

THE ROLE OF HONESTY, LIKABILITY, AND ASSUMED MORALITY ON
JUDGMENTS OF OTHERS' AUTHENTICITY

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

In modern Western society, there is greater flexibility than ever before for humans to choose how to live and express themselves, and we are increasingly connected by social media platforms on which we present carefully curated versions of ourselves. In this context, it has become increasingly important to not just be authentic but to seem authentic to others. Yet, relatively little is known about what predicts perceptions of another person's authenticity. Across three studies, I tested three sets of hypotheses regarding the interplay between honesty, morality, and liking, and the effects of these factors on perceived authenticity. Results suggested that honesty and likability both exert causal influences on perceptions of authenticity, in line with predictions. There was at best limited evidence that these factors may interact to predict authenticity, such that honesty has a greater influence on authenticity for people we like compared to dislike. However, this research seems to suggest that meta-assumptions about the morality of a target's intentions can be used to explain the effect of likability on authenticity. Furthermore, results revealed a significant indirect effect of the combined factors on perceived authenticity via perceived morality. These results lend support to a growing body of evidence suggesting the importance of morality for judgments of authenticity. Finally, while lay conceptions might suggest that in order to harness this perception one should be honest, this work suggests that other considerations, such as how well-liked we are, may also shape whether one is perceived as authentic.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my husband, Evan Rooney. Your support and encouragement never fail to strengthen me, and you have helped me become the person I am today. I am so incredibly happy to have you in my life, by my side, on my team. You bring me so much joy and love. Thank you.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The assertion that it is important to know and live in accordance with who you truly are (i.e., to be authentic) is a mantra with deep roots in Western cultural traditions. In modern Western society, there is greater flexibility than ever before for humans to choose how to live and express themselves, and we are increasingly connected by a multitude of social media platforms on which we present carefully curated versions of ourselves. In this context, it has become increasingly important to not just be authentic but to seem authentic to others. Indeed, cultural examples of the importance of projecting authenticity abound. The artist Beyoncé, for example, was celebrated when she released her 2013 self-titled album, which is described as a glimpse into the “real” her due to its exploration of intimate details of her personal life (Macrossan, 2018). Politicians like Boris Johnson and Beto O’Rourke who adopt the “every day celebrity” persona strive to increase popularity and trust amongst their constituents by engaging in seemingly spontaneous activities and using two-way mediums (e.g., twitter) to appear more authentic (Wood, Corbett, & Flinders, 2016). On a smaller scale, the presence of leaders who seem authentic in the workplace predicts positive employee outcomes such as better performance and increased worker job satisfaction (Wong & Laschinger, 2013; Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008). Even our personal relationships have been found to feel more satisfying when we think our partner is authentic (Wickham, 2013).

Yet, relatively little is known about what predicts perceptions of whether someone is being authentic. The current research explored three factors that I

hypothesized are important to perceptions of authenticity: perceived honesty, morality, and liking. I tested three sets of hypotheses examining how these factors work together to predict perceived authenticity (see Table 1). While existing work points to the importance of all three factors, no work has examined the potential interplay of all three together. For reasons that will be detailed below, I predicted that both honesty and liking will have causal direct effects on perceived authenticity, but that they also would interact to predict authenticity. I predicted that the nature of this interaction is such that honesty has a greater influence on authenticity for people we like compared to those we dislike. I expected that this interaction could be explained by differential meta-assumptions about the moral intentions of liked versus disliked individuals (see Figure 1). In this way, the current research is motivated by a growing literature which suggests morality is intimately tied to perceptions of authenticity (Newman, Bloom, & Knobe, 2014; Heiphetz, Strohminger, & Young, 2017; Strohminger, Knobe, & Newman, 2017) and similarly situates morality as a key basis for authenticity judgments.

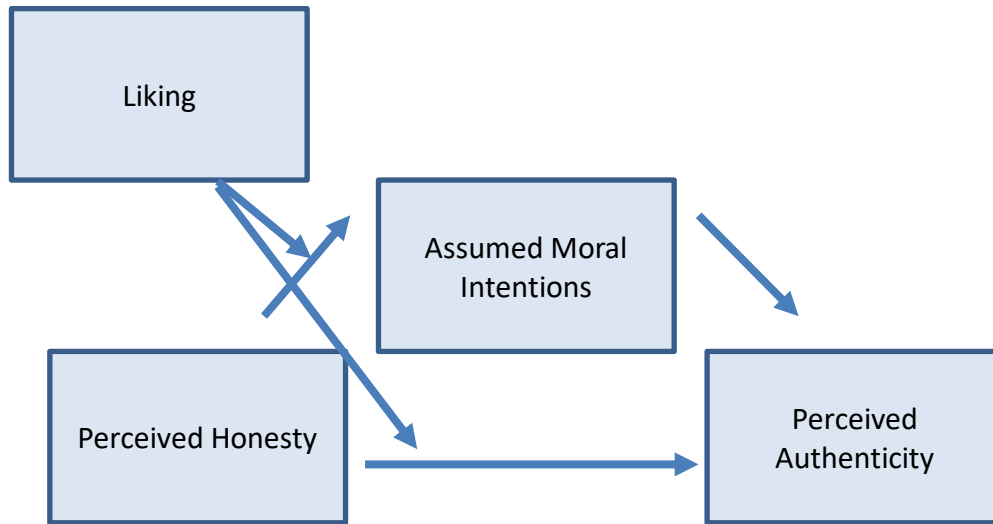


Figure 1. Hypothesized Mediated Moderation Model.

Table 1. A Comprehensive List of Hypotheses for Studies 1-3.

Over-Arching Hypothesis. Likability and honesty interact to predict perceived authenticity, and this interaction can be explained by differences in the perceived moral intentions of liked and disliked individuals.		
Hypothesis 1a.	Study 1	There is a direct causal effect of honesty on perceived authenticity.
Hypothesis 1b.	Study 1	The direct causal effect of honesty on perceived authenticity can be moderated by perceived moral intentions.
Hypothesis 2a.	Study 2	There is a direct causal effect of likeability on perceived authenticity.
Hypothesis 2b.	Study 2	The direct causal effect of likeability on perceived authenticity is mediated by perceived moral intentions.
Hypothesis 3a.	Study 3	The effect of honesty on perceived authenticity will be moderated by likability.
Hypothesis 3b.	Study 3	The interactive effect of honesty and likability on perceived authenticity will be mediated by perceived moral intentions.

1.1. Honesty and Authenticity

It may seem somewhat intuitive that perceptions of honesty matter for judging whether another person is authentic. Indeed, psychological theories that attempt to operationalize the construct often draw on language tied to honesty (e.g., the word “true”). Wood and colleagues (2008), for example, outline a dispositional form of authenticity that draws on knowing who your “true” self is and acting in accordance with that truth. Kernis and Goldman (2006, pp. 294), describe authenticity as the “unobstructed operation of one’s true- or core-self in one’s daily enterprise.” In this operationalization, being honest to and about one’s self underpins key facets of authentic functioning. As further evidence of the entanglement of these two concepts, the influential literary critic Lionel Trilling (1972) theorized that authenticity is a personal ideal that has evolved from earlier concerns with sincerity, arguing that “Authenticity means being true to oneself as an ultimate ideal, rather than (like sincerity) as a condition of being true to others. Authenticity is in some sense regarded as a development and intensification of sincerity.” Trilling attempts to distinguish the two concepts while acknowledging their connection. However, when considering making a judgment of another’s authenticity, it is hard to know how one might judge whether a person is being true to themselves, if one cannot trust that the presentation a person shows to others is true.

Not surprisingly, the entanglement of honesty and authenticity in psychological and philosophical theories is reproduced in modern lay conceptions of authenticity. In a recent investigation of lay understandings of authenticity, Kovács (2019) found that out

of the top fifteen words cited most frequently when asked to generate words associated with an authentic person, six were words related to honesty (real, sincere, genuine, honest, trustful, true-to). Honesty was the word mentioned most frequently, nearly three times as often as the second most mentioned word (“real”). Honesty was considered uniquely diagnostic of person authenticity (i.e., cited at least twice as often when considering authenticity of persons compared to authenticity of brands, organizations, paintings, and restaurants), as were four other words related to honesty (believable, truthful, sincere, straightforward; Kovács, 2019). Clearly, honesty is one of the most (if not the most) important constructs lay people explicitly associate with person authenticity. This also plays out in correlational research where participants rate real or fictitious targets, with perceptions of honesty being highly associated with perceptions of authenticity (Robinson, Johnson, & Shields, 1995; Rivera, Kelley, Kim, Hicks, & Schlegel, 2020).

1.1.1. The Potential Importance of Moral Intentions.

There is no doubt that perceived honesty is likely to predict perceived authenticity, but is the relationship so strong that they are one in the same? Do the two ever come apart? One argument against equating honesty and authenticity is that doing so does not take into account 1) that there is a large body of literature that ties authenticity with morality (Bench, Schlegel, Davis, & Vess, 2015; Newman et al., 2014; Heiphetz et al., 2017; Strohminger et al., 2017), 2) that morality encompasses a broader array of virtues than merely honesty (see Haidt & Joseph, 2006), and 3) that honesty may at times be at odds with other virtues. For example, if a person strived to be honest

at all times, whatever the cost, they could potentially run into issues where being honest about a situation might betray another person's trust (i.e., a violation of loyalty or honor), or might cause another person harm (i.e., a violation of compassion or kindness). Therefore, the intentions behind one's pursuit of honesty (e.g., whether they considered others or only themselves when being honest) might shape how that honesty is perceived. For this reason, I expect that the perceived authenticity of honest actions might be influenced by the perceived morality of the intentions behind one's actions.

This hypothesis is broadly grounded in a deep body of person perception research which suggests that morality is more important to impression formation than a variety of other characteristics, such as competence, warmth, and other non-moral personality traits (Wojciszke, Bazinska, & Jaworski, 1998; Hartley et al., 2016; Christy, Kim, Vess, Schlegel, Hicks, 2017; Strohminger & Nichols, 2014). Moral traits are strongly predictive of perceptions of liking, respecting, and knowing a person, with the specific traits of honesty, compassion, fairness, and generosity showing particularly strong relationships to these three person perceptions (compared to traits like purity or wholesomeness; Hartley et al., 2016). This research provides evidence for the importance of morality broadly speaking, but does not take into account that some moral behaviors can be at odds with others. Honesty is a specific moral trait that I suspect may causally effect perceptions of authenticity, but if honesty is not used for compassionate, fair, or generous reasons I suspect this link might be broken. Indeed, research suggests that people who tell prosocial lies are perceived to be more moral than people who tell selfish truths (Levine & Schweitzer, 2014). Furthermore, when the moral values of

benevolence (or not causing harm) and honesty conflict, benevolence may be more important than honesty for judging moral character as well as interpersonal trust (Levine & Schweitzer, 2014; 2015). Therefore, I operationalize moral intentions as honesty engaged in for the good of others, as opposed to honesty engaged in for purely selfish reasons.

Given the importance of honesty in lay conceptions of authenticity, as well as the intimate connection between morality and authenticity, I suggest two hypotheses below. These hypotheses will test one key premise of our model, the premise that perceptions of honesty can be theoretically untangled from perceptions of authenticity when considerations of morality are brought to the forefront.

Hypothesis 1a. Honesty has a causal effect on perceived authenticity.

Hypothesis 1b. The effect of honesty on perceived authenticity is moderated by perceived moral intentions.

1.2. Likability and Authenticity

While the predictions about the effect of honesty on authenticity may be somewhat intuitive, the idea that likability might have a causal effect on perceptions of authenticity could be considered more surprising. On the one hand, someone who is dislikable might be seen as particularly authentic as a function of their willingness to shirk social pressures to act in desirable and normative ways. For example, the titular character on the show *House* might be viewed as quite authentic because he does not care that he comes across as abrasive and arrogant towards others, he just gets the job done. However, the prediction that likability might color our impression of another's

authenticity can be theoretically grounded in the perspective of motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990). Specifically, a person's initial positive feelings towards a target might motivate them to see a person as more authentic than if they initially disliked the target. For example, I might be motivated to see a preferred political candidate as authentic because I want to believe that he is who he says he is, and that I like someone who embodies the important cultural proscription to be "true to yourself."

As evidence of the connection between likability and authenticity, within the Kovács (2019) investigation discussed earlier, two words seemingly related to likeability (i.e., friendly, nice) were tenth and eleventh in the top fifteen words most frequently associated with person authenticity. Additionally, two words related to likability (i.e., likable, friendly) were cited at least twice as often when considering person authenticity compared to authenticity of brands, organizations, paintings, and restaurants. While likability does not appear to be as strongly linked to authenticity as honesty is in lay conceptions, this shows some evidence that lay people acknowledge likability is indeed associated with authenticity (Kovács, 2019). One important caveat to this research is that participants were asked to generate words associated with person authenticity, not necessarily qualities that people draw on to determine if someone is authentic. This wording is important, because people may associate authenticity with likability because they think authentic people are more likable, not because they think that likability lends some insight into whether a person is authentic.

In addition to this evidence in lay conceptions, there is some empirical evidence that likability may play a role in perceptions of authenticity. Recent research from our

lab has attempted to better understand what qualities predict our perceptions of another person's authenticity by asking participants to engage in a structured group discussion with people they just met, then rate those people on a variety of person perceptions. Participants are asked to rate the other people's authenticity, personality, affect, power, similarity to themselves, liking, and a variety of single item predictors derived from lay explanations of authentic people. Contrary to what one might expect, liking seemed to be one of the strongest predictors of whether another person seemed authentic, over and above how honest someone appeared (Rivera et al., 2020). Indeed, the relationship between honesty and authenticity was no longer significant when controlling for likability (Rivera et al., 2020). Again, however, this research was correlational; the possibility remains that perceived likability does not play a causal role on perceptions of authenticity, but is instead a byproduct of perceived authenticity. Indeed, when asked about what qualities a person has that makes you believe they are authentic, lay people seem to stick to qualities related to honesty, consistency, transparency, rejecting external influences, and morality (e.g., kindness, compassion, loyalty), and do not frequently mention qualities specifically suggesting likability as an indicator of authenticity (Rivera et al., 2020). Thus, the question of causality remains somewhat open.

1.2.1. The Potential Importance of Moral Intentions

Despite the lack of direct evidence of a causal effect of liking on authenticity, I hypothesize that it exists and can be explained, in part, by perceived morality. As mentioned earlier, morality and authenticity are strongly connected. When given the opportunity, most people have a bias to view true selves as moral, good entities deep

inside ourselves and others (Newman et al., 2014; Strohminger & Nichols, 2014; Christy et al., 2017; Heiphetz et al., 2017; see also Strohminger et al., 2017). Changes for the better are seen as more indicative of a target's true self than changes for the worse (Bench et al., 2015); this bias persists even amongst individuals who explicitly endorse the idea that people are generally bad (i.e., misanthropes; De Freitas et al., 2018). Indeed, research suggests people think they know more about the true selves of moral compared to immoral targets (Christy et al., 2017).

Importantly, perceptions of what is moral are not always the same across people. Research by Newman and colleagues (2014) showed that what is considered "good" is driven by the person's own moral outlook. For example, liberals and conservatives differ on who they see as authentic based on their moral leanings. In one scenario, liberals indicate that a homosexual impulse is more indicative of a man's true self than that same man's explicit belief that homosexuality is wrong, while conservatives see the man's belief that homosexuality is wrong as more indicative. In both instances, the participants were rating in line with their personal values, but these differing values resulted in different perceptions of which internal feelings were "true". This provides evidence that our perceptions of others' authenticity can vary as a function of our personal values and preferences.

Therefore, it is possible to theorize that liking someone might bias us to think that we are glimpsing that person's good core, and subsequently see them as more authentic. Conversely, if we dislike someone, we may think that we are seeing a disagreeable front that's obscuring the goodness deep down, and subsequently see the

person as less authentic. This makes sense from a dissonance perspective (Festinger, 1957). Since people seem to have a bias to see true selves as good, it is possible that the contradiction between disliking a person and believing that the person possesses an inherently good true self might produce feelings of discomfort. In order to reduce that discomfort without threatening the belief that true selves are good, participants might assume that person is out of touch with that good true self and behaving in an inauthentic manner. Similarly, liking someone might motivate us to see that person as more authentic than someone we dislike, because we assume a likable person is in touch with their moral core (i.e., has moral intentions).

Given the relationship between likability and authenticity both in correlational research and lay associations, as well as the idea that people are motivated to see those they like in a more positive light, I suggest two additional hypotheses below. These hypotheses test another key premise of our model, specifically that likability can have a causal effect on perceptions of authenticity, and that this effect might be mediated by assumptions of underlying moral intentions.

Hypothesis 2a. Likability has a causal effect on perceived authenticity.

Hypothesis 2b. The effect of likability on perceived authenticity is mediated by perceived moral intentions.

1.3. The Interaction of Honesty and Likability on Perceived Authenticity.

Taken together, the research reviewed thus far implies that perceived honesty and perceived likability are related to perceived authenticity, but research untangling these associations to understand how perceptions of likability and honesty might causally lead

to judgments of another's authenticity is lacking. Additionally, hypotheses regarding the causal effects of likability and honesty on perceptions of authenticity are complicated by the fact that the people we view as likable or dislikable can theoretically behave honestly or dishonestly. What happens when we have evidence that someone we like is dishonest? Or that someone we dislike is honest?

Perceptions of honesty, likability, and authenticity are positive person perceptions that tend to be highly correlated with each other (Robinson et al., 1995; Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2002; Liu & Perrewe, 2006; Rivera et al., 2020). Indeed, research on workplace relationships suggests we tend to like and trust people we see as authentic (Liu & Perrewe, 2006), and in restaurants servers who are seen as friendlier (i.e., more likable) are also seen as more authentic (Grandey et al., 2002). In one experiment that manipulates targets as self-enhancing, self-deprecating, or balanced self-presenters, balanced targets are seen as more likable, authentic, and honest than enhancers or deprecators, and these three perceptions are all highly correlated (Robinson et al., 1995).

The constructs of honesty and likability, in particular, are often empirically connected to each other in psychological research. Anderson (1968) asked participants to rate the likability of over 500 personality qualities, and the top ten most likable characteristics included sincerity, honesty, truthfulness, and trustworthiness. Furthermore, the link between perceptions of honesty and likability appears to be causal and bidirectional. Manipulations of honesty can influence general likability; honest targets are liked more than dishonest targets (Paunonen, 2006), while manipulations of

likability can influence perceptions of honesty, with likable targets being seen as more sincere and trustworthy compared to dislikable targets (Chaiken, 1980).

But again, theoretically honesty does not necessarily imply likeability, nor vice versa. A person can be honest about their opinions about a situation, and still come across as dislikable, particularly if they appear to be disregarding how their honesty might affect another person. Similarly, a likeable person can still seem likable even when they are telling a lie, particularly if that lie appears to be harmless or in service of a greater good. Thus, while it is clear honesty and likeability are often related to each other empirically, it is possible to distinguish them from one another, at least theoretically.

Given these perceptions can be theoretically untangled, I expect there may be an interaction between honesty and likability when making judgments of another person's authenticity. Specifically, I predict that honesty has a greater effect on authenticity for liked compared to disliked others. Existing lab data lends support to this hypothesis in a sample of strangers (Rivera et al., 2020). These participants shared a favorite memory and an embarrassing moment, and then were asked to rate each other on various measures, including honesty, likability, and authenticity. While not the focus of that prior study, I was able to test the interaction between perceptions of likability and honesty on perceived authenticity. Participants' perceptions of likability and honesty interacted to predict authenticity, such that the relationship between honesty and authenticity was stronger when rating targets who were more well-liked (see Figure 2).

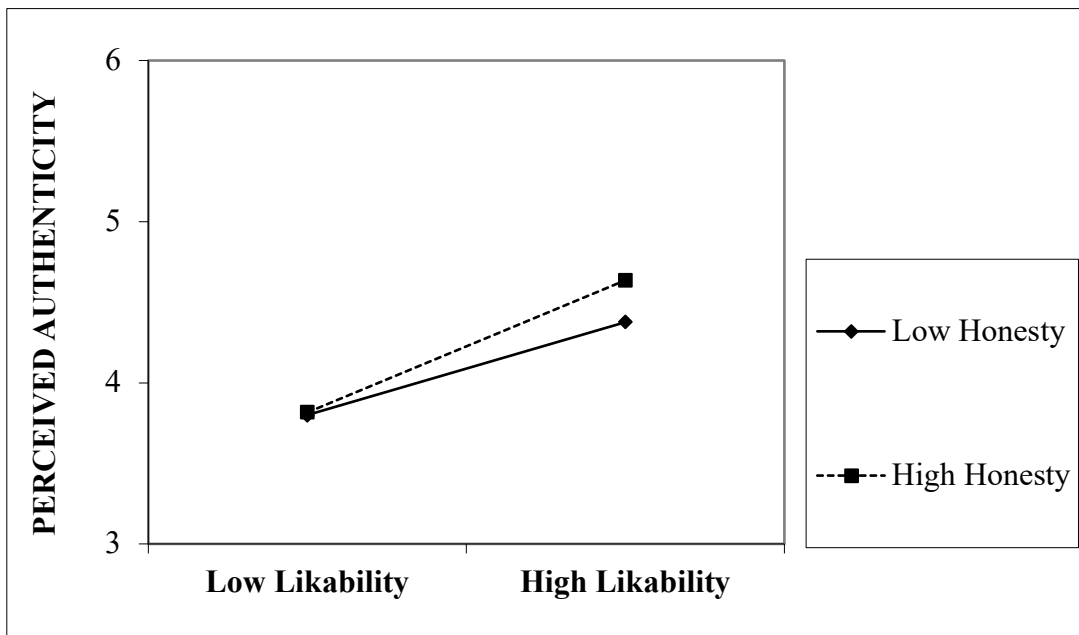


Figure 2. Pilot Data Showing the Interaction between Likability and Honesty on Perceived Authenticity.

A recent paper by Pillow, Crabtree, Galvin, and Hale (2017) provides further support for this hypothesis, albeit in the specific domain of perceptions of political candidates. Their work suggests that the relationship between honesty and perceived authenticity in political candidates is stronger for liked (compared to less-liked) candidates (Pillow et al., 2017). The authors argue that this is due to motivated reasoning, such that a partisan’s initial preference for a candidate will influence perceptions of authenticity as well as perceptions of behaviors that signal authenticity. When you like a candidate, you are more motivated to view their honest actions as an indicator of their authenticity than you would be for candidates you like less (Pillow et

al., 2017). Consider the example of Donald Trump (one of the political targets in Pillow and colleagues' study), a rather divisive president who tends to evoke strong feelings of like or dislike, and also is known for using relatively uncensored talk. If you like Donald Trump, this perceived honesty is likely to convince you that he is an authentic person, who is perhaps engaging in a form of tough love for the country. If you dislike Donald Trump, you might view his lack of sensitivity and censorship not as a cue to his authenticity, but instead as a method to appease his constituents, or perhaps a cover-up for a lack of understanding of the issues. Put differently, a Trump supporter might assume his honesty is grounded in moral intentions (e.g., the betterment of our country, not being elitist), and therefore more indicative of a moral true self. A Trump opponent, on the other hand, might assume his honesty is grounded in less moral, selfish intentions (e.g., pandering for votes, not caring about how his words might hurt others), and therefore less indicative of a moral true self.

1.3.1. The Potential Importance of Moral Intentions

While the previous research provides support for the presence of an interaction between likability and honesty on perceived authenticity (Rivera et al., 2020; Pillow et al., 2017), these relationships are correlational so we cannot be sure of the causal direction of these effects. Additionally, neither study tested the proposed possible mechanism of assumed moral intentions for understanding the interactive effect of likability and honesty on perceived authenticity.

One way to test this hypothesis is to assess participant meta-perceptions of liked and disliked agents engaging in honest or dishonest behavior. Evidence suggests that

people may judge agents based on meta-perceptions, or assumptions made about another individual's motivation for engaging in a behavior. For example, when making judgments of moral blame versus praise, participants indicated that intentional immoral actions were more blameworthy than impulsive immoral actions, while impulsive and intentional moral actions were viewed as equally praiseworthy. This discrepancy was explained by the assumptions participants made about whether the agent was likely to embrace or reject their impulse (Pizarro, Uhlmann, & Salovey, 2003).

Similarly, I suspect that participants have meta-assumptions about the motivation behind liked and disliked individuals' honest behavior. Whereas liked individuals might be assumed to engage in honesty for moral, prosocial reasons, thus seeming more authentic, disliked individuals might be assumed to engage in honesty for immoral, selfish reasons, thus dampening honesty's ability to act as a cue for authenticity. For liked individuals, honesty might have a stronger effect on perceived authenticity because we are motivated to see that individual as good and assume they engaged in honest behavior for moral reasons. For disliked individuals, we may be less motivated to apply good intentions behind their honest behavior because we want our dislike to not be at odds with the assumption of an essential moral self. If the disliked individual is not assumed to be behaving morally, it becomes easier to assume that individual is inauthentic. This fits with the schematic model of attribution (Reeder, Pryor, & Wojciszke, 1992), which asserts that people tend to make different assumptions of moral and immoral people. Moral people are assumed to behave in moral (but not immoral) ways, while immoral people are assumed to behave in both moral and immoral ways.

This is because moral behaviors are both demanded and rewarded by our social environment, so even immoral people are assumed to behave morally sometimes. In our investigation of authenticity, if disliked people are acting honestly, this might not have as strong of an impact on our perception of their authenticity because their moral behavior might be assumed to be an instance of immoral people acting morally for selfish reasons, not a result of true moral intentions.

This reasoning led to my final two hypotheses. First, liking has been shown to interact with perceptions of honesty to predict perceived authenticity in correlational research (Pillow et al., 2017; Rivera et al., 2020), and I expected this pattern to be evidenced in an experimental paradigm as well. Additionally, given ties between morality and authenticity (Bench et al., 2015; Christy et al., 2017; Heiphetz et al., 2017; Strohminger et al., 2017), I expected that a possible explanation for this interaction would come in the form of assumed moral intentions.

Hypothesis 3a. The effect of honesty on perceived authenticity is moderated by likability.

Hypothesis 3b. The interactive effect of honesty and likability is mediated by perceived moral intentions.

1.4. The Current Research

In the current research, I attempted to investigate causal influences of perceived likability and perceived honesty on perceptions of others' authenticity. While it seems likely that perceptions of honesty influence judgments of authenticity given honesty's prominent place in lay associations and conceptions of what qualities give clues to

another's authenticity (Kovács, 2019; Rivera et al, 2020), it is also plausible that likability influences judgments of authenticity, given biases towards viewing true selves as moral, positive, and good (Bench et al., 2015; Christy et al., 2017; Heiphetz et al., 2017; Strohminger et al., 2017), and the influence of personal preferences on perceptions of authenticity (Newman et al., 2014). As such, I predicted main effects of both predictors. However, since likability and honesty can theoretically be untangled and research suggests likability can moderate the strength of the association between honesty and authenticity (Pillow et al., 2017; Rivera et al., 2020), I also predicted an interaction between likability and honesty, such that honesty has a stronger influence on authenticity for liked compared to disliked others. I expected that this interaction would be explained by differential meta-assumptions about targets' moral intentions.

Studies 1, 2, and 3, tested these hypotheses using experimental manipulations of honesty (Study 1 and 3), likability (Studies 2 and 3) and either manipulated (Study 1) or measured (Studies 2 and 3) assumptions of moral intentions. The first two studies tested some key basic premises of our proposed model, while the third study tested the full hypothesized model presented in Figure 1. Study 1 used a series of vignette manipulations of a fictitious target engaging in honest or dishonest behavior with high or low moral intentions. Study 2 manipulated likability and measure perceived moral intentions of confederates who interact with participants in a laboratory setting. Study 3 examined the full model by having participants imagine liked or disliked individuals engaging in honest or dishonest behavior, and measuring perceived moral intentions behind the target's behavior.

2. STUDY 1

In order to test an over-arching hypothesis that likability and honesty interact to predict authenticity, and that this interactive effect is mediated by perceptions of moral intentions, it is important to first establish that perceptions of honesty and authenticity can be untangled when also manipulating the presence of moral intentions behind honest and dishonest behavior. In this study, I attempted to test this premise by manipulating honesty and moral intentions in a series of vignettes about a fictitious target. I predicted that there would be main effects of honesty and moral intentions on perceived authenticity, and that these factors would also interact to predict perceived authenticity, such that honesty would have a stronger effect on authenticity when one had stronger moral intentions.

2.1.1. Participants

Participants ($N = 288$; female $n = 188$; male $n = 97$; gender non-conforming $n = 1$, prefer not to say $n = 1$) were recruited from the undergraduate subject pool. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 32 ($M = 19.17$, $SD = 1.54$) and were predominantly White ($n = 204$), followed by Asian ($n = 40$), Black or African American ($n = 9$), Indian ($n = 7$), American Indian or Alaska Native ($n = 4$), and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ($n = 1$). Ten participants identified as more than one race and ten identified as other. 76 participants also identified as Hispanic or Latino. One participant was excluded from analyses because this person only answered one out of the 48 items for our main dependent measure; therefore, the full sample included in analyses was $N=287$.

2.1.2. Sample Size Selection.

I aimed for a sample of 300. I planned to recruit participants one week at a time until I hit that desired sample size. This sample size was chosen because it far exceeds the sample size needed ($N=180$) to detect the average effect size ($r = .21$; Funder et al., 2014) in social psychology studies, and has the power to detect effects as small as $d = .07$ according to a GPower analysis for repeated measures ANOVA with 4 measurements (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). I reached 288 participants by the end of four weeks of data collection. Given the pace of data collection and laboratory resources, it became necessary to stop collection after that amount of time. However, the acquired sample size still exceeded the size needed to detect the average effect size in social psychology studies.

2.1.3. Design and Procedure

This study had a within-subjects design, with every participant answering about the authenticity of an honest or dishonest target behaving with high or low moral intentions. Honesty and moral intentions were manipulated across four different vignettes. Each vignette contained a scenario in which a target could respond honestly or dishonestly and with high or low moral intentions, for a total of 16 possible versions of the four vignettes. Each participant saw all versions of the 4 vignettes. The vignette blocks were presented in random order, and the four versions were randomized within each block to prevent order effects. After reading each scenario, participants completed our measure of perceived authenticity. Finally, they filled out demographic information and were debriefed.

2.1.4. Manipulation

My manipulation of honesty and moral intentions was created by the author for the purpose of this study. Participants were first asked to read the following instructions.

Thank you for participating in our study! Please read the following scenarios. Imagine you are reading these short stories about different people interacting with friends. For each story, you will read a scenario, and this scenario will be followed by 4 different versions of how one of the people could respond in the situation. After reading each version, you will be asked to rate your thoughts and opinions about that same person.

Then, participants read each of the four scenarios that contain the manipulation of honesty and moral intentions. One example vignette is presented below (for others please see Appendix A).

Vignette. Two friends, John and Alex, were having a conversation. “Alex,” John asked, “do you think I am irresponsible?” Alex thought that John was pretty irresponsible, and thought about what to say...

Honest Condition. “Yes, I think you are.” Alex said.

High Moral Condition. John’s irresponsible behavior has had negative consequences for John in the past, so Alex decided to be honest in the hopes that it would help him change his behavior and avoid future bad outcomes.

Low Moral Condition. John’s irresponsible behavior had annoyed Alex in the past. Alex decided to be honest in the hopes that John’s behavior

would be less annoying in the future. He didn't think about whether being honest was best for John.

Dishonest Condition. “No, I don't think you are.” Alex said.

High Moral Condition. Alex decided to lie because he thought that telling John he was irresponsible in this way would be hurtful and not very kind to John.

Low Moral Condition. Alex decided to lie because he wasn't in the mood for having such a conversation. He didn't think about whether being dishonest was best for John.

2.1.5. Measures.

Perceived Authenticity. Participants rated the target on three items adapted from Fleeson and Wilt (2010). Two items asked the participant to rate their agreement with the following statements on a 7 point Likert type scale, “To what extent do you feel [target name] was being authentic in this interaction,” and “To what extent do you feel like [target name] being their true self in this interaction”. The other item asked participants to rate (from Not at all to Extremely) “How accurate of an impression do you feel you have of [target name] based on this interaction?”¹ These three items were then averaged to form a composite measure of perceived authenticity ($M = 4.51$, $SE = .50$, $\alpha = .84$).

¹ Fleeson and Wilt (2010) also used a fourth item “How much was this person putting on an act with this acquaintance?” We decided to drop this item because of concerns that the item tapped honesty as much as it tapped authenticity.

2.2. Results

2.2.1. Primary Analyses

I ran a repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) with honesty and moral intentions entered as independent variables and perceived authenticity entered as the dependent variable. There was a main effect of honesty ($F(1, 286) = 1119.97, p < .001, \eta^2 = .80, 95\% \text{ CI } [.76, .82]$) and of moral intentions ($F(1, 286) = 232.85, p < .001, \eta^2 = .45, 95\% \text{ CI } [.37, .52]$) in the predicted directions. The interactive effect was not significant, ($F(1, 286) = .06, p = .801, \eta^2 = .00, 95\% \text{ CI } [.00, .01]$), in contrast with our predictions (see Figure 3).

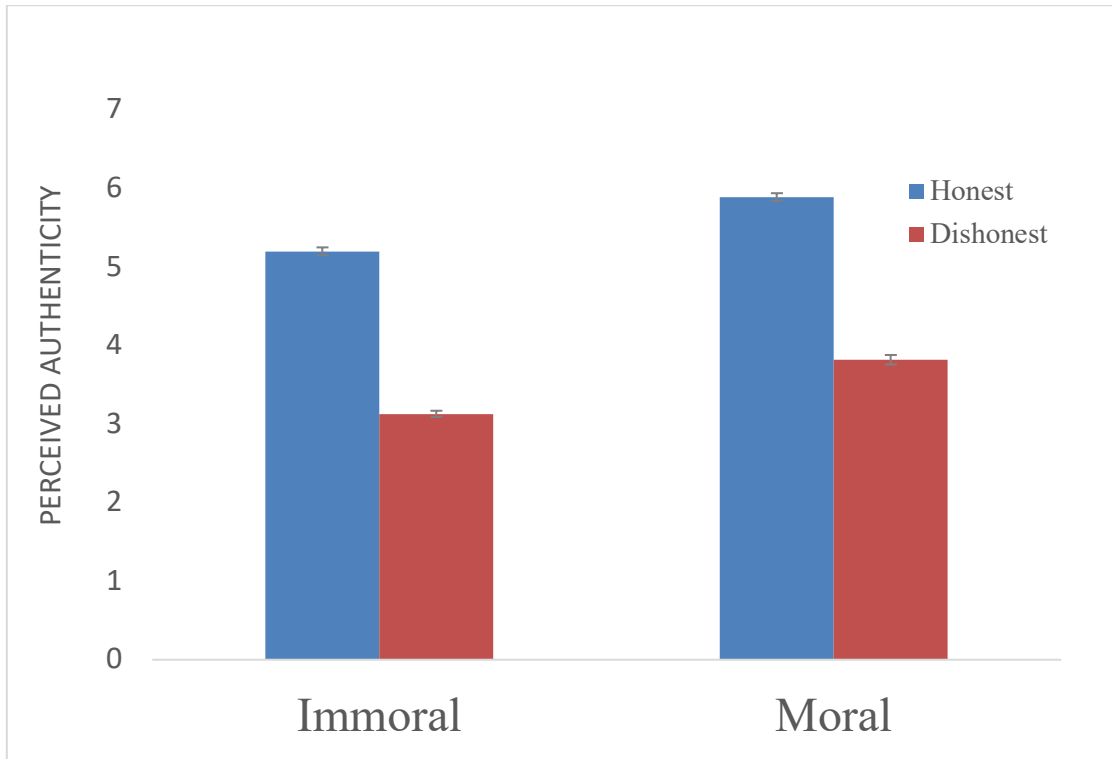


Figure 3. Study 1 Perceptions of Authenticity as a Function of Honesty and Moral Intentions.

2.2.2. Secondary Analyses.

Since we did not find the expected interaction, we explored these data further by looking at the effects of honesty and moral intentions within each vignette. To do this, we ran a repeated measures ANOVA with honesty, moral intentions, and vignette entered as factors. Results revealed a significant three-way interaction between honesty, moral intentions, and vignette ($F(3, 858) = 19.05, p < .001, \eta^2 = .06, 95\% \text{ CI } [.03, .09]$).

Tests of the simple effects of vignette within each combination of honesty and morality suggested that mean authenticity ratings in the honest-moral ($F(3, 284) = 15.51, p < .001, \eta^2 = .14, 95\% \text{ CI } [.07, .21]$), honest-immoral ($F(3, 284) = 8.99, p < .001, \eta^2 = .09, 95\% \text{ CI } [.03, .15]$), and dishonest-moral ($F(3, 284) = 20.92, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18, 95\% \text{ CI } [.10, .25]$) conditions significantly differed across vignettes, but mean authenticity ratings in the dishonest-immoral condition did not significantly differ ($F(3, 284) = 1.24, p = .287, \eta^2 = .01, 95\% \text{ CI } [.00, .04]$) across vignettes.

Probing the effects of honesty and morality within each vignette revealed significant two-way interactions between honesty and moral intentions within three out of the four vignettes, though the patterns of these interactions varied (See Figure 4). In the vignette about clothing preferences, the interactive effect was non-significant ($F(1, 286) = .86, p = .354, \eta^2 = .003, 95\% \text{ CI } [.00, .03]$). In the vignettes about a friend's personal characteristics ($F(1, 286) = 7.81, p = .006, \eta^2 = .03, 95\% \text{ CI } [.002, .07]$) and about political opinions ($F(1, 286) = 7.74, p = .006, \eta^2 = .03, 95\% \text{ CI } [.002, .07]$), the effect of honesty was stronger when one had moral compared to immoral intentions, as predicted. Put another way, honest and dishonest behavior with *immoral* intentions were seen more similarly in terms of authenticity than honest and dishonest behavior with moral intentions. By comparison, in the vignette about music preferences ($F(1, 286) = 40.04, p < .001, \eta^2 = .12, 95\% \text{ CI } [.06, .19]$), the effect of honesty was stronger when one had immoral compared to moral intentions. Put differently, this suggests that honest and dishonest behavior with *moral* intentions were seen more similarly in terms of authenticity than honesty and dishonesty with immoral intentions (See Table 2 for

simple effects of honesty at each level of morality within each vignette). These patterns, while different, generally supported our main hypothesis that considerations of the broader moral intentions behind honest and dishonest behavior can undermine a main effect of honesty on perceptions of authenticity (except in the case of the vignette about clothing preferences).

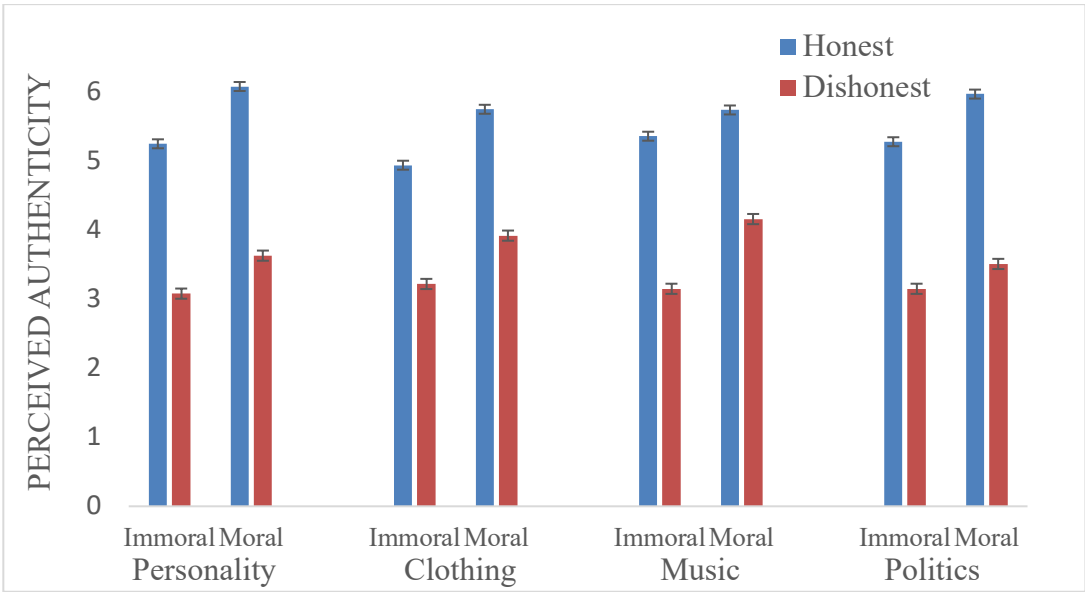


Figure 4. Interaction between Honesty and Moral Intentions on Perceived Authenticity across Vignettes.

Table 2. Simple Effects of Honesty at each Level of Morality within each Vignette.

Vignette	Condition	Honest <i>M (SD)</i>	Dishonest <i>M (SD)</i>	<i>F</i> (1, 286)	η^2	95% Confidence Interval	
1) Personality	Moral	6.07 (.85)	3.63 (1.31)	690.87*	.71	.65	.75
	Immoral	5.25 (1.08)	3.08 (1.10)	594.82*	.68	.62	.72
2) Clothing	Moral	5.75 (.99)	3.92 (1.32)	336.16*	.54	.47	.60
	Immoral	4.94 (1.36)	3.22 (1.16)	303.22*	.52	.45	.58
3) Music	Moral	5.74 (2.05)	4.16 (1.32)	234.10*	.45	.37	.52
	Immoral	5.36 (1.14)	3.15 (1.22)	531.64*	.65	.59	.70
4) Politics	Moral	5.97 (.99)	3.51 (1.25)	642.02*	.69	.64	.73
	Immoral	5.28 (1.28)	3.15 (1.14)	517.89*	.64	.58	.69

Note. This table shows the simple effects of honesty at each level of morality, within each vignette. * indicates significance at $p < .001$.

While one should use caution while interpreting these exploratory findings, this suggests that it is possible that aspects of these vignettes differentially influenced participants' reactions to the targets. For example, it is possible that the vignettes where a target's personal characteristics or political opinions are being evaluated are deemed more serious or consequential, therefore having *bad* intentions mitigated the boost that being honest normally gives to perceptions of authenticity. On the other hand, when music preferences (arguably less consequential) are being evaluated, *good* intentions dampen the boost that being honest normally gives to perceptions of authenticity (i.e., it is still somewhat authentic to be dishonest if you mean well).

2.3. Study 1 Discussion

Together, these results support hypothesis 1a, that honesty will have a causal effect on perceptions of authenticity, but not hypothesis 1b. These results at best provided limited support for the presence of an interactive effect of honesty and morality on perceived authenticity. Instead, results of my planned analyses suggest that honesty and moral intentions contribute to perceptions of authenticity in an additive manner, with honest targets being viewed as more authentic than dishonest targets, and targets with greater moral intentions being viewed as more authentic than targets with weaker moral intentions. Interestingly, the effect of honesty was nearly double the effect of moral intentions on perceived authenticity, suggesting that honesty may contribute more to our judgements of authenticity than other moral intentions.

However, exploratory analyses examining the effects of honesty and moral intentions on perceived authenticity within each of the vignettes revealed interactive effects in three out of the four scenarios. In two scenarios (personality and political opinions), the pattern of the interaction suggests that bad intentions weaken the benefit that *honesty* usually gives to perceptions of authenticity. In a third scenario (music preferences), the pattern of the interaction suggests that good intentions weaken the cost of *dishonesty* for perceptions of authenticity. While the patterns of these interactions differed, they all supported the possibility that moral intentions can interfere with the link between honesty and authenticity. However, it may be that the interactive effect of honesty and moral intentions may be more likely to emerge when a scenario is particularly serious or consequential (e.g., the consequences of telling someone you do

not like their clothing choices may be less severe than the consequences of telling someone that you think they are irresponsible). Furthermore, it may be that other contextual variables predict whether good intentions make dishonesty less costly to authenticity perceptions, or whether bad intentions weaken the benefit of honesty for authenticity perceptions. Future research could ask participants to rate the stimuli on severity of consequences, or could attempt to generate a broader pool of stimuli from participant nominated scenarios, in order to more fully understand the kinds of scenarios in which lying may be seen as authentic (or conversely, telling the truth may be seen as inauthentic).

3. STUDY 2

Study 2 aimed to test whether likability causally influences perceived authenticity (hypothesis 2a), and whether this effect can be explained by increased perceptions of morality for liked compared to disliked others (hypothesis 2b). This study is designed to test these premises in a relatively strict manner. Specifically, participants interacted with a confederate with whom the participant has no prior knowledge, and who were trained to act in either a likable (or dislikable) manner. We thus examined whether likability can influence perceptions of moral intentions (and subsequently authenticity) even when participants have no explicit information regarding the morality of the confederate within a limited interaction setting.

3.1. Methods

3.1.1. Participants

Participants ($N=222$; female $n = 168$; male $n = 54$) were recruited from the undergraduate subject pool. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 24 ($M = 18.61$, $SD = .92$). Participants were predominantly White ($n = 177$), followed by Asian ($n = 23$), Black or African American ($n = 6$), and Indian ($n = 3$), with eight participants identifying as multiracial and three participants identifying as other. 54 participants also identified as Hispanic or Latino. Condition data for one participant during the first week was lost because a confederate did not take their survey, which was used to link participant with condition; therefore, this participant was excluded from main analyses.

3.1.2. Sample Size Selection.

I aimed for a sample of at least 200, so that $n = 100$ per cell. I recruited participants one week at a time until I hit that desired sample size. Once the desired sample size was reached, I did not release timeslots for the following week, but finished out sign-ups for the current week, resulting in a sample size greater than 200. This sample size was chosen because it exceeds the sample size ($n=180$) needed to detect the average effect size in social psychology studies ($r = .21$; Funder et al., 2014) with power set to .80. This sample size is also large enough to detect significant indirect effects when the “a” and “b” paths are small-to-medium in size and power is set to .80 (Fritz & MacKinnon, 2007).

3.1.3. Design and Procedure

I used a between-subjects design with two conditions (likable and dislikable). Participants were brought into the lab and told that they would be participating in a mock interview, and that we were interested in understanding how people interact in interview settings. In order to manipulate a confederate’s likeability, I used a procedure adapted from Kieckhafer & Wright (2015). Participants were told that they were going to be randomly assigned to be either an interviewer or an interviewee. In actuality, the other “participant” was a trained confederate in the lab, and the participants were randomly assigned to a likable ($n = 116$) or dislikeable ($n = 105$) condition. In both conditions, the participants and confederates picked a number out of a hat and were told that whoever drew number 1 will be the interviewee, while 2 will be interviewer. Both pieces of paper had the number 1 on them, and the confederate lied and say that their paper says number

2. All confederates were trained in both conditions, and these conditions were randomly assigned to study sessions at the start of each week, in the hopes of having confederates acting an approximately equal number of times in both conditions.

Likable condition. In the likable condition, confederates were trained to respond positively to all participant answers, make frequent eye contact, actively listen, take a lot of notes, and mirror participant movements.

Dislikable condition. In the dislikable condition, confederates were trained to respond negatively to answers, to avoid making much eye contact, to act bored/disinterested, and to write one word answers if any.

After participants were finished with the interviews, they were escorted to private cubicles to answer questions about their experience.

3.1.4. Measures

Cover story items. Participants answered four items designed to strengthen our cover story that we are interested in how people interact during interviews. These items included “This felt like a good way to conduct an interview,” “I would expect to be asked questions like this in a real interview,” “I would accept a job that used these kinds of questions to get to know me,” and “I don't think these questions are useful for getting to know someone you're interviewing.”

Perceived moral intentions. Participants rated the target on nine items, indicating the extent to which they think the other person is the type of person who has moral intentions. Sample items include: “Will do what they think is right in any situation, regardless of whether it's necessarily easy,” and “Will do what is best for themselves,

even if it doesn't feel necessarily morally correct (reverse-coded).” Three items were framed with bipolar endpoints (e.g., immoral to moral person). These items were averaged into a composite measure ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.09$, $\alpha = .90$).

Perceived Authenticity. Participants rated the target on three items adapted from Fleeson and Wilt (2010). Two items ask the participant to rate the following statements on 7 point scales: “To what extent do you feel like this person seemed authentic during the interaction (from extremely inauthentic to extremely authentic),” and “To what extent do you feel like this person was really being their self during the interaction (from completely being a fake self to completely being their real self).” The last item asks participants to rate (from extremely inaccurate to extremely accurate) “How accurate of an impression do you feel you have of this person based on how they were acting.” These items were averaged to form a composite measure ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 1.27$, $\alpha = .77$).

Perceived liking. This measure was used as a manipulation check. Participants indicated how much they liked the other participant, using five items adapted from previous research (items 1-4, Garcia, Bergsieker, & Shelton, 2017; item 5, Pintel & Long, 2012). Sample items include “I enjoyed working with this participant,” and “I could imagine becoming friends with this participant.” These items were averaged to form a composite measure ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.92$, $\alpha = .97$).

3.2. Results

3.2.1. Preliminary Analyses

First, I conducted an independent samples t-test to examine whether our manipulation influenced perceptions of likability. Participants in the likable conditions

indeed found their targets more likeable ($M = 6.11$, $SD = .84$) than those in the dislikeable condition ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.53$; $t(219) = 17.94$, $p < .001$, $d = 2.42$, 95% CI [2.07, 2.76]). To test for confederate effects, I conducted an ANOVA to test whether there was a main effect of confederate or an interaction between confederate and condition on ratings of likability. This revealed significant main effects of confederate ($F(5, 209) = 10.82$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .21$, 95% CI [.10, .28]) and condition ($F(1, 209) = 386.58$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .65$, 95% CI [.58, .70]), as well as an interaction between confederate and condition ($F(5, 209) = 7.58$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .15$, 95% CI [.06, .23]).

The results of this interaction are plotted on Figure 5, and suggest that the difference in likability in the likable compared to the dislikable condition was stronger for some confederates compared to others. Further exploration of these differences reveals that while the magnitude of the difference in likability ratings between conditions varied, all confederates were rated as more likable in the likable condition than the dislikable condition (see Table 3). Furthermore, the “most liked” confederate in the dislikable condition was rated as less likable ($n = 15$; $M = 4.91$, $SD = 1.07$)² than the “least liked” confederate in the likable condition ($n = 12$; $M = 5.42$, $SD = 0.57$), though I was underpowered to test whether this difference was significant.

² Since the “most liked” confederate in the dislikable condition was rated above the midpoint of the scale, I ran exploratory analyses with this confederate excluded. Results of this ANOVA revealed that there were still significant main effects of confederate ($F(4, 173) = 5.99$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$, 95% CI [.03, .20]) and condition ($F(1, 173) = 379.44$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .69$, 95% CI [.61, .74]), as well as an interaction between confederate and condition ($F(4, 173) = 2.97$, $p = .021$, $\eta^2 = .06$, 95% CI [.001, .17]), even when this confederate was excluded. Subsequent analyses include the full sample.

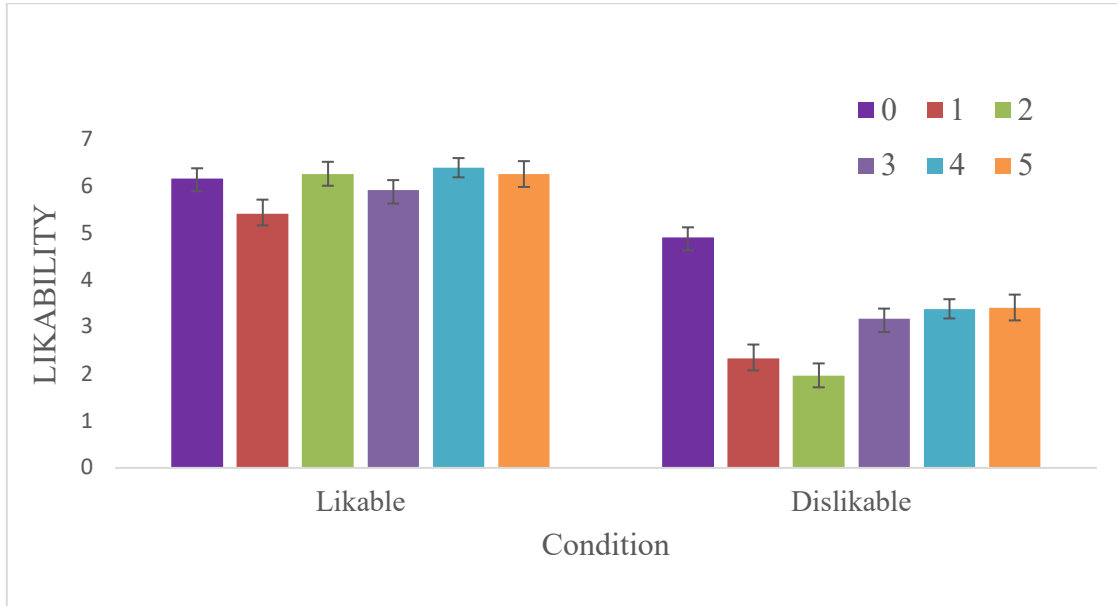


Figure 5. Effect of Likability Condition on Likability Across Confederates.

Table 3. Mean Difference in Likability by Condition and Confederate.

Confederate	Likable <i>M(SD)</i>	Dislikable <i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F</i> (1, 209)	η^2	95% Confidence Interval	
0 (<i>n</i> = 38)	6.17 (.85)	4.91 (1.07)	13.12*	.06	.01	.13
1 (<i>n</i> = 29)	5.42 (.57)	2.33 (1.27)	61.19*	.23	.13	.32
2 (<i>n</i> = 34)	6.26 (1.03)	1.97 (1.17)	142.65*	.41	.31	.49
3 (<i>n</i> = 39)	5.92 (.94)	3.19 (1.33)	59.31*	.22	.13	.31
4 (<i>n</i> = 52)	6.39 (.58)	3.39 (1.38)	107.10*	.34	.24	.43
5 (<i>n</i> = 29)	6.26 (.65)	3.41 (1.24)	53.44*	.20	.11	.29

Note. This table shows the simple effect of condition for each confederate. * indicates significance at $p < .001$.

Taken together, these results suggest that our manipulation largely worked as intended. Confederates in the likable condition were rated as significantly more likable than those in the dislikable condition across confederates, though the magnitude of this difference varied. Given the presence of significant confederate effects, however, primary analyses will include the confederate variable as a factor.

3.2.2. Primary Analyses.

To test hypothesis 2a, I ran an ANOVA to test for differences in perceived authenticity as a function of likability condition (with confederate entered as a factor). There was a main effect of condition on perceived authenticity ($F(1, 209) = 52.11, p < .001, \eta^2 = .20, 95\% \text{ CI } [.11, .29]$), such that those in the likable condition ($M = 5.21, SE = .10$) perceived their confederates to be more authentic compared to those in the dislikable condition ($M = 4.17, SE = .10$). There was also a main effect of confederate ($F(5, 209) = 3.13, p = .01, \eta^2 = .07, 95\% \text{ CI } [.005, .12]$) and an interaction between the two ($F(5, 209) = 5.97, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13, 95\% \text{ CI } [.04, .19]$).

Exploration of the interactive effect revealed that there were significant simple effects of condition in the predicted directions for all but one of the confederates (see Table 4), suggesting that participants perceived all but one of the confederates as more authentic in the likable, compared to dislikable, condition. These results largely supported my hypothesis that likability would have a causal effect on perceived authenticity.

Table 4. Mean Difference in Authenticity by Condition and Confederate.

Confederate	Likable	Dislikable	$F(1, 209)$	η^2	95% Confidence Interval	
	$M(SD)$	$M(SD)$				
0	5.32 (.75)	4.47 (1.13)	6.12*	.03	.001	.09
1	3.88 (1.20)	4.43 (1.53)	1.92	.01	.00	.05
2	5.50 (1.04)	3.64 (.97)	26.95*	.11	.05	.20
3	5.40 (.89)	4.56 (1.10)	5.58*	.03	.001	.08
4	5.87 (.58)	4.07 (1.11)	38.69*	.16	.08	.24
5	5.31 (1.04)	3.82 (1.23)	14.86*	.07	.02	.14

Note. This table shows the simple effect of condition for each confederate. *indicates significance at $p < .05$.

In preparation for my test of hypothesis 2b, I also ran an ANOVA to test for differences in perceived moral intentions as a function of likability condition (with confederate entered as a factor). There was a main effect of condition on perceived moral intentions ($F(1, 209) = 197.45, p < .001, \eta^2 = .49, 95\% \text{ CI } [.39, .56]$), such that those in the likable condition ($M = 5.31, SE = .07$) perceived that their confederates had stronger moral intentions compared to those in the dislikable condition ($M = 3.92, SE = .07$). There was also a main effect of confederate ($F(5, 209) = 7.62, p < .001, \eta^2 = .15, 95\% \text{ CI } [.06, .23]$), and an interaction between confederate and condition ($F(5, 209) = 6.12, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13, 95\% \text{ CI } [.04, .20]$). Exploration of the interactive effect revealed significant simple effects of condition in the predicted directions for all confederates (see Table 5).

Table 5. Mean Difference in Morality by Condition and Confederate

Confederate	Likable <i>M(SD)</i>	Dislikable <i>M(SD)</i>	<i>F</i> (1, 209)	η^2	95% Confidence Interval	
0	5.33 (.72)	4.68 (.57)	7.53*	.04	.003	.10
1	4.76 (.58)	3.35 (.72)	27.81*	.12	.05	.20
2	5.64 (.76)	3.23 (.80)	97.49*	.32	.22	.41
3	5.55 (.56)	4.18 (.77)	32.30*	.13	.06	.22
4	5.30 (.66)	3.75 (.71)	61.68*	.23	.14	.32
5	5.29 (.76)	4.33 (.91)	13.43*	.06	.01	.13

Note. This table shows the simple effect of condition for each confederate.

*indicates significance at $p < .01$.

Finally, I ran a mediation model to test hypothesis 2b. Likability condition was entered as the independent variable, morality as the mediator, and authenticity as the outcome variable. We did not control for confederate effects in this mediation model given the complexity of the analyses and lack of power to test for differences using confederate as a moderator. Furthermore, our exploration of the confederate effects on likability gave us confidence that the manipulation worked largely as intended, with the differences between confederates an issue of variation in the magnitude of the difference between conditions and not the pattern or direction. As predicted, there was a significant indirect effect of condition on perceived authenticity via perceived moral intentions (see Figure 6), suggesting that dislikable targets are seen as less authentic than likable targets partially because dislikable targets are assumed to have weaker moral intentions. However, the direct effect of the likability induction on perceived authenticity remained significant after controlling for this mediator, suggesting that there are likely additional mediating factors that help explain this effect.

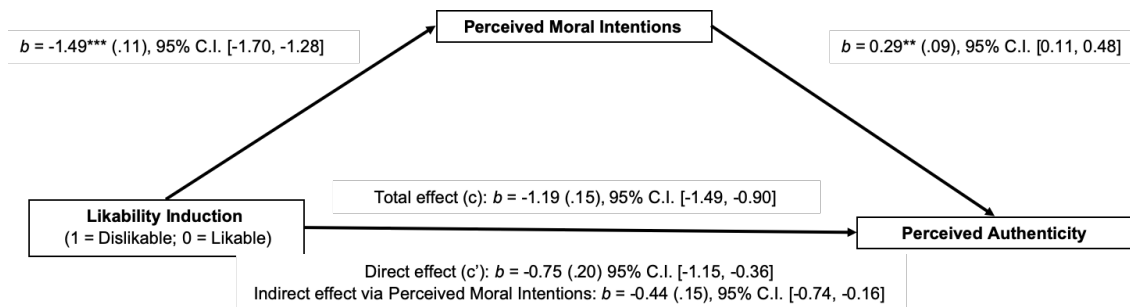


Figure 6. Results of Study 2 Mediation Analyses.

3.3. Study 2 Discussion

Together, these results support hypotheses 2a and 2b, and suggest that not only does likability have a causal effect on perceptions of authenticity, but also that this effect can be at least partially explained by perceived moral intentions. These results are particularly striking given the design of this study relies on perceptions of strangers about whom they received relatively little information and the fact that the lab confederates were putting on an act (i.e., being objectively inauthentic), at least to some extent, in both the likable and dislikable conditions. However, a likable actor was perceived as more authentic than a dislikable actor, and was assumed to be more moral despite a lack of information about their values and behaviors, outside of their present likable or dislikable behavior. One caveat to these results is that there were significant confederate effects throughout the primary analyses. However, these interactive effects

were such that the magnitude of the simple effects of condition varied by confederate, but effects remained significant and in the predicted directions in all but one instance.

It is of course possible that it was more natural, or easier for the confederates to act in the likable condition than the dislikable condition, and this could partially explain why they were found to be more authentic in the likable condition. Indeed, the remaining direct effect of likability induction on authenticity perceptions could possibly be explained by a perceived ease or awkwardness. However, in both conditions they were instructed about the importance of following the script and responding in planned ways. In order to not accidentally manipulate perceived similarity along with authenticity, confederates were instructed not to agree with participants by, for example, revealing that they shared the same favorite show or enjoy traveling to the same place. In both conditions, confederates had to inhibit natural responses to personal information that was shared and respond in ways that were either positive and planned or negative and planned. Additionally, when training for the dislikable condition, confederates were asked to think about times that they naturally feel bored, uninterested, or unfriendly, and to channel that energy into their acting in an attempt to make the acting feel more natural. For example, we practiced thinking about how they feel when they are sitting in an early morning class, after waking up on the wrong side of the bed, annoyed because the bus was late, and someone tries to talk to them who they have no energy or motivation to interact with. In this way, we attempted to make the dislikable condition feel as natural as acting in the likable condition.

4. STUDY 3

Study 2 aimed to test whether likability causally influences perceived authenticity (hypothesis 2a), and whether this effect can be explained by increased perceptions of morality for liked compared to disliked others (hypothesis 2b). This study is designed to test these premises in a relatively strict manner. Specifically, participants interacted with a confederate with whom the participant has no prior knowledge, and who were trained to act in either a likable (or dislikable) manner. We thus examined whether likability can influence perceptions of moral intentions (and subsequently authenticity) even when participants have no explicit information regarding the morality of the confederate within a limited interaction setting.

4.1. Methods

4.1.1. Participants

Participants ($N = 399$; female $n = 238$; male $n = 157$; transgender ($n = 1$); gender non-conforming $n = 1$; other $n = 1$) were recruited from the undergraduate subject pool. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 25 ($M = 18.99$, $SD = 2.65$), with the exception of one participant who indicated their age was 67, and were predominantly White ($n = 304$), followed by Asian ($n = 1$), American Indian or Alaska Native ($n = 9$), Black or African-American ($n = 8$), Indian ($n = 7$), and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ($n = 3$). Nine participants identified as more than one race and twelve identified as other. 122 participants also identified as Hispanic or Latino. One participant stopped taking the

survey before being assigned to an honesty condition, leaving a final sample of $n = 398$ for analyses.

4.1.2. Sample Size Selection

I aimed for a sample of 400, so that $n = 100$ per cell. My plan was to recruit participants one week at a time until I hit the desired sample size. This sample size was chosen because it exceeded the sample size ($n = 378$) determined by an *a priori* power analysis using GPower to detect a small sized effect for an f-test of an ANOVA with four groups, with power set to .80 (Faul et al., 2007). This sample size is also large enough to detect significant indirect effects when the “a” and “b” paths are small-to-medium in size and power is set to .80 (Fritz & MacKinnon, 2007). In attempt to balance power concerns with lab resources, we decided to go with a goal of 100 participants per cell. Due to several absences during the last week of the subject pool, I only reached 399 participants by the end of data collection.

4.1.3. Design and procedure

I used a 2 (liked vs. disliked other) by 2 (honest vs. dishonest) between-subjects design. Participants were told that we were interested in learning more about how people perceive others. They were randomly assigned to one of four conditions, which contained our manipulations of likability and honesty. After completing the manipulations, participants completed measures of moral intentions and authenticity, followed by the manipulation checks of perceptions of honesty and perceptions of liking. Finally, participants completed demographic information and were debriefed at the end of the study.

4.1.4. Liking Manipulation

In the likable condition, participants were asked to imagine a person that they like a lot and interact with somewhat frequently. The participants were asked to write a few sentences about a recent time that demonstrates why they like this person. In the dislikable condition, participants were asked to imagine a person that they dislike a lot and interact with somewhat frequently. The participants were asked to write a few sentences about a recent time that demonstrates why they dislike this person. The “next” button on the survey was disabled for two minutes to ensure they spent at least that much time engaging with the task.

4.1.5. Honesty Manipulation

After completing the writing task containing the manipulation of liking, participants were asked to imagine that they overhear the person they just thought about telling the following story to a mutual friend. This vignette is adapted from Gan, Heller, and Chen (2018). This story contains the manipulation of honesty. The language for those in the honest condition is in italics, and the language for the dishonest condition is in parentheses.

This past weekend, I was at a friend's house for a potluck dinner. At one point, a group of us were talking. When one particularly sensitive issue came up, everyone seemed to take the same stance. People were enthusiastically agreeing with one another and seemed really into the conversation. One person noticed that I wasn't really talking much and so asked me what I thought. The issue was one I had an opinion on, but I held the opposite position as everyone else.

I decided to *go ahead and say my honest opinion to the group about what I thought about the issue (hold back my honest opinion and acted as if I more or less agreed with them).*

After participants finished reading the vignette, they completed the following measures.

4.1.6. Measures

Perceived moral intentions. All participants answered 7 items about their meta-perceptions of why the person in the vignette acted the way they did. Sample items include “They thought it was right, regardless of whether it was necessarily easy,” and “They thought it was best for themselves, even if it didn't feel necessarily morally correct” (reverse-coded). Again, three of the seven items were framed with bipolar endpoints (e.g., “To what extent would you think the person was being an immoral or moral person in the situation you just read about”). These items were averaged into a composite measure of perceived moral intentions. ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.12$, $\alpha = .81$)

Perceived authenticity. Participants rated the person they thought of earlier on two items adapted from Fleeson and Wilt (2010). The instructions said “Imagine you overheard the person you thought of earlier having the conversation you read. Using the scales below, indicate what you would think about this person based on how he or she acted.” Two items asked the participant to rate their agreement with the following statements, “To what extent would you feel this person was being authentic in the situation you just read about,” and “To what extent would you feel like this person was

acting in line with their true self in the situation you read about?” These items were averaged to form a composite measure ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 2.02$, $\alpha = .94$).

Perceived liking. This measure was collected as a manipulation check. Participants indicated how much they liked the person they were asked to think of earlier, using the same five items from Study 2 (Garcia et al., 2017; Pinel & Long, 2012). Sample items include “I enjoy interacting with this person,” “I am satisfied with my interactions with this person.” These items were averaged to form a composite measure ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 2.11$, $\alpha = .97$).

Perceived honesty. This measure was collected as a manipulation check. Participants indicated how honest they thought the person was using three items, asking them to indicate on a Likert scale from 1-7 (not at all to completely) how honest, dishonest (reverse-coded), and truthful they think the person was in the story. These items were averaged to form a composite measure of perceived honesty ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 1.93$, $\alpha = .95$).

4.2. Results

4.2.1. Preliminary Analyses

First, I ran independent samples t-tests to check that our manipulations of likability and honesty were successful. Participants in the likable conditions found their targets more likeable than those in the dislikeable condition ($t(396) = 26.51$, $p < .001$, $d = 2.66$, 95% CI [2.39, 2.93]). Participants in the honest conditions found their targets more honest than those in the dishonest condition ($t(396) = 18.58$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.86$, 95% CI [1.63, 2.10]).

4.2.2. Primary Analyses.

I ran an analysis of variance (ANOVA) with likability and honesty conditions entered as independent variables and perceived authenticity entered as the dependent variable. There were significant main effects of both likability ($F(1, 394) = 38.73, p < .001, \eta^2 = .09, 95\% \text{ CI } [.04, .15]$) and honesty ($F(1, 394) = 354.54, p < .001, \eta^2 = .47, 95\% \text{ CI } [.41, .53]$) in the predicted directions. The interactive effect was not significant, ($F(1, 394) = 1.47, p = .226, \eta^2 = .004, 95\% \text{ CI } [.00, .02]$; see Figure 7).

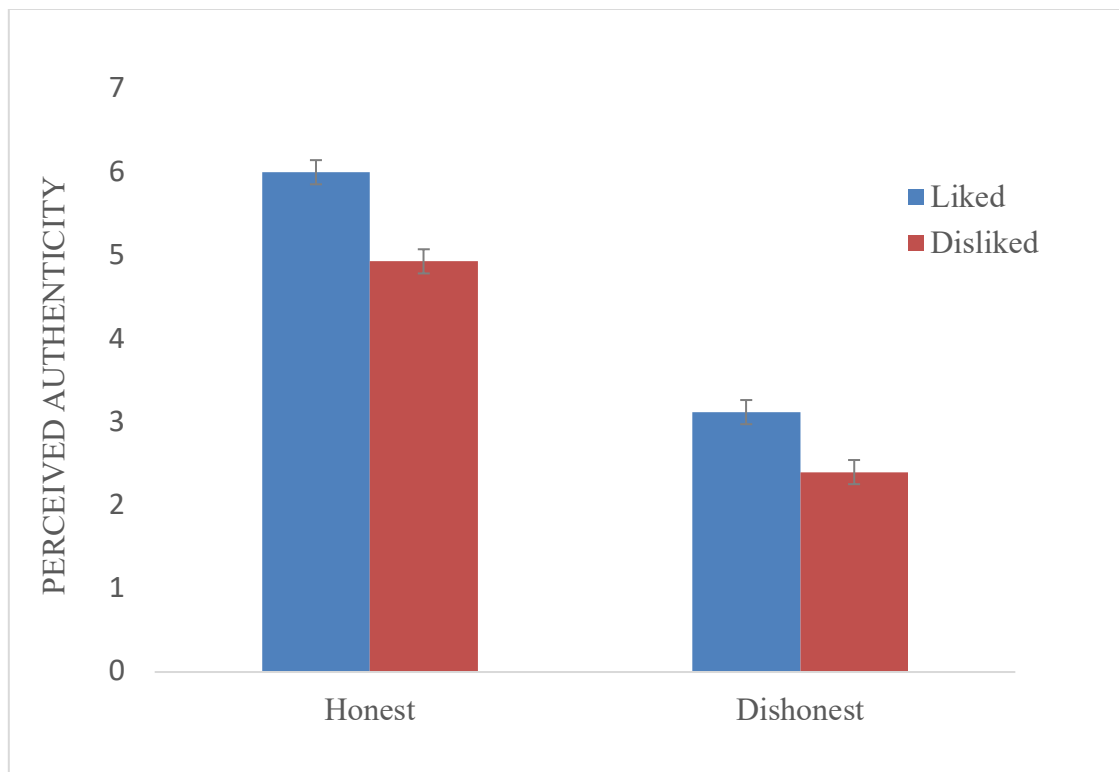


Figure 7. Perceptions of Authenticity as a Function of Honesty and Likability..

Next, I ran an ANOVA with likability and honesty conditions entered as independent variables and perceived moral intentions entered as the dependent variable. There was a main effect of likability ($F(1, 394) = 30.65, p < .001, \eta^2 = .07, 95\% \text{ CI } [.03, .13]$) and of honesty ($F(1, 394) = 328.74, p < .001, \eta^2 = .46, 95\% \text{ CI } [.39, .51]$) in the predicted directions. The interactive effect was significant, ($F(1, 394) = 18.16, p < .001, \eta^2 = .04, 95\% \text{ CI } [.01, .09]$), such that the effect of honesty on moral intentions was stronger in the likable condition ($F(1, 394) = 251.99, p < .001, \eta^2 = .39, 95\% \text{ CI } [.32, .45]$) compared to the dislikable condition ($F(1, 394) = 95.70, p < .001, \eta^2 = .20, 95\% \text{ CI } [.13, .26]$; see Figure 8). This was consistent with our predictions that there would be an interactive effect on perceived moral intentions which would then serve as a mediator for the hypothesized interactive effect of likability and honesty on perceived authenticity.

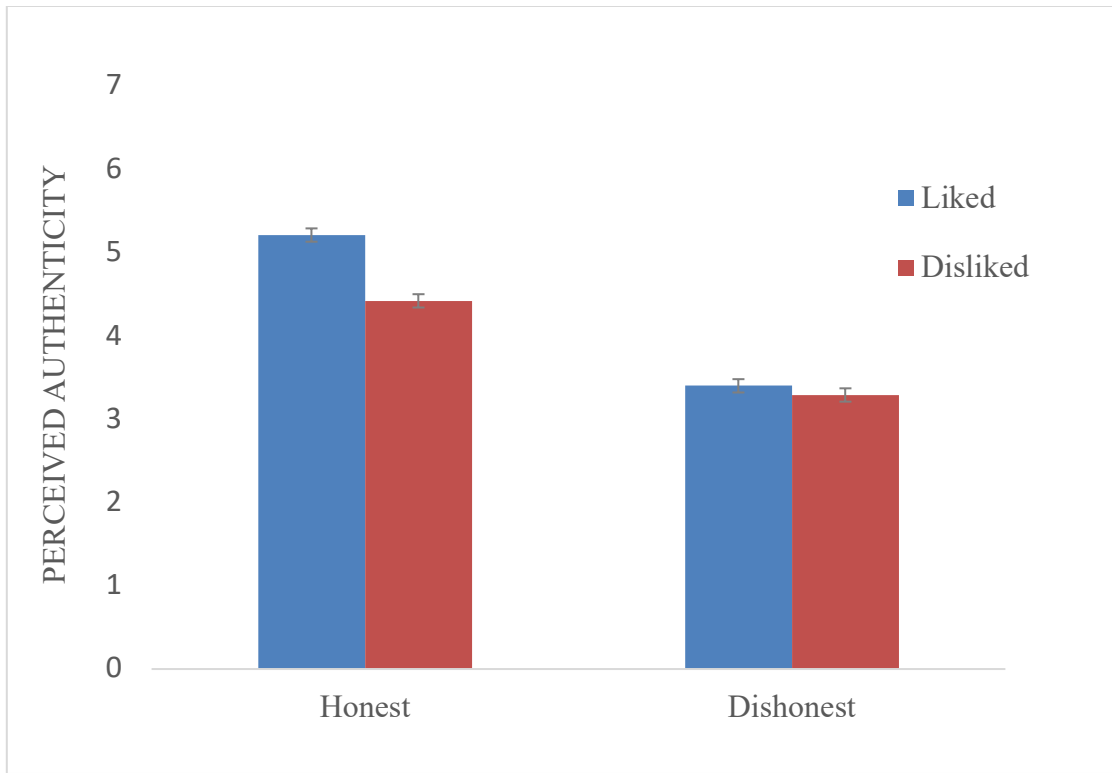


Figure 8. Perceived Moral Intentions as a Function of Honesty and Likability.

Finally, I tested a mediated moderation model with 5000 bootstrap samples using Model 8 of Hayes (2017) process macro, with honesty condition entered as the independent variable, likability as the moderator, morality as the mediator, and perceived authenticity as the outcome variable (see Figure 9). The results of this model suggested that the direct effect of honesty on perceived authenticity did not significantly differ at different levels of likability (i.e., the interactive effect on authenticity was not significant). However, there was a significant indirect effect of honesty on authenticity via perceived moral intentions that did differ at different levels of likability, as evidenced by the index of moderated mediation. This suggested that the indirect effect of

honesty on authenticity via perceived moral intentions was stronger for those in the liked, compared to disliked, condition. This is consistent with what we predicted, which was that honesty amongst those we like would serve as a stronger cue of moral intentions than it would for those we dislike, and that this higher assumption of moral intentions would subsequently predict greater perceptions of authenticity.

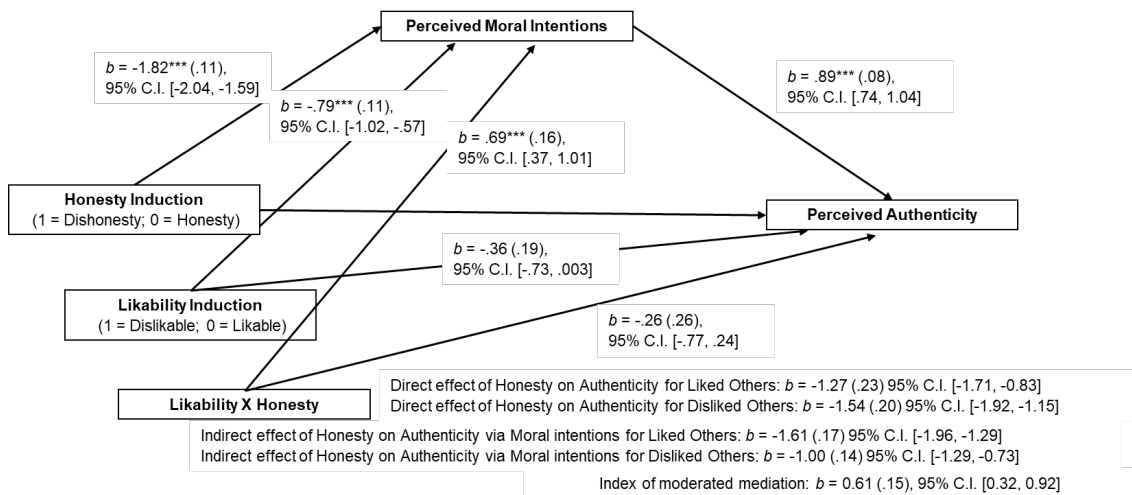


Figure 9. Mediated Moderation Results.

4.2.3. Secondary Analyses

While the manipulation did result in main effects of honesty and likeability, we assessed three exploratory items (see appendix) tapping into the “plausibility” of the manipulation across conditions ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.62$, $\alpha = .83$). There was a significant interaction effect ($F(1, 394) = 13.11$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .03$, 95% CI [.01, .07]), such that

thinking of the liked person in the honest condition ($M = 5.19$, $SD = 1.40$) is much more plausible than thinking of the liked person in the dishonest condition ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.52$; $F(1, 394) = 55.20$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$, 95% CI [.07, .18]) while thinking of the disliked person in the honest condition ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.59$) is only somewhat more plausible than thinking of the disliked person in the dishonest condition ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.52$; $F(1, 394) = 5.22$, $p = .023$, $\eta^2 = .01$, 95% CI [.0001, .04]; see Figure 10).

Therefore, we collapsed across conditions and ran a multiple linear regression with measured likability, honesty, and their interaction term entered as predictors in the model and perceived authenticity entered as the predicted variable. There was a marginally significant main effect of likability ($b = .05$, $SE = .03$, $p = .089$, 95% CI [-.01, .11]) and a significant effect of honesty ($b = .83$, $SE = .03$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.77, .90]) in the predicted directions. The interactive effect did not reach traditional levels of statistical significance ($b = .03$, $SE = .01$, $p = .080$, 95% CI [-.003, .05]), however, the pattern of results suggest that the relationship between honesty and authenticity was somewhat stronger for more likable targets (+1SD; $b = .88$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.80, .96]) compared to less likable targets (-1SD; $b = .78$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.69, .87]), consistent with predictions.

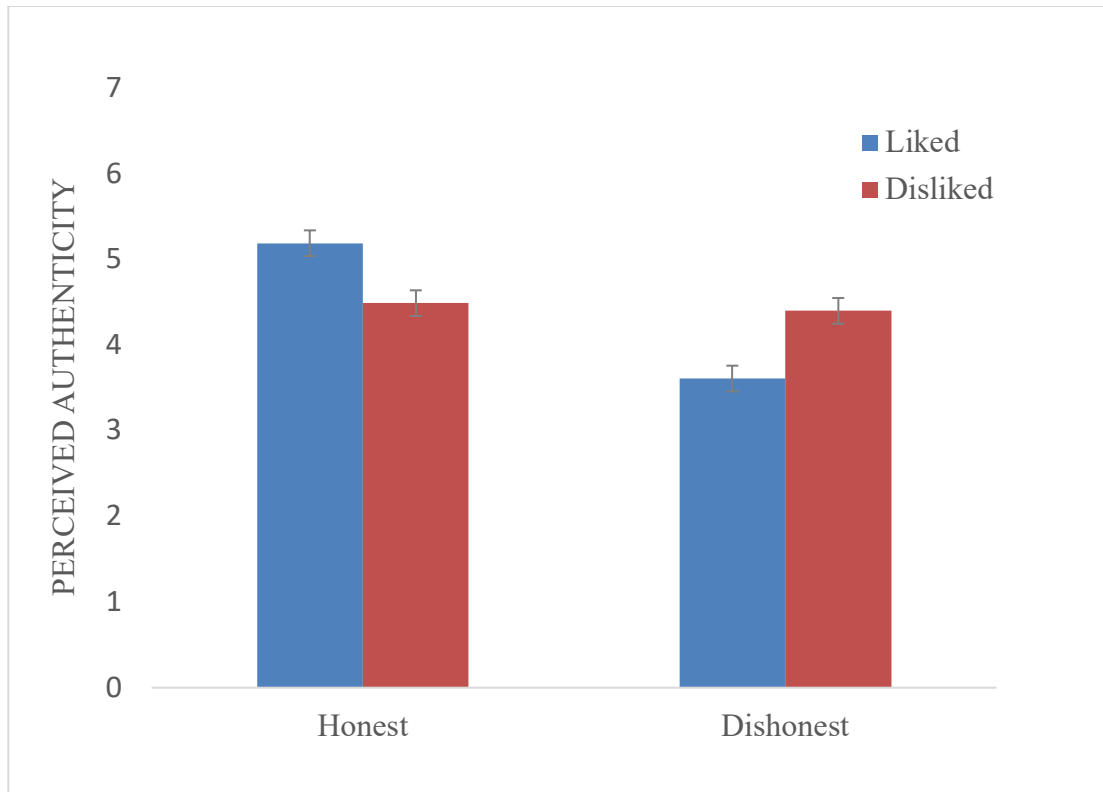


Figure 10. Plausibility as a Function of Honesty and Likability.

Finally, I tested the mediated moderation model, with measured likability would be entered as the predictor variable, measured honesty as the moderator, morality as the mediator, and authenticity as the outcome variable (see Figure 11). This served as an alternative test of the hypotheses which tests the relationships between the measured variables of interest collapsed across the manipulations. The results of this analysis somewhat mirrored the results of analyses with the manipulated variables, although measured likability no longer significantly predicted moral intentions or authenticity. There was not a significant direct interactive effect of likability and honesty on

perceived authenticity, however there was again evidence for a significant indirect effect of honesty on authenticity via morality that was stronger at higher levels of likability. This provides additional evidence for our hypothesized indirect effect of honesty on authenticity via morality that was stronger for more well-liked individuals, however, these measurements are likely contaminated by the presence of the manipulation and should be interpreted with caution.

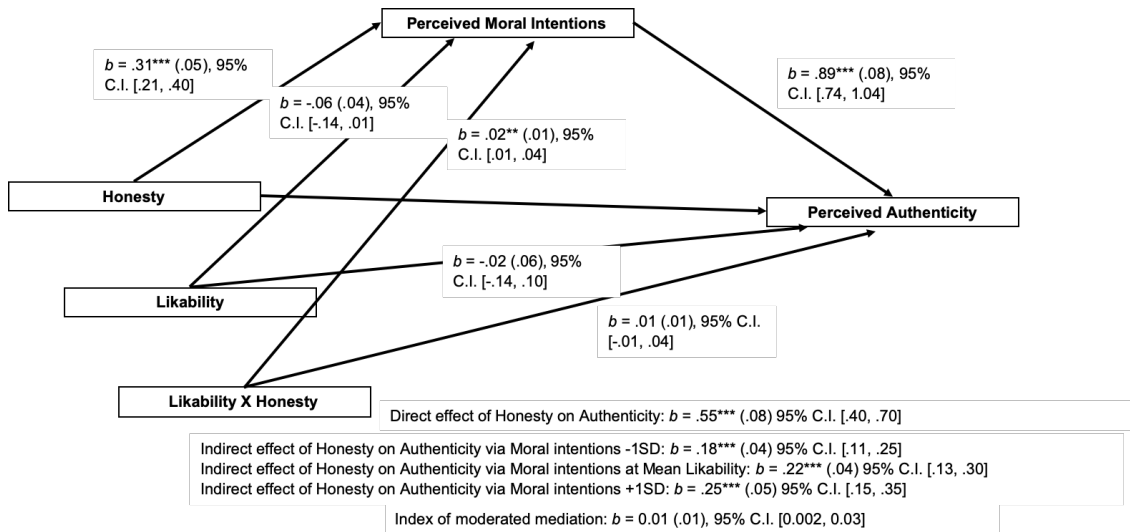


Figure 11. Study 3 Mediated Moderation Results using Measured Predictors.

4.3. Study 3 Discussion

The results of Study 3 converge with Studies 1 and 2 to suggest that perceptions of honesty and likability have causal effects on perceptions of authenticity. Results only marginally support the presence of an interaction between honesty and likability on

authenticity when using the measured variables of likability and honesty as predictors, collapsed across conditions. It is possible that our lack of a significant interactive effect is due to problems with the plausibility of the manipulation. Participants thought a dislikable person acting honestly or dishonestly was equally plausible, however, they thought a likable person acting dishonestly was much less plausible than a likable person acting honestly. In future research, it will be important to develop study stimuli that is equally plausible across conditions for a stronger test of hypothesis 3a.

Despite this lack of an interactive effect on authenticity, when I tested the mediated moderation model, there was a significant indirect interactive effect of likability and honesty on authenticity via perceived morality. This analysis seems suitable in this context, given suggestions that is appropriate to test for indirect effects in the absence of a direct effect when there is a strong theoretical prediction for why the pathway might exist (Hayes, 2009; Rucker et al., 2011). However, it is important to clarify that these findings are not evidence for a causal interactive effect of honesty and likability on perceived authenticity. Instead, they suggest a pathway by which honesty and likability interact to affect perceived morality, which in turn is associated with perceived authenticity. For those we like, honesty may have a greater effect on perceived morality because we are motivated to see that individual as good and to assume they engaged in honest behavior for moral reasons. In comparison, for disliked individuals, we may be less motivated to apply good intentions behind their honest behavior, thus honesty has a weaker effect on perceived morality. These differences in perceived morality in turn seem to predict our perceptions of authenticity.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the current research, three studies were proposed to test three sets of hypotheses regarding the interplay between perceived honesty, perceived morality, and perceived liking, and the effects of these factors on perceptions of authenticity. Across studies, results suggested that honesty and likability both exert causal influences on perceptions of authenticity, in line with my predictions. There was at best limited evidence that these factors may interact to predict authenticity, such that honesty has a greater influence on authenticity for people we like compared to people we dislike, given this interactive effect was only marginally significant in our analyses of measured liking and honesty in Study 3 and was not significant in our analyses using the manipulated variables. However, this research does seem to suggest that meta-assumptions about the morality of a target's intentions can be used to explain the main effect of likability on authenticity, and that despite a lack of a direct interactive effect of honesty and likability on perceived authenticity, there was a significant indirect effect of the combined factors on perceived authenticity via perceptions of morality. These results lend support to a growing body of evidence suggesting the importance of morality for judgements of authenticity (Newman et al., 2014; Heiphetz et al., 2017; Strohminger et al., 2017), and make sense when considering how people engage in motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990), and might be particularly motivated to see those they like as moral, which in turn, predicts perceptions of authenticity.

Honesty seems to play an integral role in lay conceptions of authenticity, and the current empirical evidence supports this claim by revealing causal effects of honesty on perceptions of authenticity in Studies 1 and 3. The evidence was mixed when regarding my hypothesis that honesty can be untangled from perceptions of authenticity when moral considerations are brought to the forefront. In Study 1, planned analyses which examined authenticity ratings (collapsed across four vignettes) of honest and dishonest targets with moral or immoral intentions suggested that honesty and morality did not interact to predict authenticity judgements, but instead exerted their own main effects. However, exploratory analyses examining the four vignettes individually revealed significant interactive effects in three of the four scenarios, though the patterns of these interactions varied. Caution is warranted in interpreting the effects of these exploratory analyses; however, these results suggest it is possible that assumptions of moral intentions may impact the effect of honesty on perceptions of authenticity in some cases.

For example, in the vignettes involving personality characteristics and political opinions, the pattern of these interactions suggested that having low moral intentions dampened the boost that honesty generally gives to perceived authenticity, while in the vignette about music preferences, the pattern of the interaction suggested that having higher moral intentions weakened the consequences of dishonesty for perceived authenticity. Though these patterns differed, both suggest that considering the intentions behind honest and dishonest behavior can interfere with a seemingly straightforward relationship between honesty and authenticity. However, it appears that contextual factors (e.g., the severity of the perceived consequences of the conflict between honesty

and other moral values such as benevolence or loyalty) may play a role in when those moral intentions matter. Much like altruistic lies can be perceived as more moral than selfish truths, it is possible that honesty alone does not have as strong of an influence on perceived authenticity as honesty for the “right” reasons, but perhaps only in relatively higher stakes conflicts between honesty and other moral values. Future research is needed to more fully understand when and if honesty is ever less predictive of authenticity ratings as a function of moral intentions.

Furthermore, in line with predictions, results from studies 2 and 3 revealed that how much we like someone can indeed play a causal role in whether we see them as authentic, and that this effect is explained in part by assumptions that people we like have greater moral intentions compared to people we dislike. Though it may seem more intuitive to predict that the correlational relationship between likability and authenticity found in previous research (Robinson et al., 1995; Grandey et al., 2002; Liu & Perrewe, 2006; Rivera et al., 2020) is a function of authentic people being deemed more likable, this research provides evidence that liking exerts a causal influence on perceived authenticity, in line with a motivated reasoning perspective (Kunda, 1990). Of course, it is possible (even likely) that this relationship is bidirectional, and in natural settings judgments of liking and authenticity may happen dynamically, each judgment both informing and being informed by the other. A limitation of my work is that when working with such highly correlated variables, it is difficult to truly know which perception would happen first in natural settings. The current studies were not positioned to test both directions, but future research could manipulate an actor’s authenticity test

the opposite causal direction. Additionally, future research interested in understanding the possible dynamic nature of these judgements could utilize longitudinal and daily diary methods to examine relationships between perceived authenticity and likability.

Finally, though results did not reveal strong evidence for the presence of an interactive causal effect of likability and honesty on authenticity, it is possible that future research with more plausible vignettes would reveal stronger evidence in favor of the proposed interactive effect. In particular, it seemed it was difficult for our participants to believe the version of our vignette where someone they liked acted dishonestly, compared to when someone they liked acted honestly. It may be more effective to ask participants to generate their own examples of times when someone they liked or disliked acted honestly or dishonestly, and then measure assumptions of morality and perceptions of authenticity. Even without a direct interactive effect, results of our mediated moderation suggest an indirect effect via assumed moral intentions, in line with predictions. This suggests that honesty and likability differentially impacted perceptions of morality, which in turn positively predicted perceived authenticity. Specifically, honesty had a stronger impact on assumptions of moral intentions of liked compared to disliked others. This suggests that when people we do not like are honest, this is not necessarily seen as indicative of deeper moral intentions but perhaps instead is dismissed as an instance of an immoral actor happening to act in a moral way (e.g., Reeder et al., 1992). However, when someone we like acts honestly, this seems to more strongly influence our assumptions that they indeed have greater moral intentions, which in turn predicts greater perceptions of authenticity.

There are several limitations to this work. One limitation across studies concerns the generalizability of results given our use of convenience samples predominantly consisting of White, American college freshman. It is possible that these effects may differ in samples with greater variability in age, race and ethnicity, or cross-culturally. As one example, research suggests that while changes in moral character similarly predict perceptions of a target's identity change (i.e., becoming more/less like one's true self) in American and Indian samples, American samples perceive greater identity change when the target's internal characteristics shift, while Indian samples perceive greater change when the target's social relationships shift (Kung, Eibach, & Grossman, 2016). In a similar vein, it is possible that the effects of honesty and likability on authenticity vary when comparing people from cultural contexts with more or less rigid social systems. In rigid social systems, likability may have a stronger effect than honesty because that likability might be more strongly tied to a shared cultural value of social harmony, while honesty may have a stronger effect in more flexible contexts given cultural narratives about uniqueness (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and going against the crowd to do what is "right." This hypothesis supposes that the variable which more closely aligns with a shared cultural value will have a stronger effect on perceptions of authenticity. Future research could test this hypothesis using a dynamic constructivist approach (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Martinez, 2000), and recruit samples of bicultural individuals with access to different cultural meaning-making systems, then highlight one of these cultural contexts before testing for causal effects of likability and honesty on authenticity.

Another limitation has to do with our choice of targets in Studies 1 and 3. While I attempted to vary the targets of these studies, with Study 1 asking participants to rate fictitious strangers, Study 2 asking participants to rate real strangers, and Study 3 asking participants to rate real people that they interact with frequently, it is possible that participants were largely thinking about people similar to themselves in some key ways (e.g., age, level of education). For example, they may have been thinking of college students in the vignettes in Study 1, they indeed interacted with fellow college students in Study 2, and they thought about people they interacted with frequently (which by proximity may be largely college students) in Study 3. It is possible that perceptions of authenticity, and the factors that predict such perceptions, may vary when considering people we see as belonging to different groups than us, or occupying different social roles. For example, perceptions of the authenticity of typical college students may differ from our perceptions of the authenticity of celebrities, or lawmakers. As another example, when considering one's own authenticity, research suggests that our perceptions of authenticity are viewed in the context of life stories, with people generally believing they are more authentic now than they were in the past, and that they become increasingly authentic as they grow older (Seto & Schlegel, 2018). It is possible that this perceived arc towards increasing authenticity is mirrored when we consider others (i.e., we might tend to think older adults are more authentic than younger adults), such that target age plays a role in addition to perceptions of likability or honesty.

Finally, one might consider how power dynamics between perceivers and targets could play a role in the relative weight that information about likability and honesty play

in judgements of authenticity. For example, for someone in a low power position, perceptions of dishonesty might play a stronger role (regardless of likability) in perceptions of authenticity of a more powerful person because dishonesty among someone with more power could be particularly threatening. Furthermore, research suggests that powerful people are viewed as having more control over their actions, and are seen to have more dispositional compared to situational influences on their behavior (Overbeck, Tiedens, & Brion, 2006). Given these findings, it is possible that assumptions of moral intentions may be more predictive of authenticity when judging powerful people than whether the behavior was honest or dishonest. As such, future research considering a broader array of targets, and the possible interplay between perceiver and targets, is necessary to better understand judgements of authenticity and the role that perceptions of likability and honesty play in such judgments.

These findings could be potentially important when we consider the benefits that come from being perceived as authentic by others. Seeing another person as authentic can be beneficial for our interpersonal relationships (Wickham, 2013; Wong & Laschinger, 2013; Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008), and suggests to a perceiver that another is living their life in accordance to a culturally valued mantra to “be true to yourself.” While lay conceptions might suggest that in order to harness this perception one should be honest, this work suggests that other considerations, such as how well-liked we are, may also shape whether that honesty is perceived as authentic, and that it may be important to consider the assumptions people make about our deeper moral intentions.

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APPENDIX A

1. Study 1 Materials

A. Vignettes

1. Two friends, John and Alex, were having a conversation. “Alex,” John asked, “do you think I am irresponsible?” Alex thought that John was pretty irresponsible, and thought about what to say.
 - **Honest High Moral Intentions:** “Yes, I think you are.” Alex said. John’s irresponsible behavior has had negative consequences for John in the past, so Alex decided to be honest in the hopes that it would help him change his behavior and avoid future bad outcomes.
 - **Honest Low Moral Intentions:** “Yes, I think you are.” Alex said. John’s irresponsible behavior had annoyed Alex in the past. Alex decided to be honest in the hopes that John’s behavior would be less annoying in the future. He didn’t think about whether being honest was best for John.
 - **Dishonest High Moral Intentions:** “No, I don’t think you are.” Alex said. Alex decided to lie because he thought that telling John he was irresponsible in this way would be hurtful and not very kind to John.
 - **Dishonest Low Moral Intentions:** “No, I don’t think you are.” Alex said. Alex decided to lie because he thought that telling John the truth because he wasn’t in the mood for having such a conversation. He didn’t think about whether being dishonest was best for John.
2. Two friends, Sara and Cameron, were having a conversation. “Cameron,” Sara asked, “do you like my new outfit?” Cameron thought that the outfit was a little unflattering and weird, and thought about what to say.
 - **Honest High Moral Intentions:** “No, I don’t like it.” Cameron decided to tell the truth because she thought that Sara would be

embarrassed if she found out it was unflattering from someone other than her.

- **Honest Low Moral Intentions:** “No, I don’t like it.” Cameron didn’t think about how Sara would feel, she just didn’t want to be seen with her in that outfit.
 - **Dishonest High Moral Intentions:** Cameron decided to lie because she thought that telling Sara her outfit was unflattering in this way would not do any good and make her feel embarrassed, given she wouldn’t have the opportunity to go home and change.
 - **Dishonest Low Moral Intentions:** “Yes, I like it.” Cameron decided to lie because she didn’t feel like dealing with Sara’s feelings. She didn’t think about whether being dishonest was best for Sara.
3. Two friends, Mark and Ben, were going to another friend’s party that night and Mark had volunteered to make the music playlist for the night. “Ben,” Mark asked, “do you think the music I listen to is stupid?” Ben thought that the genre of music was pretty stupid, and thought about what to say.
- **Honest High Moral Intentions:** “Yes, I think it is.” Ben decided to be honest with Mark because he didn’t want Mark to be made fun of for his music choices by people at the party later.
 - **Honest Low Moral Intentions:** “Yes, I think it is.” Mark’s music was annoying to listen to, and Ben decided to be honest in the hopes that he wouldn’t have to listen to such bad music at the party later.
 - **Dishonest High Moral Intentions:** “No, I don’t think it is stupid.” Ben decided to lie. Ben figured that just because he disliked like it didn’t mean that others at the party wouldn’t like it, and it’d be mean to say the truth to Mark now.
 - **Dishonest Low Moral Intentions:** “No, I don’t think it is stupid.” Ben decided to lie. He figured enough people would make fun of his music at the party later that he’d never have to listen to it again anyway.

4. Two friends, Lucy and Jane, were discussing a political issue. “So, Jane,” Lucy asked, “Do you agree with me?” Jane did not really agree with Lucy, but she knew the issue was far more important to Lucy than to her. She thought about what to say.
- **Honest High Moral Intentions:** “No, I don’t.” Jane decided to be honest with Lucy. Jane thought it would be kinder for her to hear an opposing viewpoint from a friend, rather than from someone she was less comfortable with.
 - **Honest Low Moral Intentions:** “No, I don’t.” Jane decided to be honest with Lucy. Jane didn’t care if what she said would upset Lucy, she just loves a good political battle and winning arguments.
 - **Dishonest High Moral Intentions:** “Yes, I do.” Jane lied because she didn’t want to upset Lucy when she knew Lucy really cared about the issue.
 - **Dishonest Low Moral Intentions:** “Yes, I do.” Jane lied because she wasn’t in the mood to argue with her. Jane knew her position was right and didn’t think Lucy’s arguments would hold up in a real debate. She figured eventually Lucy would say it to someone with an opposing view who would tear down her points anyway.

B. Perceived Authenticity Scale

Using the scales below, indicate the extent to which you disagree/agree with the following statements about Alex.

1. To what extent do you feel Alex was being authentic in this interaction?
(Completely inauthentic → Completely authentic)
2. To what extent do you feel like Alex was being his true self in this interaction? (Completely being a fake self → Completely being his true self)

Using the scales below, indicate your impressions of Alex.

3. How accurate of an impression do you feel you have about Alex based on this interaction? (Completely inaccurate → Completely accurate)

APPENDIX B

1. Study 2 Materials

A. Interview Questions.

1. Where are you from originally? If from Texas how do you like going to school in your home town? If from somewhere else how does Texas compare with your home town?
2. Do you have a pet? (if yes what is it and its name, if no what type of pet would you like)
3. If you could learn any skill, what would it be?
4. Tell me three interesting facts about yourself.
5. What's your favorite TV show or movie?
6. If you could wish one thing to come true this year, what would it be?
7. What's your favorite thing to do in the summer?
8. If you could talk to anyone in the world, who would it be? What would you talk about?
9. Would you rather be invisible or be able to read minds?
10. If you could go anywhere in the world where would you go? What would you do?
11. Would you rather be stranded on a deserted island alone or with someone you don't like?
12. Name a gift you will never forget.
13. If you could do your dream job 10 years from now, what would it be?
14. If you HAD to give up one of your senses (hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling and tasting) which would it be and why?
15. If you were sent to live on a space station for three months and only allowed to bring three personal items with you, what would they be?

B. Moral Intentions. Please think about the other participant and rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following questions. We realize that you may not have any information about some of these based on your interaction, so just make

your best guess based on what you did learn about your interview partner. (Strongly disagree → Strongly Agree). I think the other participant is the type of person who....

1. Will do what they think is right in any situation, regardless of whether it's necessarily easy.
2. Will take the easy road in a situation, even if it's not necessarily the right thing to do.
3. Will do what they feel is morally correct, regardless of whether it is necessarily what's best for themselves.
4. Will do what is best for themselves, even if it doesn't feel necessarily morally correct.
5. Will do what they feel is generally the right thing to do in any situation, regardless of whether it is right for them personally.
6. Will do what they feel is right for them personally in any situation, regardless of whether it is generally the right thing to do.
7. To what extent did the other participant seemed like an immoral or moral person (Extremely immoral person → Extremely moral person)
8. To what extent did the other participant seem like a bad or good person? (Extremely bad person → Extremely good person)
9. The other participant seemed like someone who does what's right. (Strongly disagree → Strongly Agree)

C. Perceived Authenticity. Please think about the other participant and answer the following questions. We realize that you may not have any information about some of these based on your interaction, so just make your best guess based on what you did learn about your interview partner.

1. To what extent do you feel like this person seemed authentic during the interaction? (Extremely inauthentic → Extremely authentic)

2. To what extent do you feel like this person was really being their self during the interaction? (Completely being a fake self → Completely being their real self)

Using the scales below, indicate your impressions of the other participant.

3. How accurate of an impression do you have of this person based on how they were acting? (Extremely inaccurate → Extremely accurate)

D. Perceived Liking. Using the scales below, indicate the extent to which you disagree/agree with the following statements. (Strongly disagree → Strongly Agree).

1. I enjoyed working with this participant.
2. I was satisfied with our interaction.
3. I like this participant.
4. This participant was comfortable to work with.
5. I could imagine becoming friends with this participant.

APPENDIX C

1. Study 3 Materials

A. Moral Intentions. If you overheard the person you thought about earlier telling the above story, why do you think that person did what they did at the acquaintance's house? Rate the extent to which you agree with the following reasons using the scale below.

1. They felt it was right, regardless of whether it was necessarily easy. (Strongly disagree → Strongly Agree)
2. They felt it was easier that way, regardless of whether it was necessarily the right thing to do. (Strongly disagree → Strongly Agree)
3. They did what they did because it felt morally correct, regardless of whether it was necessarily what was best for themselves (Strongly disagree → Strongly Agree)
4. They did what they did because it was the best for themselves, even if it didn't feel necessarily morally correct. (Strongly disagree → Strongly Agree)
5. To what extent would you think the person was being an immoral or moral person in the situation you just read about? (Extremely immoral person → Extremely moral person)
6. To what extent would you think the person was being a bad or good person in the situation you just read about? (Extremely bad person → Extremely good person)
7. I would think the person did what was right given the situation. (Strongly disagree → Strongly Agree)

B. Perceived Authenticity. Imagine you overheard the person you thought of earlier having the conversation you just read. Using the scales below, indicate what you would think about this person based on how he or she acted.

1. To what extent would you feel this person was being authentic in the situation you just read about? (Extremely inauthentic → Extremely authentic)

2. To what extent would you feel like this person was acting in line with their true self in the situation you read about? (Completely being a fake self → Completely being their true self)

C. Perceived Liking. When answering the following items, please think about the person you thought of at the beginning of the study. Using the scales below, indicate the extent to which you disagree/agree with the following statements.

1. I enjoy interacting with this person.
2. I am satisfied with my interactions with this person.
3. I like this person.
4. This person is comfortable to work with.
5. I am friends with this person.

D. Perceived Honesty. Imagine you overheard the person you thought of earlier having the conversation you just read. Using the scales below, indicate what you would think about this person based on how he or she acted.

1. He/she was honest in that situation.
2. He/she was dishonest in that situation.
3. He/she was truthful in that situation.

E. Plausibility. At the beginning of the study, we asked you to read a story and imagine the person you thought about telling that story. We just want to ask a few questions about how realistic the scenario was for the person you thought about. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. I could easily imagine this person in a situation like the one described earlier.
2. It is unlikely the person I thought about earlier would ever act the way they did in that story.
3. It is unrealistic that the person I thought about would be in a situation like the one described earlier.