An Empirical Exploration of Moral Foundations Theory in Partisan News Sources

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Moral Foundations Theory (MFT)
- Care / Harm: Valuing compassion and kindness, condemning malice and suffering.
- Fairness / Cheating: The endorsement of equality, reciprocity, egalitarianism, and universal rights.
- Ingroup Loyalty / Betrayal: Valuing patriotism and special treatment of one’s own ingroup.
- Authority / Subversion: Valuing existing or traditional hierarchies, social structures, and leadership roles.
- Purity / Degradation: Disapproval of dirtiness, unholiness, and impurity.

Datasets
- MIT Mediacloud sampled word counts
- 17 Issues
- 3 Partisan Sides: Conservative, Liberal, Libertarian
- Classification on web-scraped articles

Figure 1: Cosine similarity between issues.

Figure 2: Top 40 words by log-odds ratio.

Chart 2: Relative differences in MFT word usage.

Table 1: Most common words from the MFT dictionaries.

- Care: [List of words]
- Fairness: [List of words]
- Loyalty: [List of words]
- Authority: [List of words]
- Sanctity: [List of words]