

impacts for "others obey commandments." If we decide how to behave primarily on the basis of our own values, then "self obey commandments" should have much stronger effects on moral beliefs. In all three countries, both "self obey" and "other obey" are strongly unidimensional. It is easier to disentangle the self and the other than we might suppose. The simple correlations between the two measures are .255 for the United States, .307 for Canada, and .409 for the U.K.⁵ The modest correlations with "self obey commandments"--and its component parts--reflects the limited range of people's estimation of themselves. There isn't much variation to go around.

The WVS also includes the standard interpersonal trust question: "Do you believe that most people can be trusted, or can't you be too careful in dealing with people?" Trust is not an estimate of how we expect others to behave. But neither is it a reflection of how we judge ourselves. Neither others obey commandments or our moral judgments about ourselves is strongly related to trust.⁶ The weak connection between "others obey commandments" and trust shows that confidence in others reflects more than simple reciprocity. Trust is a broader world view that does not depend upon expectations of others' behavior. I view trust as a core value partially based on experience, but also reflecting a more general sense of optimism that goes beyond what simple calculations might yield.

For religious values, I used two questions that tap distinct components of faith: Does the respondent believe that there are clear standards of good and evil and does (s)he believe in hell. The former is a simple expression of right and wrong that doesn't demand religious beliefs. But clear standards of good and evil are more important among religious people.⁷ If you believe that there are straightforward criteria for moral behavior, you don't need to look back at experience. Your values tell you what to do. Belief in hell indicates compliance with ethical standards out of fear for an afterlife. I chose these two measures because they represent different perspectives on religious values (positive versus a negative incentives), because each is clearly connected to moral behavior, and because (not surprisingly) they had among the highest correlations with the moral behavior items of the multitude of items in the WVS.

The WVS has few good measures of social connectedness.⁸ Two measures that I employ are being married and being a member of a union. Marriage gives you a greater stake in your community. Married people need to consider the needs of others--as well as the moral approbation for violating key norms of society. Unions also provide a sense of solidarity that should reinforce society's core values among members.⁹ I explored other potential indicators of social connectedness such as having children, owning one's own home, and length of time in the community. But none was significant.

Beyond marriage, I employ a measure of how important people believe faithfulness is to a successful partnership. If our experience begins at home and spills over to more general behavior, then attitudes about marital fidelity should have a strong impact on moral behavior. The importance of marital faithfulness to ethical standards is a straightforward test of the linkage between personal experience and expectations for the larger society.

I employ three controls. Educational differences also point to fault lines in the society. Education is a surrogate for position in society; it is a key determinant of social trust (Putnam, 1995). The WVS measure is only a trichotomy (elementary school, high school, and college), so it does not pick up the nuances that extra years of education bring