more than any other philosophical field, is to offer guidance in concrete decisions (Kant, 2002), moral philosophies often do not withstand the test of practicality. Sartre (1977) exemplifies this weakness in an anecdote about his student's dilemma of joining the army for the chance to avenge his brother versus his responsibility to stay with his elderly mother who is terrified for his life, suggesting that no general moral principle offers a clear resolution. For instance, the Kantian categorical imperative would suggest that both courses of action run the risk of treating people—other soldiers or the mother—as means instead of ends. The Christian imperative to act with charity, even at the cost of personal sacrifice, does not define which goal is to be preferred. If attempting to apply emotivist ethics, one will have to consciously distinguish and weigh conflicting emotions, which are unreliable, ever-changing, and very hard to assess. Sartre thus concludes that no general ethical theory will be of use for his student (also see Hampshire, 1983; Williams, 1985; MacIntyre, 1988).

In the absence of comprehensible moral principles, and the presence of contrasting theories of ethics, firm moral stances on specific political issues are extremely hard to derive. Moreover, arguing that moral principles underlie political attitude formation demands the assumption that citizens hold the cognitive abilities and intrinsic motivation to build on ethical theories to thoroughly analyze politics, which seems unreasonable to expect given the highly politically unknowledgeable and uninterested public (Converse, 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996).

Yet, in contrast to the traditionally dominant view in moral psychology that moral judgment is governed by a cognitive reasoning process (Heider, 1958; Piaget, 1965;

Kohlberg, 1969; Turiel, 1983), recent empirical evidence supports the classic Humean view (1960; 1978) according to which moral judgment does not necessarily involve any effortful analysis, and often occurs very quickly, via emotional and intuitive responses (Greene et al., 2001; 2004; Koenigs et al., 2007; Cushman et al., 2006; Haidt, 2001). As Shel Silverstein gracefully describes in the famous poem opening this introduction, people seem to have some inner moral compass, a "voice that speaks inside," which somehow guides them in differentiating right from wrong, often without any conscious ethical analysis.

This framework allows bringing morality back into the field of political behavior, as it suggests that some political attitudes may be guided by moral judgment even without postulating particular citizen capabilities. Being informed by moral sentiments and intuitions that form some inner moral compass, public opinion may still be coherent even when lacking political information, as political arguments of both right and left frequently amount to a question of right and wrong. Thus, emotional and intuitive moral judgment may explain why individual-level political attitudes are reasonably predictable, and why public opinion is overall stable and intelligible (Page and Shapiro, 1992), despite the robust evidence that the public is "innocent of ideology" (Converse, 1964). Consequently, this dissertation suggests and tests the thesis of the moral public, arguing that people often build on intuitive and sentimental moral judgment in forming political opinions.

Conceptualization: what is morality?

Cognition vs. emotions

Ever since its emergence in the first religious and mythical texts, philosophy concerned itself with the origins of the moral mental state. The field of moral philosophy that aims at conceptualizing the meaning and source of morality is called metaethics, which literally means *beyond* ethics, as opposed to the areas of applied ethics and normative ethics (see Fieser, 2009). In the long history of metaethics, several types of theories have been developed to explain what ethical thought may be and where it comes from. These include naturalism, which seeks to derive morality from human needs and our biological and cultural nature (e.g. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*); emotivism, which attributes moral judgment to the experience of sentiments and passions (e.g., Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature*); cognitivism, which attempts to rely on reason in deducing universal moral principles (e.g., Kant's *The Metaphysics of Morals*); and the historical perspective, which connects morality with the progress of human history (e.g. *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind* and *Phenomenology of Spirit*).

One of the biggest controversies in metaethics concerns whether reasoning or emotions underlie morality. Most notably, the British philosopher David Hume in the eighteenth century argued that moral appraisal pertains to emotions. Based on an introspective examination of how moral judgment actually occurs, Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739/1978; as well as *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 1751/1983) suggests that moral thoughts and acts are not necessarily reasonable, and immoral thoughts and acts not necessarily unreasonable. Reasoning about some issue will not in itself create a moral assessment, even though it may be useful in the process. It is

emotions, or in Hume's language—passions,[3] that spark the moral imperative in some

rules, as both the motivation to morality and moral behavior are emotional in nature.

Further, passions cannot be assessed or contradicted by reason. Thus, Hume suggests that

reason alone does not immediately cause moral action, and points to the motivating

power of the moral sentiment. This outlook opened up the tradition of emotivism in

ethics, the view that moral sentences are not governed by logic (Hare, 1997), which was

represented in various versions by several twentieth century philosophers, among them

Ayer (1936) and Stevenson (1944).

The German philosopher Immanuel Kant hurried to defend the tradition of Plato

and the role of human reason in morality. In *The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of*

Morals (1785/2002) and some later writings (especially *The Critique of Practical*

Reason, 1788/1961 and *The Metaphysics of Morals*, 1797/1996), Kant suggests that

moral laws can and should be derived a priori—independently of observations and

deductively through reason alone. While emotions may and often do in practice affect our

thought and behavior, true moral conduct is grounded in emotion-free reason. Rationally

derived moral principles are thus intrinsically good, and their demands are "categorical

imperatives" in that they must always be obeyed unconditionally, irrespective of our

passions and desires. It is this internal motivational force—the sense of duty to obey

categorical imperatives—that makes a decision moral. The fundamental principle of

reason that directs moral behavior, argues Kant, is the obligation to treat others as ends in

themselves, and never instrumentally, as a means to some end. Kant's seminal work led

the way to rationalist theories of ethics, which maintain that moral sentences are

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[3] In particular, Hume refers to "sympathy," but this is defined in a way that is more similar to what the current psychology literature would define as empathy.

governed by logic, as well as to universal prescriptivism, which holds that universal

prescriptions govern moral sentences (Hare, 1997). This position has recently been

represented by several philosophers, such as Baier (1958) and Rawls (1971).

In fact, the debate between the sentimental and cognitive schools cuts across

contemporary social sciences, with the figures of the calculating, rational *homo

economicus* on the one hand, and, on the other, the automaton whose responses to

powerful situations are unaware, unintended, and difficult to inhibit (Wegner and Bargh,

1998). Unsurprisingly then, moral psychology can be divided into two leading schools of

thought as well.

The prevailing cognitivist view traditionally de-emphasizes the role of emotions

in moral judgment (e.g., Piaget, 1932/1965; Kohlberg, 1969; 1981; Turiel, 1983; 2006).

Most notably, domain theorists postulate a distinction between moral and conventional

rules. According to domain theory, actions within the moral domain are those that are

thought to have an intrinsic effect on the well-being of others, making violations, i.e.,

harm to others' welfare, inherently wrong (following Dworkin, 1978; Gewirth, 1978;

Rawls, 1971). Judgments of acts in the moral domain are "categorical in that what

persons ought to do sets requirements for them that they cannot rightly evade by

consulting their own self-interested desires or variable opinions, ideals, or institutional

practices" (Gewirth, 1978:24). Thus, the moral domain pertains to the welfare of others,

including matters of harm, justice, and rights, which remain absolutely right or wrong

unconditional upon, and even if in conflict with, self-interest, political or cultural

institutions, or the majority of opinions in the country. In contrast, the conventional

domain pertains to arbitrary social rules (Turiel, 1983; Nucci and Turiel, 2000).

The intrinsic "harmfulness" underlying moral transgressions in domain theory yields some important distinctions between moral principles and social conventions, such that moral conventions are universal (they are judged to be wrong and impermissible across different social contexts), unalterable (moral obligations cannot be altered by consensus or the majority), obligatory (one is obligated to carry out the prescribed actions), and rule-independent (transgressions would be wrong even in the absence of rules or when the authority is unaware of the rule violation).

According to this theory, children acquire the distinction between moral and other rules by experiencing the consequences of, and responses to, harm and welfare matters in their early years; such learning occurs when the child is a victim of injustice or a matter of harm, an observer of its consequences and the responses to it, or is learning information from a victim or observer (Turiel, 1983). Thus, consequences and responses can vary somewhat among cultures, as different societies may see different acts as harmful.

Similar to Kant, Piaget, and Kohlberg, domain theorists acknowledge that emotions are inseparable from reasoning in generating moral judgment, and play an important motivational role in moral actions and moral development (Turiel, 1998; Nucci, 2001). While conventional transgressions are mostly affectively neutral, aversive emotions typically co-occur with moral transgressions (Arsenio and Ford, 1985). But emotions are seen as merely a vehicle for cognitive-in-nature moral judgment; emotions are "the energy that drives and organizes judgments . . . in that they influence children's understanding, encoding, and memory of moral transgressions. Thus, in that view, moral

knowledge, not emotional response, changes qualitatively with age" (Smetana, 2006:131).

In contrast, the sentimental and intuitionist approach questions both the contents of the moral domain and the direct effect of moral reasoning and controlled "cognitive" processes on moral decisions, at least for the vast majority of judgments. While others' welfare, harm, and rights are recognized as a part of what is seen as moral, other matters, considered by this approach harmless and conventional, are moral too. This school shows evidence of "moral dumbfounding"—one's tendency to judge an event as morally wrong, while being unable to come up with reasons to justify it (Haidt, 2001; Cushman, Young, and Hauser, 2006). For instance, people are quick to appraise potential violations of harmless taboos—such as masturbating with a dead chicken before cooking it, or serving the family's dead pet for dinner—as morally wrong, and then seek a post facto justification for their judgment (Haidt, Koller, and Dias, 1993).

Following the "primacy of affect" research tradition (Zajonc, 1980; Murphy and Zajonc, 1983), some sentimentalists suggest that, more often than not, an automatic intuitive reaction emerges in response to moral transgressions, and it is this affective response that shapes our moral judgment; when it occurs at all, cognitive moral reasoning is a post hoc process destined to justify a preceding intuition (Haidt, 2001).

But this does not explain why some emotions we experience do not generate a sense of morality, and why our views on morality are responsive to informational assumptions on harm. It also does not account for the vastly consistent evidence that children as young as 3 or 4 years of age overwhelmingly differentiate between moral and conventional transgressions based on a set of formal characteristics, such that the former

are judged as more serious, generalizably wrong, and rule-independent (e.g. Smetana, 1981; Turiel, 1998); it is highly difficult to believe that these responses are made up by toddlers as a means of post hoc justification for their moral emotions.

Accordingly, Prinz's (2006; 2007; 2008) version of sentimentalism supplies a more restrictive definition identifying moral rules, which accounts for the evidence of moral domain recognition. In this version of sentimentalism, a distinction between moral and conventional rules is made because moral transgressions generate negative emotions in the child, regardless of the responses of authorities. This is achieved by emotional conditioning, which is more likely to occur when teaching moral, rather than conventional, rules. Still, emotional conditioning can occur with conventions, and in that case we tend to moralize them. As explained in chapter 2, viewing a rule as moral has three emotional characteristics—self-blaming emotions, other-blaming emotions, and consequences to a third party, such that "[t]o have a moral attitude towards ϕ-ing, one must have a moral sentiment that disposes one to feel a self-directed emotion of blame for ϕ-ing, and an emotion of other-directed blame when someone else ϕs" (Prinz, 2008).

As will be elaborated in chapter 2, both theoretical arguments on the nature of morality have abundant empirical findings on their side. First, a vast body of literature confirms that people distinguish moral obligations from social conventions above and beyond stimuli, settings, and cultures, perceiving the former but not the latter as generalizable, unalterable, obligatory, and independent from rules and authority (for reviews, see Turiel, 1998; Nucci, 2001; Killen, McGlothlin and Lee Kim, 2002; Smetana, 2006). What is more, this robust distinction emerges at a very young age. For instance, Smetana (1981) reports that children as young as 3 years old (beginning from around the

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age of 39 months) treat moral transgressions such as shoving, not sharing, and hitting, as more serious, generalizably wrong, and rule-independent than conventional transgressions such as not sitting in a designated place, not saying grace before eating, or not returning toys to their place.

At the same time, evidence has been gathered in support of the classic Humean view, showing that moral judgment and responses to moral violations can be altered by manipulating one's level of repulsion or disgust. For instance, Wheatley and Haidt (2005) were able to increase the severity of moral judgment using certain neutral words that were hypnotically conditioned with disgust. Schnall, Haidt, and Clore (2005) reported similar results when respondents engaged in moral judgment appraisal in a clean vs. dirty environment, such that subjects who were seated at a filthy desk, with such objects as a used tissue and a greasy pizza box, had a harsher moral judgment (contingent on high private body consciousness). Haidt and Bjorklund (2008) varied the vividness of disgust-eliciting features of scenarios incidental to the task, demonstrating that vividly disgusting details yielded stronger moral judgments.

The bi-dimensional moral conviction

The current literature on dual processes in psychology integrates the cognitive and sentimental views by suggesting that both automatic-sentimentalist and controlled-cognitive processes are employed in information processing, impression formation, and behavior (e.g., Bargh, 1997; Chaiken and Trope, 1999; Fazio and Olson, 2003). In fact, it seems that neuropsychologically speaking, the two systems are not separate at all (Damasio, 1994).

Accordingly, I postulate that both emotional and cognitive components underlie moral judgment, and integrate both schools of thought to develop a theoretical and methodological framework for morality. I experimentally test this notion in chapter 3. In particular, I build on two theories to define moral judgment: the domain perspective (Turiel, 1998; Helwig and Turiel, 2002, based on Dworkin, 1978; Gewirth, 1978; Rawls, 1971), which follows Kant in stressing cognition as the key component of moral judgment, and sensibility-sentimentalism (see Prinz, 2007; 2008; McDowell, 1985; Blackburn 1984; 1993; Wright, 1992), which follows Hume in stressing emotions.

Both theories agree that rules and practices are divided into moral and conventional, although they propose different criteria for distinguishing between the two groups of practices. According to domain theory, the domain of morality concerns such matters as harm, fairness, and rights, and moral violations are inherently wrong since they harm others (Turiel, 1998; Helwig and Turiel, 2002; Nucci, 2001; Dworkin, 1978; Rawls, 1971), while the sentimentalist view identifies moral rules as evoking self-blaming emotions and other-blaming emotions, as well as consequences for a third party (Prinz, 2007). However, both dimensions are necessary to define the moral domain, since the criterion of domain attribution may be too restrictive, such that some acts that do not pertain to matters of harm may still be viewed as moral (e.g. private sexual habits, see Haidt, Koller, and Dias, 1993), while the criterion of emotion emergence may not be restrictive enough, as some acts may elicit strong emotions and still not pertain to morality (e.g., anger and speeding, also see Turiel, 2006).

Indeed, the interdisciplinary literature suggests that both intuitive emotional and controlled "cognitive" mechanisms affect moral judgment. For instance, fMRI studies

demonstrate the presence of both emotional and cognitive brain activities while solving

different moral dilemmas (Greene and Haidt, 2002). Koenigs et al. (2007) demonstrated

the essential role played by emotions in moral judgment, by showing an abnormally

utilitarian pattern of judgments among patients with focal bilateral damage to a certain

brain region known to be necessary for the generation of social emotions (the

ventromedial prefrontal cortex, also see Young et al., 2010). Greene (2008) argues that

deontological moral judgments are driven by emotional and intuition-based responses

that are justified post facto, while arguing that consequentialist moral judgments are more

often driven by cognitive and reasoned responses, with some empirical evidence

supporting this claim (see also Cushman, Young and Hauser, 2006). [4]

     How are these two dimensions of morality jointly stored in our minds? According

to the associative network model (see, e.g., Bower and Forgas, 2001), objects are stored

in nodes and linked in memory in a network such that associations related in content,

valence, and discrete emotions are connected. Information is regularly affective and

cognitive alike, absorbed and activated in the memory via both automatic and

deliberative processing. In this dissertation, I argue that moral conviction is created when,

during the socialization process and due to personal experience and reflection, some node

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[4] For instance, reaction time measures show that consequentialist responses to dilemmas take longer
than non-consequentialist ones, supposedly since people need to override their emotional/automatic moral
intuitions (Greene, 2008). Valdesolo and DeSteno (2006) demonstrated the effect of automatic emotional
responses by showing that induced positive mood (by being shown a short clip of Saturday Night Live)
increased the odds of a utilitarian response to the footbridge dilemma by a factor of four, but—as
expected—did not influence responses to the trolley dilemma (recall that the trolley problem presents a
situation in which an out-of-control runaway trolley will hit and kill five people, unless a switch is hit that
turns it into a side truck, where it will hit and kill one person. In the footbridge dilemma, all is the same,
except instead of pulling a switch, a large individual is to be pushed from a footbridge to stop the trolley).
Likewise, fMRIs show more cognitive activity in the former type of dillema and more emotional activity in
the latter (Greene, 2008).

is laden with moral emotions and becomes linked to the harm schema, a set of rules, beliefs, emotions, and associations all related to harmfulness.

For a simplistic illustration, consider a young college student who has just encountered the concept of euthanasia. In creating the small web of associations that gives meaning to this object, the student picks up some information about physician-assisted suicide, say on the physical pain and psychological distress of the terminally ill, and the fact that it is currently illegal in the vast majority of countries, and this information raises some sadness and perhaps fear of ever being in this situation. To moralize this issue, two closely related routes can be taken.

First, according to Prinz's criteria for the moral domain (2008), to be moralized, the node for euthanasia must be colored by self-blaming and other-blaming moral emotions. This may occur when one feels anger thinking of a doctor constantly keeping alive suffering helpless patients who beg him to put an end to their unbearable pain, or maybe in thinking of a sick grandmother who gradually loses her dignity and lucidity, and feeling guilty for not visiting her for months now. Note that some of these emotions can be completely unrelated to articulated thoughts, and are thus more like a twitch, as a sudden flash of anger or empathy accompanies the image of vulnerability and cruelty; and some of the thoughts related to these emotions can be almost unconscious, consisting of links established between euthanasia and existing nodes and schemas, like terminal illness, suicide, rights and autonomy. As additional and stronger moral emotions are connected to this node, it will be increasingly moralized.

In addition to the affective coloring, new contents and thinking about the issue may also affect the moralization of this node. If the suffering people and one's

grandmother are viewed as deprived of their natural right to make a decision about their own fate, victims of an over-traditional and merciless system which destines them to misery, then a pro-choice interpretation will be linked to the existing node,[5] and more importantly, euthanasia will now be connected to one's harm schema, a set of laws, action tendencies, beliefs, and feelings concerning practices that endanger people and are thus inherently wrong and absolutely forbidden. This harm schema is habitually developed as we grow up, when our caretakers consistently slap our hands or raise their voice while making an angry threatening face, and when moral transgressions generate negative emotions regardless of the response of authorities; for instance, as we see someone hurt due to something we have done, crying, falling, bleeding, or just laying there, silent. Think about the harm schema as one of those red flashing stop signs: everything connected to it feels totally wrong, under all circumstances. With the establishment of this link, new relevant information will now activate not only the node of euthanasia, but also a sense of harm and wrongness, through a spreading activation (see Barsalou, 1992, for the activation mechanism). This theory is further developed in chapter 4, suggesting that the moralized node will be further related to the *self* and to social identity, and will increase attitude certainty and importance as well as out-group hostility.

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[5] Note how this step is contingent on one's interpretation of the facts, and assumptions about who is to blame. This is where socialization, partisanship, and personality may affect the moralization process, as I will show in chapter 2 with conservatism.

Ideological bias in morality?

Individual and group differences in moral convictions

The sentimentalist and cognitivist criteria for the distinction between moral and conventional rules can be expected to be highly correlated within a social context. First, the two arguably tap the same phenomenon: the distinction between moral and conventional rules. Secondly, at least some of the sentimentalist criteria correspond to the domain criteria. Specifically, the criterion of other-directed emotions toward third parties corresponds to generalizability. For instance, being strongly outraged when hearing that people in some other country often torture prisoners corresponds to thinking torture is wrong across settings. But most importantly, systematic differences can be hypothesized between contexts and groups, as developed in this subsection and in chapter 2.

Some have argued that since domain theory postulates that the moral domain universally concerns matters of others' welfare (harm, justice, and rights), it can be disproven by showing systematic differences in the moral domain between contexts. The logic behind this criticism is that if the matters included in the moral domain systematically vary among groups and cultures, it means that social institutions affect what is moralized, which stands in strict contradiction to the definition of rules in the moral domain as independent of authorities.

Indeed, Shweder, Mahapatra, and Miller (1987) compared the moral domain of American and Indian children and adults, by building on the formal characteristics to examine what regulations and practices are thought to be moral (e.g., perceived as universal, unalterable, etc.) rather than conventional obligations in each culture. The authors found that many of the issues classified by domain theory as social-personal

conventions (e.g., relating to appropriate food, clothing, and sex roles) were classified by Indians as matters of morality, leading them to the conclusion that the content of the moral domain is variable across cultures.

In subsequent work, Shweder et al. (1997) argue for the existence of three domains (rather than one) of human moral phenomena: the "ethics of autonomy," which like domain theory's moral domain concerns rights, freedom, and individual welfare; the "ethics of community," which concerns one's obligations to the larger community, such as loyalty, duty, respectfulness, modesty, respect for hierarchy, and self-restraint; and the "ethics of divinity," which is concerned with the maintenance of moral purity and sanctity.

Nevertheless, domain theory does not expect zero cross-cultural variance. It suggests that different contexts may lend themselves to different informational assumptions (i.e., what one accurately or mistakenly believes to be true) regarding the harmfulness of events. While moral events all concern harm and rights, cultures differ in holding beliefs regarding "unobservable natural occurrences that entail the possibility of harm occurring to sentient beings," such as "the existence of an afterlife, souls of the deceased, and ancestral spirits. In that context, violations of certain norms (e.g., a widow must not eat fish) are judged as wrong because of the harmful consequences" (Turiel, Hildebrandt, and Wainryb, 1991:84-85). Thus, assumptions of potential psychological or physical harmfulness interact with the context, allowing for systematic variations among groups, societies, and times.

For domain theorists, people's dependency on informational beliefs in fact adds evidence for the cognitive (rather than emotional) nature of moral judgment (Turiel,

2006). For instance, to judge whether an event in which an adult man hitting a young girl was morally wrong, people build on *data* and *beliefs*; absent any further data, the event is categorically morally wrong because it entails harm, but when the adult is the girl's father punishing her for a misdeed, the judgment is contingent on one's informational assumption about the positive contribution of spanking to children's welfare (Wainryb, 1991), which implies moral reasoning.

According to domain theory, social contexts are especially expected to involve different informational assumptions regarding potential harm when the appraised issue is "nonprototypical," i.e., complex, ambiguous, and involving components of several domains simultaneously (Turiel, Hildebrandt, and Wainryb, 1991).[6] More often than not, political issues fit this description. The effectiveness of different policies in preventing potential harm form the debate on most political issues, including the death penalty, torture, gun control, welfare, and U.S. evolvement in wars, and beliefs about the time when a fetus becomes a person and is thus subject to harm are at the heart of political discussion on abortion and stem cell research. Thus, information is expected to affect moralization in politics.

Emotions are affected by information as well. For instance, cultures differ in what evokes the emotion of disgust, along the lines of what is viewed as socially expected in sexual and personal behavior, and in whether embarrassment and shame are viewed as two distinct emotions or a single one (Haidt, 2003). In addition, there are some locally moralized emotions, such as the Hindu emotion of *sama*, translated as serenity, which is thought to advance the spirituality of the cosmos (Haidt, 2003).

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[6] Still, according to Turiel, contexts are not unitary, and they do not dictate informational assumptions in a top-down manner. Rather, the decisions of individuals within a culture are not constant, and include an integration of several domains.

Therefore, people and groups can differ in the extent to which they moralize political issues, on both dimensions of moral conviction. A crucial source for informational assumptions that may affect the moralization of political issues is ideology, so it is worth investigating the extent to which it leads to systematic differences in the moral domain.

Individual differences in moral convictions by political ideology

Ideology can be hypothesized as yielding systematic variations in the probability of assigning morality to non-prototypical issues. We often hear the "moralizing conservatives" hypothesis, suggesting that conservatives are more prone to moral conviction than liberals; or the related view that recourse to morality is simply a scheme by conservatives to win the votes of people who have no business voting Republican (e.g., Frank, 2004; Lakoff, 2002).

The question of ideology-based asymmetries in moral conviction on political issues is extremely important, as it holds implications for campaigns, persuasion, participation, and electoral success. For instance, the theories of the moralizing conservatives anticipate that conservatives will be easier to mobilize and more willing to participate and vote, giving an inherent electoral advantage to the Republicans. Morality serves the motivational role of increasing action tendencies as a response to the eliciting event (Wren, 1991), and this is at least partly due to its emotional nature. For instance, Damasio and Van Hoesen (1983) describe the state of akinetic mutism in which patients tend to neither speak nor move. When recuperated, they describe have been conscious but not having felt emotions. Arguably, damage to emotional brain areas leads to a state of

affective indifference, which in turn plays a role in attenuating inclinations to act. Even when disputing the sentimental basis of morality, philosophers and psychologists alike agree that emotions often co-occur with moral reasoning, but Kantian and other absolutist researchers will often add that moral imperatives hold intrinsic motivational force.

Indeed, some scholars argue that conservatives are more prone to moralize politics. Haidt and collaborators (e.g., Haidt and Joseph, 2006; Haidt and Bjorklund, 2006; Haidt and Graham, 2007) maintain that liberals and conservatives differ in their moral intuitions, such that liberals hold a narrower basis for morality, referring mainly to issues including harm and fairness (similar to domain theory's classic definition of the moral domain), while conservatives attribute morality to a wider variety of issues, including violations of loyalty to the in-group, respect for authority, and matters of purity and cleanliness. There is currently some evidence, from Inbar, Pizarro, and Bloom (n.d.), showing that a predisposition toward the emotion of disgust, disgust sensitivity, is associated with more conservative political attitudes on a variety of issues, but especially on issues related to the moral dimension of purity, specifically abortion and gay marriage. Additionally, and in accordance with the results of the 2004 exit polls, Lovett and Jordan (2005) suggest that Bush voters were higher on moralism—the "tendency to perceive everyday life as imbued with a moral dimension" (2005:167)—than Kerry voters. In contrast to these theories and evidence suggesting that conservatives are more prone to attribute morality to political issues, studies employing other moral conviction measures suggest that moral conviction does not generally characterize the political right more than it does the political left, and that both groups derive attitudes from moral convictions (Skitka and Bauman, 2008).

While there is empirical evidence on both sides, this question is currently moot, as most of these works define and measure morality in a loose and non-theoretical manner, thus not allowing a comparison of the theories and empirical evidence on this question. In chapter 2, I weigh into this debate, building on a new definition and a theory-driven measure of moral conviction, to test whether liberals and conservatives differ in moralizing several key political issues such that conservatives are more prone to moral conviction, or whether instead the two political groups equally moralize these issues.

The operationalization of moral convictions

As of now, the empirical social science literature that looks at individual-level morality usually uses reflective measures, in which respondents are simply asked whether or not they perceive certain issues or scenarios to be a matter of morals. While efficient, it is currently not entirely clear what it is that such measures tap. First, there are plentiful findings suggesting that people are often incapable of accessing and reporting their attitudes and experiences (Wilson and Schooler, 1991; Wilson, Hodges, and LaFleur, 1995). This is particularly the case when people are asked to categorize their attitude on some issue using a vague and much-debated concept like morality. Assuming that expressed attitudes are the result of some probabilistic memory search (Zaller and Feldman, 1992), such reflection measures rely on participants' ability to construct their attitude on the political issue and then classify it on a continuum based on their personal understanding of what morality means. Even if people are able to accurately accomplish this task, their reports confound actual differences in the level of moral conviction with differences in one's definition of morality. Different people may mean different things

when saying they perceive something as related to their moral views. For once, these differences in language may be systematically related to ideology (e.g., Haidt and Graham, 2007; Lakoff, 1995).

These measures often assume that when reporting a moral conviction, people usually report some immediate emotional reaction on the issue. However, some people may have greater access to social knowledge and to their own harm schema and principles on the issue, creating differences in the type and source of moral conviction reported, specifically emotional vs. cognitive, and deriving from an internal vs. external source. In addition, some may hold a predisposition toward moral emotions, and this proclivity may be systematically related to ideology, which may affect the conclusions. For instance, there is currently some evidence, from Inbar, Pizarro, and Bloom (n.d.), showing that disgust sensitivity is associated with more conservative political attitudes on a variety of issues, especially issues related to the moral dimension of purity, such as abortion and gay marriage. In a similar manner, some may be inclined when they regard something as moral to say that they do, and others disinclined to do so. Specifically, conservatives may view morality as a more legitimate political criterion, while liberals may tend toward relativism and feel uncomfortable about being judgmental, as moral arguments force an acknowledgment that some things are better, more right, or more correct, than others.

Assuming, as many of the sentimental approaches to morality do, that morality was evolutionarily evolved to allow cooperation in groups (e.g., Haidt and Graham, 2007), it is clear that it was not developed to rely on awareness, and thus there is no reason to expect a particular mechanism for awareness of one's own moral state of mind.

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While some people may be able to report some components of the experience that accompanies moral convictions, we can expect them to be no more accurate than when they report the extent to which some attitude is a result of a positive mood, social comparison, or defensiveness. In any one of these cases, we will much prefer to directly measure the hypothesized source, and test for its effect on the attitude, than to ask people to reflect on this connection.

Thus, one of the main goals of this project is to develop theory-driven measures of moral conviction that rely not on the respondents' understanding of morality, but on a transparent and empirically testable theoretical conceptualization. This dissertation develops, validates, and employs measures for both hypothesized dimensions of moral conviction.

The measure of the cognitive component of moral conviction will tap the non-arbitrary nature of moral rules, differentiating them from social-personal conventions, as defined by domain theory's formal characteristics, which specify that moral regularities are universal, authority independent, and unalterable. Thus, the measure will tap the extent to which a political practice is judged to be wrong and impermissible across different social contexts (universality), such that the moral rule is unalterable by consensus (alterability) or by authority, such as the legal system (authority independence). People differ in the extent to which they categorize particular issues as being in the moral domain. At one extreme are people who view a rule as strictly conventional. These people think that the rule is totally context-dependent, and is right or wrong based on the norms and legalities in a specific environment. At the other extreme are those categorizing the rule as strictly belonging to the moral domain, regarding it as

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totally context-independent, and right or wrong regardless of what the majority of people or various laws and norms have to say in the matter. Other people lie in-between these extremes, for instance, tending to view a particular sentence as potentially universal, but holding dear the norms or rules of an environment such that they are willing to put up with a transgression if other people or the authorities allow it; or tending to view the rule as conventional, but being willing to go along with other people or with the authority if they have some strong take on the practice.

The measure of the affective component of moral conviction will tap the unique emotional nature of moral convictions, as evoking both self-directed and other-directed moral emotions (Prinz, 2008). Moral emotions, as opposed to conventional emotions, are defined as "those emotions that are linked to the interests or welfare either of society as a whole or at least of persons other than the judge or agent" (Haidt, 2003), with prototypical moral emotions including disgust, anger, contempt, guilt, and shame. Accordingly, the measure for the emotional dimension will ask participants to evaluate their self-directed feelings of guilt and shame upon transgression of some rule, as well as their feelings of disgust and anger toward other people, both people they personally know and people in other countries, violating the rule (other-directed and third parties-related emotions).

These direct measures assume that the cognitive component of moral conviction, viewed as universal, is a result of ties to the harm schema. Note that this assumption is unnecessary to the argument, as the generalizability of a sentence in itself defines a moral imperative. The main advantage of measuring generalizability directly is that we do not need to hypothesize about the specific assumptions that cause some sentences to be

understood as universal, and some practices to be viewed as harmful. Still, with reference to philosophical theories on the role of attributions of harm in the formation of universal sentences (Rawls, 1971; Dworkin, 1978; Gewirth, 1978), it is interesting to test this connection, and I do so in chapter 2 by measuring the meditational effect of harm, and in chapter 3 by manipulating the accessibility of harm cues, to establish the non-spurious and causal nature of this relationship.

In addition, this operationalization allows testing the nature of self-reported measures, especially the extent to which they manifest the affective experience of moral conviction as opposed to the cognitive component (see chapter 4), as well as the extent to which they are a result of social knowledge regarding what issues are presented as moral by elites (see chapter 2).

The effects of moral convictions

This theoretical and methodological framework allows bringing morality back into empirical political science, as it suggests that some political attitudes and behaviors may be guided by moral judgment even without postulating particular citizen capabilities, and delineates the psychological and cognitive mechanisms by which this effect occurs. Having morality as a psychological constraint on political behavior suggests that public opinion may still be coherent and consistent even lacking political information, building on emotional and intuitive moral judgment, despite the robust evidence that the public is "innocent of ideology" (Converse, 1964).

However, the availability of alternative cues for people to rely upon in forming political attitudes, such as ideology, political principles, and personal traits, necessitates

exemplifying the reliance on moral judgment above and beyond such other cues. Consequently, the last empirical essay in this dissertation tests the unique explanatory power of both dimensions of moral conviction in political behavior.

Various theories suggest that morality underlies the two central risks of current democracies: culture war and political apathy (e.g., Lakoff, 2002; Uslaner, 2002; Frank, 2004; Callahan, 2007; Twenge, 2007). Culture war is a process of political polarization between traditionalists and progressivists, in which each group believes that it manifests the nation's "real" culture, holds the other group's values in disdain, sees the others as unintelligent or evil bigots, and wishes to save their children from the bad influence of the other side's biased and dangerous nonsense. In clear contradiction to this action-oriented antagonism, political apathy is the ongoing process of voters' fatigue, disinterest in the public sphere, and constantly decreasing levels of political participation. However, individual-level theory of how exactly morality affects these social-political phenomena is currently unresolved. Thus, the fourth chapter embarks upon laying out such a theory and empirically testing it.

It starts by clarifying the relationship between moral conviction and attitude strength. While existing research shows that moral conviction and attitude strength are related but not the same thing (e.g., Skitka, Bauman, and Sargis, 2005; Mooney and Schuldt, 2008), little is known about the reasons for and the directionality of this relationship. I argue that the emotional and generalizing nature of moralized nodes leads to the formation of a univalenced distribution of considerations regarding the political object, such that the vast majority of information linked to the object will be similar in tone and attitude direction. Recall the moralized node of euthanasia in the mind of our

college student, which evokes moral emotions upon activation, and is linked to harm. The harm schema reinforces a certain interpretation of occurrences, which affects not only retrieval but also the intake of new information, such that information is more likely to be noticed, processed, and given significant weight at retrieval to the extent that it matches the current view, while mismatching information is left unnoticed, is discounted, or is counter-argued (Kunda, 1990; Lodge and Taber, 2006). Since euthanasia is interpreted by our student as the act of depriving a suffering person of autonomy and natural rights, thereby dooming him or her to intolerable pain, when encountering new information on the matter our student is likely to analyze and process it according to the deprivation to and pain of the suffering person (rather than relying on, for instance, legal, religious, or slippery slope arguments). Given that this process of partisan, or motivated, reasoning is automatic and happens outside of awareness, our student believes that his judgment of the new information is actually unbiased, correct, and fair (Kunda, 1990, calls this "the illusion of objectivity").

One of the main reasons moral conviction leads to powerful motivated reasoning is the link between moralized nodes and one's self-concept. Since morals establish the manner in which one defines oneself (e.g., Rokeach, 1968), moral convictions serve a value-expressive function (Katz, 1960). Attitudes derived from personal morals thus have higher personal relevance, and threats to the moral attitude induce threats to identity concepts (e.g., Ostrom and Brock, 1968; Johnson and Eagly, 1989; Haugtvedt and Wegener, 1994), supplying a strong motivation to downplay the threatening information. This process of motivated reasoning creates a one-sided distribution of considerations

(using the terminology of Zaller and Feldman, 1992), which leads to vastly consistent responses, therefore increasing the experienced attitude certainty.

Another consequence of moral conviction, in addition to experienced certainty, is attitude importance. The value-expressive nature of moral convictions ties them to one's self-concept, making a challenge to the attitude threatening to the self. For example, imagine that the young college student forming his view on euthanasia grew up in a tiny traditional town, was raised by highly devout and strict parents, always felt that he didn't belong there, and had to fight his family to move to a college in a big city. Watching a TV interview with a terminally ill patient with a death wish, he may connect between the interviewee's distress at being imprisoned and dependent on others to end her misery and his own recollection of being restricted and feeling caged growing up, as well as his current self-view as a free spirit, spontaneous and independent. People's autonomy should never be limited like that, our college student thinks, and almost feels claustrophobic thinking about the poor patient paralyzed in her hospital bed. He wishes he could do something to free such people, give them back control over their own lives. As the link between euthanasia and personal values and experiences strengthens, an anti-euthanasia attitude is viewed by the student as a threat to his own highly-regarded values of self-dependence and autonomy, to his personal justification of the bitter battle with his family and to moving away from his home town. All of a sudden, quite a bit depends on the pro-euthanasia view, and he is willing to defend it with passion.

In turn, the threat to one's self-defining constructs exerted by challenging opinions drives hostility and a motivation to silence the opposition, which manifests itself in the political intolerance that underlies the culture war. Assuming that the node on

euthanasia becomes increasingly moralized and tied to our student's self-concept, viewing violent anti-euthanasia demonstrations where his grandmother is hospitalized; seeing people wearing "euthanasia is murder, and murderers burn in hell" t-shirts; watching fiery television debates on euthanasia in which anti-euthanasia debaters look suffering victims in the eye, trying to convince them that their misery will be compensated for in the afterlife, or telling them that only God can decide when they will be released from their earthly pain, all of these evoke strong moral emotions in our student. He interprets these occurrences with his now well-established one-sided schema. Something terribly wrong is going on here, he think to himself; vulnerable suffering people are being deprived of their freedom, and are in fact imprisoned and tortured by a bunch of crazy fundamentalists, like my parents and neighbors from back home! Someone has to stop these fanatics!

As attitude certainty and issue importance increase, given the motivating force of emotions, one is also expected to be willing to act to defend his view, which may translate into political participation. Our student can sign a petition online, forward a relevant email to his friends, and partake in a pro-euthanasia demonstration, all of which express his highly regarded value of autonomy. In turn, the stronger attitudinal certainty and vaster importance of this one political issue increases the tendency to rely on this specific issue in relevant electoral choices.

Accordingly, chapter 4 tests the extent to which moral conviction explains attitude certainty and issue importance, such that as moral conviction increases, experienced certainty and importance increase as well. This strengthens the hypotheses regarding the causal flow between morality and attitude strength. I then go on to show that moral

conviction is a key explanation of both political intolerance and political involvement, and that attitude strength at least partly underlies the effect that morality has on both processes, controlling for key alternative explanations. Additionally, moderation by political sophistication and by ideology is tested, and the effect of both dimensions of moral conviction is compared, suggesting that both are influential, and are not contingent on political knowledge or ideology.

To sum, moral judgment has always been important in the social sciences, and political philosophers have considered attitudes guided by moral principles to be intrinsically good and obligatory (e.g., Kant, 1785/2002). This dissertation is set to demonstrate that some political attitudes are constrained by moral judgment even without particular citizen capabilities, and offers a cognitive theory and a set of measures for describing and quantifying the effects of moral convictions that would facilitate integrating morality in subsequent political behavior research. By applying theories from political philosophy, psychology, behavioral economics, and the life sciences, this study aims at the unification of scientific endeavors on this topic, and thereby advances the chief scientific principle by which knowledge from all fields should be mutually consistent (see Tooby and Cosmides, 1992:22).

Chapter II

Essay 1: Moral Issues and Political Ideology

Abstract

What are moral issues? Empirical political science literature currently refers to a political matter as a moral issue based on the subjective perception of either the researcher or the respondents — without illuminating exactly what is it that makes some issues seem moral to some people — and often suggests that ideology moderates the moralization of political issues. This chapter develops theory and methods for rigorously identifying moral issues and tests for moderation by ideology. Two theories are employed to define moral conviction theoretically and operationally: domain theory and sentimentalism. The results show that liberals and conservatives moralize to the same extent, but ideology affects the particular issues moralized, such that liberal moral issues pertain to harm to people, and conservative moral issues pertain to harm to social order and tradition. Thus, while the two issues highest on moral conviction for liberals are torture and capital punishment, conservatives show the strongest moral conviction on gay adoption and abortion. As hypothesized, assumptions regarding the harmfulness of political practices were found to mediate the effect of ideology on moral convictions.

Introduction

The uncompromising nature of moral convictions is often posed as a key explanation for the political polarization and culture war in current American politics. At the same time, morality is thought to be an ideologically asymmetric mobilization force. For instance, it has been argued that conservatives more often vote on moral issues (for example, this was argued following the 2004 elections), that Republicans put morality to a better use in political campaigns (e.g., Lakoff, 1995), and that Bush voters were more likely than Kerry supporters to moralize politics (e.g., Lovett and Jordan, 2005). Are moral issues typically conservative in nature, or do liberals hold strong moral convictions on political issues as well?

While there is empirical evidence to support both arguments, the debate on the relationship between moral issues and political ideology is currently fruitless due to the lack of clear theoretical definitions of what it means to be "moral" and how this is intertwined with ideology. Instead of deriving measures from theoretical arguments about the nature of moral issues, the existing empirical literature typically refers to political matters as moral or not based on the subjective perception of either the *researcher* or the *respondents* — without theoretically illuminating exactly *what it is* that makes some issues seem moral to some people.

For instance, studies following the 2004 exit polls built on "moral values" as a mere code name for specific issues, particularly gay rights and abortion (see Hillygus and Shields, 2005; Burden, 2004; Campbell and Quinn, 2005; Fiorina, 2004), and argued that conservatives are more likely to moralize politics. But it is hard to believe that other

political issues, such as counter-terrorism practices and the death penalty, are strictly "non-moral."

At the same time, the inductive approach simply asks respondents whether they perceive some issues to be a matter of morals (Lovett and Jordan, 2005; Skitka and Bauman, 2008; Skitka, Bauman and Sargis, 2005; Skitka and Houston, 2001). However, different descriptive measures yield different results on the relationship between ideology and moral issues, with some supporting (e.g. Lovett and Jordan, 2005) and some rejecting (e.g. Skitka and Bauman, 2008) the claim that conservatives moralize to a greater extent than liberals. However, these contrasting results cannot be compared in terms of their validity, as the measures they are based on fail to explain *why* these issues are viewed morally by some people and not others.

This essay develops theory-based definitions and measures of moral conviction and tests the moderation of moral convictions by ideology. Briefly speaking, I suggest that a *moral issue* is a political issue in which moral judgment is applied; i.e., where one's opinion on the issue is derived from their morals. In turn, *moral judgment*, the appraisal of a practice (e.g., gay adoption) as morally right or wrong, depends on whether the practice obeys or violates some moral rule (Darley and Shultz, 1990).

But what determines the extent to which some rule is viewed as moral (e.g., "homicide is wrong") or merely conventional (e.g., "littering is wrong")? In this chapter, two research traditions are integrated to suggest a bi-dimensional definition, according to which *a rule is moral* under at least one of two circumstances. Under the cognitivist *domain theory* dimension (e.g., Turiel, 1998; Helwig and Turiel, 2002), a rule is moral if its violation is understood to *harm* others. The intrinsic "harmfulness" underlying moral

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transgressions, which makes them inherently wrong, yields an important distinction between moral and conventional rules, such that adherence to moral but not conventional rules is "experienced as obligatory, if it applies to all people regardless of their attitude toward it and if its force is impersonal and external" (Darley and Shultz, 1990). Under the *sentimentalist* dimension (for the version applied in this project, see Prinz, 2007; 2008), a rule is moral if it invokes self-blaming emotions and condemning emotions both in close and third party situations.

Integrating these concepts, I regard moral issues as those political issues that generate a sense of harmfulness and moral emotions, which in turn serve as attitude constraints. This theory-based definition allows us to hypothesize about the effects of ideology on moral issues. Ideology causes differences in moral convictions on political issues by generating systematic variation in the categorization of rules as in the moral or the conventional domain; i.e., by affecting what is regarded as harmful, and consequently evoking moral emotion. Thus, liberals and conservatives are sensitive to different types of harm: while liberals experience emotions and a sense of wrong as a result of harm to people and their individual rights, conservatives are alerted when current societal norms and institutions are at stake, and often prefer to protect the social order even at the cost of limiting the rights of individuals and minorities (e.g., Lakoff, 1995; Skocpol, 1983; Dione, 2004). The level of moral conviction on specific issues, however, is contingent on personal assumptions of the harmfulness of different political practices.

In accordance with these expectations, my results show that while both liberals and conservatives moralize political issues, they differ systematically in the particular issues moralized, such that liberal moral issues pertain to substantial harm to people (with

the two issues highest on moral conviction being torture and capital punishment),

whereas conservative moral issues pertain to social and religious norm violations (with

the two issues highest on moral conviction being gay adoption and abortion).

Furthermore, differential assumptions regarding the harmfulness of the political practice

are shown to mediate the effect of ideology on moral convictions.

In the next section, I build on domain theory and sentimentalism to discuss the bi-

dimensional nature of moral convictions on political issues, and argue that morality plays

a key role in the formation of political attitudes since it serves as a psychological

constraint on one's belief system. I then derive theoretical expectations for the effect of

ideology on moral issues, by claiming, as noted, that liberals and conservatives are

sensitive to somewhat differing forms of harm. After describing the theory-based

measures, as well as the methods and data, I analyze the effect of ideology on moral

convictions, and the mediation effect of harm assumptions. I then consider the nature and

limitations of self-reported measures for moral convictions as opposed to theory-based

measures in identifying moral issues in politics. Finally, I conclude by discussing the

principal findings and their implications.

What is a moral issue?

A moral issue is one attitudes toward which are based on moral judgment. But

what exactly is moral judgment? Two schools of thought in the vast interdisciplinary

literature on moral judgment suggest alternative answers to this question. The cognitivist

tradition (e.g., Kant, 1785/2002 in philosophy; Piaget, 1932/1965, and Kohlberg, 1969,

1981 in psychology) suggests that moral judgment is guided by reasoning, while the

sentimentalist tradition (e.g., Hume, 1739/1978 in philosophy; Haidt, 2001 in psychology) suggests that moral appraisals are directed by emotions. Following current literature on dual processes in psychology (Chaiken and Trope, 1999), I adopt an integrative position, defining moral judgment as a controlled and automatic process that includes both emotional and cognitive (harm-related) appraisal.

As will be detailed below, the cognitive dimension of moral judgment in my definition pertains to Turiel's moral domain perspective, and the emotional dimension to Prinz's sentimentalism. Due to the descriptive-inductive nature of this nominal definition, political issues may vary in morality attribution between times, places, and groups. However, both theories (in the versions adopted here) propose a non-relativistic view of moral judgment, and accordingly of moral issues, suggesting that moral issues are still moral in essence even if categorized by some people in the conventional domain.

The moral domain

The social-cognitive domain perspective (hereafter domain theory) follows contemporary moral philosophies (e.g., Dworkin, 1978; Gewirth, 1978; Rawls, 1971) in differentiating between moral judgments and other types of social knowledge. According to this view, social interactions lead children to qualitatively distinguish between three types of social knowledge they acquire: morals, social conventions, and personal preferences (Turiel, 1998; Helwig and Turiel, 2002; Nucci, 2001).

Actions within the moral domain have intrinsic effects on the well-being of others, making any violations (i.e., harm to others' welfare) inherently wrong (following Dworkin, 1978; Gewirth, 1978; Rawls, 1971). As such, the moral domain encompasses

rules and actions involving harm and rights (e.g., "never engage in unprovoked hitting"), which remain absolutely right or wrong unconditional upon, and even if in contrast with, self-interest, political or cultural institutions, or the majority opinion in the society. Judgments of acts in the moral domain are "categorical in that what persons ought to do sets requirements for them that they cannot rightly evade by consulting their own self-interested desires or variable opinions, ideals, or institutional practices" (Gewirth, 1978, 24). Knowledge regarding the harmfulness of certain acts is acquired throughout the socialization process, starting at a very young age.

The moral domain of social knowledge coexists with two other domains: the conventional and the personal. Similar to its moral counterpart, the conventional domain includes rules regarding right and wrong as well, but unlike rules in the moral domain, conventional rules are derived from social norms, authority, and traditions (e.g., stopping at a stop sign), and are thus arbitrary, hold force through the social organization they define, and can be changed upon decision (Nucci and Turiel, 1978; Turiel, 1983). While the existence of a social regulation is necessary for an act to be regarded as a conventional transgression, social regulation is unnecessary for an act entailing intrinsic harm to be regarded as a moral transgression. Finally, the personal domain pertains to private aspects of an individual's autonomous life, including matters of personal preference, and thus lies outside the realm of conventions and morals (Nucci, 2001).

Applying the domain view to politics, the extent to which political issues will be judged as matters of morality varies with assumptions about the extent to which transgression is perceived to entail harm to others' welfare (e.g., Turiel, Killen and Helwig, 1987:185). Political practices often involve overlapping concerns engaging both

morality and social knowledge from other domains (on "mixed domains," see Turiel, 1983; Smetana, 2006), and can thus be given varying appraisals of the level of harm they involve, which suggests variance in the likelihood of classification in the moral domain.

Still, political issues are expected to differ in their likelihood to be classified as matters of morals, with some political issues being more likely on average to be categorized in the moral domain. For example, the intentional harm to a person characterizing capital punishment intrinsically distinguishes it from the issue of agricultural funding, making it much more likely to be viewed morally. At the same time, even the classification of gay marriage as in the moral domain is not strict, as it can also be viewed as a mere legal practice characteristic of some cultural context, which suggests categorization as a convention.

The non-arbitrary nature of moral rules differentiating them from social-personal conventions is given by several formal characteristics. Under domain theory, moral regularities are universal, authority-independent, and unalterable. The attribute of *universality* or *generalizability* suggests that transgressions in the moral domain are judged to be wrong and impermissible across different social contexts. *Independence* from rules and authority sanctions means that transgressions would be wrong even in the absence of rules or when the authority is unaware of the rule violation. *Unalterability* means that moral obligations should not be alterable by consensus or a majority (see Smetana, 2006). Political attitudes on moral issues such as the death penalty are more likely than issues such as agricultural funding to be judged as universal, authority-independent, and unalterable.

Indeed, a vast body of literature confirms that people distinguish moral obligations from social and personal conventions above and beyond stimuli, settings, and cultures (for reviews, see Turiel, 1998; Nucci, 2001; Killen, McGlothlin and Lee-Kim, 2002; Smetana, 2006). What is more, this robust distinction emerges at a very young age, with children as young as 3 years old treating moral transgressions such as shoving and hitting as universally wrong and rule-independent relative to conventional transgressions such as not sitting in a designated place or not returning toys to their proper place (Smetana, 1981).

This evidence is important in establishing a causal chain between categorization in the moral domain and political attitudes. While moral judgment emerges very early in childhood development (Smetana, 1981), studies show that the understanding of abstract concepts needed to comprehend some core political concepts such as war, state, and nationality develops in adolescence (Piaget and Weil, 1951). Others indicate that it is not until the end of puberty that adolescents can refer to abstract concepts of society, institutions, norms, and laws (Torney-Purta, 1990). Hence, it can be assumed that categorization in the moral domain precedes the formation of any political attitudes.

More than harm to people

Critics of domain theory dispute its postulate — derived from the work of such philosophers as Dworkin, Gewirth, and Rawls — that the moral domain universally concerns matters of others' welfare: harm, justice, and rights. Haidt, Koller, and Dias (1993) developed stories about taboo violations, which are harmless to people and their rights upon reflection. If domain theory is right about a single moral domain involving both harm and rights, than reassurance that an action is clearly harmless to people and not

related to rights violations or injustice should lead individuals to unambiguously classify it in the conventional domain.

Following Shweder et al. (1987), Haidt, Koller, and Dias compared American and Brazilian children and adults on the moral judgment of scenarios such as a family cooking their pet dog who died in an accident and serving it for dinner, a woman cleaning her toilet with rags cut out of an old flag, or a person eating a chicken he had previously used to masturbate. While high social class (and relatively more liberal) American adults did not judge the harmless violations as morally wrong in terms of domain theory's formal characteristics, the other groups did, even when they were forced to acknowledge that no one was harmed. Haidt et al. concluded that for some groups — specifically, conservatives (Haidt and Graham, 2007) —the moral domain is broader than claimed by domain theory, and includes — on top of harm and rights considerations — loyalty to the in-group, respect for authority, and matters of purity.

Domain theory can be divided into two components, with one of them damaged by this evidence. The first component of domain theory is the argument that, in all cultures, people distinguish between moral and conventional rules, which differ by certain formal properties applied to the former and not the latter. This component empirically differentiates between the two groups of rules, but it does not explain what about moral transgressions necessitates reference to the formal characteristics. The explanation is achieved by the second component, which is the argument that the content of the moral rules is universal as well, involving harm to others and rights, which are wrong regardless of social institutions, and thus should be differentiated from any other social rule.

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While persuasive and robust evidence supports the universal tendency to differentiate between morals and conventions by their formal characteristics, Haidt's results damage the second component of domain theory, suggesting that the content of the moral domain does not universally pertain to harm to others. People who undergo different socialization, and particularly liberals vs. conservatives (Haidt and Joseph, 2006; Haidt and Bjorklund, 2006; Haidt and Graham, 2007), view at least some transgressions that are unrelated to harm to people in any straightforward way as moral according to the formal characteristics.

If contents involving harm to people do not exclusively govern the moral domain, then it is difficult to explain the intrinsic motivation distinguishing moral from conventional knowledge. What is it, then, that makes moral rules universally different from social conventions if they are not content-dependent? What is it, if not overt harm to others, that allows a toddler as young as 3 years old to distinguish between a moral and a conventional rule? A good candidate is sentiment.

Indeed, Haidt observed that participants in the harmless taboos study seemed quick to classify the violations as immoral, and only then to endeavor to justify their response, and he therefore suggested that moral judgment is guided by affective gut-reactions and justified in a post hoc manner (see Haidt and Bjorklund, 2008; Haidt, 2001). [7] According to this view, what makes an act seem moral is the emergence of emotions in response to a transgression. But surely, not all emotion-generating occurrences are regarded as moral. Being sad due to longing for a deceased friend or

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[7] Haidt's argument, according to which moral emotion evokes moral judgment, is unrestrictive. People can be disgusted by things they do not regard as moral. One may be very angry at a person speeding on the highway, and think it is highly wrong. But upon reflection, he would not think that speeding is immoral. So even within the sentimentalist framework, we need more restrictive criteria to intrinsically differentiate between moral and conventional acts.

angry when discovering a parking ticket on the front car window do not indicate that death and the traffic police are regarded as immoral. How, then, can sentiment explain moral conviction, or classification in the moral domain?

Sensibility-Sentimentalism

Following the philosophical tradition of the British moralists, Prinz (2008) suggests that moral norms are grounded in emotions:

To count as a moral norm, these emotions must behave in particular ways. . . . At a minimum, moral rules involve both self-directed emotions and other-directed emotions. . . . Second, our emotions must be directed at third parties if they are to ground moral norms. . . To have a moral attitude towards ϕ-ing, one must have a moral sentiment that disposes one to feel a self-directed emotion of blame for ϕ-ing, and an emotion of other-directed blame when someone else ϕs.

This view of sentimentalism does not reject domain theory's distinction between moral and conventional rules, but rather suggests that what differentiates moral from conventional rules is that the former hold the potential to evoke both self-directed and other-directed emotions. Both are necessary to ensure the generalizability of the norm: if we are angry at a driver speeding on the highway, but do not feel ashamed when we ourselves speed, or if we feel guilty when we sleep more than 8 hours, but are not disgusted (or try not to be) by other people sleeping in, these are not moral norms (see Prinz, 2008). Thus, toddlers easily differentiate between moral and conventional rules because moral rules elicit much stronger emotional responses both within the child and among the surrounding socialization agents.

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While domain theorists (as well as stage theorists) traditionally acknowledge that people experience emotions when thinking about morality, and that this facilitates the learning process for harm assumptions, they argue that emotions are neither necessary nor sufficient for the moral/conventional distinction to emerge (see Turiel, 2006; Smetana, 2006).

But if the formal characteristics are merely a product of emotions, does this mean that morality is hopelessly relativistic, such that what a serial killer does is not wrong if his deeds evoke no emotions? A partial savior from moral relativism is moral sensibility. According to this family of theories (see McDowell, 1985; Blackburn 1984, 1993; Wright, 1992; Prinz, 2007), morality resembles colors and other "secondary qualities" in that moral judgment depends on our cognition, perception of judgment, but that does not mean that there is no difference between right and wrong, or green and red. Analogous to visual perception, one's perception of morality corresponds to certain phenomena that lie outside the mind. A color-blind person is not as good as a man of healthy vision in differentiating between red and green.

Following Locke's definition of secondary qualities, the essence of red is in holding the properties that generate experience of red in the normal observer, under normal conditions. In the same manner, moral values hold the power of invoking moral sensation (on the application of the Lockean definition for secondary qualities to morality, see Prinz, 2007). According to the sentimentalist view of morality, the sensation that moral rules generate is sentimental. This is the connecting point between sensibility and sentimentalism: moral emotions are the property that generates experience of right and wrong in the normal observer (Prinz 2007; 2008).

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The sentimentalist view is nicely supported by empirical evidence, with a growing body of literature demonstrating that manipulating emotions actually affects moral judgments (e.g., Valdesolo and DeSteno, 2006; Wheatley and Haidt, 2005; Haidt and Bjorklund, 2008; Rozin et al., 1999). For instance, a study by Schnall, Haidt, and Clore (2005) asked respondents to give their moral judgments in clean vs. dirty environments. Subjects who were seated at a filthy desk, with such objects as a used tissue and a greasy pizza box, had harsher moral judgments (contingent on high private body consciousness).

Additionally, studies on patients with brain damage in areas related to emotions demonstrate the essential role played by emotions in moral judgment (Koenigs et al., 2007), by showing an abnormally utilitarian pattern of judgments among patients with focal bilateral damage to a certain brain region known to be necessary for the generation of social emotions (the ventromedial prefrontal cortex).

More evidence comes from psychopathic patients, characterized by affective deficit. In a study comparing psychopaths and control (non-psychopath) prisoners, with both groups serving life sentences for murder or manslaughter, psychopaths exhibited a failure to draw a distinction between moral and conventional rules (Blair, 1995; Blair et al., 1997).

Next, there is evidence that different emotions correspond to different moral contents. As described above, Shweder and colleagues (1997) suggested three (rather than one) domains of human moral phenomena: the "ethics of autonomy," which like Turiel's moral domain concerns rights, freedom, and individual welfare; the "ethics of community," which concerns one's obligations to the larger community, such as loyalty,

respectfulness, modesty, and self-restraint; and the "ethics of divinity," which is concerned with the maintenance of moral purity[8].

Rozin et al. (1999) postulated, and presented supporting empirical evidence for, what they term "the CAD triad hypothesis." They show that transgressions of Shweder's three ethics each correspond to a different basic moral emotion: contempt for community, anger for autonomy, and disgust for divinity. It follows that an emotional response to a transgression informs us about its content and facilitates its categorization in a specific domain. In that sense, emotions are not merely expressive, but are also evaluative and convey information. When a person feels anger, he knows something is wrong, and it most likely has occurred in the domain of autonomy.

Still, Prinz's sentimentalism does not reject domain theory's distinction between moral and conventional rules, but rather suggests that the classification is made by emotions in practice: a rule is moral if it is imposed by both self-blaming and other-blaming emotions, and is directed at third parties (i.e., one is concerned when seeing the transgression occurring to other people, when they are uninvolved). It is a social convention otherwise; i.e., if "we express our belief that we would not blame (or at least we would try not to blame) someone who failed to conform to that rule in another culture" (Prinz, 2008).

To conclude, both sentimentalism and domain theory agree that rules are divided into morals and conventions, and that emotions co-occur with morals. Sentimentalists identify moral rules by the emergence of self-blaming emotions, other-blaming emotions, and consequences for a third party; any political issue that does not answer to one of

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[8] Note that it could be argued that these three categories are not that separate necessarily. For instance, an ethics of community may be just as focused on questions of justice and welfare.

these three criteria is a convention. Domain theorists identify moral rules by formal

characteristics: obligation, generalizability, unalterability, and independence of society

and authority; they emerge where harm or rights violation may occur as a results of a

transgression.

The sentimentalist and domain theory definitions can be viewed as

complementary dimensions for disentangling moral and conventional political issues,

such that moral judgment — the assessment of issues as right or wrong — has both a

controlled-reasoned and an automatic-sentimental component (see Chaiken and Trope,

1999 on dual process theories). Both dimensions are necessary when defining the

concept, since the criterion of domain attribution may be too restrictive, such that some

acts that do not pertain to matters of harm to people may still be moral (e.g., Haidt, Koller

and Dias, 1993), while the criterion of emotion emergence may not be restrictive enough,

as some acts may elicit strong emotions and still not pertain to morality (e.g., Turiel,

2006).

Moral judgment as psychological constraint

Another way of defining attitudes on moral issues is to consider them as those

political attitudes in which one's moral emotions and reasoning serve as psychological

constraints. The Conversian notion of constraint in belief systems refers to the degree to

which a particular belief is predictive of another belief. For instance, support for

women's rights should be correlated with support for legalizing abortion, and maintaining

both views should in turn increase the probability of holding other pro-minority rights

attitudes and decrease the probability of holding traditional attitudes. Importantly,

constraint is not only horizontal — i.e., connecting attitudes on several different issues —
but even more importantly is also vertical — i.e., it organizes attitudes on issues due to
their connection to some abstract superordinate belief or ideology (Peffley and Hurwitz,
1985). For instance, support for women's rights and legalizing abortion may be derived
from a higher guiding principle held by the person.

Converse (1964) postulated that when it exists, attitude constraint on political
attitudes is *sociological*, i.e., learned from political and social agents, who regularly
communicate the shared structures of liberal and conservative ideology. Building on this
assumption, he finds little evidence for the existence of constraint in ordinary citizens, as
their attitudes are far from being well-organized by a "proper" ideological view as
communicated by the elites. However, others have advanced a *psychological* constraint
view, according to which constraint on political attitudes can come from within the
individual's psyche (e.g., core values [Feldman, 2003], or personality [Jost et al., 2003]).
When conceptualized in this idiosyncratic manner, the coherence in a person's political
attitudes should be measured by how well they follow his or her inner values, and not by
how well they mirror elite ideology. Thus, Converse's famous conclusion of the non-
ideologue public may result from a search for the wrong type of constraint.

Morality is a good candidate to serve as a key source of psychological constraint,
given that politics often entails questions of right and wrong, and that a sense of morality
is readily available for individuals from a very young age. If people encounter a strong
sense of wrongness and harm or a disgusted, guilty, or angry response when reflecting on
a specific issue, they are expected to show relative attitude stability and consistency.

The reliance on moral convictions as a psychological constraint in deriving political attitudes can be understood in the framework of dynamic processing models (e.g. Barsalou, 1987; Zaller, 1992; Zaller and Feldman, 1992). According to these theories, people hold several associations attached to an issue, and construct their responses on the spot at the moment of the judgment, as an estimation of the central tendency measure of the relevant distribution of considerations (Feldman, 1995). When a spontaneous reaction such as a sense of harm of disgust is raised every single time an issue is discussed, it raises the expected consistency of one's responses.

The idea of psychological constraint complicates the study of public opinion a great deal, as many different abstract concepts can potentially guide people in politics, and there is no guarantee that different groups are guided by the same concepts (e.g., Conover and Feldman, 1981). Moreover, different people may be guided by different constructs on the same issue at different times, just as the same person may employ different constraints for different issues. Thus, a moral issue for conservatives — i.e., a political issue where conservatives typically infer harm or experience disgust — can potentially be governed by other concepts for liberals, just as a conservative may use moral judgment on some issues, psychological constraint on others, and sociological constraint for still others.

Thus, there is a substantial theoretical benefit in identifying moral issues: not only does doing so point to a potentially meaningful predictor of public opinion on specific issues; it also at the same time reveals the key source of constraint on the political belief system of a particular individual (and group) for a particular issue, and thereby weakens the Conversian view of the dysfunctional unconstrained public.

Yet moral judgment has so far been neglected as a source of constraint, as the literature in moral psychology was traditionally dominated by the view that moral judgment is governed by reasoning and categorization processes (Heider, 1958; Shaver, 1985; Piaget, 1965/1932; Kohlberg, 1969; Turiel, 1983). To argue that moral judgment underlies political attitude formation demands the assumption that citizens hold the cognitive abilities and motivation to scrutinize politics. In a world where the vast majority of Americans are politically unknowledgeable (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996), and ideologically unsophisticated (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964), it seems unreasonable to expect people to analyze politics through the abstract and complex prism of moral principles.

Happily, according to this project's new bi-dimensional definition of moral judgment, building on recent theories and evidence from moral psychology, moral judgment does not necessarily involve any intricate effortful analysis, but may occur very quickly, via emotional or unconscious intuitive responses (see Greene et al., 2004; Greene et al., 2001; Koenigs et al., 2007; Valdesolo and DeSteno, 2006; Cushman et al., 2006; Haidt, 2001; Pizarro, Uhlmann, and Bloom, 2003), and without necessitating cognitive capabilities and knowledge, thus readily supplying psychological constraint.

Ideology as a moderator of moral issues

Do liberals and conservatives differ in their tendency to perceive core political issues as moral? This question is currently moot, with some studies supporting the "moralizing conservatives" hypothesis (i.e., the view that conservatives are more prone to

moral convictions than liberals), and others supporting the "morality for all" hypothesis, according to which conservatives and liberals moralize to the same extent.

The theory behind the "moralizing conservatives" view argues that American conservatism from the 1990s on can be strongly associated with support for traditional moral and religious values (Miller, 1994). Accordingly, Republicans successfully claimed moral standing for their issues in the United States, doing a much better job of communicating their messages in moral terminology (e.g., Lakoff, 2002). This may be taken to imply that conservatives nowadays are more concerned with moral issues, and hold higher moral convictions.

Another reason for this view builds on individual propensities driving the conservative tendency to moralize and the liberal tendency to 'conventionalize'. Conservatism has been found to be related to such psychological tendencies as dogmatism and intolerance of ambiguity, avoidance of uncertainty, and the need for cognitive closure (Jost et al., 2003), which all underlie a need for rigid categorization of the world, for instance in wrong-right terms. Rigid morality is also seen as a conservative response to an uncertain world (Jost et al., 2003:347, citing Wilson, 1973a). Liberals, on the other hand, are often viewed as more reluctant and less motivated to judge on the basis of right and wrong.

Indeed, the 2004 exit polls indicated that moral values prevailed as the main reason for voting among conservatives (80% among Bush voters: see Media Matters, 2004). In accordance with these results, Lovett and Jordan (2005) demonstrated that Bush voters were higher on moralism — the "tendency to perceive everyday life as imbued with a moral dimension" (2005, 167) — than Kerry voters.

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On the other hand, Lakoff (2002) suggested that the difference between the parties does not stem from an actual stronger connection between conservatism and morality but rather from more competent use of morality in Republican campaigns, the Democrats being less successful in offering morality as a sociological constraint. Accordingly, Skitka and Bauman (2008) — employing a different inductive measure from Lovett and Jordan's — demonstrated that self-reported moral conviction did not characterize Bush supporters more than it did Kerry and Gore supporters.

Lakoff's view of morality as metaphorical language suits well this chapter's view of moralization as being a typical cognitive process, as a sense of harmfulness and feelings such as disgust, guilt, and anger are shared by all healthy humans.[9] To the extent that moral conviction serves as a psychological constraint, with moral emotions and a sense of potential harm naturally emerging during socialization in response to certain occurrences, no differences should be expected between liberals and conservatives in the mere tendency to hold moral conviction on political issues. Thus, the first hypothesis is:

H_1: Ideology does not moderate the mere tendency to hold moral convictions.

However, while ideology is not expected to moderate the tendency to moralize, it may still condition the *issues* on which moral convictions are held. Thus Haidt and

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[9] Intuitions and moral emotions hold strong advantages over metaphorical language in explaining morality in politics. Lakoff suggests that politics is mediated by language (specifically metaphors), which implies that politics should not be found where there is no language. This argument generates some already falsified hypotheses. For instance, women, who are more verbal and metaphorical, should be more interested in politics than men; brain damage to the part of the brain that controls metaphorical thinking should lead to difficulty in distinguishing between ideologies; and the formation of political attitudes should follow the ability to use metaphors on the developmental scale. There are also normative consequences to Lakoff's theory of metaphor, as one metaphor can be preferred over another merely on aesthetic grounds or on account of their presumed consequences. The current framework avoids moral relativism by building on the sensibility version of sentimentalism, as explained above.

colleagues (Haidt and Bjorklund, 2006; Haidt and Graham, 2007) demonstrated that liberals hold a narrower basis for morality, reacting mainly to issues involving harm to others and fairness, while conservatives attribute morality to a wider variety of issues, including violations of loyalty to the in-group, respect for authority, and matters of purity.

These differences can be explained by viewing ideology either as political philosophy or as personal propensity. Firstly, current Western manifestations of liberal ideology advance a rights-based socially-tolerant empathetic morality, stressing people's right to pursue happiness however they see fit, provided others' rights are not infringed. However, conservatives show more concern for harm inflicted on current societal norms and institutions, and are motivated to protect them even at the cost of limiting the rights of individuals and minorities (e.g. Lakoff, 1995; Skocpol, 1983; Dione, 2004). Secondly, current literature establishes a robust link between ideology and two of the big five dimensions of personality — openness to change and conscientiousness (Jost, 2006; Caprara et al., 2006). According to this view, conservatism is a personal tendency of resistance to change, risk aversion, and justification of existing inequalities.

Both views lead to the hypothesis that liberals and conservatives differ in the type of harm they are sensitive to: again, while liberals experience emotions and a sense of wrongness as a result of harm to people (such as capital punishment and torture, where people's physical well-being is intentionally compromised), conservatives also experience these reactions when viewing harm to the current societal order by the violation of current norms, traditions, and institutions (such as gay adoption and abortion, where core family and religious values are at stake). After all, as societal institutions manifest the accumulation of choices made throughout generations, hurting them

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represents de facto harm to our ancestors. As concisely put by G.K. Chesterton, "*Tradition may be defined as an extension of the franchise. Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead*" (1908/2002, 78).

Thus, ideology can be expected to play a role in determining which issues are viewed with moral conviction, due to differential harm sensitivities acquired via temperament and socialization, as formulated in the next two hypotheses:

H_2: Ideology moderates moral issues: while liberals respond with the utmost moral conviction to matters of harm to individuals, conservatives also respond to matters of harm to societal norms and institutions.

H_3: Assumptions regarding the harmfulness of a practice mediate the effect of ideology on moral convictions.

The need for theory-based measures

Unfortunately, the inductive-descriptive measures of moral conviction currently employed in the literature, based on a self-reported sense of morality in relation to certain political issues, cannot be employed to test moral conviction as a psychological constraint and its relationship with ideology. First, self-reported measures confound actual differences in the level of moral conviction with differences in one's view of what is moral. Different people may mean different things when saying they perceive something as related to their moral views, and these differences in language may be systematically related to ideology (e.g., Haidt and Graham, 2007; Lakoff, 1995).

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For instance, some people are inclined when they regard something as moral to say that they do, and others disinclined to do so. These proclivities may be systematically related to ideological ones, which may affect the conclusions. Conservatives, for instance, may view morality as a more legitimate political criterion, while liberals may tend toward relativism and feel uncomfortable about being judgmental, as moral arguments force an acknowledgment that some things are better, more right, or more correct, than others.

Moreover, an important assumption of the self-reported measure is that people have access to their own cognition, and are able to extract and report information concerning whether or not they employ morality when thinking of a particular political issue. However, there is currently a lot of evidence that people are often incapable of reporting their attitudes and experiences in a representative manner (Wilson and Schooler, 1991; Wilson, Hodges, and LaFleur, 1995). Thus, merely asking people if they view a specific issue as moral may not be a good way of knowing whether or not they do in fact view this issue as moral.

Alternatively, the common self-reported measures for moral conviction currently employed in the literature (i.e., capturing the notion that some political issue is related to morals) might simply measure the *knowledge* that a certain political issue is related to morals in the general political discussion, whether or not one has actually employed these concepts in his or her own belief system. In other words, the self-reported measure may tap some sociological constraint (Converse, 1964). Thus, increased political knowledge, which indicates one's awareness of elite moral discussion on political issues, might be expected to increase the self-reporting of moral conviction on political issues. In the same

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manner, self-reported moral convictions might be derived not from inner assumptions about harm, but from elite talk on the issue. This leads to the following hypotheses on the functioning of inductive measures of moral conviction:

H_4: *One will be more likely to report moral conviction on moral issues as political knowledge increases.*

H_5: *Assumptions regarding the harmfulness of a practice do not mediate the effect of ideology on self-reported measures of moral convictions.*

This study employs a bi-dimensional moral conviction measure that has the advantage of building on theories that free the measure from subjective interpretations and personal reflections, and is superior to the self-reported measure since it is indicative of psychological constraint, as it assesses the extent to which a person categorizes an issue as in the moral domain and feels moral emotions as a response to it; i.e., holds the appropriate mental structure to respond to the issue with moral conviction.

Both convergent and construct validation (Adcock and Collier, 2001) are employed to empirically validate the bi-dimensional moral conviction measure. Convergent validity is assessed against Skitka's moral conviction scale.[10] To assess construct validity, attitude strength (Lavine et al., 1998) and relation to dissimilar others (Skitka, Bauman, and Sargis, 2005) are measured. Previous studies report that high moral conviction on an issue is related to more extreme attitudes, higher certainty and attitude

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[10] Although the two measures are not expected to fully converge. Turiel, Hildebrandt, and Wainryb (1991) showed that some people declare viewing transgressions of some non-prototypical issues as morally wrong, but still judged them inconsistently in terms of domain theory's formal characteristics.

importance, smaller attitudinal ambivalence, and stronger preferences for social distance from persons with differing views both on the personal level (e.g., a coworker, a potential date) and in the larger society (e.g., the owner of a restaurant one visits, the governor of one's state).

H_6: *Stronger cognitive and emotional moral conviction will be associated with stronger self-reported moral conviction; stronger, more certain, more important, and less ambivalent attitudes; and a more universal rejection of dissimilar others.*

The theory-based moral conviction measures are presented in the methods section. The results sections tests the hypotheses regarding dedifferentiation by ideology, mediation by harm assumptions, and the nature of the self-reported moral conviction measure, and then discusses the empirical constructs and convergent validation.

Method

Participants

Following a pretest taken by 51 Stony Brook undergraduates, a convenience sample of New York area resident adults (N=273) was collected by five research assistants who referred potential participants to a link to the web-based survey (programmed in SNAP 9). The sample's descriptive statistics are quite similar to the characteristics of the New York population, according to the 2000 census summary. Thus, the sample holds 49.8% males compared to 48.2% in the population; the mean age is 33.9 with a median of 25, compared to a median of 35.9 in the population; 74.7% of the participants are reported to be Whites (67.9% in the population), 1% African-

Americans (15.9%), 7% Hispanics (not specified in the 2000 census), 10.6% Asians

(5.5%), and 6.6% identified as none of the above (10.2%).

Procedure

The cognitive and emotional dimensions of moral conviction (counterbalanced),

attitude strength, and self-reported moral conviction, were measured for six different

issues: abortion for non-minors, gay adoption, capital punishment, medical usage of

marijuana, deportation of illegal immigrants, and "harsh" interrogation techniques when

interviewing detainees during wartime — with the order of issues randomized between

two possible orders: as listed here, and the reverse of this order. Participants then

encountered a battery of measures of independent variables. To facilitate interpretation,

measures were coded to vary 0-1, with the exception of age (in years) and the directional

version of cognitive moral conviction (-1 to 1). The *appendix* presents descriptive

statistics, correlations, and a per item analysis of the moral conviction scales.

Measures

Moral Conviction (MC): Cognitive Dimension

1. Act evaluation: "Is [the practice] all right or not all right?"

2. Contingency on common practice in the United States: "Suppose that it

[were/were not] common practice for people to [engage in this act] in the United States.

In that case, do you think it would be all right or not all right to [engage in the act]?"

3. Legal status in the United States: "Do you think that there should be a law that

[prohibits/allows this act] in this country?"

4. Legal contingency: "Suppose that the majority of people in the United States

decided that there should be a law that [prohibits/allows this act] and the law was in

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effect. Do you think it would be all right or not all right to [engage in the act] if there was a law [prohibiting/allowing] it?"

5. Contingency on common practice in another country: "Suppose there were another country where it [was/was not] common for people to [engage in the act]. Do you think that in that country it would be all right or not all right to [engage in the act]?"

6. Legal status in another country: "Do you think that there should be a law that [prohibits/allows the act] in all countries?"

7. Other country legal contingency: "Suppose that the majority of people in another country decided that there should be a law that [prohibits/allows the act] and the law was in effect. Do you think that in that country it would be all right or not all right to [engage in the act] if there were a law [prohibiting/allowing] it?"

These items were adjusted from Turiel et al. (1991). The measure was composed of answers to questions 2-7, which were branched by question 1. In these questions, participants answering that a certain practice is "all right" were asked about their response to a situation where it is generally not accepted or legally prohibited, whereas participants viewing the practice as "not all right" were asked about a situation where it is commonly accepted or legally allowed. Participants got a 0 for each time they shifted their answer from their original attitude, and a 1 or -1 otherwise.

The measure was coded twice. In the *directional* version of the measure, subjects received a -1 when opposed to the practice and a 1 when supporting it. This yielded a 13-point scale (-6 to 6), which was then recoded to vary between -1 and 1, with -1 indicating high moral conviction against the practice (i.e., thinking that the political practice is not alright regardless of societal norms and laws), and 1 indicating high moral conviction in

favor of the practice (i.e., thinking that the political practice is alright regardless of societal norms and laws). In the *folded* version of the measure, subjects who did not shift their attitude were coded as 1 — i.e., high on cognitive moral conviction, holding constant the attitude's direction. This yielded a 7-point scale (0-6), which was then recoded to vary between 0 and 1.

Means and standard deviations by issues are presented in Table 1, and descriptive statistics are presented in the *appendix*. Alpha for the cognitive MC measures varied between 0.69 to 0.82.

Moral Conviction (MC): Emotional Dimension

1. Self-directed negative emotions:[11] "Imagine you are in a relevant situation, and have to [perform act]. Different people may hold different feelings when executing [act]. To what extent would you have felt each of these emotions when [executing act]?"

"How ashamed would [executing act] make you feel? Embarrassed? Guilty?"

2. Other-directed negative emotions:[12] "Imagine a situation where you discover that an acquaintance of yours has recently [performed act]. Different people may feel differently when hearing this about an acquaintance. To what extent would you have felt each of these emotions toward the person [performing act]? Feel contempt; angry; disgusted."

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[11] Preceded by the following paragraph: "Now we are going to ask you a set of questions about your feelings in hypothetical situations. In the first set of situations, we will be asking you to imagine how you would have felt after executing some hypothetical actions. When answering each of the following questions, please think about yourself in the situation and how you would have felt in it. Think carefully about the specific emotion asked about in the question. It is important that you answer the question based on how much of the emotion you feel, and not just how much you support or oppose the action."

[12] Preceded by the following paragraph: "Now we will be asking you to imagine how you would have felt about other people you know who have executed some hypothetical actions. When answering each of the following questions, please think about your initial emotional reactions. Think carefully about the specific emotion asked about in the question. It is important that you answer the question based on how much of the emotion you feel, and not just how much you support or oppose the action."

3. <u>Third-party-directed negative emotions:</u>[13] "Imagine hearing that people in a different country [performed act] very often. To what extent do you feel the following emotions when hearing that people in a different country [perform act] all the time? Feel contempt; angry; disgusted."

A Likert scale was composed of the nine hot MC questions, and was then recoded to vary between 0 and 1. Means and standard deviations by issues are presented in Table 1, and descriptive statistics are presented in the *appendix*. Alpha for hot MC exceeded 0.75 for all issues.

Self-reported moral conviction. An index composed of two questions: "How much are your feelings about [issue] connected to your core moral beliefs or convictions?" — 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely); "My attitude about [issue] is closely related to my core moral values and convictions" — 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Answers to the two questions were averaged using their 0-1 form. Inter-item correlations for the six issues varied from .77 to .84.

Ideology. "We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Which of the following best describes your own political views?" (7 point scale).

Social Conservatism. Five agree/disagree items were adopted from Kerlinger's (1984) SA-II scale and Eysenck's Public Opinion Inventory scale (e.g., "If civilization is to survive, there must be a turning back to religion"); Alpha=.727.

Harm assumptions. On each of the six political issues, subjects were asked: "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: '[Political practice]

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[13] Preceded by the following paragraph: "Now we will be asking you to imagine how you would have felt about other people you don't know, residents of a different country, who have executed some hypothetical actions. Once again, please think about your initial emotional reactions. Think carefully about the specific emotion asked about in the question. It is important that you answer the question based on how much of the emotion you feel, and not just how much you support or oppose the action."

inflicts serious harm'." (7-point scale varying from very much agree to very much disagree).

Attitude strength (extremity). An index composed of the following 4 questions: (1) "please indicate the extent to which you favor or oppose [issue]," varying from 1 (strongly oppose) to 7 (strongly favor); (2) "Please use the following scale to describe your feelings about [issue]," varying from 1 (bad) to 7 (good); (3) "Please use this second scale to describe your feelings about [issue]," varying from 1 (foolish) to 7 (wise); (4) "Please use this third scale to describe your feelings about [issue]," varying from 1 (harmful) to 7 (beneficial). All questions were collapsed such that extreme ends constituted the higher end of the measure, and the neutral point the lower end. Alpha exceeded .9 in all six issues.

Certainty: "Some people are very *certain* of their views on [issue]. Others are not at all certain about their views on this issue. How certain are you of your views about [issue]?", varying from 1 (not at all certain) to 5 (extremely certain).

Importance: "How *important* is the issue of [issue] to you personally?", varying from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (extremely important).

Subjective attitudinal ambivalence: (1) "To what extent do you feel "torn" between the two sides of [issue]?", varying from 1 (not at all torn) to 5 (extremely torn); (2) "To what extent do you have *mixed* thoughts about [issue]?", varying from 1 (not at all mixed) to 5 (extremely mixed).

Social distance: Following Skitka, Bauman and Sargis (2005), the measure was divided into two dimensions: social distance in prospectively *intimate* and in prospectively *distant* relationships. "I would be happy to have someone who did not share

my views on (issue)": *Intimate:* "come and work at the same place I do," "marry into my family," "as someone I would personally date," "as the teacher of my children". *Distant:* "as President of the U.S.," "as Governor of my state," "as the owner of a store or restaurant I frequent," "as my personal physician" (7 point scale, from *very much agree to very much disagree*). Likert scales were composed for each dimension, and then recoded 0-1. Alpha exceeded .76 in all social distance measures for all issues.

Religious observance. "Lots of things come up that keep people from attending religious services even if they want to. Thinking about your life these days, how often do you attend religious services, apart from occasional weddings, baptisms or funerals?" (6 point scale for single question on services attendance, 1=never, 6=over once a week).

Political knowledge. A scale of correct answers on 6 political knowledge questions (e.g., "What job or political office does Harry Reid now hold?"). The questions varied in difficulty, and alpha was .30.

Demographics. Age (years); gender (male=0); education (a 7-point scale single question on the highest level of education received, 1=less than high school, 7=graduate degree, e.g. M.A., J.D., M.D., PhD); income (a 5-point scale single question on total family income in 2007 before taxes, 1=under $24,999, 5=$100,000 or more).

Results

Moral conviction, ideology, and harm assumptions

What political issues are held with moral conviction? Overall, both cognitive and emotional moral convictions produce some variance on these issues. The different panels of table 1 present means and standard deviations on moral conviction for the six issues

investigated, also broken down by ideology. The cognitive moral conviction measure taps the extent to which one categorizes the political issue as in the moral domain; i.e., views it as universal, authority-independent, and unalterable, independently of their support or opposition for the political practice, such that 1 means full categorization in the moral domain regardless of the attitude's direction, and 0 means no categorization in the moral domain. The emotions moral conviction measure tap the extent to which one feels negative moral emotions upon the execution of the political practice, with 1 being the strongest possible negative moral emotions, and 0 being no emotions at all.

Table 2.1: Moral conviction on different issues and by ideology

	Abortion	*Gay adoption*	*Capital punishment*	*Medical usage of marijuana*	*Deportation of illegal immigrants*	*Torture*	*Mean*
All sample (n=273)							
Mean MC	.582 (.182)	.501 (.196)	.567 (.223)	.474 (.156)	.498 (.203)	.614 (.245)	.539
Hot MC	.332 (.289)	.178 (.287)	.403 (.305)	.110 (.216)	.310 (.290)	.479 (.320)	.302
Cog MC	.831 (.238)	.824 (.234)	.731 (.292)	.838 (.241)	.687 (.279)	.749 (.301)	.777
Reported	.639 (.295)	.638 (.333)	.625 (.292)	.511 (.333)	.535 (.307)	.605 (.304)	.592
Liberals[1] (n=146)							
Mean MC	.556 (.138)[13]	.458 (.120)[13]	.621 (.241)[1]	.457 (.118)[13]	.527 (.222)[1]	.690 (.250)[1]	.552
Hot MC	.256 (.234)[1]	.068 (.161)[1]	.493 (.309)[1]	.066 (.144)[1]	.384 (.286)[1]	.586 (.310)[1]	.309
Cog MC	.856 (.216)[12]	.847 (.206)[12]	.749 (.30)[123]	.848 (.22)[123]	.671 (.282)[13]	.795 (.299)[12]	.794
Reported	.646 (.291)[12]	.652 (.314)[12]	.674 (.289)[12]	.539 (.316)[12]	.552 (.299)[12]	.670 (.670)[1]	.622
Independents[3] (n=71)							
Mean MC	.536 (.181)[13]	.482 (.190)[13]	.514 (.167)[23]	.466 (.185)[13]	.465 (.182)[23]	.536 (.223)[23]	.500
Hot MC	.323 (.266)[3]	.183 (.248)[3]	.323 (.247)[23]	.131 (.234)[3]	.256 (.271)[23]	.401 (.281)[3]	.269
Cog MC	.749 (.279)[3]	.782 (.258)[23]	.704 (.28)[123]	.800 (.29)[123]	.674 (.30)[123]	.671 (.316)[23]	.730
Reported	.559 (.290)[3]	.551 (.342)[3]	.542 (.279)[23]	.455 (.335)[23]	.471 (.306)[3]	.509 (.295)[23]	.515
Conservatives[2] (n=56)							
Mean MC	.707 (.228)[2]	.638 (.284)[2]	.493 (.201)[23]	.530 (.189)[2]	.466 (.165)[23]	.512 (.189)[23]	.557
Hot MC	.544 (.343)[2]	.457 (.388)[2]	.268 (.288)[23]	.199 (.305)[2]	.184 (.272)[23]	.296 (.280)[2]	.325
Cog MC	.869 (.217)[12]	.818 (.27)[123]	.717 (.29)[123]	.860 (.22)[123]	.747 (.242)[23]	.729 (.26)[123]	.790
Reported	.721 (.291)[12]	.713 (.349)[12]	.603 (.29)[123]	.508 (.37)[123]	.571 (.323)[12]	.557 (.312)[23]	.612

Table entries are means and std. errors for the average among emotional and cognitive MC (folded), cognitive MC (folded), emotional MC, and self-reported MC; all measures were coded to vary between 0 and 1.
T-tests compared mean MC, cognitive MC, emotional MC, and self-reported MC for each issue among conservatives and liberals, conservatives and independents, and liberals and independents; any two groups that do not share a superscript are significantly different in the one-tail 95% confidence level.

As hypothesized, there were clear differences between liberals and conservatives in terms of what issues were viewed as relatively moral. T-tests indicated that the differences between liberals and conservatives in mean moral conviction — the average of hot moral conviction and folded cognitive moral conviction — were significant for all issues. For conservatives, the two strongest moral issues as indicated by the mean moral conviction were abortion (.707) and gay adoption (.638), while immigrant deportation (.466) and capital punishment (.493) were the weakest. In contrast, torture (.690) and capital punishment (.621) were the highest in terms of moral conviction for liberals, with gay adoption (.438) and marijuana medical usage (.457) being the lowest.

As expected, the ordering of moral issues among liberals can be accounted for by the level of harm to people inflicted. Thus, torture and capital punishment were the only issues in which considerable physical pain is intentionally inflicted on a person according to liberal assumptions, which makes these issues the most prototypically moral according to domain theory. Next, deportation of illegal immigrants inflicts psychological and material harm to immigrants, and abortion inflicts physical harm to a fetus that is not a person yet, according to liberals. And finally, marijuana usage and gay adoption mostly harm current norms, and not people. Marijuana usage is clearly classified in the moral domain, since for the liberal person there is no real dilemma: sick persons are obviously suffering, and there is no harm in allowing them to use whatever attenuates their pain.

But level of harm to people is not the only ordering criteria for conservatives, who respond to the violation of social and religious norms in addition to their response to harm to people. The issue highest on moral conviction for conservatives was abortion, which jeopardizes not only traditional family values and religious rules but also inflicts

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physical harm to an unborn baby, according to conservative assumptions. Next in moral conviction was gay adoption, which offers a strong threat to traditional and religious values. On the other hand, torture and capital punishment were low in terms of moral conviction, as if they were just means to an end: practices for protecting one's society (from terror in the one case and crime in the other), or a legitimate punishment.

Similar patterns emerged from a direct measure of associated harm, which was recorded at the very end of the questionnaire; participants were simply asked to state the extent to which they agree that a certain practice inflicts serious harm. The practices regarded as most harmful by liberals, using this direct measure, were torture (.744), capital punishment (.656), and to a lesser extent deportation of immigrants (.548); and the ones thought to inflict the least harm were gay adoption (.136) and the medical use of marijuana (.182), with abortion regarded as mostly not harmful (.292).

In contrast, conservatives viewed abortion (.613) and gay adoption (.601) as most harmful. Importantly, the rest of the issues were viewed as inflicting a medium level of harm (torture: .408; medical marijuana: .369; capital punishment: .363; deportation of immigrants: .348). This supports the argument that conservatives hold a wider basis for morality compared to liberals (e.g., Haidt and Graham, 2007), viewing both practices that threaten traditional values (e.g., the medical usage of marijuana) and practices that inflict suffering on people (e.g., torture) as harmful.

Note, however, that the differences between liberals and conservatives in mean moral conviction came directly from the significant ordering in hot moral conviction. In terms of classifying the issues in the moral domain, holding constant the attitude's direction — for or against the practice — liberals and conservatives showed similar

levels of moral conviction. Similarly, the degree of self-reported moral conviction did not vary by ideology.

Interestingly, independents were less likely to view political issues as moral. Independents hold significantly lower mean cognitive and emotional moral convictions compared to both liberals and conservatives. In moral conviction on specific issues, independents regularly significantly differ from the political group most inclined to regard the issue morally. Thus, independents significantly differ from conservatives, but not from liberals, on gay adoption and abortion, and significantly differ from liberals, but not conservatives, on torture and capital punishment. In addition, independents show lower hot moral conviction on all issues compared to both liberals and conservatives (except for deportation of illegal immigrants, where independents significantly differ from liberals but not from conservatives).

Although the t-tests indicate that ideology moderated moral conviction, there are three caveats. First, the 7-point scale employed in these comparisons is a crude single-item measure of ideology. My theory regarding the relationship between ideology and moral conviction suggests that the level of conservatism in the psychological sense — as a general worldview to which one is socialized and as a personal trait, rather than political self-identification — affects the type of occurrences that generate feelings of harm and moral emotions. Thus, a more fine-grained measure for conservatism, which focuses on traditionalism vs. openness to experience, should be employed where social conservatives are expected to view political issues violating the status quo as moral transgressions.

Secondly, the hot moral conviction measure, unlike the folded cognitive moral conviction measure, is directional: since it only encompasses negative moral emotions, it could be the case that it is support or opposition to a specific issue, rather than ideology, that governs the emergence of moral emotions. Thus, position on the issue must be controlled for when the effect of political ideology on moral conviction is assessed. Note that stances on issues and ideology are certainly not perfectly correlated: the strongest correlations between issues opinion and ideology were on abortion and gay adoption, and even then 12% and 10%, respectively, of the liberals viewed abortion and gay adoption as not alright, while 46% and 41% of the conservatives viewed them as alright.

Thirdly, there may be alternative explanations for the effect of ideology on moral conviction. Most notably, religiosity, education, and gender may affect one's socialization and harm assumptions instead of ideology, creating a spurious relationship. Thus, key alternative explanations need be statistically controlled for.

Consequently, emotional and cognitive moral convictions[14] were each submitted to regressions for each issue, in which the effects of social conservatism were estimated, controlling for the specific position on the issue as well as key alternative explanations: political knowledge, age, gender, income, education, and religiosity. Next, mediation analyses were conducted to test the hypothesis that the effect of social conservatism on moral conviction is mediated by harm assumptions, i.e., by the extent to which a political practice is regarded as harmful.

The results for hot moral conviction are presented in table 2. First, social conservatism had a significant effect in the expected direction, holding constant stance on

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[14] To resemble the hot dimension, the directional form was used for cognitive moral conviction, such that -1 indicates opposition and 1 indicates support.

the issue, on all issues with the exception of the medical usage of marijuana. Thus, as social conservatism increased, hot moral conviction increased on the conservative issues of abortion and gay adoption, and decreased on the liberal issues of capital punishment, torture, and the deportation of immigrants.

Table 2.2: Emotional moral conviction regressed on
social conservatism, issue attitude, and controls

	Abortion	*Gay adoption*	*Capital punishment*	*Medical usage of marijuana*	*Deportation of illegal immigrants*	*Torture*
Social conservatism	.249 (.082)**	.289 (.067)**	-.468 (.097)**	.031 (.056)	-.224 (.091)**	-.493 (.105)**
Supports practice	-.386 (.033)**	-.479 (.026)**	-.321 (.031)**	-.478 (.027)**	-.350 (.030)**	-.309 (.033)**
Political knowledge	.026 (.049)	-.019 (.039)	-.025 (.055)	.005 (.033)	.035 (.054)	.082 (.059)
Income	-.013 (.040)	-.028 (.032)	.044 (.046)	-.038 (.028)	-.090 (.045)**	.020 (.049)
Religiosity	.164 (.048)**	.035 (.037)	.156 (.051)**	.097 (.031)**	-.035 (.051)	.072 (.055)
Gender	-.022 (.025)	.025 (.020)	-.064 (.028)**	.001 (.017)	-.018 (.028)	-.090 (.030)**
Age	-.002 (.001)**	-.000 (.001)	.000 (.001)	-.000 (.001)	-.000 (.001)	.001 (.001)
Education	-.023 (.059)	-.014 (.047)	.020 (.067)	-.057 (.040)	.027 (.066)	-.008 (.071)
Mediation by assumptions of harm of the effect of social conservatism:						
	33.1%**	37.1%**	17.9%**	N/A	49.5%**	31.9%**

**: p<.05 (two tail); *: p<.05 (one tail). Std. errors in brackets. Mediation of ideology by harm assumptions: Sobel estimate and significance.

Next, and as hypothesized, an average of one-third of the effect of social conservatism was significantly mediated by harm assumptions on all issues (except for the medical usage of marijuana, in which a mediation analysis was inapplicable as social conservatism had no significant effect on hot moral conviction), according to both the Sobel and to the Goodman-2 mediation tests. Note that these results were replicated where the 7-point scale for ideology was specified instead of social conservatism.

Table 3 presents regressions for directional cognitive moral conviction. As with hot moral conviction, social conservatism significantly affected cognitive moral conviction in the expected direction, holding constant stance on the issue, for all issues with the exception of the medical usage of marijuana (the effect for gay adoption was marginally significant, p=.082). Thus, as social conservatism increased, cognitive moral conviction increased in opposition to abortion and gay adoption (negative relationships), as well as in agreement with capital punishment, deportation of immigrants, and torture (positive relationships).

<div align="center">Table 2.3: Cognitive moral conviction regressed on
social conservatism, issue attitude, and controls</div>

	Abortion	*Gay adoption*	*Capital punishment*	*Medical usage of marijuana*	*Deportation of illegal immigrants*	*Torture*
Social conservatism	-.255 (.090)**	-.165 (.095)*	.478 (.120)**	.089 (.095)	.605 (.108)**	.513 (.117)**
Supports practice	1.52 (.036)**	1.61 (.037)**	1.38 (.038)**	1.58 (.046)**	1.34 (.035)**	1.38 (.037)**
Political knowledge	-.018 (.054)	.002 (.055)	-.081 (.069)	-.022 (.057)	-.098 (.064)	-.102 (.065)
Income	-.042 (.044)	-.077 (.046)*	-.036 (.057)	-.052 (.047)	.037 (.053)	.026 (.054)
Religiosity	-.268 (.053)**	-.108 (.053)	-.033 (.064)	-.162 (.053)**	.020 (.060)	.002 (.061)
Gender	.000 (.027)	.018 (.029)	.048 (.035)	.024 (.029)	-.004 (.033)	.042 (.033)
Age	.000 (.001)	-.002 (.001)*	-.002 (.001)*	-.001 (.001)	-.003 (.001)**	-.002 (.001)*
Education	-.022 (.065)	.054 (.067)	-.072 (.083)	-.039 (.069)	.003 (.078)	-.029 (.079)
Mediation by assumptions of harm of the effect of social conservatism:						
	29.4%**	82.9%**	24.6%**	N/A	15.1%**	29.9%**

**: p<.05 (two tail); *: p<.05 (one tail). Std. errors in brackets. Mediation of ideology by harm assumptions: Sobel estimate and significance.

Again, and as hypothesized, an average of over a third of the effect of social conservatism was significantly mediated by harm assumptions for all issues (except for the medical usage of marijuana, for which a mediation analysis is again inapplicable),

according to both the Sobel and the Goodman-2 mediation tests. These results were

replicated with the 7-point scale for ideology instead of social conservatism.

Self-reported moral conviction

I have suggested that self-reported moral conviction may not be the appropriate

measure to test the role of morality as a psychological constraint and its relationship with

ideology, as it confounds actual differences in the level of moral conviction with

differences in one's view of what is moral, or what should be regarded as moral, which

are strongly affected by information on political elite talk. Thus, self-reported moral

conviction may stem from the knowledge that a certain political issue is related to morals

in the general political discussion, and not from harm assumptions coming from ideology.

Table 2.4: Self-reported moral conviction regressed on
conservatism, issue attitude, and controls

	Abortion	*Gay adoption*	*Capital punishment*	*Medical usage of marijuana*	*Deportation of illegal immigrants*	*Torture*
Social Conservatism	-.155 (.116)	-.216 (.135)	-.031 (.118)	-.019 (.137)	.253 (.123)**	-.142 (.118)
Supports practice	-.204 (.046)**	-.238 (.053)**	-.161 (.038)**	-.084 (.065)	-.198 (.040)**	-.200 (.037)**
Political knowledge	.161 (.069)**	.171 (.078)**	.163 (.068)**	.077 (.081)	.080 (.073)	.282 (.066)**
Income	-.002 (.057)	-.038 (.065)	.009 (.056)	.006 (.068)	.053 (.061)	.106 (.055)*
Religiosity	.017 (.068)	.041 (.075)	.038 (.063)	-.128 (.076*)	-.109 (.068)	.058 (.062)
Gender	.019 (.035)	-.008 (.041)	-.034 (.034)	.064 (.041)	.045 (.037)	-.023 (.034)
Age	.001 (.001)	.001 (.001)	.002 (.001)*	.002 (.001)*	.000 (.001)	.002 (.001)**
Education	.081 (.083)	.102 (.095)	.073 (.082)	-.034 (.099)	-.005 (.088)	.031 (.080)

**: $p<.05$ (two tail); *: $p<.05$ (one tail). Std. errors in brackets.

To compare the relationship of self-reported moral conviction to the emotional and cognitive measures, self-reported moral conviction was regressed on social ideology, along with political knowledge and other control variables. The results presented in table 4 suggest that, as hypothesized, political knowledge plays an important role in self-reported moral conviction, which significantly increased with increased political knowledge on all typical moral issues (abortion, gay adoption, capital punishment, and torture). Note that political knowledge shows no significant effect on hot moral conviction or on harm appraisal cognitive moral conviction (compare to tables 2 and 3).

Another main difference between the theory-based (emotional and cognitive dimensions) and the inductive (self-reported) measures is that social ideology actually did not significantly affect self-reported moral conviction (with the exception of the deportation of immigrants). The null effect of social conservatism was replicated with the 7-point scale of ideology (with the exception of the deportation of immigrants and gay adoption; note that the significant effect of political knowledge is robust for this change in specification). While harm mediation tests are inapplicable due to the null effect of ideology, supplementary analyses added harm assumptions for the regressions as an independent variable, and yielded null results for the effect of harm assumptions (with the exception of the issue of torture).

Validation of the MC measure

An important goal of this chapter is to validate the theory-based measures for Moral Conviction (MC). Table 5 presents the pair-wise correlations of the two

dimensions of moral conviction with social distance, various characteristics of attitude

strength, self-reported moral conviction, and each other.

Table 2.5: Convergent and construct validity for moral conviction, by political issues

	Distance – close	*Distance – far*	*Extremity*	*Ambivalence*	*Certainty*	*Importance*	*Reported MC*	*Cognitive MC*
Abortion								
Cognitive MC	.148**	.172**	.275**	-.299**	.280**	.215**	.193**	-
Emotional MC	.318**	.227**	.017	.070	-.016	.151**	.316**	-.054
Gay adoption								
Cognitive MC	.285**	.359**	.462**	-.307**	.402**	.358**	.335**	-
Emotional MC	.266**	.218**	.101*	.011	.050	.152**	.117*	.285**
Capital punishment								
Cognitive MC	.163**	.254**	.356**	-.268**	.284**	.254**	.275**	-
Emotional MC	.120**	.169**	.195**	-.035	.137**	.302**	.292**	.115*
Medical usage of marijuana								
Cognitive MC	.047	.135**	.345**	-.267**	.385**	.208**	.146**	-
Emotional MC	.449**	.259**	.021	.091	-.015	.086	.099	-.077
Deportation of illegal immigrants								
Cognitive MC	.284**	.265**	.316**	-.213**	.301**	.256**	.108*	-
Emotional MC	.067	.088	.073	-.027	.113*	.147**	.296**	.017
Harsh interrogation of detainees during wartime								
Cognitive MC	.233**	.281**	.338**	-.223**	.311**	.221**	.284**	-
Emotional MC	.249**	.251**	.281**	-.105*	.256**	.332**	.519**	.251**

Table entries are pair-wise correlations of cognitive MC (folded) and emotional MC, with social distance, attitude strength attributes, and self-reported MC; all measures were recoded to vary between 0-1; N=273; **: p<.05 (two tail); *: p<.05 (one tail).

Overall, construct validation of the measure of moral conviction will be

demonstrated by significant relationships in the expected direction with theoretical

concepts to which it was expected to be correlated. Previous literature and theory (e.g.

Skitka, Bauman, and Sargis, 2005) suggest that high moral conviction on an issue is

related to more extreme attitudes, higher certainty and attitude importance, smaller

attitudinal ambivalence, and stronger preferences for social distance from persons with

differing views both on the personal level (e.g., a co-worker, a potential date) and in the larger society (e.g., the owner of a restaurant one visits, the governor of one's state). Convergent validation of the measure will be demonstrated by significant positive relationships with alternative moral conviction measures, i.e., between the two dimensions and with the self-reported moral conviction measure.

Indeed, the folded classification as in the moral domain (cognitive MC) is systematically related to social distance preferences, increased attitude extremity, certainty, and attitude importance; and to decreased attitudinal ambivalence, across all political issues examined. To the extent that a person is more likely to characterize a political issue as in the moral domain (holding constant the valence of their political preferences on this issue), they are also more likely to prefer keeping a distance from people in the closer and the further-away social circles who disagree on the issue. As the specification to the moral domain increases, one's political attitude on the issues is expected to be more extreme, certain, and important, and less ambivalent.

In the same manner, emotional moral conviction is positively correlated to social distance preferences, such that as negative moral emotions on the political issue increase, one is more likely to prefer keeping a distance from people in the closer and the further away social circles who disagree on this issue. However, while hot moral conviction is positively correlated to social distance preferences, attitude importance is the only attitude attribute to which moral emotions are systematically related (5 of 6 issues).

Prima facie, it seems that categorization as in the moral domain is much more consistently correlated with different attitude attributes than to the moral emotions dimension. Nevertheless, it is important to note that unlike the folded form of the

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cognitive dimension, the emotional moral conviction measure is *directional*, as it consists

of negative moral emotions solely. It may be the case, then, that the emergence of

negative emotions toward a political practice which one is overall expected to support

due to his political ideology will actually *weaken* his political attitudes, as it creates an

emotional-cognitive dissonance. This is a state of incongruence among one's positive

thoughts and negative feelings; for instance, when a person supports gay adoption, even

though they personally are disgusted by it. Thus, the next step was to examine emotional

moral conviction by support for, or opposition to, the political practice, as presented in

table 6.

Table 2.6: Correlations between hot moral conviction
and attitude attributes, by issues and support

	Strength	*Ambivalence*	*Certainty*	*Importance*	*Reported MC*	*Cog MC*
Legalizing abortion – Support [203; .215 (.188)]	-.417**	.347**	-.385**	-.047	.017	-.229**
Legalizing abortion – Opposition [70; .672 (.261)]	.516**	-.362**	.537**	.363**	.502**	.518**
Gay adoption – Support [205; .044 (.097)]	-.289**	.317**	-.310**	-.049	-.107	-.116*
Gay adoption – Opposition [68; .582 (.292)]	.519**	-.384**	.659**	.501**	.510**	.428**
Capital punishment – Support [139; .211 (.205)]	-.300**	.293**	-.302**	-.016	-.119	-.275**
Capital punishment – Opposition [134; .602 (.262)]	.360**	-.161*	.367**	.403**	.347**	.215**
Medical marijuana – Support [238; .048 (.098)]	-.288**	.313**	-.295**	-.120*	-.077	-.224**
Medical marijuana – Opposition [35; .535 (.306)]	.573**	-.346**	.629**	.546**	.350**	.571**
Deporting immigrants – Support [164; .158 (.186)]	-.359**	.239**	-.262**	-.120	.001	-.323**
Deporting immigrants Opposition [109 .538 (.269)]	.467**	-.313**	.523**	.355**	.403**	.313**
Stress interrogation- – Support [117; .251 (.208)]	-.278**	.321**	-.229**	.034	.064	-.420**
Stress interrogation – Opposition [156; .649 (.280)]	.396**	-.301**	.411**	.379**	.610**	.342**

Table entries are pair-wise correlations by support for the practice (is practice alright or not alright?); sample size, mean and (std. errors) of Hot MC in each condition are in brackets; **: p<.05 (two tail); *: p<.05 (one tail).

Indeed, moderation by ideology reveals the underlying directional relationship between moral emotions and attitude attributes. When one opposes a political practice, be it conservative like capital punishment or liberal like gay adoption, increased negative emotions toward the practice are associated with increased attitude extremity, certainty, issue importance, and decreased ambivalence.

It seems then that moral emotions are associated with increased attitude strength only when a moral issue is congruent with one's expected position on the matter. However, experiencing negative moral emotions that are not congruent with one's overall supportive position on the matter typically has the effect of weakening one's political attitudes. Thus, as a person feels negative moral emotions on a practice they support (e.g., capital punishment for conservatives, legality of abortion for liberals), his or her attitude on the issue tends to be less extreme, less certain, and more ambivalent. In addition to validating the measures, this set of results underscores the importance of mediation by ideology in understanding the effect of moral convictions.

A similar effect occurs with regards to convergent validation between affective and cognitive moral conviction. For example, when congruent with their attitude on the matter, i.e. when opposed to a political practice, increased negative moral emotions are associated with an increased tendency to categorize the political practice as in the moral domain. However, negative relationships between hot and cold moral emotions emerge when incongruence occurs, such that as a person feels more negative moral emotions toward a political issue he or she tends to categorize it as in the moral domain to a lesser extent. Again, this is explained by the emotional-cognitive dissonance yielding weakening attitudes. Thus, when a person feels negative emotions toward a practice he or

she supports, such as abortion, the result is to downgrade the importance of this attitude for them, and accordingly—its generalizability in the face of contrasting common norms or laws, which are the characteristics of the moral domain.

Next, table 5 shows some evidence for convergent validation by the positive significant correlations between cognitive (all issues) and affective (5 of 6 issues) moral conviction and self-reported moral conviction[15]. However, table 6 demonstrates that the correlation among the directional hot and self- reported moral conviction measures only emerges when one opposes the political practice. Thus, while strong negative emotions on an issue one opposes are associated with a higher tendency to report moral conviction on the issue, experiencing negative moral emotions has no effect on reporting moral conviction when one supports the issue (e.g., for a liberal reporting moral conviction on abortion, or a conservative reporting moral conviction on torture). This conditional effect can be regarded as further evidence of self-reported moral conviction being informed from elite talk on the issues, rather than from inner psychological constraint: a person supporting an issue ignores his moral emotions or lack thereof, and reports the issue as a moral issue based on his political knowledge.

Overall, these results provide evidence for construct and convergent validity of the new moral conviction measures. In addition, the two dimensions of moral conviction are at least somewhat orthogonal, and ideology emerges as a key moderator, as was previously discussed.

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[15] The validation hypotheses are fully directional; thus, a one-tailed significance test is in fact the appropriate test in these cases.

Directional emotional moral conviction

Some of the results were an artifact of the directionality of the emotional moral conviction scale; i.e., the fact that this dimension currently taps the strength of the negative moral emotions toward the practice. Later in the project, I developed a non-directional measure for emotional moral conviction. Similar to cognitive moral conviction, this measure was branched by the preexisting political attitude, such that participants answering that a certain political practice is alright or somewhat alright were asked about their response to a situation where it is not allowed or they are forced to deny it, while participants viewing the practice as not alright or somewhat not alright were asked about a situation where it is allowed or they are engaged in it (e.g., "Imagine that you work in [relevant job], and as part of your job [have to engage in act/ have to deny act]. How ashamed would this make you feel? How guilty?"). In this version of the measure, the aversive emotions were averaged for all relevant questions, 1 being high on emotional moral conviction, holding constant the attitude's direction. The data comes from a representative survey carried by phone among 788 NY state residents age 18 or older, who were randomly assigned to respond on one of three political issues: gay adoption (N=274), abortion (N=235), and capital punishment (N=298; see chapter 4).

In its non-directional version, emotional moral conviction is expected to increase attitude certainty regardless of the attitude's direction. Indeed, non-directional affective moral conviction was usually associated with stronger attitudes both for those opposing and for those supporting the political practice, although the correlations were typically stronger among opponents (opposition to: capital punishment — certainty r=.47 p=.00, importance r=.42 p=.00, extremity r=.50 p=.00; gay adoption — certainty r=.30 p=.03,

importance r=.29 p=.04, extremity r=.50 p=.00; abortion — certainty r=.51 p=.00,

importance r=.53 p=.00, extremity r=.44 p=.00; support: capital punishment — certainty

r=.24 p=.00, importance r=.29 p=.00, extremity r=.24 p=.00; gay adoption — certainty

r=.28 p=.00, importance r=.30 p=.00, extremity r=.39 p=.00; abortion — certainty r=.03

p=ns, importance r=.14 p=.11, extremity r=.06 p=ns).

It is also interesting to build on the directional version of the measure, as

constructed in chapter 4, to validate the results on the relationships between emotional

moral conviction and ideology, as well as its correlations with cognitive and self-reported

moral conviction. The directional version of hot moral conviction used in chapter 4

replicates the finding that liberals tend to hold stronger moral conviction on capital

punishment, where serious harm to people is inflicted, while conservatives are more

prone to moral conviction on gay adoption. Thus, the average of emotional moral

conviction (0-1 scale) on abortion significantly differed between the supporters and

opponents, with .695 for those opposing abortion (who answered based on their emotions

in the case of performing abortion) compared to .427 for its supporters (who answered

based on their emotions in the case of denying abortion). Similarly, those opposing

capital punishment held an emotional moral conviction of .539 on average, significantly

higher than the average emotional moral conviction of supporters of capital punishment

(.392). An exception was the issue of gay adoption, where supporters actually held

stronger emotional moral conviction than opponents (.634 vs. .477).

Next, the non-directional version of emotional moral conviction is convergently

validated both against the non-directional measure of cognitive moral conviction for all

three issues (abortion: r=.319, p=.000; gay adoption: r=.384, p=.000; capital punishment:

r=.367, p=.000) and against the self-reported measure of moral conviction (abortion: r=.390, p=.000; gay adoption: r=.376, p=.000; capital punishment: r=.463, p=.000). Note that self-reported moral conviction shows vaster correlations with emotional moral conviction compared to cognitive moral conviction, strengthening the view that the self-reported moral conviction strongly relates to one's indication of their feelings on the political issues (correlations between self-reported and cognitive moral conviction were r=.198, p=.004 for abortion; r=.178, p=.009 for gay adoption; r=.282, p=.000 for capital punishment). Results from this chapter are thus nicely validated when using a non-directional measure for emotional moral conviction.

Conclusions

The identification of moral issues in politics is not merely a theoretical question. Since rules in the moral domain are, by definition, to be applied to all, at all times, even in the face of contradictory norms or laws, moral rules leave no room for negotiation and compromise. A dispute between two opponents holding strong moral convictions can thus only be resolved with some form of enforcement, as both ideological sides see severe means as legitimate when fighting immorality, including coercion or even violence. As Martin Luther King put it in an address in 1963, "Morality cannot be legislated but behavior can be regulated; judicial decrees may not change the hearts, but they can restrain the heartless."

Furthermore, there is a substantial theoretical benefit in identifying moral issues: not only does this point to a potentially meaningful predictor of public opinion on specific issues; at the same time it also reveals the key source of psychological constraint

on the political belief system of a particular individual for a particular issue, and thereby weakens the classical Conversian view of the dysfunctional, unconstrained public.

To identify what political issues are moral and to whom, a clear theory is needed of what constitutes moral convictions, as well as how and why ideology affects their emergence. However, moral judgment has so far been neglected as a source of constraint, as the literature in moral psychology has traditionally been dominated by the view that moral judgment is governed by a cognitive reasoning process (Heider, 1958; Piaget, 1965/1932; Kohlberg, 1969; Turiel, 1983). To argue that moral judgment underlies political attitude formation entailed making the assumption that citizens hold the cognitive abilities and motivation to scrutinize politics. In a world where the vast majority of Americans are politically unknowledgeable (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996), and ideologically unsophisticated (Converse, 1964), it seems unreasonable to expect people to analyze politics through the abstract and complex prism of moral principles.

Happily, according to this chapter's new two-dimensional definition of moral judgment, building on recent theories and evidence from moral psychology, moral judgment does not necessarily involve any intricate effortful analysis, but may rather occur very quickly, via emotional or unconscious intuitive responses (see Greene et al., 2004; Greene et al., 2001; Koenigs et al., 2007; Valdesolo and DeSteno, 2006; Cushman et al., 2006; Haidt, 2001; Pizarro, Uhlmann, and Bloom, 2003), and without necessitating cognitive capabilities and knowledge, thus readily supplying psychological constraint.

Accordingly, this chapter embarks on developing and testing a theory of moral conviction in politics. Building on sentimentalism and domain theory, I suggest that moral convictions are those transgressions that during socialization are systematically

colored with moral emotions and a sense of harmfulness. The associated rules then encompass the moral domain and hold the characteristics of generalizability, unalterability, and independence of society and authority. The moderating effect of ideology on the moral domain thus stems from the differences between what conservatives and liberals are prone to feel moral emotions toward and to experience as harmful.

I developed a new set of moral conviction measures to test this theory. Moral conviction was conceptualized as two-dimensional, with both a cognitive harm appraisal and an emotional dimension. The cognitive dimension derives from domain theory, and it identifies a moral issue by seeing it as generalizable, unalterable, and independent of society and authority. The emotional dimension is due to sentimentalist theory, and it identifies a moral issue by the emergence of self-blaming emotions, other-blaming emotions, and consequences for a third party.

This new bi-dimensional theory-based measure of moral conviction produces some interpretable variance across a range of political issues and allows differentiating gradations of moral issues, and was nicely validated against the current self-reported moral mandate measure as well as against some related theoretical concepts. Thus, moral conviction is associated with more extreme attitudes, higher certainty and attitude importance, smaller attitudinal ambivalence, and stronger preference for social distance from persons with differing views. In addition, experiencing negative moral emotions in issues where moral conviction is overall low often has the effect of weakening one's political attitudes, presumably as a result of a cognitive-emotional dissonance.

The second goal of this essay was to test the role of ideology in moral issues. The results strengthened the "morality for all" hypothesis, as liberals and conservatives do not generally differ in the mere tendency to moralize political issues. Both liberals and conservatives readily feel moral emotions on some issues, and are far from being morally insensitive. Furthermore, the average difference between cognitive and emotional moral convictions on the various issues is practically identical for liberals and conservatives, suggesting that liberals certainly do not inhibit their moral emotions relative to conservatives.

Next, the hypothesis on the moderating effect of ideology was empirically confirmed as well. Thus, liberals showed a higher moral conviction on issues where people are intentionally and severely physically harmed, i.e., torture and capital punishment. Conservatives, in contrast, respond to violations of social order and religious norms, and showed the highest moral conviction on abortion and gay adoption. It is clear, then, why studies defining moral issues as limited to such matters as abortion and gay rights yield a very biased view of the differences in attending to morality by ideology, with results erroneously confirming the "moralizing conservatives" hypothesis. However, it is important to note that this hypothesis was not directly tested. Further investigation of these results is needed, for instance by experimentally studying the extent to which different types of harm interact with ideology to affect moral conviction.

In general, ideology is a key moderating variable, essential to comprehending what issues are viewed as moral. As hypothesized, assumptions of the harmfulness of the practice mediated the effect of ideology on moral conviction, thus strengthening the theory regarding the specific mechanism by which ideology affects moral convictions.

In addition to providing theoretical formulations and empirical results on the nature of moral convictions and their moderation by ideology, this essay puts forward a framework for future studies on morality in politics. Most of all, the hypothesis that moral convictions are a psychological constraint needs to be empirically tested, by investigating the effects of moral conviction as an explanatory variable of stable and consistent political attitudes.

Validating intuitive and sentimental moral conviction as a possible source of psychological constraint holds normative implications for the functioning of democracies. To the extent that moral judgment is quick and emotional, it can be regarded as readily able to inform political attitudes even without postulating particular citizen capabilities, and thereby explains the evidence of a rational public (e.g., Page and Shapiro, 1992), in spite of low levels of sociological constraint (Converse, 1964) and political knowledge (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996).

Most exciting of all in this research program is the application of seminal theories from political philosophy and psychology to establishing theoretical and methodological foundations upon which morality could be reintegrated in subsequent political behavior research, after decades of neglect. While political philosophers have always regarded attitudes guided by moral principles as intrinsically good and obligatory (e.g. Kant, 1785/2002), scholars of empirical political science typically shy away from studying the extent to which morals inform political attitudes, due to lack of comprehensible moral principles and contrasting complex theories of ethics. This research program develops the theoretical and methodological framework for empirically addressing the question of the role of morality in the formation of political attitudes.

Chapter III

Essay 2: Disgust, Harm, and Moral Judgment

Abstract

This essay experimentally tests a theoretical framework for moral judgment in politics, which integrates two research traditions, Domain-Theory and Sensibility-Sentimentalism, to suggest that moral judgment is bi-dimensional with one dimension pertaining to harm others and the other to moral emotions. Two experiments demonstrate that priming incidental harm associations and the moral emotion of disgust prior to a political issue facilitates moral conviction on the issue as well as a harsher moral judgment compared to no-prime and to non-moral cognitive and emotional negative primes (sadness and damage). In addition, incidental harm and incidental disgust, but not sadness and damage, interact with the preexisting attitude toward the political issue in affecting moral conviction.

Introduction

Countless scholars and pundits regularly point at values and morals to explain the political polarization, culture war, and alienation in current American politics; among them are Thomas Frank in *What's the Matter with Kansas*, George Lakoff in *Moral Politics*, David Myers in *American Paradox*, Jean Twenge in *Generation Me*, David Callahan in *The Moral Center*, Eric Uslaner in *The Moral Foundations of Trust*, and many others. The problem with America, they all agree, is morality.

But what exactly is this elusive moral state of mind, moral conviction or moral mandate? Where does it come from, and how is it created? Although morality is at the very crux of politics, scholars of empirical political science typically shy away from defining moral judgment, and instead refer to political matters as moral in an a-theoretical way, based on the subjective perception of either the researcher or the respondents— without illuminating exactly *what it is* that makes some issues seem moral to some people.

For instance, studies conducted following the 2004 exit polls used the concept of "moral values" as mere codename for specific issues, particularly gay marriage and abortion (see Hillygus and Shields, 2005; Burden, 2004; Campbell and Quinn, 2005; Fiorina, 2004), although it is hard to believe that other political issues such as counter-terrorism practices, the Iraq war, or the death penalty are strictly "non-moral" issues. Another descriptive approach simply asks the respondents whether they perceive some issues to be a matter of morals (Lovett and Jordan, 2005; Skitka and Bauman, 2008; Skitka, Bauman and Sargis, 2005; Skitka and Houston, 2001) yet fails to explain *why* these issues are viewed morally.

However, determining the extent to which the public is guided by moral judgment in political attitude formation is contingent on theoretically strong expectations regarding what is moral and on valid measures of moral judgment. This essay builds on the theory of bi-dimensional moral domain presented in the previous chapter to define a *moral issue* as an issue in which moral judgment is applied. In turn, moral judgment, the appraisal of a practice (e.g., gay adoption) as morally wrong or right, depends on whether the practice obeys or violates some moral rule (Darley and Shultz, 1990). Two research traditions (the Social-Cognitive Domain Perspective, e.g., Turiel, 1998; Helwig and Turiel, 2002, and Sensibility-Sentimentalism, e.g., Prinz, 2007; 2008) are integrated to suggest that *a rule is moral* under at least one of two circumstances. Under the rationalist *domain-theory* dimension, a rule is moral if its violation *harms* others, and in that case, it is inherently wrong. The intrinsic 'harmfulness' underlying moral transgressions yields an important distinction between moral and conventional rules such that adherence to moral but not conventional rules is "experienced as obligatory, if it applies to all people regardless of their attitude toward it and if its force is impersonal and external" (Darley and Shultz, 1990). Under the *sentimentalist* "hot" dimension, a rule is moral if it invokes self-blaming emotions and other-blaming emotions both in close and third-party situations.

In accordance with this theory, the previous chapter demonstrates that political issues can be meaningfully classified as belonging to the moral or the conventional domain based on emotions and formal domain characteristics, and that they vary systematically in pertaining to moral rules, depending on assumptions regarding the harmfulness of the political practice. However, it remains to be demonstrated that moral emotions and associations *affect*—rather than merely co-occur with—the moral judgment

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of political issues. Consequently, the goal of this study is to show that moral convictions and moral judgments in politics are *causally* affected by harm associations (as domain theory would argue) and moral emotions (as would sentimentalism theory), i.e., to link the domain classification to moral judgment in politics.

The experimental method is specifically useful in establishing such causality. Thus, this study involved two experiments to establish that priming the characteristics of moral rules identification, specifically harm associations and the moral emotion of disgust, underlie moral judgment of political issues.

Four main hypotheses on the twofold nature of moral conviction were tested and confirmed: that priming incidental harm and disgust gives rise to harsher moral judgment; that both moral emotions and harm considerations increase moral conviction—seeing the political issue as a moral one; that the effect of incidental harm and disgust on moral judgment is not uniquely due to increased accessibility of negative contents, as priming non-moral negative associations and emotions does not yield similar effects; and that manipulated incidental disgust and manipulated incidental harm associations interact with one's preexisting attitude on the issue, such that disgust and associations of harm increase moral conviction when one has a negative view of the practice, but decrease moral conviction when one has a positive view.

The twofold nature of moral conviction

There is an ongoing debate on the nature of moral judgment, i.e., the evaluation of an act as morally wrong or right. The vast interdisciplinary literature on moral judgment throughout the years can be overall divided to two schools of thought regarding the

definition of moral judgment: the rationalist, which focuses on the role of cognition in moral judgment (e.g., Kant, 1785/2002; Piaget, 1932/1965; Kohlberg, 1969; 1981; Turiel, 1983; 2006), and the sentimental, which emphasizes the role of emotions (e.g., Hume, 1739/1978; Haidt, 2001).

As will be detailed below, I developed an integrative position, defining moral judgment as the controlled and automatic process of moral assessment of objects, where an object will be appraised morally to the extent that one categorizes it in the moral domain, i.e., holds some moral conviction on the issue. Moral conviction, in turn, includes both emotional and cognitive dimensions, where the former pertains to the theory of sensibility- sentimentalism and the latter pertains to the rationalist moral domain perspective.

The cognitive dimension of moral conviction: domain theory and harm

Domain theory postulates a distinction between moral and conventional rules. The moral domain pertains to the welfare of others including matters of harm, justice and rights, whereas the conventional domain pertains to arbitrary social rules (Turiel, 1983; Nucci and Turiel, 2000). Moral transgressions, i.e., harm to others' welfare, are inherently wrong since they have an intrinsic effect on the well-being of others. In contrast, rules in the conventional domain are derived from social norms, authority and tradition (e.g., stopping at a stop sign) and thus hold force through the social organization they define and can be changed upon decision. Children acquire the distinction between moral and other rules by experiencing the consequences and responses to harms and welfare matters in their early years; such learning occurs when the child is a victim of

injustice or other matter of harm, or an observer of its consequences and the responses to it (Turiel, 1983).

What is special about matters of harm is that they can be directly derived from the features of the situation rather than from social organizations and norms. This non-arbitrary nature of moral rules that differentiates them from social conventions is defined by several formal characteristics. Under domain theory, moral regularities are universal, authority independent, and unalterable. The attribute of *universality* or *generalizability* suggests that transgressions in the moral domain are judged to be wrong and impermissible across different social contexts. *Independence* from rules and authority sanctions suggests that transgressions would be wrong even in the absence of rules or when the authority is unaware of the rule violation. *Unalterability* suggests that moral obligations should not be alterable by consensus or majority. Consequently, studies robustly verify that rules classified in the moral domain are judged more severely and considered more punishable compared to conventions and personal choices (e.g., Smetana, 2006). Political attitudes on moral issues such as gay adoption are thus more likely than issues such as agricultural funding to be judged as universal, authority independent, and unalterable, and accordingly, transgressions in the former are expected to be perceived as more morally impermissible.

Still, harmfulness can be mediated by the social context, by varying informational assumptions regarding potential, unseen harm (e.g., Turiel, Hildebrandt and Wainryb, 1991). Accordingly, harmful features in a situation can be affected by information, such that holding all else constant, an act can be classified in the moral domain when information on harm exists and in the conventional domain without such information.

The moral domain perspective's research tradition focuses on interviews in which respondents evaluate rules on the various formal characteristics. Indeed, dozens of studies using this perspective convincingly demonstrate that scenarios presenting social interactions that do and do not entail intrinsic harm, such as causing injury or injustice, are judged differently on the formal characteristics, and that rules in the moral domain are judged more *severely* and considered more *punishable* compared to conventions (for reviews, see: Turiel, 1998; Nucci, 2001; Killen, McGlothlin and Lee Kim, 2002; Smetana, 2006). In fact, children as young as three years old are able to distinguish moral obligations from social conventions above and beyond stimuli, settings, and cultures (Smetana, 1981).

Similar to Kant, Piaget and Kohlberg, domain theorists acknowledge that emotions are inseparable from reasoning in generating moral judgment and play an important motivational role in moral actions and moral development (Turiel, 1998; Nucci, 2001). Whereas conventional transgressions are mostly affectively neutral, aversive emotions typically co-occur with moral transgressions (Arsenio and Ford, 1985). However, emotions are viewed as merely a vehicle to cognitive-in-nature moral judgment; emotions are "the energy that drives and organizes judgments… in that they influence children's understanding, encoding, and memory of moral transgressions… moral knowledge, not emotional response, changes qualitatively with age" (Smetana, 2006:131).

The emotional dimension of moral conviction: sentimentalism and moral emotions

Sentimentalist approaches to moral judgment typically question both the contents of the moral domain and the direct effect of controlled "cold" processes on moral decisions, at least for the vast majority of judgments. These approaches often argue that some matters considered by domain theorists as harmless and thus conventions are perceived as moral as well. Prominent evidence to this argument is the case of "moral dumbfounding"—one's tendency to judge an event as morally wrong while being unable to come up with reasons to justify it (Haidt, 2001; Cushman, Young and Hauser, 2006). It was found that people are often quick to appraise violations of harmless taboos—such as masturbating with a dead chicken before cooking it, or serving the family's dead pet for dinner—as morally wrong and then seek post factum justification for their judgment (Haidt, Koller and Dias, 1993). They go on to suggest that moral judgment is frequently based on moral emotions and is rationalized after the fact.

What makes an emotion moral? Haidt (2003) defines moral emotions as "those emotions that are linked to the interests or welfare either of society as a whole or at least of persons other than the judge or agent" (2003: 853) and describes four main families of moral emotions: the other-condemning emotions (contempt, anger, and disgust), the self-conscious emotions (shame, embarrassment, and guilt), the other-suffering emotions (compassion), and the other-praising emotions (gratitude, awe, and elevation).

Cutting-edge interdisciplinary literature confirms that moral emotions, specifically the emotion of disgust, play a causal role in moral judgment. Disgust is a basic emotion associated with the physiological state of nausea, a distinct facial

expression, and the behavior of distancing from an object and has both physical objects and a wide variety of social violations as its elicitors. It had presumably developed as a mechanism of rejection response to bad tastes in order for humans to avoid bodily harm, but had later evolved into "a much more abstract and ideational emotion… a mechanism for avoiding harm to the soul. The elicitors of disgust may have expanded to the point that they have in common only the fact that decent people want nothing to do with them. At this level, disgust becomes a moral emotion and a powerful form of negative socialization" (Rozin, Haidt and McCauley, 2000:650, also see Miller, 1997).

A growing body of literature shows that moral judgment and responses to moral violations can be altered by manipulating one's level of repulsion (e.g. Koenigs et al., 2007; Valdesolo and DeSteno, 2006). For instance, Schnall, Haidt and Clore (2005) placed respondents in a clean vs. dirty environment and measured their moral judgments. Indeed, participants seated at a filthy desk with such objects as a used tissue and a greasy pizza box expressed harsher moral judgment (contingent on high private body consciousness). Haidt and Bjorklund (2008) report varying the vividness of disgust-eliciting features of scenarios. While incidental to the task, the vivid disgusting details yielded stronger moral judgments.

This evidence suggests that negative moral emotions—particularly disgust—may increase the negativity of moral appraisals. A possible alternative explanation may posit that the effect of negative emotions is by means of drawing attention to negative features of the moral situation (Prinz, 2006). Interestingly, Wheatley and Haidt (2005) were able to demonstrate a more negative moral appraisal when negative emotion was elicited, even for a neutral event, where no negative features could be made accessible, by hypnotically

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conditioning certain neutral words ('often' and 'take') with disgust. As hypothesized, scenarios including the conditioned word yielded more severe moral judgment.

Following these studies and the primacy of the affect research tradition (Zajonc, 1980; Murphy and Zajonc, 1983), some sentimentalists suggest that more often than not, an automatic reaction emerges in response to moral transgressions, and it is this affective response that shapes our moral judgment; when occurs at all, cognitive moral reasoning is a post-hoc process destined to justify preceding intuition (Haidt, 2001).

But this argument does not explain why moral emotions sometimes do not generate a sense of morality at all--for instance, one may be angry at a person speeding on the highway, but not consider speeding immoral (Turiel, 2006)--and why our views on morality are responsive to informational assumptions on harm. It also does not account for the vastly consistent evidence that children as young as three or four years of age overwhelmingly differentiate between moral and conventional transgressions on a set of theoretical formal characteristics, such that the former are judged as more serious, generalizably wrong, and rule independent (e.g., Smetana, 1981; Turiel, 1998); it is highly difficult to believe that these responses are made up by toddlers as means of post-hoc justification for their moral intuitions.

Prinz's (2006; 2007; 2008) version of sentimentalism supplies a more restrictive definition to moral rules, which admits to the evidence on moral domain recognition. In this version of sentimentalism, a distinction between moral and conventional rules occurs as moral transgressions generate negative emotions in the child, regardless of authorities. This is achieved by emotional conditioning, which is more likely to occur when teaching

moral, rather than conventional, rules. Still, emotional conditioning can occur with conventions, and in that case we tend to moralize them.

Following the philosophical tradition of the British moralists, Prinz (2008) suggests that moral norms are grounded in the moral emotions: "To count as a moral norm, these emotions must behave in particular ways… At a minimum, moral rules involve both self-directed emotions and other-directed emotions… Second, our emotions must be directed at third parties if they are to ground moral norms… To have a moral attitude towards ϕ-ing, one must have a moral sentiment that disposes one to feel a self-directed emotion of blame for ϕ-ing, and an emotion of other-directed blame when someone else ϕs."

This view of sentimentalism does not reject domain theory's distinction between moral and conventional rules but rather suggests that what differentiates between moral and conventional rules is that the former holds the potential to evoke both self-directed emotions and other-directed emotions. Both are necessary to ensure the generalizability of the norm: if we are angry at a driver speeding on the highway but do not feel ashamed when we ourselves speed, or if we feel guilty when we sleep more than eight hours but are not disgusted by other people sleeping in, these are not moral norms (Prinz, 2008).

Present research

The current literature on dual processes in psychology (Chaiken and Trope, 1999) and the empirical evidence confirming the importance of both emotional and cognitive components (e.g., both emerge in the brain when solving different moral dilemmas and engaging in moral judgment, e.g., Greene et al, 2001; Sanfey et al, 2003; Greene and

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Haidt, 2002; Greene, 2008) support an integrative position, defining moral judgment as the controlled and automatic process of moral assessment of objects, which includes both emotional and cognitive appraisals.

Unfortunately, generalizing from the above descried lines of research to the causal effect of harm associations and disgust on moral judgment of politics is highly inappropriate as the moral dilemmas in the few studies establishing causal relationships lack political context and are often vulnerable to strong alternative explanations.

First, unlike the new, simple and prototypical practices morally judged in most of these studies, political issues are seldom completely new and are often complex and involve both moral and conventional considerations (i.e., are mixed-domain events). The real-world political context may alter the level of motivation and ability for applying moral principles and emotions as well as change the strength of preexisting attitudes. For instance, the political context may facilitate reasoning due to higher stakes, induce feelings of risk and threat, or allow relying on ideological cues. Although there are currently some studies establishing a correlational relationship between disgust and political attitudes (e.g., my previous chapter, and also Smith et al, 2009; Inbar, Pizarro and Bloom, 2009), a causal effect of disgust on moral judgment in politics is still to be demonstrated.

There are at least three more caveats to the current empirical literature. First, moral emotions often emerge in response to harm, making it difficult to disentangle the two effects where only one of the components is manipulated. Second, induction of moral emotions and harm associations typically alter the specific situation while increasing the perceived seriousness of the original violation, which in turn, serves as a strong

alternative explanation to the harsher moral judgment. Finally, an alternative explanation to the effect of disgust and harm on moral appraisal may argue that it is the negative valence of harm and disgust rather than their moral nature that increases cognitive attention to the negativity of the stimuli and, by that, yields harsher appraisals.

The present research is designed to test the effect of harm and disgust in light of these criticisms. First, priming with *incidental* moral emotions and harm associations (i.e., without altering the nature of the appraised situation, enable the comparison of moral judgment with and without disgust and harm) while holding constant the information about the political act appraised. The effect of priming considerations on attitude formation is explained in the associative network framework or any other accessibility model for memory in which attitudes are constructed on the spot and are thus influenced by the presentation of environmental cues (Bargh and Chartrand, 2000; Zaller and Feldman, 1992; Barsalou, 1987). In accord with this view, priming increases the accessibility of specific objects in one's memory, with or without the person's awareness (Krosnick and Kinder, 1990; Krosnick and Brannon, 1993). When harm associations or the emotions of disgust which pertain to the moral domain are accessible upon appraisal of a political issue, the constructed judgment is expected to be viewed in moral terms.

Consequently, this chapter employs priming of incidental cues to study the effect of disgust and harm associations on moral judgment of political issues with four main hypotheses. First, as the moral domain is viewed here as bi-dimensional, pertaining both to matters of harm and to the emergence of moral emotions, priming both harm associations and disgust is expected to increase the probability of viewing a political act

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as a moral issue when compared to a no-prime condition. In turn, moral conviction, i.e., viewing a practice in moral terms, holds two components as well. Under the cognitive dimension, a rule is categorized in the moral domain to the extent that it is perceived as universal, rule-independent, and unalterable, whereas under the hot dimension, a rule is viewed as moral to the extent that it evokes self-blaming emotions, other-blaming emotions, and holds consequences to a third party. Thus, it is first hypothesized that manipulated disgust and manipulated harm associations will increase the tendency to perceive a political issue as a moral one, i.e., increase the extent to which a person categorizes the political practice to the moral domain, and experiences self and other-blaming emotions upon transgression.

H_1: Manipulated incidental disgust and manipulated incidental harm associations will increase moral conviction, i.e., viewing the political issue as a moral one, compared to the no-prime condition.

Second, both moral emotions and harm considerations will increase negative moral judgment, i.e., viewing transgressions as more wrong and severe, relative to the non-priming condition. Both the domain theory and the sentimentalist frameworks present evidence that violation of moral rules leads to harsher judgment compared to violation of conventions. Thus, increasing one's moral conviction, i.e., the extent to which one views a political issue as pertaining to the moral domain, by inducing incidental harm and incidental disgust is expected to increase negative moral judgment,

such that moral transgression will be viewed as more wrong and severe relative to transgressions in the neutral prime condition.

H_2: *Manipulated incidental disgust and manipulated incidental harm associations will give rise to harsher moral judgment of the political issue, compared to the no-prime condition.*

The next hypothesis is set to refute the alternative explanation according to which the effect of incidental harm and disgust on moral conviction and moral judgment is due to the increased accessibility of negative contents. For this matter, the effect of disgust and harm will be compared to the effect of sadness, a negative non-moral emotion (as it is low both in disinterestedness of elicitors and in pro-sociality of action tendency, whereas moral emotions are high on both, see Haidt, 2003), and to the effect of non-moral negative associations (damage to home appliances). The general expectation is that induced disgust and harm will increase negative moral judgment and moral conviction to a greater extent than the non-moral negative manipulations, confirming that it is their moral nature and not entirely their negative valence that generates the effects.

H_3: *Manipulated incidental disgust and manipulated incidental harm associations will have a bigger effect on moral judgment and moral conviction compared to both the cognitive and the emotional non-moral negative primes.*

The first three hypotheses can be summarized thus: priming harm associations and disgust prior to a political issue is expected to facilitate categorization to the moral domain and, accordingly, a harsher moral judgment, compared to no-prime and to other non-moral cognitive and emotional negative primes. However, the primes may hold different effects among supporters and opponents of a political practice. This possibility is supported by my previous chapter, designed to validate the measures of cognitive and emotional moral conviction employed here. In this study, the emergence of negative moral emotions toward a political practice was associated with *stronger* political attitude on the issue when one opposed the practice (i.e., with higher certainty and extremity and lower attitudinal ambivalence), but with *weaker* political attitudes when one supported the practice (lower certainty and extremity, higher attitudinal ambivalence). It was suggested that this effect was due to an emotional-cognitive dissonance, a state of incongruence between one's positive thoughts and negative feelings, for instance when a person supports gay marriage, even though they are personally disgusted by it.

In view of these findings, an interaction between the disgust and harm manipulations and preexisting view on the political practice is hypothesized such that disgust and harm increase moral conviction and lead to a harsher moral judgment among the opponents of a political practice but lead to the opposite effect among the supporters. First, drawing attention to the disgusting and harmful characteristics of a practice should foster cognitive and emotional moral conviction among the opponents of the practice. Thus, priming harm and disgust should facilitate categorizing the rule to the moral domain as serious harm inflicted by the practice suggests that the rule should be universal, unalterable, and independent of authority. Similarly, primed harm and disgust

lead to an increased experience of negative moral emotions upon appraising the political practice and thus to stronger hot moral conviction. In addition, primed disgust and harm are expected to present a practice as even more morally impermissible when one is against it at the outset, thus causing a harsher moral judgment.

However, when one holds a positive view on a practice, drawing attention to its harmful and disgusting components may have the effect of decreasing or at least not affecting preexisting moral conviction to maintain the consistency in one's attitude structure (see Heider's balance theory, 1946 and Festinger's cognitive dissonance, 1956). In this case, the primes create an emotional-cognitive dissonance, i.e., a state of incongruency among one's positive thoughts (supportive view) and negative feelings (harmfulness, disgust) toward the act, motivating one to downplay any preexisting moral conviction in favor of the act to be consistent with the current experienced feelings and associations, thus resulting in a weakened moral conviction.

For instance, when one holds some moral conviction in favor of gay adoption, yet feels disgust and encounters harm associations upon appraisal (due to the primes), one may downplay one's moral conviction in favor of gay adoption as well as perceive gay adoption as less morally permissible to alleviate the dissonance between one's preexisting positive attitude and current negative feelings. However, when one opposes gay adoption at the outset, then experiencing increased disgust and harm associations is expected to strengthen one's negative view and lead to a stronger moral conviction and to even harsher moral judgment. It is thus hypothesized that:

H$_4$: Manipulated incidental disgust and manipulated incidental harm associations will interact with one's preexisting attitude on the issue such that disgust and harm will increase moral conviction when one holds a negative position on the practice but decrease moral conviction when one holds a positive position.

Pretest of experimental manipulations

Overall, the present study employed four different primes. *Incidental disgust* was manipulated by an essay on disgusting food delicacies, accompanied by vivid and colorful pictures of each dish (such as Vietnamese raw blood soup, fertilized duck egg, and snake wine). *Incidental harm* was manipulated by an essay on first aid treatment, detailing the basic principles of limited care for an injury, aimed at preserving life in case of serious harm, and presenting pictures of dummies receiving treatments such as CPR. *Incidental sadness* was manipulated by an essay on autumn blues in poetry, including citations from famous poems and gloomy pictures of landscapes in autumn, detaching the induced sadness from actual harm to people. Finally, *incidental damage* (conventional negative associations) was manipulated by a "first aid for out-of-order appliances" manual, discussing repair and troubleshooting and integrating pictures of broken appliances. This manual resembled the harm manipulation of first aid but with no real harm to people. All stimuli were comparable in length and in the number of pictures presented. All materials are available from the author.

The priming manipulations were pretested for their effect on various associations and discrete emotions. Participants included 52 Stony Brook undergraduates who answered a computerized questionnaire for course credit and reported on their thoughts

and feelings following the exposure to each of the four primes (order of primes was randomized)[16]. Table 1 presents the means from this task.

Table 3.1: Reported thoughts and feelings upon encountering each prime

	Harm	Disgust	Damage	Sadness
This essay made me think about...				
Injuries	5.78^a	2.98^b	3.10^b	2.27^b
Harm to a person	4.12^a	3.55^{ab}	3.09^b	2.45^b
Convenience	2.64^{ab}	2.35^a	3.22^b	1.96^a
Cultural differences	2.10^a	6.39^b	1.61^a	2.33^a
Art	1.45^a	1.71^a	1.37^a	4.75^b
Justice	1.94^a	1.59^a	2.04^a	1.88^a
Fairness	2.04^a	1.61^a	2.39^a	1.90^a
This essay made me feel...				
Sad	3.45^a	2.39^b	2.60^{ab}	4.18^c
Disgusted	1.96^a	5.88^b	1.56^a	1.43^a
Anxious	2.49^a	2.35^a	2.20^a	2.80^a
Angry	1.78^a	2.25^a	2.21^a	1.98^a
Ashamed	1.62^a	1.78^a	1.60^a	1.47^a
In general...				
How negative?	3.60^{ab}	4.16^a	3.01^b	3.37^{ab}

Table entries are means on scales varying from 1-7; t tests compared the 4 primes for each question; any two primes that do not share a superscript are significantly different in the two-tail 95% confidence level.

The pretest results confirmed that the manipulations are effective. Thus, t-tests indicate that the harm prime generated significantly more injury and harm associations compared to the other primes, that the damage prime generated associations with convenience, and the disgust and sadness primes each generated the relevant emotion significantly more than the other three primes.

As expected, the four primes did not significantly differ in reported associations of fairness and justice and in the reported emotions of anxiety, anger, and shame. Still, there were some idiosyncratic effects emerging due to the specific stimuli employed.

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[16] Note that prior to the pretest reported above, another pretest (N=21) took place leading to slight alteration of the harm and sadness primes.

Thus, the disgusting delicacies essay raised significantly more cultural differences associations as it presented foods from around the world, and the sadness prime generated art associations as it cited sad autumn poems.

In addition, to get at the extremity of the manipulations, participants were asked how negative they found the essay to be in general. The only two essays that significantly differed on a t test were disgust and damage. All other pairs of primes were comparable in level of negativity, ranking slightly above the middle point of the 7-points scale.

Experiment 1

Method

Participants

A total of 127 Stony Brook undergraduates participated in the study in return for course credit: 65 were females and 78 identified themselves as liberals.

Procedure

The computerized experiment included 10 conditions in a mixed design [5 primes (incidental emotions: moral/non-moral; incidental associations: moral/non-moral; control), between-Ss, X 2 political issues (gay adoption; torture), within-Ss]. The study included four sections: the first measured determinants of moral judgment (e.g., ideology, political knowledge), the second included the experimental treatment of priming, the third measured moral judgment and moral conviction on both issues, and the fourth measured socio-demographics. Participants were informed that the purpose of the study is "to look at how different contents, both political and non-political in nature, affect people's political opinions".

In the manipulation phase, participants were presented an essay about either disgusting delicacies (disgust), first aid (harm), the autumn blues in poetry (sadness), damage to appliances (negative conventional consideration), or no essay (control) and were asked to carefully read and recall a situation in which they encountered a relevant experience (e.g., a person in need of first aid). Immediately after the priming manipulation, moral judgment, cognitive moral conviction, and emotional moral conviction (order randomized within-Ss) were measured for two political issues: gay adoption and torture (blocks' order randomized within-Ss) such that for each issue participants were asked to indicate the extent to which it is morally permissible and the extent to which the issue is a moral one by indicating whether it holds domain-theory's formal characteristics (cold dimension) and generates self- and other-blaming moral emotions (hot dimension).

Measures

All measures (except for age) were coded to vary 0-1.

Moral conviction

For the full version of the cognitive and emotional moral conviction measures, as well as empirical construct and convergent validation, see previous chapter.

Cognitive dimension of moral conviction

1. Act evaluation- Is [practice] all right or not all right?

2. Contingency on common practice in the United States- Suppose that it [was/was not] common practice for people to [engage in act] in the United States. In that case, do you think it would be all right or not all right to [engage in act]?

3. <u>Legal status in the United States</u>- Do you think that there should be a law that [prohibits issue/ allows issue] in this country?

4. <u>Legal contingency</u>- Suppose that the majority of people in the United States decided that there should be a law that [prohibits issue/ allows issue] and the law was in effect. Do you think it would be all right or not all right to [engage in act] if there was a law [prohibiting/allowing] it?

5. <u>Contingency on common practice in another country</u>- Suppose there was another country where it [is/is not] common practice for people to [engage in act]. Do you think that in that country it would be all right or not all right to [engage in act]?

6. <u>Legal status in another country</u>- Do you think that there should be a law that [prohibits issue/ allows issue] in all countries?

7. <u>Other country legal contingency</u>- Suppose that the majority of people in another country decided that there should be a law that [prohibits issue/ allows issue] and the law was in effect. Do you think that in that country it would be all right or not all right to [engage in act] if there was a law [prohibiting/allowing] it?

Measures were adapted from Turiel et al., 1991. The measure was composed of answers to questions 2-7, which were branched by the responses to question 1. In these questions, participants answering that a certain political practice is "all right" were asked about their response to a situation where it is generally unaccepted or legally prohibited, whereas participants viewing the practice as "not all right" were asked about a situation where it is commonly accepted or legally allowed. Participants got a 0 for each time they shifted their answer from their original attitude—i.e., low on cognitive moral conviction, holding constant the attitude's direction—or 1 in absolute value otherwise. This yielded a

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7 point scale (0-6), which was then coded to vary 0-1, with a mean of 0.714 for gay adoption and 0.635 for torture.

Hot dimension of moral conviction

1. Self-directed negative emotions[17]-

Imagine a time when you are in a relevant situation, and had to [execute issue]. Different people may hold different feelings when executing [issue]. To what extent would you have felt each of these emotions when [executing issue]?

How ashamed would [executing issue] make you feel? Embarrassed? Guilty?

2. Other-directed negative emotions-

Imagine a situation where you discover that an acquaintance of yours had recently [executed issue]. Different people may feel differently when hearing this about their acquaintance. To what extent would you have felt each of these emotions toward the person [executing issue]? Feel contempt; angry; disgusted.

3. Third parties directed negative emotions-

Imagine hearing that people in a different country [executed issue] very often. To what extent do you feel the following emotions when hearing that people in a different country [executing issue] all the time? Feel contempt; angry; disgusted.

A Likert scale was composed of the nine hot moral conviction questions and was then coded to vary between 0-1, with a mean of 0.188 for gay adoption and 0.508 for torture.

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[17] Each set of questions was preceded by a clarifying paragraph, for instance: "now we are going to ask you a set of questions about your feelings in hypothetical situations. In the first set of situations we will be asking you to imagine how you would have felt after executing some hypothetical actions. When answering each of the following questions, please think about yourself in the situation and how you would have felt in it. Think carefully about the specific emotion asked about in the question. It is important that you answer the question based on how much of the emotion you feel, and not just how much you support or oppose the action."

Moral judgment Three 7-point scale items: Is [political practice] a moral or an immoral act? Extremely wrong, perfectly OK, or somewhere in between these two? How morally permissible or morally impermissible do you, personally, find [practice] to be?

Ideology "We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Which of the following best describes your own political views?" (7-point scale)

Religious observance "Lots of things come up that keep people from attending religious services even if they want to. Thinking about your life these days, how often do you attend religious services, apart from occasional weddings, baptisms or funerals?" (6-point scale single question on services attendance, 1=never, 6=over once a week).

Political knowledge a scale of correct answers on six political knowledge questions (e.g., What job or political office does Harry Reid now hold?).

Demographics Age (years); Gender (male=0); Income (5-point scale question on total family income in 2007 before taxes, 1=under 24,999, 5=100,000 or more).

Results

Experimental manipulations' effects

Cognitive moral conviction, hot moral conviction, and moral judgment were each submitted to a linear regression analysis with the four experimental manipulations (control being the baseline)[18]. Table 2 presents the regression coefficients for the six models.

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[18] Note that although significance levels are reported for the two-tail significance tests, one-tail significance tests would be more appropriate as all hypotheses were directional. To arrive at the one-tail critical values, reported p-values are to be divided by 2.

Table 3.2: The effect of priming on moral conviction and moral judgment

	Gay Adoption			Harsh Interrogation techniques		
	Hot MC	**Cold MC**	**MJ**	**Hot MC**	**Cold MC**	**MJ**
Harm	**.193 (.081)****	*.118 (.070)**	**-.258 (.104)****	-.042 (.079)	-.035 (.061)	.033 (.072)
Disgust	**.153 (.074)****	-.012 (.075)	**-.222 (.078)****	-.085 (.070)	-.008 (.054)	.001 (.064)
Damage	.013 (.076)	.120 (.077)	*-.157 (.082)**	.043 (.075)	.052 (.058)	-.063 (.068)
Sadness	.043 (.074)	.098 (.085)	-.099 (.091)	.008 (.072)	-.020 (.055)	.020 (.065)

Table entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients, with standard errors in brackets. ***** = one-tail 95% confidence level, ******=two-tail 95% confidence level.

Overall, results confirmed the hypotheses for the issue of gay adoption, but not for the issue of torture. First, manipulated incidental harm increased one's emotional and cognitive moral conviction on gay adoption (b=.19, p=.02; b=.12, p=.09, respectively), such that one was more likely to categorize gay adoption to the moral domain and to hold negative moral emotions on it compared to the control condition (i.e., when all experimental manipulations were set at zero). Further, manipulated harm lowered moral judgment by ¼ of its range such that participants were much more likely to appraise gay adoption as morally wrong after exposure to the incidental harm prime compared to the control condition (b=-.26 , p=.02). However, manipulated harm showed null results in the issue of torture.

Next, manipulated incidental disgust increased hot moral conviction on gay adoption (b=.15, p=.04) and promoted a much harsher moral appraisal of gay adoption, compared to moral judgment in the control condition, by over a fifth of its range (b=-.22, p=.01). Yet, disgust had no main effect on categorization of gay adoption to the moral domain (b=-.01, p=.87). Like manipulated harm, disgust yielded null results for moral conviction and moral judgment in the issue of torture.

Finally, as expected, manipulated sadness had no significant effect on emotional and cognitive moral conviction and on moral judgment in both issues, and manipulated

damage had no effect in all three models of torture and on emotional and cognitive moral

conviction in the issue of gay adoption. However, manipulated damage significantly

promoted harsher moral judgment on gay adoption compared to the control condition

(b=-.16, p=.06), although its effect was somewhat smaller compared to manipulated harm

and disgust.

Interactive effects of the experimental manipulations and attitude

To test the fourth hypothesis, cognitive moral conviction, emotional moral

conviction, and moral judgment were each submitted to a linear regression with the four

experimental manipulations (control being the baseline), support for gay

adoption/torture[19], their interactions, and several control variables. Table 3 presents the

regression coefficients for the six models.

Table 3.3: The interactive effect of priming

	Gay Adoption			Harsh Interrogation techniques		
	Hot MC	**Cold MC**	**MJ**	**Hot MC**	**Cold MC**	**MJ**
Harm	**.336 (.097)****	**.278 (.113)****	**-.302 (.136)****	.073 (.086)	-.092 (.062)	-.017 (.073)
Disgust	**.311 (.095)****	**.220 (.110)****	*-.231 (.137)**	-.010 (.084)	.015 (.059)	-.028 (.066)
Damage	.146 (.105)	.121 (.129)	-.121 (.132)	.084 (.079)	.016 (.057)	-.072 (.064)
Sadness	.077 (.098)	.032 (.113)	-.180 (.138)	-.066 (.084)	-.061 (.056)	.030 (.063)
Supports GA/T	**-.217 (.086)****	**.190 (.097)****	*.226 (.121)**	-.157 (.124)	**-.298 (.068)****	**.237 (.079)****
Harm*Support	**-.341 (.118)****	**-.298 (.141)****	.262 (.168)	*-.292 (.173)**	**.227 (.109)****	.115 (.125)
Disgust*Support	**-.283 (.111)****	**-.390 (.131)****	.061 (.156)	-.039 (.150)	.040 (.095)	-.026 (.109)
Damage*Support	-.091 (.120)	-.022 (.150)	.050 (.169)	-.160 (.159)	.060 (.105)	.176 (.119)
Sadness*Support	-.059 (.118)	.013 (.136)	.139 (.167)	.081 (.165)	.129 (.102)	-.076 (.115)

Table entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients, with standard errors in brackets. Coefficients are estimated holding ideology, religiosity, income, age, political knowledge and gender constant. *****= one-tail 95% confidence level, ******=two-tail 95% confidence level.

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[19] Measured by the dummy question, "Is [practice] alright or not alright?".

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Starting with the interactive effect of manipulated incidental harm and support for

gay adoption, a similar two-way interaction emerged for emotional and cognitive moral

conviction. As presented in Table 3 and in Figure 1, compared to the control condition,

manipulated harm associations increased emotional and cognitive moral conviction when

a person was against gay adoption and did not affect moral conviction when a person

supported gay adoption (b=-.34, p=.00; b=-.30, p=.04).

The coefficients on harm in the interactive models indicated a main effect when

support for gay adoption was set to zero, i.e., for opposition to gay adoption. Indeed,

among those opposed to gay adoption, both emotional and cognitive moral conviction

were stronger under the harm manipulation compared to the control condition (b=.34,

p=.00; b=.28, p=.02).

Figure 3.1: The effect of harm, disgust and control on emotional and cognitive moral
conviction, by support for gay adoption
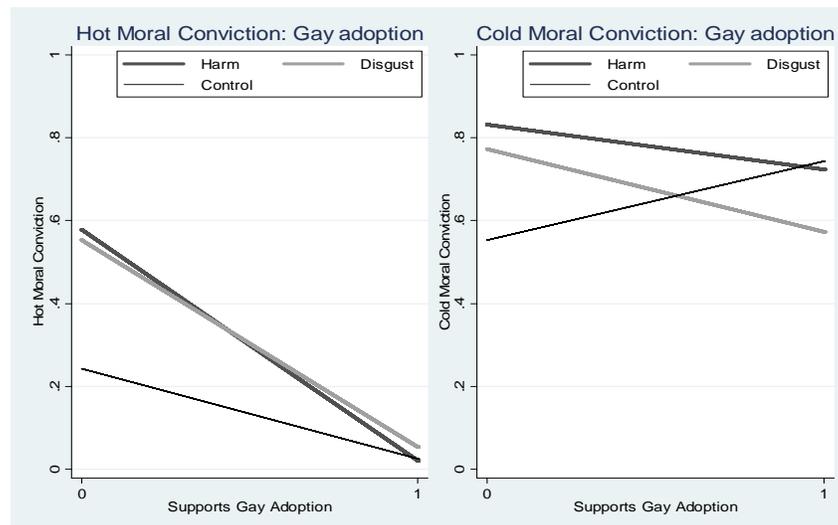
Control variables are held constant in their mean values.

To test the effect of manipulated harm among the supporters of gay adoption, the same variables were submitted to additional regression analyses, with support for gay adoption coded as zero, and its interactions with the experimental manipulations recoded accordingly. Among this group, harm did not significantly differ from the control condition in either emotional or cognitive moral conviction (b=-.01, p=.94; b=-.02, p=.81).

No interactive effect emerged for moral judgment of gay adoption between manipulated harm and support for gay adoption, yet harm retained its negative and significant main effect such that manipulated harm led to a harsher appraisal of gay adoption, holding all else constant (b=-.30, p=.03).

Figure 3.2: The effect of harm, disgust and control on emotional and cognitive moral conviction, by support for harsh interrogation techniques
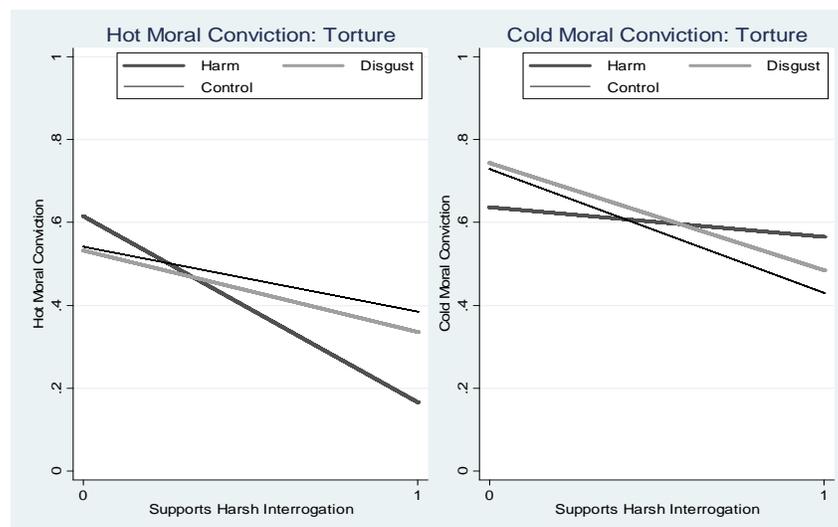
Control variables are held constant in their mean values.

Moving to the issue of torture, the interactive effect of incidental harm and support replicated for hot moral conviction such that harm increased hot moral conviction

on torture compared to the control condition when a person was opposed to torture, and decreases it compared to the control when a person supported torture (b=-.29, p=.09). This is a pure interaction, as the effect of harm is insignificant both among those opposed to (b=.07, p=.40) and those supporting (b=-.22, p=.14) torture.

The opposite interactive pattern emerged for cognitive moral conviction, with harm decreasing categorization to the moral domain among those opposed to torture, compared to the control condition, and increasing cognitive moral conviction among supporters of torture (b=.23, p=.04). Once more, this is a pure interaction, with insignificant effect of harm among those opposed to torture (b=-.92, p=.14) as well as among those supporting it (b=.14, p=.13). No interactive or main effect emerged for incidental harm on moral judgment of torture.

Next, the interactive effect emerging for harm associations also emerged for incidental disgust in both emotional and cognitive moral conviction in the issue of gay adoption. Thus, incidental disgust increased emotional and cognitive moral conviction compared to the control condition when a person was against gay adoption, and did not affect or decrease moral conviction when a person supported this practice (b=-.28, p=.01; b=-.39, p=.00).

Manipulated disgust significantly increased both types of moral conviction among those opposed to gay adoption (b=.31, p=.00; b=.22, p=.05). Among those supporting gay adoption, the effect of disgust significantly decreased cognitive moral conviction compared to the control condition (b=-.17, p=.02) but did not significantly differ from control in hot moral conviction (b=.03, p=.64).

Similar to the effects reported for manipulated harm associations, no interactive effect emerged for moral judgment between manipulated disgust and support for gay adoption; however, disgust retained its negative and significant main effect, leading to a more morally impermissible judgment of gay adoption, holding all else constant (b=-.23, p=.09). Unlike manipulated harm associations, disgust had no interactive or main effects on moral conviction or moral judgment in the issue of torture.

Finally, as expected, incidental sadness and incidental damage showed no significant interactive or main effects on moral conviction and on moral judgment in the six models tested.

Discussion

Results overall confirmed all four hypotheses on the effects of disgust and harm on moral conviction and moral judgment on the issue of gay adoption. Thus, incidental disgust and harm, but not damage and sadness, showed a main effect of increasing moral conviction and decreasing moral judgment toward a harsher appraisal. In addition, an interaction emerged among primes and preexisting attitude such that both harm and disgust increased cognitive moral conviction (i.e., viewing the issue as moral according to domain theory characteristics) and hot moral conviction (i.e., the emergence of moral emotions in response to gay adoption) among people opposed to gay adoption, but did not change moral conviction regarding gay adoption among its supporters (or even decreased it, in the case of disgust and cognitive moral conviction). Interestingly, there was no interactive effect on moral judgment of the practice, although the main effects were retained.

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However, the disgust and harm manipulations had no main effects on the issue of torture. In the interactive models as well, disgust showed no effect on emotional and cognitive moral conviction of torture, and although harm significantly—and inconsistently—interacted with support, it had no main effect and did not differ from the control condition for either supporters or opponents.

Upon reflection, there seems to be a critical difference between the two political issues, which may account for the null results for torture. Thus, the issue of gay adoption positions the rights of same-sex couples to adopt against the potential negative effects of gay adoption on society and the adopted child. In turn, disgust and harm are mostly associated with one of these two sides, specifically with the consequences of gay adoption, which are often presented as disgusting (same-sex relationships and families) and potentially harmful for the adopted child as well as for American values and society as a whole. Accordingly, primed incidental harm and disgust draw attention to the disgusting and harmful characteristics of gay relationships and to the consequences of gay adoption, and by that, foster categorization to the moral domain (cognitive moral conviction), increase negative moral emotions (emotional moral conviction) and yield a harsher moral appraisal (moral judgment).

Nevertheless, this is not the case for the issue of torture, which positions the practice of harsh interrogation techniques when interviewing detainees suspected of terrorist activities against the potential consequences of not using such methods. Whereas some may view the use of torture as disgusting and harmful, others may associate harm and disgust with the crime of terror and the potential victims who will be hurt if torture is not applied. These two viewpoints lead to converse predictions. When focusing on the

tortured detainees, manipulated disgust and harm are expected to draw attention to the disgusting and harmful character of the practice of torture, making torture seem more morally impermissible. But when the focus is on terror and the victims, attention is expected to be drawn to the disgusting and harmful nature of the alleged prisoner's deeds thus justifying the practice of torture as more morally permissible. This hypothesis could be directly examined given a measure tapping whether attention was drawn to the tortured or to the victims of terror, but unfortunately, there is no such direct measure.

An alternative explanation to these results may be that harm and disgust hold an ideologically asymmetric effect, mostly affecting conservatives but not liberals (for the "moralizing conservative" argument see, e.g., Lovett and Jordan, 2005; Inbar, Pizarro and Bloom, 2009). Thus, harm and disgust show significant effects in the conservative issue of gay adoption but null results for the liberal issue of torture. In addition, the manipulations show effects among those opposed to gay adoption compared to the typically null effect for the supporters.

However, in the previous chapter I argued and empirically demonstrated that both conservatives and liberals moralize political issues, even though they differ in the particular issues moralized, as ideology affects what is regarded as disgusting and harmful and by that leads to systematic differences in moral convictions. Accordingly, both conservatives and liberals are expected to respond to harm and disgust cues.

To put this alternative explanation to the test, another experiment was designed with two new issues: internet porn regulation and military intervention in Darfur. Several important considerations governed the choice of these issues. First, one of the issues is

conservative in nature and the other is liberal, to test the argument that the primes affect the conservative issue alone.

Interestingly, many liberal issues are inherently pro-intervention to cure an existing wrong (e.g., stop poverty, introduce affirmative action, intervene militarily), whereas conservative issues are often anti potentially harmful changes of the status quo (e.g., no gay marriage, no welfare, no immigration). This typical asymmetry holds important consequences for moral judgment, as the current literature supports the so-called action principle (i.e., omission principle), which differentiates harm caused by action from comparable harm caused by omission, such that the latter is perceived as more permissible morally (see Cushman, Young and Hauser, 2006; Baron and Ritov, 2004; Spranca, Minsk, and Baron, 1991). Thus, it was important to choose issues in which the harm is attributed to an existing disgusting status quo. Accordingly, the chosen issues position a potentially disgusting and harmful event (internet porn, the genocide in Darfur) against an omission (refraining from regulation, refraining from intervention) and thus avoid the confound that arguably led to the null results for the issue of torture.

Experiment 2

Method

Participants

A convenience sample of New York area resident adults (N=396; 202 females and 184 self-described liberals) was collected by 8 research assistants who referred potential participants to a link to the web-based experiment (programmed in SNAP 9).

Procedure

The procedure and materials remained the same as in Experiment 1, with three exceptions. First, the measures were adapted for two different issues—refraining from regulation of internet porn and refraining from intervention in Darfur. Second, the hot moral conviction and the support for the political practice measures were slightly altered. Finally, additional control variables were added. The subsection below details the changes and additions.

Measures

All measures were coded to vary 0-1. See *Appendix* for descriptive statistics of the moral conviction measures.

Hot dimension of moral conviction

The hot moral conviction measure applied in the first experiment was directional, as the negative moral emotions only represented opposition to the practice. This was not the case for the cognitive measure, which tapped categorization to the moral domain regardless of one's attitude. Thus, the hot moral conviction measure was altered to potentially represent both sides. In that vein, participants were asked to report their hypothetical moral emotions both when the practice and when the omission occur.

For instance, participants were asked: "To what extent you would have felt each of these emotions when hosting a thriving pornographic website, while refraining from any regulation or monitoring… Ashamed? Guilty?", but also: "To what extent you would have felt each of these emotions when censoring and monitoring a pornographic website hosted in your portal… Ashamed? Guilty?".

The measure included 12 questions: 4 for self-directed negative emotions (shame and guilt, for both sides of the issue); 4 for other-directed negative emotions (anger and disgust for both sides); 4 for third parties directed negative emotions (anger and disgust for both sides). Embarrassment and contempt, which were included in the former version, were omitted to shorten the measure, following a psychometric analysis.

A Likert scale was composed of the 12 items—with higher scores indicating stronger moral emotions to either side—and was then coded to vary between 0-1, with a mean of .394 for Darfur and .337 for porn.

Preexisting support for political practice "please indicate the extent to which you favor or oppose [practice]", 7 point scale.

Authoritarianism Four Item F scale (Lane, 1955, see Christie, 1991), α=.53.

Openness to experience 4 items adopted from Buchanan et al (2005), e.g. "I enjoy hearing new ideas" (α=.61).

Empathy 4 items adopted from Caruso and Mayer (1998), e.g. "too much is made of the suffering of pets or animals" (reversed; α=.59).

Social Conservatism 5 items adopted from Kerlinger's (1984) SA-II scale and Eysenck's Public Opinion Inventory scale, e.g. "Society should be quicker to throw out old ideas and traditions and to adopt new thinking and customs", Reversed (α=.48).

Fiscal Conservatism 2 items adopted from Kerlinger's (1984) SA-II scale, e.g. "Government laws and regulations should be such as first to ensure the prosperity of business since the prosperity of all depends on the prosperity of business" (α=.47).

Libertarianism 2 items from Mehrabian (1996), e.g. "my ideal government would be very small and would only perform a very few essential functions" (α=.28).

Militarianism GSS question: "Do you think it will be best for the future of this country if we take an active part in world affairs, or if we stay out of world affairs?" (1=Active participation, 0=Stay out).

Feminism 3 items adopted from Morgan (1996), e.g. "men have too much influence in American politics compared to women" (α=.61).

Disgust sensitivity 6 items adopted from the DS-R (Disgust Scale-Revised, see Haidt, McCauley, and Rozin, 1994; Olatunji et al., 2007), α=.82.

Results

Experimental manipulations' effects

Cognitive moral conviction, hot moral conviction, and moral judgment were each submitted to a linear regression with the four experimental manipulations (control being the baseline)[20]. Table 4 presents the coefficients for the six models. Overall, the results replicated for the issues of Darfur and internet porn and will thus be reported together.

Table 3.4: The effect of priming on moral conviction and moral judgment

	Intervention in Darfur			Internet porn regulation		
	Hot MC	**Cold MC**	**MJ**	**Hot MC**	**Cold MC**	**MJ**
Harm	.019 (.030)	*.049 (.030)**	*-.058 (.034)**	.013 (.035)	**.094 (.044)****	**-.080 (.040)****
Disgust	*.049 (.030)**	**.062 (.030)****	**-.067 (.034)****	.050 (.035)	**.096 (.043)****	**-.081 (.040)****
Damage	.007 (.030)	.039 (.032)	-.018 (.034)	-.001 (.035)	**.084 (.042)****	*-.073 (.039)**
Sadness	.044 (.033)	.000 (.032)	.012 (.043)	.053 (.038)	.048 (.046)	-.070 (.043)

Table entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients, with standard errors in brackets. *****= one-tail 95% confidence level, ******=two-tail 95% confidence level.

First, manipulated incidental disgust yielded the expected effect on emotional moral conviction, cognitive moral conviction, and moral judgment. Thus, the disgust

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[20] Again, note that two-tail significance tests are reported, although one-tail significance tests would be more appropriate as all hypotheses were directional.

manipulation increased one's cognitive and emotional moral conviction on intervention in Darfur (b=.06, p=.04; b=.05, p=.09, respectively) such that participants were more likely to categorize the issue to the moral domain and to hold negative moral emotions about it compared to the control condition. In the same manner, manipulated disgust boosted cognitive moral conviction on internet porn regulation by one tenth of its range (b=.10, p=.03), and its effect on hot moral conviction, although insignificant, was in the expected direction (b=.05, p=.15). Further, disgust decreased moral judgment in both issues. Thus, participants were more likely to appraise both refraining from intervention in Darfur and refraining from internet porn regulation as morally wrong after exposure to the incidental disgust prime, compared to the control condition (b=-.07 , p=.05; b=-.08, p=.04, respectively).

Next, manipulated incidental harm had the expected effect on cognitive moral conviction and on moral judgment in both issues, but had no significant influence on emotional moral conviction. Thus, the harm manipulation increased cognitive moral conviction on intervention in Darfur and internet porn regulation such that participants were more likely to categorize this issue to the moral domain following the prime compared to the control condition, regardless of their attitude on the topic (b=.05 , p=.09; b=.09, p=.03, respectively). Although the harm manipulation increased hot moral conviction in the NYS sample, this effect cannot be generalized to the overall population at any accepted significance level. Still, harm had the hypothesized effect on the moral judgment of both tested issues, advancing a harsher moral appraisal of both refraining from intervention in Darfur and refraining from internet porn regulation (b=-.06, p=.09; b=-.08, p=.05, respectively).

Finally, sadness and damage were hypothesized to hold a smaller or no effect on moral conviction and moral judgment. Indeed, manipulated sadness had no significant effect on cognitive and emotional moral conviction and on moral judgment in both issues, and manipulated damage had no effect on moral conviction and judgment in the issue of intervention in Darfur and on hot moral conviction on porn regulation. However, manipulated damage significantly increased cognitive moral conviction and significantly decreased moral judgment on porn regulation compared to the control condition (b=.08, p=.05; b=-.07, p=.06, respectively); in both cases its effect was in the expected direction and somewhat smaller compared to manipulated incidental harm and disgust.

Interactive effects of the experimental manipulations and attitude

Cognitive moral conviction, hot moral conviction, and moral judgment were each submitted to a linear regression with the four experimental manipulations (control being the baseline), support for refraining from intervention in Darfur/regulation of internet porn, their interactions, and several control variables. Table 5 presents the regression coefficients for the six models.

First, the expected two-way interactions among manipulated incidental disgust and political attitudes emerged in five out of the six models. Starting with the issue of intervention in Darfur, presented in Table 5 and Figure 3, disgust increased emotional and cognitive moral conviction compared to the control condition when a person was pro-intervention and decreased emotional and cognitive moral conviction compared to the control condition when a person supported refraining from intervention in Darfur (b=-.19, p=.04; p=-.17, p=.09).

	Intervention in Darfur			Internet porn regulation		
	Hot MC	**Cold MC**	**MJ**	**Hot MC**	**Cold MC**	**MJ**
Harm	.007 (.043)	.065 (.048)	.047 (.047)	.055 (.058)	-.020 (.061)	-.005 (.064)
Disgust	*.071 (.042)**	*.094 (.050)**	.064 (.046)	.084 (.057)	-.054 (.059)	.091 (.062)
Damage	-.001 (.049)	.058 (.051)	.046 (.049)	-.013 (.057)	-.061 (.063)	-.050 (.070)
Sadness	.049 (.043)	.067 (.054)	-.002 (.049)	-.046 (.061)	-.085 (.069)	-.021 (.071)
Supports refraining D/P	-.001 (.072)	*-.131 (.070)**	**.526 (.082)****	.045 (.064)	**-.345 (.068)****	**.417 (.081)****
Harm*Support	.032 (.113)	*-.176 (.104)**	*-.193 (.114)**	-.085 (.089)	.028 (.092)	-.068 (.108)
Disgust*Support	**-.188 (.089)****	*-.172 (.103)**	**-.250 (.104)****	*-.151 (.086)**	.141 (.087)	**-.231 (.107)****
Damage*Support	-.030 (.101)	-.090 (.105)	-.142 (.109)	-.043 (.087)	.144 (.098)	.039 (.130)
Sadness*Support	-.126 (.090)	-.169 (.111)	.055 (.113)	.140 (.093)	.163 (.112)	-.025 (.120)

Table entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients, with standard errors in brackets. Models marked as "1" are nested in models "2", which add support for refraining from intervention/regulation and its interactions with all experimental manipulations, and hold ideology, religiosity, income, age, political knowledge, gender, authoritarianism, openness to experience, empathy, social and fiscal conservatism, libertarianism, militarianism, feminism, and disgust sensitivity constant. *= one-tail 95% confidence level, **=two-tail 95% confidence level.

Figure 3.3: The effect of harm, disgust and control on moral conviction and moral judgment, by support for refraining from intervention in Darfur
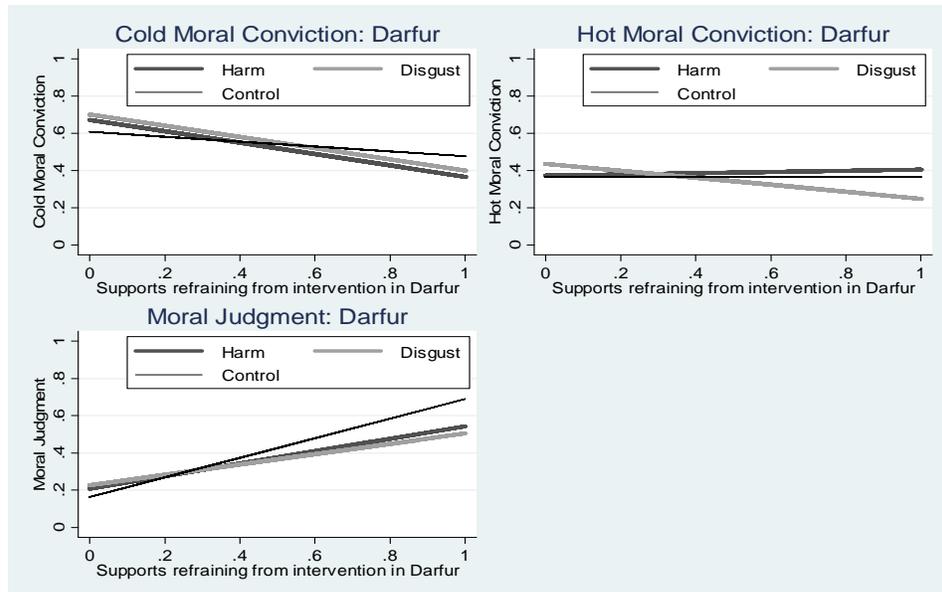
Control variables are held constant in their mean values.

The coefficient of disgust in the interactive models showed a main effect, with

support for refraining from intervention in Darfur set to zero, i.e., for a pro-intervention

attitude. Indeed, among participants opposed to refraining from intervention in Darfur, both emotional and cognitive moral conviction were stronger under the disgust manipulation compared to the control condition (b=.07, p=.09; b=.09, p=.06).

To test the effect of disgust for those who supported refraining from intervention, the same variables were submitted to additional regression analyses, with the maximum attitude score regarding Darfur—i.e., extreme support for refraining from intervention—coded as zero, and its interactions with the experimental manipulations were coded accordingly. Results showed that among the supporters of refraining from intervention, both emotional and cognitive moral conviction were lower in the disgust condition compared to control, but this difference was only significant for hot moral conviction (b=-.12, p=.07; b=-.08, p=.27).

A similar significant interactive pattern emerged for moral judgment (b=-.25, p=.02). The disgust prime caused a view of refraining from intervention as more morally impermissible among anti-intervention supporters (b=-.19, p=.01), but did not significantly differ from the control condition among those who were pro-intervention (b=.06, p=.16).

Moving to the issue of internet porn regulation, the effect of disgust replicated for hot moral conviction and for moral judgment but not for cognitive moral conviction. First, compared to the control condition, disgust increased hot moral conviction for pro-regulation participants and decreased it for participants in support of refraining from regulation of internet porn (b=-.15, p=.08). Although in the expected direction, hot moral conviction did not significantly differ from control for the pro-regulation attitude (b=.08,

p=.14) and for the supporters of refraining from regulation (b=-.07, p=.21), indicating

that this effect was a pure interaction.

Figure 3.4: The effect of harm, disgust and control on moral conviction and moral
judgment, by support for refraining from regulation of internet porn
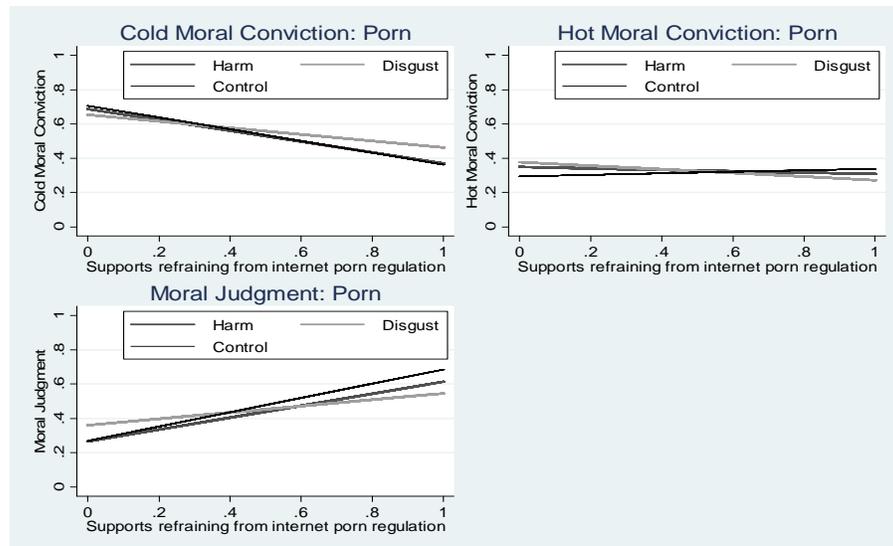
Control variables are held constant in their mean values.

The same pattern reemerged in moral judgment (b=-.23, p=.03): compared to the

control condition, disgust leads to a harsher moral judgment of refraining from porn

regulation for supporters of refraining from porn regulation (b=-.14, p=.03) and to an

insignificantly more morally permissible appraisal for those holding a pro-regulation

attitude (b=.09, p=.14). However, no significant interaction emerged for cognitive moral

conviction (b=.14, p=.11).

Next, manipulated harm associations had the expected effect on cognitive moral

conviction and on moral judgment in the issue of Darfur but no significant effect on the

issue of porn regulation. Thus, compared to the control condition, incidental harm

increased cognitive moral conviction on refraining from intervention in Darfur for pro-intervention participants and decreased cognitive moral conviction for those in support of refraining from intervention (b=-.18, p=.09). This was a pure interaction, with insignificant effects for the pro-intervention attitude (b=.07, p=.18) as well as for the supporters of refraining from intervention (b=-.11, p=.14).

This pattern of pure interaction reemerged in moral judgment (b=-.19, p=.09), where harm associations lead to a view of refraining from intervention in Darfur as more morally wrong, compared to the control condition, among its supporters (b=-.10, p=.18) and as more morally permissible, compared to control, among the supporters of intervention (b=.05, p=.31). However, primed harm associations had no significant interactive effect on hot moral conviction and in the issue of internet porn regulation.

Finally, as expected, incidental sadness and damage showed no significant interactive effect on moral conviction and on moral judgment in the six models tested.

Discussion

The null can be rejected for the first three hypotheses. Thus, both disgust and harm increased moral conviction and decreased moral judgment in both the liberal and the conservative issues. In turn, sadness had no effect, and although damage affected cognitive moral conviction and moral judgment of porn regulation, its coefficients were smaller compared to those of disgust and harm. The fact that the manipulations overall showed the expected effects in both the liberal issue of intervention in Darfur and the conservative issue of internet porn regulation suggests that the effect of disgust and harm is not ideologically asymmetric.

The fourth hypothesis, regarding the interactive effect of the primes and attitude on the issue, was supported in both political issues for disgust such that disgust increased moral conviction for supporters of military intervention in Darfur and of porn regulation—arguably because it draws attention to the disgusting components of the genocide in Darfur and of internet porn—but decreased moral conviction when one supported refraining from intervention or regulation—arguably because the attention drawn to the immoral characteristics of porn and the genocide is inconsistent with one's support for inaction. In the same manner, supporters of inaction perceived refraining from regulation and intervention as more morally impermissible under the disgust prime compared to controls, as the prime draws their attention to the immorality of genocide or porn. Although the harm associations prime had a similar interactive effect in the issue of Darfur, it did not significantly differ from the no-priming condition in the issue of porn regulation.

Conclusions

Moralization of political issues vastly influences the political discourse. When categorized in the moral domain, a rule is perceived as universal and nonnegotiable and, accordingly, leads to a general rejection of dissimilar others and to lower levels of cooperativeness in heterogeneous group discussions (Skitka, 2005). Indeed, moralization of politics is often viewed as the root of the American culture war. But what underlies the moralization of politics? This chapter establishes the view that a rule is moralized to the extent that its violation is understood as harming others—in accordance with the Social-

Cognitive Domain Perspective—or invokes self-blaming and other-blaming moral emotions, such as disgust—as suggested by the theory of Sensibility-Sentimentalism.

The causal effect of disgust and associations of harm in increasing moral conviction and facilitating a harsher moral judgment was replicated in two experiments. The robustness of the effect is especially convincing as the two experiments differed in several ways. First, whereas gay adoption, examined in Experiment 1, is prominently debated by political elites and the mass media, the issues in Experiment 2 are relatively new, with much less guiding elite talk. Second, the samples greatly differ, with a student sample in Experiment 1 and an adult sample in Experiment 2. Finally, the models were slightly altered in specification; for instance, additional controls were integrated in Experiment 2 and a different measure of support for the issue was employed.

Furthermore, the current research was designed to weaken some alternative explanations to the effect of disgust and associations of harm on moral conviction and judgment. First, the robust null results for the damage and sadness primes confirmed that it is not the negativity of disgust and harm that underlies their effect on moral appraisal. Second, introducing disgust and harm cues in a situation increases its severity, which in turn may explain the increased moral conviction and the harsher judgment. However, the disgust and harm primes in the current design were completely incidental to the political situation appraised and did not change the elements of the situation in any way. Even vaster effects could be expected with less subtle cues. A simple example is the practice of smoking. Once framed as harmful to others and as disgusting, it is no longer merely a nuisance, but almost a sin that necessitates a holy war.

Third, although harm and disgust often go hand in hand in real life, as in the cigarettes example, the primes in this framework are carefully constructed to differentiate between the two, with the pretest results indeed confirming that the former raises significantly more harm associations, but not feelings of disgust, and vice versa for the latter. Accordingly, the results support the view that morality pertains to two components, each capable of affecting moral judgment and moral conviction in politics.

Although moral judgment has always been important in the social sciences in general and political science in particular, empirical political scientists had shied away from studying the extent to which people apply moral judgment to decide on political issues. The literature in moral psychology was traditionally dominated by the view that moral judgment is governed by a cognitive reasoning process (Heider, 1958; Shaver, 1985; Piaget, 1965/1932; Kohlberg, 1969; Turiel, 1983). To argue that moral judgment underlies political attitudes formation demanded the assumption that citizens hold the cognitive abilities and motivation to scrutinize politics. In a world where the vast majority of Americans are politically unknowledgeable (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996), and ideologically unsophisticated (Converse, 1964), it seemed unreasonable to expect people to analyze politics through the abstract and complex prism of moral principles.

Yet this chapter indicates that moral judgment does not necessarily involve any intricate effortful analysis and occurs very quickly via emotions and associations. This bi-dimensional moral judgment can guide politically unknowledgeable and ideologically unsophisticated citizens in forming comprehensible political attitudes, which can account for the stability of public opinion in the face of the non-ideologue public (e.g., Page and Shapiro, 1992). Indeed, this study strengthens the thesis of the moral public, according to

which the American public can be "innocent of ideology" and rational at the same time,

simply by counting on quick and accessible morality.

Chapter IV

Essay 3: Moral Conviction and Political Determination

Abstract

This chapter suggests that morality drives two seemingly inverse processes in the political discourse: intolerance and polarization on the one hand, and political involvement on the other, and that this effect is at least partly mediated by issue importance and attitude certainty. I utilize an NSF funded representative sample to study the effect of emotional and cognitive moral judgment in forming attitudes on gay adoption, capital punishment, and abortion, holding constant alternative explanations such as religiosity, ideology, authoritarianism, openness to experience, empathy, and political sophistication. I argue and show that morality robustly increases attitude strength—certainty and importance—which in turn, affect both involvement and attitudinal extremity. I show that moral conviction is a strong political cue, available to both ideological sides, and independent of political sophistication.

Introduction

The two main risks in current democracies are culture war and political apathy. The former is the metaphor used to describe the clash between progressivist and traditionalist perspectives, which results in increasing political polarization, ideological extremity, acute intolerance, and prejudice. The latter is an ongoing process of voter fatigue, disenchantment with the public sphere, political and social alienation, and constantly decreasing levels of political participation. Although essentially inverse in nature, both risks have morality as a common denominator, with moral conviction and strong moral emotions such as anger, disgust, and contempt underlying both intolerance and involvement.

Indeed, pundits and scholars regularly point at values and morals as explaining both the culture war and political aloofness (e.g. Lakoff, 2002; Uslaner, 2002; Frank, 2004; Callahan, 2007; Twenge, 2007)*.* Mass media views morality as a vast mobilization force as well. In the lead-up to the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections in the US, the press was crammed with news stories and editorials advising candidates to find religion; discussing the moral values and religious affiliations of candidates (particularly Kerry and Bush in 2004, and Romney, Huckabee, and Obama in 2008); and attributing victory to the candidate's values, especially in the 2004 elections where the modally named "most important issue" in the exit poll results was "moral values." A current popular slogan even ties involvement and aversive moral emotions in politics, suggesting that: "if you're not outraged, you're not paying attention."

While there are some indications in the literature of statistical correlations between moral convictions and such social and political processes, empirically

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determining the extent to which morality underlies them necessitates both a theory of moral conviction, and a theory of how and why these effects occur. This essay is set to fill the gap.

The earlier chapters presented and empirically tested a theory of bi-dimensional morality, integrating two research traditions: domain theory, which follows Kant in stressing reasoned considerations as the key component of moral judgment, and sentimentalism, which follows Hume in stressing emotions. Specifically, chapter 2 defined moral conviction both conceptually and operatively, tested its relationship with ideology, and identified moral issues, while chapter 3 showed that moral judgment is both emotional and cognitive, clearing the way for this chapter to study the role of morality in political behavior.

I thus start this essay by clarifying the relationship between moral conviction and attitude strength. While current literature show that moral conviction and attitude strength are related but not the same thing (e.g. Skitka, Bauman and Sargis, 2005; Mooney and Schuldt, 2008), little is known of the type and direction of this relationship, or the reasons for it. In a nutshell, I argue that the emotional and generalizing nature of moral conviction leads to the formation of a univalenced distribution of considerations regarding the political object. In other words, the vast majority of information related to some issue will be similar in tone and content. Drawing from such a one sided distribution leads to vastly consistent responses, therefore increasing experienced attitude certainty. In addition, the value expressive nature of moral convictions ties them to one's self-concept, making a challenge to the attitude threatening to the self. Attitude certainty and importance are thus symptoms of the moral conviction, following it in the causal chain, as does any appraisal

of the relationship between one's attitude and morals, indicated in self-reported measures of morality.

In turn, the higher attitudinal certainty and the stronger importance of some political issue increase the tendency to rely on this issue in electoral choices. As certainty and importance increase, and given the motivating force of emotions, one is also expected to be willing to act to defend one's view, which may translate into political participation. At the same time, the threat to one's self-defining constructs due to challenging stances drives a hostility towards, and a motivation to silence, the opposition, which manifests as political intolerance.

Still, the political world suggests alternative cues for people to rely upon in forming political attitudes and in reacting to the political world, such as personality traits, partisanship, political principles and demographics. The availability of strong alternative explanations necessitates evidence of the reliance on moral judgment above and beyond other cues.

Accordingly, this essay will empirically demonstrate that moral conviction explains the extent to which political attitudes are held with certainty and conceived as important, such that as moral conviction increases, experienced certainty and importance increase as well. I also empirically strengthen the hypotheses regarding the causation flow with respect to both attitude strength and self-reported measures of morality. I then go on to show that moral conviction is a key explanation of both of these inverse phenomena, and that attitude strength at least partly underlies the effect that morality has on both political involvement and political intolerance, controlling for key alternative explanations. Additionally, moderation by political sophistication and by ideology is

tested, and the effects of both dimensions of moral conviction are compared, suggesting that both are influential, and neither is contingent on political knowledge or ideology.

Moral Conviction and Attitude Strength

Attitudes are not fixed constructs, but are composed on-the-spot from probabilistic memory searches in people's considerations on some subject (Barsalou, 1987; Zaller and Feldman, 1992). However, attitudes vary in persistence and resistance, such that an attitude is considered stronger as it increases in importance, certainty, and centrality (Petty and Krosnick, 1995). There are currently several empirical studies associating morality with attitude strength. For instance, Mooney and Schuldt (2008) show that people tend to hold stronger attitudes on morality policies, and Skitka, Bauman, and Sargis (2005) show that while conceptually and empirically associated, moral conviction and attitude strength are not the same. To support this claim, they control for attitude strength and show that self-reported moral convictions still hold explanatory power even with the effect of attitude strength partialled out. However, the two concepts are clearly tightly related, and currently little is known of the reasons for and the type of this relationship, and especially on its direction.

To answer these questions, we should start by understanding how moral perception is stored in our minds. According to the associative network model (e.g. see Wilson and Hodges, 1992; Bower and Forgas, 2001), objects are stored in nodes and linked in memory in a network such that related associations are connected; related not just in content but also in valence and discrete emotions. Note that according to dual processes models, information is regularly affective and cognitive alike, and absorbed in

the memory via both automatic and deliberative processes (e.g. Bargh, 1999; Chaiken and Trope, 1999; Fazio and Olson, 2003). New information on some existing node may be cognitive or affective, conscious or unaware, and will be aggregated in the existing net. As information is gathered, it may slowly push an attitude in new directions, although people often influence the information they are willing to absorb, preferring occurrences that are consistent with their current belief, and added facts have a diminishing effect.

Building on these theories of the mind, I suggest that moral conviction is created when some node is both emotionally laden with moral emotions, and is connected to the association of harm. The association of discrete emotions like anger and disgust often leads to a quick gut level response which may or may not be accompanied by conscious justification (Haidt, 2001), and to the affective coloring of new information.

Imagine, for instance, a node for the memory object "abortion." A young person developing this node can aggregate information, say, statistics on pregnancy during high school, and additionally have some personal feelings on the topic, like missing a nice classmate who got pregnant and being saddened that she dropped out of school. But for abortion to be moralized in this adolescent's mind, two tightly connected routes can be taken.

First, according to Prinz's criteria (2008), the node will be colored by self-blame and other-blame moral emotions, which are also raised when one is uninvolved. In that case, if one is filled with anger at the system through talking to a neighbor who lost her ability to give birth as a result of an illegal abortion, or watches an interview with a struggling young mother who wanted to get an abortion but was unable to because it was

prohibited, and perhaps this information raises the memory of this pregnant friend who was forced by her religious parents to give birth during high school and you never returned her calls when she was seeking your company and support, all of a sudden this new connection raises some guilt, and the process of affective moralization of abortion has started. As more experiences of moral emotions accrue, whether or not they are attached to some conscious thought or memory, this node will be affectively moralized more strongly.

In addition to the affective coloring occurring during the collection of new information and the new links established between abortion and certain existing experiences, the added information may also affect the net by its actual content, not just its affective valence. Thus, if the neighbor and the struggling high school mom are viewed as victims of a system that did not allow them to get the abortion they wished for, as individuals who were harmed by a traditional and cruel establishment which deprived them of their natural right to their bodies, then a directional pro-abortion interpretation is connected to the existing node.[21] More importantly, abortion is now connected to this person's harm schema, a collection of rules, emotions and beliefs about things that endanger people and are thus inherently wrong and absolutely forbidden. Think of the harm schema as one of those red flashing stop signs, or a black and yellow blinking crossed-bones-and-a-scalp poison mark: everything connected to it feels totally wrong, under all circumstances. With the establishment of this link, new relevant information will now activate not only the node of abortion, but also a sense of harm and wrongness, by spreading activation (see Barsalou, 1992, for the activation mechanism).

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[21] Note how this step is contingent on one's interpretation of the facts, and assumptions about who is to blame. This is where socialization, partisanship and personality may affect the moralization process, as I show in chapter 2 with conservatism.

This tie to the harm schema magnifies the tendency to generalize a preexistent stance towards new information (as 'causing harm' means that something is intrinsically wrong under all circumstances), and consequently further reinforces connections between the appraised object and its evaluation, as new information is affectively colored by moral emotions and tied to harm. A person also becomes more likely to notice, search, and process information that suits their current view on the issue, or in other words—they become predictably biased, or motivated reasoners (Kunda, 1990; Lodge and Taber, 2000), guided by their current beliefs.

In turn, stronger, more extreme, and faster responses are expected as association to one valence node over the other predominates. Using Zaller and Feldman's (1992) terminology, there is an increasing probability of drawing a valence consistent response from the distribution of considerations on the issue, which leads to actual and perceived attitude consistency. Upon moral appraisal, the emotional reaction colors all aspects of the situation (Mullen and Skitka, 2006), making people relatively insensitive to the situation's particulars (Bartels and Medin, 2007; Slovik, 2007), which further augments the personal sense of certainty as the experience is revisited.

While this process explains why attitudes held with moral conviction will be experienced as higher in certainty, why are moral issues also viewed as more important? The functional perspective on attitudes (e.g. Katz, 1960) focuses on psychological benefits of holding attitudes, proposing that any given attitude serves at least one of four distinct personality functions: an instrumental (social-adjustive/ utilitarian) function, based on the associative learning principle that people are motivated to gain rewards and avoid punishments; a knowledge function, based on the Gestalt principles that people are

motivated to attain information in order to give meaning to the world; an ego-defensive function, based on the psychodynamic principles that attitudes enable people to protect their self image from internal and external threats; and a value expressive function, addressing the need to express one's values and self-concept.

Morals establish one's self-concept and identity (e.g. Rokeach, 1968), thus serving a value expressive function. Other literature refers to this category of attitudes as ego involving attitudes, which are related to the manner in which one self-defines, such that "the closer the relation between his attitude and these values and the more central these related values are, the higher the degree of attitudinal involvement," (Ostrom and Brock, 1968:375). Deriving an attitude from one's morals thus exerts an involvement of the self that is less likely to arise in other conventional attitudes. For instance, perhaps our teenager is highly feminist, admires strong women and wishes to become one. Her pro-choice opinion on abortion can express her strong view on a woman's rights concerning her life and body, and as her view on abortion becomes more militant and overtly uttered, it also strengthens her identity as a strong young woman.

Defining moral attitudes as serving a value expressive function and as ego involving both suggest that threat to a moral attitude induces threat to self and identity concepts, and that attitudes derived from personal morals will have higher personal relevance (e.g. Ostrom and Brock, 1968; Johnson and Eagly, 1989; Haugtvedt and Wegener, 1994). Accordingly, moral attitudes are hypothesized to be more important than non-moral attitudes, which are less related to one's personal self esteem.

Moral convictions are also related to one's social identity. Viewing a practice as universally wrong is similar to viewing it as a sin. According to Meier (1999), the politics

of sin are characterized by a complete delegitimization of any possible opposition, allow no compromise in the struggle for total abolition, and will not be satisfied by a mere decline in the sinful behavior (Meier, 1999; Mooney and Lee, 2000). The presentation of a set of values or behaviors as perverse and sinful threatens some groups' social status while boosting the standing of other groups (Meier, 1999). Therefore, the political issue viewed as sinful is intimately related to group identities. In our running example, presenting abortion as evil, and women who choose to undergo it as sinners reduces the legitimacy and social status of the group of independent woman with which our teenager identifies, and thus threatens an important facet of her social identity.

As people are motivated by self-esteem enhancement, striving to achieve a positive in-group relative status (Tajfel and Turner, 1979), any attempt to challenge an opinion will be experienced as threatening to one's social identity, activating a "we" vs. "them" state of mind. Indeed, Ben Nun Bloom and Levitan (n.d.) experimentally demonstrate that a moral cue in a political persuasion setting increases perceived group closeness and decreases the effects of group heterogeneity. Being related to one's social identity is a complementary explanation of the effect of moral convictions on issue importance.

It is also interesting to note that since moralization is simply a process in which a particular node is linked to the harm schema and/or is colored by moral emotions, demoralization is expected to be much more difficult to achieve than moralization, as disengaging a memory object from its emotional valence or breaking its ties with other nodes is very difficult to do.

The causal chain in this story should now be clear: certainty and importance are symptoms of the moral emotions and universal attributes of the schema. This framework also allows a derivative hypothesis regarding the flow of causality between moral conviction and self-reports of conviction and moral judgment. The self-report moral judgment measures in the literature bluntly ask participants to appraise the extent to which some situation is moral or immoral, while self-reported assessments of moral conviction ask the respondents to estimate the extent that their attitude on some issue is related to their morals and values (e.g. Bauman and Skitka, 2009). To construct each of these two estimations, one needs to review a relevant existing memory object, and build on whatever information accessible to them about its related emotions, connections to harm and other relevant associations. That means that emotional and cognitive moral convictions precede self-reported measures in time. We can thus hypothesize that:

H1: Holding all else constant, both dimensions of moral conviction should increase attitude strength, i.e. certainty and importance.

H1a: Moral conviction should lead to attitude strength, and not the other way around.

H1b: Moral conviction should lead to self-reported measures of conviction and moral judgment, and not the other way around.

Moral Conviction and Political Involvement

The legitimacy of any given democratic polity depends on the citizenry's participation, so much so that political participation is often studied in order to understand the nature of democracy itself. The most prominent theories of democracy—

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such as Modernization theories (Inglehart, 1997; Dalton, 1998) and Social Capital

theories (Putnam, 1995)—explicitly build on comparisons of political participation

between countries, while political participation measures are also used to asses levels of

democratization in emerging and non democracies (Inglehart, 2003; Jennings, 1997).

The current participation literature takes an explicitly normative tone by studying

a possible global decrease in participation (Lijphart, 1997; Gray and Caul, 2000), means

of increasing voter turnout (Green and Gerber, 2004), and the possible explanations for

such decrease (Putnam, 1995; Norris, 2002), and thus it comes as no surprise that values

are often viewed as underlying political involvement (e.g. Inglehart, 1979; Sotirovic and

McLeod, 2001).

Indeed, morals are often viewed as intrinsically action guiding, and even as

motivations in and of themselves (see Wren, 1991, for the division of morality theories as

externalist and internalist, depending on whether moral motives are viewed as reasons for

action). There are several cognitive explanations for the action-oriented role of morality.

First, there is evidence gathered in the psychology literature indicating the primacy of

affect in motivating behavior, and of the key role played by emotions in increasing the

probability of one's choosing to act (e.g. Zajonc, 1984; Frijda, 1986). For instance,

Damasio and Van Hoesen (1983) describe the state of akinetic mutism, in which patients

tend to neither speak nor move. After recuperating, the patients describe having been

conscious but not feeling emotions. Arguably, damage to emotional brain areas leads to a

state of affective indifference, which in turn plays a role in attenuating inclinations to act.

In fact, some classify emotions as moral by definition, based, among other things, on

their motivation induction and action tendencies (Haidt, 2003). Even when disputing the

sentimental basis of morality, philosophers and psychologists alike agree that emotions often co-occur with moral reasoning, but Kantian and other absolutist researchers will often add that moral imperatives hold intrinsic motivational force.

If indeed an individual holds an emotionally laden moral conviction on some issue, they are expected to be more motivated to take action in order to promote their view of the issue, and thus engage in political life. The motivational force of morality can also be attributed to the value expressive function of moral convictions, and the overwhelming drive to protect one's ego in the face of challenge, manifest as a higher probability of political interest and participation.

Similarly, the vast importance attributed to moral issues may loom large in electoral choices. Specifically, an issue viewed with moral conviction may be weighted more heavily when appraising the attractiveness of some candidate, and may even be the only dimension evaluated in forming an opinion. The literature coined the phrase "single issue voting" to describe this, i.e. making voting decisions based on a party or candidate's stance on a single issue (e.g. Congleton, 1991), and it too can be explained by strong moral emotions about a certain issue.

Another reason for increased participation and single issue voting in the presence of moral conviction may relate to the ease with which morals can be applied to politics, i.e. to morality's effectiveness as a psychological constraint (Converse, 1964). As moral convictions produce a consistent valence for the memory object, and this valence is cognitively effortless of access, people may choose to derive their attitudes on political issues from their moral stances when available.[22] In turn, because such people derive

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[22] Oftentimes, the presentation of issues may be oriented to take advantage of such reliable, predictable, long-term associations as morality confers.

their attitudes from their easy to use morals, they are expected to experience higher certainty, and thus to base their vote on these issues that they both care about and grasp. Indeed, studies on morality policies suggest that little information is needed on moral issues, and since moral issues are also typically highly salient, they allow for greater citizen mobilization and draw more individual level participation (e.g. Haider-Markel and Meier, 2003).

As a result of these findings, the third and fourth hypotheses will test the association among moral conviction and two action intentions: issue-based political participation and single issue voting. In addition, it could be the case that the effect of moral conviction on the probability of participation is mediated by increased attitude strength, such that moral emotions and categorization increase attitude certainty and importance, which in turn lead to a tendency to act. This hypothesis concerningmechanisms will be examined as well.

H2: holding all else constant, both dimensions of moral conviction should increase issue-based political participation and single issue voting.

H2a: these relationships are mediated by attitude strength, i.e. certainty and importance.

Moral Conviction and the Culture War

Pundits often point to a "values divide" in the United States between traditionalists and progressivists. This "culture war" is characterized by increasing polarization, the emergence of an impassioned debate over social and moral issues rather than the distribution of resources, and the return of religion to the public sphere (e.g.

Hunter, 1991; White, 2002). In the spirit of post-materialism theories, it could be argued that material needs are now being met in industrial democracies, making way to a debate over socially based issues.

While political scientists differ in the extent to which they agree that such a polarization process indeed occurs in the US and what may be its determinants (e.g. Nie, Verba and Petrocik, 1979; Bartels, 2000), many agree that the past two decades have seen a change in the political atmosphere, accompanied by increasingly heated debates and ideological extremity. Morality policies are not amenable to compromise (Mooney and Schuldt, 2008), transgressions may be viewed as sins (Meier, 1999), and debating them induces resentment and aggression within political discourse. In fact, the "cultural conflict" is often defined by its portrayal of emotional environments, as a "political and social hostility rooted in different systems of moral understanding" (Hunter, 1991:42).

Whereas such antagonistic atmosphere is surely accompanied by intolerance, it is not necessarily directed toward the usual suspects, such as different religion denominations or extreme social groups—communists, Jews, feminist organizations, etc. In fact, in fostering the advance of shared moral viewpoints, this values clash encourages the formation of pragmatic alliances across religious denominations and other otherwise odd bedfellows (Hunter, 1991). Intolerance is thus directed instead toward those representing the contrasting viewpoint on some moral issue, like abortion and gay rights, even if such opponents are of the same race, class, gender, or even political party as the self.

There is empirical evidence that self-reported moral conviction is related to social distance, such that some individuals are decreasingly willing to maintain social, private,

and economic relationships, or even sit next to people who do not share a stance they report as a moral conviction (Skitka, Bauman and Sargis, 2005). While social distance is clearly an indication of intolerance, political scientists are often interested in tolerance with respect to the political and civil rights of those holding contrasting views, such as freedom of organization and speech because such acceptance constitutes a basic expectation of citizens in democracies. The degree of intolerance evoked above is in a sense an extreme case, as one may privately loath some attitude and choose to keep social distance from people holding it, but still support the permission to express this attitude in the name of democracy (as per Voltaire's apocryphal statement, I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it).

Intolerance can be explained by the nature of issues viewed with moral conviction. I suggested earlier that it is the linkage of morally based attitudes to one's self-concept, which contributes importance to an attitude. Due to the centrality of the self, people feel threatened and have a strong motivation to defend self-defining constructs when these are brought into question. In turn, this threat to one's self-esteem may lead to political intolerance (Sullivan et al, 1981). It is also possible to think about intolerance as a consequence of the "we" vs. "them" mindset activated upon threat to one's social identity. Theories on the effects of groups in politics are divided on the extent to which hostility toward out-groups is inevitable when this mindset is triggered, but they agree that such hostility certainly strengthens self-esteem and a sense of belonging (e.g. Allport, 1954; Sherif, 1966; Tajfel and Turner 1979).

Note that this logic is similar to the pivotal role of threat in activating authoritarianism and thus causing intolerance and prejudice (e.g. Duckitt, 1989; Feldman,

2003; Lavine, Lodge and Freitas, 2005). However, while authoritarianism is often measured and defined with respect to conservative values, moral conviction is ideologically symmetric, capturing threat from an attack to any self-defining political belief, and as a result predicts intolerance among conservatives and liberals alike.

The emotional nature of moral convictions may explain intolerance and extremity as well. First, I suggest above that moral convictions affectively color a memory object, such that more extreme responses are expected as associations accrue to one valence node over others. Additionally, there is gathering experimental evidence showing that people become more intolerant of moral transgressions and tend to express more extreme and severe moral judgments when emotion is induced (e.g. Schnall, Haidt, and Clore, 2006; Trafimow, Bromgard, Finlay, and Ketelaar, 2005). This suggests that, holding constant the level of threat to the self due to a moral violation, the mere experience of emotion increases extremity and intolerance.

The hypotheses following suggest that moral conviction leads to increased issue importance and certainty, which in turn increase attitudinal extremity and intolerance.

H3: holding all else constant, both dimensions of moral conviction should increase attitudinal extremity and intolerance.

H3a: these relationships are mediated by attitude strength, i.e. certainty and importance.

Morality for all: individual differences by ideology and knowledge

It is important to distinguish and separately investigate two different aspects of the tendency to apply moral judgment to political issues. First, since one of the pillars of

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the bi dimensional moral conviction defined in this project is that it is very efficient and easy to use, no differences are expected to appear in the respective effects of moral conviction on attitude strength, participation, and tolerance. Still, it is worthwhile to test whether political knowledge increases or does not affect the effects of moral conviction. In addition, the emotional and cognitive dimensions may potentially differ in relation to the interactive effect of political knowledge. Some may argue that cognitive moral conviction may increase with ability to scrutinize the issue, while others find that political sophisticates are affected by emotions to a greater extent in the activation of affectively charged political concepts (Lodge and Taber, 2005). Thus, the two dimensions should be tested separately.

Another important characteristic of the current definition of moral conviction is that it is ideologically symmetrical in the sense that it should affect attitude strength, participation, and tolerance regardless of the direction of one's attitude – opposition or support for some political practice. Still, some issues may call for more moral conviction of a certain ideological slant, as essay 1 demonstrates. Thus, three political issues were chosen for this study, of them one was found in the first essay to be higher in moral conviction among liberals (capital punishment) and two tended to evoke more conservative moral sentiments on average (gay adoption and abortion). In addition, both dimensions of moral conviction will be cross-referenced with the direction of the attitude to test for ideologically asymmetrical effects.

H4: Both dimensions of moral conviction are not expected to interact with ideology in explaining involvement and intolerance.

H5: Both dimensions of moral conviction are not expected to interact with political knowledge in explaining involvement and intolerance.

Alternative explanations to moral conviction's role as a political cue

Although seminal works in political science demonstrated that the vast majority of Americans are politically unknowledgeable (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996), and ideologically unsophisticated (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964), individual-level political attitudes seem to be reasonably predictable, and public opinion is overall stable and intelligible (e.g. Page and Shapiro, 1992). A common answer to the dysfunctional public paradox is that the public relies on a variety of cues in forming political attitudes. There is some evidence that American political attitudes are driven by stable political principles and key ideas (A. de Tocqueville, 1848/2000), such as individualism, equality, and limited government (e.g. McClosky and Zaller, 1984; Feldman, 1988; Pole, 1993; Kinder and Mendelberg, 2000; Feldman and Steenbergen, 2001), or by general motivation-based values, such as openness to change and the concern for the self versus concern for the other (Schwartz, 1992). Still others view personality predispositions as directing political behavior, specifically social conservatism and authoritarianism (e.g. Jost et al, 2003).

Political principles, goal-driven values and personal inclinations are all able to capture greater complexity relative to one-dimensional ideology, while remaining few in number—especially compared to the large number of political attitudes a citizen in a democracy is expected to hold (Feldman, 2003). Nevertheless, I suggest that moral

judgment—i.e. the controlled and automatic process of moral assessment of objects—holds some advantage over values, political principles and traits.

In contrast with specific political principles (such as individualism, equality, feminism, support for diplomatic measures in foreign relations and so on), which are grounded in a specific era and polity, motivation-based values, personality traits, and moral judgment have the merit of being relatively context-free and nearly universal (Schwartz, 1992). Specifically, some moral principles, like the taste for fairness, justice, and care, prevail throughout mankind's history, across times, geographical boundaries, and sometimes even species (e.g. Haidt and Graham, 2007).[23] Such generally applicable principles would be more efficient for a society to socialize for.

But while values are near-general too (Schwartz, 1992), moral judgment has additional advantages over values in directing attitudes, as unlike psychological motives and moral emotions, values refer to consciously desired end- states, while moral judgment emerges at a much earlier phase on the developmental scale (Smetana, 1981), and does not necessitate the assumption of awareness (e.g. Cushman, Young and Hauser, 2006). On the other hand, personal predispositions such as authoritarianism, tendency to empathy, and openness do not straightforwardly translate into political behavior, such as participation or attitudinal extremity. Unlike traits, morality is inherently action inducing, and being emotional in nature, it willingly translates into both political behavior and cognition.

Thus, I argue that moral judgment is a particularly good cue to rely on, as it is universal and generalizable beyond time and place (i.e. is still useful with changes of

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[23] Although this claim is by no means widely accepted, see Isaiah Berlin and to debates about what is meant by equal opportunity.

issues, countries and polities), intuitive and easy to communicate (both with other people and with elites), has a strong motivational force and readily generates action, is just as useful for non-political issues (so developing a singular schema for political principles is unnecessary), yet is still able to comprise the complexity of politics with just a few guidelines (especially as compared to the large number of political attitudes, see Feldman, 2003). Thus, there is reason to believe that moral judgment guides political attitudes above and beyond political principles, core values, partisanship and personality, and controlling for these factors in the statistical models should not cancel the explanatory power of moral conviction.

Method

Data

The data comes from a representative survey carried out by phone among NY state residents of 18 years or older. The survey was executed by the Center for Survey Research and Stony Brook University, funded by a dissertation improvement grant from the National Science Foundation, and included 788 completions, which were randomly assigned to answer questions regarding one of three political issues: gay adoption (N=274), abortion (N=235), or capital punishment (N=298). Of the sample, 39% self identified as liberals and 37% as conservatives (the rest as independents); the age varied from 18-92 with a mean of 54, and 41% were males.

Procedure

Overall, respondents answered questions pertaining to the dependent variables before either dimension of moral conviction was measured; these were adapted according

to the issue to which the participant was randomly assigned. Then, controls were measured. The procedure for the cognitive moral conviction scales remained the same as in study 2 (see measures below), with slight alteration of question wording, to adjust them to a phone rather than a web-based survey. The encoding of the emotional dimension, however, was altered to be more similar in nature to the cognitive dimension. All measures were coded 0-1, such that 1 indicates higher on the trait, except age (given in years).

Dependent Variables

Certainty: How certain are you of your views on [issue], 5 point scale, from not at all certain to extremely certain: mean abortion: .75; mean gay adoption: .69; mean capital punishment: .68.

Importance: How important is [issue] to you compared to the way you feel about other social and political issues, 5-point-scale, from not at all important to extremely important, mean abortion: .58; mean gay adoption: .35; mean capital punishment: .47.

Attitudinal extremity: To what extent do you favor or oppose [issue], originally varying from 1 (strongly oppose) to 7 (strongly favor), and folded such that 1 indicates high extremity (originally 1 or 7), mean abortion: .76, mean gay adoption: .65; mean capital punishment: .63.

Political participation: A series of 3 4-point-scale questions: Do you ever try to convince people to change their attitude on [issue]; In the last 12 months, did you ever write a letter or a comment regarding the issue of [issue] to the newspaper, to some website on the internet, or to a politician or other officials?; In the past two years, have you volunteered in any institution that deals with the issue of [issue]; (Often; Sometimes;

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Rarely; Never), Abortion: r_{mean}=.27, mean=.11; Gay adoption: r_{mean}=.29, mean=.06; Capital punishment: r_{mean}=.32, mean=.07.[24]

Single issue voting: How important is a candidate's position on [issue] in deciding how you vote in an election? 5 point scale, from not at all certain to extremely certain, mean abortion: .56, mean gay adoption: .40; mean capital punishment: .45.

Tolerance A scale of 3 4-point-scale questions: Should someone who [opposes/ supports issue] be allowed to make a speech in your city, town, or community? Teach in a public school? Distribute brochures in public areas (by knocking on doors, handing them out on public transportation and so on)? From definitely yes to definitely no. Participants were asked about people who hold attitudinally dissimilar view to themselves, according to their answer on the attitude question, and respondents who answered on the middle point on this question were randomly assigned to answer either on a person opposing or supporting the issue, Abortion: r_{mean}=.37, mean=.73; Gay adoption: r_{mean}=.46, mean=.74; Capital punishment: r_{mean}=.46, mean=.82[25].

Moral conviction

See *Appendix* for descriptive statistics of the moral conviction measures.

Cognitive dimension

1. Act evaluation- In general, would you say [practice] is alright, somewhat alright, somewhat not alright, or not alright? 4 point scale.

2. Contingency on common practice in the United States- Now suppose that [practice] were [common/uncommon] in the United States, would it definitely be alright

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[24] For scales of 2 or 3 items, I report the more suitable inter-items mean correlation for consistency. The reliability coefficient α is reported in a footnote. In this case, α=.47, .46, .49 correspondingly.
[25] α=.63, .71, .67 correspondingly.

[to engage in act] in this country, mostly alright, mostly not alright, or definitely not alright? 4 point scale.

3. <u>Legal status in the United States</u>- Do you think that there should or should not be a law that [prohibits/ allows practice] in this country? 4 point scale.

4. <u>Legal contingency</u>- Now suppose there is a law [allowing/prohibiting practice]. Do you think it would be definitely alright [to engage in act] if there was a law prohibiting it, mostly alright, mostly not alright, or definitely not alright? 4 point scale.

5. <u>Contingency on common practice in another country</u>-

Suppose that there was another country where [practice] is very [common/uncommon]. In this country, do you think it would be definitely alright [to engage in act], mostly alright, mostly not alright, or definitely not alright? 4 point scale.

6. <u>Legal status in another country</u>- Do you think that ALL countries should definitely pass a law [allowing/prohibiting practice], probably pass a law, probably not pass a law, or definitely not pass a law? 4 point scale.

Measures were adapted from Turiel, Hildebrandt and Wainryb (1991). The measure was composed of answers to questions 2-6, which were branched by the responses to question 1. In these questions, participants answering that a certain political practice is alright or somewhat alright were asked about their response to a situation where it is generally unaccepted or legally prohibited, whereas participants viewing the practice as somewhat not alright or not alright were asked about a situation where it is commonly accepted or legally allowed. A person who answered don't know or refused to the branching question was randomly assigned one of the two sets of questions. Participants got a 0 or a 1/3 for each time they shifted their answer from their original

attitude to "definitely" or "mostly" respectively—and 2/3 or 1 in absolute value if they kept their initial attitude (e.g. saying that something is definitely alright if it is very common after they said they believe it is not alright got a 0, saying it is mostly alright got a 1/3, saying it is mostly not alright got a 2/3, and saying it is still definitely not alright even if very common got a 1). This yielded a 20 point scale, 1 being high on cognitive moral conviction, holding constant the attitude's direction. Abortion: $\alpha=.70$, mean=.62; Gay adoption: $\alpha=.64$, mean=.61; Capital punishment: $\alpha=.69$, mean=.58.

Emotional dimension

1. Self directed negative emotions-

The following questions concern your feelings in different situations. Please think about the specific emotion you would feel personally in each situation and answer based on how much of the emotion you feel, and not just how much you support or oppose the action. Imagine that you work in [relevant job], and as part of your job [have to engage in act/ have to refuse performing the act]. How ashamed would this make you feel? How guilty? 5 point scale from extremely to not at all.

2. Other directed negative emotions-

Imagine that someone you know who works in a [relevant job] regularly [engages in act/ refuses to perform act]. How angry would this make you feel? How disgusted? 5 point scale from extremely to not at all.

3. Third parties directed negative emotions-

Imagine another country in which [relevant population] [frequently engages in act/ always denied act]. How disgusted would this make you feel? 5 point scale from extremely to not at all.

Participants answering that a certain political practice is alright or somewhat alright were asked about their response to a situation where it is not allowed or they are forced to deny it, whereas participants viewing the practice as somewhat not alright or not alright were asked about a situation where it is allowed or they are engage in it. A person who answered don't know or refused to the branching question answered all questions on both situations. The aversive emotions were averaged for all relevant questions, 1 being high on emotional moral conviction, holding constant the attitude's direction. Abortion: α=.85, mean=.51; Gay adoption: α=.88, mean=.59; Capital punishment: α=.79, mean=.43.

Controls

Ideology In general, when it comes to politics, do you consider yourself… from extremely liberal to extremely conservative, 7 point scale, mean=.50.

Social Conservatism 4 items adopted from Conover and Feldman's (1984) Moral Traditionalism scale, e.g. Society should be more accepting of people whose appearance or values are very different from most, Reversed; This country would be better off if there were more emphasis on traditional family ties, α=.54, mean=.47.

Party identification Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a… from strong Republican to a strong Democrat, reversed, 7 point scale, mean=.44.

Openness to experience 3 items adopted from Buchanan et al (2005), e.g. I enjoy hearing new ideas, r_{mean}=.144, mean=.81, α=.32.

Authoritarianism 3 items adopted from Feldman and Stenner's (1997) authoritarianism scale, e.g. Would you say that it is more important for a child to be independent or respectful of their elders? r_{mean}=.32, mean=.56, α=.58.

Empathy 3 items adopted from Caruso and Mayer (1998), e.g. Seeing other people smile makes me smile, $r_{mean}=.15$, mean=.82, $\alpha=.31$.

Feminism 2 items adopted from Morgan (1996), e.g. Men have too much influence in American politics compared to women, r=.52, mean=.70, $\alpha=.68$.

Disgust sensitivity 3 items adopted from the Revised Disgust Scale (see Haidt, McCauley, and Rozin, 1994; Olatunji et al., 2007), e.g. How disgusting would you find each of the following experiences: Your friend's cat dies, and you have to pick up the dead body with your bare hands. $r_{mean}=.43$, mean: .514, $\alpha=.69$.

Political knowledge 4 multiple choice items scale, e.g. who is the president of Russia. $\alpha=.59$, mean: .607.

Religious observance Lots of things come up that keep people from attending religious services even if they want to. Thinking about your life these days, how often do you attend religious services, apart from occasional weddings, baptisms or funerals? 6 point scale, from never to more than once a week, mean=.49.

Socio demographics Age (in years), mean=54.5; Gender (binary, male=1), mean=.41; Education (14 ordered options), mean=.68.

Results

Moral conviction and attitude strength

Attitude strength—an index of attitude certainty and issue importance—on each one of the three political issues, was submitted to a linear regression with cognitive moral conviction, emotional moral conviction, and alternative explanations. In addition, the

components of the attitude strength index, certainty and importance, were each submitted to an ordered probit. Table 1 presents the regression coefficients for the nine models.

The effect of moral conviction

Do both dimensions of moral conviction increase attitude strength, holding constant other psychological, sociological, and political key explanatory variables? Results are affirmative. First, cognitive moral conviction increases attitude strength by about 31% of its range on average (26% for abortion, t=3.55; 37% for gay adoption, t=4.44; 30% for capital punishment, t=4.42) such that ceteris paribus, participants held stronger attitudes for one or the other ideological side to the extent that they scored high on domain theory's formal characteristics. In a similar vein, hot moral conviction increases attitude strength by about 17% of its range on average (14% for abortion, t=2.45; 16% for gay adoption, t=2.61; 22% for capital punishment, t=4.55) such that participants held stronger attitudes for one or the other ideological side to the extent that they reported stronger moral emotions upon transgression, holding all else constant. Note that the effect of cognitive moral conviction is almost twice the effect of hot moral conviction. When rerunning these three models with both dimensions of moral conviction averaged, the combined index increases attitude strength by 45% of its range on average (38% for abortion, t=5.16; 47% for gay adoption, t=6.00; 50% for capital punishment, t=8.41), holding all else equal. The six ordered probit models in Table 1 estimate the effect of the two dimensions of moral conviction and the control variables on the two components of the attitude strength index, attitude certainty and issue importance, suggesting that the two are influenced by moral conviction to a similar extent.[26]

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[26] The questionnaire measured another component of attitude strength—attitudinal ambivalence—by asking, for instance, "How "torn" do you feel between the position that gay adoption should be allowed,

Table 4.1: Moral conviction and attitude strength

	Abortion			Gay Adoption			Capital Punishment		
	Strength	Certainty	Importance	Strength	Certainty	Importance	Strength	Certainty	Importance
Cognitive Moral Conviction	.261** (.073)	1.133** (.383)	.922** (.359)	.366** (.083)	1.645** (.431)	1.507** (.421)	.296** (.067)	1.578** (.385)	1.056** (.363)
Emotional Moral Conviction	.141** (.057)	.665** (.296)	.639** (.286)	.156** (.060)	.717** (.303)	.606** (.287)	.221** (.048)	1.013** (.276)	1.071** (.265)
Ideology (conservatism)	-.014 (.088)	-.313 (.449)	.189 (.428)	-.064 (.084)	-.440 (.437)	-.105 (.406)	.179** (.067)	.830** (.369)	.720** (.356)
Social conservatism	.105 (.116)	.722 (.609)	.290 (.576)	-.083 (.097)	.127 (.505)	-.681 (.466)	-.030 (.081)	-.270 (.456)	.132 (.442)
Party id (Republican)	.058 (.070)	.478 (.370)	.025 (.337)	.034 (.066)	.215 (.334)	.103 (.313)	-.037 (.057)	-.078 (.316)	-.147 (.300)
Feminism	.129* (.066)	.045 (.340)	.830** (.326)	-.002 (.070)	-.349 (.363)	.517 (.337)	-.017 (.058)	-.060 (.324)	-.006 (.308)
Authoritarian	.057 (.057)	.230 (.292)	.179 (.281)	-.009 (.061)	-.009 (.311)	-.152 (.287)	.042 (.047)	.248 (.264)	.014 (.252)
Openness to experience	-.024 (.104)	-.109 (.542)	.022 (.501)	.146 (.100)	1.041** (.500)	.036 (.482)	-.035 (.087)	-.111 (.483)	-.436 (.458)
Empathy	.201* (.107)	.631 (.544)	.931* (.530)	-.151 (.109)	-.923 (.569)	-.141 (.531)	-.062 (.093)	-.045 (.519)	-.213 (.503)
Disgust sensitivity	.021 (.068)	-.078 (.356)	.201 (.337)	.001 (.072)	-.089 (.373)	.111 (.342)	-.070 (.053)	-.731** (.296)	-.018 (.286)
Religiosity	.046 (.055)	.103 (.284)	.268 (.272)	-.004 (.050)	-.278 (.252)	.118 (.237)	-.049 (.046)	-.268 (.260)	-.117 (.246)
Political knowledge	.104 (.066)	.603* (.338)	.109 (.317)	.024 (.070)	.223 (.347)	-.047 (.328)	-.067 (.060)	.504 (.333)	-.966** (.328)
Education	-.009 (.146)	.103 (.756)	-.057 (.705)	.111 (.127)	.778 (.636)	.232 (.605)	.124 (.108)	.079 (.603)	.914 (.578)
Age	.000 (.001)	.007 (.006)	-.004 (.005)	.002* (.001)	.009* (.005)	.005 (.005)	.004** (.001)	.022** (.006)	.015** (.005)
Male	-.048 (.042)	-.127 (.213)	-.188 (.203)	-.033 (.042)	-.118 (.212)	-.001 (.196)	-.018 (.034)	-.175 (.191)	.043 (.180)
Constant	.013 (.172)			.083 (.177)			.123 (.157)		
Threshold 1		.661 (.894)	1.273 (.850)		.472 (.905)	1.084 (.875)		.522 (.887)	.380 (.841)
Threshold 2		1.308 (.888)	1.860 (.853)		.889 (.902)	1.734 (.877)		1.051 (.886)	1.452 (.847)
Threshold 3		2.263 (.895)	2.762 (.862)		2.029 (.911)	2.864 (.889)		2.212 (.891)	2.434 (.851)
Threshold 4		2.931 (.902)	3.313 (.867)		2.488 (.915)	3.334 (.897)		3.152 (.899)	3.012 (.854)
R^2 / Pseudo R^2	30%	9%	8%	30%	11%	8%	34%	13%	9%
Log likelihood ratio	-	41.73**	45.01**	-	57.37**	45.50**	-	78.29**	60.00**
N	176	179	177	189	190	193	210	214	212

Entries in the strength models are OLS coefficients. Entries in the certainty and importance models are maximum-likelihood estimates of ordered probit models. All scales are coded to range from 0 to 1 with the exception of age (years). **: $p<.05$ (two tail); *: $p<.05$ (one tail; note that hypotheses were directional). Std. errors in brackets.

and the other side that says it should not be allowed." However, this item had no significant effect on attitude strength in any of the three political issues. Still, moral conviction shows similar effects on attitude strength when the latter includes ambivalence as a third component.

Thus, moral conviction exerts a vast influence, by far the strongest and most consistent among all independent variables. Other factors that exhibit a significant effect on attitude strength were feminism and empathy for abortion (ß=.129, t=1.96; ß=.201, t=1.87), such that increasing feminism and empathy increases attitude strength, older age increases attitude strength on gay adoption (ß=.002, t=1.77) and capital punishment (ß=.004, t=4.02), and ideology affected capital punishment (ß=.179, t=2.68), such that increasing conservatism leads to stronger attitudes in the matter.

Robust analysis

Moral conviction was specified in these models to reflect the strength of conviction, holding constant its ideological direction. However, will re-specifying other independent variables from reflecting political tendency toward conservatism or liberalism to tap non-directional strength change the pattern of results? To test this possibility, ideology and party identification were both integrated in the model in their folded form, altering them from their 7 point scale to a 4 point scale, such that the two extreme categories were collapsed and coded as the highest (i.e. 1), and so were categories 2 and 6 and 3 and 5, with the middle category coded as 0. However, folded ideology and partisanship still had no significant effect on attitude strength, while moral conviction retained its effect size, with the exception of a significant effect of folded ideology on attitude strength on abortion, ß=.138, t=2.52. Folded ideology had non-significant coefficients of .085 and .079 on gay adoption and capital punishment, and folded partisanship had non-significant coefficients of .039, .060 and -.034 while combined moral conviction retained significant coefficients of .350, .444, and .467 on abortion, gay adoption and capital punishment, respectively. These results suggest that

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the vast influence of moral conviction is not an artifact of its unidirectional specification, and does not diminish when other variables are specified similarly.

Another indication of the robust effect of moral conviction on attitude strength comes from examining a model in which it is omitted. The explained variance contributed by all the independent variables specified in Table 1 except for moral conviction dropped from 30% at a minimum, to a maximum of 13% (R^2=13% for abortion, 13% for gay adoption, 9% for capital punishment).[27]

Moderation by support for the practice

Is the effect of moral conviction ideologically asymmetrical? To test this option, each of the two dimensions of moral conviction was interacted with ideological direction (a dummy in which 0=opposition and 1=support), and these interactions and their components were submitted to three regressions, one for each political issue. None of these six interactive terms approaches statistical significance (with the exception of hot moral conviction on abortion, where moral emotions increase attitude strength among people opposed to abortion, ß=.350, t=2.96), but not among supporters, ß=.029, t=.40)[28]). These results suggest that moral conviction on both ideological sides increases attitude strength.

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[27] The omission of moral conviction did not affect the other independent variables by much. Feminism and empathy still increase attitude strength on abortion, and so does political knowledge (ß=.130, t=1.81; ß=.279, t=2.42; ß=.120, t=1.72), older age still increases attitude strength on gay adoption, and so does openness to experience (ß=.002, t=1.67; ß=.257, t=2.40), and age and conservatism on the 7-point ideology scale still increase attitude strength on capital punishment (ß=.004, t=3.52; ß=.132, t=1.70).

[28] Interactive term: ß=-.321, t=-2.27; dummy support for abortion: ß= .297, t=2.11; hot moral conviction: ß= .350, t=2.96.

Moderation by knowledge

Next, one may wonder whether moral conviction only affects attitude strength among the politically sophisticated. It is this study's argument that intuitive and emotional moral conviction would be available to all, the politically unsophisticated included, but this is still an option worth examining. To test this option, each of the two dimensions of moral conviction was interacted with political knowledge (0-1, 1=high), and these interactions were submitted to three regressions, one for each political issue. None of these six interactive terms approaches statistical significance (with the exception of cognitive moral conviction on gay adoption, where cognitive moral conviction actually increases attitude strength among the most unknowledgeable participants, (ß= .770, t=3.68), but not among the most knowledgeable ones, ß=.169, t=1.34[29]). These results suggest that the effect of moral conviction on attitude strength is not contingent on political knowledge.

Mediation by awareness

Is the effect of moral conviction mediated by awareness? In other words, should a person be aware of their moral conviction in order to translate it to political determination? To test this possibility I've submitted the attitude strength models to a mediation analysis, in which self-reported moral conviction was tested for the extent that it explains the effect of each dimension of theory driven moral conviction on attitude strength.

Results tell us something about the nature of self-reported moral conviction. Sobel tests show that one's perception of the extent to which an attitude towards the issue is tied

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[29] Interactive term: ß=-.601, t=-2.08; knowledge: ß= .272, t=1.37; cognitive moral conviction: ß= .770, t=3.68.

to morality has no significant mediation effect on the impact of cognitive moral conviction on attitude strength (abortion: p=.424; gay adoption: p=.980; capital punishment: p=.124), but does mediate on average a third of the effect that emotional moral conviction has on determination (abortion: 26%, p=.062; gay adoption: 43%, p=.006; capital punishment: 38%, p=.001). This suggests that the effect of self-reported moral conviction on attitude strength comes from awareness of one's moral emotions and not from people's tendency to view their attitude as universal, which fits well with current findings suggesting that people often rely on their emotions as an indication of their views.

Moral conviction and political attitudes: reverse causation?

One may wonder about a possible endogeneity problem in the previous models. Does moral conviction affect one's political attitude, or is it the other way around? There are two major ways of confronting such concerns about endogeneity: theoretically and empirically. First, causation is a conceptual matter. According to my theory of moral conviction, causality should mostly flow from moral conviction to political attitudes, as certainty in an attitude is a symptom of the low variance and univalenced distribution of considerations on the issue, and its importance results from the memory object's intimates relations with personal and social identity.

In addition, the assumption that political attitudes are subordinate to morality is based on a developmental line of research indicating that political attitudes develop at a much older age than moral emotions and categorization of the moral domain. Toddlers readily express moral emotions like disgust and anger, and are known to apply domain

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theory's formal characteristics from the age of three (Smetana, 1981), whereas political opinions are shaped only later. Studies show that the understanding of abstract concepts requires a comprehension of certain core political concepts such as war, state, and nationality that develop in adolescence (Piaget and Weil, 1951; Sigel and Cocking, 1977). Other studies indicate that it is not until the end of puberty that adolescents can refer to the abstract concepts of society, institutions, norms and laws (Torney-Purta, 1990).

Still, it is certainly possible that at some point the relationship between moral conviction and attitudes may become dynamic for some people and issues, such that at times major changes in a political attitude may reflect back on one's moral convictions. This is where the statistical solution of two-stage least-squares comes in. Two-stage least squares regression (2SLS) uses instrumental variables to allow and test for recursivity (i.e. a state of reverse causation, in which one of the covariates affects the dependent variables), which otherwise violates OLS assumption that the disturbance term is uncorrelated with the independent variables. The model takes predicted values from the first (reduced form) equation, and plugs them in the second equation.

To test the extent to which there is reverse causality whereby an individual's political attitude affects their moral conviction in some matter, we need to find an instrumental variable that explains moral conviction, but at the same time is properly excluded from the original model explaining the political attitude, and is uncorrelated with the error term in the primary model (e.g. Bartels, 1991). If we then use this instrument to predict moral conviction, and substitute this new predicted variable for the original moral conviction variable, our new variable will be uncorrelated with the error

term. If the new variable still shows the expected effect on the political attitude when we alleviate the endogeneity concern, it will strengthen our confidence in the results from OLS.

More often than not, good instrumental variables are very difficult to come by, as any variable that will be correlated with moral conviction on some issue is also expected to be correlated with the actual political attitude. A particularly good instrumental variable can come from an experiment in which, after we measure a political opinion, we run some manipulations that produce moral conviction. In this case, to the extent that the manipulation was successful, it affects moral conviction, but is completely exogenous to the measured political attitude, which was recorded prior to the treatment, and thus is properly excluded from the original equation.

Fortunately, I have available a database from exactly such an experiment, which I ran for the previous chapter, in which I manipulated moral conviction by inducing harm associations and the moral emotion of disgust, after measuring political attitudes towards refraining from military intervention in Darfur, and refraining from the regulation of internet pornography. The experimental treatment, comparing a control with priming for disgust or harm associations, makes for perfect instrumental variables with which to test for a reversed causality of moral conviction and political attitudes, because this manipulation was found to affect moral conviction, but the attitudes and attitude strength questions are undoubtedly not affected by it because they were measured before it was ever presented. OLS and 2SLS estimates of the effect of moral conviction (averaged over the two dimensions) alongside controls for one's political attitude and the strength of one's attitude are presented in Table 2.

Although ideal in other respects, the instrumental variables in these models, as is always the case with instruments, do not perfectly explain the right hand side endogenous variable, and thus introduce noise to the primary equation, which considerably increases the standard errors, and makes it difficult to reject the null hypothesis. Indeed, a comparison of the standard errors produced by OLS and 2SLS indicate that 2SLS generates standard errors that are 13 times bigger on average. Despite of considerably larger errors, moral conviction shows effects in the right direction in all four models, and in the case of the issue of intervention in Darfur—its effect are statistically significant.

Table 4.2: Moral conviction and political attitudes: 2SLS vs. OLS

	Intervention in Darfur				Regulation of internet porn			
	Attitude strength		Supports refraining		Attitude strength		Supports refraining	
	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS
Moral Conviction	**1.388***	**.469****	**.899****	**.349****	1.239	**.530****	.725	**.446****
	(.754)	**(.089)**	**(.455)**	**(.026)**	(1.097)	**(.089)**	(.492)	**(.034)**
Ideology (conserv.)	.087	-.029	.037	.076	-.048	-.017	-.056	**-.109***
	(.063)	(.045)	(.082)	(.047)	(.103)	(.072)	(.126)	**(.065)**
Authoritarian	.021	-.028	-.080	.007	.003	.010	.032	.065
	(.052)	(.035)	(.093)	(.030)	(.055)	(.048)	(.079)	(.045)
Militarianism	-.031	.018	.016	**-.106****	-.050	-.014	.038	.019
	(.044)	(.023)	(.109)	**(.027)**	(.068)	(.033)	(.049)	(.028)
Religiosity	-.062	-.011	.055	.018	-.114	-.015	-.004	-.052
	(.072)	(.031)	(.056)	(.030)	(.156)	(.043)	(.097)	(.043)
Political knowledge	**.172****	**.167****	.311	.075	.207	.089	**.210**	**.211****
	(.053)	**(.045)**	(.200)	(.052)	(.197)	(.063)	**(.065)**	**(.057)**
Education	-.011	-.013	-.014	-.006	.015	.014	.006	-.001
	(.011)	(.009)	(.016)	(.009)	(.013)	(.012)	(.018)	(.012)
Income	.046	.007	.000	-.009	-.017	-.056	-.073	-.050
	(.050)	(.034)	(.054)	(.034)	(.077)	(.049)	(.063)	(.044)
Age	.002	.000	-.001	.001	.001	.001	.002	.002
	(.002)	(.001)	(.002)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)
Male	.055	.001	-.104	.007	.134	.049	.026	**.097****
	(.057)	(.022)	(.097)	(.021)	(.136)	(.030)	(.130)	**(.030)**
Constant	-.199	**.289****	**.567****	**.464****	-.215	**.168***	**.381**	**.359****
	(.472)	**(.080)**	**(.128)**	**(.059)**	(.593)	**(.094)**	**(.091)**	**(.073)**
R^2	**-**	21%	-	51%	-	14%	-	51%
Root MSE	.213	.171	.264	.166	.262	.236	.247	.221
N	270	270	282	282	279	279	270	270

Entries are OLS and 2SLS coefficients. Instruments in the 2 SLS models are harm and disgust experimental manipulations (predicting moral conviction). Moral conviction is coded as non-directional in the strength models, and as directional in the support models. All IDVs are coded to range from 0 to 1 with the exception of age (years). **: $p<.05$ (two tail); *: $p<.05$ (one tail; note that hypotheses were directional). Std. errors in brackets.

Starting with attitude strength, both 2SLS and OLS show that moral conviction significantly increases attitude strength regarding intervention in Darfur (2SLS: t=1.84; OLS: t=5.26), such that ceteris paribus, participants held stronger attitudes on one or the other ideological side to the extent that they were more morally convinced. Similarly, moral conviction increases attitude strength concerning internet porn regulation, but was only significant via OLS (2SLS: t=1.13; OLS: t=5.95; note that while the 2SLS coefficient is twice as big as the coefficient produced by OLS, the standard errors in 2SLS are 12 times as big).

In the models estimating the effect of moral conviction on the actual attitude on these issues, the moral conviction measure was altered to capture the direction of one's conviction (which was irrelevant in the models tapping attitude strength). In this directional version of the measure, subjects received a -1 when opposed to the practice and a 1 when supporting it, consistent with the coding for the dependent variable, based on their response to the items used for branching (recall that respondents encountered slightly different items based on their preexisting attitude towards the issue).

For the issue of intervention in Darfur, both 2SLS and OLS show that increasing moral conviction toward support for refraining from intervention significantly increases one's support for intervention (2SLS: t=1.98; OLS: t=13.58). The same relationship occurs for the issue of porn regulation as well, except it was only significant for the OLS estimates (2SLS: t=1.47; OLS: t=13.20; note that while the 2SLS coefficient is bigger from the OLS coefficient by a factor of 1.6, the standard errors in 2SLS are 14 times bigger).

Next, we can run a Hausman test to determine whether the differences between the two models are large enough to suggest that the OLS estimates are inconsistent due to endogeneity. Its null indicates that endogeneity is not a huge threat for OLS, as the estimator is still consistent, thus a rejection of the null implies that there are considerable effects from an endogenous regressor and thus estimation by 2SLS is due.

Results differ for the two issues tested. For the issue of intervention in Darfur, the Hausman test yields a marginally significant chi-square for the political attitude [χ^2=3.66; p(χ^2)=.056], and a significant chi-square for attitude strength [χ^2=13.01; p(χ^2)=.002], which leads to the rejection of the null and to the conclusion that some reversed causation occurs in the model, and we should rely on the 2SLS coefficients. Note however, that the 2SLS coefficients in this case replicate the significant results from OLS.

However, for the issue of porn regulation, the Hausman test yields insignificant chi-square both for the political attitude [χ^2=.39; p(χ^2)=.531] and for attitude strength [χ^2=.51; p(χ^2)=.475]. These results suggest that the null of no endogeneity cannot be rejected, and OLS is a consistent estimator when it comes to reversed causality, and we should be able to rely on its coefficients in this case. Recall that OLS shows significant results in the expected direction for the effect of moral conviction on support for porn regulation as well as for attitude strength in this issue.

To sum up this section, the theory suggests that moral conviction would emerge before political attitudes are crystallized. However, later on in life, some dynamic process may occur with respect to some political issues, in which changes to the attitude may affect moral conviction regarding the issue. In any case, even when controlling for any

reverse causality, moral conviction still significantly affects both political attitudes and attitude strength.

Theory driven and self-reported moral conviction: reverse causation?

Another question worth answering regards the causal relationship between theory-driven moral conviction (i.e. the categorization of the moral domain and moral emotions), and self-reported moral conviction (i.e. one's perception of the extent to which they view an issue as moral). Theoretically speaking, it makes sense that while correlated, emotions and cognitive categorization to the moral domain precede one's moral appraisal and awareness of moral conviction. Important is to note that the instruments in these models are not as ideal as they are in the last subsection, because moral judgment and self-reported moral conviction were recorded after the morality manipulation, and may thus be affected by it. This is especially so for moral judgment, which was one of the dependent variables in this experiment, its order after the manipulation was randomized, and was affected by the treatment. This is less of a concern for self-reported moral conviction, which was measured later in the questionnaire, about 30 questions after the experimental treatment was presented, and is thus less likely to have been affected by it. Thus, it is still worthwhile applying a statistical approach to this question. Therefore, Table 3 presents results from models similar to the ones in Table 2, where OLS and 2SLS are employed to estimate the effect of moral conviction (averaged over the two dimensions) and controls on self-reported moral conviction and moral judgment concerning refraining from military intervention in Darfur, and refraining from regulation of internet pornography.

Table 4.3: Theory driven and self-reported moral conviction: 2SLS vs. OLS

	Intervention in Darfur				Regulation of internet porn			
	Moral Judgment		Self-reported MC		Moral Judgment		Self-reported MC	
	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS
Moral Conviction	.501**	.297**	1.224	.635**	.514*	.338**	2.916*	.782**
	(.234)	(.026)	(1.029)	(.103)	(.306)	(.031)	(1.747)	(.102)
Ideology (conserv.)	.001	.003	.176	.110	.096	.058	-.024	.066
	(.050)	(.045)	(.136)	(.071)	(.092)	(.063)	(.132)	(.073)
Authoritarian	-.051	-.009	-.106*	-.122**	-.034	-.008	-.073	-.066
	(.063)	(.036)	(.061)	(.052)	(.065)	(.047)	(.090)	(.051)
Militarianism	-.052	-.086**	.002	.038	-.026	-.043	-.105	.001
	(.049)	(.023)	(.071)	(.033)	(.041)	(.029)	(.107)	(.034)
Religiosity	.038	.032	.029	.062	.026	-.006	-.377	-.074
	(.038)	(.034)	(.072)	(.043)	(.062)	(.037)	(.261)	(.046)
Political knowledge	.108	.003	.260**	.247**	.105*	.102*	.542	.177**
	(.132)	(.047)	(.076)	(.068)	(.057)	(.053)	(.342)	(.069)
Education	-.020	-.012	-.008	-.008	.009	.006	.035*	.027**
	(.014)	(.008)	(.013)	(.012)	(.013)	(.011)	(.020)	(.012)
Income	.000	.001	.000	-.001	.000	.000	.001	.001
	(.001)	(.001)	(.002)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.002)	(.001)
Age	-.056	-.010	-.007	-.047	-.055	-.008	.272	.016
	(.057)	(.022)	(.079)	(.031)	(.084)	(.027)	(.221)	(.031)
Male	-.022	-.013	.003	-.016	.024	.039	.049	-.051
	(.042)	(.035)	(.065)	(.054)	(.054)	(.047)	(.126)	(.051)
Constant	.598**	.538**	-.199	.154	.411**	.387**	-1.177	-.016
	(.089)	(.053)	(.634)	(.122)	(.083)	(.074)	(.998)	(.118)
R^2	-	47%	-	24%	-	40%	-	26%
Root MSE	.162	.151	.257	.243	.199	.186	.427	.254
N	216	216	282	282	216	216	282	282

Entries are OLS and 2SLS coefficients. Instruments in the 2 SLS models are harm and disgust experimental manipulations (predicting moral conviction). Moral conviction is coded as non-directional in the self-reported models, and as directional in the moral judgment models. All IDVs scales are coded to range from 0 to 1 with the exception of age (years). **: $p < .05$ (two tail); *: $p < .05$ (one tail; note that hypotheses were directional). Std. errors in brackets.

In these models, self-reported moral conviction was measured using a scale of two items, which were both coded 0-1 prior to averaging: my attitude on (intervention/ regulation) is closely related to my core moral values and convictions (7 point scale); how much are your feelings about (intervention/ regulation) connected to your core moral beliefs or convictions. Moral judgment is an average scale of three 7 point questions: is refraining (from intervention/ regulation) a moral or an immoral act (reversed); extremely wrong, perfectly OK, or somewhere in between these two (reversed); how morally permissible or morally impossible do you regard refraining to be, with high meaning that

refraining is moral. Since moral judgment is directional, moral conviction in this model was coded as directional as well, such that extreme moral conviction in the direction of support for refraining is coded as 1, extreme moral conviction in the direction of opposition for refraining is coded as -1, and no moral conviction to either side is coded 0.

Starting with moral judgment, both 2SLS and OLS show that increasing moral conviction in support of refraining from intervention in Darfur increases the view that refraining is the moral and right thing to do (2SLS: t=2.14; OLS: t=11.49). Similarly, directional moral conviction significantly increases moral judgment on internet pornography regulation using both methods (2SLS: t=1.68; OLS: t=10.77). However, we must remember that these results should be treated with caution, as the instrumental manipulations may not have been rightly excluded from the second stage equation.

Moving to the models estimating the effect of moral conviction on self-reported moral conviction, where the instruments are probably more reliable, both 2SLS and OLS show that increasing moral conviction concerning pornography regulation significantly increases one's self-reported moral conviction (2SLS: t=1.98; OLS: t=13.58). The same relationship occurs for the issue of intervention in Darfur as well, except that this was only significant for the OLS estimates (2SLS: t=1.47; OLS: t=13.20; note that while the 2SLS coefficient is twice as big as the OLS coefficient, the standard errors in 2SLS are 10 times bigger).

Next, a Hausman test was applied to check whether the differences between OLS and 2SLS are large enough to suggest that the OLS estimates are inconsistent due to endogeneity. Results for three of the four models suggest that the null of no endogeneity cannot be rejected [moral judgment, Darfur: χ^2=.91; p(χ^2)=.340; porn: χ^2=.35; p(χ^2)=.554;

self-reported MC, Darfur: χ^2=.38; $p(\chi^2)$=.540], with the exception of self-reported moral conviction in porn regulation [χ^2=4.28; $p(\chi^2)$=.039]. Note, however, that even in the latter case, the 2SLS coefficients replicate the significant results from OLS.

To sum up this section, my theory suggests that categorization of some political issue as belonging to the moral domain and feelings of moral emotion precede any possible awareness of one's moral conviction, as well as any appraisal of the political practice as moral or immoral. Indeed, results show that a model controlling for reverse causality has no significant advantage compared to OLS, which assumes endogeneity, and even in cases where some endogeneity may occur, controlling for any reverse causality, moral conviction maintains its significant effect. Still, these results are tentative and should be taken with care, especially in the case of moral judgment.

Moral conviction, political participation and single issue voting

To test the extent to which moral conviction affects political involvement, single issue voting and political participation were submitted to an ordered probit and a linear regression analysis respectively, with both dimensions of moral conviction and controls. Table 4 presents the regression coefficients for the six models, two for each political issue.

Table 4.4: Moral conviction, political participation and single issue voting

	Abortion		Gay Adoption		Capital Punishment	
	Participation	SI Voting	Participation	SI Voting	Participation	SI Voting
Cognitive Moral Conviction	.090* (.050)	1.020** (.356)	.060 (.048)	1.418** (.408)	.127** (.038)	.787** (.358)
Emotional Moral Conviction	.125** (.038)	.737** (.275)	.063* (.034)	.485* (.287)	.065** (.028)	1.033** (.264)
Ideology (conserv.)	-.070 (.058)	.144 (.403)	-.046 (.049)	-.706* (.415)	.009 (.038)	.326 (.357)
Social conservatism	.233** (.075)	.100 (.522)	.011 (.055)	.682 (.461)	-.006 (.047)	.338 (.433)
Party id (Republican)	-.039 (.044)	.229 (.316)	.023 (.038)	.097 (.312)	-.019 (.032)	.229 (.301)
Feminism	-.079* (.045)	.207 (.313)	.047 (.039)	.116 (.344)	.051 (.032)	.611** (.303)
Authoritarian	-.017 (.038)	.103 (.275)	-.011 (.034)	-.024 (.293)	-.018 (.027)	.014 (.252)
Openness to experience	.022 (.069)	.585 (.481)	-.066 (.057)	.763 (.482)	-.176** (.048)	-.544 (.454)
Empathy	.043 (.071)	-.047 (.509)	-.067 (.061)	-.511 (.517)	-.017 (.053)	-.062 (.494)
Disgust sensitivity	.004 (.045)	.027 (.317)	-.013 (.041)	-.052 (.337)	-.019 (.030)	-.507* (.288)
Religiosity	.031 (.037)	-.051 (.262)	.006 (.028)	-.040 (.237)	.024 (.026)	-.307 (.248)
Political knowledge	-.023 (.044)	-.544* (.314)	.037 (.038)	.144 (.328)	.002 (.035)	-.726** (.325)
Education	.000 (.099)	.072 (.698)	-.007 (.072)	.304 (.608)	.067 (.062)	.618 (.582)
Age	-.002** (.001)	-.001 (.005)	.000 (.001)	-.002 (.005)	.001** (.001)	.013** (.005)
Male	-.014 (.027)	-.355* (.194)	-.015 (.023)	-.203 (.195)	.030 (.020)	.092 (.180)
Constant	.022 (.115)		.052 (.102)		-.045 (.089)	
Threshold 1		.094 (.824)		.817 (.869)		.461 (.835)
Threshold 2		.611 (.821)		1.462 (.869)		1.237 (.838)
Threshold 3		1.485 (.821)		2.464 (.879)		2.509 (.847)
Threshold 4		2.243 (.828)		3.175 (.891)		3.370 (.855)
R^2 / Pseudo R^2	21%	7%	8%	7%	24%	8%
Log likelihood ratio	-	38.72**	-	38.44**	-	49.75**
N	183	188	191	190	209	213
Mediation by attitude strength	28 %**	37%	n.s.	64%	21 %**	66%

Entries in the participation models are OLS coefficients. Entries in the voting models are maximum-likelihood estimates of ordered probit models. All scales are coded to range from 0 to 1 with the exception of age (years). **: p<.05 (two tail); *: p<.05 (one tail; note that hypotheses were directional). Std. errors in brackets. Mediation analysis comes from models where moral conviction is averaged for its two dimensions, and tests the mediation effect of attitude strength in the effect of moral conviction on each DV. In the participation models, the estimate and significance test come from a Sobel test (similar p values in a Goodman-2 test). In the voting models, the estimate comes from comparing the predicted value of MC on the DV when attitude strength is omitted and specified.

The effect of moral conviction

Results show that both dimensions of moral conviction robustly increase issue

based political involvement, above and beyond the political issues, holding constant key

alternative explanations, and also maintain the only effect consistent across all other

independent variables. First, emotional moral conviction increases single-issue political participation by about 9% of its range on average (13% for abortion, t=3.26; 6% for gay adoption, t=1.84; 7% for capital punishment, t=2.34) such that ceteris paribus, participants are more likely to try to persuade people to change their minds on this particular issue, volunteer in an institution that is dealing with it, and write a letter or post a comment about this issue online to the extent that they are more morally convinced about the issue. Similarly, cognitive moral conviction increases issue based political participation in the issues of abortion and capital punishment (9% for abortion, t=1.80; 6% for gay adoption, t=1.23; 13% for capital punishment, t=3.35) such that participants reported more political activity for the issues of abortion and capital punishment to the extent that they categorized the issue in their moral domain, holding all else constant. When rerunning these three models with both dimensions of moral conviction averaged, the combined index increases issue-based participation by 17% of its range on average (22% for abortion, t=4.34; 12% for gay adoption, t=2.79; 18% for capital punishment, t=5.27), holding all else equal.

Second, all else constant, both dimensions of moral conviction significantly increase single issue voting intentions on the three issues tested. First, emotional moral conviction increases the predicted probability of viewing a candidate's position on a single political issue as extremely important when deciding how to vote in an election voting by about 20% on average, when moving from its minimum to its maximum (abortion: there is a 9% chance for viewing abortion as extremely important when emotional moral conviction is at its minimum, and 44% when it is at its maximum; gay adoption: 2% vs. 11%; capital punishment: 2% vs. 18%), indicating that ceteris paribus,

single issue voting is far more likely as emotional moral conviction increases (abortion: z=2.68; gay adoption: z=1.69; capital punishment: z=3.92). Cognitive moral conviction increases the predicted probability of viewing a candidate's view on a political issue as extremely important in voting by 20% on average as well, when moving from its minimum to its maximum (abortion: there is a 9% chance for viewing abortion as extremely important when emotional moral conviction is at its minimum, and 38% when it is at its maximum; gay adoption: 1% vs. 19%; capital punishment: 2% vs. 16%), such that the chance for a single issue voting increases with cognitive moral conviction, holding all else constant (abortion: z=2.86; gay adoption: z=3.48; capital punishment: z=2.20).

When combined, the two dimensions of moral conviction increase the predicted probability of viewing a candidate's view on a political issue as extremely important in voting by 28% on average, when moving from its minimum to its maximum (abortion: there is a 1% chance for viewing abortion as extremely important when combined moral conviction is at its minimum, and 48% when it is at its maximum; gay adoption: 2% vs. 14%; capital punishment: 1% vs. 25%), such that the chance for a single issue voting increases with moral conviction, holding all else constant (abortion: z=4.63; gay adoption: z=4.31; capital punishment: z=5.63).

Robust analysis

It is furthermore worthwhile to examine whether re-specifying other independent variables as non-directional, or moral conviction as directional, affects the results, especially as ideology and party identification show no significant effect on involvement (with the exception of single issue voting on gay adoption, where liberalism increased the

tendency to make a vote decision based on this issue, holding else constant). First, the

models were re-specified with ideology and party identification integrated in their folded

form, which indicates non-directional ideological and partisan extremity, and moral

conviction averaged across its two dimensions. Coded this way, ideological extremity

shows a significant positive effect on political participation for the issue of abortion

alone, partisan extremity still holds no significant effects, and moral conviction retains its

significant effects, and shows vastly bigger coefficients (abortion: moral conviction:

$ß=.202$, $t=3.89$, ideological extremity: $ß=.065$, $t=1.73$, partisan extremity: $ß=.007$, $t=.22$;

gay adoption: moral conviction: $ß=.127$, $t=2.87$, ideological extremity: $ß=.006$, $t=.17$,

partisan extremity: $ß=.001$, $t=.04$; capital punishment: moral conviction: $ß=.177$, $t=5.09$,

ideological extremity: $ß=.002$, $t=.05$, partisan extremity: $ß=.020$, $t=.88$).

A similar pattern occurs in single issue voting intentions, where ideological

extremity shows a significant positive effect for the issues of abortion and capital

punishment, partisan extremity still carries no significant effects, and moral conviction

retains its significant effects, and shows much bigger coefficients (abortion: moral

conviction: $ß=1.601$, $z=4.32$, ideological extremity: $ß=.525$, $z=1.97$, partisan extremity:

$ß=.325$, $z=1.42$; gay adoption: moral conviction: $ß=1.672$, $z=4.35$, ideological extremity:

$ß=.419$, $z=1.54$, partisan extremity: $ß=.347$, $z=1.58$; capital punishment: moral

conviction: $ß=1.699$, $z=5.04$, ideological extremity: $ß=.453$, $z=1.68$, partisan extremity:

$ß=-.298$, $z=-1.42$). It seems then that the vast influence of moral conviction is not an

artifact of its unidirectional specification.

Another indication of the important role played by moral conviction in explaining

political involvement comes from examining the effect of omitting it. Models do not

significantly explain the variance in single issue voting when moral conviction is omitted, as indicated by the model's χ^2 test (abortion: $p(\chi^2)=.187$; gay adoption: $p(\chi^2)=.171$; capital punishment: $p(\chi^2)=.135$). For issue based political participation, the models lost from their explanatory power, but are still significant for two of the three issues, as indicated by the F test (abortion: $R^2=12\%$, F=.045; gay adoption: $R^2=4\%$, F=.808; capital punishment: $R^2=13\%$, F=.007).

Moderation by support for the practice

Next, each of the two dimensions of moral conviction was interacted with ideological direction (a dummy in which 0=opposition and 1=support for the issue), to test whether the effect of moral conviction is ideologically asymmetrical. The effect of hot moral conviction held for both ideological sides, with none of the six interactive terms being statistically significant, whereas cognitive moral conviction had an ideologically asymmetrical effect on both participation and single issue voting for the issue of abortion, but not in the other two issues. For abortion, cognitive moral conviction holds a four times bigger effect in increasing political participation among those opposing abortion (ß=.324, t=3.29), compared to those supporting it, where the effect becomes insignificant (ß=.087, t=1.22).[30] Similarly, cognitive moral conviction significantly increases single issue voting among those opposing abortion (ß=2.307, z=2.93), but not among those supporting it (ß=-.111, z=-.21).[31]

Moderation by knowledge

To test the view that the application of moral conviction is contingent on political

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[30] Interactive term: ß=-.237, t=-1.89; dummy support for abortion: ß=.104, t=1.22; cognitive moral conviction: ß= .324, t=3.29.

[31] Interactive term: ß=-2.418, z=-2.47; dummy support for abortion: ß=1.735, z=2.6; cognitive moral conviction: ß=2.307, z=2.93.

sophistication, each of the two dimensions of moral conviction was interacted with

political knowledge. Only one of these twelve interactive terms reaches statistical

significance (cognitive moral conviction on abortion with respect to political

participation, where cognitive moral conviction increases participation among the highly

knowledgeable, ß=.250, t=3.04, but not among the unknowledgeable, ß=-.125, t=-1.18).[32]

This suggests that the effect of moral conviction on political involvement generally does

not depend on political knowledge.

Mediation by attitude strength

One of the hypotheses was that the effect of moral conviction on political

participation is at least partly mediated by attitude strength, such that increased moral

conviction leads to increased importance of the political issue and to higher certainty in

the attitude, and in turn, it is this attitude strength that induces increased political

involvement.

To test this possibility, a Sobel test was performed on the single issue

participation models to estimate the extent to which the effect of moral conviction

(averaged across its two dimensions) on participation can be attributed to the scale of

attitude strength, which includes attitude certainty and issue importance. As the bottom

row of Table 4 shows, and as hypothesized, the effect of moral conviction on

participation was significantly mediated by attitude strength on abortion (28%) and

capital punishment (21%), but not on gay adoption.

Unfortunately, the Sobel test cannot be applied in ordered probit models, and

Wald tests indicate that single issue voting cannot be regarded as approximately interval

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[32] Interactive term: ß=.375, t=2.35; knowledge: ß=-.318, t=-2.71; cognitive moral conviction: ß=-.125, t=-1.18.

for two of the three issues, and thus cannot be tested using an OLS, and cannot receive

the Sobel mediation test (the null hypothesis that all four intervals simultaneously equal

each other (Threshold4 - Threshold3 = T3 - T2 = T2 – T1 = T1) is rejected for abortion:

$p(\chi^2_3)$=.088; and capital punishment: $p(\chi^2_3)$=.021, however, for gay adoption: $p(\chi^2_3)$=.140).

Thus, to find the extent to which attitude strength mediated the effect of moral

conviction in the ordered probit models, I took the difference between the prediction for

single issue voting when (combined) moral conviction is at its minimum of zero and all

else at their means to when moral conviction is at its maximum of 1, and the same

difference when attitude strength is included in the model, calculated the ratio of the two

differences, and subtracted it from 1 to get the percent decrease in the effect of moral

conviction due to the inclusion of attitude strength in the model. This calculation shows

that all else equal, moral conviction loses an average of 56% from its effect on the

likelihood for single issue voting when attitude strength is included in the model

(abortion: 37%, gay adoption: 64%, capital punishment: 66%), which suggests a rather

large mediation effect of attitude strength[33].

Mediation by self-reported MC

Is the effect of moral conviction mediated by awareness? To test this possibility I

submitted the models to a mediation analysis, in which self-reported moral conviction

was tested for the extent that it explains the effect of theory-driven moral conviction on

involvement. Sobel tests show that one's perception of the extent to which one's attitude

toward the issue is tied to morality has no significant mediation effect on the effect of

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[33] Note that for the issue of gay adoption, where the null hypothesis of an interval measure cannot be rejected according to a Wald test, a Sobel test was conducted and replicated the results from the predicted probabilities mediation analysis. This Sobel test shows that attitude strength mediates 73% of the effect of moral conviction on single issue voting, and is highly significant.

moral conviction (averaged across its two dimensions) on participation (with the exception of a marginal effect in capital punishment, 19%, p=.061). Since self-reported moral conviction played a meditational role on hot moral conviction alone in the attitude strength models, I ran the mediation analysis for each dimension separately. Again, self-reported moral conviction had no significant mediating effect for any of the dimensions (with the exception of hot moral conviction on capital punishment, 41%, p=.042).

Results from the procedure described in the previous subsection suggests that, all else equal, moral conviction loses an average of 22% from its effect on the likelihood for single issue voting when attitude strength is included in the model (abortion: 21%, gay adoption: 17%, capital punishment: 30%), which suggests a fair mediation effect of attitude strength.[34] The mediation analysis was also conducted for each dimension separately. Self-reported moral conviction had a very small mediating effect for the cognitive dimension (16% in abortion, 15% in capital punishment, and a negative 23% for gay adoption, suggesting that the coefficient for cognitive moral conviction actually increased with the inclusion of self-reported conviction), and a much larger effect for the emotional dimension (46% in abortion, 91% in gay adoption, 37% in capital punishment).

Moral conviction, political extremity and tolerance

Tolerance and political extremity were submitted to a linear regression analysis and an ordered probit respectively with both dimensions of moral conviction and

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[34] Note that for the issue of gay adoption, where the null hypothesis of an interval measure cannot be rejected according to a Wald test, a Sobel test was conducted and replicated the results from the predicted probabilities mediation analysis. This Sobel test shows that attitude strength mediates 73% of the effect of moral conviction on single issue voting, and is significant.

controls. Table 5 presents the regression coefficients for the six models, two for each

political issue.

Table 4.5: Moral conviction, political extremity and tolerance

	Abortion		Gay Adoption		Capital Punishment	
	Tolerance	Extremity	Tolerance	Extremity	Tolerance	Extremity
Cognitive Moral Conviction	.049 (.086)	**1.99** (.421)**	.046 (.091)	**1.83** (.449)**	**.186** (.075)**	**2.27** (.418)**
Emotional Moral Conviction	**-.109* (.062)**	**.705** (.331)**	**-.159** (.066)**	**1.25** (.319)**	**-.086* (.052)**	**.967** (.286)**
Ideology (conserv.)	.042 (.091)	-.322 (.489)	**-.205** (.093)**	.525 (.455)	-.004 (.070)	.374 (.379)
Social conservatism	-.096 (.125)	-.040 (.671)	.040 (.105)	**-1.27** (.538)**	-.114 (.087)	.131 (.474)
Party id (Republican)	-.065 (.073)	-.194 (.403)	-.009 (.073)	-.441 (.352)	.019 (.060)	-.261 (.319)
Feminism	.016 (.071)	.175 (.365)	.039 (.076)	-.059 (.371)	-.042 (.062)	-.022 (.333)
Authoritarian	**-.177** (.061)**	.366 (.326)	**-.138** (.066)**	.465 (.319)	-.042 (.050)	**.526* (.275)**
Openness to experience	.117 (.109)	-.543 (.624)	.116 (.109)	.098 (.534)	**.217** (.092)**	-.719 (.503)
Empathy	.009 (.118)	-.557 (.601)	.111 (.118)	-.914 (.585)	-.053 (.100)	.590 (.551)
Disgust sensitivity	.028 (.073)	-.501 (.409)	-.119 (.078)	.018 (.389)	**-.106* (.057)**	**-.682** (.304)**
Religiosity	-.024 (.059)	-.211 (.321)	.009 (.055)	-.289 (.265)	-.005 (.049)	-.173 (.267)
Political knowledge	**.115** (.070)**	-.095 (.368)	**.200** (.074)**	-.152 (.369)	**.168** (.065)**	.342 (.358)
Education	**.451** (.159)**	**1.86** (.842)**	.037 (.138)	**1.84** (.694)**	-.074 (.114)	.552 (.619)
Age	-.001 (.001)	.008 (.006)	**-.003** (.001)**	**.014** (.006)**	.000 (.001)	.005 (.006)
Male	.054 (.043)	-.259 (.235)	.028 (.045)	.140 (.220)	.005 (.036)	-.135 (.200)
Constant	**.473** (.192)**		**.811** (.195)**		**.748** (.167)**	
Threshold 1		-.016 (.977)		1.549 (.959)		1.237 (.906)
Threshold 2		1.013 (.971)		2.173 (.961)		2.097 (.907)
Threshold 3		1.664 (.975)		2.882 (.969)		2.929 (.914)
R^2 / Pseudo R^2	30%	14%	23%	17%	21%	14%
Log likelihood ratio	-	50.18**	-	80.03**	-	79.05**
N	165	177	193	190	202	210
Mediation by attitude strength	n.s.	25%	n.s.	28%	n.s.	29%

Entries in the tolerance models are OLS coefficients. Entries in the extremity models are maximum-likelihood estimates of ordered probit models. All scales are coded to range from 0 to 1 with the exception of age (years). **: $p<.05$ (two tail); *: $p<.05$ (one tail; note that hypotheses were directional). Std. errors in brackets. Mediation analysis comes from models where moral conviction is averaged for its two dimensions, and tests the mediation effect of attitude strength in the effect of moral conviction on each DV. In the tolerance models, the estimate and significance test come from a Sobel test (similar p values in a Goodman-2 test). In the extremity models, the estimate comes from comparing the predicted value of MC on the DV when attitude strength is omitted and specified.

The effect of moral conviction

Results show that both dimensions of moral conviction consistently increase attitude extremity holding constant key alternative explanations, but while emotional moral conviction increases issue based political tolerance, cognitive moral conviction exhibits no significant effect or even increases tolerance in one case.

Starting with issue based tolerance, emotional moral conviction decreases issue based tolerance by 12% of its range on average (11% for abortion, t=-1.78; 16% for gay adoption, t=-2.39; 9% for capital punishment, t=-1.66), such that ceteris paribus, participants are less likely to support free speech, teaching in public schools, and persuasion attempts by people who disagree with them on the specific political issue to the extent that they have stronger moral emotions concerning it. However, cognitive moral conviction produces no significant effect on tolerance for two of the issues, and unexpectedly increases tolerance on the issue of capital punishment (ß=.186, t=2.47).

Moving to attitude extremity, both dimensions of moral conviction significantly increase extremity on all three issues tested, all else constant. First, moving from the minimum to the maximum of emotional moral conviction increases the predicted probability of holding an extreme position on either ideological side by 45% on average (abortion: there is a 47% chance of holding an extreme attitude on abortion when emotional moral conviction is at its minimum, and 77% when it is at its maximum; gay adoption: 17% vs. 73%; capital punishment: 22% vs. 72%), indicating that ceteris paribus, the likelihood of extremity increases with emotional moral conviction (abortion: z=2.13; gay adoption: z=3.91; capital punishment: z=3.38).

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Similarly, cognitive moral conviction increases the predicted probability of attitude extremity by 73% on average, when moving from its minimum to its maximum (abortion: there is a 17% chance for viewing abortion as extremely important when emotional moral conviction is at its minimum, and 88% when it is at its maximum; gay adoption: 4% vs. 77%; capital punishment: 4% vs. 79%), such that the chance for an extreme position increases with cognitive moral conviction, holding all else constant (abortion: z=4.72; gay adoption: z=4.08; capital punishment: z=5.44).

Combined, the two dimensions of moral conviction increase the predicted probability of attitude extremity by 77% on average, when moving from minimal to maximal conviction (abortion: there is a 18% chance for viewing abortion as extremely important when emotional moral conviction is at its minimum and 86% when it is at its maximum; gay adoption: 2% vs. 81%; capital punishment: 3% vs. 88%), such that the chance of an extreme position increases with cognitive moral conviction, holding all else constant (abortion: z=5.40; gay adoption: z=6.56; capital punishment: z=7.51).

Robust analysis

It is worthwhile to examine whether re-specifying other independent variables as non-directional, or moral conviction as directional, affects the results, especially as ideology and party identification show no significant effect in these models (with the exception of tolerance on gay adoption, where conservatism decreased tolerance, holding else constant). First, the models were re-specified with ideology and party identification integrated in their folded form, which indicates non-directional ideological and partisan extremity. Moral conviction was averaged across its two dimensions for the extremity models, but was left as two separate variables in the tolerance models, as cognitive and

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emotional moral conviction had the opposite signs. Starting with the tolerance models, ideological extremity and partisanship extremity exhibit no significant effects, while all of the effects of moral conviction retain their signs and significance, and hardly change.

When coded to reflect ideological extremity, ideology shows a significant positive effect for the issues of abortion and gay adoption, however, partisan extremity still holds no significant effects, and moral conviction retains its significant effects, and shows much bigger coefficients than ideology (abortion: moral conviction: ß=2.278, t=4.95, ideological extremity: ß=.883, t=2.67, partisan extremity: ß=.132, t=.44; gay adoption: moral conviction: ß=2.746, t=6.21, ideological extremity: ß=.522, t=1.74, partisan extremity: ß=.155, t=.63; capital punishment: moral conviction: ß=2.710, t=6.9, ideological extremity: ß=.459, t=1.57, partisan extremity: ß=.305, t=1.35).

Again, the models were rerun such that moral conviction was omitted. Two of the three attitudinal extremity models were insignificant when moral conviction is omitted, as indicated by the model's χ^2 test (abortion: $p(\chi^2)$=.401; gay adoption: (χ^2)=.007; capital punishment: $p(\chi^2)$=.410). For issue based tolerance, the models lost some explanatory power, but usually not very much (abortion: R^2=29%, F=.000; gay adoption: R^2=20%, F=.000; capital punishment: R^2=19%, F=.000).

Moderation by support for the practice

Next, each of the two dimensions of moral conviction was interacted with ideological direction (a dummy in which 0=opposition and 1=support for the issue), to test whether the effect of moral conviction is ideologically asymmetrical. The effect of neither dimension of moral conviction interacted with the attitude's direction for abortion and capital punishment. This, however, was not the case for the issue of gay adoption, in

which both dimensions of moral conviction had ideologically asymmetrical effects on tolerance, and emotional moral conviction had an ideologically asymmetrical effect on attitudinal extremity.

For gay adoption, emotional moral conviction significantly decreases tolerance among those opposing gay adoption (ß=-.451, t=-3.57), but loses its significance among those supporting it (ß=-.035, t=-.47).[35] The interaction is somewhat different for cognitive moral conviction, such that moving from the minimum of 0 to the maximum of 1 in cognitive moral conviction when people are opposed to gay adoption decreases tolerance by about 17% in the sample, although insignificantly (t=-1.05), but moving from the minimal to the maximal moral conviction when people support gay adoption actually increases tolerance (ß=.231, t=1.95).[36] Moving to attitudinal extremity on gay adoption, emotional moral conviction holds a three times bigger coefficient in increasing extremity among those opposing gay adoption (ß=2.341, z=3.25) compared to those supporting it (ß=.947, z=2.49), although both effects are significant.[37]

Moderation by knowledge

To test the view that the application of moral conviction is contingent on political sophistication, each of the two dimensions of moral conviction was interacted with political knowledge. Only one of these twelve interactive reaches statistical significance, emotional moral conviction on capital punishment with respect to attitudinal extremity, where emotional moral conviction increases extremity when political knowledge is high

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[35] Interactive term: ß=.415, t=2.83; dummy support for abortion: ß=-.401, t=-3.02; hot moral conviction: ß=-.451, t=-3.57.

[36] Interactive term: ß=.405, t=2.04; dummy support for abortion: ß=1.735, t=2.6; cognitive moral conviction: : ß=-.174, t=-1.05.

[37] Interactive term: ß=-1.394, z=-1.7; dummy support for abortion: ß=-.888, z=-1.32; hot moral conviction: ß=2.341, z=3.25.

($ß=1.701$, $z=3.49$) but has no significant effect when it is at its minimum ($ß=-.315$, $z=-.45$).[38]

Mediation by attitude strength

To test whether the effect of moral conviction on tolerance is at least partly mediated by attitude strength, a Sobel test was conducted on each significant dimension of moral conviction separately, as mediation analysis is not applicable when the original effect is insignificant. The four tests show no significant mediation by attitude strength of the effects of moral conviction on tolerance.

Since the Sobel test cannot be performed in ordered probit models, Wald tests were performed to show whether attitudinal extremity can be regarded as approximately interval, and thus can be submitted to an OLS and accept the Sobel procedure for all three issues. Indeed, the hypothesis that all three intervals simultaneously equal each other ($Threshold_3 - Threshold_2 = T_2 - T_1 = T_1$) could not be rejected for any of three issues (abortion: $p(\chi^2_3)=.197$, gay adoption: $p(\chi^2_3)=.581$), capital punishment: $p(\chi^2_3)=.894$). Thus, the mediation analysis by attitude strength was performed twice: by using the Sobel test when the models were run via OLS, and also calculated as indicated in the previous subsection. In both tests, moral conviction was averaged for its two dimensions.

As hypothesized, both procedures indicate that the effect of moral conviction on attitudinal extremity is mediated by issue importance and attitude certainty, i.e. attitude strength, in all three issues (abortion: Sobel=42%, p=.000, nested models=25%; gay adoption: Sobel=37%, p=.000, nested models=28%; capital punishment: Sobel=44%, p=.000, nested models=29%). This suggests a large and robust mediation effect of attitude strength in the relationship between moral conviction and attitudinal extremity.

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[38] Interactive term: $ß=2.02$, $z=1.96$; knowledge: $ß=-.85$, $z=-.92$; hot moral conviction: $ß=-.32$, $z=-.45$.

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Mediation by self-reported MC

Models were submitted to a mediation analysis, in which self-reported moral conviction was tested for the extent to which it explains the effect of theory-driven moral conviction on intolerance and extremity. Sobel tests show that one's perception of the extent to which one's attitude toward the issue is tied to morality does not significantly mediate the effect of moral conviction (averaged across its two dimensions) on tolerance and extremity (with the exception of gay adoption in extremity, 12%, p=.019). Since self-reported moral conviction played a mediating role on hot moral conviction alone in the attitude strength models, I ran the mediation analysis for each dimension separately, both in the tolerance and in the extremity models. Again, self-reported moral conviction had no significant mediating effect for any of the dimensions (with the exception of hot moral conviction on gay adoption in extremity, 26%, p=.013).

Discussion

This chapter introduces a cognitive theory of moral conviction, and then derives and tests the resulting hypotheses, which can be divided into two categories: direct hypotheses on the cognitive nature of moral convictions, and hypotheses regarding the effects of moral conviction on key political variables. The latter hypothesized the effect of moral conviction on participation, single issue voting, political intolerance, and extremity. The former included hypotheses regarding conviction's relationship to certainty and importance, the causal flow between moral conviction and attitude strength and theory-driven and self-reported morality, and the necessity of both dimensions in explaining the dependent variables; hypotheses on the mediating effect of attitude

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strength; on the moderating effect of ideology; on the moderating effect of political knowledge; and on the mediating effect of self-reported moral conviction. I will discuss each subset of hypotheses in order.

The effect of moral conviction

Results overall support the hypotheses concerning the effect of moral conviction on the four variables presented. Moral conviction significantly affects political involvement, increasing the probability of single issue voting and of issue-based political participation. Combined, the two dimensions of moral conviction explain an average of 17% of the range of participation, and increase the predicted probability of viewing a candidate's stance on an issue as extremely important when casting a vote by 28% on average, as one moves from minimal to maximal conviction. Both dimensions contribute to these effects, and no dimension is systematically superior to the other in its explanatory power.

Additionally, hypotheses are supported for attitudinal extremity, but only partly confirmed for issue-based tolerance. Combined, moral conviction increases the predicted probability of attitude extremity by a striking 77% on average, when moving from its minimum to its maximum, with cognitive moral conviction showing a stronger effect, although the emotional dimension also functions robustly and as hypothesized. Emotional moral conviction, however, was the only dimension to significantly decrease issue-based tolerance, by an average of 12% of its range. In the case of tolerance, cognitive moral conviction had no significant effect, and even exhibited a significant opposite effect of increasing tolerance in the case of capital punishment. In fact, cognitive moral conviction increases tolerance among those supporting gay adoption as well. That suggests that at

least for some people, the activation of cognitive moral conviction may upload some fairness schema that translates into willingness to endorse the expression of political rights regardless of the opinion involved. This differential finding is a further motivation to study political tolerance as opposed to social distance. While individuals may privately prefer to move away from those holding differing political views, selecting themselves into relatively ideologically homogeneous social networks, they may still be politically tolerant, not supporting a deprivation of civil and political rights of those advocating the contrary view.

The effect of moral conviction on attitude strength, and reversed causality

Moral conviction was found to be vastly influential on attitude strength, with both dimensions explaining together 45% of the range in strength, and affecting both certainty and importance quite evenly. Of the two dimensions, cognitive moral conviction exhibits a stronger effect, but the effect of both dimensions is impressive and robust. In addition, the causal effects of moral conviction on attitude strength and on self-reported measures of morality were supported by two stage least-squares.

The mediating role of attitude strength

Attitude strength was usually found to mediate between a fifth and two thirds of the effect of moral conviction. First, the effect of moral conviction on participation was significantly mediated by attitude strength as concerns abortion (28%) and capital punishment (21%), but not gay adoption. Using nested models, I was able to show a considerably large—56% on average—mediation effect of attitude strength in the relationship between moral conviction and the likelihood of single issue voting. It seems

then that attitude strength partially mediates the effect of moral conviction on political involvement.

In addition, and as expected, attitude strength mediated on average 41% of the effect of moral conviction on attitudinal extremity according to the Sobel test, again showing as significant in all three issues. However, unexpectedly, no mediation effect was found for the reduction in tolerance due to emotional moral conviction, or for its increase due to cognitive moral conviction in the single case where it was significant. It could be the case that some esteem measure will be able to better tap the mechanism that mediates between emotional moral conviction and intolerance.

Moderation by support for the practice

To the extent that moral mechanisms are evolutionary features, they should be available to all, regardless of specific ideology or opinion. Indeed, the effect of both dimensions of moral conviction was consistently independent of the attitude's direction—support or opposition, such that of the 30 interactive terms (2 dimensions X 3 issues X 5 dependent variables), only six (one fifth) were significant, usually such that the original effect was retained among both opponents and supporters of an issue, but was stronger among the former. Thus, emotional moral conviction exhibited a stronger positive effect on attitude strength among those opposing abortion as compared to supporters, and stronger positive effects on attitudinal extremity and on tolerance among those opposing gay adoption compared to supporters. Similarly, cognitive moral conviction had a stronger positive effect on participation and on single issue voting among opponents of abortion. The only exception to this rule was the effect of cognitive moral conviction on

tolerance in gay adoption, where cognitive moral conviction decreases tolerance among opponents of gay adoption, but increases it among supporters.

Moderation by political knowledge

I suggested that moral conviction should be available to all regardless of preexisting political knowledge, and this argument receives strong support, as the effects of both dimensions are not contingent on political knowledge. In fact, only two of the 30 interactive terms returned significance, and I suggest these results can be generally attributed to chance. Thus, political knowledge reduces political participation on abortion among those low on cognitive moral conviction, but loses most of this negative effect where cognitive moral conviction is high, and reduces attitudinal extremity on capital punishment among those low on emotional moral conviction, but increases extremity where emotional moral conviction is high.

Mediation by self-reported moral conviction

Finally, I was curious to test the extent to which awareness of one's moral convictions mediates their effect on each of the dependent variables. First, mediation tests show that while awareness plays no role in the effect of cognitive moral conviction, around a third of the effect that emotional moral conviction has on attitude strength is mediated by one's perceived conviction.

Moving to political participation, self-reported moral conviction played no mediating role for any of the dimensions, with the exception of hot moral conviction in the case of capital punishment. For the likelihood for single issue voting, its mediation effect was very small or nonexistent for the cognitive dimension, but is did mediate 58% of the effect of emotional moral conviction on average. Additionally, self-reported moral

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conviction typically did not mediate any of the effects on tolerance or extremity, with only one exception: 26% of the effect of emotional moral conviction on extremity for gay adoption.

Overall, mediation by self-reported moral conviction is the exception rather than the rule, and relationships between both dimensions of moral conviction and the dependent variables typically remain strong and significant with self-reported moral conviction specified in the model. However, while the effect of cognitive moral conviction is robustly unaffected by its inclusion, emotional moral conviction occasionally is affected. Mainly, emotional moral conviction loses around a third of its effect on attitude strength on average, and over a half of its effect on single issue voting.

This pattern generally fits with the growing body of literature suggesting that the experience of moral emotions informs moral appraisal (Kahneman, Schkade, and Sunstein, 1998). Essay 2 of this dissertation shows that experimentally induced disgust leads to more severe moral judgment and increases moral conviction (also see Schnall, Haidt, and Clore, 2006). Additionally, moral judgment is reduces in severity when participants are led to misattribute their experienced emotions to external sources rather than to the moral transgression (Trafimow et al., 2005). Becoming aware of one's emotions can thus facilitate the effect of emotional moral conviction on some variables, such as reported attitude certainty and reported issue importance. Note that likelihood of single issue voting was worded as related to issue importance as well. However, this study provides no evidence that the effect of moral conviction on actual action is mediated by awareness, although this should be further investigated in a stylized design, which perhaps manipulates the self-awareness level of one's convictions.

Conclusions

War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things: the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks nothing worth a war, is worse. When a people are used as mere human instruments for firing cannon or thrusting bayonets, in the service and for the selfish purposes of a master, such war degrades a people. A war to protect other human beings against tyrannical injustice; a war to give victory to their own ideas of right and good, and which is their own war, carried on for an honest purpose by their free choice,—is often the means of their regeneration.
John Stuart Mill, 1868:26

I started this essay by suggesting that moral conviction underlies the two main risks in current democracies, the culture war and political apathy, and developed a theory explaining how and why this effect occurs. Indeed, results support the cognitive theory of theory-driven moral conviction, and show that moral conviction is related both to increased political involvement and to increased extremity and intolerance. This is the case for both the knowledgeable and the unsophisticated, for both supporters and opponents, this holding constant a host of political principles, partisanship, values, personality traits, and demographics.

However, neither political participation nor political tolerance is completely normatively good; also are their inverses not entirely normatively bad, for citizens in a democracy. As the quote by Mill indicates, tolerance can be harmful, when we agree to tolerate evil. Participation can be destructive, where the end justifies all means. Viewing them from the standpoint of moral conviction, these two processes are placed in a continuum running from apathy and non-action to extremity, hostility, and self-justified violence.

If political participation was viewed as simply a cost-benefit analysis, no one would be expected to vote (Downs, 1957). Moral conviction, then, has strong advantages for politics. But it may be dangerous as well, leading both to suicide terrorism and political assassinations, and to a polarized and antagonistic social climate, where fellow citizens are deprived of their political rights (e.g. Skitka and Morgan, 2009). But this is exactly why it is so fascinating to study in a political framework: normatively good or bad, strong moral conviction links individuals to the social world, relates them to something bigger than themselves. In economic language, it integrates other-regarding motivations into individual payoffs.

The literature that exposes the inability of self interest to explain some political phenomena (for a review see Sears and Funk, 1991), the studies that present non-self interested factors that explain political behavior better than self interested factors (such as concern for quality of education and sympathy with underpaid teachers- see Rasinski and Tyler, 1986, sense of civic duty- see Katosh and Traugott, 1982, or sense of public responsibility- see Smith, 1982), the experimental studies in psychology demonstrating the existence of altruistic behavior (e.g. Batson, 1991), the qualitative studies interviewing altruists (see Monroe, 1996), the research demonstrating the existence of evolutionary altruism in humans (see Monroe, 1994; Sidanius and Kurzban, 2003), the ample studies on altruistic behavior in game theory settings (see Camerer, 2003), and the mere fact that some people willingly blow themselves up in the name of principles, all suggest that political behavior is not limited to self-interested motivations. Moral conviction is a mechanism that supplies the strong motivation and the action-orientation necessary to engage in such activities, even at a heavy personal cost. Such actions are

rational in the sense that they serve a greater moral cause, and that the individual feels they will simply be unable to live with themselves if they refrain from performing them.

Recent research on morality tends to stress its emotional nature (e.g. Haidt, 2001). Indeed, the affective basis of moral conviction is crucial for explaining its motivating force, and its role in encouraging participation, social contribution, and altruistic behavior. For instance, the literature on altruism in behavioral economics affirms the essential role of emotions like anger in costly and seemingly irrational response to violations of norms (e.g. Fehr and Gachter, 2002; Sanfey et al, 2003). However, results from the current study suggest that the role of emotions should not be overstated. Even with the emotional dimension held constant, cognitive moral conviction prevails, and in the case of attitude strength, single issue voting and extremity—even exhibits a stronger explanatory power than its emotional counterpart. Moral conviction is not all about emotions, but also about generalization of rules. The Kantian and Humean views of morality are thus complementary rather than competitive.

What can be done to evoke the "right" level of moral conviction in citizens of democracies, to encourage participation without breeding intolerance? Cognitive moral conviction's unexpected effect of at times increasing tolerance points to a potential direction for future investigation. If the harm schema is strongly tied to democratic values such as freedom of speech, than rules advocating tolerance will be activated by cognitive moral conviction. Moralizing democracy by relating non-democratic views to harm can thus contribute to decreasing the likelihood of political intolerance and its implications for the political discourse.

Chapter V

Conclusions

A man wrote the IRS:
I can't sleep at night, because I feel so guilty for cheating on my tax return.
Attached is a check on $150. If I still can't sleep, I'll send the rest.

The most complex human cognitions, which even the most sophisticated computers are unable to imitate, are often the simplest and least effortful for people to engage in. My computer very easily calculated the sophisticated two-stage least-squares models in the previous chapter, but is unable to decide whether it likes Obama, distinguish a male from a female face, or realize that the above sentences from the letter to the IRS exemplify the complex interplay between emotions and cognition in moral behavior, and constitute a joke.

Moral conviction is a wonderful example of a highly complex cognitive task that is often very easy for people to perform, and impossible for computers. A person can decide almost instantly that some political practice he heard about a couple of minutes ago, like a bloody war in a distant country or other people eating cats, is just wrong. The ease with which complex judgments like that are made can be explained in the adaptationist framework, which suggests that natural selection has designed organisms—human beings included—to solve adaptive problems they faced throughout the history of the species (Tooby and Cosmides, 1992).[39] According to this view, the reason that moral

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[39] As evolution gives rise to various types of problems that cannot be solved by a single cognitive mechanism (e.g., navigating, capturing prey, and acquiring language), the adaptationist logic expects domain-specificity in the human brain, i.e., a large number of mechanisms built to carry out different aspects of human life (Tooby and Cosmides, 1992). Since the background conditions that create a specific

conviction, like recognizing gender or using grammar, is so easily engaged in is that it serves greater evolutionary goals, and was thus developed in the course of evolution.

The problem that morality solves, according to this logic, is caring about others. Darwin's concept of "group selection" suggests that groups of altruists will be fitter, even though altruistic individuals within a group are less fit than selfish individuals. In the same manner, while an individual's interests might lie in exploiting members of his own group, conflict-ridden groups may suffer a disadvantage. Hence, altruistic traits evolve because they are valuable at the group level (Sober, 2002). On a larger scale and in a more modern context, without some sense of social responsibility and civic duty, people are expected to always abstain from political participation (Downs, 1957).

Being adaptive, cognitive mechanisms had to evolve to facilitate other-regarding behavior that might come at the expense of one's own preferences at times, and would motivate the individual to devote energy to the greater good, to care about and act on behalf of society, and to punish people for doing wrong to others or for not reciprocating. Due to its contribution to the species, this moral mechanism was positively selected in the process of natural selection.[40]

Indeed, ample evidence from various disciplines suggests the existence of other-regarding behavior which is non-self-interest-oriented (Sears and Funk, 1991; Rasinski

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problem may have been in the external environment (dangerous beasts, weather), the design of the organism (slow, weak, needing to remember many details), or both (needing to be able to detect allies that will help one outsmart beasts), the model does not separate between "environmentally" and "genetically" determined behaviors (and thus is not "deterministic," as it is often criticized for being).

[40] An interesting attempt to integrate other-regarding motivations into individual payoffs is made by McCabe in his work on reciprocity (2003). McCabe derives the "goodwill accounting" concept from the evolutionary logic of reciprocity, and suggests that this cognitive strategy allows a delay of gratification and positive reciprocity, and may also explain punishment behavior towards in-group defectors. Note that McCabe builds his goodwill factor to suit situations in which reciprocity and short-term rather than long-term considerations are possible, and thus the goodwill can be factored into the cost-benefit calculations of the individual.

and Tyler, 1986; Katosh and Traugott, 1982; Monroe, 1994; Sidanius and Kurzban, 2003), and moral considerations have always been viewed as highly relevant in judgments of political decisions about resource allocation and other policies. But what is the mechanism underlying the moral state of mind and how is it manifested in political attitudes? This is the main question that this dissertation has attempted to answer.

Conceptualization: what is morality?

I argued that there are two dimensions that distinguish conventional from moral objects. First is the cognitive route, inspired by Kant's universalism and Turiel's domain theory, according to which a rule is viewed morally if it is perceived as referring to harm to others. This intrinsic harmfulness makes transgressions inherently wrong, rendering adherence to the rule universally obligatory and generalizable (e.g., Turiel, 1998; Helwig and Turiel, 2002). Second is the affective dimension, inspired by Hume's sentimentalism and Prinz's philosophy, according to which a rule is moral if it invokes self-blaming emotions and condemning emotions both in close and third party situations.

This project builds on both experimental and correlational studies to empirically test the theory of bi-dimensional morality. The main examination of this conceptualization was in chapter 3, which was devoted to testing the assertion that a rule is moralized to the extent that its violation is understood as harming others or invokes self-blaming and other-blaming moral emotions, such as disgust. Two experiments varied the priming of incidental cues prior to a political issue, with participants exposed to harm associations, the moral emotion of disgust, conventional negative associations (damage) or conventional negative emotions (sadness). Results showed that, as hypothesized, both

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disgust and harm facilitate moral conviction on the issue as well as a harsher moral judgment compared to the no-prime condition, but that the non-moral cognitive and emotional negative primes of sadness and damage have a smaller or no such effect. These findings demonstrate the causal effect of disgust and associations of harm in the moral state of mind. Another important conclusion concerns the interdependence and the importance of both dimensions, as both types of cues increase both dimensions of moral convictions. This settles well with current theories of dual processes and with evidence from neuropsychology, suggesting that the two systems are inseparable.

The nature of moral convictions was tested in the other two empirical essays as well. Using 2-SLS regression, chapter 4 provides strong evidence for the causal effect of the two dimensions of moral conviction on one's political attitude, its perceived importance, and its reported certainty. Chapter 2 employs mediation analysis to show that assumptions regarding the harmfulness of the political practice mediate the effect of ideology on moral convictions. Here too, chapters 2 and 4 show evidence that both dimensions of moral conviction hold unique explanatory power for relevant dependent variables, even with an abundance of alternative explanations, and the other dimension held constant. Together, these findings strongly support the theory of bi-dimensional morality.

There being a mechanism that relies on harm and moral emotions does not mean that all cultures and people can be expected to moralize the same objects, or in the same manner, any more than there being a universal mechanism for acquiring language means that all children will end up with the same language, grammar, and vocabulary. Just as children's language depends both on their abilities and on the linguistic stimuli they are

exposed to, as noted in the Chomskyan framework, moralization mechanisms are partly

personal and partly depend on the assumptions and emotions of caretakers. People are not

moral tabula rasa, fully relying on what they are taught by others and by elites to figure

out right from wrong, and are also not noble savages who are equipped from birth with

all the moral intuition they need for modem politics. They are born with moral

propensities—such as a high level of disgust sensitivity, an angry temperament, risk

aversion that sees potential harm everywhere, or a tendency to give to others—but are

also influenced by their environment to direct those emotions toward some wrongs, and

to view as harmful some practices, and not others.

Limitations and directions for future research

Some important caveats are in order. First, I argue throughout this dissertation

that morality is a universal human mechanism such that its cognitive underpinnings can

be expected to be the same in other cultures, even if informational assumptions vary.

However, this project focuses on American politics, and further analysis is needed to

generalize the results to other political and cultural settings.

Next, building on a recent theoretical framework in psychology showing that

harm to community elicits contempt, harm to persons anger, and harm to nature disgust, I

would argue that different moral emotions and different harm cues have potentially

different effects on the moral judgment of politics. Chapter 3 was limited to investigating

the effects of disgust and of cues of physical harm to people. The effects of other

manipulated moral emotions such as contempt, anger, and guilt, and the effects of cues of

harm to community, to nature, and psychological harm to people, have yet to be studied.

Studying the effects of discrete emotions is important as well. Disgust has received a lot of attention in the social sciences lately as being an efficient elicitor of the moral state of mind, and it should be interesting to compare its effects both quantitatively and qualitatively to those of other moral emotions.

Furthermore, one of the main advantages of the experimental study in chapter 3 is the fact that the moral primes were incidental to the political issue. This was important in order to establish the causality of the primes without altering the political issue. However, the common moral prime in politics is far from incidental; rather it is tied into the political message: pictures of dead fetuses, of tortured and humiliated prisoners, of stacked dead bodies in Darfur. It is likely that such overt primes will have an even stronger effect on moral conviction, but there is also a chance that explicit and strong primes can be more easily counterargued, leading to a backfiring effect. It is thus important to further study the effect of endogenous primes on moral conviction in politics.

Is there an ideological bias in morality?

Chapter 2 is devoted to examining the effects of ideology on moral issues. I theorized that while people should be able to moralize politics regardless of their political stance, ideology causes differences in moral convictions on political issues by affecting what is regarded as harmful, and consequently evoking moral emotion. Indeed, I find that while both liberals and conservatives moralize political issues, they differ systematically in the particular issues moralized, with the two issues highest on moral conviction for

liberals being torture and capital punishment, whereas the two issues highest on moral

conviction for conservatives are gay adoption and abortion.

Limitations and directions for future research

Although the main goal of this essay is to test the view that both liberals and

conservatives moralize politics, even if different issues are moralized, the chapter also

suggests an explanation for the differences by ideology in the type of issues moralized. I

claimed that liberals and conservatives appear to be sensitive to different types of harm:

while liberals experience emotions and a sense of wrong as a result of harm to people and

their individual rights, conservatives are alerted when current societal norms and

institutions are at stake, and often prefer to protect the social order even at the cost of

limiting the rights of individuals and minorities (e.g., Lakoff, 1995; Skocpol, 1983;

Dione, 2004). However, note that the chapter offered no direct empirical test of this

claim. The support for this hypothesis relies on the specific issues that conservatives

turned out to moralize to a greater extent compared to the issues higher in moralization

among liberals. The argument that conservatives and liberals are sensitive to different

types of harm is both empirically testable and theoretically fruitful, and deserves direct

investigation in future research. This can be done, for instance, by experimentally

studying the extent to which different types of harm interact with ideology to affect moral

conviction.

Another limitation of this work concerns the generalizability of the effect of

ideology. Viewing conservatism as more concerned with harm inflicted on current

societal norms and institutions and motivated to protect them even at the cost of limiting

the rights of individuals and minorities, and liberalism as advancing a rights-based

socially-tolerant empathetic morality, stressing people's right to pursue happiness however they see fit, provided others' rights are not infringed, serves us very well when trying to test this effect in other political systems, as these characteristics of politics are far from unique to the American political system. However, it still remains to be shown that the tendency to experience moral conviction and its particular relationship with ideology are robust across political systems and cultural settings.

It is also worth further studying the moral convictions of political independents. Findings from chapter 2 show that independents hold significantly lower mean cognitive and emotional moral convictions compared to both liberals and conservatives. This is in step with the results from chapter 4, demonstrating that moral conviction increases both political participation and political extremism. Studying moral conviction in independents can shed light on the meaning of political independence in current American politics. To the extent that moral conviction is strongly tied to motivation to participate and to attitude certainty, independents are likely to be moderates, people who don't care much about politics and are uncertain about their political views, rather than extremely sophisticated and versatile voters who pick and choose political parties according to their up-to-date platforms. It would also be interesting to study the extent to which different moral primes affect moral conviction among independents: do independents readily moralize when cued, and are moral emotions and cognitive primes effective to the same extent in encouraging moralization among partisans and independents?

The operationalization of moral convictions

One of the central objectives of this dissertation was to construct a set of measures of moral conviction, based on the above conceptualization. Accordingly, the measure of the cognitive dimension taps the non-arbitrary nature of moral rules, differentiating them from social-personal conventions, as defined by domain theory's formal characteristics, by assessing the extent to which a certain political practice is judged to be wrong and impermissible across different social contexts (universality), and the extent to which the moral rule is unalterable by consensus (alterability) or by authority, such as the legal system (authority independence). In addition, the measure of the affective component taps the extent to which one feels self-directed and other-directed moral emotions, like disgust, anger, guilt and shame.

Following a couple of pretests on student samples, chapter 2 validates this operationalization of moral conviction. The bi-dimensional measure produces interpretable variance across a range of political issues, and it shows nice construct validity against some related theoretical concepts, such as attitude strength and social distance, and convergent validity against the self-reported measure.

Note that the scales changed slightly in the course of this project. In the version employed in chapter 2, the emotional dimension measured negative moral emotions against some political practices, while the cognitive dimension had two possible forms: directional, differentiating between strong moral conviction against and in support of some political practice, and folded, tapping the strength of moral conviction while holding constant the political attitude. In the cognitive measure, questions were branched by the preexisting attitude, such that participants supporting the political practice were

asked about their response to a situation where it is generally unaccepted or legally prohibited, whereas participants opposing the practice were asked about a situation where it is commonly accepted or legally allowed.

This asymmetry was corrected in chapter 3, where I developed a non-directional measure for emotional moral conviction. Similar to that for cognitive moral conviction, this measure was branched by the preexisting political attitude, such that participants were asked to report their hypothetical moral emotions toward both employing and neglecting to employ the practice. For instance, participants were asked: "To what extent would you have felt each of these emotions when hosting a thriving pornographic website, while refraining from any regulation or monitoring?" but also: "To what extent you would have felt each of these emotions when censoring and monitoring a pornographic website hosted in your portal?" This allowed tapping the strength of the negative emotions, holding constant support or opposition to the practice.

Three further changes were made in chapter 4. First, the emotional scale, which formerly tapped negative moral emotions toward both a scenario of employing and a scenario of neglecting to employ the political practice, was branched by the preexisting attitude, similarly to the branching in the cognitive scale. Thus, participants supporting a certain political practice were asked about their moral emotions in a situation where it is not allowed or they are forced to deny it, whereas participants opposing the practice were asked about a situation where it is allowed or they are forced to engage in it. The aversive emotions were averaged for all relevant questions, 1 being high on emotional moral conviction, holding constant the attitude's direction. This alteration was made to shorten the measure and make it more similar to the cognitive one, and relied on an analysis from

chapter 3 showing that, as could be expected, emotional responses were substantially weaker toward a congruent scenario, such that people who supported a certain practice did not express negative emotions when the practice was executed, and vice versa.

Secondly, both the cognitive and the emotional measures were shortened in chapter 4, following a psychometric analysis that confirmed the redundancy of some items, and included 5 items each (instead of 6 for cognitive and 12 for emotional moral conviction as in chapter 3). Finally, the wording was altered and the opening paragraphs presenting the measures were shortened and slightly rephrased, to adjust the scales to a phone- rather than a web-based survey. Results from chapter 2 were nicely validated with data from chapter 4, where the non-directional measure for emotional moral conviction was employed, and the non-directional version of emotional moral conviction was convergently validated both against the non-directional measure of cognitive moral conviction and against the self-reported measure of moral conviction (see chapter 2). I am thus content with the most recent version of the moral conviction measure, which is symmetric between the two dimensions and quite efficient (with five items for each dimension).

However, the new measure of moral conviction is still more extensive than current self-reported indicators. I thus have theorized about its relative strengths in the face of the more parsimonious self-reported measures of moral conviction. I first suggested that self-reported measures of moral conviction confound actual differences in the level of moral conviction with differences in one's definition of morality, and that their assumption that people are able to access their attitudes is unrealistic.

I then utilized my theory of moral conviction to theorize about what a self-reported measure of moral conviction does tap, and empirically tested these assertions. Chapter 2 shows that since a person's definition of what they view as moral, which is necessary for reporting the extent to which he or she views a certain issue as related to morals, is strongly affected by knowledge that the issue is related to morals in elite discourse. Indeed, political knowledge plays an important role in increasing self-reported moral conviction, although it shows no significant effect on emotional or cognitive moral conviction.

Next, tentative findings in chapter 4 support the hypothesis that emotions and cognitive categorization of certain things as being in the moral domain causally effect one's moral appraisal and awareness of moral conviction. In addition, there is some evidence that self-reported moral conviction stems from emotional, much more than cognitive, moral conviction.[41] First, results in chapter 2 strengthen the view that self-reported moral conviction is correlated with one's indication of his or her feelings on the political issues. Since self-reported moral conviction is non-directional, it is best to compare it to the non-directional versions of emotional and cognitive moral conviction. When doing so, self-reported moral conviction shows greater correlation with emotional moral conviction than with cognitive moral conviction. Secondly, mediation tests show that while self-reported moral conviction plays no role in the effect of cognitive moral conviction, around one-third of the effect that emotional moral conviction has on attitude strength is mediated by one's perceived conviction. Finally, I analyzed the effects of specifying self-reported moral conviction in the models, where both theory-driven

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[41] Future research can investigate individual level differences in the extent to which self reported moral convictions relate to the emotional or cognitive dimension.

measures explain a host of political dependent variables. While the effects of cognitive moral conviction are robustly unaffected by its inclusion, emotional moral conviction is occasionally affected. Mainly, emotional moral conviction loses around one-third of its effect on attitude strength on average, and over half of its effect on single-issue voting. This pattern generally supports the growing body of literature suggesting that the experience of moral emotions informs moral appraisal.

Limitations and directions for future research

There are still some issues regarding the new set of measures that are worthy of consideration and future research. First, the cognitive moral conviction scale measures mere intensity of categorization to the moral domain, with 1 indicating that a person regards an issue as entirely moral, according to domain theory's formal characteristics, and 0 indicating that he or she does not regard the issue as moral at all. However, it is important to acknowledge that not all people categorizing some issue as in the moral domain do so for the same reasons, as they may build on different principles in justifying their moralization. Moreover, people may differ in how developed their association net is with regard to this issue, such that some people may have highly developed argumentation, and be as sophisticated as moral philosophers in viewing something as universal, while others may have only a simple if powerful justification, such as "an innocent child is murdered in abortion." Future research can study the extent to which the type and complexity of the argumentation justifying the moralization of certain issues affects the functioning of cold moral conviction.

Next, there is some interesting variance in hot moral conviction as well that the current additive scale masks. While a perfect score on this measure means that people

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experience all moral emotions very strongly, and a zero on the measure indicates no moral emotions at all, people in the middle may differ in the type of emotions they experience. For instance, one person with a medium score on moral conviction may report maximum self-blaming but low other-blaming emotions, while another person with an identical score may show the opposite pattern. Future research should study the role of discrete emotions in motivating action. For instance, other-blaming emotions may motivate more aggressive action, and such differences may systematically correspond to ideology such that among the non-extremist partisans, liberals experience stronger self-blaming and conservatives stronger other-blaming emotions.

Further, inconsistencies within each of the two dimensions would be interesting to explore, particularly regarding the group of people who show cognitive moral conviction with no corresponding moral emotions. Studies show that patients with damage to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex judge attempted harm in the absence of harmful outcomes (e.g., attempted murder) as more morally permissible relative to controls (Young et al., 2010). It could be the case that in cases where real harm does not occur, one's moral compass relies mostly on his or her emotions, and without such feelings to indicate that a wrong has occurred, moral judgments may be less harsh and more forgiving.

Another subset of people who exemplify inconsistency between the two dimensions are psychopaths, who are able to reason about harm but are unable to feel moral emotions. Such patients can use reason to justify contemplating even the most heinous deeds on account of some harm (e.g., systematically killing citizens of some race, on the grounds that they harm the general population. Or recall John Doe, the rationalistic, well reasoned, and serene serial killers in the movie *seven*, who aspired to

awaken society by matching a murder to each deadly sin), lacking the emotions to direct a "moral common sense."

The effects of moral convictions

In chapter 4, I further developed the cognitive theory of moral conviction, and accordingly suggested that morality underlies the two main risks in current democracies: culture war and political apathy. Results confirmed this hypothesis. First, moral conviction significantly affects political involvement, increasing the probability of single-issue voting as well as of issue-based political participation. Additionally, hypotheses were supported on attitudinal extremity, but only partly confirmed for issue-based tolerance (while moral conviction in both dimensions increased the predicted probability of attitude extremity by a striking 77% on average, only emotional moral conviction significantly decreased issue-based tolerance, by an average of 12% of its range).

These results are especially impressive since, more often than not, the two types of moral conviction combined had the strongest effect on the dependent variables, relative to many classical explanations of political behavior, including political viewpoints (ideology, feminism), groups (partisanship, religiosity, gender), personality traits and proclivities (authoritarianism, social conservatism, disgust sensitivity), values (openness, empathy), and cognitive skills (political knowledge, education), that were controlled for in the models. This finding suggests the primacy of morality in public opinion.

Additionally, moral conviction was found to have a vast influence on attitude strength, with both dimensions together accounting for 45% of the range in strength, and

affecting both attitude certainty and issue importance quite evenly. Of the two dimensions, cognitive moral conviction exhibits a stronger effect, but the effects of both types of moral conviction are impressive and robust. In addition, the causality of this effect of moral conviction on attitude strength was supported by both theory and the appropriate statistical model (two-stage least squares).

Next, I hypothesized about the mediating effect of attitude strength on these effects, and tested potential moderation by ideology and political knowledge. First, results show that attitude strength usually mediates between one-fifth and two-thirds of the effect of moral conviction on three of these dependent variables (participation, single-issue voting and political extremism), but not on political tolerance. Secondly, to the extent that moral mechanisms have evolved throughout evolution, they are expected to be available to all. Indeed, the effect of both types of moral conviction was typically not contingent on the attitude's direction—support or opposition, and was robustly independent of political knowledge.

Limitations and directions for future research

One caveat is in order. While the results of the empirical tests suggest strong evidence for the effects of moral convictions on political attitudes, this project has only been concerned with opinions and intended or reported behavior. It would be worthwhile to study the effects of moralization on other politically relevant evaluations, such as candidates' evaluation and identification with political groups and parties, and concrete behaviors, such as turnout, demonstrations, intolerant behavior in the lab, etc.

Beyond the moral public

While morality is pivotal to politics, scholars of public opinion and political decision-making typically shy away from studying the extent to which morals inform political attitudes. Lacking comprehensible moral principles, and in the presence of contrasting theories of ethics, firm moral stances on specific political issues are extremely hard to derive. Moreover, arguing that moral principles underlie political attitude formation demands the assumption that citizens hold the cognitive abilities and intrinsic motivation to deeply scrutinize politics. In a world where the vast majority of Americans are politically unknowledgeable (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996), and ideologically unsophisticated (Converse, 1964), it seems unreasonable to expect people to analyze politics through the complex prism of moral principles.

This project suggests a new theoretical framework that allows bringing morality back into the field of political behavior, as it suggests that some political attitudes may be guided by moral judgment even without postulating particular citizen capabilities. Being informed by moral sentiments, public opinion may still be coherent even lacking political information.

Thus, emotional and intuitive moral judgment explain how individual-level political attitudes are reasonably predictable, and how public opinion is overall stable and intelligible (Page and Shapiro, 1992), despite the robust evidence that the public is "innocent of ideology" (Converse, 1964). Consequently, this dissertation suggests and supports the thesis of the moral public, arguing that people often build on intuitive and sentimental moral judgment in forming political opinions. I have described the cognitive foundations of moral conviction, and have employed both experimental and correlational

designs on six diverse convenience samples of adults and students as well as a representative New York sample, to support my claims.

So far, this chapter has discussed future research that is worth undertaking to strengthen and expand the thesis of the moral public; i.e., the argument that public opinion is motivated by moral conviction. However, the theoretical and methodological framework developed in this project has implications for future research on the effect of morality in other key aspects of the political realm. Here are a couple of directions I will be interested in pursuing.

First, it would be interesting to investigate the role that moral conviction plays in dehumanization. Current literature on dehumanization is typically atheoretical and non-causal, and harm and disgust may offer a potentially useful framework for understanding how people come to view other groups as inferior, and are willing to employ severe force in fighting them.

In moralizing intergroup conflict, a link is established between a certain group, the harm schema, and disgust. The emotion of disgust gradually evolved from rejection of whatever endangers one's body, like rotten meat, rats, objects that have been touched by cockroaches or symptoms of sickness (e.g., vomit), to a more general rejection of people and acts that violate purity-related norms (see Rozin, Haidt, and McCauley, 1993, for a detailed hypothesis on the evolutionary process). Thus, in linking the group to disgust, it also gets connected to other nodes that elicit these emotions and associations, with strong, typically non-human, archetypes being negatively valenced, such as pests, spoiled food, diseases and poisons, and the set of solutions to deal with such menaces. These links can be established overtly by using metaphors, e.g., comparing the group to

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rats or to a disease that endangers the nation (as in Nazi propaganda and some anti-immigrants campaigns by the extreme right), but can also be much more subtle, like refusing to shake the hand of a leader or a recoiling facial expression when referring to the group.

Once these connections are launched and as they grow stronger, the group is expected to be not only devalued, but also its members categorized, at least in some contexts, with disgusting non-human things (such as pests), which will further lead to detachment from the suffering of members of this group as a result of using the appropriate solutions to reject them and minimize their hazardous effects. In other words, the group is expected to be viewed as subhuman, and undeserving of empathy and concern. Therefore, this framework suggests a mechanism for potential causal effects of conflict moralization on the dehumanization of groups. In turn, these perceptions may be used to justify the humiliation of out-group members, the complete negation of diplomatic solutions in a violent conflict, or the excessive use of force.

It also might be revealing to study ambivalence in moral conviction. Recall the operational definition of moral conviction. To measure moral conviction in an intergroup conflict, participants answering that they have positive feelings toward the group could be asked, for the emotional moral conviction measure, about their emotions in a situation where force and humiliation are used, by others or themselves, against it; and for the cognitive moral conviction measure, about their support for the group across situations and times, even when it justifies typical negative stereotypes and in other countries. Participants reporting negative feelings would be asked, for the emotional measure, about a situation where compensation, acknowledgement, and prizes are given to the group by

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them or by others; and for the cognitive measure, about their support for depriving the group across situations and times, even when this support is not used to justify typical negative stereotypes or applied to other countries. Participants showing relatively neutral or ambivalent feelings should be asked both sets of questions.

However, actual positive feelings toward an out-group during an intractable conflict, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, are very rare. Even the supporters of most left-wing parties are expected to report around the middle point of neutrality, and thus will be requested to answer on all possible scenarios in the emotional measure. Within this group, it is interesting to look at possible inconsistent answers, especially a pattern of other- blaming emotions from positively acknowledging the group but not from using force against it, and self-blaming emotions from using force against the group and not from acknowledging it.

Such simultaneously held feelings hold potentially opposite consequences, with self-blaming emotions increasing one's willingness to reconcile with out-groups and decreasing the probability of dehumanization and violent behavior. Therefore, it would be valuable to study the consequences of focusing on each group of emotions in relation to support for reconciliation and diplomatic solutions and support for the willingness to use force, as well as pointing out the factors that motivate a person to experience self-blaming versus other-blaming emotions on this issue.

Indeed, an examination of the responses of Israeli soldiers who took part in the efforts to suppress the first Palestinian uprising (Maoz, 2001) showed two typical reactions that generally fit the profile of strongly negative and ambivalent moral conviction. Members of one group justified their use of violence and even took pleasure

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in it, and they are characterized by devaluation, dehumanization, disgust, and hatred towards Palestinians. Members of the second group were ambivalent toward their behavior, and expressed feelings of shame, empathy, and regret in addition to some dehumanizing symptoms.[42]

For the few soldiers who hold strong moral convictions in supporting the out-group, their beliefs may allow them to resist social pressures to immoral behavior. Crimes of obedience, such as massacres, occur when legitimate authorities encourage or permit violence, allowing most people to set aside their moral principles (Kelman and Hamilton, 1989). However, moral convictions are by definition independent of authority (Nucci and Turiel, 1978), and morally-based disagreement may lead to perceiving authorities as less legitimate, even in the case of the Supreme Court (Skitka, Bauman, and Lytle, 2006). Therefore, moral conviction may underlie refusal to commit crimes of obedience, via increased resistance to social pressures and authority.

Next, the vast majority of literature on morality, this dissertation included, deal with the processes underlying moralization of issues. However, it would also be interesting, and very challenging, to devote some theoretical and experimental attention to the ways in which political objects can be de-moralized, i.e. conventionalized, or moral convictions change in direction. One potentially promising direction for studying such processes at the individual level may come from the prejudice literature.

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[42] It is important to stress the difference between expressing these emotions when using force against the groups and moral conviction on the issue. Note that in the emotional moral conviction measure, both sides are able to express systematic negative moral emotions: those feeling negatively about the group are asked about experiencing self-blaming emotions not when fighting the group, but rather when positively acknowledging it, while those feeling positively are asked about experiencing disgust toward using force against the group. However, the different emotions expressed by soldiers when using force against Palestinians may be an artifact of opposite political attitudes on the conflict.

Following the seminal study by Devine (1989), according to which people can consciously override the application of stereotypes to targets even if they cannot help having the stereotypes activated, Moskowitz et al. (1999; 2000) demonstrated that stereotype activation can be automatically controllable through implicitly operating goals, more specifically, the pursuit of equality. Moskowitz et al. argue that certain implicit goals may prevent stereotype activation to begin with.[43] This is achieved by initially consciously pairing the goal with situations, which will then lead to the movement of the goal pursuit away from consciousness, such that the chronic goal will be automatically activated upon encountering the situations it has been paired with. In his vivid language, Bargh refers to the possibility of overriding stereotypes with implicit goals, which he names "auto-motives," as "fighting automatic fire with automatic fire" (1999:378).

This process may be generalizable from the specific case of stereotypes to moral conviction in any category, such that pairing with chronic values and conventional self-interested motivations inhibits intuitive and emotional moral convictions. For instance, some people originally experience spontaneous disgust at the thought of homosexuality, but as they are also true believers in equality, they consciously remind themselves, upon feeling repulsed, that gays deserve equal rights. The constant pairing of the egalitarian goal with gay marriage may lead to the inhibition of disgust and to the automatic activation of egalitarianism upon encountering the issue of gay marriage.[44]

Finally, political polarization and intolerance at the public level are often argued to reflect elite trends. However, it is currently unclear whether the same psychological

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[43] Although their research does not reveal whether the egalitarian goal replaces the stereotype or inhibits it (Moskowitz et al., 2000:169).

[44] Such mechanism may explain the finding in chapter 4, in which cognitive moral conviction increases political tolerance at times. I suggested that if the harm schema is strongly tied to democratic values such as freedom of speech, than rules advocating tolerance will be activated by cognitive moral conviction.

mechanisms underlie extremism at the elite and public level. One would hope highly politically sophisticated elites would arrive at political positions based on well-reasoned ideological considerations, and not intuitions and moral emotions. But the role played by emotions may in fact increase for sophisticates, as theories of emotions induction suggest that the more people need to engage in open, constructive processing in order to reason about a problem, the more likely their affective state is to influence their memory, judgments, and decisions (Forgas, 1995). Indeed, political sophisticates were found to be affected by emotions to a greater extent in activation of affectively charged political concepts (Lodge and Taber, 2005). It would thus be worthwhile to test the extent to which elites consciously and unconsciously rely on moral convictions in forming attitudes, policies, and campaigns.

In sum, future research may generalize the role of moral convictions to different cultures, political settings, and times, and there is a need for further study of the moral public thesis by looking at moral convictions among political independents, the effect of discrete emotions and different harm cues on moralization, and the role of moral convictions in attitude change. In addition, the framework developed in this project allows studying the role of morality in violent conflicts and intergroup relations, and looking at moral conviction as a mechanism for dehumanization, crimes of obedience, elite polarization, and political campaigns. Setting up theory-based criteria for moral-political issues as well as subsequent measures holds implications for key questions in political science, such as political behavior, public opinion, inter-group relations, conflicts, and the functioning of democracies, and I hope that this project will be the vehicle for many illuminating future studies on morality in politics.

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Appendix for chapter 2

Table 2.1A: Descriptive statistics and correlations of
cognitive (directional) and emotional moral conviction

	Mean	*Std. dev*	*Min*	*Max*	*Cor. w/ Cog MC*
Abortion – Cognitive MC	.432	.750	-1	1	
Abortion – Emotional MC	.332	.289	0	1	-.73**
Gay adoption – Cognitive MC	.413	.752	-1	1	
Gay adoption – Emotional MC	.178	.287	0	1	-.82**
Capital punishment – Cognitive MC	-.041	.787	-1	1	
Capital punishment – Emotional MC	.403	.305	0	1	-.66**
Medical marijuana – Cognitive MC	.654	.578	-1	1	
Medical marijuana – Emotional MC	.110	.216	0	1	-.78**
Deporting immigrants – Cognitive MC	.123	.733	-1	1	
Deporting immigrants – Emotional MC	.310	.290	0	1	-.68**
Stress interrogation – Cognitive MC	-.224	.777	-1	1	
Stress interrogation – Emotional MC	.479	.320	0	1	-.68**

Entries in rightmost column are pair-wise correlations; **: $p<.05$ (two tail).

Note that the directional form of cognitive moral conviction is coded such that 1 indicates strong moral conviction in the direction of support for the practice, while -1 indicates strong moral conviction in the direction of opposition. In turn, emotional moral conviction is coded such that 0 indicates no negative moral emotions upon performance of the political practice and 1 indicates strong negative moral emotions in that case. This accounts for the significant negative correlations between the dimensions, indicating that as a person increases in emotional moral conviction he also tends to increase in cognitive moral conviction in the same ideological direction. For instance, as one feels stronger negative moral emotions upon the practice of abortion (i.e., approaching 1 on emotional moral conviction), they are also inclined to categorize abortion in the moral domain to a greater extent, in the direction of opposition to the practice (i.e., approach -1 on cognitive moral conviction).

Issue by Pro/Anti	Contingency on common practice (U.S.)	Legal status(U.S.)	Legal contingency (U.S.)	Contingency on common practice (another country)	Legal status (all countries)	Legal contingency (another country)
Abortion – P (203)	.916	.931	.764	.887	.833	.764
Abortion – A (70)	.914	.629	.814	.900	.571	.843
Gay adoption – P (205)	.956	.922	.698	.912	.805	.649
Gay adoption – A (68)	.926	.691	.912	.868	.662	.897
Capital punishment – P (139)	.820	.899	.453	.763	.676	.453
Capital punishment – A (134)	.903	.664	.806	.910	.604	.828
Medical marijuana – P (238)	.941	.912	.777	.920	.824	.761
Medical marijuana – A (35)	.857	.686	.686	.686	.714	.686
Deporting immig. – P (164)	.787	.890	.488	.677	.695	.512
Deporting immig. – A (109)	.917	.505	.807	.844	.385	.780
Torture – P (117)	.803	.744	.530	.632	.513	.453
Torture – A (156)	.917	.788	.846	.917	.756	.885
Mean	.888	.772	.715	.826	.670	.709

Items are binary (0-1), sample size in brackets. Items were originally branched by the attitude on the political practice. See the methods section for details.

Overall, contingency on common practice in the U.S. is the easiest item for cognitive moral conviction: 89% of the participants insisted that the political act they endorse is a common practice in spite of the fact that the opposite act is actually the common practice in the country. In the same manner, contingency on common practice in another country is the second easiest item.

As can be expected, the most difficult item offers the ultimate generalization: should one's endorsed political practice be legalized worldwide ("Do you think that there should be a law that prohibits/allows [issue] in all countries?"). Interestingly, and in contrast with the moralizing conservative hypothesis, liberal attitudes are generally higher on universalism. Thus, the attitudes most likely to be generalized around the world (around 80% of the responses) are favoring legalization of abortion, gay adoption, and medical marijuana and opposing the use of torture. Quite intuitively, legal generalization around the world is a more difficult item than legal generalization in the U.S. across the board (except for opposition to medical marijuana), but the latter is quite difficult as well.

The two legal consistency questions seem redundant in this version of the measure. But note that the measure was changed in later versions, from binary to a 4-point scale.

	Abortion	Gay adoption	Capital punishment	Medical usage of marijuana	Deportation of illegal immigrants	Torture	**Mean**
Ashamed	.468	.164	.473	.119	.388	.504	.353
Embarrassed	.470	.186	.409	.134	.327	.441	.328
Guilty	.563	.163	.591	.119	.450	.571	.410
Contemptuous – other- directed	.219	.201	.328	.118	.282	.419	.261
Angry – other-directed	.190	.155	.301	.091	.269	.408	.236
Disgusted – other-directed	.220	.182	.398	.114	.269	.473	.276
Contemptuous – third party	.283	.191	.367	.108	.271	.492	.285
Angry – third party	.266	.164	.359	.077	.260	.486	.290
Disgusted – third party	.312	.194	.397	.111	.269	.513	.299
Mean	.332	.178	.403	.110	.310	.479	.302

Items are on a 5-point scale, recoded to vary 0-1. See the methods section for details.

Generally, self-directed negative moral emotions are stronger than other-directed moral emotions: people are more likely to feel ashamed, guilty or embarrassed at employing the political practice, than to feel anger, disgust or contempt at other people doing so. There is also a slight in-group favoritism effect: other-directed negative moral emotions are stronger when directed to a third party; i.e., to people in some other country, than to people one may know.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Ashamed – self-directed								
2. Embarrassed – self- directed	.8867							
3. Guilty – self-directed	.8537	.7950						
4. Contemptuous – other- directed	.6073	.6157	.5220					
5. Angry – other-directed	.6786	.7005	.5774	.8093				
6. Disgusted – other- directed	.7063	.7252	.6473	.7806	.9008			
7. Contemptuous – third- party	.5931	.5896	.5354	.8011	.7062	.7129		
8. Angry – third-party	.6705	.6723	.6015	.6742	.7792	.7873	.8627	
9. Disgusted – third-party	.6761	.7043	.6636	.6571	.7376	.8407	.8262	.9138

Table entries are pair-wise correlations between the 9 items, averaged across issues. All correlations are highly significant.

The correlations among the items are overall very high, and are particularly strong between each group of items: the self-directed, other-directed and third-party items are correlated at around .8 or higher.

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (Iterated Principal Factors) yields 1 Eigen Value greater than 1 (6.68), explaining about 80.1% of the variance in the hot moral conviction measure. The second factor is quite far from 1 (Eigen=.812), and explains an additional 9.7% of the variance, with factor 3 even farther away from the value of 1 (.427). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy indicates a meritorious degree of common variance among the 9 items (KMO=.848), with items' KMO varying between .81 and .91.

However, both the orthogonal varimax horst and the more appropriate oblique promax rotations yield a 4-factors solution. The oblique solution yields a clean simple structure with four factors retained. Items 7-9 (third-party directed moral emotions) load on factor 1 (factor loadings: .530, .872, .812), items 5-6 (other-directed, anger, and disgust) load on factor 2 (factor loadings: .824, .748), items 1-3 (self-directed) load on factor 3 (factor loadings: .940, .704, .746), and the other-directed contempt loads on the fourth item (.681).

Note that the measure was changed in later versions: the contempt questions were omitted, and an additional set of scenarios was added in measuring negative moral emotions in situations where the practice is prevented (i.e., disgust at not legalizing abortion, at allowing torture, etc.).

Appendix for chapter 3

<u>Table 3.1A: Descriptive statistics and correlations of</u>
<u>cognitive and emotional moral conviction, adult sample</u>

	Mean	*Std. dev*	*Min*	*Max*	*Cor. w/ Cog MC*
Darfur – Cognitive MC	.562	.200	0	1	
Darfur – Emotional MC	.394	.189	0	.979	.14**
Porn – Cognitive MC	.530	.237	0	1	
Porn – Emotional MC	.337	.210	0	1	.24**

Entries in rightmost column are pair-wise correlations; **: p<.05 (two tail).

Appendix for chapter 4

<u>Table 4.1A: Descriptive statistics and correlations of
cognitive and emotional moral conviction</u>

	Mean	*Std. dev*	*Min*	*Max*	*Cor. w/ Cog MC*
Abortion – Cognitive MC	.619	.307	0	1	
Abortion – Emotional MC	.515	.322	0	1	.32**
Gay adoption – Cognitive MC	.607	.265	0	1	
Gay adoption – Emotional MC	.587	.332	0	1	.38**
Capital punishment – Cognitive MC	.585	.266	0	1	
Capital punishment – Emotional MC	.435	.324	0	1	.37**

Entries in rightmost column are pair-wise correlations; **: $p<.05$ (two tail).