

Running Head: POLITICIZATION AND MORAL CONVICTION

**You're Either With Us or Against Us!: Moral Conviction Determines How the
Politicized Distinguish Friend from Foe.**

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Word count: 8379

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Abstract

Three studies investigated how politicized collective identification affects individuals' reactions towards others. We hypothesized that a strong politicized identity tends to be accompanied by a moral conviction about the politicized cause, which in turn determines how the politicized respond to those less committed to their cause. Consistent with this, Study 1 showed that politicized (feminist) identification is associated with lower identification with women to identify less with other women who place moderate (vs. high) moral value on gender equality. Study 2 showed that politicized identification was associated with negative emotions towards people who disagree with this cause and this was mediated by the extent to which participants saw supporting the activist goal as morally obligatory. Study 3 showed that politicized identification, to the extent to which it implied holding a moral conviction about the activist cause, is associated with a desire for more social distance to an attitudinally dissimilar other, but not from an attitudinally similar other.

You're Either With Us or Against Us!: Moral Conviction Determines How the Politicized Distinguish Friend from Foe.

Over the last decades, great strides have been made in our understanding of the factors that cause members of disadvantaged groups (e.g., women, ethnic minorities) to work together with others in an effort to improve the societal position of their group. This work shows that the formation of a bond with likeminded others (i.e., the formation of a politicized collective identity) is a particularly important predictor of individuals' willingness to engage in activism—behavior aimed at achieving these shared collective goals. At the same time, however, politicized individuals' relations with others *who are not (as) committed to the collective cause* have received far less attention (for notable exceptions, see Simon & Grabow, 2010; Simon & Ruhs, 2008). This is unfortunate because, under most circumstances, the majority of people, both within and outside the disadvantaged group, are not activists, yet the feasibility of social change often depends on their support (e.g., Louis, 2009).

In the present paper we argue that the politicization process that binds like-minded people together in their effort to achieve social change may also drive apart those who are committed to social change from those who are not. More specifically, we argue that to the extent that the development of a politicized collective identity implies the adoption of a moral attitude about the collective cause, the relation between the politicized and the non-politicized may not be unequivocally positive.

Politicization

The term politicized collective identification refers to the extent to which individuals identify with a social movement and have internalized its norms and values. Feminists, for example, identify with the feminist movement and have internalized its values and its norm to take collective action against gender inequality. According to Simon and Klandermans

(2001), individuals begin to develop a politicized collective identity when they become aware of grievances they share with the other members of their group. The process of politicization continues when they make adversarial attributions for these grievances, placing the blame on an outgroup and engaging in a struggle for power with this outgroup in order to redress these grievances. In the final stages of politicization, the individuals are thought to become aware of the influence of third parties in resolving their grievances and triangulate their own position in relation to that of the outgroup and that of the relevant third parties in order to mobilize these third parties to their cause. Research has consistently shown that the extent to which individuals are politicized (i.e., identify with a social movement) forms a particularly strong predictor of collective action (e.g., Kelly, 1993; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1995; Simon et al., 1998; Sturmer & Simon, 2004; Van Zomeren et al., 2008).

Whereas much research has addressed the consequences of politicized identification for collective action participation, relatively little is known about the way the politicization process shapes attitudes towards individuals who are not (as) committed to the cause. A notable exception is the work by Simon and colleagues (Simon & Grabow, 2010; Simon & Ruhs, 2008). According to the authors, politicized collective identity entails both identification with the aggrieved group whose societal disadvantage must be addressed and identification with society as a whole. This identification with society is thought to arise out of the recognition that the aggrieved group is only entitled to support for its claims due to broader societal norms. In line with these ideas, the authors showed that politicized collective identification among Turkish and Russian immigrants in Germany was positively related to identification with both the relevant disadvantaged in-group and with German society (Simon & Grabow, 2012; Simon & Ruhs, 2008).

Whereas we acknowledge that the relation between politicized individuals and those who are not (as) committed to the collective cause (be they members of the same

disadvantaged group or members of the same society) can be positive, we believe that this is not unequivocally the case. Rather, we argue that the politicization process involves the moralization of the collective cause, which has the potential to drive a wedge between the politicized and those who are less committed to the collective cause, be they members of the same society, or even members of the same disadvantaged group.

Morality and the Relation Between the Politicized and the Non-politicized

We argue that the politicization process results in a moralized attitude (a moral conviction) about the collective cause, which has the potential to affect the relation between the politicized and those less committed to the collective cause. The term moral conviction refers to strong and stable beliefs about right and wrong (Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005; Skitka & Mullen, 2002; Skitka, 2002; Wright, Cullum, & Schwab, 2008). According to Skitka and colleagues, moral convictions differ from other strong, but non-moral attitudes in several ways. First of all, moral convictions, in contrast to any other type of attitude, are experienced as universal prescriptions (i.e., as norms that everyone should conform to). Second, moral convictions, more than other strong but non-moral attitudes, are connected to intense emotional experiences. Those who hold an attitude with moral conviction experience intense negative emotions (such as anger) with regard to what they see as immoral (Haidt, 2003; Mullen & Skitka, 2006; Rozin, Lowery, Imada, & Haidt, 1999). Finally, moral convictions, more than other types of attitudes, carry within them the obligation to act (Skitka et al., 2005).

The concepts of politicized collective identity and moral conviction show considerable overlap. First of all, theoretically, the politicization process involves psychologically changing a conflict of interest between two groups into *grievances* that are *blamed* on an outgroup. Blaming an outgroup for an outcome, instead of merely placing the cause of this outcome with this other group, indicates the outgroup has transgressed some

moral boundary, and thus constitutes a moral judgment. Coming to blame shared grievances on an outgroup therefore represents the change from a conflict of interest between two groups to a conflict with a moral component. The theory of politicization can thus be seen to describe the moralization of the collective cause.

Consistent with this interpretation of the theory, research shows a strong connection between politicized collective identification and the moralization of the collective cause (Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2012). More precisely, like politicized collective identification (Sturmer & Simon, 2009; Sturmer, Simon, Loewy, & Jorger, 2003; Van Zomeren et al., 2008), moral conviction increases feelings of anger at injustice, and strengthens individuals' belief in the efficacy of collective action in producing social change (Mullen & Skitka, 2006; Rozin et al., 1999; Van Zomeren et al., 2012), and can explain why politicized individuals would experience a felt inner obligation to engage in collective action (Skitka et al., 2005). Furthermore, theory and research suggest that during the politicization process, the moralization of the collective cause can result from interactions with like-minded others (Thomas & McGarty, 2009, Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009), thereby further strengthening individuals' bonds with these others and increasing their motivation to pursue social change (Van Zomeren et al., 2012). Thus, consistent with our reading of the theory, research thus suggests there is a strong relation between individuals' level of politicized collective identification and the extent to which they moralize the collective cause.

If, as we argue, the politicization process involves the moralization of the collective cause, this should have important consequences for the relation between the politicized and those who are less committed to the collective cause. Work by Skitka and colleagues (2005; see also Wright et al., 2008) shows that individuals who hold an attitude with moral conviction tend to respond negatively to others who do not share this attitude or opinion. More precisely, Skitka and colleagues show that attitude dissimilarity in moral domains

causes individuals to distance themselves psychologically, and even physically, from others who do not share that attitude. Furthermore, holding an attitude with moral conviction has been shown to cause individuals to experience negative moral emotions such as anger (Mullen & Skitka, 2006), contempt, and disgust (Haidt, 2003; Rozin et al., 1999) towards attitudinally dissimilar others.

If, as we argue, politicized identification is associated with strong moral convictions, then politicized individuals' evaluations of others should in large part depend on the extent to which these others are seen as supporting the collective cause. We investigate this prediction in the current research. We hypothesize that individuals' level of politicization, because it implies holding a moral conviction about the goal of collective action, affects their responses to attitudinally similar and dissimilar others. Specifically, we propose that politicized individuals (but not non-politicized individuals) will 1) identify less with, 2) experience more negative emotions towards, and 3) prefer greater social distance from others who do not agree with their cause than from others who agree with their cause (Studies 1 - 3). Furthermore, we expect the association between individuals' level of politicization and their responses to attitudinally similar and dissimilar others to be explained by the extent to which they hold a moralized attitude about the collective cause (Studies 2 and 3).

Overview of the studies

These predictions were investigated in three studies in the context of feminism and gender equality. In Study 1, we examined how politicized (feminist) identification predicts identification with the broader category (women) depending on how much other women are perceived to attach moral importance to the cause (gender equality). In Study 2 we sought to replicate and extend the results of Study 1 in the context of actual feminist activism. Here, we assessed politicized identification and the extent to which support for the activist cause was seen as a moral obligation as predictors of the emotional responses of feminist activists

towards other women who do not agree with the feminist cause. Finally, in Study 3 we investigated how politicized (feminist) identification and moral conviction are associated with participants' preferred social distance from an attitudinally similar (feminist) or dissimilar (sexist) target.

Study 1

Study 1 examined how politicized (feminist) identification is associated with identification with the broader category (women), depending on how much other women are perceived to attach moral importance to the cause (gender equality). We expected that women who strongly identify with feminism would identify less with other women when they believe these women attach moderate, rather than strong, moral importance to gender equality.

Method

Participants and design

Eighty-five Dutch female students from Leiden University ($M_{\text{age}} = 20.73$, $SD = 2.66$) took part in this experiment in exchange for €3 or course credit.¹ They were randomly assigned to the conditions of a one-factor (the moral importance other Dutch women attach to gender equality: high vs. moderate) between participants design. Identification with feminism was assessed as an independent variable prior to the manipulation, and identification with Dutch women served as the dependent variable.

Procedure

Participants were told that they would be taking part in a study on attitudes towards gender equality. To provide context for the measures and manipulations employed in this study, all participants were first asked to read a short text describing gender inequality in the Netherlands that has been used before to the same end (Zaal, Van Laar, Ståhl, Ellemers, & Derks, 2011; 2012). Through this text it was explained that women in the Netherlands earn approximately 7.5 percent less than men for the same work and that they receive fewer

opportunities for promotion. We subsequently measured participants' *feminist identification* using five items (with 9-point Likert scales, "I identify with feminism", "I feel a bond with other feminists", "I consider myself to be a feminist", "I have a lot in common with feminists", "I don't feel connected to feminism [reverse scored]", $\alpha = .93$, $M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.74$).

Participants were then asked to read a short research report that ostensibly summarized the results of a survey of Dutch women's attitudes towards gender equality. In reality, this report was constructed to serve as the manipulation of the moral importance other women attach to gender equality. In the high moral importance condition participants read that, on average, other Dutch women strongly moralize the goal of gender equality, whereas in the moderate moral importance condition, participants read that on average, other Dutch women only moderately moralized the goal gender equality (see Appendix A).

Group efficacy was measured with four items (with 9-point Likert scales, "I think that we as women are capable of countering gender discrimination", "I believe that actions against gender discrimination will be successful", "I believe that it is possible to counter gender discrimination", "I believe that actions against gender discrimination will have the desired effect", $\alpha = .87$, $M = 6.50$, $SD = 1.19$). Group efficacy was included to serve as a control variable. This allowed us to rule out the possibility that feminist participants would identify less with women who placed only moderate moral importance on gender equality because of seeing these women as a barrier to social change, instead of as less moral.

Identification with other Dutch women was measured with five items (with 9-point Likert scales, e.g., "I identify with other Dutch women", "I feel a bond with other Dutch women", "Being a Dutch woman is an important part of how I see myself", "Being a Dutch woman is an important part of my identity", "In many ways, I am like other Dutch women",

$\alpha = .89$, $M = 6.18$, $SD = 1.42$). Finally, all participants were debriefed, thanked and paid.

Means, standard deviations and correlations of the measures are included in Table 1.

Results

Hierarchical linear regression analysis was used to investigate the prediction that individuals' level of politicization is positively associated with disidentification with others who are not believed (vs. are believed) to share their commitment to the political goal. In Step 1 the standardized feminist identification measure and the effect-coded manipulation were entered as independent variables into the analysis, and their interaction was entered in Step 2. The results revealed a non-significant main effect of feminist identification, $b = 0.09$, $t(81) = 0.58$, $p = .57$, and a significant main effect of the manipulation, $b = -0.23$, $t(81) = -2.01$, $p = .05$, which indicates that participants identified less with other women who were believed to attach moderate (vs. high) moral value to gender equality. More importantly, the results revealed the predicted interaction between the measure of feminist identification and the manipulation, $b = -0.41$, $t(81) = -2.77$, $p = .007$, $\Delta R^2 = .08$, Figure 1. Simple slope analysis (Aiken & West, 1991) showed that believing other women to attach moderate (compared to high) moral importance to gender equality was associated with a reduced identification with women among participants high in feminist identification, $b = -0.71$, $t(81) = -3.40$, $p = .001$, but not among participants low in feminist identification, -1 SD, $b = 0.09$, $t(81) = 0.55$, $p = .59$.

Viewed differently, the results showed that feminist identification was only positively associated with identification with women when participants believed these other women to attach high moral importance to gender equality, $b = 0.50$, $t(81) = 2.46$, $p = .02$. When participants believed other women only to attach moderate moral importance to gender equality, feminist identification was not positively related to identification with women. In

fact, there was even a non-significant trend in the opposite direction, $b = -0.33$, $t(81) = -1.49$, $p = .14$.

Including group efficacy and its interaction with feminist identification in these analyses does not alter the results, the feminist identification x manipulation interaction remains significant, $b = -.42$, $t(79) = 2.78$, $p = .007$. This finding allows us to rule out an alternative explanation for the results, namely that feminists identified less with Dutch women in the moderate moral importance condition than in the high moral importance condition because they saw Dutch women in the moderate moral importance condition as a barrier to social change, instead of as less moral. Neither group efficacy, $b = .10$, $t(79) < 1$, $p = .71$, nor its interaction with feminist identification, $b = .10$, $t(79) < 1$, $p = .41$, significantly predicted identification with Dutch women.

Discussion and Introduction to Study 2

Study 1 provided initial evidence for the hypothesis that individuals' level of politicized identification would be associated with the experience of a psychological distance between themselves and others who do not attach high moral importance to the political cause. As predicted, the results showed that women who strongly identify with feminism identify less with other women when they believe these women attach moderate, rather than strong, moral importance to gender equality. Also as predicted, among individuals who did not identify strongly with feminism no association between the moral importance other women attach to gender equality and identification with these women was found. Thus, this study demonstrates experimentally that differences of opinion with other women about the moral importance of gender equality are associated with an increased social distance towards these women among individuals high in feminist identification.

Even though these results are clear and in line with predictions, Study 1 does have some limitations. First, the individuals participating in this study were all young,

undergraduate social science students, most of whom were not involved in any organized form of activism (in fact, only 1 reported being a member of a feminist organization). This makes it uncertain whether we can generalize the findings of Study 1 to actual political activists. To address this limitation, we surveyed feminist activists' opinions of women who disagree with the feminist cause in Study 2.

Second, even though dissimilarities in non-moral attitudes should not have led to the observed effects (Skitka, et al., 2005), Study 1 did not directly measure participants' moral considerations about the activist cause as an explanatory variable. This means that, even though the results of Study 1 are in line with predictions and difficult to explain in other ways (Skitka et al., 2005), we have yet to directly demonstrate the role of moral considerations in politicized individuals' evaluation of less committed others. To address this limitation, in Study 2 we directly assessed the extent to which participants saw supporting the gender equality as a moral obligation.

Study 2

Study 2 examined how politicized (feminist) identification is associated with the evaluation of women who do not agree with the feminist cause among members of a feminist activist group. We expected that feminist identification, to the extent that it implies seeing support for gender equality as a moral obligation, would be associated with more negative evaluations of women who do not agree with the feminist cause.

Method

Participants

Fifty-eight members of a British feminist organization ($M_{\text{age}} = 34.62$, $SD = 13.59$) participated in this survey in exchange for a chance to win one of three £50 vouchers in a prize draw.² Participants were recruited through an advertisement on a feminist organization's website.

Measures

Feminist identification was measured with five items (“Being a feminist activist is an important part of how I see myself”, “I feel solidarity with other feminist activists”, “I have a lot in common with the average feminist activists”, “I am glad to be a feminist activist”, “Feminist activists have a lot in common with each other”, $\alpha = .76$).

The extent to which participants perceived that supporting gender equality is a moral obligation was measured with seven items (e.g., “Supporting the feminist cause is a moral obligation”, “Not supporting the feminist cause is immoral”, “Supporting the feminist cause is the only moral position”, “Women who do not support the feminist cause are just as moral as feminist activists” [reverse scored], “Whether or not someone supports the feminist cause says nothing about their morality” [reverse scored], “Feminist activists are morally superior to women who do not support the feminist cause”, “I find it morally indefensible not to support the feminist cause”, $\alpha = .80$).

Six items were used to measure *negative emotions towards women who do not agree with the feminist cause* (anger, outrage, contempt, disgust, disdain, hostile, $\alpha = .89$). These specific emotions were selected because research had identified them as important in both the collective action literature (e.g., Van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004; Tausch et al. 2011) and the morality literature (e.g., Mullen & Skitka, 2006; Haidt, 2003; Rozin et al., 1999). Means, standard deviations and correlations of the measures are included in Table 2.

Results

Mediation analysis (Baron & Kenny, 1986) was used to investigate the prediction that feminist identification, because it involves the moralization of gender equality, would be associated with the experience of negative emotions towards women who do not agree with the feminist cause.³ Analyses showed that identification with feminism predicted the extent to which participants saw supporting gender equality as a moral obligation, $b = 0.52$, $t(53) =$

2.45, $p = .02$, $\Delta R^2 = .10$. Furthermore, identification with feminism predicted the extent to which participants experienced negative emotions toward women who do not agree with the feminist cause, $b = 0.54$, $t(53) = 2.06$, $p = .04$, $\Delta R^2 = .06$. Finally, when the extent to which participants saw supporting gender equality as a moral obligation was entered into this analysis, the effect of identification with feminism on the experience of negative emotions towards women who do not agree with the feminist cause was no longer significant, $b = 0.28$, $t(52) = 1.10$, $p = .27$, whereas moral obligation emerged as a significant predictor, $b = 0.49$, $t(52) = 3.11$, $p = .003$, $\Delta R^2 = .15$. Bootstrap analysis using 5000 resamples (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) showed that the indirect effect of feminist identification on negative emotions through moral obligation was significant (indirect effect = 0.26, bias corrected 95% CI [0.04, 0.71]). The mediation model is depicted in Figure 2. Thus, the results of Study 2 demonstrate that politicized identification is positively associated with the experience of negative emotions towards others who do not agree with this goal, to the extent that it involves holding a moralized view of the collective cause.

Discussion and Introduction to Study 3

As predicted, the results of Study 2 showed that, in a sample of feminist activists, feminist identification was associated with the experience negative emotions towards others who disagree with this cause to the extent that it involves holding a moralized view about gender equality. Importantly, the finding that feminist identification did not predict negative emotions towards women who disagreed with the collective cause when we controlled for moral obligation allows us to rule out the possibility that feminist identification mediated the effects of moral obligation on negative emotions. Taken together, Studies 1 and 2 offer converging evidence for the prediction that politicized identification - to the extent that it implies holding a moral attitude about the collective cause - differentially affects responses towards attitudinally similar and dissimilar others.

A question that remains unanswered is whether the way politicized individuals respond to others is pulled primarily by positive responses to attitudinal similarity, or by negative responses to attitudinal dissimilarity. Because no control condition was included in Study 1, it was not possible to determine whether politicized (feminist) participants' identification with women was increased (compared to baseline) by the "high" moral importance condition or lowered (compared to baseline) in the "moderate" moral importance condition in this study. Similarly, because Study 2 only focused on targets who were attitudinally dissimilar (i.e., women who disagree with the feminist cause), this study does not yet shed light on the relative influence of attitudinal similarity and dissimilarity on politicized individuals' evaluations of others.

Importantly, research shows that, while moral conviction is associated with both positive reactions to attitudinally similar others and negative reactions to attitudinally dissimilar others (Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, & Hepp, 2009; Skitka et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2008), its negativity effects are generally found to be stronger than its positivity effects (e.g., Parker & Janoff-Bulman, 2013; Skowronski & Carlston, 1989). We therefore expected that politicized collective identification (to the extent that it implied holding a moral conviction about the collective cause), would be associated with positive reactions to attitudinally similar others, and with negative reactions to attitudinally dissimilar others. In line with work on moral conviction, we further expected that politicized collective identification would be more strongly associated with negative reactions to attitudinally dissimilar others than with positive reactions to attitudinally similar others.

These predictions were investigated in Study 3. We experimentally manipulated a target's attitude to be either clearly in favor of gender equality or clearly opposed to gender equality. Participants' preferred social distance to this target (Skitka et al., 2005) was measured before and after the target's attitude to gender equality was manipulated. This pre-

and post-test design allowed a clear differentiation between positive responses to the target (a smaller preferred social distance on the post-test than on the pretest) and negative responses to the target (a larger preferred social distance on the post-test than on the pretest). We expected that participants' level of politicized collective identification, to the extent that it implied holding a moral conviction about the collective cause (gender equality), would be associated with a preference for more social distance (compared to the pre-measure) to an attitudinally dissimilar target and with a preference for less social distance (compared to the pre-measure) to an attitudinally similar target. We furthermore expected politicized collective identification to be associated with more distancing from the attitudinally dissimilar target than with approach of the attitudinally similar target.

In Study 3 we wished to investigate whether the effects of politicized identification that we observed in Studies 1 and 2 extend beyond members of the broader disadvantaged group (women) and apply to men as well. We therefore chose to use a male target in Study 3.

Method

Participants and design

One hundred and fifty four women from the United States ($M_{\text{age}} = 34.8$, $SD = 11.82$) were recruited through Amazon's Mturk (www.mturk.com) to take part in this 10 minute study about gender equality in exchange for \$1.50.⁴ All participants indicated being in favor of gender equality. Moral conviction about gender equality and politicized (feminist) identification were assessed as independent variables at the start of the experiment. Participants' preferred social distance to a sexist or feminist target served as the dependent variable.

Procedure

All variables were measured on 7-point Likert scales. The items used in this study are included in Appendix B. At the start of the study we assessed the strength of participants'

moral conviction about gender equality with 7 items (e.g., “My position on gender equality is a reflection of my core moral beliefs and convictions”, $\alpha = .94$) and their feminist identification with 10 items taken from Leach and colleagues (e.g., “I feel a bond with feminists”, Leach et al., 2008, $\alpha = .93$).

Participants then read a short description of a target person, John. This description identified John as a university student who enjoys his part time job, hanging out with his friends, and watching sports. At this point, we premeasured participants’ preferred social distance to the target with 6 items taken from Skitka and colleagues (Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005). Participants indicated on a 7-point scale the extent to which they would be unhappy (1) or happy (7) to have John play several roles in their lives (e.g., as a close friend or as a colleague, $\alpha = .90$).

We then manipulated *the target’s stance on gender equality*. Participants in the *sexist target* condition learned that John opposes gender equality, whereas participants in the *feminist target* condition learned that John supports gender equality (see Appendix C).

We then again measured participants’ preferred social distance to John, using the same six items as before the manipulation of the target’s stance, $\alpha = .98$. Finally, participants answered some background questions, were thanked for their participation, and paid.

Results

The means, standard deviations and correlations between the measures are included in Table 2. The items of the pre- and post-measures of social distance were reverse-scored so that higher values indicate a greater desire for social distance. We calculated a difference score between the pre- and post-measures of social distance to function as the dependent variable. Positive scores on this variable indicate participants’ desire for more distance to the target upon learning his stance on gender equality; negative scores indicate a desire for more

closeness. Differences in numbers of degrees of freedom between similar analyses are caused by the listwise deletion of missing values.

Social distancing

Social distancing to the target was analyzed with hierarchical multiple regression. In the first step, the effect-coded manipulation of the target's stance on gender equality (1 for the feminist target condition, -1 for the sexist target condition) and the standardized feminist identification scale were entered. Their interaction was entered in step 2. The results showed a marginally significant main effect of feminist identification, $b = 0.17$, $t(131) = 1.65$, $p = .09$, and a significant main effect of the manipulation of the target's stance on the social distancing measure, $b = 1.75$, $t(131) = 17.66$, $p < .001$. Importantly though, these effects were qualified by the predicted interaction between the manipulation of the target's stance and feminist identification, $b = 0.40$, $t(131) = 3.96$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .03$, Figure 3. Simple slope analyses (Aiken & West, 1991) revealed that participants' feminist identification was associated with a desire for more social distance to the sexist target, $b = 0.56$, $t(131) = 3.72$, $p < .001$, and was marginally significantly associated with a preference for more social closeness to the feminist target, $b = -0.23$, $t(131) = -1.79$, $p = .08$. As predicted, these results thus showed that feminist identification is associated with a desire for more social distance from a sexist target, and a desire for somewhat more social closeness to a feminist target.

A similar analysis, now using the measure of moral conviction as the independent variable instead of the measure of feminist identification, revealed a main effect of moral conviction, $b = 0.21$, $t(138) = 2.31$, $p = .02$, a main effect of the manipulation of target's stance, $b = 1.76$, $t(138) = 18.99$, $p < .001$, as well as the predicted interaction between moral conviction and the target's stance, $b = 0.43$, $t(138) = 4.65$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .04$, Figure 4. As predicted, simple slope analyses revealed that the strength of participants' moral conviction about gender equality was associated with a desire for more social distance to the sexist

target, $b = 0.65$, $t(138) = 4.80$, $p < .001$, and was marginally significantly associated with a desire for more social closeness to the feminist target, $b = -0.22$, $t(138) = -1.70$, $p = .09$. Thus, as predicted, the results thus showed that participants' moral conviction in support of gender equality was associated with a desire for more social distance from a sexist target, and a desire for somewhat less social distance from a feminist target.

Mediated moderation analyses

We used moderated mediation analysis (Muller, Judd, & Yzerbyt, 2005) to investigate whether moral conviction explained why feminist identification led participants to distance themselves from the sexist target, but not from the feminist target. The proposed model is included in Figure 5. In statistical terms, we expected the observed interaction between feminist identification and target's stance (which indicates that feminist identification is associated with an increased desire for social distance from the sexist [vs. feminist] target) would be explained by 1) a strong correlation between feminist identification and moral conviction (reflecting the proposed overlap between these concepts), 2) and by an interaction between moral conviction and target's stance (reflecting the finding that moral conviction in support of gender equality is associated with an increased desire for social distance from the sexist [vs. feminist] target).

Consequently, and following recommendations of Muller and colleagues (2005), we consider the data to support the proposed mediated moderation model when each of the following criteria are met. First of all, as in Study 2, individuals' level of feminist identification must be significantly (positively) correlated with the extent to which they see gender equality as a moral good. Second, the significant interaction between feminist identification and the target's stance must become non-significant when moral conviction and its interaction with the target's stance are included in the analyses. Third, the interaction between moral conviction and the target's stance must remain significant when feminist

identification and its interaction with the target's stance are included in the analysis. Finally, feminist identification must have a significant indirect effect, through moral conviction, on preferred social distance to the sexist target.

In line with these predictions, the results first of all showed a strong correlation between feminist identification and moral conviction, $r(137) = .66, p < .001$, which reflects the predicted overlap between these concepts. Furthermore, a regression analysis showed that the significant interaction between feminist identification and the target's stance on social distancing to the target, $b = 0.40, t(131) = 3.96, p < .001$, became non-significant when moral conviction and its interaction with the target's stance were entered into the analysis, $b = 0.20, t(129) = 1.51, p = .13$. Thus, feminist identification was no longer associated with different reactions to the sexist and feminist target when we controlled for moral conviction and its interaction with the target's stance.

Also as expected, the interaction between moral conviction and the target's stance remained a significant predictor of social distancing in this analysis, $b = 0.31, t(129) = 2.43, p = .02$. Moral conviction in support of gender equality was still associated with a desire for greater social distance towards the sexist target ($r[65] = .32, p < .01$), and not associated with a desire for more social closeness to a feminist target ($r[64] = -.09, p = .50$) when we controlled for feminist identification and its interaction with the target's stance. Together, these results indicate that participants who strongly identified with feminism distanced themselves from the sexist target, but not from the feminist target, because identifying with feminism implied holding a strong moral conviction in support of gender equality.

A moderated mediation bootstrap analysis (5000 resamples, Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007) corroborated these findings. The results showed that moral conviction mediated the effect of feminist identification on social distancing from the sexist target, indirect effect = 0.41, bias corrected and accelerated 95% CI (0.22, 0.66). Moral conviction did not mediate

the (already marginal) effect of feminist identification on the approach of the feminist target, indirect effect = -0.17, bias corrected and accelerated 95% CI (-0.36, 0.01). Thus, participants' level of feminist identification was associated with a desire to distance themselves from a sexist person to the extent that it implied holding a moral conviction about gender equality.

Simple mediation analysis (Baron & Kenny, 1986) of the effect of feminist identification, through moral conviction, on social distancing (within the sexist target condition) corroborated the results of the bootstrap analysis. First of all, feminist identification was strongly predictive of moral conviction in the sexist target condition, $b = .63$, $t(67) = 5.79$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, feminist identification had a significant effect on social distancing from the sexist target, $b = .52$, $t(66) = 3.33$, $p = .001$, which became non-significant when we controlled for moral conviction, $b = .25$, $t(65) = 1.23$, $p = .22$. Moral conviction emerged as a significant predictor of social distancing from this analysis, $b = .52$, $t(65) = 2.71$, $p = .009$. A Sobel test showed that indirect effect of feminist identification, through moral conviction, on social distancing from the sexist target was significant, Sobel $Z = 2.47$, $p = .01$.

Finally, additional analyses, using absolute values on the social distancing measure as the dependent variable, showed that both feminist identification ($b = 0.21$, $SE = 0.10$, $t(131) = 2.21$, $p = .03$) and moral conviction ($B = 0.26$, $SE = 0.09$, $t(138) = 2.89$, $p = .004$) were more strongly associated with distancing from the sexist target than with approach of the feminist target. Further analyses showed that the negativity effect of politicized collective identification was explained by moral conviction. When moral conviction and its interaction with target's stance were controlled for, the interaction between politicized collective identification and target's stance became non-significant ($p = .56$), whereas the interaction between moral conviction and target's stance remained significant ($p = .03$). Thus, to the

extent that politicized (feminist) identification implied holding a moral conviction about gender inequality, it was associated with more negative reactions to sexism than with positive reactions to feminism.⁵

Discussion

The results of Study 3 replicate and extend the results of Studies 1 and 2. As in Studies 1 and 2, individuals' level of politicized collective identification was shown to be an important predictor of their responses to attitudinally similar and dissimilar others. Furthermore, as in Study 2, moral considerations were found to be responsible for this effect. To the extent that politicized identification meant holding a moral conviction about the collective cause, politicized individuals distanced themselves from the attitudinally dissimilar target. Importantly, feminist identification did not predict social distancing to the sexist target when we controlled for moral conviction, whereas moral conviction did emerge as a significant predictor of social distancing in this analysis.² This finding allows us to rule out the possibility that feminist identification explains why moral conviction was associated with a desire for more social distance from the sexist target. In addition, Study 3 extends the results of Studies 1 and 2 by demonstrating that politicized identification, to the extent that it implies holding a moral conviction about the cause, is associated with a tendency to place more weight on attitudinal dissimilarity (but not more weight on attitudinal similarity) in their evaluation of others. Together then, the results of Studies 1, 2 and 3 demonstrate the importance of considering moral considerations for understanding the way politicized individuals respond to attitudinally similar and dissimilar others.

General discussion

The current studies were designed to investigate how politicized collective identification (i.e., identification with a social movement) affects individuals' responses to others who either support or oppose the collective cause. We argued that the process of

politicization strengthens the formation of a moral attitude about the collective cause. We expected that this moralized attitude affects how politicized individuals respond to attitudinally similar and dissimilar others. Specifically, we predicted that politicized collective identification, to the extent that it involves holding a moral attitude about the collective cause, would be associated with more negative reactions to others who hold a different attitude about the collective cause than towards like-minded others.

Three studies, using different procedures and measures, investigated this prediction in the context of feminism and attitudes towards gender inequality. The results of these studies offer convincing evidence for the role of moral considerations in politicized individuals' attitudes towards attitudinally similar and dissimilar others. Study 1 showed, as predicted based on our morality argument, that feminist participants, but not non-feminist participants, identified less with other women when they believed these women to attach only a moderate (compared to high) moral value to gender equality. Study 2 showed that politicized identification among feminist activists, to the extent that it implied seeing support for gender equality as a moral obligation, was associated with increased levels of negative emotions towards other women who disagree with the feminist cause. Finally, Study 3 showed that feminist identification, to the extent that it implied holding a moral conviction about gender equality, was associated with a desire for increased social distance from attitudinally dissimilar others. Together, the results of these studies convincingly demonstrate the importance of considering moral conviction in the way politicized individuals regard and respond to non-politicized individuals.

These findings have important implications for both the theory and the practice of collective action. First of all, the present results extend our understanding of the relation between politicized and non-politicized individuals, and specifically demonstrate that politicized individuals' view of other depends on these others' level of support for the

collective cause. In line with predictions from work on politicization (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Simon & Ruhs, 2008), the results of Study 1 showed a strong positive relation between feminist identification and identification with women. Importantly though, the current research extends the results of this earlier work by showing that the relation between politicized collective identification and identification with the relevant disadvantaged group depends on the extent to which this disadvantaged group is seen to support the collective cause. The positive relation between feminist identification and identification with women disappeared when these women were seen to offer only moderate moral support for the cause. The results of Studies 2 and 3 suggest that moral considerations may have been responsible for this finding. As these studies demonstrated, politicized individuals tended to respond negatively to attitudinally dissimilar others, to the extent that politicized collective identification implied holding a moralized view of the collective cause. By connecting politicization to moral conviction, the present work extends current understanding of the relation between the politicized and both members of their broader in-group and society at large.

With an eye on the practice of collective action, the current results suggest that the relation of (highly politicized) activists with their broader disadvantaged in-group, as well as with the general public, may not be as positive as would ideally be the case. According to Simon and colleagues (e.g., Simon & Ruhs, 2008), politicization can be seen as a dual identification in that it implies identifying with both the broader disadvantaged group and with society as a whole. The results of the present work suggest that the link between individuals' level of politicization and their level of identification with the broader disadvantaged group and with society may not be unequivocally positive, instead depending on the extent to which society and the broader disadvantaged group are perceived to support the collective cause. Specifically, assuming that most others (be they un-politicized members

of the broader disadvantaged in-group or members of the general public) are less committed to the collective cause than most activists, one might expect activists, because of their moralized view of the cause, to experience a degree of social distance between themselves and these others. In line with this reasoning, Becker and colleagues (Becker, Tausch, Spears, & Christ, 2011) show that individuals engaging in radical collective action that has little support among the broader ingroup can come to disidentify with members of their broader ingroup because they see these members as insufficiently committed to the collective cause. Such disidentification could potentially backfire because the feasibility of social change often depends on the support of the broader in-group and of society as a whole (e.g., Burstein, 2006; Louis, 2009; Subasic, Reynolds, & Turner, 2008).

The current findings may also have implications for our understanding of the processes leading individuals to radicalize in pursuit of the collective goal, and to justify more hostile forms of collective action. According to Simon and colleagues (e.g., Simon & Grabow, 2010), politicized collective identification normally is not related to support for political violence because its connection to societal identification implies following societal norms in pursuit of the collective cause. They argue that only under conditions of escalating conflict may politicization lead to the adoption of more disruptive forms of action (Simon, Reicher, & Grabow, 2013). The results of the current work could help specify the conditions under which this might be the case. To be more precise, the present results suggest that the radicalization of politicized individuals should depend on the extent to which these individuals perceive society to share their stance. When they perceive society to disagree with their cause, politicized individuals could be expected to disidentify with society, lowering their willingness to adhere to societal norms that prohibit the use of collective violence (e.g., Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). Importantly, research shows that morally convicted individuals infer the legitimacy of societal institutions (e.g., the supreme court) from the

extent to which these are seen to support their moral judgments, instead of vice versa (Skitka, Bauman, & Lytle, 2009). In a similar vein, morally convicted individuals may infer the legitimacy of societal norms prohibiting collective violence from the support for social change society is perceived to provide. When such support is perceived to be low, politicized individuals may start to doubt the legitimacy of societal rules that prohibit more confrontational forms of collective action and start to radicalize (e.g., Doosje, Loseman, & Van den Bos, 2013). We are currently in the process of investigating this possibility.

The current findings are broadly consistent with, and importantly extend, a perspective on politicization as identification with an opinion-based group (Bliuc et al., 2007; McGarty, Bliuc, & Thomas, & Bongiorno, 2009; Musgrove & McGarty, 2008). According to this work, the relevant identity for predicting individuals' willingness to engage in collective action revolves around shared opinions about specific societal issues. In line with this prior work, the current research shows that politicized individuals' responses to others depend on these others' attitudes about the collective cause. The current research also extends this work by showing that it is the moral component of politicized individuals' opinions about the collective cause that explains their relations to attitudinally dissimilar others. Indeed, from the perspective of work on moral conviction (e.g., Skitka et al., 2005), disagreement about opinions that individuals do not perceive as morally relevant should not have led to the observed results (see also Parker & Janoff-Bulman, 2013). The current work thus extends the opinion-based group perspective on politicization by demonstrating that it is the moral aspect of people's opinions that determines how they respond to proponents and opponents of the cause.

Limitations

One possible limitation of the present work concerns the use of a male target in Study 3. Specifically, it is unclear whether the negativity effect observed in Study 3 (i.e., the finding

that politicized identification is primarily associated with negative responses to those who oppose the collective cause) can be generalized to female targets. We chose to use a male target in Study 3 because we were interested in investigating whether the effects of feminist identification that were observed in Studies 1 and 2 would extend beyond perceptions of members of the broader disadvantaged group. However, as a result of this choice, it is not clear whether the results of Study 3 would have been the same if we had used a female target instead. In gender political terms, women should form an ingroup for politicized feminists (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001). This means that, had we used a female target in Study 3, our politicized (vs. un-politicized) participants may have responded more positively to the feminist target and less negatively to the sexist target. This means that the negativity effect of politicized identification that was observed in Study 3 (i.e., more negative reactions to sexism than positive reactions to feminism) might have been less pronounced (or absent) had we chosen to use a female target. We acknowledge this possibility, and advise caution when generalizing the results of Study 3 beyond their immediate context. More research is needed to determine whether the negativity effect observed in Study 3 generalizes to female targets.

Another possible limitation of the current work is the exclusive focus on feminism and gender equality as the context for our investigations. Because of this, it is uncertain whether the present results generalize to other contexts and forms of politicized collective identification. However, the politicization process itself has been studied in a variety of contexts, and the results of this work generally fit with a view of politicized collective identification as involving a moral component. We therefore believe that the results of the current work generalize to contexts other than the one under investigation here. Nevertheless, future research could investigate the generalizability of the present findings in contexts other than the one under investigation here.

Conclusion

The present work examined the role of moral considerations in politicized individuals' attitudes towards non-politicized others. The results of three studies showed that politicized individuals' responses to others depends on the extent to which these others are seen to support the cause. In addition, Studies 2 and 3 revealed that moral considerations explained this effect; individuals' level of politicization was primarily associated with negative responses to attitudinally dissimilar others because politicization implied holding a moral conviction about the collective cause.

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Footnotes

¹ Post hoc power analysis showed that, in the main analysis of the results of Study 1 a sample size of $N = 85$ (at $\alpha = .05$) yielded considerable power (.80) for detecting effect sizes (R^2) of .086 or above. The observed power of the interaction effect between politicized (feminist) identification and the manipulation of the moral importance other women attached to gender equality was .78.

² According to Fritz and McKinnon (2007), when testing for simple mediation effects, the sample size needed to achieve a power of .80 depends on the method used for testing mediation effects and on the strength of the IV to Mediator and Mediator to DV paths. When the IV to M and M to DV paths are moderately strong (as is the case in the present study), a sample size of approximately $N = 70$ is needed for a bias corrected bootstrapping analysis to reach a power of .80 (at $\alpha = .05$). The mediation analysis reported in the results section of Study 2 is thus somewhat underpowered.

³ The reduced number of degrees of freedom in these analyses is caused by the listwise deletion of two cases with missing values on the feminist identification scale.

⁴ Due to the listwise deletion of missing values, the effective sample size of the analyses of Study 3 is somewhat lower (between $N = 141$, and $N = 134$, depending on which variables are included in the analysis). In the analyses reported here, these sample sizes yielded considerable power (.80 at $\alpha = .05$) for detecting effects with effect sizes (R^2) of approximately 4%.

⁵ Some of the items we used to measure moral conviction in Study 3 did not explicitly refer to the *moral* value participants attached to gender equality. An additional (bias corrected) bootstrap analysis, using only the subset of moral conviction items that refer directly to the moralization of individuals' attitudes towards gender equality corroborated our finding that moral conviction explains the effects of feminist identification on social distancing from the

sexist target (indirect effect = 0.27, 95% CI = 0.13, 0.45), but not from the feminist target, (indirect effect = -0.10, 95% CI = -0.23, 0.02, index of mediated moderation = 0.37, 95% CI = 0.18, 0.58).

Table 1.

Means, standard deviations and correlations of the measures used in Study 1

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.
<i>1. Feminist identification</i>	4.69	1.74	-	.06	.22*
<i>2. Identification with women</i>	6.18	1.42		-	.06
<i>3. Group efficacy</i>	6.50	1.19			-

* $p < .05$

Table 2.

Means, standard deviations and correlations of the measures used in Study 2

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.
<i>1. Feminist identification</i>	6.16	0.65	-	.32*	.27*
<i>2. Moral obligation</i>	3.54	1.42		-	.38*
<i>3. Negative emotions</i>	2.57	1.27			-

* $p < .05$

Table 3.

Study 3: Means, standard deviations and correlations

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. <i>Moral conviction</i>	5.45	1.36	-	.66 ^{***}	-.14	.01
2. <i>Feminist identification</i>	4.26	1.36		-	-.21 [*]	-.04
3. <i>Pre-measure of social distance</i>	2.95	1.04			-	.22 ^{**}
4. <i>Post-measure of social distance</i>	3.94	2.09				-

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

Figure 1. Identification with other women as a function of identification with feminism and the manipulation of the moral importance other women attach to gender equality.



Figure 2. Among feminist activists, identification with feminism increases negative moral emotions towards women who disagree with the feminist cause through moral conviction about gender equality (all regression coefficients are unstandardized *b*'s).

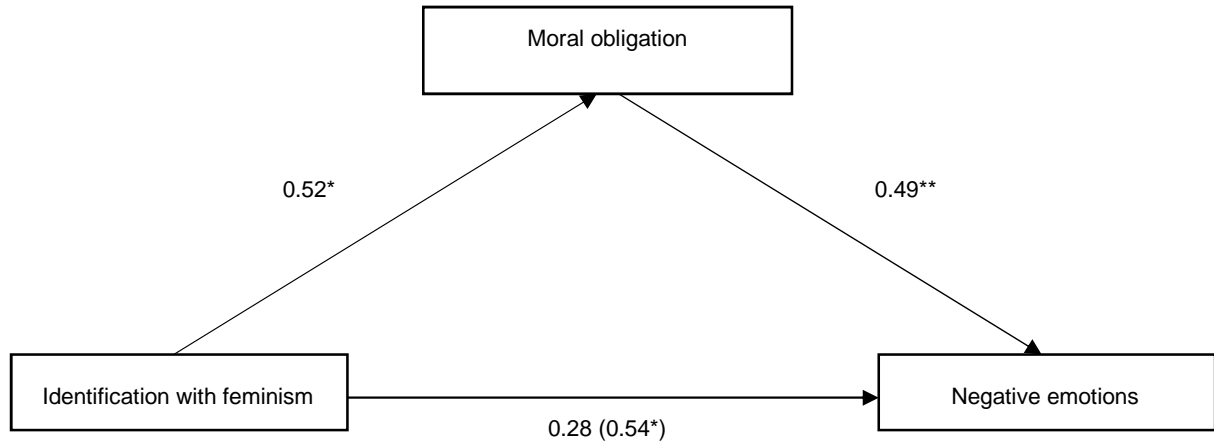


Figure 3. Social distancing to the target (post-measure – pre-measure) as a function of feminist identification and the manipulation of the target's stance towards gender equality in Study 3.

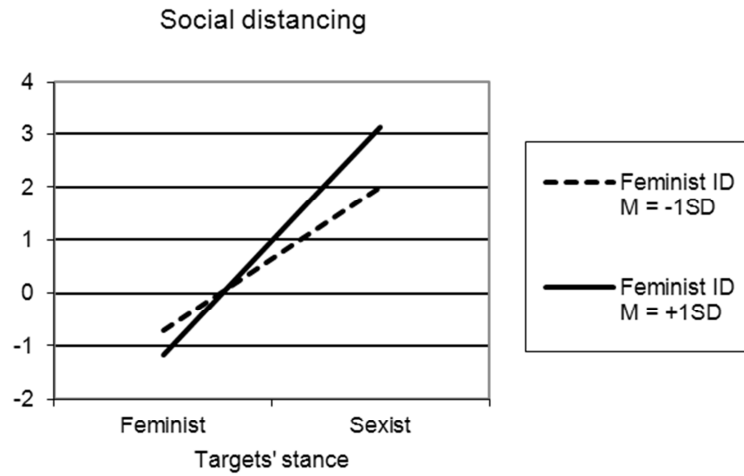


Figure 4. Social distancing to the target (post-measure – pre-measure) as a function of moral conviction and the manipulation of the target's stance towards gender equality in Study 3.

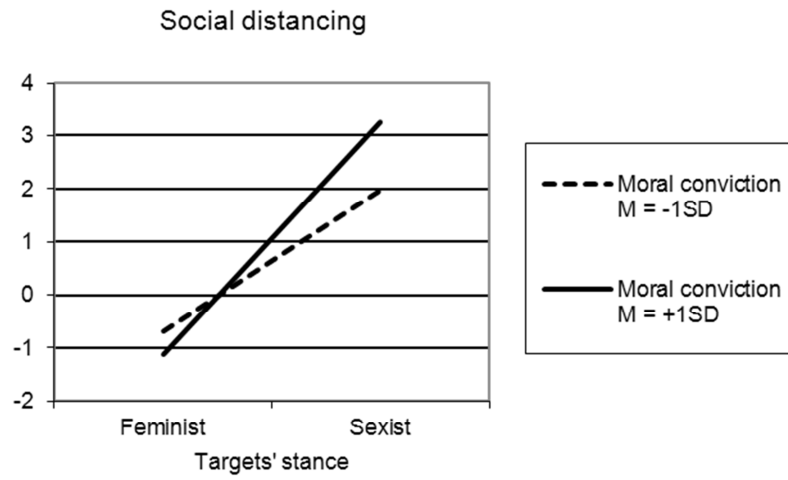
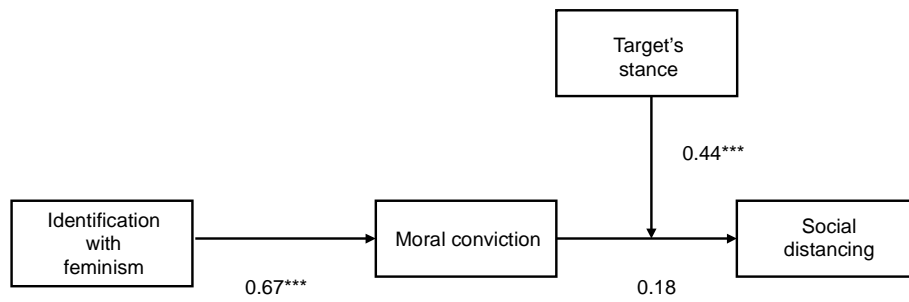


Figure 5. Moral conviction explains why feminist identification leads to social distancing towards attitudinally dissimilar, but not attitudinally similar others. All regression coefficients were taken from a moderated mediation bootstrap analyses, using the standardized measures of feminist identification and moral conviction, and the effect-coded manipulation of the target's stance.



Appendix A

High moral importance condition

The survey clearly demonstrated the consensus among Dutch women about the moral importance of gender equality. More than 65% of the women who were asked indicated that for them gender equality is either a strong moral issue (answer category 6) or a very strong moral issue (answer category 7). See Figure 1.

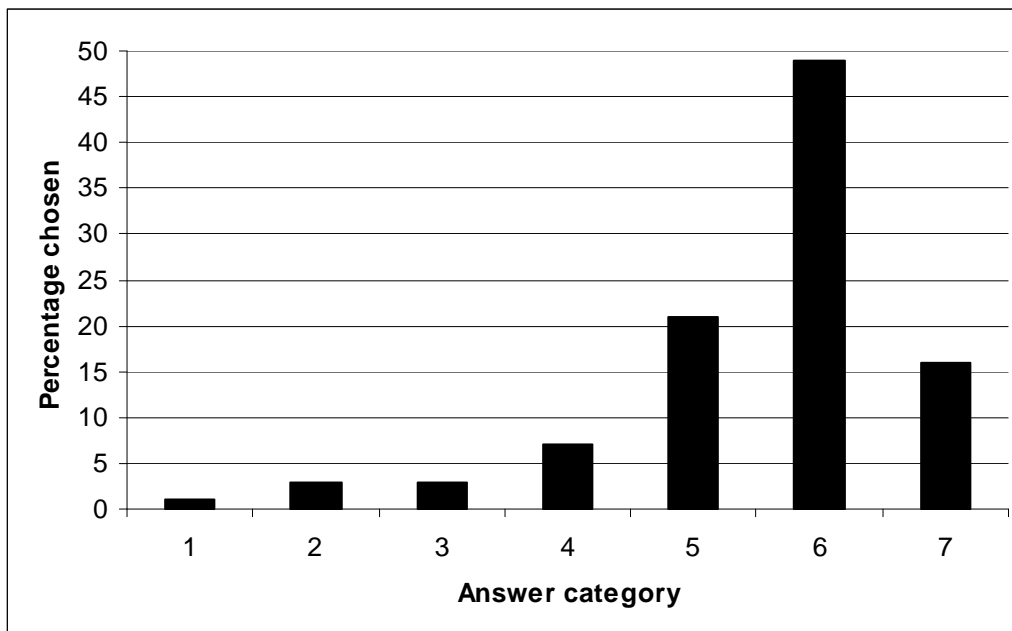


Figure 1. The moral loading of Dutch women's attitudes about gender equality among Dutch women.

Moderate moral importance condition

The survey clearly demonstrated that Dutch women tend to place only moderate moral value on gender equality. More than 65% of the women who were asked indicated that for them gender equality forms either a somewhat moral issue (answer category 3) or moderately moral issue (answer category 4). See Figure 1.

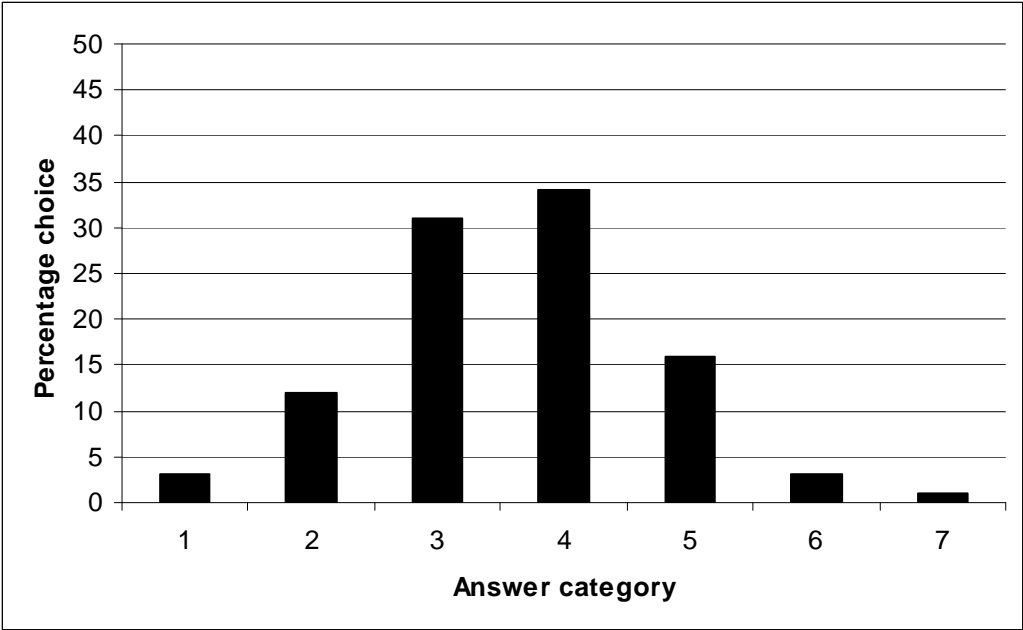


Figure 1. The moral loading of Dutch women’s attitudes about gender equality among Dutch women.

Appendix B

Measures used in Study 3

Moral Conviction

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. (1 = Completely disagree, 7 = Completely agree)

- 1) My position on gender equality is a reflection of my core moral beliefs and convictions.
- 2) Gender equality is something I care a lot about.
- 3) I see my position on gender equality as non-negotiable.
- 4) Gender equality is personally important to me.
- 5) I see my view on gender equality as a moral absolute.
- 6) My stance on gender equality reflects a moral value that I believe should apply everywhere in the world.
- 7) My stance on gender equality reflects a moral value that I believe should apply at all times.

Feminist identification

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. (1 = Completely disagree, 7 = Completely agree)

- 1) I feel a bond with feminists.
- 2) I feel solidarity with feminists.
- 3) I think feminists have a lot to be proud of.
- 4) It is pleasant to be a feminist.
- 5) Feminism forms an important part of my identity.
- 6) Being a feminist is an important part of how I see myself.

- 7) I have a lot in common with the average feminist.
- 8) I am similar to the average feminist.
- 9) Feminists have a lot in common with each other.
- 10) Feminists are very similar to each other.

Social distance

(1 = Very unhappy, 7 = Very happy)

- 1) To which extent would you be happy or unhappy to have John as your neighbour?
- 2) To which extent would you be happy or unhappy to have John as a colleague?
- 3) To which extent would you be happy or unhappy to have John marry into your family?
- 4) To which extent would you be happy or unhappy to have John as your personal physician?
- 5) To which extent would you be happy or unhappy to have John as your close personal friend?
- 6) To which extent would you be happy or unhappy to have John as the teacher of your children?

Appendix C

The manipulation of the *target's stance towards gender equality*:

Sexist target condition

John considers himself to be traditional in his views on gender equality. According to John, men are better suited for most types of work than women. If he were to marry, John indicates, he would not allow his wife to have a full-time job. "It's a woman's job to take care of the kids, to keep the house clean, and to prepare the meals" John claims. "I oppose feminism because it upsets the natural relation between men and women".

Feminist target condition

John considers himself to be progressive in his views on gender equality. According to John, men and women are equally equipped for most, if not all, types of work. If he were to marry, John indicates, he would be happy for his wife if she would have a full-time job. "Equality between men and women is important to me" John indicates, "Taking care of children, keeping the house clean, and preparing the meals are responsibilities men and women should share". "Thus, I fully support feminism".