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## Why the Harsh Treatment? Deservingness Beliefs in the Interrogation Room

Contemporary theories of procedural justice (e.g., Thibaut and Walker, 1975; Tyler, 1989) cannot readily explain people's support for negative treatment, such as harsh interrogation tactics. The present study draws on theorizing about deservingness (e.g., Lerner, 2011; Feather, 1992; 1999) to test a matching hypothesis to explain support for disrespectful treatment in an interrogation context. A 2 (morality: high vs. low) x 2 (treatment: respectful vs. disrespectful) between-subjects design was utilized. This study employs an adaptation of the Russano et al. (2005) paradigm to alter the participant's behavior: in the "low moral behavior" condition, a confederate instigates cheating from a naïve participant while working on a set of problems. In the "high moral behavior" condition, the participant is not led to cheat, and no cheating occurs. Upon completion of the problem set, the experimenter accuses both the participant and confederate of cheating in either a respectful or disrespectful manner. Two hypotheses were tested: 1) participants in the positive (no cheating) condition would believe they deserved more positive treatment, and 2) as predicted by Feather's (1992) matching hypothesis, matches between the morality of a participant's (positive or negative) behavior and the (positive or negative) treatment of the participant are more likely to be judged fair by the participants. Results support both hypotheses. There was a significant main effect of the morality manipulation on participants' reports that they deserve respect. Also, the matching hypothesis is in the predicted direction and of a moderate effect-size, though not yet statistically significant: fairness judgments are higher when the (positive or negative) treatment the participants received was matched to the (positive or negative) value of their behavior. This study adds to others (e.g. Heuer, Blumenthal, Douglass, and Weinblatt, 1999) that show an important role for deservingness, independent of respectful treatment, for judgments of procedural fairness.