ABSTRACT

Title of Document:	Different Without Disagreement: Understanding Polarization in the United States
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A prevailing belief is that Americans hold a shared set of values that finds expression in and is informed by our nation's founding documents. It is puzzling, then, to acknowledge that the United States is more polarized now than at any time since Reconstruction. Our research examined possible explanations for the tension between Americans holding a shared set of values and their being highly polarized, especially concerning the following issues: abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage. We found evidence that suggests there could be two types of polarization: substantive and superficial. Based on a metric we term 'scattering,' a measure of consensus regarding the most pertinent value for a given issue, we argue that polarization on capital punishment and gun control is substantive, while polarization on abortion and same-sex marriage is merely superficial. We argue that substantive polarization is to be preferred to superficial polarization.

Keywords: values, polarization, morality policy, politics

DIFFERENCE WITHOUT DISAGREEMENT: UNDERSTANDING POLARIZATION
IN THE UNITED STATES

by

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Despite being both demographically and ideologically diverse, Americans still take pride in being citizens of a nation that promotes values such as liberty, equality, and justice. Given the frequency of references to these values in the nation's founding documents, prominent American political speeches, and Supreme Court cases, one might expect that Americans are also unified with respect to the meaning of "liberty," "equality," and "justice." However, as Abraham Lincoln noted, "We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing" (Lincoln & Fornieri, 2009, p. 676). Lincoln's point is especially apparent in 2017, as we find the nation has become more polarized than ever regarding contemporary moral issues. But is that polarization best explained by Americans meaning different things by these value terms, or is there something more going on? That is the question that animates our research.

Our study expands on previous research, which aimed to understand the tensions that arise with respect to contentious social issues by examining how Americans rank, define, and apply values to the following: abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage. In Chapter 2, we review literature that supports our initial, motivating observations that while Americans tend to believe that they hold a set of shared values, Americans are more polarized than they have ever been since Reconstruction. This literature invites the question: is it just that, individually, Americans apply these values differently?

We believe that that question is too simple. Hence, we developed the following four research questions to guide this study in digging a bit deeper: (1) to what extent do

individuals' *ranking of values* explain their moral and policy stances on the issues of abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage; (2) to what extent do individuals' *definitions of values* explain their moral and policy stances on the issues of abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage; (3) to what degree are demographics correlated with how an individual rank orders and defines values; and (4) to what degree is an individual's personality correlated with how an individual orders and defines values?

In Chapter 3, we identify seven 'American' values and four morality policies to use in our survey. In Chapter 4, we demonstrate how we constructed definitions of those values appropriate for use in our nationwide survey. Our survey design is fully outlined in Chapter 5. The survey gathered (a) demographic information, (b) personality information, (c) individuals' moral and policy judgments about abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage, (d) individuals' preferred definition of the seven values, and (e) how individuals ranked the relative importance of these values with respect to each of the aforementioned issues.

In Chapter 6, we analyze our data, and find that (1) there is more consensus about which values are most pertinent for capital punishment and gun control than for abortion and same-sex marriage; (2) the value that an individual ranks as most pertinent is predictive of an individual's moral and political judgments about all four issues; (3) the differential impact of *how a value is defined* is evident only when there is consensus about the most pertinent value; and (4) demographic factors are more influential in predicting moral and political judgments about an issue when there is no consensus on

most pertinent value for an issue. In Chapter 7, we discuss these results and their

implications for our initial research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Our research is motivated by two observations: (1) Americans are increasingly polarized on several major policy issues, and (2) that there is a prevailing belief that Americans hold similar values. This pair of observations points to a tension: if Americans generally hold similar values, how and why do they come to have such different views about major policy issues? To begin to answer this question, we reviewed pertinent academic literature on political polarization and on values.

Political Polarization in the United States

The History of Political Polarization. "Political polarization" refers to the phenomenon in which members of a society cluster near the poles of a political ideological spectrum, ranging from liberal to conservative. In the United States, political polarization is also evident in terms of the two major political parties, Democratic and Republican. Measures of ideological consistency and partisanship vary depending on the target population. For example, if our population of interest is Congress, we evaluate congressional political ideologies, and thus congressional polarization, using Poole and Rosenthal's (2001) DW-NOMINATE metric. They examined complete records of legislators' roll-call voting behavior, observing how often members of Congress voted along party lines. The more often members vote along party lines, the more polarized Congress is. If our population of interest is the electorate, we measure polarization within the electorate through surveys and polls. Pew Research Center, for example, conducts surveys to evaluate Americans' ideological consistency on the liberal-conservative spectrum.

Several historical factors contributed to the current trend of political polarization, including (1) electoral reactions to the civil rights movement, (2) Senator Barry Goldwater's 1964 presidential campaign, and (3) a general increased focus on ideology. Hare and Poole (2014) argue that polarization between the two political parties is greatest when non-economic issues take precedence over economic issues (p. 414). Prior to the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, legislators primarily campaigned on regionally specific economic issues, as opposed to more general ideological platforms. However, after the passage of civil rights legislation and Goldwater's 1964 presidential campaign, a trend of increasing ideological conservatism began across the country. One effect of this trend was a change in political emphasis from regional economic interests to ideological issues. Jost (2006) also cites "the development of a strong coalition [of] economic conservatives and religious fundamentalists beginning in the 1970s" and "the powerful emergence of right-wing think tanks and media conglomerates" as contributors to the rise of ideological conservatism in national politics. According to Jost, the Republican Party became even more ideological than "political scientists had anticipated" (p. 658).

Baldassarri and Gelman (2008) claim that scholars generally subscribe to one of two explanations for political polarization among the American people. The first explanation holds that politicians and activists—or 'elites'—in each party have taken increasingly ideological stands on major political issues, and that the general electorate has reacted by becoming better at party sorting, or aligning their policy preferences with party affiliation. Hence, as Republican elites have tended to espouse more conservative policies, and Democratic elites have tended to espouse more liberal policies, the

ideological divide between the two parties has become more apparent, which more easily allows like-minded voters to cluster in a party reflective of their policy preferences. The second explanation holds that the American people themselves have come to hold more consistently conservative or more consistently liberal views on a variety of major issues. According to the second explanation, the polarization of elites is a response to the polarization of the electorate, with elites adopting positions that are a better 'fit' for their constituents.

To determine which of these explanations is accurate, Baldassarri and Gelman (2008) investigated the ideological consistency of stances that individuals took across issues, positing that polarization increases as individuals take stances corresponding with the same ideology across issues. If the first explanation were correct, namely, that political elites drive polarization, then we would not expect to observe increased ideological consistency across issues over time by partisan voters. If the second explanation were the second explanation correct, namely, that voters drive polarization, then we would expect to see increased ideological consistency over time by partisan voters. That is, self-identified Democratic voters would take more consistently liberal stances across issues and self-identified Republican voters would take more consistently conservative stances across issues. Baldassarri and Gelman found that the electorate had not become more ideologically consistent, suggesting that polarization is driven by the elites and not by rank-and-file voters.

Political Polarization within Congress. Poole and Rosenthal (2001) sought to discover the degree to which federal legislators voted along party lines, which they posit exhibits political polarization. They did this by using congressional data to examine

overlap between Democratic and Republican members of Congress, measured through

roll call behavior and the frequency with which members voted along party lines. As

members vote along party lines more frequently, thus moving further toward the ends of

the political ideological spectrum (conservative for Republicans, liberal for Democrats),

the percentage of members in the overlap decreases relative to previous years and

political polarization increases. As detailed in Figure 2.1, the percentage of overlapping

members was at its highest in both the Senate and House of Representatives during

World War II but has been decreasing since, essentially dropping to zero since 2005. On

VoteView.com, where complete data analysis is published, Poole & Rosenthal (2015)

concluded that Congress is more polarized today than at any time since the end of

Reconstruction.

Party Polarization 1879-2014
Percentage of Overlapping Members First Dimension
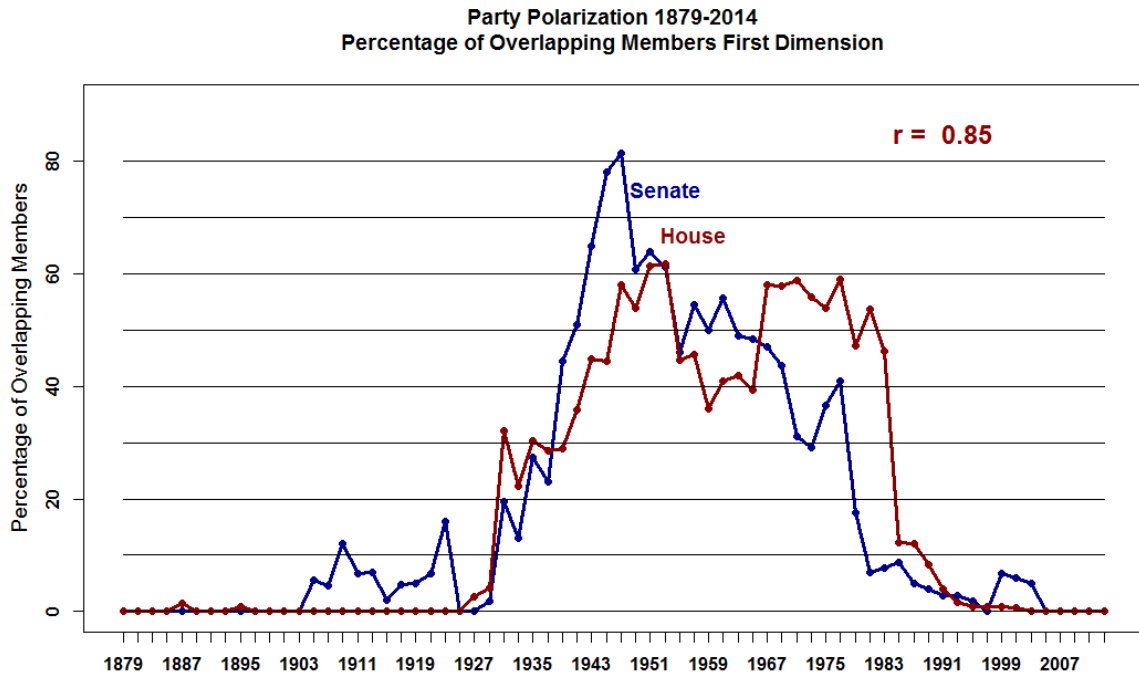
Figure 2.1. Party polarization 1879-2014: Percentage of overlapping members first dimension (Poole & Rosenthal, 2015). This figure illustrates how often members of Congress vote across party lines; a lower percentage of overlapping members means a higher percentage of members voting along party lines, which means higher polarization.

Political polarization severely decreases the likelihood for legislative compromise: for example, the Social Security Amendments of 1965, which included Medicare and Medicaid, passed in the House of Representatives with the votes of 237 Democrats and 70 Republicans. In 2010, the Affordable Care Act passed in the House with no Republican votes (Hare & Poole, 2014). The Pew Research Center found that the 112th (2011-2012) and 113th (2013-2014) Congresses were the least productive in history, respectively enacting merely 63 and 61 substantive laws, defined as "any legislation other than renaming buildings, awarding medals, commemorating historic events, or other purely ceremonial actions" (Desilver, 2015).

Political Polarization within the Electorate. While there is consensus that political elites have become polarized, there is no such consensus that the general electorate has become polarized. Measuring polarization by the frequency with which individuals take extremely liberal or extremely conservative positions, Fiorina and Abrams (2008) found that the proportion of extreme positions on contentious issues was relatively stable from 1984 to 2004. Over this time period, the narrative of polarization became popular in the media, and although Fiorina and Abrams did not find empirical evidence to support this narrative, they report that the American people appear to have bought into the idea that polarization exists. Similarly, Westfall, Van Boven, Chambers, & Judd (2015) found that the American people overestimate the degree of polarization that actually exists within the general population. Despite these findings, there are signs that polarization exists among American citizens as well as among their legislators. Pew Research Center conducted a nationwide phone survey that found that the percentage of Americans who "express consistently conservative or consistently liberal opinions" has increased in the last twenty years from 10% to 21% ("Political polarization in the American public," 2014).

Additionally, as illustrated in Figure 2.2, fewer Republicans are more liberal than the median Democrat and fewer Democrats are more conservative than the median Republican. In other words, the percentage of moderates in both parties is shrinking, while the number of voters on the political extremes grows.

Republicans Shift to the Right, Democrats to the Left

Distribution of Republicans and Democrats on a 10-item scale of political values

1994

MEDIAN
Democrat

64% of Republicans

Consistently liberal — Consistently conservative

MEDIAN
Republican

70% of Democrats

Consistently liberal — Consistently Conservative

2004

MEDIAN
Democrat

70% of Republicans

Consistently liberal — Consistently conservative

MEDIAN
Republican

68% of Democrats

Consistently liberal — Consistently conservative

2014

MEDIAN
Democrat

92% of Republicans are more conservative than the median Democrat

Consistently liberal — Consistently conservative

MEDIAN
Republican

94% of Democrats are more liberal than the median Republican

Consistently liberal — Consistently conservative

Source: 2014 Political Polarization in the American Public.
Notes: Ideological consistency based on a scale of 10 political values questions (see Appendix A). Republicans include Republican-leaning independents; Democrats include Democratic-leaning independents (see Appendix B).

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Figure 2.2. Increasing polarization among the American public over the time period 1994-2014 (Pew Research Center, 2014). This figure demonstrates a trend toward ideological sorting, with Democrats becoming more liberal and Republicans becoming more conservative than the median of the other political party.

Ramifications of Political Polarization. Differences in political opinion are not inherently negative. Indeed, the structure of the American government system includes several mechanisms ("checks and balances") to reduce the likelihood that a single party, ideology, or person could completely dominate the governing process, and a commitment to compromise is an operating principle that legislators use in order to resolve a variety of issues. However, political polarization threatens to divide a pluralistic society into opposing factions with rigid ideological beliefs (Baldassarri & Gelman, 2008). Extreme

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disagreement can lead to gridlock in Congress, which can be harmful to both government productivity and citizen prosperity and well-being.

Morality Policies

Mooney & Lee (2000) define a 'morality policy' as a policy that (a) involves a question of fundamental rights and wrongs and (b) is more concerned with core moral principles than with economic self-interest. Mooney and Schuldt (2008) tested whether morality policies constitute a distinctive type of policy through a telephone survey of 700 Illinois residents. They found that morality policies differed significantly from other types of (non-morality) policies insofar as they (1) are "more likely to involve a conflict of basic values," (2) are "less amenable to compromise," and (3) are "more technically simple," which means that they are more likely to be interpreted in clear 'black and white' terms.

The criterion of technical simplicity merits additional comment. Mooney and Schuldt (2008) explain that an issue exhibits technical simplicity when debates about that issue involve fundamental conceptions of right and wrong, informed by moral values, rather than involving detailed arguments about "cause and effect and policy implementation" (p. 210). When individuals believe that they can arrive at an informed opinion by relying on their basic moral values, it is an indication that an issue is technically simple. When individuals believe that they need to seek additional information such as statistics and the analysis of experts to arrive at an informed opinion, it is an indication that an issue is technically complex. However, that individuals think they can rely on basic moral values rather than fact-based arguments does not mean that an issue *is* technically simple, only that individuals *view* an issue as technically

simple. We believe that the crux of the criterion of technical simplicity is not whether an issue is actually technically simple but whether the issue is *viewed* as technically simple. For the purposes of our research, we will deem that issues meet the criterion of technical simplicity when an issue is perceived as technically simple.

Values

Welzel (2013) argues that all state-governed societies have "two domains of life: a private domain in which matters are decided by personal choices and a public domain in which matters are decided by political choices" (p. 45). As societies grow in size and diversity, it is inevitable that personal and political choices will overlap and also often conflict. This conflict between personal and political choices is demonstrated in numerous U.S. Supreme Court cases, including *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) regarding marital privacy, *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) regarding interracial marriage, *Roe v. Wade* (1973) regarding abortion, and *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003) regarding sexual privacy. Values shape individuals' actions, which in turn shape the society in which they live (Welzel, 2013). Though Jacoby (2006) says citizens of the United States share common values such as liberty, equality, economic security, and social order, the United States is nonetheless highly politically polarized, as seen in an analysis of political polls showing eleven distinct groups of voters with clear differences in political affiliation and values (Lewellen, 1993).

Reported differences in political views are often overly simplified. Reputable public opinion surveys, such as Gallup and Pew polls, tend to merely report the differences between respondents' views, and rarely seek to uncover why individuals hold the views they do. A recent example is a Gallup survey which showed Americans evenly

divided on the issue of abortion, with 47% being pro-choice and 46% being pro-life. While the poll mentions respondents' party affiliation, the accompanying analysis fails to discuss deeper reasons for the difference between those who support legalized abortion and those who oppose legalized abortion (Gallup, 2014). Kaposy (2012) discusses the dialogue surrounding abortion and how those who identify as pro-choice and pro-life frame their respective arguments. Neither group, it seems, succeeds in truly supporting its stances. Kaposy writes, "both sides in the philosophical debate about abortion use the same strategy, drawing on the same pool of supposedly shared values, yet the two camps arrive at opposite conclusions" (Kaposy, 2012). A lack of attention to understanding the reasons for interpersonal disagreement inhibits potential conflict resolution aimed at decreasing polarization and partisanship in America.

Shared Set of American Values. Throughout this thesis, we will use the phrase 'shared set of American values.' By this terminology, we mean to refer to certain values which most Americans hold that have been central to American politics since the nation's founding, as evidenced in founding documents, major speeches, and Supreme Court cases. It is also important to specify what we do not mean when we use this terminology. First, we do not mean that any component values of this set are *exclusively* held by Americans. For example, when we claim that liberty is a shared American value, we recognize that non-Americans may hold liberty as an important value. Second, we do not mean that Americans *only* hold those values included in our set, as Americans likely hold other additional values.

American politicians often employ values-based rhetoric to signal to voters that they are stewards of and champions for certain values (Doherty, 2008). Prominent

Democratic and Republican politicians alike have alluded to shared values among the American people that endure despite political or demographic differences. In his final State of the Union address in 1988, President Ronald Reagan extolled "an America whose divergent but harmonizing communities were a reflection of a deeper community of values." Referring to the economy in his 2012 State of the Union address, President Barack Obama declared that "what's at stake aren't Democratic values or Republican values but American values." Similarly, during his 2016 presidential campaign, Jeb Bush, the former Republican governor of Florida, asserted that "the power of America is a set of shared values with a very diverse population embracing it." For more examples of politicians promulgating the notion of shared American values, refer to Appendix A.

Some politicians, however, have noted that appealing to a certain value does not necessarily mean appealing to the same underlying idea. Abraham Lincoln, in his 1864 Address at a Sanitary Fair in Baltimore, acknowledged that "the world has never had a good definition of liberty, and the American people, just now, are much in need of one. We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing." Then, as now, there is no consensus among Americans on the meaning of frequently-invoked values.

That politicians invoke the concept of common values in their rhetoric is not evidence that Americans agree on shared set of values. Politicians may invoke values for political reasons rather than because Americans in fact share values. To illustrate, politicians may find it advantageous to speak broadly about values as opposed to elaborating on the intricacies of policy proposals, which are both more complicated to explain and more likely to alienate voters (Doherty, 2008). However, because the notion

that Americans share a set of values is enshrined in the founding documents of the United States and is promulgated by politicians, the idea that Americans share values is perpetuated.

In addition to politicians, a diversity of think tanks assert that Americans have a shared set of values. In examining the websites of 16 think tanks (three that are identified as conservative, four as conservative/libertarian, six as liberal, and three as centrist/bipartisan), we found that at least 13 published works identifying some set of values as shared among Americans. For example, in a co-published report on bipartisan methods of addressing poverty, the conservative-leaning American Enterprise Institute and the liberal-leaning Brookings Institution write that diversity in political ideology can be effectively addressed through proposal recommendations that are "based on shared values" (Aber et al., 2015). In discussing the "theme of 'change' in American politics" at the conservative Heritage Foundation, McClay (2008) mentions "values and characteristics that are thought to be centrally American." The centrist think tank New America lists independence, opportunity, and security as enduring American values (Zukin, 2008). Regardless of their position on the conservative-liberal spectrum, think tanks overwhelmingly indicate their belief in the existence of a shared set of values among Americans (Appendix B).

Politicians and researchers often discuss shared values without specifying what that shared set of values is. However, when they do specify values that belong to this shared set, they tend to highlight different ones. For example, the libertarian Cato Institute lists "liberty, sacrifice, risk-taking, and... faith" as American values (Kasparov, 2014), while the liberal Center for American Progress cites equal opportunity, fairness,

and marriage equality as national values (Woodiwiss, 2013; Burns & Harris, 2012). Therefore, although mention of values plays a central role in political debate and policy analysis, these values are rarely, if ever, concretely operationalized, thus leaving intact conflicting assumptions about what they mean in practice.

One reason for the discrepancy between the belief in shared values and the fact of high political polarization could have something to do with what values are and how they function. Verplanken and Holland (2002) describe values as "motivational constructs [that] fulfill a particular, highly abstract goal" (p. 434). They consider values ways of thinking and feeling that "define a situation...elicit goals... [and] guide action" (p. 435). Rokeach (1973) contends that these abstract, end-goals are in themselves values. Similarly, Isaiah Berlin argues that values are "not means to ends, but ultimate ends, ends in themselves" (Berlin & Hardy, 1991). This view of values is reflected in the Preamble of the Constitution, which states that "in order to form a more perfect union," values such as "establish[ing] justice" and "secur[ing] the blessings of liberty" must be maintained.

Feldman (1988) examined three core values considered to be central to American public opinion (citing Devine, 1972): equality of opportunity, economic individualism, and free enterprise. He compared varying levels of commitment to each of these values to evaluations of presidential candidates in nine policy areas and found that, with respect to Ronald Reagan in particular, levels of commitment to "equalitarianism" (a term Feldman equates with "equality of opportunity") are strongly correlated with evaluation of Reagan's performance in seven of the nine policy areas. Levels of commitment to the value of individualism are strongly correlated with evaluation of Reagan's performance

in three areas, while support for the value of free enterprise was not found to have any statistically significant impact on the evaluation of any of the policy areas.

Categories of Values. Values may be categorized according to which aspects of human life they concern. We will focus on moral values, which concern the moral evaluation of institutions, policies, and individual people's actions, as we are interested in values that determine people's beliefs about what is generally morally permissible in society at large.

Verplanken and Holland (2002) showed that values need to be activated to assess a situation and influence behavior. According to them, activation occurs when a person encounters a situation or information that evokes a value from his or her complex value system. Put differently, dispositional beliefs (subconsciously held beliefs) become occurrent when they are triggered, or *activated*, by something in the environment, making them (seem to be) more relevant at the time. Once an individual's values have been activated, his or her decision-making process is deployed. Harrington (1997) identified four common components of major ethical decision-making processes: (1) "recognition of a moral issue," (2) "moral judgment about which course of action is morally right," (3) "prioritization of moral values above other [idiosyncratic] values," and (4) "moral behavior or [discipline] to follow through on the person's intention" (p. 363).

Lovett & Jordan (2005) found that in the 2004 U.S. presidential election, a plurality (22%) of Americans surveyed listed "moral values" as exerting the strongest influence on their vote, yet the meaning of this phrase was not fully unpacked. Both the media and scholarly experts took this to mean that Americans cared a great deal about two particularly contentious issues at the time, namely abortion and same-sex

marriage. Scholars tested this hypothesis and found that in fact, views on these two issues had no independent impact on voting behavior nor a significant impact on the election outcome (Lovett & Jordan, 2005). This finding invites the following question: if these policy issues were not the stand-in for "moral values," what does the latter phrase mean?

Lovett and Jordan (2005) argue that the outcome of the 2004 presidential election was not influenced by specific policy issues, but rather by "moralism": a "general tendency to see the world in moral terms" and a heightened disposition to judge actions as 'simply' right or wrong. Lovett and Jordan employed a moralism questionnaire, consisting of 30 vignettes about everyday decisions (as opposed to policy issues) to assess the relationship between an individual's level of moralism and the presidential candidate he or she voted for. For each vignette, respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the degree to which the decision was "a matter of personal preference or a moral matter with a right and a wrong answer." Lovett and Jordan found that respondents who voted for incumbent President George W. Bush, the Republican candidate, scored higher on the moralism scale than those who voted for John Kerry, the Democratic candidate.

This study demonstrates that morality in a general sense has an influence on American politics, but it does not go further into what moral values individuals employ in their voting behavior, let alone their regular behavior or decision-making. It also showed that, even though the term "moral values" is used in analyses of voting behavior, the meaning of the expression itself is unclear. Operationalization of central variables is key to obtaining significant and reliable results. However, variables such as morals and

values are not easily operationalized, and this has thus confounded empirical research examining correlations between these variables and policy-related questions, such as presidential candidate choices (Skitka & Morgan, 2014).

Value Hierarchies

Not only do individuals hold values, but they also prioritize those values in variously-ordered value hierarchies. The 1994 Multi-Investigator Study (MIS) conducted by the University of California-Berkeley's Survey Research Center gathered information regarding American value preferences. MIS identified four commonly held American values (liberty, equality, economic security, and social order) based on their prevalence in American political culture. After providing their respondents with an explicit definition for each value, the MIS investigators asked respondents to make paired-comparison choices among the four values in order to establish a value hierarchy.

While the MIS study concluded that the aggregated value hierarchy was economic security as most important, then liberty, equality, and social order, there was no consensus when examining the value hierarchies at the *individual* level: each of the four values shows up in every possible position within the hierarchies of a significant number of respondents.

Jacoby (2006) points out one flaw in using paired-choice comparisons to determine a value hierarchy: if transitivity of preferences does not govern respondents' determinations, it is impossible to properly order the values in a hierarchy. For example, if a respondent chooses economic security over liberty and liberty over equality, but then chooses equality over economic security–therefore violating the principle of transitivity of preferences–then neither individual nor aggregate hierarchies can be derived.

Conclusion of Literature Review

Our review of the existing literature provides support for our first observation (the existence of political polarization in the U.S.), and for our second observation (the widely-held notion that Americans share a set of values), as well as for the idea that morality and values are important in American political behavior. Based on this review, our research focuses on the potential role of ranking and defining of values in understanding political polarization.

In order to better understand the moral and political divisions among Americans, our research seeks to uncover whether there are correlations between an individual's (a) stance on contentious moral and political issues, (b) rank-ordering of a set of values, and (c) definitions of those values. In this way, we hope to discover whether divisiveness at the political ideological level is connected to the variation in the ways that the same value term–for example, "liberty"–is defined. We also evaluate whether certain demographic features are correlated with an individual's moral and policy stances on certain issues, as well as their rank-ordering and definitions of values. Via this multifaceted inquiry, we hope to uncover the best indicator of moral and policy stances on morality policies (that is, on political issues perceived as being based on morals–see Chapter 3 for further explanation).

Given the context and background provided to us by previous research and the available literature, our study seeks to answer four primary research questions in hope of understanding political polarization in the United States:

1. To what extent do individuals' ranking of values explain their moral and policy stances on the issues of abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage?

2. To what extent do individuals' definitions of values explain their moral and policy stances on the issues of abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage?

3. To what degree are demographics correlated with how an individual rank orders and defines values?

4. To what degree is an individual's personality correlated with how an individual rank orders and defines values?

Chapter 3: Research Theory and Design

Identified Values

For the purposes of our research, we are adopting Isaiah Berlin's definition of values as "ultimate ends, ends in themselves" (Berlin & Hardy, 1991). Individuals direct their actions toward and make their evaluative judgments in light of these ends. We identified seven values around which to design our survey: equality, happiness, justice, liberty, privacy, security, and self-determination.

In our search for values that are allegedly shared by most Americans, we looked to three different areas: America's founding documents, landmark Supreme Court cases, and major political speeches. It is reasonable to believe that values mentioned in these prominent places, which are influential to American politics and American life, are indeed held by Americans, so the identification of values in these sources informs our selection of the components of the shared set of American values

We first looked at America's two most important and enduring founding political documents: the Declaration of Independence (US 1776) and the Constitution (US 1787). However, before proceeding, two points need to be addressed concerning the seven values we have chosen to examine in our research: first, that privacy is not explicitly mentioned in either of America's two founding political documents, and second, that freedom is not included in our list of values. With the exception of privacy, the values we identify are explicitly mentioned in either one or both of these two documents. Still, privacy deserves a place among our set since it is widely, though not universally, held to be implicit in and hence protected by the Constitution. The Supreme Court has recognized that the right to privacy is implied in at least the First, Fourth, Fifth,

Ninth, and Fourteenth Amendments (*Griswold v. Connecticut,* 1965), and important subsequent opinions have rested on that right. For example, the majority opinion in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), on the constitutionality of anti-sodomy laws, draws from the decision in *Eisenstadt v. Baird* (1971) to argue that "if the right to privacy means anything, it is the right of the individual...to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion." Such language makes it clear that privacy, as a value, is central to morality policy discussions, particularly with respect to issues related to sex, such as abortion and same-sex marriage.

Each of the seven selected values has been mentioned in prominent American political speeches and Supreme Court cases, indicating their enduring relevance and importance. Such speeches include Herbert Hoover's "The meaning of America" (1948), Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a dream" (1963), Lyndon B. Johnson's "We shall overcome" (1965), Ronald Reagan's first inaugural address (1981), and more recently, Barack Obama's "The audacity of hope" (2004). Supreme Court cases mentioning these values include *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *United States v. Windsor* (2013), and more too numerous to mention (Appendix C).

While "freedom" is another term that is mentioned in the Constitution, as well as in multiple speeches and court cases, we determined that "freedom" and "liberty" were too similar in meaning to differentiate between the two for the purposes of our research, and that differentiating between the two may confuse survey respondents. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, freedom is "the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint" ("Freedom"), which is nearly identical to the definition of liberty, "the condition of being able to act or function without hindrance or

restraint" ("Liberty"). Additionally, the term "liberty" is used in the Constitution to articulate rights, meaning that liberty is the right to certain freedoms.

To verify that a sample of Americans agree that our seven selected values are prominent among those held by Americans, we conducted seven focus groups at the University of Maryland. Our findings from these focus groups are detailed in Chapter 4.

Preliminary Value Definitions

To test our hypotheses about the correlations between (a) individuals' prioritization and definition of values and (b) individuals' moral and policy stances on morality policies, we had to select definitions for our values that would accurately capture subtleties in definitions. We found little guidance in our examination of significant political speeches and Supreme Court cases. It was evident that while political figures had no qualms about calling for liberty, justice, and equality, definitions of those mentioned values were largely assumed as opposed to being made explicit. In court cases, value terms are defined, but primarily in ways tailored to the case or issue at hand.

To construct definitions appropriate for use in our survey, we identified various concepts in both classical and contemporary philosophical literature that are associated with each of our seven values. The Founding Fathers used Enlightenment-era philosophical reasoning (John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and others) to envision and defend a democratic form of government. However, we also drew from significant philosophical figures from other time periods, including those of the classical age, like Aristotle, as well as those of the contemporary age such as Isaiah Berlin and John

Rawls. This was done to give us insight into how interpretations of values changed, remained constant, or developed over time.

As there is no widely acknowledged standard method for selecting definitions for values, we decided to select sets of definitions that either appeared to be mutually exclusive or at opposite ends of a spectrum from one another. For example, our chosen definitions for equality appear to be mutually exclusive. Two of the original definitions we selected were: (1) equality means achieving the same outcomes as others and (2) equality means having the opportunity to achieve the same outcomes as others. One emphasizes equal opportunities while the other emphasizes equal outcomes. For happiness, our definitions can be placed along a spectrum, anchored at one end in brute hedonism and at the other in what Aristotle (in his work *Nichomachean Ethics*) called *eudaimonia*: (1) happiness means experiencing pleasure, (2) happiness means satisfying my most important desires, and (3) happiness means having a flourishing, meaningful life.

Among our set of values, privacy has the least philosophical precedent. Negley (1966) claims that there is little historical consensus on privacy as an innate or inalienable right; in fact, he argues that though privacy is currently thought to be "a right or value to be protected by the law…few philosophers would argue that privacy is a 'natural right' or that the intrinsic nature of privacy establishes it as a legal right" (p. 319). Despite the lack of historical and philosophical consensus, the notion of privacy has certainly played an important moral role over the last half-century, with respect to arguments about new technologies, women's reproductive rights, and Supreme Court cases associated with a number of changes in the American social, political, and technological landscape. Since

we are interested in political polarization in the 21st century, we decided to incorporate this contemporary value of privacy because of the increasing role of privacy in Supreme Court decisions concerning certain issues.

Each of our seven values has important and distinctive dimensions which are captured by different definitions. Although we further refined the definitions of our seven values in light of feedback from our focus groups (Chapter 4), the concepts behind our definitions remained unchanged. In the tables below, the heading 'Original Definition Wording' refers to the definitions that we constructed based on a review of concepts from philosophical literature prior to input from participants in the focus groups.

EQUALITY		
Concept	**Source**	**Original Definition Wording**
Fair equality of opportunity	John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (1971) (Arneson, 2015)	• Equality means having the opportunity to achieve the same outcomes as others.
Equality of outcome	Richard Arneson, "Equality of Opportunity" (2015)	• Equality means that everyone gets the same outcome.
Equality of treatment	Richard Arneson, "Egalitarianism" (2013)	• Equality means being treated the same as others.

Table 3.1. This table shows our process for creating an original definition for "equality." The first column lists the philosophical concept that our definition is based on and the second column lists the sources from which these concepts were found.

HAPPINESS		
Concept	**Source**	**Original Definition Wording**
Hedonism: pleasure	Jeremy Bentham (Haybron, 2011)	• Happiness means experiencing pleasure.
Leading a flourishing and meaningful life	Aristotle (Haybron, 2011)	• Happiness means living a contented and meaningful life.
Life satisfaction	Jason Raibley (Haybron, 2011)	• Happiness means satisfying one's most important desires.

Table 3.2. This table shows our process for creating an original definition for "happiness." The first column lists the philosophical concept that our definition is based on and the second column lists the sources from which these concepts were found.

JUSTICE		
Concept	**Source**	**Original Definition Wording**
Distributive: goods are distributed according to need	John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (1971) (LeBar, 2016)	• Distributing social "goods" (such as education) and social "bads" (such as punishments) according to individual needs.
Responsibility-based: goods are distributed according to moral desert	Aristotle (LeBar, 2016)	• Distributing social "goods" (such as education) and social "bads" (such as punishments) according to what people deserve, based on their actions.
Value-neutral: goods are distributed equally, independently of people's conception of the good	John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (1971)	• Distributing social "goods" (such as education) and social "bads" (such as punishments) equally, without consideration to individual needs or moral desert.

Table 3.3. This table shows our process for creating an original definition for "justice." The first column lists the philosophical concept that our definition is based on and the second column lists the sources from which these concepts were found.

LIBERTY		
Concept	**Source**	**Original Definition Wording**
Positive freedom: the freedom to do because of regulations that are capacity-enhancing	Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty" (1958) (Carter, 2016)	• Having the resources and support to be or to do something.
Negative freedom: the freedom to do without restrictions, or non-interference with some restrictions	Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty" (1958) (Carter, 2016)	• An absence of obstacles, barriers, or constraints to my actions. • Complete non-interference from other parties when I attempt to do things.

Table 3.4. This table shows our process for creating an original definition for "liberty." The first column lists the philosophical concept that our definition is based on and the second column lists the sources from which these concepts were found.

PRIVACY		
Concept	**Source**	**Original Definition Wording**
Decisional privacy	Judith DeCew, *Pursuit of Privacy: Law, Ethics, and the Rise of Technology* (1997) (van den Hoven, Blaauw, Pieters, & Warnier, 2014)	• Privacy means that people are able to make decisions about their own lives, without intrusion or interference.
Informational privacy	Judith DeCew, *Pursuit of Privacy: Law, Ethics, and the Rise of Technology* (1997) (van den Hoven, Blaauw, Pieters, & Warnier, 2014)	• Privacy means that people are not obliged to disclose personal information to the government or another higher authority.

Table 3.5. This table shows our process for creating an original definition for "privacy." The first column lists the philosophical concept that our definition is based on and the second column lists the sources from which these concepts were found.

SECURITY		
Concept	**Source**	**Original Definition Wording**
Extended security: security of the nation means security of the person	Montesquieu (Bok, 2014)	• Security means being safe in my everyday life because I believe the country is secure.
Mental and physical security: security from the fear of violation of the person	Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) (Rothschild, 1995)	• Security means being safe from fear of personal mental and/or physical violation.
Freedom from the abuse of government power	Federalism (Føllesdal, 2014)	• Security means being safe from the abuse of government power.

Table 3.6. This table shows our process for creating an original definition for "security." The first column lists the philosophical concept that our definition is based on and the second column lists the sources from which these concepts were found.

SELF-DETERMINATION		
Concept	**Source**	**Original Definition Wording**
The right to govern oneself through representative government	Sarah Buss, "Autonomy Reconsidered" (1994) (Buss, 2013)	• Self-determination means being able to govern oneself through representative government.
To be able to control activity within one's sphere	Sarah Buss, "Autonomy Reconsidered" (1994) (Buss, 2013)	• Self-determination means personal autonomy to structure my life according to my own choices.

Table 3.7. This table shows our process for creating an original definition for "self-determination." The first column lists the philosophical concept that our definition is based on and the second column lists the sources from which these concepts were found.

Morality Policies

Criteria for Selection. Our research seeks to discover whether interpersonal variation in political and moral stances can be explained by individuals' different definitions and rankings of values. We focused on so-called 'morality policies' to elicit individuals' definitions and rank ordering of values, presenting respondents with four contentious morality policies in our survey.

Our issue selection was informed by the three criteria that distinguish morality policy from non-morality policy according to Mooney and Schuldt's (2008) study: conflict of basic values, difficulty in compromising, and the perception of technical simplicity. To these criteria, we added the requirements that issues must (1) have contemporary prominence in national political conversation and (2) generate significant constitutional debate and activity.

Contemporary prominence in national political conversation is important because survey respondents are more likely to have thought about, and to have formed opinions on, prominent issues, thereby enabling them to provide more insightful answers to our questions. The generation of constitutional debate and activity is an important criterion because constitutional conflicts are often indicative of conflicts over values (Alvarez, 2011). When constitutional conflicts arise over the opposition of two (or more) fundamental rights, "the legal solution must offer an answer that will result from comparing the conflicting values" (Alvarez, 2011, p. 68). Thus, issues that generate frequent high-profile constitutional controversy may be particularly useful for investigating values. Of the numerous issues at the forefront of American politics that reflect moral disagreement, we have chosen four: abortion, capital punishment, gun

control, and same-sex marriage, each of which is identified by Studlar (2001) as a prominent morality policy in American politics.

Abortion

Abortion, defined as the deliberate termination of a pregnancy, is a controversial issue in American society, and Mooney and Schuldt (2008) classify the governmental regulation of this act as a morality policy. Though the overarching policy argument is whether abortion should be legal or not, there are numerous sub-issues as well, including where abortions can be performed, mandatory waiting periods, spousal or parental consent, government funding, and late-term abortions.

As a Morality Policy. At the policy level, there are traditionally two sides in the abortion debate: those who self-identify as "pro-life" and those who self-identify as "pro-choice." Those who self-identify as pro-life argue that abortions should not legally be allowed because "the baby…has the unalienable right to life and deserves full protection under the law," and a pregnant woman's decision choices "can never include the right to kill her baby" (Turner & Balch, 2014). On the other hand, one of the primary arguments of the pro-choice side is that the issue should be treated as a matter of personal autonomy, as "the right to choose abortion is essential to ensuring a woman can decide for herself if, when and with whom to start or grow a family" ("Abortion access," n.d.). According to Mooney and Schuldt's (2008) criteria, abortion is considered a morality policy as it generates a conflict of basic moral values in that it pits such things as the right to life, freedom, privacy, and self-determination against each other, and has generated significant constitutional debate.

Although most Americans identify with absolute stances of "pro-life" or "pro-choice," particularly when choosing which political candidates to support, many Americans recognize that there is actually a spectrum between these two absolute stances. Often Americans will fall somewhere along this spectrum, as opposed to at either pole. A 2016 Gallup poll showed that while there have been slight changes since 1975 in the percentage of Americans taking an absolutist stance on abortion, the most prevalent stance is a conditional one: that abortion should only be legal only under certain circumstances ("Abortion," Gallup, 2016).

Prominence in National Debate. Abortion is prominent in political and policy debates. Controversy around abortion has manifested in debate over funding for Planned Parenthood, which receives over $500 million a year in both federal and state funding from Title X and Medicaid (Kurtzleben, 2015). Planned Parenthood is a non-profit organization that provides a range of reproductive health services including pregnancy option counseling, sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing, and breast and cervical cancer screening. The most controversial aspect of Planned Parenthood is that it also provides abortions and that it is the "largest single provider of abortions" in the United States (Rovner, 2011). While Title X funds–which are solely federal funding–may not be used to fund abortions, Medicaid funds–which are a combination of federal and state funding–can be used for abortions in cases where the pregnancy is due to rape or incest, or when the biological mother's life is at risk. Seventeen states have expanded Medicaid funding use to cover all abortions deemed medically necessary.

During the 2012 presidential campaign, Republican candidate Mitt Romney pledged to defund Planned Parenthood at the federal level, and since then, the defunding

of Planned Parenthood has continued to be a relevant issue. In June 2015, videos from a hidden camera surfaced showing Planned Parenthood employees discussing the sale for profit of tissues from aborted fetuses for profit (Calmes, 2015). Planned Parenthood subsequently explained that the recorded discussions concerned handling fees for covering expenses associated with providing the fetal tissue to researchers, which Planned Parenthood may legally collect (Calmes, 2015). Regardless, these videos reignited the discussion on abortion. As of early 2016, 10 states have defunded Planned Parenthood (Sun, 2016). The issue of abortion was also a prominent and relevant talking point in the 2016 presidential election. Then-Republican candidate Donald Trump pledged to defund Planned Parenthood and voiced support to both nominate Supreme Court Justices who would overturn *Roe v. Wade* and push legislation banning late-term abortions (Reinhard, 2016). As of November 2016, 43 states prohibit abortions after a certain period of time, except in cases where the pregnant woman's life is at risk by the continuation of the pregnancy, 42 states allow institutions to refuse to perform abortions, and 27 states mandate a waiting period before the procedure ("An overview of abortion laws," 2016).

Support for and opposition to legalized abortion has remained relatively consistent over the past two decades. In 1993, 34% of Americans believed that abortion should be legal under any circumstances, 48% believe that abortion should be legal under certain circumstances, and 13% believe it should be illegal under any circumstances. In 2015, those numbers remained relatively steady at 29% for legal abortion under any circumstances, 50% for legal abortion under certain circumstances, and 19% for illegal under any circumstances ("Abortion," Gallup, 2016).

A recent poll from Gallup shows that 29% of the population believes abortion should be legal under any circumstances, 50% believe it should be legal only under certain circumstances, and 19% believe it should be illegal in all circumstances (Gallup, "Abortion," 2016). In a separate study, Gallup found that 43% of Americans deem abortion as morally acceptable. To put this figure in context, Americans find suicide, polygamy, and pornography less morally acceptable than abortion, while Americans find physician-assisted suicide, capital punishment, and gay or lesbian relations more morally acceptable than abortion. This divide is much starker when stratified by party affiliation: only 24% of Republicans view abortion as morally acceptable, while 44% of Independents and 62% of Democrats view it as such ("Birth control, divorce…," 2016).

Constitutional History. The 14th Amendment is typically invoked when abortion cases reach the courts. The CQ Press Supreme Court Collection categorizes 43 cases under abortion, seven of which were decided in the 21st century. In *Griswold v Connecticut* (1965), the Supreme Court found that the Constitution implies a right to privacy that includes the right to privacy in marital relations, which includes seeking and receiving contraceptive counseling. In *Roe v. Wade* (1973), a landmark abortion rights case that considered the constitutionality of Texas criminal abortion laws, the Court expanded these rights of reproductive privacy and freedom by holding that the right to privacy extends to a woman's decision to have an abortion.

Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992) expanded on *Roe* by reaffirming that the right to privacy extends to cover decisions about pregnancy, but differed from *Roe* on the trimester system. In *Roe,* the Court ruled that (1) before the first trimester (roughly, the period before the point of viability), the state may not interfere with a woman seeking to

terminate her pregnancy; that (2) in the second trimester, the state may impose restrictions that protect maternal life, and that (3) in the third trimester, the state may place even more restrictions on abortion since the state has a compelling interest in protecting both maternal and fetal life. *Casey,* however, found the trimester system faulty, as the point of viability is a moving target. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor instead proposed the new 'undue burden' standard for evaluating the constitutionality of state restrictions on abortions. *Casey* found that spousal notification places an 'undue burden' on women seeking abortions, while the state requirements of informed consent, a 24-hour wait period, and parental consent in the event of a minor did not place an 'undue burden.'

Most recently, in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt* (2016), which asked if legislation that restricts access to abortion services may be a source of "substantial burden" in the pursuit of promoting health, the Court came to a similar decision as in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey.* It found that while it is within a state's right to implement statutes that ensure the safety of women seeking abortions, it is not within the state's right to implement statutes that also 'impose an undue burden' on a woman's ability to obtain an abortion. Abortion is a highly contentious issue and is still quite complex in terms of its legality. This is best evidenced by how cases regarding tenets of its legality still come to the Supreme Court even after landmark cases such as *Roe v. Wade* (1973).

Capital Punishment

Capital punishment is the legally authorized killing by the state of someone as punishment for a crime and is also one of Mooney and Schuldt's prototypical morality policies. In addition to the question of whether or not the state ought to have the power

to execute its citizens, debates over capital punishment also concern methods of execution such as lethal injection and electrocution, for what crimes can one be sentenced to death, implicit racial bias in sentencing, and the age and mental status of individuals convicted of capital crimes.

As a Morality Policy. There are two sides on the issue of capital punishment: those who support it and those who oppose it. Opponents of capital punishment argue that the government should not be in the business of taking human life, period. This issue then exhibits technical simplicity since many oppose it due to a fundamental conception that the government is morally wrong in taking lives (Mooney & Schuldt, 2008). Some also argue that capital punishment is inherently unfair because it is disproportionately imposed on minority and lower-income felons and/or question the degree of confidence that the government can have that each person sentenced to death is actually guilty of the crime for which he or she has been convicted. Furthermore, there is considerable dispute about the alleged "humane-ness" of certain methods of execution. In particular, while execution by lethal injection was introduced as a purportedly more humane alternative to the electric chair, there have been several cases in which the drug combination did not work correctly, resulting in severe pain before death (Eckholm & Schwartz, 2014).

Supporters of capital punishment argue that some crimes are so brutal and heinous that execution is the only sentence that can ensure justice. Supporters also point to several recent statistical studies that purportedly show that capital punishment, even though rarely used, deters violent crime (Pew Research Center, 2008). Overall, 59% of Americans view capital punishment as morally acceptable. However, political partisanship is visible for this issue: 74% of Republicans favor capital punishment,

compared to 56% of Independents and 47% of Democrats ("Birth control, divorce top list of morally acceptable issues," 2016). Capital punishment has been abolished in 19 states ("States and capital punishment," 2017), but it still generates great controversy among Americans. In the 2016 election, proponents of capital punishment won three victories on ballot initiatives. Voters in California, which has the largest death row population in the United States, opted against abolishing the death penalty, voters in Oklahoma amended their state constitution to declare that capital punishment is not cruel and unusual, and voters in Nebraska reinstituted capital punishment after the state legislature had previously banned it (Berman, 2016).

This issue implicates not only the government and those on death row, but medical professionals as well. The expertise of doctors, especially anesthesiologists, during lethal injection executions, would help ensure that condemned prisoners do not suffer unduly. However, the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American Society of Anesthesiologists claim that physicians' participation in executions violates core principles of medical ethics (Eckholm & Schwartz, 2014).

Prominence in National Debate. Capital punishment is only one aspect of the current national debate on race relations and the criminal justice system. After George Zimmerman was acquitted in 2013 in the death of African American teenager Trayvon Martin, the Black Lives Matters movement was formed as a protest against perceived unjust treatment of and violence against African Americans in the criminal justice system. The Death Penalty Information Center ("Facts about the death penalty," 2016) finds that 50% of murder victims nationwide are white, but 76% of cases resulting in execution of the defendant involve white victims. The Center also reports that "in 82%

of the studies [reviewed], race of the victim was found to influence the likelihood of

being charged with capital murder or receiving capital punishment, i.e., those who

murdered whites were found more likely to be sentenced to death than those who

murdered blacks" ("National statistics on the death penalty," 2016). Human Rights

Watch, an international non-governmental organization that releases annual reports on

the status of human rights worldwide, names the U.S. criminal justice system and its

related inequities–including harsh sentencing and racial disparities in criminal justice–as

one of the most significant institutions hindering the country's progress in advancing

human rights ("United States: Events of 2015," 2016).

The pharmaceutical industry has also been drawn into the capital punishment

debate. Earlier in 2016, the global drug company Pfizer placed distribution restrictions

on seven products, several of which are sedatives or paralytics (Caplan, 2016). The new

restrictions prohibit using these drugs in lethal injection executions. Restrictions like

these have caused several states to outsource their supplies of drugs used in the lethal

injection cocktail: Arizona, California, and Georgia all bought "untested sodium

thiopental" from the British company Dream Pharma. Sodium thiopental is a "depressant

of the central nervous system" and is the first of the three drugs given during lethal

injection executions ("Penthothal," 2010). Subsequently, the United Kingdom banned

the sale of sodium thiopental and a U.S. federal court ruled that the U.S. Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) had "improperly approved" the use of this drug (Federal

Court). Additionally, a federal appeals court banned the FDA from allowing sodium

thiopental to enter the country from any foreign suppliers (Caplan, 2016).

Constitutional History. The CQ Press Supreme Court Collection lists over 140 cases from the last 75 years categorized under "capital punishment," with over 40 of those cases from the 21st century alone. There is debate regarding what constitutes "cruel and unusual punishment" under the Eighth Amendment, particularly in light of recent botched executions, such as the April 2014 botched execution of Clayton Lockett in Oklahoma (Berman, 2014). In *Furman v. Georgia* (1972), the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that applying the death penalty in the case under review was racially motivated, and thus constituted cruel and unusual punishment and was therefore unconstitutional. However, the Court majority diverged in their reasoning, with each of the five justices authoring their own concurring opinion. Three justices argued that capital punishment is only cruel and unusual when the means are "inhuman or barbarous" or the punishment is imposed in a discriminatory fashion against certain groups. Two justices argued that capital punishment is always cruel and unusual, regardless of how it is applied (*Furman v. Georgia*). As a result of *Furman,* states could not reinstate capital punishment until they showed that they had introduced safeguards against its arbitrary and discriminatory imposition.

States took notice, and a few years later, the Supreme Court reversed themselves in *Gregg v. Georgia* (1976) and upheld Troy Gregg's death sentence. The Court established that Georgia's system for sentencing Gregg to death was both "judicious" and "careful," so "the infliction of death as a punishment for murder is not without justification and thus is not unconstitutionally severe." On the notion that the death penalty was not cruel and unusual in all circumstances, the Court affirmed capital punishment's purposes of retribution and deterring crimes.

There have been numerous high-profile Supreme Court cases relating to capital punishment in the last two decades, including *Atkins v. Virginia* (2002), which prohibited capital punishment for mentally retarded individuals; *Baze v. Rees* (2008) which held that lethal injection does not constitute cruel and unusual punishment; and *Kennedy v. Louisiana* (2008) which prohibited capital punishment for crimes that do not result in the death of the victim, with the exception of crimes against the state such as treason.

Gun Control

The term 'gun control' concerns laws and regulations regarding the sale, purchase, possession, and use of firearms in the United States. Gun control encompasses a wide range of sub-issues including background checks, restrictions on assault weapon sales and ownership, and waiting periods on gun purchases.

According to Pew Research Center, support for gun control has been declining, from 50% in 2015 to 46% in 2016 ("Gun rights vs. gun control," 2016). In addition, four states held gun control referendums during the recent presidential election of 2016. In Maine, voters defeated a referendum calling for expanded background checks for private gun sales and transfer or loans of weapons to friends. In Nevada, a referendum was approved with 50.5% of the votes to "expand background checks to private gun sales and transfers." California approved outlawing the possession of large-capacity ammunition magazines, requiring background checks for ammunition sales and allowing the state to immediately remove firearms from people who have been convicted of a felony or violent misdemeanor. Similarly, Washington State approved a measure allowing judges to issue orders enabling authorities to temporarily seize guns from people who are deemed a threat to themselves or others (Sanburn, 2016).

As a Morality Policy. There are two broad opposing sides on the gun control issue: pro-gun and pro-gun control. The former's main argument is that Second Amendment protects the right of individuals to keep and bear arms. Pro-gun supporters also argue that gun ownership deters crime. The latter group argues that the Second Amendment at most guarantees the right of states to maintain militias under the supervision of the national government, and it does not limit the government's authority to control the ownership of firearms (Utter and True, 2000, p. 68). Pro-gun control supporters also argue that gun control laws would reduce gun deaths and deter crime. These contrasting views and arguments prevent the establishment of common ground and represent a conflict of basic values such as liberty and security in policy and constitutional debate. Alongside this conflict of basic values, gun control also fulfills Mooney and Schuldt's (2008) criterion that a morality policy must be "less amenable to compromise" as depicted by the lack of common ground.

Prominence in National Debate. Gun control has featured prominently in national debate lately due to several tragic shootings. The 2012 school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, brought the issue of gun control to the forefront of political debate in Congress (Koenig, 2013). In the wake of the 2013 Navy Yard shooting, President Obama and California Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein called for gun control reform, and President Obama criticized current gun laws after the Charleston, SC church shooting in 2015 (Sink, 2014; Tau, 2015). In June 2016, the country experienced its deadliest mass shooting, which took the lives of 49 people in an attack on a nightclub in Orlando, FL (Alvarez, Hause, & Pérez-Peña, 2016). Gun control was also a prominent issue in both the Clinton and Trump presidential campaigns. One

in four television ad campaigns that were run in New Hampshire focused on gun control, and Clinton frequently met with victims of gun violence, particularly mothers (Zornik, 2016). Trump, on the other hand, spoke at the National Rifle Association, stating that "whether it's a young single mother in Florida or a grandmother in Ohio, Hillary wants them to be defenseless [and] wants to take away any chance they have of survival" (Zornik, 2016).

    Constitutional History. Gun control implicates the Second Amendment, and debate about specific policies and regulations typically invokes discussion of the impact of such state action on an individual's constitutional right to keep and bear arms. This issue has reached the United States Supreme Court twice in the 21st century. In *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008), the Supreme Court interpreted the Second Amendment as ensuring an individual's right to gun ownership for the purpose of self-defense. In *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010)*,* the Supreme Court applied the Second Amendment to the states through selective incorporation. Both *District of Columbia v. Heller (2008)* and *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010) broadened the interpretation of the Second Amendment, enhancing an individual's right to gun ownership. In addition, the ruling in each of these cases was of 5-4, demonstrating that the justices themselves were divided in their interpretation of the Second Amendment.

Same-Sex Marriage

    Same-sex marriage, defined as the legal recognition of the union between members of the same-sex, is an issue whose status has drastically changed in the U.S. since Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage in 2004 (Associated Press, 2014). Prior to the Supreme Court's 2015 decision in *Obergefell v.*

Hodges legalizing same-sex marriage in all 50 states, same-sex marriage was legal in 37 states through a combination of state legislation, ballot initiatives, and court rulings (Chappell, 2015). Despite this rapid change, same-sex marriage is still contentious; Pew Research Center found in 2016 that 55% of Americans favored the legalization of same-sex marriage, while 37% opposed the legalization of same-sex marriage ("Changing attitudes," 2016).

As a Morality Policy. Mooney and Schuldt (2008) identify same-sex marriage as a prototypical example of morality policy. Regarding a conflict of basic values, opposition to legalizing same-sex marriage has often been linked to religious views as some religions teach that marriage is restricted to one man and one woman and that homosexual activity is sinful (Olson et al., 2006). Proponents of same-sex marriage insist that there is a core sense of "belonging" from which same-sex couples were wrongfully excluded while opponents of same-sex marriage view themselves as the defenders of a traditional and endangered bastion of "normality" (Burt, 2011). Same-sex marriage also displays difficulty to compromise because the issue necessarily involves two extremes: either same-sex marriage is allowed or it is not allowed, with little to no room for any compromise. Same-sex marriage is technically simple in that debate about the issue is often framed in moral terms and informed by religious views, and individuals believe that relatively little additional research or statistics is needed to form an opinion.

Prominence in National Debate. Same-sex marriage has been a prominent topic discussed in national political conversation in recent years. The Supreme Court ruled on cases relating to same-sex marriage in 2013 (*Hollingsworth v. Perry and U.S. v. Windsor*) and 2015 (*Obergefell v. Hodges*). These rulings generated significant news coverage and

reactions at the state and local level, particularly following the *Obergefell* decision. In the aftermath of the decision, state employees in Texas and Mississippi refused to issue marriage licenses to couples of the same-sex (Hennessy-Fiske, 2015; Dreher, 2015). Perhaps most prominently, Kim Davis, the county clerk of Rowan County, Kentucky, refused to issue same-sex marriage licenses and at one point ceased issuing marriage licenses altogether. Davis was found in contempt of court for refusing to issue licenses even after being ordered to do so and ultimately spent five nights in jail; Davis and her cause found support nationwide including from Republican presidential candidates Mike Huckabee and Ted Cruz (Blinder & Pérez-Peña 2015).

Some states, including Indiana, enacted legislation ostensibly in the name of religious freedom to protect individuals engaged in business from having to violate their religious beliefs such as by, for example, fulfilling catering orders for same-sex weddings (Barbaro & Eckholm, 2015). Indiana's law was controversial, and several companies criticized the law and threatened to leave the state. Subsequently, Indiana passed a law enhancing protections for LGBT citizens. The Indiana law was similar to a law that was passed in Arizona but vetoed by then-governor Jan Brewer, a Republican, in 2014 (Santos, 2014).

Constitutional History. Constitutional debate on same-sex marriage is typically based on the 14th Amendment. There have been three recent cases in the Supreme Court regarding this issue: *Hollingsworth v. Perry* (2013), *United States v. Windsor* (2013), and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015). In *Hollingsworth*, the Court ruled that the sponsors of Proposition 8, a California ban on same-sex marriage, did not have standing to appeal a ruling that determined Proposition 8 was unconstitutional. In *Windsor,* the Court ruled

that the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), a federal law passed in 1996 that specifically

defined marriage as limited to "a legal union between one man and one woman" was

unconstitutional (Defense of Marriage Act, 1 U.S.C § 7, 1996). In *Obergefell,* the Court

held that the Constitution affords citizens a fundamental right to marry (in a two-person

union) regardless of the sex of each of the partners, thus legalizing same-sex marriage

nationwide.

Demographics in Relation to Selected Morality Policies

The demographic features that we deemed important in relation to our selected

morality policies are (1) race/ethnicity, (2) gender, (3) age, (4) religion, (5) religiosity, (6)

education, (7) household income, (8) political affiliation, (9) political ideology, (10)

sexual orientation, (11) geographic area and (12) marital status. These demographic

features were chosen because major polling organizations, such as Pew, include them in

their research on morality judgment, social issues, and government policies.

In reviewing the results from polls conducted on each of the four morality

policies, we noticed that some demographic features are associated strongly with certain

stances. For the issue of abortion, there are some key differences that may help predict

support for or opposition to abortion. In 2017 report, Pew found that 57% of those

surveyed thought abortions should be legal in all or most cases, and 39% thought

abortions should be illegal in all or most cases ("Public opinion on abortion,"

2017). Some demographics were associated with opinions that strongly diverged from

these numbers. Political party affiliation was one such demographic, as 74% of self-

identified Democrats thought abortion should be legal in all or most cases and only 36%

of Republicans shared that view. Research has demonstrated that the demographic factor

of political ideology is important as well: liberals and conservatives are shown to be divided on what they value, even if they share a "smaller set of core values" (Graham and Haidt, 2009). Additional demographics of interest include religion, age, education, and race. While many assume that support for legal abortion varies greatly along gender lines, there was no significant difference based on gender: 57% of women and 57% of men believed abortion should be legal in all or most cases, and 40% of women and 39% of men believed abortion should be illegal in all or most cases.

According to a 2016 Pew report, 49% of those surveyed supported capital punishment, and 42% opposed capital punishment. However, the polling shows that certain demographics were associated with greater support or opposition to capital punishment that deviated from the averages including gender, race, political party affiliation, education, and religion: men were more likely to favor capital punishment than women (55% compared to 43%); whites were more likely to favor capital punishment than blacks and Hispanics (57% compared to 29% and 36% respectively); Republicans were more likely to support capital punishment than Democrats and independents (72% compared to 34% and 44% respectively); and white evangelicals and white mainline Protestants were more likely to support capital punishment than Catholics and the religiously unaffiliated. Support for capital punishment decreased as education level increased.

Regarding gun control, an August 2016 report by Pew found that 52% of respondents thought it was more important to protect gun rights, compared to 46% of respondents who thought it was more important to control gun ownership. Gender, race, party affiliation, and geographic area displayed important trends. Men were more likely

to support gun rights than women, white respondents were more likely to support gun rights than black respondents and Hispanic respondents, Republicans and independents were more likely to support gun rights than Democrats, and rural respondents were more supportive of gun rights than both suburban and urban respondents.

Based on a May 2016 Pew article, 55% of those surveyed believed that same-sex marriage should be legal, and 35% thought that same-sex marriage should be illegal. Influential demographics include age, gender, race, religion, and political party affiliation. Some trends emerge: younger respondents were more likely to support same-sex marriage than older respondents; female respondents were more supportive than male respondents; white respondents were more supportive than black respondents; and self-identified Democrats and independents were more supportive than self-identified Republicans. An individual's religious affiliation showed interesting relationships: those who were religiously unaffiliated (80%) were more likely than the general population to support same-sex marriage, as were white mainline Protestants (64%), and Catholics (58%). Black Protestants (39%) and white evangelical Protestants (27%), however, were less likely to support same-sex marriage.

Although certain demographic factors have been shown to be correlated with certain stances on the morality policies, there is scant research as to how demographic factors may be correlated with an individual's ranking and definition of values. We hoped to address this in our research.

Instrument

In order to collect our data of interest, we concluded that a survey would be the best instrument to use, as it would allow us to collect a large set of quantitative data from

a nationally representative sample. Details of methods we used to collect our data will be explored in more depth in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Focus Groups

Purpose of Focus Groups

We conducted a set of focus groups to better inform our survey. The main overarching goal we had for the focus groups was to gain an understanding of how individuals reasoned when evaluating the phenomenon of polarization, and the different issues and values presented from our research. Namely, we wanted to answer a series of "why" questions: why do they believe there is or is not polarization, why do they believe certain issues are divisive, and why do they believe we share certain values? We also wanted to answer a "how" question: how do participants define the different values they identified as shared American values? The narrative participants employed in their answers, the language they used, and the thought process explained provided us with valuable insight that informed our survey.

To achieve these goals, we designed a script to use for our focus groups (Appendix D). The script had two distinct sections: one focused on polarization (which also encompassed questions about major social issues), and the other section focused on values. For both sections, we attempted to move from broad questions to more specific ones in order to first provide context for the discussion and then to prompt participants to offer thoughtful insight.

Focus Group Logistics

After we constructed the questionnaire for our focus groups, we drafted the IRB application for an expedited review process. We were granted IRB approval to conduct our focus groups after modifying the application by addressing comments from the IRB.

Given our limited time frame, financial resources, and the objectives of the focus groups, we determined it would be best to conduct focus groups on the University of Maryland campus. This influenced our eligibility criteria in that participants needed to be enrolled as students at the University of Maryland, College Park. In addition, we reasoned that participants needed to be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years of age, since our research relates to voting patterns and political opinions.

We planned to offer participants $10 cash as compensation, as well as light refreshments. We estimated that each session would last between an hour to an hour and a half, depending on each group and the flow of conversation.

Once we established the parameters for the focus groups and were granted IRB approval, we started the recruitment process. Recruitment was conducted through several different channels, including: various email listservs through the University of Maryland; various University of Maryland's Facebook cohort groups that members of the research team were part of at the time of recruitment; posting flyers in University of Maryland academic buildings; and advertising on the campus buses operated by the UMD Department of Transportation Services (Appendix E). Each recruitment tool contained information regarding the eligibility criteria, compensation, duration of the study, and a specific URL to allow interested individuals who met the eligibility requirements to sign up for focus group session.

In preparation for the focus groups, we reserved classrooms in central buildings on campus for the convenience of participants. Upon arriving to the session, participants received, read, and signed the consent form approved by IRB, which informed participants that the sessions would be recorded. After the conclusion of the session,

participants received their compensation of $10 and signed a receipt acknowledging the payment.

Three team members facilitated each focus group. Two of those three team members served as moderators, following the approved IRB questionnaire, which was constructed in a way to enhance conversation and discussions of the mentioned topics. The third team member served as a scribe, taking notes about participants' responses. Each session was video- and audio-recorded to enable an accurate and full transcription of the session to facilitate further analysis and examination of the results.

In total, 41 individuals participated across seven different focus groups. Of the 41 participants, 32 were female and nine were male. Accurate transcripts were written with the aid of the recordings, and once the transcripts were finished, the recordings were subsequently destroyed. Transcripts were then utilized for the analysis of the results of the focus groups.

Major News Events During Focus Groups

Since it is reasonable to assume that participants could be influenced by prominent news topics leading up to their participation in the focus groups, we monitored the major news headlines during the period in which we conducted our focus groups. We believed that our analysis of the focus groups' results and the subsequent changes to our survey would be more informed and accurate if we, ourselves, were aware of the context and news participants were exposed to during those days.

Our focus groups occurred in a two-week period from November 20, 2015 to December 3, 2015. We monitored major news topics that occurred during the two weeks of our focus groups as well as during the week prior to first focus group. Prior to the

focus groups, the November 13, 2015 terror attacks in Paris (for which the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) claimed responsibility) and their aftermath dominated news coverage (Meichtry, Robinson, & Kostov, 2015; Dalton, Faucon, & Gauthier-Vilars, 2015). Following the news that a Syrian refugee was involved in the Paris attacks, many Republican politicians voiced their opposition to President Obama's plans to accept Syrian refugees, while many Democrats voiced their continued support for these plans (Tau & Peterson, 2015; Jordan, 2015). The Paris attacks also spurred a debate on the role and extent of spying in the fight against terrorism (Paletta & Hughes, 2015). On November 20, Islamist militants attacked the Bamako Hotel in Mali, taking hostages and killing more than 20 people (Hinshaw & Höije, 2015). Brussels, Belgium was under lockdown from November 21-25, relating to the search for terrorists after the Paris attacks and fears of another attack (Drodziak, Pop, & Barnes, 2015).

Domestically, on November 24, there were major protests in Chicago following the police shooting of Laquan McDonald, a 17-year old black man (Davey & Smith, 2015). On November 27, there was a shooting at a Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood that killed three individuals and left nine others wounded (Radnofsky, Karmin, & Frosch, 2015). On December 2, a married couple inspired by ISIS killed fourteen people and injured over 20 more in a shooting at the San Bernardino Social Services Center (Audi, Frosch, & Carlton, 2015).

Nov. 13:
Paris Terror Attacks

Nov. 14:

Nov 15:

Nov 16:

Nov. 17:
GOP politicians oppose
Accepting Syrian refugees

Nov. 18:

Nov. 19:

Nov. 20:
Focus Group #1
Bamako Hotel attack in Mali

Nov. 21:
Focus Group #2

Nov. 22:

Nov. 23:
Focus Group #3

Nov. 24:
Protests in Chicago after police
Shooting of Laquan McDonald

Nov. 25:

Nov. 27:
Shooting at Colorado Springs
Planned Parenthood

Nov. 26:

Nov. 28:

Nov. 29:

Nov. 30:
Focus Group #4

Dec. 1:

Dec. 2:
Focus Group #5 & #6
San Bernardina Terror Attacks

Dec. 3:
Focus Group #7

Figure 4.1. This is a timeline depicting the day each focus group took place and prominent news events that occurred during that time period. These events may have had impacts on the subjects that focus group participants chose to raise.

In light of these events, we should not be surprised that the list of issues mentioned during the focus groups included immigration, acceptance of refugees, terrorism, foreign policy, national security, and surveillance.

Results from Focus Groups

In this section, we discuss the results from our focus groups and the implications that these results had for our survey construction and broader research design. To preserve participants' anonymity and confidentiality, we assigned numbers to each participant, with each number consisting of two components. The number before the

'dot' identifies the focus group session that the individual participated in, and the number after the 'dot' refers to the seat in which the participant sat. For example, participant 3.2 attended the third focus group session and sat in seat number two.

Perceptions of Political Polarization. When asked whether the American people are significantly divided on major social issues, a significant majority of participants in each focus group agreed that the American people are significantly divided regarding major social issues, including abortion, gun control, immigration, and LGBT rights.

We then asked participants who claimed that the American public is polarized to explain their reasoning as to why they believe this polarization exists, and, in the process of answering this question, provide the way in which they reached such conclusion. The most common responses were: (1) differences in demographics, culture, upbringing, and experiences; (2) impacts from media coverage of issues and news; and (3) the two-party political system and the way it frames debates and amplifies voices at the extremes.

In discussing reasons for significant disagreement on social issues, some participants cited values in their explanations, without prompting from the moderators. Some participants asserted that the disagreements stemmed from the fact that different individuals and groups hold different values. For example, participant 1.2 asserted that the difference of opinion about social issues is a result of "really conservative values compared to really liberal values." Other participants, however, argued that despite the appearance of major differences, many Americans share similar underlying values. Participant 5.3 agreed that Americans are divided on issues but also maintained that "the values behind those issues are more similar than [Americans] think."

Divisive Issues. After discussing the reasons participants provided for the existence of major disagreement on social issues, we asked participants to explicitly state which major social issues they think are the most polarizing and why. Moderators did not prompt participants or provide examples of issues, so all issues that were raised originated from the participants. In proceeding this way, we hoped to identify which of the issues we originally selected were mentioned and thus decide whether to include them in our final survey.

To reiterate, our four selected issues were abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage. Abortion and reproductive rights, as well as same-sex marriage and LGBTQ rights were mentioned in all focus groups, while gun control and gun rights were mentioned in a vast majority of the focus groups. Capital punishment, however, was only raised as such an issue in one focus group.

After each focus group generated a list of issues on which the American people are significantly divided, we asked the participants why these issues engendered more disagreement than other issues. Participants mentioned demographic factors such as race, religion, geographic location, and educational attainment as reasons for starkly different views on these issues. Some participants argued that people are unable to empathize with others who have different perspectives and experiences because of demographic differences. Other explanations included a tribal mentality in which people on each side of an issue retreat to the extremes of people who agree with them and viscerally oppose the other side. Another recurring theme among participants is that the social issues are more salient and are perceived to be more impactful in their daily lives than other issues. For example, participant 5.5 said that "a lot of [these issues] are things that

people deal with in their everyday lives, you know, based on how they identify within certain groups," and participant 6.2 said that "social issues are more applicable to us in our day-to-day life."

Interestingly, some participants used language that echoed Mooney & Schuldt's criteria for morality policies, which we adopted as part of our criteria for selecting the issues to use in our survey. As mentioned in Chapter 3, morality policies involve a conflict of basic values, increased difficulty to compromise relative to non-morality policies, and (perceived or actual) technical simplicity. Without being aware of this framework for differentiating between certain types of policy, participants made comments that touched on each of the characteristics.

Regarding a conflict of basic values, participants noted that many of the controversial issues touch on matters of identity and upbringing, which help to inform a person's basic values:

> "A lot of these issues are really deeply rooted in how you were grown up [*sic*]. Like how you were raised." (5.3)

Participants pointed out that many of the issues the focus groups identified deal fundamentally with morality in addition to politics, in a way that economic policy, for example, does not. Extending this further, it makes sense that individuals are less likely to compromise on these issues than on non-morality policies because many people are unwilling to compromise their most deeply felt moral views.

> "To compare their significance to economic issues, it's really hard to get passionate about the economy, that's strange, so I think it's easier to get that emotional investment involved with social issues because they have that religious or moral authority or something...it really deals with moral issues." (6.4)

Technical simplicity refers to individuals' perceptions that an issue is 'easy' to understand and to evaluate. Technical simplicity does not mean that an issue is in fact simple but that individuals perceive the issue to be simple and believe they can make an informed judgment without performing much research or seeking the thoughts of experts. In our research, we care not that an issue is in fact simple to understand but that the issue is viewed to be technically simple. Participants made observations that suggested these issues are perceived to be technically simple:

> "[It's one] or the other, it's very black and white to a lot of people, there's not, I mean nothing's really black and white, so a lot of people fail to see that." (1.5)

Shared Set of Values. Participants' responses were very evenly distributed when asked whether they believed that Americans tend to share a uniform set of predominant values. While some believed that shared values do exist, others believed this statement to be false or were skeptical about it.

We were predominately interested as to why participants thought in the way that they did and in how they defended their ideas. In analyzing the responses, we found a few recurring themes.

First, some participants that were skeptical of the idea that there could be a shared set of values attributed it to the highly diverse demographics in the United States:

> "I think that trying to give Americans a whole set of values that they all believe in is not going to work because it's such a diverse population." (1.2)

> "I think that it really just depends on many factors like race, religion, where you're from, like what region you are in, what your education is, what your economic status is and it's just like a lot of variation and so many differences that can affect your values." (5.2)

Second, some participants expressed skepticism that values were anything more than vague buzzwords that people use to create a sense of unity:

> "I almost feel like they have been used so frequently that they become buzzwords rather than something that holds significance." (3.6)

Third, other participants argued that Americans generally believe in the same core values but have different interpretations of those values and favor different ways of promoting these values:

> "There are so many things that [Americans] do have in common...maybe we don't always practice them but we say that we try to uphold them." (1.3)

> "I think there are a lot of values that Americans as a culture tend to hold...there are a lot of different ways that people find their own values, whether that be through religion or through their parents or through their individual cultures because we are the 'melting pot' country. There are a lot of values that we have in common, just not all of them." (2.1)

> "Two different people can see the word freedom and define it as two completely different definitions as it means to them so it really just depends on different definitions you give these set values." (3.5)

> "I think you have to look at what just America was founded on like freedom, opportunity, equality, whether it is there or not is a whole separate discussion, but I think that people would agree that Americans believe in the idea of equality, it obviously isn't there in a lot of places but it's an overarching value that we work towards." (3.1)

> "The same values affect everybody but I think how they go about expressing those and achieving those values is different so that's why there is a divide, even though we have the same values." (6.5)

Although we assumed that Americans also believed that they shared a similar set of values, it is perhaps unsurprising to see such a lack of consensus among our participants. As mentioned in Chapter 2, politicians often invoke the notion of shared values, but they neglect to elaborate on or define explicitly what those supposed shared values are, which could send mixed signals to Americans. Additionally, we conducted

our focus groups during a divisive election cycle, which could have exacerbated divisions and obscured underlying agreement. Mixed signals from politicians and the timing of the focus groups could have made participants less inclined to say that Americans share values.

We found in the focus group results that all the values on our list (liberty, equality, justice, security, happiness, self-determination, privacy) were mentioned. Additionally, the majority of focus group participants agreed that the list of values we generated accurately reflected the values Americans utilize to evaluate moral and political issues. It is worth commenting that across focus groups, some individuals challenged the inclusion of happiness as a value, arguing that happiness is too subjective a value to be universally shared. However, we note that Americans can reasonably define and understand values differently without being incorrect, so we decided to retain happiness as one of the values in the survey.

Analysis of Focus Groups

Selection of Morality Policies. Abortion, gun control, and same-sex marriage (and/or related LGBT issues) were mentioned in each of the focus groups, which affirmed that these morality policies were divisive and could plausibly be included in our survey as a medium for studying values. However, we reexamined the inclusion of capital punishment in our survey since the issue was mentioned in just one focus group. The literature describes capital punishment as a prototypical morality policy (Mooney & Schuldt, 2008). We theorize that capital punishment was rarely mentioned among University of Maryland students because the death penalty was abolished in

Maryland since 2013 and the last state execution was in 2005 ("Persons executed in Maryland," n.d.).

Conversely, immigration was identified by participants across five different focus groups as one of the most polarized social issues. In fact, prior to the focus groups, we ourselves had considered immigration as an issue to include in our study. However, the issue of immigration does not fully meet our criteria as it is not perceived as being technically simple. For this reason, we opted not to include the issue of immigration in our study despite its repeated mention throughout the focus groups.

Definitions of Values. Based on definitions provided by participants, the language provided, and the trends that emerged across focus groups, we revised the definitions of each value that we had initially developed for our survey. The tables below compare the pre-focus group definitions to the post-focus group definitions that were used in the survey. Informed by participants' responses, we grouped definitions that participants offered into various categories according to their themes, and we noted the frequency with which each category was mentioned across focus groups. We then composed definitions ("Focus Group Definitions" in the tables below) to cover the popular definitions participants articulated. Finally, we compared the pre-focus group definitions (refer to Chapter 3 for further discussion) to the focus group definitions and composed final definitions to be used in the survey.

When we first thought about equality, we formulated three definitions, corresponding to the following ideas (1) equality of outcome; (2) equality of opportunity; and (3) receiving the same treatment as others receive under law. Across focus groups, participants also identified equality of outcome, equality of opportunity, and equal

treatment under the law regardless of one's demographic characteristics. When we

finalized our definitions, we constructed definitions that described equality of opportunity

and equality of outcome but avoided using those phrases so that participants would think

carefully about which option more closely aligns with their views. We removed the

definition about receiving the same treatment under the law in recognition that this

definition could be easily conflated with justice, which will be discussed below.

EQUALITY		
PRE-FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS	**FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS**	**FINAL DEFINITIONS FOR SURVEY**
1. I believe that equality means achieving the same outcomes as others. 2. I believe that equality means having the opportunity to achieve the same outcomes as others. 3. I believe that equality means being treated the same as others.	1. Equality means the same treatment/rights under the law regardless of demographic characteristics (no discrimination). 2. Equality means that everyone has the same opportunity to succeed. 3. Equality means that everyone gets the same outcome.	1. Equality means that everyone is able to start from the same point even if they don't end at the place. 2. Equality means that everyone is able to get to the same endpoint even if they don't start at the same place.

Table 4.1. This table shows our process for creating our final definition for "equality." The first column

lists our original definition based on philosophical concepts and the second column lists the definitions we

formulated after conducting our focus groups.

We initially identified three definitions of happiness: the satisfaction of desires,

the experiencing of pleasure, and the living of a meaningful life. Participants viewed

happiness as short-term pleasure, seeking long-term satisfaction and fulfillment, and

being successful, especially in a material sense. For the survey, we articulated definitions

that dealt with (1) experiencing pleasure; (2) satisfying one's most important desires; and

(3) living a contented and meaningful life. The first definition, that happiness just is

experiencing pleasure, is hedonism. The second definition reflects the desire-satisfaction

understanding of happiness, which recognizes that desires can be satisfied without

necessarily experiencing pleasure. The third definition encompasses participants' beliefs

that happiness is concerned more with a long-term sense of fulfillment.

HAPPINESS		
PRE-FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS	**FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS**	**FINAL DEFINITIONS FOR SURVEY**
1. I believe that happiness means experiencing pleasure. 2. I believe that happiness means satisfying desires. 3. I believe that happiness means having a flourishing, meaningful life.	1. Happiness is short-term pleasure. 2. Happiness is a long-term sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. 3. Happiness is the result of success and material gains.	1. Happiness means experiencing pleasure. 2. Happiness means satisfying my most important desires. 3. Happiness means living a contented and meaningful life.

Table 4.2. This table shows our process for creating our final definition for "happiness." The first column

lists our original definition based on philosophical concepts and the second column lists the definitions we

formulated after conducting our focus groups.

We had articulated three conceptions of justice before the focus groups: (1) social

goods and social bads should be distributed according to one's needs; (2) social goods

and social bads should be distributed according to what people deserve based on their

actions and merits; and (3) social goods and social bads should be distributed equally,

without consideration for individuals' circumstances. In our focus groups, participants

had a narrow interpretation of justice, largely confining it to the context of criminal

justice or speaking broadly in terms of fairness. We inferred that participants meant that

social goods and social bads are distributed based on what an individual deserves or that

social goods and social bads are distributed to people according to their need, which

involves more individual consideration.

JUSTICE		
PRE-FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS	**FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS**	**FINAL DEFINITIONS FOR SURVEY**
1. Distributing social "goods" (such as education) and social "bads" (such as punishments) according to individual needs. 2. Distributing social "goods" (such as education) and social "bads" (such as punishments) according to what people deserve, based on their actions. 3. Distributing social "goods" (such as education) and social "bads" (such as punishments) equally, without consideration to individual needs or just deserts.	1. Justice means fairness in the distribution of goods/services. 2. Justice means holding individuals accountable for their actions according to a fair standard. 3. Justice means 'righting' a wrong.	1. Justice means that societal "goods" and societal "bads" are distributed to people based on what they deserve. 2. Justice means that societal "goods" and societal "bads" are distributed to people based on what they need.

Table 4.3. This table shows our process for creating our final definition for "justice." The first column

lists our original definition based on philosophical concepts and the second column lists the definitions we

formulated after conducting our focus groups.

After analyzing the focus group definitions for liberty, we observed that definitions generally touched on three aspects. The first aspect related to the ability of individuals to do whatever they want without external interference from other people or the government and without any reference to the rights of others. The second aspect was less individualistic, implying that liberty is the right to do whatever one pleases so long as that action does not infringe on the rights of another person. This second aspect is more inwardly focused and not explicitly concerned about external parties who might restrict one's liberty. Finally, the third aspect focused exclusively on the relationship between government and individuals' actions, asserting that liberty means the absence, specifically, of government oppression or coercion on action.

In developing definitions for our survey, we combined the first and third aspects, which concern negative liberty, or the notion that one's actions should not be constrained by external forces into one definition. We then constructed a second definition to capture the second aspect, which concerns positive liberty, or the notion that one is able to "take control of one's life" (Carter, 2016).

LIBERTY		
PRE-FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS	**FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS**	**FINAL DEFINITIONS FOR SURVEY**
1. Having the resources and support to be or to do something. 2. An absence of obstacles, barriers, or constraints to my actions. 3. Complete non-interference from other parties when I attempt to do things.	1. The ability to freely do what one wants without interference from other individuals or government. 2. The right to do what one wants as long as it does interfere with other's rights 3. Freedom to act without government oppression or coercion.	1. Liberty means the right to freely do what one wants without interference from external influences such as other people, government, and institutions. 2. Liberty means the right to freely do what one wants as long as one's actions do not interfere with others' rights.

Table 4.4. This table shows our process for creating our final definition for "liberty." The first column lists our original definition based on philosophical concepts and the second column lists the definitions we formulated after conducting our focus groups.

We thought of privacy as the ability to make life decisions without external interference and as the ability to refuse to disclose sensitive personal information to others. The former is similar to how our focus group participants conceived self-determination, and upon further analysis, we agreed that this conception of privacy was not the most accurate. In the focus group, participants aligned with our own thinking that privacy is the ability to refuse to disclose sensitive information to external parties. Participants also raised another aspect of privacy related to the ability to live one's live free of external monitoring or supervision provided that one's activities are legal.

The definitions we adopted for our survey still relate to our initial concepts of decisional privacy and informational privacy, but they employ language similar to that which our participants used. The first survey definition relates to informational privacy and says that individuals have the power to withhold sensitive personal information from others. The second survey definition relates to decisional privacy and the life decisions that one makes every day, free of external monitoring or supervision.

PRIVACY		
PRE-FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS	**FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS**	**FINAL DEFINITIONS FOR SURVEY**
1. I believe that privacy means that people are able to make decisions about their own lives, without intrusion or interference. 2. I believe that privacy means that people are not obliged to disclose personal information to the government or another higher authority.	1. Privacy is the ability to keep one's personal information to oneself unless one decides to disclose that information. 2. Privacy is the ability to live one's life however one wants without external supervision or interference as long as one's actions are legal.	1. Privacy means the power to withhold personal information from external sources such as the government, companies, or other people. 2. Privacy means the ability to live without external monitoring.

Table 4.5. This table shows our process for creating our final definition for "privacy." The first column lists our original definition based on philosophical concepts and the second column lists the definitions we formulated after conducting our focus groups.

We developed our definitions for security in terms of homeland security, physical security of a person's well-being, and security from the abuse of government power. Focus group participants thought of security in terms of a country's safety from

external threats (homeland security), a person's safety from external threats (physical safety of a person's well-being), and stability from excessive or rapid change.

We compared both sets of definitions and composed four definitions of security for the survey. These definitions focused on (1) a sense of personal safety derived from a sense of national safety; (2) a sense of personal safety from fear of violation of the self; (3) freedom from the abuse of government power; and (4) security of a stable and relatively certain standing in society, regardless of societal changes.

SECURITY		
PRE-FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS	**FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS**	**FINAL DEFINITIONS FOR SURVEY**
1. I believe that security means being safe in my everyday life because I believe the country is secure. 2. I believe that security means being safe from fear of personal mental and/or physical violation. 3. I believe that security means being safe from the abuse of government power.	1. Security is the safety of the person from external threats. 2. Security is the safety of the country from external threats. 3. Security means stability.	1. Security means being free from danger in my everyday life because the country is secure. 2. Security means being free from fear of personal, mental, and/or physical violation. 3. Security means being free from the danger of possible abuses of government power. 4. Security means maintaining my well-being irrespective of what is going on in society.

Table 4.6. This table shows our process for creating our final definition for "security." The first column lists our original definition based on philosophical concepts and the second column lists the definitions we formulated after conducting our focus groups.

Before the focus groups, we conceived of self-determination in two ways: (a) that people could influence the direction of their society through representative self-government, and (b) that individuals could structure their lives according to their own choices. In our focus groups, it became apparent that our first conception of self-determination was not shared by many people. The themes regarding self-determination that emerged in the focus groups concerned an individual's ability to succeed according to his/her merits, an individual's ability to define his/her identity, and an individual's ability to make decisions without interference from others, which echoes our second conception of structuring one's life according to one's choices.

Based on these results, we refined our original definitions. First, we removed the definition concerning representative self-government. Then, we constructed new definitions for self-determination that touched on the themes of identity and success according to merits and effort mentioned in the focus groups. We also simplified our original conception (b) to emphasize the structuring of lives according to one's choices.

SELF-DETERMINATION		
PRE-FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS	**FOCUS GROUP DEFINITIONS**	**FINAL DEFINITIONS FOR SURVEY**
1. I believe that self-determination means being able to govern one's self through representative government. 2. I believe that self-determination means personal autonomy to structure my life according to my own choices.	1. Self-determination is an individual's ability to succeed according to his/her merits and effort. 2. Self-determination is an individual's ability to define his/her identity. 3. Self-determination is the ability to make decisions that affect oneself without interference from others.	1. Self-determination is the ability to succeed according to my own merits and effort. 2. Self-determination is the ability to control my identity. 3. Self-determination is the ability to structure my life according to my choices.

Table 4.7. This table shows our process for creating our final definition for "self-determination." The first column lists our original definition based on philosophical concepts and the second column lists the definitions we formulated after conducting our focus groups.

Conclusion

The goal of the focus groups was to better inform our survey. The most enriching aspect of our interactions with the 41 different participants, was our ability to understand their thought process when thinking about polarization, and the values chosen with respect to divisive issues. The narrative and language they employed in explaining their thought processes provided us with validation of our values and issues and helped to better articulate our value definitions. We were able to utilize these findings to finish the construction of our survey in order to distribute it and gather the data needed to answer our research questions.

Chapter 5: Survey Design and Implementation

Focus Group Results

From our focus group results, we confirmed the issues and values we would use in our survey. Our four issues (abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage) were mentioned various times throughout our seven focus groups. All of our values (liberty, equality, justice, security, happiness, self-determination, privacy) were either mentioned at least once throughout the focus groups or, when suggested as a set of viable options for a shared American value list, the majority of participants agreed.

Another result of our focus groups was a recurring issue of participants not fully understanding what was meant by "values." Borrowing from Rokeach (1973) and Berlin and Hardy (1991), we defined values as "desirable end states" and "ends in themselves" meaning that these values are themselves ends that people work towards. Participants often mentioned tangible items they valued such as money or family, instead of conceptual ideals, like liberty and justice. This confusion motivated us to be more explicit in our definition of values in our survey.

The focus groups also helped us modify our original value definitions. After compiling and comparing our original definitions and the definitions provided from focus groups participants, we constructed multiple definitions for each value. These multiple definitions ensure each value now had two or more clear definitions that represent different understandings of the same value. For a more detailed discussion of changes made to value definitions, refer to Chapter 4.

In using these results from our focus groups, there were two overall goals that informed our survey design. The first goal was to obtain, as completely as possible, a set

of opinions and beliefs from survey respondents. We sought to understand respondents' views from both the moral and political perspective and to be informed of the extent to which they held these opinions, while minimizing the possibility of respondents expressing common ideas in different ways or answering a question one way, but in fact meaning something else. The second goal was to learn an individual's opinion on a wide variety of topics without allowing any of the questions that were previously asked to bias respondents' answers. Since we found in our focus groups that beginning with more general, broader questions and eventually moving to more specific questions was helpful in reducing bias and priming as much as possible, we used this same approach in our survey. Furthermore, our intent was to understand the subtle differences within respondents' views without our questions leading to us projecting difference onto the respondents.

Based on our focus group results, we incorporated vignettes, using them as hypothetical scenarios in which respondents could analyze a situation and recognize that moral stances and policy stances may (or may not) conflict. For the vignettes, we intentionally chose scenarios involving issues other than our four morality policies so as not to influence respondents' responses. For example, this was one of the vignettes we created for our survey:

> A man and his wife left Mexico and illegally immigrated to the United States with their two-year old son. They settled in Los Angeles, California, where the husband worked in the landscaping industry and the wife cleaned houses. Five years after moving to the United States, their daughter was born. Today, 20 years after moving to the country, the family could be facing deportation. As a result, the husband, the wife and the son will be deported back to Mexico, while the daughter will be allowed to stay in the United States.

This vignette, as well as the other vignettes presented in our survey, primes participants not only to consider both moral and policy aspects of the situation, but to evaluate the possibility of moral and policy stances to not align with each other. In the vignettes presented, the laws being followed are presented clearly. In this example, morally, a respondent may consider whether it is permissible to separate a family or whether it is permissible to excuse law-breaking due to individual circumstances. At the same time, policy-wise, this vignette addresses the debate on immigration policy, and whether or not (or under what circumstances) illegal immigrants should be allowed to remain in the country.

Goals of the Survey

The overarching goal of our survey was to collect sufficient data to reach statistically significant answers to our research questions identified in Chapter 2. Because the survey population was U.S. citizens above the age of 18, we sought a representative sample of the population (further discussion below). We asked questions to determine correlations relating to the following areas: how respondents prioritize values; how respondents define values; and how respondents apply values to their evaluation of selected morality policies.

Survey Design

Overview. The survey consisted of seven sections: (1) Demographics Part One, (2) Vignettes, (3) Issues, (4) Value Definitions, (5) Value Hierarchies, (6) Demographics Part Two, and (7) Personality Test[1]. There was a total of 81 questions throughout the

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[1] Initially, we planned to investigate how an individual's personality affected (or did not affect) his or her ranking and definition of values. Therefore, we included a condensed version of the IPIP personality tests in our study. Although we collected this data, due to time constraints and other trends that emerged from the data, we reprioritized the areas of focus of our data analysis.

survey in a variety of formats including multiple choice, Likert scales, ranking, and text entry.

Demographics. The demographic section contained 13 questions split into two parts: part one, which has three questions, and part two, which has 10. Part one is located at the beginning of the survey immediately following the consent form. Part two is located at the end of the survey preceding the personality test. We placed three demographics questions (age, race/ethnicity, and gender) at the beginning of the survey. This placement was necessary to screen out respondents under the age of 18 and to impose the quotas for an even gender split and a racial composition representative of the U.S. population. The remaining demographic questions, which included political ideology and party affiliation, were left until the end of the survey so as to reduce the likelihood that respondents would consider their political ideology or affiliation in answering questions about the four issues.

The thirteen questions asked about ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, religiosity, education, household income, marital status, party affiliation, political ideology, and media sources of current events. Most questions were multiple choice except for age (text entry), religiosity (Likert scale), political ideology (Likert scale), and media sources (combination of checkboxes and text entry for additional detail). The incorporation of these specific demographics was based on the standard questions asked by Pew and Gallup polls.

Vignettes. The next section was the vignette section, which included three scenarios. The vignettes were incorporated to encourage respondents to recognize that their moral and policy stances on morality policies may come apart. For example, an

individual may judge that abortion is morally impermissible but still support legal access to abortion. The potential divergence of moral stance and policy stance is relevant to our research because we ask respondents to make both moral judgments and policy judgments on the morality policies. The respondent had two multiple choice options from which to decide. The three scenarios appeared in random order within the vignette section. The vignettes were designed to highlight potential conflicts between respondents' moral stance and policy stance. The vignettes also allowed respondents to be sensitized to the fact that one's moral stance could differ from one's stance regarding policy vis-à-vis a particular issue. The vignettes covered topics relating to business ethics, immigration, and assisted suicide.

Issues. The issue section contained a total of 24 questions. First, there were four questions that ask the respondents about how important each of the four issues was to them. The respondents answered by selecting one of four Likert scale options from "not at all important" to "very important." The respondents were then presented with three questions for each issue. The first question asked the respondents about the moral permissibility of the issue and the strength of their moral stance. The second question asked the respondents about the degree to which they supported legal regulation of the issue. The last question presented the seven values in a random order, and asked respondents to drag and drop the values relevant to the specific issue into the adjacent box and then to rank the applicable ones in order of importance. The four issues were also presented in a random order to prevent bias.

Value Definitions. The value definitions section consisted of two questions for each of the seven values. First, the respondents chose for a given value the best

definition, ranging from two to four options. Next, the respondent indicated the accuracy of each definition by selecting one of five Likert scale options from very inaccurate to very accurate. The values and their definitions were presented in a random order to prevent bias.

Value Hierarchy. The value hierarchy section contained two parts. The first part was embedded in the issues section. For each of the four issues, there was a drag, drop, and rank question with seven items in the word bank. Respondents were asked to consider the list of seven values and to drag and drop the values that they consider to inform their views on the particular issue into the designated boxed area. Once the applicable values are dropped into the value box, respondents were asked to rank those applicable values in order of importance. Part one collected information on the application and ranking of a respondent's values in the context of each issue.

Part two of the value hierarchy section was located after the definition section. It consisted of six questions that ask the user to remove the least important value in the list shown. The first question contained the list of seven values and the respondent chose one value that they consider least important. Using survey logic, the next question contained six values, which excluded the values that had already been selected as "least important." The respondent eliminated one value at a time until the sixth question in the series. This way, the possible difficulties that Jacoby (2006) faced in his study (Chapter 2, p. 16) are mitigated: respondents are forced to break any possible ties, and a logically sound hierarchy for each respondent can easily be assembled. Part two also generated a general value hierarchy from the respondent's answer outside of the context of any issue.

Personality Test. The personality test was the last item of the survey and contained twenty multiple choice questions. The questions were split into subsections of five for readability, but the order of subsections and the questions they contain were randomized. The questions were derived from the abbreviated OCEAN personality test. The respondent determined how accurately a statement described his or her own behaviors by choosing from a five point Likert scale.

Determination of Sample Size

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, on July 1, 2015 there were an estimated 324,418,820 people in the United States. Given that our population is American citizens 18 years old or older and the Census Bureau from 2014 estimates that 76.9% of all Americans are over 18, we have rounded up to a finite population of 249,478,073 individuals. Since the population (N) is known, we can use the Yamane Method to estimate our necessary sample size:

$$ny = N / (1 + Ne^2),$$

where N is the known population, and e is the error level. For a confidence level of 95%, we have e=.05. Given our population of 249,478,073 and e of .05,

$ny = 249,478,073 / (1 + (249,478,073 * .0025))nY = 249,478,073 / 623696.1825 = 399.99$

Thus, our minimum sample size is 400 individuals.

Survey Implementation

To implement our survey, we had to determine our population, how we would disseminate the survey, and then to apply for IRB approval.

We determined that our respondents should be drawn from eligible voters in the United States, thus setting minimum criteria that our participants must be old enough to vote (older than 18) and citizens of the United States. All participants must be U.S. citizens as many topics of our survey are about American political issues and values that are considered to be shared by Americans. Though some non-U.S. citizens may be knowledgeable about these topics, others may not, so we decided that restricting participation to U.S. citizens would ensure a greater likelihood that participants are more familiar with American political issues and values.

The next step in our process was to determine what method we would use to reach our participants. We decided to contract with Qualtrics, a research software company, to distribute our survey so that we could have access to the millions of participants they have on their panels. Qualtrics distributed our survey to a small group of individuals (N=20) initially and returned the results to us so that we could confirm our satisfaction with the results in terms of completeness of answers and proper screening of participants. Qualtrics then sent the survey to an additional 500 participants, randomly chosen throughout the United States from their databases, but constrained in terms of the following: U.S. citizenship, 18 years of age or older, to be racially representative of the U.S. population by imposing racial composition quotas that approximated the U.S. census, and to be equally representative in terms of gender.

After determining the logistics to distribute our survey, we compiled it and submitted it to the University of Maryland IRB. We received IRB approval on April 28, 2016 and began data collection with Qualtrics on May 4, 2016. We completed data collection on May 12, 2016 with a yield of 520 respondents.

Chapter 6: Results and Analysis

Introduction

We begin this chapter by noting the extent to which our initial assumptions were validated, and by introducing and clarifying several key terms that we will use in the description of our analysis. Next, we detail the reasoning behind how we approached and conducted our analysis, report the results of our survey, and offer an analysis of these results.

Before we begin the discussion of our results, it is worth noting that three of the assumptions we made while designing our research were validated. The data validated our assumptions that: (1) the issues included in the survey were salient; (2) the values that we provided were relevant to respondents' judgments about the issues; and (3) the definitions of the values resonated with respondents and captured their understanding of the values[2].

Our survey generated a large amount of data and so we had to prioritize which of these data served our purposes best. We made our selections about which data to analyze by keeping in mind our primary focus, which was not the particular stances respondents took on the different issues, but rather how they ranked and defined the values they deployed in their judgments about the issues. When we began the statistical analysis, a few trends emerged quickly, and, in this chapter, we will discuss our analysis in line with

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[2] First, the issues (abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage) were salient: when asked how important an issue was to them, respondents most commonly said that each issue was 'very important,' and when asked how strong their moral stance and policy stance were for an issue, respondents most commonly said 'very strong' across all four issues. Second, the values in our survey were relevant to respondents: at least 70% of respondents selected each value once as being pertinent to informing their evaluation of an issue. Third, the definitions that we provided resonated with respondents and captured their understanding of the values: when asked to specify how accurate each definition of a value was, a majority of respondents indicated either 'accurate' or 'very accurate' for most of the definitions.

those trends.

We now clarify some key terminology that we use throughout the chapter to describe our major findings. First, the term ''most pertinent value' refers to the value that respondents ranked as the value that most informed their judgments about a particular issue. For example, if a respondent ranked justice as the most important value for judging capital punishment, we would label justice as the most pertinent value for that respondent in making judgments about capital punishment.

Second, we use the term ''scattering' to refer to how widely dispersed, among the seven values provided, the selections of most pertinent values were for each issue among all respondents. When respondents generally agreed on the most pertinent value for judging an issue, scattering is described as low; when respondents did not generally agree on the most pertinent value for judging an issue, scattering is described as high.

Third, by 'policy stance', we mean the position that respondents take on a particular issue, dictated by their policy preferences for that issue. For example, a respondent's policy stance with respect to capital punishment could be that capital punishment should be either illegal, legal, or the respondent could remain neutral and neither favor nor disfavor the legality of capital punishment. In this chapter, we will use the phrase legally acceptable to denote an individual's policy stance in favor of the legal status of an issue.

Reasoning for Our Process of Analysis

Because we collected more data than we actually needed to answer our research questions, we had to prioritize which data to analyze. We detail the choices we made in the following paragraphs.

First, to analyze the influence of value ranking on an individual's moral and policy stances, we chose to compare respondents' selections of most pertinent value for an issue to their moral and policy stances on that issue. We made this choice because we were more concerned with whether an individual ranked a value as pertinent with respect to an issue than with whether an individual generally ranked a value first, outside of the context of evaluating the particular issue. This choice was also consistent with what we learned from our review of the relevant literature (Chapter 2) about the crucial role of context in activating individuals' values.

Second, we chose to compare a respondent's choice of most pertinent value for an issue to their moral and policy stances on that issue. We did this, instead of comparing all of the values that individual viewed as pertinent to their evaluation of an issue, because we were unable to gauge how much more important one value was compared to another. In other words, we could not discern in respondents' ranking of values whether the difference in importance between any two values was the same. Hence, we opted to analyze only the most pertinent value in relation to stance.

Third, to determine the impact of how respondents defined values on their moral and policy stances, we chose to compare only definitions of the most pertinent value for an issue to respondents' moral and policy stances on that issue. We made this choice because we are concerned with how a value is defined only if we know that the respondent views the value as pertinent to moral and policy stances. For example, it was not relevant how a respondent defined self-determination, in relation to that respondent's stances on capital punishment, if the respondent did not even believe that self-determination was pertinent for capital punishment.

Finally, we chose to ignore other data that we collected. Thus, beyond what was required to validate our initial assumptions, we did not use information about (1) how personally important each respondent reported an issue to be; (2) how strongly respondents' felt about their moral and policy stances; or, (3) the degree to which respondents felt each definition was accurately captured their understanding of a value.

Below, we present our results in the following order, which mirrors our analysis process. We start by reporting which values respondents selected as the most pertinent value for evaluating each issue. This serves to illustrate the concept of scattering and shows how the degree of scattering varied across all four issues. These results determine the order in which we then address our findings for each particular issue. We move from the issue that exhibited the least scattering (capital punishment) to the issue that exhibited the most (abortion).

Figure 6.1, which represents the total population results of how frequently each value was selected as the most pertinent value for each issue, makes vivid the differential scattering of values across the four main issues.

Capital punishment exhibits the least scattering, with 62.7% of respondents agreeing that justice was the most pertinent value, whereas as abortion exhibits the most scattering, with 23.8% of respondents choosing privacy and 22.1% of respondents choosing self-determination as the most pertinent value. We will expand on the implications of such scattering as we address each issue in turn.
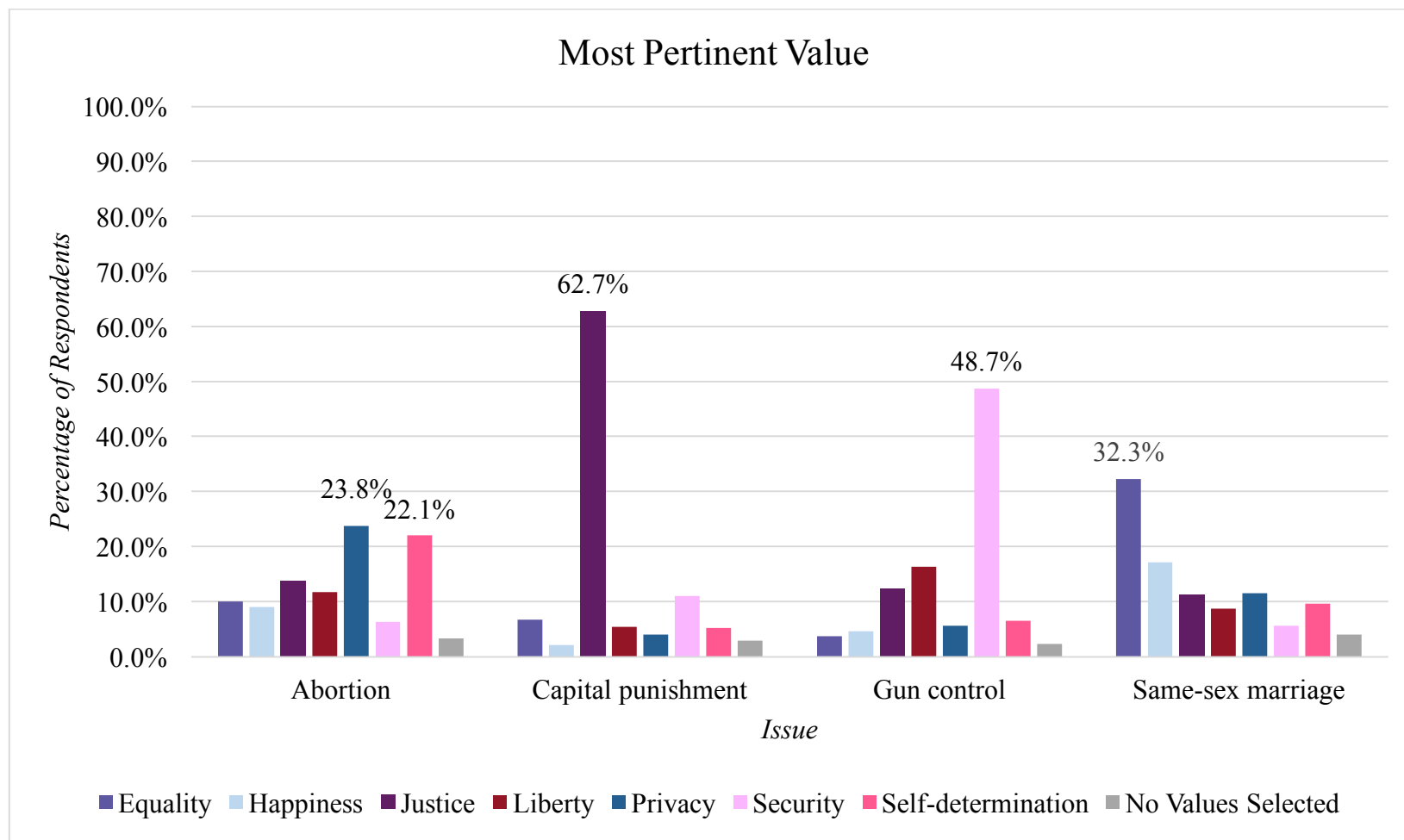
Figure 6.1. This figure illustrates how frequently each value was selected by respondents as the most pertinent value for each issue (abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage). Capital punishment shows the least 'scattering,' while abortion shows the most.

Respondents who ranked justice as #1
for capital punishment (CP)

*How does most pertinent value
correlate to moral stance?*

What definition did they choose?

What is their moral stance on capital punishment?

Definition 1   Definition 2

CP is permissible   CP is impermissible

*How does definition of most pertinent value
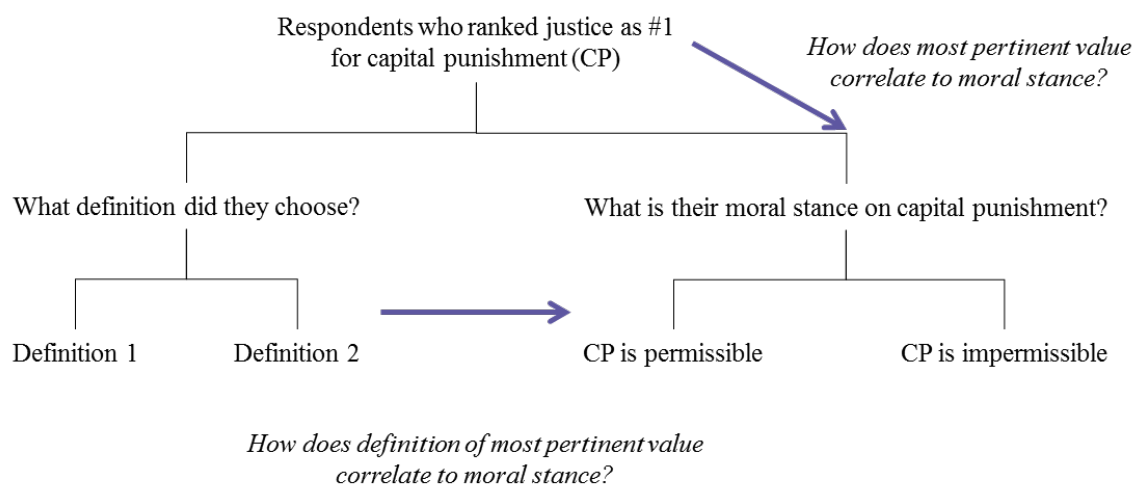correlate to moral stance?*

Figure 6.2. This figure demonstrates our method of analysis for most pertinent value, utilizing the selection of the value of justice as the most pertinent value for capital punishment as an example.

For each issue, we implemented a uniform method of analysis, in that the same statistical tests[3] were run for each of the four issues. Our general process of analysis is illustrated in Figure 6.2, using the example of justice as the most pertinent value for capital punishment. In the sections, we proceed as follows.

First, we identify the value that respondents most frequently selected as the most pertinent value for judging the issue and comment on the degree of scattering. Second, we report the results of the correlations that we ran to determine the effect of ranking a value as most pertinent to an issue on an individual's moral and policy stances on that

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[3] To examine the correlation between values that are pertinent to an issue and moral stance and policy stance on that issue, where the latter two are dependent ordinal variables, we used SPSS to run ordinal regressions. The ordinal regression tests whether the independent variables have an effect on the dependent variable. The test sees if what respondents chose for a given independent variable (such as 'most pertinent value' or 'best definition') can be used to predict what respondents would choose for a given dependent variable (such as 'moral stance' or 'legal stance'). For example, an ordinal regression can show whether a respondent choosing Definition 1 for justice would make them more likely than a respondent choosing Definition 2 to view capital punishment as morally permissible. Since variation could have been attributed to a respondent's demographic information, we included all ten demographic variables as additional independent control variables in each regression. Utilizing a p-value threshold of 0.05, we noted significances and estimate values in our results. In addition, we ran chi-squared tests to find out which demographic variables affected the selection of the most pertinent value and best definition.

issue. Third, we dive deeper and report the results of the correlations that we ran to determine the effect of how an individual defined the most pertinent value for an issue on an individual's moral and policy stances. Fourth, we comment on which demographic features were significantly correlated to an individual's moral and policy stances. Finally, we conclude each section by summarizing the results.

Issues

Capital Punishment. A 62.7% majority of respondents selected justice as the most pertinent value for their judgments about capital punishment. Responses regarding the most pertinent value for evaluating capital punishment exhibited relatively little scattering, meaning that there was a high degree of consensus among respondents that justice is the most pertinent value for capital punishment.

For moral stance, we found that a 48.5% plurality of respondents viewed capital punishment as always or usually morally permissible, and 22.3% of respondents viewed capital punishment as never or rarely permissible. For policy stance, a 58.3% majority of respondents believed that capital punishment should be legal, and 15.4% of respondents believed that capital punishment should be illegal.

Capital Punishment: Views on Moral Permissibility
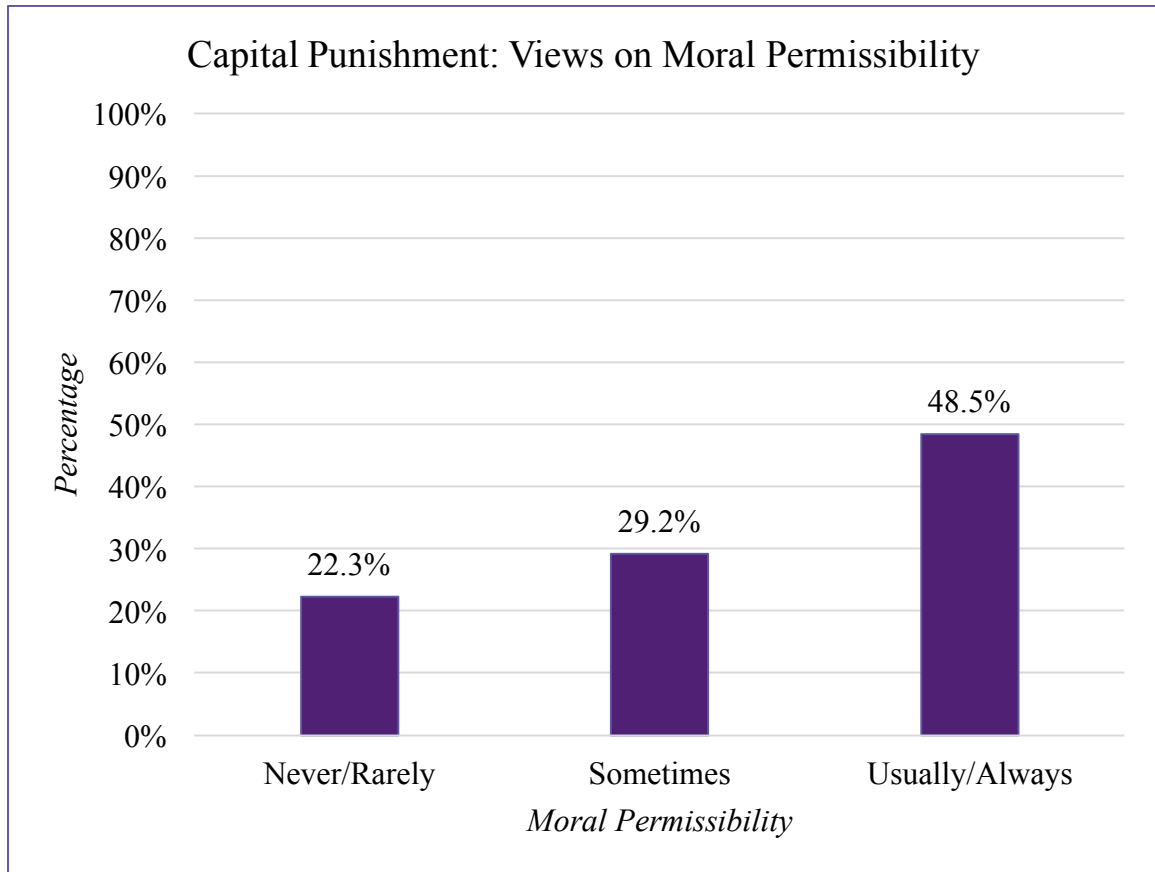
Figure 6.3. This graph shows the percentage of respondents who viewed capital punishment as never/rarely morally permissible, sometimes morally permissible, or usually/always morally permissible (n = 520).

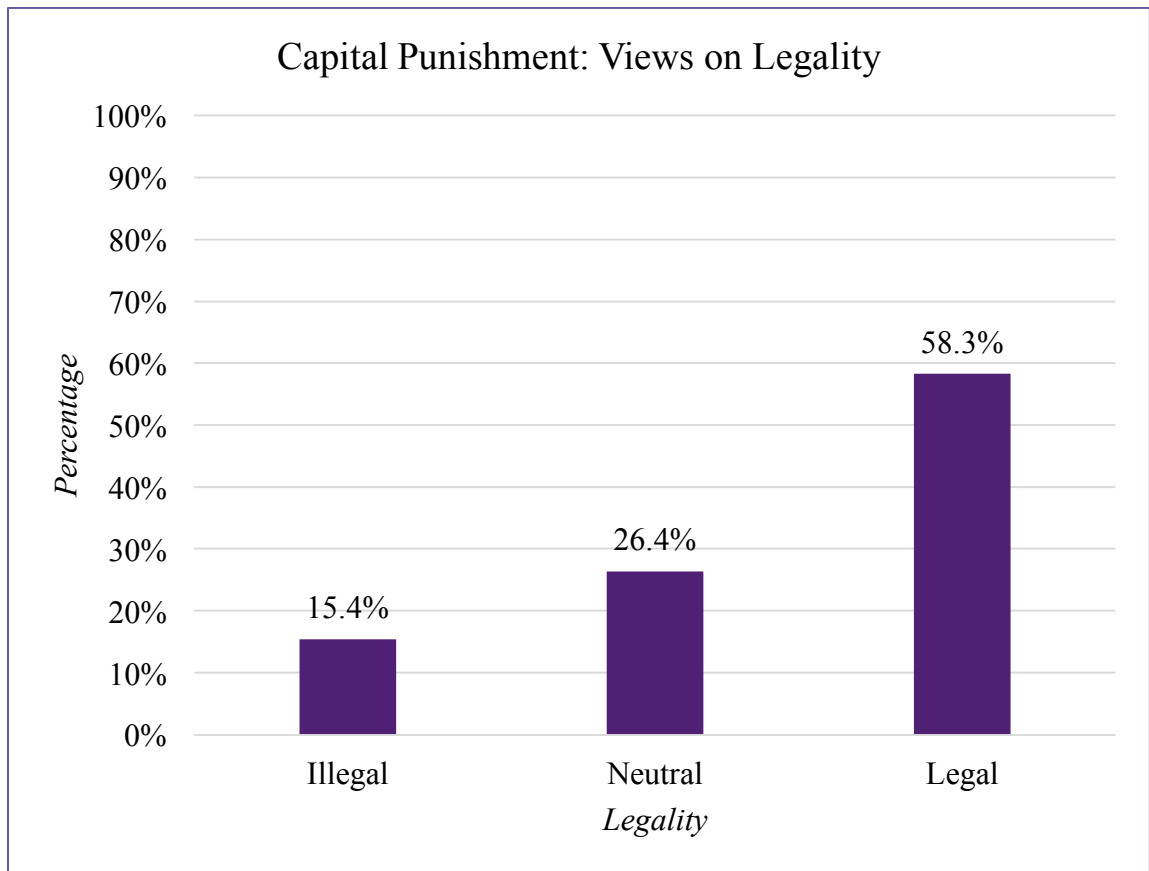*Figure 6.4*. This graph shows the percentage of respondents who viewed capital punishment as illegal, neither illegal or legal, or legally acceptable (n = 520).

Since justice was viewed as the most pertinent value for capital punishment, we then tested to see if there was a correlation between choosing justice as the most pertinent value for capital punishment and respondents' moral and policy stance on the issue.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Estimate (β)	Significance (p)
CP Top Value = Justice	CP Moral Stance	0.322	0.080
CP Top Value = Justice	CP Policy Stance	0.584	0.004

Table 6.1. This table displays the results of the ordinal regression where the selection of justice as the most pertinent value is compared with moral stance and policy stance on capital punishment. Positive numbers indicate increased support for capital punishment.

As Table 6.1 indicates, there is evidence that respondents who choose justice as the most pertinent value for thinking about capital punishment are more likely to favor the legality of capital punishment as a matter of policy than those who chose some other value as the most pertinent value for the evaluation of capital punishment. However, choosing justice as the most pertinent value for the evaluation of capital punishment bore no significant relation to whether respondents judged capital punishment to be morally permissible.

Next, we examined the effect of respondents' preferred definition of justice, the most pertinent value, on respondents' moral and policy stances on capital punishment. We offered respondents two different definitions of justice:

> ***Definition 1***: "Justice means that societal 'goods' (such as education) and societal 'bads' (such as punishments) are distributed to people based on what they deserve."

> ***Definition 2***: "Justice means that societal 'goods' (such as education) and societal 'bads' (such as punishments) are distributed to people based on what they need."

We found that 76.4% of respondents who ranked justice as the most pertinent

value for capital punishment chose Definition 1, while 23.6% chose Definition 2.

Definitions of Justice

23.6%

76.4%

■ Definition 1:
Justice means that societal 'goods' (such as education) and societal 'bads' (such as punishments) are distributed to people based on what they deserve.

■ Definition 2:
Justice means that societal 'goods' (such as education) and societal 'bads' (such as punishments) are distributed to people based on what they need.

Figure 6.5. This figure illustrates how respondents who ranked justice as the most pertinent value for capital punishment defined the value of justice (n = 326).

Then we utilized an ordinal regression to determine, within the subpopulation of people who ranked justice as the most pertinent value for capital punishment, whether how a respondent defined justice made a difference to how that respondent viewed capital punishment as morally permissible or legally acceptable.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Estimate (β)	Significance (p)
CP Justice Definition = 1	CP Moral Stance	0.906	0.001
CP Justice Definition = 1	CP Policy Stance	1.253	<0.001

Table 6.2. This table shows the results of the ordinal regression comparing the selection of Definition 1 to respondents' moral policy stances on capital punishment. Positive numbers for the estimate indicate increased support for capital punishment.

As Table 6.2 indicates, there is significant evidence demonstrating that, of respondents who ranked justice as the most pertinen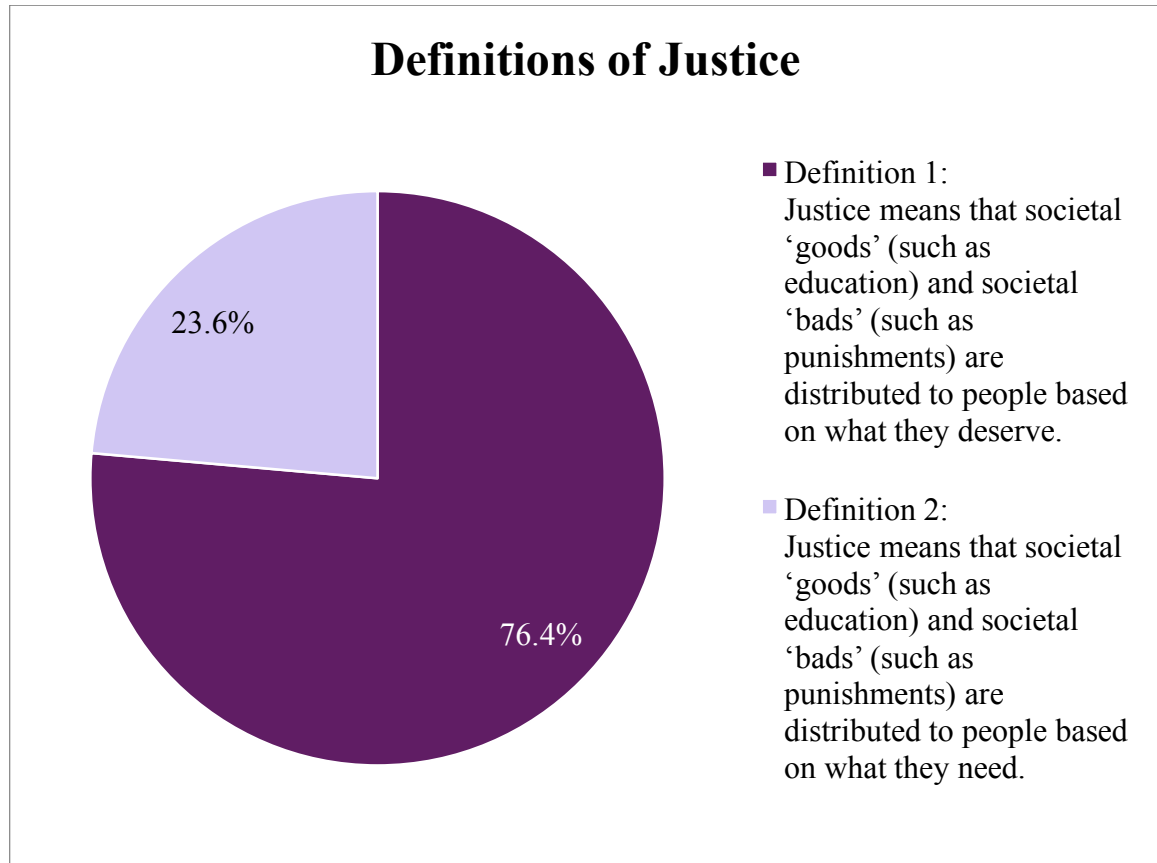t value for capital punishment, those who chose Definition 1 were more likely to view capital punishment as morally permissible and legally acceptable than those who chose Definition 2. This shows that not only is there a correlation between the ranking of values with respect to capital punishment, but, among those who ranked justice as the most pertinent value, how respondents define justice also plays an important role in respondents' differing stances on the issue.

Finally, we examined correlations between demographic factors and respondents' moral and legal stances on capital punishment. We found few statistically significant correlations. The only major relationships were: (1) that respondents who identify as "very liberal" or "liberal" view capital punishment as less morally permissible and legally acceptable than respondents who place themselves elsewhere on the ideological spectrum; and (2) Republican respondents view capital punishment as more legally acceptable than Democratic or unaffiliated respondents do.

To summarize, we found several noteworthy results for the issue of capital punishment. We found (1) that consensus emerged that justice was the most pertinent

value for this issue, with a 62.7% majority of respondents saying so, (2) that those who selected justice as the most pertinent value and who selected Definition 1 of justice, were more likely to view capital punishment as legally acceptable and morally permissible, and (3) that there were few instances of statistically significant influences of demographics on respondents' moral and legal stances. Thus, we conclude that how people rank values with respect to an issue and how they define values, in addition to ideological identification and party affiliation, are strong candidates for explaining both varying moral and policy stances on capital punishment.

Gun Control. A 48.7% plurality of respondents selected security as the most pertinent value for informing judgments about gun control (Figure 6.2). Responses exhibited more scattering for the most pertinent values in relation to gun control than they did for capital punishment, meaning that there was less consensus about the value most pertinent to gun control. However, respondents still strongly preferred security as the most pertinent value: security was selected nearly three times as frequently (48.7%) as the second-most frequently chosen value, liberty (16.3%).

For moral stance, we found that 58.3% of respondents viewed gun control as always or usually morally permissible, and 18.7% of respondents viewed gun control as never or rarely morally permissible. For policy stance, we found that 53.9% of respondents believed that there should be more regulation of guns, and 13.5% believe that there should be less regulation of guns.
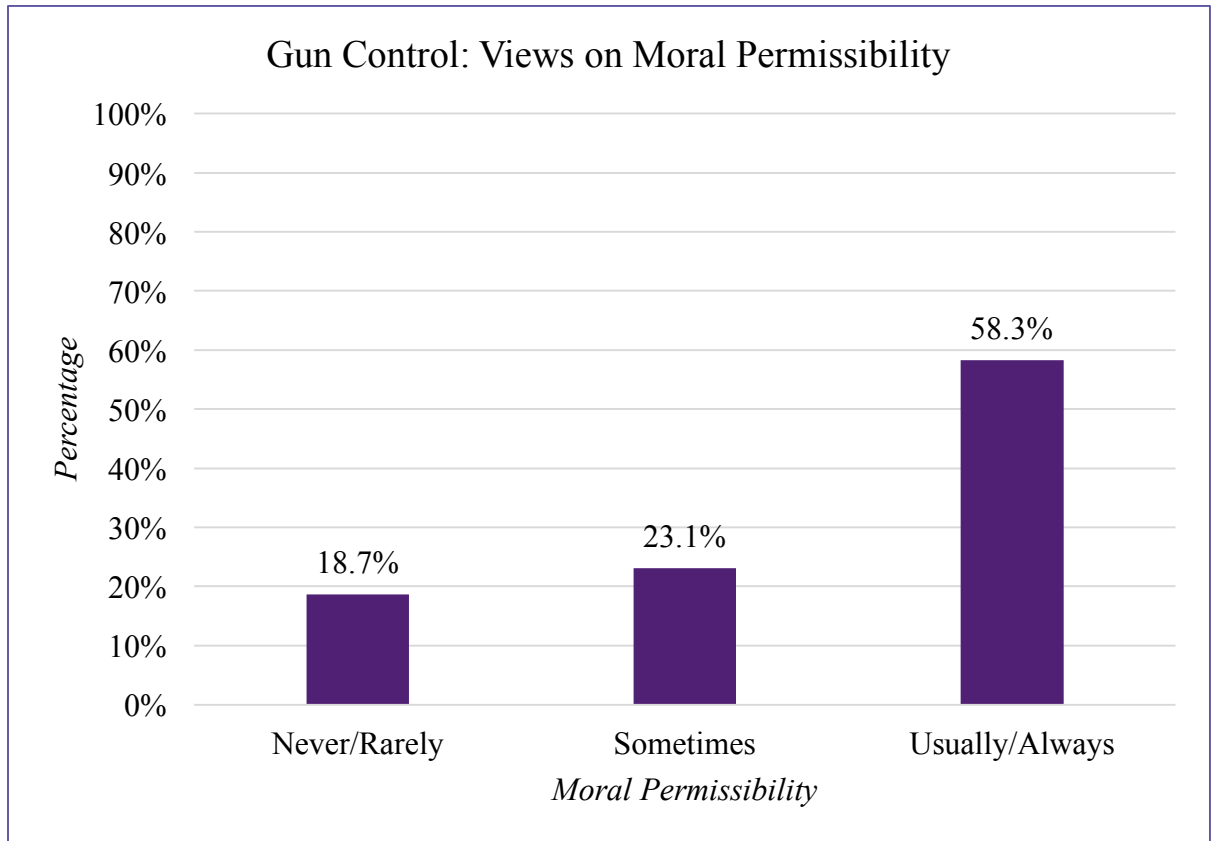
Figure 6.6. This graph shows the percentage of respondents who viewed gun control as never/rarely

morally permissible, sometimes morally permissible, or usually/always morally permissible (n = 520).

Gun Control: Views on Legality
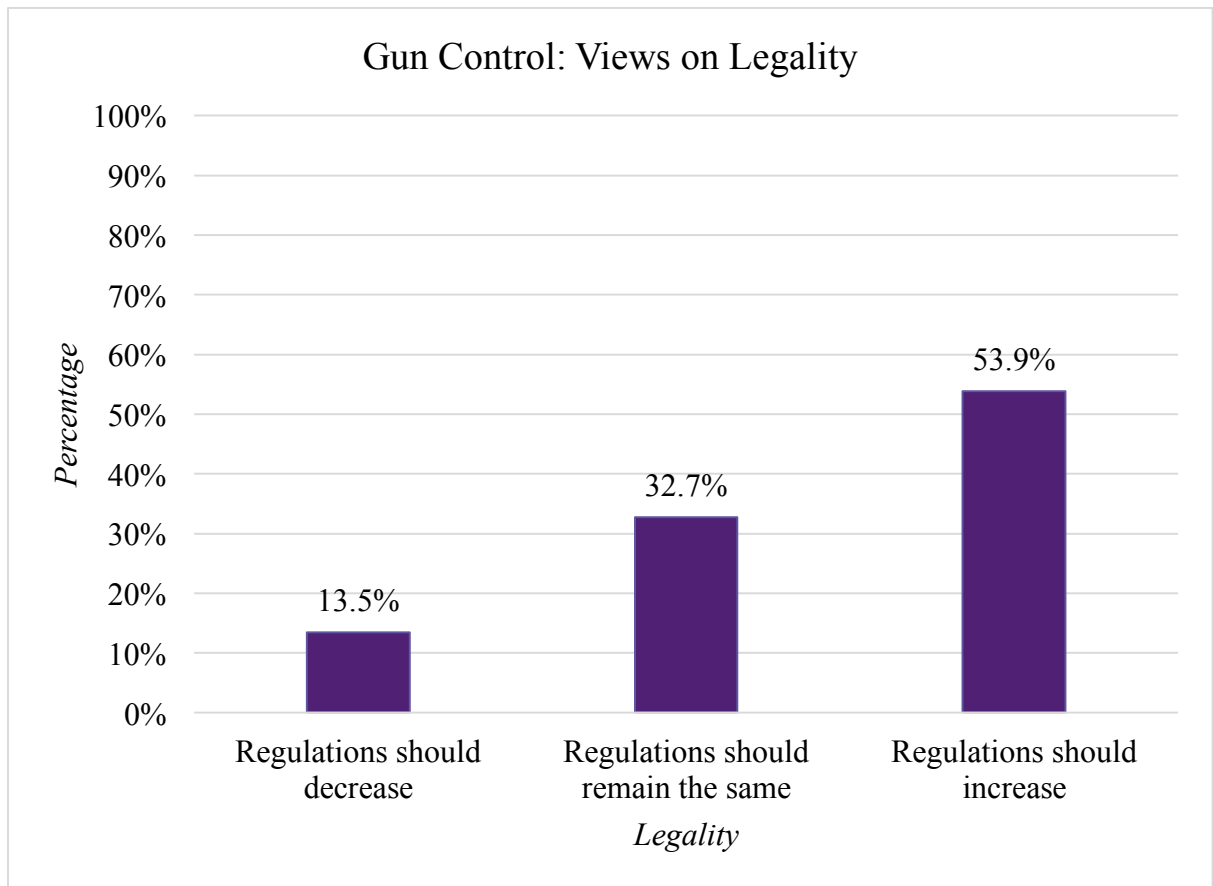
Figure 6.7. This graph shows the percentage of respondents who believed gun control regulations should decrease, believed regulations should remain the same, or believed that gun control regulations should increase (n = 520).

Since security was viewed as the most pertinent value for gun control, we tested to see if there was a correlation between choosing security as the most pertinent value for gun control and respondents' moral and policy stances on gun control.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Estimate (β)	Significance (p)
GC Top Value = Security	GC Moral Stance	0.368	0.035
GC Top Value = Security	GC Policy Stance	0.564	0.004

Table 6.3. This table displays the results of the ordinal regression where the selection of security as the most pertinent value in regards to gun control is compared with moral stance and policy stance on gun control. Positive numbers for the estimate indicate increased support for gun regulations.

As Table 6.3 indicates, there is evidence that respondents who choose security as the most pertinent value for thinking about gun control view gun control as more morally permissible and are more supportive of increased gun regulations than respondents who did not choose security as the most pertinent value for thinking about gun control.

Next, we examined the effect of respondents' preferred definition of security, the most pertinent value, on respondents' moral and policy stances on gun control. We offered respondents four different definitions for security:

> *Definition 1*: "Security means being free from danger in my everyday life because the country is secure."
>
> *Definition 2*: "Security means being free from fear of personal, mental, and/or physical violation."
>
> *Definition 3*: "Security means being free from the danger of possible abuses of government power."
>
> *Definition 4*: "Security means maintaining my well-being irrespective of what is going on in society."

We found that 58.1% of respondents who ranked security as the most pertinent value for gun control chose Definition 2, while 25.7% chose Definition 1, 10.3% chose

Definition 4, and 5.9% chose Definition 3.

Definitions of Security

- **Definition 1:** Security means being free from danger in my everyday life because the country is secure.

- **Definition 2:** Security means being free from fear of personal, mental, and/or physical violation.

- **Definition 3:** Security means being free from the danger of possible abuses of government power.

- **Definition 4:** Security means maintaining my well-being irrespective of what is going on in society.

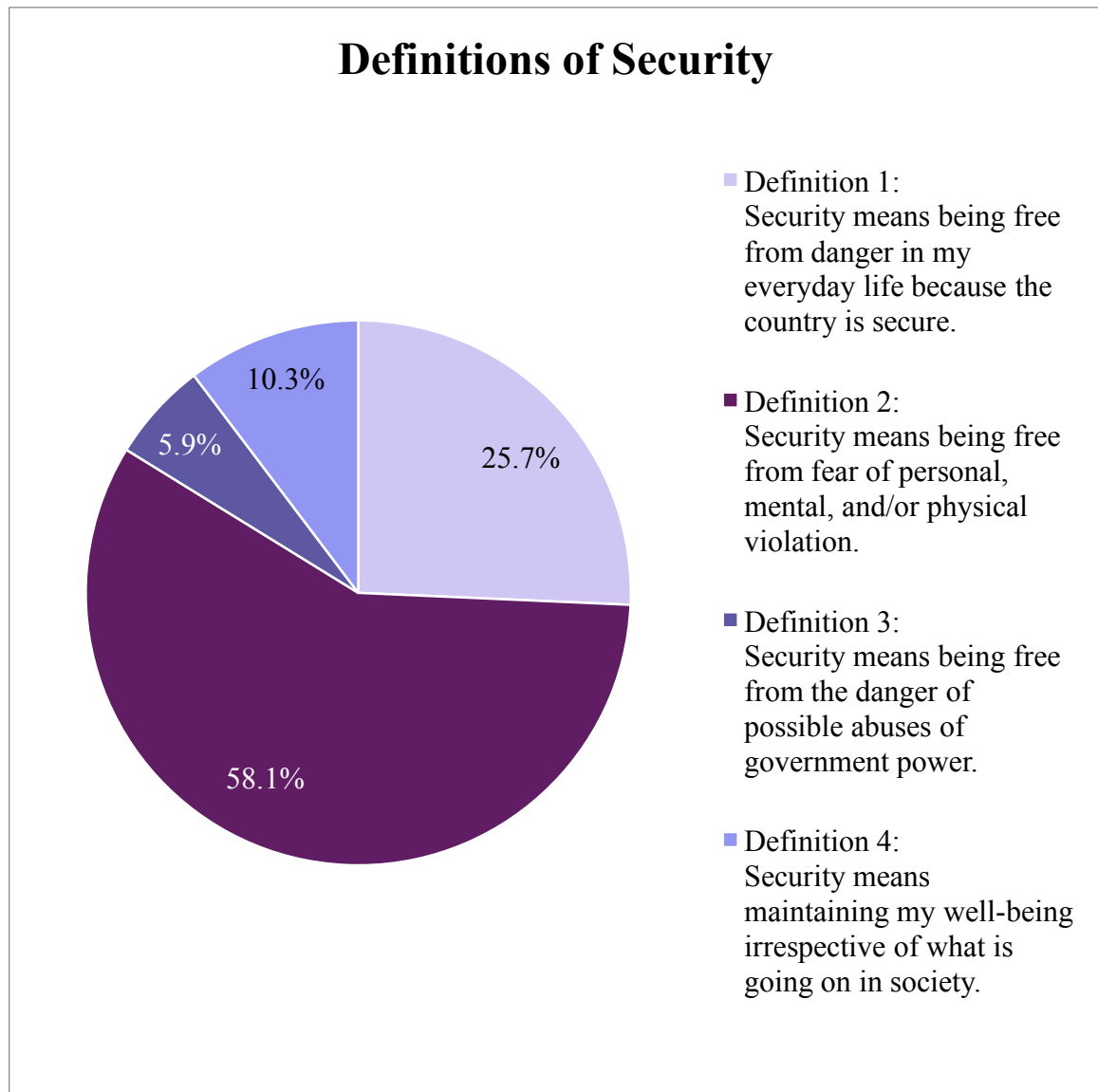*Figure 6.8.* This figure illustrates how respondents defined the value of security, after having chosen security as the most pertinent value for the issue of gun control (n = 253).

Then we utilized an ordinal regression to determine, within the subpopulation of people who ranked security as the most pertinent value for gun control, whether how a respondent defined security made a difference to how that respondent viewed gun control

as morally permissible or legally acceptable.[4]

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Compared to	Estimate (β)	Significance (p)
GC Security Definition = 1	GC Moral Stance	GC Security Definition = 2	-0.183	0.572
GC Security Definition = 3	GC Moral Stance	GC Security Definition = 2	-0.139	0.803
GC Security Definition = 4	GC Moral Stance	GC Security Definition = 2	0.363	0.432
GC Security Definition = 1	GC Policy Stance	GC Security Definition = 2	-0.109	0.770
GC Security Definition = 3	GC Policy Stance	GC Security Definition = 2	-2.012	0.001
GC Security Definition = 4	GC Policy Stance	GC Security Definition = 2	1.143	0.056

Table 6.4. This table shows the results of an ordinal regression comparing the selection of the four

different definitions of security, to moral and policy stance on gun control. Positive numbers indicate

increased support for gun regulations.

As Table 6.4 indicates, there is significant evidence demonstrating that, of

respondents who ranked security as the most pertinent value for gun control, those who

choose Definition 3 view gun control as less legally acceptable than those who choose

Definition 2. This shows that not only is there a correlation between the ranking of

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[4] When running the regression, if the independent variable is nominal, one of the options must be chosen as the base option which the other options are compared to. For most of the tests, the independent variables only has two options. For example, for a definition with two options, there "Compared to" option is trivial since there is only one option for comparison; choosing definition one is compared to choosing definition two. However, since security has more than one compared to option, the column is included to specify which definition was chosen for comparison (the one with the highest response was chosen as the base).

values within the issue of gun control, but, among those who ranked security as most pertinent, definition also plays an important role in respondents' differing stances on the issue.

Finally, we examined correlations between demographic features and moral and legal stances on this issue. We found few statistically significant correlations. Respondents identifying as "very liberal," "liberal," or "somewhat liberal" are more likely than other respondents to view gun control as both more morally permissible and legally acceptable. Additionally, Republican respondents are more likely than other respondents to view gun control as less morally permissible and legally acceptable. Furthermore, respondents who reported an annual income of less than $75,000 were more likely than respondents earning higher incomes to view gun control as morally impermissible.

To summarize, we found several noteworthy results for the issue of gun control. We found (1) a consensus that security was the most pertinent value for this issue, with a plurality of 48.7% of respondents ranking it as their number one value, (2) those who selected security were more likely to view gun control as morally permissible and legally acceptable, (3) those who selected security defined as "being free from the danger of possible abuses of government power" were more likely to view gun control as less legally acceptable and less morally permissible than those who defined it as "being free from fear of personal, mental, and/or physical violation", and (4) few demographic factors correlated with respondents' stances. Thus, we conclude that how people rank the most pertinent value with respect to gun control and how they define that most pertinent value, in addition to ideological stance and party affiliation, are strong candidates for

explaining both varying moral and policy stances on gun control.

Same-Sex Marriage. A 32.3% plurality of respondents selected equality as the most pertinent value for informing their judgments about same-sex marriage (Figure 6.2). Same-sex marriage exhibited relatively high scattering of the most pertinent values compared to capital punishment and gun control.

For moral stance, we found that 53.1% of respondents viewed same-sex marriage as always or usually morally permissible, and 39% of respondents viewed same-sex marriage as never or rarely permissible. For policy stance, we found that 51.0% of respondents believed that same-sex marriage should be legal, and 31.5% believed that same-sex marriage should be illegal. This indicates that respondents are more polarized about same-sex marriage than they are about capital punishment or gun control.
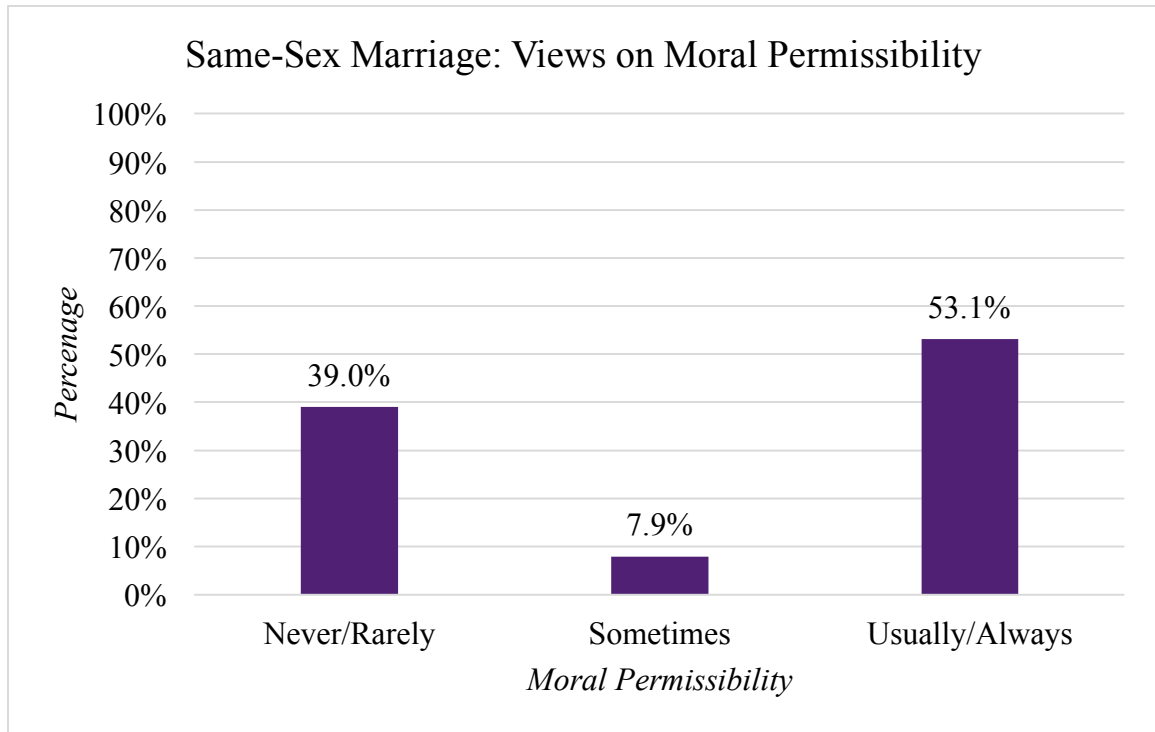
Figure 6.9. This graph shows the percentage of respondents who viewed same-sex marriage as

never/rarely morally permissible, sometimes morally permissible, or usually/always morally permissible (n

= 520).
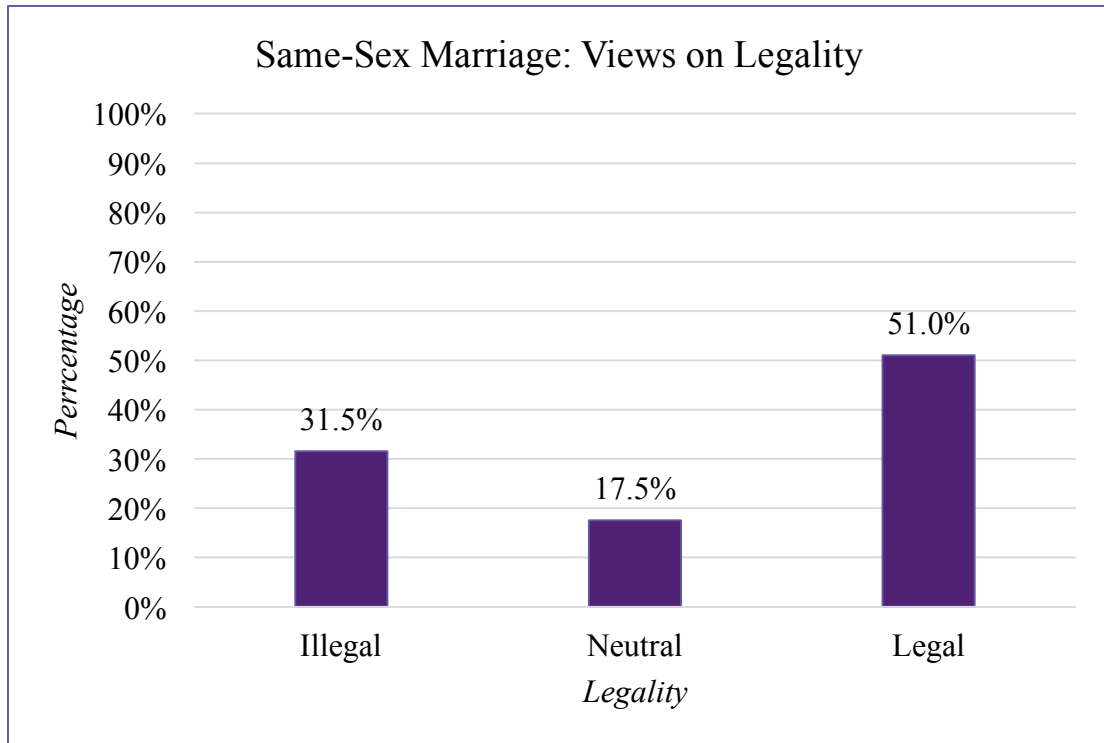
Figure 6.10. This graph shows the percentage of respondents who viewed same-sex marriage as illegal, neither illegal or legal, or legally acceptable (n = 520).

Since equality is the most pertinent value informing respondents' judgments about same-sex marriage, we looked at whether there was a correlation between choosing equality as the most pertinent value for same-sex marriage and respondents' moral and legal stance on the issue.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Estimate (β)	Significance (p)
SS Top Value = Equality	SS Moral Stance	1.147	<0.001
SS Top Value = Equality	SS Policy Stance	1.633	<0.001

*Table 6.5.* This table displays the results of the ordinal regression where the selection of equality as the most pertinent value in regards to same-sex marriage is compared with moral stance and policy stance on same-sex marriage. Positive numbers indicate increased support for same-sex marriage.

Table 6.5 indicates that respondents who chose equality as the most pertinent value for same-sex marriage viewed the issue as both more morally permissible and legally acceptable than those who chose some other value as the most pertinent value for the evaluation of same-sex marriage.

Next, we examined the effect of respondents' definition of equality, the most pertinent value, on respondents' moral and policy stances on same-sex marriage. We offered respondents two different definitions for equality:

Definition 1: *"*Equality means everyone is able to get to the same place even if they don't start from the same point."

Definition 2: "Equality means everyone is able to start to the same point even if they get to the same place."

We found that 58.9% of those who ranked equality as the most pertinent value for same-sex marriage chose Definition 2, while 41.1% chose Definition 1.

Definitions of Equality

Definition 1:
Equality means that everyone is able to start from the same point even if they don't end at the same place.

Definition 2:
Equality means that everyone is able to get to the same place even if they don't start from the same point.

41.1%

58.9%
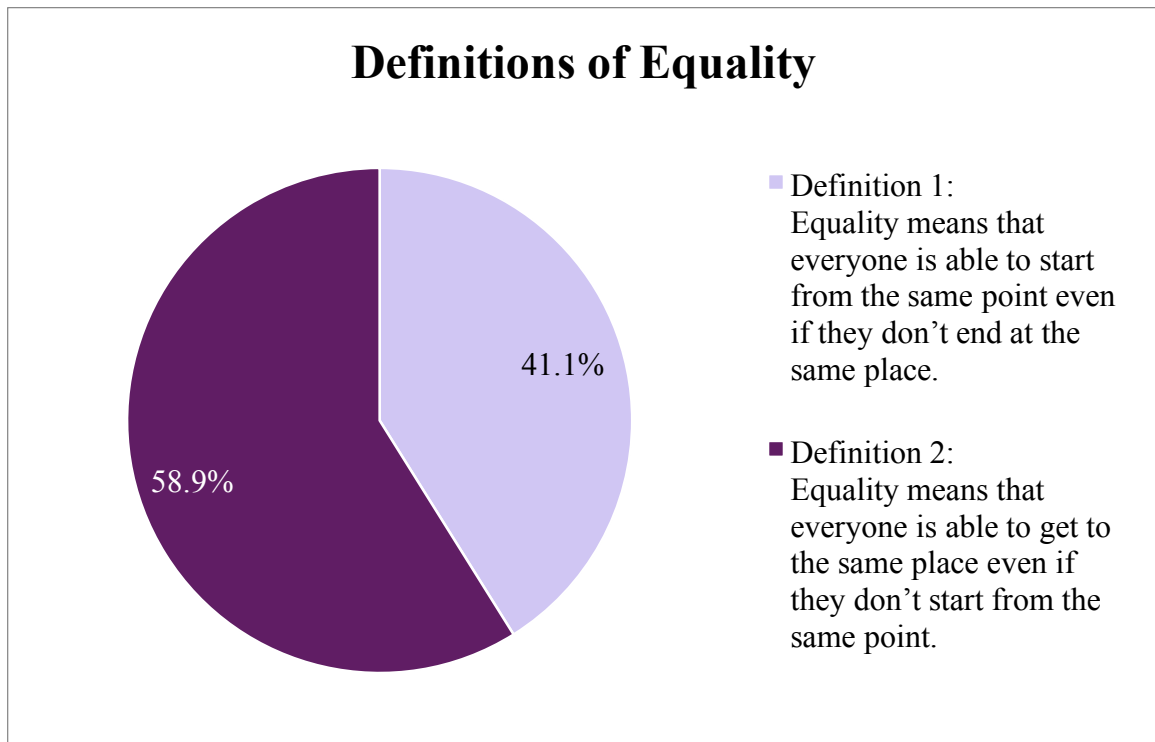
Figure 6.11. This figure illustrates how respondents defined the value of equality, after having chosen equality as the most pertinent value for the issue of same-sex marriage (n=168).

We then utilized an ordinal regression to determine, within the subpopulation of people who ranked equality as the most pertinent value, whether how respondents defined equality made a difference to how respondents view same-sex marriage as morally permissible or legally acceptable.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Estimate (β)	Significance (p)
SSM Equality Definition = 1	SS Moral Stance	-2.946	0.111
SSM Equality Definition = 1	SS Policy Stance	-9.438	0.072

Table 6.6. This table shows the results of an ordinal regression comparing the selection of the first definition of equality - "equality means that everyone is able to start from the same point even if they don't end at the same place" - to moral and policy stance on same-sex marriage. Positive numbers indicate increased support for same-sex marriage.

As Table 6.6 indicates, there is no statistical evidence that shows that choosing either Definition 1 or Definition 2 of equality is correlated with viewing same-sex marriage as more morally permissible or legally acceptable. This shows that other factors, besides how equality is defined, are contributing to the difference in stance.

More demographic features were found to be statistically significant with respect to a respondent's moral and legal stance on an issue for same-sex marriage than for capital punishment or gun control. In particular, we found that political ideology, religiosity, and sexual orientation were all individually significantly correlated with moral stance and policy stance on same-sex marriage.

Respondents identifying as "very liberal," "liberal," "somewhat liberal," "somewhat conservative," or "neither liberal nor conservative" viewed same-sex marriage as more morally permissible and legally acceptable than respondents identifying as "conservative" or "very conservative." Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino respondents viewed same-sex marriage as less morally permissible and legally acceptable than Asian, white or Caucasian, or other respondents. Regardless of respondents' religious affiliation, if they reported that religion was "not at all important," "not very

important," or "somewhat important" to them, then they were more likely to view same-sex marriage as morally permissible and legally acceptable than respondents who reported that religion was "very important" to them.

To summarize, we found several noteworthy results for the issue of same-sex marriage. We found that (1) a 32.3% plurality of respondents chose equality as the most pertinent issue, (2) those who selected equality were more likely to view same-sex marriage as morally permissible and legally acceptable, (3) no statistical evidence supports that the definition chosen for equality influences moral or policy stance, and (4) multiple demographic factors correlated with respondents' stances. Thus, we conclude that ranking values appears to drive varying stances on same-sex marriage, but the lack evidence for how equality is defined driving moral or political stance and the multiple demographic factors that correlated with respondent's stances suggest there are other candidates for explaining both varying moral and policy stances on same-sex marriage.

Abortion. A plurality of 23.8% of respondents chose privacy as the most pertinent value for abortion, while 22.1% of respondents chose self-determination (Figure 6.2). Compared to our other issues, this was a low plurality for most pertinent value, and abortion exhibited higher scattering with respect to most pertinent value in comparison to our other issues, with the two most pertinent values (privacy and self-determination) being close in percentage and count.

For moral stance, we found that a 43.5% plurality of respondents believed that abortion is always or usually morally permissible, and 32.1% of respondents believed that abortion is never or rarely morally permissible. For policy stance, we found that 54.2% of respondents believed that abortion should be legal, and 33.3% believed that abortion

should be illegal.
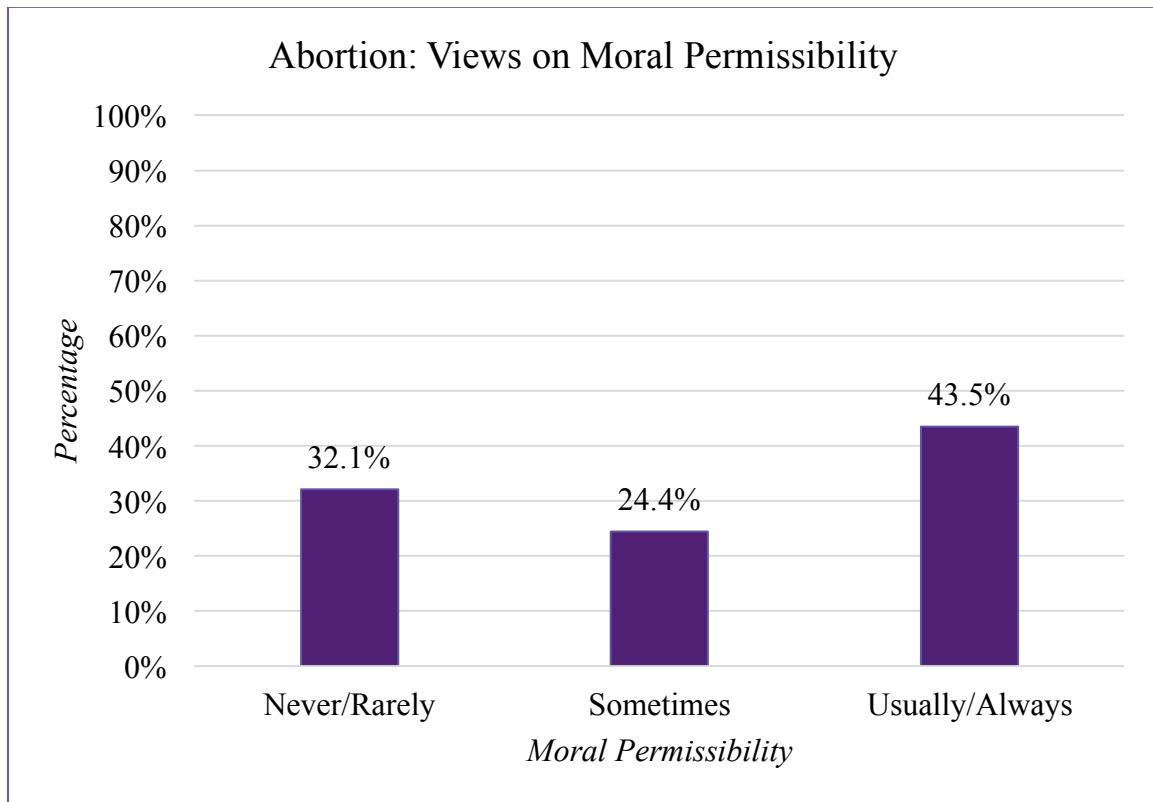
Figure 6.12. This graph shows the percentage of respondents who viewed abortion as never/rarely morally
permissible, sometimes morally permissible, or usually/always morally permissible (n = 520).

Abortion: Views on Legality
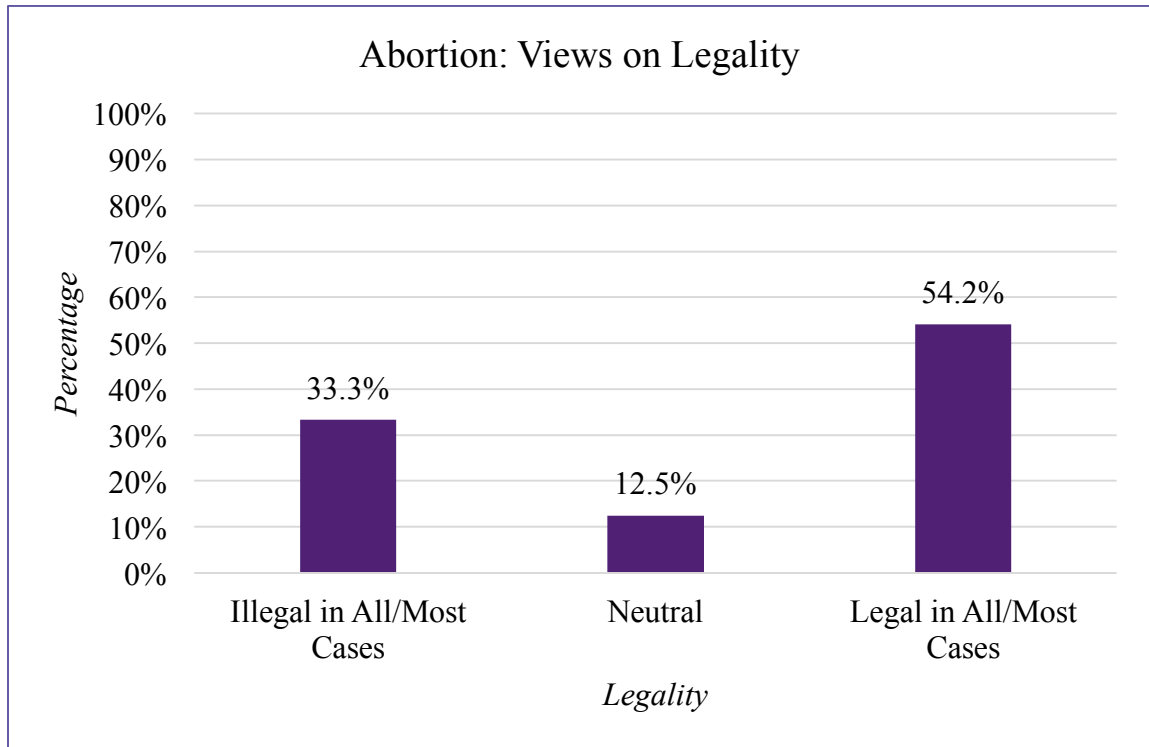
Figure 6.13. This graph shows the percentage of respondents who viewed abortion as illegal, neither illegal or legal, or legally acceptable (n = 520).

Because privacy and self-determination were chosen with almost equal frequency as the most pertinent values for abortion, we looked at whether there was a correlation between choosing either of them as the most pertinent value for abortion and respondents' moral stance and policy stance on the issue.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Estimate (β)	Significance (p)
AB Top Value = Privacy	AB Moral Stance	1.010	<0.001
AB Top Value = Privacy	AB Policy Stance	0.931	<0.001
AB Top Value = Self-determination	AB Moral Stance	0.060	0.777
AB Top Value = Self-determination	AB Policy Stance	-0.109	0.614

Table 6.7. This table displays the results of the ordinal regression where the selection of privacy and self-determination as the most relevant values in regards to abortion is compared with moral stance and policy stance on abortion. Positive numbers indicate increased support for abortion.

     As Table 6.7 indicates, there is no significant relationship between choosing self-determination as the most pertinent value for abortion and policy and moral stance on this issue. Our research does show, however, there is significant evidence that choosing privacy (as opposed to other values) as the most pertinent value for abortion is correlated to viewing abortion as more morally permissible and legally acceptable.

     Next, we examined the effect of respondents' preferred definition of privacy and self-determination, the two most pertinent values, on respondents' moral and policy stances on same-sex We offered respondents two different definitions of privacy:

> **Definition 1**: "Privacy means the power to withhold information from external sources such as the government, companies, or other people,"
>
> **Definition 2**: "Privacy means the ability to live without external monitoring."

We offered respondents three definitions of self-determination:

Definition 1: "Self-determination means the ability to succeed according to my own merits and effort."

Definition 2: "Self-determination means the ability to control my identity,"

Definition 3: "Self-determination means the ability to structure my life according to my choices."

We found that 60.5% of respondents who ranked justice as the most pertinent value for capital punishment chose Definition 2, while 39.5% chose Definition 1.
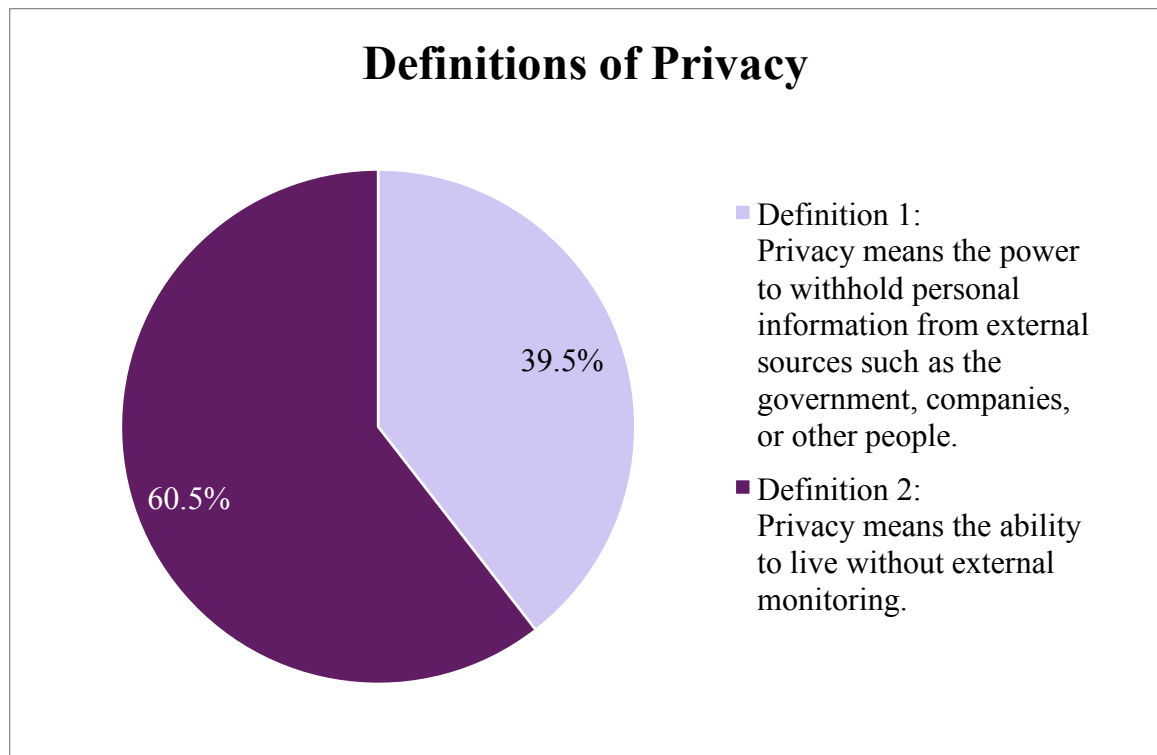
Figure 6.14. This figure illustrates how respondents defined the value of privacy, after having chosen privacy as the most pertinent value for the issue of abortion (n=124).

We found that among those who ranked self-determination as the most pertinent value for abortion, 54.8% chose Definition 1, 40.0% chose Definition 3, and 5.2% chose Definition 2.

Definitions of Self-Determination

- Definition 1: Self-determination is the ability to succeed according to my own merits and effort.
- Definition 2: Self-determination is the ability to control my identity.
- Definition 3: Self-determination is the ability to structure my life according to my choices.

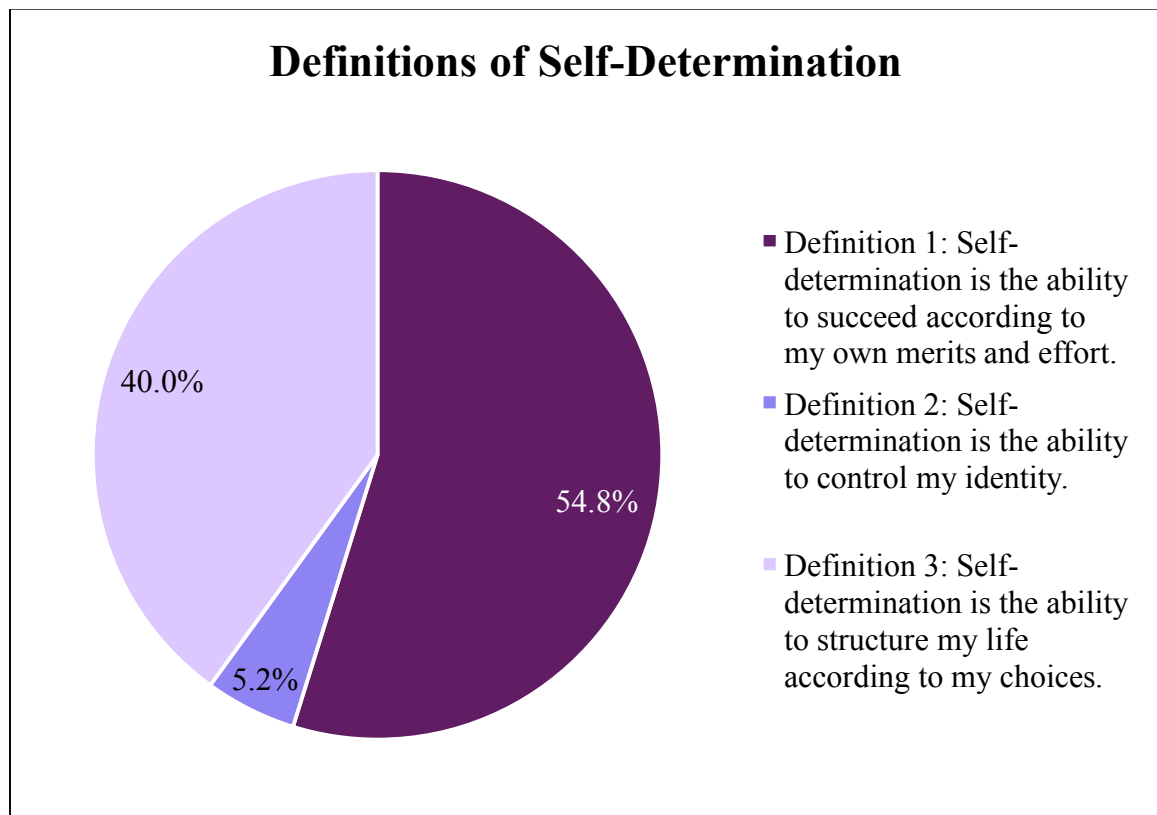40.0%

54.8%

5.2%

Figure 6.15. This figure illustrates how respondents defined the value of self-determination, after having chosen self-determination as the most pertinent value for the issue of abortion (n=115).

Independent Variable	Compared to	Dependent Variable	Estimate (β)	Significance (p)
AB Privacy Definition = 1	AB Privacy Definition = 2	AB Moral Stance	0.848	0.464
AB Privacy Definition = 1	AB Privacy Definition = 2	AB Policy Stance	0.825	0.485
AB Self-determination Definition = 1	AB Self-determination Definition = 3	AB Moral Stance	-0.257	0.464
AB Self-determination Definition = 2	AB Self-determination Definition = 3	AB Moral Stance	0.006	0.973
AB Self-determination Definition = 1	AB Self-determination Definition = 3	AB Policy Stance	-0.334	0.473
AB Self-determination Definition = 2	AB Self-determination Definition = 3	AB Policy Stance	-0.772	0.985

Table 6.8. This table shows the results of an ordinal regression comparing the selection of the two definitions of privacy and the three definitions of self-determination to moral and policy stance on abortion. Positive numbers indicate increased support for abortion.

Our research shows that there is no significant evidence that, of respondents who ranked self-determination as the most pertinent value for abortion, those who chose Definition 1 view abortion as less morally permissible or legally acceptable than those who chose Definition 2 or Definition 3. Likewise, there is no significant evidence that, of respondents who ranked privacy as the most pertinent value for abortion, those who chose Definition 1 view abortion as less morally permissible or legally acceptable than those who chose Definition 2. This shows that other factors, besides how respondents defined privacy and self-determination, contribute to respondents' moral and policy stances on abortion.

Finally, we examined correlations between demographic factors and respondents' moral and legal stances on abortion. We found several demographic factors with statistically significant correlations. The major relationships were: (1) age, (2) education, (3) party affiliation, (3) political ideology, (4) gender, and (5) religiosity.

Respondents with no high school degree, or only a high school diploma, viewed abortion as less legally acceptable than respondents with some college education. With respect to party affiliation, Republicans and unaffiliated respondents viewed abortion as less legally acceptable than Democratic respondents, while unaffiliated respondents also viewed abortion as less morally permissible than Democratic respondents. With respect to political ideology, respondents identifying as "liberal" or "very liberal" viewed abortion as more morally permissible than those identifying elsewhere on the spectrum, while respondents identifying as "liberal," "very liberal," "somewhat liberal," and "neither liberal nor conservative" viewed abortion as more legally acceptable than those identifying elsewhere on the spectrum. Male respondents viewed abortion as less legally acceptable than female respondents. Regardless of respondents' religious association, respondents who stated that religion was "not at all important," "not very important," or "somewhat important" to them viewed abortion as both more morally permissible and legally acceptable than respondents who stated that religion was "very important" to them.

Beyond stance, however, we were interested in the way that demographic factors are correlated with the way respondents defined values and with the values they chose as most pertinent to an issue. While there were few correlations between demographic features and definitions of values (six total), trends did emerge regarding the relationship

between (1) marital status and happiness, (2) political party and justice, (3) political party and happiness, (4) race and privacy, (5) sexual orientation and happiness, (6) age and privacy.[5] The most significant trend was that three of them, political party affiliation, marital status, and sexual orientation, affected the way respondents defined happiness.

For the most pertinent value to an issue, there were 14 overall significant findings, with two clear trends emerging. Except for abortion, political party affiliation is correlated with a respondent's most pertinent value, and, with the exception of capital punishment, a respondent's religion is correlated with a respondent's most pertinent value.

To summarize, we found several noteworthy results for the issue of abortion. We found: (1) while there was slight consensus regarding the most pertinent values for this issue, namely, privacy and self-determination, there was a higher degree of scattering for this issue than the other issues; (2) for respondents who selected either privacy or self-determination as the most pertinent value, there were no significant correlations between preferring any particular definition for either value and having a particular moral or legal stance on abortion; and (3) multiple statistically significant influences of demographics on respondents' moral and legal stance. Thus, we conclude that how people rank values with respect to an issue and how they define values are not strong candidates for explaining both varying moral and policy stances on abortion, but instead the multiple demographic factors that are correlated with moral and policy stance suggest that other factors may contribute.

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[5] In our consideration of demographic factors that correlate with value definitions, we did not include personality because an individual's personality is not simply a demographic feature, and consequently it was not considered in our analysis and the interpretation of our results.

With those details as background, we now turn to describe the overarching trends that emerged from our analysis.

Overarching Trends

Scattering of Most Pertinent Value. We used the term 'scattering' in analyzing the degree to which respondents agreed on the most pertinent value for an issue. As the results discussed above indicate, some issues exhibited more scattering than others. An issue exhibited low scattering when there was a high degree of agreement among participants about which value was most pertinent for evaluating that issue. An issue exhibited high scattering when there was a low degree of agreement among participants about which value was most pertinent for evaluating that issue. Capital punishment and gun control exhibited low scattering, as 62.7% of respondents said that justice was the most pertinent value for evaluating capital punishment and 48.7% said security was the most pertinent value for evaluating gun control. Abortion and same-sex marriage exhibited high scattering as 23.8% of respondents said privacy was the most pertinent value for evaluating abortion and 32.3% said equality was the most pertinent value for evaluating same-sex marriage.

We then analyzed whether there was any similarity between the influence of demographic features on moral and policy stance on the issues with the least scattering (capital punishment and gun control) and the issues with the most scattering (abortion and same-sex marriage). We noticed that fewer demographic features were influential when there was less scattering: very few demographic features were correlated with individuals' moral and policy stances on capital punishment and gun control. This was not the case, however, for abortion and same-sex marriage, the two issues with the most

scattering. We noticed that many demographic features were correlated with individuals'

moral and policy stances on abortion and same-sex marriage. Thus, it is possible that,

when individuals cannot agree on which values are pertinent for an issue (there is high

scattering), it is because there are several demographic or background factors are doing

the work in determining individuals' moral and policy stances. The implications of this

finding will be explored further in Chapter 7.

Issues with Low Scattering: Capital Punishment Gun Control	Issues with High Scattering: Abortion Same-sex Marriage
Characteristics: 1. Smaller divide on moral and policy stances[6] 2. Fewer statistically significant correlations between demographic features and stance	Characteristics 1. Greater divide on moral and policy stances 2. Larger number of statistically significant correlations between demographic features and stance

Table 6.9. This table displays characteristics of issues with low scattering (capital punishment and gun

control) and characteristics of issues with high scattering (abortion and same-sex marriage).

Preferred Definition. The most popular definition for the top value of an issue

was predictive of stance for only some issues. With respect to capital punishment and

gun control, there was a clear majority, respectively, for the preferred definition for

justice (76.4% chose Definition 1) and security (58.1% chose Definition 4, with the next

[6] We calculated the divide on policy stance by finding the difference, for each of our four issues, between the percent of all respondents who were in favor of the legalization and the percent of those who were opposed. A larger difference indicates a smaller divide, while a smaller difference indicates a greater divide. For example, the magnitude of the divide on policy stance for capital punishment was 42.9 (calculated as 58.3% who support the legalization of capital punishment minus 15.4% who opposed the legalization of capitalization). The divide for abortion was 20.9, the divide for gun control was 40.4, and the divide for same-sex marriage was 19.5. Participants were less divided on the issues with low scattering, capital punishment and gun control and were more divided on the issues with high scattering, abortion and same-sex marriage.

highest chosen being 25.7% for Definition 1). Responses, however, were fairly spread out for same sex marriage and abortion, with the definitions of self-determination, privacy, and equality all remaining relatively equally spread. There was a significant correlation between preferred definition and stance for: justice and capital punishment; privacy and abortion; and security and gun control. However, there was not a significant correlation between preferred definition and stance for: self-determination and abortion, or equality and same-sex marriage. Overall, definition preference did the most explanatory work with respect to moral and policy stances on capital punishment and the least with respect to moral and policy stances on same-sex marriage.

Demographic Stratification. The stratification of the data for most pertinent values and preferred definitions for those most pertinent values by party affiliation and ideology identification[7], varied little from the results of the total respondent population. We will describe our findings below by issue.

For capital punishment, a majority of each of the following population subsets selected justice as the most pertinent value: Democratic, Republican, unaffiliated (with either party), liberal, conservative, and neither liberal nor conservative respondents. The percentage of respondents in each of these population subsets who chose justice ranged from 55.2% (liberal respondents) to 71.6% (Republican respondents). Among those of each population subset who chose justice as the most pertinent value for capital punishment, the more popular definition for justice was Definition 1 ("justice means that societal 'goods' and 'bads' are distributed to people based on what they deserve"),

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[7] To clarify, when we talk about Republicans, Democrats, and independents and liberals and conservatives, we are not making a clean partition between political party affiliation and political ideology. That is, there is overlap between these features, and when we talk about these groups, we are not talking about distinct subpopulations.

ranging from 69.2% (neither liberal nor conservative respondents) to 86.6% (conservative respondents).

For gun control, a plurality of each population subset selected security as the most relevant value, ranging from 40.3% (Republican respondents) to 54.9% (unaffiliated respondents). The definition most frequently selected by each population subset was Definition 2, "Security means being free from fear of personal, mental, and/or physical violation." The range of percentage of each population subset that chose Security Definition 2 varied from 46.7% (conservative respondents) to 64.3% (liberal respondents).

For same-sex marriage, a plurality of each population subset selected equality as the most pertinent value, but it was far from an overwhelming selection for Republican and conservative respondents. Though a plurality of 19.1% of Republican respondents chose equality, 16.3% chose happiness, 14.9% chose justice, and 12.8% chose privacy. Of conservative respondents, 20.4% chose equality, but 17.7% chose justice, 16.1% chose happiness, and 15.1% chose privacy. For Democratic and liberal respondents, the selection of equality was more distinct: 39.1% of Democratic respondents selected equality and 15.7% selected happiness. 43.6% of liberal respondents selected equality and 19.3% selected happiness.

Finally, for abortion, the most pertinent values varied across population subsets and there was high scattering. Only Democratic respondents had a majority (54.8%) of their population select one value (privacy). Of total respondents, 23.8% of the population chose privacy, while their second most pertinent value was self-determination at 22.1%. Of liberal respondents, 26% chose self-determination as their most pertinent value for

abortion and 25.4% chose privacy. Conservative respondents and Republican

respondents chose justice (22.6% and 22.7%, respectively).

Additionally, there were several significant demographic factors that influenced

moral and legal stances for the issues of abortion, including: age, political ideology, party

affiliation, and religiosity.

Demographic factors appear to have more effect on respondents' views on

abortion than on their views about the other three issues, which is noteworthy given that

respondents were most divided as to the most pertinent value for abortion. Although this

will be discussed in greater detail in the Chapter 7, it is possible that this demonstrates

that demographic features, rather than relative value rankings and value definitions, 'do

the work' in determining an individual's moral and legal stances on abortion.

Limitations

It is important to consider the limitations of our survey design and the data

resulting from it. The first aspect to discuss is the order of the survey sections (Appendix

H). The definition section was placed after respondents were asked to provide issue-

specific value hierarchies, then asked to define values, and then asked to provide their

general (issue-independent) value hierarchies. This was intentional and designed to

observe if there was a difference in value ranking after the respondent was primed with

our definitions. However, we discovered that this made it impossible to compare

respondents' issue-specific and general hierarchies, since the issue hierarchy did not

require the user to include all the values (to allow them to include only the ones they

believed to be relevant). Future research could require respondents to rank all values also

for the issue specific cases. In addition, asking respondents to consider value definitions

after they had selected their value ranking for each issue may have contributed to some users choosing definitions to justify their stances they had expressed, encouraging a kind of post hoc rationalization for their stances.

Two distinctions are at play here: (1) the difference between the respondents' ranking of values given their own understanding of them and their ranking of values given our set of definitions, and (2) the respondents ranking of values in the context of a particular issue and in general. Our survey unfortunately conflated (1) and (2).

Another obstacle we faced was figuring out an appropriate way to combine the data from more than one question. This was evident in two cases: (1) stance and strength of stance and (2) best definition and rating of each definition. We initially intended to combine the Likert scales of stance and strength into one longer Likert scale. Although the extremes of the scale fit well (Never Permissible/Very Strong and Always Permissible/Very Strong), there was not a coherent way to map the intermediary points. In addition, the definition Likert scale was included with the intention of giving us information about how a respondent viewed each definition, rather than just which one was the best. This data showed the accuracy of our definitions, but did not provide an advantage over the best definition question when comparing respondents and their stances. Because of the large amount of significant results, and ultimately feasibility, we did not focus on strength of stance, issue importance, or definition Likert rating for our main analysis.

Our last major obstacle was the response count and its effect on the accuracy of our results. This needed to be addressed for two considerations. First, did we have enough responses for each option of a particular demographic for it to be accurate and not

identifiable? For example, for race, there were only three respondents who identified as

"American Indian or Alaska Native," a mere 0.58% of our total respondents. Any model

correlating data based off only three people would not be statistically

sound/representative because of the low n value. Since there were no clear guidelines in

defined in literature as to what the minimum threshold for representation accuracy should

be, we looked to research organizations at the University of Maryland for standards

practiced. The Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) at the University of

Maryland does not consider the statistical significance of any groups of respondents that

make up less than 5% of their sample because it is not considered enough representation

to be analyzed. Given this policy and the desire to avoid any identifiable respondents, we

defined our minimum n value for an option to be considered for statistical significance as

5% (n = 26).

Second, when narrowing down our population by those who selected the most

pertinent value for an issue, did we have enough respondents to run all our demographic

variables as control variables in the ordinal regressions? Each demographic included as a

control variable requires 10-20 cases (respondents) each to maintain the accuracy of the

ordinal regression test[8]. With a total of 10 demographics run as control variables, our

tests required a minimum of n = 100, 19.2% of respondents. Each subpopulation did

have sufficient cases to meet this minimum (Figure 6.1). However, some subpopulations

were close to this threshold such as abortion and privacy as the most pertinent value

(22.1% of respondents). It would be good to have a higher response count of people from

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[8] This is by recommendation of an expert in SPSS and the field of statistics, Dr. Alan Lehman, Ph.D. and
Professor of Research Methods at the University of Maryland, College Park in the Department of
Criminology and Criminal Justice.

both minority demographics and in the subpopulations of issue and most pertinent value

to better represent the American constituency and increase the reliability of the statistical

tests performed.

Chapter 7: Discussion

Interpretation and Implications of Results

In this chapter, we interpret the results reported in Chapter 6 and comment on how they enhance our understanding of polarization in the United States. Our results suggest that there may be two types of polarization: (1) substantive polarization, which exists when individuals genuinely disagree about an issue but share some common ground, and (2) superficial polarization, which exists when individuals merely express differences in stance but do not genuinely disagree because they have not established a common ground for discussion.

We will elaborate on why our results suggest such a finding. When we began our research, we expected that individuals' moral and policy stances on the issues we selected would be explained by how individuals ranked the values they believed were relevant to an issue; thus, we expected that the value that individuals selected as most pertinent to an issue would predict their stance. We also expected that individuals' preferred definitions of values would influence their moral and policy stances. If these expectations had been met, then all the boxes in Table 7.1 would be checked, indicating that there were significant correlations between each independent and dependent variable. However, we found that this was not the case. Ranking was predictive of stance in all but one instance (moral stance about capital punishment). Definition of the most pertinent value was only predictive of stance in some instances, for capital punishment and gun control. To look at this another way, definition of the most pertinent was never predictive of stance for same-sex marriage and abortion. Why is that the case?

Issue	Moral Stance		Policy Stance	
	Most Pertinent Value	**Definition**	**Most Pertinent Value**	**Definition**
Capital Punishment		✔	✔	✔
Gun Control	✔		✔	✔
Same-sex Marriage	✔		✔	
Abortion	✔		✔	

Table 7.1. This table shows whether rankings of values and value definitions were correlated with moral stance and policy stance on an issue. Checks indicate that correlations existed.

Scattering

To answer the question that was just posed, we returned to scattering. As reported in Chapter 6, the degree of scattering of most pertinent values, as selected by respondents, varied across each of the four issues. Capital punishment and gun control exhibited low scattering. A majority or near-majority of respondents agreed on the most pertinent value for evaluating each of these issues: 62.7% said that justice was the most pertinent value for capital punishment, and 48.7% said that security was the most pertinent value for gun control. Conversely, same-sex marriage and abortion exhibited high scattering, with a plurality of only 32.3% of respondents selecting equality as the most pertinent value for same-sex marriage and an even lower plurality of 23.8% selecting privacy as the most pertinent value for abortion.

The question then arises: why do respondents generally agree on the most pertinent values for evaluating capital punishment and gun control, but disagree on the most pertinent values for evaluating same-sex marriage and abortion?

We offer the following possible, non-mutually exclusive explanations for high scattering for some but not all issues. First, it is possible that the scattering of most pertinent values for abortion and same-sex marriage demonstrates the influence of Supreme Court opinions in high profile cases concerning these issues. Same-sex marriage is a relatively new phenomenon in constitutional debate. As discussed in Chapter 3, significant changes in the legal status of same-sex marriage occurred only in the last two decades, culminating in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), which struck down state prohibitions on same-sex marriage as unconstitutional. It is possible that the scattering we saw regarding same-sex marriage is the result of a tumultuous decade of legal changes. Americans may need some time to adjust to social changes and "learn" which values are pertinent for same-sex marriage.

Such an explanation would not apply to abortion, however, as the debate over abortion has not subsided since the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*. Instead, the sustained challenges to the legality of abortion have resulted in legal language seeping into everyday moral and policy debates. Supreme Court jurisprudence has emphasized privacy as the justification for a woman's constitutional right to legal abortion, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, respondents selected privacy as the most pertinent value for abortion with the highest frequency. If this explanation is correct, then rather than engage in uncomfortable debate over the morality of abortion and the desired policy for abortion, Americans retreat and couch their arguments in seemingly-safe legal language.

Additionally, *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) foreclosed the possibility of legislative compromise, which perhaps entrenched proponents and

opponents of the issues into rigid opposing camps. When *Roe* identified a woman's constitutional right to abortion and *Obergefell* declared state prohibitions on same-sex marriage unconstitutional, the opportunity to gradually reach a consensus on these issues was lost.

This risk was noted in dissenting opinions in both cases. In his dissent in *Roe v. Wade*, then Chief Justice Rehnquist claims that "the fact that a majority of the States...have had restrictions on abortions for at least a century is a strong indication, it seems to me, that the asserted right to abortion is not 'so rooted in the traditions and conscience of our people as to be ranked as fundamental'" (Rehnquist, J., dissenting). In *Obergefell v. Hodges,* Chief Justice Roberts writes in his dissent that "this Court is not a legislature. Whether same-sex marriage is a good idea should be of no concern to us." He concludes by stating, "stealing this issue from the people will for many cast a cloud over same-sex marriage, making a dramatic social change that much more difficult to accept" (Roberts, C. J., dissenting). Rehnquist and Roberts' concern about the Supreme Court engaging in 'law-making' is relevant to our research. When the Court pronounces on a morality policy, both 'winning' and 'losing' sides have little incentive to continue any dialogue about these issues. The 'winning' side need not compromise or deal with the 'losing' side because they have the weight of Supreme Court precedent behind them. Similarly, the 'losing' side need not compromise or deal with the winning side because they cannot flout constitutional precedent. Thus, the only recourse is for each side to continue to battle in the courts.

Discussion about capital punishment and gun control, unlike that about abortion and same-sex marriage, can rely on explicit Constitutional language, namely, that of the

Eighth and Second Amendments, respectively. It is easy to determine that the constitutionality of capital punishment should be analyzed through the lens of the Eighth Amendment's language of "cruel and unusual punishment," while gun control should be analyzed through the lens of the Second Amendment's language on "the right of the people to keep and bear arms." There is no such language clearly determining how the constitutionality of abortion and same-sex marriage should be evaluated.

We are not endorsing an originalist interpretation of the Constitution or any other judicial philosophy; we are merely noting that the discussion of capital punishment and gun control is explicitly constrained by Constitutional language that is specific to each issue, while the discussion about abortion and same-sex marriage is not so constrained. This is not to say that the Constitution does not provide resources for evaluating policies about abortion and same-sex marriage. In *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), Justice Douglas argues that the "various guarantees of [the Bill of the Rights] creates zones of privacy," and the right to privacy was central in *Roe* and subsequent abortion cases. In the *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) opinion, Justice Kennedy writes that the Due Process and Equal Protection clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment protect "the right to marry, a fundamental right inherent in the liberty of the person," and this right extends to same-sex couples. However, the Due Process and Equal Protection clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment have acted as portmanteaus for a multitude of issues presented before the Court. For example, *Washington v. Glucksberg* (1997) asserted that the ban on physician-assisted suicide in the state of Washington violated the Due Process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, while *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923) found that the Nebraska law banning the teaching of any language in school except English also

violated that same clause. We also do not claim that the constitutionality of capital

punishment and gun control is or ever was settled; the understanding of what constitutes

"cruel and unusual punishment" is still being discussed to this day. However, we believe

that the guidance provided by the accessible and explicit language of the Eighth and

Second Amendments may serve to make individuals more confident in their nomination

of values relevant to capital punishment and gun control.

Second, it is worth noting that same-sex marriage and abortion are arguably more

complex than capital punishment and gun control. What we mean is this: abortion and

same-sex marriage concern highly intimate parts of life, whereas details of capital

punishment and gun control do not. Abortion and same-sex marriage implicate complex

metaphysical and empirical questions about the nature of love, the meaning of

parenthood, the moral significance of human life, and even when human life

begins. Although capital punishment does concern the life or death of a person, capital

punishment is dependent upon state action; it is not a choice that the convicted individual

makes for himself or herself. Even though gun control concerns whether and how an

individual may act on his or her preference to own or purchase a gun, this choice is less

intimate than the choices involved in abortion and same-sex marriage.

Because abortion and same-sex marriage implicate such complicated

metaphysical and empirical questions, it is possible that individuals do not evaluate their

stances on these issues as thoroughly as they should. Rather than address the challenging

and uncomfortable aspects that these two issues raise, individuals 'halt' their evaluation

of these issues on a surface level and then seek values to justify their stances.

Third, individuals' views about some issues may be more sensitive to the influence of demographic features than their views on other issues. We uncovered that moral and policy stances on abortion and same-sex marriage were more sensitive to the influence of certain demographic features, while moral and policy stances on capital punishment and gun control were less so. We might expect, then, that individuals 'find' themselves with a certain view about abortion, for example, that is heavily influenced by their socioeconomic status, religiosity, or ethnic origin, rather than reason their way to that view from a consideration of well-considered values. If this is the case, then we would expect that when they are asked about which values are implicated in the issue and to what degree, they 'look for' for values and offer what amount to post hoc rationalizations for their stance. That is, people may 'feel' strongly about the moral status of abortion, but not understand why they do. Their moral view is not the outcome of reasoning at all. Hence, when pressed to justify it, they must 'look for' reasons. When this is the case, scattering of most pertinent value is highly likely to ensue. Table 7.2 below shows our findings: there were more correlations between demographic features and individuals' moral and policy judgments about same-sex marriage (25) and abortion (20) than there were for capital punishment (3) and gun control (8).

	Moral Stance	Policy Stance
Issue	Number of Demographic Features Correlated to Moral Stance (36 possible)	Number of Demographic Features Correlated to Policy Stance (36 possible)
Capital Punishment	COUNT: 2	COUNT: 1
Gun Control	COUNT: 9	COUNT: 8
Same-sex Marriage	COUNT: 13	COUNT: 12
Abortion	COUNT: 7	COUNT: 13

Table 7.2. This table shows the number of demographic features that were significantly correlated to moral stance and policy stance for each of the issues.

It is important to note that capital punishment and gun control behave similarly in two major respects: low scattering and definitions of MPV were predictive of stance. Abortion and same-sex marriage behave similarly in two major respects: high scattering and definitions of values were not predictive of stance. This behavior suggests that abortion and same-sex marriage as morality policies are different from capital punishment and gun control. Perhaps, they also exhibit then a different type of polarization.

Substantive Polarization and Superficial Polarization

We found that for two issues (capital punishment and gun control), of the people who were 'talking about the same thing' (i.e., chose the MPV), their definition of the MPV predicted their stance on the issue. However, when following the same methodology for the two other issues (same-sex marriage and abortion), we found that, of the people who chose the MPV, their definition of the MPV did *not* predict their stance

on the issue. Regardless of whether the MPV definition was predictive of stance, just selecting the MPV was predictive of stance in almost all cases. Whether or not a respondent chose the MPV was a significant predictor of their stance for all issues; their definition of that MPV was a significant predictor of their stance for only some issues. This then begs the question: if people seemed to be in agreement about what was at stake for an issue, and this was significant in predicting their stance on an issue, why then did their definition not affect their stance in some cases?

We pose two possible explanations: (1) either the MPV was not really the MPV, or (2) while the MPV was important, respondents were not able to define it accurately. These situations may occur when individual's moral and policy stances do not stem from a well-considered value hierarchy, but instead values are used in a post-hoc rationalization of the stances taken by that individual. In other words, the value hierarchy and value definitions follow from the stances taken by an individual instead of stances coming from the hierarchy and definitions.

When definitions were predictive of stance, there was genuine disagreement about what a value meant, and because it was the most pertinent value for an issue, respondents' opposing stances on the issue were influenced by this difference. We conclude that gun control and capital punishment exhibit value-based disagreement that manifests itself in substantive polarization. Polarization is substantive when it is the result of genuine disagreement, because there is a common ground for debate. However, when differing stances were not attributed to a value-based disagreement, such as for same-sex marriage and abortion, we conclude other factors are influencing these stances, which is manifested in what we call superficial polarization. Polarization is superficial

when it is not the result of genuine disagreement, because there is no common ground. In other words, people are merely expressing differences.

Difference Without Disagreement. To make this point clear, consider the following example. Two individuals go out to get ice cream together. Person A tells Person B that chocolate is the best flavor of ice cream, while Person B responds that strawberry is the best flavor of ice cream. Are these two individuals disagreeing about the best flavor of ice cream?

The key is in defining what they mean when they say "best flavor." If Person A defines the best flavor as the richest flavor, while Person B defines the best flavor as the sweetest flavor, A and B are not really disagreeing about which ice cream has the best flavor; they are merely reporting their respective preferences. This example parallels the behavior observed in our survey. In our case, 'ice cream' is the issue being discussed, 'best flavor' is the stance, the 'criterion' for best flavor is the MPV, and the definition of that criterion is the definition of MPV. For example, for the issue of gun control, a majority of respondents regardless of their stance, believed that security was the MPV. This conveys a shared 'criterion.' From there, the disagreement can be seen to be the result of varying definitions of security. A majority of respondents chose the second definition, "Security means being free from fear of personal, mental, and/or physical violation." The effect of selecting definitions other than the majority on a respondent's stance were discussed in Chapter 6 for each of our issues.

Genuine dialogue is only possible when individuals agree on the values that are at stake in an argument. Without this common ground, we talk past each other. The idea of difference without disagreement can be tied to Scalet (2010)'s two concepts of political

respect. One is 'reciprocal respect,' drawn from Rawls' (1993) idea of an overlapping consensus of shared values in a society, where two people engaged in an argument can "meet each other 'halfway' with reasons from a shared perspective." This respect, however, does not hold if "the conditions of reciprocity no longer apply," thus leading to the second concept of political respect, that of 'confrontation respect.' When both sides refuse to compromise, each side must be able to fully articulate their reasoning and "be ready and willing to consider and rebut the opposing...views" (Scalet, 2010, p. 102). Scalet argues that 'confrontation respect' is the notion of agreeing to disagree.

We contend that agreeing to disagree should not be terminal but instead the beginning of a good process of pragmatic policy-making. If Americans are able to articulate what they believe and why they believe it, then they can consider and engage with opposing views. This articulation would allow Americans to get the values 'out there' for public discussion so that everyone can see what the stakes are for each issue. Because the United States is a heterogeneous nation with no national religion, no overwhelmingly predominant race or ethnicity, or any other majority demographic feature, we argue that interlocutors should call on shared American values to establish a common ground and to genuinely grapple with the issues. Only then can the American people--and not only the elites in the judiciary, legislature, or executive office-- effectively communicate their concerns about what is really at stake in regards to morality policies.

Future Research

We believe that our findings have the potential to serve as a stepping stone for future research with the purpose of better understanding the polarization facing this

country. We offer three suggestions that could extend our research: (1) to look at how individuals apply values to other relevant and contentious issues; (2) to see how all the values that respondents deemed relevant to an issue, in addition to their most pertinent value, affected their moral and policy stances on that issue; and (3) to better incorporate and examine personality to see if meaningful relationships exist between individuals' personality traits and their ranking and definition of values.

We limited the issues in our study to four morality policies: abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage. We believe it would be beneficial to see how individuals apply values to other salient morality policies such as physician-assisted suicide and immigration, the latter of which was particularly salient during the 2016 U.S. presidential election campaign. By extending this research to other issues, we can make additional observations about scattering, the influence of value ranking and definition on moral and policy stances, and the influence of demographic features on moral and policy stance, which could elucidate whether there is difference without true disagreement.

Because of how we asked our questions in the survey, we were limited to evaluating only the effect of respondents' most pertinent value for an issue on their moral and policy stances. We had no way of knowing the incremental difference between all the values that respondents listed as pertinent for each issue. For example, if a respondent ranked two values as pertinent to their evaluation of an issue, we did not know if both values were of roughly equal importance or if one value was very important and the other was not very important. Thus, we were cautious and only ran correlations between the most pertinent value and moral and policy stance. We recommend that

future research reframe the question to better quantify the relative importance of pertinent values for evaluating an issue. This would allow the researchers to analyze how the total mix of pertinent values affected a respondent's moral and policy stances.

At the beginning of our thesis, we introduced the following research question: to what degree is an individual's personality correlated with how an individual rank-orders and defines values? We gathered the information needed to study this question in our survey. Through basic statistical tests, as shown in Appendix J, we found some initial correlations to start to answer this question. However, we decided not to focus on it due to time constraints and the fact that we uncovered other interesting patterns related to the other research questions. Although we did not expect personality to be as influential as ranking of values, definition of values, or demographic features, it could be valuable to further examine this variable to try to explain significances in the results.

Conclusion

We began our investigation by noting the coexistence of a rhetoric of common American values and high political polarization. We hypothesized that how Americans rank and define values contribute to polarization on our four morality policies. From the results of a nationwide survey, we observed significant trends between individuals' ranking and defining of a value and their stances on the issues. We noted that stances on gun control and capital punishment were better explained by the most pertinent value and how it is defined than stances on abortion and same-sex marriage were. We concluded that other factors, namely demographic features, also contributed to polarization. And since demographic features will continue to be widely diverse, values are all the more important for public discussion about significant issues and policies.

Our research shows that *only when* respondents first agreed on the most pertinent value for an issue (i.e., there was low scattering), was this most pertinent value and its definition predictive of stance. Our conclusion about the effect of value ranking and how values are defined is thus conditional. If there is general agreement on the most pertinent value for an issue, then common ground for evaluating an issue is established, and the most pertinent value and its definition explain stance well. However, if there is not general agreement about the most pertinent value, then common ground for evaluating the issue is not established, and the most pertinent value and its definition do not explain stance well. When high scattering occurs, we claim that the issue at hand is demonstrating superficial polarization (e.g., for abortion and same-sex marriage). When low scattering occurs, we claim that the issue at hand is demonstrating substantive polarization (e.g., capital punishment and gun control). Apparent discrepancies in moral and policy stances are not primarily based on disagreement in value ranking and definition, but rather just difference. Disagreement requires dialogue based on common ground; therefore, when no value is deemed most pertinent, this common ground does not exist. This common ground is the basis of substantive polarization. Thus, we suggest that substantive polarization is preferred to superficial polarization.

It seems counterintuitive, but if Americans can get to a place of disagreement, then there is a chance of them getting to a place of agreement. There is a hope for understanding and compromise between opposing sides because individuals at least understand why they hold the stances that they do and can articulate their beliefs to others. When people engage in genuine disagreement, everyone is clearer about what is at stake. If we are simply different, then there is little hope for understanding or

compromise because we are just speaking past one another and never truly engaging with others' views. We found that respondents generally held in common a most pertinent value for capital punishment and gun control, but did not agree on a most pertinent value for abortion and same-sex marriage, which suggests that on a deeper level than public opinion polls suggest, Americans can indeed reach a common ground.

Substantive polarization is a pragmatic stepping-stone for policy-making. It is impossible to advance discourse and be legislatively productive if everyone is talking past each other. We hope that our research can improve public discourse, to get Americans to go past simply taking different stances and instead to begin genuine dialogue about the issues. These dialogues can consist of individuals using the same terms and discussing commons things that they and opposing partisans both value. If Americans can move from mere difference to genuine disagreement, it is possible, through further dialogue, to move from unproductive cacophony to productive, articulated disagreement.

Appendix A

State of the Unions and Quotes on Values

We looked to the transcripts of State of the Union addresses for instances in which

presidents appeal to common values as evidence of the notion that Americans in fact

share values. Since Hare and Poole (2014) identify Barry Goldwater's 1964 presidential

campaign as a main contributor to political polarization, we analyzed State of the Union

transcripts from all presidents that were given after the 1964 presidential election. Below

are quotes that advance the notion that Americans share core values. Interestingly,

presidents began to invoke 'values' more with high frequency beginning with President

Jimmy Carter in 1979. Prior to this point, presidents tended to speak about common

'principles' or 'ideals.'

Keywords used in search: value; principle; ideal; common; share

President Lyndon B. Johnson (Democratic)

1. "It is the genius of our Constitution that under its shelter of enduring institutions and rooted principles there is ample room for the rich fertility of American political invention." (1966)

President: Richard M. Nixon (Republican)
1. "The secret of mastering change in today's world is to reach back to old and proven principles, and to adapt them with imagination and intelligence to the new realities of a new age. That is what we have done in the proposals that I have laid before the Congress. They are rooted in basic principles that are as enduring as human nature, as robust as the American experience; and they are responsive to new conditions. Thus they represent a spirit of change that is truly renewal. As we look back at those old principles, we find them as timely as they are timeless. We believe in independence, and self-reliance, and the creative value of the competitive spirit. We believe in full and equal opportunity for all Americans and in the protection of individual rights and liberties. We believe in the family as the keystone of the community, and in the community as the keystone of the Nation. We believe in compassion toward those in need. We believe in a system of law, justice, and order as the basis of a genuinely free society. We believe that a person should get what he works for--and that those who can, should work for what they get. We believe in the capacity of people to make their own decisions

in their own lives, in their own communities--and we believe in their right to make those decisions. In applying these principles, we have done so with the full understanding that what we seek in the seventies, what our quest is, is not merely for more, but for better for a better quality of life for all Americans." (1972)

President: Gerald R. Ford (Republican)
1. "Like our forefathers, we know that if we meet the challenges of our own time with a common sense of purpose and conviction, if we remain true to our Constitution and to our ideals, then we can know that the future will be better than the past." (1976)
2. "The state of the Union is a measurement of the many elements of which it is composed--a political union of diverse States, an economic union of varying interests, an intellectual union of common convictions, and a moral union of immutable ideals." (1977)

President: Jimmy Carter (Democratic)
1. "But we in America need not fear change. The values on which our Nation was founded—individual liberty, self-determination, the potential for human fulfillment in freedom—all of these endure." (1976)
2. "To establish those values, two centuries ago a bold generation of Americans risked their property, their position, and life itself. We are their heirs, and they are sending us a message across the centuries. The words they made so vivid are now growing faintly indistinct, because they are not heard often enough. They are words like "justice," "equality," "unity," "truth," "sacrifice," "liberty," "faith," and "love." (1976)

President: Ronald Reagan (Republican)
1. "The very key to our success has been our ability, foremost among nations, to preserve our lasting values by making change work for us rather than against us." (1983)
2. "We're seeing rededication to bedrock values of faith, family, work, neighborhood, peace, and freedom—values that help bring us together as one people, from the youngest child to the most senior citizen." (1984)
3. "We can help [our children] build tomorrow by strengthening our community of shared values. This must be our third great goal. For us, faith, work, family, neighborhood, freedom, and peace are not just words; they're expressions of what America means, definitions of what makes us a good and loving people." (1984)
4. "Tonight America is stronger because of the values that we hold dear. We believe faith and freedom must be our guiding stars, for they show us truth, they make us brave, give us hope, and leave us wiser than we were." (1985)
5. "Private values must be at the heart of public policies." (1986)
6. "An America whose divergent but harmonizing communities were a reflection of a deeper community of values" (1988)
7. "Our focus is the values, the principles, and ideas that made America great. Let's be clear on this point. We're for limited government, because we understand, as the Founding Fathers did, that it is the best way of ensuring personal liberty and

empowering the individual so that every American of every race and region shares fully in the flowering of American prosperity and freedom." (1988)

President: George H.W. Bush (Republican)
1. "Never before in this century have our values of freedom, democracy, and economic opportunity been such a powerful and intellectual force around the globe." (1989)

President: William J. Clinton (Democratic)
1. "We will find our new direction in the basic old values that brought us here over the last two centuries: a commitment to opportunity, to individual responsibility, to community, to work, to family, and to faith. We must now break the habits of both political parties and say there can be no more something for nothing and admit frankly that we are all in this together." (1993)
2. "Our Government, once a champion of national purpose, is now seen by many as simply a captive of narrow interests, putting more burdens on our citizens rather than equipping them to get ahead. The values that used to hold us all together seem to be coming apart." (1995)
3. "How do we preserve our old and enduring values as we move into the future?" (1996)
4. "Our economy is measured in numbers and statistics, and it's very important. But the enduring worth of our Nation lies in our shared values and our soaring spirit." (1997)
5. "What we have to do in our day and generation to make sure that America becomes truly one nation—what do we have to do? We're becoming more and more and more diverse. Do you believe we can become one nation? The answer cannot be to dwell on our differences but to build on our shared values. We all cherish family and faith, freedom and responsibility. We all want our children to grow up in a world where their talents are matched by their opportunities." (1998)
6. "We must work together, learn together, live together, serve together. On the forge of common enterprise, Americans of all backgrounds can hammer out a common identity. We see it today in the United States military, in the Peace Corps, in AmeriCorps. Wherever people of all races and backgrounds come together in a shared endeavor and get a fair chance, we do just fine. With shared values and meaningful opportunities and honest communication and citizen service, we can unite a diverse people in freedom and mutual respect. We are many; we must be one." (1998)
7. "We restored the vital center, replacing outmoded ideologies with a new vision anchored in basic, enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all Americans." (2000)

President: George W. Bush (Republican)
1. "We are living in a time of great change in our world, in our economy, in science and medicine. Yet some things endure: courage and compassion, reverence and integrity, respect for differences of faith and race. The values we try to live by never change, and they are instilled in us by fundamental institutions such as

families and schools and religious congregations. These institutions, these unseen pillars of civilization, must remain strong in America, and we will defend them." (2004)

2. "Because one of the main sources of our national unity is our belief in equal justice, we need to make sure Americans of all races and backgrounds have confidence in the system that provides justice." (2005)

3. "The only alternative to American leadership is a dramatically more dangerous and anxious world. Yet we also choose to lead because it is a privilege to serve the values that gave us birth." (2006)

President: Barack Obama (Democratic)

1. "Abroad, America's greatest source of strength has always been our ideals. The same is true at home. We find unity in our incredible diversity, drawing on the promise enshrined in our Constitution: The notion that we're all created equal; that no matter who you are or what you look like, if you abide by the law, you should be protected by it; if you adhere to our common values, you should be treated no different than anyone else." (2010)

2. "In the end, it's our ideals, our values that built America, values that allowed us to forge a nation made up of immigrants from every corner of the globe, values that drive our citizens still. Every day, Americans meet their responsibilities to their families and their employers. Time and again, they lend a hand to their neighbors and give back to their country. They take pride in their labor and are generous in spirit. These aren't Republican values or Democratic values that they're living by, business values or labor values, they're American values." (2010)

3. "What's at stake aren't Democratic values or Republican values, but American values. And we have to reclaim them." (2012)

4. "Just over a decade ago, I gave a speech in Boston where I said there wasn't a liberal America or a conservative America, a Black America or a White America, but a United States of America. I said this because I had seen it in my own life, in a nation that gave someone like me a chance; because I grew up in Hawaii, a melting pot of races and customs; because I made Illinois my home, a State of small towns, rich farmland, one of the world's great cities, a microcosm of the country where Democrats and Republicans and Independents, good people of every ethnicity and every faith, share certain bedrock values." (2015)

5. "Looking to the future instead of the past, making sure we match our power with diplomacy and use force wisely, building coalitions to meet new challenges and opportunities, leading always with the example of our values—that's what makes us exceptional. That's what keeps us strong. That's why we have to keep striving to hold ourselves to the highest of standards: our own." (2016)

Appendix B

Think Tanks and Shared/American Values Language

Think Tank	Ideological Leaning	Excerpts about Values
Acton Institute	Conservative/libertarian	"Prager claims that traditional American conservatism is distinctive because of its ethical decency, high ideals, **moral values**, and intrinsic visionary worth" (Barnett, 2013).
American Enterprise Institute	Conservative	"Is America forgetting **American values**?" (Schmitt & Gedmin, 2015)
Aspen Institute	Centrist	"I think this is going to be a disruptive and amazing moment when this election happens...when people begin to examine **what values are dominant**" (Krivonen, 2015).
Bipartisan Policy Center	Bipartisan	"On display was a shining example of how **shared values**, shared friendship and shared purpose are beginning to enable our system to govern" (Grumet, 2015).
Brookings Institution	Liberal	"...**certain values** transcend political chasms" ("The things both conservatives and liberals want…," 2016). "Liberals and Democrats are not really part of a party, as much as they are part of a new America that...is a lifestyle, a culture and a sensibility, **with its own media, institutions, norms and values**" ("Will left vs. right…," 2016).
Cato Institute	Libertarian	"**The traditional American values** of liberty, sacrifice, risk-taking, and even faith have declined…. Risk, excellence, sacrifice, faith, unity. **American values** that were good for the world and good for the American economy" (Kasparov, 2014). "To know whether or not our criminal justice policies comport with **our deepest values…**" (Loury, 2009).

Center for American Progress	Liberal	"Most importantly, each win shed light on **the durability of these values—values that are holding strong across the nation** in a time of financial, social, demographic, religious, and political uncertainty" (Woodiwiss, 2013). "...the organization's network and other similar groups highlight **an enduring American value:** the belief that everyone should have the opportunity to contribute her or his fair share toward creating a more just and prosperous nation for all" (Woodiwiss, 2013).
Guttmacher Institute	Liberal	"Exporting Antiabortion Ideology at the Expense of **American Values**" (Cohen, 2001)

Heartland Institute	Conservative/libertarian	"**American values** such as rewarding individual effort, honoring individual achievement, and promoting healthy competition have given way to a capricious smorgasbord of liberal ideas that undermine...traditional values in many of our schools" (Butcher, 2004).
Heritage Foundation	Conservative	"At a minimum, the government asks its citizens to pledge allegiance to its flag; **to value certain concepts** such as individual freedom, religious liberty, popular sovereignty, and private ownership…" (Messmore, 2007). "Both speak to **values and characteristics that are thought to be centrally American**" (McClay, 2008). "...society is maintained by authority--or the recognition of **commonly held values**…" (Slack, 2013).
Hoover Institution	Conservative/libertarian	No relevant mention of values found
Manhattan Institute for Policy Research	Conservative	No relevant mention of values found

New America Foundation	Liberal	"These tensions shed light on a perpetual interplay between **the enduring American values of independence, opportunity, and security**" (Zukin, 2008).
RAND Corporation	Centrist	"Any sense of community depends on **a set of shared values**, said Etzioni. He illustrated the contemporary limits of community by pointing to **examples in the United States** and Europe…. We are Americans, and we don't make such calculations—that is the sense of community" ("The role of moral dialogues…," 2002).
Third Way	Liberal	"It is **our values that make us American**" (Trumble and Hatalsky, 2016).
Urban Institute	Liberal	No relevant mention of values found

Appendix C

Values and Prominence in American Politics

Value	Founding Documents	Political Speeches	Court Cases
Equality	Constitution, Declaration of Independence	First inaugural address (Reagan, 1981), We shall overcome (Johnson, 1965), Civil Rights Address (Kennedy, 1963), I have a dream (King, Jr., 1963), The meaning of America (Hoover, 1948), Gettysburg Address (Lincoln, 1863)	*Hollingsworth v. Perry* (2013), *United States v. Windsor* (2013), *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), *Loving v. Virginia* (1967), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965)
Happiness	Declaration of Independence	First inaugural address (Reagan, 1981), We shall overcome (Johnson, 1965), I have a dream (King, Jr., 1963)	*Loving v. Virginia* (1967), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965)
Justice	Constitution	We shall overcome (Johnson, 1965), Civil Rights Address (Kennedy, 1963), I have a dream (King, Jr., 1963), Emancipation Proclamation (Lincoln, 1863)	*United States v. Windsor* (2013), *Kennedy v. Louisiana* (2008), *Atkins v. Virginia* (2002), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965)
Liberty	Constitution, Declaration of Independence	2004 Democratic National Convention keynote address (Obama, 2004), First inaugural address (Reagan, 1981), We shall overcome (Johnson, 1965), I have a dream (King, Jr., 1963), The meaning of America (Hoover, 1948), Gettysburg Address (Lincoln, 1863)	*United States v. Windsor* (2013), *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), *Roe v. Wade* (1973), *Loving v. Virginia* (1967), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965)
Privacy	Constitution		*Hollingsworth v. Perry* (2013), *United States v. Windsor* (2013), *Roe v. Wade* (1973), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965)
Security	Constitution, Declaration of Independence	2004 Democratic National Convention keynote address (Obama, 2004), First inaugural address (Reagan, 1981), We shall overcome (Johnson, 1965), Civil Rights Address (Kennedy, 1963), I have a dream (King, Jr., 1963)	*United States v. Windsor* (2013), *Roe v. Wade* (1973), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965)
Self-determination	Constitution, Declaration of Independence	First inaugural address (Reagan, 1981)	*United States v. Windsor* (2013)

Appendix D

Focus Group Outline and Questionnaire

ARRIVAL

10 minutes allocated prior to start of focus group for participants to eat, fill out consent forms, and get name tags.

WELCOME

Good morning/afternoon/evening! Thank you for being a part of our focus group. My name is _____ (Moderator 1) and these are my colleagues _____ and _____ (Moderator 2 and Scribe). We are undergraduate researchers at the University of Maryland in the Gemstone Honors Program. _____ (Moderator 1) and I (Moderator 2) will be asking questions during this session, and _____ (Scribe) will be taking notes and keeping us on schedule.

The reason we are having these focus groups is to examine Americans' perspectives on values and current political issues because information about this is essential to our research project.

You may have already noticed the video recorder. Our discussion will be videotaped to allow us to accurately transcribe the information from our discussion. After we have transcribed the session, the video will be safely stored on our team laptop. We will never report your names in our research so as to preserve your anonymity and respect confidentiality.

We would like each one of you to participate and to share your views. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions we will pose. Please feel comfortable in sharing your views and beliefs.

Before we begin our conversation, let's set a few ground rules.

- Please be respectful of others and do not speak in a way that you would find offensive if the roles were reversed.

- Take time to listen to others' comments. If you disagree with another person's point of view, you will have time to explain why you disagree.

- Feel free to ask the other group members questions. For example, you may ask them to clarify their view if you do not understand it.

- It would be very useful if you could give examples when possible and/or provide details of your experiences to illustrate your reasons for your views.

- We are interested in hearing what you really think, and not in what you think we want to hear. If one of us asks a follow-up question, it will be for clarification or to invite you to more fully develop your view. The point of our questions is definitely not to change your mind.

- The point of this discussion is not for us to reach consensus on any of these issues, so there is no need to modify your own responses based on what other people say.

- Finally, please turn off your cell phones and other electronic devices for the duration of our conversation.

Are there any questions before we begin?

POLARIZATION - 15min

1. Show of hands, please: who thinks that the American people are significantly divided about major social issues? Raise your hand if you think the American people are not significantly divided. Raise your hand if you are unsure.

2. Why do you think there is or is not significant disagreement among the American people on major social issues? If you were unsure, please explain why.

3. Are there some social issues that people disagree about more than others? If so, what are they?

4. Why do you think there is more disagreement on these issues than on others?

All right, thank you so much for your thoughts. Now let's shift gears to talk about values.

VALUES - 45min

1. Show of hands, please: who believes that the American people tend to share a uniform set of predominant values? Who thinks that there is no shared uniform set of predominant values? Who is unsure?

2. Why do you think the American people share a uniform set of predominant values? Why do you think the American people do not share a uniform set of predominant values? Why are you unsure?

3. If you were to compile a list of "American values," what values would you include in the list?

4. Do you think there are differences in which the American people interpret the values on your list?

5. What values are central to your own moral and political thinking?

6. Does the following list **[liberty, equality, justice, self-determination, privacy, security, happiness--moderator should write this on the board]** accurately reflect values that Americans use to evaluate moral and political issues? Why or why not? Is there anything missing? Is there anything that should not be included?

7. How do you define "[this value]"? ← asked about each of the following values:

liberty, equality, justice, self-determination, privacy, security, happiness

EXIT QUESTION

12. Before we wrap up, is there anything you want to add, related to the topics we have

discussed today?

CONCLUSION

Again, thank you for participating in our study. We are very grateful for your time, and

we sincerely value your thoughts.

Focus Groups Advertisement

Paid Focus Group Opportunity

Gemstone research team M.O.R.A.L.S. is looking for student participants to join a study about American politics and society. Participants will be compensated with $10 cash. Refreshments will be provided during the focus group period. If interested, please email gemstoneteammorals@gmail.com to get more information.

Must be a UMD student who is at least 18 years of age and a US citizen

(Flyer is not full size in this appendix).

Appendix F

Focus Group Consent Form

University of Maryland College Park

Project Title	Defining What We Value in the Context of Political Polarization
Purpose of the Study	This research is being conducted by Dr. Susan Dwyer and the Gemstone research team MORALS at the University of Maryland, College Park. The purpose of this study is to help us formulate the survey questions we shall use in our larger research project, which concerns the role of values in political polarization.
Procedures	You will be a member of a focus group of your peers. Two members of the research team will begin with a brief introduction of the nature of the study. After this, the moderators will explain the general guidelines for discussion. The moderators will then ask a series of questions. You will have ample time to state your own response, and for you to discuss with others their responses. Questions will include items such as, "Are there some social issues that people disagree about more than others? If so, what are they?" and "If you were to compile a list of 'American values,'" what values would you include in the list?" The total length of the focus group session will not last longer than 90 minutes. The session will be videotaped and one of our team members will act as a scribe, taking notes on the password-protected laptop specifically purchased for holding our research data. This video will never be released and will later be destroyed at the end of the longer study. After the discussion has finished, the moderators will make some closing remarks, and each participant will receive their compensation and may leave.
Potential Risks and Discomforts	Confidentiality will be protected by the measures taken as described in the confidentiality section below. Moderators will try their best to mediate any discomfort that may arise due to difference of opinions.
Potential Benefits	There are no direct individual benefits. The overall benefit of the research is to contribute to a larger body of knowledge about political polarization and its possible causes, e.g., individual personalities, the ways in which individuals define, rank, and apply values, and their stance on contentious morality policies in America.
Confidentiality	We will ensure the full confidentiality of all our focus group participants. Once you arrive at the location of the focus group you will be asked to sign a consent form. These forms will be kept in a secure, locked cabinet in Dr. Dwyer's office and will never be released. You will be given a name tag– first name only–so that all participants can identify each other and talk to one another comfortably. The desk where you sit will be labeled with a number. The session will be videotaped and one of our team members will act as a scribe, taking notes on the password-protected laptop specifically purchased for holding our research data. The scribe will identify participants in the notes only by their desk numbers and not by their actual names. The video will be used for transcription purposes and viewed only by the scribe and another team member who will act as a fact-checker. Once the final version of the transcript is verified by the scribe and the fact-checker, the video will be kept secure on the password-protected laptop. Both the forms and the video will be

Initials _____ Date _____

	destroyed at the end of the longer study.
Compensation	You will receive $10.00 and light refreshments. You will be responsible for any taxes assessed on the compensation.
Right to Withdraw and Questions	Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. Your academic standing at UMD will not be affected by your participation or nonparticipation in this study. If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the investigator: **Dr. Susan Dwyer** 1110B Skinner Building University of Maryland College Park, MD 20742 (301) 405-7867 dwyer@umd.edu
Participant Rights	If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **University of Maryland College Park** **Institutional Review Board Office** **1204 Marie Mount Hall** **College Park, Maryland, 20742** **E-mail: irb@umd.edu** **Telephone: 301-405-0678** This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.
Statement of Consent	Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form. If you agree to participate, please sign your name below.
Signature and Date	**NAME OF PARTICIPANT** **[Please Print]**	
	SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT	
	DATE	

Appendix G

IRB Approval for Focus Groups

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

DATE: October 27, 2015

TO: Susan Dwyer, PhD, MIT
FROM: University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [807874-1] Defining What We Value in the Context of Political Polarization
REFERENCE #:
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: October 27, 2015
EXPIRATION DATE: October 26, 2016
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 7

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

Prior to submission to the IRB Office, this project received scientific review from the departmental IRB Liaison.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulations.

This project has been determined to be a Minimal Risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of October 26, 2016.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Unless a consent waiver or alteration has been approved, Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others (UPIRSOs) and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

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Generated on IRBNet

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of seven years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB Office at 301-405-4212 or irb@umd.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) IRB's records.

Appendix H

Survey

University of Maryland College Park

Initials_____ Date_____

Project Title	Defining What We Value in the Context of Political Polarization
Purpose of the Study	This research is being conducted by Team M.O.R.A.L.S. of the Gemstone Honors Program at the University of Maryland, College Park, under the supervision of Dr. Susan Dwyer. The purpose of the research is to examine how individuals define, rank, and apply values to their moral and policy stances on four morality policies--abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage.
Procedures	Participants in this study will complete an online survey that will expose them to situational vignettes, a 20-question personality inventory, questions to define, rank and apply values to their moral and policy stance in issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage, capital punishment, and gun control. The survey will also gather the participants' demographic information. The survey is expected to take 30 minutes to complete.
Potential Risks and Discomforts	There are minimal risks to participants for taking part in this survey. The only known risk is potential discomfort that may result from the mentioning of controversial and potentially sensitive moral and political issues such as abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage.
Potential Benefits	There are no direct individual benefits. The overall benefit of the research is to contribute to a larger body of knowledge about political polarization and its possible causes, e.g., individual personalities, the ways in which individuals define, rank, and apply values, and their moral stance and policy stance on contentious morality policies in America.
Confidentiality	All data collected through this online survey will be confidential, and will not be associated with any identifiable information. Only the investigators will be allowed access to the data from this study. The researchers will never receive any identifying information. Data from the survey will be kept on a password-protected laptop, and the researchers will be the only ones with access to any of the data collected through the study.

	If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.
Compensation	You will be compensated directly by Qualtrics.
Right to Withdraw and Questions	Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this survey or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you decide to stop taking part in this study, if you have any questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please

University of Maryland College Park

Initials_____ Date_____

	contact the investigator: **Principal Investigator: Dr. Susan Dwyer** **Email: gemstoneteammorals@gmail.com** **Telephone: (301) 405-1102**
Participant Rights	If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **University of Maryland College Park** **Institutional Review Board Office** **1204 Marie Mount Hall** **College Park, Maryland, 20742** **E-mail: irb@umd.edu** **Telephone: 301-405-0678**

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	This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.
Statement of Consent	By clicking "Yes" below, you confirm the following: You are at least 18 years of age. You have read this consent form or have had it read to you. You voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. You may request a copy of this consent form by emailing the principal investigator.

Yes, I consent.   No, I do not consent.

Demographics (Part I)

Please read each question carefully and take your time going through the survey as you WILL NOT be able to return to previous questions once you have moved on to the next question. If you think you have made a mistake on a previous question, please continue the rest of the survey a normal.

How do you describe yourself?

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian or Asian American

Black or African American

Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Hispanic or Latino

White or Caucasian (non-hispanic)

Other

Prefer not to say

What is your gender?

Female

Male

Transgender

Prefer not to say

What is your age?

Vignettes

We have all encountered a situation where there is a disconnect between policy and morality. In the following scenarios, please choose what you think is the morally right thing to do.

The boss of a company is very impressed with an employee the boss feels is extremely valuable to the company. This is the best employee that the boss has, and a merger is depending on this employee. While in the restroom, the boss overhears the employee mention over the phone that the employee has been purchasing drugs. A drug screen test is scheduled for next week for a few selected employees who would be subject to termination if they do not pass.

Morally speaking, should the boss include this employee in the testing?

The boss should include the employee in the drug test.

The boss should not include the employee in the drug test.

A man and his wife left Mexico and illegally immigrated to the United States with their two-year-old son. They settled in Los Angeles, California, where they both worked. Five years after moving to the United States, their daughter was born. Today, 20 years after moving to the country, the family is facing deportation. As a result, the husband, the wife, and the son will be deported to Mexico, while the daughter, who is a natural-born citizen, will be allowed to stay in the United States legally.

Morally speaking, should the husband, wife, and son be deported?

The husband, wife, and son should be deported.

The husband, wife, and son should not be deported.

A 65 year-old grandfather is suffering from a degenerative disease. Every day, he lives through excruciating pain that the disease is causing. He asked his daughter, who is a nurse, to help him with assisted suicide, but she still has hope for his

future and is unwilling to give up on him. However, as an only child she wants to respect his wishes and alleviate his suffering.

Morally speaking, should the daughter help her father with assisted suicide?

The daughter should assist with her father's suicide.
The daughter should not assist with her father's suicide.

Issues (General)

Please indicate how strongly you feel about four selected issues (abortion, capital punishment, gun control, and same-sex marriage).

Abortion refers to the deliberate termination of a human pregnancy by the intended death of an embryo or fetus.

How important is the issue of abortion to you?

	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important
Abortion	○	○	○	○

Capital punishment refers to the legally authorized killing of a duly convicted individual as punishment for a crime.

How important is the issue of capital punishment to you?

	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important
Capital Punishment	○	○	○	○

Gun control refers to government laws which aim to restrict or regulate the sale, purchase, or possession of firearms

through licensing, registration, or identification requirements.

How important is the issue of gun control to you?

	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important
Gun Control	○	○	○	○

Same-sex marriage refers to marriage between partners of the same sex.

How important is the issue of same-sex marriage to you?

	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important
Same-Sex Marriage	○	○	○	○

In this next section, please specify your moral stance and policy stance on the four issues.

'Moral stance' means the position you take on an issue dictated by your moral values.

'Policy stance' means the position you take on an issue dictated by what you believe will be the most effective policy.

Abortion

Abortion refers to the deliberate termination of a human pregnancy by the intended death of an embryo or fetus. Please specify your MORAL stance and strength of that stance.

How morally permissible is abortion?					How strong is your stance?			
Never Permissible	Rarely Permissible	Sometimes Permissible	Usually Permissible	Always Permissible	Not At All Strong	Slightly Strong	Moderately Strong	Very Strong

| Abortion | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Please specify your POLICY stance on abortion and the strength of that stance.

	What is your judgment on abortion policy?					How strong is your stance?			
	Illegal in All Cases	Illegal in Most Cases	Neutral	Legal in Most Cases	Legal in All Cases	Not At All Strong	Slightly Strong	Moderately Strong	Very Strong
Abortion should be...	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

From the word bank provided below, please DRAG the value(s) that inform your view on abortion into the box on the right. Then RANK the values in order of importance.

Items

Equality

Security

Justice

Liberty

Privacy

Self-determination

Happiness

Values for Abortion

Capital Punishment

Capital punishment refers to the legally authorized killing of a duly convicted individual as punishment for a crime. Please specify your MORAL stance and the strength of that stance.

	How morally permissible is capital punishment?					How strong is your stance?			
	Never Permissible	Rarely Permissible	Sometimes Permissible	Usually Permissible	Always Permissible	Not At All Strong	Slightly Strong	Moderately Strong	Very Strong
Capital Punishment	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please select your POLICY stance on capital punishment and the strength of that stance.

	What is your judgment about capital punishment policy?			How strong is your stance?			
	Illegal	Neutral	Legal	Not At All Strong	Slightly Strong	Moderately Strong	Very Strong
Capital punishment should be...	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

From the word bank provided below, please DRAG the value(s) that inform your view on capital punishment into the box on the right. Then, RANK the values in order of importance.

Items

Justice

Happiness

Security

Privacy

Self-determination

Equality

Liberty

Values for Capital Punishment

Gun Control

Gun control refers to government laws which aim to restrict or regulate the sale, purchase, or possession of firearms through licensing, registration, or identification requirements. Please select your MORAL stance and the strength of that stance.

	How morally permissible is gun control?					How strong is your stance?			
	Never Permissible	Rarely Permissible	Sometimes Permissible	Usually Permissible	Always Permissible	Not At All Strong	Slightly Strong	Moderately Strong	Very Strong
Gun Control	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please select your POLICY stance on gun control and the strength of that stance.

	What is your judgment on gun control policy?			How strong is your stance?			
	Decrease	Remain the Same	Increase	Not At All Strong	Slightly Strong	Moderately Strong	Very Strong
Gun control regulations should...	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

From the word bank provided below, please DRAG the value(s) that inform your view on gun control into the box on the right. Then, RANK the values in order of importance.

Items

Security

Happiness

Justice

Privacy

Liberty

Values for Gun Control

Self-determination

Equality

Same-Sex Marriage

Same-sex marriage refers to marriage between partners of the same sex. Please select your MORAL stance and the strength of that stance.

	How morally permissible is same-sex marriage?					How strong is your stance?			
	Never Permissible	Rarely Permissible	Sometimes Permissible	Usually Permissible	Always Permissible	Not At All Strong	Slightly Strong	Moderately Strong	Very Strong
Same-Sex Marriage	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please select your POLICY stance on same-sex marriage and the strength of that stance.

	What is your judgment about same-sex marriage policy?			How strong is your stance?			
	Illegal	Neutral	Legal	Not At All Strong	Slightly Strong	Moderately Strong	Very Strong
Same-sex marriage should be…	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

From the word bank provided below, please DRAG the value(s) that inform your view on same-sex marriage into the box on the right. Then, RANK the values in order of importance.

Items

Privacy

Justice

Values for Same-Sex Marriage

Liberty

Equality

Self-determination

Security

Happiness

Attention Check 1

Please solve the following question:

2 + 7 =

8

9

10

VD - Equality

Which of the these statements best describes your interpretation of the following value?

Equality:

Equality means that everyone is able to start from the same point even if they don't end at the same place.

Equality means that everyone is able to get to the same place even if they don't start from the same point.

Please indicate how accurately each definition describes your understanding of **'Equality.'**

Very   Very

	Inaccurate	Inaccurate	Neutral	Accurate	Accurate
» Equality means that everyone is able to start from the same point even if they don't end at the same place.	○	○	○	○	○
» Equality means that everyone is able to get to the same place even if they don't start from the same point.	○	○	○	○	○

VD - Happiness

Which of the these statements best describes your interpretation of the following value?

Happiness:

Happiness means satisfying my most important desires.

Happiness means experiencing pleasure.

Happiness means living a contented and meaningful life.

Please indicate how accurately each definition describes your understanding of **'Happiness.'**

	Very Inaccurate	Inaccurate	Neutral	Accurate	Very Accurate
» Happiness means experiencing pleasure.	○	○	○	○	○
» Happiness means satisfying my most important desires.	○	○	○	○	○
» Happiness means living a contented and meaningful life.	○	○	○	○	○

VD - Justice

Which of the these statements best describes your interpretation of the following value?

Justice:

Justice means that societal "goods" (such as education) and societal "bads" (such as punishments) are distributed to people based on what they need.

Justice means that societal "goods" (such as education) and societal "bads" (such as punishments) are distributed to people based on what they deserve.

Please indicate how accurately each definition describes your understanding of **'Justice.'**

	Very Inaccurate	Inaccurate	Neutral	Accurate	Very Accurate
» Justice means that societal "goods" (such as education) and societal "bads" (such as punishments) are distributed to people based on what they deserve.	○	○	○	○	○
» Justice means that societal "goods" (such as education) and societal "bads" (such as punishments) are distributed to people based on what they need.	○	○	○	○	○

Just to make sure you are paying attention, please answer the following question.

	Very Inaccurate	Inaccurate	Neutral	Accurate	Very Accurate
Please select very accurate for this question.	○	○	○	○	○

VD - Liberty

Which of the these statements best describes your interpretation of the following value?

Liberty:

Liberty means the right to freely do what one wants as long as one's actions do not interfere with others' rights.

Liberty means the right to freely do what one wants without interference from external influences such as other people, government, and institutions.

Please indicate how accurately each definition describes your understanding of **'Liberty.'**

	Very Inaccurate	Inaccurate	Neutral	Accurate	Very Accurate
» Liberty means the right to freely do what one wants without interference from external influences such as other people, government, and institutions.	○	○	○	○	○
» Liberty means the right to freely do what one wants as long as one's actions do not interfere with others' rights.	○	○	○	○	○

VD - Privacy

Which of the these statements best describes your interpretation of the following value?

Privacy:

Privacy means the power to withhold personal information from external sources such as the government, companies, or other people.

Privacy means the ability to live without external monitoring.

Please indicate how accurately each definition describes your understanding of **'Privacy.'**

	Very Inaccurate	Inaccurate	Neutral	Accurate	Very Accurate
» Privacy means the power to withhold personal information from external sources such as the government, companies, or other people.	○	○	○	○	○
» Privacy means the ability to live without external monitoring.	○	○	○	○	○

VD - Security

Which of the these statements best describes your interpretation of the following value?

Security:

Security means maintaining my well-being irrespective of what is going on in society.

Security means being free from the danger of possible abuses of government power.

Security means being free from fear of personal, mental, and/or physical violation.

Security means being free from danger in my everyday life because the country is secure.

Please indicate how accurately each definition describes your understanding of **'Security.'**

	Very Inaccurate	Inaccurate	Neutral	Accurate	Very Accurate
» Security means being free from danger in my everyday life because the country is secure.	○	○	○	○	○
» Security means being free from fear of personal, mental, and/or physical violation.	○	○	○	○	○
» Security means being free from the danger of possible abuses of government power.	○	○	○	○	○
» Security means maintaining my well-being irrespective of what is going on in society.	○	○	○	○	○

VD - Self-Determination

Which of the these statements best describes your interpretation of the following value?

Self-determination:

Self-determination is the ability to structure my life according to my choices.

Self-determination is the ability to succeed according to my own merits and effort.

Self-determination is the ability to control my identity.

Please indicate how accurately each definition describes your understanding of **'Self-determination.'**

	Very Inaccurate	Inaccurate	Neutral	Accurate	Very Accurate
» Self-determination is the ability to succeed according to my own merits and effort.	○	○	○	○	○
» Self-determination is the ability to control my identity.	○	○	○	○	○
» Self-determination is the ability to structure my life according to my choices.	○	○	○	○	○

Hierarchy (After)

For this series of questions, you will be asked to remove one value at a time that you find the LEAST important out of all the options presented. Please note that as you go through the questions, the order of the values may be rearranged.

Out of the values listed below, please select the value that is the LEAST important to you (in general).

Self-determination

Privacy

Liberty

Equality

Security

Justice

Happiness

Out of the values listed below, please select the value that is the LEAST important to you (in general).

Equality

Happiness

Liberty

Justice

Privacy

Self-determination

Security

Out of the values listed below, please select the value that is the LEAST important to you (in general).

Liberty

Security

Privacy

Self-determination

Equality

Justice

Happiness

Out of the values listed below, please select the value that is the LEAST important to you (in general).

Security

Justice

Self-determination

Equality

Privacy

Happiness

Liberty

Out of the values listed below, please select the value that is the LEAST important to you (in general).

Security

Equality

Privacy

Liberty

Self-determination

Happiness

Justice

Out of the values listed below, please select the value that is the LEAST important to you (in general).

Security

Happiness

Self-determination

Liberty

Privacy

Justice

Equality

Demographics (Part II)

Please provide the following demographic information.

Which of the following best describes the area in which you were raised?

Suburban

Rural

Urban

Prefer not to say

173

What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual

Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other

Prefer not to say

With which religion do you associate?

```
Buddhism
Catholicism
Eastern Orthodoxy
Protestantism
Other Christianity
Hinduism
Islam
Judaism
Nonreligious (agnostic, atheist, secular humanist)
Other
```
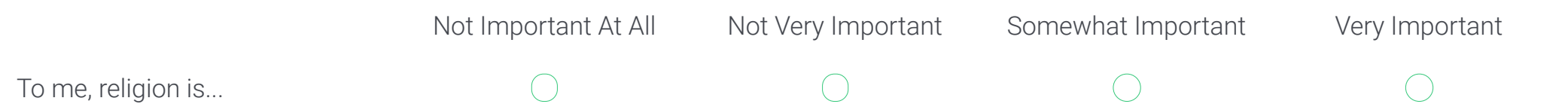
	Not Important At All	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
To me, religion is...	○	○	○	○

What is your highest level of education obtained?

Not High School Graduate

High School Graduate / GED

Some College

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

PhD or Advanced Graduate work

Prefer not to say

What is your total household income?

Less than $30,000/yr

$30,000-$49,999

$50,000-$74,999

$75,000-$99,999

$100,000+

Prefer not to say

What is your marital status?

Single

Married

Widowed

Divorced

Prefer not to say

With which political party do you most identify?

Democratic

Republican

Neither

Other--please specify

Prefer not to say

Where on the following ideological scale do you place yourself?

	Very Liberal	Liberal	Somewhat Liberal	Neither Liberal nor Conservative	Somewhat Conservative	Conservative	Very Conservative
My political ideology is...	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

How do you know about current events? For each option that you select, please specify the name(s) of the major sources you use in the corresponding text box.

TV News

Word of Mouth

Radio

Print Journalism

Social Media

Online Journalism

Personality Test

Below are phrases describing people's behaviors. Please use the rating scale below to describe how accurately each statement describes you as you generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you honestly see yourself, in relation to other people you know of the same sex as you are, and roughly your same age. Please read each statement carefully, and then fill in the bubble that corresponds to the item on the scale.

	Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neither	Moderately Accurate	Accurate
Sympathize with others' feelings.	○	○	○	○	○
Have frequent mood swings.	○	○	○	○	○

	Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neither	Moderately Accurate	Accurate
Get chores done right away.	○	○	○	○	○
Have a vivid imagination.	○	○	○	○	○
Am the life of the party.	○	○	○	○	○

	Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neither	Moderately Accurate	Accurate
Don't talk a lot.	○	○	○	○	○
Am not interested in other people's problems.	○	○	○	○	○
Often forget to put things in their proper place.	○	○	○	○	○
Am relaxed most of the time.	○	○	○	○	○
Am not interested in abstract ideas.	○	○	○	○	○

	Inaccurate	Moderately Inacurrate	Neither	Moderately Accurate	Accurate
Talk to a lot of different people at parties.	○	○	○	○	○
Feel others' emotions.	○	○	○	○	○
Like order.	○	○	○	○	○
Get upset easily.	○	○	○	○	○
Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.	○	○	○	○	○

	Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neither	Moderately Accurate	Accurate
Keep in the background.	○	○	○	○	○
Am not really interested in others.	○	○	○	○	○
Make a mess of things.	○	○	○	○	○
Seldom feel blue.	○	○	○	○	○
Do not have a good imagination.	○	○	○	○	○

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Appendix I

IRB Approval for Survey

DATE: April 28, 2016

TO: Susan Dwyer, PhD, MIT
FROM: University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [807874-2] Defining What We Value in the Context of Political Polarization
REFERENCE #:
SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: April 28, 2016
EXPIRATION DATE: October 26, 2016
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 7

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this project. The University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

Prior to submission to the IRB Office, this project received scientific review from the departmental IRB Liaison.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulations.

This project has been determined to be a Minimal Risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of October 26, 2016.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Unless a consent waiver or alteration has been approved, Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others (UPIRSOs) and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of seven years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB Office at 301-405-4212 or irb@umd.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) IRB's records.

Appendix J

Chi-Squared Test for Demographics/Personality and Stance

Independent Category	Independent Variable	Dependent Variables											
		Top Value					Best Definition						
		ABTop	CPTop	GCTop	SSTop	GenTop	Justice	Security	Privacy	Liberty	Self_Determination	Equality	Happiness
Demographics	Q53_Area												
	Q57_Educ		X										
	Q6_Gender			X		X							
	Q58_Income												
	Q59_Marital					X							X
	Q61_1_PolIdeo	X			X	X							
	Q60_PolPar		X	X	X	X	X						X
	Q5_Race			X		X			X				
	Q55_Religion	X		X	X	X							
	Q56_1_Religiosity				X								
	Q54_SexOrien		X										X
	Q7_Age			X		X			X				
	Extraversion				X								X
	Agreeableness			X				X		X			X
	Conscientiousness		X								X		X
	Neuroticism	X							X				X
	Openness			X		X							

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