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Can we be primed against moral hypocrisy?

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ABSTRACT

Moral Hypocrisy is appearing moral, to oneself and others, without actually being moral, and was identified by Batson (1997,1999, 2002) using Coin-Flipping measures. Morality is initially automatic (Haidt, 2001) so it should be possible to prime it (subconsciously influence behaviour to display morality (Bargh, 1996), as shown in Utz et al.'s 2005 study). Priming against moral hypocrisy could lead to better social environments. This study aimed to explore the possibility of priming moral integrity and hypothesised that participants primed would be more likely to behave with moral integrity (and less likely to behave with moral hypocrisy) than those not primed. Participants whose initial moral motive was moral integrity were screened out using the Chair Test (designed by the experimenter, validity tested in Experiment 1). Morality was then primed using a scrambled sentence task, then the coin-flipping task tested for any effects of the prime on moral motives. A trend was identified: participants were 2.77 times more likely to show moral integrity after the prime, but this was not significant (x^2= 3.51, p=0.185). However the trend showed a medium effect size, so with a larger sample a significant result should be produced. This supports Utz's finding that morality can be primed, Batson's studies on moral hypocrisy and Haidt's SIM theory of initially automatic morality. However, it does not support Batson's assumption that the coin introduces ambiguity to hide morally hypocritical decisions or even the validity of the coin-flipping measure. Before applying these results to social environments, a significant result, better understanding of the nature of primes and better understanding of the cognitive processes involved in morality are needed.

KEY WORDS:	MORALITY	MORAL HYPOCRISY	MORAL INTEGRITY	PRIMING

"Every man, in his own opinion, forms an exception to the ordinary rules of morality." - William Hazlitt

This quote could be interpreted as people can easily justify not being moral. Morality encompasses principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior. This can include systems of values and principles of conduct, or the extent to which an action is right or wrong. People who value morality can act in ways that seem to oppose their moral principles. It is often assumed that moral individuals want to be moral, but in actual fact some people want to appear moral whilst actually serving self-interest (moral integrity and moral hypocrisy; Batson & Thompson, 2001). People behave as moral hypocrites to gain the rewards of being moral whilst avoiding the punishments of failing to be moral (Batson, Kobrynowicz, Dinnerstein, Kampf & Wilson 1997), perhaps due to bad judgement caused by poorly learnt principles, or due to situational pressures (eg. higher authority (Milgram, 1974), diffusion of responsibility (Darley & Latané, 1968)). However Batson (2011) believes it is not just this, but also because some people's goal is not to be moral, but to appear moral (to themselves and others), for example, those who strongly endorse morals can fail to act morally even when there is low pressure to do so – moral hypocrites.

Batson et al. (1997) tested for moral hypocrisy with coin-flipping studies. Participants were told to assign themselves and another participant (who, unknown to them, was fictional) to positive or neutral consequences tasks. To allow for ambiguity (and therefore for moral hypocrisy) participants could flip a coin to decide. 10/20 participants flipped the coin, and of those who didn't flip, 9/10 assigned themselves to the positive consequences task showing self-interest. Of those who did flip, 9/10 also assigned themselves to the positive consequences tasks (compared to 5/10 due to chance) showing moral hypocrisy, as they tried to conceal their decision behind "chance". Batson and colleagues have tested this phenomenon many different ways, all supporting the notion of moral hypocrisy (Batson et al., 1997; Batson, Thompson, Seuferling, Whitney & Strongman, 1999; Batson, Thompson & Chen, 2002).

But if one can set aside moral principles when there is a personal cost (the neutral consequences task is described as boring and dull), is this not when morality is supposed to guide behaviour? Morality becomes a luxury item one might like but, given the cost, can live without (Batson & Thompson, 2001).

Perhaps moral principles are used more reactively than proactively – to justify or condemn action rather than to motivate it. Batson et al. (1997) propose two steps of moral judgement: step 1: perceptual – the decision to uphold or violate moral principles, step 2: motivational - seeking to maximise personal gain by appearing moral without personal cost (effort) of actually being moral. This is similar to Haidt's Social Intuitionist Model (2001) (SIM).

"As for morality, well that's all tied up with the question of consciousness." - Roger Penrose.

Rationalist approaches say moral judgement is reached by a process of reasoning and reflection; the person as a judge weighing up issues of harm, rights, justice and fairness before passing judgement. However the SIM says that

moral judgement is caused by a sudden flash of intuition (automatic cognition, not reasoning) that something is morally right or wrong. Then when asked for verbal justification people become lawyers trying to build a case to support their initial intuition (intuition then reasoning; Haidt, 2001). This is not a new idea; Freud (1900; as cited in Haidt, 2001) claimed judgements are driven by unconscious motives and feelings, which are then rationalised with publicly acceptable reasons, and as can be seen through the above quote, the idea even transcends psychology.

Bargh (1994) claims that mental processes fall along a continuum from fully automatic to fully controlled. Automatic processes are fast, effortless and efficient mental processes in response to the environment without the need for conscious reflection or awareness. Most behaviours and judgements are made automatically, such as attitude formations, first impressions, stereotypes and aesthetic judgements (Haidt, 2001).

Haidt's theory is not entirely intuitionist; it is a dual processes model, meaning that it accounts for both reasoning and intuitionist aspects of morality. The SIM claims moral conclusions are initially, and most importantly, reached by flashes of intuition. Conscious reasoning is employed afterwards to justify the conclusion later when prompted (Haidt, 2001). This is supported by the finding that people are better at coming up with "myside" reasons to support initial hypotheses on moral judgements than opposing reasons. Conversely, true reasoning should be balanced and unbiased (Perkins, Faraday & Bushey, 1991; as cited in Haidt, 2010).

Therefore, it can be said that moral systems are interlocking sets of values, practices, institutions and evolved psychological mechanisms (a morality schema) that work together to suppress and regulate selfishness (or, in the case of moral hypocrisy, conceal it) and make social life possible (Haidt, 2008). Perhaps if selfishness was suppressed and regulated rather than merely concealed, social life might be better. For that reason, perhaps we should aim to discourage moral hypocrisy. Batson (2001) asked how we might structure social environments so that even those motivated by moral hypocrisy might be led to act morally. If morality is initially automatic (as claimed by Haidt's SIM), and attitudes and other affective reactions can be triggered automatically through priming (Bargh, Chen & Burrows, 1996) then perhaps priming is the answer.

"People exercise an unconscious selection in being influenced." – T.S. Eliot

Priming is the incidental activation of knowledge structures, such as trait concepts and stereotypes, by the current situational context (Bargh et al., 1996). This is inspired by James' principle of ideomotor action (1890; as cited in Bargh et al., 1996): that merely thinking about a behaviour increases the likelihood of engaging in it.

Trait concepts can be automatically activated by the environment through a trait's membership in larger schema (eg. stereotype) or by the presence of trait relevant behaviour. Therefore priming a trait concept influences subsequent social behaviour (Bargh et al., 1996). Exposing individuals to words linked to a particular stereotype or trait concept influences behaviour nonconsciously - this can be done via scrambled sentence tasks.

Bargh et al. (1996) primed traits of either rudeness or politeness in participants through scrambled sentence tasks and found that, following the polite prime, almost no participants interrupted the experimenter when talking to a confederate, and following the rude prime almost all participants quickly interrupted. They then primed the stereotype of elderly people (again through scrambled sentence tasks) and found participants walked slower following the prime. Participants were not given any explicit instructions to behave in this way, in fact at the point of measurement participants were unaware they were engaging in the experiment. Through these studies, Bargh concluded that priming would not work if participants were aware of the desired priming effect or if the desired effect is irrelevant to the current situation.

Utz, Van Lange, Green, Waldzus and Bovina (2005) studied whether activating concepts of morality by priming has a direct influence on behaviour. Also using scrambled-sentences, they found enhanced prosocial motivation after morality-positive primes and reduced levels of prosocial motivation after morality-negative primes. This shows that, as suggested by Bargh's studies and Haidt's SIM, priming has a direct influence on prosocial choices, or social value orientations (an individual preference for a certain pattern of outcomes for the self and others; Utz et al., 2005). Proselfs (those whose dominant social value orientation seeks to maximize personal gain) can even be primed to behave as prosocially as prosocials (those whose dominant social value orientation seeks to maximize equality in outcome between the self and others), showing that priming had an effect even when the dominant social value orientation was in conflict with primed concept (opposing Bargh et al., 1996).

This study aims to expand on Utz et al.'s study and examine whether if, like prosocial behaviour, moral integrity can be primed; or whether moral hypocrisy can be primed against. To test this moral motives will be assessed, then morality will be primed, then moral motives will be assessed again to observe any change. This study will use Batson's coin-flipping task to assess morality, but to avoid practice effects and to screen out those already moral (prosocials cannot be primed to be more prosocial, or if they can no effect can be measured (Utz et al., 2005)), a different measure of moral hypocrisy must be employed as well as the coin-flipping task. This led to the creation of the Chair Test (Experiment 1). In order to prime morality in the participants, the scrambled-sentence task used in Utz et al.'s (2005) study will be used, but only the morality positive priming task.

It is hypothesised that participants primed against moral hypocrisy will be more likely to behave with moral integrity (by choosing the positive consequences condition of the coin-flipping task for the other participant), and participants not primed against moral hypocrisy will be more likely to continue to behave with moral hypocrisy (by choosing the positive consequences task for themselves)

Experiment 1 – Preliminary Study

Method

Design

This study used a within-subjects design (participants carried out both tasks). The Independent Variable was which chair is selected (comfortable or uncomfortable)

and the Dependent Variable was the task selected in the Coin-flipping task (positive consequences task or neutral consequences task). This study used nominal data.

Participants

The participants were Psychology and Psychology Pathways students at Southampton Solent University, recruited through a post on the University Psychology Forum – volunteer sampling. Participation was in exchange for 15 minutes participation time. The study needed 15 participants to identify a trend and generate results reliable enough for a preliminary measure.

Measures

The Chair Test: This task is based on the same principles as the coin-flipping task (a conflict between self-interest and the interest of others, when participants are unaware morality is being assessed) and involves participants choosing between a comfortable or uncomfortable chair for themselves, leaving the other chair for the other (fictitious) participant. If the participant chooses the comfortable chair, it is assumed they are displaying self-interest or moral hypocrisy; if the participant chooses the uncomfortable chair it is assumed they are displaying moral integrity. The validity of the Chair test was tested by correlating the results of the Chair test with the results of the Coin-Flipping Task.

The Coin-Flipping Task (Batson et al., 1997): This task assesses whether participants' behaviour reflects moral hypocrisy, moral integrity or self-interest by getting them to assign themselves and another (fictional) participant to a positive or neutral consequences task. If they assign themselves to the positive consequences task, their behaviour is reflecting self-interest or moral hypocrisy (made clear by the moral choices questionnaire); if they assign themselves to the neutral consequences task, their behaviour is reflecting moral integrity. This is deemed to be an appropriate measure of moral hypocrisy because one participant's gain is directly corresponded to another's loss, it is a real (not hypothetical) dilemma to demonstrate the participant's actual behaviour, it is simple so that the participant understands what is expected of them, and it is mundane and bland so that when participants are asked to explain their reasons for their choice the responses will not be scripted, like those given for dramatic, hypothetical dilemmas. The task is also ambiguous because the participants are given the option to flip a coin without the conditions of the coin being set, so that benefitting oneself can appear to be an innocent, unintended consequence of a moral action.

Moral Choices questionnaire: This questionnaire asks whether the participant considers themselves to be moral, what the participant's reasons were for choosing the chair they chose and the positive/neutral consequences task they chose, and finally whether they thought that their choices were the moral options. This will allow the experimenter to identify whether the participant's behaviour is reflecting moral hypocrisy and is adapted from Batson et al. 1997. If a participant answers "yes" when asked whether they consider themselves to be moral yet acknowledges that their actions were not moral when asked, they can be considered to be behaving as moral hypocrites. If a participant answers "no" when asked whether they consider themselves to be moral, their actions can be

considered to be reflecting self-interest as they show no interest in coming across as moral (like one behaving as a moral hypocrite might).

Procedure

Participants first carried out the Chair Test (they will be unaware of their being assessed at this point). They were led to a room with two chairs in; one comfortable chair (soft furnished) and one uncomfortable chair (hard plastic) and asked to take a seat whilst waiting for the other (fictional) participant to turn up. The chair they picked determined their initial moral motives. Those who picked the comfortable chair and left the uncomfortable chair for the other participant were motivated by self-interest or moral hypocrisy; those who picked the uncomfortable chair for themselves were motivated by moral integrity.

Participants were then given the basic information sheet and "sham" consent (due to the participants being unaware of the true aims of the study at this point) was obtained. Participants were then given the full information sheet, outlining the coin-flipping task. This involves making a decision to assign themselves and the other participant (who still had not turned up but does exist as far as the participant is aware) to a positive consequences task (a quiz with rewards) or a neutral consequences task (a dull and boring quiz with no rewards). Participants have the option of assigning the tasks by flipping a coin (to introduce ambiguity and allow for moral hypocrisy). Once participants have made a choice they mark it on the Information sheet.

If the participant chooses not to flip a coin and has picked the positive consequence task they are serving self-interest, if they have picked the neutral consequences task they are considering the interest of others/moral integrity.

If the participant chooses to flip the coin and has picked the positive consequence task their behaviour shows moral hypocrisy, if they have picked the neutral consequences task they are considering the interest of others/moral integrity.

Participants will then be given the Moral Choices Questionnaire asking whether they consider themselves to be a moral person (to highlight those behaving as a moral hypocrite), why they picked the chair they picked, and whether the chair they picked was the "moral" choice. Then they will be asked why they assigned the conditions they did and whether the condition they assigned themselves was the "moral" choice.

This is actually where the study ends; participants do not carry out a quiz. Participants were given the preliminary study debrief form, explaining in detail what the true aims of the experiment were: outlining the Chair Test, the coin-flipping task and the Moral Choices Questionnaire. The debrief sheet was also read to the participant, and the participant can ask any questions they might have to ensure they fully understand the true aims of the study. Informed consent for the data to be used was then obtained and participants were reminded of their right to withdraw now they knew the true aims of the study.

Ethical Considerations

This study used deception, however there were no actual consequences to the tasks (there are no positive/neutral consequences tasks and there is no other

participant) so the deception was not damaging in any way to the participants.

In the coin-flipping task and the chair test, the participants will not know that their morality is being assessed; they will think that the coin-flipping task is simply to pick the next task. This is because if they are aware that their morality is being assessed, they will behave in a more moral way than they ordinarily would in order to come across as moral, which is a desirable trait (Social desirability bias – when a respondent influences their answer to avoid embarrassment and project a favourable image to others (Fisher, 1993)). Also, this is part of the very effect being testing for; moral hypocrisy is when people aim to come across as more moral than they actually are (Batson et al., 1997). It was not possible to allow participants to know the details of the coin-flipping task at the beginning of the experiment so that their choice of task assignment was made entirely after the Morality-Priming or Morality-Neutral questionnaires.

Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw in the Information Sheet and "sham" consent will be obtained and in the debrief form participants will give full informed consent for their data to be used. Participants will be verbally debriefed and given a debrief form to ensure they fully understand the true aims of the study (due to the deception).

The name of the student will be obtained, but only in order to award participation time and will be kept completely separate from the data. The participant will be given a participant number in order to keep their data together anonymously. This is because participants may not want to be known as "immoral". Only the researcher, examiner and project supervisor will have access to the data.

Results

Table 1

Effect of Chair Selection on Task Selection.

	Soft Chair	Hard Chair
Positive Task	9	2
Neutral Task	2	2
N	11	4
% positive	81.8	50
Odds	4.5	1

73.3% of participants picked the soft chair, compared to 26.7% who picked the hard chair. 81.8% of those who chose the soft chair chose the positive consequences task and 18.2% of participants who chose the soft chair picked the neutral consequences task. 50% of participants who chose the hard chair chose the positive consequences task and 50% chose the neutral consequences task. The Odds Ratio suggests participants are 4.5 times more likely to choose the positive task if they chose the soft chair. A Chi-Squared test was carried out on the effect of chair selection on task selection and found that x^2=1.519 (p=0.275 using Fisher's Exact Test). Coefficient kappa was calculated on the relationship between chair selection and task selection and found kappa = 0.318.

		Chair Morality	
		Moral Integrity	Low Morality
Task Morality	Moral Integrity	2	2
	Low Morality	2	9
	N	4	11
	% hypocrisy (only)*	50	80
	Odds	1	4.5

Table 2

Effect of Morality Inferred by Chair Selection on Morality Inferred by Task Selection.

*Percentage worked out as percentage of participants who showed moral hypocrisy for task morality only (self-interest not included).

50% of participants who showed moral integrity for chair selection also did for task selection, and 50% of participants who showed moral hypocrisy for chair selection showed moral integrity for task selection. 20% of participants who showed moral hypocrisy for chair selection showed moral integrity for task selection, and 80% of participants who showed moral hypocrisy for chair selection also did for task selection. 6.7% of participants showed self-interest for chair and task selection. The Odds Ratio suggests participants are also 4.5 times more likely to show moral hypocrisy for task selection if they showed moral hypocrisy for chair selection (values for moral hypocrisy and self-interest were collapsed into one category of low morality due to only one participant showing self-interest). A Chi-Squared test was calculated on the relationship between moral motives inferred by choice of chair and choice of task and found $x^2 = 16.35$ (p<0.01). Coefficient kappa was calculated on the relationship between participant's morality inferred by the chair selection and the task selection and found kappa = 0.444.

Discussion

The Chi-Squared test carried out on the effect of chair selection on task selection gave a non-significant result (p=0.275) suggesting that choice of chair has no effect on choice of task. The Coefficient kappa suggested that despite there being a high level of agreement overall (11/15), it was found that kappa was 0.318, suggesting that much of the apparent agreement may be due to chance. However, according to Cohen (1992), a result between 0.3 and 0.5 suggests a medium effect size.

The Chi-Squared test calculated on the relationship between moral motives inferred by choice of chair and choice of task gave a significant result (p<0.01) suggesting that morality inferred by chair selection has an effect on morality inferred by task selection. The Coefficient suggested that despite there being a high level of agreement overall (11/15), it was found that kappa was 0.444,

suggesting that much of the apparent agreement was due to participants' tendency to behave reflecting moral hypocrisy in both tasks so much of the time (8/15) compared to reflecting moral integrity or self-interest. This was expected, as in Batson et al.'s study (1997) 80% of participants' behavior reflected moral hypocrisy. However, according to Cohen (1992), a result between 0.3 and 0.5 suggests a medium effect size.

As the Chi-square gave a significant result for the relationship between morality inferred by chair selection and by task selection, and the coefficient kappa suggested a medium effect size, it can be assumed that the Chair test is a valid measure of moral motives (its results give similar enough data to Batson's Coin-Flipping Task (1997)). Therefore, the Chair test can be used as a screening measure in Experiment 2.

Experiment 2 – Main Study

Method

Design

This study used a between-subjects design (50% participants were primed and 50% were not). The Independent Variable was priming (morality-priming or morality-neutral scrambled-sentence tasks), the Dependent Variable was moral motivation (moral integrity, moral hypocrisy or self-interest). This study used nominal data.

Participants

Participants were Psychology and Psychology Pathways students at Southampton Solent University, recruited through a post on the University Psychology Forum – volunteer sampling. Participation was in exchange for 30 minutes participation time. The study needed 50 participants to generate reliable data, whilst allowing for 20% of participants to be screened out through the Chair Test due to their moral motivation already being moral integrity before priming (20% of people's moral motivation is moral integrity (Batson et al., 1997)). Therefore the study actually used around 40 participants.

Materials

The Chair Test: This measure was devised by the experimenter (as tested in the preliminary study by correlating the results with those from the coin-flipping task). It aims to screen out participants whose behaviour reflects moral integrity, allowing it to be clearer when a participant has been primed to behave morally. If the participant chooses the comfortable chair, they are displaying self-interest or moral hypocrisy; if the participant chooses the uncomfortable chair they are displaying moral integrity.

Morality-Priming Scrambled-Sentence Questionnaire: This questionnaire consists of 5 morality priming scrambled sentences and one neutral scrambled sentence (so the participant doesn't notice a theme and guess they are being primed) for participants in the morality-priming condition to unscramble. This is adapted from Utz et al., 2005.

Morality-Neutral Scrambled-Sentence Questionnaire: This questionnaire consists of 6 random neutral scrambled sentences for participants in the morality-neutral condition to unscramble. These have been compiled in accordance with the guidelines in Bargh et al., 1996.

The Coin-Flipping Task (Batson et al., 1997) and Moral Choices questionnaire (adapted from Batson et al. 1997): See Experiment 1 measures (pg. 7).

Procedure

Participants first carried out the Chair Test as in the preliminary study, except those who pick the uncomfy chair for themselves, motivated by moral integrity, were ineligible for priming, so they were debriefed and dismissed. Participants were then given the basic information sheet and "sham" consent (due to the participants being unaware of the true aims of the study at this point) was obtained.

The remaining participants then carried out the Priming Task: 50% carried out the Morality-Priming 6-item questionnaire; the other 50% carried out the Morality-Neutral 6-item questionnaire.

Once participants had carried out the priming tasks, participants were given the full information sheet, outlining the coin-flipping task, and following their selection of tasks were given the Moral Choices Questionnaire – this section of the procedure was carried out exactly as in the Preliminary Study (see Experiment 1 procedure, pg. 8).

As in the Preliminary Study, this is where the Main Study ends. Participants were given the main debrief form, explaining in detail what the true aims of the experiment were: outlining the Chair Test, the Scrambled-Sentence tasks, the coin-flipping task and the Moral Choices Questionnaire. The debrief sheet was also read to the participant and the participant can ask any questions they might have to ensure they fully understand the true aims of the study. Informed consent for the data to be used was then obtained and participants were reminded of their right to withdraw now they understood the true aims of the study.

Ethical Considerations

This study faces the same ethical considerations as the Preliminary Study (see method, pg. 10), but with some extra considerations:

In the scrambled-sentence test, the participants were under the impression that it was a simple word task to test their decision making processes. This was necessary because priming needs to occur subconsciously and if the participants were aware they were being primed to behave more morally, the task would be ineffective. The effects of priming are short-term and not damaging to participants in any way (Bargh, Chen & Burrows, 1996).

In the coin-flipping task it was not possible to allow participants to know the details of the task outlined in the full information sheet at the beginning of the experiment. This was so that their choice of task assignment was made entirely after the Morality-Priming or Morality-Neutral questionnaires.

Results

Similarly to in Experiment 1, 74% of participants picked the soft chair, compared to 26% who picked the hard chair. This meant 26% (*N*=13) of participants were screened out via the Chair test.

Table 3

Effect of Priming on Morality Inferred by Task Selection

	Morality Primed	Morality Neutral
Moral Integrity	12	8
Low Morality	6	11
N	20	17
% Integrity	60	47
Odds	2	0.73

66.7% of participants who were primed showed moral integrity, and 33.3% of those primed showed moral hypocrisy. 42.1% of those not primed showed moral integrity, 47.4% of those not primed showed moral hypocrisy, and 10.5% of those not primed showed self-interest. The Odds Ratio suggests participants are 2.77 times more likely to show moral integrity when primed (values for moral integrity and self-interest were collapsed into one category of low morality to highlight the effect of priming on moral integrity). A Chi-Squared test was calculated on the relationship between priming and morality inferred by task selection, and found x^2= 3.375 (p=0.185). The effect size of the trend was calculated as r_{phi} = 0.308, which, according to Cohen (1992), suggests a medium effect size.

Discussion

The Chi-Squared test calculated on the relationship between whether or not morality was primed in a participant, and their resulting moral motives inferred by their choice of task, showed a trend (participants are 2.77 times more likely to show moral integrity when primed) but it was not significant (likelihood ratio x^2=3.51, p=0.185). The effect size was calculated at r_{phi} = 0.308 (a medium effect size), which suggests that in order to obtain a significant result at p<0.05, a sample size of at least 87 participants would be required (Cohen, 1992). Therefore, this study goes towards supporting the hypothesis that those primed against moral hypocrisy will behave with moral integrity, and Utz et al.'s finding that morality (specifically prosocial choices) can be primed using scrambled sentences. If replicated with a larger sample size the hypothesis may be significantly supported.

This study supports Batson's studies on Moral Hypocrisy (1997; 1999; 2002) as participants behaved in a way that mirrored those in Batson's studies. 74% of participants in this study behaved showing moral hypocrisy at the screening measure (before priming), compared to the 80% in Batson's study (1997); and 26% of participants in this study behaved showing moral integrity at the screening measure, compared to 20% in Batson's study (1997). Interestingly, the Morality Neutral priming condition (a replication of Batson et al. (1997) with those initially showing moral integrity screened out) gave results close to chance (42.1%

showed moral integrity, 57.9% showed low morality). One might assume that this was because after making the first decision participants were leaving the second decision to chance using the coin flip. However, only 21% of those in the Morality Neutral priming condition flipped the coin, and of those that did 75% behaved showing moral integrity. Of the other 79% who did not flip the coin, only 25% behaved showing moral integrity. Whilst supporting Batson's idea that introducing the coin allowed for ambiguity and that participants will not necessarily follow the outcome of the flip (if they did, then 50% would have chosen the positive consequences task and 50% would have chosen the neutral consequences task; Batson et al., 1997), this study does not support his idea that flipping the coin will mask morally hypocritical decisions: most (75%) of those in the Morality Neutral priming condition who did flip the coin chose the neutral consequences task, suggesting behaviour reflecting moral integrity. This is compared to Batson's finding that regardless of whether the coin was flipped, an equally high percentage of participants would choose the positive consequences task, potentially showing evidence of moral hypocrisy (Batson et al., 1997). However, the effect found in this study was only found in a small sample (only 21% in the Morality Neutral priming condition flipped the coin, equivalent to 4 participants) therefore further investigation is needed. Further investigation into this finding would highlight methods employed by participants showing moral hypocrisy in order to mask their non-moral behaviour, and whether the coin-flip provides adequate ambiguity or whether ambiguity really is that important a factor in teasing out moral motives from moral decisions and judgements.

This study also appears to support Haidt's theory that moral decisions are first made automatically (Haidt, 2001). Firstly, there appears to be a trend of priming leading to moral integrity. In order for priming to have any effect on morality, morality must be, at least in part, due to automatic processing (Bargh & Williams, 2006). Secondly, and somewhat anecdotally, participants in this study appeared to have some difficulty answering the Moral Choices Questionnaire. When asked for reasons as to why they chose the chair or task they did, they tended to spend some time answering and even mentioned to the experimenter that perhaps they had no answer to these questions (participants were asked to give any reason, however "right" or "wrong" they felt it could be perceived, and to try to give an answer as opposed to simply writing "I don't know" which would have made it very hard for the experimenter to infer their moral motives from). This suggests that post intuition conscious reasoning does not occur until prompted to give reasons for the decision, as described by Haidt (2001). Perhaps an interesting replication of this study could also measure response times to the Moral Choices Questionnaire which would help infer whether participants had made their decision through intuition (requiring longer to give reasons as they had not been previously considered) or reasoning (requiring less time as participants would be simply recalling reasoning already considered) in order to significantly support this anecdotal evidence.

However, this study does not give a significant result. This could be due to issues relating to the sophistication of the methodology. There are very few published journals containing methods of measuring moral hypocrisy, suggesting that research into moral hypocrisy is still relatively under developed. Whist the Chair Test's validity was checked against the Coin-Flipping task, there is little evidence to suggest the validity of the Coin-Flipping task itself. Batson's studies' validity is

mostly based on face validity, in that it seems obvious that allowing another person to have to opportunity to win money over oneself reflects moral integrity (Batson et al., 1997). However, this assumes a lot of thought processes that are not measured, for example is it always moral to give the opportunity of winning money to another person, when you know you are considerably worse off money-wise than your available peers (who could be the other participant) and you have a young family to support? Participants in situations like this could behave with moral integrity but because of the end result of their choice they would be classed as moral hypocrites.

Watson, Teague and Papamarcos (2007) conducted a study to investigate the validity of the Coin-flipping task. They found that measures of concepts that comprise morality (justice and caring approaches, social responsibility and ascription of responsibility) did not differentiate between those who assigned themselves to the positive or neutral consequences tasks. This could be because there is a discrepancy between motives and behaviour when it comes to morality, which could be taken as evidence for moral hypocrisy. However, it could also be taken as evidence for a lack of convergent validity as the outcomes of the coin-flipping task do not correlate with measures that, theoretically, it should, and other similar measures do not differentiate the results. Therefore, the development of more sophisticated and valid measures of moral hypocrisy and moral integrity could lead to a significant result in this study.

"How might one structure social environments so that even those motivated by moral hypocrisy… might be led to act morally?" – Batson and Thompson, 2001, pg. 57.

If moral hypocrisy can be primed, this could be useful in structuring moral social environments. As mentioned previously, if morality serves to suppress and regulate selfishness and make social life possible (Haidt, 2008), and moral hypocrisy serves to conceal selfish moral decisions (Batson et al., 1997) then eliminating or reducing moral hypocrisy would lead to less selfishness in the social world. One way we might structure the social environment to reduce moral hypocrisy and selfishness could be to prime moral integrity (assuming that the trend identified in this study would be significant using a larger sample size). Moral integrity could be primed in everyday life or in situations where moral decisions are important (eg. when a government makes decisions on how much tax should be charged on income, taking into account the effect it would have on the wealthy and the not so wealthy). This could be done by placing posters of moral concepts in areas where moral decisions and judgements are made, or by members of society taking initiative and "priming by example". If enough people behave reflecting moral integrity, this could act as a real life prime or social cue, which would in turn subconsciously influence others to behave in this way too.

However, deliberately structuring a social environment to bring about a certain behaviour raises an important question of whether it is ethical to prime a behaviour in people. Generally, the public are very nervous about being influenced or persuaded without their knowledge or consent (McConnell, Cutler & McNeil, 1958), even when the subconscious influence may bring about beneficial outcomes (Kivikangas & Ravaja, 2009).

Finally, perhaps even more importantly, before we can structure social environments by priming moral integrity, a significant result supporting the effect of priming on morality would be needed. We would also need a better understanding of what it is we are priming and how the priming effects are produced (Bargh, 2006) and how morality really is structured (Monin, Pizarro & Beer, 2007). It also needs to be acknowledged that perhaps the lack of a significant result suggests that the trend identified between morality and priming is actually due to chance.

"It seems we have been running before we can walk." – Bargh, 2006, pg.148

It has been suggested that perhaps our knowledge of primes is not yet developed enough to be properly applied. Bargh says, "…our empirical knowledge has outstripped our ability to understand and conceptualise what is going on here – what exactly is being primed, and how are these impressive effects produced?" (2006, pg. 148). So, we know what can be produced in experimental circumstances, but we don't truly know how, when or why in a natural setting. One issue that Bargh feels is necessary to investigate is the Generation Problem: how can one prime have so many different effects? For example, priming the concept of "generous" can activate affectively similar material in memory, alter judgements and perceptions of a target person, increase likelihood of generous behaviour in relevant circumstances or trigger altruistic motivations and goal pursuits - depending upon the dependent variable the experimenter is investigating. It seems that this could be due to priming effects coming in "packages" of behaviour, social values and social interactions, much like the idea of schemas in cognitive psychology. Concepts are not defined in an isolated way but in terms of their roles in real-world environments; in terms of their interactional rather than inherent properties (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; as cited in Bargh, 2006). But how do we control for a desired effect? Is it even possible to do so?

Secondly, there is the Reduction Problem: how do we choose which prime out of all the available primes influences us at a given time? Outside of a laboratory setting, the real world is incredibly stimulus-rich and full of potential primes. One way this problem could be solved is through goal-directed selective attention – where primes are attended to and selected if they are in accordance with a person's current goal (Bruner, 1957; as cited in Bargh, 2006). However, a person can have many goals at any given time, including current goals (have conversation), and chronic, evolved motives (avoid disease, sexual attraction), so a person is still left with many primes relevant to their current goals. It seems that people select which goal to attend to at a given time (and therefore which primes) through internal response-conflict resolution processes (Bargh, 2006). But how do these processes actually sort through goals and primes to attend to?

All taken into account, it seems that a lack of understanding of the true nature of primes may have contributed to the lack of a significant result for the trend that moral integrity can be primed. Therefore, if one prime can have many different effects, and primes can influence different people in different ways, according to their own order of importance, how can you be certain that the dependent variable measured is definitely the way participants will respond to the prime? Perhaps priming moral concepts does not manifest most strongly in the majority of people as moral integrity. After all, moral hypocrisy is a form of morality, so can

we be sure we are priming moral behaviour as opposed to moral appearance? As Bargh suggests, further investigation into the true nature of primes is needed in order to understand them and apply them to real-world settings.

Our knowledge of morality may not yet be developed enough to apply this study's findings either: the debate between whether morality is caused by conscious reasoning or automatic intuitions is not yet resolved. Rationalist approaches stress the importance of a priori reasoning (Haidt, 2001), saying that cognition is primary when it comes to morality (Gibbs, 1995; as cited in Krebs & Denton, 2005). This theory is based on Kohlberg's work on moral dilemmas (1963; as cited in Monin, Pizarro & Beer, 2007). On the other side of the debate are the Intuitionist approaches. This theory is built on the idea that people tend to reach moral conclusions with little awareness of how they reached them (Bruner, 1960; as cited in Haidt, 2001) and that the process is more like perception than reasoning, as it occurs so quickly in order to keep up with real-time stimuli (Harrison, 1967; as cited in Haidt, 2001). Ambady and Rosenthal (1992) even found that first impressions (which are considered to be automatic due to their speed) tend to reach the same conclusions as lengthy conscious reasoning, suggesting that the conclusion had been reached through the first impression, or intuition, anyway.

Dual Processes theories, such as Haidt's SIM (2001), attempt to bridge this debate by arguing that intuitions come first, and then reasoning follows to justify the intuition (see pg. 3). However, this theory is not unanimously agreed upon, in fact it may not be the best resolution of the reason/affect debate in morality. Monin, Pizarro and Beer (2007) suggest that researchers of the two different approaches to morality reach such different conclusions because they are actually describing two different aspects of morality. If morality is investigated through moral dilemmas, the conclusion that morality emphasizes reason will be reached. If morality is investigated through judgements of moral infractions (moral reactions), the conclusion that morality emphasizes intuition based on affect will be reached.

Moral Dilemmas involve a tension between conflicting moral claims. They ask the participant to take the first person perspective and compare possible outcomes, all of which could be moral but conflict with one another – often leading to an inconclusive immediate reaction, and then participants' morality is assessed through structured interview questions. Such a methodology encourages conscious reasoning, so it is unsurprising that following this would lead one to the conclusion that morality emphasizes reasoning. Moral Reactions involve witnessing shocking transgressions. They ask a participant to judge another's action that tends to have one "moral" outcome, which is usually shocking and provokes quick, affect-laden responses (eg. disgust or contempt). Such a methodology involving quick decisions encourages automatic intuition, so using this would lead to the unsurprising conclusion that morality emphasizes intuition (Monin, Pizarro & Beer, 2007).

If we accept that these two moral encounters are different psychological entities, this solves the reason/affect debate as it becomes no longer relevant – reasoning is involved in first person dilemmas, intuition is involved in judging another's moral transgression. Much like judging a piece of art as aesthetically pleasing

does not involve the same processes as deciding to buy it.

This study could help support Monin, Pizarro & Beer's theory, in that if a moral reaction can be primed then it uses automatic processing (intuition), whereas if conclusions to moral dilemmas cannot be primed then they use conscious processing (reasoning). In order to do this, the methodology involved in priming morality would have to be refined to have a more reliable and valid measure of moral hypocrisy, and greater understanding of the nature of primes would be needed. Then we might be able to account for enough of the error margin to establish which aspects of morality can and can't be primed and in which circumstances (high/low morality, first/second person, etc.), potentially in order to begin working towards a unified theory of moral encounters.

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