Affect, Culture, and Morality, or Is It Wrong to Eat Your Dog?

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Are disgusting or disrespectful actions judged to be moral violations, even when they are harmless? Stories about victimless yet offensive actions (such as cleaning one's toilet with a flag) were presented to Brazilian and U.S. adults and children of high and low socioeconomic status ($N = 360$). Results show that college students at elite universities judged these stories to be matters of social convention or of personal preference. Most other Ss, especially in Brazil, took a moralizing stance toward these actions. For these latter Ss, moral judgments were better predicted by affective reactions than by appraisals of harmfulness. Results support the claims of cultural psychology (R. A. Shweder, 1991a) and suggest that cultural norms and culturally shaped emotions have a substantial impact on the domain of morality and the process of moral judgment. Suggestions are made for building cross-culturally valid models of moral judgment.

What sorts of issues do people treat as moral issues? Harm, broadly construed to include psychological harm, injustice, and violations of rights, may be important in the morality of all cultures. But is a harm-based morality sufficient to describe the moral domain for all cultures, or do some cultures have a non-harm-based morality, in which actions with no harmful consequences may be moral violations? This question is being debated in the literature on moral judgment. Researchers in the cognitive–developmental tradition (e.g., Turiel, Killen, & Helwig, 1987) have argued that particular rules may vary from culture to culture, but that in all cultures moral issues involve questions of harm, rights, or justice. An opposing view has been taken by cultural psychologists (Miller, Bersoff, & Har-

wood, 1990; Shweder, 1991a; Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller, 1987; Shweder & Sullivan, 1993). They have argued that the domain of morality is culturally variable and that it extends beyond harm, rights, and justice in many cultures. The present research contributes to this debate by investigating a class of issues that has not yet been studied: harmless yet offensive violations of strong social norms. While we explore this debate, we focus attention on the comparatively neglected role of affect in moral judgment.

Western philosophers since Mill (1859/1972) have debated the moral status of harmless offenses. In a thorough modern treatment, Feinberg (1973) considered the issues of flag desecration, sexual perversion, and the mistreatment of corpses. He pointed out that these actions are harmless in the narrow sense that they violate no interests of others, beyond the interest of not being offended. Whereas most legislation in Western countries aims to prevent harm to the material or psychological interests of others, there are many instances of legislation that attempts to prevent harmless acts in private (e.g., homosexual sex between consenting adults). Feinberg called this "legal moralism," because its goal is to prevent the mere existence of "sinful" acts. He argued that legal moralism is neither legitimate nor practical in Western societies.

The harmless offenses in the present research are all private and consensual, and on Feinberg's (1973) analysis, people ought to be free to engage in them. The principal dependent measure of this study is whether subjects adopt a *moralizing* stance toward these acts or a *permissive* stance. If subjects view these acts as moral transgressions, they will endorse two beliefs that are commonly held about such prototypical moral violations as murder. First, people should not be at liberty to perform these acts; they should be stopped or punished. Second, the wrongness of these acts is universal, not contingent on local custom or convention. Philosophers (e.g., Hare, 1981; Kant, 1785/1959) as well as psychologists (e.g., Shweder, Turiel & Much, 1981; Turiel, 1983) have generally used one or both of these

principles—especially universality—as the hallmark of a moral judgment.

Cognitive–Developmental View

The question, then, is whether harmless offenses will be judged to fall within the domain of moral violations. Cognitive–developmental theory, beginning with Piaget (1932/1965) and Kohlberg (1969, 1971), has limited the domain of morality to actions that affect the material or psychological well-being of other people. Kohlberg wrote that "the overwhelming focus of moral choice and feeling is. . . personal welfare consequences" (1969, p. 393). Turiel defined the domain of morality as "prescriptive judgments of justice, rights, and welfare pertaining to how people ought to relate to each other" (1983, p. 3). Thus, moral issues are intrinsically interpersonal issues, and actions are judged by their material and psychological consequences for others.

Turiel (1983) and Nucci (1981; Nucci & Turiel, 1978) have developed a "domain" theory of moral development, in which development proceeds as children sort social events into three domains of knowledge—personal, moral, and conventional—based on the interpersonal consequences of the events. Actions whose consequences fall primarily on the actor are said to be within the personal domain, which is "outside the realm of societal regulation and moral concern" (Nucci, 1981, p. 114). In contrast, acts that have "intrinsically harmful" consequences to others, such as violence and theft, are understood even by young children to pertain to the moral domain. Intrinsic harm is said to be directly perceived, or else inferred from direct perceptions (Turiel, 1983, pp. 41–43). Children know that actions such as hitting or stealing entail intrinsically harmful material or psychological consequences to others. Because the harm is intrinsic to the act, children reason that the act is universally wrong, even in another town or country and even if adults were to say the act was permissible.

Finally, events that have interpersonal consequences that are not intrinsically harmful, yet are meaningful in the context of a specific social system, are said to fall within the domain of conventional knowledge. It is not intrinsically harmful for a boy to wear blue jeans, but in the context of a school that requires all pupils to wear a school uniform, the boy commits a violation of a local social convention. Children will say that the boy's action is wrong but not universally or unalterably wrong; that is, it would be all right in a different school with a different set of rules.

Turiel and his colleagues have shown that North Americans distinguish among "prototypical" exemplars of these three domains, on the basis of the perceived harmfulness of consequences (see Turiel, Killen, & Helwig, 1987, and Turiel, Hildebrandt, & Wainryb, 1991). This finding has been replicated in several non-Western countries (Hollos, Leis, & Turiel, 1986; Nucci, Turiel, & Encarnacion-Gawrych, 1983; Smetana & Kim, 1987) and within an Amish-Mennonite community in the United States (Nucci, 1985).

Cultural Psychology Critique

However, several recent studies have suggested that the distinctions made by North Americans are not universal and that

the domain of morality varies cross-culturally. Miller, Bersoff, and Harwood (1990) found that the decision to help friends and strangers in a variety of situations was perceived to be a matter of personal choice for North Americans, whereas in India almost all subjects perceived a moral obligation to offer help. A consistent finding in Miller's research (1991; Miller & Bersoff, 1992; Miller & Luthar, 1989) has been that Indians endorse social regulation, interference, or punishment in situations in which North Americans perceive a right to choose one's own actions.

A second challenge comes from Shweder (1990; Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, in press), who argued that there are three codes of moral thought and discourse, which cultures elaborate and rely on to different degrees. In the *ethics of autonomy*, the self is conceptualized as an individual preference structure, and the point of moral regulation is to increase choice, autonomy, and control. This code corresponds closely with Turiel's moral domain, in which moral discourse focuses on harm, rights, and justice, and it is highly elaborated in the legal systems and moral philosophies of Western secular societies. But the anthropological literature suggests to Shweder that there are two other ways in which people think and talk about morality. In the *ethics of community*, the self is conceptualized as the holder of an office or role in a larger interdependent and collective enterprise. This code requires duty, respect, obedience to authority, and actions consistent with one's gender, caste, age, or other components of social role. In the third moral code, the *ethics of divinity*, the self is conceptualized as a spiritual entity striving to avoid pollution and attain purity and sanctity. Acts that are disgusting or degrading to one's spiritual nature are condemned, even if they involve no harm to others. This moral code, with its emphasis on bodily practices, sounds strange and nonmoral to members of modern Western societies. Yet the ethics of divinity is highly elaborated in Hindu rules of purity and pollution (Fuller, 1992) and in the food, sex, and menstrual taboos of the Old Testament (cf. Leviticus 12-20). In sum, Shweder argued that the domain of morality has been restricted to the ethics of autonomy (harm, rights, and justice) in the West, but that it is often broader in other cultures.

In a large study that preceded the "three-codes" formulation, Shweder, Mahapatra, and Miller (1987) demonstrated that a broad range of social practices are treated as moral issues in the Indian town of Bhubaneswar. They elicited judgments about food, sex role, and clothing violations, as well as about matters of harm and injustice. They compared Brahmin and low-caste adults and children with a sample of North American adults and children. Their major finding was that all Indian groups treated these social practices as universal moral obligations, whereas Americans judged some of the practices to be social conventions. Shweder et al. (1987) concluded that morality and moral discourse in Bhubaneswar made little or no use of the idea of a social convention. The social order was seen as a moral order whose practices were universalizable and unalterable.

Cognitive–Developmental Response

Turiel, Killen, and Helwig (1987) have criticized Shweder et al.'s (1987) conclusions. First, Shweder et al. (1987) used stories that had different meanings in India and the United States. For

example, Americans think it is an arbitrary convention that widows in Bhubaneswar are not allowed to eat fish. Yet in Bhubaneswar, it is believed that eating fish stimulates a woman's sexual appetite. A widow who eats fish will act on her urges and offend the spirit of the deceased husband. Indians therefore perceived harm in the widow's actions, whereas Americans did not. Shweder et al. (1987) chose these examples to demonstrate that conventions about food and dress are often invested with a moral force. But to make this important point they used acts that were not comparable in their cultural meanings (see Duncker, 1939). Because members of both cultures would presumably agree that insulting one's spouse is harmful and immoral, it may still be the case that both cultures have the same domain of moral issues, centered on material and psychological harm.

A second objection is that Shweder et al. (1987) found low levels of social conventional judgment among North Americans. Yet Turiel and his colleagues (Nucci, 1985; Turiel et al., 1987) have repeatedly found high levels of conventional judgment among North Americans, suggesting that Shweder's methods may have differed in important ways from Turiel's. Shweder et al.'s (1987) failure to find any social conventional thinking in Bhubaneswar may have resulted from a floor effect: Indians may indeed engage in less social conventional thinking than North Americans, but perhaps a different set of probe questions would have revealed a higher level of conventional judgment in both cultures.

Present Research Approach

Does the domain of morality vary across cultures? If so, then it should be possible to find evidence of a broader morality, extending beyond the harm-based ethics of autonomy, outside of the North American upper-middle class. This research project was an attempt to search for non-harm-based morality in the United States and Brazil, while respecting Turiel, Killen, and Helwig's (1987) two objections to Shweder, Mahapatra, and Miller (1987).

To test the idea that affective reactions may play a role in moral judgment, we chose issues and actions on the basis of their ability to offend, or "feel wrong," even when victimless. Combining our Brazilian and North American intuitions to generate stories that would offend on both continents, it turned out that most such stories involved either disrespect or disgust. Respect is a central value in many cultures, in particular in collectivist cultures of Latin America and the Mediterranean (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988). It is an empirical question, however, whether disrespect is considered immoral because of its socially constructed harmful consequences for people (e.g., war veterans offended by flag burning), or whether disrespect is considered intrinsically immoral, even when nobody is offended.

Disgust may be another common component of morality. All human cultures have food and sexual taboos (e.g., incest, cannibalism, and bestiality), which are generally among the strongest of moral prohibitions (Douglas, 1966; Meigs, 1984). Rozin (1990) surveyed the anthropological literature on food and eating and concluded that disgust is a moral emotion in many cultures, acting as a guardian of the purity of the soul. But once

again, it is an empirical question whether disgusting acts such as incest are moralized because of their potential for harm, or whether they are considered intrinsically wrong regardless of their consequences. (See Rozin, Haidt, & McCauley, 1993, for a review of the moral aspects of disgust.)

This research project was begun in 1989, before Shweder (1990) published his account of the three codes of moral discourse. The themes of disrespect and disgust were chosen independently of Shweder's formulation, yet they fall neatly into his second and third codes: disrespect is a central violation in the ethics of community, and disgusting actions pollute the temple of the body, in violation of the ethics of divinity. In addition to addressing the debate over the cultural construction of the moral domain, the present study therefore also provides a preliminary test of the utility of Shweder's three codes as an account of cultural variation.

The basic research strategy is to present subjects with stories that are affectively loaded—disrespectful or disgusting actions that "feel" wrong—yet that are harmless. We then probe to determine who, if anyone, takes a moralizing stance toward these harmless-offensive stories by endorsing interference and by judging the actions to be universally wrong. If moral issues require interpersonal harm, then all subjects should take a permissive stance toward these stories when they perceive them to be harmless. This research strategy has not been used before. There have been studies of disrespectful actions (e.g., Pool, 1989), but these have always involved public offensiveness. As Turiel (1989) pointed out, burning a flag in public and wearing a bikini to a funeral are not purely conventional violations; they have second-order moral implications. Given the social significance of these acts, other people will be psychologically harmed, so these acts should be condemned by anyone with a harm-based morality.

Research Design and Predictions

The present study searches for non-harm-based morality in six groups that vary on two cultural variables. The first variable refers to the degree to which each of three cities has a cultural and symbolic life based on European traditions, including a democratic political structure and an industrialized economy. This variable is glossed, imperfectly, as *westernization*. Many authors have claimed that there are psychologically important differences between western industrial democracies and other societies (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis et al., 1988). For example, a substantial body of cross-cultural research has found that North Americans are more individualistic than Latin Americans (Hofstede, 1980), including Brazilians (Bontempo, Lobel, & Triandis, 1990). Among societies with some degree of westernization, there appears to be a high correlation between affluence and individualism (Hofstede, 1980). Yearly household income averages $36,000 in the United States. In Brazil, it is less than $3,000 (Encylopaedia Brittanica, 1991).

Even among affluent classes, Brazil and the United States may have differing moralities. DaMatta (1991) described the complex rituals of rank and authority in Brazilian culture and its emphasis on personal contacts and relationships. He explored the Brazilian maxim "for friends, everything; for enemies, the law," and he contrasted Brazil with the more egalitar-

ian and law-governed United States. DaMatta's analysis suggests that the ethics of autonomy should be more important in the United States than in Brazil, where rights and justice are often outweighed by personal ties and the ethics of community. Furthermore, within Brazil, the ethics of autonomy should be less important in the northeastern city of Recife, which is comparatively less westernized, than in the southern city of Porto Alegre, which is in the most westernized region.

The second cultural variable, cutting across westernization, is socioeconomic status (SES) within each city. Triandis, McCusker, and Hui (1990) noted that affluent social classes tend to be more individualistic, placing a greater value on autonomy and individual freedom than do lower social classes. Members of affluent social classes should therefore take a permissive stance toward harmless instances of disgust and disrespect, whereas members of lower social classes should be more likely to moralize these actions. It must be stressed that we are using SES as a qualitative variable to index two different communities within each city. U.S. and Brazilian cities are similar in containing great extremes of wealth and poverty. In both countries, rich and poor people may live near each other, yet interact only superficially, maintaining substantially different attitudes, beliefs, and customs.

The present study therefore involved six cultural groups: two social classes in each of three cities. Adults and children in each group were asked about a series of harmless-offensive stories and probed to determine whether they took a moralizing stance or a permissive stance. The cognitive–developmental position predicts that all cultural groups should take a permissive stance, as long they perceive the stories to be harmless. Cultural psychology, however, makes the following predictions: (1) A majority of the high-SES Philadelphia subjects will take a permissive stance, because this group has a harm-based morality. (2) There will be a main effect of city, or westernization, such that the harmless-offensive stories will be moralized most in Recife and least in Philadelphia. (3) There will be a main effect of SES, such that within each city the harmless-offensive stories will be moralized more by low-SES subjects than by high-SES subjects. (4) A majority of the low-SES Recife subjects will moralize the harmless-offensive stories, because this group is likely to have a broader, non-harm-based morality. No prediction is made about whether the effect of social class will be larger or smaller than the effect of westernization.

The cross-cultural design of this study allows an additional question to be addressed: Do all groups differentiate equally between "prototypical" moral and conventional stories? Cognitive–developmental researchers have shown that children in several nonwestern countries distinguish prototypical moral violations (involving harm) from prototypical conventional violations (e.g., of dress codes), but they have not yet made a direct comparison between North American and other children within a single study. A cultural psychology perspective leads to this hypothesis: (5) The domain distinction between prototypical moral and conventional events should be large among Philadelphia high-SES subjects, but it should be smaller in low-SES and less westernized groups.

Some researchers have found developmental trends in moral judgment, especially in the verbal justifications of judgments (Damon, 1975; Kohlberg, 1969). Yet Turiel (1983) and Shweder

et al. (1987) both found that the criterion judgments of 10-year-old children are similar to those of adults within their own culture. For this reason, no age effects were predicted. No gender differences were predicted either, because of the lack of such findings in empirical research (Brabeck, 1983; Ernst, 1990; Miller & Bersoff, 1992; Walker, 1984).

Method

Locations and Subjects

Porto Alegre is a city of 1.4 million people in the far south of Brazil. This region, near Argentina and Uruguay, is among the wealthiest and most developed parts of Brazil. Its people are almost exclusively of European descent (Portuguese, Italian, German, and Spanish). Recife is a city of 1.4 million in the northeast corner of Brazil. This region is poor and tropical. Its people are of mixed African and European origin. These two cities, 3,000 km apart, represent the economic, cultural, and geographic extremes of Brazil. Recife is below the national average on nearly all indicators of industrial development (e.g., economic activity, income, health, education, and suicide), whereas Porto Alegre is above the national average on all of these measures (Instituto Brasileiro, 1989). Philadelphia is a city of 1.6 million in the northeast of the United States. The 1990 census recorded its population as 53% White, 40% Black, and 7% other.

In each of the three cities, four groups of 30 subjects were interviewed. The four groups crossed age (adult vs. child) with SES (high vs. low). Thus, there were 12 groups in all, comprising 360 subjects in a 3 × 2 × 2 design (City × SES × Age). All groups were approximately balanced for gender. The racial composition of the groups reflected the demographics of race and class in each of the three cities. In Porto Alegre, all subjects were White. In Philadelphia, all high-SES subjects were White, and all low-SES subjects were Black.[1] In Recife, where most people are of mixed race, high-SES subjects were of primarily European ancestry, whereas low-SES subjects were of primarily African ancestry. All Brazilian groups were almost exclusively Catholic. Both Philadelphia low-SES groups were predominantly Baptist. The Philadelphia high-SES adults were evenly divided among Jews, Protestants, and Catholics. The Philadelphia high-SES children were 67% Jewish, 20% Protestant, and 13% Catholic.

The age range on the six children's groups was set at ages 10–12 years, inclusive, and all groups had a mean age between 10.7 and 11.0 years. In all three cities, children of low SES attend free public schools, and children of high SES commonly attend expensive private schools. The three low-SES child groups were obtained from public school classes, and the three high-SES child groups were obtained from private school classes. For the six adult groups, the age limits were set at 19–26 years, inclusive, and all groups had an average age between 21.3 and 22.6 years. The three high-SES adult groups were obtained from the student populations of the three universities to which the principal investigators belong. No single technique of subject recruitment was available for all six adult samples. In Philadelphia, where opinion sampling and marketing research are common practices, both adult groups were collected by standing in public walkways and asking passersby to participate in a psychology survey in exchange for $3. The high-SES adult group (mean years of school = 15.6) was obtained from the central

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[1] Philadelphia contains some poor Whites and Hispanics, and Porto Alegre contains some poor people of African or mixed heritage. But for cross-cultural comparisons, homogeneous samples reflecting the dominant race provide clearer tests of the research hypotheses. Also, that all Porto Alegre subjects were White provides an important control, allowing social class to be separated from race.

walkway of the University of Pennsylvania. The low-SES adult group (mean years of school = 11.5) was obtained in front of a McDonald's restaurant in West Philadelphia, a predominantly Black and poor area around the University of Pennsylvania.

In Brazil, the practice of soliciting strangers in public and paying them to answer questions is unusual, so different methods were used. No subjects were paid. In both cities, the high-SES group was obtained from among the classmates of the research assistants who conducted the interviews. In mean years of schooling, both groups are equivalent to U.S. college juniors. The low-SES Recife group was obtained from a night-school class for adults who had at most an eighth grade education. The low-SES Porto Alegre group (mean years of school = 7.8) was obtained from among the maids, gardeners, and other manual laborers in the homes of the students who participated in the study. It is thus a potential problem that adult subjects were recruited in different ways in the different cities. Such problems are almost unavoidable in cross-cultural research outside of college populations; they are the norm rather than the exception. It should be noted, however, that the problem of varying recruitment techniques does not arise for the children's groups, which provide an independent test of the five research hypotheses.

It should also be noted that differences among the groups (e.g., by race, religion, kind of education, and political values) are not necessarily confounds. It is impossible to have two groups of people who vary only by SES, or only by westernization, without also varying on dozens of other variables. The central question of the present study is whether a harm-based morality can account for the moral judgment of all groups. If it cannot, then the task of taking apart SES and westernization to identify causal subvariables and to distinguish them from correlated subvariables would seem to be a daunting and unpromising next step, which few studies of this nature have ever taken.

Materials and Procedure

The basic procedure was the structured interview, described by Turiel (1983). Three stories were paraphrased from Davidson, Turiel, and Black (1983). In the Swings story, a girl wants to use a swing, so she pushes a boy off and hurts him. This is a prototypical moral violation, because it involves direct physical harm to an innocent victim. In the Uniform story, a boy wears regular clothes to school, even though the school requires students to wear a uniform. In the Hands story, a man eats all his food with his hands, in public and in private, after washing them. These last two stories are prototypical conventional violations, because they involve no intrinsic harm to others.

The novel stimuli created for this study were five harmless-offensive stories in which an actor does something likely to be considered offensive, yet there is neither harmful intention nor harmful consequence. Two of these stories involved disrespect or disobedience:

> *Flag:* A woman is cleaning out her closet, and she finds her old [American or Brazilian] flag. She doesn't want the flag anymore, so she cuts it up into pieces and uses the rags to clean her bathroom.

> *Promise:* A woman was dying, and on her deathbed she asked her son to promise that he would visit her grave every week. The son loved his mother very much, so he promised to visit her grave every week. But after the mother died, the son didn't keep his promise, because he was very busy.

Three additional stories involved unconventional food and sexual practices, designed to trigger the emotion of disgust:

> *Dog:* A family's dog was killed by a car in front of their house. They had heard that dog meat was delicious, so they cut up the dog's body and cooked it and ate it for dinner.

> *Kissing:* A brother and sister like to kiss each other on the mouth. When nobody is around, they find a secret hiding place and kiss each other on the mouth, passionately.

> *Chicken:* A man goes to the supermarket once a week and buys a dead chicken. But before cooking the chicken, he has sexual intercourse with it. Then he cooks it and eats it. [This story was given to adults only.]

The Philadelphia Board of Education gave an unwanted confirmation of the offensiveness of these stories when it refused to permit the incestuous Kissing story to be read to public school children. This refusal came after all 11 other groups had been tested with the Kissing story, so there was no alternative but to substitute a different disgust story. For Philadelphia low-SES children, the Kissing story was replaced by the Candy story, in which a 12-year-old boy "eats so much candy that he is full. But he still wants to eat more candy, so he makes himself throw up in the bathroom, then he returns to his room to eat more candy. Nobody sees him do this, and it does not make him feel bad."

A final story, given only to children, described a girl who goes out for a walk wearing entirely blue clothing. This was given to catch subjects who were not paying attention, and to prevent the formation of a response set by forcing all children to say that at least one action was not wrong. Any child who did not say that this action was "perfectly OK" was removed from the study and replaced by another child. (Six children were replaced in Recife and two in Philadelphia.)

After each story, six probe questions were asked: (a) *Evaluation:* "What do you think about this? Is it very wrong, a little wrong, or is it perfectly OK for [act specified]?" (b) *Justification:* "Can you tell me why?" (c) *Harm:* "Is anyone hurt by what [the actor] did? Who? How?" (d) *Bother:* "Imagine that you actually saw someone [performing the act]. Would it bother you, or would you not care?" (e) Interference: "Should [the actor] be stopped or punished in any way?" (f) Universal: "Suppose you learn about two different foreign countries. In country A, people [do that act] very often, and in country B, they never [do that act]. Are both of these customs OK, or is one of them bad or wrong?"

The Harm probe was included in response to Turiel et al.'s (1987) claim that Shweder et al.'s (1987) 39 stories may have been perceived as harmful in India, but not in the United States. The Harm probe determines whether there are cultural differences in the perception of harmfulness. The Bother probe serves a similar function as a check on the offensiveness of the stories. These two probes work together as manipulation checks to determine whether the harmless-offensive stories are perceived to be equally harmless and offensive in all groups.

The two most important probe questions are the Interference and Universal probes, which determine when a moralizing stance is taken. The Interference probe was taken from Miller et al. (1990). It establishes whether the action is seen as the actor's own business or whether outside interference would be legitimate and appropriate. The Universal probe establishes whether the action is seen as universally wrong, regardless of local customs and consensus, or whether it is seen as a social convention that can be different in different places. A subject who says that "both countries are OK" indicates that the practice is perceived to be a social convention, whereas a subject who states that "one of those countries has a bad custom" takes a moralizing stance.

The interview script was developed simultaneously in English and Portuguese. The final scripts were back-translated in both directions by professional translators and compared with the originals by monolingual judges, who determined that there were no differences of meaning between the two scripts. All interviews were conducted individually by trained interviewers who recorded responses on the interview script. All interviews began with the Swings story followed by the Uniform story, to allow subjects to become accustomed to the probe questions on the uncontroversial prototypical stories before they encountered the more unusual harmless-offensive stories. All children

received the "catch" story, about the girl who wears blue, as the third story. The Flag, Promise, Kissing or Candy, Dog, and Hands stories were presented next, in randomized order. The Chicken story was presented last, to adults only. Average interview duration was approximately 25 min for adults and 30 min for children.

In pilot testing, we found that many children judged violations of social conventions, such as eating with one's hands, to be universally and unalterably wrong, across many wordings of the probe questions. We feared that some children thought they were being tested and were seeking to demonstrate that they were "good" children by condemning all violations in the strongest possible terms. To reduce such demand effects and increase the likelihood of finding conventional judgment, all children in all three cities were given a "warm-up" to familiarize them with the Universal probe and with the idea that it is "OK" for countries to differ on some customs.[2]

Results

The adult groups are not fully comparable with the children for three reasons: (a) The children were given pretraining that was not appropriate for the adults, (b) one of the groups of children received the Candy story as a substitute for the Kissing story, and (c) the adults responded to a fifth harmless-offensive story (Chicken) that was not given to the children. For these reasons, the adults and children are analyzed separately.

First, each probe question is analyzed separately. To facilitate statistical comparisons among the groups, the percentage of harmless-offensive stories answered in a given way was calculated for each subject, and the group means of these individual percentages was the focus of analyses of variance (ANOVAs). To check for gender differences, a $2 \times 3 \times 2$ ANOVA (Gender $\times$ City $\times$ SES) was performed on the harmless-offensive means, for each of the five probe questions. The Bonferroni procedure was used to correct for the inflation of alpha resulting from multiple post hoc significance tests. There were no effects of gender, either for adults or for children, and gender was dropped from subsequent analyses. Unless otherwise stated, all F values result from a 3×2 ANOVA (City $\times$ SES). Planned and post hoc comparisons of group means were done using the Scheffé procedure.

Adult Responses

Manipulation checks. To test for the existence of non-harm-based morality, it was essential that subjects perceive the harmless-offensive stories to be harmless and offensive. The Harm probe asked whether anyone was harmed in the story, and all references to a victim or potential victim of any kind were recorded. Responses that cited a victim were later divided into those that mentioned some person or entity other than the actor of the story and those that cited harmful consequences only to the actor (e.g., guilt feelings).

In the Flag story, 8% of adults said the woman might be harmed, mostly through later guilt feelings, and 12% cited another victim, mostly "the country." In some cases, subjects personified the flag and said that the flag was harmed. In the Promise story, 23% said the son might harm himself, mostly from subsequent guilt feelings, and 11% said that another person might be harmed, mostly the mother's spirit. In the Dog story, 23% said that the family might harm itself, mostly

through potential health consequences, and 10% cited other potential victims. The Kissing story was the only harmless-offensive story in which a majority of adults cited some potential harm. Thirty-six percent said that the siblings themselves might be harmed, either from guilt feelings or from interference in their sexual development, and 23% cited other victims, mostly the parents, if they were to discover their children's actions. In the Chicken story, 37% of the adults said that the man was harming himself, typically that he might get sick. Eight percent of the adults cited another victim.

The percentage of harmless-offensive stories (out of five) in which harm of any kind was cited was calculated for each subject. An ANOVA on these data revealed no significant effects of SES or city. There appear to be no large cultural differences in the perceived harmfulness of the harmless-offensive stories. This finding satisfies Turiel et al.'s (1987) first criticism of Shweder et al. (1987). (The low and high SES group means were 40% and 41% in Recife, 51% and 35% in Porto Alegre, and 34% and 28% in Philadelphia.)

Next we turn to the Bother probe, which served as a manipulation check on the affective content of the harmless-offensive stories. The Flag and Promise stories were not as offensive as we had hoped: Only 40% and 37% of adults reported that they would be bothered to witness the actions in these two stories, respectively. The disgust-based stories were more affectively laden: 72% said they would be bothered to witness the Dog story, 68% for the Kissing story, and 79% for the Chicken story. An ANOVA on the means for the five stories combined found that low-SES groups were more bothered than high-SES groups, $F(1, 174) = 11.00$, $p < .01$; and there was a main effect of city, $F(2, 174) = 6.31$, $p < .01$. A post hoc test showed that ratings were higher in Philadelphia than in Porto Alegre or Recife ($p < .05$), which did not differ from each other. (The low and high SES group means were 61% and 50% in Recife, 63% and 44% in Porto Alegre, and 73% and 65% in Philadelphia.)

In sum, the harmless-offensive stories were generally perceived to be harmless (except for the Kissing story) and offensive (although the Flag and Promise stories were mild). Only 13% of all cases were perceived to entail a victim other than the actor; thus, 87% of all cases meet Nucci's (1981) criterion for the "personal domain," in which the effects of actions are perceived to be "primarily upon the actor." However, because there were substantial minorities in most groups who said the stories were either harmful or inoffensive, subsequent analyses will be done in two ways. First, all responses will be analyzed. Then, two "filters" will be applied to the data to limit the analysis to only those responses in which a story was explicitly declared to be both harmless and offensive.

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[2] After talking with each child for a few minutes to build rapport, the interviewer gave a simple definition of the word *custom*, along with examples. The child was then told that it is "OK" that some customs are different from "ours." He or she was given examples of foreign food habits and asked whether these customs were "OK." The child was then told that some other countries have bad customs, such as slavery, and was asked whether he or she thought that slavery was a bad custom. The main interview did not begin until the child had stated that the first custom was OK and the second custom was bad. Almost all children passed this pseudo pretest on the first try.

Overall evaluation. The first probe question asked whether the act was wrong in any way. This question does not reveal whether the wrongness is perceived to be moral (universal) or conventional (local), but it does serve as an initial measure of permissiveness. Subjects were asked to describe the actions as *perfectly OK, a little wrong,* or *very wrong.* Because we could not be certain that this scale was an interval scale in which the middle point was perceived to be equidistant from the endpoints, we dichotomized the responses, separating *perfectly OK* from the other two responses. An ANOVA on the percentage of harmless-offensive stories said to be wrong in any way (calculated for each subject) showed effects of SES, $F(1, 174) = 73.1$, $p < .001$; city, $F(2, 174) = 5.6$, $p < .01$; and an interaction of SES with city, $F(2, 174) = 4.5$, $p < .05$. High-SES groups were more permissive than low-SES groups, especially in Philadelphia, and Recife was less permissive than Philadelphia ($p < .01$). Porto Alegre did not differ significantly from either city. (The low and high SES group means were 91% and 63% in Recife, 78% and 59% in Porto Alegre, and 85% and 40% in Philadelphia.)

Interference. The two theoretically central probe questions of this study are Interference and Universal. Table 1 gives the results of the Interference probe, in which subjects were asked whether the actor should be "stopped or punished in any way." An ANOVA on the mean of the harmless-offensive stories (penultimate line of Table 1) reveals that low-SES groups endorsed more interference than high-SES groups, $F(1, 174) = 55.2$, $p < .001$, and there was no effect of city. But what happens when the analysis is limited to cases that were explicitly declared to be both harmless and offensive? The last line of Table 1 shows the mean ratings when cases that failed either the Harm or Bother checks are filtered out. The recomputed mean ratings are slightly higher, but the effect of SES remains significant, $F(1, 128) = 20.57$, $p < .001$. The filter also increases the effect of SES in Philadelphia, so the interaction of city and SES becomes significant, $F(2, 128) = 4.66$, $p < .05$.

Universalizing. The last probe question asked whether it

would be "OK" for countries to differ on the custom in question. Subjects who replied "no" to this question were, by definition, universalizing their judgment. The far right column of Table 2 shows that the Swings story was indeed treated as a universal violation by most subjects. The convention stories (Uniform and Hands) were generally treated as nonuniversal social conventions, and the harmless-offensive stories showed high variance across groups.

An ANOVA on the mean of the five harmless-offensive stories found a main effect of SES, $F(1, 174) = 55.24$, $p < .001$. Within each city the high-SES group was more permissive than the low-SES group. The overall effect of city was not significant, $F(2, 174) = 1.88$. Limiting the analysis to harmless and bothersome cases (last line of Table 2) increased the difference between Philadelphia and the Brazilian cities, and the effect of city became significant, $F(2, 127) = 4.58$, $p < .05$. A post hoc test showed that subjects in Philadelphia were more permissive than in either of the Brazilian cities ($p < .05$). The effect of SES remained significant in the filtered analysis, $F(1, 127) = 55.75$, $p < .001$.

Taken together, the results of the Interference and Universal probes support the first four research predictions. The majority of high-SES Philadelphians took a permissive stance toward the harmless-offensive stories (Prediction 1). In Recife, the majority of low-SES subjects took a moralizing stance (Prediction 4). There was a large and consistent effect of social class (Prediction 3), in which high-SES groups were more permissive than low-SES groups. The Philadelphia college students were consistently the most permissive group on the Interference and Universal probes; however, the overall effect of city was significant only in the filtered analysis of the Universal probe, so Prediction 2 (main effect of westernization) received only weak support.

Children's Responses

The children's data were analyzed in the same way as the corresponding adult data. However, the Philadelphia low-SES

Table 1

Percentage of Adults Who Said the Actor Should Be Stopped or Punished

Story	Recife		Porto Alegre		Philadelphia		Total
	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	
Moral							
Swings	77	80	87	93	100	100	89
Convention							
Uniform	77	36	60	40	83	62	60
Hands	30	30	47	33	53	13	34
Harmless-offensive							
Flag	63	23	53	17	50	0	34
Promise	57	7	23	7	20	3	20
Dog	57	40	50	33	80	10	45
Kissing	68	53	70	50	87	57	64
Chicken	79	50	87	63	80	27	64
M harmless-offensive	63	35	57	34	63	19	45
M when filtered[a]	65	47	60	41	78	16	51

Note. SES = socioeconomic status.

[a] Cases were removed when not explicitly declared to be harmless and offensive.

Table 2
Percentage of Adults Who Universalized Their Judgment

Story	Recife		Porto Alegre		Philadelphia		
	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Total
Moral							
Swings	83	50	87	60	87	67	72
Convention							
Uniform	40	14	20	13	10	7	17
Hands	37	7	50	3	23	3	21
Harmless-offensive							
Flag	50	24	67	13	50	3	35
Promise	87	28	53	23	40	20	42
Dog	60	13	60	17	57	7	36
Kissing	67	20	53	33	80	17	45
Chicken	87	43	87	57	87	23	64
M harmless-offensive	70	26	64	29	63	14	44
M when filtered[a]	76	33	79	28	60	10	47

Note. SES = socioeconomic status.
[a] Cases were removed when not explicitly declared to be harmless and offensive.

children were given the Candy story instead of the Kissing story, and the two stories cannot be assumed to be equivalent. To correct for this problem, we performed the principal analyses of this section twice, first on the average of the Flag, Promise, Dog, and Kissing or Candy stories, and then on the three stories other than the Kissing or Candy stories.

Manipulation checks. The responses of the children to the Harm probe were similar to those of the adults: In 39% of the harmless-offensive stories, a victim or potential victim of some sort was mentioned (compared with 38% for the adults). There was no effect of SES on perceptions of harmfulness, although there was an effect of city, $F(2, 174) = 4.04$, $p < .05$, in which more harm was seen in Recife than in Philadelphia ($p < .05$). On the Bother probe, each of the harmless-offensive stories was rated as bothersome by the majority of children. Averaging across the stories, the children said they would be bothered to witness the harmless-offensive actions in 68% of all cases. There was an effect of city, $F(2, 174) = 9.56$, $p < .001$, similar to the effect found among the adults: Philadelphians were more likely to report being bothered ($p < .05$), whereas the groups in the Brazilian cities did not differ from each other. There was also a small interaction of city with SES, $F(2, 174) = 3.61$, $p < .05$, in which low-SES groups were more likely to report being bothered in Porto Alegre and Philadelphia, whereas the reverse was true in Recife.

Overall evaluation. The children were consistently critical of the actions in the harmless-offensive stories. Each story was said to be "very wrong" or "a little wrong" by a majority in each of the six groups. When all stories were combined, low-SES subjects condemned the stories more than high-SES subjects, $F(1, 174) = 9.00$, $p < .01$, and there was an effect of city, $F(2, 174) = 5.91$, $p < .01$, reflecting the fact that Philadelphians were less likely than Recifeans to condemn the acts ($p < .01$). Porto Alegre fell between the other two cities and did not differ from either.

Interference. The children's responses to the Interference probe (Table 3) showed the predicted effects of both SES and

city. When all harmless-offensive stories were combined, low-SES groups were more likely to endorse interference, $F(1, 174) = 24.50$, $p < .001$, and there was an effect of city, $F(2, 174) = 40.64$, $p < .001$, in which Recifeans endorsed more interference than did subjects in the other cities ($p < .001$), which did not differ from each other. When the analysis was repeated using only the Flag, Promise, and Dog stories, thereby eliminating the Kissing and Candy stories, these effects persisted (for SES, $F(1, 174) = 19.32$, $p < .001$; for city, $F(2, 174) = 39.77$, $p < .001$).

To determine whether these group differences resulted from differences in the perceived harmfulness or offensiveness of the stories, the filters used on the adult data were applied. When the analysis was limited to cases that were explicitly declared to be harmless and offensive (last line of Table 3), the same significant effects were found (both ps < .01), as well as an interaction of city and SES, $F(2, 136) = 6.04$, $p < .01$. It is notable that only the Philadelphia high-SES children remained consistently opposed to interference.

Universalizing. The children's responses to the Universal probe (Table 4) mirrored their responses to the Interference probe in showing the predicted effects of both SES and city. Low-SES groups were more likely to universalize their judgments, $F(1, 174) = 50.95$, $p < .001$, and there was an effect of city, $F(2, 174) = 31.58$, $p < .001$, in which Recife was higher than Porto Alegre ($p < .01$), which was higher than Philadelphia ($p < .001$). There was also an interaction of city and SES, $F(2, 174) = 6.67$, $p < .01$, in which the effect of SES was larger in Philadelphia than in the other cities. When the analysis was repeated using only the Flag, Promise, and Dog stories, the interaction dropped out, but the two main effects remained significant (both ps < .001).

Filtering out harmful or inoffensive cases (last line of Table 4) has little effect on the data. The interaction of city and SES drops out, but the separate effects of city and SES remain significant (both ps < .01). Recife remains high, Philadelphia remains low, and in each city the low-SES group universalizes more than its corresponding high-SES group.

Table 3
Percentage of Children Who Said the Actor Should Be Stopped or Punished

Story	Recife		Porto Alegre		Philadelphia		Total
	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	
Moral							
Swings	100	97	83	83	100	100	94
Convention							
Uniform	97	100	60	57	73	63	75
Hands	90	87	53	40	37	47	59
Harmless-offensive							
Flag	90	80	57	27	53	27	56
Promise	97	87	47	33	77	33	62
Dog	100	87	57	47	67	43	67
Kissing[a]	100	87	70	60	80	33	72
M harmless-offensive	97	85	58	42	69	34	64
M when filtered[b]	100	91	51	52	79	31	65

Note. SES = socioeconomic status.
[a] For Philadelphia low-SES children, Kissing was replaced by Candy.
[b] Cases were removed when not explicitly declared to be harmless and offensive.

In summary, the children's data support all of the first four research predictions. The majority of high-SES Philadelphians judged the harmless-offensive stories to involve nonmoral conventions, which should not be interfered with (Prediction 1); the majority of low-SES Recifeans universalized their judgments and endorsed interference (Prediction 4); and there were significant effects of social class (Prediction 3) and city (Prediction 2) in the predicted directions.

Age Effects

The adults and children in the present study can be directly compared, although procedural differences make such a comparison less interpretable than comparisons within each age group. The most important difference is that a warm-up was given only to children. This warm-up was intended to increase the children's level of conventional judgment on the Universal probe.

A 2 × 3 × 2 (Age Group × City × SES) ANOVA was performed on the average of the Flag, Promise, Dog, and Kissing or Candy stories, for each of the five probe questions. The Bonferroni procedure was used to correct for the inflation of alpha resulting from multiple post hoc significance tests. Reported here are only those effects involving age group. On the Harm probe there were no significant effects of age group. On the Bother probe, children were more likely to report being bothered, $F(1, 348) = 20.41$, $p < .001$. On the Evaluation probe children were more likely than adults to condemn the acts, $F(1, 348) = 57.53$, $p < .001$, and the effect of age was larger in the high-SES groups, interaction $F(1, 348) = 21.54$, $p < .001$. On

Table 4
Percentage of Children Who Universalized Their Judgment

Story	Recife		Porto Alegre		Philadelphia		Total
	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	
Moral							
Swings	100	93	97	90	93	63	89
Convention							
Uniform	87	80	37	17	17	3	40
Hands	80	57	77	50	27	10	50
Harmless-offensive							
Flag	77	73	87	53	53	20	61
Promise	100	90	90	73	80	47	80
Dog	97	80	80	53	80	27	69
Kissing[a]	97	83	87	50	73	7	66
M harmless-offensive	93	82	86	58	72	25	69
M when filtered[b]	100	85	89	72	79	35	74

Note. SES = socioeconomic status.
[a] For Philadelphia low-SES children, Kissing was replaced by Candy.
[b] Cases were removed when not explicitly declared to be harmless and offensive.

the Interference probe, children endorsed more interference, $F(1, 348) = 60.32$, $p < .001$, and this age effect interacted with city, $F(2, 348) = 13.09$, $p < .001$, being larger in Recife than in the other cities ($p < .05$). The largest difference between children and adults occurred on the Universal probe, where children universalized 69% of the harmless-offensive cases and adults universalized 39%. The effect of age group was significant, $F(1, 348) = 94.33$, $p < .001$, and it interacted with city, $F(2, 348) = 7.63$, $p < .001$, being largest in Recife and smallest in Philadelphia. When the analysis of age group was repeated using the average of only the Flag, Promise, and Dog stories, the same effects were found.

In sum, children were more likely than adults to take a moralizing stance, even though they were not more likely to find victims contained in the stories, and despite the fact that they were given a warm-up designed to increase conventional judgment.

Four Permissive Groups

The analyses so far have looked at individual probe questions. But the clearest indication of a moralizing stance can be seen in the conjunction of the Interference and Universal probes. Crossing these two probe questions yields four possible response patterns: (a) A subject could universalize and endorse interference, which will be labeled a *fully moralized* response. This was the most common response pattern on the harmless-offensive stories, accounting for 43% of all responses, and it was the modal response pattern for all 12 groups on the Swings story. (b) A subject could oppose universalizing and oppose interference, which will be labeled a *fully permissive* response. This was the second-most common response pattern on the harmless-offensive stories, accounting for 31% of all responses. (c) A subject could oppose universalizing while endorsing interference, which will be labeled an *enforceable-conventional* response. This was the most frequent pattern on the Uniform story, but it accounted for only 12% of responses to the harmless-offensive stories. (d) Finally, a subject could universalize, yet oppose interference. This pattern is similar to the "personal-morality" orientation identified by Miller and Luthar (1989), and it accounted for 14% of all responses to the harmless-offensive stories.

When the modal response pattern on the harmless-offensive stories is calculated for each group, a clear division emerges. There were four groups in which the modal response was fully permissive. These were the three college groups (Philadelphia, 73% fully permissive responses; Porto Alegre, 58%; and Recife, 50%), plus the Philadelphia high-SES children (55% fully permissive). These four groups, all of them high SES, will henceforth be referred to as the four *permissive* groups. There was one group, the Porto Alegre high-SES children, in which responses were almost evenly divided between fully permissive (32%), fully moralized (31%), and personal-moral (27%). In the remaining seven groups, the modal response was fully moralized. In these seven groups (all low-SES groups plus Recife high-SES children), the percentage of fully moralized responses ranged from 45% to 92%, with a mean of 61%. The percentage of fully permissive responses ranged from 3% to 25%, with a

mean of 16%. These seven groups will be referred to as the seven *moralizing* groups.

Distinctions Among Story Types

We now turn to Prediction 5, about cultural variation in the distinction between domains of social knowledge. Two distinction scores were calculated for each subject from the data in Tables 2 (for adults) and 4 (for children). The maximum possible *moral-conventional* distinction occurred when a subject universalized the prototypical moral violation (Swings) and did not universalize either of the prototypical conventions (Uniform and Hands). A subject who made this maximum distinction was given a score of 100 on the moral-conventional distinction. A subject who universalized the Swings story and one of the two conventions was given a score of 50 for having made one half of the maximum possible distinction. A subject who universalized all three stories, or who did not universalize any of the three stories, was given a score of 0 for having made no distinction. (There were no cases in which a subject universalized a conventional story without universalizing the Swings story.) Likewise, the *moral-harmless* distinction measures the percentage of the maximum possible distinction each subject made between the Swings story and the harmless-offensive stories. It too runs from 0 to 100, with 100 indicating that the Swings story was universalized although none of the harmless-offensive stories were universalized.

Table 5 shows that, for adults as well as children, the distinction between the prototypical moral story (Swings) and the two conventional stories was large in Philadelphia. This finding satisfies Turiel et al.'s (1987) second criticism of Shweder et al. (1987), because it demonstrates that the methods used in the present study replicate Turiel's (1983) finding of a domain distinction among North Americans. But the distinction between moral and conventional stories was smaller in Brazil. The effect of city was significant for adults, $F(2, 171) = 3.85$, $p < .05$, as well as for children, $F(2, 171) = 19.44$, $p < .001$. In both cases the distinction was larger in Philadelphia than in Recife ($p < .05$). Among the Recife low-SES children, the distinction between moral and conventional stories was not significantly greater than 0 (by Friedman test, for $p < .05$). This finding supports Prediction 5, that the size of the domain distinction varies cross-culturally. There was no effect of SES, either for adults or for children.

The analysis of the moral-harmless distinctions finds the predicted effects of both city and SES, for adults as well as children. High-SES adults made larger distinctions than did low-SES adults, $F(1, 171) = 6.51$, $p < .01$, and there was an effect of city, $F(2, 171) = 3.31$, $p < .05$, in which Philadelphians made larger distinctions than Recifeans ($p < .05$). The same effects were found for children, SES: $F(1, 171) = 6.79$, $p < .01$; city: $F(2, 171) = 4.75$, $p < .05$, Philadelphia greater than Recife, $p < .05$). Friedman tests on each group revealed that the moral-harmless distinction was not significantly greater than 0 for the three noncollege Recife groups, nor for the Porto Alegre low-SES children. All other groups were significant at $p < .05$. In all four rows of Table 5, Porto Alegre fell between the other two cities and did not differ significantly from either one.

In sum, this analysis confirms the conclusions of the pre-

Table 5

Percentage of Maximum Possible Distinction Between Story Types on the Universal Probe

	Recife		Porto Alegre		Philadelphia		
Story	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Total
			Moral–conventional distinction				
Adults	45	40	52	52	70	61	53
Children	17	25	40	57	72	57	44
			Moral–harmless distinction				
Adults	13	24	23	31	24	51	27
Children	8	12	11	33	22	38	20

Note. SES = socioeconomic status.

vious sections and supports all five research predictions. Both of the Philadelphia high-SES groups made large distinctions between the harmful story (Swings) and the harmless-offensive stories (Prediction 1); the low-SES Recife subjects made small or nonsignificant distinctions (Prediction 4); and the moral-harmless distinction was affected by city (Prediction 2) and SES (Prediction 3) in the predicted ways. Social conventional understanding was not limited to the North American upper-middle class, but it was most robust in Philadelphia, and it was weak in Recife, especially among children (Prediction 5). These findings do not appear to be artifacts of an overall bias toward tolerance among the four permissive groups, because they were found in the analysis of distinctions among story types, as well as in the absolute scores.

Justifications

The analysis of responses to the five probe questions suggest that there may be cultural differences in the moral judgment of harmless events. Yet before these differences can be interpreted as evidence for an underlying model of morality (e.g., Shweder's three codes), additional evidence is required, evidence that speaks to the content of the moral judgments. This additional evidence was obtained by recording the open-ended justifications that subjects gave immediately after responding to the Evaluation probe question.

Each adult subject responded to five harmless-offensive stories, and each child responded to four stories, producing a total of 1,620 justifications, most of which consisted of one or two sentences. These justifications were coded using Shweder's three codes of moral discourse (1990; Shweder et al., in press). Any justification that referred to harm, potential harm, rights, justice, or freedom of choice was assigned to the category of *autonomy.* All references to respect, duty, authority, patriotism, or the requirements of how people in a given social relationship "ought" to relate to one another were assigned to the category of *community.* Justifications that referred to disgustingness, beastliness, human dignity, natural order, or sin were assigned to the category of *divinity.* A fourth category was found to be necessary, especially for low-SES subjects. The category of *norm statement* was assigned when subjects justified their condemnation of an act with a direct affirmation of the norm that

was violated, e.g., "Because you're not supposed to cut up the flag," or "Because it's wrong to eat your dog." Justifications that did not fit into any of these four categories were scored as uncodable. Most of these responses had no clear moral content.[3]

There were few cases in which more than one of Shweder's three codes appeared, so each justification was assigned to one and only one of the five categories. To respect Turiel's (1989) arguments about second-order moral implications, any reference to harmful consequences of any kind was automatically assigned to autonomy. All coding was done by Jonathan Haidt, in consultation with the other authors. Reliability was assessed by a second coder, whose codings yielded a Cohen's kappa of .89. This was considered sufficiently high that the original codings were used without modification.

A 3 × 2 (City × SES) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed on the percentage of stories in which each subject used each of the four codable categories (see Table 6), for adults and children separately. Among adults, high-SES groups were more likely to use autonomy, $F(1, 174) = 58.04$, $p < .001$, less likely to use community, $F(1, 174) = 20.37$, $p < .001$, and less likely to use norm statements, $F(1, 174) = 34.50$, $p < .001$. The effect of city was significant only for autonomy, $F(2, 174) = 3.87$, $p < .05$, which was used more often in Philadelphia than in Recife ($p < .05$). The interaction of SES and city was significant for autonomy, $F(2,174) = 5.72$, $p < .01$; divinity, $F(2,174) = 3.36$, $p < .05$; and norm statement, $F(2, 174) = 3.48$, $p < .05$.

Among children, the effect of SES was marginally significant for norm statements, $F(1,174) = 3.81$, $p = .05$, which were used more by low-SES groups. The effect of city was significant for autonomy, $F(2, 174) = 5.65$, $p < .05$; community, $F(2, 174) = 10.42$, $p < .001$; and norm statements, $F(2, 174) = 10.03$, $p <$

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[3] A difficulty arose on the Promise story, in which the modal justification for those who condemned the act was "because he broke his promise." Such a justification asserts that promises have a moral force, yet the origin of this force cannot be determined without further information. It could be based on the importance of contracts (ethics of autonomy), the importance of duty within the family (ethics of community), or it could be derived from the repetition of a rule that is frequently expounded to children (norm statement). Because of this ambiguity, justifications that referred only to the importance of promises were scored as uncodable.

Table 6
Percentage of Justifications Referring to Each of Shweder's Moral Codes

Code	Recife		Porto Alegre		Philadelphia		
	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Low SES	High SES	Total
Adults							
Ethics of autonomy	15	37	23	39	16	59	31
Ethics of community	29	21	32	22	31	11	24
Ethics of divinity	7	12	14	14	16	9	12
Norm statement	21	4	11	6	17	4	11
Uncodable	27	27	20	19	19	17	22
Children							
Ethics of autonomy	15	13	12	26	26	27	20
Ethics of community	30	37	45	43	25	27	34
Ethics of divinity	7	5	4	2	6	7	5
Norm statement	23	22	13	7	15	7	14
Uncodable	25	23	27	23	28	32	26

Note. Adult data reflect responses to five harmless-offensive stories, including the Chicken story. Child data reflect responses to four stories.

.001. Autonomy was used more in Philadelphia than in Recife (*p* < .05); community was used more in Porto Alegre than in the other cities (*p* < .05); and norm statements were used more in Recife than in the other cities (*p* < .01).

This analysis converges with the analysis of the probe questions. The Philadelphia college students, who gave the most permissive responses on the probe questions, showed by far the greatest preference for the ethics of autonomy (59%) over other kinds of justification. The other two college groups, which were permissive on the probe questions, showed a general preference for the ethics of autonomy. The seven groups that had fully moralized the probe questions (all low-SES groups, plus Recife high-SES children) showed a general preference for the ethics of community, or for norm statements. The children did not show the effects of SES here that they showed on the probe questions, but they did show the same effects of city, with the ethics of autonomy being most characteristic of Philadelphia. It is noteworthy that the ethics of divinity was rarely used, except on the Chicken story, in which it was the modal justification category.

Is Moral Judgment Predicted by Harmfulness or Offensiveness?

If moral judgments result from appraisals of harmful consequences, then the Harm probe should show a high concordance with the Universal and Interference probes. Subjects who cited victims should also state that the actions are universally wrong and that the actors should be stopped or punished. Conversely, subjects who explicitly stated that nobody was harmed should take a permissive stance. On this view, if you want to predict whether a person will moralize an action, the most important question you can ask is "Do you think anyone is harmed?"

But if the domain of morality extends beyond harm in some cultural groups, then the Harm probe may be less effective as a predictor of moral judgment. In particular, actions may be judged wrong because of their offensiveness, because they "feel

wrong" to a properly enculturated person. In this case, the Bother probe should be superior to the Harm probe as a predictor of a moralizing stance.

To compare the power of the Harm and Bother probes as predictors of moral judgment, two concordance rates were calculated for each subject. The concordance of Harm and Universal refers to the proportion of harmless-offensive stories in which a subject either cited a victim and universalized, or cited no victim and did not universalize. The concordance of Bother and Universal was calculated in the same way. These concordance rates show a clear difference between the permissive groups and the moralizing groups. In each of the four permissive groups, the concordance of Harm with Universal (mean concordance = 66%) was higher than the concordance of Bother with Universal (mean concordance = 55%). For the four groups combined, the difference was significant, $t(119) = 4.28$, $p < .001$. In each of the seven moralizing groups, the concordance of Bother with Universal (mean concordance = 70%) was higher than the concordance of Harm with Universal (mean concordance = 56%), $t(209) = 6.53$, $p < .001$.

When this analysis was repeated for the concordance of the Harm and Bother probes with the Interference probe, the same differences were found. In each of the four permissive groups, the concordance of Harm with Interference (mean concordance = 74%) was higher than or approximately equal to the concordance of Bother with Interference (mean concordance = 65%), $t(119) = 2.83$, $p < .01$. In each of the seven moralizing groups, the concordance of Bother with Interference (mean concordance = 69%) was higher than the concordance of Harm with Interference (mean concordance = 56%), $t(209) = 5.04$, $p < .001$.

These concordance rates provide an additional illustration of the difference between the four permissive groups and the seven moralizing groups. The permissive groups conformed to the cognitive–developmental prediction that moral judgment is closely associated with appraisals of harm. But in the seven moralizing groups, morality was not so closely tied to harm. In

these groups, moral judgment is better predicted by asking "would it bother you to see this?" than by asking "is anyone harmed?"

Discussion

The domain of morality appears to vary cross-culturally. Philadelphians of high SES exhibited a harm-based morality limited to the ethics of autonomy. Disgusting and disrespectful actions were not moralized, as long as these actions were perceived to have no harmful interpersonal consequences. But in low SES groups, and especially in Brazil, morality appears to be broader. Stories that involved disgust and disrespect were moralized, even when they were perceived to be harmless. These data are fully consistent with the predictions of cultural psychology, which states that psychological processes such as moral judgment may work differently in different populations (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Shweder, 1991a; Shweder, Mahapatra & Miller, 1987)

These conclusions were supported by four converging analyses conducted on 180 adults and then repeated on 180 children. First, the predicted effects of social class and westernization were found on probe questions about the universality of rules and the propriety of interference in the actions of others (although the effect of westernization was weak among adults). Second, the same effects were found in an analysis of the distinctions made between story types: Philadelphia and high-SES groups made the largest distinctions between the harmless-offensive stories and a harmful action (the Swings story). Third, the same differences were found in the analysis of free-form verbal justifications: Philadelphia and high-SES groups made more references to the ethics of autonomy and fewer references to the ethics of community. (Among children, however, there was no effect of SES.) And finally, for the four groups that were permissive on the probe questions (three college groups plus Philadelphia high-SES children), moral judgment was better predicted by ratings of harm than by ratings of offensiveness; yet for the seven groups that moralized the probe questions, moral judgment was better predicted by ratings of offensiveness than by ratings of harmfulness. This last finding suggests that the relationships among moral judgment, harm, and affective reactions may be culturally variable.

The consistency of these findings across analyses and across age groups suggests that some models of moral judgment may not travel well outside of the populations on which they were developed. All of the Philadelphia groups made large distinctions between prototypical moral and conventional stories, consistent with Turiel's (1983) theory. But this distinction was substantially smaller in Recife than in Philadelphia. A model of morality that builds in an account of cultural variation is more consistent with the present data (e.g., Fiske, 1991, 1992; Shweder et al., in press).

Two artifactual explanations of the present findings can be eliminated. First, the cultural differences are not due to differences in factual beliefs about harmful interpersonal consequences, because they persisted when cases declared to be harmful were filtered out. Second, these differences are not due to differentially strong affective reactions, because they persisted when cases that were not declared to be bothersome were filtered out. Furthermore, Philadelphians reported the highest affective reactions on the Bother probe, yet were more permissive than Brazilians on the three judgment probes.

Social Class and Moral Judgment

One surprise of the current study was the large difference between social classes, which was in most cases larger than the differences among the cities. College students in Philadelphia had more in common with college students in Brazil than they did with their own low-SES neighbors. This finding has important implications for cross-cultural research, for it suggests that studies of morality among college students may be misleading. If college students in different nations share a harm-based morality, then studies of morality among college students will produce an exaggerated impression of cultural uniformity. Research across class lines should be given as much attention as research across national borders.

Building a Model of Moral Judgment That Can Travel

The present study has found cultural differences in the domain of morality. There does not appear to be a single list of content areas—even defined abstractly as harm, rights, and justice—that can capture the moral world of all peoples. Yet cultural variation does not preclude the building of psychological models any more than language variation precludes the building of linguistic models. Shweder (1991b) discussed the possibility of "universalism without uniformity," and his theory of the three codes of moral discourse may help in the construction of such a model for moral judgment. In Shweder's Indian data, people talk easily and frequently in all three moral codes (Shweder et al., in press). In the present data, moral discourse took place primarily within just two codes—autonomy and community—whereas divinity emerged only in the most revolting story (Chicken). Among students at the University of Pennsylvania, however, moral discourse was largely limited to a single code, the ethics of autonomy (see Table 6). It would seem that cultures may vary on the number of codes that they use, although this tentative conclusion must await further studies that focus specifically on moral discourse.

The works of Shweder (1990, 1991a; Shweder et al., in press), as well as those of Fiske (1991, 1992), offer great promise that cross-culturally valid models of moral judgment and moral development can be formulated. Such models must specify what is universal, and how culture fills in, implements, or builds on this universal base to produce the differing moralities of the world. Toward that end, the present study offers three suggestions for future research.

1. *Place less emphasis on the role of harm.* Harm may be an important factor in the moral judgment of all cultures, but harm references may sometimes be red herrings. As Nisbett and Wilson (1977) have argued, we often "tell more than we can know." A subject may not know what caused her to condemn a story about incest between consenting adults, but when asked to explain her judgment, she can easily produce a story about the genetic dangers of inbreeding. Rozin and Nemeroff (1990; Rozin, Millman, & Nemeroff, 1986) have repeatedly found that justifications of disgust-based attitudes use ex post

facto rationalizations about health risks. When they inform subjects that the cockroach in a glass of juice has been fully sterilized, subjects are still unwilling to take a sip. This independence of the intuitive basis of belief from the reasoning used in justification has been elegantly explored by Margolis (1987).

The importance of harm may also have been overstated in developmental models. The cognitive–developmentalists are undoubtedly right that children "self-construct" some of their moral knowledge in the course of social interaction. Yet the present study suggests that harm cannot be the "brute fact" (Turiel, 1983, pp. 41–43) that children seize on as a sort of bootstrap in the construction of the moral domain. For a child growing up in a culture with a non-harm-based morality, harm is not a reliable guide to the local morality. Acts considered to be unambiguous moral violations might involve harm (e.g., the Swings story) or no harm (e.g., the Flag or Dog stories). Acts considered to be morally correct might involve harm (e.g., initiation rites, justified punishment, and dentistry) or no harm (e.g., giving to charity). Harm is neither necessary nor sufficient as a marker of moral issues.

2. *Place more emphasis on the role of the emotions.* A growing body of scholarship points to the importance of emotion in social action (e.g., Frank, 1988; Gibbard, 1990; Lazarus, 1991; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). An emerging picture seems to be that emotions are a part of the decision and judgment apparatus. Emotions are cognitions invested with a motivating force (Sabini & Silver, 1987); they are "embodied thoughts, thoughts seeped with the apprehension that 'I am involved'" (Rosaldo, 1984, p. 143).

The ideas of Kagan (1984) are particularly instructive. Kagan proposed that there are two processes underlying the human attachment to moral standards. One process is described by the rationalist tradition in philosophy (e.g., Rawls, 1971) and psychology (e.g., Piaget, Kohlberg, and Turiel), which holds that the moral prohibition on harm is self-evident, and children discover it through the process of role taking (e.g., "I would not want to be harmed if I were in her position"). But Kagan, drawing on Hume (1751/1957), believed that there is a second and more powerful process in which "a set of emotional states [form] the bases for a limited number of universal moral categories that transcend time and locality" (p. 119). That is, all humans share a set of emotions that tell us that certain things, abstractly specified, are right or wrong. Kagan proposed that the rationalist and emotional processes work together to produce moral discourse: Morality draws its force from sentiment, not logic, but "because humans prefer—or demand, as some psychologists would say—a reason for holding a standard, they invent the arguments that rationalists regard as essential" (p. 122). In the present study, people who had strong and clear convictions about the wrongness of certain acts often seemed to struggle to provide justifications. One child, for example, justified his condemnation of the woman in the Flag story by stating, hesitantly, that the flag might get caught in the drain and clog it up.

3. *Place more emphasis on the role of culture.* Evidence is accumulating that educated Westerners perceive the domain of morality to be narrower than do other groups (Miller & Bersoff, 1992; Nisan, 1987; Shweder et al., 1987). The present study suggests that this difference may be due in part to the interac-

tion of affect and culture, neither of which are included in most current cognitive–developmental models. These models can often be stated with only two terms: appraisal of (unjustified) harm leads to moral condemnation. We propose that at least two additions be made to this model. First, affective reactions should be added as a source of moral judgment, because they are a part of the decision and judgment apparatus. Second, the link between harm and judgment should be made bidirectional, because moral condemnation may sometimes cause an ex post facto appraisal that harm has been committed. There may be other links among these three terms, but at a minimum the enhanced model can be stated as:

Appraisal of Harm ← → Moral Judgment ← Affect

The cultural differences of the present study can now be interpreted as follows. In cultures in which morality is limited to the ethics of autonomy, the link between harm and moral judgment is tight, and there is an effort to weaken or deny the link between affect and judgment. In the present study, the four permissive groups showed a higher concordance of moral judgment with the Harm probe than with the Bother probe, although we cannot be certain whether their judgments were caused by appraisals of harm, or whether harm was cited to justify their judgments. But in groups with a non-harm-based morality, moral judgment does not require harm. The groups that moralized the harmless-offensive stories therefore showed a higher concordance of moral judgment with the Bother probe than with the Harm probe.

This enhanced model is supported by an analysis of the cultural discourse rules governing how to relate affective reactions to moral judgments. If something disgusts you, does that make it wrong? In groups with a harm-based morality it does not, for moral condemnation requires a victim. Just as murder charges cannot be filed until a body is found, moral condemnation cannot be declared until harmful consequences are found or plausibly invented. The mere fact that one is bothered by something (e.g., heterosexuals bothered by homosexuality) does not give one the right to condemn it. The four permissive groups, therefore, frequently decoupled their affective responses (which were as strong as in other groups) from their moral condemnation and coordinated their judgments with their verbal reports of harmfulness.

In cultural groups with a non-harm-based morality, however, moral condemnation requires no victim, and one's own affective reactions may be considered relevant. Discourse rules allow moral condemnation to be backed up by assertions such as "because that's disgusting," or norm statements such as "because you're not supposed to do that to a chicken." The role of affect in moral judgment may therefore be variable across cultures, and researchers who study only college students are unlikely to find it.

Conclusion

Turiel (1989) made the important point that neither individuals nor cultures have monolithic, homogeneous worldviews. Therefore, we do not want to claim that upper-middle-class North Americans have a harm-based morality in all situations. Indeed, some of the moral arguments that divide U.S. society

center on the moral value of respect (e.g., flag burning and the pledge of allegiance) and sexual purity (e.g., restrictions on homosexuals or condom distribution in schools). However, note that these issues often divide along social class lines.

The college students of the present study may be extreme exemplars of the ethics of autonomy, and there is some evidence that their morality may broaden when they leave their liberal academic environments (Balle-Jensen, 1993). They may therefore be unrepresentative of the societies from which they come. Yet, if they are unrepresentative, then the cultural psychology critique becomes even more pressing. Psychological processes such as moral judgment may be variable across social classes and national borders. An adequate model of moral judgment must capture this variation.

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