Supplemental Information

1. Short prompt before experiments.

There are times, both now and in the past, both in the United States and abroad, where violent practices have been performed. And in our own lives, there are times when we feel the urge to physically harm someone, even if we choose not to or if it is not allowed by current law. On the page that follows, you will be presented with a series of questions. For each question, we would like you to think about the situation described, whether or not and to what extent you would support violence, and the mental states of the people who would be harmed in each case. The questions are not either/or, likely you will not completely favor non-violence or completely favor violence in any question. Rather, in each question we are asking you to consider the extent to which you would endorse violence. Please think carefully and answer the questions as best as you can.

2. Humanity items. In experiments 4 and 5, participants responded in regard to the man’s current state in the vignette they had read. In Experiments 1 and 2, participants answered about ‘goals and intentions’ and ‘pain and suffering’ in lieu of the first two items. Prior research identified these items as reliable measures of agency and experience (1).

   To what extent do you think ________ is capable of engaging in thought processes such as planning, reasoning, and remembering?

   To what extent do you think ________ is capable of experiencing sensations such as hunger, fear, pain, and pleasure?

   To what extent do you think ________ is capable of love and compassion?

   To what extent do you think ________ is capable of anger and hatred?
3. Items from Experiment 1

“Moral violence” items:
To what extent do you approve of executing murders?
To what extent do you approve of killing enemy soldiers in a time of war?

“Instrumental violence” items:
To what extent do you approve of purchasing products that are made in so-called 'sweatshops' overseas?
To what extent do you approve of conducting experiments on animals?

4. Items from Experiment 2

“Moral violence” item:
To what extent do you approve of drone strikes that result in the deaths of ISIS terrorists?

“Instrumental violence” item:
To what extent do you approve of drone strikes that result in collateral damage to innocent Iraqi civilians?

5. Vignettes from Experiment 3

Participants in the “humanized/moral motive” condition read:

John is a 29 year old man with brown hair and brown eyes. People who know him would describe him as ambitious and imaginative, but also high-strung and insecure. Imagine for a moment that you are in a position to physically break John's thumb. John is blindfolded and tied to a chair, and you have been assured that you will not get in any trouble. The reason you are considering it is because
you have learned that John recruits poor women between the ages of 15 and 17 and sells them into prostitution.

Participants in the “dehumanized/moral motive” condition read:

Imagine for a moment that you are in a position to physically break a man's thumb. The man is blindfolded and tied to a chair, and you have been assured that you will not get in any trouble. The reason you are considering it is because you have learned that the man recruits poor women between the ages of 15 and 17 and sells them into prostitution.

Participants in the “humanized/instrumental motive” condition read:

John is a 29 year old man with brown hair and brown eyes. People who know him would describe him as ambitious and imaginative, but also high-strung and insecure. Imagine for a moment that you are in a position to physically break John's thumb. John is blindfolded and tied to a chair, and you have been assured that you will not get in any trouble. The reason you are considering it is because you have been offered $2 million dollars to do it.

Participants in the “dehumanized/instrumental motive” condition read:

Imagine for a moment that you are in a position to physically break a man's thumb. The man is blindfolded and tied to a chair, and you have been assured that you will not get in any trouble. The reason you are considering it is because you have been offered $2 million dollars to do it.

6. Vignettes from Experiments 4 and 5. Descriptions in Experiment 5 are identical except for the inclusion of the additional clause “while they are sleeping” when referring to the imagined stranger.
Participants in the “instrumental/control” condition read:
We'd like you to imagine a typical person you might encounter in everyday life.

Participants in the “instrumental/imaged harm” condition read:
We'd like you to imagine a typical person you might encounter in everyday life.
Now imagine that you pricked their index finger with a pin in exchange for $10.

Participants in the “moral/control” condition read:
We'd like you to imagine a typical person you might encounter in everyday life.
Now imagine that the person is evil and enjoys making other people suffer.

Participants in the “moral/imaged harm” condition read:
We'd like you to imagine a typical person you might encounter in everyday life.
Now imagine that you pricked their index finger with a pin because the person is evil and enjoys making other people suffer.

References