

powerful network of Christian ideas about sanctity and sexuality that allowed them to portray Democrats as the party of Sodom and Gomorrah. Set against the rising crime and chaos of the 1960s and 1970s, this five-foundation morality had wide appeal, even to many Democrats (the so-called Reagan Democrats). The moral vision offered by the Democrats since the 1960s, in contrast, seemed narrow, too focused on helping victims and fighting for the rights of the oppressed. The Democrats offered just sugar (Care) and salt (Fairness as equality), whereas Republican morality appealed to all five taste receptors.

That was the story I told to the Charlottesville Democrats. I didn't blame the Republicans for trickery. I blamed the Democrats for psychological naiveté. I expected an angry reaction, but after two consecutive losses to George W. Bush, Democrats were so hungry for an explanation that the audience seemed willing to consider mine. Back then, however, my explanation was just speculation. I had not yet collected any data to support my claim that conservatives responded to a broader set of moral tastes than did liberals.<sup>2</sup>

#### MEASURING MORALS

Fortunately, a graduate student arrived at UVA that year who made an honest man out of me. If Match.com had offered a way to pair up advisors and grad students, I couldn't have found a better partner than Jesse Graham. He had graduated from the University of Chicago (scholarly breadth), earned a master's degree at the Harvard Divinity School (an appreciation of religion), and then spent a year teaching English in Japan (cross-cultural experience). For Jesse's first-year research project, he created a questionnaire to measure people's scores on the five moral foundations.

We worked with my colleague Brian Nosek to create the first version of the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ), which began with these instructions: "When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking?" We then explained the response scale, from 0 ("not at all relevant—this has nothing to do with my judgments of right and wrong") to 5 ("extremely relevant—this is one of the most important factors when I judge right and wrong"). We then listed fifteen statements—three for each of the five foundations—such as "whether or not someone was cruel" (for the Care foundation) or "whether or not someone showed a lack of respect for authority" (for the Authority foundation).

Brian was the director of ProjectImplicit.org, one of the largest research sites on the Internet, so we were able to recruit 1,600 subjects to fill out the MFQ within a week. When Jesse graphed the data, he found exactly the differences we had predicted. I've reprinted Jesse's graph in figure 8.1, which shows responses from people who said they were "very liberal" on the far left, and then moves along the political spectrum through moderates (in the middle) to people who self-identified as "very conservative" (on the far right).<sup>3</sup>

As you can see, the lines for Care and Fairness (the two top lines) are moderately high across the board. Everyone—left, right, and center—says that concerns about compassion, cruelty, fairness, and injustice are relevant to their judgments about right and wrong. Yet still, the lines slope downward. Liberals say that these issues are a bit more relevant to morality than do conservatives.

But when we look at the Loyalty, Authority, and Sanctity foundations, the story is quite different. Liberals largely reject these considerations. They show such a large gap between these foundations versus the Care and Fairness foundations that we might say, as shorthand, that liberals have a two-foundation