

Research Question

Is our moral view of the world affected by exposure to the moral reasoning of others?

Moral Foundations Theory

Haidt & Joseph (2004)

5 categories of moral concerns:

- ❖ Authority (*comply; respect; protest*)
- ❖ Fairness (*reasonable; rights; prejudice*)
- ❖ Harm (*protection; safety; suffered*)
- ❖ Loyalty (*enemy; member; together*)
- ❖ Purity (*integrity; pervert; preserve*)

Moral Foundations Questionnaire

(Graham et al., 2011)

- ❖ Designed to measure individual differences in the importance of moral concerns
- ❖ 2 parts with 15 questions each

Moral Foundations Dictionary

(Graham et al., 2009)

- ❖ A set of terms associated with each concern

Materials

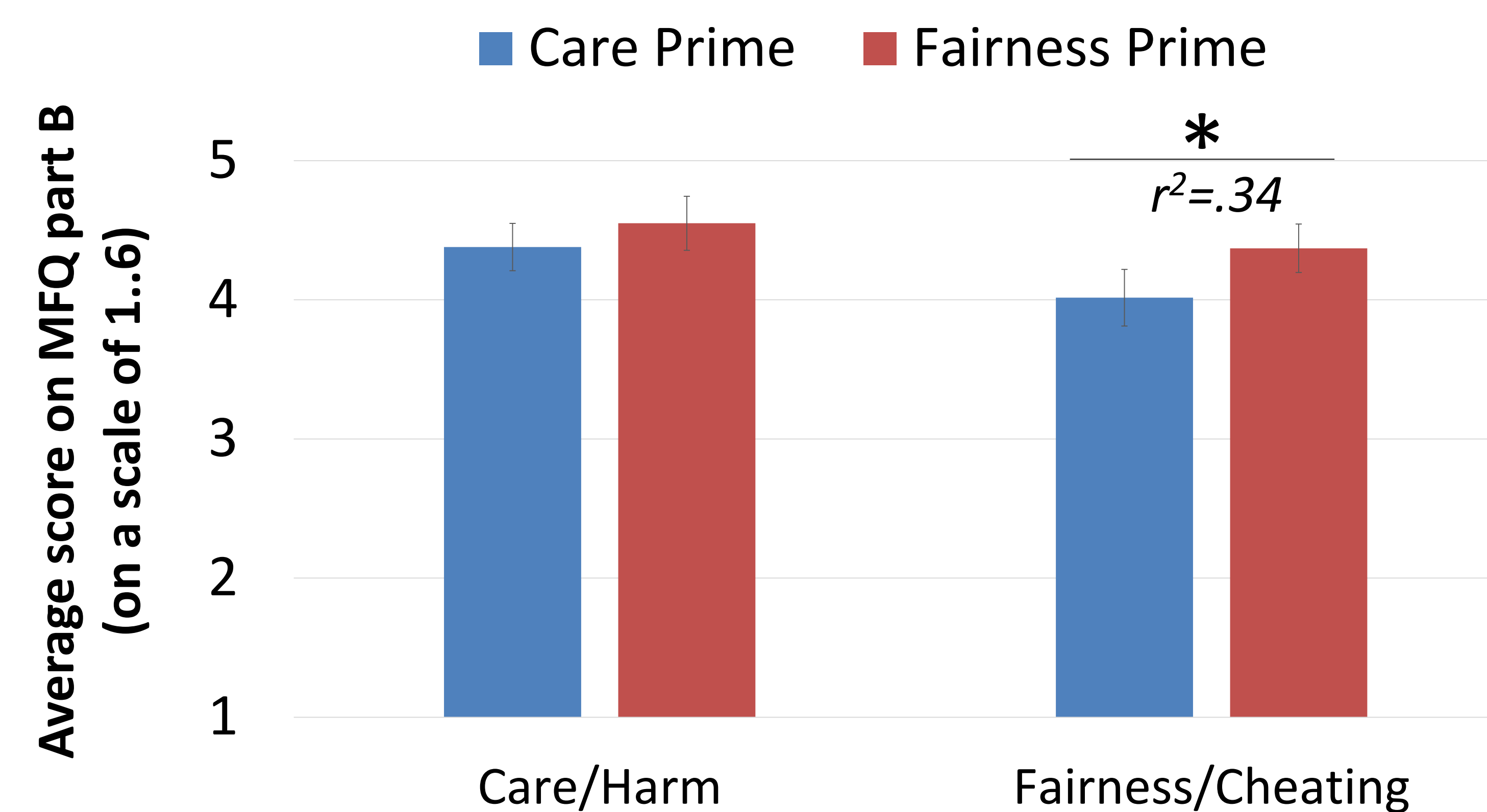
(from Sagi & Dehghani, 2014)

Selected from a corpus of tweets about the U.S. Federal Shutdown (Sep.-Oct. 2013; 421k tweets)

- ❖ Automatically scored on the 5 moral concerns
- ❖ Priming materials:
 - ❖ 14 tweets that were high in *fairness/cheating*
 - ❖ 14 tweets that were high in *care/harm*
- ❖ Rating materials:
 - ❖ 25 tweets (5 tweets relevant to each of the 5 moral concerns)

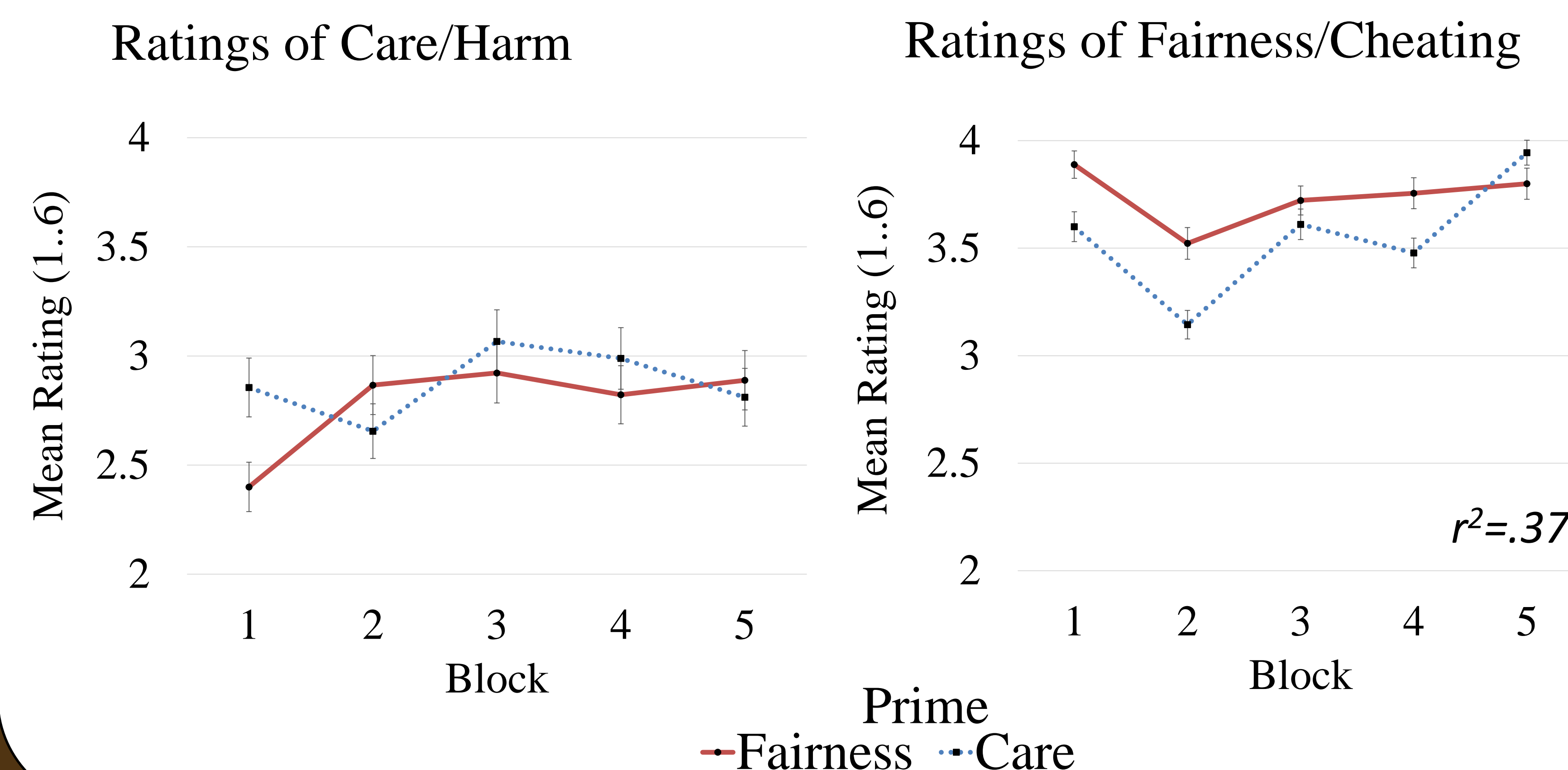
Measure I: Moral Foundations Questionnaire

- ❖ 36 Ps rated agreement with 14 priming tweets (*fairness or care*)
- ❖ Completed Part B of the MFQ
- ❖ Analysis used their score on part A (pre-priming) as a covariate



Measure II: Ratings of Tweets

- ❖ 36 Ps rated 25 different tweets on the relevancy of all 5 concerns
- ❖ Analysis included the order in which tweets were rated (in blocks of 5)



Samples of primes

Fairness/Cheating

- ❖ “Liberal #Congress members claim that the law must apply equally to all...well, except them. #Obamacare #Dems #GOP”
- ❖ “Hey #GOP look up the 14th amendment! If u love the Constitution Founding Fathers so much, then ADHERE to the law of the land. #JustVote”
- ❖ “Liberals progressives say that #obamacare is the law of the land, but they ignore illegals breaking the law of the land!”

Care/Harm

- ❖ “Refugees Waiting Overseas Are in Limbo as U.S. Shutdown Continues #refugees #shutdown #resettlement #newcomers #USA”
- ❖ “Outrageous not paying death benefits to families of our fallen servicemen! This SOB #Obama looking for a civil war to become dictator!”
- ❖ “Dr. Seuss's #Congress Who Stole #SNAP: Kids seniors face health risks due to #GovernmentShutdown. #PublicPolicy”

Results

- ❖ Observed a priming effect for *fairness* but not for *care*
 - ❖ Possibly due to a ceiling effect?
- ❖ Priming affected both *perceived importance* and *ratings of relevance*
- ❖ Effect might be short-lived

Future Studies

- ❖ Replicate with other concerns
- ❖ Does agreement with the content matter?
- ❖ Can this type of priming affect long-term change?

References

- Graham, J., Haidt, J., & Nosek, B. A. (2009). Liberals and conservatives rely on different sets of moral foundations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 96*(5), 1029–1046.
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- Haidt, J., & Joseph, C. (2004). Intuitive ethics: How innately prepared intuitions generate culturally variable virtues. *Daedalus, 133*(4), 55–66.
- Sagi, E., & Dehghani, M. (2014). Moral Rhetoric in Twitter: A Case Study of the U.S. Federal Shutdown of 2013. In P. Bello, Guarini, M., McShane, M., & Scassellati, B., *Proceedings of the 36th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 1347–1352).