This article was downloaded by: *[Bauman, Christopher W.]*
On: *26 February 2009*
Access details: *Access Details: [subscription number 909050372]*
Publisher *Taylor & Francis*
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK

Australian Journal of Psychology
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713701010

Moral disagreement and procedural justice: Moral mandates as constraints to voice effects

Christopher W. Bauman [a]; Linda J. Skitka [b]
[a] Department of Management and Organization, School of Business, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington [b] Department of Psychology, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Online Publication Date: 01 March 2009

To cite this Article Bauman, Christopher W. and Skitka, Linda J.(2009)'Moral disagreement and procedural justice: Moral mandates as constraints to voice effects',Australian Journal of Psychology,61:1,40 — 49
To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/00049530802607647
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00049530802607647

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Australian Journal of Psychology, Vol. 61, No. 1, March 2009, pp. 40–49.

The Australian Psychological Society Ltd

Moral disagreement and procedural justice: Moral mandates as constraints to voice effects

CHRISTOPHER W. BAUMAN[1] & LINDA J. SKITKA[2]

[1]*Department of Management and Organization, School of Business, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington and* [2]*Department of Psychology, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA*

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

Abstract

Procedural voice is a widely used and effective means to reduce or eliminate conflict. Moral disagreements, however, are particularly inflammatory, divisive, and difficult to manage. The current article reports two studies that demonstrated the unique challenge that moral disagreements pose. Specifically, the studies tested the extent to which procedural voice affected justice judgements, group climate, and decision acceptance when people perceived decisions to have moral implications. Results indicated that when people's outcome preferences represent strong moral convictions, outcomes were the primary determinant of perceived fairness and related judgements, irrespective of whether people had voice in the decision-making process.

Keywords: *Moral conviction, moral mandates, procedural justice, voice*

Procedural justice research provides decision-makers with a set of effective strategies to avert or alleviate problems caused by disagreement about decision outcomes (Deutsch, 2000; Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). People are more likely to perceive situations to be fair, accept decisions, and remain engaged in decision-relevant groups when decision-making procedures are fair rather than unfair (''the fair process effect'') (Folger, Rosenfeld, Grove, & Corkran, 1979). Of the many aspects of procedures that can generate the fair process effect, procedural voice (i.e., opportunities to express opinions and participate in decision-making processes) (Folger, 1977) is both highly effective and widely studied (van den Bos, 1999). Voice effects are remarkably robust, emerging in the majority of studies that have attempted to document them (Lind & Tyler, 1988). That said, the effectiveness of voice to resolve moral disagreements has not been examined.

Moral conviction fuels conflict and is at the core of many of the most contentious issues in the world today and throughout history (e.g., Guttman & Thompson, 1996; Mooney, 2001). The persistence of moral conflict over moralised social issues such as abortion in the United States represents a phenomenon that is difficult to explain when viewed through the lens of theories of procedural justice because these disputes have raged within the context of a procedurally fair political system that applies rules equally to everyone and includes multiple occasions for people to voice their opinion and participate in the decision-making process. Nevertheless, people's reactions to decisions they perceive to have moral implications appear to be untempered by procedural fairness and are driven instead by their moralised outcome preferences. How people react when they have a moral stake in a decision outcome therefore appears to be inconsistent with predictions of prominent theories of procedural justice that assert that fair decision-making procedures – especially those that provide voice – should reduce conflict and increase people's willingness to accept non-preferred outcomes.

The goal of the present research was to examine whether moral controversies are inherently more difficult to resolve than non-moral controversies.

Correspondence: Dr C. W. Bauman, Department of Management and Organization, School of Business, University of Washington, Mackenzie Hall, Box 353200 Seattle, WA 98195-3200, USA. E-mail: cwbauman@u.washington.edu

ISSN 0004-9530 print/ISSN 1742-9536 online © The Australian Psychological Society Ltd
Published by Taylor & Francis
DOI: 10.1080/00049530802607647

Two studies tested whether voice would foster acceptance of non-preferred conclusions to moral disagreements or whether moral conviction about issues would attenuate voice effects on justice judgements and related perceptions.

Moral conviction

Moral convictions are subjective beliefs that something is fundamentally right or wrong. They comprise concerns about human welfare, justice, and rights (Turiel, 1983), as well as encompassing notions of duty, purity, and potentially other sources as well (e.g., Haidt & Graham, 2007; Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, 1997). Moral convictions centre mainly on standards for interpersonal behaviour, but they also may extend beyond humans and include concerns about animals and the environment (Clayton & Opotow, 1994). Although these criteria identify what can induce moral conviction, people do not experience moral conviction about everything that fits theoretical definitions of morality. Instead, people experience moral conviction about only a select subset of all potential triggers (Bauman & Skitka, 2009; Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005; cf. Bandura, 1999). Therefore, it is important to assess whether individuals experience moral conviction in a given situation rather than make blanket assumptions based on aspects of the situation. In short, moral conviction is a psychological rather than a situational variable.

Philosophers argue that moral convictions are *sui generis*, that is, unique, special, and in a class of their own (e.g., Boyd, 1988). Consistent with this proposition, more than 25 years of domain theory research demonstrates that people act and reason differently across moral and non-moral contexts (Nucci, 2001). Therefore, it seems reasonable to question whether decision-making procedures, such as voice, which often help avert or resolve conflict in non-moral situations, similarly influence perceptions of fairness about decisions that pertain to moral issues.

Several psychological characteristics of moral conviction may affect the way that people perceive and respond to decisions made in moral contexts. Skitka et al. (2005) argued that moral disagreement should be particularly contentious because people (a) believe that their view is the only legitimate position, (b) are compelled and feel justified to take a stand in the face of opposition, and (c) experience strong emotions related to moral issues. Moreover, at least two aspects of moral motivation also are likely to complicate efforts to resolve disagreements over moral issues. First, moral motivation is autonomous rather than heteronomous (e.g., Kohlberg, 1984; Piaget, 1997); that is, people have a personal stake in moral issues that is independent from the views of authorities or society. Failing to abide by and defend one's moral beliefs has negative consequences for the self (Blasi, 1984, 1993). Second, people seem to be less flexible in the way they deal with threats to their moral self compared to how they cope with other negative self-relevant information. Non-moral self-affirmations, such as focusing on academic or athletic prowess, cannot fully recompense moral failures (Power & Khmelkov, 1998). Somewhat similarly, people abhor and reject proposed trade-offs that would cause them to compromise their moral beliefs in exchange for non-moral incentives (Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Lerner, & Green, 2000). In short, moral motivation is incommensurate with other concerns. Although people may be willing to sacrifice their material or social self-interest if authorities act in ways that communicate status and belonging, they may not be willing to similarly sacrifice their moral beliefs. In sum, the inherent connection between morality and the self in conjunction with the non-fungibility of the moral domain makes moral compromise difficult and unlikely, even in the face of attractive non-moral incentives.

Procedural justice and morality

For many years, theories of procedural fairness have dominated the justice literature (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Lind & Tyler, 1988). These theories emphasise that the means used to determine outcomes strongly influence perceived fairness, often overwhelming people's outcome preferences (i.e., people's opinions about potential courses of action). In empirical studies, voice is the most commonly used and most widely accepted procedural manipulation (van den Bos, 1999). Voice effects are robust because voice can address multiple motives that underlie justice judgements. Voice can appease instrumental motives because people expect voice to provide them with partial decision control (i.e., the ability to influence outcomes) (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Voice also can satisfy interpersonal motives because people interpret voice as a sign that they are respected and valued by decision-makers and the groups they represent (e.g., Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, Rasinski, & Spodick, 1985). As a result, voice can affect perceived fairness even when voice cannot affect the decision outcome. For example, voice can enhance perceptions of fairness even when the opportunity for voice comes after a decision has already been made (Lind, Kanfer, & Earley, 1990).

Although procedural justice research has contributed greatly to our understanding of how instrumental and interpersonal motives affect perceived fairness, the field largely has ignored associations between fairness and morality. The relative absence

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

of morality in the justice literature is surprising given that links between morality and justice judgements are central components of prominent theories of moral development (e.g., Kohlberg, 1984; Turiel, 1983). Dominant models of justice ''essentially ignore *principled moral obligations* and instead substitute *personal desires* as reasons for acting fairly or responding negatively to injustice'' (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2003, p. 1019; italics in original). Several theorists, however, have recently addressed this issue and have argued that justice can be morally or deontically driven, rather than always being a means to satisfy material or social self-interest (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001; Folger, 2001; Skitka, 2003; Skitka, Bauman, & Mullen, 2008; cf., Lerner, 2003).

Empirical research on morality and justice suggests that moral mandates (i.e., outcome preferences held with strong moral conviction) change the way people judge fairness. Specifically, moral mandates attenuate the effect of procedures on justice judgements (e.g., Mullen & Skitka, 2006; Skitka & Houston, 2001). When people perceive outcomes to be relevant to their moral beliefs, they base their fairness judgements on whether outcomes are consistent or inconsistent with their outcome preferences and consider procedural information to a much lesser degree, if at all. But research has not tested the effect of moral mandates on justice judgements when people are involved personally in the decision-making process and have voice, conditions under which procedures should be especially likely to influence fairness judgements.

The current article reports two studies that tested hypotheses derived from procedural justice and moral mandate research: The voice hypothesis predicted that the effect of outcome preferences on perceived fairness and related phenomena should decrease when people have voice compared to when they do not; the moral mandate hypothesis predicted that the pattern predicted by the voice hypothesis should hold when people do not perceive their outcome preferences to reflect their moral convictions, but that voice should not moderate the effect of outcome preferences on fairness and related evaluations when outcome preferences represent moral convictions. That is, when people hold decision-relevant moral convictions, their perceptions should depend primarily on whether an outcome is consistent or inconsistent with their outcome preference, rather than whether they have voice.

Study 1

Study 1 involved a situation in which people had moral mandates relevant to a decision outcome and were directly involved in and affected by the decision-making process. In a laboratory experiment, participants were led to believe that they were working as part of a group on a series of tasks. At the end of the session, participants were told that their group earned a performance bonus. The allocation decision about the bonus included a voice manipulation and served as the focus of the study.

Method

Participants. Participants were 97 students who reported having an opinion about abortion on a pretest measure. Participation partially fulfilled a class requirement.

Design. The experiment included one manipulated variable (Voice: voice, no voice) and one measured variable (Moral Mandate: consistent or inconsistent with the outcome).

Procedure. At least 24 hr before the experiment sessions, participants reported their attitude position and moral conviction about abortion as part of a larger survey. At the laboratory, participants were told that the study would examine how people work in online groups. In reality, no groups existed. Participants completed the study alone via computer, but were led to believe that they were working on a series of tasks with others at various locations across the university. Participants were told that groups that performed above average would earn a USD$30 bonus that could be donated to a charity of the group's choice. At the end of the final work period, all participants read that their group had won the performance bonus. The computer then ''randomly'' selected a group member other than the participant to choose which charity would receive the bonus money. The voice manipulation followed (details are provided below). Finally, all participants read that the allocator chose to donate the bonus to the ''Pro-Life Action League'' and read a message that said, ''i [*sic*] chose this group b/c they organise protests against abortion''. A questionnaire that contained manipulation checks, dependent variables, and probes for suspicion followed.

Voice manipulation. Before learning the outcome of the allocation decision, participants in the voice condition read:

> *CwB will make the final decision about which charity will receive the bonus money. However, this is your opportunity to voice your opinion about what charity you think should receive the money. Please provide a name of an organisation or a very brief description of a cause or purpose you would like to support. The system will deliver your message to CwB. Remember, you may choose any non-profit organisation.*

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

Participants in the voice condition responded in a text box that appeared on the same screen. Participants in the no voice condition read nothing about an opportunity for voice.

Measures.

Manipulation check. Participants were asked, ''To what extent were you given the opportunity to voice your opinion about which organisation should receive the bonus money?'' Participants responded on a 5-point scale scored 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*).

Moral mandate. A pretest questionnaire assessed outcome preference, asking participants, ''To what extent do you support or oppose allowing abortion to remain a legal option in the U.S.?'' Participants responded on a 7-point scale scored +3 (*strongly support*) to –3 (*strongly oppose*). Participants who reported not having an outcome preference (i.e., responded using the midpoint) were not recruited for the laboratory portion of the study.

The questionnaire also assessed moral conviction, asking participants the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, ''My attitude about abortion is closely related to my core moral values and convictions.'' Participants responded on a 5-point scale scored 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Nearly all participants reported having a moral mandate (i.e., an outcome preference held with strong moral conviction) about abortion; that is, there was a severe restriction of range on the moral conviction measure. For example, only two participants who opposed abortion responded below the midpoint.

Given that almost all participants reported high levels of moral conviction and that the outcome preference was not truly a continuous variable because potential participants without an opinion about abortion did not attend the experiment session, we grouped participants into two categories that were approximately equal in size based on their responses on the outcome preference item. One category represented participants who had a pro-choice moral mandate; they reported having strong moral conviction about abortion and their position was inconsistent with the pro-life mission of the charity chosen to receive the bonus money. A second category represented participants with a pro-life moral mandate; they reported having strong moral conviction about abortion and their position was consistent with the charity's mission. In short, moral mandates represented outcome preferences held with strong moral conviction.

Procedural fairness. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with four statements: (a) ''The decision about the bonus money was handled in a fair way'', (b) ''The person who allocated the bonus money was fair to all team members'', (c) ''I would trust the person who allocated the bonus money to make other similar decisions in the future'', and (d) ''The person who allocated the bonus money cared about team members' satisfaction with the decision''. Participants responded using 7-point scales scored +3 (*strongly agree*) to –3 (*strongly disagree*). Scores were averaged for analyses ($\alpha = .84$).

Group enjoyment. To assess the social consequences of the decision, participants were asked, ''How enjoyable or unenjoyable was working in your group?'' Participants responded on a 7-point scale scored +3 (*very enjoyable*) to –3 (*very unenjoyable*).

Results

Manipulation check. A 2 (Voice: voice, no voice) × 2 (Moral Mandate: outcome consistent, inconsistent) between-subjects ANOVA with perceived voice as the dependent variable indicated a main effect of voice condition, $F(1,93) = 82.96$, $p < .001$, $\eta = .47$. Perceived voice was higher for participants in the voice ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 1.23$) than no voice condition ($M = 1.29$, $SD = 0.80$). Therefore, the manipulation operated as intended. No other effects were significant.

Procedural fairness. A 2 (Voice: voice, no voice) × 2 (Moral Mandate: decision consistent, inconsistent) between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with procedural fairness as the dependent variable (Figure 1). In further support of the effectiveness of the voice manipulation, results indicated a significant main effect of voice, $F(1,93) = 10.64$, $p < .01$, $\eta = .10$. Participants perceived the procedures to be

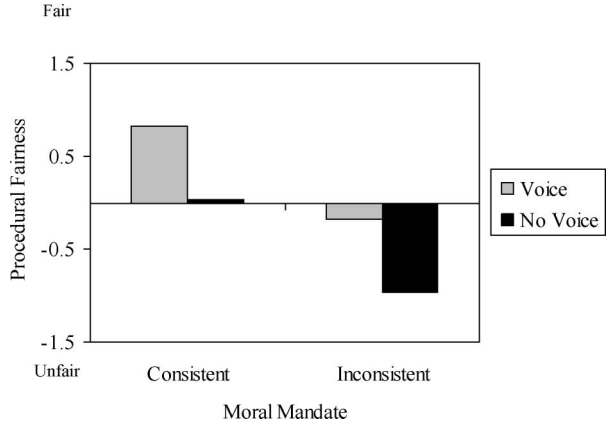

Figure 1. Perceived procedural fairness as a function of voice and moral mandate in Study 1

fairer in the voice than no voice condition. Results, however, also indicated a significant main effect of moral mandates, $F(1,93) = 16.70$, $p < .01$, $\eta = .15$. Procedural fairness was higher for participants with a decision-consistent than -inconsistent moral mandate. The interaction of moral mandate and voice was not significant, $F(1,93) = 0.00$, ns, $\eta = .00$. In sum, voice affected perceived procedural fairness, but it did not qualify the effects of moral mandates. Perceived procedural fairness was higher when procedures generated moral rather than immoral outcomes, regardless of whether participants had voice.

Group enjoyment. A 2 (Voice: voice, no voice) × 2 (Moral Mandate: decision consistent, inconsistent) between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with group enjoyment as the dependent variable. Results were consistent with the moral mandate hypothesis and not the voice hypothesis. The effect of voice condition on group enjoyment was not significant, $F(1,93) = 0.89$, ns, $\eta = .01$. Group enjoyment was equal across the voice ($M = 0.64$, $SD = 1.63$) and no voice conditions ($M = 1.03$, $SD = 1.54$). In contrast, moral mandate affected group enjoyment, $F(1,93) = 4.22$, $p < .05$, $\eta = .04$. Group enjoyment was higher for participants with a decision-consistent ($M = 1.37$, $SD = 1.61$) than -inconsistent moral mandate ($M = 0.60$, $SD = 1.51$). The interaction of moral mandates and voice was not significant, $F(1,93) = 0.06$, ns, $\eta = .00$. In sum, whether group decisions were in line with moral mandates affected whether people enjoyed being in the group, but voice did not.

Discussion

Study 1 suggested that procedural voice did not influence the extent to which people enjoyed working in groups when their moral mandates were at stake; moral mandates were the sole predictor of group enjoyment. People enjoyed group membership more if their moral mandate was consistent rather than inconsistent with the decision about what charity would receive the bonus money. Voice affected perceived procedural fairness, providing strong evidence that our manipulation was successful, but it did not directly affect group enjoyment or attenuate the negative social consequences of perceived moral transgressions. Therefore, Study 1 extended previous moral mandate research by demonstrating that moral mandates affected perceptions of groups when people were engaged directly in situations and had voice.

Although the results of Study 1 were more consistent with the moral mandate than voice hypothesis, there are reasons to be cautious when interpreting the data. In particular, the sample did not include enough variability on the moral conviction measure to permit comparisons between people with low versus high moral conviction about abortion. Therefore, we could not differentiate between moral mandates and non-moral outcome preferences (i.e., attitudes held with versus without moral conviction), and we do not know how people with non-moral outcome preferences about abortion would have reacted to the voice manipulation. We do know, however, that voice effects are extremely robust, appearing in the vast majority of studies that test for them (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Moreover, voice in Study 1 came before the decision was made, so voice had the potential to appease both instrumental and relational motives. Furthermore, two different tests corroborated the success of the voice manipulation. Taken together, it seems that failing to observe a voice effect on group enjoyment was much less likely than finding one. Although the discussion of the results includes an interpretation of a null effect (see Greenwald, 1975 for a discussion of when this may be defensible), the data nonetheless are consistent with the moral mandate hypothesis and inconsistent with the voice hypothesis.

We conducted Study 2 to attempt to replicate the results of Study 1 and explicitly demonstrate differences between moral mandates and non-moral outcome preferences using a different method and sample. We also manipulated the decision outcome to unconfound it with attitude position (i.e., pro-life, pro-choice), although none of our previous research has ever detected an effect as a function of attitude position (Bauman & Skitka, 2009).

Study 2

Study 2 was an experiment embedded in a survey of a national representative sample. It assessed participants' outcome preferences and moral conviction about abortion, and then asked participants to consider the possibility that a US Supreme Court decision either ratified legal abortion or made abortion illegal. Participants were randomly assigned to decision-consistent or -inconsistent conditions based on their stated abortion policy preferences. Voice was manipulated by providing half of the participants with multiple opportunities to share their views on abortion and telling them that their survey responses would be shared with government authorities. The other half did not have opportunities to share their views and were not told that their responses would be shared with officials. In short, the study tested the effects of outcome preference, moral conviction, and voice on perceived fairness and decision acceptance.

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

Method

Participants. A random sample of 540 adults was drawn from a nationally representative panel of adults maintained by Knowledge Networks (http://www.knowledgenetworks.com/ganp/). Of those contacted, 394 responded within a 15-day fielding period (73% response rate). Of those, 312 had an opinion about abortion and were included in the study.

Design. The experiment was a 2 (Voice: low, high) × 2 (Outcome: consistent or inconsistent with the participant's abortion outcome preference) × 2 (Moral Conviction: low, high) between-subjects design.

Procedure. All participants reported their attitudes and moral conviction about abortion when they first accessed the survey. Next, participants in the high voice (but not the low voice) condition read, ''The anonymous comments and responses you provide on this survey will be sent to your congressional and senatorial representatives, to the U.S. Supreme Court justices, as well as to the President, to ensure that you have some voice in how these decisions are made.'' Participants in the high voice (but not the low voice) condition then were asked, ''Do you have any other comments about abortion policy that you would like to share with legislators?'' and given an opportunity to respond.

After the voice manipulation, participants considered one of two outcomes. Half of the pro-choice participants were asked to imagine that the Supreme Court overturned Roe *v. Wade*, making abortion illegal in the US (the decision-inconsistent condition). The other half of the pro-choice participants were asked to imagine that the Supreme Court reaffirmed its support for Roe v. Wade, keeping abortion legal and solidifying its legal foundation (the decision-consistent condition). Similarly, the pro-life participants were randomly split in half and received decision-consistent and -inconsistent information.

Measures.

Manipulation checks. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements using 7-point scales that ranged from –3 (*strongly disagree*) to +3 (*strongly agree*): (a) ''I personally feel I have the opportunity to voice my opinion and share my views with policy makers about how issues of the day, like the ones being asked in this survey, should be resolved'', (b) ''American citizens as a whole have the opportunity to voice their opinions and share their views with policy makers about how issues of the day, like the ones being asked about in this survey, should be resolved'', and (c) ''Completing this survey provides me with an opportunity to share my views on the issue of abortion with policy makers''. Scores were averaged for analyses ($\alpha = .78$).

Outcome preference. Participants were asked, ''To what extent do you support or oppose allowing abortion to remain a legal option in the U.S.?'' Participants responded on a 7-point scale that ranged from +3 (*strongly support*) to –3 (*strongly oppose*). Those who responded above the midpoint (i.e., supported legal abortion) were classified as pro-choice, and participants who responded below the midpoint (i.e., opposed legal abortion) were classified as pro-life. After classification, participants were randomly assigned to an outcome condition.

Moral conviction. Participants were asked, ''To what extent is your position on abortion a reflection of your core moral values and convictions?'' Participants responded on a 5-point scale that ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Participants who scored 4 or 5 were classified as high moral conviction (53% of the sample), and those who scored ≤ 3 were classified as low moral conviction. (For brevity, we report results of analyses that treated the moral mandates as a categorical variable, but regression analyses generate the same pattern of results.)

Dependent measures. To assess perceived procedural fairness, participants were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement: ''The procedures that the U.S. Supreme Court uses to make policy decisions are fair.'' To assess decision acceptance, participants were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement: ''I could accept the Supreme Court decision to [make abortion illegal/keep abortion legal] as the final word on the issue.'' Participants responded on 7-point scales that ranged from +3 (*strongly agree*) to –3 (*strongly disagree*).

Results

Manipulation checks. Results confirmed that the voice manipulation had the intended effect, $F(1,309) = 8.22$, $p < .01$, $\eta = .03$. Participants in the high voice condition perceived that they had more voice in policy decisions ($M = 1.81$, $SD = 1.00$) than did those in the low voice condition ($M = 1.45$, $SD = 1.11$). No other effects were significant.

Procedural fairness. A 2 (Moral Conviction: high, low) × 2 (Voice: high, low) × 2 (Outcome: consistent or inconsistent with perceivers' abortion outcome preference) between-subjects ANOVA with procedural fairness as the dependent measure provided further support that the voice manipulation

was successful. The main effect of voice was significant, $F(1,309) = 10.95$, $p < .01$, $\eta = .03$. Perceived procedural fairness was higher for participants in the high ($M = 0.37$, $SD = 1.58$) than low ($M = -0.06$, $SD = 1.54$) voice condition.

A Voice × Moral Conviction interaction qualified the voice effect, $F(1,309) = 5.45$, $p < .05$, $\eta = .02$. As seen in Figure 2, analyses of the simple effects of voice at each level of moral conviction indicated that low moral conviction participants perceived higher procedural fairness if they were in the voice rather than the no voice condition, $F(1,309) = 14.00$, $p < .01$, $\eta = .10$. Voice, however, did not affect perceived procedural fairness of high moral conviction participants, $F(1,310) = 0.61$, *ns*, $\eta = .00$. In sum, voice increased perceptions of procedural fairness of the Supreme Court, but only for people with low moral conviction. No other effects were significant.

Decision acceptance. We conducted a 2 (Moral Conviction: high, low) × 2 (Voice: high, low) × 2 (Outcome: supported or opposed perceivers' position on abortion) between-subjects ANOVA with decision acceptance as the dependent measure. Results were more consistent with the moral mandate than voice hypothesis. A main effect existed for outcome, $F(1,309) = 204.71$, $p < .01$, $\eta = .40$. Participants were more willing to accept a Supreme Court decision as the final word on the issue of abortion when it was consistent ($M = 1.62$, $SD = 1.64$) rather than inconsistent ($M = -1.28$, $SD = 1.84$) with their outcome preference. An Outcome × Moral Conviction interaction, however, qualified this main effect, $F(1,309) = 4.46$, $p < .05$, $\eta = .01$. As seen in Figure 3, the difference between accepting a positive and rejecting a negative outcome was greater when people had high, $F(1,309) = 160.88$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .47$, compared to low moral conviction, $F(1,309) = 61.44$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .33$. No other effects were significant. In summary, moral conviction amplified the effect of outcome preference on decision acceptance. Voice did not affect decision acceptance.

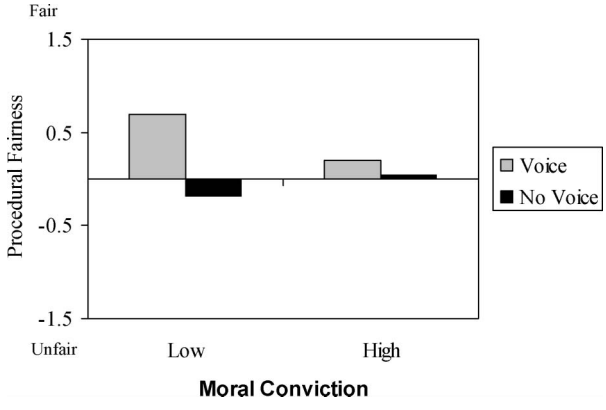

Figure 2. Perceived procedural fairness as a function of voice and moral conviction in Study 2

Discussion

Telling people that their survey responses would be shared with policy makers and providing them with an opportunity to express their views increased people's perceptions that they had voice in policy decisions. Moreover, these instantiations of voice enhanced overall perceptions of the procedural fairness of the Supreme Court. Despite multiple indications that we successfully manipulated voice, results supported the notion that moral convictions about outcomes alter the way people judge fairness and perceive outcomes. Voice enhanced perceived procedural fairness for people with low moral conviction, but it had no effect on people with high moral conviction about the outcome. More importantly, outcome preferences, and especially

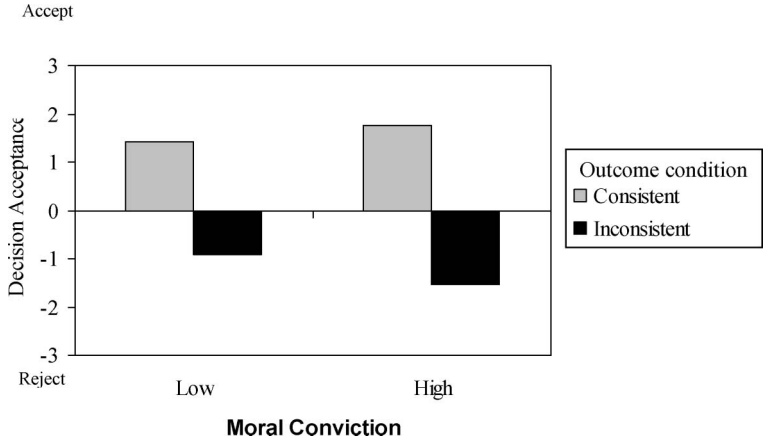

Figure 3. Decision acceptance as a function of outcome and moral conviction in Study 2

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

those associated with moral convictions, determined whether people were willing to accept the Supreme Court decision as the final word on the issue, whereas voice did not affect decision acceptance.

Although the moral mandate hypothesis predicted that outcomes rather than procedures would drive decision acceptance for people with high moral conviction, it is somewhat puzzling that voice did not affect decision acceptance for those with low moral conviction. One possible explanation for this is that people may respond differently to normatively moral issues (i.e., issues that people expect most people to view in a moral light) than to normatively non-moral issues (i.e., issues that people expect few people to view in a moral light), even when they personally do not perceive an issue to have moral implications. People may tend to shy away from conflict over issues that are not morally important to them but are likely to push others' moral buttons. To date, research has focused on the effects of perceivers' own moral conviction about issues on their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviour (Skitka et al., 2008). But people may also think and act differently when they expect others to be morally motivated. Future research must explore this possibility.

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

General discussion

Moral mandates affected first-person justice judgements and related phenomena even in situations when people should have been especially likely to have based their judgements on procedural information. These results were consistent with and extended previous research that suggest that morality represents a boundary condition of the fair process effect (e.g., Mullen & Skitka, 2006; Skitka & Houston, 2001). Procedural fairness can avert or alleviate conflict because people expect to benefit over the long run when they infer from procedures that they have positive social standing or will receive their just deserts (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). But moral mandates appear to make immediate outcomes sufficiently important to perceivers that they deemphasise the benefits that fair procedures promise. This interpretation is consistent with other evidence that suggests that people prefer not to associate with others who do not share their moral beliefs (Haidt, Rosenberg, & Hom, 2003; Skitka et al., 2005). If people prefer distance between themselves and morally dissimilar others, then they should not care about their long-term prospects in groups that make immoral decisions.

The current research contributes to a growing body of literature that suggests that morality is an important but understudied factor in justice judgements (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 2003; Folger, 2001; Skitka et al., 2008). When aspects of situations activate a concern for morality, people change the way they approach questions of justice. Too often, theories of justice have focused on the impact of a single motive and assumed that it consistently would play a major role in how people decide whether something is fair or unfair across both persons and situations. The current studies highlight the need for theories to specify contingencies that integrate multiple motives and make predictions about when people are likely to base their fairness judgements on specific classes of information that correspond to active underlying concerns. In short, the process by which people judge fairness appears to change as a function of the motives that aspects of situations activate (Skitka, 2003).

Implications for conflict resolution

Although the studies presented here focused primarily on how morality can affect justice judgements, the results also provided a potentially novel insight into how to induce voice effects. To the best of our knowledge, all previous research on voice has compared perceptions of people with voice to those without voice. Study 2, however, suggested that simply reminding people that the system provided them with an opportunity for voice may be sufficient to produce voice effects. Given that voice is a common component of decision-making procedures in a wide variety of settings, making salient opportunities for voice could be a successful strategy for managers, legislators, or other decision-makers who want to persuade people that an outcome was fair. Except in few select situations (e.g., Peterson, 1999; van den Bos & Spruijt, 2002), people should perceive situations to be fairer when reminded of their opportunity for voice compared to when the opportunity for voice is not made salient, provided that people do not perceive the decisions to have moral implications.

In moral situations, however, conflict appears more difficult to manage. Some theories suggest that framing concessions on moral issues as trade-offs between two competing moral concerns may facilitate tolerance, if not agreement (Fiske & Tetlock, 1997; Tetlock et al., 2000). The idea behind this approach is that people abhor the idea of ''selling out'', or exchanging symbols of their moral beliefs for material or social rewards. Nevertheless, people recognise real-world constraints on their beliefs, and they are more willing to make trade-offs when a concession on one moral issue can be cast in terms of the progress it provides toward a different moral end. This basic premise has great promise, but future research will need to determine how to enact this strategy in specific situations.

In conclusion, moral disagreements appear to be inherently more difficult to manage than non-moral disagreements. Standard conflict resolution techniques, such as voice, appear to be less effective when people perceive that moral outcomes are at stake. Given the longevity of existing moral controversies and the likelihood that globalisation will increase the frequency that people with conflicting worldviews will meet and be forced to deal with their differences, there is a clear need to develop new techniques that can be used to resolve moral conflict.

Acknowledgements

Preparation of this article was facilitated by the Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS), and grants to the second author from the National Science Foundation (NSF 05-30380, 05-18084).

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009

References

Bandura, A. (1999). Moral disengagement in the perpetration of inhumanities. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *3*, 193–209.

Bauman, C. W., & Skitka, L. J. (2009). In the mind of the perceiver: Psychological implications of moral conviction. In B. H. Ross (Series Ed.) & D. M. Bartels, C. W. Bauman, L. J. Skitka, & D. L. Medin (Vol. Eds.), *Psychology of learning and motivation, Vol. 50. Moral judgment and decision making.* San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Blasi, A. (1984). Moral identity: Its role in moral functioning. In J. Gewirtz, & W. Kurtines (Eds.), *Morality, moral behavior, and moral development.* (pp 128–139). New York: Wiley.

Blasi, A. (1993). The development of identity: Some implications for moral functioning. In G. Noam, & T. Wren (Eds.), *The moral self* (pp. 99–122). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Boyd, R. (1988). How to be a moral realist. In G. Sayre-McCord (Ed.), *Essays in moral realism* (pp. 181–228). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Clayton, S., & Opotow, S. (1994). Green justice: Conceptions of fairness and the natural world. *Journal of Social Issues*, *50*, 1–11.

Cropanzano, R., Byrne, Z. S., Bobocel, R., & Rupp, D. E. (2001). Moral virtues, fairness heuristics, social entities, and other denizens of organizational justice. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *58*, 164–209.

Cropanzano, R., Goldman, B., & Folger, R. (2003). Deontic justice: The role of moral principles in workplace fairness. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *24*, 1019–1024.

Deutsch, M. (2000). Justice and conflict. In M. Deutsch, & P.T. Coleman (Eds.), *The handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice* (pp. 41–64). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fiske, A. P., & Tetlock, P. E. (1997). Taboo trade-offs: Reactions to transactions that transgress the spheres of justice. *Political Psychology*, *18*, 255–297.

Folger, R. (1977). Distributive and procedural justice: Combined impact of "voice" and improvement on experienced inequity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *35*, 108–119.

Folger, R. (2001). Fairness as deonance. In S. W. Gilliland, D. D. Steiner, & D. P. Skarlicki (Eds.), *Research in social issues in management* (pp. 3–31). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Folger, R., & Cropanzano, R. (1998). *Organizational justice and human resource management.* London: Sage.

Folger, R., Rosenfeld, D., Grove, J., & Corkran, L. (1979). Effects of "voice" and peer opinions on responses to inequity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *37*, 2253–2261.

Greenwald, A. G. (1975). Consequences of prejudice against the null hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin*, *82*, 1–20.

Guttmann, A., & Thompson, D. (1996). *Democracy and disagreement.* Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.

Haidt, J., & Graham, J. (2007). When morality opposes justice: Emotions and intuitions related to ingroups, hierarchy, and purity. *Social Justice Research*, *20*, 98–116.

Haidt, J., Rosenberg, E., & Hom, H. (2003). Differentiating diversities: Moral diversity is not like other kinds. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *33*, 1–36.

Kohlberg, L. (1984). *Essays on moral development: Vol. 2. The psychology of moral development.* New York: Harper.

Lerner, M. J. (2003). The justice motive: Where social psychologists found it, how they lost it, and why they may not find it again. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *7*, 388–399.

Lind, E. A., Kanfer, R., & Earley, E. P. (1990). Voice, control, and procedural justice: Instrumental and non-instrumental concerns in fairness judgments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 59*, 952–959.

Lind, E. A., & Tyler, T. R. (1988). *The social psychology of procedural justice.* New York: Plenum.

Mooney, C. Z. (2001). The public clash of private values: The politics of morality policy. In C. Z. Mooney (Ed.), *The public clash of private values: The politics of morality policy* (pp. 3–20). New York, NY: Seven Bridges Press.

Mullen, E., & Skitka, L. J. (2006). Exploring the psychological underpinnings of the moral mandate effect: Motivated reasoning, identification, or affect? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90*, 629–643.

Nucci, L. P. (2001). *Education in the moral domain.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Peterson, R. (1999). Can you have too much of a good thing? The limits of voice for improving satisfaction with leaders. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 25*, 313–324.

Piaget, J. (1997). *The moral judgment of the child.* New York: Free Press.

Power, C. F., & Khmelkov, V. T. (1998). Character development and self-esteem: Psychological foundations and educational implications. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *27*, 539–551.

Shweder, R. A., Much, N. C., Mahapatra, M., & Park, L. (1997). The "big three" of morality (autonomy, community, and divinity), and the "big three" explanations of suffering. In A. Brandt & P. Rozin (Eds.), *Morality and health* (pp. 119–169). New York: Routledge.

Skitka, L. J. (2003). Of different minds: An accessible identity approach to why and how people think about justice. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 7*, 286–297.

Skitka, L. J., Bauman, C. W., & Mullen, E. (2008). Morality and justice: An expanded theoretical perspective and empirical review. In E. J. Lawler (Series Ed.), & K. A. Hegtvedt, & J. Clay-Warner (Vol. Eds.). *Advances in group processes: Vol. 25. Justice* (pp. 1–27). Oxford: Emerald.

Skitka, L. J., Bauman, C. W., & Sargis, E. (2005). Moral conviction: Another contributor to attitude strength or something more? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *88*, 895–917.

Skitka, L. J., & Houston, D. (2001). When due process is of no consequence: Moral mandates and presumed defendant guilt or innocence. *Social Justice Research*, *14*, 305–326.

Tetlock, P. E., Kristel, O. V., Elson, B., Lerner, J. S., & Green, M. C. (2000). The psychology of the unthinkable: Taboo trade-offs, forbidden base rates, and heretical counterfactuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *78*, 853–870.

Thibaut, J., & Walker, L. (1975). *Procedural justice: A psychological analysis.* Mahway, NJ: Erlbaum.

Turiel, E. (1983). *The development of social knowledge: Morality and convention.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tyler, T. R., Rasinski, K., & Spodick, N. (1985). The influence of voice on satisfaction with leaders: Exploring the meaning of process control. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *48*, 72–81.

van den Bos, K. (1999). What are we talking about when we talk about no-voice procedures? On the psychology of the fair outcome effect. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *35*, 560–577.

van den Bos, K., & Spruijt, N. (2002). Appropriateness of decisions as a moderator of the psychology of voice. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *32*, 57–72.

Downloaded By: [Bauman, Christopher W.] At: 04:44 26 February 2009