

# When the Message is Moralized

## *Elite Cues and Moral Framing*

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### **Abstract**

The literature on moral reasoning and politics has begun to shift from focusing on morality policy toward morality as an independent predictor of political attitudes and behavior. This study analyzes the role elites play in framing certain issues or policies as moral. Research has demonstrated that when individuals consider an issue to be a part of their moral beliefs or convictions it may lead to an increase in their political behaviors, such as voting. We argue that moral frames can be used to induce moral reasoning over a wide-range of issues, including issues that are not thought of as traditionally moral. If elites can use moral frames to moralize an issue, they can bolster their mobilization efforts and induce political action. Using a set of web-experiments we attempt to induce morality over a generally non-moral issue by using elite cue vignettes about building a sports stadium in a hypothetical city. We hypothesize that participants receiving the morally framed vignette will be more likely to consider an issue as a part of their core moral values and conviction and report that they are more likely to act on a given issue in the political area. Evidence from the experiment supports this hypothesis.

## INTRODUCTION

That elected officials attempt to moralize their issue positions is no secret. In fact, elected officials consistently attempt to focus the public's attention on their moral commitments vis-à-vis public issues. The interesting question is whether elite moralization of political issues resonates with the public, and affects their political attitudes and behavior. In political science, scholars have addressed the role of morality in politics by focusing on morality policy (Mooney and Schuldt, 2008; Mooney, 1999; Mooney and Lee, 2000; Mucciaroni, 2011; Haider-Markel and Meier, 1996; Haider-Markel, 1999; Norrander and Wilcox, 1999; Smith, 1999). However, recent scholarship moves beyond the focus on morality policy by developing theoretical and empirical explanations of moral attitudes, and their consequences for a wide variety of political behavior (Haidt, 2001; 2013; Ryan, 2014; Skitka et. al., 2005; Skitka and Bauman, 2008; Skitka, 2010; Skitka and Wisneski, 2011). This newly developing literature, however, has yet to systematically study the way in which political elites can morally frame political issues, providing information that generates a moral response in citizens. This moral response, in turn, has consequences for the attitudes that citizens hold, as well as their political behavior. If political elites can frame issues in moral terms, and generate a moral response from citizens based on the moral frame, this conclusion raises significant questions about the ability of elites to manipulate or persuade the public via the moralization of political issues. To generate these theoretical and empirical insights, we draw from existing literature in political science focused on elite cueing (for a review, see Gilens 2012) and issue framing (Nelson et.al. 1997; Zaller, 1992).

We attempt to show empirically that the use of moralized issue framing can generate a moral response in those exposed to the moral frame, particularly when this frame references general circumstances related to deeply held moral beliefs. We also show that when individuals believe the moral frame is related to their deeply held moral beliefs, there are predictable and consistent consequences for individual political attitudes and beliefs. We utilize the methodological insights of current scholars, but develop a unique experimental design by presenting respondents two vignettes on a policy issue, where one of these contains a moralized frame about the policy issue. To demonstrate the effects of moralized framing on individual political attitudes and beliefs, it is important not to choose a political issue that is already moralized. The strictest test of the theoretical argument developed here would be to morally frame a political issue that is non-moral (or at least not *a priori* moral). If a non-moral issue could be moralized via framing it in moral terms, this would provide strong empirical evidence in favor of the argument that moral issue framing could be strategically useful to political elites.

The present research proceeds by first providing a discussion and analysis of the existing work in political science focused on moral psychology. We then review the elite cueing, cognitive heuristics literature in political science, as well as the issue framing literature. Next, we succinctly outline the theoretical arguments of our work, and following this, present empirical results of a survey-based experiment. The present research concludes with a discussion of how our empirical results can add to, and help extend, current work in political science focused on moral psychology.

## MORAL PSYCHOLOGY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

As noted above, theoretical and empirical work in political science that attempts to integrate morality into politics can be broken down into at least two areas of study: a focus on morality policy and how moral psychology affects individual political attitudes and behavior.

### *MORALITY POLICY*

Scholarship in the study of morality policy tends to focus on policies that engender moral conflict of the type mentioned above. Thus, scholars have focused their analyses on pornography policies (Smith, 1999); US state-level abortion policy (Mooney and Lee, 1995; Norrander and Wilcox, 1999), drug and alcohol policy (Meier, 1994), gay and lesbian rights (Haider-Markel and Meier, 1996), and the death penalty (Mooney, 2000). In these studies, scholars note that morality policy advocacy begins with the use of frames, which employ moral concepts, such as equating certain behaviors or choices with sin (Haider-Markel and Meier, 1996; Meier, 1999). The tendency in this literature is not to view any policy as intrinsically moral; instead, the use of moral frames by policy advocates defines when a policy is moral (Haider-Markel and Meier, 1996).

Due to the definition of what is a morality policy in this literature, it is not surprising that the politics of such policies are argued to be different than the politics of other policy types. Generally, morality politics is defined by a lack of compromise (Meier, 1999; Mooney and Schuldt, 2008); an inability for policy experts to take advantage of their expertise to moderate policy outcomes (Meier, 1999); issues that are technically simple, highly salient, and easy (Carmines and Stimson, 1980; Mooney and Schuldt, 2008; Haider-Markel, 1999);

greater participation in the policy debate by citizens and elected officials, and a corresponding decrease in the influence wielded by interest groups (and policy bureaucrats) engaged in the policy process (Haider-Markel, 1999, but see Haider-Markel and Meier, 1996); and responsiveness of elected officials' policy choices to (perceived) public opinion (Norrander and Wilcox, 1999; Mooney and Schuldt, 2008). It is generally assumed that the unique politics of morality policy comes from the underlying moral values conflicts animating such policies (Mooney and Schuldt, 2008; Meier, 1999).

While the focus on morality policy is critical, for it emphasizes the role that morality plays in governmental decisions (and the actors involved in advocating for certain moral commitments to be expressed via public policy), the more recent literature in political science focuses on how morality is expressed via individual political attitudes and behavior. It is this most recent literature that becomes the source of theoretical insight for considering how the moral framing of political issues can affect attitudes, and behavior as well.

#### *MORAL PSYCHOLOGY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE*

Recent scholarship in political science focused on morality draws heavily from work in psychology to develop theoretical insights regarding how morality is expressed in individual attitudes and behavior. This literature focuses on the structure of moral attitudes, how they are expressed and ultimately their effects on political behavior.

Scholarship in political science that seeks to integrate morality at the level of individual attitudes begins with a series of assumptions about the structure of moral attitudes. Drawing

from a line of research in Psychology, scholars posit the existence of morally convicted attitudes (Skitka et. al., 2005; Skitka and Bauman, 2008; Skitka, 2010; Skitka and Wisneski, 2011). These attitudes have the following traits. First, morally convicted attitudes are experienced as facts about the world. Morally convicted attitudes seem to be self-evident to those who hold them, and when pressed by researchers in experimental settings to explain why an attitude object is wrong or bad, many people have a difficult time articulating reasons for their judgments (Haidt, 2001). This inability to explain a moral reaction to an offending attitude-object suggests the presence of an intuitive foundation for moral reasoning such that individuals judge some attitude-object as morally problematic, but then must reason after the fact to explain their initial moral judgment (Haidt 2001; 2013). This intuitive rationalizing model has also been applied to more than moral judgement (Lodge and Taber, 2013). Psychologists and others have linked this intuitive model of moral judgment to evolutionary traits that help groups to reproduce and survive. Intuitive moral reasoning also helps to explain variation across individuals as to what they find to be moral. Scholars have posited the existence of moral foundations which appear to inform moral debates between conservative and liberal individuals. Conservatives and liberals share certain common moral conflicts (such as: liberty/oppression, sanctity/degradation, cheating/fairness), although they interpret these differently (Haidt, 2013). To empirically test these moral foundations, the current study uses the cheating/fairness moral foundation relation to the public funding of private sports stadiums.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The sports economics literature focuses extensively on the social benefits and costs of public funding for sports stadiums (for a review, see Quirk and Fort, 1991). While this literature does not explicitly focus on the morality of the public's choice to fund sports stadiums, the literature does refer to public debates regarding who is benefited from publicly funded sports stadiums and why, implicating the cheating/fairness moral foundation of scholars in moral psychology.

Secondly, morally convicted attitudes are seen as universal: the judgments made by individuals regarding what is good or bad are not culturally dependent. Individuals with these attitudes assume others outside of their cultural and social contexts would (and ought to) agree with their moral judgments. Finally, morally convicted attitudes are defined by the strength with which they are held. In fact, scholarship suggests that while it is true that strongly held attitudes will share structural similarities with moral convictions, these moral stances will be more extreme, certain, important, and central. Moral convictions will also be idiosyncratic, as individuals will have moral convictions over a wide variety of different issues based on their point of view (Skitka, 2005). Given that morally convicted attitudes are argued to be qualitatively different than strong, but not moral, attitudes, what behavioral consequences are attributable to morally convicted attitudes held by individuals?

Ryan's (2014) study provides evidence that when moral conviction makes its way into political discourse, problematic consequences can result. Moral conviction leads to negative affect towards opposing viewpoints and can materialize over a wide-range of issues. Moreover, moral conviction is an action oriented dimension of attitude. Those most likely to participate in the political system may also be the most likely to collaborate in homogenous groups, reject opposing viewpoints, and create social distance between themselves and political opponents. More importantly, this is true not just for traditionally moral issues, but for a wide-variety of issues, including economic issues. Findings like these have led scholars to decree that there is a dark side to moral conviction (Skitka and Mullen 2001, 2002). For example, research has demonstrated that individuals become unconcerned with how moral

mandates are achieved, as long as they are achieved. Studies have more generally shown that a strong moral conviction over an issue or set of issues inspires action. Skitka and Bauman (2008) find that moral conviction motivated voter turnout in the 2004 presidential election controlling for a host of other variables such as attitude strength and partisanship, and that the effect was strong for people on both the left and the right. Overall, the moral conviction literature indicates that those with morally convicted attitudes tend to be more active politically, but also are less likely to negotiate with others when faced with threats to their moral beliefs. Being morally convicted renders an individual more likely to use political activity as a means to protect or pursue their own moral commitments.

The moral conviction literature does not yet have a well-developed theoretical argument focused on the moral framing of issues or how issues become “moralized.” The existing literature notes the possibility of moral commitments being used to mobilize voters, but the explicit mechanisms by which this activity occurs is not fully articulated. To explicate the theoretical logic that connects moral framing to moral conviction and finally to political behavior, it is important to explicitly focus on elite cueing, cognitive heuristics, issue framing and their relationship to moral conviction as well as political behavior.

## **ELITE CUEING, COGNITIVE HEURISTICS AND ISSUE FRAMING**

Scholars in American politics have known for some time that the public can utilize information cues presented by better-informed individuals and trusted information sources to help them manage the information processing costs associated with political decision-making (Berelson et.al., 1954; Downs, 1957). The basic notion is that the public looks to

trusted information sources and adopts the policy positions of those sources (or conversely, rejects or takes the opposite policy position of those information sources they disagree with) (Lupia, 1995). The public looks to trusted information sources as a way to cognitively deal with the costs of being informed on public policy issues. This is because the public, in the aggregate, generally has low-levels of political information (Carpini and Keeter, 1996), which means to be informed, additional information must be provided from alternative sources other than the individual. The fact that the public looks to trusted information sources directly implicates the actions and activities of political elites, who have strong incentives to provide informational cues to the public.

Generally, the scholarly literature indicates that the use of informational cues does not significantly alter the aggregate collective issue opinions or political choices of the public as compared to actual or (simulated) well-informed members of the public who share the same demographic traits as the less-well informed (Althaus, 2003; Bartels, 1996; Fishkin and Luskin, 2005; Gilens, 2012). The magnitude of the difference in expressed issue opinions or political choices for the less and better-informed members of the public is small, but a difference does exist, which suggests two conclusions. First, the use of informational cues provided by trusted sources is a rational response to the information costs of being politically informed. Second, given that there is a small difference in the expressed issue positions and political choices of the less and better-informed members of the public, this does allow for the possibility that strategic elites could use misinformation to mislead or even manipulate the less-well informed members of the public (Lupia and McCubbins, 1998).

Complicating the conclusions of the elite cueing literature is the recognition by scholars of American politics that, how issues are framed to the public can alter the aggregate expressed issue positions of the public. A well-known example concerns the use of the term “welfare” versus the phrase “assistance to the poor” in asking the public about their preferences toward government policies designed to help the poor, with the former term receiving less support than the latter phrase (Smith, 1987). This framing of an issue is magnified once scholars apply the same concept to mass media communications developed by candidates running for elected office – candidates can use visual and auditory cues to collectively frame issues and their political opposition in elections (Brader, 2006). Finally, the issue framing literature shows that issue framing is not a neutral political activity. Instead, those actors who employ issue frames attempt to get the public to think about an issue a particular way, emphasizing a particular message (Slothuus, 2008).

The integration of the elite cueing and issue framing literatures provide an explanation for how the moral framing of issues by political elites can generate a moral response in the public, and in turn, affect the political behavior of the public. We now turn to the theoretical basis for the present research, emphasizing the integration of scholarly work in the study of moral conviction, elite cueing and issue framing.

## THEORY

Several research studies have found that morally convicted attitudes are correlated with stronger attitudes (Skitka, 2005), increased likelihood of certain political behaviors such as voting (Brader, 2006; 2012; Skitka and Bauman, 2008; Ryan, 2014), and when asked to

choose the most important issues facing the nation today, respondents tend to choose issues they believe are a part of their moral conviction (Skitka et al., 2005). It appears that when an individual identifies an issue as a part of their moral belief system, their attitudes and political behaviors are different from other types of issues. This difference in the attitudes and behaviors of individuals for moral issues is also related to the emotional bases of them. Due to individuals experiencing moral issue attitudes as strong and difficult to negotiate, individuals holding such issue attitudes also have emotional responses to environmental stimuli that challenge their attitudes. Thus, moral issue attitudes are supported by affective responses that can motivate individuals holding such attitudes to behave politically in different ways than those who do not hold moral issue attitudes (Brader, 2006). Moreover, Ryan (2014) has also found that issues other than the ones most political scientists call morality policy can be moralized by members of the electorate. Put differently, we posit that issues which are not traditionally defined as “moral” can be seen as moral by the electorate, with predictable consequences for the moral attitudes and political behavior of those who perceive amoral issues to be moral.

Given that most Americans tend to have low political knowledge (Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Gilens, 2012), they rely on simplifying mechanisms to make decisions in the political arena (Carmines and Kuklinski, 1990; Lau and Redlawsk, 1997; 2006; Lupia and McCubbins, 1998; Popkin, 1991; Sniderman et.al., 1991). Scholars have found that individuals tend to use certain heuristics to anchor their attitudes toward issues based on their trusted elites – such as politicians and those in media (Gilens 2012). The empirical evidence for this phenomenon is robust. The most important political heuristic is party identification. Studies have shown

that the electorate is likely to split regarding their approval on war after party elites begin to shift on the issue (Zaller 1992; Voeten and Brewer, 2006; Berinsky 2009). It has also been shown that citizen interpretations of "events" such as casualty counts can be interpreted differently based on partisanship (Gaines and Kuklinski, 2007). Arena, (2008) highlights that without opposition to an incumbent government's war, war outcomes are unlikely to affect election outcomes. Studies have also shown that small pieces of non-partisan information, such as knowing who sponsors a ballot initiative, can predict political behavior (Lupia, 1994).<sup>2</sup>

In conjunction with the literature on elite cues and cognitive heuristics, it is important to emphasize how trusted elites can *frame* issues, affecting how individuals interpret the information provided to them. Issue framing can be defined as "the process by which a communication source... defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy" (Nelson, Clawson and Oxley, 1997, p. 567). Because most political issues are complex, frames can be employed to alter how citizens think about issues, by activating considerations in the minds of those who receive the relevant frame (Zaller, 1992; Slothuus, 2008). The literature on framing effects further indicates that frames are not simply neutral in the provision of information for citizens. Instead, frames usually contain evaluative content that seeks to direct the receivers of the frame to a particular interpretation of issues and/or political events. Thus, frames serve as sources of information *and* they enable "sense-making" on the part of citizens who are thinking about a particular issue and/or event (Slothuus, 2008). It is a well-known finding, for example, that individuals can (and do) change their expressed opinions on certain issues by the wording and/or framing of those issues (Gilens, 2012).

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed review of this literature see Gilens and Murakawa (2002).

Moreover, literature focusing on the emotional foundation of political behavior confirms that how candidates and public issues are framed can induce emotional responses that affect political behaviors such as voting and seeking out political information (Brader, 2006; 2012). Given the conclusions of the elite cue and issue framing literatures, we posit that elites can embed moralized cues in how they frame issues for individuals. Once elites attempt to frame issues for the public, the frames they employ can be related to moral attitudes and beliefs. The frames can use moralized language or imagery to cue individuals, and thus generate a moral reaction by those who view/consume the frame. Depending upon the frame employed by an elite (and the moralized language/imagery used in the frame), individuals can receive very different types of information, with important consequences for their (moral) reactions to it. The critical idea is that elites use issue frames along with informational cues to generate a moral reaction in individuals with empirically predictable (and testable) consequences for their political attitudes and behavior.

Given the affect that moral conviction has on attitudes and behavior, along with the ability for elites to send cues that influence opinion, we contend that it is possible for elites to moralize an issue thus influencing the way that individuals think about the issue as well as increase mobilization and rise to action. Our hypothesis is that relatively amoral issues can be framed as moral and thus illicit: (1) the respondent to believe that the issues falls within their moral belief system and (2) elicit certain political behaviors and greater political mobilization. We use a web-optimized survey-experiment where we take a control vignette and then add a few sentences that frame the issue in the fairness/cheating moral frame

(Haidt, 2013). We then compare the vote choice and intention to vote between the control and the moral frame.

## METHODOLOGY

The experiment is a simple between-subjects design, where the independent variable is randomized equally between participants. The independent variable takes on two conditions: (1) Control and (2) Moral Frame. The frames are presented as a recent political speech from a local Councilman. The issue in the vignette is the building of a new sports stadium in a hypothetical city. In the control group the economic costs and benefits are discussed and the issue is presented in relatively neutral terms, although the costs purposely outweigh the benefits. The vignette describes the decision by the City Council to bring a minor-league baseball team – The Middlefield Shockers - to the city. The participants are told that they will be one of only 30 cities to acquire such a team. The deal is structured so that the city will pay for the stadium, costing \$52.9 million dollars. The subjects are told that the city will pay for the new stadium with “new hotel occupancy taxes, stadium lease payments, ticket surcharges, and parking fees.” They are also told that “over the first 5 years, the stadium will generate over \$150 million in benefits for the city, including increased downtown traffic.” The speech makes it clear that the deal needs the approval of the citizenry in an upcoming ballot initiative and ends with the message, “A majority of the City Council is supportive of the measure. Be sure to get out there and voice your opinion!” There are other benefits listed in the vignette, such as increased traffic downtown. The speech also gives the participants the opponents’ view stating, “Opponents have argued that city leaders have rushed the project and should also allow voters to decide where to build the stadium, not

just if the stadium will be built.” The vignette is designed to be positive in the aggregate without telling the respondent how they should vote on the measure.

The treatment vignette keeps all the original information in the control, but adds several sentences that are designed to frame the issue within a moral context, specifically the fairness/cheating frame.<sup>3</sup> In the treatment, the participants are told that the speech-giver has been critical of the measure because the teams and their ownership, “is cheating the decent citizens of our City by violating a very basic rule: you must pay your own way! The City has to meet its financial responsibilities, why shouldn’t Powerhouse<sup>4</sup> do the same?” Further they are told, “The Powerhouse Sports Group is taking advantage of the decent citizens of our City by asking them to pay for a private benefit. It is not the responsibility of the public to finance others’ private choices.” Finally, they are told, “The Powerhouse Sports Group’s request to have our City fund their stadium is simply economic blackmail. It’s unfair for Powerhouse to use public funding of a sports stadium as leverage against our City and its decent citizens to extract a private benefit.” The final sentence of vignette remains the same as the control, telling citizens that a majority of the Council is supportive of the measure and urging them to get out and vote.

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<sup>3</sup> The fairness/cheating moral frame is one emphasized by the existing literature in moral psychology and political science (Haidt 2013; Lakoff, 2002). Fairness is a concept that involves how individuals are treated by each other, and the society in which they live. If individuals are treated fairly, one view is that their interests are respected by others and their society. Cheating in this context refers to not respecting others’ interests, OR pursuing one’s own interests at the expense of others. While there are other moral frames that are discussed in existing literature, the fairness/cheating moral frame is used since it corresponds to the issue addressed in this study: is it fair for the public to pay for sport stadiums, or are sports’ teams cheating the public by getting their financial support for stadium construction? Debates about the public funding of sports stadiums do impinge on this frame (Quirk and Fort, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> The “Powerhouse Sports Group” is the economic (business) entity that is making the deal with the city, they own the sports team.

Once a participant has read either the control or the treatment they are asked the two primary dependent variables: (1) How they intend to vote on the upcoming ballot proposition and (2) How likely they would be to vote on the proposition. In addition, they are asked to choose their agreement with the following statement on a 7-point Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree: “My choice on the ballot proposition to build the sports stadium reflects something about my core moral values and convictions.”<sup>5</sup> This question is intended to gauge whether the moral frame induces participants to say that the issue falls into their moral value and convictions as opposed to the control. We hypothesize that those participants receiving the moral frame will be more likely to say that the issue falls within their moral convictions. We also hypothesize that those respondents who claim that the issue falls within their moral conviction will be more likely to vote no on the ballot proposition.

## HYPOTHESES

- *Hypothesis 1:* Respondents who receive the morally framed speech will be less likely to vote yes on the ballot proposition.
- *Hypothesis 2:* Respondents who receive the morally framed speech will be more likely to report that the issue reflects something about their core moral values and convictions.

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<sup>5</sup> There are other versions of this question used in the moral conviction literature. The other common wording is as follows: “How much are the feelings about \_\_\_\_\_ connected to your core moral beliefs or convictions?” This question has the choice set: (1) Very Much, (2) Much, (3) Moderately Much, (4) Slightly, and (5) Not at All. This question has a significant weakness because there is little variation in the choice-set leading respondents to over-report whether the issue falls into their moral beliefs.

- *Hypothesis 3:* Respondents who felt the issue reflected something about their core moral values and conviction will be less likely to vote yes on the ballot proposition.
- *Hypothesis 4:* Respondents who are more likely to report that the issue reflects something about their core moral values and convictions will be more likely to say they would vote on the issue.

The issue presented here does not immediately reference anything related to traditional moral issues such as pornography, abortion, capital punishment, gay marriage, or drug use. Rather, the decision to build a stadium is an economic issue with low salience that does not involve basic moral value conflicts (Quirk and Fort, 1991). By framing the issue in the way that we have, we have attempted to transpose the moral frame of fairness/cheating onto an otherwise non-moral issue. If moral conviction can be generated for this issue, we argue that it is possible for political elites to use moral language to try and alter how individuals see a wide-variety of issues and ultimately induce greater mobilization from their supporters. We also chose this issue since some of the existing literature in political science posits the existence of non-moral issues, particularly economic issues (Mooney, 1999). Put differently, to show that moralization can occur with an already moralized issue defeats the broader theoretical insight animating this paper, and is circular. Thus, choosing an issue which is *a priori* not a moral one, and framing it as such (with predictable consequences), strengthens the results reported below.

## SAMPLE

The sample comes from a web-experiment conducted using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). The MTurk platform allows "requesters" to create Human Intelligence Tasks (HITS) and submit these to "workers" who perform these tasks for a set reward. Scholars have demonstrated the value of MTurk for recruiting subjects, especially for experimental studies (Berinsky et al, 2012; Huff and Tingley, 2015). For this study 458 workers were recruited at \$0.30 for each assignment. The gender of the sample was relatively even with 206 females and 252 males. The age of the respondents ranged from 18 to 74, with a mean of 36. Income of the respondents ranged from \$0 – 24,999 (106 respondents) to some over \$200,000 (6 respondents); the mode category was \$25,000 - \$49,999. The sample contains mostly Democrats (222 respondents), with a relatively even split between Republicans (100 respondents) and Independents (122 respondents). The sample was overwhelmingly White (354 respondents) but also contained African Americans (46 respondents) and several other races. While MTurk does not provide a representative sample and thus external validity can be an issue, the treatment was randomized preserving internal validity.

## RESULTS

### VOTING BEHAVIOR

To understand the results of the experiment we must look at more than effect of the treatment. Although the treatment was designed to take the control and frame the issue within the context of the fairness/cheating frame, we cannot rely on that language alone to distinguish whether the causal process is the moralization of the issue. The frame itself is

negative and thus should have a negative effect on participants. The more important question is whether that effect is mediated through the moralization of the issue.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if a yes vote on the ballot initiative was different for groups that received the moral frame vs. the control. Participants were classified into two groups: Control ( $n = 230$ ) and (2) Treatment ( $n = 228$ ). A one-way ANOVA determined that the control and treatment groups are statistically significant from each other ( $F(1,457) = 44.28, p = 0.000$ ). A Turkey pairwise comparison of means with equal variances test determined that those in the treatment group were statistically significantly less likely to vote yes on the ballot initiative (Difference =  $-0.29$ ; std. err. =  $0.44$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ). The treatment increased the likelihood that participants voted no on the ballot initiative.

Table 1 shows the hypothetical “election” based on the experiment. In the Treatment condition the ballot proposition loses, while in the Control condition it overwhelmingly wins (chi-squared significant at  $p = 0.000$ ). A Lambda of  $0.21$  indicated that knowing whether the respondent was in the control group or the treatment groups reduced error by about  $21\%$ .

[Table 1, About Here]

The next question was whether the treatment made participants more likely to claim that building a sports stadium reflected their core moral values and convictions. The answers to the moral conviction question were recoded into three groups: (1) Agree, (2) Neither Agree nor Disagree, and (3) Disagree. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if a

participant's belief that the issue was a part of their core moral beliefs and convictions was different for groups that received the moral frame vs. the control. Participants were classified into two groups: Control ( $n = 230$ ) and (2) Treatment ( $n = 228$ ). A one-way ANOVA determined that the control and treatment groups are statistically significant from each other ( $F(1,457) = 8.78, p = 0.003$ ). A Turkey pairwise comparison of means with equal variances test determined that those in the treatment group were statistically significantly more likely to say the issue was a part of their core moral beliefs and convictions (Difference = 0.218; std. err. = 0.074;  $p = 0.003$ ). This demonstrates that the morally charged frame was more likely to invoke moral conviction over building a sports stadium than the control.

Table 2 shows the cross tabulation of the moral conviction variable with the Treatment. Within the treatment group, participants were 10.58% more likely to report that the issue reflected their core moral values or conviction. Because the moral conviction variable is ordinal we can use gamma, which was calculated to be 0.23; this indicates a small to moderate correlation. The Chi-Square statistic was also statistically significant indicating that there was a difference in the moral conviction variable between the control and the treatment groups.

[Table 2, About Here]

Based on these findings, we argue that part of the effect of the treatment was mediated through its effect on invoking morally relevant attitudes. While some of these results are weak correlations, it is important to remember that the issue at hand is whether a city

council should build a sports stadium, which per the vignettes, would give the city rather sizable benefits. The fact that moral conviction can be induced over this issue is interesting and lends evidence to the idea that elite frames can significantly change attitudes over a wide-variety of issues using moral language. To isolate the effects of the treatment on voting decisions, a multivariate analysis was performed. Before turning our attention to that analysis, we must first look at the controls used in the study.

After receiving one of the randomly distributed speeches the participants were asked the primary questions dealing with the dependent variable. Then they were asked to select, “Which of the following events do you think have more than a 50 percent chance of happening if the stadium is built? (You may select all that apply).” The choices were as follows:

- The city will receive a large economic benefit from the stadium.
- The stadium will help to revitalize the Downtown area.
- Tourism in the city will increase as people come to the stadium to see the new team play.
- The citizens of the city and the minor-league team and its affiliates will share in the costs and benefits.
- Taxes will increase for the citizens of the city.
- Tourism in the city will decrease because of the hotel tax.
- The stadium will fail because the decision was rushed.
- The citizens of the city will pay an undue cost and the minor-league team and its affiliates will reap most of the benefits.

- I am not sure.

This question was designed to further understand what the participant thought could potentially happen if the stadium was built. This type of question has been used in recent research to further understand the reasoning behind a respondent's decision following an experimental vignette (Tomz and Weeks, 2013). There are four possible positive consequences if the stadium is built and 4 possible negative consequences if the stadium is built. Moreover, one of the positive consequences and one of the negative consequences relates specifically to the moral frame of fairness/cheating.

Four variables were created from this question: (1) A count of the positive "events" that would happen if the stadium was built, minus the positive consequence of the citizens and the sport team sharing in the benefits; (2) A count of the negative "events" that would happen if the stadium was built, minus the negative consequence of the citizens paying an undue cost; (3) A dummy variable for those that said the citizens and the sport team would share in the benefits; and (4) A dummy variable for those that said the citizens would pay an undue cost, while the sports team would reap most of the benefits. These variables allow for the isolation of the treatment's affect controlling for economic costs and benefits and the costs and benefits associated with the fairness/cheating frame.

The survey-experiment also asked questions regarding gender, age, party identification, self-placement on a 7-point ideological scale from Liberal to Conservative, income, race, political

knowledge<sup>6</sup>, interest in government and politics (5-point Likert scale), interest in sports (3-point Likert Scale), and a question asking whether they think the government should provide more/less services (3-point scale including less services, about the same, more services). Using these variables, a Logit Regression was estimated to predict vote choice based on the treatment, the Moral Conviction question, and a series of controls.

[Table 3, About Here]

[Table 4, About Here]

Table 3 presents the full model including all the control variables, while Table 4 is a trimmed model removing any control variable that did not have a statistically significant effect on participants' vote choice. In both models the Morally Framed treatments is negative and statistically significant, demonstrating that the frame itself changed the likelihood of voting yes on the initiative compared to the control. Moreover, in both models the mediator variable is negative and significant, indicating that the more a respondent believed that the issue of building a sports stadium was a part of their core moral values and conviction, the less likely they were to vote "yes" on building the sports stadium. Both variables remain significant even when controlling for the Positive and Negative event count variables, which are both in the right direction and significant. It is also clear that those who are more interested in sports are more likely to vote for the initiative, controlling for frame the received.

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<sup>6</sup> Participants were asked four political knowledge questions, specifically who is the current: (1) Vice President, (2) Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, (3) Speaker of the House, and (4) President of Russia. Each respondent received a 0 for a wrong answer and 1 for a correct answer and the variables were added together to create a political knowledge scale ranging from 0 to 4.

Lastly, those respondents who scored higher on the political knowledge variable were less likely to vote for the initiative. None of the other control variables in Table 1 were significant or approaching significance. Figure 1 shows the odds ratios for each independent variable for the timed model on voting yes on the proposition. The odds ratio for the Treatment is 0.25, which indicated that the odds of voting yes on the ballot proposition, when in the Treatment group, were 75% less than in the Control group. The odds ratio for the 7-point scale for whether one believes the issue is connected to their core moral values and conviction is 0.81, which indicated that for a one unit increase in moral conviction we see about a 19% decrease in the probability of voting yes on the ballot initiative.

By including the negative and positive event counts in the model, we can discern multiple effects from the treatment and isolate the effect of moral conviction. Given that the treatment (and the control) contains economic information about the costs and benefits of the stadium and positive and negative consequences of building the stadium, we need to be able to isolate the effects of these possible decision-making elements when trying to understand if the treatment specifically influences moral conviction, which then influenced voting behavior. The Logit models in Tables 1 and 2 and the odds ratios in Figure 1, show that when participants selected more positive events they were more likely to vote yes on the initiative and the opposite was true for the selection of more negative events. Moral conviction had an independent effect when controlling for the positive and negative events in the model. It is also clear from the ANOVA above, that the Treatment group had significantly higher levels of moral conviction.

[Figure 1, About Here]

The question that allowed for the selection of events also allowed participants to directly choose the specific consequence related to the moral frame of Fairness/Cheating. One of the choices was, “The citizens of the city will pay an undue cost and the minor-league team and its affiliates will reap most of the benefits.” Participants choosing this option indicated that the information they received from the moral frame – regardless of the relatively large positive economic benefits listed in the speech – led them to believe that the building of the stadium would be *unfair*.

Table 5 presents the results from a cross tabulation between receiving the treatment and selecting the unfair event. The results show that there was a correlation ( $\lambda = 0.12$ ) between receiving the Treatment and selecting the “unfair” consequence of building the stadium, with a statistically significant chi-square ( $p = 0.000$ ). Moreover, there is also a correlation between selecting the “unfair” event and saying that the issue is connected to one’s moral conviction ( $\gamma = 0.21$ ,  $ASE = 0.063$ ; chi-square = 13.86,  $p = 0.031$ ). These results demonstrate: (1) That the treatment correlated with Moral conviction over the issue and (2) The belief that building a sports stadium is connected to one’s moral conviction is correlated with the belief that building the stadium would provide more benefits to the sports group than the citizenry.

Table 5 presents the results of a logit regression including a dummy variable for those respondents who selected the unequal benefits consequence. The coefficient on the “unequal benefits” variable is negative and statistically significant. The variable “Equal Benefits” has also been included, but it is in the wrong direction and not significant, indicating no

correlation between those selected the event that the citizens and the sports team would share equally in the benefits and voting yes on the ballot initiative. The model also includes an interaction term between the Treatment and the selection of the “unfair” event. Figure 2 plots the average marginal effect of the interaction term on the probability of voting yes. The results show that the marginal effect of selecting the “unfair” consequence for the Treatment group lowers the probability of voting yes on the initiative, but the confidence intervals indicate that the marginal effect is not statistically different from those selecting the “unfair” consequences in the control group, as they overlap.

[Table 5, About Here]

[Figure 2, About Here]

The results in this section lead to the rejection of the null for hypotheses 1 and 2. Framing the building of the stadium in moral terms – specifically the fairness/cheating frame – led to a decreased probability in participants voting yes on the ballot initiative (hypothesis 1). Table 1 shows that in the Treatment condition there is a 29.17% decrease in voting yes on the ballot initiative. The results of the one-way ANOVA and Table 2, show that respondents who received the morally framed speech were more likely to report that the issue of building a sports stadium reflected something about their core moral values or convictions (hypothesis 2). Tables 3 and 4 show that participants who scored higher on the moral conviction variable were significantly less likely to vote yes on the initiative (hypothesis 3), even when controlling for which positive and negative events they thought would result from the building of the stadium.

[Figure 3, About Here]

Figure 3 presents a traditional mediational logic (Baron and Kenny, 1986) showing three separate stages of logit regression analysis. The moral values variable was recoded into a dummy variable, with 1 equaling only those who stated the issue reflected something about their core moral values or conviction. The first, indicated by the solid lines, reports unmediated effects of each independent variable on vote choice. All the variables, including the Treatment, Negative Event Count, Positive Event Count, and Interest in Sports have a statistically significant effect on vote choice. Next, the effect of each independent variable is reported on the mediator, connected to moral values (dashed lines). Only the Treatment and the interested in sports variables are statistically significant, indicating that the Treatment acts on the mediator. Finally, the effect of the mediator variable is shown, while controlling for all the other independent variables; the coefficients for this model are the second ones in the path and the strong dashed line from the mediator to the vote choice. The figure shows that the effect of the treatment is not fully mediated through the moral values variable. However, this only means that the treatment – as well as the other variables – had an independent effect on vote choice. The analysis still shows that the treatment is directly correlated with moral conviction and that moral conviction is directly correlated with vote choice. The next section turns to mobilization and the likelihood of voting on the ballot proposition.

## LIKELIHOOD OF VOTING

Hypothesis 4 predicts that those who said the issue reflected something about their core moral values and conviction would be more likely to vote on the hypothetical ballot initiative. This hypothesis is in line with several other findings in the literature (Skitka, 2005). We asked respondents, “If this was an issue in your city, how likely would you be to vote on the upcoming ballot proposition?” The response choices ranged on a 5-point scale from Extremely Unlikely to Extremely Likely with a middle category Neither Likely or Unlikely. Given the ordinal nature of this variable, it was recoded into a dummy variable with only the two “likely” categories included as 1 and the rest as 0. Table 6 reports a trimmed estimated logit regression model.<sup>7</sup>

The results show that those participants who said that the issue reflected something about their core moral values and convictions were significantly more likely to say they would vote in this hypothetical ballot initiative. Older people were also more likely to state they would vote in the proposition, as well as those more interested in sports. Those participants who scored higher on the political knowledge variable, as well those who were more interested in politics, were also more likely to say they would vote in the initiative. Income approached statistical significance at the 10% level.

[Table 6, About Here]

[Figure 4, About Here]

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<sup>7</sup> A logit regression with all control variables was estimated and variables not reaching statistical significance were trimmed. The coefficient on the variable of interest – connected to moral values – did not change in a meaningful way and its significance level was identical.

Figure 4 shows the marginal effect of moving from each level of moral conviction on the likelihood of participants saying they would vote in the hypothetical ballot proposition with confidence intervals. Interestingly, the treatment was shown to have a negative coefficient and was not statistically significant in the model, although the analysis earlier in the paper shows that the treatment is correlated with moral conviction. The important implication here is that individuals who feel that an issue is somehow related to their core moral values or conviction are much more likely to be mobilized on a given issue, which allows us to reject the null for hypothesis 4. The fact that so many individuals in the sample reported that the issue reflected something about their core moral beliefs and conviction is important, especially because the morally framed treatment induced increased levels of “moral conviction” from respondents. The next section will discuss the implications for these results.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The experiment in this study was designed to understand three basic research questions: (1) Is it possible that an issue generally considered non-moral, framed in moral terms, can induce individuals to think about the issue as reflecting their moral convictions? And if so, (2) Could that moral frame make people behave differently toward that issue? And further, (3) Would individuals who considered the issue a part of their moral conviction be more likely to want to participate in the choice over that issue? The results of the experiment allow us to answer yes to each of these questions.

These are important findings in the context of the elite cueing literature because it reveals a potentially harmful strategy that can be used to not only influence attitudes over a wide-variety of issues, but also mobilize segments of the population that are affected by the moral frame. For example, trade is usually not considered a moral issue. It is technical and usually of low to medium salience. However, in the recent 2016 election, Donald Trump framed trade in the language of “fairness/cheating.” A short snippet from Trump’s June 28, 2016 speech on his job plan is a prime example,

“The legacy of Pennsylvania steelworkers lives in the bridges, railways and skyscrapers that make up our great American landscape. But our workers' loyalty was repaid with betrayal.... if we're going to deliver real change, we're going to have to reject the campaign of fear and intimidation being pushed by powerful corporations, media elites, and political dynasties... *The people who rigged the system for their benefit will do anything...* We tax and regulate and restrict our companies to death, *then we allow foreign countries that cheat to export their goods to us tax-free...* The TPP would be the death blow for American manufacturing.... *It would further open our markets to aggressive currency cheaters.*” (Trump, 2016)<sup>8</sup>

Donald Trump used the same fairness/cheating frame that we used in the experiment in this paper. He is not alone, as President Obama has also framed issues in moral terms. In his

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<sup>8</sup> Italics added for emphasis.

January 2016 State of the Union Address, President Obama used the phrase "*it's the right thing to do*" four times. For example, he states, "And I will keep pushing for progress on the work that I believe still needs to be done. Fixing a broken immigration system. Protecting our kids from gun violence. Equal pay for equal work. Paid leave. Raising the minimum wage. All these things still matter to hardworking families. They're still *the right thing to do*. And I won't let up until they get done" (Obama, 2016).<sup>9</sup> Later in the speech he remarks, "Providing two years of community college at no cost for every responsible student is one of the best ways to do that [reduce student loan payments], and I'm going to keep fighting to get that started this year. *It's the right thing to do*" (Obama, 2016). He goes on, "When we help African countries feed their people and care for the sick - *it's the right thing to do*, and it prevents the next pandemic from reaching our shores" (Obama, 2016).

There is value in the moral frame and not just for the realm of issues once considered "morality policy." Moral framing has the potential change attitudes, voting behavior, and increase political mobilization and participation. The theoretical and empirical literatures in moral psychology, as well as the experiment in this study, suggest that the presence of morality in politics has significant consequences for political attitudes and behavior.

Those individuals who possess morally convicted attitudes are more likely to be politically active *and* tend to view compromise or negotiation in regards to the objects of their morally convicted attitudes as inadequate responses to those who do not share their moral

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<sup>9</sup> Italics added for emphasis in all quotations from President Obama.

judgements. Indeed, the literature suggests that the presence of morally convicted attitudes induces a lack of compromise, and a motivational drive to reduce threats to moral judgments. The political science literature suggests that modern democratic citizens lack basic information about political events and processes (Carpini and Keeter, 1996). In a democracy, the absence of a well-informed public means governmental authority can be used in ways that undermines the capacity of citizens to discern the consequences of policy-making for broader, public interests vs. narrower, private ones.<sup>10</sup> The solution to this “democratic dilemma” has often been simplifying heuristics that allow citizens to make reasoned judgements without complete information (Gilens, 2012; Lupia, 1994; Popkin, 1991).

Cues and cognitive heuristics help to reduce the information costs associated with forming and maintaining opinions on matters of policy as well as electoral preferences. The problem is that cues and cognitive heuristics are not always neutral in the information they provide to citizens. Indeed, the provision of elite cues has the potential to alter how the public views policy and political issues, while cognitive heuristics can distort how information is processed by citizens.

Given the elite model of public opinion, which explains citizen attitudes by linking elite opinion to voter preferences, moral framing may have a significant impact. Such processes best implicate the strategic use of morality in politics by political elites, particularly if a

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<sup>10</sup> See Gilens (2012), pp. 70 - 71. Gilens argues that, at least in American democracy, government tends to be overly responsive to the interests of the affluent, particularly when this group's interests diverge from those of the less well-off.

democratic public lacks the informational resources to cognitively evaluate how morality can prime them to view certain public issues as important, and frame citizen interpretation of issues in moral terms. To the degree that democratic publics lack information, and rely on cues (as well as cognitive heuristics) in the formation of their political interests and choices, political elites can use cues and heuristics embedded within issue frames to moralize policy debate and the issue positions of citizens. And, to the degree that moralized policy debate activates intuitive moral judgments on the part of citizens, they are more likely to be politically active due to the motivational benefits associated with emotional responses to moral conflict. The problem, of course, is that the increased political activism of those mobilized based on moralized elite frames produces a polarized and conflict-ridden political environment, while potentially serving the narrow political goals and interests of elites.

Taken together, the intuitive moral conviction model and citizens' use of elite cues to form opinions may be dangerous for republican democracy. Given the participatory qualities of moral conviction, elites' framing of issues as moral can mobilize a significant portion of the citizenry. Moreover, because moral conviction tends to invoke one-sided and uncompromising political attitudes, political discourse over these issues becomes more difficult. The moral framing of single issues – such as abortion or immigration - can generate responses from the citizenry that limit compromise. Once elected, officials who moralize these issues are then bound by a powerful electoral connection, whereby elected officials must act in accordance with the interests of those who elected them (Mayhew, 1974), which can prevent compromise within legislatures, leading to further polarization in Congress and among the public. However, while political participation may be spurred by moral

conviction, it also reduces the ability of individuals to have democratic discourse. In this light, morally convicted attitudes seem to be rather immoral with respect to the normative model of republican democracy.

The findings of this research study demonstrate that a morally charged frame over the issue of building a sports stadium influenced whether participants indicated that the issue reflected something about their core moral values and convictions. The results also demonstrated that the stronger the reported moral conviction the more likely participants were to say that they would vote on the hypothetical ballot initiative. Given the content of the issue and the strong economic benefits that the hypothetical stadium would bring to the citizens, the treatment was powerful in its ability to reduce the likelihood of a yes vote. This study demonstrated that the “fairness/cheating” frame can be a powerful predictor of attitudes. But more importantly, if something as mundane as building a sports stadium can be “moralized” then the strategy of moral framing can be a powerful tool in the hands of elites, especially when those elites are a trusted source of information for certain segments of the citizenry.

Avenue for future research includes analyzing the effect of different moral frames over other issues that are generally non-moral. Also, further renditions of this experiment can vary the identity of the speech giver – using political cues such as partisanship or prominent political figures. More studies also need to be conducted outside of the experimental setting to maximize external validity. Further research into moral framing, morally convicted

attitudes, and their effect on political attitudes and behavior can help identify their uses and possible consequences for American democracy.

## APPENDIX – TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Cross Tabulation, Vote Yes by Treatment

	CONTROL	TREATMENT	TOTAL
<b>VOTE NO</b>	25.65% (59)	54.82% (125)	40.17% (184)
<b>VOTE YES</b>	74.35% (171)	45.18% (103)	59.83% (274)
<b>TOTAL</b>	100% (230)	100% (228)	100% (458)

$$\lambda = 0.21; \chi^2 = 40.54, p = 0.000$$

Table 2: Cross Tabulation, Connected to Moral Conviction by Treatment

	TREATMENT = 0	TREATMENT = 1	TOTAL
<b>DISAGREE (NOT PART OF MORAL CONVICTION)</b>	24.78% (57)	13.6% (31)	19.21% (88)
<b>NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE</b>	19.13% (44)	19.74% (45)	19.43% (89)
<b>AGREE (PART OF MORAL CONVICTION)</b>	56.09% (129)	66.67% (152)	61.35% (281)
<b>TOTAL</b>	100% 230	100% 228	100% 458

$$\gamma = 0.23, ASE = 0.82; \chi^2 = 9.56, p = 0.00$$

Table 3: Logit Regression, Vote Yes on Ballot Initiative

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>95% CI Lower</i>	<i>95% CI Upper</i>
<i>Treatment</i>	-1.39	0.28	-5.03	0.00	-1.93	-0.85
<i>Connected to Moral Values</i>	-0.20	0.10	-1.97	0.049	-0.39	0.00
<i>Negative Event Count</i>	-1.20	0.20	-5.90	0.00	-1.60	-0.80
<i>Positive Event Count</i>	0.98	0.12	7.93	0.00	0.74	1.23
<i>Female</i>	-0.29	0.29	-0.99	0.32	-0.86	0.28
<i>Age</i>	-0.01	0.01	-0.56	0.57	-0.03	0.02
<i>Interested in Sports</i>	0.66	0.20	3.37	0.00	0.28	1.04
<i>Ideology (Lib to Con)</i>	0.01	0.11	0.08	0.93	-0.21	0.23
<i>Interested in Politics</i>	-0.11	0.15	-0.73	0.47	-0.40	0.18
<i>More Gov. Services</i>	-0.02	0.20	-0.12	0.91	-0.42	0.37
<i>Income</i>	0.10	0.09	1.15	0.25	-0.07	0.27
<i>Political Knowledge</i>	-0.63	0.21	-3.00	0.00	-1.04	-0.22
<i>Democrat</i>	-0.13	0.34	-0.38	0.71	-0.79	0.53
<i>White</i>	0.26	0.34	0.76	0.45	-0.40	0.92
<i>Constant</i>	2.54	1.32	1.93	0.05	-0.04	5.13
<i>N = 430</i>						
<i><math>\chi^2 = 213.39</math></i>	<b>p = 0.000</b>					
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>	= 0.37					

Table 4: Trimmed Logit Regression, Vote Yes on Ballot Initiative

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>95% CI Lower</i>	<i>95% CI Upper</i>
<i>Treatment</i>	-1.37	0.27	-5.09	0.000	-1.89	-0.84
<i>Connected to Moral Values</i>	-0.25	0.09	-2.62	0.009	-0.43	-0.06
<i>Negative Event Count</i>	-1.23	0.19	-6.47	0.000	-1.64	-0.88
<i>Positive Event Count</i>	0.96	0.12	8.19	0.000	0.72	1.18
<i>Interested in Sports</i>	0.77	0.17	4.42	0.000	0.43	1.11
<i>Political Knowledge</i>	-0.60	0.18	-3.24	0.001	-0.95	-0.23
<i>Constant</i>	2.15	0.89	2.41	0.016	0.40	3.90
<i>N = 458</i>						
<i><math>\chi^2 = 239.28</math></i>	<b>p = 0.000</b>					
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>	= 0.387					

Figure 1: Odds Ratios, Vote Yes, with Confidence Intervals

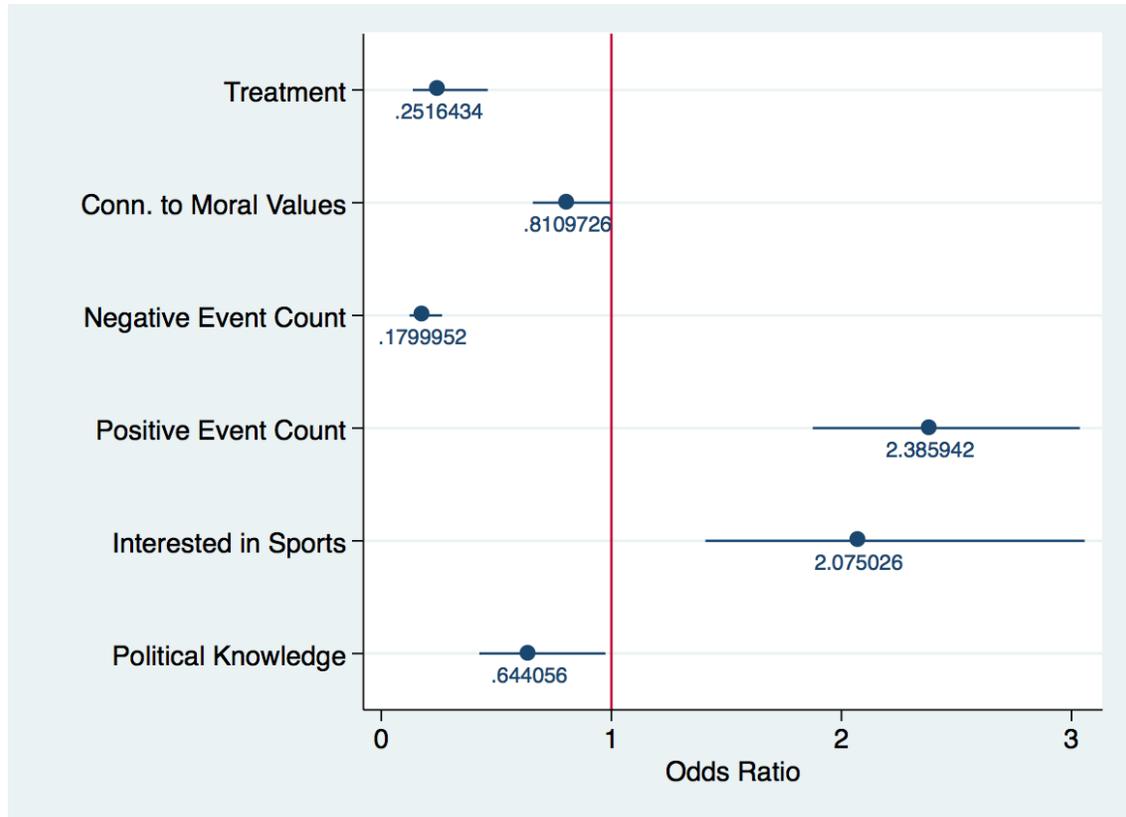


Table 5: Logit Regression, Vote Yes on Ballot Initiative

	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>95% CI Lower</i>	<i>95% CI Upper</i>
<i>Treatment</i>	-0.85	0.40	-2.12	0.03	-1.64	-0.06
<i>Unequal Benefits</i>	-1.37	0.51	-2.71	0.01	-2.36	-0.38
<i>Treatment*Unequal Benefits</i>	-1.40	0.66	-2.1	0.04	-2.70	-0.10
<i>Equal Benefits</i>	-0.31	0.40	-0.77	0.44	-1.10	0.48
<i>Negative Event Count</i>	-0.96	0.23	-4.08	0.00	-1.41	-0.50
<i>Positive Event Count</i>	0.95	0.15	6.54	0.00	0.67	1.24
<i>Interested in Sports</i>	0.54	0.20	2.66	0.01	0.14	0.95
<i>Political Knowledge</i>	-0.29	0.23	-1.27	0.20	-0.73	0.16
<i>Constant</i>	0.85	0.93	0.91	0.36	-0.98	2.68
<i>N = 458</i>						
$\chi^2 = 239.28$	<b>p = 0.000</b>					
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup> = 0.56</i>						

Figure 2: Average Marginal Effects of the Interaction Term with CIs

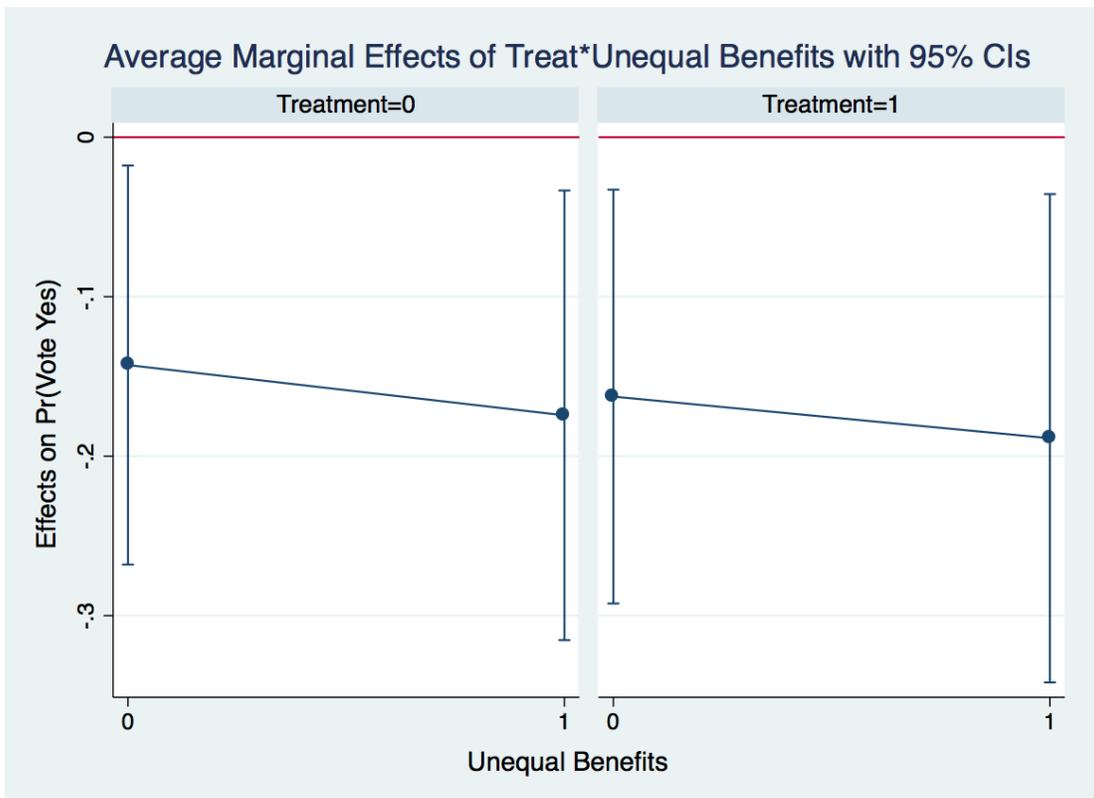


Figure 3: Mediation Analysis, Connected to Moral Conviction

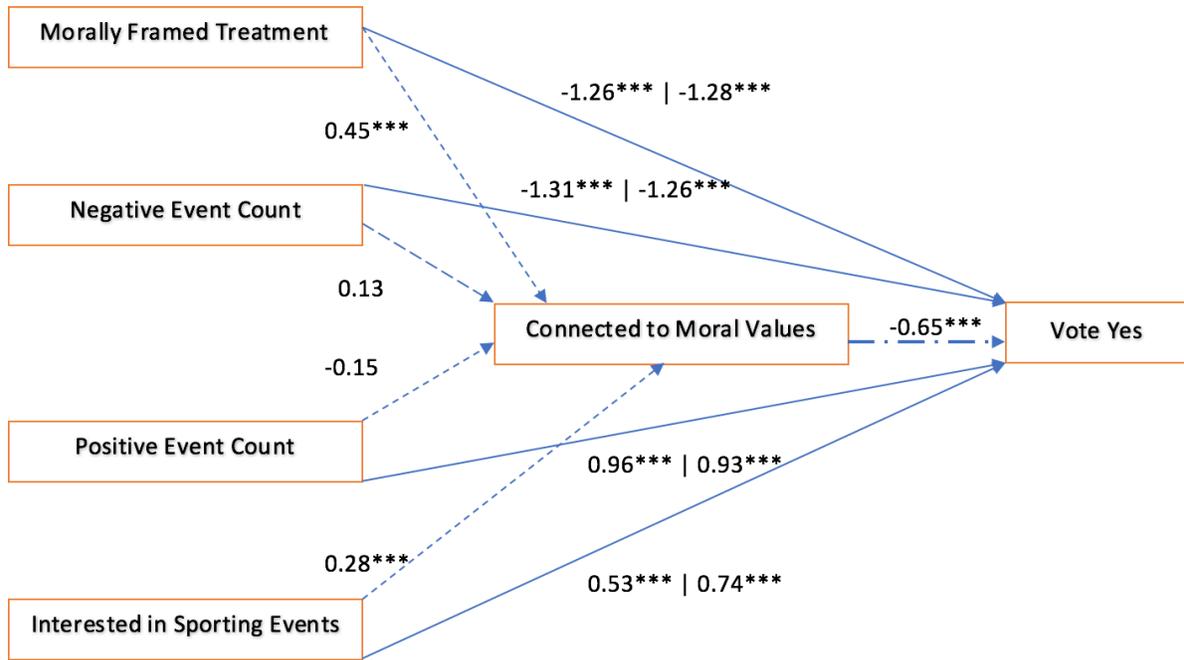
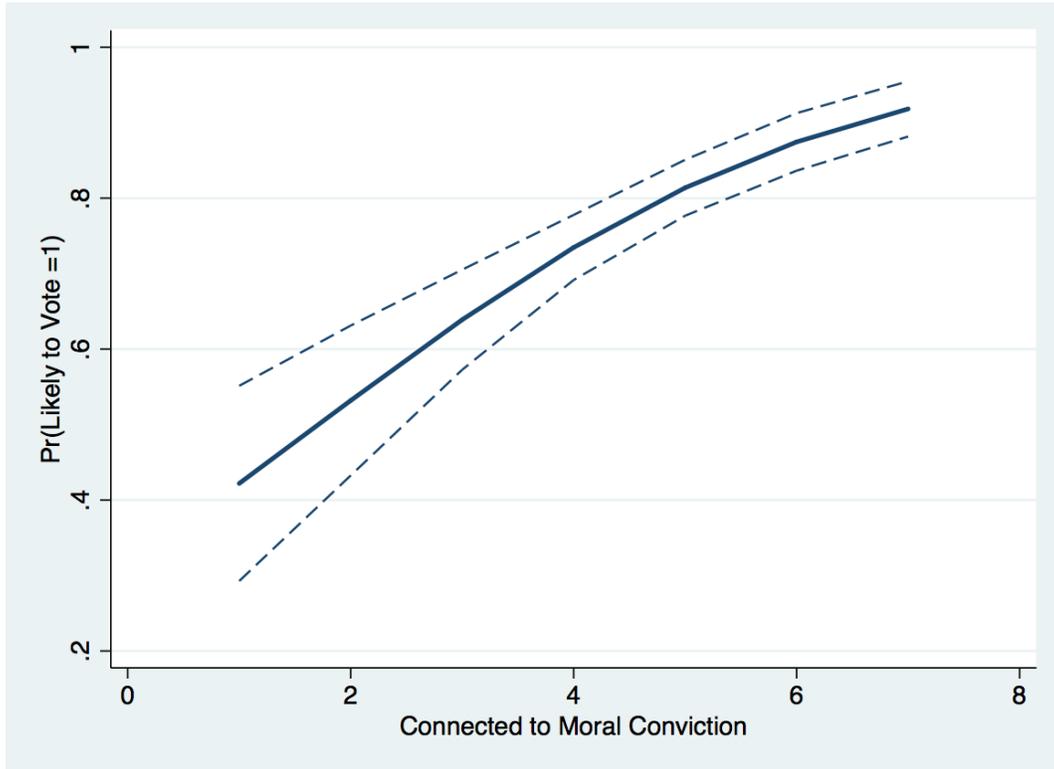


Table 6: Logit Regression, Likelihood of Reporting Voting on the Initiative

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>P&gt;z</i>	<i>95% CI Lower</i>	<i>95% CI Upper</i>
<i>Treatment</i>	-0.23	0.26	-0.89	0.38	-0.73	0.28
<i>Connected to Moral Values</i>	0.51	0.09	5.84	0.00	0.34	0.68
<i>Age</i>	0.04	0.01	3.34	0.00	0.02	0.07
<i>Interested in Sports</i>	0.43	0.17	2.59	0.01	0.10	0.76
<i>Interested in Politics</i>	0.24	0.13	1.83	0.07	-0.02	0.49
<i>Income</i>	0.13	0.09	1.50	0.13	-0.04	0.31
<i>Political Knowledge</i>	0.37	0.17	2.18	0.03	0.04	0.71
<i>Constant</i>	-5.73	0.94	-6.09	0.00	-7.58	-3.89
<i>N = 458</i>						
<i>χ<sup>2</sup> = 84.04</i>	<b>p = 0.000</b>					
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup> = 0.17</i>						

Figure 4: Effect of Moral Conviction on Likelihood of Voting



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