Polarization of Moral Judgments
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Introduction

- Recently, there have been more lone-wolf acts of violence than ever before, but little is known about the processes leading to this attitude radicalization.
- Attitude Representation Theory (ART; Lord & Lepper, 1999) discusses how individuals make judgments based on associations.
- Previous work suggests that source monitoring (Johnson, Hashtroudi, & Lindsay, 1993) errors can change how people respond to scenarios and remember information.
- **Aim:** Here, we tested 3 different manipulations (e.g., extrapolation, embellishment, and biased assimilation) to see if participants would polarize moral judgments.

Method

As was stated in the large prescreen survey that you took at the start of the semester, some groups favor construction of the Keystone Pipeline because it will provide thousands of American jobs during its construction. Other groups oppose the pipeline because it will carry petroleum extracted from Canadian oil sands through methods that create more carbon pollution than the production of conventional oil. One pipeline company, calling themselves the Sand Runners, has been carrying out various acts of sabotage.

![Diagram](Diagram.png)

### Experiment 1

**Control (n = 79) vs. Extrapolation (n = 75), between groups**

![Graph](Graph1.png)

### Experiment 2

**Control (n = 79) vs. Embellishment (n = 81), between groups**

![Graph](Graph2.png)

### Experiment 3

**Control (n = 46), truth (n = 40), vs. lies (n = 50), between groups**

![Graph](Graph3.png)

Discussion

- Results suggest that participants do not differ, across studies, in judgments of wanting to join the group.
- Embellishment exercise showed the most polarization, in two of the dependent variables.
- Limitation: Parts of the studies lacked engagement, participants’ responses from pre-screen survey lacked reliability.
- Future Direction: Conduct a follow-up session, to track changes over time, also include an issue that most people may be familiar with in current events.

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