Who Engages with Moral Beauty?

Rhett Diessner
Lewis-Clark State College
Ravi Iyer
University of Southern California
Meghan M. Smith
University of Virginia
Jonathan Haidt
New York University-Stern School of Business

[in press at the Journal of Moral Education]

Corresponding author:
Rhett Diessner
Lewis-Clark State College
Division of Social Science
500 8th Ave.
Lewiston, ID 83501 USA
Email: diessner@lcsc.edu
Fax: 208 792 2571

Author Note
We would like to thank Jesse Graham, Spassena Koleva, Pete Ditto, Matt Motyl, and Sean Wojcik for their help in data collection. We also thank the Social Science Division at LCSC, and its chair Bill Clouser, for support; and thank Wendy Diessner for feedback on an earlier draft. This project/publication was made possible, in part, through the support of a grant from the John Templeton Foundation to the 2nd author. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the John Templeton Foundation.
Abstract

Aristotle considered moral beauty to be the *telos* of the human virtues (Sachs, 2002). Displays of moral beauty have been shown to elicit the moral emotion of elevation and cause a desire to become a better person and to engage in prosocial behavior. Study 1 (*N* = 5,380) shows engagement with moral beauty is related to several psychological constructs relevant to moral education, and structural models reveal that the story of engagement with moral beauty may be considered a story of love and connectedness; it is uniquely predictive of caring for, being empathic of, loving, and valuing benevolence toward others. Study 2 (*N* = 542) demonstrates that the personality trait of engaging with moral beauty moderates susceptibility to elevation. These studies suggest that encouraging students to engage with moral beauty might increase their desire to become better persons and to do good.

Convergent with other research showing that moral emotions motivate moral behavior, we suggest that moral education programs increase their focus on developing engagement with moral beauty.

Keywords: Moral Beauty, Elevation, Virtues, Moral Education
Moral Beauty

Who Engages with Moral Beauty?

Aristotle viewed human virtues as beautiful, and some have argued that “an education in beauty can be a training in the love of virtue” (Iris Murdoch, as cited in Winston, 2006, p. 285). Sachs (2002) noted that *to kalon*, which means “the beautiful,” has mistakenly been translated as “noble” in most translations of Aristotle’s *Nichomachean Ethics*. Sachs adds that “the beautiful,” as described by Aristotle, is not simply an object for philosophic contemplation, but is the source of moral action. A person of good character--one who puts the moral virtues into action--can see the truly beautiful in themselves and others, and knows that the beautiful is the end or highest good of human behavior. We term the kind of beauty that Aristotle refers to as *moral beauty*. In this article we ask: who responds most strongly to moral beauty? What are the demographic and personality traits of a person who is more easily moved by witnessing moral beauty in others?

The Emotion of Moral Elevation and the Trait of Engaging with Moral Beauty

The emotional reaction to moral beauty has been described by poets for thousands of years, but only recently has it been studied by experimental psychologists, who call it “moral elevation” (or simply “elevation”). Moral elevation is elicited by witnessing acts of virtue, or “moral beauty” (i.e., displays of charity, gratitude, courage, etc.; Haidt, 2003). Elevation produces pleasant sensations in the body, including a warm feeling in the chest, and sometimes tingles on the skin and a lump in the throat (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). Elevation has been shown to cause lactating women to hug their children, nurse them, and release milk into a nursing pad, suggesting that the hormone oxytocin may be released during experiences of elevation (Silvers & Haidt, 2008). Elevation, like oxytocin, seems to promote social bonds.

A variety of studies have indicated that elevation is associated with an action tendency of wanting to become a better person, to emulate the acts of virtue observed, and to serve others (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Cox, 2010; Haidt, 2000, 2003b, 2006; Landis et al., 2009;
Additionally, three studies with random assignment to experimental and control groups have illustrated a causal effect for elevation on prosocial behavior (Aquino, McFerran, & Laven, 2011; Freeman, Aquino, & McFerran, 2009; Schnall, Roper, & Fessler, 2010).

These empirical findings affirm Thomas Jefferson’s insight into the emotional response to virtue. In a letter to a friend in which Jefferson advised the friend to buy some novels and plays for his new library—despite the contemporary belief that such works were only suited for women—Jefferson justified his advice by discussing the moral-educational benefits that come from reading great works of fiction:

>[E]very thing is useful which contributes to fix us in the principles and practice of virtue. When any ... act of charity or of gratitude, for instance, is presented either to our sight or imagination, we are deeply impressed with its beauty and feel a strong desire in ourselves of doing charitable and grateful acts also. On the contrary when we see or read of any atrocious deed, we are disgusted with its deformity and conceive an abhorrence of vice. Now every emotion of this kind is an exercise of our virtuous dispositions; and dispositions of the mind, like limbs of the body, acquire strength by exercise. (Jefferson, 1771/1975, p. 350).

If Jefferson is correct, then experiences of elevation may be useful in moral education programs. Repeatedly witnessing moral beauty and then feeling a visceral and elevating response may motivate people to become better human beings, and may increase the frequency of unselfish and prosocial behavior.

But before considering designing moral education curricula to explicitly include elevating experiences, it would be important to know whether all students are equally “elevatable,” or whether there are personality traits and demographic variables that make some more prone to elevation and others immune to it. In Haidt’s experience studying
elevation and lecturing on it, he has often found elevation “virtuosos”--some of whom cry more easily than they’d like to when hearing stories about virtue—and also, occasionally, individuals who don’t recognize the emotion as something they have experienced.

There is a trait, or character strength (cf. Peterson & Seligman, 2004), which we term engagement with moral beauty, and which we hypothesized would predict who is more, or less, elevatable (see Study 2 below). This trait has been assessed in people using the Engagement with Beauty Scale (EBS; Diessner, Davis, & Toney, 2009; Diessner, Parsons, Solom, Frost, & Davidson, 2008; Diessner, Rust, Solom, Frost, & Parsons, 2006), which has subscales measuring three beauty related traits: engagement with natural beauty, engagement with artistic beauty, and engagement with moral beauty. Elevation is an emotional state; engagement with moral beauty, on the other hand, is the disposition to experience elevation, a trait for which there are individual differences (Diessner et al., 2008).

So far, across studies of elevation, there has only been one consistent quality linked to being prone to elevation and that is gender. Women have shown slightly higher levels of elevation and susceptibility to elevation (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Freeman, et al., 2009; Landis et al., 2009). Likewise, in studies with the Engagement with Beauty Scale (EBS; Diessner, et al., 2008), women score higher levels on the Engagement with Moral Beauty subscale than men (Diessner et al., 2008; and Study 1 reported below), as well as higher levels on the two other subscales of the EBS, the Engagement with Natural Beauty subscale and the Engagement with Artistic Beauty subscale.

The trait of engagement with beauty may be considered a strength of the virtue of transcendence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), and Haidt and Keltner (2004) hypothesized that appreciation of beauty would be correlated with other character strengths related to transcendence. Indeed, two small studies using the EBS (Diessner et al., 2008), with student samples, have found that engagement with moral beauty positively correlates with several
transcendent traits, such as hope (Diessner et al., 2006), spiritual transcendence and gratitude, and negatively with materialism (Diessner et al., 2008). A prior study (Smith, Mayton, & Diessner, 2009) also found a moderately strong correlation between empathy and engagement with moral beauty; empathy appears to be related to the virtue of Love/Humanity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Therefore, we anticipated that engagement with moral beauty would, with a much larger sample than previous studies, show moderate relationships with traits related to the virtue of transcendence and the virtue of love.

Aims of the Present Studies

Because studies have shown the causal influence of elevation on moral behavior, including the desire to become a better person and to serve others, (Aquino et al., 2011; Freeman et al., 2009; Schnall et al., 2010), and because displays of moral beauty are the eliciting stimulus for experiences of elevation (Algoe & Haidt, 2009), we believe that nurturing students to develop their personality trait of engagement with moral beauty may be a useful strategy in moral education programs.

Therefore, Study 1 extends prior studies on the personality trait of engagement with moral beauty by greatly enlarging the sample size and diversity of the research participants, and the number of personality traits examined. In Study 1, we hope to develop a comprehensive profile of the kind of person who more easily engages with moral beauty. We also examined whether engagement with moral beauty would be differentiated from engagement with natural and artistic beauty. Would engagement with any kind of beauty correlate with moral personality traits and virtues, or does engagement with moral beauty have a specific relationship with moral traits? We also examined whether engagement with beauty is a trait more highly associated with the virtue of transcendence, or with the virtue of love; in fact, most of the measures noted in Study 1 and Table 1 were chosen for this study due to their association with either transcendence or love. Of special interest is the
relationship between moral identity and engagement with moral beauty; previous research has demonstrated that moral identity centrality predicts intensity of elevation and the ability to remember acts of moral goodness (moral beauty; Aquino et al., 2011).

Based on the establishment of a correlation between engagement with moral beauty and prosocial motivations, Study 2 below examined whether the disposition toward engagement with moral beauty potentially moderates susceptibility to elevation, using an experimental design. In particular, we asked whether people who say that they are highly responsive to moral beauty do, in fact, show greater emotional responsiveness to viewing a morally elevating video, including increased motivation to help others.

**Study 1: The Personality Engaged by Moral Beauty**

To examine the relationships of engagement with moral beauty with other personality constructs, the full Engagement with Beauty Scale (Diessner et al., 2008) was posted on YourMorals.org in 2009. We examined the correlations of the three EBS subscales with 12 common measures of personality and morality that were posted on YourMorals (see Table 1) and have a theoretical basis for relating to the EBS. Rather than simply noting the large number of significant correlations, our goal was to establish discriminative validity, by understanding the pattern of correlations. For all measures we'll look across the three subscales of the EBS, identifying which measures show a stronger correlation with engagement with moral beauty than with the other two subscales (measuring engagement with natural and artistic beauty). For each measure with subscales, we will pick out which subscale of the personality measure shows the strongest correlation with engagement with moral beauty. To give some advance notice, in the hope of helping the reader navigate through Table 1: the general story is that engagement with moral beauty has a special relationship with measures of love, caring, benevolence, and moral identity.

**Method**
Participants. Between May 2009 and April 2010, 5,380 participants completed the Engagement with Beauty Scale at YourMorals.org. The sample consisted of 49% women; mean age was 39.7 years (SD = 15.5); 85.2% reported that they live in the United States; reported ethnicity was 73% white, 12% non-white, and 15% not reporting. The various samples used in analyses reported below are subsets of this overall sample, and they generally reflect these demographics.

Previous studies using the EBS to assess engagement with moral beauty were limited to sample sizes ranging from $N = 52$ to 206. These participants came from a single state in the USA (Idaho) and comprised undergraduate college students, with a mean age of 22 to 23 years ($SDs = 6$-$8$ years; Diessner et al., 2008; Diessner et al., 2006; Diessner et al., 2009); the sample used here has over 5,000 more participants than any previous study, has a mean age of nearly double that of previous studies, and a $SD$ of 15 years. Although we did not record state of residence for this study, YourMorals.org participants typically come from every state in the USA and a variety of other countries. The sample is certainly not a representative sample as it tends to be better educated and more politically liberal than the national average. Still, it is a more diverse and materially different sample compared to samples used in previous research. Moreover, examination of this sample has previously replicated a great deal of psychological findings (e.g., Iyer, Koleva, Graham, Ditto, & Haidt, 2012), indicating that this sample is comparable to samples used in previous research.

Measures. The Engagement with Beauty Scale (EBS; Diessner et al., 2008) is a 14-item self-report scale indicating various levels of cognitive and emotional engagement concerning natural, artistic, and moral beauty. The EBS uses a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from very unlike me to very much like me, on questions such as, “When perceiving beauty in nature I feel changes in my body, such as a lump in my throat, an expansion in my chest, faster heartbeat, or other bodily responses,” “When perceiving beauty in a work of art I
feel something like a spiritual experience, perhaps a sense of oneness or being united with the universe or a love of the entire world,” and “When perceiving an act of moral beauty I find that I desire to become a better person.” Previous studies of the EBS with an American sample yielded a total score internal consistency of .91, and test-retest reliability of .79; EBS Natural Beauty subscale $\alpha$ of .80; Artistic Beauty subscale $\alpha$ of .88; and the EBS Moral Beauty subscale $\alpha$ of .89; test-retest reliability correlations ranged from .67-.79 on the subscales (Diessner et al., 2008). International studies with translations of the EBS, in Iran, Germany, Cyprus and Croatia, as well as in English among bilingual Samoans, demonstrated $\alpha$s from .85-.94, and showed a similar factor structure across cultures (Richel et al., 2008). A variety of concurrent and predictive studies have shown the validity of scores obtained when using the EBS (Diessner et al., 2008; Diessner et al., 2006; Diessner et al., 2009). Using the current sample ($n = 5,380$ participants from YourMorals.org), we found the following reliabilities: Natural Beauty subscale: $\alpha = .81$; Artistic Beauty subscale: $\alpha = .86$; Engagement with Moral Beauty subscale $\alpha = .91$.

To spare readers the cognitive load of holding descriptions of twelve personality measures in memory, descriptions of those 12 measures of personality and morality included in Table 1 will be given in the relevant parts of the Results section below.

**Results**

Table 1 shows the simple Pearson correlations of each trait with the three subscales of the EBS. Our focus is on the engagement with moral beauty column. But because gender differences have been found for engagement with moral beauty, and because a liberal political affiliation is well known to positively correlate with measures of appreciation of beauty (McCrae & Sutin, 2009), we will provide partial correlations that control for these two variables. What does the trait of engagement with moral beauty tell us, beyond knowing a person's sex and politics? These partial correlations are shown in the fourth column. Readers
may focus on either the third or fourth columns; they tell essentially the same story, and we won’t discuss the small differences between them.

In regard to missing values, in all comparisons made below, any participant who failed to complete more than 20% of items was excluded from analysis for any particular measure. Otherwise scale scores were averaged across items. In regard to statistical assumptions, scatter plots indicated that the variables noted in Table 1 are bivariately normally distributed, and thus have linear relationships; and in regard to the partial correlations, are multivariately normally distributed.

**Gender and Age.**

Women ($N = 2,299$) scored higher ($M = 33.9; SD = 7.2$) than men ($N = 2,397; M = 30.6; SD = 8.3$) on the EBS Moral Beauty subscale; $t(4694) = 14.37, p < .001, d = .42$; and showed a very similar difference on the engagement with natural and artistic beauty subscales as well (results of the Levene test indicate that equal variance between the two groups can be assumed). This reinforces Haidt and Keltner’s (2004) brief review of gender issues in appreciation of beauty and excellence; they note that women tend to score higher on connectedness in self-transcendence and are more prone to moral elevation. It also corroborates a previous study (Diessner et al., 2008), which found women’s EBS scores to be significantly higher than men’s scores.

Age correlated .07 with the EBS Moral Beauty subscale ($N = 5380, p < .001$); the partial correlations of engagement with moral beauty, with the various constructs in Table 1, after controlling for age, show very little change in value.

**Political Ideology.**

All subjects completed a measure of their political ideology when they registered at YourMorals.org. The measure offered a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = *very liberal*, 4 = *moderate*, to 7 = *very conservative*. The measure also offered three additional choices, for
those who did not want to place themselves on the 7-point scale: *Don’t know/not political*, *Libertarian*, or *Other*. In this analysis we only used participants’ scores who placed themselves on the 7-point scale (\(n = 4,713\)); that sample included 20.7% very liberal, 40.7% liberal, 17.2% slightly liberal, 10.3% moderate, 4.6% slightly conservative, 5.0% conservative, 1.5% very conservative; thus the sample was 78.6% liberal and 11.1% conservative. As shown in Table 1, engagement with moral beauty has a very low correlation with political affiliation in our study, although the correlations with natural and artistic beauty are somewhat larger.

**Twelve Personality Scales.**

*The Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ).* The MFQ (Graham, Nosek & Haidt, 2011) has three “judgment” and three “relevance” questions (using 6 point Likert-type scales, from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*, and from *not at all relevant* to *extremely relevant*, respectively) for each of the factor analytically validated subscales of Care/harm (\(\alpha = .69\); note all \(\alpha\)s reported here, and on the 11 other personality scales below, are from the current study), Fairness/cheating (\(\alpha = .65\)), Authority/subversion (\(\alpha = .74\)), Loyalty/betrayal (\(\alpha = .70\)), and Sanctity/degradation (\(\alpha = .84\)). Due to care being the behavioural manifestation of love, and Platonic theory’s emphasis on the special relationship between love and beauty (Nehamas, 2007), we expected engagement with moral beauty to correlate the highest with the Care/harm foundation of the five foundations. Indeed, the EBS Moral Beauty subscale had a special relationship with the Care foundation. The correlation of Care with moral beauty was higher than with the other kinds of beauty, and the correlation of moral beauty with Care was higher than with the other four moral foundations.

*Five Factor Model of Personality (BFI).* The Big Five Inventory (BFI; John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991) is a 44-item measure of 5 personality traits, using a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The BFI measures the classic
traits of Extraversion ($\alpha = .87$), Agreeableness ($\alpha = .78$), Conscientiousness ($\alpha = .84$), Neuroticism ($\alpha = .85$), and Open-mindedness ($\alpha = .81$). As shown in Table 1, engagement with moral beauty has a moderate correlation with Agreeableness (the other kinds of beauty had low correlations with it), and small correlations with Extraversion and Openness; of the five big traits, Agreeableness is theoretically the one most closely associated with caring and love (DeYoung, Weisberg, Quilty, & Peterson, J. B., in press).

Haidt and Keltner (2004) predicted that appreciation of beauty in general would be related to Agreeableness (p. 548). Haidt and Keltner also anticipated that Extraversion would “correlate modestly” (p. 548) with appreciation of beauty, and it does. They also predicted that appreciation of beauty would have a “strong relationship” (p. 548) with Openness, and although engagement with moral beauty has a weak correlation with Openness, engagement with artistic beauty had a higher correlation with Openness than any form of beauty with any of the big-five traits. Moral beauty has previously been found to have no correlation with measures of depression (Diessner et al., 2008; Diessner, Brink, & Rust, 2010), thus it is consistent that no relationship with Neuroticism was found in this study.

**Schwartz Value Survey (SVS).** The SVS (Schwartz, 1992) is a widely used measure of universal cross-cultural values. The version of the SVS used here has 58 items, each item a value with a short definitional phrase accompanying it, and participants rated to what degree the value is a guiding principle in their life. The ratings range from -1 (*opposed to my values*) through 0 (*not important*), 3 (*important*), to 7 (*of supreme importance*). The 58 values are combined into the 10 major value types determined by Schwartz (1992) using smallest-space analysis (see Table 1 for names of the 10 types).

Of the various values shown in Table 1, Universalism ($\alpha = .77$), Benevolence ($\alpha = .74$), and Spirituality ($\alpha = .57$) were the values most highly associated with engagement with moral beauty, and the only correlations of moderate size (the correlations with the other eight
values were low to weak). Benevolence and Spirituality also correlated higher with engagement with moral beauty than the other kinds of beauty, whereas Universalism correlated highest with engagement with natural beauty (there are items concerning nature on the Universalism subscale). Schwartz (1992) defines the Benevolence value as a “concern for the welfare of close others in everyday interaction” (p. 11), in other words, loving locally; and the Universalism value as focused on “understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature” (p. 12), a self-transcendent value. The value of Spirituality is an 11th type, derived from SVS items concerning inner harmony, a spiritual life, and meaning in life. Haidt and Keltner (2004) predicted that the character strength of “appreciation of beauty and excellence” (p. 537) would be related to spirituality and transcendence. It appears engagement with any kind of beauty, including moral beauty, lifts us out of ourselves, and assists us to transcend ourselves.

**Identification with All of Humanity (IWAHS).** The IWAHS (McFarland, Webb, & Brown, 2012) has 27 items, 9 for each of three subscales measuring identification with community (α = .91), country (α = .88), and the whole world (α = .91); the questions on the IWAHS are scored on a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging from not at all to very much. Because McFarland et al. (2012) partially defined identification as feeling “love toward” (p. 852) others and also noted its strong relationship with the transcendental value of universalism, we anticipated a high correlation between the IWAHS and the EBS moral subscale. As shown in Table 1, those who engage in noticing moral beauty identify with their community, with their nation, as well as with the whole world; the EBS moral beauty subscale correlated higher with all IWAHS subscales than did the other kinds of beauty.

**Different Types of Love Scale (DTLS).** As the philosopher Alexander Nehamas states, invoking Plato, “Beauty is the object of love…” (p. 99). In the case of the DTLS (Campos, Keltner, & Gonzaga, 2002) the object of love concerns four different
categories of love objects: friends ($\alpha = .83$), family ($\alpha = .87$), romantic partners ($\alpha = .84$), and all humanity ($\alpha = .88$). The DTLS’s 40 items are scored on a 7 point Likert-type scale from not at all to completely.

Based on Platonic theory concerning love and beauty (Nehamas, 2007) we expected all four love subscales to correlate highly with engagement with moral beauty. As shown in Table 1, engagement with moral beauty has a strong correlation with love of all humanity; a moderate correlation with love of friends; and low correlations with love of family and romantic partners; and correlated higher with all four love subscales than did the other kinds of beauty

**Empathy (IRI-EC).** To measure empathy we used the Empathic Concern subscale ($\alpha = .84$) of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI-EC; Davis, 1983). The IRI-EC has seven items scored on a five-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Based on a past study on empathy and engagement with moral beauty (Smith et al., 2009), and with empathy being a foundation for love, we anticipated a high correlation between empathy and engagement with moral beauty. As shown in Table 1, engagement with moral beauty has a strong relationship with empathy, an ability closely related to love and caring; and correlated higher with empathy than the other two kinds of beauty

**Adapted Good-Self Scale (AGSS).** The AGSS, revised by Barriga, Morrison, Liau, and Gibbs (2001), has two subscales, one measuring the relevance of moral concepts to the self ($\alpha = .79$), and the other to the relevance of pragmatic, non-moral abilities ($\alpha = .48$). The measure presents a list of 8 moral and 8 non-moral positive traits and subjects are asked to rate their importance to their self-concept from 1 = not important to 4 = extremely important. Based on Aquino et al.’s (2011) research on moral identity and elevation, we anticipated a strong relationship between the moral subscale of the AGSS and the EBS Moral Beauty subscale. As shown in Table 1, engagement with moral beauty is moderately
associated with seeing one’s self as a good person (and more so than the other kinds of beauty); and is unrelated to identifying with pragmatic or non-moral excellence.

**Moral Identity Scale (MIS).** The MIS (Aquino & Reed, 2002) consists of 10-items, five each for the moral action subscale (Symbolization, ($\alpha = .84$) and the moral self-concept subscale (Internalization, ($\alpha = .91$) both measuring moral self-relevance. Subjects rate each item’s importance on a 5 point scale from $1 = \textit{strongly disagree}$ to $5 = \textit{strongly agree}$. Based on Aquino et al.’s (2011) research on moral identity and elevation, we anticipated strong relationships between both MIS subscales and the EBS Moral Beauty subscale. Engagement with moral beauty strongly correlated with viewing one’s self as a moral actor (Symbolization) and with moral traits as central to self-image (Internalization); and correlated higher with both MIS subscales than did the other kinds of beauty.

**Gratitude (GQ-6).** The GQ6 (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002) is a six item measure of gratitude and thankfulness ($\alpha = .83$), scored on a seven point Likert-type scale (1 = $\textit{strongly disagree}$, 7 = $\textit{strongly agree}$). As shown in Table 1, dispositional gratitude has a moderate correlation with engagement with moral beauty; and correlated higher with it than the other kinds of beauty. Haidt and Keltner (2004) note that “gratitude…is one kind of responsiveness to moral beauty” (p. 545), thus anticipating that measures of gratitude would significantly associate with measures of appreciation of moral beauty. Gratitude is a self-transcendent character strength, and it appears that grateful people tend to see the inner beauty of others.

**Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS).** The HFS (Thompson et al., 2005) is an 18-item questionnaire that measures dispositional forgiveness and consists of three six-item subscales: Forgiveness of Self ($\alpha = .88$), Forgiveness of Others ($\alpha = .90$), and Forgiveness of Situations ($\alpha = .88$); each item is rated on a seven point scale, from 1 = almost always false of me to 7 = almost always true of me. Because forgiveness is related to the virtue of
transcendence we anticipated that the HFS and the EBS moral subscale would have substantial relationships. As shown in Table 1, engagement with moral beauty has a strong correlation with forgiving others (which may be seen as a self-transcendent trait), and moderate correlations of forgiving self and situations; and correlated higher with all three forgiveness subscales than the other kinds of beauty.

**Connectedness to Nature Scale (CNS).** The CNS ($\alpha = .87$; Mayer & Frantz, 2004) measures the trait of being emotionally connected to the natural world with a 14-item scale scored on a five point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). Congruent with Kant’s statement that an interest in the beauty of nature was always a sign of a “good soul” (1790/1987, p. 165), and because we associate being “green,” with being moral, and connectedness to nature is trait related to transcendence, we expected a substantial relationship between engagement with moral beauty and feeling connected to nature; on the other hand, because the CNS focuses on nature, we anticipated that it would correlate higher with natural beauty than with either the moral beauty or artistic beauty subscales. As expected, the correlation with engagement with natural beauty and the CNS was strong whereas the correlations with engagement with moral beauty and engagement with artistic beauty were moderate.

**Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS).** The SWLS ($\alpha = .89$; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, Griffin, 1985) is a brief measure consisting of five items scored on a seven point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*), created to reflect life satisfaction and well-being as a whole. Past studies have shown that engagement with, or appreciation of beauty has only weak correlations with SWL (Diessner et al., 2008; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004). As shown by the low correlations in Table 1, apparently engaging with beauty may not be an effective path to satisfaction with life for our sample either.
Engagement with Moral Beauty and Social Desirability.

Perhaps the trait of engaging with moral beauty correlates with moral motivation due to a positive response mind-set among research participants. Is responding in a socially desirable manner an influence on the responses to the engagement with moral beauty subscale of the EBS? To answer this question we examined correlations of data from subsamples of the 5,380 subjects from Study 1 who had completed the EBS, and four measures related to morality: the Moral Identity Scale (MIS; Aquino & Reed, 2002), the Adapted Good Self Scale (AGSC; Barriga et al. (2001), and the Fairness and Care subscales of the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ; Graham et al., 2010), while controlling for social desirability with the Marlowe Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS; Crowne & Marlowe, 1960; for descriptions of the EBS, MIS, AGSS, and MFQ, see above). The MCSDS is a 33-item questionnaire, measuring whether respondents have a socially desirable response bias, with each item marked true or false.

As can be seen in Table 2, the relationships between engagement with moral beauty, and moral identity, moral good self, and levels of Care and Fairness moral foundations, are not mediated by social desirability in these particular subsamples.

Structural Models showing the Unique Predictive Power of Engagement with Moral Beauty.

Table 1 shows that engagement with moral beauty is potentially associated with two major virtues: Love (characterized by caring for others, being empathic towards others, agreeableness, loving all humanity, and valuing benevolence) and Transcendence (characterized by gratitude, forgiveness, connectedness to nature, and valuing universalism and spirituality). However, in order to better place the engagement with moral beauty construct within a nomological network, we constructed structural models to test these observations and determine whether engagement with moral beauty is particularly related to
dispositions related to love and/or dispositions related to transcendence. In particular, we were interested in whether we could group these traits together and whether considering the three factors of the engagement with beauty scale separately fit the data better than considering each factor as indicative of a general dispositional sensitivity to beauty. A series of structural models were created and compared using AMOS 20 for Windows.

In order to examine the independent relationship between engagement with moral beauty, as opposed to engagement with natural or artistic beauty, with constructs related to love of others, we created a structural model depicted in Figure 1. This model was a relatively good fit to the data (Chi-Squared = 385.2, df = 17, \( p < .001 \), CFI = .981, RMSEA = .010) and the relationship between engagement with moral beauty and love of others (beta = .50) was independent of and higher than the relationships between engagement with natural (beta = .18) and artistic (beta = .07) beauty. Further, this model, which considers engagement with natural, artistic, and moral beauty as separate constructs, was a better fit to the data than an alternative model whereby engagement with natural, moral, and artistic beauty were considered part of a unitary construct (Chi-Squared = 808.0, df = 19, \( p < .001 \), CFI = .958, RMSEA = .014), even though both models were relatively good fits to the data.

In contrast, several models grouping variables that were indicative of transcendence (e.g., gratitude, forgiveness, connectedness to nature, and valuing universalism and spirituality) in various combinations as indicative of a single latent construct, were poor fits to the data (CFI < .80) and generally engagement with natural beauty was the best predictor in these models, even in cases where items relating specifically to nature were removed.

**General Discussion/Summary of Study 1**

Engagement with beauty is a trait that is philosophically and culturally associated with the feminine (Steiner, 2001), and our empirical data bear this out; women score substantially higher than men on engagement with moral, natural, and artistic beauty.
However, when we controlled for gender and political affiliation, in the relationship between engagement with moral beauty and 12 other measures of values and traits, it made little difference on the size of the correlations. It appears that the trait of engagement with moral beauty has its own unique relationships with the moral and trait constructs shown in Table 1.

Based on both the structural and correlational models, it appears the story of engaging with moral beauty may well be considered a story of love. In terms of the five moral foundations (Graham et al., 2011), Care is the most closely related to love, and engagement with moral beauty moderately correlated with it; whereas the correlations with the other four foundations were low. The dominant classical personality factor, for those high in the trait of engagement with moral beauty, is Agreeableness, and of the big five traits, Agreeableness best represents compassion and love (DeYoung et al., in press); and again, engagement with moral beauty correlated moderately with it, but had only low correlations with the other four big traits. Likewise, the value of Benevolence had a higher correlation with engagement with beauty than any other of the 10 values in Schwartz’ system, and Benevolence represents love of close others more than any of the other 10 values.

Two of the highest correlations extant on Table 1 were engagement with moral beauty with love of all humanity, a direct measure of love, and with empathy, an essential foundation for love. On the DTLS (Campos et al., 2002), love of all humanity showed a strong correlation with engagement with moral beauty, whereas the other three subscales, measuring love of romantic partners, friends, and family were weak to low medium correlations – thus indicating that those high in the trait of engagement with moral beauty are more concerned about universal love than love for one’s immediate connections. This appears to contradict the oxytocin/bonding theory of elevation and engagement with moral beauty (Silvers & Haidt, 2008). However, it does fit with the finding that one of the highest correlations in Table 1 is with identification with all humanity (McFarland et al., in press).
Perhaps the story of engagement with beauty is more about a love and connectedness to humanity in general, than about affiliation with close others.

Additionally, engagement with moral beauty had higher correlations with all these measures of love than did engagement with natural beauty or engagement with artistic beauty. Discriminatively, the lowest correlations with engagement with moral beauty in Table 1 are with qualities that seem unrelated to love, such as the Authority moral foundation, the big-five trait of Neuroticism, or the values of Achievement, Power, and Hedonism.

Finally, structural models confirm that considering engagement with moral beauty as uniquely and independently indicative of variables that load on a unitary “love” construct is a good fit to our data. Perhaps these findings validate Nehamas’s (2007) emphasis that Plato considered beauty to be the object of love. Thus, moral educators who are concerned with cultivating the virtue of Love may find focusing upon engaging their students with the moral and inner beauty of others to be beneficial.

The single highest correlation in Table 1 was between engagement with moral beauty and moral identity. This implies that the moral self schema of those strong in the trait of engagement with moral beauty is more cognitively accessible than for those low in the trait of engagement with moral beauty. Aquino et al.’s (2011) research, with their social cognitive model of moral identity, indicates that situations in which subjects observed acts of moral beauty (“acts of uncommon goodness [p. 705]”) increased cognitive access to their moral identity. Thus “when people are exposed to acts of uncommon moral goodness [acts of moral beauty], those whose moral identity is more central to their self-definition assign greater psychological weight, relevance, and value to these actions compared with people whose moral identity is less self-defining” (p. 705). It seems likely that the relationship between the trait of engagement with moral beauty, and the many of the positive moral traits noted
Table 1, as well as the relationship between engagement with moral beauty and elevation, are mediated or moderated by moral identity.

Aquino et al. (2011) also demonstrated that moral identity predicts prosocial behavior, and Shao, Aquino, and Freeman (2008) have reviewed evidence that moral behavior is consistently determined by moral identity. Therefore an important direction for future research would be to examine whether repeated exposure to acts of moral beauty, or other means of increasing students’ trait of engaging with moral beauty (viz. Diessner et al., 2006) would increase students’ level of moral identity centrality (or vice-versa; would helping students increase their moral identity centrality lead to deeper and more frequent engagement with moral beauty).

A limitation of Study 1 is that the correlations of the 12 personality measures are all subsamples of the overall N = 5,380 sample, ranging from an n of 4,672 to an n of 124. Thus, findings of statistical significance with some scales and not others may have nothing to do with the nature of the relations among the scales but with the use of somewhat different samples. Likewise, the social desirability correlations were from a subsample, and thus we cannot state with confidence that socially desirable responding was not occurring with the subjects completing any particular scale noted in Table 1.

Another limitation is that our sample is not representative of the entire population, as it is an online sample of more educated and more liberal, participants. As well, participants were conscious of the fact that they were engaging in moral psychology research due to the nature of the website visited.

It is notable that trait engagement with moral beauty had only a weak positive correlation with satisfaction with life (SWL); however, a past study with a sample of college students also produced a correlation of .14 between these two variables (Diessner et al., 2008), and Park, Peterson, and Seligman (2004) similarly found weak correlations between
the character strength of appreciation of beauty and excellence with SWL. Would not those high in engagement with moral beauty, and thus more susceptible to experiencing elevation (see Study 2 below), experience higher levels of satisfaction with life? We do not know why they don’t, but perhaps those sensitive to social and interpersonal moral beauty are also sensitive to moral ugliness, and find much about our social world to cause less satisfaction with life (perhaps it bi-modal; they are more satisfied with the beauty, and less satisfied with the ugliness, and thus there is little relationship to satisfaction with life). Investigating this would be worthwhile future research.

**Study 2: Susceptibility to Elevation:**

**The Role of the Trait of Engagement with Moral Beauty**

Algoe and Haidt (2009) have differentiated between admiration for non-moral excellence (impressive skills) and elevation as a response to moral beauty. Indeed, fMRI studies have demonstrated that the brain shows distinctively different responses to elicitors of moral elevation compared to elicitors of admiration of physical skills (Immordino-Yang, McColl, Damasio, & Damasio, 2009). Algoe and Haidt randomly assigned college students to watch one of three videos: 1) elevation: a boy who established a homeless shelter in Philadelphia \(N = 39\); 2) non-moral admiration: Michael Jordan flying through the air to dunk basketballs \(N = 46\); 3) amusement: clips of three stand-up comedians \(N = 45\) (this was a control condition). They found that the elevation and admiration videos both induced high levels of self-described feelings of admiration, which were not significantly different by condition. However, the elevation video caused higher levels of gratitude, love, and the feeling of a lump in the throat than did the admiration of skill video. Likewise, the elevation video caused significantly higher levels of desire to be a better person and a desire to do good for others whereas the admiration video caused a higher level of a desire for success and a higher level of awe.
In Study 2, we partially replicated their study using different videos and a larger and more heterogeneous sample, anticipating the same pattern of results concerning the variables of feeling a lump in the throat, awe, admiration, gratitude, love, desire to be a better person, desire to do good, and desire for success.

Additionally we sought to answer the question of whether the trait of engagement with moral beauty moderates the relationship between moral elevation and the desire to become a better person and to do good deeds. We hypothesized that those higher in the trait of engaging with moral beauty would be more susceptible to experiencing the emotion of moral elevation.

Method

Participants. The experiment was completed by 542 participants between July and September 2011 at YourMorals.org. The 241 subjects in the elevating video condition were 49% women, with a $M_{age} = 32$ ($SD = 14.3$); 76% were from the United States. The 301 subjects in the non-moral excellence video condition were 49% women, with $M_{age} = 33$ ($SD = 16.3$); 78% were from the United States. Seven participants engaged in the experiment, but failed to complete the dependent measures and were excluded from the analyses.

Procedure. Participants were randomly assigned to watch either a non-moral excellence video of Masato Akamatsu making an amazing baseball catch (the Admiration condition; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlS-0jml0kU; 1:09 minutes duration) or a video of Sara Tucholsky hitting a homerun, but damaging her knee at first base. In the Sara video, two members of the opposing team then altruistically and spontaneously carried her around the bases so that she could score her first and final homerun of her college baseball career, even though that homerun helped contribute to their own team losing the game (the Elevation condition; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jocw-oD2pgo; 6:17 minutes duration).
Measures. The Engagement with Beauty Scale (see Study 1 above) was completed by the participants either before or after they watched their randomly assigned video. There appears to be no sequencing effect; the $N = 66$ who completed the EBS before watching the non-moral admiration video had a mean EBS Engagement with Moral Beauty score of 5.2 ($SD = 1.34$), and the $N = 235$ who took the EBS after had score of 5.4 ($SD = 1.26$); a $t$-test showed no significant difference. More importantly, the $N = 57$ who took the EBS before watching the morally elevating video had a mean EBS Engagement with Moral Beauty score of 5.4 ($SD = 1.25$), and the $N = 184$ who took it after also had a mean score of 5.4 ($SD = 1.37$), showing no difference.

After watching their assigned video, participants completed Likert-type scales indicating to what level they experienced a lump in the throat, awe, admiration, gratitude, love, desire to be a better person, desire to do good for others, and desire for success. All questions were answered on seven point scales, anchored with 1 = not at all, and 7 = a great deal (similar to the scales used by Algoe & Haidt, 2009).

Results

Comparing means of the Likert-type scales showed the elevation video caused higher levels of admiration, gratitude, love, wanting to be a better person, wanting to do good for others, and the feeling of a lump in the throat. The admiration of skill video caused a higher level of awe. There was no difference in regard to the desire for success. See Table 3.

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if the Moral Beauty subscale, video condition, and the interaction between Moral Beauty score and video condition, significantly predicted participants’ endorsement of the item “wanted to do something good for others.” All variables were centered before conducting these analyses. The results of the regression indicated the three predictors explained 34.2% of the variance (adjusted $R^2 = .338$, $F(3,531) = 91.39$, $p < .001$). It was found that Moral Beauty subscale scores significantly predicted...
wanting to do good ($\beta = .19$, $p < .001$), as did the interaction between engagement with Moral Beauty and the video condition ($\beta = .51$, $p < .001$). Figure 2 illustrates that participants who were higher (+1SD) in the disposition to engage with moral beauty reported wanting to do good for others, particularly in the condition where they watched the moral video. Participants who were lower (-1SD) in the disposition to engage with moral beauty were still significantly affected by the moral video ($p < .001$), though the effect was not as pronounced as for those higher in engagement with moral beauty (see Figure 2). Engagement with artistic beauty did not predict wanting to do good ($p = .14$), nor did scores interact with the video condition ($p = .60$). Engagement with natural beauty did predict wanting to do good ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$), but importantly, this subscale did not interact with the video condition ($p = .18$).

Likewise, it was found that the Moral Beauty subscale scores, video condition, and the interaction between Moral Beauty score and video condition, significantly predicted participants' ratings of the item “wanted to become a better person.” The results of the regression indicated the three predictors explained 24.2% of the variance (adjusted $R^2 = .238$, $F(3,531) = 56.31$, $p < .001$). It was found that Moral Beauty subscale scores significantly predicted wanting to become a better person ($\beta = .17$, $p = .001$), as did the interaction between engagement with Moral Beauty and video condition ($\beta = .39$, $p < .001$). Figure 3 illustrates that participants who scored higher (+1SD) in engagement with moral beauty were particularly likely to report wanting become a better person, specifically in the condition where they watched the moral video. Participants who scored lower (-1SD) in engagement with moral beauty were marginally affected by the moral video ($p = .08$). Engagement with artistic beauty did not predict wanting to become a better person ($p = .81$), nor did scores interact with the video condition ($p = .28$). Engagement with natural beauty marginally predicted wanting to be a better person ($\beta = .09$, $p = .08$), but scores did not interact with the video condition ($p = .17$).
Discussion

Our results replicate Algoe and Haidt’s (2009) study: we found the elevation video caused higher levels of feeling a lump in the throat, gratitude, love, desire to be a better person, and desire to do good for others (and all with large effect sizes), relative to the admiration video. Although Algoe and Haidt found no significant difference between levels of admiration by condition, we found a small difference that was significant (very small effect size), with participants in the elevation condition feeling somewhat more admiration. Algoe and Haidt also found that those watching the admiration of skill video reported higher levels of wanting success, whereas our two groups showed no difference on that variable. Overall our study replicated and extended Algoe and Haidt’s findings with different video content, a larger sample ($N = 542$ versus $N = 84$), and a more heterogeneous sample (a large mixed internet sample versus college students). However, the current sample, while more diverse, is still not representative of the entire population, as it is an online sample of more educated participants. As well, participants were conscious of the fact that they were engaging in moral psychology research due to the nature of the website visited. Future research should seek to replicate these effects in less affluent, more naïve, non-college student populations.

A possible limitation of our study is that the two stimuli videos were of differing length, with the admiration condition video being 1:09 minutes, and the elevation condition video being 6:17. Does length influence level of engagement with videos? A simple regression analysis of pilot data (Smith, 2010) of responses to various moral emotion inducing videos indicated that video length explained 1.3% of the variation in self-reported emotional engagement, a very small amount (adjusted $R^2 = .013$, $F(1, 1470) = 19.69, p < .001$). However, video length showed a small negative association with emotional engagement scores; the shorter the video, the higher the emotional engagement with the
video ($\beta = -0.12, p < .001$). Shorter videos could be beneficial in that they do not dilute the emotion by including scenes of extra, non-emotion eliciting behaviors. In our study, the longer video (elevation condition) produced higher emotional engagement scores than the shorter video (admiration condition); thus, the video condition may, in fact, be more influential in the engagement outcome. Nevertheless, it may be worthwhile to replicate our study with similar length videos.

Our hypothesis that engagement with moral beauty moderates susceptibility to potentially elevating experiences was confirmed. As can be seen in Figures 2 and 3, people low in the trait experienced relatively little influence from the elevating video on their desire to do good or become a better person, whereas those high in the trait were strongly influenced. Neither engagement with natural beauty nor engagement with artistic beauty interacted with our experimental manipulation, indicating discriminant validity for our hypothesis. The implication for moral education is substantial. It may be that helping students become more aware of, specifically, the moral beauty of others may lead them to be more motivated to become a good person and do more good deeds for others.

**General Discussion**

People who have the trait of engagement with moral beauty appear to have morally beautiful personalities; they are grateful, caring, empathic, agreeable, and forgiving. They identify with all humanity, love all humanity, value universalism and benevolence, and have strong moral identities. Moral beauty appears to be uniquely related to love of, and connectedness to, others. Moral beauty engagers are more susceptible to the moral emotion of elevation – morally beautiful acts of virtue are more likely to cause them to desire to become a better person, and to desire to do good.

As our two studies demonstrate, there is human variation in levels of engagement with moral beauty and with susceptibility to potentially elevating experiences. If a moral
educator sees value in students increasing their levels of engagement with beauty, what could be done? On the curricula aspect, teachers can include, and highlight, acts of moral beauty in the progress of science (e.g., the courage of scientists who knew that their culture would be hostile to their findings); in history and social studies highlighting the roles of leaders who authentically cared for and sacrificed for their group, or stood up for justice in their community; in language arts classes selecting stories that illustrate elevation eliciting virtues, such as “acts of charity, gratitude, fidelity, generosity, or any other strong display of virtue” (Algoe & Haidt, 2009, p. 106); and in physical education classes telling stories of athletes who demonstrated such virtues. On the methodology aspect of moral education, teachers may have students keep a “beauty log” of their own experiences of witnessing acts of moral beauty in their everyday lives, and sharing their logs with other students in small or large group dialogue. Quasi-experimental research shows that keeping such logs may increase trait levels of engagement with moral beauty (Diessner et al., 2006).

The strong link between the virtue of love and engagement with moral beauty is provocative for moral education programs. Further research is needed to explore this link, in particular to study the causality: does increasing engagement with moral beauty increase a student’s ability to love; does loving others increase the ability to see moral beauty; is the causality bi-directional?

In closing, convergent with the research showing that moral emotions motivate moral behavior, we suggest that moral education programs increase their focus on developing engagement with moral beauty.
References


Mayer, F. S., & Frantz, C. M. (2004). The connectedness to nature scale: A measure of


Table 1

Relationships between the Engagement with Moral Beauty subscale of the EBS, and various Traits/Values/Moral Constructs, when Controlling for Gender and Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait/Value/Construct</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Natural</th>
<th>Artistic</th>
<th>Moral</th>
<th>Partial^</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Affiliation (n = 4,672)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-10*</td>
<td>-19*</td>
<td>-05*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Foundations (n = 4,696)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctity</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.05*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>.07*</td>
<td>.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Five Personality (n = 3,498)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.07*</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schwartz Values (n = 2,594)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benevolence</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.44*</td>
<td>.38*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universalism</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Direction</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonism</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>-.08*</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification w/Humanity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.49*</td>
<td>.45*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love of Humanity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All humanity</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.51*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>.59*</td>
<td>.54*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>.48*</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>.59*</td>
<td>.55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapted Good Self</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.47*</td>
<td>.40*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatic</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Identity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>.46*</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.56*</td>
<td>.50*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.55*</td>
<td>.51*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.62*</td>
<td>.57*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.54*</td>
<td>.48*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.54*</td>
<td>.48*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identification w/ Humanity (n = 1,762)

Love of Humanity (n = 497)

Empathy (n = 1,460)

Adapted Good Self (n = 207)

Moral Identity (n = 202)

Gratitude (n = 1,166)

Forgiveness (n = 124)
<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situations</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connected to Nature</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>.57*</td>
<td>.36*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ = the partial correlation with engagement with moral beauty after controlling simultaneously for gender and politics; the ns dropped 10-14% for the partial correlations due to some participants not marking one of the 7 main political affiliation choices; due to the many correlations we set * = p < .001 (two tailed)
Table 2
Correlations between Engagement with Moral Beauty, Moral Identity, and the Care & Fairness Moral Foundations when Controlling for Social Desirability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait/State/Value</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Moral Beauty</th>
<th>Partial Correlation^</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moral Identity Scale</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>.55*</td>
<td>.52*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Self Moral</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.48*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Foundation</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>.45*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness Foundation</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ = the partial correlation with moral beauty after controlling for social desirability; due to multiple correlations * = p < .001
Table 3
Variables differentiated by Elevating and Non-moral Excellence Videos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Elevation Mean</th>
<th>Elevation SD</th>
<th>Non-moral Excellence Mean</th>
<th>Non-moral Excellence SD</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lump in throat</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.96***</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>-1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admiration</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>5.28**</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>2.32***</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>-1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.04***</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>-1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better person</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>2.82***</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do good for others</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>2.62***</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>-1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awe</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>5.25***</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 541; means are from seven point scales, with higher numbers indicating higher self-reported levels of the variable; t-tests were used with **p < .01; ***p < .001; with Bonferroni correction all p values remain < .01, except admiration, p = .016
Figure 1
Figure 2

Error Bars: 95% CI
Figure 3

[Graph showing the relationship between Engagement with Moral Beauty and Desire to be a better person. The graph includes error bars for a 95% CI. The x-axis represents Engagement with Moral Beauty, with values ranging from -1 SD to +1 SD. The y-axis represents Desire to be a better person, ranging from 1 to 7. There are two lines in the graph: one for Video Watched (including Amazing Catch and Morally Uplifting Video).]