Title: Mechanisms of Moral Derogation Towards Social Movement Supporters

Abstract: Social movements aim to mobilise support from the society to achieve their goals, but in reality, they often face opponents who object to their propositions. This research focuses on a particular group of opponents—those who profess to accept a movement goal, such as protection of animal rights raised by vegan movement, but disagree with its claim, such as adopting a vegan lifestyle. The purpose of the research is to identify ways in which these opponents morally derogate supporters of a movement claim, either as a result of their opposition to the claim, or in order to further buttress their stance against the claim.

Based on personal observation of dialogues surrounding social movements and related theories such as the theory of do-gooder derogation (Monin, 2007), I developed a number of derogation mechanisms that could be employed to disparage social movement supporters. Study 1 conducted a thematic analysis of participants' responses to supporters of movements (i.e., feminist and vegan movements, identified by a pilot study), and the results were incorporated into the revision of the list of derogation mechanisms. Study 2 examined the factor structure of the revised derogation mechanisms, and investigated the relationship between participants' endorsements of the revised moral mechanisms and their agreements with the movement goals and claims.

This research revealed an overall negative association between endorsements of the mechanisms and support for movement claims, and also showed that different orientation of a movement claim (liberty vs. justice) tended to elicit different types of derogation mechanisms (character-focused vs. consequence-focused). Its implications for both social movement studies and research on do-gooder derogation were discussed.

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Mechanisms of Moral Derogation Towards Social Movement Supporters

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Abstract

Social movements aim to mobilise support from the society to achieve their goals, but in reality, they often face opponents who object to their propositions. This research focuses on a particular group of opponents—those who profess to accept a movement goal, such as protection of animal rights raised by vegan movement, but disagree with its claim, such as adopting a vegan lifestyle. The purpose of the research is to identify ways in which these opponents morally derogate supporters of a movement claim, either as a result of their opposition to the claim, or in order to further buttress their stance against the claim.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements **2**

Abstract **3**

Table of Contents **4**

List of Tables **5**

Moral Derogation Mechanisms Towards Social Movement Supporters **5**

Morally Motivated Individuals in Social Movements *7*

Moral Derogation Towards Morally Motivated Individuals *8*

Derogation Mechanisms, Movement Goals and Claims *17*

Main Exploratory Aims and Hypotheses of the Proposed Studies **18**

Overview of the Proposed Studies **19**

Pilot Study **19**

Method *19*

Results *21*

Discussion *22*

Study 1 ..... **25**

Method *25*

Results *26*

Discussion *40*

Study 2 ..... **46**

Methods *51*

Results *52*

Discussion *73*

General Discussion **78**

On the Most and Least Informative Mechanisms *79*

Whether Results of Studies 1 and 2 Converge *81*

Why Results of Hypotheses Testing Differ by Claim Orientation *81*

Limitations **83**

Implications for Future Research **84**

Conclusion **86**

References **87**

Appendix **95**

Moral Derogation Mechanisms Towards Social Movement Supporters

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche (1883-1885/1961) wrote the following:

> Zarathustra has seen many lands and many peoples: thus he has discovered the good and evil of many peoples. Zarathustra has found no greater power on earth than good and evil. (p. 97)
>
> Truly, the power of this praising and blaming is a monster. Tell me, who will subdue it for me, brothers? Tell me, who will fasten fetters upon the thousand necks of this beast? (p. 100)

Few people would disagree that the domain of social movements is one full of arguments about "good and evil", and replete with examples of the power of "praising and blaming" manifesting itself. This likely has to do with the fact that social movements aim to make social changes, and achieving these changes often requires successfully implementing movement *claims* that challenge people's values, beliefs, or life styles. For example, activists of vegan movement may raise a claim asking people to adopt a vegan diet, which requires significant changes of people's diet habits and their food preparation practices. To establish the legitimacy of these claims and persuade people to follow them, movement advocates may stress the *goal* of the movement, which is usually an objective with moral significance that represents what the claims strive to fulfil. Continuing the example of vegan movement, the activists may stress the importance of animal rights and environmental protection, and how one's concerns for these values reflects the person's moral character. In other words, during the process of presenting movement goals and claims, relevant issues are likely to be strongly moralised, whether these issues are fundamentally moral in nature. As a consequence, both movement supporters and opponents may label those within their group as "good" and those outside their group as "evil"; they may also go to great lengths to "praise" those on board

with their view, and "blame" or derogate those against their view for hindering social progress or causing social unrest.

Not tackling all kinds of moral discourses that may occur in the context of a social movement, this study focuses on investigating mechanisms used by certain movement opponents who in general appreciate the goal of a movement but disagree with its claim. Since they recognise the moral significance attached to the goal and do not (or find it difficult to) oppose the goal, they have to make the claim non-moral to justify their disagreement with it. One way to strip a movement claim of its "moral halo" is to derogate those supporting the claim, especially when supporters of a social movement are often perceived as morally motivated individuals by the general public. This is because, as long been studied in research on persuasion and attitude changes, that endorsers of a message serve as cues for people to form their attitudes towards the message (Petty et al., 1983; Philip et al., 2014), and therefore a claim is likely to be evaluated as less moral if it is primarily advocated by people lacking moral virtues than by people whose moral character is recognised and acclaimed.

While the purpose of this research is to exploratively identify the moral derogation mechanisms, and quantitatively test the association between endorsements of the mechanisms and attitudes towards movement claims, it first attempts to conceptually elucidate why movement supporters are often perceived as morally motivated individuals and therefore stimulate those opposing the claim of the movement to undermine their morality. Research on do-gooder derogation (Monin et al., 2008) is drawn upon during discussion about the conceptual reasons for moral derogation.

I then present a list of moral derogation mechanisms and explain how each mechanism serves to deny virtues of movement supporters. After which I discuss the relationships between derogation mechanisms and movement goals and claims, and develop hypotheses for the current research.

Morally Motivated Individuals in Social Movements

Movement supporters are often seen as driven by moral concerns and can therefore prompt moral resentment from those disagreeing with what they support. Their "moral vibe" are related to two lines of research on moral psychology—moral conviction and moralisation.

Moral Conviction Predicts Movement Participation

Moral conviction is defined as "a strong and absolute belief that something is right or wrong, moral or immoral" (Skitka et al., 2005). Two of its features are that the strong moral belief is perceived as a fact that should be held by everyone, and its violation motivates people to act to restore what has been damaged (Skitka et al., 2005; Skitka, 2010). These features explained why moral conviction has been found to be a significant predictor of intention to participate in activism for a range of causes (Skitka & Morgan, 2014).

For example, van Zomeren et al. (2012) found that participants who held strong moral conviction against increasing tuition fees, measured by items such as "My opinion about increased tuition fees is an important part of my moral norms and values", predicted higher intention to participate in a student union protest against the increased fees. Similarly, participants' tendency to engage in collective action against genetically modified meat in consumer products was predicted by level of moral conviction about the issue (van Zomeren et al., 2012).

The connection between moral conviction and willingness to engage in social movement has been shown to be rather robust, such that researchers have endeavoured to find potential mediators between the two variables. Studies revealed that when people's moral conviction about certain issue was violated, they would have heightened negative emotion (Skitka & Wisneski, 2011), particularly anger (van Zomeren et al., 2012), along with increased identification with the group suffering from causes of the violation (van Zomeren et al., 2012), which together lead to increased intention to protest. These findings suggest that a

major portion of the social movement supporters is driven by their moral conviction. Given the role of morality in motivating movement supporters, it seems reasonable to posit that they are likely to express their support in a way that allows others to identify them as morally motivated individuals.

Moralisation Mobilises Participation in Movement

As moral conviction motivates people to join social movements, it follows that movement advocates may frame the movement morally to gather support. This kind of moral framing has been studied in social psychology under the term of moralisation, referring to the process through which "objects or activities that were previously morally neutral acquire a moral component" (Rozin et al., 1997). Rozin et al. (1997) observed that smoking used to be considered a matter of preference, but has been assigned a moral significance by a number of institutions and individuals.

Rozin (1999) further argued that moralisation could urge the society to pay attention to an issue, stimulate action by the government to deal with what might be violating social norms, and mobilise support from social organisations and the general public to uphold what was (or should be considered) moral. Therefore, social movement advocates are likely to stress how the movement goal is tightly linked to people's deeply held values or moral standards, whether the movement is fundamentally morally relevant.

In sum, as many people engage in a movement because of their moral belief, and a social movement is often moralised to gather support, supporters of a movement are likely to be seen as morally motivated individuals. Therefore, for those who disagree with the movement, one of their objectives is likely to derogate the morality of those supporters.

Moral Derogation Towards Morally Motivated Individuals

Do-Gooder Derogation

Several studies have shown that a morally motivated individual may trigger resentment from others. Whether this individual refused to engage in a racially prejudiced task (Monin et al., 2008; O'Connor & Monin, 2016), or wanted to know if child labour is involved in the manufacturing process before purchasing a product (Zane et al., 2016), or desired to endorse grocery stores that adopt a sustainable "no-packaging" policy (Bolderdijk et al., 2018), or showed strong willingness to cooperate in a public-goods game (Pleasant & Barclay, 2018), or simply was being a vegetarian (Minson & Monin, 2012), this person might elicit rejection and irritation due to the moral choices made. Such rejection has been termed do-gooder derogation (Minson & Monin, 2012), rebellion resentment (Monin et al., 2008), or antisocial punishment (Pleasant & Barclay, 2018), depending on the contexts in which the phenomenon was studied.

Monin (2007) argued that the reason why a seemingly moral person is disliked by others is because the morality displayed by the person may threaten other people's moral self-regard via upward social comparison in moral domains. He further explained that such comparison could give rise to three types of self-threat: moral inferiority, moral confusion, and anticipated moral reproach (Monin, 2007). Experienced feeling of self-threat drives people to engage in defensive strategies with an attempt to neutralize the threat, and these strategies include *denying virtue* (such as questioning the person's motive and accusing him or her as hypocrite), *trivialisation* (such as calling the person a naive fool), or *resentment* (such as expressing dislike or hostility) (Monin, 2007).

The strategy of denying virtue highlights the attempts to question the intentions of morally motivated individuals and asserts that the real motives behind their seemingly moral behaviour are ulterior or unethical (Monin, 2007). With this strategy, one's helping behaviour might be construed as an act to make oneself feel self-righteous, or to project a positive social image to gain popularity. However, when this strategy is unlikely to succeed as one's

virtuous motive is self-evident, the strategy of trivialisation might be employed. This strategy admits one's intention or behaviour to be moral but derogates the person as weak, naïve, or unintelligent. According to Monin (2007), omnivores' attitudes towards vegetarians seemed to reflect this strategy such that they did not think of vegetarians as hypocrites or people pretending to be moral, but considered vegetarians weak. In situations where the above two strategies both become ineffective as one's demonstration of virtues is undeniable and the person's intelligence or strength cannot be belittled, the strategy people can resort to is to distance themselves from and express disliking towards the moral person (Monin, 2007).

Given the fact that Monin (2007) has documented more than one defensive approach, by far research in this area mostly focused on the last strategy. In other words, only the resentment strategy in Monin's article (2007) has been largely discussed. For example, Monin et al. (2008) found that participants who engaged in a racist task found moral rebels, those who chose to not be part of the task, as less likable than those went along. Zane et al. (2016) also showed that participants who wilfully ignored ethical product information were more likely to judge moral others, those who actively sought out the information, to possess negative traits (e.g., boring, odd) than participants non-wilfully ignored the information.

Unlike the strategy of resentment, the other two—virtue denial and trivialization—have not received much attention from researchers. As the purpose of the current research is to examine ways in which people challenge the morality of movement supporters, it helps fill this gap by identifying specific mechanisms that serve to deny one's virtues.

Moral Derogation Mechanisms

A number of mechanisms may serve to disparage morally motivated social movement supporters. These mechanisms were inspired by observing incidents in which activists are reviled or even threatened. As these mechanisms reflected people's *cognitive* responses to a movement whose goal they agree with but whose claim they oppose, the mechanisms may

not manifest themselves via a particular kind of human behaviour. In other words, people can behave in a range of ways toward activists, as a way for them to express the morally derogatory opinions categorised by the derogation mechanisms. Some people may withdraw themselves from socialising with protesters, while some may verbally or physically attack protesters.

Before elucidating specific moral derogation mechanisms, I present below a number of examples about how morally derogatory opinions can be expressed in real life.

Real Life Examples of Moral Derogation. One of the more extreme examples can be found in an email sent from the ex-editor of Waitrose Food magazine, William Sitwell, to a vegan freelance journalist, Selene Nelson. The journalist told BuzzFeed News that after she had contacted Sitwell and suggested the magazine feature a series on plant-based meals, she received a response from Sitwell, which said: “How about a series on killing vegans, one by one?". The email went on to ask the journalist: “How to interrogate them properly? Expose their hypocrisy? Force-feed them meat?” (Stefano, 2018).

Whether the accusation of vegans as hypocrites was why Sitwell resented vegans in the first place, or was used by him to rationalise his resentment, is not a question that can be easily answered, but such accusation is certainly far from rare. Another example can be found in a New York Post article by Steve Cuozzo, who said the “hypocritical vegans” were driving him “insane”, while commenting on Sarma Melngailis, the former owner of a vegan restaurant, who was seen ordering a cheese pizza at Domino’s (Cuozzo, 2016). Throughout his article, Cuozzo used derogatory terms to describe the “hypocritical vegans”, such as full of themselves, sanctimonious, and self-righteous (Cuozzo, 2016).

Cuozzo also cited an article by a wildlife lecturer, Ward Clark, who questioned vegans’ ethical principles by stating that “animals are killed in untold millions in the course of plant agriculture” (Clark, 2011; Cuozzo, 2016). Cuozzo seemed to suggest, by referencing

and mentioning that the process of producing vegan food did not always protect animal lives, a vegan lifestyle could not really solve the problems vegans hoped to solve, and they were therefore hypocritical in believing they could.

Cuozzo even went further to argue that "veganism can be a threat to humans as well" (Cuozzo, 2016), by referencing a former vegan's experience of receiving death threats after telling people she needed to eat eggs and fish due to health issues (Ridley, 2015).

Not only can vegans or vegan activists be perceived as hypocritical people with a "holier-than-thou" mentality who supported something that could not solve what they wished to solve or even cause harm to people, the motive of movement supporters may also be questioned. For example, when young people or students engaged in climate change and environmental protests, they may be thought of as, and some of them probably were, doing it due to peer pressure (Perkins, 2019), or to be recognised by their friends and get noticed on social media (Hechmer, 2019). It probably goes without saying that, in addition to acceptance and popularity, people may also think some protesters are after power, dominance or control over others.

Although most of the derogatory statements against activists I have listed so far were made by non-activists, potential derogation strategy could also be observed from activists themselves. For example, an American animal activist, Matt Ball, mentioned that he could always see vegan activists use "screaming and hatred" while advocating for veganism, but he asked his reader "How many of you stopped eating meat because someone yelled 'Go VEGAN, you MURDERER!'?" (Ball, 2017). Indeed, research showed some of the negative stereotypes about activists were them being aggressive and hostile, which could push people away from supporting their goals (Bashir et al., 2013).

Eight Specific Derogation Mechanisms. Based on the above observations, I developed a list of eight derogation mechanisms. Among these mechanisms, five aim to

directly disparage the movement supporters by challenging their moral character, other two focus on the movement claim but indirectly attack supporters by questioning whether advocating the movement claims is a moral decision from a consequentialist ethical perspective, and the last one denigrates the supporters both by challenging their moral character and questioning whether they advocate something that can lead to an overall positive consequence. These mechanisms are discussed as follows, and their names and simple descriptions can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptions of the proposed derogation mechanisms

Mechanisms	Descriptions	References
Hypocrite accusation	Movement supporters are hypocrites.	Stefano (2018)
Holier-than-thou	Movement supporters think they are better than others.	Cuozzo (2016)
Trend following	People support the movement to fit in with a group.	Perkins (2019); Hechmer (2019)
Power seeking	People support the movement to gain power.	Personal observation
Controlling	Movement supporters are motivated by a desire to control others.	Personal observation
Bad solution	The movement claim fails to address the root of the issue.	Cuozzo (2016); Clark (2011)
Bad consequence	The movement claim will do more harm than good.	Cuozzo (2016); Ridley (2015)
Offensive tone	Movement supporters speak or act in an aggressive manner.	Bashir et al. (2013); Ball (2017)

Moral character is defined as "an individual's disposition to think, feel, and behave in an ethical versus unethical manner (Cohen & Morse, 2014)." Among the first five mechanisms which aim to bring down people's moral character, one mechanism is called *hypocrite accusation*, which accuses movement supporters as hypocrites; one is called *holier-*

than-thou, highlighting that supporters' motive is to project or maintain their moral superiority; one is called *trend following*, contending that supporters join the protest because they want to follow the trend and gain acceptance from their social group members; one is called *power seeking*, arguing that supporters are motivated to gain power, elevated status, or increased influence; the final one is called *controlling*, stressing that supporters are driven by desire to restrict others' freedom.

As to two mechanisms focusing on the effectiveness of the movement claims, they are called *bad solution* and *bad consequence*, stating that the claims championed by the movement supporters fail to address the real problem and will cause more harm than good, respectively. Since the claims are ineffective in that they cannot achieve what they set out to accomplish, nor can they increase the overall social utility, it follows that those who support these claims fail to behave in accordance to utilitarian ethical principles (e.g., Piazza & Landy, 2013; Everett & Kahane, 2020), and therefore these two mechanisms serve to indirectly reproach the movement supporters.

Finally, the last mechanism is called *offensive tone*, criticising that the tone used by supporters while spreading or justifying the claims is offensive or inappropriate. This mechanism can be employed to both argue that movement supporters are harming others with their hostile language, and that they are causing more harm than good to the movement goal by pushing potential supporters away with their offensive language. The first argument suggests that the movement supporters lack moral character due to their harmful language, while the second one implies that the movement supporters behave unethically from the consequentialist viewpoint.

Many of these mechanisms have been subjects of social psychology research. For example, moral hypocrisy has been conceptualised as when people act in discord with their moral beliefs (Batson et al., 1997), and when people judge others' behaviours more harshly

than they judge their own ones (Valdesolo & DeSteno, 2007). Both cases have been found to be at odds with most people's understanding of moral integrity (Monin & Merritt, 2012). Therefore, accusing someone as a hypocrite serves to put their morality under suspicion.

Other mechanisms, except for the one of offensive tone and the two about efficacy of movement claims, all aim to question people's motive of supporting a movement. They highlight that people endorse the movement without being genuine or honest, such that they do so in order to improve their self-worth or reputation (holier-than-thou), to be accepted or recognised (trend following), to increase their power and status (power seeking), and to gain control over others (controlling). These mechanisms suggest that people are primarily caring about things (i.e., reputation, acceptance, power, and control) benefiting themselves instead of advancement of the movement goal. Since honesty and unselfishness are important components of one's moral character (Cohen & Morse, 2014), these mechanisms function to deny people' moral character.

The mechanism of offensive tone is a rather unique one compared to other candidates on the list. Although using a tone that is aggressive or hostile can be thought of as impolite (Laplante & Ambady, 2016), politeness is less associated with evaluation of morality (Aquino et al., 2007). What makes an offensive tone immoral comes from research on criticism. Past research found that a hostile tone was often used in destructive criticism, and this kind of criticism often was judged by those criticised as involving an intent to harm and upset them (Raver et al., 2012). This reasoning implies that, when people are accusing movement supporters of using a negative voice of tone, they are implying that the supporters attempt to harm people's feelings or cause distress, which is something that should be morally blamed. On the other hand, people may also use this mechanism to argue that supporters are turning people away from the movement due to their offensive language,

suggesting that the supporters are weakening the effectiveness of the movement and therefore are unethical from a consequentialist perspective.

Comparisons Between the Do-gooder Derogation and Moral Derogation Mechanisms. As mentioned earlier, the first five mechanisms listed in Table 1 and the last mechanism (offensive tone) all question movement supporters' moral character and are therefore linked to the strategy of denying virtue by Monin (2007).

The other two mechanisms (bad solution and bad consequence), although focusing on the merit of a movement claim, to certain extent are related to the trivialisation strategy by Monin (2007). This is because when claims being advocated cannot solve the problem they set out to tackle and will give rise to more problems, it suggests that supporters of the claims might be foolish and naïve.

Despite the above similarities and the fact that do-gooder derogation and the moral derogation mechanisms introduced by far both address disparagement towards seemingly moral people, one major theoretical difference is that do-gooder derogation is triggered when people feel their self-worth is threatened by someone's behaviour they recognise as moral. For example, as mentioned earlier, in the experiments of racist task by Monin et al. (2008) and ethical purchase by Zane et al. (2016), participants failed to act in a moral way, and exhibited derogation towards those who made a rather moral decision. Researchers of both experiments concluded that participants experienced negative social comparison and felt threatened by those behaving virtuously and therefore expressed resentment towards the ethical others (Monin et al., 2008; Zane et al., 2016).

However, with respect to the moral derogation mechanisms I have described, they are developed to illustrate the opinions of people who profess to accept the goal of a movement but desire to remove moral values attached to its claim by morally derogating the movement supporters. People who employ these mechanisms may not necessarily think the claim itself

is moral nor feel their moral self-worth is threatened by the movement supporters. They deny the virtues of these supporters not necessarily because they acknowledge that the supporters have the virtues, but might do so because they feel that the supporters seem to believe and want others to believe that they possess the virtues.

In other words, the difference between do-gooder derogation by Minson and Monin (2012) and the moral derogation mechanisms I have listed is whether it is an integral part of the theory that someone's behaviour is acknowledged by the agent to be morally desirable and therefore threatens the agent's moral self. For what was proposed in the current research, it is not necessarily the case and the moral derogation mechanisms are therefore not necessarily a self-defensive strategy as do-gooder derogation is.

However, it is certainly possible that an agent disagrees with an activist's claim and at the same time finds the claim morally desirable; in such case both do-gooder derogation and the use of moral derogation mechanisms are likely to be invoked, and may result in stronger endorsements of the moral derogation mechanisms introduced in the current research.

Derogation Mechanisms, Movement Goals and Claims

Although the current research focuses on ways to derogate movement supporters, it is also interested in the relationship between endorsements of derogation mechanisms and evaluation of the movement claims and goals, due to the following reasons.

First, as the content of a movement claim should be the primary cue for people to form their evaluation toward those supporting the claim, attitudes toward these two entities should be consistent; in other words, the more people support the claim, the more they should disagree with the mechanism. Thus, their association serves to check whether the derogation items used in the questionnaires of the current study are valid measures of derogation tendency.

Next, as mentioned earlier, as the goal of a social movement is usually abstract and linked to moral principles (e.g., gender equality or human rights), people who oppose a movement may be more likely to attack its claim or supporters, rather than the goal. However, even if someone professes to accept a movement goal, when the person strongly endorses most of the derogation mechanisms, it may suggest that this person has relatively lower support for the goal. Therefore, people's overall derogation tendency may be negatively associated with their evaluation of the goal of a movement.

Main Exploratory Aims and Hypotheses of the Proposed Studies

As the proposed derogation mechanisms have not been investigated in the context of people's attitudes toward social movement claims, to my knowledge, this thesis sets up both exploratory aims and hypotheses to examine the features of the mechanisms. Once the exploratory aims are examined by the first study, the findings in turn form hypotheses for the second study.

There are two exploratory aims and two hypotheses for the first study, which are as follows:

Goal 1: Identifying the most highly endorsed mechanisms.

Hypothesis 1: Mechanisms that are endorsed moderately or strongly (i.e., with endorsement at or above point 3 on a 7-point scale) will overall correlate negatively with agreement with the claim.

Goal 2: Identifying mechanisms that are most influential in predicting people's disagreement with the social movement claim, by including mechanisms having a significant negative correlation with support for the claim (as identified by testing hypothesis 1) as regressors in a regression model.

Hypothesis 2: Despite professing to support the goal, people who overall support the mechanisms highly will also have weaker support for the goal.

The mechanisms identified as result of examining goals 1 and 2 become additional hypotheses for Study 2.

Overview of the Proposed Studies

I employed one pilot study and two studies to examine the goals and hypotheses listed above. The pilot study identified movements whose goals were accepted but whose claims were rejected by most people. Study 1 tested the hypotheses based on the movement claims identified by the pilot study and qualitatively analysed the negative evaluations participants assigned to movement supporters, in order to check whether my list of mechanisms already covered most morally denigrating strategies people would use or it needed further revision. Study 2 incorporated results from study 1 and sought to replicate its main findings, and examined the factor structure underlying the derogation mechanisms. Study 2 also investigated whether participants had different endorsement pattern between their own personal endorsements of the mechanisms and their perceived endorsements from the perspective of the general public.

Pilot Study

The goal of the pilot study was to exploratively identify a particular set of goal and claim, that were of the same movement, where people tended to strongly support the goal yet at the same time firmly disagreed with the claim. This kind of goal and claim allows me to investigate how people react to advocates of the claim in the subsequent studies. The study employed a Qualtrics questionnaire survey.

Method

Participants

A total of 30 psychology students at University of Kent participated in the study in exchange for partial course credits.

Procedures

I recruited participants from the School of Psychology via the Research Participation Scheme (RPS) system. Once people expressed interest in taking part in the research, an appointment to meet in a laboratory on campus was arranged. In the laboratory, participants used a computer to complete a questionnaire about goals and claims of social movements, and a demographic questionnaire. Responding to these questionnaires took about 10 minutes. After completion of the research, participants were debriefed and then received 1 RPS credit.

Material

The main research questionnaire consisted of items related to goals and claims of social movements. These items were presented in seven blocks. Each block introduced one social movement and contained five items. The seven movements covered a range of topics, including the Me Too movement, the feminist movement, the LGBTQ+ movement, the environmental movement, the climate change movement, the animal rights or vegan movement, and the capitalist movement. After the title of the movement, one item described the goal of the movement, which represented some broad objective or abstract value that a movement aimed to achieve, such as "we should treat animals in human care kindly" in the case of animal rights movement, and "we should support economic markets free of government interference" in the case of capitalist movement. For each movement, two items specified two claims that were supposedly brought up in the movement. A claim was referred to as a specific action or particular behaviour that activists expected people to undertake or stop doing. For example, a claim of the animal rights movements went as follows: "Everyone who can should adopt a vegan diet that excludes animal products such as meat, eggs, and dairy"; as to capitalist movement, one of the claims was "Essential services such as police and firefighting should be privatised and subject to the free market". Participants reported the extent to which they agreed with the goals and claims on a 7-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree.*

Results

Agreement With the Goals

Descriptive analysis (see Table 2) showed that participants in general strongly agreed with the goal of each movement with the mean ranging from 6.37 to 6.77 (*SD* = .48 to .85), except for the capitalist goal (*M* = 4.60, *SD* = 1.45).

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of goals of movements

Statement of goal	Support	
	M	*SD*
Animal rights (vegan) movement		
We should treat animals in human care kindly.	6.73	0.64
Capitalist movement		
We should support economic markets free of government interference.	4.60	1.45
Climate change movement		
We should combat climate change.	6.67	0.61
Environmental movement		
We should take more steps against pollution.	6.67	0.55
Feminist movement		
We should achieve gender equality.	6.80	0.48
LGBTQ+ movement		
Society should be more tolerant toward people of diverse sexuality and gender identities.	6.37	0.85
Me Too movement		
We should do more to ensure justice for victims of sexual harassment.	6.77	0.57

Note. *N* = 30.

Agreement With the Claims

As shown in Table 3, participants' agreement with claims were generally above the midpoint of a 7-point scale (M = 4.13 to 6.13, SD = 1.31 to 1.83), except for five claims, including two capitalist claims, one feminist claim, one animal rights claim, and one LGBTQ+ claim. However, a one sample t-test revealed that only the two capitalist claims had scores significantly lower than the midpoint 4.

Discrepancy Between Goals and Claims

The difference between evaluations of goals and claims ranged from 0.67 to 3.27 (SD = 1.10 to 1.98), as shown in Table 3. The lowest two included one environmental claim and one animal rights claim; the highest two included one animal rights claim and one feminist claim.

Discussion

Based on the results, the two claims that lead to the largest discrepancy was one from feminist movement ("In professions where there are not equal numbers of women and men, it should be made much easier for the under-represented gender to succeed than the over-represented gender") and one from animal rights movement ("Everyone who can should adopt a vegan diet that excludes animal products such as meat, eggs, and dairy"). These discrepancies were caused by both factors: participants showed highest level of agreement with their goals and lowest agreement with the claims. Therefore, I decided to use these two claims for Study 1 to further explore features of moral derogation mechanisms.

One potential issue was whether the large difference between support for the goal of animal rights movement and the claim of vegan diet was due to the misalignment between the goal and the claim. The misalignment resulted from the fact that it is possible to achieve "treating animals in human care kindly" without having everyone adopting a vegan diet. However, the claim that led to the largest difference between support for the goal and the

claim was the the claim of reaching equal numbers of genders in professions, which was closely aligned with its goal (gender equality). In other words, the extent to which the claim aligned with its goal was not likely to be a main factor in determining participants' support for the claim[1].

Table 3

Descriptive statistics of claims of movements and the difference between goals and claims

Statement of claim	Support		Difference	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Animal rights movement				
1. Everyone who can should adopt a vegan diet that excludes animal products such as meat, eggs, and dairy.	3.80	2.07	2.93	1.98
2. Animals should not be harmed or killed in medical experiments.	6.13	1.46	0.80	1.45
Capitalist movement				
1. Essential services such as police and firefighting should be privatised and subject to the free market.	2.97	1.47	1.63	1.10
2. Citizens should be allowed to sell their blood and even non-essential organs on the free market.	2.53	1.28	2.33	1.69
Climate change movement				
1. Air travel should be taxed until it is ten times as expensive as it is now, since it is a major source of CO2 emissions.	4.20	1.83	2.47	1.76
2. Industrial-scale production of meat and dairy should be banned, even though this would raise the price of these products and make them scarce, because this kind of farming contributes to global warming.	4.50	1.72	2.17	1.51

[1] Furthermore, in the second study of the current thesis, participants were presented a list of six claims and asked to select the one they disagreed with the most. The vegan claim was chosen by more people than those choosing some other claims (i.e., the feminist claim, the Me Too claim, and the LGBTQ+ claim). Since these other claims are all closely aligned with their corresponding goals, it suggested that the large difference between support for the animal rights goal and the vegan claim was likely to be primarily driven by participants' disagreement with the claim.

Table 3

Descriptive statistics of claims of movements and the difference between goals and claims

Statement of claim	Support		Difference	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Environmental movement				
1. Disposable plastic bottles need to be entirely banned, and people should carry around reusable bottles for soft drinks and water instead.	6.13	1.41	0.67	1.15
2. Single use plastic cutlery needs to be entirely banned, because it contributes to plastic pollution.	6.00	1.44	0.87	1.22
Feminist movement				
1. In professions where there are not equal numbers of women and men, it should be made much easier for the under-represented gender to succeed than the over-represented gender.	3.60	1.71	3.27	1.70
2. We should boycott all movies where a female actor is paid less than her male counterpart.	4.53	1.72	2.33	1.71
LGBTQ+ movement				
1. Everyone should start using pronouns by default, introducing themselves as "he/him" or "she/her", so that people with non-binary gender pronouns ("they/them") do not have to make a special effort to be known.	4.20	1.71	2.23	1.52
2. In reproductive health care, we should not refer to services for "women" but rather "people with a uterus", because some of those people identify as men.	3.90	1.88	2.47	1.55
Me Too movement				
1. We should always believe people who say they have been harassed, by default.	4.13	1.53	2.63	1.50
2. We should boycott movies starring actors who were accused of sexual harassment.	4.57	1.31	2.20	1.40

Note. $N = 30$.

Study 1

In the pilot study I identified two social movement claims, deriving from animal rights (vegan) and feminist movements, that lead to low agreement with their content yet high support for their corresponding goals. Study 1 used these two claims to investigate the potential strategies people might adopt to derogate or demean those endorsing the claims. Such investigation was carried out in both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Participants were invited to describe why they thought people supported the claims, and whether they agreed with items designed to capture derogatory rhetoric people might use.

Method

Participants

A total of 67[2] psychology students at University of Kent participated in the study in exchange for partial course credits.

Procedures

I recruited participants in the same way as the pilot study. In the laboratory, participants used a computer to complete a questionnaire about goals and claims of social movements, and a demographic questionnaire. Half the participants first responded to questions regarding the topic of animal rights movement, followed by the topic of feminist movement. The order of these two topics were reversed for the other half.

Responding to these questionnaires took about 15 minutes. After completion of the research, participants were debriefed and given 1 RPS credit. (Minson & Monin, 2012)

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[2] For hypotheses 1, a medium correlation effect (r = .3) was assumed which could be obtained with a sample size of 82 people according to the G*Power software. Such assumption of effect size was a conservative one derived from reviewing correlational studies in the do-gooder derogation literature. For example, Minson and Monin (2012) found correlation scores of -.41 and -.52 between anticipated moral reproach and do-gooder derogation; Pleasant and Barclay (2018) found a correlation score of -.45 between targets' contribution in public-goods games and agents' do-gooder derogation. Unfortunately the data collection process was forced to cease due to the Covid pandemic. Sensitivity power analysis was reported in the result section for each analysis conducted.

Material

The research questionnaire first introduced one of the two social movements—feminist and animal rights movements—and one pair of goal and claim for each movement. Then, participants were asked to indicate their evaluations of the claim on a 7-point scale, consisting of 3 items for each, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* (i.e., "I am against this claim", "I think this claim is foolish", and "This claim upsets me"). Next, participants were told to first write in their own words about why they thought people would support the claim, and then responded to items assessing their derogatory beliefs about those people. These items were presented in eight blocks. Each block contained three items and represented one derogation mechanism. For example, some items (e.g., "people who make the claim are aggressive in tone") represented the mechanism of "offensive tone". Some items (e.g., "people who endorse the claim are hypocrites") represented the mechanism of "hypocrite accusation". These items were answered on a 7-point scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Next, they were asked to indicate how much they agreed with the goal of the movement on a 7-point scale from *strongly oppose* to *strongly support*. Then they responded to the same set of questions (both the open-ended question and scale items) based on the other movement.

Results

Thematic Analysis

Each participant responded to two open-ended questions, one for each of the two social movements, with each asking them why people would support certain movement's claim. For each open-ended question, a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012) was carried out with the following research question in mind: "what reasons did participants provide with respect to why people made or supported the social movement claim of interest?"

To complete the analyses, I went through the first five phases outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006): I first read the texts in depth multiple times, produced codes to capture main points as to the research questions, generated themes based on the codes, and reviewed those themes to ensure they represented specific texts and together reflected the entire data set, and finally gave each theme a name.

The following are themes for both movements.

Themes for Feminist Movement.

Theme 1: Concern for Equality. A majority of participants thought that concern for gender equality, namely the goal of the movement, explained why activists made or supported the claim. Participants focused on different aspects of gender equality. Some simply paraphrased the goal by stating that the claim "would create equality of opportunity"; some looked at those who suffered from lack of equality by stressing that some supporters of the claim "have seen or experienced some sort of inequality" or "were mistreated". Some emphasised the importance of equality for the whole society by describing how humans would benefit from "a more balanced scale of gender representation in all areas of employment":

> *It [the claim] might allow the next generations to see that it is acceptable to have whatever job they desire regardless of gender and therefore make a more cohesive society.*

Although many participants acknowledged that people made or supported the claim out of good will, some of them also pointed out that there were other factors affecting and driving people's seemingly well-intended action. I identified these factors as the following themes.

Theme 2: Possessing Stereotypical Traits. Although participants were not asked to describe the personality traits of those supporting the claim, a number of participants touched

on these. Most words used to describe those supporters, such as “passionate” and “entitled”, aligned with stereotypical traits of activists identified by researchers (Bashir et al., 2013). For example, one participant stated:

> *I picture a very stereotypical radical feminist group who are angry about job inequality, marching around with signs…I suspect they would get easily irritated when others opposed their views and would have a lot to say back.*

Some other traits pointed out by participants included: “opinionated”, “hostile”, “assertive”, “ruthless”, and “annoying”. Although participants did not explicitly argue that activists’ support for the claim was driven by these stereotypically negative traits, they seemed to suggest a positive association between activists’ agreement with the claim and their possession of those traits.

Theme 3: Egoistic Motive. Unlike the first theme focusing on activists’ concern for equality, a seemingly altruistic cause, this theme perceived their concern as a selfish one; that was to say, participants thought some activists were seeking the advancement of their own self-interest or the interest of their ingroup.

For example, one participant thought that people had different reasons to uphold the claim: While some were being “passionate”, and “somewhat gullible”, as captured by the second theme, “a few others may also make this claim to profit from any changes it may bring, suggesting they are self-centred.” Similarly, as this participant pointed out that egoistically-driven people could not represent the entirety of feminist activists, another participant clarified that there were two types of feminists, such that when “the ’normal’ feminists who believe that women and men should have equal opportunities in the workplace”, there were also “more extreme feminists, who believe women should be treated better than men, in this claim, being able to succeed more easily.”

Theme 4: Missing the Picture. This theme focused on questioning activists’

understanding of the issue related to the claim. For example, one participant perceived the activists as people who "have some knowledge of feminism but not a full appreciation of what it truly represents." Another participant stated:

> *A lot of these claims are false and are based on experience and knowledge, for example a man may get a promotion purely because they have been working for longer and are more experienced, having nothing to do with their gender.*

Such a lack of comprehension could be a result of or closely linked to having some of the stereotypical traits described by the second theme. For example, one participant described the activists as "a bit rash, not fully considering things". Although one might think this theme was not meant to undermine the activists' morality per se, since it doubted their ability in grasping with the issue, it did to some extent suggest that activists failed to put sufficient efforts into understanding the subject, and therefore the trait associating with "not fully considering things" was "rash", instead of foolish or unintelligent. It is such questioning of lack of efforts that made this theme a form a moral denigration towards the activists.

Themes for Animal Rights (Vegan) Movement.

***Theme 1: Concern for Animal Rights*.** Similar to the first theme for the feminist movement claim, a majority of participants attributed people's support of the claim to their concern for important causes. One of these causes was essentially the goal of the movement, namely treating all animals in human care kindly, that was presented to participants. For example, one participant stated:

> *They make or support that claim because they feel strongly about the welfare of animals and want less animals to be harmed or killed for the purpose of food.*

Some participants linked concern for animals to their recognition of rights that animal should have as humans. For example, one participant described this rather explicitly:

They make the claim because they believe that animals have an equal right to life as humans, so consuming them when not necessary would be unethical.

Participants also expressed care for other causes. For example, one participant mentioned how "farming has a massive impact on crops", demonstrating an environmental concern, which was more clearly pointed out by another participant in these words: "People may also support the claim due to global warming, and saving the planet as well as animals."

Theme 2: Possessing Stereotypical Traits. Just like previous movement, one major theme for animal rights movement was also the mentioning of activists' stereotypical traits. These traits included: "aggressive", "hostile", "loud", and "free spirited and hippy like".

Interestingly, animal rights activists were also perceived as having a number of positive traits, particularly being "healthy", "empathetic", and "educated". These traits seemed to be derived from people's perception of a stereotypical vegan or vegetarian. For example, participants described those supporting the animal rights claim as "healthy and fit", or "slim and fitness motivated". Those people were also considered "compassionate" or "empathetic towards others". Finally, they were depicted as "knowledgeable in the farming industry", or "educated in how the system of animal agriculture works".

Theme 3: Negative Attributions. As some participants attributed people's support of the feminist claim to egoistic motives, participants also suggested that animal rights activists' behaviours were driven by morally questionable motives. These motives were categorised into the following 5 sub-themes.

Subtheme1: Moral Superiority. Participants suggested that people's agreement with the claim reflected their belief that they were superior to other people. For example, some participants stated that these people "think of themselves as morally superior", or "believe their views are superior and better than other peoples". Moreover, this kind of "holier-than-

thou" mentality was perceived to demonstrate itself when these people were interacting with others. One participant described these supporters in the following:

> *They believe their views are superior and better than other peoples and will be sure to tell everyone this, talking down and undermining what other people have got to say.*

Subtheme 2: Controlling. Some participants felt that supporters of the claim displayed the tendency to be controlling or demanding. For example, one participant stated:

> *Although their heart is in the right place they can often come across as controlling or condescending when telling others what they should and shouldn't eat.*

The tendency to control others was also perceived as a reason why people supported the claim in the first place, as articulated by one participant:

> *They make and/or support this claim because they strongly believe what they say is the truth and want people to understand and follow their views.*

This sub-theme went hand-in-hand with the first one, such that participants recognised that those who were controlling also seemed "high and mighty". For example, one participant stated: "They want everyone to follow their choice and look down on people that don't agree with it." Another participant made a similar comment when describing someone upholding the claim as "almost forces this claim onto people, and looks down on those who aren't vegan."

Subtheme 3: Trend Following. The next sub-theme emphasised that people supported the claim in order to follow a trend or to be accepted. For example, one participant expressed this observation and used it to explain why activists were aggressive: "Some support this claim because they want to follow the trends and therefore can be increasingly hostile."

Another participant suggested that for people to gain attention or be liked on social media, both following the trend or being unique could be effective strategies and therefore both were reasons for why people supported the claim. This participant stated:

To save animals, a lot of people will support the claim... It is quite a big thing on social media that is shown which may be why they have supported it. They may also be jumping on the bandwagon or trying to be different in order to be liked or considered 'cool' by other vegans.

Subtheme 4: Easiness. This theme argued that people supported the claim because it was rather easy for them to follow it. For example, these people might simply "do not enjoy meat or simply have an intolerance to meat, eggs or dairy", or "vegan diets work well for them and they've had no problems". More people stressed that one's social or financial status played a role in influencing his or her decision to accept the claim. This view implied that living in accordance with the claim could be costly and those who could afford it were more likely than others to support it. For example, one participant mentioned that "higher class people may support the claim more because a vegan diet is more accessible to them."

On the same note, another participant stated that "Those who write and support these claims are usually from middle class and wealthier families that can afford to and have the time to make vegan food." One participant expressed this notion in a similarly dismissive way: "They make that claim because they are able to…This is because they may be in a social position where they are able to think about animal issues instead of personal survival."

Subtheme 5: Strong Identification. The last sub-theme highlighted that people supported the claim because keeping a vegan diet had been part of their lifestyle and even part of identity. For example, a number of participants stated that people supported the claim "because they are strong vegans", or "because they feel very strongly about veganism", or "because they themselves also have adopted a vegan lifestyle". Taken together, these quotes illustrated a group of people who committed themselves to a specific way of living and therefore upholding a claim that was designed to reinforce and promote the legitimacy of the lifestyle.

Theme 4: Missing the Picture. As the final theme identified in participants' responses to people supporting the previous claim, this theme focused on animal rights activists' lack of understanding of the issue. Different aspects of the claim were brought up by participants to highlight what the activists had ignored. One participant focused on the actuality of animal brutality, arguing that the activists "get caught up in their ideologies that they forget about the animals that are treated well until death".

Other participants put the emphasis on people whose life might be negatively affected due to the claim, such as those working in the farming industry or "those people who cannot afford to be vegan". The concern about people who could not financially afford vegan diets tied into the fourth sub-theme just mentioned (i.e. easiness).

Quantitative Analysis

Data Preparation. I calculated participants' endorsements of each of the derogation mechanisms by averaging statements aimed to measure each specific mechanism. Next, I computed the corrected item-total correlations for each item within each mechanism. I set the cut-off value for corrected item-total correlation to be .30, (e.g., Idvall et al., 2002; Ebrahimi et al., 2013; Worthington et al., 2013). The only mechanism with one or more items having an item-total correlation less than .30 was the mechanism of "bad consequence". In fact, two items (i.e., "This claim is hard to follow" and "The claim will do more harm than good") of the mechanism showed a less than .30 item-total correlation, and this occurred whether the claim of interest was related to animal rights or feminist movement. As a result, this mechanism was removed from further analysis of the data.

Agreements With Goals and Claims. Descriptive statistics and reliability related to goals and claims are shown in Table 4. As found in the pilot study, participants in general agreed with goals of both the feminist movement (M = 6.57, SD = 1.41) and the animal rights movement (M = 6.13, SD = 1.35). To capture participants' attitude toward the claims, I

reverse coded the score of each of the three statements assessing participants' disagreement with a particular claim, and then averaged the three scores. However, unlike results from the pilot study where the scores of agreements with the two claims were around the midpoint, this study found that the agreements with the feminist claim (M = 4.73, SD = 1.51) and the animal rights claim (4.62, SD = 1.41) were both significantly higher than the midpoint (ts > 3.62, ps < .001, ds > .44). A sensitivity analysis using the G*Power software indicated that a sample of 67 participants had 80% power to detect an effect of Cohen's d equal to or larger than .35, when comparing to a constant.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics of support for the movements and endorsements of the derogation mechanisms

Variables	Feminist movement			Vegan movement		
	M	*S.D.*	*α* [a]	*M*	*S.D.*	*α*
Support for the movement						
The goal	6.57	.89	—	6.13	1.35	—
The claim	4.73	1.51	.84	4.62	1.41	.81
Agreement with derogation mechanisms						
Bad solution	4.12	1.45	.80	3.57	1.23	.77
Offensive tone	3.45	1.42	.91	3.82	1.60	.91
Holier-than-thou	3.95	1.49	.93	5.37	1.23	.82
Controlling	3.08	1.46	.88	3.98	1.52	.83
Power seeking	3.16	1.54	.93	2.98	1.50	.94
Trend following	3.56	1.48	.89	4.49	1.34	.92
Hypocrite accusation	3.54	1.49	.87	3.00	1.29	.84

Potential Order Effect. As half of the participants responded to feminist movement first and the other half animal rights movement first, I examined whether an order effect

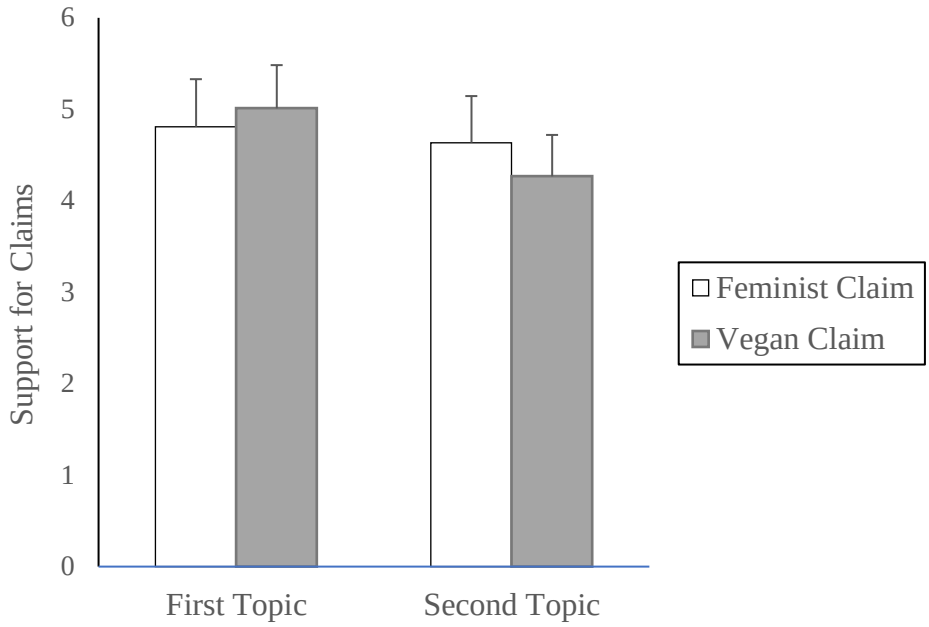
influenced the responses. To examine whether order of presenting the movements affected one of the primary variables, namely support for the claims, I conducted a mixed ANOVA, with the order as a between-subject variable, and claims of the two movements as a within-subject variable. There was a significant interaction effect: $F(1, 65) = 5.37$, $p = .024$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$.

Simple effect analysis showed that for feminist claim, the score of agreement did not significantly vary due to order; but for the vegan claim, when it was responded to as the second topic, its score dropped significantly compared to when it was the first topic of the questionnaire: $F(1, 65) = 4.96$, $p = .029$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. To better describe this interaction, I employed a t-test to compare agreements with the feminist claim and the vegan claim only when they were both the first topic and it showed no significant difference. In other words, the interaction, as depicted by Figure 1, resulted from the fact that, when presented as the first topic, the two claims were given similar support; yet when presented as the second topic, support for the feminist claim did not vary much but support for the vegan claim decreased.

However, as the p-value of the interaction was close to .05, the order effect might be a false positive. I accounted for the order effect and conducted separate analyses for each of the hypotheses, and the results were not much different from what was found when the order issue was ignored. Therefore, I presented the following findings based on the complete data, to keep the results clear and avoid low power issue due to fractionated data.

Figure 1

Support for movement claims by presenting order



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence interval.

Mean Difference Among Endorsements of Derogation Mechanisms. I first examined the exploratory aim 1 with respect to feminist movement and then vegan movement.

Examining Exploratory Aim 1 for Derogation Towards Feminist Movement. As participants in general supported the claim, none of their endorsements of the mechanisms was significantly higher than the midpoint. To examine the exploratory aim 1, I employed a repeated-measures ANOVA with the derogation mechanism (seven mechanisms) as a within-subject variable. As the Mauchly's test of sphericity was significant ($p < .001$), results were reported based on the Greenhouse-Geisser correction. The results revealed a significant main effect of the derogation type: $F(4.77, 309.97) = 11.45$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .15$. The effect size was larger than what the sample size could detect with 80% power according to post hoc sensitivity analysis.

The post hoc comparisons with Bonferroni corrected significance showed that the mechanism of "bad solution" had the endorsement score significantly higher than most of other mechanisms (*ps* < .001, except for comparisons with "holier-than-thou" and "trend following": *ps* = 1.00 and .051, respectively).

Examining Exploratory Aim 1 for Derogation Towards Vegan Movement. Similarly, as participants in general supported the claim, only two of their endorsements of the mechanisms, namely "holier-than-thou" and "trend following", were significantly higher than the midpoint: *ts* > 2.98, *ps* < .004, *ds* > .36. Examining exploratory aim 1, another repeated-measures ANOVA was employed with derogation mechanism as a within-subject variable. The results revealed a significant main effect of the derogation type: $F(6, 390) = 49.80$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .43$. The effect size was again larger than what the sample size could detect with 80% power.

The post hoc comparisons with Bonferroni corrected significance showed that the mechanism of "holier-than-thou" had the endorsement score significantly higher than any of the other mechanisms (*ps* < .001, except for one comparison: *p* = .002).

In sum, since "holier-than-thou" was among the highest endorsed mechanisms for the feminist movement, and the most highly endorsed mechanism for the vegan movement, it appeared to better reflect movement opponents' intention to derogate movement supporters, compared to other mechanisms.

Association Between Support for Claims and Endorsements of Mechanisms. Hypothesis 1 was tested by correlating support for the claim with each mechanism that had a mean endorsement higher than or equal to 3. As all mechanisms were endorsed higher than this benchmark, they all entered into the correlation analysis. The results (see Table 5) supported the hypothesis as a significant negative correlation coefficient was found across mechanisms towards either the vegan claim or feminist claim (*rs*: -.67 ~ -.32, *ps* < .001).

Most effect sizes were larger than what the sample size could detect with 80% power (r = .33). The mechanism of "bad solution" had the highest correlation with both attitudes towards the feminist claim (r = .64, p < .001) and vegan claim (r = .67, p < .001).

Table 5

Correlations between support for claims and endorsements of mechanisms

Derogation mechanisms	Support for feminist claim	Support for vegan claim
Bad solution	.64	.67
Offensive tone	.47	.46
Holier-than-thou	.32	.45
Controlling	.60	.55
Power seeking	.63	.52
Trend following	.42	.41
Hypocrite accusation	.57	.51

Note. All correlation coefficients are significant, .05 < *ps* < .01.

Prediction of Support for Claims. To examine the exploratory aim 2, the mechanisms with a negative correlation with the claim were entered into regression analysis to assess which mechanism was most influential in predicting agreement with the claim. For both claims, "bad solution" appeared to be the most influential predictor, such that in the context of the feminist movement, its beta coefficient was -.44 (p = .001, partial r^2 = .16), and the model with 7 predictors explained 54% of the variance of the criterion, $F(7, 59) = 9.81$, p < .001. In the context of the vegan movement, the beta coefficient of "bad solution" was -.50 (p < .001, partial r^2 = .26), and the model explained 56% of the variance of the criterion, $F(7, 59) = 10.90$, p < .001. Both effect sizes were larger than what the sample size could detect with 80% power (partial r^2= .11). Regression results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Support for claims regressed on derogation mechanisms

Derogation mechanisms	Support for feminist claim			Support for vegan claim		
	β	*t*	*p*	*β*	*t*	*p*
Bad solution	-.44	-3.39	.001	-.50	-4.56	<.001
Offensive tone	-.05	-0.39	.701	.09	0.76	.451
Holier-than-thou	.21	1.65	.105	-.16	-1.30	.197
Controlling	-.31	-1.57	.123	-.07	-0.50	.621
Power seeking	-.23	-1.31	.194	-.09	-0.71	.481
Trend following	-.06	-0.47	.641	-.04	-0.40	.688
Hypocrite accusation	.08	0.48	.632	-.18	-1.68	.098
R^2	.54		<.001	.56		<.001

Note. $N = 67$.

Association Between Support for Goals and Endorsement of Mechanisms.

Finally, testing hypothesis 2, correlation analyses (see Table 7) showed negative correlations between the average endorsement of overall derogation items and agreement with the goal of the feminist movement ($r = -.30$, $p = .014$) and the vegan movement ($r = -.25$, $p = .040$). Note that both effect sizes were smaller than what the sample size could detect with 80% power ($r = .33$).

Table 7

Correlations between support for the goals and overall derogation tendency

	Support for feminist goal	Support for vegan goal
Derogation tendency	-.30	-.25

Note. All correlation coefficients are significant, *ps* < .05.

Discussion

The thematic and quantitative analyses together generated several topics to be further discussed.

Qualitative Analyses: New Mechanisms

The qualitative examination of the texts indicated that a few themes reflected the content of the existing mechanisms, such as the sub-themes of "trend following", "controlling", and "superiority", while the first two both corresponding to mechanisms of the same title, and the last one corresponding to the mechanism of "holier-than-thou". The analysis also suggested that new mechanisms needed to be developed to better grasp the the wide range of derogation strategies. The themes that were dismissive in nature, yet not addressed by the eight mechanisms, and therefore could be incorporated to the list were: the one unique to the feminist movement (i.e., "egoistic motive"), those unique to the vegan movement (i.e., "strong identification" and "easiness"), and those shared by the two movements (i.e., "negative stereotypical traits" and "missing the picture").

Among the themes that were not covered by the original eight mechanisms, the theme of "easiness" concerned a relatively costly lifestyle and appeared to be primarily relevant to the vegan claim and might not be applicable as much when other claims were in discussion. This was because other movements either concerned changes of lifestyle that might cause inconvenience rather than financial cost (e.g., a claim about environmental movement, "single use plastic cutlery needs to be entirely banned, because it contributes to plastic pollution"), or policies regarding market regulations that exerted less direct influence on the lifestyle of the majority of people (e.g., one claim about the capitalist movement: "citizens should be allowed to sell their blood and even non-essential organs on the free market"). Therefore, it seemed less vital to include this theme as one of the mechanisms. Other themes all appeared valid candidates to be considered as derogation mechanisms.

The development of new derogation mechanisms could be summarised by Table 8. This table described that some themes were extracted from texts written about both movements, while some themes were uniquely identified in texts written about only one of the movements. Most of these themes were related to some of the existing derogation mechanisms, and the mapping between themes and mechanisms were illustrated by columns 3 and 4 of the table. When the content of the themes could not be fully reflected or captured by the initial mechanisms, new mechanisms emerged. The names and simple descriptions of the new mechanisms could be seen in Table 9.

Table 8

Emergence of new mechanisms from thematic analysis

Movements	Themes	Initial mechanisms[a]	Emerged mechanisms
Feminist and vegan movements	Possessing negative traits	Offensive tone	Protest anything
	Missing the picture	Bad consequence Bad solution	Missing the picture
Feminist movement	Egoistic motive	Power seeking[b]	Egoistic motive
Vegan movement	Negative attributions		
	Strong identification	—	Over-commitment
	Moral superiority	Holier-than-thou	—
	Controlling	Controlling	—
	Trend following	Trend following	—
	Easiness	—	—

Note. [a] The only initial mechanism not linked to one of the themes was “hypocrite accusation”.

[b] As ”power seeking” could be covered and accounted for by “egoistic motive”, it was not included in the final list of mechanisms.

Table 9

Descriptions of derogation mechanisms emerged from thematic analysis

Mechanisms	Descriptions
Egoistic motive	People support the movement because it serves their self-interest.
Missing the picture	Movement supporters do not fully understand the issue.
Protest anything	People support the movement because they just enjoy being radical about anything.
Over-commitment	People support the movement because they already identify too much with it to back down.

On the whole, according to Table 8, results of the thematic analysis were satisfying as the extracted themes were on the one hand, substantially related to the initial mechanisms developed based on real life examples and theory of do-gooder derogation, and on the other hand, still able to inform the emergence of the following new mechanisms. The reasoning behind how these newly emerged mechanisms came into place is presented as follows.

The Mechanism of *Egoistic Motive*. It was quite conceivable to include the theme of "egoistic motive" as one of the derogation mechanisms as it argued that people participated in a movement to pursue something other than a moral cause, but their own self interests. Just like the existing mechanisms of "controlling", "trend following", "holier-than-thou", and "power seeking", this new mechanism questioned the morality of the movement participants' motive. In fact, as seeking power or dominance over others fell under the umbrella of "egoistic pursuit", it was appropriate and parsimonious to merge the "power seeking" mechanism into this newly constructed "egoistic motive" mechanism.

The Mechanism of *Missing the Picture*. The theme of "missing the picture" suggested that movement supporters failed to comprehend substantial (or at least more than

trivial) aspects of issues related to the movement. This theme was related to the mechanisms of "bad consequence" and "bad solution", as they all implied that the supporters violated moral principles from a consequentialist or utilitarian perspective, in promoting a claim whose effect of bringing forth an overall positive influence was not well grounded, due to their lack of understanding of the related issues. Distinct from "bad consequence" and "bad solution", once "missing the picture" was also considered a derogation mechanism, it focused directly, rather than only indirectly (via sabotaging the claim), on undermining movement supporters.

The Mechanism of *Protest Anything*. The theme of "negative stereotypical traits" was mentioned by many participants in response to activists of both movements. It seemed to stress both the *display* and the *possession* of these traits. The former aspect (i.e., the display of negative stereotypical traits) largely coincided with a mechanism that was highlighted in the beginning, "offensive tone", in perceiving the language of the movement supporters as hostile and offensive.

Yet the latter aspect, or the possession of stereotypical traits, suggested something more inherent within the supporters that made them radical and aggressive, and thus implied: they supported certain claims not because of the morality embedded in those claims but due to their personality traits (e.g., aggressiveness, belligerence) stimulating them to engage in protests. This type of reasoning of deeming protestors as people looking for opportunities to protest or incite unrest certainly served to deny both the virtue of protestors and the moral cause of protests. Therefore, judging protesters as people who would "protest anything", could be included as one of the derogation mechanisms.

The Mechanism of *Over-Commitment*. The theme of "strong identification" described that the vegan practice and identification with veganism had become essential parts of some vegans' self-identity and therefore these people would strongly support the claim

that promoted a vegan lifestyle. This theme could be used to construct a derogation mechanism called “over-commitment” to ascribe people’s support for a movement claim to their commitment to living in line with the claim, instead of their desire to uphold the claim’s moral value.

One way of employing this mechanism is to use a disparaging tone and label people who espouse feminist or the Me Too movement as “just a group of feminists”, or call someone protesting for climate change as “another environmentalist”. Such labelling serves to stress that people’s participation in collective action is primarily driven by an entrenched commitment to certain movement, not necessarily moral concerns.

Comparison Between Feminist and Vegan Movements. One notable difference between the mechanisms identified regarding two movements was that the feminist movement texts revealed one unique theme “egoistic motive”, while the vegan movement texts suggested one unique theme “negative attributions” along with its five sub-themes (i.e., “moral superiority”, “controlling”, “trend following”, “easiness” and “strong identification”).

The reason for the two movements producing unique themes were likely to be related to the claims presented to participants. Specifically, the feminist claim was about making it easier for the under-represented gender to succeed in all professions where two genders did not have equal numbers, and it could be intuitive for opponents of the claim to think of the advocates as people who wanted to get career advancement just because of their gender, which indicated their egoistic motive.

On the other hand, the vegan claim was about asking people to adopt a vegan diet. There was no one apparent or intangible factor (such as “a job” in the case of feminist movement) for opponents of the claim to regard as the underlying cause of advocates’ motive, and therefore multiple attributions or assumptions were made about why vegan advocates were pushing the claim.

Quantitative Analyses

Next, I turn to discussions based on the results of quantitative analyses. One important question was whether results of feminist and vegan claims converged. Although the *qualitative* results indicated that each movement had its own unique mechanism extracted in the process of thematic analysis, the *quantitative* findings suggested that the two movements largely converged when it came to the exploratory aims and hypotheses.

The first finding in common was that the mechanism of "holier-than-thou" was the mostly highly supported mechanisms with respect to both claims. Another similarity was that "bad solution" had the highest correlation with support for both claims and was the most influential, and the only significant, predictor of both claims. The hypotheses testing also indicated that the hypotheses were supported: the endorsement of each mechanism was negatively correlated with support for the claims, and the endorsements of derogation items were negatively correlated, although with insufficient power, with support for the goals.

Interestingly, although "holier-than-thou" had the highest endorsement, it did not provide unique prediction of attitude toward claims, compared to "bad solution". This might have to do with how "holier-than-thou" was a mechanism focusing on movement supporters, while "bad solution" was a mechanism primarily about the claim. This is to say, taking the vegan movement as example, the extent to which people resented some vegans' perceived sense of moral superiority did not translate to how much they opposed the claim about adopting vegan diets. It was the extent to which they regarded veganism as a defective solution to fulfil animal rights that predicted how they felt about the vegan claim.

Finally, one notable finding was that participants in general supported both claims, and the results might be different when people reacted to a claim they opposed, which is investigated in Study 2.

Study 2

In the previous study, I found negative associations, as hypothesised, between people's agreements with claims made in social movements and their agreements with derogatory statements towards movement activists. In other words, the more people opposed certain movement claim, the more they tended to criticise those making it.

Moreover, the findings of exploratory analyses in Study 1 lead to two hypotheses to be tested; namely, compared with other mechanisms, the mechanism of "holier-than-thou" would be more highly endorsed, and the mechanism of 'bad solution" would be a more influential predictor of attitudes toward movement claims.

However, as participants in the previous study supported the movement claims in general, it was important to investigate whether the aforementioned negative association would still hold when people were presented with claims they found unfavourable.

In addition to quantitative analysis, in the previous study I also conducted a thematic analysis, and the results suggested that more choices could be added to the list of derogation mechanisms, while some existing mechanisms needed revision. The addition and revision should help better pinpoint derogation mechanisms used to condemn activists.

Therefore, Study 2 aimed to test the following 4 hypotheses to investigate whether the previously found features of the mechanisms would still hold, both with respect to the newly developed mechanisms, and in the context where people opposed the proposed claims.

Hypothesis 1: The mechanism of "holier-than-thou" is the most highly endorsed mechanism.

Hypothesis 2: Mechanisms that are endorsed moderately or strongly (i.e., with endorsement at or above point 3 on a 7-point scale) will overall correlate negatively with agreement with the claim.

Hypothesis 3: The mechanism of ‘bad solution” is the most influential predictor of attitudes toward movement claims, when including mechanisms having a significant negative correlation with support for the claim (as identified by testing hypothesis 2) as regressors.

Hypothesis 4: People who overall support the mechanisms highly will also have weaker support for the goal

In addition to testing the above hypotheses, Study 2 also aimed to achieve 3 exploratory aims.

First, as most of the derogation items were asking participants whether they agree with disparaging statements toward movement supporters, participants might be reluctant to express their opinions freely; in other words, a social desirability bias (Krumpal, 2011; Tourangeau & Yan, 2007) might affect participants responses. To examine the influence of social desirability concerns on participants responses, I adopted a method of *indirect questioning* (Larson, 2018; Fisher & Tellis, 1998) by asking participants how they thought the the *general public* would endorse the derogation mechanisms. In doing so, I aimed to achieve this goal:

Exploratory aim 1: Identifying mechanisms that lead to larger differences between participant’s personal endorsement and their perceived social endorsements, compared to other mechanisms.

This exploratory aim would be achieved by first conducting a moderation analysis to investigate whether there existed an interaction between the type of endorsements (personal vs. perceived social) and the type of moral derogation mechanisms. Then, simple effect analysis was employed to determine which mechanism lead to significant difference between participants’ own and perceived social endorsement.

Next, since there were as many as 11 mechanisms to be investigated, it was worth exploring whether the derogation items would load on higher-order factors through conducting an exploratory factor analysis.

Exploratory aim 2: Employing factor analysis to assess potential higher-order factors underlying the 11 mechanisms.

Finally, as the thematic analysis of Study 1 indicated that some mechanisms might be more emphasised than the others depending on the movement claims in discussion (e.g., "egoistic motive" was highlighted in discussion of the feminist but not the vegan claim), in current study I planned to present a range of movement topics, as did in the pilot study, to participants, and asked them to select the one whose claim they found most undesirable, out of those whose goals they agreed with. This would allow me to detect mechanisms that were relevant across social movements.

Determining which social movement or movement claim to be included in Study 2 was driven by two considerations. The first consideration was whether the movement lead to large difference between agreements with its goal and claim, according to results of the pilot study. The second consideration stemmed from the fact that the pilot study showed that support for goals and claims of the capitalist movement was lower than those of any other movement. Why were the responses about the capital movement different from those about other movements? One explanation was that the capitalist movement was the only movement focusing more on the importance of *liberty*, while other movements (i.e., vegan, feminist, LGBTQ+, environmental and climate change movements) were more connected to the urgency of achieving different facets of *justice* (e.g., gender, environmental and economic justice). As liberty is more tightly associated with the Right wing values, and justice is more linked to the Left wing values in terms of political orientation (Domhoff, 2013), and the Left-Right division is a commonly employed reference tool by many people when processing

information about social issues and political policies (Mair, 2009), I decided to examine whether the orientation of the social movement, namely liberty-orientation versus justice-orientation, would affect people's endorsement of derogation mechanisms.

Based on the above two considerations, the list of movements presenting to participants included five movements from the pilot study that had larger differences between support for the goal and claim, which were the animal rights (vegan), feminist, LGBTQ+, Me Too, and capitalist movements, with the first four as justice-oriented and the fifth as liberty-oriented movements. Adding one more liberty-oriented movement to the list, I included the medical freedom movement. The goals and claims of these six movements can be found in Table 10. Here is the final exploratory aim:

Exploratory aim 3: Examining whether patterns of participants' endorsements of the derogation mechanisms differ by the orientation (liberty vs. justice) of the movement in discussion.

Exploratory aims 2 and 3 were examined together by investigating hypotheses 1 to 5 and the exploratory aim 1, while controlling for both the factor structure and the movement orientation.

This study was preregistered on the Open Science Framework (OSF; https://osf.io/g6jsk) prior to data collection, and a priori power analysis using G*Power was conducted to ensure that the sample size would have sufficient power to detect an effect equal to or larger than a medium one when testing each hypothesis with 80% power. Importantly, the power calculations were all based on mean differences, rather than the EFA (proposed by exploratory aim 2), since due to budget constraint, the sample size was not large enough to provide sufficient validity for EFA related analyses (exploratory aims 2 and 3), and the purpose for these analyses would be primarily exploratory.

Table 10

Goals and claims of six social movements used in Study 2

Movements	Goals and claims
Feminist	Goal: We should achieve gender equality Claim: In professions where there are not equal numbers of women and men, it should be made much easier for the under-represented gender to succeed than the over-represented gender
Animal rights	Goal: We should treat animals in human care kindly Claim: Everyone who can should adopt a vegan diet that excludes animal products such as meat, eggs, and dairy
LGBTQ+	Goal: Society should be more tolerant toward people of diverse sexuality and gender identities Claim: In reproductive health care, we should not refer to services for 'women' but rather 'people with a uterus', because some of those people identify as men
Me Too	Goal: We should do more to ensure justice for victims of sexual harassment Claim: We should always believe people who say they have been harassed, by default
Capitalist	Goal: We should support economic markets free of government interference Claim: Citizens should be allowed to sell their blood and even non-essential organs on the free market
Medical freedom	Goal: We should have the right to make our own health and medical decisions Claim: Government should not implement mandatory medical intervention, such as vaccines

Methods

Participants

I recruited 110 participants using the online platform Prolific Academic. Responding to the question about gender, 76 participants chose female, 32 chose male, a person chose "other" and a person chose "rather not say". The mean age was 25.05 years (*SD* = 6.63), with 14 people under the age of 20, 77 people in the range of 20 to 29, 15 people in the range of 30 to 39, 2 people in the range of 40 to 49, and 2 people in the range of 50 to 59.

Procedures

Participants completed a questionnaire about goals and claims of social movements, derogation mechanisms towards movement supporters, and a demographic questionnaire. Responding to these questionnaires took about 10 minutes. At the end of the survey, participants were debriefed. Each participant was paid 1.25 pounds, as required by the U.K. minimum wage regulation and recommended by the Prolific platform.

Measures

The research questionnaire first introduced a list of six social movements, and one pair of goal and claim for each movement. The goals and claims of the social movements are shown in Table 10. Then, participants were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each of the goals and claims. Among the claims which they opposed and whose goals they agreed with, they were asked to select the one claim that they disagreed with the most, and then answer the remaining questions based on this claim. If they chose to disagree with all of the goals, they would also be be asked to answer the remaining questions based on the claim they disagreed with the most. Later, they were presented with items exploring their attitudes toward the claim they just selected and the claim's corresponding goal on a 7-point scale (anchored at 1 = *strongly oppose* and 7 = *strongly support*), and 33 Likert items that were divided into 11 blocks, each block representing one kind of derogation

mechanism (e.g., “holier-than-thou”, “bad consequence”, etc.), anchored at 1(*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*). Later, participants were asked to indicate how strongly they thought the general public would agree with 11 statements about the claim on a 7-point scale (anchored at 1 = *extremely unimportant* and 7 = *extremely important*), each statement representing a derogation mechanism (e.g., “people support the claim because they feel they are better than others”, “the claim will do more harm than good”). Finally, they were told to complete demographic questions.

Results

Data Preparation

I first checked whether any data met the exclusion criteria (as specified in the Exclusion Criteria section at https://osf.io/g6jsk) and 5 participants indicated inconsistency. The inconsistency resulted from the fact that they gave a score larger than the midpoint of a scale assessing their support of a claim which they had previously indicated their disagreement toward the same claim on a binary scale. The data failing the consistency check was removed and resulted in a sample of 105 participants (72 women, 32 men, 1 other; the mean age = 25.07 years, *SD* = 6.54).

Each mechanism was calculated by averaging across scores of three items for measuring the mechanism. The corrected item-total correlation was calculated for each item and all scores were above .30 (see Table 11). Reliability coefficients were also calculated and all Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were above .75 except for 2 mechanisms (“over-commitment” and “egoistic motive”; alphas = .72 and .68, respectively).

Agreements with Goals and Claims

As anticipated, participants indicated strong support for the goals and opposition to the claims (see Table 11), such that support for goals was significantly higher than the

midpoint (4) of the scale (t = 23.71, p < .001) and support for claims was significantly lower (t = -31.13, p < .001).

Mean Difference Among Endorsements of Derogation Mechanisms

Endorsements of each derogation mechanism can also be found in Table 11. Most endorsements were significantly higher than the midpoint (*ts* > 2.32, *ps* < .022, *ds* > 0.23) except for "trend following", "over-commitment", and "hypocrite accusation". Note that the sample size of 105 people could detect a Cohen's *d* equal to or larger than 0.28 with 80% power and only "controlling" had a smaller Cohen's *d* among mechanisms significantly above the midpoint.

Testing hypothesis 1, I employed a repeated-measures ANOVA to investigate the differences among endorsements of the derogation mechanisms. The Mauchly's test of sphericity was significant (p < .001), I therefore reported the following results based on the Greenhouse-Geisser correction. A significant within-subject effect with large effect size was found: $F(7.64, 794.70) = 25.27$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .20$. Post-hoc tests with Bonferroni corrected confidence intervals indicated that the mechanism of "bad consequence" was significantly endorsed more highly than all of other mechanisms, except that its difference with "bad solution" was marginally significant (p = .057).

Based on the finding, the hypothesis was not supported, as "bad consequence", rather than "holier-than-thou", was the most highly endorsed mechanism.

Table 11

Descriptive statistics of support for movements and endorsements of the derogation mechanisms

	M	*S.D.*	α^a
Support for the movement			
Support for the goal	5.99	.86	—
Support for the claim	1.67	.77	—
Agreement with derogation mechanisms			
Bad solution	5.36	1.26	.81
Bad consequence	5.82	1.30	.90
Offensive tone	4.77	1.56	.93
Holier-than-thou	4.75	1.41	.89
Egoistic motive	4.65	1.23	.68
Controlling	4.35	1.54	.92
Trend following	4.25	1.62	.92
Hypocrite accusation	4.09	1.51	.91
Missing the picture	5.07	1.21	.77
Protest anything	4.12	1.51	.88
Over-commitment	4.17	1.29	.72

Note. $N = 105$.
[a]α = Cronbachs' alpha.

Association Between Support for Claims and Endorsements of Mechanisms

Hypothesis 2 was tested by conducting a correlation analysis between support for the claim, and the endorsements of each of the derogation mechanisms with a moderate or high score (above 3 on the 7-point scale). As all mechanisms had an average endorsement score higher than 4, they all entered the analysis.

Results (see Table 12) showed that the hypothesis was mostly supported, as most correlation coefficients were significantly negative (*rs*: -.20 ~ -.63, *ps* < .044), except for

correlation between support for the claim and endorsements of the mechanisms "holier-than-thou" (r = -.17, p = .090) and "over-commitment" (r = -.11, p = .246).

The mechanism of "bad consequence" had the highest correlation coefficient (r = -.63, p < .001). Note that about 5 mechanisms had correlations with a small effect size (rs < .30) that was smaller than what the sample size could detect with 80% power.

Table 12

Correlations between support for the claims and endorsements of mechanisms

	Support for the claim
Bad solution	-.25*
Bad consequence	-.63**
Offensive tone	-.46**
Holier-than-thou	-.17†
Egoistic motive	-.21*
Controlling	-.31**
Trend following	-.20*
Hypocrite accusation	-.29**
Missing the picture	-.38**
Protest anything	-.46**
Over-commitment	-.11

Note. †p < .10. *p < .05. *p < .01. ***p < .001.

Prediction of Support for Claims

Hypothesis 3 was tested by using regression with all of the mechanisms that had a significant correlation with support for the claim, as identified in testing hypothesis 2 (all mechanisms except for "holier-than-thou" and and "over-commitment"), as predictors. Only "bad consequence" and "offensive tone" had significant regression coefficients (β = -.55, p

< .001, partial r^2 = .24 and β = -.22, p = .036, partial r^2 = .05, respectively). The effect size of "offensive tone" was smaller than what the sample size could detect with 80% power (partial r^2 = .07). This model of 9 predictors explained 48% of the variance of the criterion, $F(9, 95) = 9.67$, $p < .001$. Regression results were shown in Table 13.

The above finding suggested that hypothesis 3 was not supported, as "bad consequence", rather than "bad solution", was the most influential predictor of attitude toward movement claims.

Table 13

Support for claim regressed on derogation mechanisms

	β	t	p
Bad solution	.01	0.07	.942
Bad consequence	-.55	-5.46	< .001
Offensive tone	-.22	-2.13	.036
Egoistic motive	.08	0.86	.393
Controlling	-.05	-0.48	.635
Trend following	.07	0.72	.474
Hypocrite accusation	.01	0.14	.893
Missing the picture	.09	0.87	.385
Protest anything	-.19	-1.54	.127

Note. N = 105. R^2 = .54, $p < .001$

Association Between Support for Goals and Endorsement of Mechanisms

Hypothesis 4 was tested by correlating support for the goal with overall average endorsement of all derogation items, and it was not supported as the analysis revealed a nonsignificant correlation.

Influence of Perspective (Personal vs. Perceived Social) of Derogation

The exploratory aim 1 was examined by inputting scores of personal endorsements of each mechanism and beliefs about other people's endorsements of those mechanisms in a 2 by 11 repeated measures ANOVA, with the perspective of endorsements (personal vs. perceived social) serving as a moderator. Descriptive statistics were shown in Table 14. As specified as one exclusion criterion (https://osf.io/g6jsk), one participant's data was excluded due to the fact that the same score was given to all items assessing the perceived social endorsements of mechanisms. The Mauchly's test of sphericity was significant ($p < .001$), the following results would be reported based on the Greenhouse-Geisser correction.

The ANOVA with a sample size of 104 participants indicated a significant interaction effect: $F(7.33, 755.32) = 3.17$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, with a small to medium effect size. Simple effect analyses showed the differences between personal and perceived social endorsements were significant across 6 of the mechanisms, namely, "offensive tone", "trend following", "missing the picture", "egoistic motive", "protest anything", and "controlling": $Fs(1, 103)$: $5.17 \sim 9.92$, $ps < .025$, $\eta_p^2 = .05 \sim .09$, but only marginal or not significant for the others. The differences of these six mechanisms all resulted from the fact that their perceived social endorsements were higher than participants' personal endorsements, suggesting the potential influence of social desirability concern on participants' responses.

In addition to the interaction effect as hypothesised, the analysis also showed both significant within-subject main effects. First, there was a significant difference among 11 mechanisms: $F(7.33, 755.32) = 23.99$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .19$. Post hoc comparisons with Bonferroni corrections showed that "bad consequence" was endorsed significantly more than any of other mechanisms ($ps < .026$). Second, the perceived social endorsements of the mechanisms were significantly higher than personal endorsements: $F(7.33, 755.32) = 8.50$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$.

Table 14

Descriptive statistics of endorsements of derogation mechanisms by perspectives (personal vs. perceived social)

	Personal endorsements		Perceived social endorsements	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Bad solution	5.36	1.26	5.15	1.26
Bad consequence	5.82	1.30	5.63	1.37
Offensive tone	4.77	1.56	5.15	1.33
Holier-than-thou	4.75	1.41	4.83	1.47
Egoistic motive	4.65	1.23	4.94	1.41
Controlling	4.35	1.54	4.63	1.45
Trend following	4.25	1.62	4.63	1.44
Hypocrite accusation	4.09	1.51	4.37	1.51
Missing the picture	5.07	1.21	5.36	1.24
Protest anything	4.12	1.51	4.47	1.55
Over-commitment	4.17	1.29	4.45	1.64

Note. $N = 105$.

Factor Analyses and Identification of Higher-Level Derogation Schemes

Factor Analyses of Derogation Items. The exploratory aim 2 was examined by first conducting an EFA on all 33 items of the mechanisms. The EFA was conducted with the ULS extraction and Promax rotation. Judging from the scree plot, as the third factor appeared to be the elbow point, two factors were selected. Together these two factors explained 41.18% of the variance of participants' responses. Next, with respect to the individual items, those failed to load on any factor with loading larger than .32 or had cross loadings larger than .32 on two or more factors, were excluded.

The resulting factor structure (see Table 15) was largely clear and straightforward that items of 5 mechanisms ("trend following", "holier-than-thou", "offensive tone",

"controlling", and "over-commitment") all loaded on one of the factors, and those of 4 mechanisms ("bad consequence", "missing the picture", "bad solution", and "hypocrite accusation") loaded on the other.

The less clear part had to do with the remaining 2 mechanisms, namely "egoistic motive" and "protest anything", which both had only one item loaded on the first factor, with the other two items suffering from the issues of either cross or low factor loadings. I excluded all 6 items of these two mechanisms from the factor structure to simplify the interpretation thereof. The remaining 27 items were inputted into another EFA and the 2 two-factor structure with the same loading pattern was reaffirmed, which explained 42.63% of the variance.

Next, I calculated participants' scores for one factor with 5 mechanisms by averaging scores of their corresponding 15 items, and the other factor with 4 mechanisms by averaging scores of the corresponding 12 items, and then tested hypotheses 1 to 4 following the same methods outlined above. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, two items, one of the "egoistic motive" mechanism and one of the "protest anything" mechanism, were excluded from the factor structure as other items of their corresponding mechanisms all had cross or low factor loadings, the resulting factor structure after such exclusion became "clean" in the sense that the two factors only consist of mechanisms that were represented by their entire set of three (rather than one or two) items. This "cleanness" allowed me to calculate the scores for each factor with respect to the perceived social endorsements of the mechanisms, such that 5 items, each representing a mechanism, were averaged to form the score for one factor and the mean score of other 4 items were calculated as the score for the other factor. These calculations enabled me to also test hypothesis 5, in addition to hypotheses 1 to 4, in the context of factor scores instead of individual mechanism endorsements

The two factors identified by the EFA model seemed to reflect two derogation schemes. The factor comprising items of 5 mechanisms (“trend following”, “holier-than-thou”, “offensive tone”, “controlling”, and “over-commitment”) might be interpreted as focusing on criticising the character of movement supporters; the factor comprising items of 4 mechanisms (“bad consequence”, “missing the picture”, “bad solution”, and “hypocrite accusation”) might be interpreted as aiming to challenge the effectiveness of movement claims from a consequentialist point of view. For the sake of reporting the following results with clarity, these two schemes are labelled character-focused scheme and consequence-focused scheme, respectively. Further discussions about features of these derogation schemes can be found in the discussion section.

Table 15

Exploratory Factor Analysis of derogation items

Derogation item	Factor loadings	
	1	2
Bad solution		
The claim fails to address the root of the issue.	-.07	**.62**
The claim only offers a trivial solution to what it hopes to change.	-.05	**.40**
Adopting the claim will not contribute much to the achievement of its goal.	.02	**.62**
Bad consequence		
Adopting this claim will cause bad consequences.	-.27	**.87**
Putting the claim into policy will negatively affect many people.	-.03	**.67**
The claim will do more harm than good.	-.20	**.85**
Offensive tone		
People who make the claim are too aggressive in their tone.	**.53**	.20
Supporters of the claim make their points in an overly harsh way.	**.60**	.21
Those who endorse the claim are hostile towards other people.	**.59**	.22
Holier-than-thou		
People support this claim because they feel they are more moral than others.	**.67**	-.31
People make this claim because they think they are better than others because of their moral stance.	**.73**	-.17
People advocate this claim because doing so makes them feel more righteous than others.	**.81**	-.17
Egoistic motive		
People support this claim because it serves their self-interest.	**.39**	.14
People agree with this claim because it will hurt people like them less than others.	.21	.31
People advocate this claim because they can benefit from it.	.22	.23
Controlling		
Advocates of this claim are motivated to control other people.	**.49**	.17
People endorse this claim because they want to have power over other people's behaviour.	**.58**	.16
People support this claim because they like to tell people what to do.	**.60**	.29

Table 15

Exploratory Factor Analysis of derogation items

Derogation item	Factor loadings	
	1	2
Trend following		
People support this claim in order to follow trends.	**.82**	-.17
The reason people are in favour of this claim is to fit in with a group.	**.82**	-.15
People make such claims in order to get more "likes" or more followers on social media.	**.72**	.02
Hypocrite accusation		
People who endorse the claim tend to be hypocrites.	.25	**.54**
People advocating this claim say one thing and do another.	.09	**.58**
Supporters of this claim do not practice what they preach.	.06	**.55**
Missing the picture		
People make this claim because they do not fully understand the issue.	-.18	**.79**
People come to support this claim because they have limited personal experience.	.01	**.50**
People support this claim because they have not done sufficient research on the topic.	-.10	**.69**
Protest anything		
People support this claim because they are looking for something to get angry at.	.51	.34
This claim is not special to its supporters, just another thing to protest.	**.49**	.29
The people who advocate this claim are the kind of people who enjoy being radical about anything.	.50	.37
Over-commitment		
People support this claim because they identify too much with their movement to back down.	**.56**	-.18
This claim only gets support from people who have made it their whole lifestyle.	**.54**	-.17
The only people advocating this claim are highly committed activists.	**.41**	.01

Note. Statements in bold were also used while asking participants to rate the extent to which they think other people in general would agree with the statements.

Influence of Orientation (Liberty vs. Justice) of the Claims

Support for Goal and Claim by Movement. As mentioned earlier, the content of the six movements fell into two categories, one focusing on liberty (capitalist and medical freedom movements) and one focusing on justice (animal rights or vegan, feminist, LGBTQ+, and Me Too movements). When looking at descriptive statistics of participants' support of goal and claim by movement in Table 16, the above categorisation (liberty and justice) was buttressed as both the capitalist and medical freedom movements received lowest support for their goal and claim, compared to other movements.

Table 16

Descriptive statistics of support for the movements and overall derogation tendencies

Movement	Support for the goal		Support for the claim		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*N*
Animal rights	6.38	1.02	1.94	0.68	16
Capitalist	5.28	0.67	1.39	0.61	18
Feminist	6.58	0.67	2.00	0.74	12
LGBTQ+	5.86	0.53	1.93	0.92	14
Me Too	6.86	0.36	1.79	1.05	14
Medical freedom	5.65	0.66	1.39	0.56	31
Liberty-oriented	5.51	0.68	1.39	0.57	49
Justice-oriented	6.41	0.78	1.91	0.84	56

Note. $N = 105$.

Each movement was chosen by around 15 (ranging from 12 to 18) participants as the one whose claim they found most objectionable, with the exception of the medical freedom movement, which was chose by 31 participants. The reason for why the claim of the medical

freedom movement elicited disagreement from more participants than other claims might be related to the fact that the data was collected during the Covid pandemic.

As the number of participants who chose one of the liberty-oriented claims was similar to the number of those who chose among justice-oriented claims, it was appropriate to create a variable indicating the distinction between liberty and justice orientations. To confirm whether participants evaluated goals and claims of two orientations differently, an independent-samples t-test was conducted, and agreements with liberty-oriented goals and claims were significantly lower than those with justice-oriented goals and claims (t = -6.26 and -3.69, respectively, $ps < .001$).

Hypotheses 1 to 4 would be revisited as I tried to account for the influence of the orientation (liberty vs. justice) of the issues. As the two derogation schemes identified by EFA provided a simpler and informative way to understand participants' use of the derogation strategies, both the scores the individual mechanisms and the schemes would serve as dependent variables to be investigated.

Revisiting Hypothesis 1, Controlling for Claim Orientation. The descriptive statistics of endorsements of mechanisms by claim orientation can be found in Table 17.

A repeated measures ANOVA was conducted with mechanism endorsement as the within-subject variable, and the movement orientation as a between-subject variable. As the Mauchly's test of sphericity was significant ($p < .001$), results would be reported based on the Greenhouse-Geisser correction. In addition to the significant difference among mechanisms: $F(8.04, 827.67) = 28.01$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .21$, the results indicated a significant and larger than medium interaction effect: $F(8.04, 827.67) = 8.23$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, while the effect of movement orientation was not significant.

Hypothesis 1 was tested by analysing the interaction and examining whether "holier-than-thou" received highest endorsement. The hypothesis was not supported with respect to

those finding one of the liberty-oriented claims most objectionable, as the mechanism of "bad consequence", rather than "holier-than-thou", was given a score of endorsement significantly higher than all the other 10 mechanisms, based on post hoc comparison with Bonferroni correction (*ps* < .001).

Table 17

Descriptive statistics of endorsements of derogation mechanisms and schemes by claim orientation

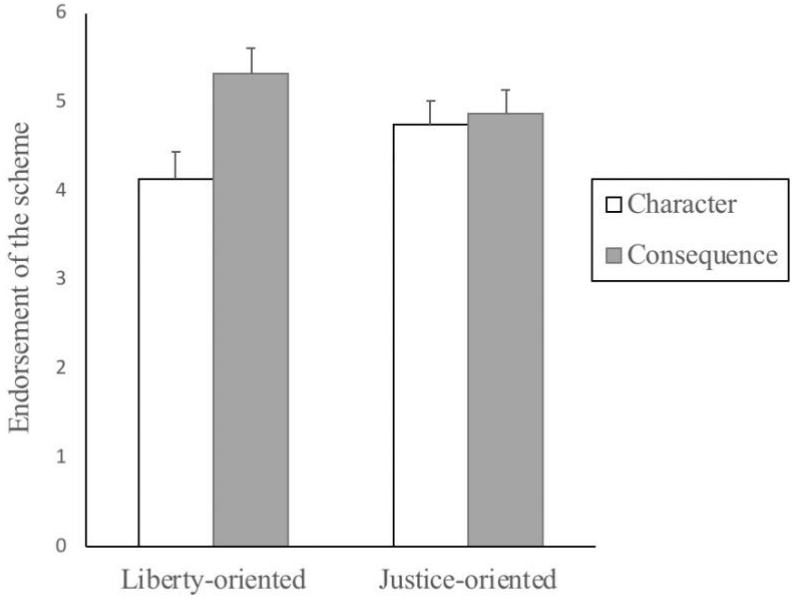
Mechanism/Scheme	Liberty-oriented claim (*N* = 49)		Justice-oriented claim (*N* = 56)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Derogation mechanism				
Bad solution	5.29	1.31	5.42	1.23
Bad consequence	6.37	0.88	5.33	1.41
Offensive tone	4.61	1.49	4.90	1.62
Holier-than-thou	4.37	1.30	5.09	1.42
Egoistic motive	4.65	1.09	4.65	1.34
Controlling	3.97	1.51	4.68	1.51
Trend following	3.67	1.49	4.76	1.58
Hypocrite accusation	4.24	1.38	3.96	1.61
Missing the picture	5.42	1.08	4.77	1.25
Protest anything	4.16	1.40	4.08	1.61
Over-commitment	4.05	1.28	4.27	1.31
Derogation Scheme				
Character-focused	4.13	0.95	4.74	1.15
Consequence-focused	5.33	0.85	4.87	1.08

Among participants opposing one of the justice-oriented claims the most, the hypothesis was supported as "holier-than-thou" was among the most strongly endorsed mechanisms, with no other mechanism being significantly endorsed more highly than it.

Controlling for Both Claim Orientation and Derogation Scheme. Another mixed ANOVA was conducted with derogation scheme (character-focused vs. consequence-focused), rather than the 11 derogation mechanisms, as the within-subject variable, and the movement orientation as a between-subject variable was employed. Similarly, the results showed a nonsignificant effect of the orientation of claims, and a significant and large main effect of the scheme: $F(1, 103) = 43.36$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .30$, indicating that the consequence-focused scheme was endorsed more strongly than the character-focused scheme. There was also a significant and large interaction effect: $F(1, 103) = 27.87$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .21$, as depicted in Figure 2. The simple effect analysis showed that for participants selecting a liberty-oriented claim, the consequence-focused scheme was endorsed significantly more strongly than the character-focused scheme: $F(1, 103) = 65.98$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .39$, but for participants who picked a justice-oriented claim, the two schemes had similar endorsement levels.

Figure 2

Endorsements of schemes (character-focused vs. consequence-focused by claim orientation (liberty-oriented vs. justice-oriented)



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence interval.

Revisiting Hypothesis 2, Controlling for Claim Orientation. Hypothesis 2 was tested by correlating support for the claim with mechanism and scheme endorsements separately for participants responding to claims of different orientations. As shown in Table 18, for liberty-oriented claims, several mechanisms did not correlate significantly with support for the claim, including "bad solution", "holier-than-thou", "egoistic motive", "trend following", "hypocrite accusation", and "over-commitment".

Table 18

Correlations between support for claim and endorsements of mechanisms/schemes by claim orientation

Mechanism/Scheme	Liberty-oriented claim (N = 49)	Justice-oriented claim (N = 56)
	Derogation mechanism	
Bad solution	-.25†	-.32*
Bad consequence	-.70**	-.53**
Offensive tone	-.39**	-.61**
Holier-than-thou	<.01	-.44**
Egoistic motive	-.06	-.30*
Controlling	-.34*	-.49**
Trend following	-.19	-.45**
Hypocrite accusation	-.14	-.35**
Missing the picture	-.36*	-.30*
Protest anything	-.49**	-.47**
Over-commitment	-.23	-.12
	Derogation scheme	
Character-focused	-.35*	-.56**
Consequence-focused	-.45**	-.48**

Note. $^{\dagger}p < .10$. *$p < .05$. *$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

The hypothesis was more fully supported with respect to justice-oriented claims, as a significant coefficient was found across correlations of each mechanism except for the mechanism of "over-commitment", with "offensive tone" showing strongest correlation (r = -.61, p < .001).

Interestingly, among all mechanisms, "holier-than-thou" was the only one having significantly different correlations with claims of different orientations, such that its correlation with liberty-oriented claim (r = .001) differed significantly from that with justice-oriented claim (r = -.44): z = 2.34, p = .019.

Controlling for both claim orientation and derogation scheme. With liberty-oriented claims, the character-focused scheme (r = -.35, p = .014) had a weaker, although not significantly weaker, correlation than consequence-focused scheme (r = -.45, p = .001). Note that the sample size (n = 49) could detect a correlation larger than a medium effect (r = .38) with 80% power.

In addition, character-focused scheme (r = -.56, p < .001) had a stronger, although not significantly stronger, correlation than the consequence-focused scheme (r = -.48, p < .001). Note that the sample size (n = 56) could detect a correlation larger than a medium effect (r = .36) with 80% power.

Revisiting Hypothesis 3, Controlling for Claim Orientation. Hypothesis 3 was tested by separately regressing support for the claim on 5 mechanisms (those with low correlations were excluded) for people disagreeing with a liberty-oriented claim the most, and on 10 mechanisms ("over-commitment" was not included due to low correlation) for people who found a justice-oriented claim most objectionable.

Results of both regressions indicated that the hypothesis of "bad solution" as the most influential predictor was not supported. As shown in Table 19, with attitude toward liberty-oriented claims as the dependent variable, "bad consequence" was the only significant

predictor (β = -.67, p < .001), and the model explained 56% of the variance of the criterion, F(5, 43) = 10.81, p < .001. When attitude toward justice-oriented claims were the dependent variables, "offensive tone" and "bad consequence" were significant predictors (β = -.41, p = .023 and β = -.34, p = .027, respectively), but the effect size of "bad consequence" was smaller than what the sample size (n = 56) could detect with 80% power. The model explained 50% of the variance of the criterion, F(10, 45) = 4.49, p < .001.

Table 19

Support for claims regressed on derogation mechanisms/schemes

Mechanism/Scheme	Liberty-oriented claim (N = 49)			Justice-oriented claim (N = 56)		
	β	t	p	β	t	p
Derogation mechanism						
Bad solution	—	—	—	-.11	-0.77	.448
Bad consequence	-.67	-5.12	<.001	-.34	-2.29	.027
Offensive tone	.05	0.33	.744	-.41	-2.36	.023
Holier-than-thou	—	—	—	-.20	-1.25	.219
Egoistic motive	—	—	—	.19	1.31	.195
Controlling	-.14	-1.24	.223	-.03	-0.14	.893
Trend following	—	—	—	-.07	-0.43	.671
Hypocrite accusation	—	—	—	-.08	-0.57	.573
Missing the picture	.16	1.19	.241	.05	0.36	.718
Protest anything	-.23	-1.85	.071	.11	0.56	.578
R^2	.56		<.001	.50		<.001
Derogation scheme						
Character-focused	-.15	-0.98	.332	-.43	-3.47	.001
Consequence-focused	-.37	-2.39	.021	-.28	-2.22	.030
R^2	.22		.003	.37		<.001

Controlling for Both claim orientation and derogation scheme. Two additional regression analyses were conducted by replacing the regressors with the derogation schemes. For people responding to a liberty-oriented claim, only consequence-focused scheme was a significant predictor (β = -.37, p = .022), its effect size was again smaller than what the sample size (n = 49) could detect with 80% power, and the model explained 22% of the variance of the criterion, $F(2, 46) = 6.42$, p = .003.

For people responding to a justice-oriented claim, both character-focused and consequence-focused schemes were significant predictors (β = -.43, p = .001; β = -.26, p = .043, respectively), and the effect size of consequence-focused scheme was smaller than what the sample size (n = 56) could detect with 80% power. The model explained 37% of the variance of the criterion, $F(2, 53) = 15.60$, p < .001.

Revisiting Hypothesis 4, Controlling for Claim Orientation. Hypothesis 4 was tested by separately analysing the correlations between support for the goal and mean of overall derogation items for participants responding to claims of different orientations. The hypothesis was not supported, as none of the correlation coefficients was significant.

Controlling for Both Claim Orientation and Derogation Scheme. I further investigated the associations between support for the goal and the two schemes, and the results (see Table 20) indicated that for those disagreeing with a justice-oriented claim the most, the character-focused scheme correlated significantly negatively with support for the goal (r = -.32, p = .022), but its effect size was slightly smaller than what the sample size (n = 56) could detect with 80% power (r = .36).

Table 20

Correlations between support for goal and overall derogation tendency/derogation schemes

Derogation tendency/Scheme	Liberty-oriented claim (N = 49)	Justice-oriented claim (N = 56)
Derogation tendency	.08	-.24
Character-focused	.02	-.32*
Consequence-focused	.19	-.16

Note. *p < .05.

Examining Exploratory Aim 1, Controlling for Claim Orientation. The exploratory aim 1 concerned whether endorsements of derogation items differed between two perspectives, namely participants' personal and perceived social responses. In the earlier exploration, the results of a two-way interaction between mechanisms and perspectives showed that for six mechanisms (i.e., "offensive tone", "trend following", "missing the picture", "egoistic motive", "protest anything", and "controlling"), the perceived social endorsements were higher than personal endorsements.

Investigating whether the factor of claim orientation influenced these changes, I conducted a three-way (11 x 2 x 2) mixed ANOVA with the 11 mechanisms and perspective (personal vs. perceived social) as within-subject variables, and the orientation of the claim as a between-subject variable. Compared to what was already found in the two-way (11 mechanisms x 2 orientations) ANOVA used for testing hypothesis 1, and another two-way (11 mechanisms x 2 perspectives) ANOVA used for early examination of exploratory aim 1, this analysis did not produce any novel finding. In other words, the two-way interaction between perspective and orientation, and the three-way interaction were not significant.

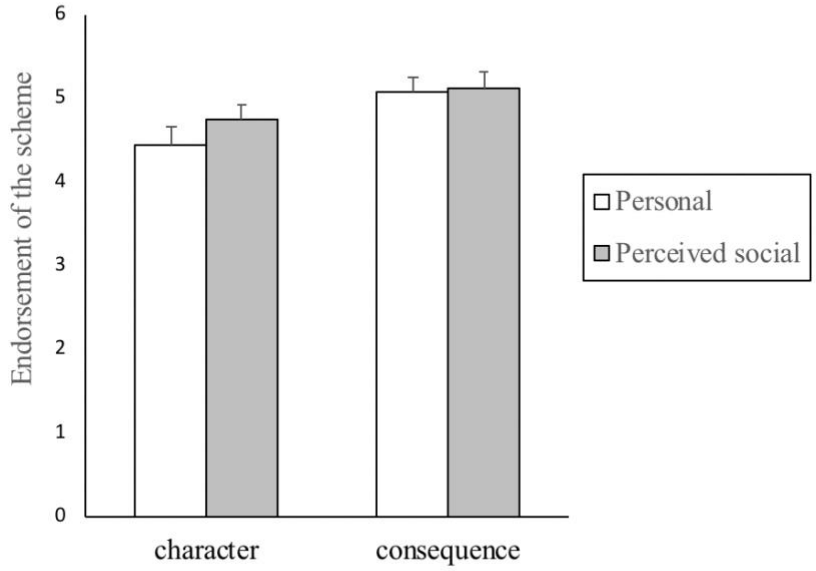
Controlling for Derogation Scheme. Since the claim orientation did not influence the

earlier finding of differences between participants' own and perceived social endorsements of derogation mechanisms, here I employed a two-way repeated-measures ANOVA, not controlling for claim orientation, but replacing the derogation mechanisms with derogation schemes. Thus, the analysis had the endorsements of the derogation schemes (character-focused vs. consequence-focused) and perspective of endorsements (personal vs. perceived social) as two within factors.

As the earlier exploration showed, the interaction between scheme and perspective was significant, with a nearly medium effect size: $F(1, 103) = 5.90$, $p = .017$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. Simple effect analysis revealed that, as to the character-focused scheme, the perceived social endorsement was significantly higher than personal endorsement: $F(1, 103) = 10.16$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$, but such significant difference was not found with respect to the consequence-focused scheme, as depicted in Figure 3. This suggested that the social desirability concern only influenced participants' responses regarding the character-focused scheme.

Figure 3

Endorsements of schemes by perspective (personal vs. perceived social)



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence interval.

Discussion

Study 2 tested four hypotheses and examined three exploratory aims. The hypotheses focused on the derogation mechanisms' endorsement scores and correlational patterns with attitudes toward claims and goals, and the exploratory aims looked into potential social desirability concerns, factor structures underlying mechanisms, and movement types.

The exploration regarding the movement types was particularly fruitful because it revealed that claim orientation served as a moderator in all of the hypotheses testing. Thus, the first discussion point is about how the claim orientation influenced findings from hypotheses testing.

The second discussion point is how participants endorsements of the mechanisms differed as a function of the perspective (personal vs. perceived social) they took while indicating the endorsements, and whether the influence of the perspective could be explained by the social desirability concern.

The results of factor analysis, namely the derogation schemes, came in handy as they made possible a simpler interpretation of findings of each hypothesis testing. However, due to the sample size limit, future study is needed to confirm conclusions based on the derogation schemes. Interpretations of the derogation schemes serve as the third discussion point.

Claim Orientation as a Moderator in Results of Hypotheses Testing

Consequence-Focused Scheme Endorsed More Highly for Liberty-Oriented Claims. Mechanisms of "bad consequence", "bad solution", and "missing the picture" were found to be among those with highest endorsements. This corresponded to the fact that consequence-focused scheme was endorsed more highly than the character-focused scheme.

However, this pattern was only confirmed by the responses to liberty-oriented claims. The interaction between scheme and orientation indicated that, with respect to justice-oriented claims, there was no significant difference between two schemes.

These finding seemed to suggest that opponents of liberty-oriented claims did not perceive supporters of these claims as highly morally motivated individuals, as many of the character-focused mechanisms (e.g., "holier-than-thou", "controlling", and "trend following") received endorsements *not* above the mid-point of the scale. This observation continued to be confirmed by the subsequent findings from hypotheses testing, which are summarised and discussed below.

Five Mechanisms Only Negatively Correlated with Justice-Oriented Claims. The mechanisms and schemes were in general associated negatively with support for the claims, except for "holier-than-thou" and "over-commitment".

However, after taking into consideration of the claim orientation, "holier-than-thou", along with four other mechanisms ("bad solution", "egoistic motive", "trend following", and

"hypocrite accusation") became only correlated negatively with justice-oriented claim but *not* with liberty-focused claim.

This seemed to suggest that even when people got more upset about a liberty-oriented claim, they would not feel more strongly that the supporters of the claim were trying to look moral, to profit from the movement, or to be accepted by others, nor would they question more intensely whether those followers would follow the claim themselves. Such finding might again indicate that supporters of a liberty-oriented claim were just not perceived as morally motivated individuals by people who opposed the claim.

The above interpretation was certainly only one of many possible explanations. Another reason that the more people opposed a liberty-oriented claim, the more they endorsed only some of derogation mechanisms might suggest that the opponents thought it was effective *enough* to only rely on certain strategies to bring down those supporters. This explanation might account for why "bad solution" was also a mechanism with nonsignificant correlation—the opponents of a liberty-oriented claim might think that its goal was not persuasive in the first place, or the problem it aimed to solve was far from well-established, and therefore they did not need to stress how inadequate the claim was as a solution, no matter how much they opposed the claim.

"Bad Consequence" and "Offensive Tone" as the Most Influential Predictors. Regression analyses showed that "bad consequence" and "offensive tone" were the most influential predictors of attitude towards the claims (with "bad consequence" having larger effect size), and consequence-focused scheme was more significant a predictor than character-focused scheme.

When taking the orientation of claims into consideration, it showed that with liberty-oriented claim, "bad consequence" was the only significant predictor with larger than medium effect size, and for justice-oriented claim, both "offensive tone" and "bad

consequence" were significant predictors with larger than medium effect sizes (with "offensive tone" having larger effect size). Similarly, for liberty-oriented claims, consequence-focused scheme was the only significant predictor with detectable effect size, and for liberty-oriented claims, both schemes were significant predictors with detectable effect sizes, but the character-focused scheme had larger effect size.

One way to construe the above regression pattern—the consequence-focused scheme better predicted attitude toward a liberty-oriented claim, and the character-focused scheme better predicted attitude toward a justice-oriented claim—might be postulated as what had been suggested: supporters of a liberty-oriented claim were less perceived as morally motivated individuals as supporters of a justice-oriented claim were, and therefore they elicited less direct derogation of their morality.

Correlation Between Character-Focused Scheme and Justice-Oriented Goal. In terms of correlations between support for the goal and overall derogation tendency or derogation schemes, the only significant coefficient was found between the character-focused scheme and support for justice-oriented goal.

This might again be related to the postulation mentioned above: the supporters of justice-oriented claims were seen more as morally motivated individuals, and thus they triggered more character-focused moral derogation scheme. Since the morality of supporters of justice-oriented claims might in part be derived from the morally-framed goals of the justice-oriented movements, as mentioned in the moralisation section in literature review, the use of character-focused scheme by opponents of the justice-oriented claims might reflect that these opponents did not agree with the claim's goal as much as they professed.

Perceived Social Endorsements of Character-Focused Scheme

When looking at the difference between self-endorsements and perceived endorsements by the public, a pattern could be observed that "bad consequence" and "bad

solution" were the only two mechanisms having different direction than other mechanisms. This is to say, the perceived social endorsements of these two mechanisms were higher than their counterparts, the personal endorsements, while other mechanisms showing the opposite direction. Although analyses showed that the list of mechanisms ("offensive tone", "trend following", "missing the picture", "egoistic motive", "protest anything", and "controlling") having significant differences between personal and perceived social endorsements did not include "bad consequence" and "bad solution", the pattern was worth exploring.

In fact, such findings supported the assumption of exploratory aim 3 in that concern for social desirability influenced participants' endorsements. As character-focused mechanisms, such as "offensive tone", "trend following", etc., directly attacked movement supporters and might make people endorsing the mechanisms seem hostile and mean, or less "warm" (as defined by the stereotype content model, e.g., Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske, 2018) and lacking communal qualities (Wojciszke et al., 2009), participants might be reluctant to reveal the full extent to which they endorsed the mechanisms.

On the other hand, "bad consequence" and "bad solution" were the only mechanisms focusing directly on the claims (rather than people who supported the claims), participants might feel more open about showing their genuine opinions, without being seen as aggressive and judgmental.

Higher-Order Derogation Schemes

Finally, the factor analysis found that the 11 mechanisms loaded onto two higher-order factors, which I termed derogation schemes. One scheme questioned movement supporters' moral character by suggesting that they engaged in the movement to gain control, to appear moral, and to follow trends, etc., and therefore it was called a character-focused scheme.

The other scheme challenged the effectiveness of the movement claim by arguing that the claim could not reach its goal and was made by people overlooking the whole picture, and therefore implying that the claim violated utilitarian or consequentialist ethics as it failed to increase overall utility in society. This scheme focused on the consequence of adopting the movement claim and therefore was termed consequence-focused scheme, but it also suggested that supporters of the claim were upholding an unethical claim and therefore indirectly undermined those people's morality.

Strangely, the mechanism of "hypocrite accusation" loaded onto the consequence-focused scheme although theoretically its aim should be challenging movement supporters' moral integrity (Monin & Merritt, 2012). One explanation might be that a major aspect of calling someone a hypocrite is the recognition of the person's inconsistent behaviour (Monin & Merritt, 2012). Therefore, while "hypocrite accusation" conceptually reflected disapproval of movement supporters' moral character, its items might more strongly capture participants' belief that the claim would not make much difference or lead to a positive *consequence* since the supporters would not follow the claim as they preached. It might be the latter aspect of the mechanism that caused the items to primarily load on the factor of consequence-focused scheme.

General Discussion

This section first discusses features of some specific mechanisms that appeared to carry more information than others, in terms of reflecting people's derogation tendency. It also looks into whether results of Studies 1 and 2 converge, and why the claim orientation (justice vs. liberty) affected participants' responses to derogation mechanisms.

On the Most and Least Informative Mechanisms

When used against movement supporters, different mechanisms were endorsed with different levels of strength, and showed different levels of association with attitude toward the claims.

These differences were important because they reflected two criteria that appeared to decide whether a mechanism was relied on heavily. I propose that a mechanism is relied upon more heavily when it is on average *agreed* on, namely endorsed above midpoint of the scale, compared to another that is disagreed on. A mechanism is also relied on more substantially when it is strongly rather than weakly negatively *associated* with people's attitude toward the claim, because people with stronger opposition are more likely to demonstrate their derogation.

"Bad Consequence" and "Offensive Tone" as the Most Informative Mechanisms

Although not included in Study 1, "bad consequence" had been shown to be the mechanism most replied upon by participants to reflect their disagreement with claims in Study 2. This was particularly true when it came to the liberty-oriented movements (i.e., the capitalist and medical freedom movements). It should not be surprising as this mechanism reflected the most fundamental thinking of a commonly applied moral principle, namely utilitarian ethics (de Lazari-Radek & Singer, 2017), which was to maximise aggregate well-being and assess whether a policy or claim would produce an overall positive outcome.

However, it seemed less intuitive to see why "offensive tone" was a primarily used mechanism. It might be because this mechanism was more directly related to perception of activists' stereotypical traits, such as angry, aggressive, loud, etc., as listed in the thematic analysis, compared to other mechanisms. If this mechanism represented tendency to derogate activists based on their negative stereotypes, it might be an easy "go-to" mechanism to derogate activists since opponents of a movement claim might heuristically attribute activists'

support for a claim they disliked to the thinking that "since these people are activists, they must act like typical activists who are offensive and loud".

Moreover, when "offensive tone" was introduced in the literature review section, I suggested that it might be considered both a mechanism to deny movement supporters' virtues by accusing the supporters of using harmful language intentionally to hurt others, and a mechanism to derogate the supporters from a consequentialist viewpoint by arguing that the supporters would do the goal more harm than good by turning people away. The factor analysis seemed to suggest that the "offensive tone" was more strongly related to a virtue-denying and character-focused mechanism than to a consequence-focused mechanism.

"Over-Commitment" as the Least Informative Mechanism

On the other hand, "over-commitment" was shown to have less endorsement score and less correlation with attitude toward claims. Based on Study 2, it was one of the three mechanisms (along with "hypocrite accusation" and "protest anything") whose endorsement scores were not significantly higher than the mid-point of the scale regarding both claims, and the only mechanism having non-significant correlation with attitudes toward both claims.

One explanation for these findings about the mechanism might be that some participants thought it was just describing a group of people who were strongly committed to their belief and identity. In other words, some participants might not consider the items like "People support this claim because they identify too much with their movement to back down" derogatory, and therefore did not endorse the mechanism even though they strongly disagreed with the claim.

Similarly, the wording of the items might also elicit less endorsement from participants who opposed the claim. For example, one item read "The only people advocating this claim are highly committed activists", and some participants might disagree because they thought there were other people advocating the claim such as hypocrites, and trend followers.

As a result, these participants did not indicate agreement with the mechanism even when they were in fact opponents of the claim. Future research is certainly needed to clarify whether these explanations account for the non-significant correlation between agreement with "over-commitment" and disagreement with movement claims.

Whether Results of Studies 1 and 2 Converge

As claims presented in Study 1, namely the feminist and vegan movements, were also examples of justice-oriented claims, results of Study 1 indeed in general converged with results of Study 2 regarding claims with justice orientation, such that "holier-than-thou" was among the highest endorsed mechanisms and all mechanisms correlated negatively with attitudes towards claims.

However, in Study 1, "bad solution", a consequence-focused mechanism, was the strongest predictor of attitudes towards claims, unlike Study 2, whose strongest predictor was one of the character-focused mechanisms, "offensive tone". This difference might be due to the fact that participants in Study 1 tended to appreciate the claims and were not keen on endorsing derogation mechanisms, and thus their attitude toward the claims more strongly reflected their concern that the claim might not successfully reach the goal, rather than by other concerns such as how activists were aggressive.

Why Results of Hypotheses Testing Differ by Claim Orientation

The discussion section of Study 2 recognised that some mechanisms, such as "bad consequence", could be generalised across movements of different orientation, while some mechanisms less so, such as "holier-than-thou". To account for such difference among mechanisms, I argued that supporters of liberty-oriented claims might be less seen as morally motivated individuals. This argument was made based on the findings in Study 2 which indicated that, in responding to liberty-oriented claims, compared to justice-oriented claims, (a) more character-focused mechanisms were *no*t significantly higher than the mid-point of

the scale, (b) more character-focused mechanisms were *not* correlated with attitude toward the claims, and (c) *no* character-focused mechanisms could predict attitude toward the claims beyond a consequence-focused mechanism, "bad consequence".

This argument could be further buttressed by findings about the mechanism of "holier-than-thou". This mechanism reflected moral rebuke of movement supporters' motive to appear more moral than others. In Study 2, this mechanism was found to be endorsed significantly less by opponents of liberty-oriented claim, than by those of justice-oriented claim, and its correlation with attitude toward liberty-oriented claims was significantly weaker than that toward justice-oriented claims. Such patterns might suggest that supporters of liberty-oriented claims were less seen by the opponents as eager (or able) to establish and demonstrate their superior moral image, or in other words, as morally motivated individuals. It thus followed that opponents of a liberty-oriented claim might find it less urgent to directly sabotage the supporters' morality, which explained why use of the consequence-focused derogation scheme, rather than character-focused scheme, better predicted the opponents' attitude toward liberty-oriented claim.

Why were supporters of capital and medical freedom movements perceived as less morally driven? It might be explained by moral foundations theory, which proposes that there are six categories or "foundations" on which people judge the morality of issues or actions (Haidt, 2012). These foundations include care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion, sanctity/deration, and liberty/oppression (Graham et al., 2013). However, these foundations are accepted or recognised differently by people of different of political orientation, such that the political liberals embrace the first two (care and fairness) strongly and, unlike political conservatives, focus less on or even dismiss the other ones (loyalty, authority, sanctity or purity, liberty) (Haidt & Graham, 2007).

If people on the political Left tend to not recognise the notion of liberty as moral principle, as much as those on the political Right, it might explain why opponents of liberty-oriented claims did not see advocates of the claims as morally motivated individuals and thus did not rely on character-focused mechanisms to derogate them.

However, future research is still needed to explore whether opponents of liberty/justice-oriented claims indeed regard themselves as political liberals/conservatives. It is important to investigate whether opponents of liberty-oriented claims rely less on character-focused mechanisms because they do not see supporters of the claims as morally driven, or because they think it is effective enough to only endorse consequence-focused mechanisms (as mentioned previously), or because they just think it is not right to question people's moral characters, or even because they simply recognise the moral characters of those supporting a claim they disagree with.

Limitations

Unfortunately, this research suffered the following two limitations.

First, the limited sample size gave rise to concerns about whether power was sufficient to detect some of the proposed effects. This issue became more serious when the total sample size was divided in half to investigate the claim orientation in Study 2. Another sample size related issue was the validity of the factor analysis. As a commonly applied rule of thumb for determining the appropriate sample size for EFA is 10 subjects per item (Osborne & Costello, 2004), 33 items would require a sample size equal to or larger than 330 participants. Therefore, although the result of factor analysis appeared somehow "clean", as items of particular mechanisms in general loaded onto the same factors, and the resulting pattern permitted rather meaningful interpretation, confirmation of the factor pattern with larger sample size is still crucially needed.

Second, as this research focused on exploratorily identifying the derogation mechanisms and examining the relationship between mechanisms and attitude toward social movements, it did not employ experiments to investigate potential causal connection between the main variables. Therefore, when discussing the regression findings, no conclusion could be made as to whether increased endorsement of certain mechanism led to stronger opposition of a claim or vice versa.

Implications for Future Research

One postulation explaining why people used the moral derogation mechanisms against movement supporters, was that supporters were seen as morally motivated individuals and thus triggered people who disagreed with the movement claim to undermine their morality, but this idea was not tested in the studies. Future research on this topic should look into whether higher level of perception of a movement supporter's moral motive will cause participants who oppose the movement claim to endorse the derogation mechanisms more strongly.

This research also has implication related to the literature of both moral psychology and social movements. For example, although moral derogation mechanisms identified in this research were not necessarily adopted by individuals as a self-defensive strategy to compensate for a morally threatened ego, they certainly can be used this way to achieve the purpose of do-gooder derogation, particularly the character-focused derogation scheme. In other words, these mechanisms may be studied in future do-gooder derogation research to further our understanding about via which particular mechanisms are resentment towards moral rebels expressed under different circumstances.

Also, as research on moralisation has shown that moralised arguments have a potential negative effect of undermining social cohesion (Tauber et al., 2018), such that stigmatization of those deviating from the moral norms evoked by moralised persuasion

mediates the relationship between the level of moralisation and social cohesion. Moral derogation tendencies are likely to be another predictor of social cohesion in that the more moralisation leads to more derogation, and thus leads to more discrimination, more exclusion and less solidarity. In other words, stigmatization of those deviating from the norms and derogation of those upholding the norms both can damage social cohesion.

Furthermore, research on social movements has indicated that the negative impression people have of activists have an impact on the influence of the movement (Bashir et al., 2013). As moral derogation, by definition, reflects a negative impression of activists, it is likely to undermine movement influence. Therefore, understanding how these mechanisms are employed may increase our understanding of why social movements are sometimes less effective. For example, based on findings of this research, to increase influence of the movement, supporters of a liberty-oriented movement may strengthen their arguments regarding how the movement claim can maximise the overall social utility, and present an image that they have taken into consideration all factors related to the issue. These efforts might help them deflect consequence-focused derogation.

On the other hand, as supporters of a justice-oriented movement are likely to be criticised for how they express their messages in an offensive tone and for how they possess a "mixed motive" (e.g., hoping to look better than others, desiring to control others, etc.), they should be able to get their messages across more easily if they demonstrate a high level of humility and honesty, attributes that have been understood as integral parts of one's moral character (Ashton & Lee, 2007; Cohen & Morse, 2014). Demonstration of these two qualities may deflect or mitigate the attack of the character-focused derogation. It seems when the monster of praising and blaming becomes too formidable to be subdued, a bit of modesty might help mitigate its strike.

Conclusion

This research showed that for people who accepted the goal of a movement, but rejected its claim, they endorsed moral derogation toward the movement supporters. Moreover, the more they opposed the claim, the more they tended to both derogate the moral character of supporters of the claim and question the outcome of the claim.

As 10 derogation mechanisms (excluding "over-commitment" due to low endorsement and correlation) were identified, I found it important to use the structures of derogation schemes (consequence vs. character-focused) and claim orientations (liberty vs. justice-oriented) to reiterate the primary findings of the research as follows:

When people intended to derogate supporters' moral character, they used the character-focused mechanisms that criticised supporters' tone as offensive and motive as not pure (e.g., self-righteous posturing and trend following). When they questioned the outcome of the claim, they also indirectly morally denigrated supporters from the standpoint of utilitarian ethics, and they used consequence-focused mechanisms that argued the claim would do the society more harm than good and supporters did not fully comprehend the relevant issues.

When intending to derogate supporters of a movement claim with liberty orientation (e.g., abolishing mandatory vaccination and restriction on organ trade), people relied more heavily on consequence-focused mechanisms, especially the one highlighting the bad consequence caused by the claim. When intending to derogate supporters of a movement claim with justice orientation (e.g., adopting a vegan lifestyle and equal career representation for both genders), both consequence and character-focused mechanisms were employed, especially the ones focusing on the bad consequences of the claim and the offensive tone used by supporters.

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Appendix

Study Materials

The study materials include goals and claims of social movements, and items of derogation mechanisms. Those used in the pilot study can be found in Tables 2 & 3; those used in Study 2 can be found in Tables 10 & 15; those used in Study 1 can be found in Tables 2 & 3 and below.

Bad solution
Experts will not support this claim.
The claim only offers a trivial solution.
This claim is a distraction to advancing its goal.
Bad consequence
This claim is hard to follow.
Most people react against the claim.
The claim will do more harm than good.
Offensive tone
People who make the claim are aggressive in tone.
Supporters of the claim talk in a harsh way.
Those who endorse the claim speak in a hostile tone.
Holier-than-thou
People support this claim because they feel they are more moral than others.
People make this claim because they think they are better than others because of their moral stance.
Advocates of this claim enjoy thinking that they are more righteous than others.
Controlling
People who agree with this claim do not respect people's rights.
Those in favour of this claim want to restrict people's freedom for what they think are right.
Supporters of this claim like to tell people what to do.
Trend following
People support this claim in order to follow trends.
The reason people are in favour of this claim is to fit in with a group.
People make such claims in order to get more "likes" or more followers on social media.

Hypocrite accusation
People who endorse the claim tend to be hypocrites.
People advocating this claim do not do what they ask of others.
Supporters of claim sometimes behave hypocritically.
Power seeking
Advocates of this claim are motivated by control over others.
People who endorse this claim want to dominate others.
Those who support this claim tend to believe that they should have more power than others.