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Rage donations and mobilization: Understanding the effects of advocacy on collective giving responses

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Abstract

Advocacy is intended to change people's attitudes and behavior. Yet the psychological and behavioral consequences of advocacy have rarely been considered. Across 3 experiments (combined $N = 934$) in the contexts of debates around racial discrimination and abortion, we investigated if and how exposure to advocacy can influence collective giving responses: self-reported willingness to make donations congruent with one's beliefs on the issue and actual giving behavior. Reading tweets from one's own side of a contentious debate sometimes indirectly mobilized collective giving responses by enhancing perceptions of efficacy and ensuring people empathized and identified with highlighted victim groups. Simultaneously, however, supporting advocacy sometimes inadvertently suppressed action by reducing anger and perceived injustice. Results therefore show that advocacy can simultaneously mobilize and demobilize support. However, effects were not found consistently across contexts and donation measures. Overall, mobilization pathways were stronger, especially on donation behavior and in the context of the abortion debate. Results suggest advocacy can work broadly as intended: by influencing the attitudes and behaviors of audience members. Online

advocacy exposure in social media echo chambers may therefore be contributing to political polarization. Finally, results also demonstrate that charitable giving can be a form of collective action.

INTRODUCTION

After taking office in 2017, former U.S. President Donald Trump announced an executive order to ban visitors from six Muslim-majority countries (Trump, 2017). In response, people donated $24 million to the American Civil Liberties Union in just 1 week; seven times as much as they had received in the entire previous year (Stack, 2017). Later that year, a right-wing politician in Australia tweeted criticism of a school's 'do-it-in-a-dress' fundraiser, calling it 'absurd' and 'gender bending.' In response, donations flooded in from around the world – with the school raising over $180,000 (their target was $900; BBC News, 2017). These are examples of an emerging phenomenon called 'rage donations' (Fetters, 2017). More broadly, however, they show that policy decisions and public advocacy influence collective giving.

How public advocacy can influence citizens' collective responses has rarely been considered. Yet, in an age marked by social media advocacy and political polarization, it is perhaps more important than ever to understand the psychological and behavioural effects of exposure to advocacy. In this paper, we propose that charitable giving is sometimes a form of collective action, and that collective responses can be influenced by advocacy. We first consider whether known drivers of collective action – anger, efficacy, and identification – also promote collective giving. Next, we discuss what is known about how advocacy that either supports or opposes one's personal views may influence these antecedents of collective responses. Across three experiments, we then examine if, when, and how political advocacy can mobilize or demobilize collective giving.

Charitable giving as collective action

We start with the premise that charitable giving can be a form of collective behaviour. Charitable giving is often studied as a type of individual prosociality (e.g., Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011b). However, Louis et al. (2019) theorize that charitable giving can sometimes be a form of collective action (see also Kende et al., 2017). Further, Thomas and McGarty (2018) have recently shown that activists – people motivated to change systems, often via collective action – give just as much to charity as more benevolent supporters – people motivated to palliate the suffering of victims, often via charitable giving. This highlights a potential cross-over in the determinants of giving and activism.

Three key mechanisms are theorized to motivate collective action: anger, efficacy, and identification (Thomas et al., 2012; van Zomeren et al., 2008). Although these mechanisms have been theorized to relate to one another in different ways, all three have consistently been shown to influence collective action (e.g. Bilali et al., 2019; van Zomeren et al., 2012, 2018).

How these mechanisms may (or may not) influence charitable giving is less well understood. Anger has been linked to politicized giving (van Doorn et al., 2017), but not general giving (Van de Vyver & Abrams, 2015). Efficacy promotes giving (Smith & McSweeney, 2007), but is less influential than other factors such as being asked, managing one's reputation, and personal preferences (Berman et al., 2018; Chapman et al., 2019). Identification, and especially a sense of shared identity between donor and beneficiary, can influence charitable choices (e.g., Chapman et al., 2018, 2020; Zagefka et al., 2013). In sum,

anger, efficacy, and identification are likely antecedents of collective giving, but their relative influence may differ compared to other forms of collective action.

Political advocacy as a tool for collective mobilization

Advocacy is the act of publicly supporting people, ideas, or groups in a way intended to influence the attitudes or behaviour of audience members (London, 2010). Although extensive evidence exists for anger, efficacy, and identification as antecedents of collective mobilization, much less research attention has been given to the question of if and how advocacy or other types of campaigns can actually elicit or stifle these antecedents. Answering this question is a key objective of the current research.

There is very little research showing if and how campaigns can evoke anger. One study showed that anti-child abuse public service advertisements promote helping in part by evoking negative emotions like anger (Bagozzi & Moore, 1994). Another study of Twitter activity within the Black Lives Matter movement showed that images help promote campaign involvement, but that images evoking anger were not mobilizing (Casas & Williams, 2019). Anecdotal evidence of rage donations suggest opponent advocacy can promote collective giving via anger (Fetters, 2017). Thus, we surmise that campaigns may help to mobilize action if they can evoke anger, though few studies have examined this question. We therefore test the notion of rage donations explicitly and for the first time. If advocacy from opponents can increase anger, it may mobilize people to act. If so, however, the reverse will also be true: advocacy that supports one's own views could inadvertently demobilize action if it reduces anger.

It may be difficult for campaigns to actively promote a sense of efficacy (Hornsey et al., 2021a, 2021b). However, in the context of environmental advocacy, image use in campaign materials has been found to promote collective action via an enhanced sense of group efficacy (Gulliver et al., 2020). In three separate experiments, those authors build the case that images of people taking action on environmental issues can enhance group efficacy via descriptive norms: by creating the sense that more people in the group are also taking action. Therefore, exposure to supporting advocacy may enhance efficacy. Correspondingly, exposure to a number of opposing advocates could also reduce perceptions of efficacy by creating the sense that the opposition is large and therefore that collective efforts will face greater resistance.

Identification can also be promoted by campaigns. One common strategy used by activist groups is to draw sympathy from potential supporters by highlighting shared concerns (Sommerfeldt, 2011), essentially encouraging a process of shared identity. Analyses of community responses to an animal welfare campaign in Australia demonstrated the effectiveness of creating a sense of commonality between humans and animals (Mummery & Rodan, 2019). These studies suggest that campaigns can enhance identification. Because advocacy by definition privileges the perspectives of some groups over others, exposure to advocacy may therefore alter levels of identification with groups highlighted by the opposition and by one's own side.

The current research

The current research examines the effects of advocacy on collective giving responses, with anger, efficacy, and identification as potential mechanisms explaining donation responses after exposure to advocacy. Given that people prefer to give to causes that reflect their own values (Chapman et al., 2018, 2020), individuals are expected to donate more to charities that promote their stance on contested social issues (vs. charities that promote the opposition agenda; H1). Informed primarily by real-world examples of rage donations as well as the few empirical studies showing that advocacy can evoke anger, we further hypothesize that the effects of advocacy will be mediated by anger (H2): exposure to opposing advocacy will enhance participants' preference to give to charities that promote their personal stance on the issue (i.e., to make cause-congruent donations) by provoking anger, while exposure to supporting advocacy will reduce cause-congruent donations by reducing anger. To the best of our knowledge,

this is the first empirical test of the phenomenon called rage donations. We also test the hypothesis that the effects of advocacy can be mediated by efficacy (H3): exposure to opposing advocacy may reduce cause-congruent donations by reducing people's sense of efficacy in relation to the issue, while exposure to supporting advocacy may increase cause-congruent donations via efficacy. Finally, we test the hypothesis that advocacy can affect donation responses by influencing people's identification with various groups that are highlighted in campaigns (H4). Thus, exposure to opposing (supporting) advocacy may increase (reduce) identification with victim groups that are highlighted by the opposition (H4a), while simultaneously decreasing (increasing) identification with victim groups that are highlighted by the participant's own side (H4b). In this paper, we refer to these groups as the outgroup's perceived victims and the ingroup's perceived victims, respectively.

The current research makes several important contributions to the literature. First, to the best of our knowledge, it is one of the first psychological examinations of the effects of advocacy on collective responses. It does so using ecologically valid and contemporary examples of public advocacy in the form of Twitter content. Second, it specifically examines the mobilizing and demobilizing effects of vocal supporters and opponents, which has special relevance at a time of growing concern about the social effects of our increasingly polarized political world. Third, it provides perhaps the first empirical examination of the new social phenomenon called 'rage donations'. Fourth, it explicitly considers charitable giving as a form of collective behaviour. Fifth and finally, it compares and contrasts the effects of collective action mechanisms on the self-reported willingness and actual behaviour, something that has often been called for in collective action research (e.g. Bamberg et al., 2015; van Zomeren et al., 2008).

Deviations from preregistration

All three experiments were preregistered on the Open Science Framework (OSF; see https://osf.io/dwmu8/). In the preregistrations for Studies 1 and 2, we expected effects of advocacy only via anger (H2) but not via efficacy or identification (H3 and H4). In Study 3, based on results from the earlier studies, we hypothesized all four pathways. For simplicity, we present only the Study 3 hypotheses in this article. Results of analyses relating to preregistered hypotheses that are not included in this manuscript (i.e., contempt, moral convictions, and identification with the opinion group) are also available on the OSF. Originally, our intention was to investigate so-called rage donations, and the focus was on the effects of exposure to opposing advocacy. As the research progressed, however, it became apparent that supporting advocacy was also having important effects. Further, reviewers highlighted the need to compare each type of advocacy to the control condition in Studies 1 and 2. Thus, although the original preregistration called for analyses comparing opposing advocacy to supporting advocacy and to the control, we have elected to report analyses comparing each of the advocacy conditions against the control. We feel that this is simpler and more intuitive for readers, and makes the key findings clearer. For transparency, we also report analyses with the original contrasts on the OSF alongside supplementary analyses for preregistered hypotheses not reported in the manuscript. In all studies, we found strong, unexpected effects of stance on donation responses. Stance effects (direct and interactive) are therefore controlled for in all analyses. As these variables were not included in the preregistrations, we apply Bonferroni corrections to all relevant tests to assess the evidence against a more stringent alpha and reduce Type I error. Details of these corrections are included in the footers of all relevant tables. We also originally intended to treat donation behaviour as a three-level ordinal variable (congruent, neutral, and incongruent donations) and to test the direct and indirect effects using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and structural equation modeling, respectively. However, participants rarely selected incongruent causes, and reviewers were concerned about the three-level treatment. We therefore treated donation behaviour as binary (congruent vs. other donations) and tested the direct and indirect effects using logistic regression and the diagonal weighted least squares (DWLS) approach, respectively, as these analyses are more appropriate when using binary outcome measures. Finally, the preregistration for Study 2 reports

an expected sample size of 276 while the actual study has a sample of 228. This was due to an error of calculation made when preregistering, whereby we calculated the sample based on 95% power instead of 90% power. In actuality, Study 2 used the same power analysis as Study 1.

STUDY 1

Study 1 was conducted in December 2017 in the context of the debate over whether or not athletes should be allowed to kneel during the U.S. national anthem. Starting in 2016, National Football League (NFL) player Colin Kaepernick refused to stand during the pre-match national anthem in protest against racial discrimination and police brutality. Others followed Kaepernick's lead, but this behaviour evoked furious controversy. At the time of data collection, some form of active protest was being engaged by at least 23 players from 10 of the 32 NFL teams (ESPN, 2018). At that time, both President Trump and Vice-President Pence had publicly stated their strong opposition to kneeling during the national anthem (Landler et al., 2017) and Kaepernick had recently been named the 'Citizen of the Year' by GQ magazine (Editors of GQ, 2017).

METHOD

For all studies, we report how we determined our sample size, all data exclusions (if any), all manipulations, and all measures in the study (Simmons et al., 2012). Data, full questionnaires, and stimuli for all studies are also available on the OSF.

Participants

Two hundred and twenty-eight U.S. residents took part in an online experiment. The sample size was determined by an a priori power analysis for 90% power to detect medium ($f = .25$) effects, with a 10% buffer to allow for any potential exclusions. One person asked for their data to be deleted after debriefing and 5 were excluded for failing an attention check ('To show you're paying attention, please select "totally agree" for this item'). In addition to these planned exclusions, two additional participants were excluded because they reported technical glitches that compromised their responses and one for failing the comprehension check on all five attempts. The final sample ($N = 219$) included 130 females and 89 males. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 73 years ($M_{age} = 40.50$, $SD = 13.09$). Of these, 111 were anti-kneeling and 108 were pro-kneeling.

Procedure

Participants were recruited online via the Amazon Mechanical-Turk platform. First, participants completed a 1-minute screening survey assessing demographic information and asking their stance on a range of current social issues, for which they received payment of USD$0.05. Only participants who either opposed or supported NFL players kneeling during the national anthem were invited to participate, while people without clear views on the issue were screened out. The full experiment took approximately 5 min to complete, for which participants were compensated with a bonus of USD$0.70.

Participants were randomly allocated to read public tweets that either advocated support of players kneeling, opposed players kneeling, or to a control condition in which they read no tweets. After passing a comprehension check, participants indicated their anger, perceived efficacy, and identification with perceived victim groups. Next, participants reported how willing they were to make a personal donation to charities that were advancing either side of the kneeling issue and then had the opportunity to allocate a real donation.

Advocacy manipulation

In each of the two experimental advocacy conditions, eight public tweets were presented. All tweets were real and publicly visible. In the pro-kneeling condition, all tweets supported NFL players kneeling during the national anthem and argued that such actions were a fair protest for systemic racial injustice and police brutality against people of color. In the anti-kneeling condition, all tweets opposed players kneeling and argued that such actions were disrespectful to those who served the nation such as police officers and the military. In the control condition, no tweets were presented but, when answering questions that followed, participants were instructed to think about any tweets or media discussion they may have been exposed to that discussed kneeling during the anthem.

For the analyses reported below, the advocacy conditions were coded in relation to the participant's own stance on the issue. For example, for an anti-kneeling participant, exposure to advocacy that endorsed kneeling was considered opposing (the views of the participant), while exposure to advocacy that was against kneeling was considered supporting. The three-level advocacy independent variable was coded into two dummy-coded variables for the purpose of regression analysis. We compared the effects of both supporting and opposing advocacy separately against the control condition. In other words, the supporting advocacy variable was coded: supporting = 1, opposing = 0, and control = 0; the opposing advocacy variable was coded: opposing = 1, supporting = 0, and control = 0.

Measures

Focal measures for the current study are outlined below, and the full questionnaire is available on the OSF. Except where otherwise noted, all items were measured on 7-point Likert scales: 1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*, and scales were averaged with higher scores indicating more of the construct in question.

Anger

Two items adapted from Tausch et al. (2011) measured participants' anger about the advocacy (i.e., 'I felt angry at what they said', 'I was outraged about what they said'), $r = .91$.

Efficacy

Two items adapted from van Zomeren et al. (2011) measured the degree to which participants felt they could affect change in relation to the kneeling issue (i.e., 'I think together individuals can make a difference on this issue', 'I think together we can successfully change things in relation to this issue'), $r = .85$.

Identification

Two items adapted from van Zomeren et al. (2011) measured identification with relevant groups highlighted as victims by either side of the kneeling debate (i.e., 'I identify with [those who serve and protect, like soldiers and police/people of color]', 'I feel strong ties with [those who serve and protect, like soldiers and police/people of color]'; rs = .87 and .78, respectively). Victim groups were coded in relation to the participants' own stance on the issue. For pro-kneelers, people of color were the ingroup's perceived victims while soldiers and police were the outgroup's perceived victims. For anti-kneelers, this coding was reversed.

Donation willingness

Participants were asked 'How willing would you be to make a donation of your personal money today to an organization that works towards social justice for minorities' (pro-kneeling cause; 1 = *Not at all willing*, 7 = *Extremely willing*), and 'works to ensure all people respect the national anthem' (anti-kneeling cause). Responses were coded in relation to the participants' own stance. Thus, for pro-kneelers, the pro-kneeling cause was the congruent cause and the anti-kneeling cause was the incongruent cause; and vice versa for anti-kneelers.

Donation behaviour

Despite evidence that people overreport socially desirable behaviours (e.g., Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011a), most research on collective action and charitable giving has assessed intentions or other self-report measures (Tausch et al., 2011; van Zomeren et al., 2008). We therefore incorporated a behavioural measure into the study. Participants were advised that, in addition to their compensation for participation (USD$0.75), the researchers were willing to make a USD$0.25 donation on their behalf to a charity of their selection. Participants read short descriptions of seven organizations before indicating to which they wished their donation to be given. All donation choices were subsequently honored by the researchers. Two organizations reflected priorities of the pro-kneeling cause (i.e., Black Lives Matter and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), two reflected the priorities of anti-kneeling cause (i.e., Blue Lives Matter and The American Legion), and three organizations were unrelated to the kneeling debate (i.e., ASPCA, United Way, and UNICEF). Choices were coded based on congruence with the participant's stance on the kneeling issue. For example, for pro-kneeling participants donations to pro-kneeling causes were coded 1 (for congruence), donations to anti-kneeling or unrelated causes were coded −1 (for incongruence).

RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations between all variables are reported on the OSF. Overall, participants reported greater willingness to donate to a cause that was congruent with their stance on the kneeling issue ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 2.10$) than a cause that was incongruent with their stance ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 2.02$), $t(217) = 10.82$, Cohen's $d = 0.74$, $p < .001$. When it came to selecting a charity to receive a real donation, 67 participants (31%) selected a congruent charity and only 5 (2%) selected an incongruent charity.[1]

A 2 (stance: pro-kneeling, anti-kneeling) × 3 (advocacy: supporting, opposing, and control) ANOVA revealed no overall main effects of advocacy on willingness to make congruent donations, $F(2, 213) = 1.30$, $p = .275$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Similarly, binomial logistic regression analyses revealed no main effects of opposing, $OR = 0.79$, $p = .624$, 95% CI [0.29, 2.06], or supporting advocacy, $OR = 0.69$, $p = .452$, CI [0.25, 1.82], on actual donation behaviour relative to the control condition. Thus, advocacy had no *direct* effects on donation responses in Study 1 (see Table 1 and Figure 1).

To examine potential *indirect* effects, mediation analyses were conducted using the lavaan package for R (Rosseel, 2012). Mediation analyses on donation behaviour were conducted using the DWLS approach which provides standardized probit regression coefficients (*P*) for model parameters. A positive coefficient indicates an increase in the predicted probability, while a negative coefficient indicates a decrease in the predicted probability. DWLS is preferred over using logistic regression in mediation analyses because odd ratios in path models with both continuous and binary predictors can produce unstable estimates (MacKinnon et al., 1995). The DWLS approach provides more stable estimates, lends

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[1]The remaining 147 participants (67%) did not select a charity that was relevant to the kneeling issue.

TABLE 1 ANOVA (a) and logistic regression results (b) for the impact of participant stance and type of advocacy on cause-congruent donation willingness and behaviour (Study 1: NFL players kneeling)

(a): Donation willingness				
Source	SS	df	F	η^2
Stance	111.60	1	28.15***	0.11
Advocacy	10.30	2	1.30	0.01
Stance ×advocacy	8.00	2	1.01	0.01
Residual	844.20	213		
Total	974.10	218		

(b): Donation behaviour			
	OR	SE	95% CI
Stance	0.57	0.51	0.21, 1.54
Opposing advocacy	0.79	0.49	0.29, 2.06
Supporting advocacy	0.69	0.50	0.25, 1.82
Stance × opposing advocacy	1.58	0.73	0.38, 6.68
Stance × supporting advocacy	2.56	0.72	0.63, 10.70
Likelihood ratio test	$\chi^2 (5) = 1.92, p = .860$		
McFadden's R^2	0.01		

Note: ***$p < .001$; Bonferroni corrections were made to the p-values of stance and the interaction term to assess them against stringent alpha (we multiplied the observed p-value by 2) because they were not included in the pre-registered analysis plan.
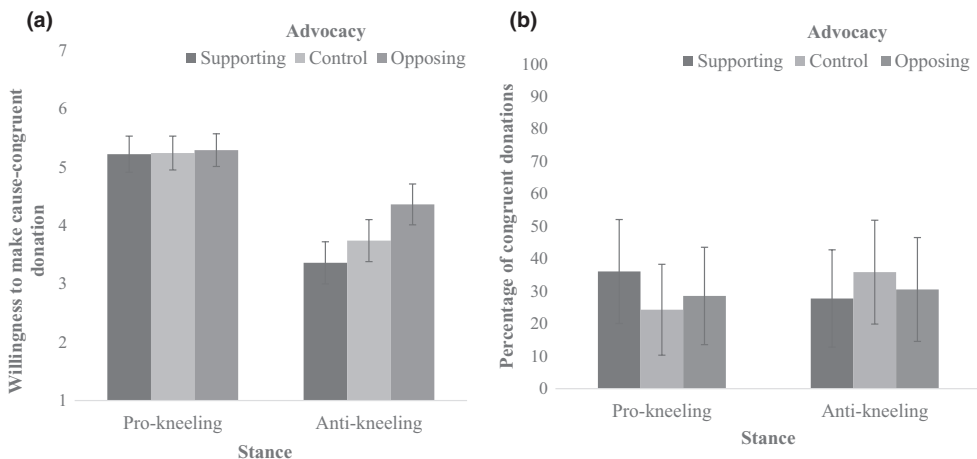

FIGURE 1 Plots of cell means showing the effects of participant stance and advocacy type on cause-congruent donation willingness (1a) and behaviour (1b) in Study 1 (NFL players kneeling)
Note: Error bars are standard errors.

itself more easily to standardized coefficients, and performs well with sample sizes greater than 200 (MacKinnon et al., 2007).

Anger, efficacy, and identification with both the ingroup's and the outgroup's perceived victims were tested as parallel mediators of the effects of supporting and opposing advocacy (each vs. control) on donation willingness and behaviour, controlling for stance and the interaction terms. The model explained 25% of the variance in self-reported willingness to make a congruent donation, $F(9, 208) = 7.69$, $p < .001$, and 13% of the variance in actual donation behaviour, $\chi^2(6) = 42.48$, $p < .001$. Results are summarized in Table 2 and tests of the indirect effects are reported below.

Anger

Exposure to supporting advocacy significantly reduced anger ($\beta = -0.52$, $p < .001$) but exposure to opposing advocacy did not significantly increase anger ($\beta = 0.10$, $p = .130$), relative to a control condition. Anger, in turn, was associated with willingness to make a cause congruent donation ($\beta = 0.23$, $p = .001$) but not actual donation behaviour ($p = .10$, $p = .434$). Thus, mediation analyses showed a significant indirect effect whereby exposure to supporting advocacy actually reduced people's willingness to make donations congruent with their beliefs via a reduction in anger, *Indirect effect (IE)* $= -0.12$, 95% CI [-0.20, -0.04], however, this effect was not found on behaviour, *IE* $= -0.05$, CI [-0.19, 0.07]. Exposure to opposing advocacy had no significant indirect effects on willingness or behaviour, *IEs* < 0.02 and 0.01, respectively.

Efficacy

Neither supporting ($\beta = -0.05$, $p = .477$) nor opposing advocacy ($\beta = -0.06$, $p = .415$) had significant effects on perceptions of efficacy, relative to the control condition. Efficacy was not associated with donation willingness ($\beta = 0.05$, $p = .377$) or behaviour ($p = .09$, $p = .438$). Therefore, no indirect effects were found, all *IEs* < 0.01.

Identification

Neither exposure to supporting nor opposing advocacy influenced participants' identification with the two types of victim groups, $|\beta|s \leq 0.11$, $p \geq .122$). Participants who identified more with their ingroup's victim group reported a greater willingness to donate ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < .001$) and were also more likely to actually donate to a congruent cause ($p = .33$, $p = .004$). In addition, participants who identified more with the outgroup's perceived victims were significantly less likely to donate to a congruent cause ($p = -.18$, $p = .001$), despite expressing no difference in their willingness to do so ($\beta = 0.07$, $p = .265$). However, no indirect effects were found, $|IE|s < 0.04$.

DISCUSSION

As predicted, people showed a preference for donating to causes congruent with their beliefs (H1). Exposure to supporting advocacy reduced anger which, in turn, reduced willingness to make congruent donations but did not affect donation behaviour. The complementary rage donation effect, whereby exposure to opposing advocacy evokes anger, was not observed. Thus, only partial support for H2 was found. Advocacy did not influence participants' perceived efficacy or identification with victim groups (no support for H3 or H4). The observed indirect effect via anger was not found on behaviour, perhaps because so many participants chose to donate to unrelated causes. We therefore sought to replicate the methodology and analyses of Study 1 in a new context and with a narrower range of giving options.

STUDY 2

Abortion remains a fiercely contested social issue in many societies around the world, including the United States. We accessed public tweets on either side of a debate about the 2018 United States H.R.36 Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, which was introduced to ban abortion after 20 weeks (Congress. gov, 2018). In addition, we refined the behavioural measure from Study 1 by reducing the number of

TABLE 2 Regression results for the impact of the type of advocacy on cause-congruent donation willingness and behaviour (Study 1: NFL players kneeling)

	Mediators (β)					DV: Donations	
	Anger	Efficacy	Ingroup ID	Outgroup ID		Willingness (β)	Behaviour (p)
Opposing advocacy	0.10	−0.06	−0.04	0.06		0.07	.03
Supporting advocacy	−0.52***	−0.05	−0.11	0.02		0.11	.14
Pro-kneeling (vs. anti-kneeling) stance	0.00	0.23***	−0.33***	0.16		0.40***	−.04
Opposing advocacy × stance	0.05	0.06	−0.01	0.08		−0.09	.08
Supportive advocacy × stance	−0.05	−0.02	0.03	−0.02		0.04	.15
Anger						0.23***	.10
Efficacy						0.05	.09
Ingroup ID						0.23***	.33***
Outgroup ID						0.07	−.18**
Model R²	0.34***	0.06*	0.13***	0.04		0.25***	.13*

Note: N = 218; Bonferroni corrections were made to the *p*-values of stance and the two interaction terms to assess them against a more stringent alpha (we multiplied the observed *p*-value by 3) because they were not included in the pre-registered analysis plan.

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

charity options from eight to four. We specifically removed options to donate to help animals and children, which many participants preferred in Study 1 and which are known to be attractive beneficiaries for many donors (Chapman et al., 2020).

METHOD

Participants and procedure

The online experiment was run in July 2018 using the Amazon Mechanical-Turk platform. The sample size of 228 was determined by the same a priori power analysis as Study 1. Three participants asked for their data to be deleted and four were excluded for failing the attention check. The final sample ($N = 221$) included 121 females, 99 males, and 1 participant who identified as gender fluid. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 75 years ($M_{age} = 35.61$, $SD = 12.50$); 114 identified as pro-choice and 107 as pro-life.

The procedure was a streamlined version of Study 1. The screening was based on participants' stance on the abortion issue ($n = 114$ pro-choice and $n = 114$ pro-life). In the pro-life condition, all tweets advocated for the protection of unborn babies. In the pro-choice condition, all tweets advocated for the reproductive rights of women. In the control condition, no tweets were presented.

Measures

Full study materials for Study 2 are available on the OSF. The same anger, $r = 0.87$, and efficacy, $r = 0.84$, measures outlined in Study 1 were used. The victims highlighted by pro-life tweeters were unborn babies (e.g., 'I feel strong ties with unborn babies'; $r = 0.86$), while the victims highlighted by pro-choice advocates were women seeking abortions (e.g., 'I identify with women accessing abortions'; $r = 0.93$). Donation willingness was measured with two items (i.e., 'How willing would you be to make a donation of your personal money today to an organization that: works to protect women's rights to access abortion' and 'works to ensure unborn children are protected and given a chance at life'). For the donation behaviour measure, participants could select between donating to the National Pro-Life Alliance (pro-life cause), Planned Parenthood (pro-choice cause), the Multiple Sclerosis Society, or the United Way (two neutral causes).

RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations between all variables are reported in the OSF. Overall, participants reported a greater willingness to donate to a cause that was congruent with their stance on the abortion issue ($M = 4.91$, $SD = 2.11$) than to a cause that was incongruent ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 1.78$), $t(218) = 14.81$, $d = 1.91$, $p < .001$. When donation behaviour was observed, 134 participants (61%) selected a congruent charity and only 15 (7%) selected an incongruent charity.[2]

A 2 (stance: pro-life, pro-choice) x 3 (advocacy: supporting, opposing, and control) ANOVAs revealed no main effect of advocacy on donation willingness, $F(2, 213) = 0.38$, $p = .685$, $\eta^2 < 0.01$. However, logistic regression analyses revealed a significant main effect of supporting advocacy on actual donation behaviour, OR = 5.07, $p = .010$, 95% CI [1.58, 19.84]. That is, participants were over 5 times more likely to donate to a congruent cause when exposed to advocacy supporting their position (vs. control). However, there was no effect of opposing advocacy on donation behaviour, OR = 1.04, $p = .930$, CI = [0.40, 2.73] (see Table 3 and Figure 2). Thus, in the context of the renewed debate on abortion, significant direct mobilization effects of advocacy were observed.

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[2]Of the remaining participants, 69 (31%) selected a neutral and 3 (1%) did not answer.

TABLE 3 ANOVA (Table 3a) and logistic regression results (Table 3b) for the impact of participant stance and type of advocacy on cause-congruent donation willingness and behaviour (Study 2: Abortion bill)

(a): Donation willingness				
Source	SS	df	F	η^2
Stance	0.70	1	0.160	<0.01
Advocacy	3.40	2	0.370	<0.01
Stance ×advocacy	18.20	2	2.040	0.02
Residual	951.60	213		
Total	973.90	218		

(b): Donation behaviour			
Source	OR	SE	95% CI
Stance	0.63	0.48	0.24, 1.62
Opposing advocacy	1.04	0.49	0.40, 2.73
Supporting advocacy	5.07[*]	0.63	1.58, 19.84
Stance × opposing advocacy	0.60	0.69	0.15, 2.30
Stance × supporting advocacy	0.19	0.79	0.04, 0.84
Likelihood ratio test	$\chi^2 (5) = 25.21, p < .001$		
McFadden's R^2	0.09[***]		

Note: [*]$p < .05$; Bonferroni corrections were made to the p-values of stance and the interaction term to assess them against stringent alpha (we multiplied the observed p-value by 2) because they were not included in the pre-registered analysis plan.
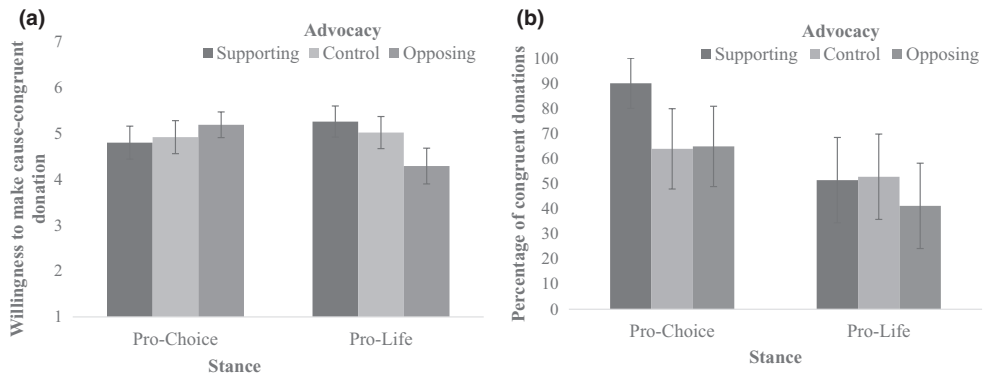

FIGURE 2 Plots of cell means showing the effects of participant stance and advocacy type on cause-congruent donation willingness (2a) and behaviour (2b) in Study 2 (Abortion bill)
Note: Error bars are standard error.

Identical mediation models as Study 1 were tested. The model explained 25% of the variance in willingness to make a congruent donation, $F(9, 209) = 7.86, p < .001$, and 48% of the variance in actual donation behaviour, $\chi^2(6) = 11.21, p = .082$. Results are summarized in Table 4.

Anger

As in Study 1, exposure to opposing advocacy did not significantly influence anger ($\beta = -0.09$, $p = .215$) but exposure to supporting advocacy decreased anger ($\beta = -0.46, p < .001$), relative to a control condition. Because anger was associated with willingness to make a congruent donation ($\beta = 0.20, p = .003$), this resulted in a significant negative indirect effect of supporting advocacy via

TABLE 4 Regression results for the impact of type of advocacy on cause-congruent donation willingness and behaviour (Study 2: Abortion bill)

	Mediator (β)				DV: Donations	
	Anger	Efficacy	Ingroup ID	Outgroup ID	Willingness (β)	Behaviour (p)
Opposing advocacy	−0.09	−0.10	−0.13	0.15	0.05	.09
Supporting advocacy	−0.46***	0.15*	0.03	−0.05	0.05	.32
Pro-life (vs. pro-choice) stance	0.05	0.04	0.05	−0.04	−0.07	−.26
Opposing advocacy × stance	−0.08	0.15	−0.09	0.09	−0.11	−.02
Supportive advocacy × stance	0.14	0.04	0.09	0.09	−0.01	−.40
Anger					0.20**	.20
Efficacy					0.28***	.01
Ingroup ID					0.30***	.56***
Outgroup ID					−0.13*	−.47**
Model R²	0.23***	0.07*	0.05	0.04	0.23***	.48***

Note: N = 218; Bonferroni corrections were made to the *p*-values of stance and the two interaction terms to assess them against a more stringent alpha (we multiplied the observed *p*-value by 3) because they were not included in the pre-registered analysis plan. * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001.

anger, such that people exposed to advocacy from their own side were actually less willing to donate to causes they believed in, IE = −0.09, CI [−0.16, −0.03]. However, anger was not associated with actual donation behaviour (p = .20, p = .167). Therefore, no other indirect effects via anger were significant, all $|IE|s < 0.09$.

Efficacy

Exposure to supporting advocacy enhanced participants' sense of efficacy (β = 0.15, p = .043), which, in turn, was associated with willingness to make a congruent donation (β = 0.28, p < .001) but not donation behaviour (p = .01, p = .920). Opposing advocacy did not influence ratings of efficacy (β = −0.10, p = .203). A marginal indirect effect suggested that exposure to supportive advocacy could enhance donation willingness via efficacy, IE = 0.04, CI [0.00, 0.09], but the effect did not reach significance and no other indirect effects were observed, $|IE|s < 0.03$.

Identification

Neither supporting nor opposing advocacy influenced participants identification with relevant victim groups, compared to the control condition, $|\beta|s < 0.16$, $ps \geq .051$. Participants who identified more with victims highlighted by their own side of the debate said they were more willing to make congruent donations (β = 0.30, p < .001) and this was reflected in their actual behaviour (p = .56, p < .001). Participants who identified more with the victims highlighted by the opposing side said they were less willing to make congruent donations (β = −0.13, p = .028), which was also reflected in their actual giving behaviour (p = −.47, p = .001). A negative indirect effect of opposing advocacy on donation behaviour via identification with the outgroup's victims was trending but not significant, IE = −0.07, CI [−0.16, 0.00], and no other indirect effects via identification were found on donation willingness or behaviour, $|IE|s < 0.07$.

DISCUSSION

H1 was again supported: people preferred to donate to causes congruent with their personal beliefs. Further, participants were more likely to donate to a congruent cause when exposed to advocacy that supported their personal stance on abortion, indicating that supporting advocacy can mobilize supportive action. Advocacy had no direct effects on self-reported donation willingness but did affect actual behaviour.

Competing indirect effects were also observed. Specifically, just like in Study 1, participants exposed to supporting advocacy reported reduced willingness to make cause-congruent donations because of reduced anger, but again this effect was not found on behaviour (partially supporting H2). Although this suggests supporting advocacy may counterintuitively suppress action among supporters, this second study also identified a competing mechanism that may simultaneously promote collective giving after exposure to supporting advocacy: an increased sense of efficacy (partial support for H3). There was also a trend suggesting that opposing advocacy can discourage people from donating in line with their beliefs to the extent that it encourages people to identify with alternative victim groups, although this effect was not robust (no support for H4). Some limitations remain, which were addressed in a third study.

STUDY 3

To replicate and extend the findings of the first two studies, we ran a third study in June 2019. At that time, abortion had re-emerged as a fierce topic of debate in the United States following the consecutive

decisions of three states to amend abortion laws in ways that made it more difficult for women to access abortions (BBC News, 2019). Thus, we ran Study 3 using the abortion debate, and improved the study design in a number of ways. First, due to a well-documented negativity bias (Baumeister et al., 2001), we believe that the control condition used in Studies 1 and 2 – where participants were simply asked to recall tweets or advocacy they had seen on the issue – may have primed people to think mostly of opposing advocacy, and therefore functioned more like a second opposing advocacy condition than a true control. If true, the results of the first two studies could be interpreted as the relative effects of supporting (vs. opposing) advocacy rather than supporting (vs. no) advocacy. For the third study, we removed what we speculate to be a problematic control condition and instead directly compare supporting to opposing advocacy. Second, we ensured that both tweet streams ended with a call to action from the target charity on each side of the cause, in an attempt to more closely align advocacy with the giving response. Third, improved measures were employed to more closely capture the group nature of responses. Fourth, we increased the sample size to ensure sufficient power to detect smaller behavioural effects if present. Finally, we assessed two of the proposed mechanisms (elaborated below) through which opposing advocacy could promote antecedents of collective action.

Injustice

Group-based anger is theorized to be evoked by a sense of injustice (van Zomeren et al., 2004, 2008), and people who experience more affective (vs. cognitive) perceptions of injustice are most likely to take part in collective action (van Zomeren et al., 2008). Evidence that perceived injustice evokes group-based anger abounds (e.g., Brown et al., 2010).

Advocacy is designed to highlight certain aspects of the issue at the expense of others. The messages of vocal opponents on an issue that has personal importance therefore may seem to unfairly promote the agenda of other groups at the expense of those that your side deem important. Opposing advocacy therefore may heighten a sense of injustice in relation to the issue. This sense of injustice, in turn, provokes anger. On the other hand, supporting advocacy may decrease the sense of injustice and therefore reduce anger.

Empathy

Identification with victims may be enhanced by empathy, which focuses emotion on the plight of a particular group and may encourage a sense of identification. Empathy is the ability to identify what others are thinking or feeling (Baron-Cohen, 2011; Davis, 1983). It has a spotlight nature (Bloom, 2006), meaning empathy draws our energy and attention to some targets at the expense of others. Indeed, it is very difficult to empathize with many targets at once (Slovic, 2007). Empathy and identification are intrinsically linked. For example, empathy involves the ability to take the perspective of another person and engage with their experiences on an emotional level (de Waal, 2008), which should facilitate identification (see Shen, 2010; Thomas et al., 2009). In this approach, when you empathize, you feel the target is like you, and are therefore more willing to help.

We propose that advocacy that highlights particular victim groups may draw the spotlight of empathy to the target group in question. Because of the spotlight nature of empathy, this has a two-fold effect: increasing empathy with the highlighted group while simultaneously decreasing empathy with other relevant groups. Empathy, in turn, creates a sense of identification with the same target group. In this way, advocacy can influence identification with relevant victim groups by drawing people's spotlight of empathy onto and off different targets of need.

Thus, in addition to the primary hypotheses that people prefer to give to causes that are congruent with their beliefs (H1) and that advocacy can influence collective giving via anger (H2), efficacy (H3), and identification with relevant victim groups (H4), we propose:

H5: Advocacy influences anger via a sense of injustice: Opposing (supporting) advocacy increases (reduces) anger by accentuating (attenuating) a sense of injustice.

H6: Advocacy affects identification by encouraging or inhibiting empathy with relevant victim groups.

METHOD

Participants and procedure

Five hundred and sixteen Americans completed the survey through Amazon Mechanical-Turk. The sample size was determined by an a priori power analysis based on 90% power to detect small effects (f = 0.15), plus a 10% buffer to allow for planned exclusions. In total, 22 participants were excluded based on planned exclusion rules: 16 for failing the attention check, 2 for failing the comprehension check all five times, and 4 who asked for their data to be deleted after they were debriefed. The final sample (N = 494) consisted of 191 men, 300 women, and 3 people of other genders. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 81 years (M_{age} = 38.91, SD = 12.44); 248 were pro-choice and 246 were pro-life.

A streamlined version of the procedure from Study 2 was employed. Participants were randomly allocated to only two conditions: opposing advocacy (n = 252) or supporting advocacy (n = 242).

Measures

All materials for Study 3 are available on the OSF. The same measures of identification and donation willingness from Study 2 were used. The same unrelated donation choices were used, but the pro-choice organization was the Planned Parenthood Action Fund, and the pro-life organization was the March for Life. All items included 7-point response scales (i.e., 1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*).

Anger

Four items adapted from Harth et al. (2011) measured participants' group-based anger (e.g., 'When reading the tweets, I as a pro-[life/choice] person felt angry about the messages being shared by those people'), α = 0.96.

Efficacy

Two items adapted from van Zomeren et al. (2011) were used to capture group-based efficacy (i.e., 'I think together our side can make a difference on this issue', 'I think together our side can successfully change things in relation to this issue'), r = 0.85.

Identification

The same two items were used to capture identification with unborn babies. The items capturing identification with women accessing abortions were slightly adapted from Study 2 to reflect the change of legal context inherent in the contemporary debate (e.g.,'I identify with women whose rights to access abortion are threatened'), r = 0.92 for women and r = 0.96 for unborn babies.

Perceived injustice

We used five items to measure perceived injustice. A three-item scale adapted from Okimoto and Wenzel (2010) ('The tweets I read were no big deal' [reverse scored], 'The tweets I read were serious', and 'The tweets I read were acceptable' [reverse coded]) was found not to be reliable, $\alpha = 0.07$. Therefore, we relied on two face-valid items to measure perceived injustice ('The tweets I read were unjust' and 'The tweets I read promoted injustice'), $r = 0.75$.

Empathy

Two items adapted from Escalas and Stern (2003) measured participants' empathy with the highlighted victim groups (e.g., 'Based on the tweets, I understand what [women/unborn babies] go through'). These items were supplemented with a single face-valid question (i.e., 'After reading the tweets, I have empathy for [women whose rights to access abortion are threatened/unborn babies]'). The three items were averaged to create a scale, $\alpha = 0.86$ for women and $\alpha = 0.91$ for unborn babies.

RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations between all variables are presented on the OSF. Overall, participants reported a greater willingness to donate to a cause that was congruent with their stance on the abortion issue ($M = 5.07$, $SD = 2.02$) than to a cause that was incongruent with their stance ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.72$), $t(493) = 23.89$, $d = 1.07$, $p < .001$. When donation behaviour was observed, 283 participants (57%) selected a congruent charity and only 27 (5%) selected an incongruent charity.[3]

A 2 (stance: pro-life, pro-choice) × 2 (advocacy: supporting, opposing) ANOVA revealed no overall main effect of advocacy on participants' self-reported willingness to make a congruent donation, $F(1,490) = 3.48$, $p = .063$, $\eta^2 < 0.01$. However, logistic regression analyses found a significant main effect of advocacy on their actual behaviour, $OR = 2.02$, $p = .012$, 95% CI [1.17, 3.54], such that participants were twice as likely to donate to a congruent cause when exposed to advocacy supporting (vs. opposing) their position on abortion (see Table 5 and Figure 3). Thus, similar to Study 2, there were significant direct mobilization effects of advocacy on donation behaviour.

The same mediation models as Study 2 were tested, with the addition of perceived injustice and empathy as serial mediators of the effects of advocacy on anger and identification, respectively. The full model explained 35% of the variance in willingness to make a congruent donation, $F(10,482) = 26.52$, $p < .001$, and 62% of the variance in actual donation behaviour, $\chi^2(20) = 261.54$, $p < .001$. Results are summarized in Table 6.

Anger

As expected, exposure to supporting advocacy decreased perceived injustice ($\beta = -0.63$, $p < .001$)[4], which in turn was associated with group-based anger ($\beta = 0.65$, $p < .001$). Group-based anger was, in turn, associated with actual donation behaviour ($p = .37$, $p = .031$). Thus, there was a significant negative indirect effect of supporting advocacy on actual donations, whereby exposure to supporting advocacy

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[3]Of the remaining participants, 171 (35%) selected a neutral charity and 13 (3%) did not answer.

[4]This direct effect was qualified by a significant interaction between stance and advocacy (ß =.21, p <.001) such that, compared to opposing advocacy, supporting advocacy reduced perceived injustice more among people who were pro-choice (ß = −.78, p <.001) than people who were pro-life (ß = −.45, p <.001).

TABLE 5 ANOVA (Table 5a) and logistic regression results (Table 5b) for the impact of participant stance and type of advocacy on cause-congruent donation willingness and behaviour (Study 3: Abortion reforms)

(a): Donation willingness

	Willingness			
Source	SS	df	F	η^2
Stance	0.90	1	0.21	< 0.01
Advocacy	14.20	1	3.48	< 0.01
Stance × advocacy	2.30	1	0.56	<0.01
Residual	1994.80	490		
Total	2012.20			

(b): Donation behaviour

Source	OR	SE	95% CI
Stance	0.52[*]	0.26	0.32, 0.65
Advocacy	2.02[*]	0.28	1.17, 3.54
Stance × advocacy	0.72	0.38	0.34, 1.52
Likelihood ratio test	$\chi^2(3) = 26.50, p < .001$		
McFadden's R^2	0.04[***]		

Note: [*]$p < .05$; [***]$p < .001$; Bonferroni corrections were made to the p-values of stance and the interaction term to assess them against stringent alpha (we multiplied the observed p-value by 2) because they were not included in the pre-registered analysis plan.
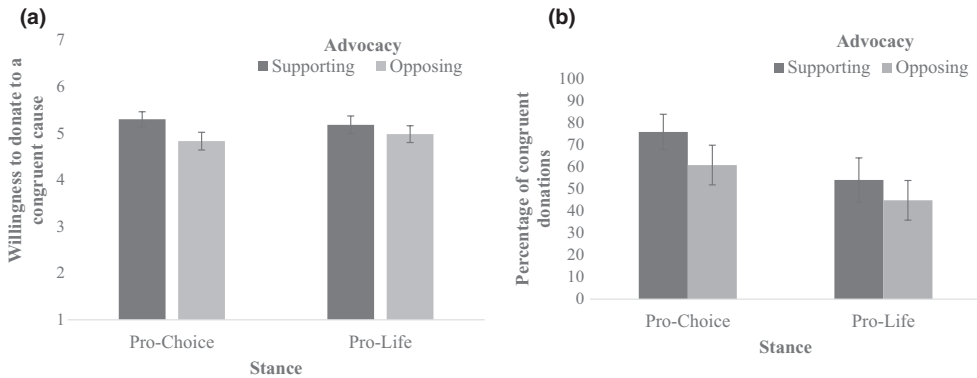

FIGURE 3 Plots of cell means showing the effects of participant stance and advocacy type on cause-congruent donation willingness (3a) and behaviour (3b) in Study 3 (Abortion reform)
Note: Error bars are standard errors.

reduced anger (and therefore actual donations to a congruent cause) by attenuating participants' sense of injustice, $IE = -0.15$, CI [$-0.32, -0.04$]. However, anger was not significantly associated with donation willingness ($\beta = 0.09$, $p = .126$). Thus, no significant indirect effect of supporting advocacy via perceived injustice and anger was found on self-reported donation willingness, $IE = -0.04$, CI [$-0.08, 0.01$], but was found on actual donation behaviour.

Efficacy

Exposure to supporting advocacy increased efficacy ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < .001$). Group efficacy, in turn, was associated with both willingness to make a cause-congruent donation ($\beta = 0.11$, $p = .003$) and actually doing so when given the chance ($p = .51$, $p < .001$). Overall, therefore, exposure to supporting advocacy

TABLE 6 Regression results for the impact of type of advocacy on cause-congruent donation willingness and behaviour (Study 3: Abortion reforms)

	Mediators (β)							DV: Donations	
	Injustice	Emp Ingroup	Emp Outgroup	Anger	Efficacy	ID ingroup	ID outgroup	Willingness (β)	Behaviour (p)
Supporting (vs. opposing) advocacy	−0.63***	0.27***	−0.21***	−0.17***	0.18***	−0.14***	0.09**	0.01	−.12
Pro-life (vs. pro-choice) stance	0.02	−0.11*	0.17***	0.07*	−0.04	−0.06	−0.12***	0.07	−.23*
Advocacy × stance	0.21***	−0.04	−0.01	0.03	−0.01	−0.05	0.02	0.00	−.10
Perceived injustice				0.65***				−0.06	−.02
Ingroup empathy						0.60***		0.23***	.50***
Outgroup empathy							0.70***	0.02	−.39**
Anger								0.09	.37*
Efficacy								0.11*	.51***
Ingroup ID								0.36***	.42*
Outgroup ID								−0.11*	−.37***
Model R²	0.43***	0.09***	0.07***	0.60***	0.03***	0.34***	0.46***	0.35***	.62***

Note: N = 493; Bonferroni corrections were made to the p-values of stance and the two interaction terms to assess them against a more stringent alpha (we multiplied the observed p-value by 3) because they were not included in the pre-registered analysis plan.

had a positive indirect effect via efficacy on both donation willingness, $IE = 0.02$, CI [0.003, 0.04], and behaviour, $IE = 0.09$, CI [0.43, 0.17].

Identification

Exposure to supporting advocacy led participants to empathize more with the victims highlighted by their own side of the debate ($\beta = 0.27$, $p < .001$). Empathy, in turn, was associated with identifying with those victim groups ($\beta = 0.60$, $p < .001$). At the same time, exposure to supporting advocacy decreased empathy with victim groups highlighted by the other side ($\beta = -0.21$, $p < .001$), leading to reduced identification with them, ($\beta = 0.70$, $p < .001$).[5] Identifying with the ingroup's perceived victims was associated with higher cause-congruent donation willingness ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < .001$) and behaviour ($p = .42$, $p = .002$), while identifying with the outgroup's perceived victims was associated with reduced willingness to make a congruent donation ($\beta = -0.11$, $p = .030$) and corresponding behaviour ($p = -.37$, $p = .008$). Overall, supporting advocacy had positive indirect effects on donation responses via empathy and identification with the ingroup's perceived victims, *IE on willingness* $= 0.22$, CI [0.15, 0.29] and *IE on behaviour* $= 0.22$, CI [0.15, 0.30]. The indirect pathway of supporting advocacy via empathy and identification with outgroup's perceived victims was significant for donation behaviour, $IE = 0.05$, CI [0.02, 0.11], but only trending for donation willingness, $IE = 0.02$, CI [0.000, 0.03].

DISCUSSION

The results of Study 3 extend findings from Studies 1 and 2. In the context of the abortion debate, exposure to supporting advocacy decreased anger and identification with the outgroup's perceived victims and simultaneously increased people's sense of efficacy and identification with the ingroup's perceived victims. Anger was provoked by a sense of injustice (after exposure to opposing advocacy), while identification was influenced by empathy. As expected, anger was significantly associated with donation responses. Thus, supporting advocacy indirectly demobilized participants via a reduced sense of injustice and therefore anger. However, supportive advocacy also mobilized collective giving both directly and indirectly via efficacy and via empathy and identification. Patterns of results across all three studies are discussed below.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The current research examines the psychological effects of advocacy on collective giving responses. Across three experiments, in the contexts of racial discrimination and abortion, we found that exposure to advocacy can have both mobilization and demobilization effects. People prefer to give to charities that align with their personal stances on contentious issues (supporting H1). Supporting advocacy sometimes indirectly weakens preferences for making cause-congruent donations by reducing anger (supporting H2), but at the same time sometimes indirectly promotes collective giving via increased efficacy (supporting H3) and changing patterns of identification with perceived victims (supporting H4). Study 3 also showed how advocacy can influence anger and change identification with victims: by affecting perceptions of injustice (supporting H5) and shifting the focus of empathy (supporting H6), respectively. Although all hypothesized pathways were observed, these effects were not consistently found across contexts or donation measures. Further, direct effects were only found in Studies 2 and 3. The possible reasons for these inconsistencies are discussed below.

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[5]In Table 6, suppressor effects are observed due to the high correlation between identification and empathy. Although the models predicting identification suggest the relationships between advocacy and identification are the opposite of those predicted, this is a statistical artefact created by the high correlation between identification and empathy. These relationships are not significant at the bivariate level.

The key finding of this paper is that advocacy has psychological implications that flow through to collective giving responses. Although advocacy had no overall effects on collective giving in Study 1, exposure to supporting advocacy mobilized donation behaviour in both Studies 2 and 3. In other words, after exposure to supporting views on the abortion debate, people were more likely to donate to a cause that advanced their personal beliefs. These results show that – at least in the context of mature, professionalized campaign contexts like abortion – advocacy works as it is intended to: it shapes people's thoughts and actions relevant to the issue in question.

In our first two studies, people reported a greater willingness to donate to cause-congruent organizations when they were angered by opponents' messages (supporting Van van Doorn et al., 2017; de Vyver & Abrams, 2015), but anger was not associated with actual donation behaviour. In Study 3, actual giving behaviour was promoted by anger, but in that study there was no association between anger and self-reported willingness to donate. Anger effects were observed primarily with reference to supporting rather than opposing advocacy (i.e., supporting advocacy suppressed anger but opposing advocacy did not provoke it). Taken together, we therefore found no evidence for the phenomenon of rage donations under laboratory conditions. Results do, however, demonstrate that advocacy can inadvertently demobilize existing supporters if it reduces their sense of injustice and their feelings of anger.

Perceptions of efficacy were not influenced by advocacy in the context of debate about players kneeling during the national anthem. However, supporting advocacy increased people's sense of efficacy in both studies conducted in the context of the abortion debate. It may be that the sheer length of time that the abortion debate has raged – spanning decades – makes people sensitive to cues about efficacy. If so, efficacy may be influenced more by advocacy for issues that have been debated for a long time, compared to newer debates where people on both sides have hopes for a fast and effective resolution. This aligns with Gulliver et al. (2020) finding that climate change advocacy campaigns can promote efficacy.

Identification with relevant victim groups was consistently associated not only with self-reported willingness to make donations but also with donation behaviour. Across all three studies, people who identified more with their ingroup's perceived victims were more likely to donate to a charity that was congruent with their beliefs, while people who identified more with the outgroup's perceived victims were less likely to make congruent donations. The strong role for identification with the victim group is consistent with previous research (Chapman et al., 2020; Gulliver et al., 2020; van Zomeren et al., 2011).

Advocacy influenced identification in the context of the abortion debate but not in the context of the kneeling debate. In abortion advocacy, tweets placed perceived victims at the center of their messaging. In contrast, images used in the kneeling debate were often more abstract or used images of famous people rather than victims. Future research could investigate how image choice within campaigns – especially concrete vs. abstract visualization of victims – may affect identification with those target groups and flow through to action.

Across three studies, known drivers of collective action – anger, efficacy, and identification – were shown to explain collective giving. This highlights the need to consider charitable giving not just as an individual act but also as a collective one (see also Louis et al., 2019; Thomas et al., 2016). Nonetheless, the patterns of prediction varied as a function of donation measures. The three drivers were more consistently associated with willingness. In contrast, only identification consistently predicted donation behaviour across the three studies (echoing Gulliver et al., 2020). These findings suggest that our models for predicting collective action may be more reliable for self-report than behavioural measures.

Strengths, limitations, and future directions

The present research examines empirically the effects of advocacy on collective giving, using an experimental design that incorporated real-world tweets on current social debates and captured donation behaviour. We establish that advocacy can influence the antecedents of collective action. Results varied across advocacy contexts, so future research could consider how the tactics employed by advocates

– such as including images of victims, showing the group mobilizing, or using provocative language – influence psychological reactions to their messages.

Across three online experiments, we find no evidence for the emerging phenomenon of rage donations: collective giving motivated by anger. Nonetheless, it is possible that our experimental paradigm did not capture the essence of rage donations, which typically emerge spontaneously in response to new provocation. The issues we examined – athletes kneeling and abortion – were social debates that had lasted months or years at the time of data collection. Future research should develop methods that can better capture fleeting emotional responses to provocation, and consider a broader range of targets (e.g., anger at the advocacy content vs. anger at the underlying issue).

We have used the term perceived victims because of the political discourses that position the groups as such. Nevertheless, we do not measure perceived victimhood directly. Examining how collective or comparative victimhood may moderate the effects of advocacy on collective responses would be a fruitful avenue for future research (see Vollhardt & Bilali, 2015; Vollhardt et al., 2021).

Finally, it should be acknowledged that when participants expressed that they identified with perceived victim groups (e.g., police or unborn children) it was likely not an expression of self-categorization as a member of those groups, but rather a reflection of a broader psychological identity-based connection with the target. Although identification was originally defined as a sense of interchangeability with ingroup members (Turner et al., 1987), recent social identity theorizing and evidence show that it is also possible for people to identify with opinion-based groups (e.g., Bliuc et al., 2007), disadvantaged outgroups (van Zomeren et al., 2011), and even animals (Amiot et al., 2020) and places (Droseltis & Vignoles, 2010). Future research should continue to explore the conceptual underpinnings of this broader kind of identity-based connection, and potentially tease it apart from related concepts like self-categorization on the one hand and empathy on the other.

CONCLUSION

Across three experiments using real-world tweets, we show that advocacy has psychological and behavioural impacts on its audiences. Advocacy can sometimes influence emotions, perceptions of efficacy, and identification with relevant victim groups. Through these mechanisms, advocacy may also influence whether or not people enact their convictions. Although supporting advocacy may sometimes demobilize people by suppressing anger, the present results show that exposure to supporters' advocacy is more likely to mobilize. These results suggest that while exposure to opponents' advocacy may move people closer to the center on polarized issues by shifting empathy towards target groups whose point-of-view had not previously been considered, exposure to supporters (e.g., via social media echo chambers) may actually accentuate political polarization.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
All authors declare no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS
Cassandra M. Chapman (Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Methodology; Project administration; Writing – original draft; Writing – review & editing) **Morgana Lizzio-Wilson** (Formal

analysis; Writing – review & editing) **Zahra Mirnajafi** (Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Methodology; Project administration; Writing – review & editing) **Barbara M. Masser** (Methodology; Writing – review & editing) **Winnifred R. Louis** (Methodology; Writing – review & editing).

OPEN RESEARCH BADGES

This article has earned an Open Data Badge for making publicly available the digitally-shareable data necessary to reproduce the reported results. The data is available at https://osf.io/dwmu8/.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are openly available in the Open Science Framework at https://osf.io/dwmu8/

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