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Individual Moral Judgment and Cultural Ideologies

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Abstract

Moral judgment cannot be reduced to cultural ideology, or vice versa. But when each construct is measured separately, then combined, the product predicts powerfully to moral thinking. In Study 1, 2 churches (N=96) were selected for their differences on religious ideology, political identity, and moral judgment. By combining these 3 variables, a multiple correlation of .79 predicted to members' moral thinking (opinions on human rights issues). Study 2 replicated this finding on a secular sample, with the formula established in Study 1 (R = .77). Individual conceptual development in moral judgment and socialization into cultural ideology co-occur, simultaneously and reciprocally, in parallel, and not serially. Individual development in moral judgment provides the epistemological categories for cultural ideology which in turn influences the course of moral judgment, to produce moral thinking (e.g., opinions about abortion, free speech).

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Theories of moral development typically invoke two processes to explain change over time: socialization of the individual into cultural ideology, and the individual's cognitive construction of social/moral meaning. Theorists differ in terms of emphasing one process or the other, and in terms of which process is assumed to be dominant at one period of time. The concepts of autonomy and heteronomy are used to refer, respectively, to the individual, cognitive-constructionist, agentic aspect of morality, or to the external, shared-group, conforming aspect. Autonomy and heteronomy are the Yin and Yang of moral theorists. On the one hand, Cognitive-developmental theories, centering on the construct of moral judgment, emphasize the development of autonomy. On the other hand, Social Learning theories and Cultural Psychology theories, centering on cultural transmission, emphasize heteronomy. Moreover, Piaget postulated that development consists in moving from heteronomy to autonomy; Kohlberg postulated oscillation between heteronomy and autonomy within each stage--as "A" and "B" substages. This paper takes the view that the two processes are both involved in the formation of moral thinking; but they are simultaneous, parallel and reciprocal processes.

We use the term, "moral thinking," to refer to people's judgments about right and wrong and the rationale behind such thinking. "Moral thinking" is meant to be broader than "moral judgment" in that the moral judgment construct refers more narrowly to the cognitive construction of basic epistemological categories (e.g., justice, duty, legitimate authorities, and rights). In contrast, moral thinking--as we use the term--refers to a person's views on such issues as abortion, rights of homosexuals, religion in public schools, women's roles, and euthanasia. "Cultural ideology" is another basic process in the formation of moral thinking, and refers to values, norms, and standards that exist independently of a single person and are shared by the group as part of their mutual culture. Our position is that moral judgment and cultural ideology both contribute significantly and uniquely to moral thinking. We have in mind a two-process, parallel theory for moral thinking, somewhat like the two process, parallel theory of Kintsch and van Dijk (1978) for text comprehension--that is, the production of moral thinking involves two processes occurring simultaneously and reciprocally, not serially, or at different times.

A good place to examine differences in moral thinking is in the clash of views on public policy issues described by Hunter (1991) in his book Culture Wars: The struggle to define America. The moral issues at stake are abortion, rights of homosexuals, religion in public schools, etc. Hunter describes the activities of antagonistic pressure groups: lobbying in political parties and legislatures against each other, sending out mailings against each other, hostile radio talk shows, splitting church denominations, and sponsoring public demonstrations. Hunter calls the polar opposites, "Orthodoxy" and "Progressivism." Orthodoxy locates moral authority in traditional, transcendent religion (p. 44); whereas Progressivism locates moral authority in "the spirit of the modern age, a spirit of rationalism and subjectivism" (p. 44-45). The split between Orthodoxy and Progressivism frustrates the attempt to find consensus in the U.S.A. on many issues of public policy. In similar terms, Marty and Appleby (1993) describe the international aspect of this polarization, stating that the greatest ideological clash since the cessation of the

Cold War is between Fundamentalism and Secular Modernism. In a series of edited volumes on countries through out the world, they describe "sectarian strife and violent ethnic particularisms, to skirmishes spilling over into border disputes, civil wars, and battles of secession" (p. 1). Thus the Orthodoxy-Progressive clash in world view is a significant phenomenon to investigate in the study of moral thinking.

A great deal of effort has been devoted to treating the two processes (of moral judgment and cultural ideology) as rival explanations, reducing one construct to the other construct. For instance, Emler, Resnick and Malone (1983) contend that the Kohlbergian scheme of moral stages--and the Defining Issues Test ("DIT") in particular--is really a manifestation of liberal/conservative political ideology. Emler, et al. (1983) stated: "[M]oral reasoning and political attitudes are by and large one and the same thing....." [p. 1073]; "We believe that individual differences in moral reasoning among adults--and in particular those corresponding to the conventional-principled distinction--are interpretable as variations on a dimension of political-moral ideology and not as variations on a cognitive-developmental dimension" [p. 1075].

Opposing the reduction of DIT scores to political attitude as the quote above suggests, a recent book (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau & Thoma, 1998; shorter treatments are given in Rest, Thoma, & Edwards, 1997; Rest, Narvaez, Thoma & Bebeau, 1997) argues for a cognitive developmental interpretation of Kohlbergian theory and the DIT. Briefly, the evidence consists of the following seven types of studies (for which over 400 published articles are cited): (1) discrimination of age/education/expert groups; (2) longitudinal studies; (3) correlation with moral comprehension, cognitive capacity in moral thinking, and other cognitive developmental measures; (4) pre-post test gains in moral intervention studies; (5) links to behavior and "real life" decision-making; (6) predictability to political attitudes and political choice; and (7) reliability. These studies argue that in accord with Kohlberg's theory, the DIT shows individual development in adolescence and adulthood, from conventional to postconventional thinking. The present article assumes that Kohlberg's theory about conventional thinking developing into postconventional thinking is a valid characterization of moral judgment development and that the DIT is a valid measure of it. However we rely on previous studies to make this case.

We suppose that both moral judgment and cultural ideology each provide separate information that does not reduce to the other; and that moral thinking is produced by the simultaneous and reciprocal interaction of these processes, acting in parallel, not serially. We suppose that the individual struggles to construct meaning of the social world (measured by the moral judgment construct). We also suppose that cultural ideology has a developmental influence by emphasizing certain social phenomena, interpreting features of the social environment in certain ways, reinforcing certain group practices that organize social life and activity, and affording certain tools, instruments, and roles. Each person does not invent culture anew. However--this is our main point--the acquisition of cultural ideology is conditioned by what makes sense to the individual. Individual cognitive development provides the conceptual bedrock for certain ideologies ("bedrock" in the sense of providing the basic epistemological categories by which to interpret cultural ideologies). In turn, cultural ideology affects the course of moral judgment. The question--we believe--is not whether individual moral judgment or group-based cultural ideology determines moral thinking , but rather the question is how do they interrelate. Our strategy is to show that when measures of cultural ideology and moral judgment are separately measured, then combined, the combination predicts more powerfully to moral thinking than either one alone. Before moving on to the empirical study, some comment should be made about how DIT research is both similar and different from the "Classic" Kohlbergian theory (for a more detailed discussion, see Rest, et al, 1998, Chapter 2, "A neo-Kohlbergian approach"). DIT research supposes--along with classic Kohlbergian theory--that the major developmental shift during adolescence and adulthood is from conventional to postconventional moral thinking. We describe development in terms of a shift from the schema of "Maintaining Norms" (largely Kohlberg's "Law and Order," Stage 4, orientation) to the "Postconventional Schema" (largely Kohlberg's Stage 5 and 6). We depict development in terms of the individual's conceptualization of the moral basis of societal cooperation (how it is possible to organize cooperation on a society-wide basis, especially when the participants relate to each other not on a personal, face-to-face basis, but through social roles, institutional structures, and law). The "Maintaining Norms" schema is defined in terms of respecting established social practices and existing authorities. We define "Postconventional schema" in terms of sharable ideals for organizing society, subject to public scrutiny and debate. Different from Kohlberg, our definition of postconventionality is not partial to the specific moral philosophies of deontologists like John Rawls (1991) or the European Liberal Enlightenment, but is broader (and looser) than Kohlberg's

definition, including left-leaning philosophies (like Rawls, 1991), but also including right-wing Communitarian philosophers (like Sandel (1982), and Walzer (1983)--and in fact, most modern moral philosophies. We contend that concepts of fairness and justice of society are not the same as Leftist Liberal ideology. For instance, the left-wing "political correctness" of the 1980s (Gross and Levitt, 1994) has received a moral critique, as well as right-wing conservative political ideology (Haan, Smith, & Block, 1968). The theoretical possibility that Postconventional reasoning can critique injustices of both the political left and the political right implies that concepts of justice (moral judgment) are distinct from either political ideology of the left or the right; the empirical findings of this study argue for the non-equivalence of political ideology and moral judgment.

Having just said that moral judgment is not equivalent to Left-wing political thinking, it is nevertheless true that right-wing political views are often associated with Maintaining Norms (Stage 4), and left-wing political views are associated with Postconventional Schema (Stages 5 and 6). In fact, Rest, et al. (1998) reviews 37 statistically significant associations (usually r in the .4 to .6 range) between the DIT and liberal political attitudes. Note that our interpretation of these correlations is not that they show that moral judgment, political attitude (and religious attitudes, and possibly other measures of ideology) all reduce to a single, underlying factor of Liberalism/Conservatism. Liberalism/Conservatism is not the ubiquitous counterpart in social cognition to the "g" factor of intelligence tests. Our interpretation is to affirm some common covariation among these variables, but also to assert their unique variance. The reason for the association between the DIT and political attitude, first concerns the fact that the DIT P score is sensitive to the shift between the Maintaining Norms schema and the Postconventional schema. This shift in conceptualizing society is accompanied by a shift in attitude towards authority (shifting from unquestioning support in Maintaining Norms to holding authorities accountable in Postconventional Schema). Also there is a shift in attitude towards the importance of maintaining established social norms and institutions (where the Maintaining Norms schema supports all established norms, but the Postconventional Schema supports only those practices that serve the community's shared ideals). In short, development in moral judgment is accompanied by shifts in political attitude. Most often, Conservative positions are more supportive of authority and established practices, and usually Postconventional thinkers find Liberal political positions more congenial. However the association between political attitudes and moral judgment is not an identity of constructs.

Study 1: Church Sample

We wanted to contrast Orthodox views with Progressive views. Therefore like the studies of Ernsberger and Manaster (1981), Jelen (1989), and Jensen (1996, 1997), we looked to contrasting church congregations to find differences in world view. We sought out congregations with contrasting reputations for liberalism or conservatism. Furthermore, we wanted to match the two congregations on as many demographic variables as possible so as to rule out explanations of differences due to geographical region, occupation, age, education, race, sex, size of congregation, or neighborhood. Study 1 was of a pair of congregations in the metropolitan Twin Cities, in the same neighborhood, of the same size (about 300 members)--the liberal congregation being United Church of Christ ("UCC"), the conservative congregation being a Baptist congregation. Our first concern was to confirm that the "liberal" congregation was indeed "liberal" on our measures, and the other congregation was "conservative." Our next concern was to see how the ideology variables and the moral judgment variable could be combined to predict opinions on public policy issues.

Method

Participants

A random sample of 100 members from each congregation were mailed the sets of questionnaires. Participants received five dollars for participating. Eighty-seven Baptists and 80 UCC members returned the questionnaires. Of these, 50 Baptists and 46 UCC members had complete protocols on every variable and passed the consistency checks built into the Defining Issues Test.[1] Most of the participants who were dropped were over 60 years old and whom we assume had difficulties with the testing materials.

Materials

Major independent variables. Several measures of religious and political ideology were chosen to be independent variables. Previous research had suggested the instruments were robust: the Brown and Lowe Inventory of Religious Belief, Hoge's Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale, and a Political Conservatism-Liberalism. Also the Defining Issues Test was used as the measure of moral judgment. (The demographic variables were considered minor independent variables.)

Religious ideology: (FUNDA and THEO). In order to measure

religious fundamentalism, Brown & Lowe's Inventory of Religious Belief (1951) was chosen. It is a 15-item measure that uses a 5-point, Likert-type scale. Its items differentiate between those who believe and those who reject the literalness of Christian tenets. It includes items like: "I believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God" (a positively-keyed item); "The Bible is full of errors, misconceptions and contradictions" (a negatively-keyed item); "I believe Jesus was born of a Virgin"; and "I believe in the personal, visible return of Christ to earth." Scores on the Brown-Lowe range from 15-75. High scores indicate strong literal Christian belief. Criterion group validity is good between more and less fundamentalistic church groups (Brown & Lowe, 1951; Getz, 1984). Test-retest reliability has been reported in the upper .70s. Spearman-Brown reliability has been found in the upper .80s (Brown & Lowe, 1951). In this article, Cronbach Alpha was .95 for the entire group of 158 participants. This scale taps a key element of Orthodoxy and the variable is labeled "FUNDA"[2]--Fundamentalism in our reports of analyses.

Hoge's Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale (Hoge, 1972) was chosen to determine whether or not religion was a primary source of direction and value in the lives of the participants. It consists of ten items such as "My faith involves all of my life" and "In my life I experience the presence of the Divine." The Hoge Scale measures the degree to which participants have a "theocentric" interpretation of their experience and of the world. High scores indicate that religion is valued for its own sake and participants report that religious belief is central in their lives. Scores range from 10 to 40. Studies with the Hoge scale indicate a Kuder-Richardson reliability of .90 (Hoge, 1972). The Hoge scale is significantly negatively correlated with prejudice (Allport & Ross, 1967). The Cronbach Alpha for the entire group in this paper was .90. Hoge scale scores will be referred to as "THEO."

Political Ideology: (POLCON). Participants were asked to identify their political identity on a 5-point scale (political conservatism scale), 1 = liberal and 5 = conservative. Another approach to measuring political liberalism/conservatism involves asking about a number of policy issues which are scored for advocating a liberal or conservative position, and then summed across items to arrive at a liberalism/conservatism score. This second approach was not used, however, because it was so similar to the dependent variable (ATHRI)--and we thought that using political policy items both as an independent and dependent variable would not produce interpretable and interesting findings. Furthermore, Emler, et al. (1983) pose their challenge to the moral judgment construct in terms of political identity (the self-conscious affirmation about whether one is a Liberal or Conservative). In addition, other researchers have used this one item, self-report measure to assess political ideology (e.g., Jelen, 1991). This variable will be referred to as "POLCON"--political conservatism, high scores being conservative.

Moral Judgment: (DIT). The Defining Issues Test (Rest, et al, 1998) is a paper-and-pencil test of moral judgment. It presents six dilemmas, each followed by a list of possible considerations in resolving the dilemma which are rated and ranked for importance by the participant. The most widely used index of the DIT is the P-score, representing the percentage of postconventional reasoning preferred by the respondent. Although the stages of moral thinking reflected on the DIT were inspired by Kohlberg's initial work, the DIT is not tied to a particular philosophical ethicist. The test-retest reliability of the P-score in heterogenous samples is generally in the high .70's and .80's. Cronbach Alpha's are usually in the high .70's and 80's. For the entire group in this paper, Cronbach's Alpha was .71.

Opinions about Public Policy Issues: (ATHRI). As the dependent variable--the measure of moral thinking--the Attitudes toward Human Rights Inventory constructed by Getz (1985), asks participants to agree or disagree (on a 5 point scale) with public policy issues such as abortion, euthanasia, homosexual rights, due process rights of the accused, free speech, women's roles, and the role of religion in public schools. The ATHRI poses issues drawn from the American Constitution's Bill of Rights, similar to the large-scale studies of American attitudes about civil liberties by McClosky and Brill (1983). The ATHRI contains forty items, ten of which are platitudinous, "apple pie" statements of a general nature with which everyone tends to agree. Here are two examples of the platitudinous, non-controversial items: "Freedom of speech should be a basic human right" and "Our nation should work toward liberty and justice for all." In contrast, thirty items are controversial, specific applications of human rights, for example: "Books should be banned if they are written by people who have been involved in un-American activities." And, "Laws should be passed to regulate the activities of religious cults that have come here from Asia." During initial validation, a pro-rights group (from an organization that had a reputation for backing civil liberties) and a selective-about-rights group (from a group with a reputation for backing civil liberties selectively) were enrolled for a pilot study (n=101) with 112 controversial items (Getz, 1985). Thirty of the items that showed the strongest divergence between groups were selected for the final version of the questionnaire along with 10 items which expressed platitudes with which there was not

disagreement (see Getz, 1985, for further details on pilot study). Therefore with the ATHRI we have a total of 40 human rights issues that are related to civil libertarian issues. Scores range from 40 to 200. High scores represent advocacy of civil liberties. Cronbach alpha was .93 for the entire group of participants in this paper.

Demographic Variables. Data were collected also on several demographic variables: education, sex, and occupation. We had originally selected the two congregations to match for these variables so that they would not be confounds in the analyses. Of these variables, education is the most serious possible confound since education is significantly and positively correlated with both civil liberty political attitudes (McClosky & Brill, 1983) and also with the DIT (Rest, 1979). Therefore we tried to control education so as to avoid the situation in which a positive relation of the DIT with public policy issues could be explained away as due to education.

Education was rated on a 9-point scale as follows: 1 = 7 years of elementary school or less; 2 = finished 8th or 9th grade; 3 = some high school; 4 = high school graduate; 5 = some college or technical school; 6 = college graduate; 7 = some graduate school; 8 = master's degree; 9 = doctorate degree. Participants gave education information about themselves ("ED1") and also about the primary wage earner in their family ("ED2"), but the two were so highly related that we report results only from ED1.

Finally, participants were asked to write down their occupation ("OCC1") and that of the primary wage earner in the family ("OCC2"). The Duncan Socio-Economic Index was used to analyze the responses concerning occupation. The Duncan index uses prestige ratings derived from public opinion polls (Haug, 1977). Scores range from 1 to 100, with higher numbers representing greater prestige. Again we report only OCC1 because the two were so highly related.

Procedure

A questionnaire containing the various measures was randomly ordered for each participant so as to control for order effects. They were then distributed by mail to a random sample of the members in each congregation.

Results and Discussion

Demographics

Basic demographic data are listed for each group in Table 1. The demographic variables for the two churches are given in the upper-left portion of the table. Recall that our intention was to match the two congregations on these variables so that demographic variables would not confound the other analyses. As intended, the subsamples were well matched on occupation and sex. There were no significant differences between the church groups on occupational status. The only sex difference was that women tended to have more education than the men in both congregations. Although samples were nearly of equal size, there were more females in each group. However there was a significant difference in average education between the two congregations, the more conservative Baptists reported a higher level of education for themselves and for the family breadwinner than did the members of the more liberal UCC congregation. This finding reverses the direction of the correlation usually found. In large scale, representative samples (e.g., McClosky & Brill, 1983) education is positively correlated with liberalism. Since this sample is not a large scale, representative sample of the U.S. population, these education findings do not threaten the generalizations from representative samples. So as things turned out, our particular selection of groups over-compensated for education. In any case, a positive relation of moral judgment to opinions about public policies cannot be explained as due to "piggybacking" on education.

"Liberalism" in the two churches

From the reputation of the churches, we expected that the two congregations would differ on the ideological variables (FUNDA, THEO, POLCON), on moral judgment development (DIT), and on opinions about public policy issues (ATHRI). Table 1 lists these variables and their differences between the church groups. All major independent and dependent variables are significantly different among the two churches in the expected directions (which for convenience of discussion, we term the "liberal" or "conservative" direction of the variable, although in the Introduction we contend that all these variables do not reduce to a single, unitary construct of liberalism/conservatism).

Summary scores for each measure (means and standard deviations in parentheses) are reported, although as suggested by the high internal consistencies of the ideology scales, each single item tended also to be significantly different between the congregations. Of the 15 items on the Brown-Lowe scale (FUNDA), all 15 items were separately significantly different; of the 10 items of the Hoge scale (THEO), all 10 were significantly different; of the 40 items of the ATHRI, 23 were significantly different, the 10 platitude items being generally less discriminating (all participants tending to agree with the civil libertarian position). We note that the ATHRI item

concerning euthanasia, and the item concerning abortion are similar to the issues raised by Jensen (1996) and, like Jensen, we also find significant differentiation between the congregations on these issues. Further, Table 1 shows there was a significant difference found for self reported liberal/conservative political identity (POLCON). Although there was some variance within the churches, overall the Baptists regarded themselves as politically more conservative than the UCC members. Additionally, the DIT was higher on postconventional thinking (P score) for the UCC congregation. On the other hand, the Baptists had a higher mean on Stage 4 ("Maintaining Norms") thinking than the UCC members.

In summary, we were successful in locating two congregations with polarized positions on public policy issues regarding human rights, and these polarities were found in ideological and moral judgment measures as well. Differences on all the measures (except education) were in the expected direction. We had sought to find the Orthodoxy-Progressive split where other researches had found it (in contrasting churches), and we also found it.

Since the two congregations can be regarded as two sub-cultures each with its own ideology, these data support the cultural ideology explanation that accounts for differences of views on public policy issues. That is--according to this view--as members are acculturated into each group, we can suppose that members are influenced by the values, interpretations, and practices of their respective groups. However, as we shall see, sub-cultural socialization is not the only determinant of people's opinions about public policy matters. While there are striking differences between the groups, there is considerable with-in group variation, suggesting that something else is co-determining people's opinions.

Intercorrelations Among the Variables

Table 2 shows the bivariate correlations of each variable with each other (upper portion of Table 2). Note that "GROUP" represents membership in the Baptist church =1 or membership in the UCC church =2; "ORTHO" is discussed below.) The correlational pattern is consistent in that the more liberal pole of each measure is positively linked to the more liberal pole of the other measures.

Looking more closely, note the correlations with ATHRI. Note that GROUP (belonging to the Baptist or UCC church) is not the highest correlation with ATHRI. The DIT is higher. Using the procedure recommended by Howell (1987,p. 244-245), with Fisher's transformation of correlations, the correlation of the DIT with ATHRI (.65) is significantly higher than GROUP with ATHRI (.52), [$t_{(93)} = 2.54$, $p < .02$). This suggests that explaining the variance in opinions about public policy issues should include moral judgment. Also the correlation of FUNDA (.63) with ATHRI is significantly higher than that of GROUP [$t_{(93)} = 3.17$, $p = .01$). However the correlation of POLCON with ATHRI (.58) was not significantly higher than that for GROUP. In sum, group membership accounts for only about 27% of the variance of ATHRI. ($r = .52$). Something else accounts for the other 73%.

Table 2 also indicates that the two congregations did not differ much on education nor occupation (note that the correlations of occupation and education with GROUP are in the teens and 20s). The findings of this study do not challenge the often repeated outcome in the literature that finds a significant positive relation between education, occupation and liberal political attitudes because the design of the study was to control these variables and not to study the correlation of education or occupation as it exists in the natural, social environment..

Another view of the relationships of the variables with ATHRI comes from partial correlations (given in the bottom portion of Table 2 rather than bivariate correlations given in top portion) of each variable after controlling for the other variables. We see that the partial correlation of GROUP with ATHRI (after controlling for the religious and political ideology variables and for the DIT) is negligible. In contrast, the partial correlation with moral judgment (DIT-P score) is substantial and statistically significant. (Also the partial correlation of Fundamentalism, and Liberal/ Conservatism are significant.) The analysis of partial correlations corroborates the pattern discussed in the bivariate correlations: the most powerful contributions to the predictability of public policy issues (ATHRI) are from the DIT-P score, Religious Fundamentalism, and Political Liberalism/Conservatism.

Measuring the Psychological Construct, Orthodoxy-Progressivism

Thus far, we have found that there is a difference between the two churches on "liberalism/conservatism" measured in various ways. Also we have reason to believe that the combined sample of both churches represents a fairly large portion of the range of our measures. Consider this: we are not limited in our analysis to explaining the variance of ATHRI to simply the classification of subjects by church membership. If we attend to the individually-measured variables (ideology subdivided into FUNDA, THEO, and POLCON) plus individual development in moral judgment (DIT), we can include both the cultural ideology explanation and also the moral judgment explanation in accounting for variation on public policy issues. In other words,

this second approach allows us to go beyond simply church membership, and allows us to consider combining cultural ideology with moral judgment. The combination of variables is our operationalization of the construct, Orthodoxy-Progressivism ("ORTHO").

In order to test the combination of the independent variables in predicting to the dependent variable, a multiple regression was run on the two-church sample (n = 96). The independent variables were POLCON, FUNDA, THEO, and DIT; ATHRI was the dependent variable. The multiple regression R was .79, accounting for 62% of the variance on the ATHRI. Thus the combined measure of individual measures accounted for more than twice the variance (62%) of ATHRI than did church membership alone (27%).[3] THEO (i.e., Theocentrism, the Hoge score) was not significantly related to ATHRI in multiple regression with the other variables. The redundancy of THEO was also suggested in the partial correlation analysis. In other words, in this sample, variation on THEO does not contribute unique variance related to attitudes about public policy after its shared variance with the other variables is partialled out. Therefore another multiple regression was run without THEO: with POLCON, FUNDA, and DIT predicting to ATHRI. Table 3 (top portion) summarizes this multiple regression (involving only minor shifts in values from the original regression that included THEO).

Table 3 shows that combining moral judgment development with political and religious ideology predicts powerfully to human rights issues (multiple R = .79). Reversing the signs in the regression equation so that the measure can be called "Orthodoxy" (so as to negatively correlate with ATHRI), we have a variable which is a combination of moral, political, and religious variables, labeled "ORTHO." ORTHO is formed by taking the following values from the regression analysis: 4.92 (POLCON) + .63(FUNDA) + -.59(DIT). Note in Table 3, that moral judgment has a large standardized beta weight relative to the three predictors, indicating that the developmental variable, moral judgment, should be included in predicting to ATHRI.

Study 2: the Student Sample

There are several problems in knowing what generalizations follow from Study 1:

(a) The two congregations were specifically selected for the likelihood of representing polar opposites on the construct, Orthodoxy/Progressivism. But extreme groups on a construct don't always predict how samples will behave that are not selected for their extreme views. (b) The formula for ORTHO predicts very well to ATHRI for the sample in Study 1. But the formula is based on a multiple regression based on that sample's data, and therefore may capitalize on chance factors in that particular data set. In order to claim some generality, the formula and findings need to be replicated on another sample. (c) Multiple regression is a statistical procedure designed so that many independent variables predict better to the dependent variable than one independent variable alone. Therefore how do we know that finding that a multiple regression predicts better to ATHRI than the church membership variable doesn't simply represent the success of the workings of the statistical procedure of multiple regression rather than an insight particular to moral thinking? (d) What is true of a sectarian sample (i.e., the church sample) may not be true of a secular sample (people not recruited from churches). Study 2 was designed to address these problems.

As a cross replication of Study 1, Study 2 tested a sample of university students. They differed from the church sample in several ways. First, the student sample was younger (mean age = 23) and at the beginning of their careers, whereas the church members were older (mean age = 47) and well along in their careers. Secondly, the students were in a setting designed to foster critical thinking and questioning of roles and practices, whereas the church members were established in their roles and were responsible for maintaining families, jobs and communities. Furthermore, the university was located in a community with many church-based 4-year colleges, so we assumed that highly religious young people were not at the secular institution. In addition, the college years are noted for their questioning of religion (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Thus the sample of Study 2 seemed apt for testing the robustness of the Orthodoxy construct and addresses the concerns of Problems (a), (c), and (d), above. Further, using the same formula in Study 2 for ORTHO derived from the regression in Study 1, provides a check on chance factors in building up the multiple R in Study 1 [addressing Problem (b), above].

Method

Participants.

Eighty-two undergraduates from a public university volunteered to complete the questionnaires. Sixty-two undergraduates had completed protocols for every measure and passed consistency checks on the Defining Issues Test. Descriptive demographic data are listed in Table 1. The 56 undergraduates who identified themselves as religious were affiliated with the Christian faith and therefore the FUNDA and THEO measures were

appropriate. Six of the undergraduates listed no religious affiliation. The range of education was restricted (to only undergraduates) so that education could be controlled as a possible confound (for similar reasons to those in Study 1).

Materials and Procedure.

The same measures were used as in the first study. The questionnaires were delivered by hand to the students. As in the first study, questionnaires were ordered randomly for each participant.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations for the primary variables. In general, the student sample was more like the UCC sample than the Baptist sample--more liberal on political conservatism (POLCON), theocentrism (THEO) , fundamentalism (FUNDA), Orthodoxy (ORTHO), moral judgment(DIT-P) and ATHRI. The main point, however, for Study 2 was not to compare mean scores with other samples (and thus to represent the population of students in contrast to church populations), but to investigate relations among the variables.

As in Sample 1, a multiple regression was run on Sample 2 with POLCON, FUNDA, THEO and DIT-P as independent variables, and ATHRI as the dependent variable. As in Study 1, the THEO variable did not have significant unique predictability to ATHRI. Therefore a second multiple regression was run, summarized in Table 3 (bottom portion). The multiple R was .82, accounting for 68% of the variance of ATHRI. As in Study 1, the three independent variables each had statistically significant beta weights indicating again that each variable does not reduce to the other, but in combination, produces a powerful association with ATHRI.

The specific values for the beta weights for the independent variables in Sample 2 differ somewhat from the beta weights in Sample 1 (compare the top portion of Table 3 with the bottom portion). Since there is some specificity in the values of the parameters relative to the sample, therefore we wanted some test of the generality and stability of the multiple regression results of Study 1. To do this, we used the beta values derived in Study 1 for ORTHO to the data in Study 2. Therefore the correlation between ORTHO and ATHRI in Study 2 is not due to the workings of a particular statistical procedure that maximizes the associating of variables within the particular data set of Study 1.

In Study 2, the correlation of ORTHO with ATHRI was .-.77, accounting for 59% of the variance (still over twice the variance accounted for by church membership, 27%). There is a little shrinkage in the correlation of Study 2 (.77) with the multiple R of Study 1 (.79) and perhaps the shrinkage represents the effects of capitalizing on chance factors in Study 1. Perhaps a better estimate of the shrinkage due to sample specificity would be to compare .77 with .82 (the sample specific multiple regression of Study 2). But in either case, the shrinkage is slight, and the variance accounted for is substantial, supporting the generality of Study 1's results.

The significance of dropping out the THEO variable. There are both theoretical and methodological implications to the fact that the Theocentrism variable (i.e., THEO, the Hoge scale) dropped out of the multiple regression both in Study 1 and Study 2. First--regarding the theoretical implication--one might think at first that theocentrism ought to be related to ORTHO (as we originally did--that was why we included the test). Also according to the approach of Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park (in press), who propose analyzing moral thinking into the discourse of Autonomy, Community, and Divinity, we would expect a significant role to be played by the theocentrism variable. According to this line of theorizing, a person high on theocentrism would be expected to invoke spontaneously expressions concerning religion in making social-political decisions (i.e., we would expect the person would use the discourse of Divinity rather than the discourse of Autonomy or of Community). Shweder, et al.'s (in press) formulation attributes great importance to a person's choosing to speak in religious terms rather than non-religious discourse. But the analyses of Study 1 and 2 suggests that simply harkening to religion (of any kind) does not make a significant difference in explaining opinions about public policy issues; what matters is whether the underlying understanding of religion is fundamentalist or not. (FUNDA is significant but THEO is not.)

A second implication that is methodological follows from eliminating theocentrism from the composite variable, ORTHO. Although the simple bivariate correlation of theocentrism with ATHRI was significant, its elimination from the multiple regression shows that ORTHO is not simply an aggregate of whatever variables happen to correlate with ATHRI. It is not the case that more independent variables are invariably better than fewer variables. The multiple regression results are not the inevitable outcome of a statistical procedure that insures that more variables (no matter what they are) produce higher multiple correlations than fewer variables. THEO shows this--its inclusion does not improve the R. In fact we tested the idea of seeing whether

including 10 predictor variables would improve the multiple R, but found that 10 variables (seven more than the standard three) did not increase it. Therefore our result is not simply a matter of adding more independent variables to the regression that accounts for the strength of three variables predicting to ATHRI. There is a special relationship among the three that predicts to ATHRI. It is not just that there are three but the particular three is significant.

Fundamentalism and moral judgment. Fundamentalism (i.e., FUNDA, the Brown and Lowe scale) has a special relation to moral judgment. Using all subjects from both Study 1 and Study 2, we see in Figure 1 the relation between development on the DIT-- in terms of the usual index, the P score-- and Fundamentalism. On the horizontal axis, P scores are grouped into six groups, from low (P=0 to 19) to high (P = 60 and up). On the vertical axis are plotted the average FUNDA scores for each group. With development in moral judgment, FUNDA at first increases, then decreases. This gives new meaning to the phrase, "Middle America." The phrase, "Middle America," is customarily used to refer to the middle classes of Americans (in terms of socio-economic status) who are more politically conservative than either the low or high end of socioeconomic status and to their Law and Order orientation. Here, the term "middle" refers to the mid-ranges of moral judgment development in which religious fundamentalism is highest.

The curvilinear relation of Fundamentalism with moral judgment is also detectable in the bivariate correlations of FUNDA with Stage 4 on the DIT (in contrast to P). Whereas the correlation of FUNDA with P is -.44, the correlation with Stage 4 on the DIT is .51. (In this case the Stage 4 correlation with FUNDA is significantly higher than for P, $t_{(155)} = 8.62$, $p < .001$.) Although P usually has higher correlations than Stage 4 in DIT studies, the attenuation of P's correlation is probably due to P's curvilinear relation with FUNDA, whereas the relation of FUNDA with Stage 4 is more linear. And so the rise of Stage 4 is linked to higher scores on FUNDA. This indicates that those with high fundamentalism scores (who endorse religious items, for instance those dealing with Jesus's Virgin Birth, and the physical Second Coming of Christ) also highly endorse secular Stage 4 items on the DIT concerning uniform respect for civil rules and punishments, citizen duties, property rights, and student respect for university authorities (e.g., "Wouldn't it be a citizen's duty to report an escaped criminal, regardless of the circumstances?" "Every time someone escapes punishment for a crime, doesn't that just encourage more crime?"). This finding suggests speculation about the formation of the Orthodox world view, and suggests more generally how individual development in moral judgment might be related to cultural ideology.

General Discussion

The major empirical findings of the present study are these: (a) political identity as Liberal or Conservative, religious fundamentalism, moral judgment, and views on public policy issues (those especially relevant to civil libertarianism) are all significantly intercorrelated, liberal views going with other liberal views and conservative views going with other conservative views. Church congregations with the general reputation for their conservative or liberal views also show significant differences on these variables. (b) Despite significant bivariate correlations, each of these variables--POLCON, FUNDA, and DIT--cannot be reduced to each other or to a common factor of liberalism/conservatism. Each variable has unique information in predicting to public policy issues (as shown in multiple regressions and in partial correlations). (c) Political identity (POLCON), religious fundamentalism (FUNDA), and moral judgment (DIT-P) can be combined to predict over 60% of the variance of views on public policy issues (e.g., issues dealing with abortion, free speech, rights of the accused, women's roles, the role of religion in public education). Church membership predicts less than half of that variance. (d) Fundamentalism and Stage 4 (on the DIT) are significantly correlated ($r = .51$).

Although statistical procedures such as multiple regression allow us to combine any variable with any other variable, what theoretical sense does it make to combine the individual cognitive variable of moral judgment development (DIT) with cultural ideology variables (POLCON and FUNDA)?

Some theorists (e.g., Shweder, 1982; and Emler, Resnick & Malone, 1983) suggest that the Kohlbegian scheme of moral judgment is really liberalism bias masquerading as cognitive development; in this view, combining both DIT and measures of liberalism/conservatism doesn't make much theoretical sense in that the measures are redundant. On the other hand, Piaget and Kohlberg suggest that the autonomous and heteronomous aspects of moral thinking operate sequentially, one process in ascendancy at one time. In contrast, our view of moral thinking is inspired by the model of Kintsch and van Dijk (1978) that portrays reading comprehension as the result of two processes acting in parallel-- simultaneously and dialectically. (Although we do not depict the two processes of moral thinking as the same two processes described in the Kintsch and van Dijk model of reading comprehension, the similarity is in the

idea of two parallel process, influencing each other to produce a cognitive product.)

The focus of this study on Orthodoxy/Progressivism is consistent with a view of moral thinking as involving autonomous and heteronomous processes in parallel. Our speculation goes something like this: The formation of Orthodox moral thinking is especially likely as the moral judgment process is developing the schema of Maintaining Norms (Stage 4 in Kohlberg's terms). Then the person recognizes the need for social norms to stabilize and establish order. The person is especially drawn to religious fundamentalism that provides clear norms and strong authorities. Hence moral judgment can supply the conceptual bedrock (the epistemological concepts) for an ideology. Simultaneously, if the person is exposed and reinforced with religious fundamentalism, strong religious authority transfers to strong respect for civil authorities (e.g., the regard for religious authorities transfers to school principals, judges, university presidents--the civil authorities in DIT dilemmas). Thus religious authoritarianism can lead to high Stage 4 scores on the DIT. Furthermore, if religious fundamentalism regards the questioning of its authority as beyond human scrutiny, forbidden to inquiry and debate, then the person is blocked from progression into Postconventional thinking which is based on open scrutiny and debate. Therefore in Orthodoxy we have an example of moral judgment influencing cultural ideology, and vice versa. We are not suggesting that with time, people change from orthodoxy to progressives, nor are we suggesting that conservatives are retarded liberals. Instead, we are suggesting an example of autonomous processes interacting with heteronomous processes to produce moral thinking. An important qualification should be mentioned here. We do not suppose that the only route to political conservatism is via religious fundamentalism/Stage 4 thinking and orthodoxy. Although both the DIT and FUNDA are significantly correlated with ATHRI, it is nevertheless true that political ideology has unique predictability to ATHRI. In other words, people may take a conservative stance on human rights but do not have fundamentalist beliefs or high Stage 4 scores--they are political conservatives for other reasons (other than the explanation we have been advancing concerning fundamentalism/Stage 4/Orthodoxy). The main point of this paper, however, is that moral judgment, religious fundamentalism, and political identity each have unique information, and are not reducible to each other; and when combined, produce powerful predictions to moral thinking about important public policy issues..

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Footnotes

1 Very stringent criteria were used for keeping subjects in the study. Subjects were eliminated for missing a single variable or for inconsistencies. Rather than maximizing sample sizes with the usual methods for supplying missing data, we were more concerned to have confidence in the appraisals of the relative strength of variables--and therefore eliminated subjects rather than tolerate any ambiguities in the data.

2 Operationalized variables used in statistical analysis are printed as an abbreviated name in all caps (e.g., FUNDA). Theoretical constructs are printed with the usual punctuation (e.g, religious fundamentalism).

3 Since GROUP is a binary variable and the other variable are not (they have many values, not just two) this raises the question whether we have biased the data against GROUP. There are several considerations why we do not think this explains the difference between church membership explaining 27% of the variance and ORTHO explaining 62%: (a) Using two extreme groups to represent the effects of church membership might actually have increased the effects of group membership instead of decreased it. The use of middle values (as in the DIT and ORTHO) will be penalized if the middle values of the dependent variables are not equally spaced in strict conformity to the linear model. Therefore more values may be a liability. (b) In Sample 2, when church denomination was used to indicate group membership (and there were many values, not only two) the variance accounted for was very minimal. Therefore group membership is not necessarily higher when not a binary variable. (c) There was considerable within-group variation on all of the variables, including the dependent variable, ATHRI. This within group variance is consistent with Jensen (1996).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for the Samples

Study 1:	Baptist	UCC	t-test diff.[a]	Study 2: Students
Demographic Variables				
Number	50	46	---	62
Female/Male	31/19	30/16	n.s.	38/24

AGE	46.69 (14.6)	48.33 (17.05)	n.s.	23.42 (3.39)
ED1[b]	4.62 (1.17)	3.76 (1.66)	2.90**	4.24 (1.91)
ED2	5.09 (1.05)	4.45 (1.43)	2.34*	5.06 (1.54)
OCC1	55.33 (21.41)	60.99 (21.58)	1.28	56.79 (23.05)
OCC2	47.16 (12.16)	53.96 (12.38)	2.55**	50.34 (14.78)

Major Variables

Study 1:	Baptist	UCC	t-test diff.[a]	Study 2:Students
POLCON	3.88 (0.75)	3.09 (0.96)	4.49***	2.85 (0.94)
FUNDA	71.90 (2.62)	51.59 (9.75)	13.68***	55.48(14.78)
THEO	26.78 (3.08)	19.28 (4.14)	10.12***	19.18 (7.87)
DIT-P	32.44 (11.29)	41.72 (15.33)	3.35***	48.58 (15.13)
DIT-St.4	28.02 (5.88)	21.40 (8.48)	4.41***	16.31 (7.57)
ORTHO	85.44 (8.63)	63.28 (14.89)	8.82***	60.58 (17.84)
ATHRI	128.42 (20.71)	149.72 (19.70)	5.85***	159.16 (17.26)

Note: [a]t-test diff. is the independent t-test for differences between the Baptist and UCC churches. [b]ED1, etc.: see text for explanation of variable labels. *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Table 2
Correlations Between Variables in Study 1

Bivariate Correlations

	ATHRI[a]	GROUP	POLCON	FUNDA	THEO	DIT	ORTHO	OCC1
GROUP	.52[b]							
POLCON	-.58	-.42						
FUNDA	-.63	-.83	.44					
THEO	-.40	-.72	.30	.80				
DIT	.65	.33	-.47	-.38	-.16			
ORTHO	-.79	-.68	.73	.80	.55	-.82		
OCC1	.24	.13	-.07	-.20	-.08	.22	-.23	
ED1	-.43	-.29	.40	.38	.20	-.31	.45	-.48

Partial Correlations with ATHRI

	ATHRI	
GROUP	-.04[c]	Controlling for THEO, DIT, POLCON, FUNDA
DIT-P	.47***	Controlling for THEO, POLCON, FUNDA, GROUP
POLCON	-.29**	Controlling for THEO, FUNDA, GROUP, DIT
FUNDA	-.34**	Controlling for THEO, GROUP, DIT, POLCON
THEO	-.08	Controlling for GROUP, DIT, POLCON, FUNDA

Note:
[a]ATHRI: for variable labels, see text.
[b]Probability levels for Bivariate correlations: .26 is significant at the .01 level; .20 is significant at the .05 level with 96 df.
[c]Significant statistical levels for Partial correlations: **p < .005 ***p <.001

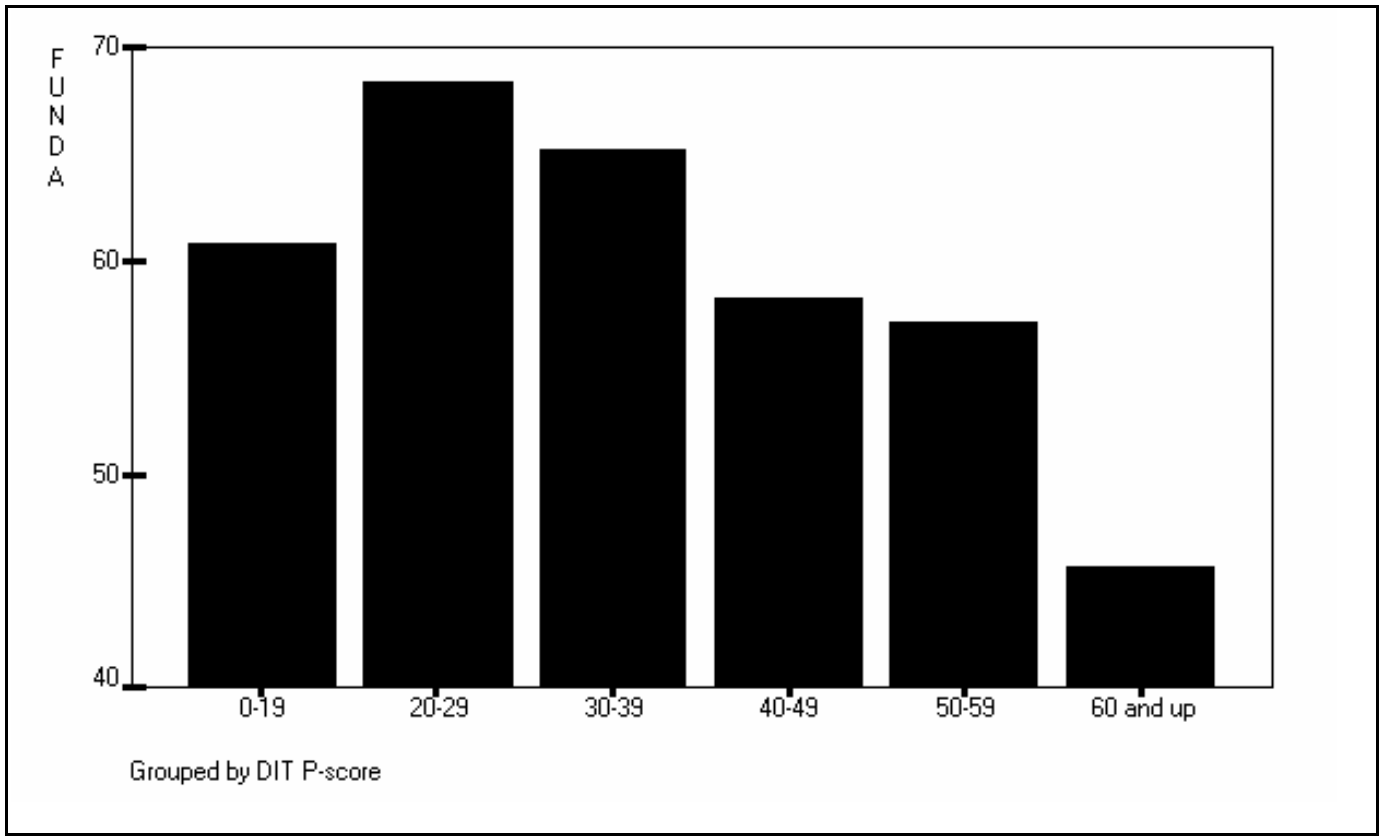
Table 3
Summaries of Multiple Regressions for Studies 1 and 2, Predicting to Opinions on Public Policy Issues (ATHRI)

Variable	B	SE B	Beta[+]	t
Study 1				
DIT-P[a]	.59	.11	.40	5.38***
FUNDA	-.63	.12	-.38	-5.14***
POLCON	-4.92	1.69	-.22	-2.92**
Study 2				
DIT-P	.31	.09	.27	3.31**
FUNDA	-.29	.10	-.25	-2.88*
POLCON	-9.59	1.56	-.52	-6.13***

Note: [+]Beta is the standardized regression coefficient.
[a]Variable labels are discussed in text.
*p<.006 **p<.005 ***p< .001

Figure Captions

Figure 1.
Fundamentalism Means by Postconventional Moral Judgment Score Group


FUNDA
70
60
50
40
0-19
20-29
30-39
40-49
50-59
60 and up
Grouped by DIT P-score