Lecture 04 : Moral Psychology

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1. Introduction to Part II: Do Cultural Differences in Moral Psychology Explain Political Conflict on Climate Change?

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In Part II of this course we will consider how, if at all, discoveries in moral psychology can inform an understanding of political conflict and routes to their democratic resolution.

Although Part II is related to Part I, I will present it as a fresh start. Nearly all of it should make sense independently of anything you learned in Part I.

We will focus on political conflict over climate change. This is also the part of the course where we will consider cultural differences in moral psychology. The overall question for Part II is, Do cultural differences in moral psychology explain political conflict on climate change?

1.1. Fact to Be Explained

People who identify as socially liberal rather than socially conservative are less likely to deny facts about anthropogenic climate change and more likely to express concern about the effects of climate change.

This is true in many, but not all, countries. The US is an extreme case, as the Republican Party denies anthropogenic climate change and has published a manifesto criticizing Democrats for treating it as a severe threat (Båtstrand 2015). Although few mainstream political parties are so extreme, the split between liberal and conservative voters exists in many countries:

> 'Recent research finds a notable political cleavage on climate change views within the general publics of the United States, Australia, Canada, the UK, and a range of other countries around the world, with citizens on the left reporting greater belief in, concern about, and support for action on climate change than citizens on the right do. [...] such an ideological divide on climate change views was not found among the general publics of former Communist countries, [...] the 'post-Communist effect.' (McCright et al. 2016, p. 351)

1.2.   Simplified Preview

We will approach this topic by working through Feinberg & Willer (2013).

In outline, Feinberg & Willer argue that cultural differences in moral psychology do explain political conflict on climate change on the basis of five considerations.

These five are considerations are:

1. 'Moral convictions and the emotions they evoke shape political attitudes' (see *Do Ethical Attitudes Shape Political Behaviours?* (section §**unresolved xref to unit:ethics_shapes_politics**))
2. There are at least two foundational domains of human morality, including harm and purity. Also, Moral Foundations Theory is true (see *Moral Pluralism: Beyond Harm* (section §**unresolved xref to unit:pluralism**); *Moral Foundations Theory: An Approach to Cultural Variation* (section §**unresolved xref to unit:moral_foundations_theory**); and *Operationalising Moral Foundations Theory* (section §**unresolved xref to unit:moral_foundations_operationalised**))
3. 'liberals and conservatives possess different moral profiles' (see *Liberals vs Conservatives* in Lecture 05)
4. 'liberals express greater levels of environmental concern than do conservatives in part because liberals are more likely to view environmental issues in moral terms'
5. 'exposing conservatives to proenvironmental appeals based on moral concerns that uniquely resonate with them will lead them to view the environment in moral terms and be more supportive of proenvironmental efforts.'

We will examine each consideration in turn.

The lectures use Feinberg & Willer (2013) as a guide. Another good source for an overview of the issues is Markowitz & Shariff (2012).

2.   Do Ethical Attitudes Shape Political Behaviours?

According to Feinberg & Willer (2013, p. 1), 'moral convictions and the emotions they evoke shape political attitudes.' What evidence supports this claim? By the end of this unit you should have an initial understanding of how researchers have attempted to gather relevant evidence, and you should be familiar with some evidence for this claim.

In this section we aim to understand and evaluate the first key claim in the argument that cultural differences in moral psychology matter for political

conflict over climate change:

> 'Moral convictions and the emotions they evoke shape political attitudes' (Feinberg & Willer 2013, p. 1).

What does 'shape' mean in this quote? Explain.

Terminological complication: what Feinberg & Willer call a 'conviction' is an attitude. What follows is framed in terms of attitudes (not convictions specifically) as most of the research focusses on attitudes.

The claim made in the above quote can be separated into two parts:

1. Nonmoral attitudes (or convictions) do not explain political attitudes
2. Moral attitudes (or convictions) do explain political attitudes

In this section we will explore evidence for each claim.

2.1.   Background: Effect Size

To understand the research in this section, you need a rough idea of two statistical notions: effect size and significance.

Suppose you are interested in the effects of diesel exhaust particles, such as nitrogen oxides, on respiratory health.[1] You make some observations which appear to follow a pattern: higher concentrations of nitrogen oxides are associated with worse respiratory health.

What do these observations mean? To answer that question, need to know at least two things. First, how strong is the evidence these observations provide for a connection between exhaust particles and health? Is the pattern likely to be a merely chance occurrence or can you expect to see the same pattern if you were to re-do the experiment? That is, is the pattern *statistically significant*?

The second thing you want to know, assuming the pattern is significant, is the size of the effect. If you impose regulations to reduce diesel exhaust particles, and if the regulations are followed,[2] how many lives can you expect to save? That is, what is the *effect size* you have observed.

A good, accessible source on effect sizes and how they are estimated is Sullivan & Feinn (2012).

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[1]   Faustini et al. (2014) is one of many studies of such effects.

[2]   Which, tragically, they were not: https://www.economist.com/books-and-arts/2017/06/01/what-really-happened-at-vw .

2.2.   Attitudes Do Not Explain Behaviours

Our concern is with the claim that nonmoral convictions do not explain political attitudes.

Even strongly held attitudes have little influence on behaviours according to a classic review by Wicker (1969).

> 'it is considerably more likely that attitudes will be unrelated or only slightly related to overt behaviors than that attitudes will be closely related to actions' […] 'substantial proportions of subjects show attitude-behavior discrepancies. This is true even when subjects scoring at the extremes of attitudinal measures are compared on behavioral indices' (p. 65).

Genthner & Taylor (1973) on racist prejudice provides a dramatic illustration. Subjects who self-reported greater prejudice were more aggressive overall in applying electric shocks, but 'aggressed equally against' both White people and Black people. Racist attitudes and racist behaviours are not always correlated (as many of us may know from experience, unfortunately).

2.3.   Moral Attitudes Do Explain Behaviours

Skitka et al. (2005) contrasted moral attitudes (e.g. about sexuality) with nonmoral but extreme attitudes (e.g. about sport). To what extend do people attempt to maintain social distance from others with conflicting attitudes?

> 'The effect of moral conviction on social distance was robust when we controlled for the effects gender, age, attitudinal extremity, importance, and centrality'

> 'In contrast, participants were more tolerant of having a distant than an intimate relationship with an attitudinally dissimilar other, when the attitude dissimilarity was on an issue that the participant held with low moral conviction, results that held even when we controlled for attitude strength' (Skitka et al. 2005, Study 1).

2.4.   But Do Moral Attitudes Explain Political Behaviours?

Skitka & Bauman (2008) report that your moral conviction about an election candidate increases both the probability that you will vote (Study 1) and the reported strength of your intention to vote (Study 2).

In both studies: 'the effects of moral conviction on political engagement were equally strong for those on the political right and left' (Skitka & Bauman 2008, p. 50).

We should be cautious in relying on these particular studies insofar as the effects could in principle be due to 'markers of attitude strength' other than moral conviction (Skitka & Bauman 2008, pp. 36–7).

2.5.   What about Attitudes to Climate Change specifically?

Doran et al. (2019) measured (i) the extent to which subjects took climate change to be a moral concern,[3] and (ii) the extent to which subjects evaluated the consequences of climate change negatively.

They found that

> 'individuals with strong moral concerns about climate change tend to be more likely to support climate policies.

and that

> 'moral concerns [were] substantially more important than consequence evaluations, explaining about twice as much of the variance.'

Conversely, Hornsey et al. (2016) contrasted climate sceptics with people who know humans are causing climate change . They found that merely knowing makes little measurable difference to behaviours. (This will be discussed in *Moral Psychology Drives Environmental Concern* in Lecture 05.) As they put it in a later review:

> 'knowing whether people are skeptics or believers tells you surprisingly little about their willingness to engage in actions that matter' (Hornsey & Fielding 2020, p. 21).

Putting these two findings together (Doran et al. 2019 and Hornsey et al. 2016), knowing about climate change or its consequences does not have much effect on practical support for mitigation compared to perceiving environmental issues as moral issues.

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[3]   In this research, the question about moral concern was:

> 'Some people have moral concerns about climate change. For example, because they think that its harmful impacts are more likely to affect poorer countries, or because they feel a moral responsibility towards future generations' (Doran et al. 2019, p. 615)

This appears to highlight the harm and fairness rather than any of the binding moral foundations such as purity. If Graham et al. (2009) are right about cultural differences and political orientation, this might in principle mean that the study confounded moral concern with political orientation.

2.6.   Conclusion

Overall, we appear to have identified some evidence for the claim that 'Moral convictions and the emotions they evoke shape political attitudes' (Feinberg & Willer 2013, p. 1). However, this required us to go beyond the studies those authors themselves cited in support of this claim.

3.   Moral Pluralism: Beyond Harm

A pluralist theory is one which entails that there are multiple kinds of moral concern which are not reducible to just one ultimate concern; for example, both purity and harm. By contrast, a monist theory is one which identifies one fundamental aspect, most likely harm, or something related to harm, as the sole basis for all genuinely moral concern. What kind of evidence might favour descriptive moral pluralism over monism? This section introduces two key sources.

In order to describe human moral psychology, do we need to recognise incommensurable kinds of moral concern?

This section offers three reasons for a positive answer.

First, it seems that harm- and purity-related concerns are incommensurable; and both kinds of concern appear to be involved in ordinary moral judgements (Chakroff et al. 2013; Chakroff et al. 2017).

Second, specific kinds of moral concern (e.g. purity) appear to have had different roles in evolution. For instance, van Leeuwen et al. (2012) had subjects answer questions which indicated the degree to which they endorsed moral concerns linked to purity, authority and loyalty (the 'binding foundations') compared to the degree to which they endorsed moral foundations linked to harm and unfairness (the 'individual foundations'). They found a link between stronger endorsement of binding foundations and the historical prevalence of pathogens in the region subjects lived:

> 'historical pathogen prevalence—even when controlling for individual-level variation in political orientation, gender, education, and age—significantly predicted endorsement of Ingroup/loyalty [stats removed], Authority/respect, and Purity/sanctity; it did not predict endorsement of Harm/care or Fairness/reciprocity' (van Leeuwen et al. 2012).

This is coherent with the idea that purity has been important because it enabled humans to mitigate risks from pathogens associated with their diet long before they understood pathogens (see further Atari et al. 2022).

The third reason for accepting (descriptive) moral pluralism is that it appears to be needed to explain how cultural differences in moral psychology underpin attitudes to homosexuality. Greater endorsement of binding foundations appears to explain stronger homophobia (Koleva et al. 2012), and this may explain why both being more socially conservative (Barnett et al. 2018) and being more sensitive to disgust (Lai et al. 2014) is correlated with being more homophobic.

While none of these reasons are decisive, it appears that moral pluralism is needed for a variety of explanations. This justifies us in accepting that there are several kinds of moral concern.

3.1.   Descriptive vs Normative Moral Pluralism

Our focus on this course is humans' ethical abilities. We are therefore interested in whether or not we need to recognize that they invovle multiple moral concerns that cannot be reduced to one ultimate concern. This is a concern about *descriptive* moral pluralism.

There is a distinct, narrowly philosophical question: Are 'different values […] all reducible to one supervalue, or [… are] there really are several distinct values' (Mason 2018)? This is a question about *normative* moral pluralism. It is not our question.

Given that humans' ethical abilities are limited and may not reflect how things actually are, one might be a descriptive moral pluralism but a normative monist (or conversely).

4.   Operationalising Moral Foundations Theory

In order to use Moral Foundations Theory to identify and explain cultural differences, we need a way to measure individual variations in how moral judgements are made. The Moral Foundations Questionnaire aims to fulfill this need.

By the end of this section you should know what the Moral Foundations Questionnaire is and how attempts have been made to validate it. You should also be aware of some objections to its use as a tool for identifying cultural differences.

Read the next section, Moral Foundations Theory: An Approach to Cultural Variation *(section §unresolved xref to unit:moral_foundations_theory), first if you are reading this outside the lecture.*

According to (Feinberg & Willer 2013), researchers have found evidence that Moral Foundations Theory is true. What is this evidence?

The first step towards finding evidence is to operationalise the theory. To this end, Atari et al. (2023) developed a Moral Foundations Questionnaire (called MFQ-2). (This is the successor to Haidt & Graham (2007)'s original Moral Foundations Questionnaire, which can be found in Graham et al. (2011). For reasons we'll get into in below, the first questionnaire did not entirely succeed.)

For each foundation, there are a number of questions. Here is an illustration of some of them:

> 'For each of the statements below, please indicate how well each statement describes you or your opinions. Response options: Does not describe me at all (1); slightly describes me (2); moderately describes me (3); describes me fairly well (4); and describes me extremely well (5).'

> 'We should all care for people who are in emotional pain.'

> 'I think the human body should be treated like a temple, housing something sacred within.'

> 'It makes me happy when people are recognized on their merits.'

> 'Everyone should feel proud when a person in their community wins in an international competition.'

> 'I believe that one of the most important values to teach children is to have respect for authority.'

You can see the full questionnaire in Atari et al. (2023).

If there are (at least) six moral foundations, and if the various questions represent those foundations, then we can predict that the questionnaire will exhibit:

- internal validity (roughly, are the patterns in subjects' answers consistent with the theory that they are answering on the basis of five foundations?[4]);

- test-retest reliability (are individuals likely to give the same answers at different times); and

- predictive power (roughly, are subjects' answers on other questionnaires correlated with the conceptually related

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[4] For a clear, nontechnical intro to confirmatory factor analysis see Gregorich (2006). (Note that you are not expected to understand this.)

foundations?).

- measurement invariance (roughly, if you compare two groups' answers, do differences in their answers indicate meaningful differences between the groups rather than merely differences in the way they interpret the questions)

Atari et al. (2023) give evidence of internal validity for MFQ-2, which is further supported by Dogruyol et al. (2024) and Zakharin & Bates (2023). Atari et al. (2023) also offer good evidence of predictive power for MFQ-2. In Study 2, these researchers also demonstrate that the questionnaire (MFQ-2) does exhibit scalar invariance for five of the six foundations—the exception is purity (p.~1167). This indicates that the questionnaire can be used to compare the mean strengths of emphasis on foundations between different populations.

Because MFQ-2 is relatively new, there is limited research using it. For now we should be cautious in accepting the results on the few studies using it. (Note that the original moral foundations researchers would disagree: they regard the findings from MFQ-2 as supporting those from MFQ-1. But we should not accept this without careful justification.)

At this point you should understand (1) how research based on a questionnaire could provide a range of evidence in support of predictions generated by Moral Foundations Theory; and (2) have a preliminary understanding of the evidence obtained using MFQ-2.

4.1. A Complication: MFQ-1 vs MFQ-2

Earlier (pre-2023) research on Moral Foundations Theory used Haidt & Graham (2007)'s original Moral Foundations Questionnaire, which is now called MFQ-1. (You can find MFQ-1 in Graham et al. (2011).)

Although very widely used (even in some work published after 2023), MFQ-1 does not appear to be a reliable tool.

One problem is internal validity. Although MFQ-1 did pass tests of internal validity in various countries (Graham et al. 2011; Yilmaz et al. 2016), there were several exceptions. Iurino & Saucier (2020) collected new samples across 27 countries but 'we were not able to replicate Graham et al.'s (2011) results indicating that a five-factor model is a suitable approach to modelling the moral foundations' (p.~6). Relatedly, Harper & Rhodes (2021) failed to find the five factor structure in a sample from the UK.

The second is a failure to demonstrate measurement invariance. Without measurment invariance, we are not justified in using a questionnaire to compare two groups. We are particularly interested in one kind of measurement

invariance, *scalar invariance*, as this would justify using the Moral Foundations Questionnaire to compare mean scores on a foundation.[5] That is, it would justify us in drawing conclusions like 'conservatives put more weight on purity than liberals'.[6] Attempts to establish the scalar invariance of MFQ-1 have been unsuccessful (Davis et al. 2016; Doğruyol et al. 2019; Davis et al. 2017; Iurino & Saucier 2020, Table 4). One illustration of this is a failed attempt to compare US and Iranian participants:

> 'Iranians and Americans do not interpret MFQ items in nearly similar ways, […] means cannot be meaningfully compared.' (Atari et al. 2020, p. 373)

Failure of the original Moral Foundations Questionnaire to exhibit scalar invariance may be due in part to lack of diversity in the sample used to develop it:

> 'Items of the MFQ [Moral Foundations Questionnaire] were refined on the basis of a sample with participants from a variety of countries, but the sample was predominately White (i.e., 87%). Furthermore, the sample involved people who visited the team's website, which inevitably involves some selection bias, potentially associated with ideological background' (Davis et al. 2017, p. 128; compare Kivikangas et al. 2021, p. 84).

In the lecture we also consider how some items on MFQ-1 are likely to provide different reactions from different groups for reasons that have nothing to do with their ethical attitudes.

Overall, we should be extremely cautious about drawing conclusions about cultural variation from results obtained with the original Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ-1) alone. Is there reason to trust them? If so, what is the reason?

4.2.   How MFQ-2 Differs from MFQ-1

The new questionnaire is based on six rather than five foundations. The change is essentially to split what was previously Fairness into two things:

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[5]   See Lee (2018): 'Ascertaining scalar invariance allows you to substantiate multi-group comparisons of factor means (e.g., t-tests or ANOVA), and you can be confident that any statistically significant differences in group means are not due to differences in scale properties.'

[6]   See Iurino & Saucier (2020, p. 2): 'A finding of measurement invariance would provide more confidence that use of the MFQ across cultures can shed light on meaningful differences between cultures rather than merely reflecting the measurement properties of the MFQ.'

Equality (which concerns equal treatment) and Proportionality (which concerns being rewarded in proportion to one's contribution).[7]

5.   Moral Foundations Theory: An Approach to Cultural Variation

Moral Foundations Theory is 'a systematic theory of morality, explaining its origins, development, and cultural variations' (Graham et al. 2011, p. 368). It comprises four assertions about the cultural origins of ethical abilities. By the end of this section you should understand, at least roughly, what Moral Foundations Theory claims.

5.1.   Why This Theory?

Moral Foundations Theory is the most difficult theory to understand that we will encounter.

As we will see later, much of the evidence for key applications of Moral Foundations Theory is at best quite weak (Davis et al. 2016; Doğruyol et al. 2019; Kivikangas et al. 2021). These weaknesses have recently led to the development of new and improved ways to study moral foundations across different groups (Atari et al. 2023). Applications of Moral Foundations Theory also faces significant theoretical objections (we have already seen one objection in *Moral Disengagement: Significance* in Lecture 03).

We must therefore treat claims about moral foundations with caution: objections to the earlier work are now widely recognized.

So why consider Moral Foundations Theory at all? Some of its strongest opponents make the best case for studying it:

> 'It would be difficult to overestimate the influence of this theory on psychological science because it caused a dramatic broadening in conceptualization of morality beyond narrow Western notions that have focused on individualistic virtues associated with protecting one's rights—especially prevention of harm (Gilligan, 1982) and unjust treatment (Kohlberg, 1969).

> 'The expansion of morality psychology to more collectivistic domains has led to substantial research into the role of morality in the political environment. More specifically, there is significant

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[7]   The new foundations are called Care, Equality, Proportionality, Loyalty, Authority and Purity (Atari et al. 2023, table 2, p. 1161). These researchers cite Meindl et al. (2019) as justifying the distinction between equality and proportionality.

support for the moral foundations hypothesis that predicts that conservatives tend to draw on virtues associated with binding communities more than liberals (Graham et al. 2009; Graham et al. 2011; Koleva et al. 2012)' (Davis et al. 2017, p. 128).

And although it is usually categorised as psychology, Moral Foundations Theory is also fruitfully considered as philosophy (and perhaps as anthropology). For all its flaws, it's hard not to love it.

5.2.   What the Theory Claims

Moral Foundations Theory is the conjunction of four claims.[8]

The first is a form of nativism:

> 'the human mind is organized in advance of experience so that it is prepared to learn values, norms, and behaviors related to a diverse set of recurrent adaptive social problems' (Graham et al. 2013, p. 63).

Second, moral psychology is affected by cultural learning ('The first draft of the moral mind gets edited during development within a culture.')

Third, the Social Intuitionist Model of Moral Judgement is true. This is a set of hard-to-understand claims in itself (which we already considered briefly in *Moral Disengagement: Significance* in Lecture 03). Two of these are:

> 'moral evaluations generally occur rapidly and automatically, products of relatively effortless, associative, heuristic processing that psychologists now refer to as System 1 thinking' (Graham et al. 2013, p. 66)

and:

> 'moral reasoning is done primarily for socially strategic purposes' (Graham et al. 2013, p. 66)

The Social Intuitionist Model is depicted in this figure:

Fourth, moral pluralism is true. ('There are many psychological foundations of morality' (Graham et al. 2019, p. 212).) This was the topic of *Moral Pluralism: Beyond Harm* (section §**unresolved xref to unit:pluralism**). Haidt & Joseph (2004).

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[8]   Graham et al. (2019) is probably the most accessible introduction, and this is the main source I follow in the lectures. Although a book chapter, it is available online. Haidt (2007) is useful if you are short of time. The theory first appears in Haidt & Graham (2007).
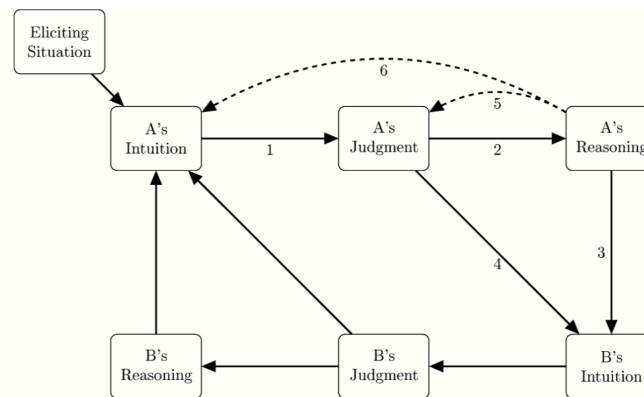
Figure 1: The Social Intuitionist Model of Moral Judgement. Arrows are interpreted causally. Dotted lines represent connections of low significance. *Source*:Haidt & Bjorklund (2008, figure 4.1)

Haidt & Graham (2007) claim that there are five evolutionarily ancient, psychologically basic abilities linked to:

- harm/care
- fairness (including reciprocity)
- in-group loyalty
- respect for authorty
- purity, sanctity

It is not important to the theory that these be the only foundations, nor that these be exactly the foundations. Some researchers have proposed that additional foundations are needed.[9] In more recent work involving the original authors (Haidt and Graham), six foundations are distinguished: what was previously Fairness is split into two things: Equality (which concerns equal treatment) and Proportionality (which concerns being rewarded in proportion to one's contribution).[10]

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[9] To illustrate, Moral Foundations Theory has had some difficulties with Qeirat, a type of honour focussed on family, friends and community that is closely related to mate retention and 'protecting a loved or sacred thing or person against intrusion' (Atari et al. 2020, p. 369). And with Libertarians ...

'Libertarians have a unique moral-psychological profile, endorsing the principle of liberty as an end and devaluing many of the moral concerns typically endorsed by liberals or conservatives' (Iyer et al. 2012, p 21).

Since 'MFT's five moral foundations appeared to be inadequate in capturing libertarians' moral concerns, [we decided to] to consider Liberty/oppression as a candidate for addition to our list of foundations' (Graham et al. 2013, p. 87).

[10] The new foundations are called Care, Equality, Proportionality, Loyalty, Authority and Purity (Atari et al. 2023, table 2, p. 1161). These researchers cite Meindl et al. (2019) as

What makes something a moral foundation? Where I simplfied above by saying 'evolutionarily ancient, psychologically basic', the standard is more demanding:

> '(a) being common in third-party normative judgments, (b) automatic affective evaluations,[11] (c) cultural ubiquity though not necessarily universality, (d) evidence of innate preparedness, and (e) a robust preexisting evolutionary model.' (Atari et al. 2023, p. 1158)

6.   Conclusion So Far

We have evaluated three of the five claims critical to Feinberg & Willer (2013)'s argument that cultural variation in moral psychology can explain political conflict over climate change.

7.   Question Session 04

There are no question sessions this year, but some of the notes from previous years are still relevant. These are included here.

7.1.   Liberal vs Conservative: Emilie's question

How can we be sure that the dutch 'liberal' is the same as the 'liberal' the moral psychologists are talking about (possibly US[12]) in the study by van Leeuwen & Park (2009)?

The rough answer I gave in the live session was, 'we can't be sure, but there does seem to be something to the one-dimensional opposition in lots of places'.

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justifying the distinction between equality and proportionality.

[11] Given the mixed evidence on the role of feelings and emotions in moral intuitions, (see *Moral Intuitions and Emotions: Evaluating the Evidence* in Lecture 02), one might question whether anything meets all five of these criteria for being a foundation. It may be possible to substitue revised criteria which involve fewer bold empirical committments but still capture the core idea that some aspects of ethical judgements are more foundational than others.

[12] van Leeuwen & Park (2009, p. 169) do indeed rely on research using US samples as background on political identity. Jost et al. (2009)'s authoritative review of the one-dimensional liberal-conservative model of political identity (which they do not cite) covers much of the background they are relying on. This review is entirely focussed on the US. It also does not discuss whether a single model of political identity works equally well across different ethnic groups.

It's important that the claim is about *socially* liberal vs *socially* conservative. (If we were talking about economic views, the picture would be much more complex.[13])

The moral psychologists do take themselves to be talking about a dimension that is found across the world. For example:

> 'Whereas in the US, the political divide is between "liberals" and "conservatives" (or Democrats and Republicans), both the substance of political divides and the terms used to describe them vary across cultural contexts (Malka et al., 2014). However, research suggests that the liberal–conservative divide on social issues in particular manifests in similar ways across cultures (e.g., Feinberg, Wehling, Chung, Saslow, & Melvær Paulin, 2019; Graham et al., 2011)' (Feinberg & Willer 2019, footnote 1).

Do the references they cite here support these assertions?

As far as I can tell, Graham et al. (2011) depend on the assumption that the socially liberal-socially conservative distinction works in roughly the same way across many countries; in this sense it provides indirect evidence (if this assumption was false, they shouldn't have been able to get significant results). Feinberg et al. (2020, Study 4a) compares earlier findings from a US sample of participants with studies of people in Austria, France and Germany. Again, this seems to depend on the assumption that (in their words) 'the same conservative-liberal divisions found in the United States are common in countries across the world' (Feinberg et al. 2020, p. 790) and so provides at most indirect assumption for it.

Those authors do cite Bornschier (2010) in support of this assumption. This covers multiple countries with relevantly different histories (but not the US). I don't fully understand this research (yet), but my sense is that it provides one method to identify how robust the idea of a divide between socially liberal and socially conservative is. It also has some very clear figures.

Glossary

binding foundations Categories of moral concern linked to social needs; these are often taken to be betrayal/loyalty, subversion/authority, and

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[13] To illustrate, Malka et al. (2014, p. 1034) notes that 'Eastern European nations formerly subjected to communist rule sometimes show relations between high levels of NSC [needs for security and certainty] characteristics [which are associated with socially conservative views] and left-wing economic preferences.' See also Duckitt & Sibley (2009), who propose that different processes underpin social and economic aspects of political identity.

impurity/purity (Graham et al. 2011). 7, 8

individual foundations Categories of moral concern linked to individual needs; these are often taken to be harm/care, cheating/fairness (Graham et al. 2011). Sometimes called *individualizing foundations*. 7

moral conviction 'Moral conviction refers to a strong and absolute belief that something is right or wrong, moral or immoral' (Skitka et al. 2005, p. 896). We take the convictions and beliefs to be attitudes. 3, 4

Moral Foundations Theory The theory that moral pluralism is true; moral foundations are innate but also subject to cultural learning, and the Social Intuitionist Model of Moral Judgement is correct (Graham et al. 2019). Proponents often claim, further, that cultural variation in how these innate foundations are woven into ethical abilities can be measured using the Moral Foundations Questionnare (Graham et al. 2009; Graham et al. 2011). Some empirical objections have been offered (Davis et al. 2016; Davis et al. 2017; Doğruyol et al. 2019). See 5. 3, 9, 10

moral pluralism Descriptive moral pluralism is the view that humans' ethical abilities involve distinct moral concerns (such as harm, equality and purity) which are not reducible to just one moral concern. 7, 8

Social Intuitionist Model of Moral Judgement A model on which intuitive processes are directly responsible for moral judgements (Haidt & Bjorklund 2008). One's own reasoning does not typically affect one's own moral judgements, but (outside philosophy, perhaps) is typically used only to provide post-hoc justification after moral judgements are made. Reasoning does affect others' moral intuitions, and so provides a mechanism for cultural learning. 13, 17

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