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That's Immoral (Unless It's Happening to an Outgroup Member): Moral Foundations,
Political Identity, and Reactions to News Media

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ABSTRACT

That's Immoral (Unless It's Happening to an Outgroup Member): Moral Foundations,
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by

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Moral foundations theory (MFT; Graham et al., 2013) proposes that moral judgments are intuitions that developed over the course of human evolutionary history, largely falling along five discrete foundations: authority, loyalty, care, fairness, and purity. MFT has been applied to media research by the model of intuitive morality and exemplars (MIME), which delineates how innate moral intuitions guide selection and evaluation of media content (Tamborini, 2011). However, neither MFT nor MIME delineate the role of group membership in moral judgments, despite research on social identity theory suggesting hostile outgroup members fall outside the boundaries of moral judgment (e.g., Deutsch, 2006; Haslam, 2006). The present research examines MFT in the context of moral violations between Democrats and Republicans. A quasi-experiment was performed using a volunteer sample recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants were randomly assigned to read one of five news stories depicting moral violations in Congress: a Democrat attacking the authority of a higher-ranking Democrat, a Democrat attacking the authority of a higher-ranking Republican, and Republican attacking the authority of a higher-ranking Democrat, a

Republican attacking the authority of a higher-ranking Republican, or a neutral condition in which the political party of the two politicians was not specified. While MFT suggests that the type of moral violation (i.e., whether it is an authority, loyalty, care, fairness, or purity violation) should determine participants' reaction to the moral violation, results largely corroborate a social identity perspective. Participants were not critical of ingroup members who committed authority violations against outgroup members, even when the participant reported caring heavily about authority violations generally. Additionally, participants were highly critical of outgroup members who committed authority violations against ingroup members, even when the participant reported *not* caring heavily about authority violations generally. Moreover, even though participants only saw news stories depicting violations of the authority and loyalty foundations, results showed significant differences in ratings of a moral transgressor's care, fairness, and purity based on their status as an ingroup or outgroup member. Results suggest that group identity plays an important role in evaluating moral violations, often trumping individuals' innate weightings of the five moral foundations outlined by MFT.

Chapter 1: That's Immoral (Unless it's Happening to an Outgroup Member): Moral Foundations, Political Identity, and Reactions to News Media

Moral judgments play an integral role in the selection and evaluation of media content. Research over the last several decades indicates that audience members judge the morality of characters in fictional narratives, people in the news media, as well as the appropriateness of punishments for moral violations; these judgments impact interest in and enjoyment of media narratives (e.g., Tamborini et al., 2010; Zillmann & Bryant, 1975). While much of the early research on the effect of moral judgment on media selection and evaluation was based on rationalist approaches to morality, which argue that judgments of right and wrong are made via effortful and conscious deliberation (e.g., Kohlberg, 1981; Zillmann, 2000), recent research relies on intuitionist approaches, which propose that judgments of right and wrong are made rapidly and subconsciously. One such approach is moral foundations theory (Haidt, 2001).

According to Moral Foundations Theory (MFT), moral judgments are intuitions that developed as adaptations over the course of human evolutionary history. Characteristic of evolved psychological mechanisms, Haidt (2001) claims that these intuitions are governed by discrete cognitive modules that react to environmental inputs (Haidt & Joseph, 2008). The theory refers to five moral foundations (or “modules”; although the theory recognizes that there could be many more): care, fairness, loyalty, authority, and purity. Being adaptive responses, people typically invoke these moral principles automatically with little conscious deliberation. Like many adaptations, however, moral foundations are facultative responses to different kinds of environmental scenarios. As such, different people weight the domains differently.

Moral foundations theory has been applied to several areas of research, much of it examining the relationship among innate moral modules, attitudes, emotions, and political ideology. For example, Koleva, Graham, Iyer, Ditto, and Haidt (2012) examined how weights of the five moral foundations could predict disapproval of hot-button political issues like abortion, same-sex marriage, and burning of the U.S. flag. They found that the sanctity/purity foundation was most associated with moral disapproval of these behaviors. Horberg, Oveis, Keltner, and Cohen (2009) examined how both trait and state disgust sensitivity affected perceptions of the importance of maintaining physical purity (e.g., washing hands, not getting tattoos, etc.) and spiritual purity (e.g., asking divine forgiveness for sins). Finally, a great deal of research has been done on moral foundations and political ideology. Haidt (2007) found that liberals and conservatives differ in the weights they place on the different moral foundations. Conservatives weight each of the five domains almost equally highly, and they are more sensitive to violations of the loyalty, authority, and purity domains than are liberals. Meanwhile, liberals are more sensitive to violations of the care and fairness domains than are conservatives.

Research in the communication field has elaborated on the core principles of MFT to investigate how people react to mediated narratives. According to the model of intuitive morality and exemplars (MIME), which delineates how innate moral intuitions guide selection and evaluation of media (Tamborini, 2011), media contain exemplars that activate moral domains both positively and negatively. Audience members are attracted to narratives that depict violations of heavily-weighted moral domains and enjoy narratives that depict appropriate repercussions for moral violations. Research on MIME has examined how innate weightings of the five moral foundation impact audience members' enjoyment of narratives

(e.g., Lewis, Tamborini, & Weber, 2014) as well as how repeated exposure to certain types of moral violations can change how much audience members weight each moral foundation (e.g., Eden et al., 2014).

Given that both MFT and MIME are focused on morality, it is peculiar that neither theory gives adequate weight to a key feature of social life that strongly impacts moral judgment and behavior: Group membership. Graham et al. (2012) posit that differences in moral weights across cultures (e.g., different weights of the purity foundation between the United States and fundamentalist Islamic states in the Middle East) often *cause* poor intergroup relations, resulting in violent conflict and the moral exclusion of outgroup members (i.e., a sense that outgroup members are undeserving of moral rights). They cite Kesebir and Pyszczynski (2011), who argue that because faith in the validity of one's worldviews acts as a buffer against the fear of death, people feel anxious and antagonistic against outgroups who possess differing worldviews. However, Graham et al. (2012) ignore decades of research on the role of group identity in moral judgments.

A great deal of research shows that prejudice and discrimination are directed at members of outgroups, and that those reactions become more hostile as a function of the degree of conflict between groups (see Tajfel, 1981, for example). In those cases where intergroup conflict is particularly acute, members of outgroups may even fall outside the boundaries of moral judgment. In these cases, moral violations against outgroup members might be ignored, and, in the most extreme cases, outgroup members can be perceived as less than human and undeserving of moral regard (Deutsch, 2006; Opatow, 2012; see also Haslam, 2006, for a review of research on dehumanization). In extreme cases, members of outgroups are viewed as deserving of extermination (Rummel, 1992). On the other hand,

while intergroup conflict produces discrimination against and moral disregard for outgroup members, ingroup members are more likely to receive fairness, trust, and generosity.

Research on moral disregard for outgroup members is not incompatible with Graham et al.'s (2012) proposal that intergroup conflict is sometimes caused and/or exacerbated by knowledge of an outgroup's differing moral concerns. However, research in the minimal group paradigm indicates that intergroup conflict and moral disregard occur absent knowledge of what an outgroup finds moral/immoral. The paradigm involves randomly dividing participants into groups and having them perform resource distribution tasks (e.g., dividing money between two people: an experimentally-determined ingroup vs. outgroup member). As Diehl (1990) discusses in a review of minimal group research, mere *categorization* into separate groups is sufficient to trigger punitive discrimination against outgroups and favoritism to ingroups. This occurs absent negative social interdependence, a history of conflict, self-interest, and even the ability to identify individuals with groups. Moreover, while people who participate in minimal group experiments frequently show "fair" responses (e.g., allocate equal quantities of money to ingroup and outgroup members), this strategy coexists with the maximum differentiation strategy: Participants prefer that the ingroup have more relative to the outgroup than both groups having equal resources, even if unequal distribution requires the ingroup to sacrifice some resources (e.g., participants prefer giving \$15 to an ingroup member and \$10 to an outgroup member over \$20 to each). All of these allocation choices have moral significance, particularly for the harm/care and fairness dimensions, and all are at odds with the simple proposition that ingroup favoritism and outgroup punishment result from knowledge of the outgroup's moral values.

There is also evidence that group membership affects the extremity of moral judgment, and that moral judgments vary in intensity with the salience of group identity. For example, research shows people judge a moral violation against a hostile outgroup member less harshly than they judge the same moral violation against an ingroup member (Bruneau, Dufour, & Saxe, 2012). Other research indicates that while people view unfair authority figures negatively in an interpersonal context, they can perceive authority figures that are unfair to *outgroup members* positively (Platow, Reid, & Andrew, 1998; Platow et al., 1997). Group identity may play a powerful role in influencing how people process moral violations.

Thus, there are two contrasting (but not irreconcilable) perspectives about the nature of moral intuitions and how they function in intergroup contexts. Moral foundations theory proposes that moral judgments come from innate, relatively intractable weights given to five discrete moral foundations. Though culture plays a role in determining which social inputs trigger the perception of a violation, and though people may come to weight one foundation or another more heavily or lightly over the course of cognitive development, people are born with the predisposition to care about some types of moral violations more than others (Graham et al., 2012). In contrast, social identity theorists claim that moral judgment is governed by coalitional psychology, and thus social categorizations. Fairness, trust, cooperation and equitable social exchange are all much more likely to occur in intragroup or interpersonal social contexts than intergroup social contexts (Diehl, 1990). This suggests that social categorization and group identification may causally precede the detailed moral judgments that are captured in MFT. These competing perspectives could be tested (and perhaps integrated) through a simple experimental manipulation of the group identity of the actor and target in a moral violation.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine audience reactions to moral violations in a political news story. The political arena is a natural place to test both moral foundations theory and social identity theory: Research on moral foundations theory suggests robust differences in how liberals and conservatives make moral judgments, and people recognize social categories based on political identity. The present study offers novel contributions to research on moral foundations theory, MIME, and social identity theory. Though MFT acknowledges differences between liberals and conservatives in the relative weight of the moral foundations, research on MFT has not examined how the political identity of the actor and target in a moral violation impacts moral judgments. If political identity is relatively powerful in impacting moral judgments, it might suggest that social categorization and group identity causally precede moral judgments. However, if innate differences between liberals and conservatives in moral judgment hold fast even in the context of intergroup conflict, it would suggest the moral foundations play an integral role in determining group identity. Finally, to date, research on MIME has examined the role of moral foundations in reactions to moral violations in fictional narratives. MIME proposes that the same processes operate in evaluations of news media, but this has not been tested experimentally. The present study marks the first attempt to test MIME in a news context.

First, I will summarize moral foundations theory, paying close attention to its theoretical underpinnings in evolutionary psychology and the findings describing differences between liberals and conservatives. Second, I will discuss MIME and the role of moral intuitions in the selection and processing of mediated narratives. Third, I will discuss research on social identity and moral exclusion of outgroup members. Fourth, I will attempt to integrate arguments from the MFT and SIT perspectives and make predictions about

audience reactions to moral violations in a political news intergroup context. Finally, I will present findings from a quasi-experiment.

Chapter 2: Moral Foundations Theory

Morality has been defined in various ways in philosophy and psychology. Kohlberg (1981) defined it as judgments about right and wrong, limited to the area of justice. Turiel (1983) expanded the definition of the moral domain as “prescriptive judgments of justice, rights, and welfare pertaining to how people ought to relate to each other” (p. 3). In moral foundations theory, Haidt (2008) defines morality in terms of its function (rather than its content) as “sets of values, practices, institutions, and evolved psychological mechanisms that work together to suppress or regulate selfishness and make social life possible” (p. 70).

Moral foundations theory takes a nativist, pluralist, intuitionist approach to morality (Graham et al., 2013). Humans are born with a first draft of a moral mind; they intuitively find some behaviors morally right and other behaviors morally wrong, and make moral judgments without much thought or effort (Haidt & Joseph, 2004). It is believed that humans’ cognitive moral architecture was designed over the course of human history via natural and sexual selection (Haidt, 2001). People who reacted strongly and negatively to unfairness in economic exchange, for instance, enjoyed fitness benefits over individuals who did not (Haidt, 2007). Innate moral structures make it easy for people to learn emotional reactions to environmental inputs, but they do not represent a final draft of the moral mind (Graham et al., 2013).

Innate cognitive structures are influenced by culture and experience to produce a final (but malleable) set of cognitive moral structures. A child in a traditional Hindu family may learn rigid rules for respecting authority figures, for example, while a child in a secular American family may learn to distrust authority (Graham et al., 2013). Both children easily learn rules for evaluating and behaving around authority figures, but these rules produce

different outputs. Innate foundations guide what people *can* learn in terms of moral judgment, while culture and experience guide what people *do* learn.

The Moral Domains

Haidt and Joseph (2008) propose that selection pressures designed at least five different moral evaluation modules, each of which guides moral judgments in a separate domain, and each of which can be distinguished as either “individualizing” or “binding.” While the individualizing foundations focus on preserving individual rights (e.g., the right to not be cheated in an economic exchange) the binding foundations focus on subverting one’s own self-interest in the interest of group harmony. The five foundations are care and fairness (the two individualizing foundations), and loyalty, authority, and purity (the group-focused or “binding” foundations). The care foundation was designed via selection pressures to care for vulnerable offspring. Graham et al. (2013) note that cues to vulnerability and suffering extend beyond one’s own offspring, and emotional reactions to the suffering of others (and those who caused the suffering) are likely easily triggered by observing media (e.g., news stories, cartoon characters) and real-world objects (e.g., animals, strangers).

The fairness foundation was designed via selection pressures to detect cheaters in economic exchange. Individuals who could identify and avoid cheaters enjoyed survival and reproductive benefits over those who engaged with all economic partners equally because they were able to secure and maintain resources (e.g., food) more effectively (e.g., Trivers, 1971). The original inputs for the fairness/reciprocity foundation were interpersonal experiences with exchange partners, but more recent research has found that triggers also extend to inanimate objects like vending machines and gossip about cheaters heard through third-parties (Graham et al., 2013).

The loyalty foundation was designed via intergroup competition pressures. Individuals whose psychology compelled them to form tight-knit, loyal coalitions stood a better chance of survival than individuals whose psychology compelled them to form loose-knit, disloyal coalitions. Today, the loyalty foundation can be triggered by brands, sports team, religion, and a host of other group identity contexts (Graham et al., 2013).

The authority foundation was designed via selection pressures for navigating social hierarchies. Individuals who were compelled psychologically to recognize and form bonds with high status members of their clan enjoyed fitness benefits that others did not. Graham et al. (2013) note that there is a great deal of cultural variation regarding moral behavior with regard to authority; some cultures (like social conservatives in the United States) promote strong respect for authority while others (like social liberals in the United States) promote questioning authority (e.g., Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009).

The sanctity/purity foundation was designed via selection pressures surrounding pathogen avoidance. Some behaviors, like interacting with members of different clans and eating meat, exposed humans to disease risks, and the emotion of disgust may have evolved as a preventative measure against exposure to these risks. In the modern world, the sanctity/purity foundation plays a role in religious standards for food preparation, reactions to immigrants, feelings regarding disease-carrying animals like rats and cockroaches, and disgust toward non-heteronormative sexual acts (Graham et al., 2013).

MFT and Political Ideology

Some of MFT's most robust findings regard differences in the moral maps of liberals and conservatives. In a series of four studies examining the 1) relevance of each foundation, 2) harshness of judgments to violations of each foundation, 3) the monetary threshold

necessary to personally violate a foundation, and 4) textual analysis of moral themes in political speeches, Graham et al. (2009) consistently found that while conservatives weight all five domains equally, liberals give the highest weight to the fairness and harm/care foundations. Additionally, conservatives give more weight to the loyalty, authority, and purity foundations than do liberals. Graham et al. (2011) and Graham, Nosek, and Haidt (2012) have corroborated these findings.

Moreover, Graham et al. (2012) found that liberals and conservatives tend to stereotype members of the opposing ideology according to these moral differences. In a survey of a random sample of adults in the U.S., respondents correctly identified which foundations were important to members of their own and the opposing political party. However, they exaggerated the importance of each foundation, and this exaggeration occurred regardless of whether they were rating ingroup or outgroup members. Liberals were especially inaccurate, underestimating how much conservatives consider fairness and care while overestimating how much other liberals consider fairness and care.

This research, in addition to research on the Big Five personality traits (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003) and disgust sensitivity (e.g., Inbar, Pizarro, Iyer, & Haidt, 2012), suggests that liberals and conservatives may engage different cognitive schema for processing social information. Liberals tend to make moral judgments according to individual (versus group) needs, tend to score highly on openness to new experiences, agreeableness, and neuroticism, and tend to have dampened disgust sensitivity. Conservatives tend to make moral judgments according to group needs, tend to be closed to new experiences, conscientious, and extraverted, and tend to have high levels of disgust sensitivity. Additionally, liberals and conservatives perceive these differences when

evaluating both ingroup and outgroup members (Graham et al., 2012). Group-level differences (along partisan lines) in moral psychology could reveal interesting patterns in the selection and evaluation of media content.

MFT and Media Content

Recent research in partisan selective exposure suggests that liberals and conservatives consume news media differently. For example, research indicates conservatives are more likely to rely on Fox News, conservative blogs, and Christian news outlets than are liberals; liberals are more likely than Conservatives to rely on NPR, news satire programs, “Big 3” news outlets (ABC/NBC/CBS), liberal blogs, Twitter, and Facebook (Wicks, Wicks, & Marimoto, 2015). Other studies show that conservatives use Fox News more than liberals (Messing & Westwood, 2012; Stroud, 2010), liberals rely on MSNBC more than conservatives (Messing & Westwood, 2012), and liberals were significantly more likely to see the anti-George W. Bush documentary *Fahrenheit 911* than were conservatives (Stroud, 2007). Partisan differences in media choice extend to other countries, including China (Chan & Lee, 2014), Uruguay, Italy, Bulgaria, Spain, Japan, Chile, Greece, Hungary, and the United Kingdom (Goldman & Mutz, 2011). These media-selection patterns are likely due to several reasons (e.g., perceived source credibility, accessibility of information in social networks, social identity gratifications, etc.), one of which may be due to the differences in the morals emphasized in liberal and conservative news sources.

In his model of intuitive morality and exemplars (MIME), which builds upon MFT, Tamborini (2011) argues that moral intuitions guide reactions to and selection of media content. MIME borrows from MFT in explaining that humans possess innate moral foundations that guide reactions to moral or immoral behavior. MIME also builds on research

by Zillmann (2000) and others in arguing that media contain moral exemplars: salient examples of moral valor and moral impropriety. Audience members make moral judgments about the people in fictional and news narratives; the strength of these judgments varies based on the salience of the exemplars in the narrative and the relative innate weight that audience members give to each of the core moral foundations (Tamborini, 2011). Although moral judgments are mostly made quickly and effortlessly, audience members might make effortful moral judgments when multiple, conflicting moral exemplars are present in a narrative.

MIME further proposes that moral intuitions and exemplars in the media have short-term as well as long-term relationships. In the short term, the theory argues that people will be attracted to media that highlight moral foundations they care the most about, react positively to narratives that confirm their moral beliefs, and react negatively to narratives that disconfirm their moral beliefs (Tamborini, 2011). The MIME predicts that these short-term experiences shape long-term expectations for media content and lead to patterns of repeated selective exposure. Additionally, individuals may weight moral modules more heavily as they are repeatedly triggered by media content (Tamborini, 2011). Finally, because many media outlets are financially motivated by drawing an audience, audience selective exposure patterns may impact the construction of media content (Mastro, Enriquez, Bowman, Prabhu, & Tamborini, 2013). An increase in attitude-reinforcing media content could exacerbate a cycle of exposure and reinforcement.

MIME and Media Enjoyment. Research suggests that moral foundations impact audience members' enjoyment of narratives. A within subjects experiment by Tamborini et al. (2013) showed participants ten short summaries of fake films. The summaries varied in

terms which of the five moral foundations was violated (two for each foundation, with only one foundation being violated in each summary), as well as the narrative outcome (punishment or reward for the moral violator). They found that individual differences in individuals' weights of the moral foundations predicted their ratings of the violator's moral character: the more a participant cared about the moral foundation, the lower they rated the character of the moral violator. They also found that moral domain salience predicted the appeal of the narrative: even when moral violators were *rewarded* for their behavior, participants who heavily weighted the moral foundation found the narrative more appealing than those who did not.

A similar study by Lewis, Tamborini, and Weber (2014) varied whether the ending of a hypothetical film upheld all five moral foundations, violated all five moral foundations, or upheld some moral foundations while violating others. The study revealed that audience members experienced more cognitive conflict, took longer to appraise narrative appeal, and were less likely to enjoy a narrative when the resolution was morally ambiguous (i.e., violated one moral violation to uphold another) or conflicted with their own moral foundations than when the resolution upheld all of their moral foundations. Interestingly, audience members in the same study demonstrated near-equal levels of *appreciation* for ambiguous and all-positive moral resolutions to narratives, while experiencing less appreciation for moral conclusions that conflicted with their own moral foundations (researchers defined "appreciation" as how meaningful, moving, and thought-provoking a narrative was).

Tamborini, Eden, Bowman, Grizzard, and Lachlan (2012) found that salience of the care foundation impacted audience members' ratings of the graphicness and enjoyableness of

violence in a narrative. They showed participants summaries from fake films, varying how graphic the violence was in the film as well as whether or not the violence was justified. Participants who weighted the care foundation heavily rated the descriptions as more graphic than those who did not. Additionally, innate weight of the fairness foundation predicted appeal of the narrative in which the violence was justified: Participants who cared deeply about fairness found justified violence more appealing than those who did not.

MIME research also indicates that there is a relationship between exposure to certain types of moral appeals and the innate weight audience members give to each moral foundation. In a longitudinal experiment by Eden et al. (2014), participants watched an online soap opera for eight weeks and were measured on the domain weight of each of the five moral foundations before and after the 8-week period. The foundations of care, fairness, and purity were salient in the soap opera narrative. Compared to a control group, soap opera viewers reported caring more about those three foundations after viewing the soap opera for 8 weeks. A similar study by Tamborini et al. (2010) found that a televised soap opera reinforced moral judgments over time, though this study did not test the specific five moral domains of MFT.

Though MIME (Tamborini, 2011) proposes that moral intuitions guide audience reactions to news media, all of the research to date has focused on fictional narratives. In light of MFT research showing that conservatives and liberals differ in how they weight the moral foundations (Graham et al. 2009), and selective exposure research demonstrating that conservatives and liberals differ in their preference for certain news sources (e.g., Stroud, 2010), an application of MIME to news media represents a step forward for the model.

Additionally, MFT and MIME can contribute theoretically to research on partisan differences in media consumption. Much of the research focuses on cognitive dissonance as a motivating mechanism for partisan selective exposure: people want to avoid the cognitive dissonance brought on by exposure to counter-attitudinal information (Festinger, 1957; Garrett, 2009a, 2009b; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Knobloch-Westerwick & Meng, 2009). However, cognitive dissonance is difficult to measure, and the theory lacks a theoretical explanation of *why* discomfort at the inconsistency between beliefs, attitudes, and actions would occur in the first place. In contrast, MFT and MIME can generate concrete, testable hypotheses about differences in how liberals and conservatives process information rooted in evolutionary psychology.

Hypotheses derived from MFT and MIME. Research on MFT shows that conservatives weight the loyalty, authority, and purity foundations higher than liberals, while liberals weight the care and fairness foundations higher than conservatives. The first hypothesis seeks to replicate these past findings:

H1: Republicans will weight the loyalty, authority, and purity foundations higher than Democrats; Democrats will weight the care and fairness foundations higher than Republicans.

Moreover, MIME argues that audience members react negatively to narratives depicting violations of heavily-weighted foundations, especially when these violations go unpunished in narrative resolutions. These negative reactions exist in terms of ratings of characters' morality and in terms of evaluations of enjoyment and appreciation of a narrative (Eden et al., 2014; Lewis et al., 2014; Tamborini et al., 2012; Tamborini et al., 2013). News stories about conflict in politics offer an excellent opportunity to examine audience reactions

to moral violations, especially regarding authority and loyalty. In Congress, for instance, there are easily identifiable indicators of rank (e.g., Senate Majority Leader vs. Junior Senator) and group affiliation (e.g., Republican vs. Democrat). As an added benefit, conservatives and liberals weight the authority and loyalty foundations differently, yielding clear predictions about differences in how each group will process violations of those respective foundations in a news story:

H2: After reading a news story depicting an authority violation, Republicans will a) rate a moral transgressor significantly lower on an authority scale, b) exhibit more anger at the moral transgressor's actions, c) exhibit less support of the moral transgressor's actions, d) find the news story more interesting, and e) find the news story less entertaining than will Democrats.

H3: After reading a news story depicting a loyalty violation, Republicans will a) rate a moral transgressor significantly lower on a loyalty scale, b) exhibit more anger at the moral transgressor's actions, c) exhibit less support of the moral transgressor's actions, d) find the news story more interesting, and e) find the news story less entertaining than will Democrats.

Chapter 3: Morality and Intergroup Relations

Moral foundations theory and MFT take the position that the weight individuals give to each moral foundation is innate but not intractable; contextual factors can influence people's perceptions of moral violations (Graham et al., 2012; Tamborini, 2011). For example, in a context when individuals are presented with moral conundrums (situations in which a behavior upholds one moral value while violating another, like stealing bread to feed a hungry child), they are likely to be more effortful in their appraisals of the violation than when presented with a moral violation that does not uphold another moral value, like stealing bread *from* a hungry child (Tamborini, 2011). One factor that influences moral judgments is group identity. The following sections first discuss how moral foundations researchers have examined the interaction of morality and intergroup relations, they then address gaps in the MFT literature by discussing research in social identity theory, moral boundaries, and leadership endorsement.

Moral Foundations and Intergroup Relations

Moral foundations theory divides foundations into individualizing (care, fairness) and binding (authority, loyalty, and purity) foundations (Graham et al., 2013; Haidt & Graham, 2007). As discussed earlier, the individualizing foundations focus on preserving individual rights, and the binding foundations focus on subverting one's own interest in the interest of the group. Authority encourages people to recognize and respect social hierarchies. Loyalty encourages faithfulness to group obligations as well as wariness toward outgroups. Purity encourages active displays of loyalty via adherence to group rituals while also discouraging exposure to potential pathogens that could put the entire group at risk of illness (Graham et al., 2013; Haidt, Graham, & Joseph, 2009).

The binding moral foundations were likely selected by intergroup conflict. According to the evolutionary psychology perspective, as different clans competed over resources in the environment of evolutionary adaptedness (Pleistocene era, which lasted from roughly 2.5 million to roughly 11,700 years ago), individuals who showed fierce clan loyalty and respected social hierarchies enjoyed fitness benefits over individuals in loosely-knit clans (Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1992). The binding foundations (especially purity) also serve a pathogen-avoidance function; they discourage people from interacting with strangers who may carry disease (Rozin, Haidt, & McCauley, 2008). Put simply, the binding foundations guide how humans interact with members of outgroups.

As discussed earlier, Haidt and colleagues propose that knowledge of an outgroup's divergent moral beliefs is existentially threatening and leads to group conflict (e.g., Graham et al., 2013). However, there is very little research that examines MFT in an intergroup context. Ditto and Koleva (2011) argue that the American political "culture war" between Republicans and Democrats over issues like abortion, gay marriage, and gun control may be due to differences in how liberals and conservatives make moral judgments. For example, liberals may not perceive violations of authority, loyalty, and/or purity as immoral at all, and may reject conservative moral concerns about these foundations out of hand. This account is corroborated by Graham, Nosek, and Haidt (2012), who found that liberals and conservatives tend to have exaggerated, stereotypical views about the weights that the opposing group assigns to the five foundations.

Intergroup relationships also affect moral judgments outside of the political domain. Smith, Aquino, Koleva, and Graham (2014) examined how reliance on the binding foundations predicted support for torture of a threatening outgroup member (i.e., a terrorist)

and found that while the binding foundations are associated with less regard for outgroup members, low regard is mitigated by the strength of moral identity. Moral identity was defined as a “schema of the moral self that is composed of an associated network of moral traits, scripts, and values” (Smith et al., 2014, p. 1556) and was measured on a 10-item scale as the degree to which people wanted to be perceived as having 9 positive traits, including compassion, fairness, and generosity. Bruneau et al. (2012) examined the moral foundations of Arabs, Israelis, and South Americans and compared their reactions to 12 short narratives when the protagonist was from an ingroup, distant outgroup, and hostile outgroup; participants reported significantly more compassion for ingroup protagonists and non-hostile outgroup protagonists than they showed for hostile outgroup protagonists.

The research by Bruneau et al. (2012) also demonstrates that people can deviate from their innate moral foundations when judging outgroup members. For example, many Israelis who heavily weight the harm/care foundation are blind to the suffering of an Arab, and vice versa (Bruneau et al., 2012). However, it is unclear how powerful intergroup relationships are in influencing moral judgments; if they are tremendously powerful, it might undermine the MFT proposal that humans possess innate, strong foundations that guide intuitive moral judgments. It could also provide a major proviso to the theory: people do differ in innate foundation weights, but the moral foundations only work in particular contexts, after information about group status is accounted for. Moreover, while moral foundations theory acknowledges the role of culture in shaping the moral foundations (Graham et al., 2013), it does not explicate a mechanism for large and frequent deviations from baseline foundation weights. Research on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991; 2003), and moral boundaries (Opatow, 1990) can address this gap.

Moral Boundaries, SIT, and Optimal Distinctiveness

Moral foundations theory (Graham et al., 2013) takes the position that group identity plays a small role in moral judgments, rather for the most part, individuals rely on innate, fairly rigid, identifiable moral maps. Other perspectives argue that group identity plays a central, antecedent role in moral judgments: humans intuitively and rapidly identify whether someone is an ingroup or outgroup member, compare the social status between the ingroup and outgroup, assess whether the outgroup is a threat, and use these assessments to guide moral judgments.

In her research on moral boundaries, Opatow (1990a) demonstrates that humans have a mental *scope of justice*, defined as a boundary separating individuals and groups that deserve moral concern from those that do not. Outgroups often fall outside the scope of justice; they are perceived as undeserving of fair treatment, access to community resources, and sacrifice on the part of others (Opatow, 1990a). They are often dehumanized, referred to in terms that elicit pathogen fears (e.g., “vermin,” “virus,” “disease,” “rats,” “cockroaches,” etc.) (Opatow, 1990b). In extreme cases, groups that fall outside the scope of justice of an existing administration experience systematic oppression, exclusion from the political process, and genocide (Opatow, 2012).

Moral boundaries are rooted in social identity. According to social identity theory (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1979), humans categorize themselves and others into discrete groups and make social comparisons among these groups. Part of an individual’s self-concept is comprised of knowledge of memberships in these social groups (Tajfel, 1981). Because the self-concept is comprised of group memberships, individuals are motivated to maintain *positive distinctiveness*: they want their ingroups to possess status advantages over

outgroups—to be different from yet better than outgroups. Positive distinctiveness is achieved via three strategies: social mobility, social creativity, and social competition.

How people choose to pursue positive distinctiveness depends on the nature of the relationship between the ingroup and outgroup: how stable it is, the legitimacy of the status difference, and the permeability of group boundaries (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). People are likely to use mobility strategies to create positive distinctiveness when ingroup status is low, identification with the ingroup is low, and group boundaries are perceived as stable and legitimate. Specifically, individuals might disassociate from the ingroup and pursue self-interest. People are likely to use social creativity strategies to pursue positive distinctiveness when identification with the ingroup is high, group boundaries are perceived as rigid, and the relationship between ingroup and outgroup is stable—i.e., the intergroup situation cannot be easily changed. For example, people might look for new dimensions on which to compare the ingroup and outgroup that are more favorable for the ingroup. People are likely to use social competition strategies when identification with the ingroup is high, group boundaries are perceived as rigid, and the relationship between ingroup and outgroup is unstable. Specifically, people might display ingroup favoritism (giving preferential treatment to ingroup members) and outgroup denigration (denying outgroup members social benefits held by the ingroup) if that protects a high status ingroup position, or enables a low status group to pursue greater status at the expense of rival outgroups.

Importantly, ingroup favoritism does not always equate to outgroup denigration. People can show strong support for an ingroup while feeling positive or neutral about outgroups. Optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) expands on SIT by using evolutionary psychology to explicitly delineate circumstances under which people use social

competition strategies involving outgroup denigration. One of the evolutionary functions of groups is efficient acquisition and distribution of resources (Kurzban & Leary, 2001).

Outgroup hate and ingroup love are likely to occur when groups are competing over the same scarce resources (acquisition) and when groups are in struggles for political power (distribution of resources) (Brewer, 2007). Because political power deals with building justice systems (determining which behaviors are immoral, determining who deserves retribution when morally wronged, determining appropriate punishments for moral violations, and distributing resources fairly), outgroup hate is often exacerbated by feelings of ingroup moral superiority (Brewer, 2007). Thus, under circumstances where an outgroup constitutes competition for scarce resources and political power, that outgroup is likely to fall outside of moral boundaries. As such, the moral foundations explained by Haidt and colleagues may not operate as predicted when making moral judgments about outgroup members, particularly if those outgroup member are a threat to the ingroup.

Social identity and leadership endorsement. The social identity approach also has important implications for the specific moral foundation of authority. The authority foundation assumes that individuals recognize an authority figure's power as legitimate. Social identity plays a role in assessing the legitimacy of an authority figure. Under circumstances when ingroup commitment is high, leaders who exhibit prototypical ingroup traits are evaluated more favorably than those who do not exhibit these traits (Fielding & Hogg, 1997; Hains, Hogg, & Duck, 1997). Additionally, though people prefer fair leaders in *intragroup* contexts, they prefer leaders who unfairly favor ingroup members in competitive *intergroup* contexts (Platow, Reid, & Andrew, 1998; Platow & van Knippenburg, 1997).

Even people who heavily weight the authority foundation may not view subversion as immoral if the authority figure is an outgroup member.

Social identity and media. MIME explains the process of selective exposure to media content in terms of morality salience. As Tamborini (2011) explains, people are attracted to narratives that trigger their moral foundations and experience positive emotions when moral conflicts are resolved in ways that are consistent with their innate morality. Research on MIME also suggests that people appreciate narratives with moral complexity (i.e., uphold some foundations while violating others) (Lewis et al, 2014). Selective exposure to media content occurs because people learn which media sources and narrative types portray the right moral narratives to elicit positive emotions. In contrast, social identity theory would explain some of the selective exposure phenomenon in terms of the desire for positive distinctiveness, made possible through identification with characters and/or coalitions depicted in media. Individuals are motivated to select media content by self-enhancement, part of which can be achieved through social comparisons between ingroups and outgroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Media can satisfy needs for self-enhancement by presenting ingroups in favorable ways. Selective exposure can thus result from seeking out positive information about ingroups and avoiding negative information about ingroups (Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010).

Research supports the notion that media can impact self-enhancement through portrayals of ingroups and outgroups. Research on race (Mastro, Behm-Morawitz, & Kopacz, 2008; Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011; Melican & Dixon, 2008; Rivadeneyra, Ward, & Gordon, 2007), gender (Behm-Morawitz & Mastro, 2008; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2006), and age (Harwood, 1999) suggest that negative portrayals of ingroup members tend to

lower self-esteem, and that people tend to avoid media containing these portrayals. Moreover, people tend to experience higher self-esteem when exposed to media that positively portray ingroups and negatively portray outgroups (Harwood, 1999; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2006; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010; Rivadeneyra et al., 2007; Ward, 2004). The same process occurs in depictions of political ingroups and outgroups. Positive portrayals of political ingroups predict positive self-concept, as well as likelihood/duration of exposure to news media (Knobloch-Westerwick & Meng, 2008). Positive portrayals of ingroups also predict ratings of how interesting and informative a news article is (Coe et al., 2008). Put simply, group identity impacts evaluations and effects of media content.

Chapter 4: Rationale and Hypotheses

As discussed, moral foundations theory presents compelling evidence that moral judgments stem from innate weights assigned to sets of discrete moral foundations (Graham et al., 2013). Further, research in MFT has shown that conservatives and liberals assign different weights to each foundation. Conservatives rely on all five foundations nearly equally, but rely on authority, ingroup/betrayal, and purity more than liberals. In contrast, liberals rely on fairness and care more than conservatives (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2012). Based on these innate differences between liberals and conservatives, MIME would predict that in a media context in which group identity is *not* salient, conservatives will judge a person who subverts authority more harshly than liberals, and conservatives will be more interested in a news story depicting this violation. However, MFT does not explain how moral foundations and group identity interact to produce moral judgments.

Research on moral boundaries, social identity theory, optimal distinctiveness theory, and leadership endorsement suggest that intergroup relationships will powerfully impact moral judgments in a political context. Political outgroups present competition for scarce resources and political power, and political outgroups are often viewed as morally inferior to ingroups (Brewer, 2007). Though political outgroups may not fall entirely outside of moral boundaries, they very likely receive less moral regard than political ingroups. In fact, the effect of intergroup relationships on moral judgments might be so strong that typical liberal and conservative moral foundation weight patterns are reversed; conservatives could be induced to ignore authority and ingroup/betrayal violations, and liberals could be induced to care deeply about authority and loyalty violations. Testing the interaction will advance research in both MFT and SIT; it will demonstrate the degree of intractability in moral

foundations as well as the level of influence of intergroup relationships in guiding moral judgments.

Assumptions based on MFT, MIME, and Moral Boundaries

Moral foundations theory (Graham et al., 2013) does not specify how intergroup relationships interact with innate moral foundations when forming moral judgments. For example, the theory is silent on whether moral violations against an outgroup member will be judged the same as moral violations against an ingroup member. However, some assumptions can be made based on the evolutionary logic discussed to substantiate the theory, MFT research, and research on moral boundaries. Only by making five assumptions will it be possible to generate predictions using MFT in an intergroup context.

First, there is consistent evidence that conservatives weight authority and loyalty violations more heavily than liberals. Additionally, conservatives care equally about authority and loyalty violations. According to Graham, Haidt, and Nosek (2009), conservatives weight both foundations around 3 points on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being the high point. Liberals *also* weight authority and loyalty violations equally to each other, just at a lower level than conservatives (around 2 points on a 5-point Likert scale; Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009).

Second, when multiple foundations are violated simultaneously, there will be an *additive* effect on the severity of the moral judgment: both liberals and conservatives should judge the violator more harshly than when a single foundation is violated. This assumption hinges on two pieces of logic: First, Tamborini (2011) and Graham et al. (2013) propose that individuals evaluate moral violators based on the individual weights they assign to each moral foundation. Second, Lewis, Tamborini, and Weber (2104) demonstrated that the

number of foundations being upheld vs. violated matters in audience assessments of narratives. The violation of one moral foundation to support another (e.g., stealing a piece of bread to feed a hungry child) leads to more effortful appraisal by the moral judge, while the violation of multiple moral foundations *without upholding another* (e.g., stealing a piece of bread *from* a hungry child) increases negative reactions to the moral violator.

Third, authority and loyalty violations that occur in an ingroup should be judged more harshly than authority and loyalty violations that occur in an outgroup; evolutionarily, it is imperative to have cohesive groups, and both authority and loyalty violations hurt group cohesion (Kurzban & Leary, 2001). Moreover, as Brewer (2007) and others demonstrate, violations against outgroup members are often disregarded or perceived as justified. This assumption is consistent with the argument put forth by MFT researchers that the authority and loyalty foundations are binding foundations rooted in governing ingroup social hierarchies and intergroup relations (Graham et al., 2013).

Fourth, moral violations that occur against an outgroup can be viewed positively. Bruneau et al. (2012) demonstrated in their examination of moral violations against distant versus threatening outgroups, moral violations that favor the ingroup (e.g., an ingroup member undermining the authority of an outgroup member) can be viewed neutrally (in the case of a distant outgroup) or positively (in the case of a hostile outgroup); such violations can help ingroup security (Kurzban & Leary, 2001).

Fifth, when a positive moral violation occurs, it can cancel out the negative judgment of a concurrent negative moral violation. For example, if an ingroup-favoring authority violation occurs with a loyalty violation (e.g., if a Republican sees a low-ranking Democrat attack a high-ranking Democrat), the violations can cancel each other out. MFT (Haidt, 2008)

and MIME (2011) both recognize that situations in which multiple foundations are violated lead to greater effort in forming moral judgments, and Lewis, Tamborini, and Weber (2014) showed that audience members rated narratives depicting the violation of one moral foundation to uphold another moral foundation as equally appealing as narratives in which all moral foundations were upheld.

Moral Judgment Rationales

These assumptions make it possible to hypothesize about how people will judge the morality of a moral transgressor in a variety of group contexts. As discussed earlier, political conflicts often provide clear examples of moral violations within and between distinct, easily identifiable groups. In the U.S. government, politicians mostly belong to two political parties (Republican and Democrat), making it easy to identify loyalty violations. Additionally, there is a clear power hierarchy in government. Within the Senate, for example, the Senate Majority Leader ranks higher than a Junior Senator. Thus, it is possible to identify violations of the authority foundation.

Ingroup against ingroup authority violation. In this scenario, a Democrat sees a Democrat politician undermine the authority of a higher-ranking Democrat politician; a Republican sees a Republican politician undermine the authority of a higher-ranking Republican politician. In this case, loyalty (ingroup-on-ingroup violation) and authority (lower ranking against higher ranking) violations occur simultaneously. Using the additive logic from Tamborini (2011) and Graham et al. (2013), if loyalty and authority violations occur simultaneously, the moral transgressor should be rated lower on *both* foundations that in a situation where either a loyalty violation *or* an authority violation occurs. This should be true of both Democrat and Republican participants. However, as specified in Hypotheses 2

and 3, the effect should be stronger among Republicans, because Republicans weight authority and loyalty violations more heavily than Democrats (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009).

Outgroup against ingroup authority violation. In this scenario, a Democrat sees a Republican politician undermine the authority of a higher-ranking Democrat politician; a Republican sees a Democrat politician undermine the authority of a higher-ranking Republican politician. In this case there is only an authority violation; there is no violation of the loyalty foundation. Both Democrats and Republicans should rate an outgroup member low on respect for authority (i.e., low on an authority scale) when seeing them undermine the authority of a high status ingroup member. However, based on the additive logic from Tamborini (2011) and Graham et al. (2013), when a liberal sees a low-ranking Republican subvert the authority of a high-ranking Democrat, the moral transgressor should be rated *higher* on respect for authority than when a liberal sees a low-ranking Republican subvert the authority of a high-ranking Republican. In the former instance, only one foundation (authority) is being violated, so it should be judged less harshly than when two foundations (authority *and* loyalty) are violated. Again, Republicans should judge the outgroup-on-ingroup authority violation more harshly than Democrats.

While Democrats and Republicans should rate an outgroup-on-ingroup violation lower on authority, there should be no effect for perceptions of the attacker's loyalty to the ingroup; the attack is on an outgroup member, so no loyalty violation occurs.

Outgroup against outgroup authority violation. In this scenario, a Democrat sees a Republican politician undermine the authority of a higher-ranking Republican politician; a Republican sees a Democrat politician undermine the authority of a higher-ranking Democrat

politician. Thus, loyalty and authority violations occur simultaneously. Research by Bruneau et al. (2012) showed that moral violations against an outgroup member can be viewed positively. MFT (Haidt, 2008) also proposes that ingroup-favoring moral violations can be viewed positively. Thus, Democrats and Republicans who see an outgroup member undermine the authority of another outgroup member should rate the moral transgressor higher on respect for authority than those who see an outgroup-on-ingroup or an ingroup-on-ingroup violation; an outgroup-on-outgroup violation favors the ingroup, whereas outgroup-on-ingroup and ingroup-on-ingroup violations do not. Republicans should rate the moral transgressor lower on authority than Democrats.

A similar effect should occur for ratings of the moral transgressor's loyalty. An outgroup-on-outgroup attack is good for the ingroup, so ratings of the attacker's loyalty to the attacker's own ingroup should be higher in the outgroup-on-outgroup condition than in the ingroup-on-ingroup condition. Again, because Republicans weight the loyalty foundation more heavily than Democrats, Republicans should rate the attacker lower on loyalty than Democrats.

Ingroup against outgroup authority violation. In this scenario, a Democrat sees a Democrat politician undermine the authority of a higher-ranking Republican politician; a Republican sees a Republican politician undermine the authority of a higher-ranking Democrat politician. Thus, only an authority violation occurs; there is no loyalty violation. Both Democrats and Republicans should view an ingroup-on-outgroup authority violation positively. Research by Fielding and Hogg (1997) suggests that people often do not recognize the authority of outgroup members as legitimate, and undermining the authority of outgroup members represents a status gain for the ingroup. Thus, a moral transgressor who

commits an ingroup-on-outgroup authority violation should be rated higher on authority than in the previous three conditions. Moreover, both Republicans and Democrats should rate an ingroup member attacking an outgroup member higher on loyalty than moral transgressors in the other three conditions. This boost should be higher among Republicans, who weight the loyalty foundation more heavily than Democrats.

Group-identity neutral authority violation. Absent of cues to group identities, Republicans should rate a low-ranking politician who commits an authority violation against a high-ranking politician lower on authority than should Democrats. Because no loyalty violation occurs, there should be no difference between Democrats and Republicans on ratings of the moral transgressor's loyalty.

Hypotheses

As discussed previously, research on MIME (Lewis, Tamborini, & Weber, 2014; Tamborini, 2011) and MFT (Graham et al., 2013) suggests that when multiple moral foundations are violated, there is an additive effect on observers' judgments of the moral transgressor, such that the transgressor is judged more harshly than if they had only violated one foundation. Additionally, insofar as the authority and loyalty foundations evolved to promote group cohesion, moral violations that favor an ingroup against a competitive outgroup can be viewed positively, while violations that threaten group cohesion should be viewed negatively (Haidt, 2008). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Participants' ratings of a moral transgressor's respect for authority will move from lowest to highest in the following pattern (where low means violation of the authority foundation and high represents adherence to the foundation): lowest for a news story in which there is an ingroup-on-ingroup authority violation, followed by,

in order, a news story in which there is an outgroup-on-ingroup authority violation, a news story in which there is an outgroup-on-outgroup authority violation, a news story in which there is a party-neutral authority violation, and highest for a news story in which there is an ingroup-on-outgroup authority violation.

Similar logic can yield predictions about perceptions of a moral transgressor's ingroup loyalty. When a loyalty violation occurs simultaneously with an authority violation, it should be judged more harshly when the violations undermine ingroup cohesion than when the violations undermine the cohesion of a competitive outgroup. Moreover, if an authority violation favors an ingroup, it can be viewed positively. Therefore, the following hypothesis is advanced:

H5: Participants' ratings of a moral transgressor's loyalty will move from lowest to highest in the following pattern: lowest for a news story in which there is an ingroup-on-ingroup violation, followed by, in order, a news story in which there is an outgroup-on-outgroup violation, a news story in which there is a party-neutral violation, a news story in which there is an outgroup-on-ingroup violation, and highest for a news story in which there is an ingroup-on-outgroup loyalty violation.

While MFT and MIME lead to straight-forward predictions about perceptions of a moral transgressor when it is clear which foundations are being violated, it is less clear how the violation of one foundation (e.g., authority) influences perceptions of a separate, but unviolated, foundation (e.g., purity). Thus, the following research question will be explored:

RQ1: Will the type of conflict (ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, or party-neutral) in a news story depicting an

authority violation impact participants' ratings of a moral transgressor's care, fairness, and purity and, if so, how?

MIME (Tamborini, 2011) proposes that there is a direct relationship between perceptions of moral violations and interest in narratives. A narrative that features multiple violations (e.g., an authority violation *and* a loyalty violation) should be more interesting than a narrative that features only one kind of violation (e.g., an authority violation *or* a loyalty violation). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Participants' ratings of interest in a news story will move from highest to lowest in the following pattern: highest for a news story in which there is an ingroup-on-ingroup violation, followed by, in order, a news story in which there is an outgroup-on-outgroup violation, a news story in which there is an outgroup-on-ingroup violation, a news story in which there is an ingroup-on-outgroup authority violation, and lowest for a news story in which there is a party-neutral violation.

Finally, research indicates that there is an important distinction between interest in and enjoyment of narratives (Lewis et al., 2014). People tend to enjoy narratives that concord with their moral expectations (e.g., moral exemplars are rewarded and moral transgressors are punished). The social identity perspective would add that identity affirmation plays an equally important role in media enjoyment. Narratives in which ingroup members are portrayed positively (and outgroup members are portrayed negatively) are more enjoyable than the opposite. Because individuals tend to enjoy media in which ingroup members are portrayed positively and outgroup members are portrayed negatively more than media in which ingroup members are portrayed negatively and outgroup members are portrayed positively, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: Participants will most be most entertained by a news story in which an ingroup member undermines the authority of an outgroup member, followed by, in order, a news story in which an outgroup member undermines the authority of an outgroup member, a news story in which an outgroup member undermines the authority of an ingroup member, and a news story in which an ingroup member undermines the authority of an ingroup member.

Chapter 4: Methods

Participants and Design

Participants were recruited using Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants were paid \$1.00 for their participation, and the study lasted approximately 30 minutes. The study employed a 3(participants' political identification: Democrat, Moderate, or Conservative) x 5 (moral violation type: Democrat on Democrat, Democrat on Republican, Republican on Republican, Republican on Democrat, or unidentified on unidentified) between-subjects experimental design. Participants were later coded as seeing an in-group on in-group violation, in-group on out-group violation, out-group on in-group violation, out-group on out-group violation, and politically neutral violation (see the following paragraph for a complete description).

In order to accommodate individuals who identified equally strongly with both political parties, and to categorize participants, political identification was assessed using separate 7-point Likert-type items measuring identification with the Democratic Party (1 *Not at all*, 7 *Very Much*) and Republican Party (1 *Not at all*, 7 *Very Much*). Identification with the Republican Party was then reverse coded and scaled with identification with the Democratic Party (Cronbach's alpha = .63), yielding scores ranging from -7 to 7. Participants who scored

between -7 and -2 on the scale were coded as Republicans. Participants who scored between -1 and +1 on the scale were coded as Moderates. Participants who scored between +2 and +7 on the scale were coded as Democrats. Moderates were excluded from some analyses because they could not be coded into group conflict types (e.g., ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, etc.).

After participants were coded for political party identity, the political identities of the moral transgressor and moral transgression target in the news stories were collapsed into the following categories: in-group on in-group violation, in-group on out-group violation, out-group on in-group violation, out-group on out-group violation, and politically neutral. Democrat participants who saw a news story in which a Democrat attacked a Democrat were coded as seeing an in-group on in-group violation, as were Republican participants who saw a news story in which a Republican attacked a Republican. Democrats who saw a news story in which a Democrat attacked a Republican were coded as seeing an in-group on out-group violation, as were Republican participants who saw a news story in which a Republican attacked a Democrat. Democrat participants who saw a news story in which a Republican attacked a Republican were coded as seeing an out-group on out-group violation, as were Republican participants who saw a news story in which a Democrat attacked a Democrat. Democrat participants who saw a news story in which a Republican attacked a Democrat were coded as seeing an out-group on in-group violation, as were Republican participants who saw a news story in which a Democrat attacked a Republican. All participants who saw a news story in which the political identity of the actors in the news story was not identified were coded as seeing a politically neutral violation. Moderates were excluded from analyses

examining the effect of group identity on perceptions of a moral violation; they could not be coded as seeing in-group and out-group members.

The news story stimuli depicted a fake event in Congress between real politicians. In all conditions, a lower-ranking politician attacked a higher-ranking politician (i.e., an authority violation occurred in every condition). In the Democrat-on-Democrat condition, the lower-ranking Democrat in the story was Senator Mark Warner (Virginia), and the higher-ranking Democrat was Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (Nevada). In the Democrat-on-Republican condition, the lower-ranking Democrat was Representative Chris van Hollen (Maryland), and the higher-ranking Republican was Speaker of the House John Boehner (Ohio). In the Republican-on-Democrat condition, the lower-ranking Republican was Senator Rob Portman (Ohio), and the higher-ranking Democrat was again Harry Reid. In the Republican-on-Republican condition, the lower-ranking Republican was Representative Scott Rigell (Virginia), and the higher-ranking Republican was again John Boehner. In the neutral condition, the lower-ranking politician was Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (Rhode Island) and the higher-ranking politician was Senator Mike Enzi (Wyoming). The political identities of the moral transgressor and the target of the authority violation were manipulated by changing their political parties. All other factors in the news story were held constant (See the “News Manipulation” section below for a detailed description of each condition).

The posted study on Amazon MTurk yielded 402 complete responses. Of those responses, 13 were excluded from analysis because the participant spent insufficient time (less than 10 seconds) reading the stimulus, 24 were excluded because their IP address appeared multiple times in the sample (addressing fears that one individual could complete the study multiple times), and 21 were excluded because they misidentified the higher-

ranking politician and/or the political parties of the politicians in the news story (final $N = 344$).

Of the 344 respondents included for analysis, 174 were coded as Democrat, 96 Moderate, and 60 Republican. Additionally, 173 identified as male (50.3%), 167 identified as female (48.5%), 2 identified as transgender (0.6%), and 2 declined to state (0.6%).

Participants ranged in age from 20-69. One hundred and fourteen were between the ages of 19-29 (33.1%), 130 were 30-39 (37.8%), 46 were 40-49 (13.4%), 52 were 50+ (15.1%), and 2 declined to state (0.6%). Two hundred and fifty seven identified as White/Caucasian (74.7%), 28 identified as African-American (8.1%), 25 identified as Hispanic (7.3%), 21 identified as Asian (6.1%), 11 identified as “Other” (3.2%), and 2 declined to state (0.6%).

Four had not obtained a high school degree (1.2%), 40 had terminated education after a high school diploma or GED (11.6%), 94 had attended some college without obtaining a degree (27.3%), 40 had completed a 2-year college degree (11.6%), 124 had completed a 4-year college degree (36.0%), 33 had completed a Master’s degree (9.6%), 5 had completed a doctoral degree (1.5%), 2 had finished a JD or MD (0.6%), and 2 declined to state (0.6%).

The sample was slightly more educated than the U.S. generally. According to U.S. census data, approximately 29.74% of adults over 25 terminated education after high school, 16.68% had attended some college without obtaining a degree, 9.93% had obtained an associate’s degree, 20.19% had obtained a 4-year college degree, 8.5% had obtained a Master’s degree, 1.5% had obtained a professional degree, and 1.77% had obtained a doctoral degree.

Procedure

Participants completed the study online at a location of their choice, mimicking online political news consumption in the real world. They were assured that they could

terminate participation in the study at any time and still receive full payment. The study consisted of three parts: assessment of moral domain salience, exposure to a moral violation via the news story stimulus, and ratings of the moral transgressor's moral character.

Moral Domain Salience. Participants first completed the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ; Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2008) and the Moral Foundations Sacredness Scale (MFSS; Graham & Haidt, 2012). These scales were included to make the moral domains salient to participants and to serve as potential moderating variables. Moral domain salience was assessed to test the relationship between intuitive morality and reactions to moral violations in the news. Consistent with past research in MFT and MIME (e.g., Eden et al., 2014; Tamborini et al., 2013), the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ; Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2008) was used to measure moral domain salience of the five moral foundations. Questions on the MFQ are split between "relevance" type items (e.g., "This consideration has nothing to do with my judgments of right and wrong/This is one of the most important factors in my judgments of right and wrong") and "statement" type items (e.g., "One of the worst things a person can do is hurt a defenseless dog"). Each item was measured on a 6-point Likert-type scale, 1 *Strongly disagree*, 6 *Strongly agree*. Consistent with research on moral foundations theory (Graham et al., 2009), prior to testing hypotheses, scales were created for the moral relevance of each of the five moral foundations. Cronbach's alphas were .69 (care), .72 (fairness), .73 (loyalty), .75 (authority), and .87 (purity).

News Story Conditions. To test for the effects of moral violations in news media on moral outrage, participants were randomly assigned to read one of five news stories depicting an authority violation in Congress (all news stories were attributed to ABC News). In the control condition, participants read a news story in which a low-ranking member of Congress

aggressively challenged the authority of a high-ranking member of Congress on matters of tax reform, with no mention of party affiliation.

In the first inter-party conflict (authority violation) condition, participants read a news story in which a low-ranking member of the Democratic Party (Chris Van Hollen) aggressively questioned the authority of a high-ranking member of the Republican Party (John Boehner). In the second inter-party conflict condition, participants read a news story in which a low-ranking member of the Republican Party (Rob Portman) aggressively questioned the authority of a high-ranking member of the Democratic Party (Harry Reid).

In the first intra-party conflict (loyalty violation + authority violation) condition, participants read a news story in which a low-ranking member of the Republican Party (Scott Rigell) aggressively questioned the authority of a high-ranking member of the Republican Party (John Boehner). In the second intra-party conflict condition, participants read a news story in which a low-ranking member of the Democratic Party (Mark Warner) aggressively questioned the authority of a high-ranking member of the Democratic Party (Harry Reid).

The specific wording of the articles was as follows:

“House debate on tax reform turned partisan and ugly today when [low-ranking moral violator] challenged [high-ranking victim].

At the conclusion of his comments on the bill, [violator] launched an attack on the [victim’s title], the highest ranking member of the [House of Representatives or Senate]. “[Victim], you have encouraged and enabled reckless behavior in Congress. Your leadership has no credibility. Stand down [victim], stand down” said [violator], a new but up-and-coming member of the [political party]. Asked to comment, the young [violator] remarked: “[Victim] has repeatedly demonstrated that he is not qualified to discuss tax reform. He has lost all credibility. If we are going to make progress, we need new leadership. The American people deserve better.”

[Victim], who has represented [state’s nth] District since [date of entry to Congress] and served as [currently position] since 2011, fired back: “My goal is to help our economy and boost job creation. That has been my goal for the 23 years I’ve served in Congress and that’s not going to change.”

“[Violator’s] comments will likely undermine [victim’s] ability to push for a vote on the reform bill before the House goes on recess later this week,” said [politically Independent member of Congress], who has advocated against partisan bickering in Congress.”

Dependent Measures

Emotional Reaction Measures. After reading the news story, participants were immediately assessed for their emotional reactions to the actions of the moral transgressor in the news story. First, they rated how the news story affected them on negative (angry, disgusted, irritated, offended, outraged) and positive (happy, entertained, supportive) emotions, all measured 5-point Likert-type scale, 1 *Not at all*, 5 *Extremely*). The negative emotion items were combined to create an anger scale (Cronbach’s alpha = .92); the positive emotions were combined to create a support scale (Cronbach’s alpha = .84).

Next, participants rated whether the moral transgressor’s behavior was moral/immoral (7-point Likert-type scale, 1 *extremely immoral*, 7 *extremely moral*), justified/unjustified (7-point Likert-type scale, 1 *extremely unjustified*, 7 *extremely justified*), and okay/wrong (7-point Likert-type scale, 1 *completely okay*, 7 *completely wrong*, reverse coded for analysis). They also assessed whether the moral transgressor’s behavior should be stopped (1 *Definitely stopped*, 7 *Definitely not stopped*) and how the moral transgressor’s actions made them feel (1 *Extremely negative*, 7 *Extremely positive*). These five items were combined to create a behavior judgment scale (Cronbach’s alpha = .92). Finally, participants assessed whether good or bad things would happen to the moral transgressor as a result of his actions (1 *Extremely bad*, 7 *Extremely good*). These seven items were adapted from Eden and Tamborini (2010) and Tamborini et al. (2010).

Character Moral Foundations. After assessing their initial emotional reactions to the moral violation, participants completed the Character Moral Foundations Questionnaire

(CMFQ; Eden et al., 2014), which adapts the 16 “relevance” type items from the MFQ and applies them to characters in the media (each measured on a 6-point Likert-type scale, 1 *Strongly disagree*, 6 *Strongly agree*). Also consistent with past research on the CMFQ, negatively-worded items were reverse-coded, and then scales were created for each of the five moral foundations: loyalty (“He betrays his group,” “He shows love for his country,” “He shows a lack of loyalty”), authority (“He conforms to the traditions of society,” “He shows a lack of respect for authority,” “He causes chaos or disorder”), care (“He causes others to suffer emotionally,” “He shows care for others who are weak and vulnerable,” “He is cruel”), fairness (“He treats some people differently than others,” “He acts unfairly,” “He denies others their rights”), and purity (“He violates standards of purity and decency,” “He does disgusting things,” “He acts in a way that God would approve of). Initial reliability analyses revealed Cronbach’s alphas of .67 (Care), .75 (Fairness), .60 (Loyalty), .42 (Authority), and .47 (Purity). To increase reliability, one item was removed from the loyalty scale (“He shows love for his country”), authority scale (“He conforms to the traditions of society”), and purity scale (“He acts in a way that God would approve of”), bringing their Cronbach’s alpha scores to .77, .64, and .77, respectively. For all scales, a higher score means adherence to the moral foundation; a lower score means violation of the moral foundation.

Interest in and Enjoyment of News Story. Lewis et al. (2014) demonstrated that interest in a narrative and enjoyment of the narrative are separate constructs. To assess interest, participants rated how interesting and well-written they found the news story (5-point Likert, 1 *Not at all*, 5 *A lot*). Cronbach’s alpha for the interest scale was .72. Enjoyment

was measured by a single item measuring how entertaining participants found the news story (5-point Likert, 1 *Not at all*, 5 *A lot*).

Story Credibility. Story credibility and political knowledge were assessed as control variables. To measure story credibility, participants rated the news story for how believable, balanced, trustworthy, credible, factual, and fair it was (5-point Likert, 1 *Not at all*, 5 *A lot*). Cronbach's alpha for the credibility scale was .91.

Political Knowledge. Political knowledge was assessed using five open-ended items recommended by Delli Carpini and Keeter (1993): identifying which party controls the House of Representatives (79.5% of participants answered correctly), identifying the percentage of Congress needed to override a veto (82.8% answered correctly), identifying the vice president (95.3% answered correctly), which branch of the government is responsible for judicial review (79.1% answered correctly), and identifying the relative ideological location of the two political parties, on a scale from 1 to 100 (1 *Very liberal*, 100 *Very Conservative*). On average, Democrats were rated as a 29.27 and Republicans as a 76.56.

Manipulation checks. Perceived politician status and perceived politician party were assessed as manipulation checks. Participants were asked to identify who was the higher ranking person in the news story and to which political party the low-ranking and high-ranking politicians belonged. There were 31 instances of participants misidentifying the high-ranking politician, 19 of participants misidentifying the party identification of the low-ranking politician, and 19 of participants misidentifying the party-identification of the high-ranking politician. Because some participants made more than one of these mistakes, 21 participants were excluded from analysis (5 from the Democrat-on-Democrat condition, 3

from the Democrat-on-Republican condition, 6 from the Republican-on-Democrat condition, 4 from the Republican-on-Republican condition, and 3 from the neutral condition).

Chapter 5: Results

Moral Foundation Weight and Political Identity

Hypothesis 1 predicted that Republicans would weight the loyalty, purity, and authority foundations higher than Democrats, while Democrats would rate the fairness and care foundations higher than Republicans. To test this hypothesis, a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted with political identity as a between-subjects independent variable (Democrats, Moderates, Republicans) and the individuals' weightings on each of the five moral foundations as the dependent measures (care, fairness, loyalty, authority, and purity). The MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate effect of political position on the weights of the five moral foundations, *Wilk's* $\lambda = .72$, $F(10, 646) = 11.47$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .15$. Results from univariate ANOVAs revealed significant differences between Democrats and Republicans on all 5 of the moral foundations that were consistent with the pattern observed by Graham et al. (2009).

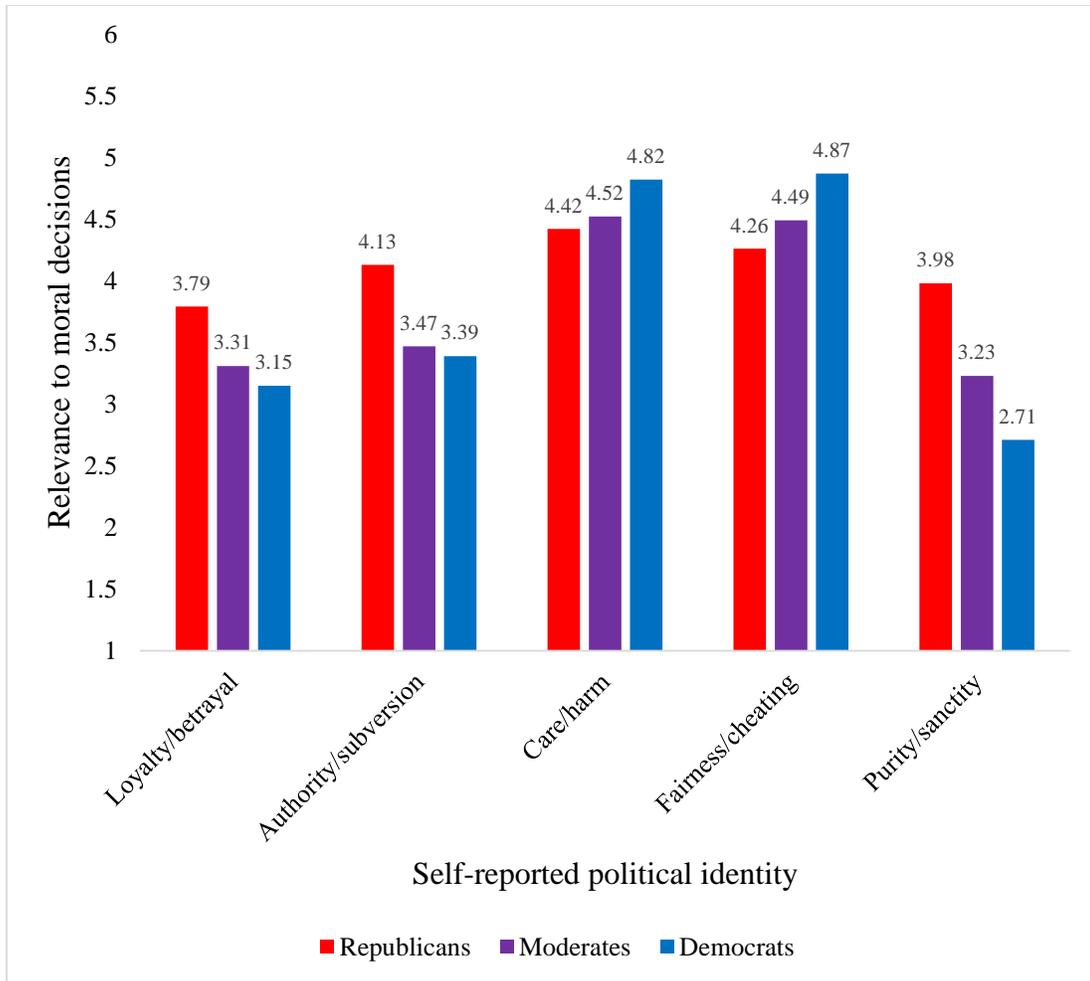


Figure 1: Relevance of moral foundations across self-reported political identity.

Loyalty. Republicans ($M = 3.79$) weighted the loyalty foundation significantly higher than did Moderates ($M = 3.31$, $p < .01$) and Democrats ($M = 3.15$, $p < .001$), $F(2, 327) = 12.55$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .07$. Democrats and Moderates did not differ significantly from each other ($p = .33$).

Authority. Republicans ($M = 4.13$) weighted the authority foundation significantly higher than did Moderates ($M = 3.47$, $p < .001$) and Democrats ($M = 3.39$, $p < .001$), $F(2, 327) = 16.51$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .09$. Democrats and Moderates did not differ significantly from each other ($p = .77$).

Care. Democrats ($M = 4.82$) weighted the care foundation significantly higher than did Moderates ($M = 4.52, p < .01$) and Republicans ($M = 4.42, p < .01$), $F(2, 327) = 27.90, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .15$. Republicans and Moderates did not differ significantly from each other ($p = .73$).

Fairness. Democrats ($M = 4.87$) weighted the fairness foundation significantly higher than did Moderates ($M = 4.49, p < .001$) and Republicans ($M = 4.26, p < .001$), $F(2, 327) = 19.03, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .10$. Republicans and Moderates did not differ significantly from each other ($p = .15$).

Purity. Republicans ($M = 3.98$) weighted the purity foundation significantly higher than did Moderates ($M = 3.23, p < .001$) and Democrats ($M = 2.71, p < .001$), $F(2, 327) = 27.90, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .15$. Additionally, Moderates weighted the purity foundation significantly higher than did Democrats ($p < .01$).

Hypothesis 1 was fully supported. Past research on moral foundations theory (Graham et al., 2009; Graham et al., 2012) suggests that conservatives weight the loyalty, authority, and purity significantly higher than liberals, while liberals weight the harm/care and fairness foundations significantly higher than conservatives. Differences between Democrats and Republicans in the present sample follow this pattern.

Tests of Focal Hypotheses

MIME proposes that how audience members weight the importance of the five moral foundations described by MFT influences how they perceive people in the media and impacts their interest in and enjoyment of mediated narratives (Tamborini, 2011). Specifically, if an audience member gives high importance to a foundation (e.g., authority), they should judge a moral transgressor who violates that foundation (e.g., undermines an authority figure) more

harshly than an audience member who gives low importance to that foundation; they should also experience more interest in and enjoyment of the mediated narrative. Because research on MFT shows that Republicans place more weight on the authority and loyalty foundations than do Democrats, Republicans should judge people who violate those foundations more harshly than do Democrats. Republicans should also display greater interest and enjoyment of news stories depicting authority and loyalty violations.

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) adds a wrinkle to this argument: people often do not recognize moral violations against outgroup members, especially when the violation leads to an ingroup gain. Research applying SIT to media use indicates that people enjoy media in which ingroup members are portrayed positively and outgroup members are portrayed negatively, especially when the ingroup and outgroup are in conflict (e.g., Harwood, 1999; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2006; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010; Rivadeneyra et al., 2007; Ward, 2004). If SIT is correct, Democrats and Republicans will demonstrate similar reactions to moral violations as they occur within and between groups (i.e., innate differences between how Democrats and Republicans weight the five moral foundations will be washed out by the group status of the moral transgressor and the target of the moral violation).

Hypotheses 2a, 3a, 4, and 5, along with Research Question 1, addressed how weights of the moral foundations and social identity processes interact to influence perceptions of a moral transgressor's moral character. They were tested using Analyses of Covariance in which political identity and type of political conflict are factorial independent variables, and the five moral foundations are controlled. These analyses allow for tests of the effects of social identity processes independent of individual differences in moral foundations. In all

analyses, a higher score means more adherence to the foundation being examined.

Additionally, because Moderates could not be reliably coded as seeing ingroup or outgroup members, they were excluded from these analyses.

To preserve order of causality, a hierarchical analysis was conducted (i.e., using Type 1 sums of squares) in which participants' moral values are entered first, followed by political identities (which moral foundations theory assumes emerge from moral foundations), followed by the experimental manipulations. Two-way interaction terms followed the same hierarchy (i.e., the interaction between moral values and political identification followed by moral values and experimental condition, followed by political identification and experimental condition).

Tests of authority ratings

Hypotheses 2a and 4 were tested via a 2 (political identity: Democrat vs. Republican) x 5 (conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, or party-neutral) ANCOVA, controlling for individual trait weights of the authority foundation. Hypothesis 2a predicted that Republicans would rate a moral transgressor who committed an authority violation lower on the Character Moral Foundation authority scale than would Democrats. Despite predictions from MFT and MIME that Republicans would judge authority violations more harshly than Democrats, and despite findings that Republicans in the sample do weight the authority foundation higher than Democrats, there was no evidence that Democrats and Republicans differed on their ratings of the moral transgressor's respect for authority, $F(1, 214) = .015, p = .90, \eta_p^2 = .00$. Hypothesis 2a was not supported.

However, analyses did reveal a significant main effect for conflict type on ratings of the moral transgressor's authority, $F(4, 214) = 5.74, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .10$. Participants who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 4.60$) rated the moral transgressor significantly higher on authority (i.e., more respectful of authority) than did participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.79, p < .05$), consistent with an SIT perspective.

Authority ratings by political party identification

Hypothesis 4 predicted that ratings of a moral transgressor's authority would be lowest for a news story in which there was an ingroup-on-ingroup authority violation, followed by, in order, a news story in which there was an outgroup-on-ingroup authority violation, a news story in which there was an outgroup-on-outgroup authority violation, a news story in which there was a party-neutral authority violation, and highest for a news story in which there was an ingroup-on-outgroup authority violation. Because of sample imbalances in number of Democrats ($n = 174$) and Republicans ($n = 60$), effects of conflict type on ratings of authority become more clear when pairwise comparisons are made within each political party. For example, Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 4.67$) rated the moral transgressor significantly higher on authority than did Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.99, p < .05$), an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.61, p < .01$), or an outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 3.97, p < .05$). Additionally, Democrats who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation rated the moral transgressor significantly *lower* (i.e., more subversive) on authority than did Democrats who saw a party-neutral violation ($M = 4.24, p < .05$). Interestingly, there were no significant differences among Republicans; due to the low number of Republicans, this may have resulted from low statistical power. Hypothesis 4 was partially supported. The ingroup-on-outgroup violation

was judged most positively, as predicted. However, the outgroup-on-ingroup violation was judged the most harshly, which was not predicted by MFT.

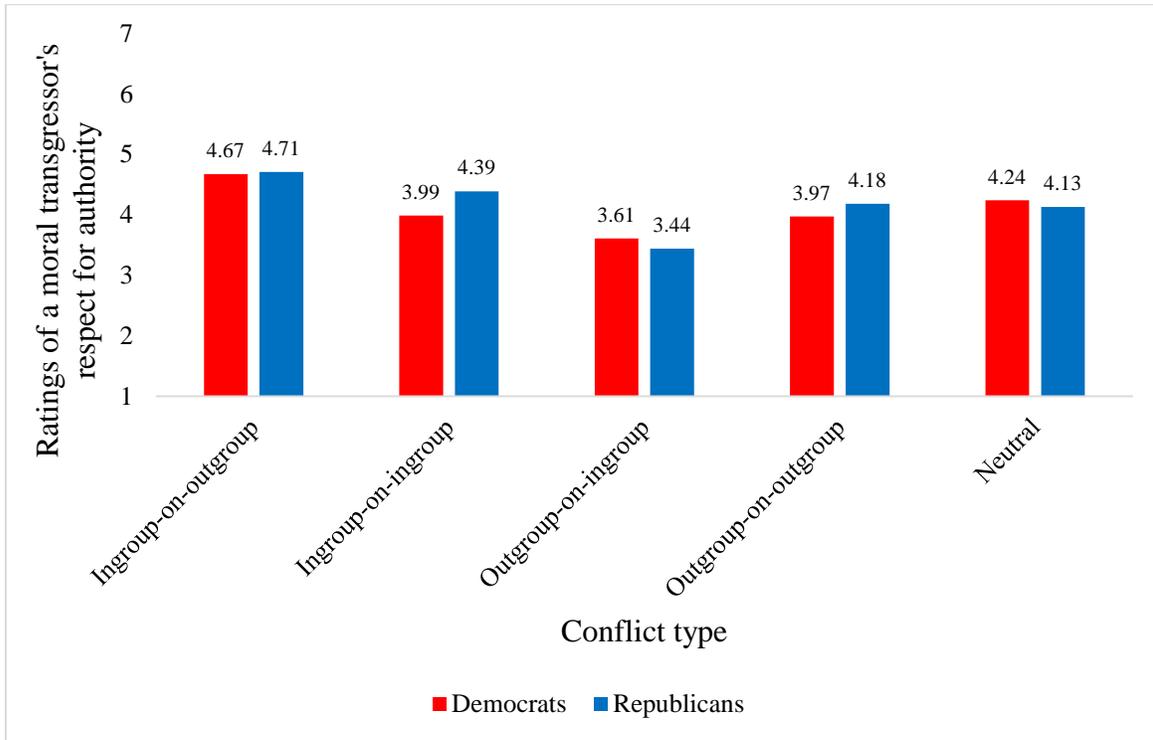


Figure 2: Participants' ratings of the moral transgressor's respect for authority (1 being low, 7 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Loyalty ratings

Hypotheses 3a and 5 were tested using a 2 (political identity: Democrat vs. Republican) x 5 (conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, or neutral) ANCOVA, controlling for individual trait weights on the loyalty foundation. Hypothesis 3a predicted that Republicans who read a news story featuring a loyalty violation would rate the moral transgressor significantly lower on a loyalty scale than would Democrats. Again, despite predictions from MFT and MIME that Republicans would judge loyalty violations more harshly than Democrats, and despite findings that Republicans in the sample do weight the loyalty foundation higher than

Democrats, there was no evidence for differences between Democrats and Republicans on their ratings of the moral transgressor's loyalty, $F(1, 214) = .33, p = .57, \eta_p^2 = .00$.

Hypothesis 3a was not supported.

However, analyses did reveal a significant effect for participants' trait weights of the loyalty foundation on ratings of the moral transgressor's loyalty, $F(1, 218) = 6.85, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .03$. As the importance of the loyalty foundation increased among participants, their ratings of the moral transgressor's loyalty decreased. This finding is consistent with MIME: judgments of moral transgressions in a mediated narrative become harsher as a foundation increases in importance.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that ratings of a moral transgressor's loyalty would be lowest for a news story in which there was an ingroup-on-ingroup violation, followed by, in order, a news story in which there was an outgroup-on-outgroup violation, a news story in which there was a party-neutral violation, a news story in which there was an outgroup-on-ingroup violation, and highest for a news story in which there was an ingroup-on-outgroup loyalty violation (see Figure 3). There was a large main effect for conflict type on ratings of the moral transgressor's adherence to the loyalty foundation, $F(4, 218) = 24.49, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .31$. However, the effect did not perfectly follow the pattern hypothesized in H5. Rather, participants who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 6.11$) rated the moral transgressor significantly higher on loyalty than did participants who saw outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 5.46, p < .05$), a party-neutral violation ($M = 5.27, p < .01$), an ingroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 4.43, p < .001$), or an outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 3.93, p < .001$). Hypothesis 5 was partially supported. As predicted, the ingroup-on-

outgroup violation was judged most positively. However, the ingroup-on-ingroup violation was not judged the most negatively.

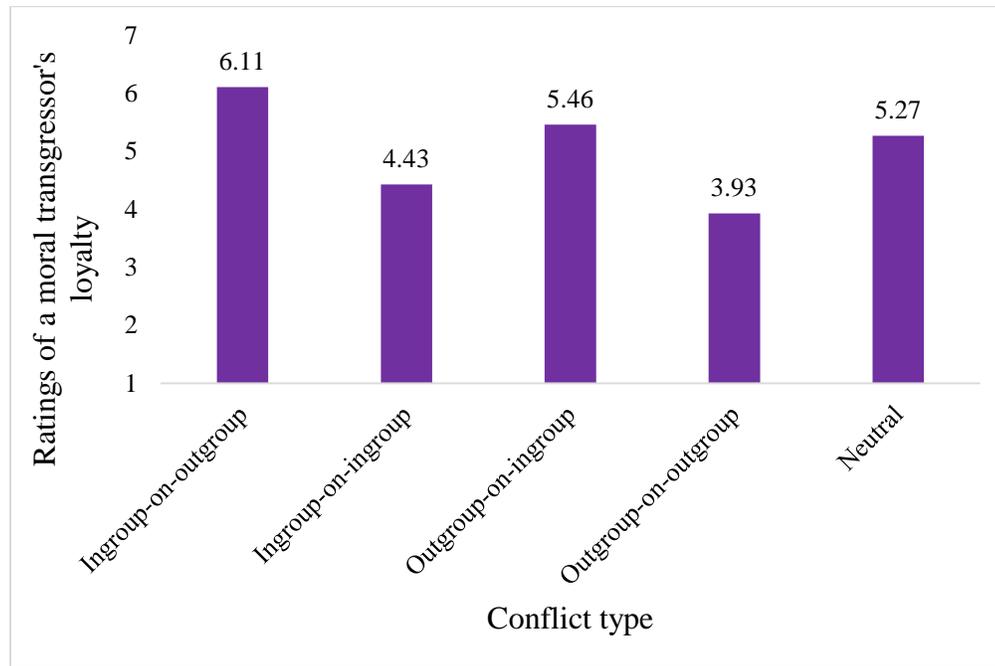


Figure 3: Participants' ratings of the moral transgressor's loyalty to the ingroup (1 being low, 7 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Loyalty ratings by political party identification. MFT leads to the prediction that there should be significant differences between Democrats and Republicans in ratings of the moral transgressor's loyalty. SIT yields the prediction that there should be no significant difference between Democrats and Republicans, but should be a significant difference based on the conflict type. Splitting mean ratings of loyalty within Democrats and Republicans shows a pattern reflective of the SIT perspective (see Figure 4).

Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 4.02$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on loyalty (i.e., less loyal) than did Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($5.95, p < .001$), an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 5.17, p < .001$), or a party-neutral violation ($M = 5.30, p < .001$). Additionally, Democrats who saw

an outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 4.02$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on loyalty than did Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup ($p < .001$), outgroup-on-ingroup ($p < .001$), or party-neutral violation ($p < .001$). Finally, Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup violation rated the moral transgressor significantly *higher* on ingroup loyalty than did Democrats in the outgroup-on-ingroup ($p < .01$) and party-neutral ($p < .05$) conditions.

Republicans who saw an outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 3.84$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on loyalty than did Republicans who saw any other conflict type (ingroup-on-ingroup, $M = 4.84$, $p < .05$; ingroup-on-outgroup, $M = 6.26$, $p < .001$, outgroup-on-ingroup, $M = 5.75$, $p < .001$, party-neutral $M = 5.23$, $p < .05$). Additionally, Republicans who saw an ingroup-on-ingroup violation rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on loyalty than did Republicans who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($p < .01$).

The results displayed in *Figure 4* largely conform to the SIT perspective on group identity and moral violations. Whereas MFT proposes Democrats and Republicans should differ in their ratings of loyalty violations, Democrats and Republicans in the sample look remarkably similar in their judgments of moral violations based on the group identity of the moral transgressor and the target of the moral violation. MFT suggests that because Republicans care more about loyalty violations than do Democrats, Republicans should be significantly *lower* in their ratings of loyalty violations. However, Republicans were *higher* in their ratings of ingroup-on-ingroup moral violations than were Democrats; they perceived a Republican who attacked another Republican as more loyal than did Democrats who saw a

Democrat attack a Democrat. Group identity appears to have played a major role in processing the loyalty violation.

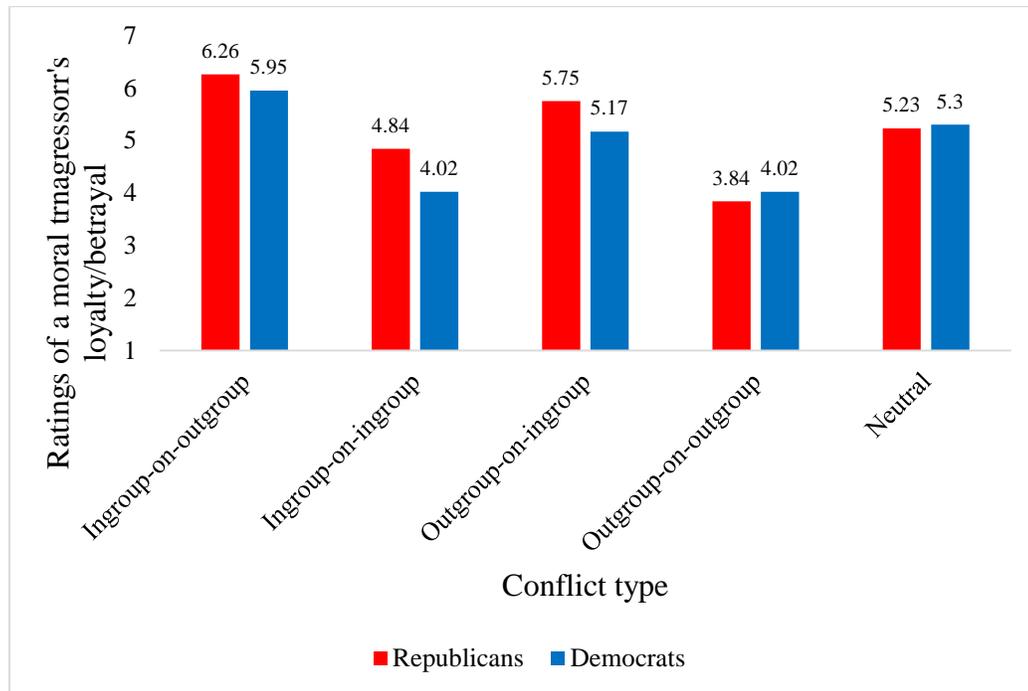


Figure 4: Comparison of Republicans' and Democrats' ratings of a moral transgressor's loyalty (1 being low, 7 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Testing Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked how the type of conflict (ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, or party-neutral) in a news story depicting an authority violation would impact participants' ratings of a moral transgressor's care, fairness, and purity. Moral foundations theory posits that each of the five foundations is a discrete but interlinked cognitive structure (Haidt et al., 2009). It is unclear how perceptions of care, fairness, and purity should be influenced by violations of the loyalty and authority foundations.

Care ratings. A 2 (political identity: Democrat vs. Republican) x 5 (conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, or

neutral) ANCOVA was performed to test the impact of participants' political identity and conflict type on perceptions of the moral transgressor's care, controlling for individual trait weights of the care foundation. Analyses revealed a small but significant interaction between political identity and individual trait weights of care ($F[1, 214] = 4.68, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .02$) and a small but significant interaction between conflict type and individual trait weights of care ($F[4, 214] = 4.21, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .07$).

Analyses also revealed a large main effect for conflict type on ratings of the moral transgressor's adherence to the care foundation, $F(4, 214) = 18.21, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .25$. Participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.56$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on care (i.e., less caring) than participants in any other condition: ingroup-on-ingroup ($M = 5.15, p < .001$), ingroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.10, p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup ($M = 4.79, p < .001$), and party-neutral ($M = 4.90, p < .001$).

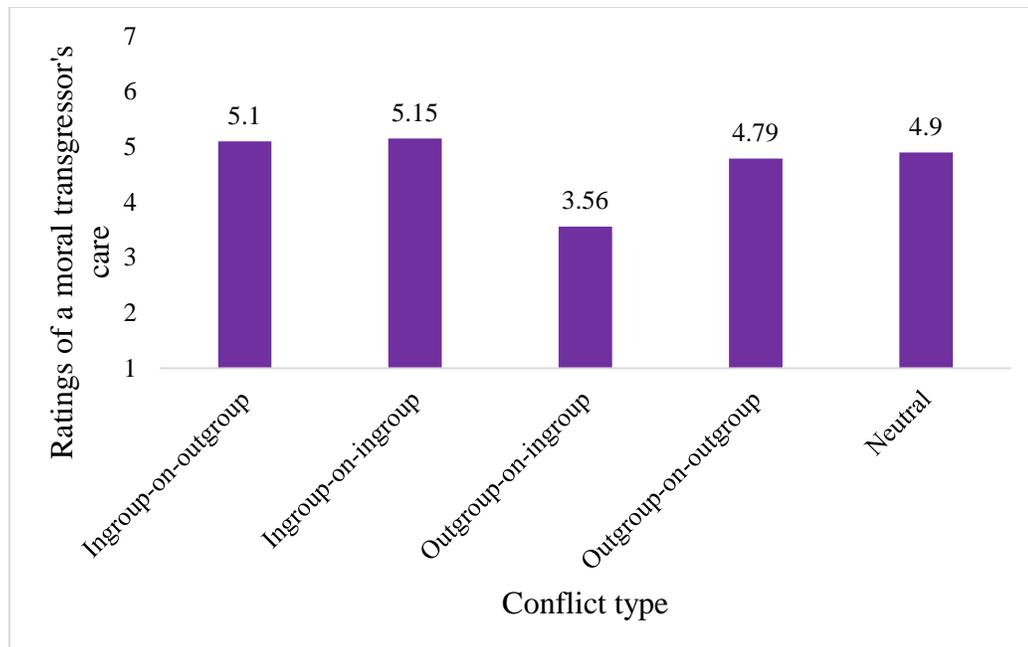


Figure 5: Participants' ratings of a moral transgressor's care (1 being harmful, 7 being caring) by the type of conflict they saw

Care ratings by political party identification. Split by political party, the main effect for conflict type on care ratings is as follows. Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 5.45$) rated the moral transgressor significantly higher on care (i.e., more caring) than did Democrats who saw any other conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 4.89, p < .05$), outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.88, p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 4.73, p < .01$), and party-neutral violation ($M = 4.87, p < .01$). Additionally, Democrats who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation rated the moral transgressor significantly *lower* on care (i.e., less caring) than did Democrats who saw any other conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup ($p < .001$), ingroup-on-outgroup ($p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup ($p < .001$), and party-neutral ($p < .001$).

There were also significant differences among Republicans in ratings of the moral transgressor's care based on the conflict type they saw. Republicans who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.24$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on care (i.e., less caring) than did Republicans who saw any other conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 5.41, p < .001$), ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 4.76, p < .01$), outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 4.86, p < .01$), and party-neutral violation ($M = 4.93, p < .01$).

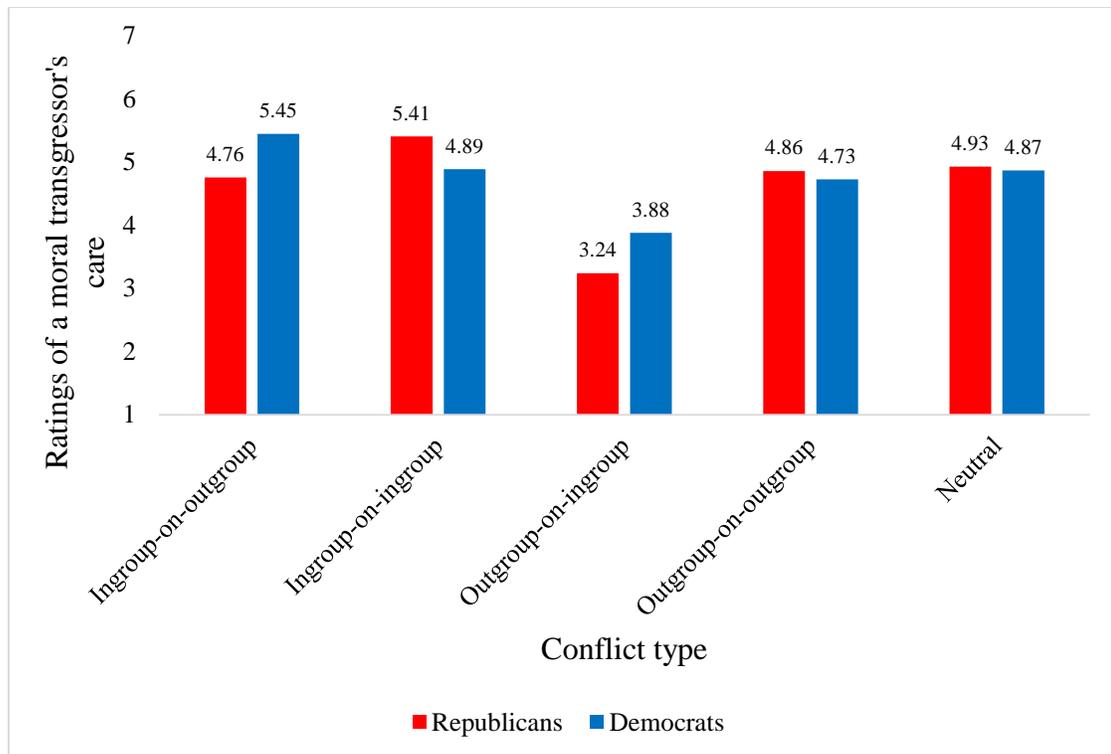


Figure 6: Republicans' and Democrats' ratings of a moral transgressor's care (1 being harmful, 7 being caring) by the type of conflict they saw

Fairness ratings. A 2 (political identity: Democrat vs. Republican) x 5 (conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, or neutral) ANCOVA was performed to test the impact of participants' political identity and conflict type on perceptions of the moral transgressor's fairness, controlling for individual trait weights of the fairness foundation. Analyses revealed a small but significant interaction between conflict type and individual trait weights of the fairness foundation, $F(4, 214) = 2.46, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .04$

Analyses also revealed a large main effect for conflict type on ratings of the moral transgressor's adherence to the fairness foundation, $F(4, 214) = 17.86, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .25$. Participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup moral violation ($M = 4.08$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on fairness than did participants in any other condition:

ingroup-on-ingroup ($M = 5.28, p < .001$), ingroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.36, p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.09, p < .001$), and party-neutral ($M = 5.11, p < .001$).

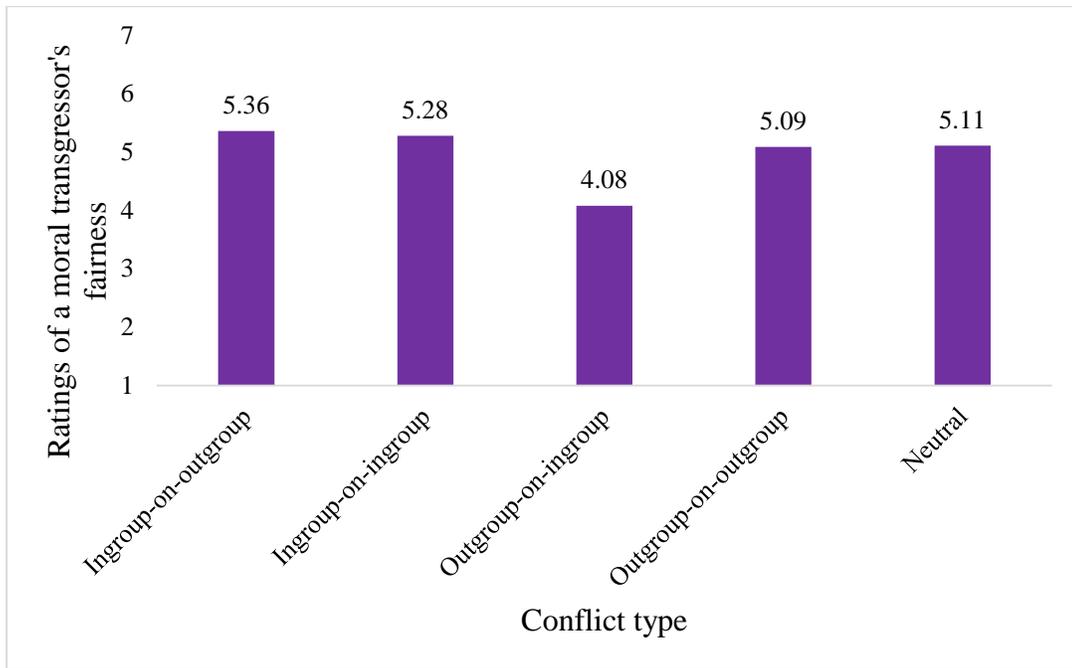


Figure 7: Participants' ratings of a moral transgressor's fairness (1 being low, 7 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Fairness ratings by political party identification. Examining the main effect for conflict type on perceptions of fairness among Democrats, participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.95$) rated the moral transgressor as significantly lower on fairness than did Democrats who saw any other conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup ($M = 5.01, p < .001$), ingroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.58, p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.11, p < .001$), and party-neutral ($M = 5.24, p < .001$). Additionally, Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-ingroup violation rated them significantly lower on fairness than did Democrats who saw an ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($p < .05$). Among Republicans, participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 4.21$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on fairness than did participants who saw an ingroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 5.54, p < .01$).

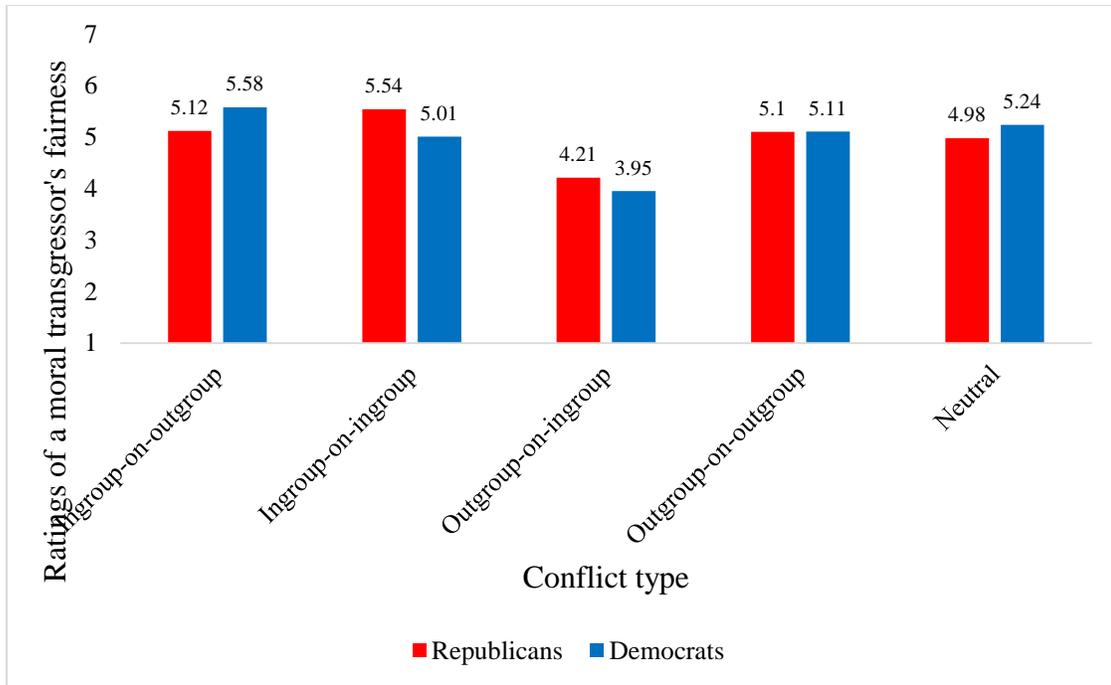


Figure 8: Republicans' and Democrats' ratings of a moral transgressor's fairness (1 being low, 7 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Purity ratings. A 2 (political identity: Democrat vs. Republican) x 5 (conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, or neutral) ANCOVA was performed to test the impact of participants' political identity and conflict type on perceptions of the moral transgressor's purity, controlling for individual trait weights of the purity foundation. Analyses revealed a small but significant main effect for political identity on ratings the moral transgressor's purity, $F(1, 214) = 4.47, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .03$. Democrats ($M = 5.67$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on purity than did Republicans ($M = 5.97$).

Analyses also revealed a moderate main effect for conflict type on ratings of the moral transgressor's adherence to the purity foundation, $F(4, 214) = 9.78, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .14$. Participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 5.30$) rated the moral

transgressor significantly lower on purity than did participants who saw an ingroup-on-ingroup ($M = 6.03, p < .05$) or ingroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.99, p < .05$) violation.

Purity ratings by political party identification. Among Democrats, participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 4.79$) rated the moral transgressor significantly lower on purity than did Democrats who saw any other conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup ($M = 5.62, p < .01$), ingroup-on-outgroup ($M = 6.14, p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.91, p < .001$), and party-neutral ($M = 5.89, p < .001$). No significant differences were found among Republicans; again, this could be due to an issue with power (see *Figure 9* for Republican mean ratings of purity based on the type of conflict they witnessed).

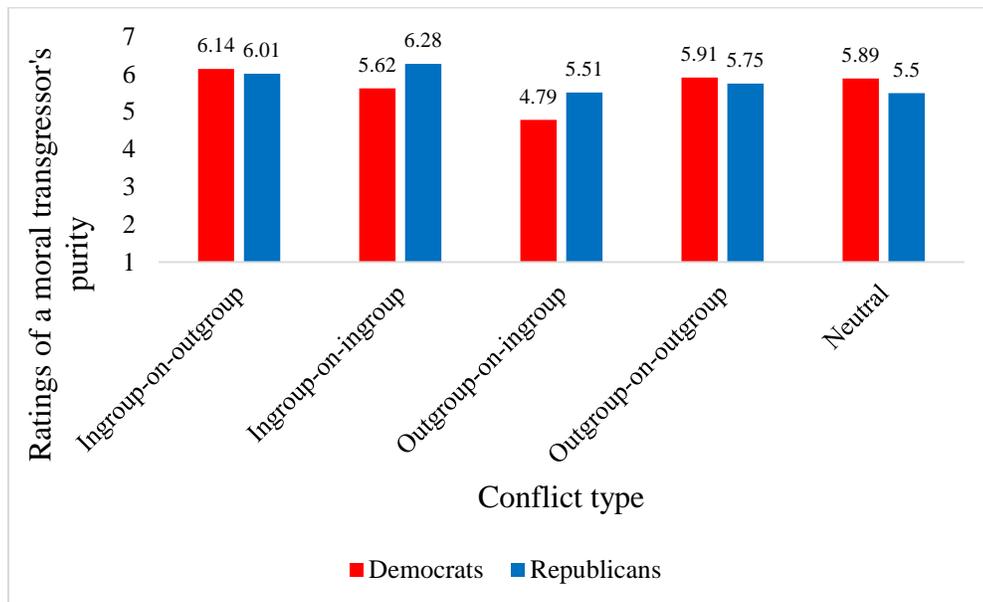


Figure 9: Participants’ ratings of a moral transgressor’s purity (1 being low, 7 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Tests of SIT and MIME

MIME predicts that interest in and enjoyment of media are influenced by the portrayal of moral violations in mediated narratives. Audience members should be more interested in a narrative that portrays a violation of a moral foundation they weight heavily

and should be more entertained by narratives that depict punishments/rewards that align with their moral values (Tamborini, 2011). SIT predicts that media interest and enjoyment are influenced by the positive and negative portrayal of ingroup and outgroup members. Positive portrayals of ingroup members and negative portrayals of outgroup members should be more interesting and entertaining than negative portrayals of ingroup members and positive portrayals of outgroup members (e.g., Harwood, 1999; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2006; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010; Rivadeneyra et al., 2007; Ward, 2004).

Hypotheses 2b-e, 3b-e, 6, and 7 made predictions regarding the effect of moral violation type (authority and loyalty) and group conflict type (ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, etc.) on emotional reactions to the moral violation and interest in/enjoyment of the news story. They were tested via a 2 (political identity: Democrat vs. Republican) x 5 (conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, or neutral) Multivariate Analysis of Variance.

Emotional reactions to the news story. Participants were assessed for their anger at the moral violation, support of the moral transgressor's actions, and perception of the morality of the moral transgressor's actions. Analyses revealed significant main effects for the type of conflict in the news story on each these three dependent variables.

Anger. Hypotheses 2b and 3b predicted that Republicans would exhibit more anger at the authority and loyalty violations than would Democrats. However, there was no significant main effect for political identity on anger, $F(1, 224) = .23, p = .63, \eta_p^2 = .00$. Hypotheses 2b and 3b were not supported.

Analyses did reveal a large main effect for conflict type on anger, $F(4, 224) = 15.69, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .22$. Participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 2.51$) were

significantly angrier than participants who saw any other conflict type: ingroup-on-ingroup ($M = 1.54, p < .001$), ingroup-on-outgroup ($M = 1.30, p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup ($M = 1.21, p < .001$), and party-neutral ($M = 1.46, p < .001$). However, levels of anger were low overall.

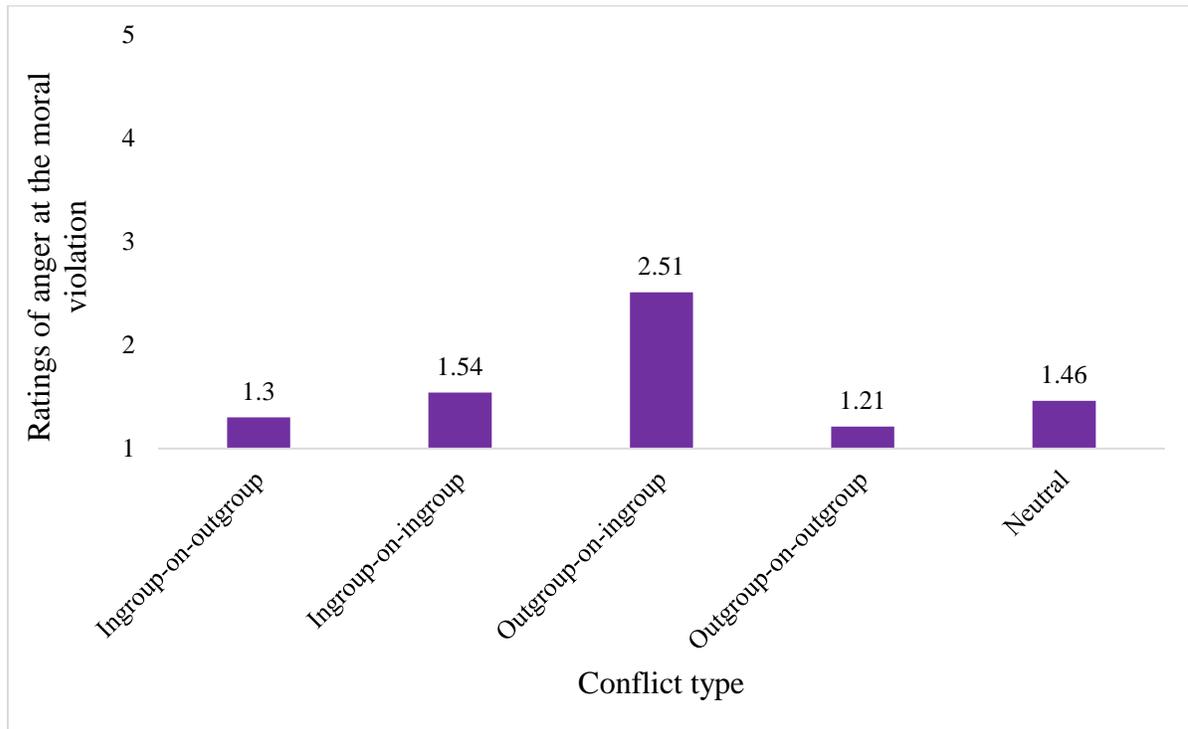


Figure 10: Participants' ratings of anger at the moral violation (1 being low, 5 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Support. Support was tested in two ways. First, via a positive emotion scale; second, via a scale measuring how moral participants believed the behavior to be. Hypotheses 2c and 3c predicted that Republicans would exhibit less support of the moral transgressor's action than would Democrats. However, there was not a significant main effect for political identity on participants' positive emotions toward the moral transgressor's actions, $F(1, 224) = 2.21, p = .14, \eta_p^2 = .01$. There was also not a significant main effect for political identity on

perceptions of the overall morality of the moral transgressor's action, $F(1, 224) = 2.98, p = .09, \eta_p^2 = .01$. Hypotheses 2c and 3c were not supported.

Analyses did reveal a large main effect for conflict type on positive emotions toward the moral transgressor's actions, $F(4, 224) = 13.77, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .20$. First, participants exhibited less positive emotion for an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 1.29$) than any other violation type: ingroup-on-ingroup ($M = 2.47, p < .001$), ingroup-on-outgroup ($M = 2.86, p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup ($M = 2.57, p < .001$), and party-neutral ($M = 1.98, p < .01$). Moreover, participants felt less positive about a party-neutral violation than an ingroup-on-outgroup violation ($p < .001$), an ingroup-on-ingroup violation ($p < .05$), and an outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($p < .05$).

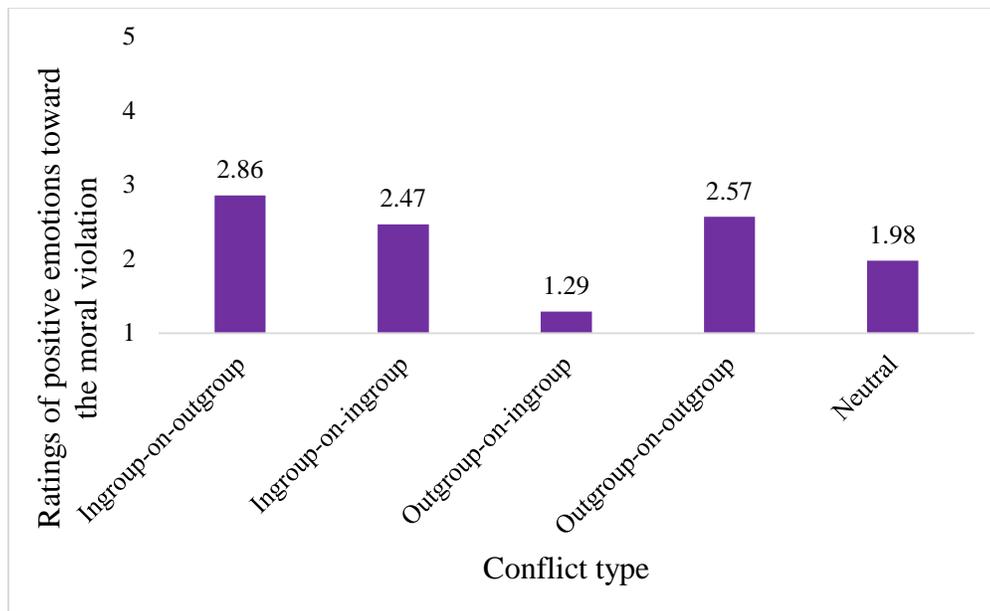


Figure 11: Participants' ratings of positive emotion at the moral violation (1 being low, 5 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Analyses also revealed a large main effect for conflict type on perceptions of the actions' morality, $F(4, 224) = 14.47, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .21$. Participants perceived the outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.17$) as significantly less moral than any other violation type:

ingroup-on-ingroup ($M = 4.73, p < .001$), ingroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.19, p < .001$), outgroup-on-outgroup ($M = 5.01, p < .001$), and party-neutral ($M = 4.54, p < .001$).

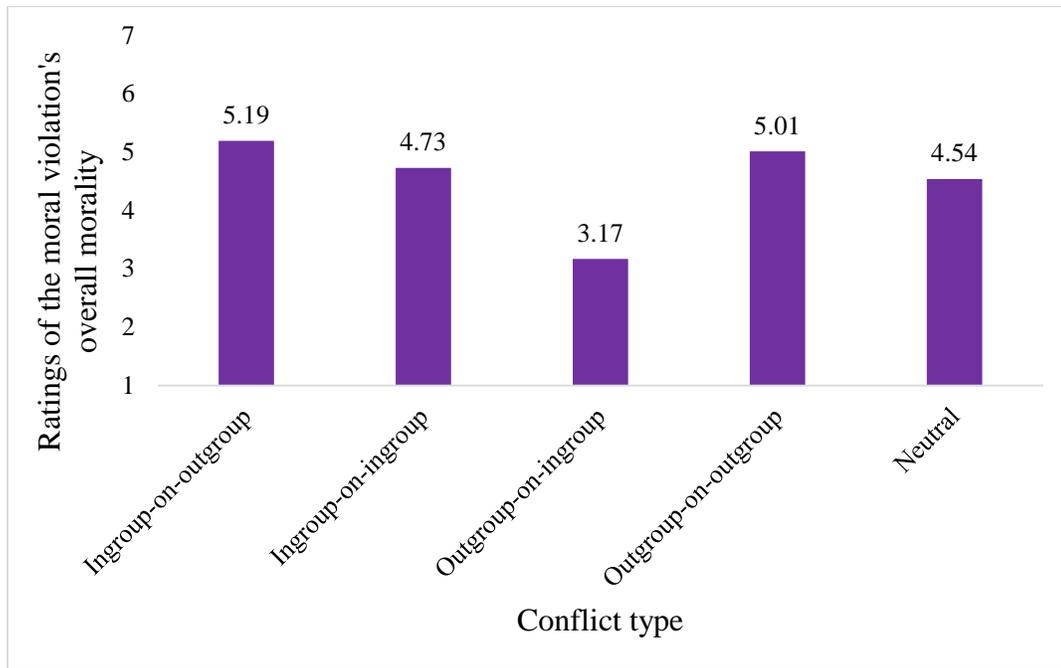


Figure 12: Participants' ratings of the moral violation's overall morality (1 being low, 7 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Interest in the news story. Hypotheses 2d and 3d predicted that Republicans would be more interested in news stories depicting authority and loyalty violations than would Democrats (because Republicans weight these foundations more heavily than do Democrats). Hypothesis 6 predicted participants' ratings of interest in a news story would move from highest to lowest in the following pattern: highest for a news story in which there was an ingroup-on-ingroup violation, followed by, in order, a news story in which there was an outgroup-on-outgroup violation, a news story in which there was an outgroup-on-ingroup violation, a news story in which there was an ingroup-on-outgroup authority violation, and lowest for a news story in which there was a party-neutral violation.

Analyses did not show a significant main effect for political identity on interest in the news story, $F(1, 224) = 2.06, p = .15, \eta_p^2 = .01$. There were no significant differences between Democrats and Republicans in ratings of interest in the news story. Hypotheses 2d and 3d were not supported.

Analyses did reveal a significant main effect for conflict type on interest in the news story, $F(4, 224) = 3.71, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .06$. Participants found the news story depicting an outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 3.79$) significantly more interesting than they found the news story depicting an outgroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.11, p < .01$) or a party-neutral violation ($M = 3.04, p < .01$). They also found the news story depicting an ingroup-on-ingroup violation significantly more interesting than the news story depicting a party-neutral violation ($p < .05$). Hypothesis 6 was partially supported.

Analyses also revealed a significant interaction effect between political identity and conflict type on news story interest, $F(4, 224) = 2.79, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .05$. Republicans ($M = 4.03$) found the news story depicting an ingroup-on-ingroup violation significantly more interesting than did Democrats ($M = 3.03, p < .001$).

Entertainment by the news story. Hypotheses 2e and 3e predicted that Republicans would be less entertained by the news story than would Democrats (because the news story does not depict punishment for the moral transgression). Hypothesis 7 predicted that participants would be most entertained by a news story in which an ingroup member undermined the authority of an outgroup member, followed by, in order, a news story in which an outgroup member undermined the authority of an outgroup member, a news story in which an outgroup member undermined the authority of an ingroup member, and a news story in which an ingroup member undermined the authority of an ingroup member.

Analyses did not show a significant main effect for political identity on perceptions of how entertaining the news story was, $F(1, 224) = 1.58, p = .21, \eta_p^2 = .01$. There were no significant differences between Democrats and Republicans in their perceptions of how entertaining the news story was. Hypotheses 2e and 3e were not supported.

Analyses did reveal a significant main effect for conflict type on participants' perceptions of how entertaining the news story was, $F(4, 224) = 4.88, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .08$. Participants found the news story depicting an outgroup-on-outgroup violation ($M = 3.70$) significantly more entertaining than the stories depicting an outgroup-on-ingroup ($M = 2.71, p < .001$) or party-neutral violation ($M = 2.60, p < .001$). Additionally, participants found the news story depicting an ingroup-on-ingroup violation ($M = 3.26$) significantly more entertaining than participants who saw an outgroup-on-ingroup ($p < .05$) or party-neutral violation ($p < .05$). Hypothesis 7 was partially supported.

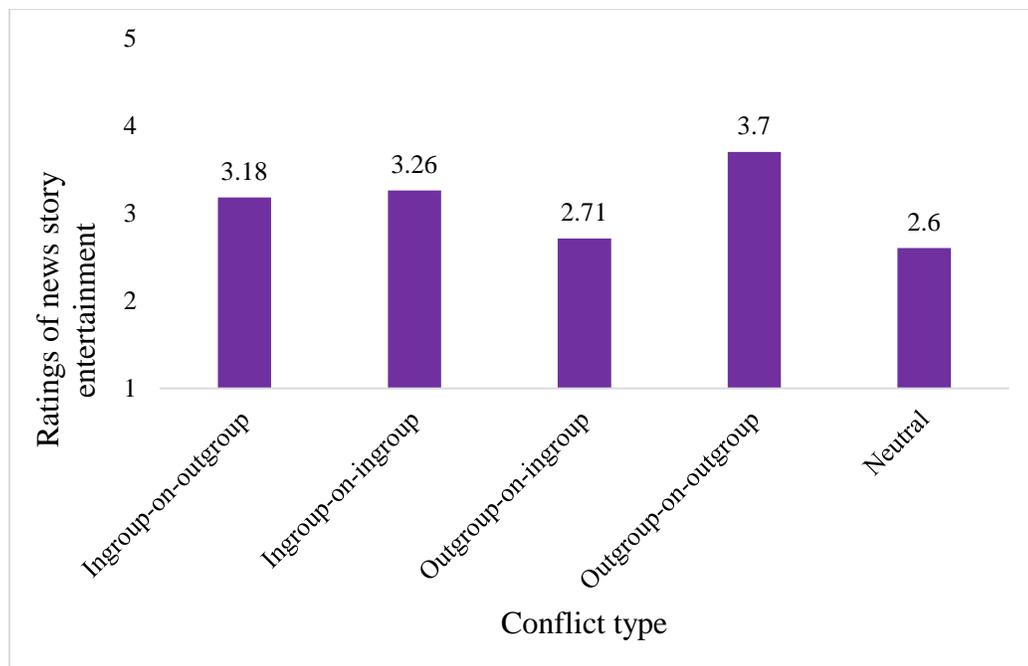


Figure 13: Participants' ratings of how entertaining the news story was (1 being low, 5 being high) by the type of conflict they saw

Analyses also revealed a significant interaction effect between political identity and conflict type on entertainment perceptions, $F(4, 224) = 2.67, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .05$. Republicans ($M = 3.81$) found the news story depicting an ingroup-on-ingroup violation significantly more entertaining than did Democrats ($M = 2.71, p < .01$).

Chapter 6: Discussion

The present study was an attempt to test and integrate two theoretical perspectives that lead to equally logical but competing hypotheses: moral foundations theory/MIME, which propose innate weights to five moral foundations affect judgments of moral transgressors, as well as interest in and enjoyment of mediated narratives; and social identity theory, which argues the group status of the moral transgressor and the violation target affect judgments of moral transgressors, as well as interest in and enjoyment of mediated narratives. In the past, both perspectives have been applied to a political context. MFT research has found differences between how liberals and conservatives weight the five moral foundations (e.g., Graham et al., 2009), and SIT research has demonstrated group status influences perceptions of the legitimacy of political power (e.g., Fielding & Hogg, 1997; Hains, Hogg, & Duck, 1997). This area of overlap facilitated crafting a quasi-experiment in which both MFT and SIT could be tested.

The two perspectives were tested by showing participants a news story depicting an authority moral violation in Congress. However, each news story depicted a different type of group conflict: *intragroup* (Democrat attacking a Democrat, Republican attacking a Republican), *intergroup* (Democrat attacking a Republican, Republican attacking a Democrat), or group neutral (political identity of people in the news story was not present). MFT and MIME propose that because innate moral foundations guide moral judgments, the group status of the people in the narrative should matter less than audience members' innate weights of each foundation. Because Republicans weight authority and loyalty more heavily than Democrats, Republicans should judge the moral transgressor in the news story more harshly. In contrast, SIT suggests that the group status of the people in the news story should

matter tremendously. People should judge moral violations that hurt their ingroup harshly but should judge moral violations that hurt an outgroup positively. Though the present study found some evidence supporting both perspectives, most of the results indicate the type of group conflict portrayed in the news story was a stronger predictor of reactions to the news story than were innate weights of the five moral foundations.

The following section will contextualize findings in past research on MFT, MIME, and SIT, identifying ways that the results confirm and contradict core ideas from each of these perspectives. It will identify limitations of the study, especially regarding the quasi-experimental design and the strength of the news story stimulus. It will also discuss strengths of the study and suggest directions for future research.

Implications for Moral Foundations Theory

Past research on MFT shows that liberals and conservatives weight the five moral foundations differently. Conservatives give more weight to the loyalty, authority, and purity foundations than do liberals; liberals give more weight to the care and fairness foundations than do conservatives (Graham et al., 2009; Graham et al., 2011; Graham et al., 2012). The present study confirms these findings. Republicans, the more conservative political party, reported heavier weights to the authority, loyalty, and purity foundations. Democrats, the more liberal political party, reported heavier weights to the care and fairness foundations. These differences could have important implications for research on the development of political identity as well as for the functioning of government.

Haidt and colleagues (e.g., Graham et al., 2011) have argued that liberal and conservative identities arise from innate weights of individualizing (care and fairness) versus binding (authority, loyalty, and purity) moral foundations. That is, people are largely born

with strong predispositions toward liberal and conservative ideologies; these predispositions are inherited genetically from parents. One key to supporting this assertion is the consistent demonstration that liberals and conservatives weight the foundations differently. Though the present study cannot make claims about the causal direction between moral foundation weights and liberalism/conservatism, it adds to the existing body of literature showing differences in foundation weights between liberals and conservatives.

As Graham et al. (2009) have discussed, differences between the moral values of Democrats and Republicans might underlie the ideological “culture war” in the United States. Neither side is open to the concerns or rhetoric of the opposition because they do not share the same set of concerns; what’s moral to one is immoral to the other, and vice versa. As Graham et al. (2012) note, the divide between liberals and conservatives is likely exacerbated by inaccurate, exaggerated views that each group holds about the other; liberals think conservatives value fairness far less than Republicans actually do, and Republicans think Democrats value loyalty far less than they actually do. This research may partially explain why Democrats and Republicans were harshest in their judgments of the moral character of outgroup members attacking ingroup members: each group characterizes the other as less moral overall in general.

The study also raises some questions about moral foundations theory, though admittedly questions it has raised about itself. Graham et al. (2013) discuss the tendency of individuals to self-report certain weights of the moral foundations but exhibit different weights when assessed using implicit measures. This was especially true of liberals, who appeared more conservative when making quick moral judgments under high cognitive load. In the present study, Democrats scored lower on loyalty, authority, and purity than did

Republicans. However, when rating a moral transgressor on these foundations, Democrats displayed ingroup favoritism to Democrats who attacked Republicans and displayed outgroup denigration to Republicans who attacked Democrats. Meanwhile, Republicans scored lower on care and fairness than Democrats, but displayed ingroup favoritism to Republicans who attacked Democrats *and* Republicans who attacked Republicans (the latter, perhaps, due to their penchant toward ingroup loyalty). The significant effects for purity, fairness, and care, foundations that were not explicitly violated in the news story, leads to questions about the discreteness of the moral foundations.

Haidt and colleagues argue that the moral foundations are discrete cognitive structures, each formed by different social selection pressures. The present study tried to trigger two of the foundations: authority (in the form of a lower-ranking politician subverting a higher-ranking politician) and loyalty (in the form of one ingroup member subverting another ingroup member). Interestingly, the authority and loyalty violations also influenced participants' views of the moral transgressor's care, fairness, and purity, especially in an intergroup conflict context. One possible explanation is that liberals and conservatives hold inaccurate, exaggerated views about the emphasis each other places on the five moral foundations. For example, Graham et al. (2012) found that liberals think conservatives care about care and fairness (the individualizing foundations) less than conservatives actually do, and conservatives think liberals care about purity, authority, and loyalty (the binding foundations) less than liberals actually do. These inaccurate views could have been automatically extended to the outgroup.

However, Graham et al. (2013) also found that liberals tend to over-estimate how much conservatives care about the binding foundations, while conservatives over-estimate

how much liberals care about the individualizing foundations. In the present study, Democrats rated Republicans *lower* on the binding foundations, especially when a Republican attacked a Democrat. Additionally, Republicans rated Democrats *lower* in the individualizing foundations, especially when a Democrat attacked a Republican. Participants appeared to make instant, negative judgments about outgroup members attacking ingroup members, and then assign the behavior a negative moral valence. These findings cannot be fully explained by the literature on moral foundations and political stereotyping. They might point to a larger issue with the discreteness of the moral foundations.

Participants demonstrated an ability to rationally distinguish among the five moral foundations while self-assessing their importance. They recognized a difference between authority and loyalty, for instance, and assigned them different weights accordingly. However, when practically assessing the moral character of a transgressor, participants routinely punished the moral transgressor for violations the transgressor did not explicitly commit (care, fairness, and purity). Morality is in the eye of the beholder; a care violation to one person might not be a violation at all to another person. Overlaps in judgments across the moral foundations make it difficult to discern just how discrete the five moral foundations are from each other. This points to a larger issue with research in evolutionary psychology: scholars have to speculate about an environment that existed thousands of years ago. If moral violations in the modern world do not trigger reactions to discrete moral foundations, how “discrete” were the selection pressures that led to the formation of the five foundations?

Implications for MIME

MIME (Tamborini, 2011) predicts a linear causal path from exposure to morally relevant content to appraisals of moral violators and enjoyment of/interest in media content.

The present study marks one of the first attempts to experimentally examine MIME in a news context (Bowman, Lewis, and Tamborini, 2014, performed a content analysis of U.S. headlines after Osama bin Laden's death using MIME as a framework). Results supported MIME's assertion that higher innate weight of a moral foundation increases harshness of judgments of a person who violates that moral foundation, but only for the loyalty foundation. As weight of the loyalty foundation increased among participants, their ratings of ingroup-on-ingroup and outgroup-on-outgroup violators decreased. However, other findings either failed to support (authority) or directly conflicted (purity) with MIME.

An authority violation occurred in every condition. It was highly expected that, averaging across all conditions, Republicans would rate the moral transgressor lower on authority than would Democrats. This was not the case, nor was innate trait weight of the authority foundation a significant predictor of the moral transgressor's authority. Additionally, results indicated that across all conditions, Democrats rated the moral transgressor lower on purity than did Republicans; this is the *opposite* of what MIME predicts, because Democrats care less about purity than do Republicans (in fact, in terms of differences in mean scores, Democrats and Republicans were more different on weights of purity than any other foundation).

MIME (Tamborini, 2011) also predicts that as moral foundation weight increases, interest in a narrative depicting a violation of that foundation increases. As such, because Republicans in the present sample weighted authority and loyalty more heavily than Democrats, Republicans should have shown more interest in the news story than Democrats. However, this was only partially the case. While there was no main effect for political identity on interest in the news story, there was an interaction effect between political

identity and conflict type on interest in the news story. Republicans were significantly more interested in the ingroup-on-ingroup violation than were Democrats. The ingroup-on-ingroup condition depicts an authority violation and a loyalty violation; this finding is consistent with MIME.

MIME further predicts that audience members enjoy narratives less when they depict unpunished, heavily-weighted moral violations (Eden et al., 2014; Lewis, Tamborini, & Weber, 2014; Tamborini et al., 2012; Tamborini et al., 2013). The news story stimulus in the present study did not depict punishment of the moral transgressor, so Republicans should have reported enjoying the news story less than Democrats. There was not a significant difference in how much Republicans and Democrats enjoyed the news story, except when political identity interacted with conflict type. Republicans reported being significantly more entertained by the ingroup-on-ingroup conflict than did Democrats. This finding is the *opposite* of what MIME predicts. One possible explanation for this unexpected finding is that Republican participants were demonstrating their ingroup loyalty by refusing to be critical of a fellow Republican. If Republicans value ingroup loyalty more than Democrats, they might have felt less willing to criticize an ingroup member.

The findings on MIME and story interest/enjoyment are corroborated by findings on emotional reactions to the moral transgression. Participants experienced the highest level of anger of the actions portrayed in the news story when the story depicted an outgroup-on-ingroup violation (this was true of both Democrats and Republicans). Participants also felt least supportive of the outgroup-on-ingroup violation, and they rated the violation as significantly less moral overall than any other violation type. Again, there was no main effect for political identity on emotional reactions to the news story.

In sum, MIME proposes that innate weights to moral foundations influence audience members' perceptions of the morality of characters in narratives, as well as their interest in and enjoyment of narratives. While some evidence was found to support this prediction, most of the differences between Democrats and Republicans in perceptions of character morality and interest in/enjoyment of the news story was better explained by the nature of the group conflict in the news story. At least in the context of narratives that depict conflict between identifiable ingroups and outgroups, MIME could increase its predictive power by incorporating research on morality in intergroup contexts.

Implications for Intergroup Morality Research

Graham et al. (2013) acknowledge the importance of intergroup selection pressures in shaping the cognitive networks responsible for processing morality. The “binding” foundations are explicitly group related (authority and loyalty relate to group cohesion; purity relates to avoiding harmful pathogens carried by geographically distant clans). In testing MFT, Bruneau et al. (2012) found that moral regard was lower for threatening outgroup members than for ingroup or non-threatening outgroup members. Group psychology clearly plays a role in morality judgments.

In the present study, the type of conflict (ingroup-on-ingroup, ingroup-on-outgroup, outgroup-on-ingroup, outgroup-on-outgroup, or party-neutral) depicted in the news story significantly predicted perceptions of the moral transgressor's character on all five of the moral foundations, even when performing a Type I sum of squares and entering participants' innate weights of the moral foundations into the model first. Participants rated an ingroup-on-outgroup attacker as significantly more respectful of authority than an outgroup-on-ingroup attacker. The effects became even more pronounced when examining differences just among

Democrats: the ingroup-on-outgroup attacker was rated higher on authority than outgroup-on-outgroup, ingroup-on-ingroup, and outgroup-on-ingroup attackers. From an MFT perspective, this finding is surprising; Democrats care less about authority than do Republicans. However, it is perfectly explained by research on group identity and leadership endorsement. Individuals do not perceive the authority held by outgroup members as legitimate, and are more favorable to leaders who exhibit stereotypical ingroup traits (Fielding & Hogg, 1997; Hains, Hogg, & Duck, 1997).

The ingroup-on-outgroup attacker received a similar boost over the outgroup-on-ingroup attacker when participants rated the moral transgressor's loyalty. Moreover, among Republicans, the ingroup-on-ingroup attacker was rated as more loyal than the outgroup-on-outgroup attacker. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) would explain these differences in terms of the audience's desire for positive distinctiveness, perhaps through the social competition method. Participants were trying to preserve their positive group identity by assigning more favorable ratings to ingroup members and less favorable ratings to outgroup members in the classic favoritism/denigration pattern.

Social identity theory may also help explain observed differences in ratings of the moral transgressor's care, fairness, and purity, the three foundations that were not explicitly violated in the news story. Participants rated the outgroup-on-ingroup attacker as significantly less caring than every other type of attacker. Additionally, Democrats in the sample rated the ingroup-on-outgroup attacker as significantly *more* caring than every other type of attacker. These findings comport with research on moral boundaries (Brewer, 2007; Opatow, 2000). An opposing political party represents a threat for power and resources. This situation encourages ingroup favoritism (cohesion is key to success in an intergroup conflict)

and outgroup denigration. Thus, an outgroup member falls outside of the scope of justice. A similar explanation could be applied to participants' ratings of the moral transgressor's fairness. As in care, participants rated an outgroup-on-ingroup attacker significantly lower on fairness than every other type of attacker.

Research on moral boundaries (Opatow, 2000) may help explain differences in ratings of purity based on conflict type. Purity is tied to pathogen avoidance, and threatening outgroup members are often characterized as unclean or associated with disease-carrying creatures (vermin, insects, etc.). In the present study, Democrats rated the outgroup-on-ingroup attacker significantly lower on purity than every other condition (while no significant differences were found among Republicans). This could be because the intergroup threat triggered networks associated with pathogen fears. However, it is surprising that no significant differences were found among Republicans, who care more about purity than do Democrats.

The tests of emotional reaction to the news story also align with a SIT explanation. Participants were angriest when they saw an outgroup-on-ingroup attack because it threatens positive distinctiveness. Similarly, participants reported being least supportive of the outgroup-on-ingroup attack. The outgroup threat elicited negative emotions. Further, participants rated this attack as significantly less moral overall (on a moral/immoral composite scale) than every other type of attack. As Brewer (2007) proposes, people often feel morally superior to outgroup members. Both Democrats and Republicans in the present study appear to feel morally superior to their political opponents.

The type of conflict portrayed in the news story explained more variance in participants' ratings of interest in and enjoyment of the news story than did political identity

or innate weights of the moral foundations. Participants found the story depicting an outgroup-on-outgroup violation to be the most interesting, significantly more so than the news story depicting an outgroup-on-ingroup or party-neutral violation. The outgroup-on-outgroup violation was also rated as the most entertaining. This is consistent with SIT research on media exposure and self-enhancement. Media containing negative depictions of outgroup members tend to boost self-esteem, which makes those media more gratifying (Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2006; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010; Ward, 2004). An outgroup-on-outgroup attack indicates a lack of cohesion within the outgroup, which is highly relevant and encouraging information during periods of intergroup conflict. In contrast, media depicting ingroup members negatively (e.g., an outgroup member attacking an ingroup member) have a negative impact on self-esteem and are less enjoyable to audience members.

Broad Implications

Perhaps the broadest implication of this study is that individuals filter their moral judgments through their group identities. While it's likely that people are predisposed to care more about certain types of moral violations than others, group identity plays such a powerful role in assessing morality that people's innate moral weights can be reversed. For example, Democrats in the present study weight authority, loyalty, and purity as less important than do Republicans. Despite these innate differences, Democrats and Republicans looked remarkably similar when assessing ingroup-on-outgroup and outgroup-on-ingroup moral violations: ingroup-on-outgroup violators were judged favorably, outgroup-on-ingroup violators were judged harshly. Similarly, Republicans weighted care and fairness significantly lower than Democrats, but still gave high ratings to ingroup-on-outgroup

violators and low ratings to outgroup-on-ingroup violators. With a simple group status manipulation, Democrats were made to look like Republicans, and Republicans were made to look like Democrats (morally speaking).

This study also has broad implications for media interest and enjoyment. MIME predicts that audience members should be most interested in narratives that depict violations of moral foundations that the audience weights heavily. Group identity appears to play a significant role in this process. In fact, a news story depicting an authority violation without the group identity of the attacker and victim present was rated as least interesting and entertaining overall. Participants were most interested and entertained by moral violations against outgroup members and were less entertained by moral violations against ingroup members. As SIT predicts, participants strongly preferred a news story that portrays an outgroup member negatively over one that portrays an ingroup member negatively. This could have implications for selective exposure.

MIME (Tamborini, 2011) proposes that selective exposure to media content occurs because audience members seek out narratives depicting violations of foundations they weight heavily. Over time, repeated exposure causes audience members to become more rigid in their foundation weights and more likely to expose selectively. In contrast, research on SIT (e.g., Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010) results from individuals seeking out positive and avoiding negative information about their ingroup as a status enhancement tool. The present study found that the type of group conflict depicted in a news story was more predictive of interest in and enjoyment of that news story than was innate foundation weights. As such, at least in the context of narratives that depict violations within and

between identifiable groups, SIT may provide a better explanation of the selective exposure phenomenon.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study had several limitations that should be addressed. First, the study employed a quasi-experimental design rather a true experimental design. Because participants did not complete the study in a lab, it is impossible to say if each participant completed the study under precisely the same conditions. While one benefit of this design is that participants were exposed to the news story in a more naturalistic setting, it is still possible that some participants were influenced by external stimuli. Random assignment to experimental conditions provides some safeguard against possible third variables, but concerns still exist about a lack of equivalence in conditions.

The quasi-experimental design also made it difficult to assess implicit measures of reactions to the news story (though time spent viewing the news story was recorded; no significant differences in view time were found based on political identity or type of conflict portrayed). Instead, the study relied on self-report measures of moral foundation weights, emotions, and perceptions of the moral transgressor's moral character. As Graham et al. (2013) point out, implicit measures of reactions to moral violations are often more accurate than explicit measures, especially when people have depleted cognitive resources (e.g., are tired, stressed, drunk, etc.). The present study may have only discovered differences Democrats and Republicans in self-reported assessments of morality rather than their *actual* reactions to moral violations. Future studies should employ a true experimental design and assess implicit reactions to moral violations in narratives.

Additionally, the study employed a volunteer sample through Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Research suggests that there are advantages to performing research through MTurk over relying on traditional college samples, including increased demographic diversity, with no drawbacks to data reliability (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011), especially when applying filters that allow only participants with the highest approval ratings to participate (Peer, Vosgerau, & Acquisti, 2014). The present study did have roughly equal numbers of men and women and a high amount of diversity in terms of race, geography, educational background, and socioeconomic status. Participants also performed well on the political knowledge test. However, concerns remain about the ability to generalize findings beyond MTurk workers, who presumably differ from the general population in terms of interest in scholarly research.

A large imbalance existed between Democrats and Republicans in the sample. Responses from Democrats may have been too influential in determining significant differences in ratings of a moral violator's character, interest in, and enjoyment of media. To address this issue, analyses were split up based on participants' political identity where relevant, but the low number of Republicans made it harder to detect significant differences among conservative participants. The low number of Republicans could point to another issue with using participants from MTurk; Republicans appear to be underrepresented on the service.

The news story manipulation could be another weakness of the study. Especially considering the political climate immediately after the study took place (increased coverage of the 2016 presidential race, the terrorist attacks by ISIS in Paris, the shooting in San Bernadino), the story depicted a relatively tame authority and loyalty violation. It's possible

that a more dramatic or violent violation (e.g., assassination of an ingroup or outgroup leader) would have yielded results more in line with MIME's predictions. Future studies should examine news stories depicting moral violations between groups that pose a violent threat to each other, much like Bruneau et al., (2012) did in examining Arabs and Israelis.

MIME makes predictions about the long-term effects of exposure to media content, and the present study did not use a longitudinal design. Based on the current study's findings, it's possible to speculate about the effects of reactions to moral violations on repeated exposure to media content and on reinforcement of existing cognitive structures. However, the only way to truly understand the mutually influential relationship among moral foundations, group identity, and exposure to media content is through longitudinal research. Such research is critical in the current American political landscape. Existing research does indicate that prolonged exposure influences both polarization (Stroud, 2010) and weightings of moral foundations (Eden et al., 2014). Given apparent differences between liberals and conservatives in their innate weights of moral foundations, it's possible that repeated exposure to narratives depicting violations of specific moral foundations could also make audience members more rigid in their political beliefs.

It is also possible, and perhaps likely, that liberal and conservative media outlets emphasize different moral foundations in their coverage of news. Extending the research by Bowman et al. (2013), a content analysis could be performed to determine a) the types of moral violations covered by liberal, conservative, and mainstream media and b) the different foundations emphasized in coverage of the same event. If there are significant differences between liberal and conservative news outlets, prolonged exposure to attitude-confirming news could reinforce moral foundations as well as political identity.

Conclusion

The present study extends research on moral foundations theory, MIME, and social identity theory by demonstrating the impact of group identity on perceptions of a moral transgressor. It is one of the first attempts to examine the MIME model in the context of news (rather than fictional) narratives. Group identity appears to play an important, antecedent role in assessing morality. Democrats and Republicans both exhibited ingroup favoritism and outgroup denigration, especially when seeing ingroup-on-outgroup and outgroup-on-ingroup attacks. Given the current climate of political polarization surrounding the 2016 presidential election and social issues like gun control, as well as frequent media coverage of ideological conflicts between the West and the Middle East, it is imperative that researchers come to a better understanding of the role innate moral foundation weights and group identity play on exposure to media content. It is also essential that scholars better understand the role that prolonged exposure to media content has on reinforcing existing foundation weights and group identity.

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Appendix: Study Materials

6/6/2016

Qualtrics Survey Software

MFQ

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The study will be conducted in two parts. In the first part of the study, you will answer some questions about how you make decisions about right and wrong. In the second part of the study, you will read a short news story and then answer some questions about how you perceive the people in it. Participation will take up to 30 minutes, in one session only.

There are no known risks associated with participation in this study with the possible exception of minor discomfort answering some of the questions being asked. If you find a question uncomfortable, you may skip the question and still receive full payment for participation. In the event that you feel emotionally discomforted during the study, or for any other reason, you may withdraw at any time. For any further concerns you may feel the need to discuss, you can contact the researchers involved.

You will gain insight into experimental design and methodology, and will learn about the theoretical issues under investigation in the study. You may also gain some insight into your own behavior and what factors help drive your own and others' reactions. However, no benefit is guaranteed.

Only the researchers involved will have access to the data, and your responses will be completely anonymous. Anonymous aggregated data will be analyzed and may be presented to the scientific community. Information included in scientific reports will be completely anonymous. The data we collect will not be linked to your identity in any way.

For your participation, you will receive \$1.00. You may discontinue participation at any time and receive full credit. At the end of the study, you will receive a payment code to enter on Amazon Mechanical Turk.

You may refuse to participate and still receive any benefits you would receive if you were not in the study. You may change your mind about being in the study and quit after the study has started.

If you have any questions about this research project or if you think you may have been injured as a result of your participation, please contact:

Ethan Hartsell at ethanhartsell@umail.ucsb.edu between 11 am and 5 pm PST

If you have any questions regarding your rights and participation as a research subject, please contact the Human Subjects Committee at (805) 893-3807 or hsc@research.ucsb.edu. Or write to the University of California, Human Subjects Committee, Office of Research, Santa Barbara, CA 93106-2050

Do you consent to participation in this study?

- Yes
 No

First, you will answer some questions about how you make judgments about right and wrong. Please answer the following questions as best you can.

When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking?

	Not at all relevant	Not very relevant	Slightly Relevant	Somewhat Relevant	Very Relevant	Extremely Relevant
Whether or not someone suffered emotionally	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not some people were treated differently than others	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone's action showed love for his or her country	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone showed a lack of respect for authority	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone violated standards of purity and decency	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone was good at math	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone cared for someone weak or vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone acted unfairly	<input type="radio"/>					

When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking?

	Not at all relevant	Not very relevant	Slightly Relevant	Somewhat Relevant	Very Relevant	Extremely Relevant
Whether or not someone did something to betray his or her group	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone conformed to the traditions of society	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone did something disgusting	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone was cruel	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone was denied his or her rights	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone showed a lack of loyalty	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not an action caused chaos or disorder	<input type="radio"/>					
Whether or not someone acted in a way that God would approve of	<input type="radio"/>					

Please read the following statements and indicate your agreement or disagreement.

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue	<input type="radio"/>					
When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be that everyone is treated fairly	<input type="radio"/>					
I am proud of my country's history	<input type="radio"/>					
Respect for authority is something all children need to learn	<input type="radio"/>					
People should not do things that are disgusting, even if no one is harmed	<input type="radio"/>					
It is better to do good than to do bad	<input type="radio"/>					
One of the worst things a person could do is hurt a defenseless animal	<input type="radio"/>					
Justice is the most important requirement for a society	<input type="radio"/>					

Please read the following statements and indicate your agreement or disagreement.

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
People should be loyal to their family members, even when they have done something wrong	<input type="radio"/>					
Men and women each have different roles to play in society	<input type="radio"/>					
I would call some acts wrong on the grounds that they are unnatural	<input type="radio"/>					
It can never be right to kill a human being	<input type="radio"/>					
I think it's morally wrong that rich children inherit a lot of money while poor children inherit nothing	<input type="radio"/>					
It is more important to be a team player than to express oneself	<input type="radio"/>					
If I were a soldier and disagreed with my commanding officer's orders, I would obey anyway because that is my duty	<input type="radio"/>					
Chastity is an important and valuable virtue	<input type="radio"/>					

For the questions below, try to imagine actually doing the following things, and indicate how much money someone would have to pay you, (anonymously and secretly) to be willing to do each thing.

IMPORTANT: For each action, assume that nothing bad would happen to you afterwards. Also assume that you cannot use the money to make up for your action.

	\$0 (I'd do it for free)	\$10	\$100	\$1000	\$10,000	\$100,000	A million dollars	Never for any amount of money
Kick a dog in the head, hard	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shoot and kill an animal that is a member of an endangered species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make cruel remarks to an overweight person about his or her appearance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stick a pin the palm of a child you don't know	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cheat in a game of cards played for money with some people you don't know well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Say no to a friend's request to help him move into a new apartment, after he helped you move the month before	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Throw out a box of ballots during an election, to help your favored candidate win	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sign a secret-but-binding pledge to only hire people of your race in your company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For the questions below, try to imagine actually doing the following things, and indicate how much money someone would have to pay you, (anonymously and secretly) to be willing to do each thing.

IMPORTANT: For each action, assume that nothing bad would happen to you afterwards. Also assume that you cannot use the money to make up for your action.

	\$0 (I'd do it for free)	\$10	\$100	\$1000	\$10,000	\$100,000	A million dollars	Never for any amount of money
Say something bad about your nation (which you don't believe to be true) while calling in, anonymously, to a talk-radio show in a foreign nation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Break off all communications with your immediate and extended family for 1 year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Burn your country's flag, in private (nobody else sees you)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leave the social group, club, or team that you value most	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curse your parents in their	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Slap your parents, w/ their face (You can apologize and explain one year later)	<input type="radio"/>							
Make a disrespectful hand gesture to your boss, teacher, or professor	<input type="radio"/>							
Throw a rotten tomato at a political leader you dislike. (remember, you will not get caught)	<input type="radio"/>							
Slap your father in the face (with his permission) as part of a comedy skit	<input type="radio"/>							

For the questions below, try to imagine actually doing the following things, and indicate how much money someone would have to pay you, (anonymously and secretly) to be willing to do each thing.

IMPORTANT: For each action, assume that nothing bad would happen to you afterwards. Also assume that you cannot use the money to make up for your action.

	\$0 (I'd do it for free)	\$10	\$100	\$1000	\$10,000	\$100,000	A million dollars	Never for any amount of money
Sign a piece of paper that says "I hereby sell my soul, after my death, to whoever has this piece of paper"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get plastic surgery that adds a 2 inch tail on to the end of your spine (you can remove it in three years)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get a blood transfusion of 1 pint of disease-free, compatible blood from a convicted child molester	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a performance art piece in which all participants (including you) act like animals for 30 minutes, including crawling around naked and urinating on stage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sit in a bathtub full of ice water for ten minutes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wear a sign on your back for one month that says, in large letters, "I am an idiot"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experience a severe headache for two weeks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lose your sense of hearing for one year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

That concludes the first part of the study. In the second part, you will be presented with a political news story from ABC News. Research indicates that when people read news stories about politics, they often can't identify the people in it. They even fail to recognize the political parties of the politicians. Please read the following story carefully. After reading it, you will be asked to identify the people in the news story.

Dem on Dem

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The following news story was published in May of 2015, after Mark Warner, a low-ranking Democrat in the Senate, verbally attacked Harry Reid, a high-ranking member of Warner's own political party.

Please read the following news story carefully and click "Continue" below when you are finished reading it.



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Conflict in Congress: Low-Ranking Dem Blasts Reid

By KATHERINE FAULDERS

Senate debate on tax reform turned ugly today when Senator [Mark Warner](#) (Democrat-VA) launched a vicious attack on Senate Minority Leader [Harry Reid](#) (Democrat-NV) for his support of a tax reform bill.

At the conclusion of his comments on the bill, Warner directed his anger at the Minority Leader, the highest ranking Democrat in the Senate. "Senator Reid, you have encouraged and enabled reckless behavior in Congress. Your leadership has no credibility. Stand down Mr. Reid, stand down," said Senator Warner, a new but up-and-coming member of the Democratic Party.

Asked for further comment, the young Warner remarked: "Senator Reid has repeatedly demonstrated that he is not qualified to discuss tax reform. He has lost all credibility. If we are going to make progress, we need new leadership. The Democratic Party and the American people deserve better."

It's rare for lower-ranking members of Congress—like Warner—to openly challenge the Senate Minority Leader, especially when he is a member of their own party. Some members of Congress will be quick to call for punishment. Warner could be formally reprimanded or censured. Regardless, his comments hurt Democrats, and they will likely undermine Senator Reid's ability to push for a vote on the reform bill before the House goes on recess later this week.

Senator Reid, who has represented Nevada in the Senate since 1987 and served as Senate Majority Leader from 2007 to 2015, fired back at Warner: "My goal is to help our economy and boost job creation. That has been my goal for the 23 years I've served in Congress and that's not going to change."

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Please indicate which politician is the *higher ranking* member of Congress.

- Mark Warner
- Harry Reid

Please indicate which political party each politician belongs to:

	Democrat	Republican
Mark Warner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harry Reid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate how HOT or COLD you feel about the following, with 100 representing VERY HOT/POSITIVE, 50 representing MEDIUM WARM/AVERAGE, and 0 representing VERY COLD/NEGATIVE:

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Mark Warner											
Harry Reid											
Democratic Party											
Republican Party											

Please indicate the degree to which Mark Warner's actions made you feel:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	Extremely
Angry	<input type="radio"/>				
Happy	<input type="radio"/>				
Disgusted	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertained	<input type="radio"/>				
Irritated	<input type="radio"/>				
Offended	<input type="radio"/>				
Supportive	<input type="radio"/>				
Outraged	<input type="radio"/>				

Overall, Mark Warner's behavior was:

Extremely immoral	Mostly immoral	Somewhat immoral	Neutral (neither moral nor immoral)	Somewhat moral	Mostly moral	Extremely moral
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

With Mark Warner in mind, to what extent do the following statements apply to him in general?

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
He causes others to suffer emotionally	<input type="radio"/>					
He treats some people differently than others	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows love for his country	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of respect for authority	<input type="radio"/>					
He violates standards of purity and decency	<input type="radio"/>					
He is good at math	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows care for others who are weak and vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts unfairly	<input type="radio"/>					
He betrays his group	<input type="radio"/>					
He conforms to the traditions of society	<input type="radio"/>					
He does disgusting things	<input type="radio"/>					
He is cruel	<input type="radio"/>					
He denies others their rights	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of loyalty	<input type="radio"/>					
He causes chaos or disorder	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts in a way that God would approve of	<input type="radio"/>					

Please indicate your opinion of the NEWS STORY you read on the following traits:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Believable	<input type="radio"/>				
Well-written	<input type="radio"/>				
Factual	<input type="radio"/>				
Balanced	<input type="radio"/>				
Interesting	<input type="radio"/>				
Trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>				
Biased	<input type="radio"/>				
Fair	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertaining	<input type="radio"/>				
Credible	<input type="radio"/>				

Dem on Rep

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The following news story was published in May of 2015, after Chris Van Hollen, a low-ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives, verbally attacked John Boehner, a high-ranking member of the opposing political party.

Please read the following news story carefully and click "Continue" below when you are finished reading it.



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Conflict in Congress: Low-Ranking Dem Blasts Boehner

By KATHERINE FAULDERS

House debate on tax reform turned partisan and ugly today when Representative **Chris Van Hollen** (Democrat-MD) launched a vicious attack on Speaker of the House **John Boehner** (Republican-OH) for his support of a tax reform bill.

At the conclusion of his comments on the bill, Van Hollen directed his anger at the Speaker of the House, the highest ranking member of the House of Representatives. "Speaker Boehner, you have encouraged and enabled reckless behavior in Congress. Your leadership has no credibility. Stand down Speaker Boehner, stand down," said Representative Van Hollen, a new but up-and-coming member of the Democratic Party.

Asked for further comment, the young Van Hollen remarked: "Speaker Boehner has repeatedly demonstrated that he is not qualified to discuss tax reform. He has lost all credibility. If we are going to make progress, we need new leadership. The American people deserve better."

It's rare for lower-ranking members of Congress—like Van Hollen—to openly challenge the Speaker of the House, especially one as tenured as Boehner. Some members of Congress will be quick to call for punishment. Van Hollen could be formally reprimanded or censured. Regardless, his comments hurt Republicans, and they will likely undermine Speaker Boehner's ability to push for a vote on the reform bill before the House goes on recess later this week.

Representative Boehner, who has represented Ohio's 8th District since 1991 and served as Speaker of the House since 2011, fired back at Van Hollen: "My goal is to help our economy and boost job creation. That has been my goal for the 23 years I've served in Congress and that's not going to change."

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Please indicate which politician is the *higher ranking* member of Congress.

- Chris Van Hollen
- John Boehner

Please indicate which political party each politician belongs to:

	Democrat	Republican
Chris Van Hollen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
John Boehner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate how HOT or COLD you feel about the following, with 100 representing VERY HOT/POSITIVE, 50 representing MEDIUM WARM/AVERAGE, and 0 representing VERY COLD/NEGATIVE:

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Chris Van Hollen											
John Boehner											
Democratic Party											
Republican Party											

Please indicate the degree to which Chris Van Hollen's actions made you feel:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Angry	<input type="radio"/>				
Happy	<input type="radio"/>				
Disgusted	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertained	<input type="radio"/>				
Irritated	<input type="radio"/>				
Offended	<input type="radio"/>				
Supportive	<input type="radio"/>				
Outraged	<input type="radio"/>				

Overall, Chris Van Hollen's behavior was:

Extremely immoral	Mostly immoral	Somewhat immoral	Neutral (neither moral nor immoral)	Somewhat moral	Mostly moral	Extremely moral
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

With Chris Van Hollen in mind, to what extent do the following statements apply to him in general?

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
He causes others to suffer emotionally	<input type="radio"/>					
He treats some people differently than others	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows love for his country	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of respect for authority	<input type="radio"/>					
He violates standards of purity and decency	<input type="radio"/>					
He is good at math	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows care for others who are weak and vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts unfairly	<input type="radio"/>					
He betrays his group	<input type="radio"/>					
He conforms to the traditions of society	<input type="radio"/>					
He does disgusting things	<input type="radio"/>					
He is cruel	<input type="radio"/>					
He denies others their rights	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of loyalty	<input type="radio"/>					
He causes chaos or disorder	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts in a way that God would approve of	<input type="radio"/>					

Please indicate your opinion of the NEWS STORY you read on the following traits:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Believable	<input type="radio"/>				
Well-written	<input type="radio"/>				
Factual	<input type="radio"/>				
Balanced	<input type="radio"/>				
Interesting	<input type="radio"/>				
Trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>				
Biased	<input type="radio"/>				
Fair	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertaining	<input type="radio"/>				
Credible	<input type="radio"/>				

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The following news story was published in May of 2015, after Scott Rigell, a low-ranking Republican in the House of Representatives, verbally attacked John Boehner, a high-ranking member of Rigell's own political party.

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Conflict in Congress: Low-Ranking GOP Blasts Boehner

By KATHERINE FAULDERS

House debate on tax reform turned ugly today when Representative **Scott Rigell** (Republican-VA) launched a vicious attack on Speaker of the House **John Boehner** (Republican-OH) for his support of a tax reform bill.

At the conclusion of his comments on the bill, Rigell directed his anger at the Speaker of the House, the highest ranking member of the House of Representatives and a fellow Republican. "Speaker Boehner, you have encouraged and enabled reckless behavior in Congress. Your leadership has no credibility. Stand down Speaker Boehner, stand down," said Representative Rigell, a new but up-and-coming member of the Republican Party.

Asked for further comment, the young Rigell remarked: "Speaker Boehner has repeatedly demonstrated that he is not qualified to discuss tax reform. He has lost all credibility. If we are going to make progress, we need new leadership. The Republican Party and the American people deserve better."

It's rare for lower-ranking members of Congress—like Rigell—to openly challenge the Speaker of the House, especially when he is a member of their own party. Some members of Congress will be quick to call for punishment. Rigell could be formally reprimanded or censured. Regardless, his comments hurt Republicans, and they will likely undermine Speaker Boehner's ability to push for a vote on the reform bill before the House goes on recess later this week.

Representative Boehner, who has represented Ohio's 8th District since 1991 and served as Speaker of the House since 2011, fired back at Rigell: "My goal is to help our economy and boost job creation. That has been my goal for the 23 years I've served in Congress and that's not going to change."

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Please indicate which politician is the *higher ranking* member of Congress.

- Scott Rigell
- John Boehner

Please indicate which political party each politician belongs to:

	Democrat	Republican
Scott Rigell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
John Boehner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate how HOT or COLD you feel about the following, with 100 representing VERY HOT/POSITIVE, 50 representing MEDIUM WARM/AVERAGE, and 0 representing VERY COLD/NEGATIVE:

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Scott Rigell											
John Boehner											
Democratic Party											
Republican Party											

Please indicate the degree to which Scott Rigell's actions made you feel:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Angry	<input type="radio"/>				
Happy	<input type="radio"/>				
Disgusted	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertained	<input type="radio"/>				
Irritated	<input type="radio"/>				
Offended	<input type="radio"/>				
Supportive	<input type="radio"/>				
Outraged	<input type="radio"/>				

Overall, Scott Rigell's behavior was:

Extremely immoral	Mostly immoral	Somewhat immoral	Neutral (neither moral nor immoral)	Somewhat moral	Mostly moral	Extremely moral
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

With Scott Rigell in mind, to what extent do the following statements apply to him in general?

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
He causes others to suffer emotionally	<input type="radio"/>					
He treats some people differently than others	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows love for his country	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of respect for authority	<input type="radio"/>					
He violates standards of purity and decency	<input type="radio"/>					
He is good at math	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows care for others who are weak and vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts unfairly	<input type="radio"/>					
He betrays his group	<input type="radio"/>					
He conforms to the traditions of society	<input type="radio"/>					
He does disgusting things	<input type="radio"/>					
He is cruel	<input type="radio"/>					
He denies others their rights	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of loyalty	<input type="radio"/>					
He causes chaos or disorder	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts in a way that God would approve of	<input type="radio"/>					

Please indicate your opinion of the NEWS STORY you read on the following traits:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Believable	<input type="radio"/>				
Well-written	<input type="radio"/>				
Factual	<input type="radio"/>				
Balanced	<input type="radio"/>				
Interesting	<input type="radio"/>				
Trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>				
Biased	<input type="radio"/>				
Fair	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertaining	<input type="radio"/>				
Credible	<input type="radio"/>				

Rep on Dem

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The following news story was published in May of 2015, after Rob Portman, a low-ranking Republican in the Senate, verbally attacked Harry Reid, a high-ranking member of the opposing political party.

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236 Comments

Conflict in Congress: Low-Ranking GOP Blasts Reid

By KATHERINE FAULDERS

Senate debate on tax reform turned partisan and ugly today when Senator **Rob Portman** (Republican-OH) launched a vicious attack on Senate Minority Leader **Harry Reid** (Democrat-NV) for his support of a tax reform bill.

At the conclusion of his comments on the bill, Portman directed his anger at the Minority Leader, the highest ranking Democrat in the Senate. "Senator Reid, you have encouraged and enabled reckless behavior in Congress. Your leadership has no credibility. Stand down Mr. Reid, stand down," said Senator Portman, a new but up-and-coming member of the Republican Party.

Asked for further comment, the young Portman remarked: "Senator Reid has repeatedly demonstrated that he is not qualified to discuss tax reform. He has lost all credibility. If we are going to make progress, we need new leadership. The American people deserve better."

It's rare for lower-ranking members of Congress—like Portman—to openly challenge the Senate Minority Leader, especially one as tenured as Reid. Some members of Congress will be quick to call for punishment. Portman could be formally reprimanded or censured. Regardless, his comments hurt Democrats, and they will likely undermine Senator Reid's ability to push for a vote on the reform bill before the House goes on recess later this week.

Senator Reid, who has represented Nevada in the Senate since 1987 and served as Senate Majority Leader from 2007 to 2015, fired back at Portman: "My goal is to help our economy and boost job creation. That has been my goal for the 23 years I've served in Congress and that's not going to change."

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Please indicate which politician is the *higher ranking* member of Congress.

- Rob Portman
- Harry Reid

Please indicate which political party each politician belongs to:

	Democrat	Republican
Rob Portman	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harry Reid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate how HOT or COLD you feel about the following, with 100 representing VERY HOT/POSITIVE, 50 representing MEDIUM WARM/AVERAGE, and 0 representing VERY COLD/NEGATIVE:

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Rob Portman											
Harry Reid											
Democratic Party											
Republican Party											

Please indicate the degree to which Rob Portman's actions made you feel:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Angry	<input type="radio"/>				
Happy	<input type="radio"/>				
Disgusted	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertained	<input type="radio"/>				
Irritated	<input type="radio"/>				
Offended	<input type="radio"/>				
Supportive	<input type="radio"/>				
Outraged	<input type="radio"/>				

Overall, Rob Portman's behavior was:

Extremely immoral	Mostly immoral	Somewhat immoral	Neutral (neither moral nor immoral)	Somewhat moral	Mostly moral	Extremely moral
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

With Rob Portman in mind, to what extent do the following statements apply to him in general?

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
He causes others to suffer emotionally	<input type="radio"/>					
He treats some people differently than others	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows love for his country	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of respect for authority	<input type="radio"/>					
He violates standards of purity and decency	<input type="radio"/>					
He is good at math	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows care for others who are weak and vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts unfairly	<input type="radio"/>					
He betrays his group	<input type="radio"/>					
He conforms to the traditions of society	<input type="radio"/>					
He does disgusting things	<input type="radio"/>					
He is cruel	<input type="radio"/>					
He denies others their rights	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of loyalty	<input type="radio"/>					
He causes chaos or disorder	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts in a way that God would approve of	<input type="radio"/>					

Please indicate your opinion of the NEWS STORY you read on the following traits:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Believable	<input type="radio"/>				
Well-written	<input type="radio"/>				
Factual	<input type="radio"/>				
Balanced	<input type="radio"/>				
Interesting	<input type="radio"/>				
Trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>				
Biased	<input type="radio"/>				
Fair	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertaining	<input type="radio"/>				
Credible	<input type="radio"/>				

Neutral

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The following news story was published in May of 2015, after Sheldon Whitehouse, a low-ranking Senator, verbally attacked Mike Enzi, a high-ranking Senator.

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236 Comments

Conflict in Congress: Low-Ranking Senator Blasts Enzi

By KATHERINE FAULDERS

Senate debate on tax reform turned ugly today when Senator **Sheldon Whitehouse** launched a vicious attack on Senate Budget Committee Chairman **Mike Enzi** for his support of a tax reform bill.

At the conclusion of his comments on the bill, Whitehouse directed his anger at the Budget Committee Chairman, one of the highest-ranking men in Congress. "Senator Enzi, you have encouraged and enabled reckless behavior in Congress. Your leadership has no credibility. Stand down Mr. Enzi, stand down," said Senator Whitehouse, a new but up-and-coming member of Congress.

Asked for further comment, the young Whitehouse remarked: "Senator Enzi has repeatedly demonstrated that he is not qualified to discuss tax reform. He has lost all credibility. If we are going to make progress, we need new leadership. The American people deserve better."

It's rare for lower-ranking members of Congress—like Whitehouse—to openly challenge high-ranking members, especially one as tenured as Enzi. Some members of Congress will be quick to call for punishment. Whitehouse could be formally reprimanded or censured. Regardless, his comments will likely undermine Senator Enzi's ability to push for a vote on the reform bill before the Senate goes on recess later this week.

Senator Enzi, who has served in the Senate since 1997, fired back at Whitehouse: "My goal is to help our economy and boost job creation. That has been my goal for the 23 years I've served in Congress and that's not going to change."

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Please indicate which politician is the *higher ranking* member of Congress.

- Sheldon Whitehouse
- Mike Enzi

Please indicate which political party each politician belongs to:

	Democrat	Republican
Sheldon Whitehouse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mike Enzi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate how HOT or COLD you feel about the following, with 100 representing VERY HOT/POSITIVE, 50 representing MEDIUM WARM/AVERAGE, and 0 representing VERY COLD/NEGATIVE:

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Sheldon Whitehouse											
Mike Enzi											
Democratic Party											
Republican Party											

Please indicate the degree to which Sheldon Whitehouse's actions made you feel:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Angry	<input type="radio"/>				
Happy	<input type="radio"/>				
Disgusted	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertained	<input type="radio"/>				
Irritated	<input type="radio"/>				
Offended	<input type="radio"/>				
Supportive	<input type="radio"/>				
Outraged	<input type="radio"/>				

Overall, Sheldon Whitehouse's behavior was:

Extremely immoral	Mostly immoral	Somewhat immoral	Neutral (neither moral nor immoral)	Somewhat moral	Mostly moral	Extremely moral
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Overall, Sheldon Whitehouse's behavior was:

Extremely unjustified	Mostly unjustified	Somewhat unjustified	Neutral (neither justified nor unjustified)	Somewhat justified	Mostly justified	Extremely justified
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Is what Sheldon Whitehouse did okay or wrong?

Completely okay	Mostly okay	Somewhat okay	Neutral (neither okay nor wrong)	Somewhat wrong	Mostly wrong	Completely wrong
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you think good things or bad things will happen to Sheldon Whitehouse as a result of the events in this news story?

Extremely bad	Mostly bad	Somewhat bad	Neutral (neither good nor bad)	Somewhat good	Mostly good	Extremely good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Should Sheldon Whitehouse be stopped from acting like this?

Definitely stopped	Probably stopped	Maybe stopped	Neutral	Maybe not stopped	Probably not stopped	Definitely not stopped
<input type="radio"/>						

How do Sheldon Whitehouse's actions make you feel?

Extremely negative	Mostly negative	Somewhat negative	Neutral (neither negative nor positive)	Somewhat positive	Mostly positive	Extremely positive
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Overall, how *competent* do you think Sheldon Whitehouse is?

0 = Completely Incompetent		100 = Completely Competent								
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<input type="text"/>										

With Sheldon Whitehouse in mind, to what extent do the following statements apply to him in general?

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
He causes others to suffer emotionally	<input type="radio"/>					
He treats some people differently than others	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows love for his country	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of respect for authority	<input type="radio"/>					
He violates standards of purity and decency	<input type="radio"/>					
He is good at math	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows care for others who are weak and vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts unfairly	<input type="radio"/>					
He betrays his group	<input type="radio"/>					
He conforms to the traditions of society	<input type="radio"/>					
He does disgusting things	<input type="radio"/>					
He is cruel	<input type="radio"/>					
He denies others their rights	<input type="radio"/>					
He shows a lack of loyalty	<input type="radio"/>					
He causes chaos or disorder	<input type="radio"/>					
He acts in a way that God would approve of	<input type="radio"/>					

Please indicate your opinion of the NEWS STORY you read on the following traits:

	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot
Believable	<input type="radio"/>				
Well-written	<input type="radio"/>				
Factual	<input type="radio"/>				
Balanced	<input type="radio"/>				
Interesting	<input type="radio"/>				
Trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>				
Biased	<input type="radio"/>				
Fair	<input type="radio"/>				
Entertaining	<input type="radio"/>				
Credible	<input type="radio"/>				

Demographics

Please indicate how much you identify with each of the following political parties:

	Not at all						Very much
Democratic Party	<input type="radio"/>						
Republican party	<input type="radio"/>						
Other (please state)	<input type="radio"/>						

At this moment, how satisfied are you with the performance of Congress?

Very Dissatisfied
 Dissatisfied
 Somewhat Dissatisfied
 Neutral
 Somewhat Satisfied
 Satisfied
 Very Satisfied

At this moment, how likely are you to vote in the 2016 Presidential Election?

Very Unlikely
 Unlikely
 Somewhat Unlikely
 Undecided
 Somewhat Likely
 Likely
 Very Likely

At this moment, how likely are you to vote in the 2016 Congressional Election?

Very Unlikely
 Unlikely
 Somewhat Unlikely
 Undecided
 Somewhat Likely
 Likely
 Very Likely

Which gender do you identify with?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Other

What is your age?

Are you a citizen of the United States?

- Yes

No

In what state do you currently reside?

Indicate total household income:

- under \$25,000
- \$25,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$74,999
- \$75,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$124,999
- \$125,000 - \$149,999
- Over \$150,000

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than High School
- High School / GED
- Some College
- 2-year College Degree
- 4-year College Degree
- Masters Degree
- Doctoral Degree
- Professional Degree (JD, MD)

What is your race?

- White/Caucasian
- African American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Native American
- Pacific Islander

- Other

Which political party controls the House of Representatives?

- Democratic Party
- Republican Party
- Tea Party
- Green Party

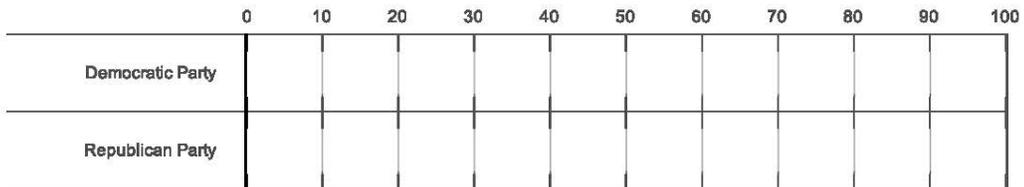
Who currently serves as the Vice President of the United States?

- Barack Obama
- Mitch McConnell
- Hillary Clinton
- Joe Biden

What percentage of votes are needed for Congress to override a Presidential veto?

- 50% of votes
- 57% of votes
- 87% of votes
- 90% of votes

Move the slider to indicate where each political party belongs on the ideological scale, moving from left (meaning very liberal) to right (meaning very conservative).



Which branch of the federal government is responsible for judicial review?

6/6/2016

Qualtrics Survey Software

- Judicial Branch
- Legislative Branch
- Executive Branch

Debriefing and Informed Consent 2

Thank you for your participation. In this study, we were interested in how the political biases influence people's perceptions of moral violations.

Researchers in psychology have shown that liberals and conservatives think of morality very differently. Conservatives are much more likely to be offended when someone undermines an authority figure or when someone betrays a member of their in-group. Liberals are much more likely to be offended when someone harms another person or treats them unfairly. However, it's unclear whether conservatives and liberals will be offended when a member of the opposing political party is the victim of a moral violation.

You saw a fake news story depicting a moral violation in Congress. The events in the news story did not occur. Other people who participated in this study may have seen a different news story. In one story, a Democrat criticized a Republican. Other possibilities were a Republican criticizing a Democrat, a Republican criticizing a Republican, and a Democrat criticizing a Democrat.

Now that you know the full intent of the study, by clicking yes below, you give consent for our use of your data in this study. You may click no, withdraw your data from use in the study, and still receive all benefits of participation. Your payment code will be on the next page.

- Yes
- No

Payment code: \${e://Field/ResponseID}

Thank you!