



Moral chronicity and social information processing: Tests of a social cognitive approach to the moral personality

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Abstract

Following Higgins, King, and Mavin (1982) chronicity paradigm, we examined the effects of chronically accessed moral constructs for prototypic moral character using two different research paradigms, spontaneous trait inferencing and lexical decision. Study 1 presented target sentences in a deliberate or spontaneous processing condition. Recall was cued with either a dispositional or semantic cue. Moral chronics made more spontaneous trait inferences with dispositional cues than semantic cues. In Study 2, participants read stories about characters who did or did not help. Moral chronics were faster responding to probes reflecting negative evaluations of story characters who did not help when requested (e.g., “disloyal”). Findings support claims that the moral personality is usefully conceptualized in terms of the chronic accessibility of moral knowledge structures.

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22 1. Introduction

23 In recent years there has been a remarkable resurgence of interest in studying moral
24 rationality within the broader context of moral personality, selfhood, and identity to
25 account more adequately for issues of character and virtue (e.g., Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004;
26 Lapsley & Power, 2005). These topics were largely pushed to the margins of research in
27 moral psychology by the ascendance of the cognitive developmental tradition, notably
28 Kohlberg's theory of moral development (Kohlberg, 1981, 1983). Kohlberg rejected char-
29 acter as a basis for moral development for a number of reasons. He argued that the lan-
30 guage of character traits does not provide the resources to combat ethical relativism
31 (because one person's *integrity* is another person's *stubbornness*); that it cannot provide
32 guidance for moral education (because it involves sampling arbitrarily from a "bag of vir-
33 tues"); and that the psychological reality of traits is much in doubt (because the cross-situ-
34 ational consistency of traits has not been adequately demonstrated). Moreover, the
35 Kantian and Piagetian sources of Kohlberg's theory led him to focus on those aspects of
36 morality (deontic judgments of duty and obligation) that could be stage-typed (justice rea-
37 soning), at the expense of more traditional "Aristotelian" concerns, such as the cultivation
38 of virtuous character.

39 Although the Piagetian stage-and-structure approach to justice reasoning has yielded
40 an enormously productive research program over the years, there is also growing recogni-
41 tion that moral reasoning cannot be abstracted cleanly from the complex dynamic system
42 of selfhood and personality of which it is both part and product (Blasi, 2005). If character
43 is the moral dimension of personality, then the explanatory reach of moral psychology
44 must be grounded on, or at least compatible with, well-attested models of personality.
45 Unfortunately, there has been little history of cross-pollinating work across the two
46 domains of psychology. For example, researchers in personality psychology rarely attempt
47 to account for the dispositional aspects of moral functioning, or to derive robust implica-
48 tions of personality theories for constructs of interest to the moral domain, such as moral
49 selfhood, identity and character (for notable exceptions, see Bandura, 1986; Bandura,
50 1991). In turn, researchers in moral psychology rarely avail themselves of the theoretical
51 resources, constructs and mechanisms of personality psychology for conceptualizing the
52 moral *person* who discerns issues, constructs reasons, forms an identity, sets goals, favors
53 projects, makes commitments, pursues justice, and otherwise attempts to live well the life
54 that is good for one to live.

55 But two research programs have attempted recently to frame integrative accounts of the
56 moral personality, and in a way that aligns with the two distinct disciplines of personality
57 psychology. According to Cervone (1991) personality psychology divides on the question
58 of which units should best conceptualize personality. One discipline favors trait/disposi-
59 tional constructs and understands personality structure in terms of between-person varia-
60 tion as described by certain interindividual taxonomic systems (e.g., the Big 5 trait
61 variables). The second discipline favors cognitive-affective constructs, or social-cognitive
62 units, and understands personality structure in terms of within-person processes (Cervone,
63 2005). Each discipline of personality psychology has attracted interest with respect to inte-
64egrative theories of moral personality.

65 For example, Walker and his colleagues examined the personality structure of moral
66 exemplars with respect to the Big 5 trait dimensions. In one study (Walker and Pitts, 1998)
67 three types of moral exemplars were studied: brave, caring and just. Brave individuals were

68 found to align with a complex of traits associated with the extraversion dimension, caring
69 individuals aligned with agreeableness, while just individuals aligned with a complex mix-
70 ture of conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness to experience. This pattern was
71 largely replicated in a subsequent study (Walker & Hennig, 2004, Study 2) that related pro-
72 totype descriptors of moral exemplars with the interpersonal circumplex and five-factor
73 models of personality as assessed by the Revised Interpersonal Adjectives Scales-Big 5
74 (Wiggins, 1995). The just prototype, for example, was described as a moderate blend of
75 nurturance and dominance, and aligned with Conscientiousness and Openness to Experi-
76 ence. Matsuba and Walker (2004) showed that the personality of young adults who were
77 nominated for their moral exemplarity was characterized by traits associated with the
78 agreeableness dimension (Matsuba and Walker, 2004).

79 In contrast to a traits/dispositions approach we have attempted to understand moral
80 personality from the perspective of social-cognitive theory (Lapsley, 1996, 1999; Lapsley &
81 Narvaez, 2004, 2000; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2005). The social-cognitive approach attempts to
82 explain the cross-situational coherence of personality, and its variability, not by appealing
83 to broad-band descriptive traits, but rather by a “bottom-up” analysis of the causal mech-
84 anisms, structures and processes of social information-processing (Cervone, 1997; Cervone
85 & Shoda, 1999a). It asserts that knowledge accessibility and knowledge activation are gen-
86 eral principles of cognitive functioning (Higgins, 1990; Higgins, 1996), and that the activa-
87 tion of available mental representations is critical for processing social information.
88 According to this view, chronically accessible constructs are at a higher level of activation
89 than are inaccessible constructs, and are processed so efficiently so as to approach automa-
90 ticity (Bargh, 1989). These constructs “include knowledge of social situations, representa-
91 tions of self, others and prospective events, personal goals, beliefs and expectations and
92 knowledge of behavioral alternatives and task strategies” (Cervone & Shoda, 1999b, p. 18),
93 and are variously conceptualized as schemas, scripts, prototypes, and similar constructs
94 (Hastie, 1981; Mischel, 1990).

95 Moreover, there are individual differences in the availability and accessibility of these
96 knowledge structures (Higgins et al., 1982; Higgins, 1986), and, as such, should properly be
97 considered a personality variable (Higgins, 1999). The source of individual differences in
98 construct accessibility lies in the particularities of each person’s unique developmental his-
99 tory (Bargh, Lombardi, & Higgins, 1988). It is assumed, for example, that accessibility
100 results from a developmental history of frequent and consistent experience with a specific
101 domain of social behavior, so that accessible constructs are readily activated for interpret-
102 ing interpersonal experience. Chronic accessibility would also influence our impression of
103 others and our memory for social events such that individuals with non-overlapping acces-
104 sible constructs would have quite different interpretations and recollections of the same
105 event.

106 This has been demonstrated in a number of studies. In a classic study, for example, Hig-
107 gins et al. (1982) measured subjects’ chronically accessible constructs by asking them to list
108 the traits of a person they liked, disliked, sought out, avoided, and frequently encountered.
109 Trait chronicity was determined by primacy of output. A trait was considered “chronic” if
110 it was listed first in response to one or more questions, and “non-chronic” if it was not
111 listed at all for any question. One week later subjects returned to participate in an ostensi-
112 bly unrelated study on “psycholinguistics” conducted by a different experimenter. Each
113 subject read individually tailored essays containing trait-related descriptions of a target
114 person. Half the traits used in the target descriptions were chronic for each subject, and

half were non-chronic. On measures of spontaneous impression and recall subjects were significantly more likely to include information related to chronic traits than non-chronic traits. Moreover, there is evidence that the effect of chronic accessibility on impression and memory are stable over time and guide the processing over a wide variety of objects (Anderson, Glassman, Chen, & Cole, 1995; Bargh et al., 1988; Higgins & Brendle, 1995; Higgins et al., 1982; Lau, 1989).

We have adapted this framework to account for the moral personality (Lapsley, 1996, 1999; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004, 2005). We argue that moral personality is best understood as the chronic accessibility of moral constructs for construing social events. On this account a moral person, or a person who has a moral identity or a moral character would be one for whom moral schemas are chronically accessible, readily primed and easily activated for processing information.

Two additional claims are made. First, moral chronicity is a dimension of individual differences. It is a major determinant of moral personality in the sense that chronically accessible moral knowledge structures are also those that are essential, central and important for one's self-identity. Virtuous individuals are those for whom moral constructs are chronically accessible, but individuals may well differ in the sort of moral constructs that are available, and, indeed, for many individuals, it is non-moral constructs that are chronically accessible for processing social information.

Second, moral chronicity accounts for the fact that many moral dispositions are automatically engaged by individuals for whom moral categories are chronically accessible. This is seen, for example, in Colby and Damon's (1992) analysis of "moral exemplars" whose lives of extraordinary moral commitment were largely absent protracted moral deliberation. Instead, many of these individuals reported that they "just knew" what was required of them, automatically as it were, without engaging in the elaborate decision-making calculus envisioned by Kohlberg's account of principled moral reasoning. The automaticity of moral information processing characteristic of these individuals is perhaps the result of chronically accessible schemas that encourage spontaneous moral inferences to guide behavior.

In the present studies we attempted to test important claims of the social-cognitive approach to moral personality using two different experimental paradigms. In Study 1 we employed the spontaneous trait inference (STI) paradigm to examine whether individuals with chronically accessible moral schemas would be more likely to make spontaneous moral trait inferences than would individuals with other kinds of schemas chronically accessible. In Study 2 we employed a lexical decision-making task to examine whether individual differences in moral chronicity influence the moral evaluation of characters in narratives. Our use of two rather different paradigms allowed us to examine whether moral chronicity has broad generality or tied to specific tasks or methodological manipulations.

2. Study 1

The spontaneous trait inference paradigm assumes that the meaning of social events is constructed routinely, habitually and unintentionally (Newman & Uleman, 1989). Spontaneous trait inferences (STIs) are said to occur when attending to another person's behavior produces a trait inference without an explicit intention to infer traits or to form an impression (Uleman, Hon, Roman, & Moskowitz, 1996; Uleman, Newman, & Moskowitz, 1996). This is typically demonstrated using a cued-recall procedure. The typical design includes

160 two conditions, a spontaneous processing condition and a deliberate processing condition.
161 Participants in the spontaneous processing condition are instructed to memorize a list of
162 sentences that contain behavioral information (e.g., “The lawyer strongly disagrees with
163 the economist.”). Note that these “memory instructions” do not ask participants to form
164 an impression of the actors in the sentence or to draw an inference about character, moti-
165 vation or reasons-for-action. Hence, it is assumed that any inference that is drawn about
166 the actors is spontaneous.

167 In contrast, participants in the deliberate processing condition are told to focus on
168 possible reasons for the actor’s behavior, and then to memorize the sentences. Conse-
169 quently, inferences drawn about actors are said to be deliberate given the explicit
170 instruction to form an impression. Participants are then given cues to help them recall
171 the presented sentences. Some of the cues are dispositional (“argumentative”), others
172 are semantic (“courtroom”). If STIs were formed at time of encoding, then trait-cued
173 recall should be effective in eliciting recall of target sentences. When participants are
174 given no instruction about how to encode information, and are simply left to their own
175 devices, they tend to make dispositional inferences congruent with their most accessible
176 schemas.

177 Two studies provide illustration. Zelli, Huesmann, and Cervone (1995) asked aggres-
178 sive and non-aggressive participants to read sentences (e.g., “The policeman pushes
179 Dave out of the way.”) that included actors whose behavior could be interpreted as hos-
180 tile or non-hostile. The results showed that, within the spontaneous inference condition,
181 hostile dispositional cues prompted significantly more recall than did semantic cues for
182 aggressive subjects, while semantic cues prompted twice as much recall among non-
183 aggressive participant than did hostile dispositional cues. These differences were not
184 apparent in the deliberate processing condition. Presumably, individual differences in
185 aggressive experiences is associated with differences in hostility inferences that are spon-
186 taneous and outside of one’s awareness (Zelli, Cervone, & Huesmann, 1996; Zelli and
187 Dodge, 1999). This study provides evidence, then, that there may be stable individual
188 differences in the types of STIs that are produced about the same stimulus information.
189 Indeed, as Zelli and Dodge (1999, p. 119) put it, “salient social experiences foster knowl-
190 edge structures that may become so highly accessible as to pervasively influence one’s
191 social thinking.”

192 Uleman, Winborne, Winter, and Schechter (1986) also demonstrated the influence of a
193 personality variable on the production of STIs. Using a cued-recall procedure, Uleman
194 et al. (1986) presented sentences that had different trait implications for individuals who
195 were high and low on authoritarianism. For example, the sentence “The architect loved the
196 excitement of military parades” implied the trait attribution “patriotic” for authoritarian
197 participants, but non-authoritarian participants were unable to reach a consensus about
198 what trait the sentence implied.

199 Taken together, these studies show that STIs vary depending on dimensions of individ-
200 ual difference such as aggressiveness and authoritarianism. In this study, we extend this line
201 of research by treating *moral* chronicity as a possible individual difference variable that
202 influences the production of spontaneous trait inferences. We hypothesized that partici-
203 pants who have moral constructs chronically accessible would tend to make dispositional
204 STIs more than participants who do not show moral chronicity. We attempted to demon-
205 strate this using a methodology that combines the cued-recall procedures common in STI
206 research with standard procedures for determining schema accessibility.

207 2.1. Method

208 2.1.1. Participants

209 The participants were 254 (154 female, 100 male) psychology students who attended a
210 large regional university in the Midwestern United States. The participants ranged in age
211 from 18 to 22, and included 162 freshmen, 58 sophomores, 24 juniors, and 10 seniors. Par-
212 ticipants who were determined to be moral chronics and non-chronics were randomly
213 assigned to the spontaneous and deliberate processing conditions. In the spontaneous pro-
214 cessing condition, there were 31 (11 male, 20 female) participants who demonstrated
215 chronically accessible moral constructs (and are denoted as “chronics”); and 38 (11 male,
216 27 female) participants who did not show chronically accessible moral constructs (and are
217 denoted as “non-chronics”). Within the deliberate processing condition, there were 30 (12
218 male, 18 female) moral chronics and 39 (18 male, 21 female) non-chronics.

219 2.1.2. Measures

220 Following Higgins et al. (1982) we used the primacy-of-output method for determining
221 participants’ chronically accessible constructs. Participants were asked to record the traits
222 of someone they like, someone they dislike, someone they seek out, and someone they
223 avoid. In addition, participants also recorded the traits of individuals that they frequently
224 encounter. These traits were recorded in order of output. A maximum of 10 traits was per-
225 mitted for each question.

226 Chronically accessible traits were those traits that participants listed first in response to
227 each question. One trait came from each of the four affect questions and two came from
228 the frequency question. If synonyms and antonyms were selected, then traits listed second
229 and third were selected to ensure the distinctiveness and reasonableness of a participant’s
230 six accessible traits. Participants were considered to have high moral chronic accessibility if
231 three of the six traits that they listed were also traits that are highly prototypic of good
232 moral character, as determined by prototypicality ratings reported by Lapsley and Lasky
233 (2001). Participants who did not name any trait adjectives prototypic of good moral char-
234 acter were considered to be “non-chronic.”

235 2.1.2.1. *Sentence creation.* The procedure for creating statements was modified from a pro-
236 cedure used by Zelli et al. (1995) and Winter and Uleman (1984). Twenty stimulus state-
237 ments were created that described social interactions that are ambiguous and therefore
238 open to alternative judgments. Ten sentences included virtue dispositional terms, and 10
239 were included as filler statements. We limited the virtue set to 10 sentences and included
240 filler sentences to minimize the possibility that participants would perceive the purpose of
241 the study. The 10 virtue traits were selected from traits that are highly prototypic of good
242 character, as determined by Lapsley and Lasky (2001), and are reported as dispositional
243 cues in Table 1. The filler traits were randomly selected from a set of the 20 least prototypic
244 good character traits, and are reported as dispositional cues in Table 2. The order of the
245 sentences was randomized to control for order effects.

246 2.1.2.2. *Manipulation check.* We attempted to assess whether the sentences that we created
247 adequately reflected the dispositional term that it was designed to reflect. This assessment
248 was done in two ways. Following Zelli et al. (1995), we created five candidate sentences for
249 each trait term. Then a group of five judges rated each sentence on a 7-point continuum

Table 1

Target sentences for virtue traits and recall cues

Target sentence	Dispositional cue	Semantic cue
The plumber always meets his obligations and keeps his word	Responsible	Pipes
The receptionist is sympathetic to the student's dilemma	Understanding	Telephone
The electrician encourages his employees' efforts	Supportive	Wires
The librarian gives her son a hug before he leaves for school	Loving	Books
The tailor comforts a friend who recently lost his job	Compassionate	Clothes
The elevator operator always makes time to exchange pleasantries	Friendly	Floors
The farmer remains devoted to his disabled wife	Faithful	Crops
The professor teaches his children lessons about virtues	Moral	Teacher
The accountant assists others with no expectation of a reward	Kind	Numbers
The butcher is trustful when he responds to questions	Honest	Meat

Table 2

Target sentences for non-virtue traits (filler) and recall cues

Target sentence	Dispositional cue	Semantic cue
The mother stumbles over her feet when walking	Clumsy	Father
The successful film-maker is frugal with his finances	Thrifty	Movie
The pianist struggles to make conversation with new people	Shy	Music
The secretary eats nutritious foods and exercises daily	Healthy	Typewriter
The sailor takes a shower everyday	Clean	Sea
The barber always analyzes his actions and knows himself well	Introspective	Hair
The carpenter understands difficult topics easily	Intelligent	Wood
The reporter has an aura that makes people want to be around him	Charismatic	Newspaper
The lawyer considers the 4th of July to be the most important holiday	Patriotic	Courtroom
The doctor evaluates the applicants without bias	Objective	Clinic

250 ranging from 1 (not related) to 7 (very related). In addition to rating the items, the judges
 251 were also asked to create their own statement that was representative of each trait word.
 252 The judges' mean ratings were used to determine which sentences to retain and which to
 253 discard (only the highest rated sentence within each set of five was retained). The retained
 254 sentences, plus the statements created for each trait by the judges, were then evaluated by a
 255 new set of five judges, who rated each sentence along the same 7-point continuum that was
 256 used in the first round. The top rated sentence for each trait construct (as determined by
 257 mean ratings across the five judges) was retained for use as stimulus materials in this study.

258 As a further manipulation check we asked fourteen participants to read each target sen-
 259 tence and to write a one word adjective that described the central character in the sentence.
 260 On average, participants adduced the intended trait term 43% of the time, with a range of
 261 21–93%. This range is similar to what is typically obtained in previous studies (e.g., Bassili,
 262 1989; Whitney, Waring, & Zingmark, 1992).

263 2.1.3. Procedure

264 Participants were told that they were engaging in an experiment on "personality." To
 265 determine the chronicity of moral constructs participants were asked to write down the
 266 traits of someone they like, someone they dislike, someone they seek out, someone they
 267 avoid, and someone they frequently encounter with a maximum of 10 traits for each ques-
 268 tion. The order of the four affect questions (i.e., like, dislike, seek out, and avoid) was coun-
 269 terbalanced across participants, and half the participants received the frequency question

270 before the affect questions and half received them after. There was a 4-min delay between
271 participants' completing their response to one question and receiving the next question.
272 During this delay period participants were given a nonverbal task (arithmetic operations)
273 to reduce the possibility that their prior responses affected later responses. This was
274 adapted from a procedure used by Zelli et al. (1995).

275 Next, participants were randomly assigned to either the spontaneous or the deliberate
276 processing condition. Each participant was given a booklet which contained task instruc-
277 tions and protocols. Participants in the spontaneous processing condition were given these
278 instructions: "While you are reading the sentences, try to memorize as much of it as you
279 can." Participants in the deliberate processing condition were given these instructions:
280 "While you are reading the sentences, think about the reasons why the individuals
281 described in the sentences performed the behaviors they did. Think about what caused the
282 outcome described. Then, try to memorize as much as you can of the statement."

283 Twenty sentences were then presented on slides at a rate of 5 s per slide (Zelli et al.,
284 1995). Immediately after the slide presentation, participants engaged in an interpolated
285 activity (arithmetic operations) for 2 min to clear short-term memory. Immediately follow-
286 ing the interpolated activity, participants in both the spontaneous and deliberate process-
287 ing conditions received a list of dispositional and semantic cues and were asked to recall
288 the sentences presented during the acquisition phase. Participants received semantic cues
289 for half of the "good character" and filler statements and dispositional cues for the other
290 half. Cues for filler sentences were intermixed randomly. The dispositional cues were traits
291 associated with good moral character. The semantic cues were linked to semantic elements
292 of the sentences. For example, if participants read the sentence "The celebrity devotes his
293 time to the community charity" the semantic cue for this sentence might be "Hollywood"
294 (linked semantically with "celebrity") while the dispositional cue could be "conscientious-
295 ness" (linked to a "good character" disposition). Tables 1 and 2 show the semantic and dis-
296 positional cues that were used for prompting recall of the sentences.

297 *2.1.3.1. Recall scoring.* Following Zelli et al. (1995) sentence recall was scored by assign-
298 ing one point for the accurate recall of each of three syntactic components of the sen-
299 tence: the actor, the action(s), and the action's target. The recall score for each sentence
300 thus ranged from 0 (no recall) to 3 (perfect recall). Two independent judges, blind to the
301 participants' experimental condition, conducted the recall scoring. The judge's ratings
302 showed a 93% agreement rate. Full credit was given for recalling a virtue sentence even if
303 the dispositional cue had been originally intended to trigger the recall of a different vir-
304 tue-centered sentence. A similar scoring decision was used when a virtue sentence was
305 cued by a semantic cue different than the one originally intended for the sentence. Credit
306 was given only for the first time a given statement was recalled. Recall of the virtue sen-
307 tences when prompted by dispositional cues and when prompted by semantic cues were
308 scored separately. For each cue type there were five sentences. Scores for each sentence
309 (0–3) were added together for a total score (maximum score possible = 15). Mean total
310 scores for recall are reported in Table 3.

311 2.2. Results

312 Sets of planned contrasts were calculated on recall of dispositional and filler sentences
313 in the spontaneous and deliberate processing condition. The Bonferroni procedure was

Table 3

Total recall (means and standard deviations) of target sentences by chronics and non-chronics, by cue type and processing condition

Cue type	Chronics		Non-chronics	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
<i>Spontaneous processing condition</i>				
Dispositional	5.42	2.17	2.17	2.19
Semantic	2.03	1.82	5.29	2.14
Filler	3.42	2.53	3.11	2.52
<i>Deliberate processing condition</i>				
Dispositional	4.20	3.245	3.97	2.74
Semantic	4.43	2.30	4.18	3.18
Filler	4.13	3.08	3.38	2.18

314 used to protect the family wide α rate of .05. Table 3 provides the means and standard devi-
 315 ations by group and condition.

316 We predicted that moral chronics in the spontaneous processing condition would recall
 317 more sentences than non-chronics when prompted with dispositional cues. This hypothesis
 318 was supported, $t(248) = 5.34, p < .001$. We predicted that non-chronics in the spontaneous
 319 processing condition would perform better with semantic cues than with dispositional
 320 cues. This hypothesis was also supported, $t(248) = 5.27, p < .001$.

321 In the deliberate processing condition we hypothesized that dispositional cues should
 322 provide no advantage to moral chronics. This view was supported. Recall between chronics
 323 and non-chronics was statistically equivalent, $t(248) = .37$ (ns). Similarly, we hypothesized
 324 that semantic cues should provide no advantage to non-chronics in the deliberate process-
 325 ing condition. This hypothesis was also supported, $t(248) = .41$ (ns).

326 We also analyzed recall for filler sentences. We did not expect to find significant differ-
 327 ences between chronics and non-chronics in the recall of filler sentences, regardless of cue
 328 type or processing condition. As expected, all comparisons were non-significant.

329 2.3. Discussion

330 In this study, we tested whether moral chronicity would constitute an individual differ-
 331 ences variable that influences the sort of spontaneous trait inferences that are made about
 332 others, using a standard cued-recall paradigm. After first assessing levels of moral chronic-
 333 ity, we compared moral chronics and non-chronics in how well they recalled sentences
 334 when prompted with dispositional and semantic cues, under two conditions. In the sponta-
 335 neous processing condition, participants were instructed to memorize target sentences. In
 336 the deliberate processing condition, participants were instructed to form an impression of
 337 the characters in each of the sentence and to memorize the sentences. We hypothesized that
 338 moral chronics (vs. non-chronics) would recall more target sentences when cued with
 339 moral dispositional cues than semantic cues, when told simply to memorize the target sen-
 340 tences (“spontaneous processing”). In contrast, we hypothesized that non-chronics would
 341 rely upon semantic cues to recall the sentences when told to simply memorize them. We did
 342 not expect to find recall differences between moral chronics and non-chronics in the delib-
 343 erate processing condition.

344 The results supported these expectations. Moral chronics, when instructed to memorize
345 target sentences, appeared to form spontaneous trait inferences of characters featured in
346 the sentences. This was evident given the superiority of dispositional cues in prompting
347 recall over semantic cues. Because moral chronics were not instructed to form character-
348 ological impressions, any trait inference that was evident is assumed to be a spontaneous
349 construction. The chronic use of moral dispositional constructs for encoding and recall
350 also explains why moral chronics did not outperform non-chronics when recall was
351 prompted with semantic cues. Non-chronics were able to profit from semantic cues
352 because target sentences were encoded with reference to the semantic properties of the sen-
353 tences, and not in terms of the moral dispositions of sentence characters. As expected, how-
354 ever, there were no differences between chronics and non-chronics in the deliberate
355 processing condition, presumably because the impression formation instructions also
356 directed non-chronics to attend to dispositional features of characters.

357 Previous research has shown that the tendency to make spontaneous trait inferences
358 varies along certain dimensions of individual differences, such as aggressiveness and
359 authoritarianism. The present results suggest that *moral* chronicity is also an important
360 individual differences dimension that influences social information-processing. Moreover,
361 the present study also documents the accessibility of a construct that is at a higher level of
362 generality than is typically reported in the chronic accessibility literature. Previous research
363 typically demonstrates chronic accessibility effects with specific trait constructs (e.g., “con-
364 ceited”). In this study, however, we showed that individuals also have more general con-
365 structs (“moral character”) chronically accessible, and that individual differences in the
366 accessibility of the moral character construct influences information-processing. This study
367 contributes, then, to growing evidence regarding the automaticity of social psychological
368 phenomena. Automatic activation has been demonstrated for attitudes (Bargh, 1989), self-
369 concepts (Bargh, 1982; Higgins, 1987), stereotypes (Pratto & Bargh, 1991), and social
370 behaviors (Bargh, 1996). It now appears that moral character is a construct that can be
371 chronically accessible for social information processing that is spontaneous, unintentional
372 and automatic.

373 3. Study 2

374 It is possible that evidence adduced in favor of moral chronicity explanations of moral
375 personality is specific to certain kinds of experimental manipulations or methodological
376 tasks. In Study 2 we attempted to assess the generality of moral chronicity and its influence
377 on social information processing by using a text comprehension paradigm that is novel to
378 this question. Text comprehension also depends critically upon schema activation, particu-
379 larly in the form of elaborative inferences that readers generate from prior knowledge to
380 make sense of text (van den Broek, 1989). General knowledge about the world is activated
381 by readers to explain the focal event or to fill in a missing causal link to the focal event (e.g.,
382 Singer, Revlin, & Halldorson, 1990; van den Broek, 1990). Moreover, elaborative infer-
383 ences are influenced by individual differences in background knowledge as indexed by cul-
384 ture and domain familiarity (e.g., Chiesi, Spilich, & Voss, 1979; Harris, Lee, Hensley, &
385 Schoen, 1988; Singer, 1994). Individual differences in moral development also influence the
386 processing of moral stories and narratives. Narvaez (1998) showed, for example, that indi-
387 vidual’s prior moral knowledge greatly influenced the recall of moral narratives. Develop-
388 mental differences in moral judgment schemas influenced what was remembered accurately

389 and what was invented during recall of moral narratives with embedded moral reasoning
390 (Narvaez, 1998; Narvaez & Gleason, 2005).

391 The second study attempts to integrate the chronicity paradigm of social cognitive per-
392 sonality research and the text comprehension paradigm to provide evidence regarding the
393 influence of accessible moral constructs on inferences made while reading moral stories.
394 We tested moral inference generation between groups of participants with high or low lev-
395 els of moral chronicity. A lexical decision task was used to assess activation of moral infer-
396 ences. Lexical decision tasks are often used to determine activation of a concept in the
397 mind of a reader. We expected those with high levels of moral chronicity to react more
398 quickly to moral inference probes than those with low moral chronicity due to differences
399 in levels of moral schema activation.

400 3.1. Method

401 3.1.1. Participants

402 There were 120 college student participants (53 male, 67 female). Data from 10
403 respondents were eliminated overall (5 for incorrect responses to key datum, 3 for not
404 being native speakers of English, and 2 for unacceptably large reaction time
405 discrepancies).

406 3.1.2. Materials

407 3.1.2.1. *Stories.* The stories were written by the researchers and used in previous research
408 (Narvaez, Mitchell, & Linzie, 1998; Narvaez & Mitchell, 1999). There were “help” stories
409 (protagonist helps the requestor) and “no-help” stories (protagonist does not help). Stories
410 were approximately 400 words long. Both kinds of stories had characters that were on their
411 way to fulfilling personal goals.

412 3.1.2.2. *Help stories.* In the “help” stories, the protagonists either postponed or sacrificed
413 their own goals. The stories were: “Sherman Takes Italian” in which Sherman’s aunt’s
414 small repeated requests interfere with Sherman’s goal of learning Italian for his forth-
415 coming vacation in Italy; “Marisol Starts College” in which Marisol sacrifices her
416 desired living arrangements during her first year in college to help out her cousin after
417 her cousin’s husband breaks a hip; “Mark and the Party” in which Mark has a last
418 chance to meet a girl he has a crush on but helps his drunk cousin instead; “Calley and
419 the Dance” in which Calley sacrifices going to a reunion dance to fix her disabled
420 uncle’s fence.

421 3.1.2.3. *No-help stories.* In the “no-help” stories, the protagonist declined to help and went
422 on to fulfill his or her personal goals. The no-help stories were: “Leroy and the Race” in
423 which Leroy is asked by his cousin to help out in a family emergency but he refuses
424 because he is about to run in a marathon (see the Appendix A for the full text of this story,
425 with probes); “Paula and the Concert” in which Paula’s aunt asks her to help move furni-
426 ture for a cleaning crew but she refuses because she has tickets for a much anticipated con-
427 cert; “Glen and the Photos” in which Glen refuses to drive his aunt to a weekly social
428 because it interferes with his plans to shoot photos for a contest; “Christie’s Money” in
429 which Christie refuses to lend money to a cousin because it conflicts with her plans to buy
430 tickets for a long-awaited vacation.

431 3.1.2.4. *Filler stories.* The filler stories were: “Verna Skips School,” about high school
432 seniors skipping a day of school to go to the beach; “Wanda’s Winter Day,” about a snow-
433 bound teacher who has a water pipe leak; “Nancy Remembers Her Sister,” about a woman
434 who participates in an AIDS walk in memory of her sister; “Tony’s First Day,” about a
435 man who takes on a difficult dog-sitting job; “Sam Gets a Job,” about a man looking for a
436 job so he can finish school; “Frank’s Paper,” about a college student submitting a term
437 paper at the last minute before leaving for vacation; “Martha Moves to Arizona,” about a
438 young woman who joins the dirt bike team after moving to Arizona; and “Steve and the
439 Camp,” about an overweight man who attempts to spend a weekend at a weight-loss camp.

440 3.1.2.5. *Chronicity assessment.* As in Study 1 we used the primacy-of-output method for
441 determining participants’ chronically accessible constructs (Higgins et al., 1982). We used a
442 stringent criterion to determine level of chronicity. We coded only the first response on
443 each of the four questions (people liked, disliked, sought out, and avoided) and the first
444 two responses on the remaining question (people frequently encountered). We coded the
445 trait words according to whether or not they reflected moral regard for the other (“loyal”,
446 “unselfish”, “respectful”, and “dutiful”) or self-regard (“self-centered”), including both
447 synonyms and antonyms. High moral chronics were those individuals that used 3–6 moral
448 terms. Non-chronics were those individuals that either had one moral term or none.

449 3.1.2.6. *Lexical decision probes.* Lexical decision is a measure of semantic activation. It is a
450 common methodology to study concept priming during reading. Participants were interrupted
451 during their reading of each story with six lexical decision tasks (“Is this an English word or
452 not?”) and were required to answer “yes” or “no” by pressing corresponding keys. Probes for
453 each target story were: one moral evaluative inference, one reinstatement (of information ear-
454 lier in the story), one irrelevant English word, three non-English words. The Appendix A has a
455 sample story that contains examples of a reinstatement probe and a moral evaluative probe.
456 Probes in the filler stories were: one reinstatement, one elaborative (evoking prior knowledge)
457 inference, one irrelevant English word, three non-English words. The location of the moral
458 probes occurred in the second half of the story, after the decision was made to help/not help.
459 The locations of the rest of the probes were determined randomly with no less than two sen-
460 tences between probes. For half the target stories, the moral probe came before the reinstat-
461 ement, and for the other half, the reinstatement probe came first. The reinstatement and
462 elaborative inferences that we tested were inferences required for comprehension.

463 The moral probes were selected to reflect a moral other-regarding or an egoist perspec-
464 tive. That is, for the “Help” stories in which the protagonist sacrificed his or her own inter-
465 ests to help, we probed with words like loyal, respectful, dutiful, unselfish. In the “no-help”
466 stories in which the protagonist refused to help and continued to complete his or her per-
467 sonal goal, we probed with words like disloyal, self-centered, selfish, and disrespect.

468 3.1.2.7. *Data trimming.* We calculated median reaction times across the different types of
469 inference probes for each individual participant. Responses (correct and incorrect) that
470 exceeded three standard deviations both from the participant’s mean and that particular
471 item’s mean across subjects were eliminated from the analyses. If a participant had more
472 than 20% such responses, the participant was eliminated from the analysis entirely. Two
473 participants were dropped for having more than 6 responses with reaction times greater
474 than 3 standard deviations from the mean for each term.

475 3.1.3. Procedure

476 Participants were tested individually. First, participants completed the five questions
 477 that assess chronicity. Participants then read a practice story on a computer to familiarize
 478 them with the task requirement of making lexical decisions. Following the familiarization
 479 procedure participants next read a filler story, followed by eight (alternating target and
 480 filler) stories that were displayed clause by clause at the participant's own pace (by pressing
 481 the spacebar with the left hand). As the participants read each story they were interrupted
 482 six times at randomly selected points (at least two sentences between probes). Instead of
 483 the next sentence, a row of asterisks was presented for 750 ms. The letter-string probe was
 484 then presented and the respondent's task was to indicate whether the letter string was an
 485 English word or not (pressing a key for "yes" or a key for "no"). Most participants com-
 486 pleted the tasks within 30 min.

487 3.1.3.1. *Participant blocks.* There were two blocks of participants. Each block read differ-
 488 ent stories except for the first filler story which all participants read. Each block read (1)
 489 two stories in which the protagonist sacrificed his or her own plans to help someone else;
 490 (2) two stories in which the protagonist said no to a request for help to complete his or her
 491 own plans; and (3) four filler stories. The order of the stories was determined in a semi-ran-
 492 dom manner making sure that there were an equal number of female and male protago-
 493 nists in each block.

494 3.1.4. Variables and hypothesis

495 3.1.4.1. *Variables.* Dependent variables were difference scores computed for each type of
 496 story (help, no-help) from median reaction times for the two types of probes (moral, rein-
 497 statement). Reinstatement inferences are commonly made by readers to maintain local
 498 coherence while reading (van den Broek, 1990) so times for these inferences were used as a
 499 baseline from which the moral inferences times were subtracted. The independent variable
 500 was moral chronicity. We compared those with high chronicity to those with low moral
 501 chronicity. There were 20 high moral chronics and 41 low moral chronics or non-chronics.

502 3.1.4.2. *Hypothesis.* We expected high moral chronics to respond faster when making
 503 moral inferences on both types of stories, no-help and help. We expected stronger differ-
 504 ences with the no-help stories because of the violation of expectation to help.

505 3.2. Results

506 Means and standard deviations are listed in Tables 4 and 5. All significant tests were
 507 conducted with alpha set at .05.

Table 4

Average means (and standard deviations) for median response times for type of inference by group

Group	Probe category		
	Reinstatements	Moral probe help stories	Moral probe no-help stories
High moral chronicity ($n = 20$)	734.38 (109.43)	954.53 (439.17)	902.03 (246.75)
Low moral chronicity ($n = 41$)	866.11 (265.10)	1000.01 (387.30)	1294.33 (640.16)

Table 5

Lexical decision difference scores (moral median-reinstatement median) by story type (help or no-help) and group (high chronic, low chronic)

Group	Story type	
	Help story: reinstatement probe—moral probe	No-help story: reinstatement probe—moral probe
High moral chronic ($n = 20$)	220.15 (398.44)	167.65 (169.76)
Low chronic ($n = 41$)	133.90 (234.46)	428.22 (477.57)

508 We conducted a MANOVA with the two dependent variables, the difference score
 509 between median reaction time for the reinstatement probes and median reaction time for
 510 the moral probes for help stories and the difference score between the median reaction time
 511 for reinstatement probes and median reaction time for moral probes for the no-help stories.
 512 Chronicity was the grouping factor. The multivariate analysis was significant, Wilk's
 513 $\lambda = .88$, $F_{(2,58)} = 3.85$, $p < .027$, $\eta^2 = .12$. Univariate tests proved significant for no-help stories
 514 ($F_{(1,59)} = 5.56$, $p < .02$, $\eta^2 = .09$) but not for help stories ($F_{(1,59)} = 1.13$, $p < .29$, $\eta^2 = .02$).
 515 See Table 5 for mean reaction time differences. High moral chronics were significantly
 516 faster than non-chronics on reacting to negative evaluations about characters that did not
 517 help as requested in the story, but there was no difference in reaction time between chronics
 518 and non-chronics for inferences about story characters that helped. Fig. 1 shows the
 519 median reaction times for each type of story by group.

520 Because there were only two responses combined for each type of story, the median
 521 resulted in being equivalent to a mean. To verify that the previous findings were not based
 522 on skewed data, we also conducted a Mann–Whitney test examining the difference scores
 523 between reinstatement response times and moral inference response times. The significance
 524 for help stories was $p < .58$ whereas for no-help stories it was $p < .025$, thereby confirming
 525 the parametric analysis.

526 Follow-up tests indicated that high moral chronics were equally fast in reacting to
 527 moral inferences for helping (positive evaluations) and not helping (negative evaluations)

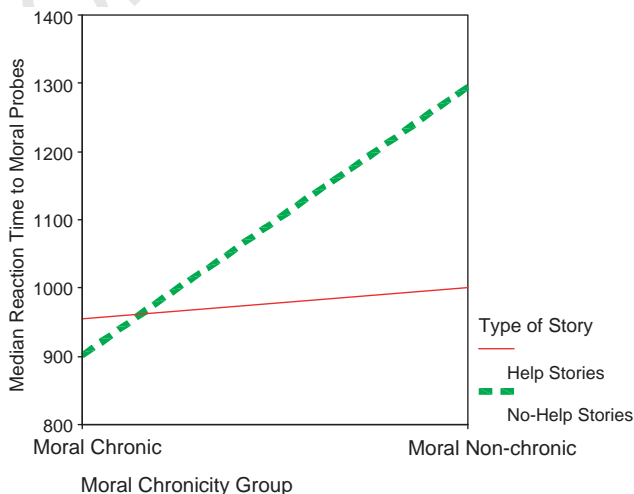


Fig. 1. Median reaction time for moral probes for story type by group.

528 $t_{(19)} = .67, p < .51$. On the other hand, non-chronics were significantly slower to react to neg-
529 ative evaluations than they were to positive evaluations ($t_{(40)} = 3.77, p < .001$). That is, they
530 were less likely to judge negatively the action of not helping. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank
531 test indicated no difference in median responses for chronics for the two types of stories
532 ($p < .76$) whereas for non-chronics, there was a significant difference ($p < .001$).

533 3.3. Discussion

534 The purpose of the second study was to measure the effects of moral chronicity on eval-
535 uative inferences generated when reading moral stories. Participants were presented with
536 moral inferences about protagonists who either helped or did not help when asked by a re-
537 lative. It was assumed that high moral chronics, that is, individuals for whom moral catego-
538 ries are chronically accessible, in comparison to non-chronics, would show faster reaction
539 time to probes that reflect moral evaluations about the actions of story characters. It was
540 anticipated that the chronic accessibility paradigm for studying personality coherence
541 would demonstrate the dispositional qualities of moral information processing on an infer-
542 ence generation task during reading.

543 The results showed that moral chronicity influenced the evaluative moral inferences that
544 participants generated while reading. As expected, high moral chronics were equally fast in
545 responding to the two types of probes, those that reflected positive judgments of a charac-
546 ter that helped and those that reflected negative judgments of a character that did not help,
547 indicating that they activated expectations for helping while reading both types of target
548 stories. In contrast, non-chronics responded differentially to the two types of probes. Their
549 reaction times to probes reflecting positive evaluation of characters that helped were as fast
550 as the chronics'; but their reaction times to probes reflecting negative evaluations of char-
551 acters that did not help were significantly slower than the chronics' reaction times, indicat-
552 ing that no generalized schema for helping was activated while reading the no-help stories.
553 Alternatively, it would appear that non-chronics activated moral schemas only when story
554 characters dropped personal goals and actively embraced the altruistic alternative; but oth-
555 erwise did not notice the moral implications of not helping.

556 These findings suggest that those who more frequently think of relationships with oth-
557 ers in moral terms, high chronics, are as likely make moral evaluations of people who help
558 as of people who do not help when expected. High chronics activate moral schemas in a
559 general fashion when judging other people's behavior, regardless of the outcome, suggest-
560 ing that moral responsibility may be paramount to high moral chronics regardless of the
561 situation.

562 4. General discussion

563 The present results demonstrate the viability of a social cognitive conceptualization of
564 moral character. According to this view, moral personality can be understood in terms of
565 the chronic accessibility of moral schemas for construing social events. On this account a
566 moral person, or a person with a moral identity or character, would be one for whom
567 moral constructs are chronically accessible, readily primed and easily activated for social
568 information-processing.

569 In Study 1 this was demonstrated using cued-recall in a spontaneous trait inference para-
570 digm. In Study 2 this was demonstrated using a lexical decision-making task commonly

571 used in text comprehension research. Both studies showed that moral chronics and non-chronics
572 respond differently to the dispositional and moral implications of social cues. Indeed,
573 moral chronicity appears to be a dimension of individual differences that influences sponta-
574 neous trait inferences and text comprehension. Moreover, the effects of moral chronicity on
575 social information-processing is not limited to specific experimental manipulations or para-
576 digms but has broader generality, insofar as moral chronicity was shown to influence both
577 spontaneous trait inferences and inferences tested through a lexical decision task.

578 Our attempt to frame a social cognitive theory of moral personality stands in contrast
579 to another strategy which attempts to understand moral personality by reference to
580 between-person taxonomic constructs, such as the Big 5 (e.g., Walker & Hennig, 2004).
581 These dual approaches to understanding moral personality represent the two disciplines of
582 personality psychology (Cervone, 1991, 2005). The social cognitive approach focuses on
583 within-person cognitive-affective mechanism (e.g., Mischel, 1999; Mischel & Shoda, 1995),
584 and attempts to understand individual differences from the “bottom-up”, that is, on the
585 basis of specific psychological systems that are in dynamic interaction with changing situa-
586 tional contexts (Cervone, 2005). In contrast, the traits/dispositions approach understands
587 personality structure as a between-person classification, and understands individual differ-
588 ences in terms of “top-down” abstract dispositional constructs as might be evident in
589 latent variable taxonomies. Our preference for the social cognitive option reflects a strate-
590 gic bet that it will more likely lead to robust integrative developmental models of the moral
591 personality than would the between-person taxonomic approach. The emphasis of social
592 cognitive theory on cognitive-affective units that are in dynamic interaction with changing
593 social contexts to produce a stable dispositional signature aligns with the paradigmatic
594 assumptions of ecological-contextualist “systems” models of development (Lerner, 1991),
595 which improves considerably the prospect for constructing developmental models of
596 emerging social cognitive mechanisms of the moral personality. In addition, as Cervone
597 (2005) points out, between-person taxonomic classifications of personality may have little
598 explanatory value with respect to causal and dynamic intraindividual processes, an advan-
599 tage that favors the social cognitive approach.

600 The present studies make a number of novel contributions to the literature. To our knowl-
601 edge these are the first studies to document variations in the generation of Spontaneous Trait
602 Inferences using moral chronicity as the individual differences variable and to integrate lexical
603 decision-making with chronic accessibility methodology. Narvaez and Lapsley (2005; Laps-
604 ley and Narvaez, 2005) recently argued that advances in the “post-Kohlberg” era in moral
605 psychology will hinge on deeper integration with the theories, constructs and methodologies
606 of other domains of psychological science, including cognitive and social cognitive science,
607 personality research and motivation. The present studies take some steps in this direction,
608 and vindicate the promise of a social cognitive conceptualization of the moral personality.

609 Of course there are also a number of questions for this research program. One question
610 concerns the mechanism that accounts for the findings. In Study 2, for example, it is not
611 clear whether the difference between moral chronics and non-chronics is best explained by
612 reference to generalized expectancy violation or to the fact that chronics simply apply
613 moral schemas to a wider variety of behaviors. Although the present study was not
614 designed to tease out this subtlety our general view is that chronically accessible moral
615 schemas dispose one to “see” readily the moral dimensions of experience, that is, to set up
616 certain expectations for behavior (e.g., that one is responsive to the needs of others). These
617 expectations, in turn, serve as the basis for differential behavioral attributions reported by

618 chronics and non-chronics. On this interpretation expectancies mediate the relationship
619 between moral schemas and behavioral attributions. Testing the validity of this and other
620 mechanisms is an important line of research for the future.

621 Another question concerns the developmental formation of the moral personality
622 (Thompson, 1998). If individual differences in moral chronicity are the basis of the moral
623 personality, then the key developmental question concerns the critical formative experi-
624 ences that lead to the availability, accessibility and activation of moral constructs. It is
625 generally assumed that specific and frequent developmental experiences with a particu-
626 lar domain of behavior results in the formation of available and accessible social cogni-
627 tive constructs (Bargh et al., 1988). Similarly, we have speculated that parents who
628 socialize morally relevant event representations (“what happened when you pushed your
629 sister?”), who make frequent character attributions (“you are a honest and helpful per-
630 son”), and consistently and inductively draw out the moral implications of the child’s
631 behavior, would tend to have children for whom moral categories are chronically acces-
632 sible (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2005; Narvaez, 2005). Future research should test these devel-
633 opmental assumptions.

634 Although we have argued that moral chronicity is a dimension of individual differences,
635 it is unclear how the present model relates to other theories of moral selfhood and identity.
636 Blasi (1984) has argued that one has a moral identity just when moral categories are essen-
637 tial, central and important to one’s self-understanding. One has a moral personality when
638 the self is constructed around moral commitments. The study of moral exemplars has
639 shown that individuals who lead lives of extraordinary moral commitment tend to align
640 self-goals with moral ideals. Future research should explore the possibility of theoretical
641 frameworks that integrate the moral exemplar and moral identity tradition in moral psy-
642 chology with social-cognitive theories of personality. One possibility is to argue that moral
643 categories (schemas, episodes, scripts, prototypes) that are essential, central and important
644 for one’s self-identity would also be ones that are chronically accessible for interpreting the
645 social landscape. Such categories would be readily primed and easily activated for discern-
646 ing the meaning of events. And, once activated, these constructs would dispose the individ-
647 ual to interpret these events in light of their moral elements.

648 Finally, in light of recent political discourse about moral values and their importance in
649 political decision making, it is not too soon to begin to evaluate the effects of moral chro-
650 nicity in areas beyond social evaluation of hypothetical situations. For example, moral
651 chronicity may have a large effect on voting behavior and may make one more vulnerable
652 to political discourse intended to prime chronic moral constructs of a certain kind. The
653 influence of situational priming on construct accessibility can also pay dividends in our
654 understanding of how person and context interact in accounting for moral behavior.

655 5. Uncited references

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658 man (1983), Gernsbacher (1990), Grabenstetter et al. (2002), Hartshorne and May (1928–
659 1932), Kohlberg (1969), Kohlberg, 1971, Kohlberg (1984), Mischel (1968), Narvaez (1999),
660 Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, and Bebeau (2000), Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, and Thoma (1999),
661 Singer, Halldorson, Lear, and Andrusiak (1992), Tulving and Thompson (1973), Uleman
662 (1989), Walker (2004), Walker and Hennig (1998).

663 Appendix A. Sample story with target probes

664 A.1. Leroy and the race (NO HELP)

665 Every morning, Leroy got up early to run before breakfast and work. He was in good
666 shape for his age. After running, he would shower and eat breakfast and then head out for
667 work. He was a carpenter and would drive to many places around the city. Every other Sat-
668 urday he would not work so he could do a 10–15 mile-long run. He knew how important
669 this run was for developing good endurance, so he rarely missed it. He liked to enter races
670 and, even though he had never won, he usually finished in the top of his age group. He
671 worked hard to better his times. For four months, he trained for the local “Grandpa’s”
672 marathon race, for men 55–65. He logged nearly 60 miles a week. As a 57-year-old in good
673 shape, his wife and friends were certain that he could win the local title.

674 When the day of the race finally arrived, he got up early for breakfast, pancakes and
675 coffee. He drank lots of orange juice and water. The event started at 8 AM. (*Reinstatement*
676 *inference: Marathon*) While he was getting dressed, the phone rang. It was Thomas, his
677 cousin. Thomas had a family emergency, his father-in-law had had a heart attack during
678 the night and was in the hospital. Thomas needed to drive the family to the small town hos-
679 pital to see him. Thomas asked if Leroy would watch his corner grocery store for the day.
680 The supply truck would be bringing the week’s produce during the day. If no one was there
681 to receive them, Thomas would miss getting the supplies for the week. Leroy was the only
682 person he trusted with running the store. Leroy sympathized but told him that he had
683 other plans. Leroy said he had a good chance at winning the race this year. He told
684 Thomas he would call after the race. He wished him well and then hung up the phone.

685 A.2. Moral evaluative inference: Disloyal

686 After he parked his car, he jogged around to warm up and then headed for the starting
687 line. There were so many people on the narrow street that he could hardly move. As the
688 race got underway, Leroy found that he was not able to reach his normal pace until more
689 people fell behind him. Once he hit his regular pace, he felt comfortable. Although he was
690 exhausted at the finish, he came in with a faster time than he ever had. But he did not win.
691 A 62-year-old came in first. He felt good about his personal record. After some stretching,
692 he milled around with the crowd, picked up his marathon T-shirt and ate some bagels.
693 That night, he went out to celebrate his accomplishment with some other racers.

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