

Running head: POLITICIANS BEHAVING BADLY

Politicians Behaving Badly: Perceived Immorality of Same- and Opposing-Party Politicians

Gabrielle N. Iverson

Spring Quarter 2016

Thesis submitted in partial completion of Senior Honors Capstone requirements for the DePaul  
University Honors Program

Christine Reyna, Psychology Department

Laith Saud, Religious Studies Department

## Abstract

The American public appears to be fascinated by the immoral behavior of politicians, from sex scandals to offensive comments and beyond. The present study investigated the nature of conservatives' and liberals' moral judgments of these different types of immoral behaviors, specifically when committed by same- and opposing-party politicians. Prior research suggests that liberals and conservatives differ in their preferences for certain moral foundations but not necessarily when making moral judgments of influential people. The literature also indicates that both liberals and conservatives demonstrate intolerance to their ideological rivals. In this study, participants were asked to read 5 different scenarios, one for each moral foundation. Each scenario consisted of a moral violation committed by a politician. Participants were randomly assigned to a survey version, one containing only Democratic politicians and the other only Republican politicians. Participants were asked to rate the immorality of the behavior in each scenario. Participants also responded to an item about their general political ideology. Data were analyzed using a 2 (participant's ideology: liberal, conservative) x 2 (politician's party: Democrat, Republican) x 5 (moral foundation: care, fairness, loyalty, authority, sanctity) mixed-model ANOVA. The results of the analyses indicated that there was a significant three-way interaction, suggesting that moral judgments of politician's immoral behaviors are dependent on not only the moral foundations being violated, but also whether the targets were ideological allies or rivals.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	5
Literature Review	6
Method	8
Participants	8
Design	9
Materials	9
Procedure	10
Results	11
Discussion	13
References	20
Appendix A	23
Appendix B	30
Appendix C	37

### Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank several of the people who not only assisted me throughout the development of my thesis, but also encouraged my academic growth and my research. First, I would like to thank Dr. Christine Reyna, with all of her support as not only my thesis director, but also as my research mentor. She has been an incredible help throughout my college career and provided me with wonderful guidance that I will continue to appreciate in the years to come. Secondly, I would like to thank Rusty Steiger for all of the assistance he has provided me throughout this research project, as well as the many projects that we have collaborated on, including two DUOS Grant funded projects, one of which is described in this thesis. Finally, I would like to thank Professor Laith Saud for serving as my second reader in this process. Not only did your teaching inspire me, but your willingness to help me during the final weeks of my project has been a wonderful contribution to this thesis.

### Politicians Behaving Badly: Perceived Immorality of Same- and Opposing-Party Politicians

Urban Dictionary's top definition for "politician" insinuates that politicians are comparable to "blood-sucking parasites", have "perfected the art of lying", and are "highly paid yes-men" (Gnuoyh, 2004). Skimming over the rest of the results, they do not get much more positive. With several mentions of lying, manipulation, and a loss of "all notion of morality" it is clear that many people hold politicians in low regard. Of course, one does not have to take Urban Dictionary's word for it. Gallup's polls on congressional approval ratings have remained firmly below 20% for over a year now (2016) and nearly 65% of people gave members of congress ratings of low or very low on Gallup's most recent poll of Honesty/Ethics in Professions (2016). The general consensus from these resources indicates that not only do people not particularly like politicians, but they also do not think of them as exhibiting particularly moral behavior..

That being said, Americans are more than a little bit fascinated by politicians' scandalous behaviors. While this can be seen throughout the year, it is especially pertinent during any given presidential election cycle. In the current context of the 2016 presidential primaries, there has been an emphasis on the Hillary Clinton email scandal (Myers & Apuzzo, 2016), criticisms of some of Donald Trump's comments on women, minorities, and people with disabilities (Kopan, 2015), and the Ted Cruz sex scandal allegations (Flegenheimer, 2016).

Bearing in mind the public's belief in the immoral nature of politicians and the overwhelming interest in their bad behaviors, the purpose of this research is to investigate the nature of our moral judgments about politicians' behavior and to discover how people judge their behavior based on their ideological similarities and differences with the target politicians, particularly through the lens of Moral Foundations Theory (Haidt & Joseph, 2004).

### **Moral Foundations Theory and Ideology**

Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) suggests that there are culturally relative and universal foundations that people rely on in order to make moral judgments that include care, fairness, loyalty, authority, and sanctity (Haidt & Joseph, 2004; Graham, et al., 2012). Immoral acts generally violate one or more of these foundations, so in the political context, a politician who has an extramarital affair would be violating purity and possibly loyalty foundations, whereas a politician who accepts bribes in exchange for giving certain people positions of power might be seen as violating the fairness foundation.

Furthermore, prior literature indicates that there is a difference in the moral foundations that liberals and conservatives rely on to make moral judgments: liberals rely more heavily on the fairness and harm foundations, while conservatives rely on loyalty, authority, and sanctity foundations (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009; Haidt, Graham, & Joseph, 2009; Van Leeuwen & Park, 2009). This pattern is supported by findings suggesting that differences in worldviews between liberals and conservatives lead to preferences for certain moral foundations (Haidt & Graham, 2007) and that there are different characteristics of each ideology, specifically increased authoritarianism in conservatives and decreased social dominance orientation in liberals, that help explain the preferential differences as well (Kugler, Jost, & Noorbaloochi, 2014).

On the other hand, some recent findings suggest that when making moral judgments of influential people, conservatives and liberals rely on a common set of moral foundations that include care, fairness, and sanctity (Frimer, Biesanz, Walker, & MacKinlay, 2013). What this research fails to piece out is whether there are differences in the moral judgments based on whether the influential person is a politician and whether that varies based on party (there were also only a small handful of the 40 target influential people that were politicians). Due to the

conflict between these findings, one purpose of this study is to discover whether there are differences between conservatives and liberals when it comes to making judgments of the behavior of politicians (e.g. Graham et al., 2009) or if there are fewer differences between political ideologies on moral foundations preferences when judging politicians' behavior, as suggested by the work of Frimer et al. (2013).

### **Ideological Conflict Hypothesis**

When examining the unsavory acts of politicians in the context of the United States' two-party system, it is important to acknowledge the role of ideological similarities and differences between liberals, conservatives, Democrats, and Republicans. Do people make harsher judgments towards their ideological out-groups than their in-groups? Are conservatives (or liberals) harsher in their judgments of their out-groups than the other? According to the Ideological Conflict Hypothesis, liberals and conservatives tend to demonstrate similar levels of intolerance towards out-groups that do not align with or threaten their respective ideologies (Brandt, Reyna, Chambers, Crawford, & Wetherell, 2014). This hypothesis is supported by prior research such as Morgan, Mullen, and Skitka's (2010) findings that demonstrate that both liberals and conservatives make harsher judgments of misdeeds of those whose values are inconsistent with theirs and other research conducted by Reynolds et al. (2007) that showed that people exhibit intolerance towards their out-groups, regardless of their ideology.

### **The Present Study**

The present study explores how ideological preferences for certain moral foundations in making moral judgments influence participants' judgments of politicians and their actions, especially when they are looking at politicians who typically align with the participants ideology versus those who typically oppose their ideology. My hypotheses are as follows:

1. The behavior in harm and fairness violations will be evaluated as more immoral regardless of politician's party or participant's ideology (a main effect of moral foundations).
2. When participants are rating the behavior of same-party politicians, they will give them lower immorality ratings than when they are rating the behavior of opposing party politicians committing the same moral violation (a participant ideology x politician's party interaction).
3. Whether or not the behavior is rated as immoral will depend on the match between participant ideology and politician party and the foundation being violated (a three-way interaction).
  - a. Liberal participants will rate all politicians' behavior as equally immoral when they violate harm and fairness foundations. However, they will rate Republican politicians' behavior as more immoral compared to Democrats when they violate authority, loyalty, and sanctity foundations.
  - b. Conservative participants will rate all politicians' behavior as equally immoral when they violate any of the moral foundations.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

This study used an Internet sample taken from Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants were paid \$0.50 for their participation. The sample comprised a total of 332 participants from the United States. The mean age of participants was  $M = 40.86$  years ( $SD = 13.66$ ). The racial makeup of the sample was predominantly Caucasian/White with 79.7%, followed by 9.3% African American/Black, 4.3% Asian, 4.3% Hispanic or Latino/a, 1% Biracial/Multiracial, .7%



American Indian or Alaskan Native, .3% Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and .3% Other. On general ideology 14.3% identified as strongly liberal, 26.1% mostly liberal, 15.4% somewhat liberal, 17.4% centrist/moderate, 10.7% somewhat conservative, 9.4% mostly conservative, and 6.4% strongly conservative. After removing participants who failed one or more of our two attention check questions, we were left with 259 participants. We further narrowed this number down for our analyses in order to focus on liberals and conservatives. We removed people who identified themselves as centrist/moderate on general political ideology and were left with 211 participants.

### **Design**

The study design was a 2 (participant's ideology: liberal, conservative) x 2 (politician's party: Democrat, Republican) x 5 (moral foundation: care, fairness, loyalty, authority, sanctity) factorial design, measuring the immorality of the behavior presented in each scenario. The independent variable of participant's ideology and the politician's party were between subjects, indicating that participants were either categorized as liberal or conservative, and only received scenarios where the politicians were either Democratic or only scenarios with Republican politicians. The independent variable of moral foundation was a within subjects variable, indicating that each participant received all five moral violation scenarios, each reflecting one of the moral foundations. Participants were randomly assigned to each version of the survey (Republican politicians or Democratic politicians) and the order in which they received the five scenarios was also randomized.

### **Materials**

The materials for this study included three separate parts. The first part was a moral foundations questionnaire adapted from the MFQ30 developed by Graham, Haidt, and Nosek

(2008), which was not included in these analyses. The second part was a set of five scenarios that contained either a Republican politician committing a moral violation or a Democratic politician committing that same moral violation. The scenarios depicting violations of the five moral foundations were developed for the purpose of this study. Each scenario is meant to reflect a behavior that violates a specific moral foundation more than the other moral foundations. Each scenario also contains a statement made by the politician(s), where they provide a justification for his/her/their actions. Participants were then asked to rate how the scenario would make them feel if it actually happened, but we did not include these measures in the present analysis. Participants were given two items about the immorality of the person and the behavior in each scenario. We focused on the ratings from the item about the immorality of the behavior in the scenario, which was rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *Not Immoral*, 7 = *Extremely Immoral*). Participants were also asked to provide several demographics including age, race, education, income, and employment status. The demographics included an item that asked about the participant's general ideology on a 7-point scale (1 = *Very Liberal*, 7 = *Very Conservative*), which we then used to determine whether a participant would be categorized as liberal (1 to 3 on the scale) and conservative (5 to 7 on the scale). Refer to Appendices B and C for each version of the survey including scenarios, immorality items, and all demographics items.

### **Procedure**

Participants read an informed consent page and were asked to click the button in the bottom right hand corner to indicate their agreement to participate in the survey. Participants were then randomly assigned to take the moral foundations questionnaire first or were given the set of political moral violations scenarios and questions. All participants received both the moral foundations questionnaire and the moral violations scenarios. Participants answered a set of

questions including questions regarding emotional responses to the moral violation and two questions about the immorality of the behavior and the person in the scenario. Participants were then asked to answer the set of demographics questions. Participants read a debrief sheet after completing the demographics questionnaire and were then paid \$0.50 by Amazon's MTurk for their service upon their completion of the survey.

## Results

### Mixed-Model ANOVAs

Data were analyzed using a 2 (participant's ideology: liberal, conservative) x 2 (politician's party: Democrat, Republican) x 5 (moral foundation: care, fairness, loyalty, authority, sanctity) mixed-model ANOVA. There was a significant main effect of moral foundations,  $F(4, 828) = 143.42, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .41$  such that participants rated the behavior in the fairness violation as the most immoral ( $M = 5.27; SE = .12$ ), followed by the sanctity violation ( $M = 4.86; SE = .14$ ), then the authority ( $M = 3.09; SE = .13$ ) and care ( $M = 3.31; SE = .14$ ) violations, and finally they rated the behavior in the loyalty violation as the least immoral ( $M = 2.06; SE = .11$ ).

There was a significant interaction effect of moral foundations and participant ideology,  $F(4, 828) = 19.88, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .09$ . This interaction was qualified by the significant three-way interaction effect of moral foundations, participant ideology, and politician's party,  $F(4, 828) = 10.66, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$ . This effect indicates that the immorality ratings for the behavior of the politicians in each scenario varied depending on the moral foundation being violated, the ideology of the participant, and the party of the politician in the scenario.

There was no significant main effect of participant ideology or politician's party ( $p$ 's > .05). There was also no significant interaction effect of moral foundations and politician's party or participant ideology and politician's party.

### **Moral Foundations**

Below are the results from the 95% confidence intervals for each of the moral foundations (see Table 1 and Figure 1 in Appendix A).

#### **Care**

The 95% confidence intervals for the care foundation indicates that while there is no difference between conservative's ratings of immorality for the behavior of Democratic and Republican politicians, there is a difference between the ratings for liberals such that they rated Republican politicians' behavior as more immoral than Democratic politicians' behavior when violating the care foundation. Liberals also gave higher ratings of immorality of the politician's behavior in general (see Figure 2 in Appendix A).

#### **Fairness**

The 95% confidence intervals for the fairness foundation reveal that there is no significant difference between any of the four groups, regardless of participant ideology and politician's party (see Figure 3 in Appendix A).

#### **Loyalty**

The 95% confidence intervals for the loyalty foundation demonstrate a nearly symmetrical crossover pattern. Both liberal and conservative participants rated the behavior of like-minded politicians as equally less immoral, and rated the behavior of ideologically dissimilar politicians as equally more immoral. In short, participants gave higher ratings of

immorality to the behavior of politicians belonging to their out-group than those belonging to the in-group (see Figure 4 in Appendix A).

### **Authority**

The 95% confidence intervals for the authority foundation display the crossover pattern where participant's ratings of in-group politicians are equally generous (not immoral) and their ratings of their out-group politicians are equally punitive (more immoral). Liberals and conservatives both gave higher immorality ratings to the behavior of their out-group politicians than their in-group politicians (see Figure 5 in Appendix A).

### **Sanctity**

The 95% confidence intervals for the sanctity foundation show that there is no difference between liberals' and conservatives' ratings of the immorality of the behavior of Republican politicians but that there is a difference between the conservatives' and liberals' ratings of the immorality of the behavior of Democratic politicians such that conservatives give significantly higher immorality ratings than liberals. Both liberals' and conservatives' ratings of the immorality of out-group politicians' behavior was greater than that of their in-groups. Overall conservatives gave greater ratings of immorality than liberals for this foundation (see Figure 6 in Appendix A).

## **Discussion**

The results of the three-way ANOVA yielded some expected results, along with some unexpected patterns. First of all, there were overall differences between the immorality ratings for each of the moral violations. However, the pattern was not exactly as stated in the predictions. While the behavior in the fairness violation was rated to be the most immoral, sanctity was the second most immoral instead of the care violation. It is possible that this is due

to the nature of the sanctity violation, which involved the use of an illicit drug, thus standing as an illegal act, which could be driving the increased immorality ratings.

The second prediction was also somewhat unsupported. There was no overall interaction between the participant's ideology and the politician's party. While the prediction indicated that there would be an overall pattern where participants would rate the moral violations of their in-group politicians as more immoral than that of their out-group politicians, the pattern was not significant. This might have been partially influenced by the pattern of results for the loyalty foundation. The loyalty pattern was different than the other foundations, due to the nature of the scenario posed and provided a pattern that was a reversal from the predicted increase in ratings of immorality for the behavior in the scenario for opposing-party politicians over same-party politicians. The lack of significant interaction might also come as a result of the variations in pattern between each of the moral foundation, as suggested by the prediction of the three-way interaction.

There were only select few parts of the three-way interaction that followed the predicted pattern. The care violation partially followed the predicted pattern, in that conservatives did not differ on how immoral they believed the politician's behavior was, regardless of their political party. The expected pattern did not hold for liberals, as there was a difference between their ratings for the immorality of the Republican's behavior and the Democrat's behavior such that they gave Republican's significantly higher immorality ratings.

In contrast to the pattern found in the care violation, which should have mimicked the pattern for the fairness violation if the prediction were true, the violation of the fairness foundation was completely in alignment with the predictions. There were no differences overall in any of the ratings, regardless of the participant's ideology or the politician's party. The pattern

for this moral foundation was the only pattern for any of the moral foundations that fully followed the predictions.

Loyalty in particular fell relatively far outside of all of the predictions for the results of this study. This is explained by the fact that switching loyalty to the opposite party is detrimental to the participants who are a part of their in-group. In other words, people will see it as more immoral when their in-group politicians are disloyal to their group because it is a direct violation against the person's in-group. Conversely, the out-group politician switching to the opposite party actually benefits participants because the opposing party politician would be supporting the participant's in-group.

The authority violation and sanctity violations both displayed a crossover pattern, more so than the other foundations. For each of these foundations, liberals and conservatives both gave harsher ratings of immorality to the behavior of their opposing-party politicians, contrary to the predictions, which suggested that only liberals would give harsher ratings to the immoral behavior of Republicans, not that conservatives would give harsher ratings to the immoral behavior of Democrats. For authority there was no difference between the overall ratings given by conservatives or liberals, which follows the predictions; however, the ratings for sanctity showed that conservatives overall care much more about immoral behavior that violates the foundation of sanctity.

Although liberals gave greater immorality ratings to behavior that violated the care foundation and conservatives gave greater ratings to behavior that violated the sanctity foundation, it appears that there are no overall differences in the ratings given by either ideology, suggesting that liberals and conservatives tend to be similar in the harshness of their moral judgments. The results also suggest that it is likely that ideological match plays a more important

role in determining the harshness of moral judgments made by partisans than ideology alone.

Ultimately, the results of this study imply that it is a unique combination of factors that determine whether or not a conservative makes similar moral judgments to liberals, two of which being the moral foundations that are violated by the immoral behavior and the ideological similarity or dissimilarity between the person making a judgment and the political perpetrator of the immoral action. The results also demonstrated that whether or not the immoral act is potentially harmful to their in-group while simultaneously benefitting their out-group is another factor that might be considered in making moral judgments of ideological allies and rivals.

The significance of this research is that it helps us to understand how people make moral judgments and supports the continuation of research into how moral judgments might influence political decisions. For example, moral violations committed in the political context can result in different responses following the violation such as public apologies on behalf of politicians, public criticism of politicians, and even changes in expected outcomes of elections. Considering there is no shortage of criticisms of politicians' immoral behaviors, these findings bring us one step closer to understanding the way that people might react following political scandals and the potential results of those reactions.

### **Limitations**

There were several limitations to this study that could warrant further exploration and/or could have had an effect on the results. One of the most crucial limitations of this study was the imbalance between the number of liberals and conservatives. The number of liberal participants was more than double the number of conservative participants. This imbalance is not uncommon among MTurk samples, and is something that future research should account for in order to find ways of obtaining a more even sample. The small number of conservative participants in each of



the two survey conditions (Democratic politicians and Republican politicians) was also a limitation of this study and could be remedied in the future by obtaining a larger overall sample size to account for the imbalance of participants' political ideology. Furthermore, there were few strongly conservative participants ( $N = 19$ ) as compared to strongly liberal participants ( $N = 72$ ), which could potentially have influenced the results due to the way that this study categorized participants into political ideology groups. Having more moderate conservatives could potentially mitigate the effect of conservative ideology on immorality ratings of Democratic politicians' behavior. Because it would be expected for more extreme conservatives to be harsher towards those who are more ideologically dissimilar to them (Morgan et al., 2010), the pattern of results for some of the moral foundations might change (e.g. there might be a significant difference between conservatives' ratings of immorality for the behavior of Democratic politicians and Republican politicians for the care violation, even though the data from this study did not indicate a difference).

While some of the variables absent from this study and the imbalances presented in the participants might serve as problematic, another major limitation of this study, and possibly a much more critical limitation was the lack of pilot study and/or manipulation checks done on the scenarios used to reflect the particular moral violations. The lack of manipulation checks on the scenarios means that there is no way of knowing the degree to which these scenarios actually reflected violations of the moral foundations as intended. While the intention was for each moral violation scenario to be associated with one specific moral foundation, past research indicates that oftentimes scenarios violate several different moral foundations to different degrees. In the future, these scenarios would have to be tested further in order to ensure that the manipulations worked in the way that they were intended to.

### **Further Directions**

Although several of the limitations previously discussed could lend themselves to further research possibilities, there are several other directions that have yet to be explored. One major direction to take this research in is to look at whether these same patterns of results emerge when you remove the statements at the end of each of the scenarios that justifies the actions of the politician. It is also pertinent to see whether different scenarios/behaviors that reflect the same moral foundations produce the same results or if certain scenarios have different effects on immorality ratings. One other important further direction is to look at whether or not these judgments play a role in changing people's willingness to support these politicians after they commit the moral violation. Previous research on political scandals suggest that once a political scandal happens, there is a reduction in the supporter's evaluation of the politician but that in time, the evaluation bounces back to pre-scandal levels (Vonnahme, 2014). It would be interesting to see how this pattern might change or stay the same depending on the moral foundation violated during the scandal.

### **Conclusion**

The variations in the results of this study from both its hypotheses and the results from prior literature suggest that there is still much to be learned about the nature of moral judgments, especially in regards to the political realm. It appears that the previously proposed differences in preferences for certain moral foundations between conservatives and liberals (Graham et al., 2009) do not necessarily apply in making judgments of same- and opposing-party politician's behaviors. Furthermore, the prior patterns of similarities between conservatives and liberals found in the research looking at the moral foundations that people rely on to make moral judgments of influential people (Frimer et al., 2013) do not seem to come through fully in this

study, either indicating that there might be something unique about looking at how people judge behaviors versus people as a whole and/or how people make judgments about politicians in particular.

## References

- Brandt, M. J., Reyna, C., Chambers, J. R., Crawford, J. T., & Wetherell, G. (2014). The ideological-conflict hypothesis intolerance among both liberals and conservatives. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 23*(1), 27-34.
- Flegenheimer, M. (2016) Ted Cruz blames Donald Trump and ‘henchmen’ for tabloid report of affair. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/26/us/politics/ted-cruz-blames-donald-trump-and-henchmen-for-tabloid-report-of-affairs.html>
- Frimer, J. A., Biesanz, J. C., Walker, L. J., & MacKinlay, C. W. (2013). Liberals and conservatives rely on common moral foundations when making moral judgments about influential people. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 104*(6), 1040.
- Gallup. (2016). “Congress and the public.” [Survey Report] Retrieved from <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1600/congress-public.aspx>
- Gallup. (2015). "Honesty/ethics in professions." December 2-6, [Survey Report] Retrieved from <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1654/honesty-ethics-professions.aspx>
- Gnuoyh. (2004). Politician. Retrieved May 24, 2016, from <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=politician>
- Graham, J., Haidt, J., & Nosek, B. A. (2009). Liberals and conservatives rely on different sets of moral foundations. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 96*(5), 1029.
- Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2012). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, Forthcoming*.

- Haidt, J., & Graham, J. (2007). When morality opposes justice: Conservatives have moral intuitions that liberals may not recognize. *Social Justice Research, 20*(1), 98-116.
- Haidt, J., Graham, J., & Joseph, C. (2009). Above and below left–right: Ideological narratives and moral foundations. *Psychological Inquiry, 20*(2-3), 110-119.
- Haidt, J., & Joseph, C. (2004). Intuitive ethics: How innately prepared intuitions generate culturally variable virtues. *Daedalus, 133*(4), 55-66.
- Kopan, T. (2015). 10 groups Donald Trump offended since launching his campaign. *CNN*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/27/politics/donald-trump-insults-groups-list/>
- Kugler, M., Jost, J. T., & Noorbaloochi, S. (2014). Another look at moral foundations theory: Do authoritarianism and social dominance orientation explain liberal-conservative differences in “moral” intuitions?. *Social Justice Research, 27*(4), 413-431.
- Morgan, G. S., Mullen, E., & Skitka, L. J. (2010). When values and attributions collide: Liberals' and conservatives' values motivate attributions for alleged misdeeds. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.
- Myers, S. L., & Apuzzo, M. (2016). As campaign unfolds, so do inquiries into Hillary Clinton's emails. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/03/us/politics/as-presidential-campaign-unfolds-so-do-inquiries-into-hillary-clintons-emails.html>
- Reynolds, K. J., Turner, J. C., Alexander Haslam, S., Ryan, M. K., Bizumic, B., & Subasic, E. (2007). Does personality explain in-group identification and discrimination? Evidence from the minimal group paradigm. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 46*(3), 517-539.

- Vonnahme, B. M. (2014). Surviving Scandal: An Exploration of the Immediate and Lasting Effects of Scandal on Candidate Evaluation. *Social Science Quarterly*, 95(5), 1308-1321.
- Van Leeuwen, F., & Park, J. H. (2009). Perceptions of social dangers, moral foundations, and political orientation. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 47(3), 169-173.

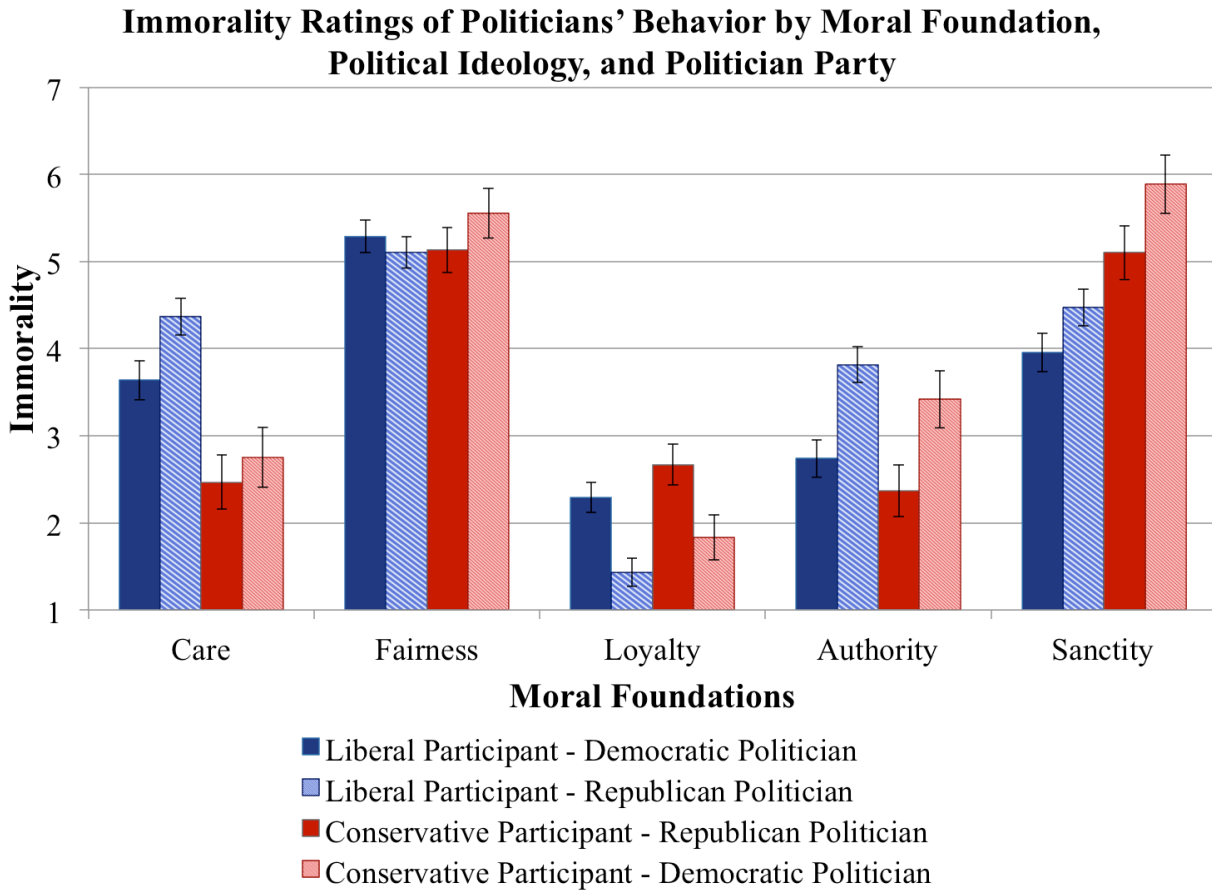
## Appendix A

Table 1

*Immorality Ratings of Politician's Behavior by Moral Foundation Violated, Target Politician's Party, and Participant Ideology*

<i>Moral Foundation</i>	<i>Target Politician's Party</i>	<i>Liberal Participants</i>		<i>Conservative participants</i>	
		<i>M</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Care	Democratic	3.64 <sup>a</sup>	[3.19, 4.08]	2.75 <sup>c</sup>	[2.14, 3.36]
	Republican	4.37 <sup>b</sup>	[3.95, 4.79]	2.47 <sup>c</sup>	[1.78, 3.14]
Fairness	Democratic	5.29 <sup>a</sup>	[4.92, 5.66]	5.56 <sup>a</sup>	[5.04, 6.07]
	Republican	5.11 <sup>a</sup>	[4.75, 5.46]	5.13 <sup>a</sup>	[4.57, 5.70]
Loyalty	Democratic	2.29 <sup>a</sup>	[1.96, 2.63]	1.83 <sup>ab</sup>	[1.37, 2.30]
	Republican	1.43 <sup>b</sup>	[1.12, 1.75]	2.67 <sup>a</sup>	[2.16, 3.18]
Authority	Democratic	2.74 <sup>a</sup>	[2.32, 3.16]	3.42 <sup>b</sup>	[2.83, 4.00]
	Republican	3.82 <sup>b</sup>	[3.41, 4.22]	2.37 <sup>a</sup>	[1.72, 3.01]
Sanctity	Democratic	3.96 <sup>a</sup>	[3.52, 4.40]	5.89 <sup>c</sup>	[5.28, 6.50]
	Republican	4.47 <sup>b</sup>	[4.06, 4.89]	5.10 <sup>b</sup>	[4.43, 5.77]

<sup>abc</sup> Similar letters indicate similarities and different letters indicate differences between means for each moral foundation based on the 95% confidence intervals.



*Figure 1.* Participants' mean ratings of the immorality of the politicians' behavior, shown by moral foundation violated, participant's ideology, and target politician's party (similar colors represent the same participant ideology, whereas the solid bars are immorality ratings of the behavior of same-party politicians and the shaded bars are immorality ratings of the behavior of opposing party politicians)



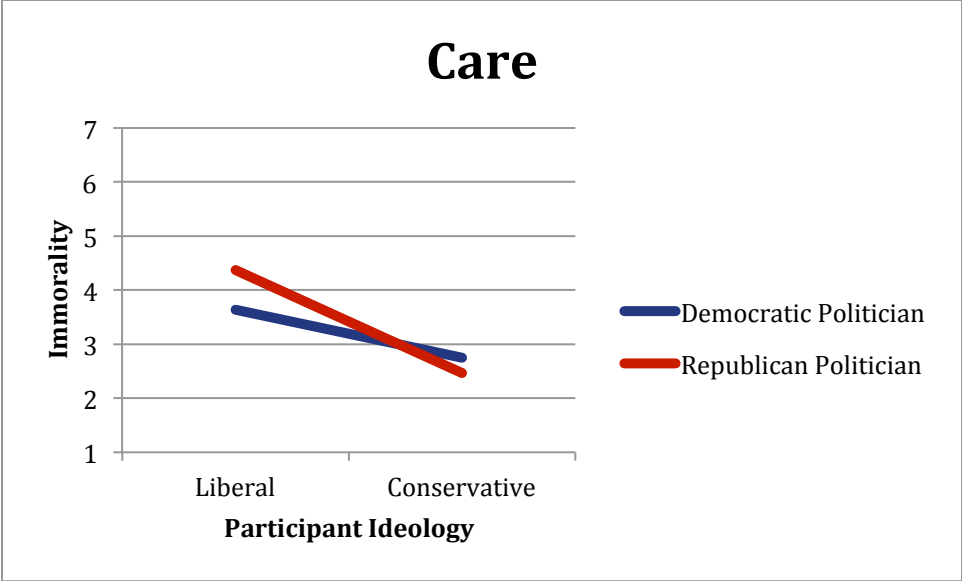


Figure 2. Participants' mean ratings of the immorality of the politician's behavior in the care moral violation, shown by participant's ideology, and target politician's party

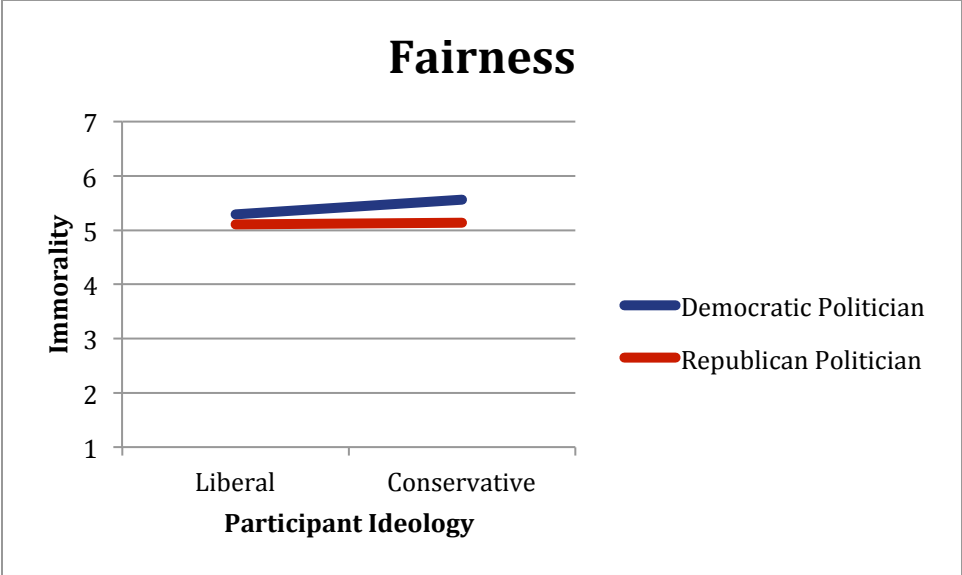


Figure 3. Participants' mean ratings of the immorality of the politician's behavior in the fairness moral violation, shown by participant's ideology, and target politician's party

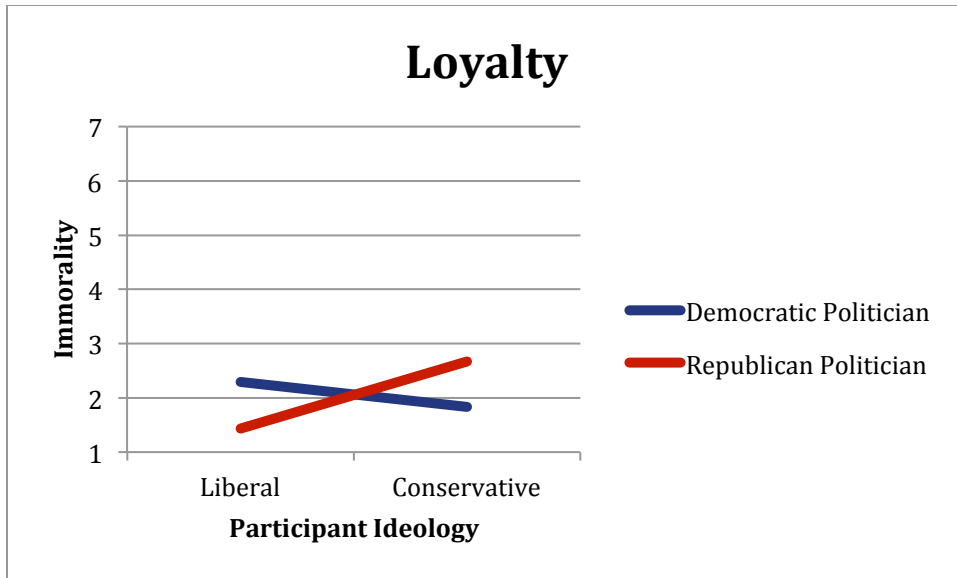


Figure 4. Participants' mean ratings of the immorality of the politician's behavior in the loyalty moral violation, shown by participant's ideology, and target politician's party

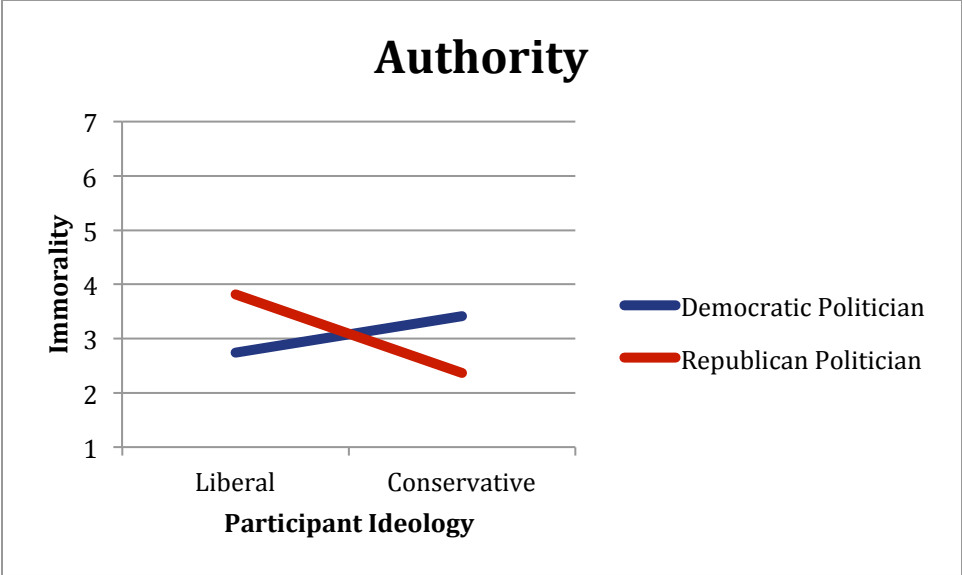


Figure 5. Participants' mean ratings of the immorality of the politician's behavior in the authority moral violation, shown by participant's ideology, and target politician's party

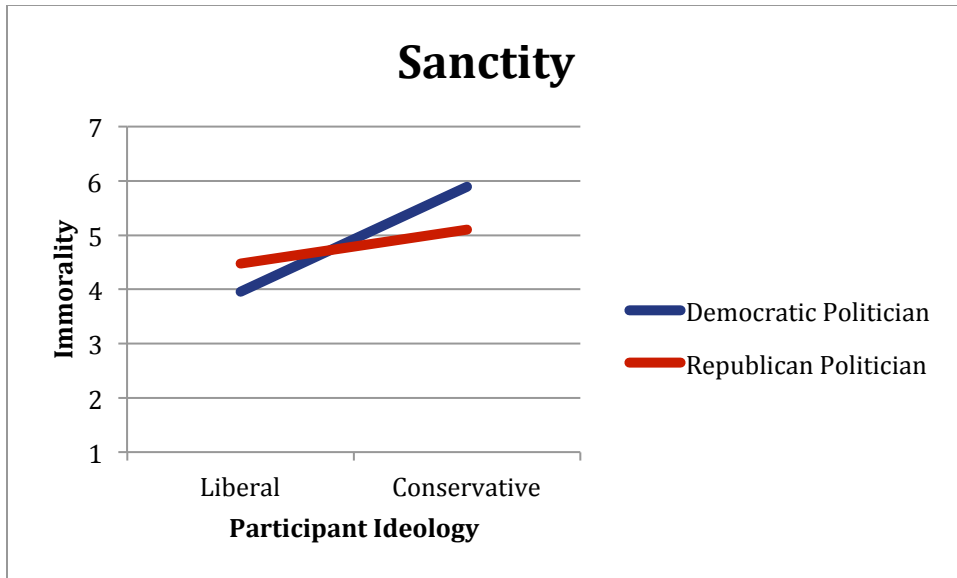


Figure 6. Participants' mean ratings of the immorality of the politician's behavior in the sanctity moral violation, shown by participant's ideology, and target politician's party

## Appendix B

## Survey Version 1 (Democratic Politicians)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

Tom, a Democratic Congressman, gets large campaign donations every year from the president of a small private college in his state. When Congress is putting together its yearly must-pass spending bill, Tom slips an amendment into the bill that gives seven million dollars of grant money to the small private college; no other colleges in his state get any money from the bill. Tom defends his actions by saying that nearly every Congressperson adds these types of special interest amendments to the must-pass spending bill.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is Tom's behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

A presidential election is coming soon. James, a Democratic Congressman, is a personal friend of the Republican presidential candidate. He decides to publicly endorse the Republican candidate, and gives his endorsement speech at a televised Republican conference. In the speech, he makes many harsh and critical remarks about the Democratic presidential candidate. James defends his actions by saying that he has the right to endorse whoever he feels would be the best president.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is James's behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

During a Republican president's official state of the union address, he refers to one of his major agenda proposals which had been blocked by Democratic members of Congress. The Democratic members of Congress interrupt the speech by loudly cheering and clapping for a long time. Afterwards, they defend their actions by saying that Congresspersons from the Republican party have done similar things in the past.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is the Congress members' behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

Greg, a Democratic Congressman, is addicted to cocaine, and uses it several times a day. When this is discovered, he defends himself by saying that his cocaine use isn't a big deal, since the majority of voters in his district approve of his job performance.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is Greg's behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

Mary, a Democratic Congresswoman, votes for a bill that requires 35,000 government workers to be fired from their jobs. Many experts said that the cuts could have been made in other areas that wouldn't have caused as many people to lose their jobs. She defends her actions by saying that while job losses are unfortunate, tough decisions need to be made in order to balance the budget.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is Mary's behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

What is your age?

What is your racial/ethnic identity?

- African American/Black (1)
- American Indian or Alaskan Native (2)
- Asian (3)
- Biracial/Multiracial (4)
- Caucasian/White (5)
- Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (6)
- Hispanic or Latino/a (7)
- Other (Please Explain Below) (8) \_\_\_\_\_

What is your total FAMILY income?:

- Less than \$20,000 (1)
- \$20,000 to \$29,999 (2)
- \$30,000 to \$39,999 (3)
- \$40,000 to \$49,999 (4)
- \$50,000 to \$59,999 (5)
- \$60,000 to \$69,999 (6)
- \$70,000 to \$79,999 (7)
- \$80,000 to \$89,999 (8)
- \$90,000 to \$99,999 (9)
- \$100,000 to \$149,999 (10)
- More than \$150,000 (11)



What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- No schooling completed (1)
- Pre-School to 8th Grade (2)
- High School – No Diploma (3)
- High School – Diploma or Equivalent (GED) (4)
- Some College – Did not Finish (5)
- Some College – Currently Attending (6)
- Associate Degree (7)
- Bachelor’s Degree (8)
- Master’s Degree (9)
- Professional Degree (MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD) (10)
- Doctorate Degree (PhD, EdD) (11)

What is your current employment status?

- Employed Full-Time (1)
- Employed Part-Time (2)
- Self-Employed (3)
- Unemployed and Looking for Work (4)
- Unemployed and Not Looking for Work (5)
- Student (6)
- Retired (7)
- Other (8)

In General, would you consider yourself to be more liberal or more conservative?

- Strongly Liberal (1)
- Mostly Liberal (2)
- Somewhat Liberal (3)
- Moderate/Centrist (4)
- Somewhat Conservative (5)
- Mostly Conservative (6)
- Strongly Conservative (7)

On Social Issues, would you consider yourself to be more liberal or more conservative?

- Strongly Liberal (1)
- Mostly Liberal (2)
- Somewhat Liberal (3)
- Moderate/Centrist (4)
- Somewhat Conservative (5)
- Mostly Conservative (6)
- Strongly Conservative (7)

On Economic Issues, would you consider yourself to be more liberal or more conservative?

- Strongly Liberal (1)
- Mostly Liberal (2)
- Somewhat Liberal (3)
- Moderate/Centrist (4)
- Somewhat Conservative (5)
- Mostly Conservative (6)
- Strongly Conservative (7)

What political party or political category do you most strongly identify with?

- Democratic Party (1)
- Republican Party (2)
- Libertarian Party (3)
- Green Party (4)
- Independent (5)
- Other 3rd Party (6)
- None/Don't Care (7)

Regardless of your specific political views, do you prefer Democrats or Republicans to win most elections?

- Totally Prefer Democrats (1)
- Mostly Prefer Democrats (2)
- Somewhat Prefer Democrats (3)
- No Preference/ Don't Care (4)
- Somewhat Prefer Republicans (5)
- Mostly Prefer Republicans (6)
- Totally Prefer Republicans (7)

Which of the following news programs do you watch or listen to regularly? (Check all that apply)

- Fox (1)
- MSNBC (2)
- CNN (3)
- PBS (4)
- BBC (5)
- AlJazeera (6)
- News satire/comedy shows (e.g. The Daily show, Bill Maher, etc.) (7)
- Fox Financial News (8)
- MSNBC Financial News (9)
- National Public Radio (NPR) (10)
- Conservative Talk Radio (11)
- Progressive Talk Radio (12)

Please rate the job performance of Democratic members of Congress. Are they doing a good job or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

Please rate the job performance of Republican members of Congress. Are they doing a good job or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

Please rate the job performance of Congress as a whole. Are they doing a good job or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

Please rate the job performance of President Obama. Is he doing a good job or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

Please rate the job performance of former President George W. Bush (during his presidency).  
Did he do a good job, or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

## Appendix C

## Survey Version 2 (Republican Politicians)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

Tom, a Republican Congressman, gets large campaign donations every year from the president of a small private college in his state. When Congress is putting together its yearly must-pass spending bill, Tom slips an amendment into the bill that gives seven million dollars of grant money to the small private college; no other colleges in his state get any money from the bill. Tom defends his actions by saying that nearly every Congressperson adds these types of special interest amendments to the must-pass spending bill.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is Tom's behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

A presidential election is coming soon. James, a Republican Congressman, is a personal friend of the Democratic presidential candidate. He decides to publicly endorse the Democratic candidate, and gives his endorsement speech at a televised Democratic conference. In the speech, he makes many harsh and critical remarks about the Republican presidential candidate. James defends his actions by saying that he has the right to endorse whoever he feels would be the best president.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is James's behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

Democratic president's official state of the union address, he refers to one of his major agenda proposals which had been blocked by Republican members of Congress. The Republican members of Congress interrupt the speech by loudly cheering and clapping for a long time. Afterwards, they defend their actions by saying that Congresspersons from the Democratic party have done similar things in the past.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is the Congress members' behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

Greg, a Republican Congressman, is addicted to cocaine, and uses it several times a day. When this is discovered, he defends himself by saying that his cocaine use isn't a big deal, since the majority of voters in his district approve of his job performance.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is Greg's behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

Instructions: Please read the following scenario carefully.

Mary, a Republican Congresswoman, votes for a bill that requires 35,000 government workers to be fired from their jobs. Many experts said that the cuts could have been made in other areas that wouldn't have caused as many people to lose their jobs. She defends her actions by saying that while job losses are unfortunate, tough decisions need to be made in order to balance the budget.

Instructions: Please answer the following items. If your answer lies somewhere in between two choices, choose the number in between them.

How immoral is Mary's behavior?

- 1 Not Immoral (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 Somewhat Immoral (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Very Immoral (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 Extremely Immoral (7)

What is your age?

What is your racial/ethnic identity?

- African American/Black (1)
- American Indian or Alaskan Native (2)
- Asian (3)
- Biracial/Multiracial (4)
- Caucasian/White (5)
- Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (6)
- Hispanic or Latino/a (7)
- Other (Please Explain Below) (8) \_\_\_\_\_

What is your total FAMILY income?:

- Less than \$20,000 (1)
- \$20,000 to \$29,999 (2)
- \$30,000 to \$39,999 (3)
- \$40,000 to \$49,999 (4)
- \$50,000 to \$59,999 (5)
- \$60,000 to \$69,999 (6)
- \$70,000 to \$79,999 (7)
- \$80,000 to \$89,999 (8)
- \$90,000 to \$99,999 (9)
- \$100,000 to \$149,999 (10)
- More than \$150,000 (11)

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- No schooling completed (1)
- Pre-School to 8th Grade (2)
- High School – No Diploma (3)
- High School – Diploma or Equivalent (GED) (4)
- Some College – Did not Finish (5)
- Some College – Currently Attending (6)
- Associate Degree (7)
- Bachelor’s Degree (8)
- Master’s Degree (9)
- Professional Degree (MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD) (10)
- Doctorate Degree (PhD, EdD) (11)

What is your current employment status?

- Employed Full-Time (1)
- Employed Part-Time (2)
- Self-Employed (3)
- Unemployed and Looking for Work (4)
- Unemployed and Not Looking for Work (5)
- Student (6)
- Retired (7)
- Other (8)

In General, would you consider yourself to be more liberal or more conservative?

- Strongly Liberal (1)
- Mostly Liberal (2)
- Somewhat Liberal (3)
- Moderate/Centrist (4)
- Somewhat Conservative (5)
- Mostly Conservative (6)
- Strongly Conservative (7)

On Social Issues, would you consider yourself to be more liberal or more conservative?

- Strongly Liberal (1)
- Mostly Liberal (2)
- Somewhat Liberal (3)
- Moderate/Centrist (4)
- Somewhat Conservative (5)
- Mostly Conservative (6)
- Strongly Conservative (7)



On Economic Issues, would you consider yourself to be more liberal or more conservative?

- Strongly Liberal (1)
- Mostly Liberal (2)
- Somewhat Liberal (3)
- Moderate/Centrist (4)
- Somewhat Conservative (5)
- Mostly Conservative (6)
- Strongly Conservative (7)

What political party or political category do you most strongly identify with?

- Democratic Party (1)
- Republican Party (2)
- Libertarian Party (3)
- Green Party (4)
- Independent (5)
- Other 3rd Party (6)
- None/Don't Care (7)

Regardless of your specific political views, do you prefer Democrats or Republicans to win most elections?

- Totally Prefer Democrats (1)
- Mostly Prefer Democrats (2)
- Somewhat Prefer Democrats (3)
- No Preference/ Don't Care (4)
- Somewhat Prefer Republicans (5)
- Mostly Prefer Republicans (6)
- Totally Prefer Republicans (7)

Which of the following news programs do you watch or listen to regularly? (Check all that apply)

- Fox (1)
- MSNBC (2)
- CNN (3)
- PBS (4)
- BBC (5)
- AlJazeera (6)
- News satire/comedy shows (e.g. The Daily show, Bill Maher, etc.) (7)
- Fox Financial News (8)
- MSNBC Financial News (9)
- National Public Radio (NPR) (10)
- Conservative Talk Radio (11)
- Progressive Talk Radio (12)

Please rate the job performance of Democratic members of Congress. Are they doing a good job or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

Please rate the job performance of Republican members of Congress. Are they doing a good job or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

Please rate the job performance of Congress as a whole. Are they doing a good job or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

Please rate the job performance of President Obama. Is he doing a good job or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)

Please rate the job performance of former President George W. Bush (during his presidency).  
Did he do a good job, or a bad job?

- Extremely Bad (1)
- Mostly Bad (2)
- Somewhat Bad (3)
- Neither Good Nor Bad (4)
- Somewhat Good (5)
- Mostly Good (6)
- Extremely Good (7)