

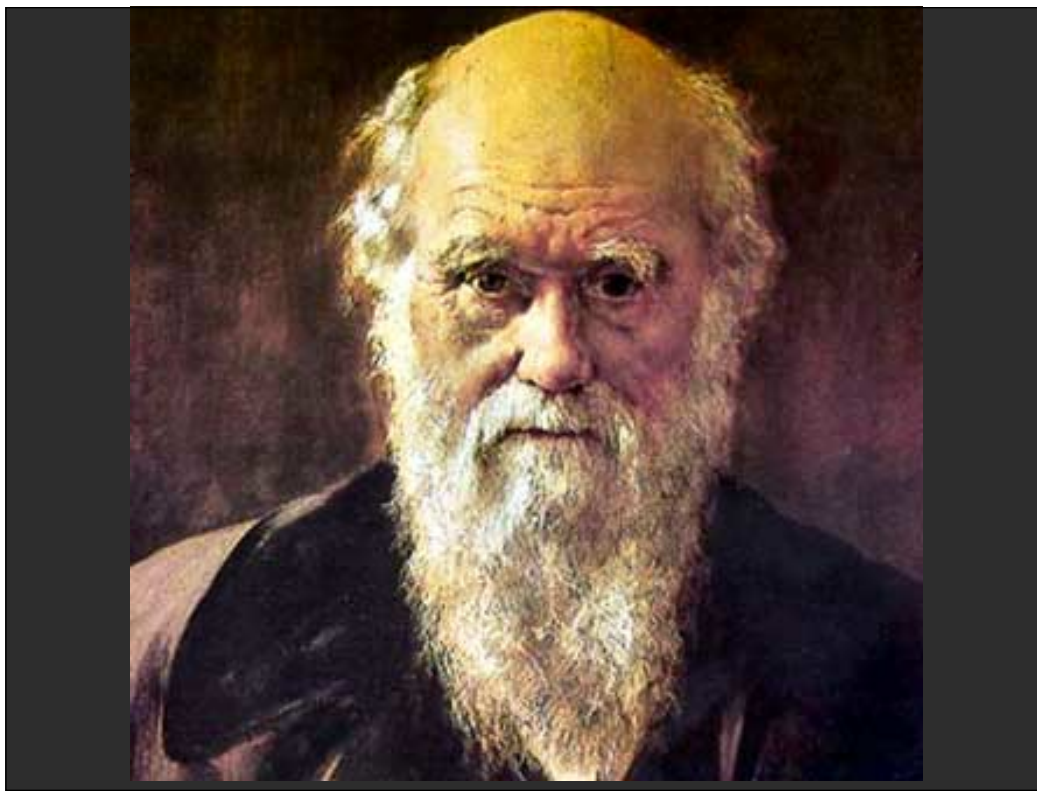
the surprising way **disgust** shapes our thinking

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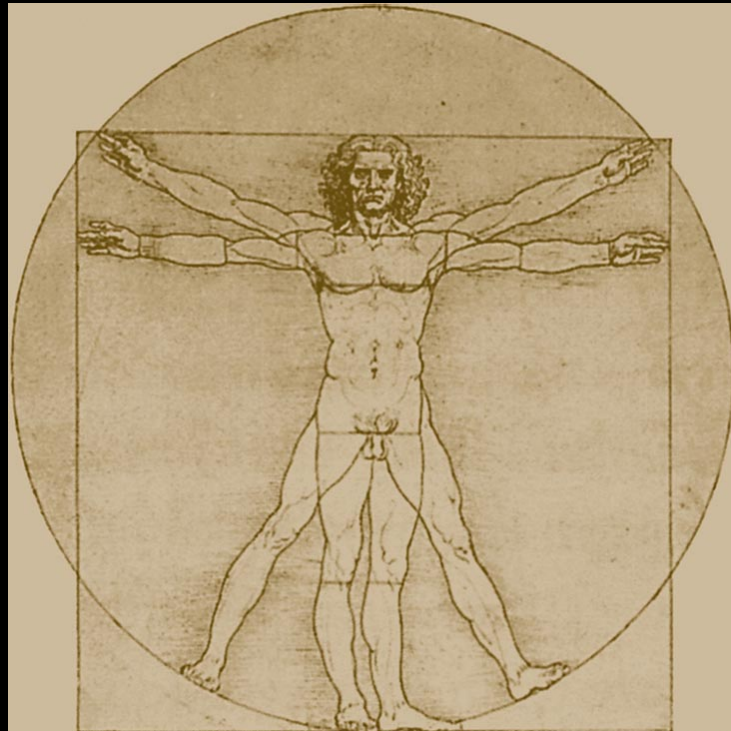
*the power of emotions



*the power of emotions to influence
judgments and decisions









similarly, disgust keeps us away from noxious, contaminating substances. Even if we know they are perfectly safe (that is, they could never actually harm us), disgust is powerful enough that it is one of the easiest emotions to induce, and one of the most powerful of the emotional responses. Let me give you some examples of how easy it can be to make you disgusted.

*disgusting



* universal triggers of disgust

feces

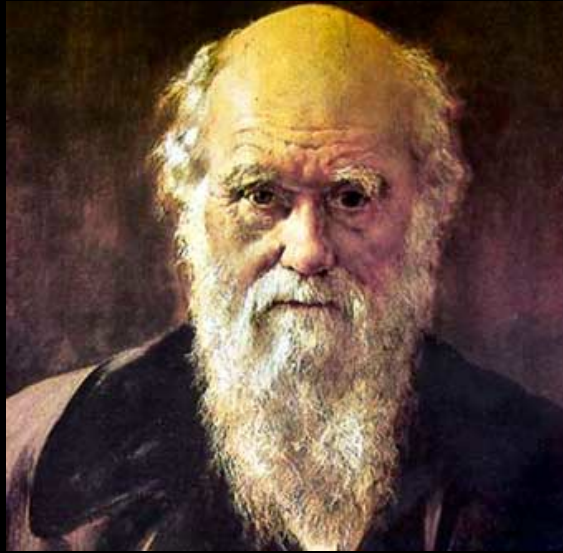
urine

blood

vomit

rotten flesh

pus



In *Tierra del Fuego* a native touched with his finger some cold preserved meat while I was eating...and plainly showed disgust at its softness; whilst I felt utter disgust at my food being touched by a naked savage, though his hands did not appear dirty.

Charles Darwin (1890) "The expression of emotion in man and animals"

*the power of contagion



this is your mug



how much is it worth?



„Schau nur diese Kerle an! Diese verlauffen Bärte! Diese schmutzigen, wegstehenden Ohren...“

'Just look at these guys!
The louse-infested
beards! The filthy,
protruding ears, those
stained, fatty clothes...
Jews often have an
unpleasant sweetish
odor. If you have a good
nose, you can smell the
Jews.'

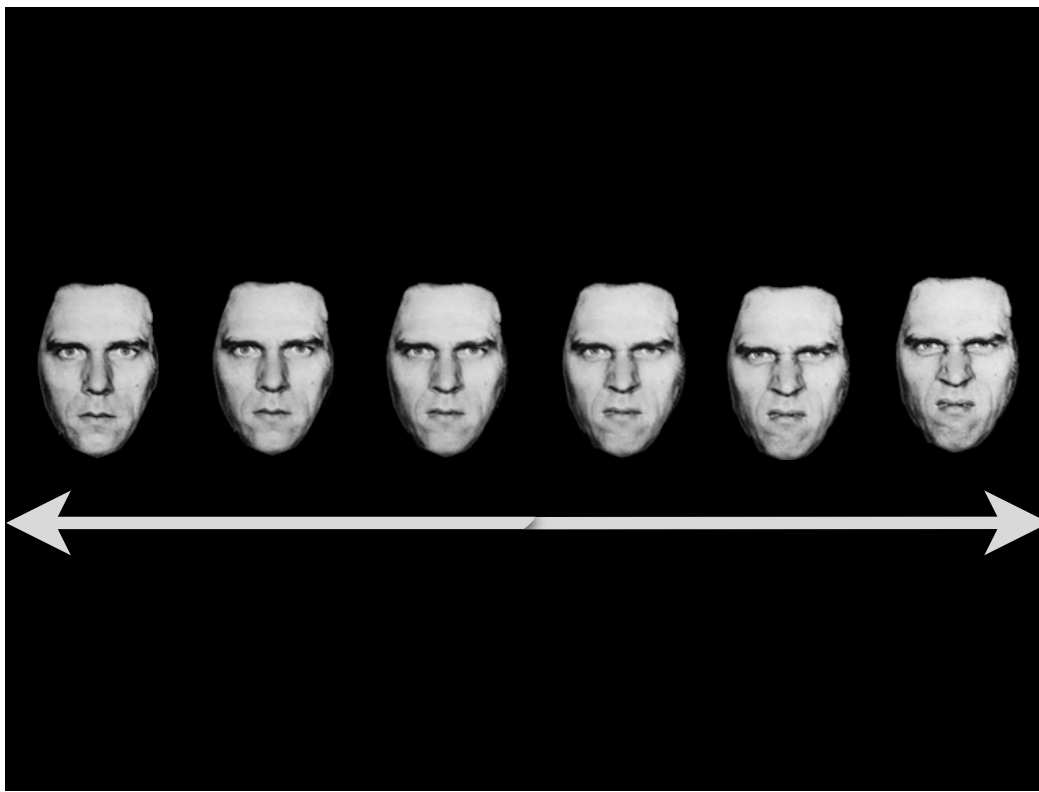
Nazi Children's Book (1938)



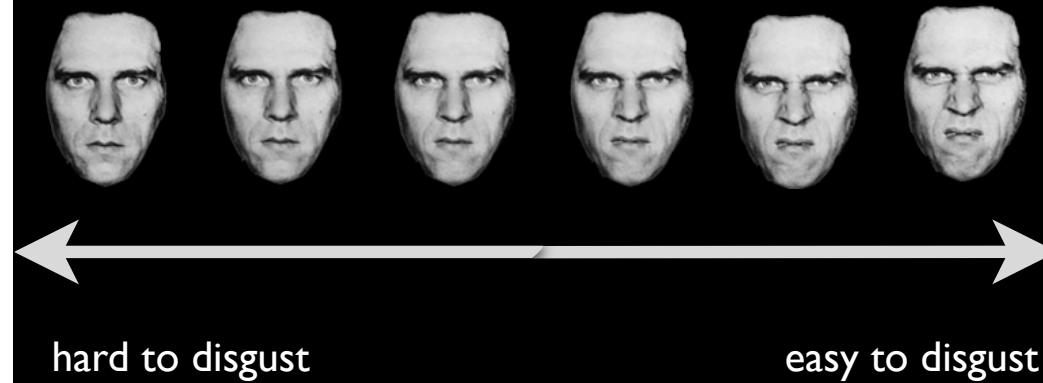
‘worthy of
death for their
vile...sex
practices...’

‘dogs eating
their own vomit
and sows
wallowing in
their own feces’

www.godhatesfags.com



*are individual differences in disgust related to attitudes?



*disgust sensitivity

Even if I were hungry, I would not drink a bowl of my favorite soup if it had been stirred by a used but thoroughly washed fly-swatter

disagree—————*agree*

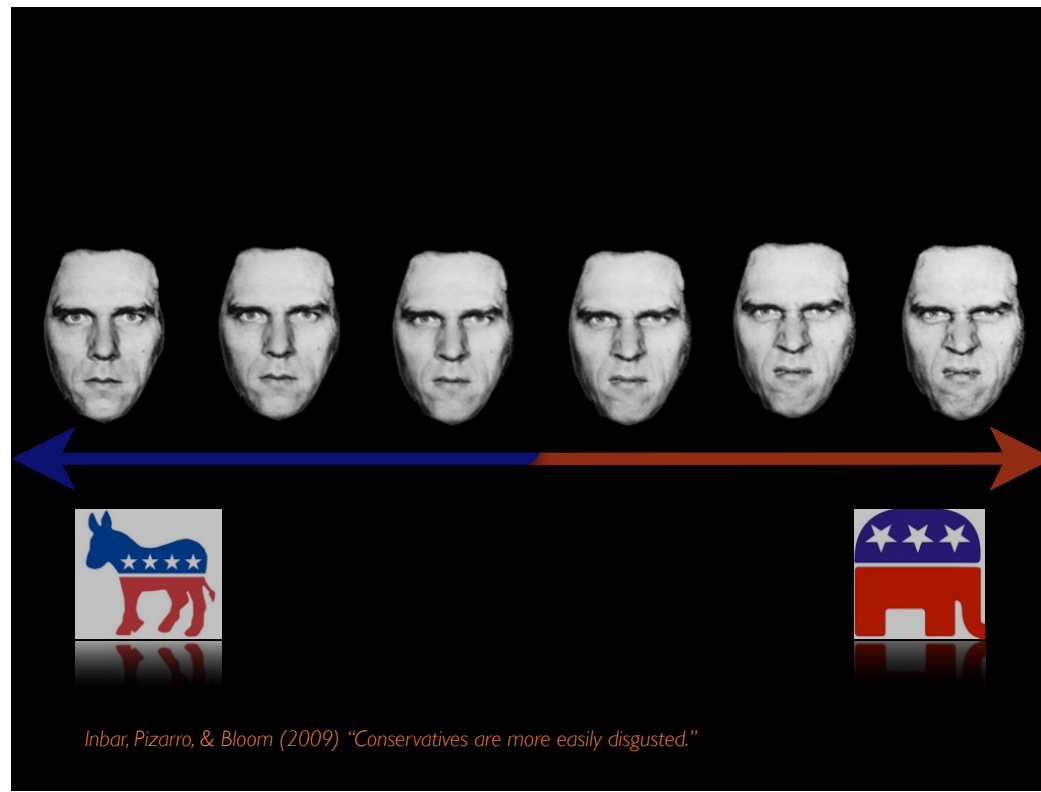
While you are walking through a tunnel under a railroad track, you smell urine

not at all disgusted—————*very disgusted*

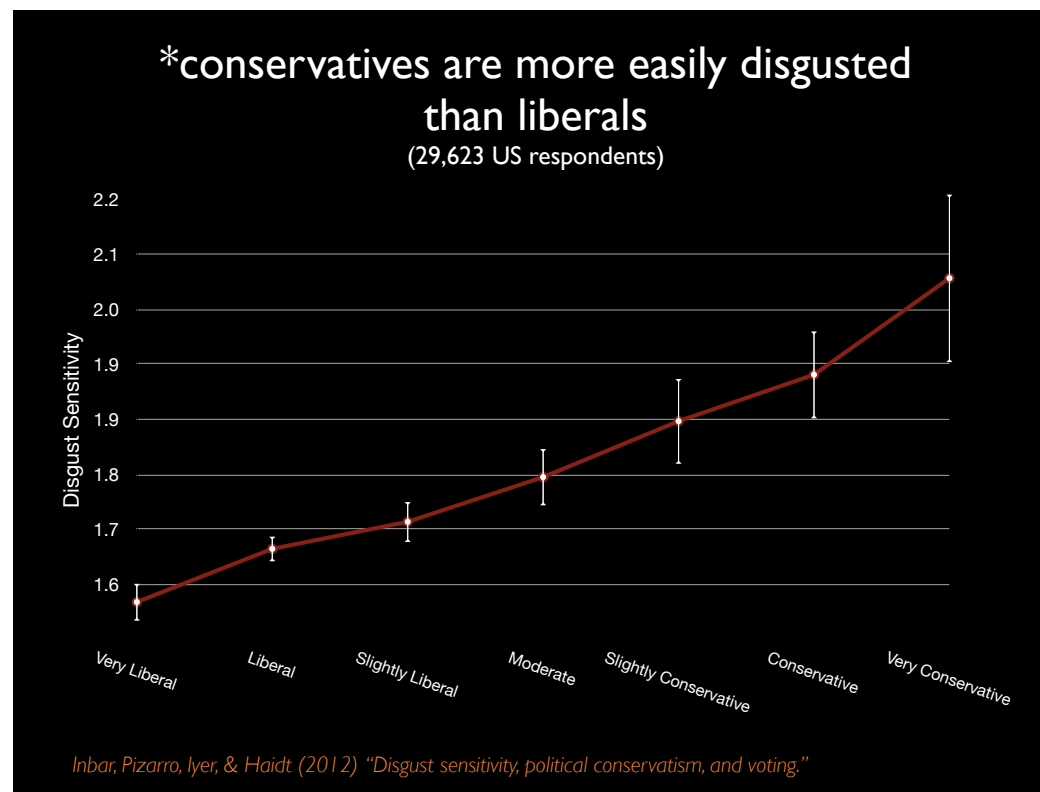
Haidt, McCauley & Rozin, 1994; Olatunji et al. 2007



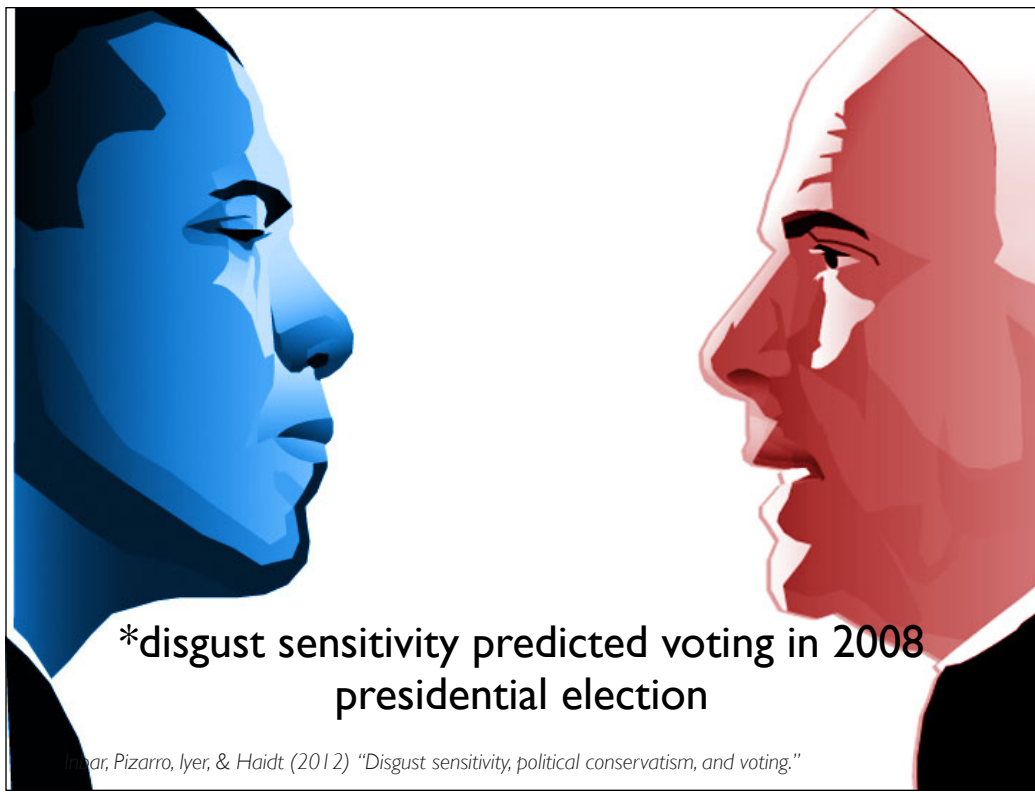
These questions predict behavior, such as whether you'd be willing to eat something like this.



what we found was a consistent pattern, that people who reported being politically conservative were more likely to report that they would be disgusted across these scenarios, and that liberals seemed to be less disgusted.

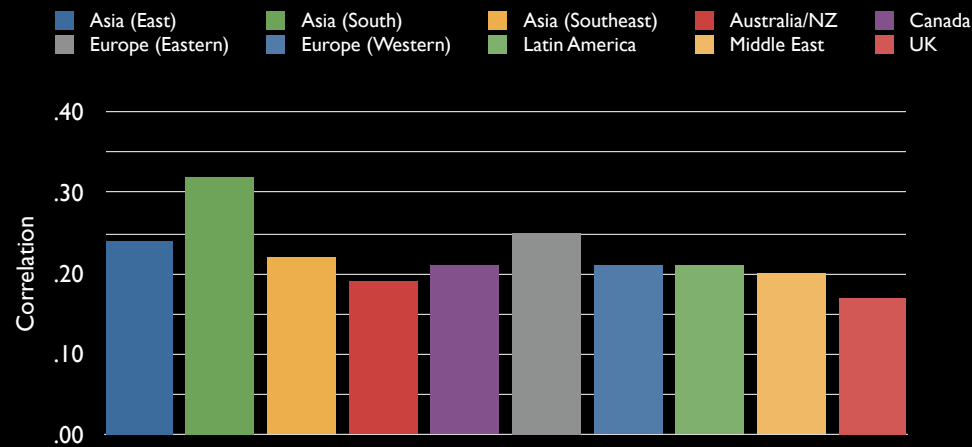


a couple of years later we gained access to a much larger sample of US respondents--rather than looking at college students and a few real people, we were able to look at 10s of thousands of people reporting their own sensitivity to disgust, their political orientation, and a number of other variables such as income, socioeconomic status, age, personality type, etc. and we still found a very strong pattern. the more conservative you were, the more disgusted you reported being.



we were also to look at patterns of voting in the 2008 presidential election. Even in states won by Obama, the average disgust sensitivity of the state was strongly related the Obamas margin of victory.

*political conservatives report greater disgust across the world

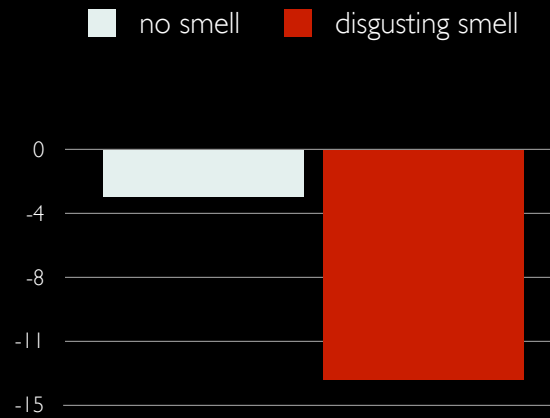


Inbar, Pizarro, Iyer, & Haidt (2012) "Disgust sensitivity, political conservatism, and voting."

We also gained access to world data and found not only the similar relationship—here expressed as a correlation between being conservative and being easily disgusted—but the relationship appears stable across 121 countries in 10 geographical regions of the world.



***disgusting smell causes more negative attitudes toward gay men**



Inbar, Pizarro, & Bloom (2011) "Disgusting smell increases negative attitudes toward gay men"

*conservatives more physiologically aroused when viewing disgusting images

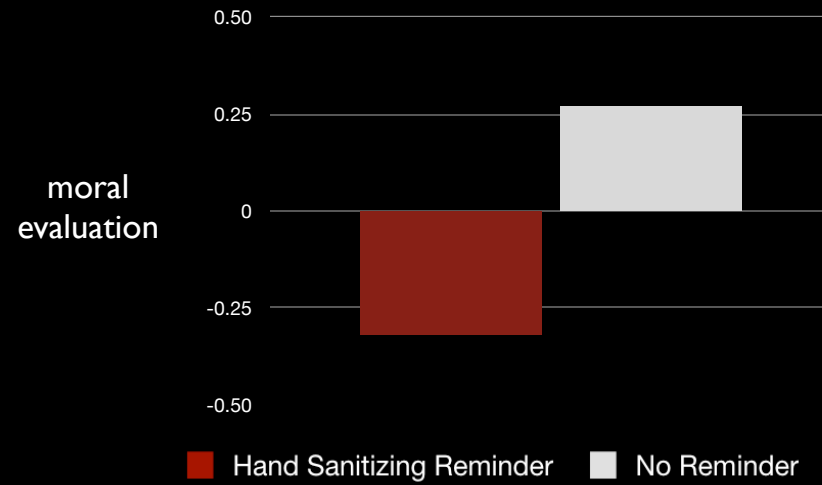


Smith, Oxley, Hibbing, Alford & Hibbing (2011) "Disgust Sensitivity and the Neurophysiology of Left-Right Political Orientations."

Other labs have corroborated these findings. Researchers looking at skin conductance and heart rate when exposed to disgusting images demonstrated that conservatives were more easily aroused by disgusting images than liberals. these individual differences in physiological arousal also predicted attitudes toward gay marriage.

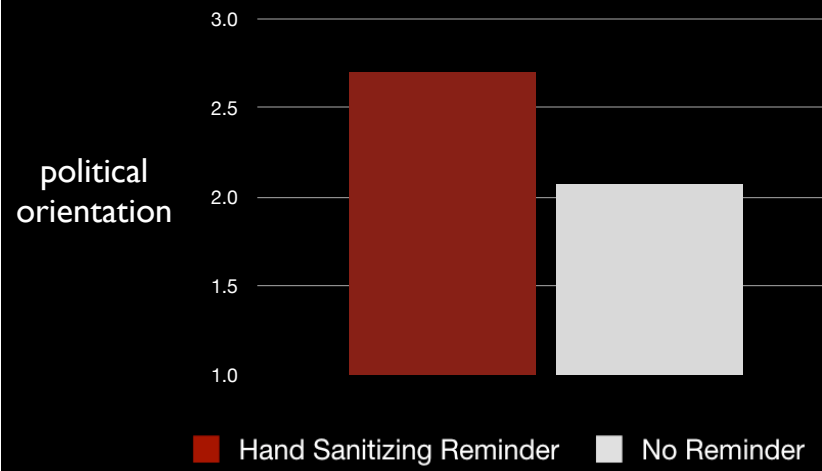


*makes people harsher moral judges of deviant
(but harmless) sexual practices



Helzer & Pizarro (2011) "Dirty Liberals: Reminders of cleanliness promote conservative political and moral attitudes"

*reminder to sanitize hands makes students
more politically conservative



Helzer & Pizarro (2011) "Dirty Liberals!: Reminders of cleanliness promote conservative political and moral attitudes"

*when *should* emotions
influence our thinking?