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Mapping Moral Motives: Approach, Avoidance, and Political Orientation

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Abstract

Recent critiques of moral psychology and the contemporary culture wars highlight the need for a better understanding of diverse moral perspectives. A model of moral motives is proposed. The fundamental approach-avoidance distinction in motivation is crossed with self-other focus to create four moral motives: Self-Restraint (avoidance-self), Social Order (avoidance-other), Self-Reliance (approach-self), and Social Justice (approach-other). Three studies explored these motives in the context of political orientation. Overall, political conservatism was associated with avoidance motives and liberalism with approach motives. Approach-avoidance motives were also associated with distinct patterns of results regarding authoritarianism, social dominance, and positions on contemporary social issues. Responses of campus political groups demonstrated the utility of the moral motives in providing a more nuanced view of politics that also takes into account the model's second dimension, for an emphasis on self-focus (personality responsibility) versus other-focus (social responsibility) further distinguished between conservative groups. Moral and political implications are discussed.

Keywords: morality, motivation, responsibility, approach, avoidance, politics, liberal, conservative

Mapping Moral Motives: Approach, Avoidance, and Political Orientation

The big news story following the 2004 election was the “moral values” vote. According to National Election Pool exit polls, a plurality (22%) of voters chose “moral values” as the most important issue influencing their vote, and 80% of those who ranked moral issues as most important voted for Bush; it was clearly a conservative preference (Pew Research Center, 2004). Fueled in part by this election, much popular attention has focused on morality and its role in the contemporary culture wars. Yet there is an unfortunate and dramatic disconnect between these societal discussions and psychology’s treatment of the topic, for the psychological study of morality in past decades has focused almost exclusively on moral rationality, as represented by the work of Kohlberg (e.g., 1981, 1984); the study of moral reasoning has largely defined and appropriated the field of moral psychology. Bemoaning this limited vision, several psychologists have promoted a new emphasis on emotional and intuitive processes (e.g., Greene & Haidt, 2002; Haidt, 2001), and research by social psychologists has begun to broaden the boundaries of inquiry in moral psychology (e.g., Batson, Thompson, & Chen, 2002; Haidt & Hersh, 2001; Pizarro, Uhlmann, & Bloom, 2003; Skitka, Bauman & Sargis, 2005).

Our aim is consistent with these recent efforts to expand the purview of moral explorations in psychology. Although a few researchers have proposed compelling themes central to morality (Haidt & Joseph, 2004, and Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, 1997), to date there have not been attempts to map the moral domain from a motivational perspective. Our interests lie in exploring the motives that underlie our morality-based beliefs, feelings, and behaviors. To this end, we propose a model of motives that broadly informs different orientations toward moral responsibility; such orientations, we hope to demonstrate, may help us better understand individuals’ distinct perspectives in the moral domain.

A Model of Moral Motives

Essentially, morality can be regarded as a set of rules that facilitate group living (e.g., DeWaal, 2006; Haidt & Joseph, 2004; Hauser, 2006). As De Waal (1996) notes, “Social inclusion is absolutely central to human morality, commonly cast in terms of how we should or should not behave in order to be valued members of society” (p. 10). Our fundamental social interdependence (see Brewer, 2004) is evident in systems of morality, which seem to be built on two core precepts: “benefit the group,” and its corollary, “do not over-benefit the self.” The components of a model of morality, then, should reflect these group-based assumptions.

With this in mind, we turned to a classic distinction in psychology: approach versus avoidance. Approaching positive outcomes versus avoiding negative outcomes is probably the most fundamental difference in motivation theory and research. It has a long and rich history in psychology and is represented in core conceptualizations in self-regulation; thus Carver and colleagues (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1998; Carver & White, 1994) discuss behavioral inhibition versus activation, and Higgins (1997, 1998) distinguishes between a prevention and promotion focus (also see Camacho, Higgins, & Luger, 2003). Gray (1982; 1990) provides evidence for an aversive motivational system sensitive to punishment (Behavioral Inhibition System [BIS]) and an appetitive motivational system sensitive to reward (Behavioral Activation System [BAS]), and research has supported a distinct neural substrate for each (see, e.g., Sutton & Davidson, 1997 on right [BIS] versus left [BAS] prefrontal cortex activation). Further, the differential impact of these two orientations has been demonstrated in areas as diverse as achievement (e.g., Elliot & Church, 1997), attention (e.g., Forster, Friedman, Ozelsel, & Denzler), and interpersonal relations (e.g., Impett, Gable, & Peplau, 2005). Most fundamentally, the approach motivational

system is sensitive to positive outcomes and entails *activation*, whereas the avoidance motivational system is sensitive to negative outcomes and entails *inhibition*.

When considered in terms of the moral domain, approach-avoidance regulatory strategies parallel the two primary motives underlying parental responsibility: providing the child with the means to survive and protecting the child from danger, thereby satisfying the child's nurturance and security needs (see Bowlby, 1969; Higgins, 1997). Applied to broader social bonds, responsibilities of group members similarly lie in the domains of protecting and providing, security and nurturance. In terms of regulating the group's own actions, these correspond to inhibiting (i.e., avoiding) undesirable, dangerous behaviors and activating (i.e., approaching) behaviors that promote the group's welfare.

With regard to moral motivation, an approach versus avoidance orientation can be applied to the self or others; moral philosophers have discussed the importance of recognizing both the intrapersonal and interpersonal domains of morality (see, e.g., Flanagan, 1991). Moral regulation can be focused on one's own behavior or the behavior of others. In our model, then, approach-avoidance strategies are crossed with self-other focus, representing personal versus social responsibility. Four distinct moral motives, suggesting distinct conceptions of moral responsibility, result (see Table 1): Self-Restraint (avoidance-self), Social Order (avoidance-other), Self-Reliance (approach-self), and Social Justice (approach-other).

Self-Restraint involves a self-focused avoidance orientation focused on one's own negative outcomes; it can best be understood in terms of self-protection, in particular *inhibition* in the face of threatening temptations. This is the realm of most of our popularized "seven deadly sins" (e.g., lust and gluttony), for it is personal control in the face of undesirable behaviors in order to protect the individual. From the meta-perspective of benefit to the group,

self-restraint minimizes the depletion of group resources by individual members and more broadly minimizes attempts to over-benefit the self.

Social Order involves the application of avoidance-based *inhibition* motives to other people in order to protect the larger community. It focuses on resisting threats to the group--both physical threats to the groups' safety and psychological threats to the group's identity. Protection derives not only from following society's rules, but also symbolically through strong group definition (i.e., homogeneity and conformity) and adherence to a set of group-defining social norms. Virtually all members of a community invoke Social Order to some extent, for we typically follow restraint-based societal rules for the protection of the group and its members (e.g., criminal law). However, the stronger the endorsement of Social Order, the greater the fear of group breakdown and "cultural pollution" and the wider the net of social conformity. Social Order contributes to group living by maximizing both order and group cohesion.

Self-Reliance is an approach-based orientation that involves providing for the self; the focus is on *activation* for one's own advancement and entails industriousness and independence. At first glance Self-Reliance may not appear to be a likely candidate for a moral motive, yet it is akin to a very familiar and highly valued moral conception in our culture, the Protestant ethic, with its emphasis on autonomy and hard work. And although perhaps not immediately obvious, Self-Reliance benefits the group in that it minimizes social loafing and each individual's burden on the group; and as individual members work to improve their lot, the group's resources as a whole increase as well.

Social Justice involves *activation* and a focus on positive outcomes; the approach-based goal here is to help others in the community advance. Based on a desire to provide for others, Social Justice is typically associated with efforts at insuring economic and material support for

community members and taking care of others worse off in society. This is the domain of egalitarianism and distributional justice. Social Justice contributes to group survival by maximizing social welfare and strengthening social bonds.

The four moral motives represent conceptions of morality that are distinct yet recognizable; each reflects the intersection of two dimensions—approach-avoidance and self-other focus. All four are likely to be represented to some extent in any given individual's moral system, yet our unique socialization histories, temperaments, and life experiences are apt to create a greater focus on one or more motives (Janoff-Bulman & Sheikh, 2006).

To explore the four moral motives, we turned to the realm of politics to determine whether political orientations are associated with particular patterns, such as an emphasis on an approach versus avoidance orientation (represented by the model's rows) or on personal versus social responsibility (represented by the model's columns). Based on a major research review, Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, and Sulloway (2003) concluded that the management of uncertainty and threat underlies the core ideology of conservatism. It follows from their analysis that conservatives would be high on motives associated with safety and protection—the avoidance motives of the model (also see Lakoff, 2002, 2004). Although Jost et al. were not interested specifically in moral psychology, the proposed model can serve to extend their work on political ideology into the moral domain. If avoidance-based motivation is a critical element of conservatism, we would expect conservatives to be high not only on Social Order, but on Self-Restraint. Are liberals, in contrast, high on approach motives? In regulating morality, do liberals and conservatives differ in self-other focus, or more specifically, their emphasis on personal versus social responsibility?

Study 1

The aim of this preliminary first study was to explore the associations between the four moral motives and political orientation, specifically political liberalism versus conservatism.

Would meaningful patterns of moral motives be associated with each perspective?

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 596 students (188 males, 40 females) who completed a questionnaire packet because they were enrolled in psychology courses that constituted the department subject pool. Respondents completed the questionnaires online during the first week of the semester at a specific time and place of their own choosing. During this period an additional 17 participants declined participation in the online survey.

Materials

Moral Motives Scale. Participants completed the 20-item Moral Motives Scale (MMS; Janoff-Bulman, Manning, & Sheikh, 2006). The MMS has four 5-item subscales corresponding to the four moral motives (see Appendix A); items are rated on 7-point scales with endpoints 1 = “strongly disagree” and 7 = “strongly agree.” Sample items are: “Life is full of unhealthy attractions, so it’s important for me develop a strong sense of self-discipline and control” (Self-Restraint); “I’m willing to put the necessary time and effort into providing for my own well-being and success” (Self-Reliance); “Giving people the freedom to choose the way they live threatens the societal bonds that hold us together” (Social Order); and “In the healthiest societies those at the top feel responsible for providing better lives for those at the bottom” (Social Justice). Reliabilities for the four subscales were .757 (Self-Restraint; \underline{M} = 5.02), .746 (Social Order; \underline{M} = 2.78), .835 (Self-Reliance; \underline{M} = 5.97), and .716 (Social Justice; \underline{M} = 4.39). The four-

factor structure confirmed via CFA in earlier research (Janoff-Bulman, Manning, & Sheikh, 2006) was supported here as well (see Appendix A for factor loadings).

Political Orientation. Four items tapped political orientation (see Skitka et al, 2005). Respondents indicated where they would place themselves on two scales, one with endpoints 1 = “Very Liberal” and 7 = “Very Conservative” and the other with endpoints 1 = “Strong Democrat” and 7 = “Strong Republican.” Participants were also asked, “How much do you tend to like or dislike political conservatives?” and “How much do you tend to like or dislike political liberals?” Participants answered on 7-point scales with endpoints 1 = “dislike extremely” and 7 = “like extremely.” These four items were highly correlated and were combined (after reverse-scoring the “dislike/like liberals” item) to provide a single measure of Political Orientation ($\alpha = .79$), with higher numbers indicating greater political conservatism.

Results and Discussion

Political Orientation was positively associated with Self-Restraint, $r(592) = .15$, $p < .001$ and Social Order, $r(594) = .28$, $p < .001$, and negatively associated with Social Justice, $r(586) = -.32$, $p < .001$. Thus the greater the conservatism, the higher the score on both avoidance motives and the lower the score on the approach motive of Social Justice. Self-Reliance was not associated with political orientation, but proved politically interesting when further examined. Using a median split to divide the sample on Political Orientation, analyses indicated that Self-Reliance was significantly positively associated with Social Justice for liberals, $r(296) = .22$, but negatively associated with Social Justice for conservatives, $r(243) = -.16$, $z\text{-score} = 4.42$, $p < .001$. For liberals, providing for themselves was associated with providing for others, indicating a general approach orientation; for conservatives, the motive to provide for self was negatively associated with the motive to provide for others, reflecting the absence of a general approach

orientation. Overall, the rows of the model, reflecting avoidance and approach orientations, appeared to be respectively associated with greater political conservatism and liberalism.

Study 2

Study 2 further explored the model by investigating the motives' relationship with individual difference measures associated with political orientation—specifically Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA; Altmeyer, 1981) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Duckitt, Wagner & du Plessis (2002) proposed that two different motivations underlie RWA and SDO—desire for security and control (based on a belief in a dangerous, threatening world) in the case of RWA, and desire for power and dominance (based on a belief in a tough, competitive world) in the case of SDO. The security-based motives are represented by the two avoidance motives in the model (Self-Restraint and Social Order), and thus these should be positively associated with RWA. This prediction is also consistent with the views of Kreindler (2005), who believes RWA represents a concern with normative differentiation and intragroup prototypicality; these too reflect avoidance motives, based as they are on inhibition and restraint orientations. Self-Reliance and Social Justice, reflecting neither restraint nor safety concerns, were not expected to be associated with RWA. Given the approach bases of these motives, a negative association with SDO seemed more likely.

We were also interested in determining whether particular moral motives, or patterns of moral motives, would be differentially related to attitudes on “hot-button” societal issues. Avoidance motives (Self-Restraint and Social Order) entail sensitivity to negative outcomes and an inhibitory orientation regarding one's own behaviors and one's social group (i.e., the minimization of “deviance” at the group level); as such, they would be expected underlie

attitudes towards societal issues specifically associated with group norms and lifestyles, such as gay marriage and abortion. Approach motives, with their emphasis on activation and advancement of self and others, would more likely underlie attitudes towards social issues related to social distributions and inequities, such as affirmative action. Would approach and avoidance motives differentially predict support for different types of moral issues? Or would avoidance motives predict conservative positions and approach motives predict liberal positions more generally, regardless of issue domain?

Method

Participants and Procedures

Participants were 350 undergraduate students (101 males, 249 females) enrolled in psychology courses. They completed the questionnaires in groups of 15-30 in exchange for extra course credit.

Materials

Participants completed the Moral Motives Scale and were asked the same four political orientation questions described in Study 1. These four items were again combined ($\alpha = .81$) to create a single Political Orientation score, with higher scores indicating greater conservatism. Participants also completed the SDO Scale (Pratto et al., 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and the RWA Scale (RWA; Altmeyer, 1981) and were asked to indicate the extent to which they approved or disapproved (scale endpoints 1 = “approve completely” and 7 = “do not approve at all”) of the following 10 contemporary issues: legal abortion, affirmative action in college admissions, gay marriage, an environmental tax on luxury cars and SUV’s, stem cell research, the death penalty, pornography on the internet, government welfare programs for the poor, teaching creationism in the classroom, and tax cuts for the rich.

Results and Discussion

Replicating the relationships found in Study 1, greater political conservatism was again associated with higher scores on Self-Restraint, $r(322) = .13, p < .05$, Social Order, $r(324) = .30, p < .001$, and lower scores on Social Justice, $r(325) = -.32, p < .001$. Further, Self-Reliance was once again significantly positively correlated with Social Justice for liberals, $r(159) = .21$; these were uncorrelated for conservatives, $r(153) = .01, z\text{-score} = 1.78, p < .08$. RWA and SDO were highly correlated ($r[304] = .44, p < .001$) and were both strongly associated with Political Orientation ($r[300] = .58, p < .001$, and $r[310] = .39, p < .001$, respectively). However, multiple regression analyses predicting the moral motives indicated that RWA and SDO were nevertheless differentially related to the approach and avoidance motives. As shown in Table 2, RWA significantly predicted the two avoidance motives—Self-Restraint and Social Order—but did not predict either of the approach motives. In contrast, SDO significantly (negatively) predicted the two approach motives—Self-Reliance and Social Justice—but did not predict either of the avoidance motives.

A factor analysis produced two distinct factors (see Table 3). Factor 1, which included legal abortion and gay marriage, primarily reflected lifestyle and normative concerns. Factor 2, which included affirmative action and welfare items, primarily reflected economic and equity concerns. “Approval of the death penalty” and “tax cuts for the rich” were reverse-scored, and the ratings of the respective issues were combined to create Factor 1 and Factor 2 variables, with higher scores indicating greater disapproval (i.e., more conservative positions). Both were strongly associated with Political Orientation, with correlations of .50 (Factor 1) and .37 (Factor 2), both p 's $< .001$, yet they nevertheless were differentially associated with the moral motives. As evident in Table 3, Factor 1 was significantly predicted by the two inhibition-based avoidance

motives—Self Restraint and Social Order (β 's = .18 and .45 respectively)—and not by either of the two approach motives. Factor 2, in contrast, was significantly predicted by Social Justice ($\beta = -.54$), an approach motive, but not by either of the two avoidance motives.

Distinct patterns of results arose in exploring the relationship between the moral motives and well-known individual difference measures and social issues positions. The two avoidance motives--Self-Restraint and Social Order--were associated with RWA, but not SDO, consistent with the proposed greater security and normative concerns underlying these moral motives. In contrast, the two approach motives—Self-Reliance and Social Justice—were (negatively) associated with SDO, but not RWA, consistent with the greater activation, resource-distribution concerns of these moral motives. Further, although both social issues factors were similarly and strongly associated with political liberalism/conservatism, they were nevertheless differentially associated with approach versus avoidance motives, presumably reflecting the inhibition- versus activation-based emphases of the two categories of social issues.

Study 3

As suggested by Study 2's findings regarding social issues, the single dimension of liberalism-conservatism no doubt simplifies the broad political spectrum of beliefs (see, e.g., Sidanius & Pratto, 1999 on political conservatism). Although it would be an overwhelming task to characterize the political landscape in all its complexity, we nevertheless believed it would be useful to begin to develop a more nuanced picture, and how it might be informed by the four moral motives. Towards this end, we recruited members of four campus organizations; our aim was to locate committed individuals representing both ends of the political spectrum, but with diverse social-political agendas within both conservatism and liberalism. What aspects of the

moral motives would be associated with these distinct representatives of liberalism and conservatism?

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 125 (71 males and 54 females) undergraduate students; 35 were affiliated with the Campus Crusade for Christ (CCrusade), 35 with the Cannabis Reform Coalition (CReform), 20 with the College Republicans (CReps) and 35 were affiliated with the University Democrats (UDems). Surveys were completed at a regular group meeting, with the experimenter present to answer questions. The target sample (35) was met for all groups except the CReps, which has a less active campus membership than the other organizations; despite frequent attempts to increase participation by the leader of the group and the experimenter, the final sample size for this group was 20. Members of each group opted to have compensation go to the group, which was paid \$5.00 per survey completed.

Materials

Participants completed the 20-item Moral Motives Scale and were also asked to indicate their approval/disapproval of the 10 social issues presented in Study 2. Participants were asked two questions (on 7-point scales) to tap political orientation: where they place themselves on a liberal-conservative continuum (“Very Liberal” to “Very Conservative”) and on a scale from “Strong Democrat” to “Strong Republican.” These two were averaged to create a new variable, Political Orientation ($\alpha = .80$), with higher scores indicating greater conservatism. (When study analyses were re-run with only the liberal-conservative item, the pattern of results remained the same.) Participants were also asked to rate the importance of religion to them (“Not at All Important” to “Extremely Important”) and the extent of their religiosity (“Not at all Religious” to

“Extremely Religious”). A combined variable for Religiosity ($\alpha = .84$) was created by averaging these two scores.

Results and Discussion

A MANOVA was conducted for the major study variables—Political Orientation, Religiosity, and the moral motives—with campus group and gender as independent variables. A strong main effect for group was found, $F(24) = 12.25, p < .001$; there was no gender main effect or interaction. The campus groups significantly differed on Political Orientation (for F 's and means, see Table 4.) The CReps and the CCrusade were more conservative than the UDems and CReform (and scored above the midpoint [4] of the scale), but differed from each other, with the CReps scoring highest on conservatism; the UDems and CReform did not differ (and scored below the midpoint). CCrusade had the highest scores on Religiosity and differed from the other groups; the two liberal groups had the lowest scores and did not differ from each other.

There was a significant main effect for campus group for all four moral motives (see Table 4 for F 's and means). The two conservative groups (CCrusade and CReps) had the highest scores on the two avoidance motives--Self-Restraint and Social Order--and did not differ from one another. The two liberal groups (UDems and CReform) had significantly lower Social Order scores than both conservative groups and lower Self-Restraint scores than the CReps. The CReps had significantly lower scores on Social Justice and higher scores on Self-Reliance than the other three groups. Once again, the pattern of associations between Self-Reliance and Social Justice differed for the conservative and liberal groups: positively correlated for the liberal groups considered together, $r(70) = .18$, and negatively correlated for the conservative groups, $r(55) = -.25, z\text{-score} = 2.37, p < .02$.

As in Study 2, the social issues were subjected to a factor analysis, which yielded the same two strong, independent factors, with loadings ranging from .656 to .866. Death penalty and tax cuts for the rich were reverse-scored and the five variables loading on each factor were again combined to create Factor 1 and Factor 2, with higher scores again indicating greater conservatism (i.e., disapproval). As shown in Table 4, the four campus groups differed significantly on both factors. On Factor 1 (e.g., abortion, gay marriage), the UDems and CReform had the most liberal views and differed from the other two groups; the CCrusade reported the greatest disapproval (see Table 4). With regard to Factor 2 (e.g., affirmative action, welfare), the CReps indicated the greatest disapproval and differed from the three other groups.

Overall, the two liberal groups (UDems and CReform) were virtually identical across all measures, but this was not the case for the conservative groups. The CCrusade and CReps had similarly high scores on the avoidance motives, and in fact when a combined Avoidance score (Self-Restraint + Social Order) was calculated, the conservatives groups did not differ from each other and had significantly higher scores than the two liberal groups, $F(3,121) = 16.06$, $p < .001$. Yet the conservative groups clearly differed on Self-Reliance and Social Justice (and the social issues factors). In order to further explore these differences, we looked more closely at the columns of the model: self-other focus. Combining the two motives in each column, Self Focus (Self-Restraint + Self-Reliance) and Other Focus (Social Order + Social Justice) variables were created. As shown in Figure 1, the CReps had significantly higher Self Focus scores than the other three groups, $F(3,120) = 6.11$, $p < .001$ (means: 6.37 [CReps] versus 5.45 [CReform], 5.71 [Crusade], and 5.67 [UDems]). In contrast (see Figure 2), the CCrusade had significantly higher scores on Other Focus than the other three groups, $F(3, 121) = 14.69$, $p < .001$; means: 4.33 [CCrusade] versus 3.52 [CReform], 3.43 [CReps], and 3.74 [UDems]).

The two liberal groups were both low on the avoidance motives. Compared to the conservative groups, they seemed to exhibit a general approach orientation; their Self-Reliance scores were positively associated with Social Justice. In contrast, the conservative groups were again characterized by high scores on the avoidance motives, Self-Restraint and Social Order. They differed, however, on the approach motives. Findings regarding Self and Other Focus provided clues to these differences. It appears that the CREps are high on moral motives involving the regulation of their own behavior (self-focus), rather the regulation of others' behaviors or outcomes; this might be deemed closest to a "libertarian" perspective. In contrast, the CCrusade focused primarily on others, both in terms of inhibition-based (Social Order) and activation-based motivations (Social Justice), reflecting what might be labeled a "communitarian" perspective. These two perspectives seem to reflect different combinations of fiscal versus social liberalism and conservatism. Thus, libertarianism seems most consistent with fiscal conservatism and social liberalism, whereas communitarianism seems most consistent with fiscal liberalism and social conservatism. Overall, then, the moral motives can help inform political orientations, with the rows of the moral motives model reflecting broad differences in political conservatism versus liberalism, and the columns reflecting differences in libertarian versus communitarian perspectives (see Figure 3).

General Discussion

The four cells of the proposed model of moral motives are each defined by two dimensions: approach-avoidance and self-other focus. The approach-avoidance dimension, reflecting differences in activation-inhibition, appears to broadly distinguish between political liberalism and conservatism. In these studies the inhibition-based avoidance motives (Self-Restraint, Social Order) were associated with RWA, norm-based social issues, and more

generally, political conservatism. Across all studies, conservatives were highest on the two avoidance motives. The activation-based approach motives (Self-Reliance, Social Justice) were associated (negatively) with SDO and more generally with political liberalism; liberals were high on Social Justice, and Social Justice predicted scores on the equity-based social issues.

Also, across all three studies the Self-Reliance scores of liberals were positively associated with Social Justice, whereas for conservatives, Self-Reliance scores were negatively (Studies 1 and 3) correlated or uncorrelated (Study 2) with Social Justice. For liberals, the consistent positive association with Social Justice suggests a broad approach-based morality, reflected in the assumption that we have a responsibility to provide for both ourselves and others in society. Self-Reliance in the absence of Social Justice, the conservative view, seems to reflect a belief in our responsibility to provide for ourselves alone. For liberals, benefiting the self also benefits the group (the core precept of morality) through direct sharing of personal resources; for conservatives the benefit to the group is more indirect, involving the inhibition of social loafing and an increase in overall group resources. The conservative view is consistent with a strong emphasis on individualism, so often promoted in American culture; liberals' positive associations between Self-Reliance and Social Justice reflect stronger beliefs in societal interdependence.

The nature of the path from basic approach-avoidance motivations to higher-level attitudes remains open to speculation. Temperament and experience no doubt produce greater activation or inhibition tendencies that are reflected in different behavioral and emotional sensitivities. Future research will hopefully help us understand how these sensitivities, over time, generate differential preferences in complex values and judgments, such that basic approach-avoidance tendencies underlie politically liberal versus conservative orientations.

Results of Study 3 suggest the importance of the model's second dimension--self-other focus--for further understanding political orientation, and political conservatism in particular. Although the liberal groups could not be characterized in terms of particular endorsement of either Self or Other Focus, College Republicans were especially high on Self Focus, represented by Self-Restraint and Self-Reliance, and Campus Crusade for Christ were especially high on Other Focus, represented by Social Order and Social Justice. These differences supplemented high scores on the avoidance motives for both conservative groups.

From a practical perspective these findings raise possibilities for shifting political coalitions and connections across the liberal-conservative spectrum. For example, if members of the Religious Right emphasize Social Justice over Social Order concerns (e.g., embrace poverty rather than abortion or gay marriage as a pivotal political issue) alliances with political liberals, with their approach-based emphasis on Social Justice, become increasingly feasible.

In contemporary America, whether we are talking about liberals versus conservatives, Democrats versus Republicans, or red states versus blue states, these groups seem to view the world differently. Each side no doubt regards its own political views and societal perspectives as morally right and eminently justifiable (e.g., Kruger & Gilovich, 2004; Ross & Ward, 1996) and the other side's views as morally suspect and ill-intentioned (e.g., Ehrlinger, Gilovich, & Ross, 2005; Reeder, Pryor, & Wohl, 2005). Yet we all operate from our own models of reality, including our conceptions of morality, and our positions become comprehensible when viewed in light of these respective models. The model of moral motives explored in these studies is an attempt to begin to understand the motivations underlying these different conceptions. In applying the model to politics, our intent was not to claim that conservatives or liberals are more or less moral, but rather that they both operate from a meaningful understanding of

responsibility, even if these often dramatically differ from one another. By trying to comprehend and appreciate others' moral motives, we may not always approach greater agreement, but we are nevertheless likely to approach the worthy goal of a more civil society.

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Table 1: Model of Moral Motives

	<u>Self Focus</u> (personal responsibility)	<u>Other Focus</u> (social responsibility)
<u>Approach</u> (activation)	SELF-RESTRAINT	SOCIAL ORDER
<u>Avoidance</u> (inhibition)	SELF-RELIANCE	SOCIAL JUSTICE

Table 2 : Predicting the Moral Motives from SDO and RWA

	<u>SDO</u>	<u>RWA</u>
<u>Avoidance Motives (betas)</u>		
Self-Restraint	-.074	.200*
Social Order	.054	.618**
<u>Approach Motives (betas)</u>		
Self-Reliance	-.172*	-.065
Social Justice	-.355**	-.102

* $p < .01$ ** $p < .001$

Table 3: Contemporary Social Issues: Factors and Regression Analyses

		Avoidance Motives (β's)		Approach Motives (β's)	
		<u>Self-Restraint</u>	<u>Social Order</u>	<u>Self-Reliance</u>	<u>Social Justice</u>
Factor loadings					
Factor 1		.18*	.45**	-.01	-.01
legal abortion	.753				
stem cell research	.740				
gay marriage	.598				
pornography	.600				
creationism	.433				
Factor 2		.02	.11	.13	-.54**
affirmative action	.556				
environmental tax	.420				
death penalty ^r	.577				
welfare programs	.707				
tax cuts for the rich ^r	.441				

^r reverse-scored; higher scores indicate greater conservatism

* $p < .01$

** $p < .001$

Table 4: Group Means for Study 3 Variables

	Campus Groups				F values
	Campus Crusade For Christ	Cannabis Reform Coalition	College Republicans	University Democrats	
Political Orientation	4.50 ^a	2.39 ^b	5.93 ^c	2.32 ^b	76.14**
Religiosity	6.22 ^a	2.76 ^b	4.40 ^c	2.69 ^b	40.76**
Moral Motives					
Self-Restraint	5.47 ^{a, b}	5.00 ^a	5.96 ^b	5.11 ^a	4.33*
Self-Reliance	5.95 ^a	5.89 ^a	6.73 ^b	6.23 ^a	6.02**
Social Order	3.25 ^a	1.79 ^c	3.12 ^a	2.35 ^b	12.94**
Social Justice	5.41 ^a	5.24 ^a	3.74 ^b	5.13 ^a	12.94**
Factor 1 Issues ¹	5.48 ^a	1.96 ^c	4.25 ^b	2.13 ^c	70.23**
Factor 2 Issues ¹	3.97 ^a	2.67 ^a	5.02 ^b	3.19 ^a	23.24**

¹ higher scores indicate a more conservative responses

* $p < .01$

** $p < .001$

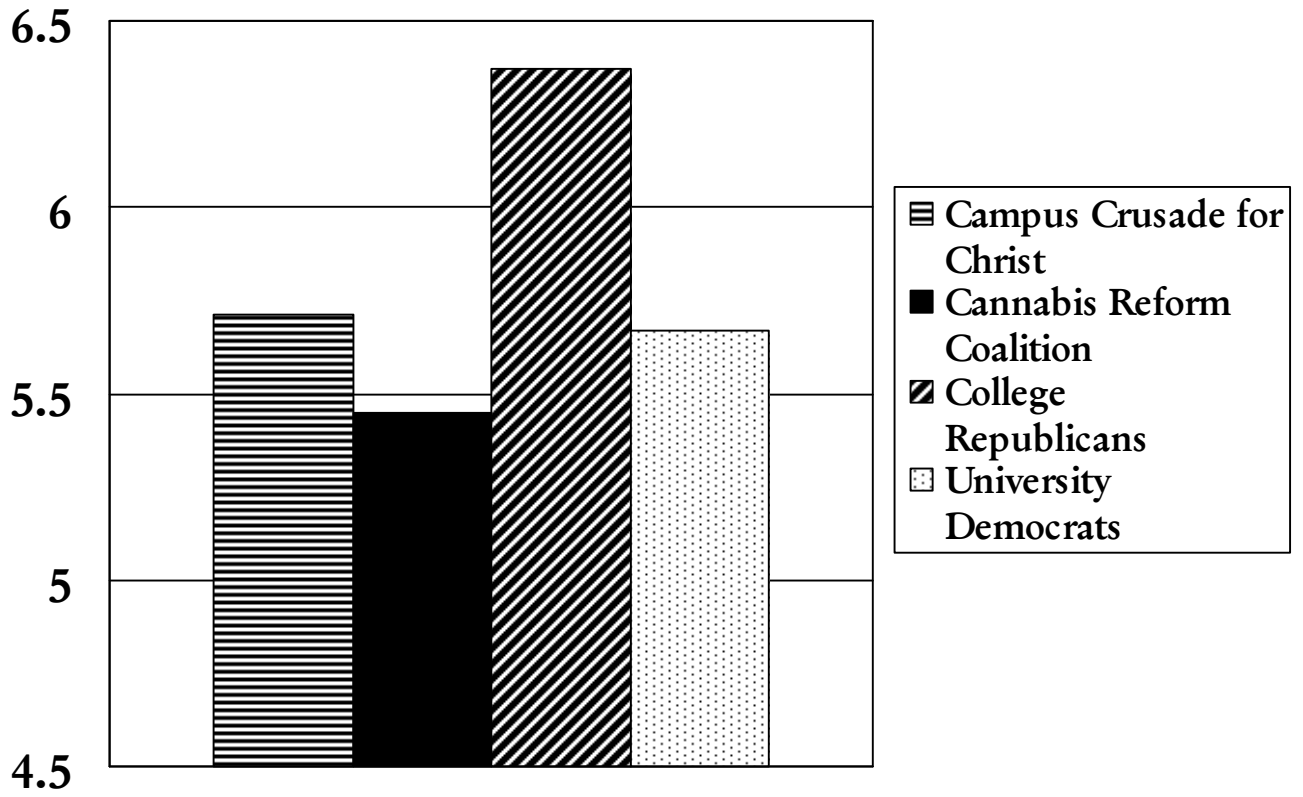
Figure Captions

Figure 1: Personal Responsibility Scores for Campus Groups

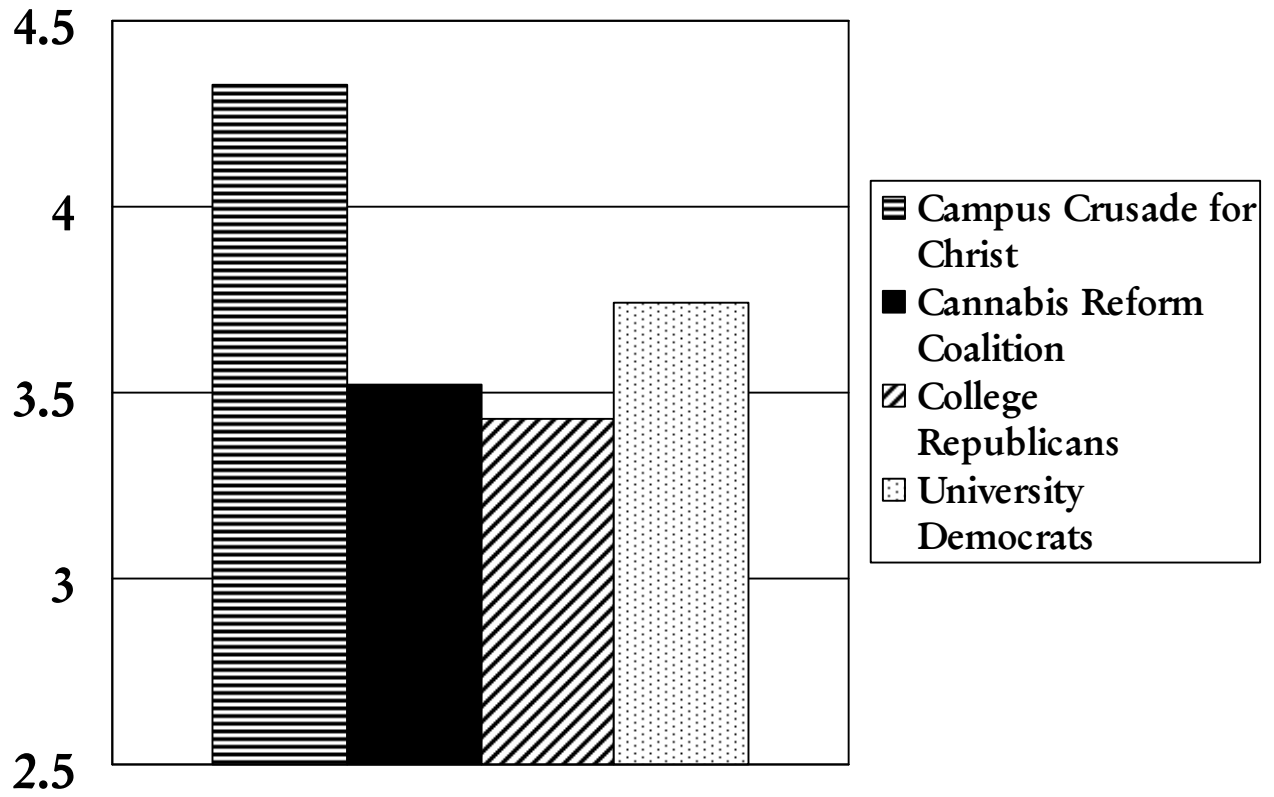
Figure 2: Social Responsibility Scores for Campus Groups

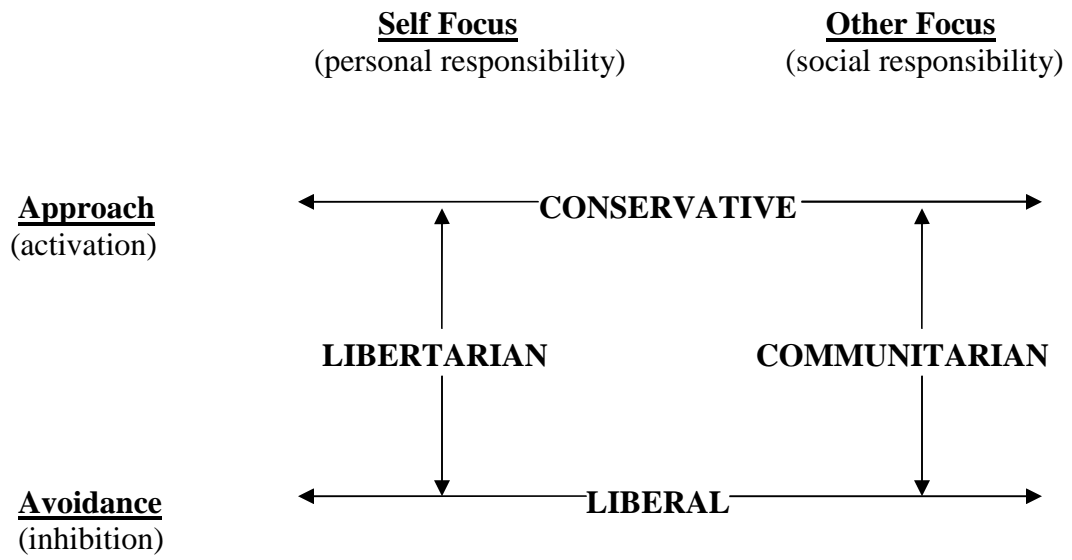
Figure 3: Moral Motives and Political Orientations

Self Focus
(Self-Restraint + Self-Reliance)



Other Focus
(Social Order + Social Justice)





Appendix A

Moral Motives Scale

We are interested in the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below. Using the following scale, please indicate the extent of your agreement by placing the number that best represents your response on the line preceding each statement. There are no correct or incorrect reactions, so please be as honest as possible in responding. Thanks.

- | | strongly
disagree | | | | | | strongly
agree |
|-----------|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| _____ 1. | It's particularly important to me to demonstrate self-control in the face of temptation. | | | | | | |
| _____ 2. | We should all be responsible for improving the welfare of others beyond our immediate circle of friends and family | | | | | | |
| _____ 3. | Giving people the freedom to choose the way they live threatens the societal bonds that hold us together. | | | | | | |
| _____ 4. | I'm willing to put the necessary time and effort into providing for my own well-being and success. | | | | | | |
| _____ 5. | It's an obligation, not a matter of personal preference, to provide for people worse off even if we're not close to them. | | | | | | |
| _____ 6. | I value hard work and personal commitment when it comes to making decisions in my life. | | | | | | |
| _____ 7. | People should not be completely free to express themselves through their own choice of lifestyle, even if they don't harm others. | | | | | | |
| _____ 8. | When things get tough, I apply myself and work even harder to overcome difficulties. | | | | | | |
| _____ 9. | Self-discipline in the lifestyle I choose is an important way for me to feel like a decent person. | | | | | | |
| _____ 10. | It's important for those who are better off in society to work hard to provide more resources for those who are worse off. | | | | | | |
| _____ 11. | By bucking tradition and choosing new lifestyles, people are actually threatening the wider society. | | | | | | |
| _____ 12. | I demonstrate I'm a better person every time I exercise self-restraint rather than give in to my desires. | | | | | | |
| _____ 13. | I think it's important to take responsibility for my failures and setbacks rather than blame other people. | | | | | | |
| _____ 14. | It's not always easy to avoid temptations, but for my own good I feel I really have to try my best. | | | | | | |
| _____ 15. | If we look after ourselves, we still need to look after others in society. | | | | | | |
| _____ 16. | Whether or not I have others to lean on, I think it's important for me to try to provide for myself. | | | | | | |
| _____ 17. | When we try to get people to abide by our own code of behavior, we are not invading other people's privacy and right to choose for themselves. | | | | | | |
| _____ 18. | In the healthiest societies those at the top feel responsible for providing better lives for those at the bottom. | | | | | | |

- ____ 19. Life is full of unhealthy attractions, so it's important for me develop a strong sense of self-discipline and control.
- ____ 20. In a decent society, people should not be free to make their own choices about how to live their lives, but should attend to community standards

Subscales (with respective factor loadings):

Self-Restraint: items 1, 9, 12, 14, 19
(.669, .580, .79, .770, .758)

Social Order: items 3, 7, 11, 17, 20
(.647, .682, .697, .615, .656)

Self-Reliance: items 4, 6, 8, 13, 16
(.798, .794, .767, .530, .572)

Social Justice: items 2, 5, 10, 15, 18
(.760, .752, .767, .769, .688)