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Introduction

About half of US states have introduced “bathroom bills” restricting bathroom access to the sex on one’s birth certificate (McCarthy, 2017). Despite their harmfulness to transgender people (Herman, 2013), about half of the US population supports them (Times, 2017). Why?

A Role for Disgust? Some Americans associate transgender people with pathogens (Waters, 2017) and body modification (Tadlock, 2015). They may see bathroom bills as a way of reducing *pathogen disgust* (Tybur et al., 2009), *sexual disgust* [elicited by reproductively risky behaviors; Tybur et al. (2009)], or *injury disgust* [elicited by gore; Kupfer (2018)].

A Role for Moral Values? *Purity*, which concerns adherence to “the natural,” is correlated with disgust (Wagemans et al., 2018) and with positions on political issues (Koleva et al., 2012). Schein & Gray (2015), however, argue that harm matters more (Schein et al., 2016).

Research Questions:

1. Does pathogen, sexual, or injury disgust predict of bathroom bill support?
2. Does purity or harm predict of bathroom bill support?
3. Does purity or harm more mediate between disgust and bathroom bill support?

Method

Bathroom bill support: “when it comes to public bathrooms, someone who was born into a [male/female] body should be required to use the [men’s/women’s] bathroom, even if they feel that they are a [woman/man].”

IVs: We measured trait **pathogen**, **sexual**, and **injury disgust** using self-report measures (Kupfer, 2018; Tybur et al., 2009). Participants were asked to imagine that “someone who was born into a [male/female] body, but feels that they are a [woman/man], uses the [women’s/men’s] bathroom,” rating how obscene/impure/sinful/perverted (**purity**) and dangerous/harmful/safe (**cisgender harm**) that

Pathogen disgust predicts support for bathroom bills, but not sexual or injury disgust. Purity matters more than harm.



scenario would be for non-transgender people. Participants also imagined “a policy that would require someone who was born into a [male/female] body to use the [men’s/women’s] bathroom, even if that person feels that they are a [woman/man],” rating how dangerous/harmful/safe that would be for transgender people.

Results

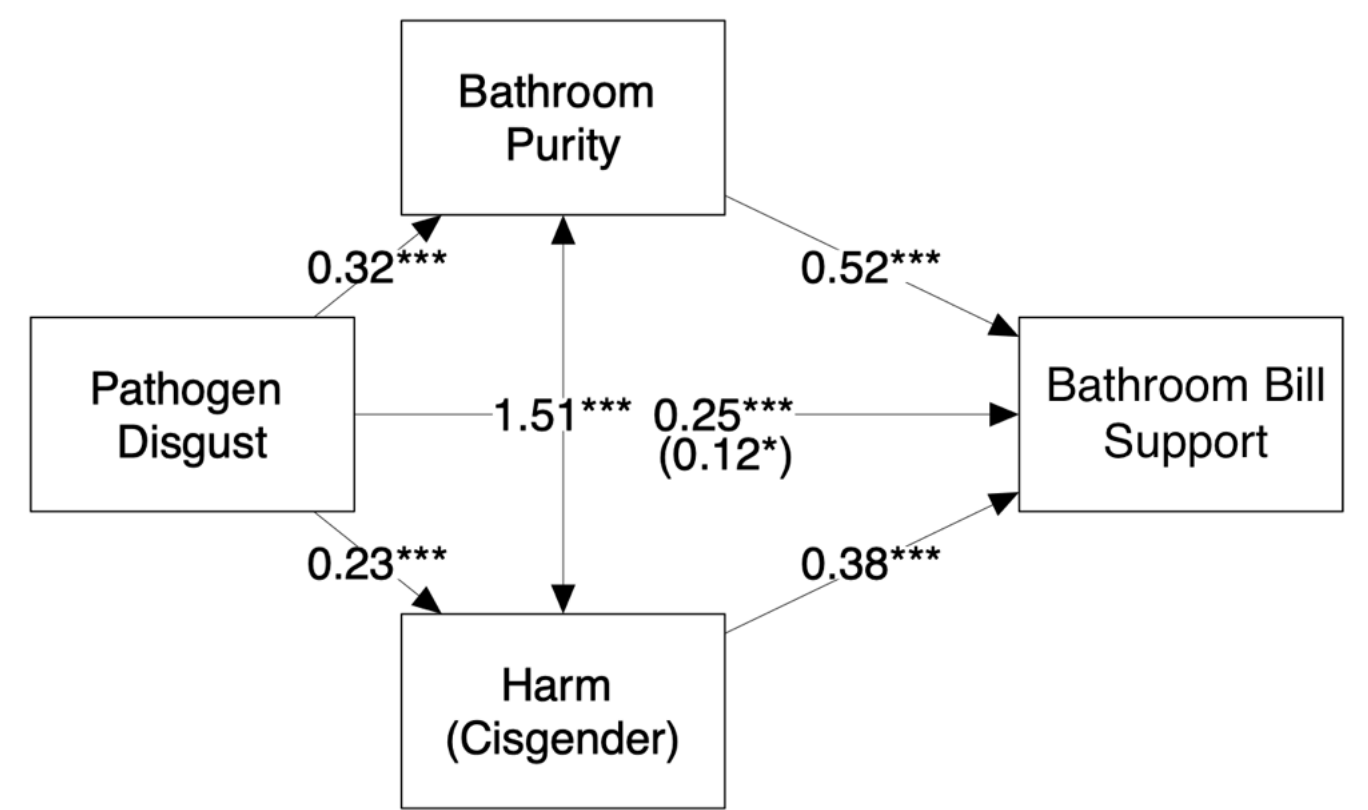
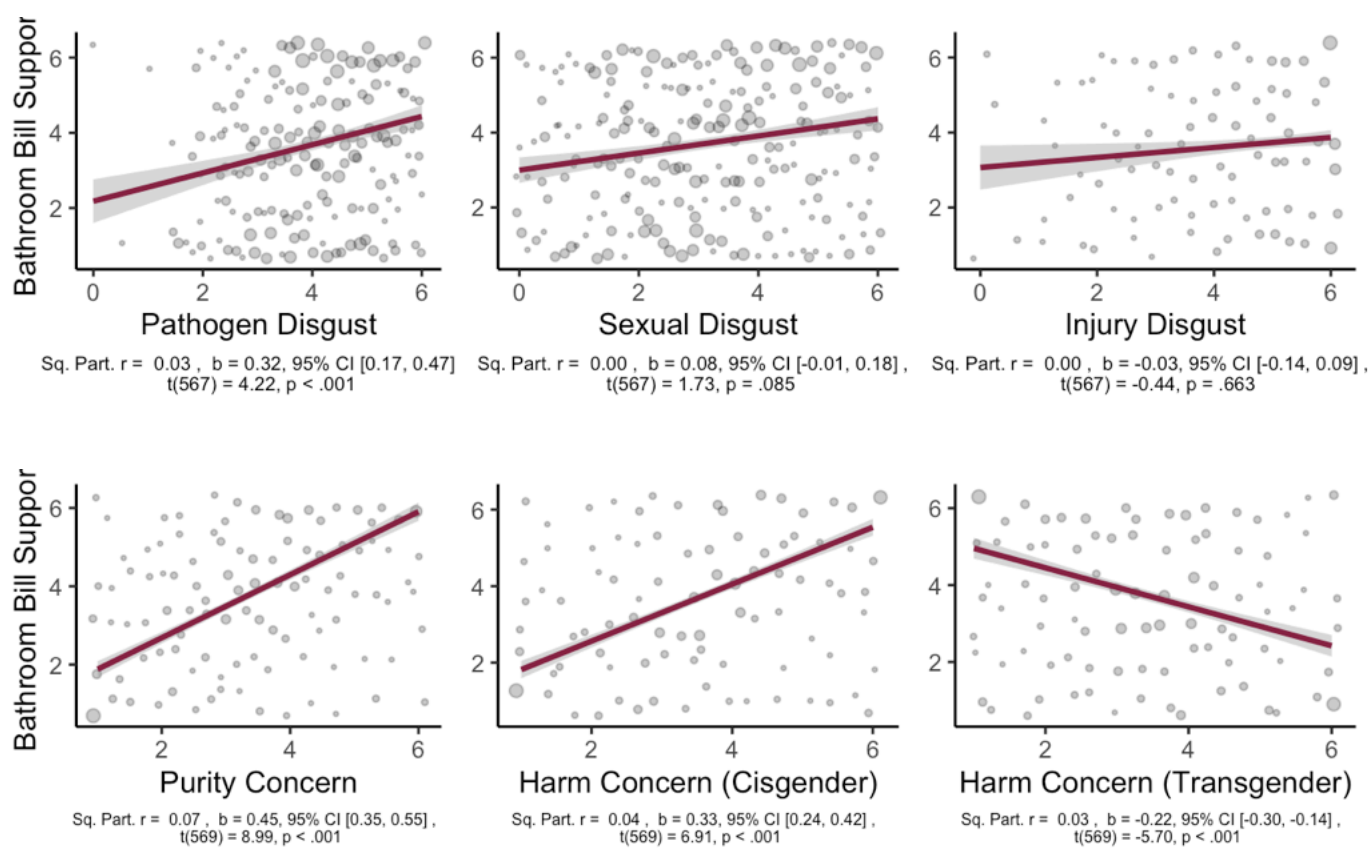


Figure 1: Indirect effect, Purity: ($b = 0.17$, $SE = 0.03$, $p < .001$)
Indirect effect, Harm: ($b = 0.09$, $SE = 0.03$, $p < .001$)
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion

1. Pathogen (not sexual or injury) disgust predicts bathroom bill support
2. Purity is a stronger predictor than harm concerns
3. Purity is a stronger mediator than harm

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