Authority and punishment: on the ideological basis of punitive attitudes towards criminals

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Running Head: Authority and Punishment

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Abstract

Why do people support tough sentencing of criminal offenders? Three explanations dominate the literature. The first is an instrumental perspective: people are concerned about becoming a victim of crime and they look to punishment to reduce future harm. The second is a relational perspective: people are concerned about community breakdown, and they support punishment to restore moral boundaries. The third is a psychological model based on ideological preferences: people desire conformity and authority in society, and they look to institutions to punish transgressions that threaten collective security. Building on the work of Tyler & Boeckmann (1997), two studies of London citizens (n_1=13,929, n_2=283) suggest a way of integrating these three perspectives. We show that right-wing authoritarianism predicts both the extent to which people worry about social threats and the extent to which they support harsh punitive measures. Bridging research from political psychology and criminology, we conclude with the idea that popular punitive sentiment is grounded in an uncritical submission to authorities, an adherence to conservative moral values, and consonant concerns about collective security and cohesion.

Key words: punitive attitudes, relational concerns, instrumental concerns, right-wing authoritarianism

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Popular demands for stronger sentences for law-breakers are commonplace practically all over the world. In Europe, for instance, more than 40% of those questioned in each country agreed with the need to use harsher sentences for criminal offenders (ESS Round 5: European Social Survey Round 5 Data, 2010). This is important, in part because widespread punitive sentiment is thought to shape the design of crime-control policy and the operation of legal institutions (Garland, 1990; 2001a; 2001b; Lacey, 2008).

Why do people support the harsh treatment of convicted criminals? In this paper we consider two perspectives from criminology and one perspective from political psychology. The criminological literature has been concerned mostly with two possible explanations, one instrumental and the other relational (King & Maruna, 2009; Tyler & Boeckmann, 1997). The instrumental perspective states that people demand harsh punishment to reduce future crime and personal risk; they worry about becoming a victim of crime and they look to punishment to address their sense of threat. The relational perspective states that people endorse harsh treatment of criminals not because they fear crime, but because they look to formal agents of criminal justice to clarify and restore social values and moral boundaries. People see around them weak social bonds and weak informal social controls, and they look to harsh punishment to address not just the societal need for justice, but also the more expressive production of social cohesion and affirmation of moral boundaries (Durkheim, 1973; Freiberg, 2001).

A third explanation comes from political psychology: Punitive attitudes stem from people's ideological beliefs about how society should be structured and about how institutions should work to achieve social order (e.g. Carroll, Perkowitz, Lurigio, & Weaver, 1987; Gerber & Jackson, 2013; Tyler & Boeckmann, 1997). Punitive policies will be particularly appealing to people who have ideological preferences to live in highly cohesive and stable societies but who see around them weak social bonds. The punishment of criminal offenders is a central component of any social order, and ideological preferences of how social order should be attained will be central in understanding people's support for tough sentencing policies.

We present in this paper two studies into the instrumental, relational and ideological bases of public punitiveness. We draw upon a random probability sample of Londoners (Study 1) and a follow-up sample of London University students (Study 2). We examine some of the theoretically plausible predictors of public support for the harsh treatment of criminal offenders. We consider a wider range of instrumental and relational factors than prior studies. Also, while Tyler & Boeckmann (1997) focused on a relatively broad set of social values, we drill down specifically into RWA. Following work in political psychology, we argue that ideological beliefs about the proper moral and political order of society shape not only the degree to which people worry about threats to the social order, but also the value they assign to the harsh punishment of criminal offenders. Authoritarians like conformity and authority; they believe that people should follow conventional traditions and established authorities; they quickly see disorder around them and they respond strongly to that what they see as weak social bonds and social control (Altemeyer, 1981, 1988). Because of their belief in the legitimacy of authority, they are especially open to institutional responses to deviance. It follows that visible strong punishment will garner exactly the right sort of support from the people who are most concerned about the problem and most demanding of authorities to respond; people turn to authorities when social order is seen to be under threat, and at the root of attitudes towards punishment may be a preference for tight social structures, with

conventional moral values, and an aggressive response to those who threaten collective security.

We begin by reviewing the instrumental and relational models of punitive sentiment. We then motivate the current investigation by considering prior research into ideology and punitive attitudes towards crime. After presenting the findings from two studies, we finish with some thoughts on new avenues of criminological inquiry into punitive sentiment, based upon theories and concepts drawn from political psychology.

Instrumental and relational perspectives

Why do individuals desire harsher punishment of law-breakers? One explanation is that punitive sentiment towards convicted criminals is driven by the desire to protect oneself and one's community from tangible threats. On this account, people want to punish because punishment reduces the likelihood of future harm; victimization risk is reduced not only by incapacitating the offender (imprisonment) but also by deterring offenders and would-be offenders from committing crime. One way of testing this is to examine whether patterns in desire for harsher sentences are associated with area-level crime rates and individual-level victimization experiences and fear of crime. Indeed, a number of studies have found some – albeit small – effect of fear of crime on punitive attitudes (e.g., Costelloe, Chiricos & Gertz, 2009; Hogan, Chiricos & Gertz, 2005; Sprott & Doob, 1997).

Yet, most studies have failed to find effects of victimization experiences (Cullen, Clark, Cullen & Mathers, 1985; Hough & Roberts, 1999; Kuhn, 1993), fear of crime (Kuhn, 1993; Sprott, 1999) and crime concerns (Cullen *et al.*, 1985). Other factors seem to be more important predictors of punitive attitudes. In a seminal study set in Northern California, Tyler and Boeckmann (1997) linked public attitudes (support for the 'Three Strikes and You're Out' initiative in California and overall punitiveness) to relational concerns about social cohesion and moral consensus. Finding little support for the instrumental model, they showed that people's concern about the deterioration of morality, discipline and social cohesion within the family were the key predictors of punitive attitudes. They reasoned that individuals desire harsher punishment of law-breakers because they are motivated to reassert social values and restore people's obligation to 'play by the rules'.

A second study, this time based on a postal survey of 907 individuals in England, drew similar conclusions. King and Maruna (2009) argued that support for the harsh punishment of law-breakers reflects the desire to create security by reasserting one's values as moral absolutes. Finding that 'generational concerns' (i.e. beliefs about the loss of respect and discipline in society) were more important than crime-related concerns in explaining punitive attitudes, they linked ontological insecurity to three areas of social anxiety: concerns about collective efficacy, economic anxiety[1] and generational anxiety. They argued that punitive attitudes are driven by more abstract anxieties that have come to symbolize the erosion of 'shared social values and traditions' (King & Maruna, 2009: 161).

Viewed together, the conclusions of Tyler and Boeckmann (1997) and King and Maruna (2009) chime with an intriguing theoretical proposition: namely, that widespread anxieties about social breakdown generate the bedrock for popular punitive support for the use of harsh punitive measures (Cheliotis, 2011; Voruz, 2003). Giving the offender his just deserts symbolically labels the offence as wrong, which then restores people's faith in shared values (Okimoto & Wenzel, 2009; Rucker, Polifroni, Tetlock, & Scott, 2004; Vidmar, 2002; Vidmar & Miller, 1980), social cohesion (cf. Goldberg, Lerner & Tetlock, 1999; Okimoto &

[1] A number of other studies have linked punitiveness to economic insecurities (e.g., Costelloe *et al.*, 2009; Hogan *et al.*, 2005; King and Maruna, 2009; Useem, Liedka & Piehl, 2003). Cheliotis (2011) argues that this association indicates that individuals project anxieties onto a 'handle receptacle' – the criminal – and call for institutions that seem to have lost power in other areas of life to 'act out' against the threat.

Wenzel, 2009; Wenzel & Thielmann, 2006; Vidmar, 2002; Vidmar & Miller, 1980), social order (cf. Goldberg *et al.*, 1999; Rucker *et al.*, 2004) and balance (cf. Carlsmith, Darley & Robinson, 2002; Okimoto & Wenzel, 2009). Crucially, people call for authorities to reassert norms and values when those norms and values are believed to be eroding.

On the ideological foundations of punitive sentiment

There is thus a body of empirical evidence supporting the idea that punitive sentiment is driven less by instrumental concerns about future harm and more by relational and social concerns. Yet, Tyler and Boeckmann (1997) also showed that social values predict both punitive attitudes and beliefs about eroding levels of social cohesion and moral consensus. Social values included authoritarianism, dogmatism and liberalism. The more authoritarian, dogmatic and conservation someone was, the more likely they were not just to express punitive attitudes towards criminals, but also to see the world as dangerous and as lacking moral cohesion. Other research, this time focusing on the police, finds something similar. UK research has linked authoritarian concerns about lost morality and discipline in society to perceived disorder, and therefore fear of crime and distrust in the police (Jackson, 2004; Jackson & Sunshine, 2007; Farrall *et al.*, 2009).

Our goal in this study is to focus more specifically on RWA. As a kind of ideology RWA is a collection of beliefs about the ways in which people ought to behave and how institutional practices ought to be structured (cf. Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski & Sulloway, 2003). Broadly speaking (political) ideology can be thought of as a '…set of beliefs about the proper order of society and how it can be achieved' (Erikson, Luttbeg & Tedin, 1988: 74). Beliefs that individuals hold about how society should be structured serve to define guidelines for social judgment (Pratto, 1999) and shape the value that people assign to groups, social practices and institutions (Feather, 1996). Those who have a preference for social cohesion and stability, for example, might find comfort in strong institutions that can help to ensure order, security and moral alignment in society (Duckitt, 2009). Analogous to what Tetlock *et al.* (2007: 196) call the 'stylized social-watch-dog view of human nature,' people are motivated to feel that they live in cohesive communities with moral consensus and strong social bonds (Tyler & Boeckmann, 1997).

A link between punitive attitudes and ideology has found strong support in political psychology. Ideology has been argued to affect people's views about criminals, their theories about the causes of crime, and their beliefs about appropriate institutional reactions to rule-breaking (Carroll et al., 1987). Carroll et al. (1987) explain these associations in terms of resonances between ideological beliefs and attitudes towards crime and punishment. The conservative political right, on the one hand, believes that crime is committed by those who lack moral conscience and self-control, while harsh punishment can bring offenders back on the right track. The liberal political left, on the other hand, thinks that the causes of crime can be found in structural economical inequalities and problems of discrimination; the solution lies in reforming the system and rehabilitating offenders. Support for harsh sentencing of criminals thus seems to be a right-wing phenomenon: conservatives tend to be more punitive towards offenders than liberals (Carroll et al., 1987; Hogan et al., 2005; Johnson, 2009; King & Maruna, 2009; Miller, 1973; Tetlock et al., 2007; Tyler & Boeckmann, 1997).

More specifically, high authoritarians rely on tradition and submission to authorities to achieve social order, as well as aggression from authorities to groups that threaten the social order (Altemeyer, 1981). They have been argued to favor tough sentencing because they are inclined to endorse actions carried out by authorities. At the same time, Duckitt (2009) has argued that right-wing authoritarians support the use of harsh punishment to increase collective security – i.e. 'societal order, cohesion, stability, tradition' (Duckitt & Sibley, 2009: 105) – and control the behavior of those who threaten social order. Several

(mostly psychological) studies have also found a link between punitive attitudes and right-wing authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1988; Carroll et al., 1987; Feather, 1996; Gerber & Jackson, 2013).

Conservatives and right-wing authoritarians thus seem not only to endorse harsher sentences, but also see the world as lacking social order and cohesion. But crucially for the current discussion, a number of political psychologists have explored the relationship between right-wing authoritarianism and perceived social threat (i.e. the perception that the world is dangerous and that cherished aspects of social order are under attack). First, social threat may increase levels of expressed right-wing authoritarianism (see for example, Doty, Peterson & Winter, 1991; Duckitt & Fisher, 2003; Sales, 1972; Sibley, Wilson & Duckitt, 2007). According to Duckitt (2001), a dangerous worldview is one of the antecedents of right-wing authoritarianism. In an experimental study Duckitt and Fisher (2003) manipulated social threat, finding that it increased people's perceptions of the world being dangerous and thereby, levels of right-wing authoritarianism. Second, Feldmann and Stenner (1997) argue that social threat activates authoritarian predispositions rather than increases authoritarianism; the authors found an interaction effect between perceived threat and authoritarian predispositions. Third, while people may become more authoritarian under conditions of social threat, the opposite may also be true; as Tyler and Boeckmann (1997) suggest, authoritarians may be more likely to perceive a situation as threatening to the social order (Altemeyer, 1996; Duckitt, 2001, Sibley *et al.*, 2007). For example Lavine, Lodge, Polichak & Taber (2002) found that high authoritarians were quicker in responding to threatening words, compared to low authoritarians, concluding that authoritarians are especially sensitive to threat. Reciprocal effects may also exist between authoritarianism and perceived social threat. Sibley *et al.* (2007) analyzed cross-lagged effects of dangerous worldview and right-wing authoritarianism over a five-month period, showing that longitudinal change in authoritarianism was predicted by a dangerous worldview and that the reverse was also true.

Research objectives

There thus seems to be a complex two-way relationship between right-wing authoritarianism and perceived social threat, and between each of these and punitive attitudes. Our contribution to the literature is threefold. First, we bring new data to the debate. In Study 1 we consider a high-quality probability sample of Londoners to predict punitive attitudes in terms of an authoritarian ideology and a wider range of instrumental and relational concerns than those considered in prior studies. Using a multi-level modelling framework, we also examine whether ideology predicts variation not just in punitive attitudes but also in instrumental and relational concerns. In Study 2, drawing upon measures used in political psychology we consider proper scales of right-wing authoritarianism and perceptions of a dangerous world.

Second, we focus on the relationship between punitive attitudes, right-wing authoritarianism, instrumental concerns and relational concerns about neighborhood order and stability. While studies in political psychology have shown a close link between ideology and punitive attitudes, and between perceptions of social threat and right-wing authoritarianism, they have not examined in any detail the complex pattern of relationships between instrumental concerns, relational concerns, ideology and punitive attitudes. In this we build on an important but overlooked aspect of Tyler & Boeckmann's (1997) study: namely, that social values predicted both public punitiveness and perceptions of criminal and social threat. We should note, however, that we focus specifically on RWA in our work, while Tyler & Boeckmann's study combined authoritarianism, dogmatism and liberalism. Third, we discuss the findings in the light of theories and concepts from political psychology: we argue that ideological preferences shape people's readiness to perceive the social world as

being dangerous *and* to demand an aggressive response to rule-breaking, and work into the bases of popular punitive sentiments needs to take this into account.

Study 1

Our two studies explore whether instrumental concerns, relational concerns and ideological preferences each explain variation in punitive sentiment. In Study 1 we draw upon a probability sample of Londoners, based on face-to-face interviews conducted with over 20,000 individuals. We disentangle the effect of different relational variables; we use locally specific measures of perceptions of disorder, collective efficacy and concerns about local change; and we consider a wider range of instrumental factors than prior studies, including not only fear of crime and victimization but also area-level crime levels, indirect victimization, perceptions of crime and perceptions of anti-social behavior. Modelling within-neighborhood variation, we partial out the effect of individual factors from the effect of living in heterogeneous neighborhoods.

We also conduct some follow-up analysis. Recall that Tyler & Boeckmann (1997) found that social values predicted the belief that the world is dangerous and the belief that the world lacks moral cohesion. We assess whether authoritarian concerns predict within-neighborhood variation in key instrumental and relational concerns. Consider, for instance, neighborhood disorder; we examine whether individual A, who shares the same or similar environment with individual B, judges there to be higher levels of disorder partly because individual A is more concerned about the loss of community, respect, authority and discipline in society. Combined with the first step of analysis, this allows us to test whether authoritarian concerns predict not just punitive attitudes (reducing the predictive value of instrumental and relational concerns) but also instrumental and relational concerns.

Sample and Analytical Strategy

The first of our two studies capitalizes on personal interviews with a probability sample of Londoners. The Public Attitude Survey (PAS) of the Metropolitan Police Service is a random-probability, face-to-face survey based on a three-stage sample selection process (households, dwelling units and individuals). Our analysis is from the 2007/2008 sweep, in which an achieved response rate of 60% yielded an analytical sample of 20,480 individuals clustered in 637 electoral wards.[2] The sample size across all models was 13,929 individuals nested in 609 wards, largely because there were missing values on the perceived crime (4,599) and perceived anti-social behavior (3,670)[3].

Our second objective is to examine whether ideological preferences predict within-neighborhood variation in worry about crime and perceptions of crime, anti-social behavior, disorder and collective efficacy. We draw on not just the 2007/2008 but also the 2008/2009 sweep; this gives us an analytical sample of 33,201 individuals living in 982 neighborhoods. To aid interpretation we aggregate individual-level variables estimated from the observed sample to estimate cluster-level means of worry about crime and perceptions of crime, anti-social behavior, disorder and collective efficacy as weighted averages of the sample mean and the grand mean (Kuha, 2011). Exploiting the partial pooling inherent in multi-level

[2] Note, we are only interested in explaining individual-level variation in people's attitudes not neighbourhood-level. The clustering of individuals within neighbourhood is not of current concern. That said, a preliminary analysis revealed non-independence between observations from the same neighbourhood, so we do need to take into account the hierarchical nature of the data. We use a multilevel modelling approach to make intercept and coefficient estimates of individual and neighbourhood levels. This enables a separation of variation resulting from differences between observations *within* the same neighbourhood from that which results from differences *between* neighbourhoods. We can thus partial out ecological effects on individual attitudes to punishment, honing in on individual-level associations.

[3] We also estimated the models without these two variables (giving an n of 18,313 nested in 603 wards). The findings did not vary significantly.

modelling (Gelman & Hill, 2007), we correct for the low within-cluster sample size that generates small-area estimation problems. We then add cluster-level means to the model, allowing us to interpret the coefficient for authoritarian concerns in the light of variation in the outcome variable around the neighborhood mean.

As discussed above, authoritarianism and social threats are likely to affect each other (high authoritarians tend to perceive more threats; social threats increase levels of authoritarianism and interact with authoritarianism in predicting outcome variables). We explore whether authoritarianism predicts perceptions of social threat (as a deviation from the neighborhood average) controlling for a range of socio-demographic variables. However, we avoid drawing conclusions on the causal direction of these relationships given the lack of longitudinal data.

Outcome variable. Our first objective is to explain individual-level variation across London (conditioning on the neighborhood in which an individual lives) in *punitive sentiment*, which we operationalize as agreement or disagreement with the statement: 'People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences' (1=disagree strongly, 5=agree strongly). 53.4% of respondents agreed strongly, 36.4% agreed, 8.5% neither agreed nor disagreed, and only 1.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Using a single-item measure of a complex concept has drawbacks. But this is balanced by (a) strong measures of other variables and (b) the quality and scope of the sample. Importantly, Study 2 addresses this weakness by using a proper scale of punitive sentiment.

Predictor variables. Instrumental factors included victimization experience, concerns about future harm, and perceptions of crime and anti-social behavior. *Victimization* and *indirect victimization* over the past twelve months were each measured using a single dichotomous item (1= victim of crime or knows someone who has been a victim; 0=not been a victim or does not know someone who has been a victim). *Fear of crime* was measured by asking respondents how worried they were about being victim of different types of offenses (being attacked by strangers, mugged or robbed, insulted or having their homes robbed)[4]. *Perceptions of crime* was measured asking respondents if they thought that crime rates had increased or decreased in the local area since two years ago (1=a lot less crime, 5=a lot more crime). Finally, *perceptions of increased anti-social behavior* was measured by asking respondents if they thought that anti-social behavior had gotten worse, stayed the same or gotten better in the local area over the past two years (1=got a lot better, 5=got a lot worse).

Relational factors included perceptions of disorder, concerns about collective efficacy, and concerns about local change. *Perception of disorder* was measured by asking respondents whether or not they thought each of the following was a local problem: teenagers hanging around on the streets; rubbish or litter lying around; vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles; people being drunk or rowdy in public places (1=not a problem at all; 4=very big problem). *Concern about collective efficacy* was measured by asking respondents whether they thought that their community was close-knit and whether they thought that people helped each other in order to solve common problems (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997). Six items were used: 'People around here are willing to help their neighbors', ' This is a close-knit neighborhood', 'People in this neighborhood can be trusted', 'If I sensed trouble whilst in this area, I could 'raise' attention from people who live here for help', 'The people who live here can be relied upon to call the police if someone is acting suspiciously', and 'If any of the children or young people around here are

[4] While we use standard *intensity* measures of worry about crime, we acknowledge the complexities of measuring fear of crime (Gray *et al.*, 2011a, 2011b).

causing trouble, local people will tell them off.' (1=agree strongly, 5=disagree strongly). Finally, *concerns about local social change* captured people's perception of deterioration of the moral structure of their community. This concept was measured using three items that asked respondents whether they perceived an increase or decrease in (a) the sense of belonging in the local community; (b) the sense of right and wrong in the local community; and (c) trust amongst people who make up the local community (1=decreased a lot; 5=increased a lot).

Authoritarianism was measured using two items. One captured authoritarian submission: 'Schools should teach children to obey authority.' The other tapped into conventionalism: 'Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional values.' (1=disagree strongly, 5=agree strongly). While this is an incomplete scale – we were constrained by the available data – Study 2 employs a proper scale of right-wing authoritarianism, in part to replicate key aspects of Study 1.

We used latent trait modelling (Latent Gold 4.0) to create continuous variables indexing each of fear of crime, perceptions of disorder, concerns about collective efficacy, concerns about local change and authoritarian ideology. Full information maximum likelihood estimation allowed us to draw upon all available and usable data. All weighted factor score variables were rescaled to range from 0 to 10 to aid interpretation.

The following variables were included in regression analyses as controls at the individual level: gender, age, disability (yes, no), work status (working full time or part time, not working or house person, retired, unemployed, student, other), and ethnicity (White, Mixed, Asian or Asian British, Black, other). Two domains of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (crime and income) were included at the ward level.

Results

Table 1 presents the zero-order correlations among punitive sentiment, instrumental concerns, relational concerns and authoritarianism. Punitive sentiment correlated positively with all variables. The strongest correlation was between punitive sentiment and authoritarianism (r=.59, p<.01). Authoritarianism was positively correlated with a variety of instrumental and relational concerns. High authoritarians tended to be more worried about falling victim (r=.22, p<.01), to perceive higher crime levels (r=.18, p<.01) and anti-social behaviour (r=.22, p<.01), and to be more concerned about disorder (r=.23, p<.01), collective efficacy (r=.09, p<.01) and local change in society (r=.14, p<.01). Lastly, those who worried about crime also tended to be more concerned about the full range of relational issues.

- Table 1 about here -

In order to model variation in punitive sentiment, three linear (random intercept) models were fitted[5]. Each of these models conditions on the neighborhood in which an individual lives. By estimating within-neighborhood variance, we can address the question of whether (and if so, why) different people living in the same area can come to different conclusions about the need to impose tougher sentences on law-breakers. We can thereby focus on individual-level predictors, bracketing out neighborhood-level heterogeneity. *Model 1* includes control variables and instrumental concerns: direct and indirect victimization, fear of crime, perceptions of increased crime rates, and perceptions of increased anti-social behavior. *Model 2* adds relational concerns to the previous model: perceptions of disorder,

[5] We fitted linear, multinomial and logistic random effect models to examine variation in the outcome variable (a single ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 5), assessing whether the findings were robust across different methods of analysis. Because the findings did not vary significantly, we present the findings of more easily interpretation linear models.

concerns about collective efficacy and concerns about long-term social change. *Model 3* adds authoritarianism.

- Table 2 about here –

Table 2 presents the regression coefficients of the three fitted models. Starting with *Model 1*, all of the instrumental concerns were statistically significant linear additive predictors of punitive sentiment (controlling for gender, age, disability, work status, ethnicity, area-level crime, income-deprivation and all unobserved neighborhood characteristics). Overall, instrumental concerns (and the controls) explained 15% of the variance of punitive sentiment. 24% of the variance in people's punitive sentiment could be attributed to differences between neighborhoods. Higher levels of fear of crime and perceived crime and anti-social behavior were positively related with more punitive attitudes towards law-breakers. Surprisingly, conditioning on fear of crime, perceived crime and perceived anti-social behavior, having been a victim (direct and indirect experience) was associated with less punitive sentiment. No significant effect of area-level crime levels was found on punitive sentiment, after controlling for individual-level instrumental concerns.

Model 2 introduces relational concerns into the model. Perceptions of disorder and concerns about local change were associated with greater expressed support for the use of harsher sentences. Consistent with King and Maruna (2009), concerns about collective efficacy had no estimated effect on punitive attitudes. But unlike their study, the inclusion of relational variables only slightly reduced the estimated effects of the variables relating to instrumental motivations.[6] Fear of crime and perceptions of crime and anti-social behavior seem to exert a slightly stronger estimated influence on punitive sentiment than relational concerns. This is a departure from the findings of Tyler and Boeckmann (1997) and King and Maruna (2009), who found that relational concerns were most important. The inclusion of relational concerns increased the explained variance to 17% (the intraclass correlation remained the same).

Model 3 extends the model to include right-wing authoritarianism. Higher levels of authoritarianism were found to be related to higher levels of support for punitive stances. Strikingly, the inclusion of a measure of authoritarianism increased the R^2 from .17 to .57. The intra-class correlation (ICC) also dropped from .24 to .16, suggesting that part of the area effect was due to differences in levels of authoritarianism between neighborhoods. After controlling for authoritarianism, the estimated effects of fear of crime and perceptions of increased anti-social behavior were reduced and the effect of increased crime rates became non-significant. Among the relational factors, the effects of perceptions of disorder and concerns about local change were reduced, while a small and negative effect of concerns about collective efficacy was now found. This is inconsistent with King and Maruna (2009). However, the effect size is almost negligible and probably only significant due to the large sample size[7].

- Figure 1 about here –

[6] One important difference with King and Maruna's (2009) study is that they introduced conservatism as a background variable. The effect of instrumental concerns is thus already controlled for the preference for social order and moral cohesion, and adding relational concerns will not make a significant difference. Their effects becoming non-significant can also be due to a smaller sample size.

[7] Finally, Model 3 shows significant effects of disability (with disabled people being slightly more in favour of harsh punishment) and work status (with those who work, are house persons or students being less punitive than 'other').

Overall these results support a weak – at most – role for instrumental and relational factors on punitive sentiments. Tellingly, the relative effect size of authoritarianism was much stronger than the effects of instrumental and relational factors. Figure 1 produces fitted values from Model 3, showing how the small effect sizes of instrumental and relational factors were overshadowed by the strong effect of authoritarianism. Note how the expected mean of punitive sentiment moves from 2.5 (somewhat between 'tend to disagree' and 'neither agree nor disagree' to the sentiment 'Law-breakers should be given stiffer sentences') to just below 5 ('strongly agree') as one traces the minimum to maximum scores on authoritarianism. Neither instrumental nor relational concerns thus seem as important in understanding variation in punitive sentiment as authoritarian submission and conventionalism.

We can see from Table 1 that authoritarian concerns are correlated with worry about crime, perceived disorder, perceptions of crime levels and so forth. From Table 2 we can see that adjusting for authoritarian concerns reduces the partial regression coefficients for these variables when predicting punitive attitudes. In this final set of analysis we examine whether authoritarian concerns predict these variables in a multi-level context. Table 3 presents a series of fitted multi-level models, with perceptions of disorder, collective efficacy, worry about crime, perceived change in local crime levels and perceived change in local anti-social behavior levels set as the outcome variables. For each, an empty fitted model (that includes no covariates) indicated that just under 20%, 9.5%, 13.7%, 7.4% and 7.8% (respectively) of the variation occurs between neighborhoods (the rest is individual, i.e. within-neighborhood variation, plus random error). We include a series of control variables and we include a weighted neighborhood average for the particular outcome variable. This means that we can interpret the partial regression coefficient for authoritarian concerns as the change in the expected value of relational and instrumental concerns as authoritarian ideology increases or decreases, where the change refers to moves above and below the neighborhood average. For example, a positive effect of authoritarianism on perceptions of disorder –controlling for neighborhood level of perceived disorder- would imply that higher levels of authoritarianism are related to levels of perceived disorder that are above the neighborhood average.

- Table 3 about here –

In all cases we find that authoritarian concern is a significant positive predictor. The more an individual is concerned about the loss of discipline and morality in society, the more likely that individual is to be more concerned than the average person in their neighborhood about disorder, collective efficacy, victimization risk, local crime levels and local anti-social behavior levels. The magnitude of the coefficients for disorder and worry about crime are higher than the other three variables.

Discussion of Study 1

The findings of Study 1 are consistent with the idea that punitive sentiment is partly ideological. People who have a strong desire to live in tight and cohesive societies – who submit to conventional authorities and endorse traditional values and morals – also tend to express a preference for aggressive responses from institutions to punish law breakers. It follows that right-wing authoritarians approve of policies – such as harsh sentencing – in part to control social groups that they perceive to be a threat to society.

What was less predictable was that the effect of instrumental and relational concerns weakened considerably once we controlled for ideology. Right-wing authoritarianism seems to be an especially important factor behind individual-level variation of punitive attitudes in London (conditioning on the neighborhood in which an individual lives). This ideological

preference – that includes adherence to conventional values and traditional morality – may also shape people's fear of crime and perceptions of neighborhood disorder (cf. Jackson, 2004; Jackson and Sunshine, 2007). Indeed, authoritarians tended to be both concerned about criminal and social threat and inclined towards strong punitive measures from the justice system. People who worry about crime and the deterioration of moral bonds may be punitive *precisely because* they also have an ideological preference to live in tight and cohesive societies.

In Study 2 we address some of the weak measurements tools used in Study 1. Instead of using a single indicator of punitiveness, we use a proper scale; instead of using two single measures of right-wing authoritarianism, we apply a more complex set of measures. We also assess the association between punitive sentiment, authoritarianism and instrumental/relational concerns. Drawing upon the sort of measures that political psychologists might use when exploring the link between ideology and perceptions of social threat, we consider perceptions of a dangerous world as a sense in which danger and threat is commonplace, where people's values and lifestyles are threatened by bad people (Altemeyer, 1981). We test whether instrumental and relational concerns relate to this broader perception of threats to the social order (Tyler and Boeckmann, 1997). We hypothesize that the strong link between instrumental and relational concerns found in Study 1 is due to these concerns being related to an underlying perceptions that the social order is under threat. We examine this by testing a model in which fear of crime, perceptions of moral decline, and beliefs about a dangerous world are considered as part of a broader factor of perceived social threat. After controlling for ideology, we expect that perceptions of threat will not have a significant effect on punitive attitudes. We also hypothesize a positive relationship between right-wing authoritarianism and perceptions of social threat. As just noted, studies have shown that authoritarianism and social threat affect each other. Because we only have access to cross-sectional data, we allow these to co-vary: we do not specify any directional effect.

Study 2

Sample

283 students of the University of London (University College London, Goldsmiths University and City University) completed a questionnaire that included measures of punitive sentiment, right-wing authoritarianism, instrumental and relational concerns, and a dangerous worldview. The students answered the questionnaire in exchange for a voucher to be used in their college's cafeteria (worth £2.00 to 2.50), at a table set up in different locations at their university's campus. 46.5% were men and 53.5% were women. The mean age was 22, ranging from 18 to 49 years. 84.8% were undergraduate students and the remaining 15.2% were postgraduate students.

Measures

Punitive sentiment was measured using three agree/disagree items: 'People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences', 'Offences against laws and norms in our society should be punished as severely as possible', and 'The use of harsh punishment should be avoided whenever possible (R)'. This is a considerable improvement on Study 1 because multiple indicators allow us to partial out measurement error and capture more comprehensively the domain meaning of the concept.

Instrumental concerns focused on victimization and fear of crime. *Victimization* was measured asking participants if they had been victim of burglary or assault during the last 5 years. *Fear of crime* was measured using standard items that asked respondents how worried they were about being victim of different types of offenses (being attacked by a stranger;

harassed, threatened or verbally abused in the street; and being robbed or mugged in the street).

Relational concerns focused on a scale of *perception of moral decline*. Participants were asked to agree or disagree with the following two statements: 'People don't know the difference between right and wrong anymore' and 'I'm worried about where morality is headed in society'. These measures were designed to capture people's perceptions about the place of morality and social cohesion in society.

Belief in a dangerous world was conceptualized as a set of beliefs about the world being a dangerous and threatening place, where bad people threaten the way of life of good people (Duckitt, Wagner, Du Plessis & Birum, 2002; Duckitt & Fisher, 2003). It was measured using two items drawn and adapted from Duckitt and Fisher (2003): 'We live in a dangerous society in which good, decent, and moral people's values and way of life are threatened by bad people' and 'I live in a society that is unsafe, unstable, and insecure where good and decent people are the exception rather than the rule'.

Right-wing authoritarianism was measured following Dunwoody, Hsiung & Funke (2009) adaptation of Altemeyer's scale, adding one extra item for authoritarian submission. Three items were used to measure authoritarian submission, namely 'People should be critical of statements made by those in positions of authority', 'Our leaders know what is best for us' and 'Obedience and respect for authority are the most important values children should learn'. Three items were used to measure conventionalism: 'Traditions are the foundation of a healthy society and should be respected', 'People should be critical of statements made by those in positions of authority' and 'It would be better for society if more people followed social norms'. The sub-scale of authoritarian aggression was not considered given its similarities with the measures of punitive attitudes. Again, this is a significant improvement on Study 1.

All items (except victimization) were measured using 7-point response scales ranging from disagree strongly to agree strongly. In the initial analyses we used latent trait modelling (Latent Gold, 4.0) to create continuous-level scales for punitive sentiment, fear of crime, perception of moral decline, belief in a dangerous world and right-wing authoritarianism. All weighted factor score variables were rescaled to range from 0 to 10 to aid interpretation. Age, gender, ethnicity (White, other) and religiosity (1: low to 7: high) were included as controls.

Results

Table 4 presents the zero-order correlations among punitive sentiment, instrumental concerns, relational concerns, dangerous worldview and right-wing authoritarianism. Punitive sentiment correlated positively and significantly with all variables apart from victimization. The strongest correlation were with right-wing authoritarianism (r=.55, p<.01) and belief in a dangerous world (r=.41, p<.01). Consistent with Study 1, right-wing authoritarianism was found to be positively correlated to both instrumental and relational concerns. High authoritarians were more afraid of crime (r=.24, p<.01), were more concerned about the loss of morality in society (r=.43, p<.01) and were more likely to believe that the world is a dangerous place (r=.41, p<.01). Again consistent with Study 1, there were positive correlations between instrumental and relational concerns.

- Table 4 about here-

Four linear models were fitted, with gender, age, ethnicity (being white or other) and self-reported level of religiosity included as control variables. *Model 1* tests the instrumental perspective, including measures for victimization and fear of crime. *Model 2* tests the relational perspective, adding perceptions of moral decline to the previous model. *Model 3*

includes belief in a dangerous world, examining whether the effects of instrumental and relational concerns on punitive sentiment are due to these being related to more general perceptions of social threat. *Model 4* introduces right-wing authoritarianism into the model.

Table 5 summarizes the results of the different regression models. In *Model 1*, in which only crime concerns are considered, fear of crime had a positive and significant effect on punitive attitudes. This is consistent with findings of Study 1. However, unlike Study 1, victimization had no significant effect on punitive attitudes. Instrumental factors explained 22% of the variance in punitive sentiment. *Model 2* adds perceptions of moral decline. Higher levels of perceptions of moral decline were significantly related to punitive sentiment, while the effect of fear of crime became non-significant.[8] The inclusion of relational concerns increased the R^2 to 24%. In *Model 3,* a significant and positive effect of the belief in a dangerous world was found. Moreover, the effect of perceptions of moral decline became, and the effect of fear of crime remained, not statistically significant. These findings suggest that the previously found effect of relational concerns on punitive attitudes was due to perceptions of moral decline being linked to the belief that the world is a dangerous place. The explained variance now increased to 29%. In *Model 4,* and consistent with Study 1, a strong effect of right-wing authoritarianism on punitiveness was found. The effect of a dangerous worldview decreased somewhat and the effects of perceptions of moral decline and fear of crime remained non-significant. Surprisingly, victimization now became a significant predictor of punitive attitudes, with victims being more punitive. In Model 4, instrumental, relational and ideological factors together explained 40% of the variance in punitive sentiment.

- Table 5 about here -

We finish by testing the measurement model and structural relationships between latent variables simultaneously. Using structural equation modelling (SEM) we can examine whether (1) instrumental and relational concerns collapse into one factor measuring perceptions of social threat, and (2) perceptions of social threat and right-wing authoritarianism predict punitive sentiment.

- Figure 2 about here -

Results of the SEM are shown in Figure 2. The model shows a good overall fit ($\chi^2_{(96)}$=174.66, p<.01; χ^2/df < 2; CFI=.95; RMSEA=.05, 90% C.I.=.04-.07). As hypothesized, latent constructs reflecting fear of crime, perceptions of moral decline and beliefs about a dangerous world all loaded on the same second order factor, suggesting an underlying perception of threat to the social order. Right-wing authoritarianism had a positive and significant effect on punitive sentiment and was also highly correlated to perceptions of social threat. The latter, however, did not have a significant effect on punitive sentiment after controlling for ideology.

Right wing authoritarianism and perceptions of social threat seemed to 'hunt in a pack.' Authoritarians tended to see the world as dangerous; they also worried about falling victim of crime and they believed that society is going through a period of significant moral decline. This is consistent with work outside of criminology that explores the link between a dangerous worldview and right-wing authoritarianism (Duckitt, 2001, 2006, 2009). Belief in a dangerous world may increase people's needs for collective security and their endorsement of an authoritarian ideology (Duckitt, 2001). Since authoritarians are motivated to achieve

[8] These findings are consistent with Study 1 in that the inclusion of relational concerns decreased the effect of instrumental concerns. However, unlike Study 1, the effect of fear of crime became non-significant. This is likely to be due to the sample size in Study 1 being larger.

collective security, they will favor institutions that can help assuring order, social cohesion and stability in society. Punitive policies symbolize the endorsement of authority and security, and can thus be perceived by authoritarians as a means to increase order and moral cohesion in society.

Conclusion

In this paper we have applied theories and concepts from political psychology to criminological work on public attitudes towards punishment. Our approach is distinctively interdisciplinary. Exploring the links between punitive sentiment, ideology, instrumental concerns and relational concerns, we have built upon prior evidence – principally Tyler and Boeckmann (1997), but also King and Maruna (2009) – that relational concerns and social anxieties explain a greater amount of variation in punitive attitudes than instrumental concerns about future harm. Drawing upon data from a city-wide representative sample, as well as a student sample of Londoners, we initially found that instrumental concerns about crime and relational concerns about neighborhood breakdown and cohesion predicted punitiveness. But we also showed that the effect of instrumental and relational concerns dropped out once we took into account people's ideology. What seems to drive both punitive sentiment and instrumental/relational concerns is authoritarian submission and consonant concerns about traditional moral values. People who worry about crime and the deterioration of moral bonds may be punitive precisely because they have an ideological preference to live in tight, cohesive societies and endorse conventional moral values (as well as worry about the seeming decline in moral values).

Tyler & Boeckmann (1997: 257) pointed to '... underlying social values as a core source of public feeling about both the three strikes initiative and punitiveness more generally.' Like Tyler and Boeckmann's study, our findings underline the importance of people's fundamental ideologies and attitudes. People seek punishment in a symbolic attempt in order to defend social order and moral cohesion. But they also vary in their dispositional needs for social order and in their ideological preferences for tight and cohesive societies. Some people seem to be ideologically predisposed to believe that the social world is under threat and to adopt a 'punitive mindset' (Tetlock et al., 2007). Borrowing Haidt and Graham's (2009) concept, some people seem to be more *Durkheimian* than others. Some people '…have a biological need to belong to tight groups with clear and widely-shared norms for behavior.' (p. 372) and '…crave, above all else, being tightly integrated into strong groups that cooperatively pursue common goals' (p. 371). Public attitudes towards crime, policing and punishment emerge as an expressive phenomenon: they are wrapped up in what people see as hostile to social order, how people want society and its institutions to be organized, and a concomitant desire for authorities to reassert moral values when threat (from rule-breaking, for example) seems to be present (Jackson, 2004; Jackson & Sunshine, 2007; Farrall *et al.*, 2009).

We would like to address some limitations of the current research. We have discussed evidence that authoritarianism and social threat tend to predict each other. In this paper we have explored the combined effects of social threats and authoritarianism on punitive attitudes. We have shown that authoritarianism and perceptions of social threats go hand in hand. However, given the lack of longitudinal data it is not possible to conclude on the causal direction of this relationship. Future research should try to disentangle these effects and how they work together in predicting the support for punitive responses. A second limitation of this paper refers to the less than ideal measurement of punitiveness and authoritarianism in Study 1 and the less than ideal sampling strategy in Study 2. However, it is worth noting that both studies compensate each other: Study 1 considers a proper random probability sample and Study 2 considers improved scales to measure punitiveness and authoritarianism.

In closing, we have looked in this paper at the link between an authoritarian ideology and punitive attitudes. We have argued that ideological preferences for the ways in which society should be structured influence the value people assign to punitive policies. Authoritarians have a preference to live in highly cohesive and structured societies; they are more likely to perceive the world as being a dangerous place and to assign positive value to punishment as it can help restoring a sense of social order. It is for future empirical work to unpick other ideological positions and related motivational goals that might have an affinity with punitive attitudes. The richness of political psychology offers fruitful guidelines for these intriguing areas of criminological enquiry.

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Table 1

Zero-order correlations among variables (Study 1, n=13,929)

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Punitive sentiment	.02**	.02*	.23**	.17**	.20**	.16**	.06**	.17**	.59**
2 Victimization	-	.29**	.15**	.10**	.11**	.17**	.06**	.02*	.05**
3 Indirect victimization		-	.15**	.12**	.14**	.17**	.05**	.06**	.02**
4 Fear of crime			-	.35**	.36**	.41**	.24**	.22**	.22**
5 Perceptions of crime level				-	.69**	.29**	.28**	.33**	.18**
6 Perceptions of anti-social behavior					-	.31**	.30**	.33**	.22**
7 Perceptions of disorder						-	.27**	.11**	.23**
8 Concerns about collective efficacy							-	.37**	.09**
9 Concerns about local change								-	.14**
10 Authoritarianism									-

Source. 2007/2008 London Metropolitan Police Public Attitudes Survey

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Table 2

Linear regression coefficients for instrumental, relational and ideological factors on punitive sentiment (Study 1, n=13,929), estimated from a series of random (intercept) models

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Control variables						
Female	-0.01		0.00		0.00	
Age	0.03	**	0.03	**	-0.01	
Disability	0.08	**	0.06	*	0.05	**
Working full time or part time (ref: Other)	-0.24	**	-0.22	**	-0.17	*
Not working or house person (ref: Other)	-0.23	**	-0.21	*	-0.16	*
Retired (ref: Other)	-0.22	*	-0.2	*	-0.1	
Unemployed (ref: Other)	-0.29	**	-0.28	**	-0.08	
Student (ref: Other)	-0.29	**	-0.26	**	-0.18	*
White (ref: Other)	-0.07		-0.05		-0.01	
Mixed (ref: Other)	-0.06		-0.04		-0.02	
Asian or Asian British (ref: Other)	0.02		0.04		0.06	
Black (ref: Other)	-0.10		-0.08		0.04	
IMD Crime	0.02		0.02		0.02	
IMD Income	0.03	*	0.02	*	0.01	
Instrumental factors						
Victim	-0.07	**	-0.07	**	-0.08	**
Indirect victim	-0.06	**	-0.07	**	-0.05	**
Fear of crime	0.06	**	0.05	**	0.03	**
Perception of increased crime rates	0.05	**	0.03	**	0.02	
Perception of increased anti-social behavior	0.10	**	0.08	**	0.04	**
Relational factors						
Perception of disorder			0.03	**	0.01	*
Concerns about collective efficacy			-0.01		-0.01	*
Concern about local change			0.06	**	0.04	**
Ideological factor						
Authoritarianism					0.21	**
Individual variance	0.30		0.29		0.20	
Neighborhood variance	0.52		0.52		0.45	
Intraclass correlation	0.24		0.24		0.16	
R-Squared	0.15		0.17		0.57	

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Table 3

Linear regression coefficients for modelling disorder, collective efficacy, worry about crime, perceived change in local crime levels, and perceived change in local anti-social behaviour levels (Study 1, n=33,201)

	Perceptions of Disorder		Collective efficacy		Worry about crime		Perceived change in local crime levels		Perceived change in local anti-social behaviour levels	
Control variables										
Female	0.05	*	-0.02		0.43	**	-0.06	**	-0.06	**
Age	-0.02	*	0.05	**	-0.03	**	0.01		0.01	**
White - Irish	-0.01		-0.01		0.05		-0.03		-0.09	**
White - any other	-0.01		0.10	**	0.12	**	-0.02		-0.03	
Mixed - white and black caribbean	0.19	**	0.09		0.01		0.01		0.00	
Mixed - white and black african	0.17	*	0.09		0.05		0.04		0.01	
Mixed - white and asian	0.09		0.09		0.14		0.01		0.06	
Other mixed	0.08		0.17	**	0.19	*	-0.05		-0.06	
Indian	0.05		0.15	**	0.19	**	-0.04		0.01	
Pakistani	-0.03		0.30	**	0.05		0.04		0.10	**
Bangladeshi	0.34	**	0.39	**	0.37	**	0.07	**	0.11	**
Other asian or asian british	0.00		0.01		0.45	**	0.06		0.05	
Black or black british - caribbean	-0.01		-0.02		-0.09		0.01		-0.02	
Black or black british - african	-0.09	*	0.24	**	-0.12	*	0.06	**	0.09	**
Other black or black british	0.06		0.27	**	0.03		0.03		0.02	
Chinese	0.00		0.07		0.24		-0.01		0.03	
‘Other Chinese’ or other ethnic group	-0.38	**	-0.09		-0.11		-0.02		0.01	
Working part time (8 - 29 hrs per/wk)	-0.08	*	-0.11	**	0.12	**	-0.05	**	-0.05	*
Working part time (less than 8hrs per/wk)	0.08		-0.15		0.19		-0.13	*	-0.14	*
Not working	-0.01		-0.29	**	0.18	**	-0.07	**	-0.05	*
House person	-0.09	*	-0.16	**	0.30	**	-0.06	**	-0.05	**
Retired	-0.13	**	-0.12	**	0.02		-0.08	**	-0.08	**
Registered unemployed	-0.08		-0.32	**	-0.06		-0.07	**	-0.07	**
Unemployed but not registered	0.09		-0.10		-0.05		-0.08		-0.03	
Student/full time education	-0.20	**	-0.10	*	-0.06		-0.04		-0.04	
Working status (other)	0.02		-0.39	**	0.26		-0.12	*	-0.14	**
Buying on mortgage	0.09	*	-0.03		-0.24	**	-0.05	**	-0.04	**

Rented from council	0.36	**	-0.13	**	0.01		-0.02		-0.01	
Rented from housing association	0.46	**	-0.41	**	0.01		-0.11	**	-0.09	**
Rented from private landlord	0.38	**	-0.24	**	-0.05		-0.04	**	0.00	
Tenure (other)	0.58	**	0.16	*	-0.29	**	0.14	**	0.18	**
Household access to a car	0.06	*	-0.07	**	-0.02		-0.03	**	-0.04	**
Number of kids	0.04		0.16	**	0.07	**	0.09	**	0.08	**
Primary victimization: personal crime	0.81	**	-0.17	**	0.52	**	-0.19	**	-0.20	**
Primary victimization: property crime	0.81	**	-0.76	**	1.10	**	-0.31	**	-0.33	**
Secondary victimization: someone in the neighborhood	0.67	**	-0.21	**	0.42	**	-0.12	**	-0.17	**
Secondary victimization: someone in the family	0.28	**	-0.05		0.26	**	-0.14	**	-0.16	**
Neighbourhood factors										
Crime levels	0.06	**	0.00		0.11	**	-0.01		-0.01	*
Average of disorder	0.95	**								
Average of collective efficacy			1.06	**						
Average of worry about crime					0.92	**				
Average of perceived change in local crime levels							0.95	**		
Average of perceived change in local anti-social behavior levels									0.92	**
Ideological factor										
Authoritarianism	0.17	**	-0.06	**	0.20	**	-0.05	**	-0.08	**
Intercept	-1.11		-0.02		-1.20		0.62		0.82	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Table 4

Zero-order correlations among variables (Study 2, n=283)

	2	3	4	5	6
1 Punitive sentiment	.03	.21**	.33**	.41**	.55**
2 Victimization	-	.05	-.07	.06	-.13*
3 Fear of Crime		-	.25**	.37**	.24**
4 Concerns about moral decline			-	.58**	.43**
5 Belief in a dangerous world				-	.41**
6 Right-wing authoritarianism					-

Source. London student sample (n=283)

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Table 5

Linear regression coefficients for instrumental concerns, relational concerns, belief in a dangerous world and right-wing authoritarianism on punitive sentiment (Study 2, n=283)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
Control variables								
Age	-0.04	**	-0.04	**	-0.03	**	-0.03	*
Female	0.02		0.02		0.06		0.13	
White (ref: Other)	-0.40	**	-0.36	**	-0.33	**	-0.23	*
Religiosity (1-7)	0.11	**	0.08	*	0.06	*	-0.01	
Instrumental factors								
Victim	0.18		0.19		0.16		0.24	*
Fear of crime	0.14	*	0.10		0.03		-0.03	
Relational factor								
Concerns about moral decline			0.21	**	0.06		-0.03	
Perceptions of Threat								
Belief in a dangerous world					0.32	**	0.26	**
Ideological factor								
Right-wing authoritarianism							0.47	**
R-squared	0.22		0.24		0.29		0.40	

Source. London student sample (n=283)

Note. Regression coefficients from four linear regression models are shown. Outcome variable is a scale punitive sentiment scale that ranges from 0 to 10. Model 1 starts with instrumental factors and controls; Model 2 adds relational factors; Model 3 adds perceptions of threat; Model 4 adds authoritarianism. For all models, *n*=244. Control variables were gender, age, ethnicity and religiosity. Predictor variables coded 0 to 10, apart from victimisation (0 or 1). R2 = variance explained. Note how the coefficients of fear of crime and concerns about moral decline shift towards zero as one moves from model 2 to model 3, and from model 3 to model 4.

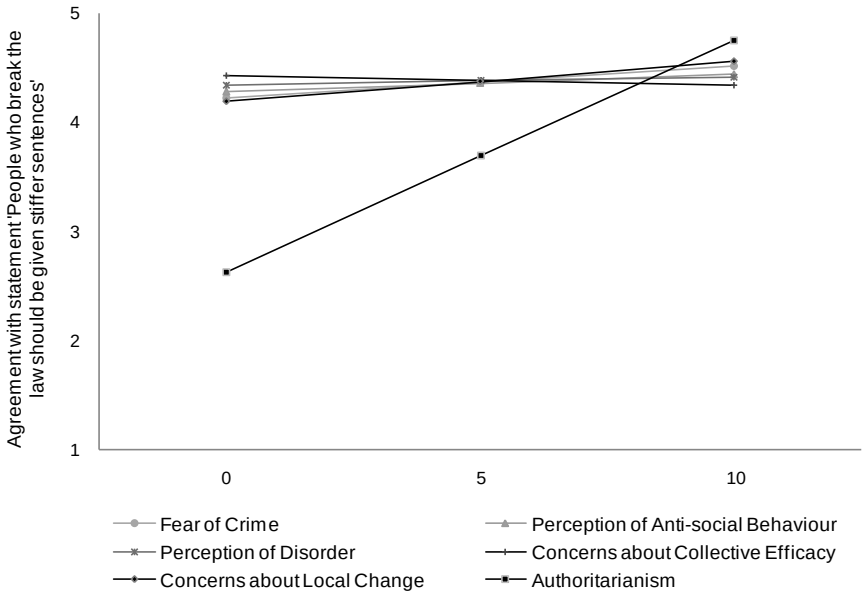

Figure 1. Predicted values of punitive sentiment from Model 3.
Note. All other variables in the model were held constant at their mean.

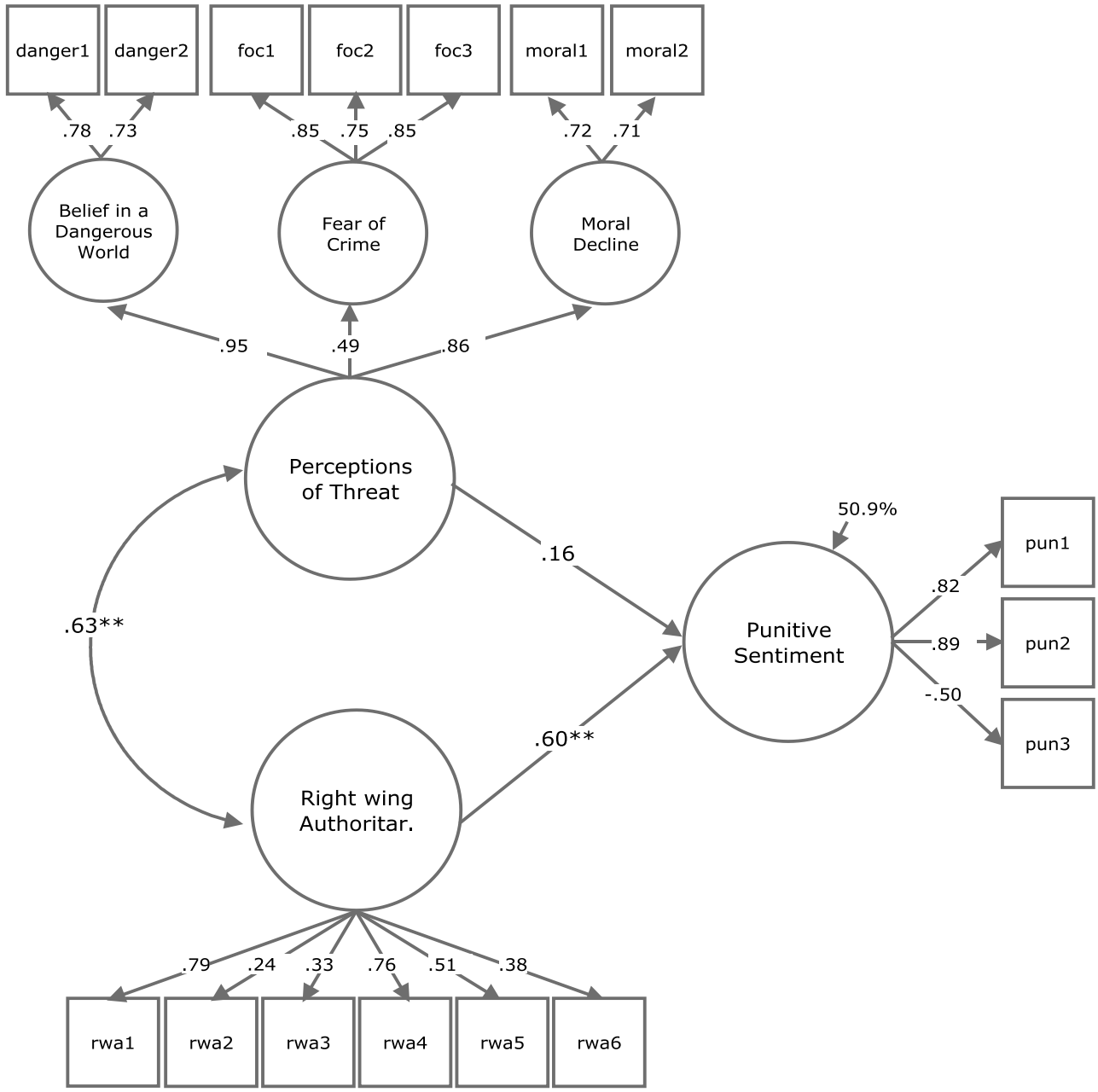

Figure 2. Structural equation model of the effects of right-wing authoritarianism and perception of social threat on punitive sentiment.
Note. MPlus 5.2 was used. Standardized coefficients are shown. Model fit: $\chi^2_{(96)} = 174.66$, $p = <.001$, $\chi^2/df < 2$; CFI = 0.95; TLI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.05, 90% C.I. = .04 - .07.
All factor loadings are significant at a 99% confidence level.
For structural relationships: *p < .05. **p < .01.

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