

# **Why is it Wrong to Sell Your Body? Understanding Liberals' vs. Conservatives' Moral**

## **Objections to Bodily Markets**

Shreyans Goenka

Stijn M.J. van Osselaer

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Shreyans Goenka (shreyans.goenka@vt.edu) is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at the Pamplin College of Business, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061. Stijn M.J. van Osselaer (stijn.vanosselaer@cornell.edu) is S.C. Johnson Professor of Marketing at the S.C. Johnson Graduate School of Management, Cornell S.C. Johnson College of Business, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. Correspondence: Shreyans Goenka. The authors thank the research assistants at the Johnson Behavioral Simulation Laboratory for assistance with data collection and the IRB committee at Virginia Tech for assistance with study design. We are also grateful to Manoj Thomas, Soo Kim, and Thomas Gilovich for helpful feedback. Experimental stimuli, procedural details, and supplementary data analysis are available in the web appendix. Data for all studies is available at the open science framework website ([https://osf.io/qwxaz/?view\\_only=f3a2a9c58deb4cb291f134099e7f653d](https://osf.io/qwxaz/?view_only=f3a2a9c58deb4cb291f134099e7f653d)). This article is based on the lead author's dissertation.

## Abstract

People hold strong moral objections to commercial bodily markets – the buying and selling of the human body and its components (e.g., prostitution; commercial surrogacy; trade of kidneys, blood plasma, sperm, ovum, and hair). This research takes a descriptive approach to understand *why* people object to the marketing of the human body and how their moral objections differ across the political spectrum. The authors propose that liberals *and* conservatives find bodily markets to be morally wrong; however, the two groups object to bodily markets for different reasons. Liberals are more sensitive to exploitation concerns, but conservatives are more sensitive to violation of sanctity concerns in these markets. Real-world observational data and controlled experiments test these predictions. The findings show how socio-political leaders utilize the different moral objections to persuade their respective audiences, such as how conservative versus more liberal pastors sermonize differently on prostitution. Second, results show how targeted marketing campaigns encourage liberals and conservatives to participate in consumer advocacy and donate to political causes. Third, findings outline how liberals and conservatives support different regulatory laws that penalize buyers versus sellers. Finally, results show how the different moral objections manifest for live bodily products but not for dead bodily products.

*Keywords:* political identity, moral judgments, prostitution, organ trade, illegal markets

Commercial bodily markets (e.g., prostitution, kidney trade) involve the buying and selling of the human body and its components (Hoeyer 2013). Needless to say, commercial bodily markets are morally contentious. Numerous scholars in philosophy, legal studies, medical sciences, economics, sociology, and feminism have deliberated upon the morality of bodily markets (Arunachalam and Shah 2008; Chadwick 1989; Erin and Harris 2003; Satz 2012; Shrage 1989). Notably, existing scholarly research in this area centers on the normative debate of the permissibility of these markets. That is, the authors take a stance on whether a bodily market is morally acceptable or unacceptable and then present an argument for their position. For instance, Sullivan (2010) argues that sex work should be decriminalized and presents an analysis of the beneficial social impact of decriminalization in Australia. In contrast, Raymond (2004) argues that sex work should not be legalized and outlines a socio-historical analysis of the negative impact of decriminalization in the Netherlands to make her case. Thus, extant research has largely taken a prescriptive approach to deliberate upon the morality of bodily markets.

In the present research, we deviate from past research to take a descriptive approach. That is, we do not take a stance on whether these markets are morally right or wrong. Instead, we seek to understand consumers' moral attitudes towards these bodily markets. *Why* do people find bodily markets morally objectionable? What are the underlying beliefs that shape these objections? Importantly, how do these moral attitudes differ for liberals and conservatives?

Understanding these moral objections and the heterogeneity across the political spectrum is vital because bodily markets provoke heated political debates. Policymakers often struggle to understand the stance of their constituents, resulting in public outcry when they introduce misguided regulations (e.g., New York state's ill-fated attempt to legalize commercial surrogacy (Wang 2019)). Moreover, policymakers also misunderstand the moral stance of the opposing

political party, resulting in protracted political battles that stall progress (e.g., the five-year political impasse around India's surrogacy laws (Banerjee and Kotiswaran 2021)). Consequently, policymakers need to understand the moral objections of their specific liberal or conservative constituents to introduce representative legislation. At the same time, stakeholders must also recognize how moral objections differ across the political spectrum in order to reach across the aisle. Furthermore, advocacy groups and think tanks engaged with bodily markets also tend to be divided across political lines. Thus, it is important for these organizations as well to understand how people's moral objections to bodily markets might differ across the political spectrum.

Hence, this research examines consumers' moral objections to bodily markets and how these objections might differ for liberals and conservatives. To examine this, we utilize a phenomenon-construct mapping approach with a descriptive goal (MacInnis et al. 2020). This approach allows us to capture the complexity of a real-world phenomenon using an appropriate theoretical lens and then generate implications for stakeholders engaged with bodily markets. We draw from Moral Foundations Theory (Haidt 2007) to posit that liberals *and* conservatives find bodily markets to be morally wrong. However, they will object to bodily markets for different reasons. Liberals will tend to be more sensitive than conservatives to exploitation concerns in these markets, but conservatives will tend to be more sensitive than liberals to violation of sanctity concerns in these markets. Thus, liberals and conservatives should hold different moral objections towards bodily markets. We test these propositions through a series of controlled studies and real-world observational data.

To the best of our knowledge, this research is the first to demonstrate the heterogeneity in moral objections to bodily markets across the political spectrum. Consequently, by demonstrating the different moral attitudes in a novel substantive domain (i.e., bodily markets),

we extend the literature on market ethics (Bhattacharjee, Dana, and Baron 2017; Campbell and Winterich 2018; Shaddy and Shah 2018), consumer morality (Goenka and van Osselaer 2019; Olson et al. 2016; Reed, Aquino, and Levy 2007; Winterich, Mittal, and Ross 2009), and consumer political identity (Kidwell, Farmer, and Hardesty 2013; Ordabayeva and Fernandes 2018; Winterich, Zhang, and Mittal 2012).

Importantly, this research generates novel insights about persuasion, policy, and advocacy. First, our findings show how socio-political leaders utilize the different moral objections to persuade their respective audiences. Specifically, we show how conservative versus more liberal pastors sermonize on prostitution differently by emphasizing the different moral objections. Second, we show how the different moral objections impact the persuasiveness of targeted marketing campaigns aimed at increasing consumer advocacy and soliciting political donations. Third, the findings show how liberals and conservatives support different regulatory laws that punish buyers versus sellers. Finally, we show one substantively relevant moderator for the political differences. Namely, the political differences in moral objections manifest for live bodily products but attenuate for dead bodily products.

## **Theoretical Background**

### ***Bodily Markets***

We define bodily markets as those markets that involve the economic trade of the human body, components of the body, and derivative bodily products. These markets include sex work, commercial surrogacy, the trade of organs (e.g., kidney, liver), the trade of bodily products such as blood plasma, sperm, ovum, breast milk, hair, and even the trade of human fetuses and cadavers. These markets are vast in their size and scope. For instance, estimates suggest that the

global market for sex work is valued at \$186 billion (Havocscope 2015) and the market for commercial surrogacy is approaching \$27.5 billion (Global Marketing Insights 2019). Similarly, the blood plasma market is valued at \$24 billion (Press and Lindsay 2021) and the global hair trade is valued at \$10 billion (Macleod 2020).

The first defining feature of bodily markets is that they treat the body and its components as commodities of exchange. Thus, these markets include the exchange of organs, bodily fluids, and bodily waste products. Moreover, bodily markets also include the exchange of services that commodify the whole human body, such as sex work and commercial surrogacy. However, we would not consider human labor to be a bodily market, as such services do not turn a person into a commodity of exchange (in most cases).

The second defining feature of bodily markets is that the exchange of a bodily product must take place in return for some commercial payment. Thus, these markets are distinct from those involving altruistic donations (e.g., Pessemier, Bemmaor, and Hanssens 1977; Robitaille et al. 2021). This is because placing a monetary value on the human body and trading it for economic benefit gives rise to unique economic, ethical, legal, and psychological challenges, which are distinct from the challenges in prosocial markets (Satz 2012). For instance, most people would encourage the prosocial donation of organs, but they would balk at the notion of trading an organ for money (Tetlock et al. 2000).

It is also important to consider that bodily markets tend to vary in terms of their legal status. Some bodily markets are legally permissible across the United States (e.g., sperm, ovum, blood plasma), and other bodily markets are legally prohibited across the United States (e.g., kidneys, liver, heart). There is also a “middle” group of bodily markets that are legally permissible in some states and legally prohibited in other states (e.g., prostitution, commercial

surrogacy). One could posit that the moral objections vary across the illegal and legal markets. However, the legality of the market is contingent upon various ethical, legal, economic, social, and historical factors (Sandel 2012). Moreover, the legal status of bodily markets varies across countries. Thus, differentiating markets by legal status may not be theoretically relevant as the legalization itself is contingent upon multiple factors. More importantly, the legalization of a market does not imply that the market is beyond moral concern. For example, the sperm and ovum markets are legal in the U.S., yet many news articles have reported upon the moral violations that occur in these markets (Bowles 2021; Feron 2021). Hence, we examine liberals' and conservatives' moral objections to both legal and illegal bodily markets.

### ***Political Ideology and Moral Beliefs***

Extant works have outlined various theories describing how attitudes differ across the political spectrum (see Jung and Mittal 2020 for a review). In this research, we draw from Moral Foundations Theory, which presents an apt framework to understand differences in moral attitudes between liberals and conservatives (Graham, Haidt, and Nosek 2009; Haidt 2007; Haidt and Graham 2007). This theory posits that five different foundations characterize moral values. The care foundation focuses on the motivation to care, nurture, and protect others in society. The fairness foundation emphasizes reciprocity and equality in society. The loyalty foundation motivates in-group cohesion and allegiance. The authority foundation motivates respect for authority figures and social institutions. And, the purity foundation motivates concerns of cleanliness and sacredness to promote social, psychological, spiritual, physical, and physiological purity in society.

Importantly, the theory argues that liberals' moral attitudes tend to be driven by the adherence to the care and fairness foundations together (*individualizing* foundations). In contrast,

conservatives' moral attitudes tend to be driven by the adherence to the loyalty, authority, and purity foundations (*binding* foundations). Alternatively, specific values within each set may be more or less relevant and hence more or less instrumental in driving behavior in each context. For instance, in domains where sacredness is particularly relevant, conservatives' moral behavior is determined by their endorsement of the purity values alone (Koleva et al. 2012).

Extant research has utilized Moral Foundations Theory to shed light on several differences between liberals and conservatives. For instance, researchers have used this theory to understand liberal versus conservative attitudes towards recycling (Kidwell, Farmer, and Hardesty 2013), prosocial behaviors (Kaikati et al. 2017; Winterich, Zhang, and Mittal 2012), social causes (Koleva et al. 2012), out-group discrimination (Smith et al. 2014), religious beliefs (Graham and Haidt 2010), self-control (Mooijman et al. 2018), and conspicuous consumption (Goenka and Thomas 2020). We suggest that Moral Foundations Theory can also be used to understand liberals' and conservatives' moral objections towards bodily markets.

### ***Liberals' Moral Objections***

We propose that liberals' moral objections towards bodily markets are driven by their adherence to the individualizing moral foundations (harm and fairness). As outlined above, liberals (vs. conservatives) are especially cognizant of situations where individuals are harmed or denied their rights (Haidt and Graham 2007). In the context of bodily markets, we would expect this to manifest as concern about exploitation in these markets.

That is, liberals are attuned to the notion that the commercialization of these markets can cause harm to vulnerable people and magnify the entrenched inequality in society. For example, Satz (2012, chap. 4) argues that an asymmetric agency and underlying vulnerabilities characterize commercial bodily markets. This produces harmful outcomes for individuals and

undermines the social framework needed for people to interact as equals. In other words, liberals' adherence to the individualizing moral foundations makes them more likely to believe that bodily markets can become another means for rich buyers to exploit poor sellers, causing the latter systematic physical, psychological, and economic harm. Formally we propose:

**H1a:** Liberals (vs. conservatives) will tend to be more sensitive to exploitation concerns in bodily markets.

**H1b:** Liberals' sensitivity to exploitation concerns will be driven by their adherence to the individualizing moral foundations (harm and fairness).

These predictions generate some testable implications. First, liberal (vs. conservative) leaders' socio-political discourse around bodily markets should emphasize exploitation concerns. Second, liberals (vs. conservatives) should be more willing to support advocacy campaigns that emphasize exploitation concerns. Third, liberals (vs. conservatives) should be more willing to donate to political campaigns in favor of legalizing a market when exploitation concerns are assuaged.

### *Conservatives' Moral Objections*

We propose that conservatives' moral objections towards bodily markets are driven by their adherence to the purity moral foundation. As outlined above, conservatives (vs. liberals) are especially sensitive to preserving social, psychological, spiritual, physical, and physiological purity (Haidt 2012; Haidt and Graham 2007; Inbar and Pizarro 2014). In the context of bodily markets, we would expect this to manifest as concern about the violation of the sanctity of the human body.

That is, conservatives believe that the commercialization of these markets places a monetary value on the human body and reduces it to become like any other commodity. For

instance, Sandel (2012, chap. 3) argues that the market valuation and market exchange of bodily products can diminish and corrupt the sanctity of those very goods. In this view, bodily markets promote a degrading, objectifying view of the human person as a collection of spare parts. In other words, conservatives' adherence to the purity foundation makes them more likely to believe that the inherent sanctity of the divinely created human body is diminished or corrupted when it is bought or sold. Thus, formally we propose:

**H2a:** Conservatives (vs. liberals) will tend to be more sensitive to violation of sanctity concerns in bodily markets.

**H2b:** Conservatives' sensitivity to violation of sanctity concerns will be driven by their adherence to the purity moral foundation.

These predictions generate some testable implications. First, conservative (vs. liberal) leaders' socio-political discourse around bodily markets should emphasize violation of sanctity concerns. Second, conservatives (vs. liberals) should be more willing to support advocacy campaigns that emphasize violation of sanctity concerns. Third, conservatives (vs. liberals) should be more willing to donate to political campaigns in favor of legalizing a market when violation of sanctity concerns are assuaged.

### ***Punishment of Buyers vs. Sellers***

Given that bodily markets are considered morally objectionable, it is also important to understand how support for punitive laws varies across the political spectrum. Specifically, who should be punished for participating in bodily markets – the seller or the buyer? Our theorization proposes that if liberals and conservatives are sensitive to different moral concerns in bodily markets, they should support different punitive laws to regulate these markets.

Sensitivity to exploitation concerns should increase the desire to punish the buyer over the seller in the markets. This is because the buyer tends to have more power in the transaction, and the seller tends to be more vulnerable (Satz 2012). In other words, the buyer is the agent who is responsible for exploiting the seller. In contrast, sensitivity to violation of sanctity concerns should create a desire to punish both the buyer and the seller in the markets. This is because both the buyer and seller are responsible for violating sanctity, as one is commoditizing their body by selling, and the other is commoditizing the body by buying (Sandel 2012). Thus, we propose:

**H3a:** Liberals (vs. conservatives) tend to support punitive laws that punish the buyer.

**H3b:** Conservatives (vs. liberals) tend to support punitive laws that punish the buyer *and* the seller.

### ***Live vs. Dead Bodily Products***

Our theorization proposes that liberals' and conservatives' moral objections to bodily markets are driven by a concern about exploitation and violation of sanctity, respectively. This theorization implies that moral objections should be weaker for those bodily markets where the potential for exploitation and sanctity violation are lower. Specifically, we suggest that moral objections should be stronger for bodily markets that involve the trade of live human products (e.g., sperm, ovum, bone marrow, kidney) compared to markets that involve the trade of dead human products (e.g., hair, nails, urine). We use "dead" as a shorthand for something that lived before but is now irrevocably dead or for something that never lived. Thus, we would not consider a frozen embryo or frozen sperm to be dead, as they can be brought back to life (and can generate new life).

Our hypothesis is based on the idea that live bodily products should provide greater scope for exploitation than dead bodily products, as the trade of live parts of a body can cause greater

harm to the sellers. Similarly, live bodily products should also provide greater scope for sanctity violation than dead bodily products, as live products should be more closely tied to the essence of a person. Hence, we suggest that dead bodily products should have less scope for exploitation and violation of sanctity and thus generate lower moral objections than live products.

Consequently, we propose:

**H4:** The political differences in moral objections manifest more for live bodily products than for dead bodily products.

### *Alternative Account*

While we argue that the differences between liberals and conservatives are explained by their adherence to the different moral foundations, there is also an alternate possibility. Namely, the differences could be driven by variation in religiosity. That is, conservatives tend to be more religious than liberals (Jung and Mittal 2020). Further, religiosity is associated with stronger moral objections to bodily markets like prostitution and commercial surrogacy (Satz 2012). To rule out this account, we also measure participants' religiosity and examine its relationship with moral attitudes.

## **Overview of Studies**

We conducted five studies to examine liberals' and conservatives' moral attitudes towards bodily markets (see Table 1 for a summary). First, study 1 examines how socio-political leaders use the different moral objections in real-world social discourse to address their target audience. Specifically, we assess how conservative versus more liberal pastors use the different moral objections to sermonize about prostitution. Results show that relatively liberal pastors tend

to emphasize exploitation concerns, but relatively conservative pastors tend to emphasize violation of sanctity concerns. Study 2 examines how the use of different moral objections in marketing communications impacts the persuasiveness of targeted advocacy campaigns that oppose bodily markets. Study 3 examines how the use of different moral objections in marketing communications impacts the persuasiveness of targeted charity appeals that raise donations in support of legalizing these markets. Study 4 uses an experimental approach to assess the causal link between political identity and the different moral objections. This study also examines liberals' and conservatives' support for punitive laws in bodily markets. Finally, Study 5 examines the pattern of moral objections for bodily markets that involve live bodily products versus dead bodily products.

**[Insert Table 1 about here]**

Throughout the studies, we measure and control for religiosity. Also, political identity tends to be correlated with demographics like age, gender, income, education, and race; thus, we control for all these demographics in our studies. We collected all data only after receiving approval from the university research ethics committee (IRB#20-900). The ethics committee assisted with the design of the studies to reduce participant discomfort and ensure that participants' rights were protected. We preregistered all the studies. Materials, procedural details, and additional analyses are available in the web appendix. Data for all studies are available on the OSF website ([https://osf.io/qwxaz/?view\\_only=f3a2a9c58deb4cb291f134099e7f653d](https://osf.io/qwxaz/?view_only=f3a2a9c58deb4cb291f134099e7f653d)).

### **Study 1: Church Sermons**

We designed the first study to assess how socio-political leaders use the different moral objections in the real world to persuade their target audiences. Specifically, we examined how relatively liberal versus conservative pastors sermonize about prostitution. We acquired an archive of church sermons on prostitution and coded the moral objections expressed in the sermons. We then examined the relationship between these moral objections and the political leaning of the church. Thus, this allows us to document a context wherein a leader knows how to frame their message in a manner that resonates with their audience.

We hypothesized that liberal and conservative pastors would be equally likely to decry prostitution, but that they would highlight different moral objections to prostitution. Relatively liberal pastors would be more likely than conservative pastors to emphasize exploitation concerns in prostitution (H1a). However, the conservative pastors would be more likely than the relatively liberal pastors to emphasize violation of sanctity concerns in prostitution (H2a). The study was preregistered (<https://osf.io/cyp7e>).

### ***Data Collection***

*Church sermon coding.* We extracted church sermons from the website - [www.sermon.net](http://www.sermon.net). We searched for sermons using the keyword ‘prostitute’ and extracted 120 unique sermon audio recordings along with the name of the church congregation associated with the sermon. Two independent research assistants separately listened to each sermon. For each sermon, they responded to the questions - To what extent does the sermon deem prostitution to be morally wrong? / To what extent does the sermon say prostitution exploits vulnerable people? / To what extent does the sermon say prostitution violates the sanctity of the human body? (1: Not at All; 5: Extremely). The responses of the two RAs were averaged to form the three dependent variables of interest – moral evaluations of prostitution ( $\alpha = .56$ ,  $M = 3.25$ ,  $SD = .80$ ),

exploitation concerns ( $\alpha = .77$ ,  $M = 1.76$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ), and violation of sanctity concerns ( $\alpha = .75$ ,  $M = 2.48$ ,  $SD = .95$ ). Note, separately analyzing each RA's responses yielded the same pattern of statistically significant results (see Appendix W1).

*Church political leaning.* We acquired the political leaning of the church denomination from a working paper by Hersh and Malina (2017). The researchers surveyed 130,000 religious leaders across 40 church denominations in the United States to assess their political leanings. They report the percent of pastors who identify as a democrat, republican, or independent for each church denomination. We utilized these data to compute a political rating for each church denomination (% Republican Pastors - % Democrat Pastors). On this metric, the most liberal-leaning churches were the Unitarian Universalist (-.73) and the African Methodist Episcopal Church (-.72). On the other hand, the most conservative-leaning churches were the Lutheran Church (+.73) and the Church of God (+.57). We also performed the analysis using a separate measure of church political rating acquired from the Pew Research Center (2016) and found convergent results (see Appendix W1).

## ***Results***

We combined the sermon coding data with the political leaning dataset using church denomination as the merging variable. Note that we removed eight churches from the dataset because they were independent/non-denominational. Hence, the final dataset consisted of 112 sermons. See Appendix W1 for the detailed procedure.

*Moral evaluations of prostitution.* We examined the relationship between the church's political rating and the moral evaluations of prostitution using a random-effects linear regression. The moral evaluations measure was the dependent variable, and the standardized value of the church's political rating was the fixed effects independent variable. We included Church

congregation as a random effect to control for any unobserved heterogeneity. The analysis showed that church political rating did not significantly predict moral evaluation of prostitution ( $B = .05$ ,  $SE = .08$ ,  $t = .64$ ,  $p = .527$ , 95% CI [-.11, .21]). Hence, the liberal and conservative pastors seemed more or less equally opposed to prostitution. See Appendix W1 for detailed results.

*Exploitation vs. sanctity concerns.* Next, we examined the relationship between the church's political rating and exploitation and sanctity concerns using another random-effects linear regression. The exploitation and sanctity concern measures were included as the dependent variables, and the standardized value of the political rating were included as a fixed effect predictor variable. Again, we included the church congregation as a random effect. The analysis showed a significant interaction between political rating and the concern-type ( $B = .64$ ,  $SE = .12$ ,  $t = 5.22$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.39, .89]). Conservative political rating significantly predicted lower exploitation concerns (simple slope:  $B = -.23$ ,  $SE = .09$ ,  $t = -2.62$ ,  $p = .009$ , 95% CI [-.40, -.06]). However, conservative political rating significantly predicted greater sanctity concerns (simple slope:  $B = .41$ ,  $SE = .08$ ,  $t = 4.74$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.24, .59]). See Figure 1 for graphical depiction of interaction and Appendix W1 for detailed results.

**[Insert Figure 1 about here]**

*Sermon excerpts.* To emphasize how churches across the political spectrum discuss prostitution, we present some paraphrased excerpts from the sermons. First, we present an excerpt from a sermon given in the liberal-leaning South City Church of Little Rock:

*Prostitutes historically have been marginalized, been on the edge of society. This profession is created out of necessity or abuse. When there are no other options or possibilities. This is what you do when it is forced upon you, and your will is taken out of the equation. Rahab survived all this. She doesn't let the difficulty of her past discourage the possibility of her future. Of what God can do in her life.  
(Paraphrased from Sermon ID #21262587)*

This sermon emphasized how prostitutes are typically exploited and how Rahab could rise above the exploitation and accept faith. We contrast this with a sermon discussing Rahab given in the conservative-leaning San Diego Church of Christ:

*Don't listen to the lies of Satan. You can overcome any obstacle in your way. Look at Rahab. She was an adulterer and a prostitute. She was a deceiver and a liar. Her profession was that of Satan's – unholy. Rahab was doing ungodly work but still had a godly attitude. Even imperfect, blemished, sinful, ungodly people like Rahab can respond to God's faith. (Paraphrased from Sermon ID #21367285)*

This sermon emphasized how prostitution violates sanctity by describing Rahab's work as "unholy" and deeming her "ungodly." Hence, these excerpts provide an excellent illustration of how the relatively liberal versus the relatively conservative churches discuss prostitution by emphasizing different moral concerns.

### ***Discussion***

This study shows how socio-political leaders use different moral objections to communicate with their target audience. Of course, we acknowledge that this observational analysis has certain limitations. For instance, the churches vary on metrics aside from political leaning (e.g., location, socio-economic status, racial demographics) that might explain the different moral objections. However, combined with the findings of subsequent controlled studies, we believe that these results do illustrate how liberal versus conservative leaders discuss bodily markets in the real world. Specifically, liberal and conservative pastors decry prostitution to be morally wrong; however, they emphasize different moral objections. Relatively conservative pastors were less concerned about the exploitation of sellers. However, relatively conservative pastors were more concerned about the violation of sanctity in these markets. Thus, these results demonstrate a context wherein a socio-political leader knows how to frame their message in ways that resonate with their audience.

It is important to note that the relatively liberal pastors also seemed concerned about the violation of sanctity. This is because the absolute level of moral concerns is context-dependent, and our predictions center around the differences within a sample. Notably, the ‘liberal’ pastors are still more conservative than the general population and should be considered more aligned with political moderates.

## **Study 2: Petition Campaigns**

We designed this study to examine how the different moral concerns can impact the marketing communications of advocacy campaigns. We examine this in the context of the current political debate around prostitution. Specifically, in June 2019, the New York state government introduced a bill to decriminalize prostitution (McKinley 2019). Subsequently, advocacy groups across the political spectrum launched petition campaigns to garner support from the general public and encourage consumer advocacy. We propose that liberals’ and conservatives’ sensitivity to the different moral concerns can impact the persuasiveness of targeted advocacy campaigns.

We designed two petitions that advocated against the New York state bill by highlighting either exploitation concerns or violation of sanctity concerns in prostitution. We then tested the effectiveness of these petitions in drawing support from liberals and conservatives. We hypothesized that liberals (vs. conservatives) would be more likely to endorse the petition opposing prostitution when it highlighted exploitation concerns. However, conservatives (vs. liberals) would be more likely to endorse the petition opposing prostitution when it highlighted violation of sanctity concerns. The study was preregistered (<https://osf.io/p5wxz>).

## *Method*

We recruited 500 participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk to complete the study online in exchange for a small monetary compensation ( $M_{age} = 37.17$  years, 49% female). We introduced participants to a study on political petitions and showed them a petition opposing the New York state's prostitution bill. Half the participants saw a petition which highlighted exploitation concerns in the prostitution market ("Prostitution is extremely harmful and coercive to women and children...Don't legalize prostitution"). The other half of the participants saw a petition which highlighted violation of sanctity concerns in the prostitution market ("Placing a monetary value on the body violates the inherent sanctity of the human body...Don't legalize prostitution"). We pretested these petitions to ensure that they increased the salience of the different concerns (see Appendix W2).

Below each petition, participants saw the text -- Click Here If You Are Willing To Support This Petition. The link will take you through the steps. Supporting this petition is voluntary and does not affect your study compensation. -- We measured whether the participant clicked on the hyperlink to support the petition as our main dependent variable.

Note, we routed the hyperlink to an error page instead of an actual petition. We did not actually make participants sign a petition. This is because making participants sign a petition against an existing government bill raises several ethical concerns, especially considering that our study involves experimental manipulation. Further, making participants sign a petition would violate their anonymity. Hence, due to these ethical challenges, we could only measure whether a participant clicked on the hyperlink. Importantly, from the participant's perspective, they viewed a request to sign a petition for a current ongoing political debate and voluntarily clicked on an external website to support the petition. Thus, this was a "real, consequential behavior" measure

in the sense that the participants thought they would be signing an actual petition when they clicked on the link.

Then, participants indicated their political identity on a 7-point slider scale (1: Extremely Liberal; 7: Extremely Conservative). Next, basic demographics were measured along with participants' religiosity. Finally, participants were debriefed. See Appendix W2 for details.

### **Results**

*Petition clicks.* First, we see that the percentage of participants that clicked on the exploitation petition (20.47%) and the percentage of participants that clicked on the sanctity petition (19.91%) were statistically indistinguishable ( $\chi^2(1) = .02, p = .877$ ). Next, we examined the relationship between the petition clicks and the participant's political identity. We performed a binary logistic regression with the petition click measure (1: Clicked on link, 0: Did not click on link) as the dependent variable. We included participant's political identity, petition-type (exploitation vs. sanctity), and their interaction term as predictor variables. Further, we also included demographics and religiosity as controls in the analysis. The results showed a significant interaction between political identity and the petition-type ( $B = 1.56, SE = .21, \chi^2(1) = 56.74, p < .001, 95\% CI [1.15, 1.96]$ ). As participants became more conservative, they demonstrated a lower likelihood of clicks for the exploitation petition (simple slope:  $B = -.68, SE = .13, \chi^2(1) = 27.91, p < .001, 95\% CI [-.93, -.43]$ ). However, as participants became more conservative, they showed a greater likelihood of clicks for the sanctity petition (simple slope:  $B = .88, SE = .17, \chi^2(1) = 27.25, p < .001, 95\% CI [.55, 1.21]$ ). See Figure 2 for graphical depiction of interaction.

Note, a supplementary analysis shows that religiosity is associated with greater petition clicks for the exploitation petition *and* the sanctity petition. Hence, religiosity cannot explain the differences between liberals and conservatives. See Appendix W2 for all detailed results.

**[Insert Figure 2 about here]**

### ***Discussion***

The results of this study reinforce the findings of the previous study and again confirm our central predictions. The relatively liberal participants were more likely to endorse a petition against prostitution that highlights exploitation concerns. However, the relatively conservative participants were more likely to endorse a petition against prostitution that highlights violation of sanctity concerns. Hence, the sensitivity to the different moral concerns predicts the persuasiveness of targeted consumer advocacy campaigns.

### **Study 3: Donation Campaigns**

We designed this study to examine how the different moral concerns can impact the effectiveness of marketing communications in political donation campaigns. Advocacy groups engaged with bodily markets often seek to raise donations for their political lobbying efforts. We examined how the different moral concerns impact the targeted donation campaigns aimed at legalizing commercial surrogacy. Note that the legal status of commercial surrogacy varies across the United States. Some states like California and Washington allow commercial payments for surrogacy, but other states like Michigan and Louisiana do not allow commercial payments for surrogacy. Further, countries across the world like the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, India, and China currently prohibit commercial surrogacy. Consequently,

many organizations worldwide are lobbying to legalize the commercial surrogacy market and often seek to raise donations to aid their advocacy efforts. We propose that the different moral concerns can explain the persuasiveness of donation appeal campaigns targeted towards liberals and conservatives.

We designed two charity advertisements to raise donations in support of legalizing surrogacy in the United States. Crucially, we framed the advertisement to either assuage concerns about exploitation or violation of sanctity that might arise from legalizing the commercial surrogacy market. We then tested the effectiveness of the two advertisements in raising donations from liberals and conservatives. We hypothesized that because liberals (vs. conservatives) are sensitive to exploitation concerns in bodily markets, they would be more likely to donate to legalize commercial surrogacy when the advertisement assuages exploitation concerns. However, because conservatives (vs. liberals) are sensitive to violation of sanctity concerns, they would be more likely to donate to legalize commercial surrogacy when the advertisement assuages violation of sanctity concerns. The study was preregistered (<https://osf.io/42pbr>).

### ***Method***

We recruited 505 participants from MTurk to complete the study online in exchange for a small monetary compensation ( $M_{\text{age}} = 37.38$  years, 50.4% female). We administered a donation paradigm adapted from Goenka and van Osselaer (2019). We ostensibly recruited participants for a study on reading comprehension. First, we asked participants to finish a word completion task to match the cover story. Then, we deployed a standard attention check (we preregistered the exclusion criterion). We removed fifty-nine participants (11.7% of the sample) who failed the attention check (Final  $N = 446$ ).

Next, we told participants that the main tasks of the study had ended, and we awarded them with a 50¢ bonus. Then, we told participants that our laboratory is participating in a fundraising drive. We showed them an advertisement for a non-profit advocacy group named ‘Resolve’ that works to legalize commercial surrogacy in the United States. We randomly assigned participants to view one of two advertisements for the charity. In the Exploitation condition, the advertisement utilized text that assuaged exploitation concerns that can arise from the commercial surrogacy market (“regulations will ensure that the surrogates receive fair compensation, access to healthcare, and access to legal support...”). In contrast, in the Sanctity condition, the advertisement utilized text that assuaged violation of sanctity concerns (“surrogacy will allow more couples to experience the joys of birth and celebrate the sanctity of human life...”). Importantly, we encouraged participants to visit the organization’s website and gather more information. Thus, participants were conscious of the fact that this charity was real and that the donation was consequential.

Below the advertisement, we appealed to the participants to donate a part of their bonus to the charity. They indicated the amount they were willing to donate on a continuous slider scale (0¢-50¢). Then participants indicated their political identity on a 7-point scale (1: Extremely Liberal; 7: Extremely Conservative). Finally, we measured basic demographics and religiosity, and then debriefed the participants. After data collection was complete, we made the appropriate donation to Resolve and gave each participant the remaining bonus amount based on their response. Appendix W3 provides details for all stimuli.

## ***Results***

*Donation Amount.* We analyzed the data using a Poisson regression. We included participant’s political identity, advertisement-type (exploitation vs. sanctity), and their interaction

term as predictor variables. Further, we also included demographics and religiosity as controls in the analysis. As predicted, we see a significant interaction between political identity and the advertisement-type ( $B = .29$ ,  $SE = .02$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 364.70$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.27, .33]).

Conservative political identity predicted lower donation amounts when the advertisement assuaged concerns about exploitation (simple slope:  $B = -.16$ ,  $SE = .01$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 179.34$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-.18, -.14]). However, conservative political identity predicted greater donation amounts when the advertisement assuaged concerns about sanctity (simple slope:  $B = .14$ ,  $SE = .01$ ,  $\chi^2(1) = 146.12$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.12, .16]). Figure 3 graphs the interaction.

Note, we see that religiosity predicts greater donation amounts for both advertisements. Hence, again religiosity cannot explain the differences between liberals and conservatives. See Appendix W3 for all detailed results.

**[Insert Figure 3 about here]**

### ***Discussion***

The results of this study reinforce the findings of the previous studies and again confirm our central predictions. Because liberals are more sensitive to exploitation concerns than conservatives, they donate more to legalize the commercial surrogacy market when the advertisement assuages exploitation concerns. In contrast, because conservatives are more sensitive to violation of sanctity concerns than liberals, they donate more to legalize the commercial surrogacy market when the advertisement assuages violation of sanctity concerns. Hence, the sensitivity to the different moral concerns predicts the persuasiveness of targeted donation appeal campaigns and influences consumer support in favor of legalizing these markets.

### **Study 4: Punitive Laws**

We designed this study to examine a policy implication of the different moral objections. Specifically, we examined how liberals and conservatives support different punitive laws to regulate these markets. The second aim of this study was to examine the causal effect of political identity on moral objections. While people's political identity and adherence to moral foundations are generally stable traits, people are susceptible to momentary shifts in their political identity and moral beliefs. That is, extant research has shown that it is possible to momentarily shift people towards becoming more liberal (or more conservative) (Ordabayeva and Fernandes 2018). Therefore, in this study, we manipulated the salience of liberal versus conservative identity and assessed the impact of this manipulation on the sensitivity to exploitation and sanctity concerns. Finally, we also sought to examine the underlying role of the different moral foundations in driving the effects.

We hypothesized that inducing a liberal (vs. conservative) identity will increase the sensitivity to exploitation concerns (H1a) and subsequently increase the desire to punish the buyer over the seller (H3a). However, inducing a conservative (vs. liberal) identity will increase sensitivity to violation of sanctity concerns in the markets (H2a) and subsequently lead to the desire to punish both the buyer and the seller (H3b). Further, we hypothesized that inducing a liberal identity would increase the salience of individualizing foundations, while inducing a conservative identity would increase the salience of the purity foundation. And, the different moral foundations would mediate the different moral concerns (H1b and H2b). The study was preregistered (<https://osf.io/jng3w>).

## ***Method***

We recruited 500 participants from MTurk to complete the study in exchange for a small monetary compensation ( $M_{\text{age}} = 37.04$  years, 51.9% female). First, we manipulated the salience of political identity using a procedure from Ordabayeva and Fernandes (2018). We randomly assigned participants to one of two political conditions and asked them to recall a social interaction on a political issue. In the liberal condition (conservative condition), we asked participants to write a paragraph about a social interaction where they felt they had a more liberal stance (conservative stance) than another person. Because the manipulation involved a subtle shift of political identity, it was essential to ensure that participants engaged with the task. We a priori decided to remove all participants who wrote less than one sentence in the task (we preregistered the exclusion criterion). Thus, we removed 67 participants (13% of the sample; Final N = 433).

Following the essay task, we administered a manipulation check. We asked participants to indicate their political identity on a slider scale (1: Extremely Liberal; 7: Extremely Conservative). Indeed, participants assigned to the conservative condition ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 1.83$ ) indicated a higher conservative identity than participants in the liberal condition ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = 1.71$ ;  $M_{\text{diff}} = .82$ ,  $SE = .17$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.48, 1.15]).

Then, we asked participants to complete the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (Graham et al. 2011). This is a widely used scale that assesses a person's adherence to the five moral foundations through 30 morality statements (e.g., "When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be ensuring that everyone is treated fairly," "I would call some acts wrong on the grounds that they are unnatural.") measured on a 6-point scale (0: Strongly Disagree; 5: Strongly Agree).

Following this, we asked participants to rate their moral opinions on five bodily markets – prostitution, surrogacy, blood plasma, kidney, and sperm. For each market, we asked participants two questions to assess their sensitivity to exploitation and violation of sanctity concerns in these markets – “To what extent does the commercial \_\_\_ market exploit vulnerable people” and “To what extent does the commercial \_\_\_ market violate the sanctity of the human body” (1: Not At All; 7: Extremely). In addition, we also asked them two questions that measured support for punitive laws in these markets. The first question measured blame towards the buyer -- Consider that the government is designing laws to make the \_\_\_\_\_ market a punishable offense. To what extent should the buyer - the person who pays money to buy \_\_\_\_\_ services - be punished (fines, prison time, etc.) for engaging in this behavior? (1: Not At All; 7: Extremely). The second question measured blame towards the seller -- Consider that the government is designing laws to make the \_\_\_\_\_ market a punishable offense. To what extent should the seller - the person who sells \_\_\_\_\_ services for money - be punished (fines, prison time, etc.) for engaging in this behavior? (1: Not At All; 7: Extremely). All participants answered the four questions for all five bodily markets, presented in a randomized order. Finally, we collected basic demographics and religiosity. Appendix W4 provides details for all stimuli.

## ***Results***

*Exploitation vs. sanctity concerns.* First, we examined whether the political identity manipulation influenced sensitivity to exploitation and sanctity concerns in bodily markets (Fig 4). We performed a 2 x 5 x 2 mixed factorial ANOVA with the exploitation and sanctity concern measures of the five body markets as the repeated dependent variables (i.e., ten repeated measures for each participant) and the politics condition as the between-subjects independent factor. Results showed a significant interaction between concern-type and the politics condition

( $F(1, 431) = 27.90, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .06$ ). The three-way interaction between concern-type, politics condition, and market replicates was not significant ( $F(4, 1724) = 1.74, p = .137, \eta_p^2 = .00$ ), indicating that the pattern of results is similar across the five bodily markets. Therefore, we now report results by aggregating across the five markets. See Appendix W4 for detailed means and tests for each of the five markets.

We explored the significant interaction between concern-type and politics condition using planned contrasts. Aggregating across the five markets, we see that inducing liberal identity ( $M = 4.26, SD = 1.34$ ) compared to conservative identity ( $M = 3.93, SD = 1.46$ ) significantly increased sensitivity to exploitation concerns ( $M_{diff} = .33, SE = .14, F(1, 431) = 5.95, p = .015, \eta_p^2 = .01$ ). In contrast, inducing conservative identity ( $M = 3.54, SD = 1.62$ ) compared to liberal identity ( $M = 3.18, SD = 1.55$ ) significantly increased sensitivity to violation of sanctity concerns ( $M_{diff} = .37, SE = .15, F(1, 431) = 5.71, p = .017, \eta_p^2 = .01$ ). Hence, these results show that inducing liberal versus conservative identity leads to endorsement of different moral concerns in bodily markets.

**[Insert Figure 4 about here]**

*Punishment measures.* Next, we examined how the manipulation influenced participants' views on punishment in bodily markets (Fig 5). We performed another  $2 \times 5 \times 2$  mixed factorial ANOVA with the buyer and seller punishment measures of the five bodily markets as the repeated dependent variables (i.e., ten repeated measures for each participant) and the politics condition as the between-subjects independent factor. Results showed a significant interaction between agent-type and the politics condition ( $F(1, 431) = 27.44, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .06$ ). Again, the three-way interaction between agent-type, politics condition, and market replicates was not

significant ( $F(4, 1724) = 1.98, p = .134, \eta_p^2 = .01$ ), suggesting that the pattern of results is similar across the five markets. Therefore, we now report results by aggregating across the markets. See Appendix W4 for detailed means and tests for each of the five markets.

We explored the interaction between agent-type and politics condition using planned contrasts. Aggregating across the five markets, we see that inducing liberal identity increased the desire to punish the buyer ( $M = 3.99, SD = 1.54$ ) compared to the seller ( $M = 3.15, SD = 1.64$ ;  $M_{diff} = .84, SE = .09, F(1, 431) = 77.76, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .15$ ). However, inducing conservative identity led to similar levels of desire to punish the buyer ( $M = 3.63, SD = 1.57$ ) and the seller ( $M = 3.51, SD = 1.62$ ;  $M_{diff} = .12, SE = .09, F(1, 431) = 1.52, p = .218, \eta_p^2 = .00$ ). Looking at the contrasts another way, we see that inducing liberal identity compared to conservative identity significantly increased the willingness to punish the buyer ( $M_{diff} = .36, SE = .15, F(1, 431) = 5.73, p = .017, \eta_p^2 = .01$ ). However, inducing conservative identity compared to liberal identity significantly increased willingness to punish the seller ( $M_{diff} = .36, SE = .16, F(1, 431) = 5.22, p = .023, \eta_p^2 = .01$ ). Hence, these results suggest that liberals versus conservatives support different types of punitive laws to govern bodily markets.

**[Insert Figure 5 about here]**

*Mediation analyses.* Next, we examined how the different moral foundations mediated the effect of the political identity manipulation on moral concerns (Fig. 6). We performed a mediation analysis using PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes 2013). A dummy variable for the liberal condition was the independent variable, the score of the individualizing values was the mediator, and exploitation concern was the dependent variable. The analysis revealed that the mediation was significant (standardized indirect effect [.01, .13]). Then, we performed another mediation analysis using a dummy variable for the conservative condition as the independent variable, the

scores of the purity moral value as the mediator, and violation of sanctity concern as the dependent variable. This mediation pathway was also significant (standardized indirect effect [.03, .24]). Hence, these results show that (1) liberals' adherence to the individualizing values increases sensitivity to exploitation concerns, and (2) conservatives' adherence to the purity values increases sensitivity to violation of sanctity concerns.

**[Insert Figure 6 about here]**

Next, we also performed serial mediation analyses to test how the moral foundations and the moral concerns together mediate the effect of political identity on punishment measures. First, we performed a mediation analysis using PROCESS Model 6 (Hayes 2013). A dummy variable for the liberal condition was the independent variable, the score of the individualizing values was the first mediator, exploitation concern was the second mediator, and desire to punish the buyer was the dependent variable. The analysis revealed that the serial mediation pathway was significant (standardized indirect effect [.002, .07]). Thus, liberals' desire to punish the buyer is driven by the individualizing values and exploitation concerns.

Then, we performed another mediation analysis using a dummy variable for the conservative condition as the independent variable, the score of the purity moral value as the first mediator, violation of sanctity concern as the second mediator, and desire to punish the buyer as the dependent variable. The mediation pathway was significant (standardized indirect effect [.01, .11]). Finally, in the third serial mediation analysis, we tested the path from conservative condition over purity moral value and violation of sanctity concern to desire to punish the seller and again found a significant mediation pathway (standardized indirect effect [.02, .14]). Hence, conservatives' desire to punish both the buyer and seller is driven by the purity moral value and violation of sanctity concerns.

Finally, we also tested alternate mediation models by varying the mediators and direction of the pathways. However, none of the alternate models can explain the pattern of results better. See Appendix W4 for detailed results of all mediation models.

### ***Discussion***

The results of this study extend the previous findings to support our central propositions. First, they demonstrate the causal effect of political identity on the different moral concerns. Inducing a liberal (vs. conservative) identity increased sensitivity to exploitation concerns in bodily markets. However, inducing a conservative (vs. liberal) identity increased sensitivity to violation of sanctity concern in bodily markets. Consequently, liberals were more likely than conservatives to punish the buyer, but conservatives were more likely than liberals to punish the seller in these markets. Notably, conservatives were equally likely to punish the buyer and seller. Furthermore, liberals' (conservatives') moral attitudes to bodily markets were driven by the individualizing (purity) moral foundations.

Note, as stated previously, our propositions are centered around the differences between liberals and conservatives and not on the absolute levels of moral concerns (c.f. Study 1). This is because the relevance of the moral concerns is context-dependent. Thus, we see that the exploitation concerns remain high across the board for the relatively liberal MTurk population even after the subtle conservative identity manipulation.

### **Study 5: Live vs. Dead Bodily Products**

We designed this study to examine a moderator of our findings. Specifically, we propose that the political differences in moral objections should manifest for live bodily products but

attenuate for dead products (which we define as irrevocably not alive). Thus, we measured people's moral attitudes towards a range of bodily markets representing live and dead products. We hypothesized a main effect of product type on moral objections to the markets such that liberals and conservatives show stronger moral objections to the trade of live products than to the trade of dead products. Further, we predicted that for live bodily products, liberals (relative to conservatives) would see greater scope for exploitation, but conservatives (relative to liberals) would see greater scope for violation of sanctity. We also predicted that political differences would be attenuated for dead bodily products (H4). The study was preregistered (<https://osf.io/zphek>).

Note, the second aim of this study was to rule out the possibility that moral attitudes are entirely contingent upon the legality of the market. Therefore, all the markets examined in this study are legally permitted in the United States. This allows us to ascertain that the effects are not particular to illegal markets only.

### ***Method***

We recruited 316 undergraduates from a large public university in the Southern U.S. to complete the study in exchange for course credit ( $M_{\text{age}} = 20.2$  years, 57% female). First, participants were asked their moral opinions about three bodily markets that involved the trade of live products (sperm, ovum, bone marrow) and three bodily markets that involved the trade of dead products (hair, nails, urine). Note that all six commercial markets are legal in the United States. For each market, we asked participants to indicate their moral objection to the market – “I think the commercial \_\_\_\_ market is” (1: Morally acceptable in most or all cases; 7: Morally wrong in moral or all cases). And, we asked two questions to assess their sensitivity to exploitation and violation of sanctity concerns in these markets (same measures as Study 4). All

participants answered the three questions for all six bodily markets, presented in a randomized order.

Then we administered a standard attention check. We removed twenty-three participants who failed the attention check (Final N = 293). Next, participants indicated their political identity, religiosity, and basic demographics. Appendix W5 provides details for all stimuli.

## **Results**

*Moral Evaluations.* First, we examined whether political identity and bodily product type (live vs. dead) influenced moral objection to bodily markets. We performed a random-effects regression analysis where the moral evaluation measures of the six markets were included as the dependent variable (i.e., six repeated measures per participant). Political identity, product type, and their interaction term were the fixed effects predictor variables. Further, we included demographics and religiosity as controls in the analysis. We included dummy variables representing the different markets as controls. We treated Participant as a random effect to account for unobserved heterogeneity. We found a main effect of product type on moral evaluations, such that dead products generated weaker moral objections than live products ( $B = -.77$ ,  $SE = .19$ ,  $t = -4.16$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-1.14, -.41]). However, confirming the results from Study 1, political identity did not significantly predict moral evaluations ( $B = .06$ ,  $SE = .05$ ,  $t = 1.27$ ,  $p = .203$ , 95% CI [-.03, .15]). Further, as expected, the interaction between political identity and product type (dead vs. live) was not significant ( $B = -.01$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $t = -.32$ ,  $p = .751$ , 95% CI [-.10, .07]). Thus, we see again that liberals and conservatives seemed equally opposed to all bodily markets. See Appendix W5 for details.

*Exploitation vs. sanctity concerns.* Next, we examined the relationship between political identity, product type, and sensitivity to exploitation and sanctity concerns in the markets (see

Fig 7). We included exploitation and sanctity concerns measures as the dependent variables (i.e., twelve repeated measures per participant) and political identity, product type, and their interaction term as predictor variables. The analysis included the same controls as above. Results show a significant three-way interaction between political identity, concern-type, and product-type ( $B = -.47$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $t = -8.01$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI  $[-.58, -.35]$ ).

For live bodily products, we see that conservative identity predicts less sensitivity to exploitation concerns ( $B = -.18$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $t = -4.01$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI  $[-.26, -.09]$ ) but greater sensitivity to sanctity concerns ( $B = .33$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $t = 7.61$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI  $[.25, .42]$ ). Thus, these results replicate the findings of the previous studies to show that for live bodily products, liberals and conservatives are sensitive to different moral concerns. In contrast, for dead bodily products, we see that conservative identity does not significantly predict sensitivity to exploitation concerns ( $B = .04$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $t = .84$ ,  $p = .404$ , 95% CI  $[-.05, .12]$ ) and only marginally predicts sensitivity to the sanctity concerns ( $B = .08$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $t = 1.78$ ,  $p = .075$ , 95% CI  $[-.01, .16]$ ). Thus, the effect of political identity on exploitation and sanctity concerns is attenuated when bodily products are dead. See Appendix W5 for detailed results.

**[Insert Figure 7 about here]**

*Mediation analysis.* Next, we examined how the effect of product type on moral evaluations of bodily markets can be explained by liberals' and conservatives' differing sensitivity to exploitation and sanctity concerns (Fig. 8). We performed a mediation analysis using PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes 2013). A dummy variable for the product type (live vs. dead) was the independent variable, and the moral evaluation of the market was the dependent variable. We included scores for exploitation concern and violation of sanctity concern as two parallel mediators with political identity as the moderator. The analysis controlled for demographics. The

results show that the indirect effect through exploitation concern was significant (index of moderated mediation [.04, .11]). And the indirect effect through violation of sanctity concern was also significant (index of moderated mediation [-.20, -.09]). This indicates that live (vs. dead) bodily products increased sensitivity to exploitation concerns, but this effect is stronger for liberals. Moreover, live (vs. dead) products increased sensitivity to sanctity concerns, but this effect is stronger for conservatives. Further, the level of exploitation and sanctity concerns together drive the moral objections to bodily markets. See Appendix W5 for detailed results.

**[Insert Figure 8 about here]**

### ***Discussion***

This study shows that the type of bodily product moderates the political differences in moral objections. Namely, for live bodily markets, we see that liberals and conservatives demonstrate different moral objections. However, for dead bodily markets, we find that these effects are attenuated. Thus, the moral attitudes towards bodily markets can vary contingent upon the nature of the products. Importantly, this study also shows that the moral objections manifest for legal markets, not just illegal markets.

## **General Discussion**

### ***Summary***

We report five studies that examined liberals' and conservatives' moral attitudes towards bodily markets. Study 1 assessed how socio-political leaders use different moral objections (exploitation vs. violation of sanctity) in real-world discourse to communicate with their target audience. Study 2 demonstrated how the different moral concerns impact the persuasiveness of targeted advocacy campaigns. Study 3 demonstrated how the different moral concerns impact the

persuasiveness of targeted donation appeals. Study 4 demonstrated causality by showing that inducing liberal versus conservative political identity changed sensitivity to the different moral concerns. Further, this study also demonstrated that liberals are more likely to punish the buyers over the sellers, but conservatives prefer to punish both the buyers and the sellers in bodily markets. Finally, study 5 showed that the political differences in moral concerns manifest for bodily markets with live bodily products but attenuate for markets in dead bodily products.

Note, the studies also demonstrate that religiosity predicts greater sensitivity to both exploitation and violation of sanctity concerns. Thus, variation in religiosity cannot explain the differences observed between liberals and conservatives.

### ***Theoretical Contributions***

As outlined before, several scholars in philosophy, legal studies, medical sciences, feminism, and sociology have deliberated upon the morality of bodily markets (Arunachalam and Shah 2008; Chadwick 1989; Erin and Harris 2003; Sandel 2012; Satz 2012; Shrage 1989). However, these works have primarily taken a prescriptive approach to present a case for or against the permissibility of bodily markets.

In this research, we take a descriptive approach to understand *why* people morally object to bodily markets. Specifically, we find that both liberals and conservatives object to bodily markets but do so for different reasons. Liberals, more than conservatives, tend to be sensitive to exploitation concerns in these markets, while conservatives, more than liberals, tend to be sensitive to violation of sanctity concerns in the markets. Consequently, this is the first research, to the best of our knowledge, to demonstrate the heterogeneity in moral objections to bodily markets across the political spectrum.

These results generate theoretical contributions for the fields of political identity and morality. Several researchers have examined how political identity shapes consumption behaviors (Farmer, Kidwell, and Hardesty 2020; Kidwell, Farmer, and Hardesty 2013; Kim, Park, and Dubois 2018; Krishna and Sokolova 2017; Ordabayeva and Fernandes 2018; Winterich, Zhang, and Mittal 2012). Similarly, other researchers have examined how consumer morality influences market preferences (Bhattacharjee, Berman, and Reed 2013; Campbell and Winterich 2018; Goenka and van Osselaer 2019; Goenka and Thomas 2020; Mick 2016; Olson et al. 2016; Winterich, Mittal, and Ross 2009). While these works present a rich understanding of consumer politics, consumer morality, and market preferences, one cannot extrapolate the findings from these extant works to bodily markets. This is because bodily markets represent unique psychological challenges that do not allow extension from previously studied domains (i.e., recycling, prosocial behaviors, status goods, etc.). Importantly, none of the extant works have examined how political orientation is associated with the different moral concerns (exploitation vs. sanctity) outlined in this research. Thus, our demonstration of the different moral concerns extends our theoretical understanding of political identity and morality.

### ***Practical Implications***

This research helps policymakers understand people's (and each other's) concerns about bodily markets, as well as how their actions might impact those concerns. For example, our findings in Study 1 shed light on understanding the socio-political discourse around bodily markets. Specifically, the findings show one context (pastor sermons) where a leader knows how to frame their message in a manner that resonates with their target audiences.

Our findings also help elucidate the different punitive laws that liberals and conservatives would support to regulate bodily markets. Our findings show that liberals are more likely to

support laws that punish the buyer over the seller. However, conservatives are more likely to support laws that punish both the buyer and seller. Notably, we can find support for our findings in prostitution laws across the world. For instance, many liberal countries (e.g., Norway, Canada, France) have adopted the ‘Nordic Model’ for prostitution wherein only the buyer (client) is punished, and the seller (sex worker) faces no legal charges (Mathieson, Branam, and Noble 2015). On the other hand, in more conservative countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia, China, UAE, USA), both the buyer and seller face legal charges for engaging in prostitution (Clark-Flory 2010). Hence, our findings explain why these countries have adopted different laws in accordance with their political leaning.

This research also produces insights about advocacy groups and political organizations that “advertise” and “market” their views to raise awareness, solicit donations, and encourage public discourse around these markets. Our findings show that liberals are more likely to endorse a petition opposing prostitution when the petition highlights exploitation concerns. However, conservatives are more likely to endorse a petition opposing prostitution when the petition highlights violation of sanctity concerns. Thus, the different moral concerns can impact the efficacy of targeted marketing campaigns used by advocacy groups.

Moreover, our findings can also provide insights about organizations working to legalize bodily markets across the world. Advocacy groups promoting legalization efforts typically face difficulty in addressing ethical concerns and amassing public support. Our results suggest that assuaging exploitation concerns will increase support and donations from liberals. But, assuaging violation of sanctity concerns will increase support and donations from conservatives.

### ***Limitations and Future Research***

The present research is the first step in understanding the heterogeneous moral objections towards bodily markets. As such, our findings present many avenues for subsequent research. First, we found a similar pattern of results across the seven (live) bodily markets investigated (prostitution, surrogacy, kidney, blood plasma, sperm, ovum, bone marrow). We do demonstrate one moderator of the moral objections – dead vs. live bodily products. Future research might investigate additional moderators and boundary conditions. For instance, opposition to the markets might be stronger for individuals higher on moral identity (Reed, Aquino, and Levy 2007). Relatedly, future research can also examine demographic moderators for the effects. That is, how do the moral objections differ across gender and age for the different markets? Exploratory analyses did not find any consistent effects for differences across the demographics; therefore, we do not report any findings. However, we encourage researchers to perform their own analysis of our data and use our research as starting point to explore demographic differences.

Lastly, future research can explore whether our findings generalize to domains adjacent to bodily markets. For instance, we would not consider medical drug trials as a bodily market, but they can also present scope for exploitation and sanctity violation. Similarly, recreational drug markets can also present scope for these moral concerns. Hence, we encourage researchers to utilize our paradigms to investigate the heterogeneity in moral attitudes in other markets and strengthen the bridge between marketing research and policy issues.

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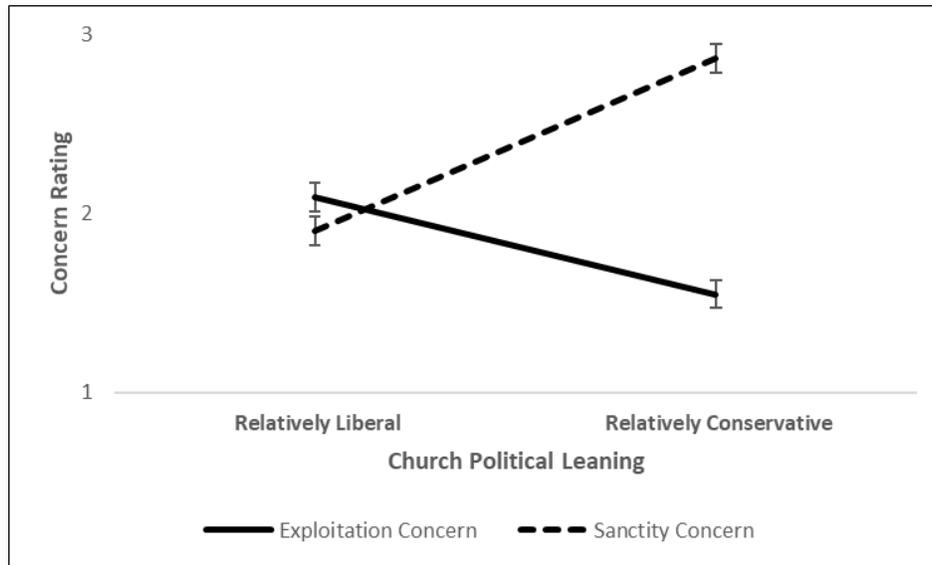
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**TABLE 1**  
**SUMMARY OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

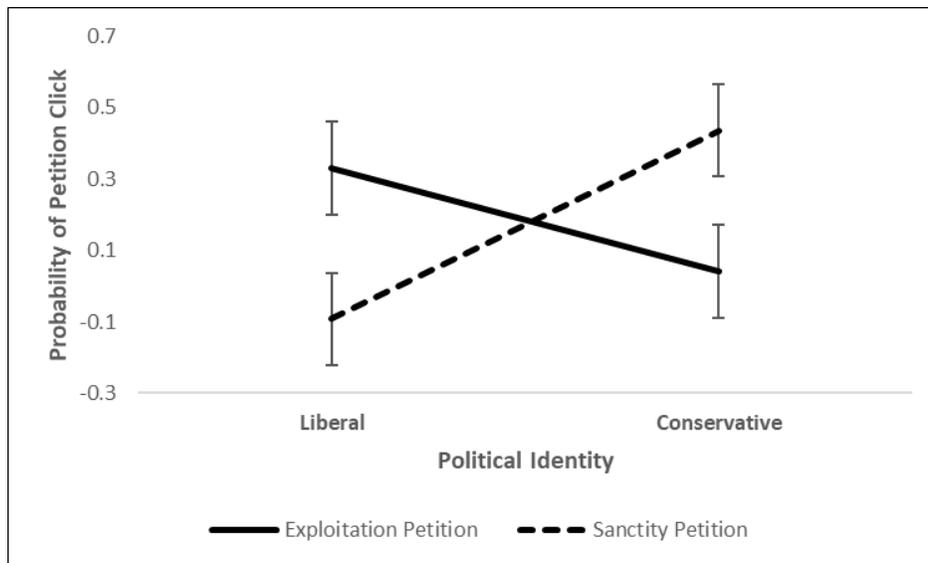
<b>Study No.</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Key Dependent Variables</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>
<b>Study 1</b>	Examine how leaders utilize the different moral objections in real-world discourse	Database of church sermons on prostitution (N = 112)	Political leaning of the church	Exploitation and violation of sanctity concerns (coded by RAs)	Liberal (conservative) pastors tend to highlight exploitation (violation of sanctity) concerns
<b>Study 2</b>	Show impact in advocacy campaigns	MTurk Participants (N = 500)	Petitions against prostitution (Exploitation vs. Sanctity concern highlighted) x Political Identity	Clicking on a hyperlink to sign the petition	Liberals (conservatives) tend to sign the petition against prostitution when it highlights exploitation (violation of sanctity) concerns
<b>Study 3</b>	Show impact in political donation campaigns	MTurk Participants (N = 446)	Charity appeal supporting commercial surrogacy (Exploitation vs. Sanctity concern assuaged) x Political Identity	Amount of bonus donated to the charity	Liberals (conservatives) tend to donate to legalize surrogacy when exploitation (violation of sanctity) concerns are assuaged
<b>Study 4</b>	Show impact in support for punitive laws; demonstrate causality.	MTurk Participants (N = 433)	Politics Prime (Liberal vs. Conservative) x 5 bodily markets replicates	Exploitation and violation of sanctity concerns; desire to punish buyer and seller	Liberals wish to punish the buyer; conservatives wish to punish the buyer and seller. Effect of political identity on moral concerns is causal.
<b>Study 5</b>	Show moderation by bodily product type	Undergraduate Students (N = 293)	Product Type (Live vs. Dead) x 3 nested bodily markets replicates x Political Identity	Exploitation and violation of sanctity concerns	Political differences manifest for live products but attenuate for dead products.

**FIGURE 1**  
**MORAL CONCERNS EXPRESSED FOR PROSTITUTION ACROSS CHURCH POLITICAL LEANING (STUDY 1)**



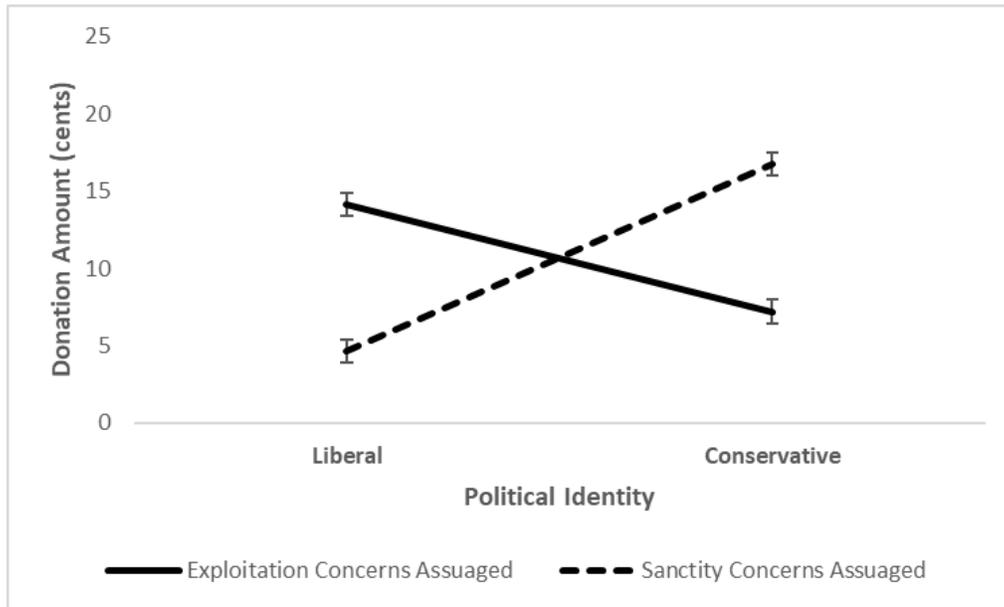
Note: Values on vertical axis represent regression predicted values of concern ratings. Values on horizontal axis represent church political leaning at 16<sup>th</sup> percentile (liberal) and 84<sup>th</sup> percentile (conservative). Errors bars represent ± 1 SE.

**FIGURE 2**  
**PROBABILITY OF PETITION CLICKS BY MORAL CONCERN AND POLITICAL IDENTITY (STUDY 2)**



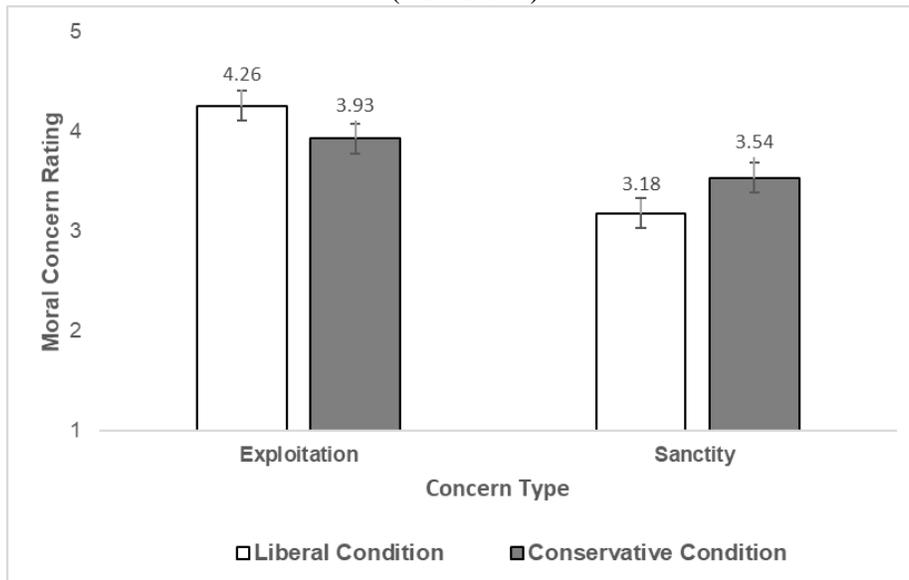
Note: Values on vertical axis represent regression predicted probabilities. Values on horizontal axis represent participant political identity at 16<sup>th</sup> percentile (liberal) and 84<sup>th</sup> percentile (conservative). Errors bars represent ± 1 SE.

**FIGURE 3**  
DONATION AMOUNT BY MORAL CONCERN AND POLITICAL IDENTITY (STUDY 3)



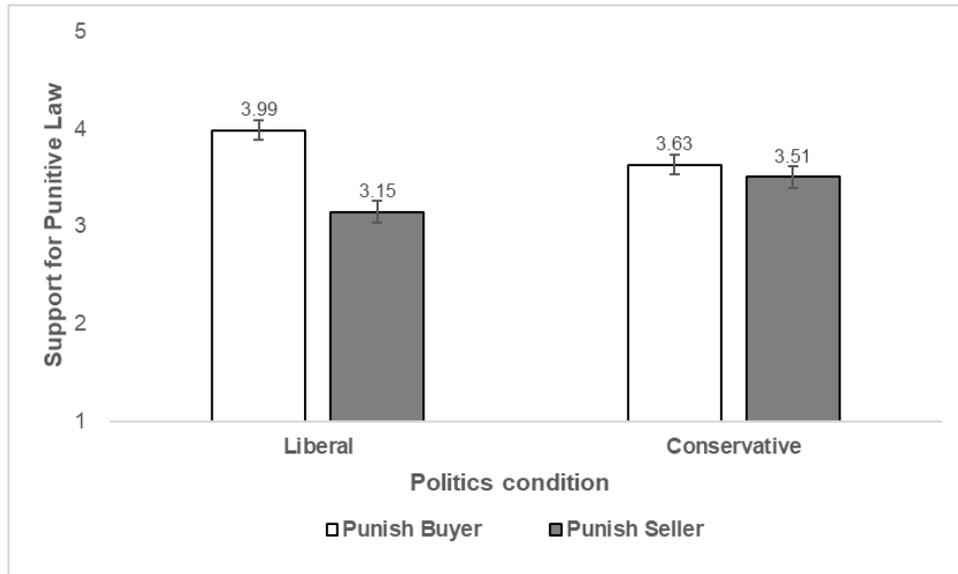
Note: Values on vertical axis represent mean regression predicted donation amounts. Values on horizontal axis represent participant political identity at 16<sup>th</sup> percentile (liberal) and 84<sup>th</sup> percentile (conservative). Errors bars represent  $\pm 1$  SE.

**FIGURE 4**  
MORAL CONCERNS ABOUT BODILY MARKETS ACROSS POLITICAL CONDITION (STUDY 4)



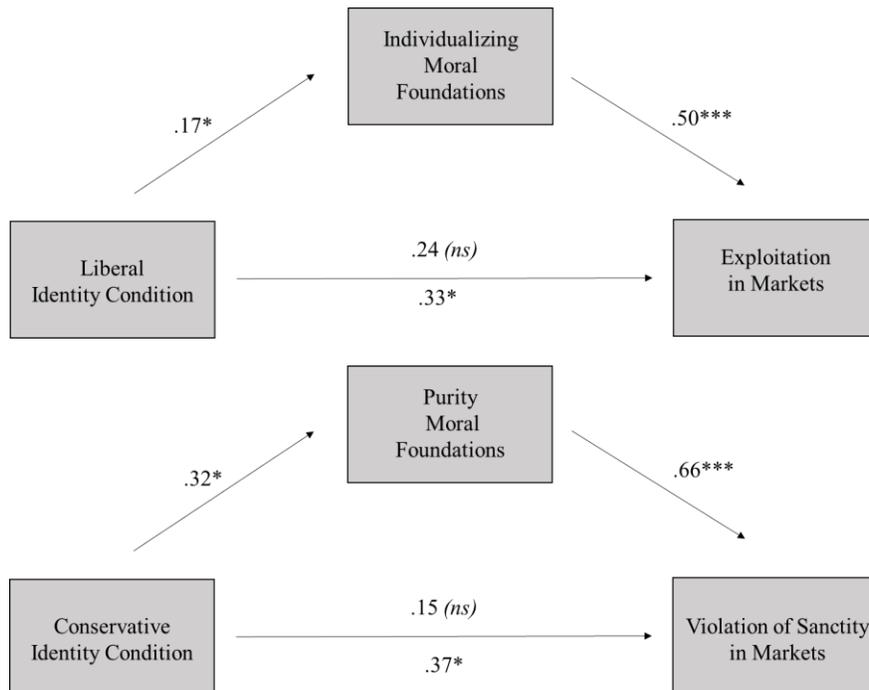
Note: Values on vertical axis represents moral concerns about bodily markets (exploitation vs. sanctity). Errors bars represent  $\pm 1$  SE.

**FIGURE 5**  
SUPPORT FOR PUNITIVE LAWS FOR BODILY MARKETS ACROSS POLITICAL  
CONDITION (STUDY 4)



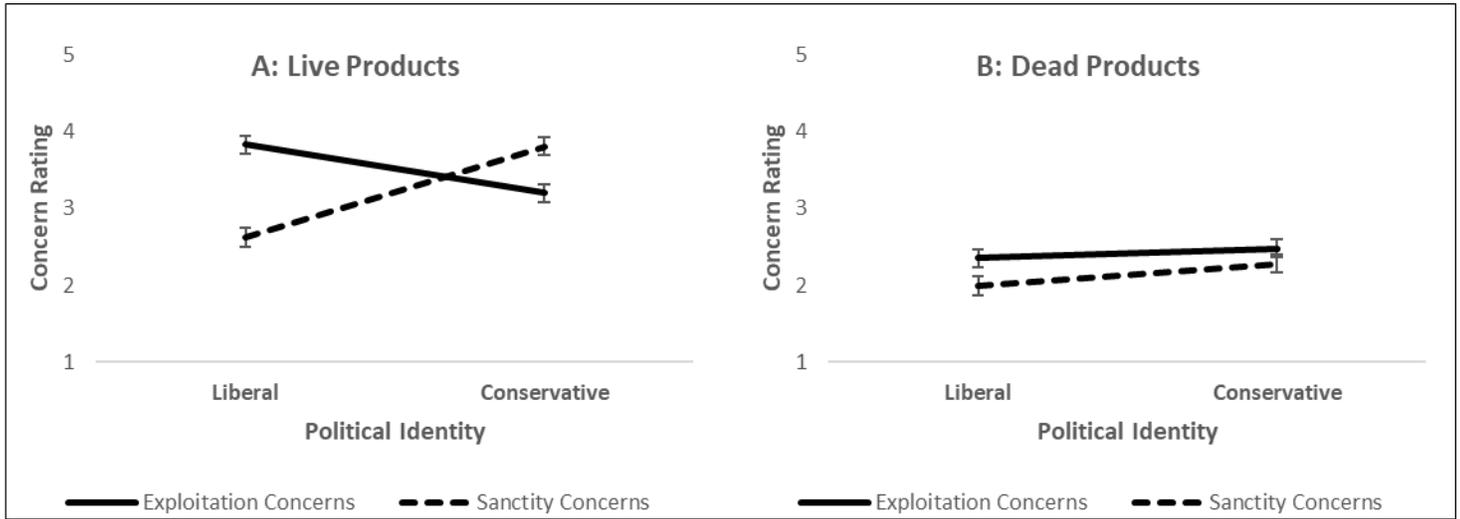
Note: Vertical axis represents the likelihood of supporting the punitive law in the market (punish buyer vs. punish seller). Errors bars represent  $\pm 1$  SE.

**FIGURE 6**  
MEDIATION ANALYSES (STUDY 4)



Note: Figure represents two separate mediation analyses. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**FIGURE 7**  
**SENSITIVITY TO EXPLOITATION AND SANCTITY CONCERN BY POLITICAL IDENTITY AND PRODUCT TYPE (STUDY 5)**



Note: Values on vertical axis represent mean moral concern rating (regression predicted). Values on horizontal axis represent participant political identity at 16<sup>th</sup> percentile (liberal) and 84<sup>th</sup> percentile (conservative). Panel A represents the live bodily products and Panel B represents the dead bodily products. Errors bars represent  $\pm 1$  SE.

**FIGURE 8**  
**MEDIATION ANALYSIS (STUDY 5)**

