

# 0050 Changing Perceptions about Harm Can Temper Moral Outrage

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## 1. Changing (v.) Perceptions about Harm /Can Temper (v.)使缓和；使温和 Moral Outrage 愤怒；愤慨

Comprehensive 全部的；所有的；（几乎）无所不包的；详尽的；综合性的（接收各种资质的学生）sex education works (n.). Years of research show that /it is much more effective **than** an abstinence（因道德、宗教或健康原因对饮食、酒、色等的）节制；禁欲-only approach /at preventing teen pregnancy. In fact, abstinence-only programs /may actually increase unplanned pregnancies /and can contribute to harmful shaming /and sexist 性别歧视者 attitudes.

Issues 后定 like sexual behavior, drug use /and gun ownership 所有权；产权；物主身份 /involve (v.) highly moralized opinions. Research shows that /when people feel (v.) moral outrage 愤慨，愤怒 toward a behavior, they are more likely to support policies /that aim to completely stop (v.) that activity /**rather than** make it safer. For example, the more strongly /people were against **engaging in** risky sexual behavior, the less supportive /they were of initiatives 积极性；主动权 to provide (v.) medicine /that protects against HIV.

But our research suggests that /not all expressions of moral outrage are alike. Through a series of studies /that involved surveying (v.) more than 1,000 Americans, we found that, in some cases, people base their moral opposition 强烈反对 (或抵制) 某人/某事物 on the harm that an action causes (v.). In those instances, if you can find ways /to make an activity safer, you can also make it more morally acceptable.

### Example 1. 标题

#### *abstinence*

→ abs-分离,脱离 + -tin-握,持有 + -ence名词词尾 → 放弃不良嗜好

综合性教育工程。多年的研究表明,在预防青少年怀孕方面,它比仅禁欲的方法更有效。事实上,纯禁欲计划实际上可能会增加计划外怀孕,并可能助长有害的羞辱和性别歧视态度。

性行为、吸毒和拥有枪支等问题涉及高度道德化的观点。研究表明,当人们对某种行为感到道德义愤时,他们更有可能支持旨在完全停止该活动而不是使其更安全的政策。例如,人们越强烈反对从事危险的性行为,他们就越不支持主动提供预防艾滋病毒的药物。

但我们的研究表明,并非所有道德义愤的表达都是相似的。通过对 1,000 多名美国人进行调查的一系列研究,我们发现,在某些情况下,人们的道德反对程度,是建立在该行为造成多大的伤害程度上的。在这些情况下,如果你能找到让一项活动更安全的方法,你也可以让它在道德上更容易被接受。

we wanted to know /why policies that reduce (v.) harm /are unpopular among people with strong moral reactions —wouldn't reducing harm /be a good thing?

In a third study, we assessed a new group of people and again asked whether they would support a harm-reduction strategy related to these three provocative issues. Then we again asked how strongly they opposed each

behavior. We also asked the participants to rate how harmful, threatening or dangerous they believed certain issues were—and how much suffering the activity might cause.

This time we were surprised. We found that for gun ownership and risky sexual behavior, the more harmful people thought the behavior was, the more they supported a harm-reducing policy. In other words, our data presented a paradox: wrongfulness and harmfulness usually go together, but we found that perceiving something as wrong was linked with opposing a harm-reduction policy, whereas perceiving something as harmful was tied to supporting such a policy.

### *Example 2. 标题*

我们想知道为什么减少伤害的政策, 在道德反应强烈的人群中不受欢迎——减少伤害不是一件好事吗?

在第三项研究中, 我们评估了一组新人, 并再次询问他们是否会支持与这三个挑衅性问题相关的减少危害策略。然后我们再次询问他们反对每种行为的强烈程度。我们还要求参与者评估他们认为某些问题的危害性、威胁性或危险性, 以及该活动可能造成的痛苦程度。

这次我们很惊讶。我们发现, 对于拥有枪支和危险的性行为, 人们认为这种行为越有害, 他们就越支持“减少危害的政策”。换句话说, 我们的数据呈现出一个悖论: “错误性”和“有害性”通常是相互关联的, 但我们发现, 将某事视为“是错误的”, 与“反对减少危害政策”有关; 而将某事视为“只是有害的(而非本质错误的)”, 则与“支持此类政策”有关。

To explore this relationship between harmfulness and wrongness further, we designed a fourth study that included hypothetical questions such as “If there was no harm associated risky sex, would it be wrong?” and “If there was no harm associated with gun ownership, would it be wrong?” The results revealed that two distinct kinds of moral response exist. Some people showed strong

moral opposition to the activity, even if it was harmless. For them, the issue was black-and-white: this behavior is wrong. The more strongly they felt the behavior was morally wrong, the less they supported harm-reduction policies. Other people, however, had a moral response rooted in how harmful the activity may be. For these people, the behavior was wrong but could become perfectly acceptable if it were somehow harm-free. They could support for a harm-reduction policy despite their moral objections to the activity.

### *Example 3. 标题*

为了进一步探讨危害性和错误性之间的这种关系，我们设计了第四项研究，其中包括假设性问题，例如“如果不存在与“危险性”行为相关的“危害”，它会是错误的吗？”和“如果拥有枪支没有危害，那它是错误的吗？”结果表明存在两种截然不同的道德反应。有些人对这项活动表现出强烈的道德反对，即使它是无害的。对于他们来说，问题是非黑即白的：这种行为是错误的。他们越强烈地认为，这种行为在道德上是错误的，他们就越不支持减少伤害的政策。

然而，其他人的道德反应植根于该活动的危害程度。对于这些人来说，这种行为是错误的，但如果它在某种程度上是无害的，则可以完全接受。尽管他们在道德上反对这项活动，但他们可以支持减少危害的政策。

Our work suggests that not all moral judgments are alike. If we want to understand one another or persuade others to consider ways of reducing harm, we need to pay attention to what motivates people's moral judgments. That insight is valuable to policy makers who want to implement harm-reduction strategies. It also holds promise for those who may fear certain conversations are too morally charged to be productive or even pleasant. Our findings show that someone can have a strong moral objection to a behavior and yet be willing to entertain strategies that allow for some form of the activity to continue. In other words, just because people harbor moral opposition to a behavior does not necessarily mean their thinking is rigid or uncompromising when it comes to policy.

When we asked some of the people in our studies whether they felt for those involved in the potentially harmful behaviors we had presented, we found that people who expressed some compassion also showed greater support for harm-reduction policies.

#### *Example 4. 标题*

我们的工作表明，并非所有的道德判断都是相似的。如果我们想相互理解或说服他人考虑减少伤害的方法，我们需要注意是什么激发了人们的道德判断。这种洞察力对于想要实施减少危害战略的决策者来说很有价值。它也为那些可能担心某些对话过于道德而无法产生成效甚至令人愉快的人带来希望。我们的研究结果表明，某人可能对某种行为有强烈的道德反对，但仍愿意采取允许某种形式的活动继续进行的策略。换句话说，仅仅因为人们对某种行为怀有道德上的反对并不一定意味着他们在政策方面的思维是僵化的或不妥协的。

当我们询问我们研究中的一些人，他们是否同情那些参与我们提出的潜在有害行为的人时，我们发现表达一些同情心的人也表现出对减少伤害政策的更大支持。

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## 2. Changing Perceptions about Harm Can Temper Moral Outrage

Comprehensive sex education works. Years of research show that it is much more effective than an abstinence-only approach at preventing teen pregnancy. In fact, abstinence-only programs may actually increase unplanned pregnancies and can contribute to harmful shaming and sexist attitudes.

Issues like sexual behavior, drug use and gun ownership involve highly moralized opinions. Research shows that when people feel moral outrage toward a behavior, they are more likely to support policies that aim to completely stop that activity rather than make it safer. For example, the more

strongly people were against engaging in risky sexual behavior, the less supportive they were of initiatives to provide medicine that protects against HIV.

But our research suggests that not all expressions of moral outrage are alike. Through a series of studies that involved surveying more than 1,000 Americans, we found that, in some cases, people base their moral opposition on the harm that an action causes. In those instances, if you can find ways to make an activity safer, you can also make it more morally acceptable.

We wanted to know why policies that reduce harm are unpopular among people with strong moral reactions—wouldn't reducing harm be a good thing?

In a third study, we assessed a new group of people and again asked whether they would support a harm-reduction strategy related to these three provocative issues. Then we again asked how strongly they opposed each behavior. We also asked the participants to rate how harmful, threatening or dangerous they believed certain issues were—and how much suffering the activity might cause.

This time we were surprised. We found that for gun ownership and risky sexual behavior, the more harmful people thought the behavior was, the more they supported a harm-reducing policy. In other words, our data presented a paradox: wrongfulness and harmfulness usually go together, but we found that perceiving something as wrong was linked with opposing a harm-reduction policy, whereas perceiving something as harmful was tied to supporting such a policy.

To explore this relationship between harmfulness and wrongness further, we designed a fourth study that included hypothetical questions such as “If there was no harm associated risky sex, would it be wrong?” and “If there was no harm associated with gun ownership, would it be wrong?” The results revealed that two distinct kinds of moral response exist. Some people showed strong moral opposition to the activity, even if it was harmless. For them, the issue was black-and-white: this behavior is wrong. The more strongly they felt the behavior was morally wrong, the less they supported harm-reduction policies.

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