Power to the Tweeple? The role of social media in the bridging and setting of boundaries in collective action

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ABSTRACT

Social media is increasingly used for social protest, but does online participation advance the aims of social movements, or does it undermine efforts for social change? We explore this question in the present thesis by examining how the use of social media for collective action shapes, and is shaped by, the social psychological concerns of technology users. Adopting a diverse approach in terms of research questions and methodology, we examine how collective action is affected by: (1) features of the digital environment, (2) internet-enabled modes of participation, and (3) digitally-facilitated communities. Our findings demonstrate that group-level representations of the self and salient others are integral to the relationship between digital technology and collective action. Ultimately, we argue that digital technology can act as both a psychological bridge and barrier between disparate groups and issues; in this way it can both facilitate and undermine mobilisation efforts and broader aims for social change.

THESIS SUMMARY

Our empirical work begins by exploring the effect of peripheral identity signals in digital environments. We examine whether identity signals – in the form of digital advertisements – affect how bystander group members respond to a mobilisation message from an anonymous source. Across three experiments we test the effect of identity signal on bystander mobilisation, mediated by social categorisation of the message source. In a between-participants design, participants view an online blog that asks them to take collective action to support an outgroup. To manipulate the peripheral identity signal, ostensibly incidental banner advertisements relating to either the outgroup, ingroup, superordinate category or neither category are presented alongside the blog. We find that identity signals relating to the outgroup and ingroup affect the likelihood that the message source will be categorised as an outgroup member. However, **we find no consistent effect of social categorisation or identity signal on bystander mobilisation**. We conclude that, while the identity signals contained within peripheral features of digital environments have the potential to affect key social cognitive processes, such as categorisation, the effect of these signals on collective action is unclear.

We then move on to consider a more central feature of the digital environment: the organisational affiliation of the source of a mobilisation message on social media. We test whether and how message source affiliation and the social identity of the message recipient affect third-party mobilisation. Operationalised in the context of a social media campaign for fathers' rights, in two experiments we test whether a mobilisation message from an

individual, unaffiliated campaigner is more effective in mobilising support than when the message comes from a social movement organisation (SMO). We also test whether the message is more effective when the SMO is unknown vs. already known to participants. We expect the effect of message source to depend on the message receiver's social identity. Message source is manipulated between-participants; participants are asked to view a social media page belonging to either an unknown individual, an unknown SMO, or a known SMO with a reputation for hostility towards women. Social identity is quasi-experimental; participants are either male or female. **We find that the mobilising efficacy of the message is not affected by whether the message source is an individual or a SMO *per se*. Rather, the reputation of the SMO combines with message recipient social identity to affect mobilisation**. Specifically, in women, compared to the unknown SMO, the known SMO predicts reduced willingness to engage in collective action, due to: (1) reduced feelings that the SMO endorses ingroup category interests, and (2) increased negative affect. However the same effect of message source on collective action motivation is not observed in men. We conclude that, while the source of a digital mobilisation message can affect collective action mobilisation, the message recipient's own social identity also plays an integral mobilising role.

Moving away from the effect of the digital environment, we go on to test the effect of participating in internet-enabled action on future engagement for other social issues. We ask when internet-enabled action promotes future engagement and when it demobilises action. We find that the answer to this question depends on prior level of activism, and on beliefs about the effectiveness of one's own contribution to the collective campaign. Internet-enabled action is varied quasi-experimentally, with participants choosing whether or not to share a campaign on social media. Participants are then informed that sharing on social media has a big (high action efficacy) or small (low action efficacy) impact on achieving the campaign's

goal. Prior levels of activism are measured before the experiment, and general levels of collective action are measured one week after the experiment. **Taking internet-enabled action for one campaign increases future activism for other campaigns – but only in individuals who are already active and who perceive their actions to be an effective contribution to the campaign.**

In our final empirical study we examine political rhetoric on social media during a period of the Black Lives Matter social movement. We ask how disadvantaged group members use social media to balance competing aims for social change, such as growing the movement beyond disadvantaged group members, but preventing appropriation or dilution of their message. Using thematic analysis we examine how the collective action-based functions of Tweets containing the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag are achieved through identity work. We find that although hashtag users promote different, and often competing, definitions of the issues that the movement represents, rhetorical and identity strategies are used to advance inclusive definitions that focus on racism. When hashtag users address alternative definitions of movement actors and issues, representations of Otherness are used to characterise the proponents of these definitions as in opposition to the movement. Finally**, we find that one way of resolving the tension between growing the movement and maintaining disadvantaged group control is by using identity and technology resources to define how different groups can be movement advocates, and action strategies for social change**. We conclude that, while internet-enabled action can be used as a tool to advance a social movement's social change aims, social identity and the social context also play a fundamental role; they shape, and are shaped by, the ways that social media is used for activism.

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CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are numerous recent examples of large-scale collective action that have popularly been linked to activities occurring in the digital realm. For example, a number of social researchers and commentators have argued that Twitter and BlackBerry Messenger played key roles in facilitating the Arab Spring uprisings and the London 2011 riots (e.g., Ball & Brown, 2011; Lotan et al., 2011). At the heart of these discussions is the suggestion that digital technology can act as a catalyst for collective action and social change. It seems that this idea has gained credibility at various levels of society; for example, the United States of America reportedly funded a $1.6 million operation between 2009-2011 to create a social media app called ZunZuneo, the purpose of which was to “inspire dissent”, “trigger political demonstrations” and “renegotiate the balance of power between the state and society” in the Cuban population (de Graaf, 2014, para. 1, para. 8). It is clear that in popular culture at least, the idea exists that digital technology can be used to influence or at least indicate collective action. This idea is of particular interest to governments, researchers and activists alike because collective action can have a dramatic impact on a country’s social and political landscape.

On the other hand, many individuals argue that digital technology inhibits meaningful engagement and harms sustained efforts for social change (e.g., Gladwell, 2010). With the advent of social media, an increasing number of social movement organisations are using the

internet in their campaigns by asking individuals to perform some type of low-threshold internet-enabled action, such as liking a campaign or posting a photo, and then asking them to follow this up with more traditional forms of action. Invisible Children's popular campaign for Joseph Kony's arrest asked supporters to watch a video and then make Kony famous by posting flyers and donating money to the campaign; the video was viewed over 70 million times in one week (Rainey, 2012). However, some argue that campaigns like these achieve little for the cause (e.g., Hindman, 2008; Shulman, 2009); in the case of the Invisible Children campaign, Joseph Kony has not been arrested and his army are still active (LRA Crisis Tracker, 2015). Therefore, although digital technology seemingly has the potential to catalyse collective action (e.g., Tudoroiu, 2014) there is also the risk that it could harm social change (e.g., Gladwell, 2010; Morozov, 2009).

These examples reveal contrasting lay views about the relationship between digital technology and collective action. This in turn suggests that, in order to facilitate social change in digitally-networked societies, we need a more detailed understanding of how individuals and groups interact with digital technology in collective action. Adopting a social identity approach (Haslam, 2004), the present thesis will explore these ideas by asking: When does digital technology facilitate collective action and when does it hold back efforts for social change?

This thesis answers this question in three steps. Firstly, we extend social psychological examinations of the effect of digital technology on mobilisation by examining collective action as a trajectory that includes mobilisation, collective behaviour and third-party responses. Secondly, we build on research examining how online processes affect offline forms of collective action, to consider how the interplay between online and offline co-creates collective action. Finally, in order to understand how this interplay between online and offline can both facilitate and undermine collective efforts, we consider the dynamic

relationship between collective action and social identity. Ultimately, we argue that the mobilisation and social change functions of digital technology affect, and are affected by, group-level evaluations of the self and salient others. Moreover, we suggest that digital technology can both facilitate and undermine attempts for social change by influencing group-level social psychological boundaries between disparate groups and issues. Thus, we examine when and how the *affordances* conferred by digital technology – the things that digital technology offers or affords to its users (e.g., Gibson, 1979) – act as a psychological bridge and/or barrier between different identity groups and social issues, and how this affects collective action and social change.

With a view to justifying the steps and research undertaken in this thesis, this review outlines substantive literature to date, divided into four sections. In the first section, we provide an overview of the social identity approach, which is the theoretical framework adopted throughout the thesis. The second section moves on to give a background to collective action by presenting literature that examines traditional forms of collective action, which do not include a digital component; we begin by examining why people are motivated to engage in collective action and then move on to consider crowd behaviour and the role of third parties. In the third section, we narrow our emphasis by examining how digital technology affects collective action. Finally, in the fourth section we outline the aims of the present thesis along with relevant research questions.

It is worth mentioning that the work conducted in this thesis is based on multiple studies, and these studies are in the process of being submitted to peer-reviewed journals as a series of papers. Because of this, the introduction and discussion sections may repeat some of the points in the Literature Review and General Discussion chapters. This was done so that each empirical chapter can be understood separately. Moreover, as the research in the thesis was conducted in collaboration with Mark Levine and Andrew Livingstone, the pronoun

"we" rather than "I" is used throughout. Nevertheless, "we" principally refers to me – Denise Wilkins – under the supervision and guidance of my PhD supervisors.

The Social Identity Approach

The Oxford Dictionary of Sociology defines collective action as "action taken by a group (either directly or on its behalf through an organisation) in pursuit of members' perceived shared interests" (Scott & Marshall, 2009, p. 96). Traditionally, collective action is associated with large groups of co-present individuals. On a practical level, many instances of collective action occur in a crowd context, for example strikes (e.g., the 1984-1985 UK miners' strike), riots (e.g., 1980 St. Paul's riot) and protest events (e.g., 1990 Seattle WTO protests). However, other common definitions recognise that collective action does not necessarily require a physical collective of individuals. For example, Wright, Taylor, and Moghaddam (1990, p. 995) suggest that: "A group member engages in collective action anytime that he or she is acting as a representative of the group and the action is directed at improving the condition of the entire group". Following this definition, collective action has been examined within a range of disciplines and from a number of theoretical perspectives; additionally, a number of broad actions have been understood as collective action.

In order to examine the relationship between digital technology and collective action, this thesis draws on the concept of social identity. Social identity is defined as, "the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership" (Tajfel, 1972, p. 292). The social identity approach (SIA; Haslam, 2004) – which incorporates social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; 1982) and self-categorisation theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) – is a social psychological framework that seeks to explain how people make sense of the world and then act in it. It suggests that we have a range of personal and social identities available to us that are derived from our membership of social groups. Within this

framework, the self-concept is understood as a continuum of self-definition, where the self is defined in relation to others, from the personal (I) - to the social (we) -self (Brown & Turner, 1981; Turner, 1982). These differing levels of abstraction (personal to social to human) are said to be functionally antagonistic (Turner, 1985); that is, as one level becomes more salient the others become less so.

Social identity theorists argue that we know what to think and how to act by first knowing who we are (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg, & Turner, 1990), and that the social context plays a key role in determining identity and therefore behaviour. Social behaviour also exists on a continuum of interpersonal to intergroup, two extremes that are fully determined by either individual characteristics/interpersonal relationships or group membership respectively (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Turner (1982) suggests that movement along this interpersonal-intergroup continuum is cognitively determined by the functioning of the self-concept; interpersonal behaviour occurs when a personal identity is salient, while social identity makes intergroup behaviour possible.

In regards to how social identity affects behaviour, self-categorisation theory suggests that when individuals categorise themselves with similar others in an intergroup context a social identity will become salient. In order for this categorisation to occur, the category needs to be cognitively accessible to the individual, such that the differences between members within the category need to be seen as smaller than the differences between members of that category and others salient in the context (comparative fit), and the direction of these differences must fit in with what that individual believes about the categories (normative fit) (Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987). The categories themselves are said to be represented as prototypes, which are context-dependent representations of the group's characteristics defined by the principle of metacontrast (which is the position that maximises the ratio of intergroup to intragroup differences) (Hogg & Terry, 2000). When a social

identity becomes salient, the individual is depersonalised and will conform to the group's prototype. This is when group behaviour will occur (Hogg, 2001).

However, rather than being a rigid set of traits or characteristics that dictate behaviour, social identity is dynamic in nature. Postmes, Spears, Lee, and Novak (2005) distinguish between inductive and deductive routes to social identity formation. In deductive routes, group members infer behavioural norms from the properties of an available common identity, whereas inductive processes occur when interpersonal relations are central to the group and group identity is generated from individual contributions. In this way, social identity can both influence the behaviour of group members and also itself be influenced by group and individual behaviour. This dynamism is a key component in a number of models that have been shown to provide a sound understanding of collective action engagement, which will be discussed in more detail later in the thesis.

Traditional Collective Action

Collective action mobilisation. One of the key tenets of social identity theory is the argument that individuals are motivated to attain positive distinctiveness, which is a positive self-concept including a positive social identity (Turner, 1975). In order to achieve positive distinctiveness, groups of individuals who share the same social identity will compete with other groups to obtain mutually-recognised status; the exact nature of this competitive strategy is said to be determined by individual beliefs about the permeability of group boundaries, the stability of intergroup relations and the legitimacy of these relations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The SIA understands collective action as an intergroup behaviour employed by members of a low-status group as a means of achieving positive distinctiveness when their group's position is viewed as illegitimate and unstable, and boundaries are perceived as impermeable (Ellemers, van Kippenberg, & Wilke, 1990; Ellemers, Wilke, & van Knippenberg, 1993; Turner & Brown, 1978). Because of this, group membership and a

shared social identity are seen as key factors for the occurrence and understanding of collective action for social identity theorists. However, a number of other factors have also been found to be important for the mobilisation process in other theories and disciplines. In the following section, we outline substantive theoretical approaches that aim to understand collective action mobilisation, or why people engage in collective action. We begin by outlining earlier research from outside of the SIA and then move on to present contemporary social psychological approaches to mobilisation.

The experience of disadvantage has been identified as key motivator for engaging in collective action. Although early research concentrated on the role of objective economic deprivation (e.g., Hovland & Sears, 1940), subsequent work shifted its focus to concentrate on psychological explanations. For example, it was found that objective disadvantage did not always lead to people feeling dissatisfied (Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star, & Williams, 1949) and that individuals' perceptions of disadvantage, rather than disadvantage in absolute terms, motivates them to engage in collective action (Crosby, 1976, 1982; Folger, 1986; Runciman, 1966).

Work examining the motivating force of subjective deprivation has been incorporated into relative deprivation theory (RDT). RDT has been used to explain differences in how deprivation can be perceived and experienced, and has related these differences to engagement in collective action. For example, relative deprivation theorists have made distinctions between deprivation that is experienced on a personal level, by comparison between individuals within the same group, and that which is experienced on a group level when a group compares itself to a more advantaged group (e.g., Runciman, 1966). They have also distinguished between the effects of knowing that one is disadvantaged and the negative subjective feelings of disadvantage (e.g., Guimond & Dubé-Simard, 1983). However, although distinctions such as these have increased the usefulness of RDT as a tool for

explaining why an individual will engage in collective action, with group-based disadvantage and affective feelings of injustice being the strongest predictors (Smith & Ortiz, 2002; van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008), the theory has received some criticism. For example, it is unable to pinpoint when discontent will turn to action (Adam, 1984) or offer an explanation of who will take action (Silver, 1974), as not everyone who experiences subjective feelings of deprivation or even group-based injustice will engage in collective action. These ideas are of particular importance to economic theorists who see individuals as rational, but collective action as a relatively irrational choice.

Although economists have considered collective action from a variety of theoretical perspectives, individuals' rationality and desire to maximise utility are fundamental in many models. For example, neoclassical economic theory views individuals as rational agents who act to maximise their own expected return (see Gintis, 2000); because of this, rather than collective action being seen as the default response to experiences of group-based injustice, non-participation is seen as the norm and as something that must be actively overcome in order for collective action to occur. A central concept in much of the economic literature around collective action is the idea that the outcomes obtainable through collective action are public goods; these are benefits that, once gained, are available equally to all group members irrespective of an individual's contribution to the good (e.g., Oliver & Marwell, 1988). This presents economic theorists with a free-rider problem; that is why a rational individual would choose to incur personal costs by engaging in collective action when that person could choose not to engage, avoiding the costs, but still benefiting from the actions of others.

Olson's (1965) seminal contribution to the collective action literature synthesised research from the economic perspective and offered a solution to the free-rider problem that has been used as a starting point by many collective action theorists. His work made two inter-related claims that have been extensively built upon and critiqued in subsequent

research. The first relates to the free-rider problem and why people are motivated to engage in collective action, with Olson viewing coercion or the provision of private goods as necessary solutions. The second concerns the effect of group size on collective action, with Olson suggesting that the free-rider problem is particularly problematic for large groups as coercion and private goods provision are harder to implement.

These ideas around the free-rider problem, solutions to the free-rider problem and group size have received extensive treatment in subsequent literature, primarily in relation to how and why specific individuals are motivated to engage in collective action. Although Olson's (1965) theory suggests that people are less motivated to engage in collective action in large groups, empirical research does not always support this idea (e.g., Scott & El-Assal, 1969; Spilerman, 1970). In order to resolve this discrepancy, research progressed to focus on how the number of others taking part affects individuals' personal cost-benefit calculations, and the mobilising role of quasi-political organisations.

In regards to the effect of the number of others on participation decisions, several models have been proposed (e.g., Granovetter, 1978; Oliver & Marwell, 1988). However these models have received some criticism, including the fact the people have to decide to participate at a point when they do not know how many others will take part (Klandermans, 1984). In terms of the role of the quasi-political organisation, resource mobilisation theory (RMT) suggests that participation in social movements is the result of a rational decision making process that involves weighing the costs and benefits of participation, and argues that the free rider problem can be overcome by the aggregation of resources (money, labour) by social movement organisations (McCarthy & Zald, 1977)[1]. Being critical of existing accounts

[1] Although RMT is concerned with social movement participation, with an inclusive definition of social movement as "… a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distributions of a society" (McCarthy & Zald, 1977, p. 1217-

that tended to view collective action as irrational and failed to account for the role of allies (Schwartz, 1976), RMT aims to move away from psychological explanations of collective action to examine more structural determinants; in particular, the mobilising role of longstanding grievances and political actors (McCarthy & Zald, 1977).

However, Klandermans (1984) is also critical of resource mobilisation accounts as he argues that they fail to consider costs and benefits from the individual's perspective and fail to take account of mobilisation that is generated through interactions occurring between individuals. In order to address these concerns, Klandermans (1984) integrates RMT with social psychological explanations of collective action to provide an account of how social movement organisations and the number of other collective action participants can affect mobilisation. He argues that while feelings of deprivation or frustration are important for collective action, individuals are rational and do calculate the costs and benefits of participation, therefore they will only be mobilised to take action when the goals of a movement are perceived as instrumental to eliminating feelings of deprivation and that the work of social movement organisations is key in this process. In addition to this, he also suggests that people's perceptions about the probability of the action succeeding in eliminating the deprivation are also affected by individuals' expectations about others' participation in the action. Although these ideas about the effectiveness of collective action and the social movement organisation are important constructs for explaining collective action mobilisation (van Zomeren et al., 2008), Klandermans' work has been criticised for

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1218) that does not necessarily always equate to collective action participation; it is clear that collective action can and often does occur as part of a social movement context (e.g., 1999 Seattle World Trade Organisation protests as part of the anti-globalistaion movement) and RMT is frequently used to understand mobilisation for a wide range of collective action events (e.g., Snow, Soule, & Cress, 2005), because of this, "social movement" will be treated as a proxy for "collective action" in the following section.

being too individualistic (Schrager, 1985). Wider criticism of RMT has been on its focus on how rather than why people are mobilised, its focus on action against the state, and its conception of the individual as a rational actor (see Polletta & Jasper, 2001).

In order to answer the series of questions left unanswered by RMT, the concept of collective identity or "…an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice or institution" (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 285) was introduced in the sociological literature. Rather than focusing on individuals' rational cost-benefit calculations and the role of the social movement organisation for mobilisation, collective identity scholars focus on the bonds between individuals in a group (e.g., Fireman & Gamson, 1979) and the identities that emerge from changes in societies (e.g., D'Emilio, 1983) as motivators for action. Although a number of researchers have recently questioned its relevance for more contemporary examples of collective action (e.g., Bennett & Segerberg, 2011; Mcdonald, 2002), the concept of collective identity has been used to explain a wide range of collective action phenomenon. For example, it has been used to go beyond an examination of the motivators of collection action by explaining how identity is associated with the type of action an individual engages in (Downey, 1986) and how social change itself can result from the identities that emerge as the products of a movement (Litcherman, 1999). However, sociologists have been criticised for defining the concept of 'collective identity' too broadly and attempting to do too much with it (Poletta & Jasper, 2001).

Nevertheless, many of the ideas behind collective identity have parallels with social identity. However, social identity is more precisely defined than collective identity, and due to its dynamic nature (e.g., Thomas, Mavor, & McGarty, 2012), social identity has been able to explain collective action engagement in a variety of contemporary contexts. Social identity has been found to be implicated in the mobilisation process in a number of different ways. For example, individuals are more likely to engage in collective action when their social

identities are salient (Lalonde & Silverman, 1994) and when they have high levels of identification with their ingroup (Klandermans, 2002). Other research has provided a link between the SIA and alternative theories of mobilisation. Building on the resource mobilisation approach, Stúrmer and Simon (2004) propose a dual-pathway model of mobilisation. They argue that mobilisation is motivated by two independent routes; a calculation pathway where participation is motivated by extrinsic benefits, and an intrinsic identification pathway that is underpinned by group-based standards of behaviour. Taken together, these accounts demonstrate social identity's independent mobilisation role. However, in addition to its unique effects on mobilisation, social identity can also work in conjunction with group-based appraisals to motivate action.

The social identity model of collective action (SIMCA: van Zomeren et al., 2008) and the encapsulation model of social identity in collective action (EMSICA; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009a) both describe the relationship between efficacy, injustice and identity in the pathway to collective action. Conferring a central role to social identity processes, the models describe how social identity can act as a bridge between, basis for, and outcome of efficacy and injustice appraisals. EMSICA details how group-based efficacy and injustice perceptions can give rise to the formation of a social identity and become encapsulated in it, thereby motivating collective action participation. SIMCA describes how, in addition to its unique mobilisation role, social identity can underpin efficacy and injustice appraisals by influencing group members' feelings about situations and events.

Taking a more detailed examination of how group-based appraisals act to motivate action, the dynamic dual-pathway model (van Zomeren, Leach, & Spears, 2012; van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004) conceptualises collective action as an approach form of coping with group-based disadvantage. Specifically, the model outlines two distinct routes to mobilisation; an emotion-focused pathway, where appraisals about injustice and

emotional social support motivate action through group-based anger, and a problem-focused pathway where considerations about support for social action mobilise via group efficacy. Although a large body of research has identified key roles for anger and efficacy in mobilising collective action (e.g., Leach, Iyer, & Pedersen, 2006, 2007; Livingstone, Spears, Manstead, Bruder, & Shepherd, 2011), the anger and efficacy explanations were traditionally perceived as competing accounts of mobilisation (e.g., Olsen, 1968; Tilly, 1978). In contrast, by understanding collective action as approach coping with collective disadvantage, the dynamic dual-pathway model demonstrates how these explanations can be complementary.

Dynamic approaches to social identity in collective action, such as these, have not only provided a greater understanding of the socio-psychological processes that underpin mobilisation, but they have also been able to unite competing explanations of mobilisation. Not only this, dynamic approaches to social identity have also been used to understand collective action beyond the mobilisation process.

Collective action behaviour. While a large body of literature has considered what motivates people to engage in collective action, collective action is not uniform. Rather, collective responses to disadvantage are diverse and complex. Recognising this, research has also examined a variety of collective action activities, as well as the motives that drive behaviour during collective action events. Focusing on literature from within the SIA, in the following subsection we begin by considering *types* of collective action and the factors that affect individuals' decisions about the type of collective action to engage in. We then move on to consider crowd behaviour, and the processes that affect behaviour during collective action. Finally, we outline how behaviour in collective action contributes to social change.

Collective action is multifaceted in nature. Reflected in Wright et al.'s (1990) definition, rather than representing a uniform set of actions and behaviours, a variety of different activities can be considered as collective action in certain contexts. In order to make

sense of the wide variety of collective action activities, various typologies exist that highlight shared factors among different instances of collective action. For example, Postmes and Brunsting (2002) suggest that collective action can vary along two dimensions; an individual-collective dimension that distinguishes between actions that are performed alone and those that involve the participation of others, and a persuasive-confrontational dimension that differentiates between actions aimed at solving disputes and those that are more closely related to disputes. Other typologies have concentrated on the relative cost or effort associated with different actions (e.g., Klandermans, 1997), and the extent to which the actions are normative or acceptable in society (see also Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, 1995; Wright et al., 1990). In addition to considering why people engage in collective action, a number of researchers have considered the factors that affect the type of collective action individuals engage in, using the characteristics of collective action as a point of departure.

Drawing on the dynamic dual-pathway model (van Zomeren et al., 2004, 2012), recent research has demonstrated the important role of emotion and efficacy appraisals in determining the type of action in which an individual choses to engage. Distinguishing between hard and soft forms of action, Shi, Hao, Saeri, and Cui (2015) examine the roles of efficacy and anger in the pathway to mobilisation. Focusing on how collective action can be used to serve two distinct functions, they reason that individuals will be more inclined to engage in high-cost collective action when it is likely to be effective, but less motivated by efficacy concerns when collective action has fewer costs. In line with their predictions, Shi et al. (2015) demonstrate that while group-based anger and efficacy perceptions both predict intentions to participate in hard collective action, only group-based anger predicts soft collective action.

Adopting a different perspective by examining the routes to normative and non-normative forms of action, Tausch et al. (2011) found that qualitative differences in emotions

are important for determining the type of action engaged in. Their findings demonstrate that while anger and efficacy were positively related to normative action, non-normative action was associated with feelings of contempt and low efficacy. So, while those who feel connected to the system are more likely to engage in normative action, non-normative action is chosen by those who feel estranged and powerless. Taken together, these findings demonstrate how group-based appraisals influence broad categories of collective action behaviour. However, other research has examined the factors that affect behaviour during collective action events, particularly behaviour that occurs during instances of crowd protest.

Classic theories of crowd behaviour had a simplistic, unidirectional view of collective action behaviour and tended to see the crowd as irrational and primitive (e.g., Le Bon, 1897), where individuals either become deindividuated, losing their sense of self (e.g., Zimbardo, 1969), or due to the convergence of like-minded deviant individuals act as they would on their own, only in more extreme ways (e.g., Allport, 1924). However, more recent research within the SIA has found evidence to suggest that social identities are also important in crowds, with dynamic processes influencing behaviour during these interactions.

The social identity model of crowd behaviour (Reicher, 1984, 1987) argues that individuals' behaviour in crowds is neither irrational nor determined by individual characteristics, but rather is a product of their salient social identities. Norms for behaviour are both inferred inductively from the actions of those seen as typical group members, but also confined within broader standards of behaviour. For example, Reicher (1984) describes how during riots in the St Paul's area of Bristol, certain acts (e.g., brick throwing) generalised from individual to group behaviour when they were directed against the police, who were seen as legitimate targets for action given the social and economic context of the riots. However, these same acts, when targeted at figures unrelated to the police, were condemned by group members and did not generalise beyond individual behaviour.

Further research, which has been integrated into the elaborated social identity model of crowd behaviour (ESIM; Drury & Reicher, 1999; Reicher, 1996, 1997a, 1997b; Stott & Drury, 1999; Stott & Reicher, 1998), emphasises the intergroup nature of crowd events and demonstrates how collective action behaviour can also be influenced through intergroup dynamics. ESIM argues that the interactions between groups form the context of crowd events, which in turn shapes social identity and determines its behavioural expression. For example, examining student protests near Westminster Bridge, Reicher (1996) details how police perceptions and treatment of students as a homogenous and confrontational crowd led student participants to change their own self-perception. Originally, the majority of participants viewed themselves as a primarily anti-antagonistic aggregate of small groups; however, police behaviour led crowd members to perceive themselves as a unified category in opposition to the repressive police force.

Research around the social identity model of crowd behaviour and ESIM demonstrate how social context influences collective action behaviour through social identity. It also suggests that rather than treating social identity as a list of traits, it is better understood as a representation of the location of, and actions available to, an individual who is situated within a set of social relations; social identity is itself shaped by participation in collective action (Drury & Reicher, 2000). In this way, social identity can be seen to be dynamic in collective action behaviour; not only influencing behaviour, but itself being influenced by participation. Furthermore, the effects of collective action participation on participant social identity are thought to be integral to the creation of social change.

Social identity research on crowds has identified a *subjective* sense of empowerment as a key consequence of collective action participation which functions to promote present and future social change. Defined as “positive social-psychological transformation, related to a sense of being able to (re)shape the social world” (Drury & Reicher, 2009, p. 708),

psychological empowerment has been examined at both the individual and collective level. On an individual level, psychological empowerment is about control; it is created when individuals have the opportunity to control, and influence decisions that affect, their own lives (e.g., Zimmerman, 1995). However, at the collective level, psychological empowerment occurs through participation in collective action, when social identity is transformed through the instantiation of a subordinated identity (Drury & Reicher, 2009).

Examining the antecedents of collective psychological empowerment, ESIM argues that intergroup conflict, between powerful and disadvantaged (or subordinated) groups during collective action, enables disadvantaged group members to challenge and invert existing relations of domination, which leads to collective psychological empowerment in the disadvantaged group. Thus, disadvantaged group empowerment occurs through collective action when participation enables disadvantaged group members to enact subordinated identities, and thereby gain recognition, agency and power for that identity (Drury, Evripidou, & van Zomeren, 2015). Regarding the transformation of social identity, Drury and colleagues (2015) suggest that this will materialise through collective action when subordinated groups are able to act tangibly in a way that upholds group values, and would be impossible for a single individual to enact alone. In this way, disadvantaged groups are able to overcome the power of dominant groups – leading to a positive emotional experience and a new understanding of what is possible for the group.

Drury and Reicher (2009) suggest that this process of collective psychological empowerment can motivate social change in a number of ways. For one thing, the disadvantaged group's act of contestation is itself the enactment of power over domination, which functions to turn movement end goals for equality into an objective reality in the present. However, the subjective sense of power and social identity transformation that occur

through participation can advance future change, for example by affecting the decisions that individuals make about their personal lives – such as career choice – or motivating future participation. Thus, the transformations that occur to social identity through participation in, and intergroup interaction during collective action are integral to social change. In this way, the dynamic nature of social identity is not only integral to collective action mobilisation and behaviour, but it is also fundamental for social change. However, in addition to its roles for disadvantaged group members, social identity has also been found to be important for third parties and their part in collective action and social change.

The role of third parties. Third parties also play an important role in social change processes (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subašić, Reynolds, & Turner, 2008). Collective action represents a power struggle between disadvantaged and higher-status and/or higher-power groups, and these power struggles are played out within a wider societal context (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). A growing body of research has examined how members of the wider public, not directly implicated in the conflict, influence the outcomes of collective action. The following subsection focuses on research from within the SIA. It begins by discussing different types of group membership, then it outlines how members of the wider public become involved in collective action, finally it considers how third parties can influence social change more broadly.

Groups exist in society. Individuals can be members of social or psychological groups. A social group can be defined as, “two or more individuals who share a common social identification of themselves or… perceive themselves to be members of the same social category” (Turner, 1982, p. 15). They are formed on the basis of social category membership, which is one’s perception that they are a member of the same social category (e.g., age, religion, nationality, ethnicity) as one or more others (Turner, 1982). As already outlined, the perception of social category membership involves the cognitive processes of

self- and social categorisation. Social categorisation is the process through which individuals classify others by, and group them into, social categories; the targets of social categorisation are no longer perceived as unique individuals, but as an embodiment of the group prototype. Self-categorisation is the cognitive process where individuals depersonalise themselves and assimilate to the ingroup prototype (Hogg & Terry, 2000).

In addition to social category membership, research can be concerned with psychological groups. Bluic, McGarty, Reynolds, and Muntele (2007) make a distinction between social category and psychological group membership. They outline that a focus on psychological group membership takes into account the meaning of the groups for the group members. Research examining psychological groups is primarily concerned with what is psychologically meaningful for members of the group, rather than the perception of group membership being based solely on broad social categories. Cognitive depersonalisation of the self and others still underpins psychological group membership; however, psychological groups can involve other types of social identity such as those based on shared opinion (Bliuc et al. 2007).

In terms of the influence of both types of group membership on behaviour, social identification is key. Although, on a general level, social identification can be defined as a general connection to an ingroup (i.e., a group that one self-categorises as a member of), it has a number of specific components (Leach et al., 2008). Leach and colleagues outline a hierarchal model of social identification, distinguishing between self-definition (which is comprised of individual self-stereotyping and ingroup homogeneity) and self-investment (consisting of solidarity, satisfaction and centrality). Importantly, the more individuals socially identify with a salient ingroup, the more influence that group has on behaviour.

In addition to identifying with ingroups, there is also evidence to suggest that individuals can identify with outgroups, or groups to which they do not belong (Hogg &

Grieve, 1999; Mallett, Huntsinger, Sinclair, & Swim, 2008; Zagefka, Noor, & Brown, 2013). Outgroup identification represents the feeling of connection to an outgroup. It can be contrasted to ingroup identification because individuals who identify with an outgroup do not self-define as members of that group, nor does a process of self-depersonalisation occur. Rather, individuals identify with a group that they do not perceive themselves to be part of.

Groups exist in a context of real and perceived asymmetries, where inequalities exist across a number of dimensions, including material resources, status, and power. As already outlined, collective action is typically understood as a behaviour that is engaged in by disadvantaged group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It represents a contest between those who are in a position of social power and those who are in a position of subordination (e.g., Subašić et al., 2008). Collective action is often directed at groups who have an established authority position in society (e.g., government, organisational management; Subašić et al., 2008). However, it frequently takes place in front of a number of different societal audiences. These can include general society, who are also referred to in social psychological research as the majority, or third-party group members (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001).

Third-party group members can be any individual who is not a member of the authority or disadvantaged group. However, the term third-party is rather general, and other terms can be used that more accurately represent intergroup power/status relations. For example, ‘advantaged group’ members are in a position of relative advantage compared to the disadvantaged ingroup, but are not part of an established authority. Alternatively, ‘bystander group’ members are neither part of the disadvantaged group, authority, nor advantaged group (e.g., Saab, Tausch, Spears, & Cheung, 2015).

It is also possible that members of authority, bystander and advantaged groups can engage in collective action in solidarity with disadvantaged group members (e.g., Saab et al., 2015; Subašić et al., 2008; Droogendyk, Wright, Lubensky, & Louis, 2016). Advantaged

group activists who take collective action to support the disadvantaged group are sometimes called allies (e.g., Droogendyk et al. 2016). Allies can be contrasted to those who oppose collective action or social movements (e.g., Della Porta & Diani, 2009). Rather than referring to a third-party audience or majority in general, it is thus sometimes useful to distinguish between bystander, advantaged and authority groups, particularly when they engage in collective action on behalf of a disadvantaged group. This is important because, as we will proceed to demonstrate, different types of third-party groups can have different motives for participating in collective action; moreover different groups can have different effects on collective action outcomes.

Existing literature highlights the role of third-party group members as active participants in collective action. Acting as allies, third parties can support social change by engaging in collective action either on behalf of, or in partnership with, disadvantaged groups (e.g., Montgomery & Stewart, 2012; Thomas et al., 2015). Evidence suggests that advantaged and bystander group members can play important roles by participating in collective action, with a variety of factors found to facilitate third-party mobilisation.

The participation of advantaged group members can affect the success of collective action. For example, the UK-based Gurkha Justice Campaign group was prominent in securing UK settlement rights for Gurkha veterans who fought for the UK ("Gurkhas win right", 2009). There are a number of reasons why collective action participation by advantaged group members is thought to be beneficial for social change. Advantaged groups have increased privilege, resources and power that can be used to effect change, active participation can increase advantaged groups' power sensitivity and awareness of privilege, and social relationships between disadvantaged and advantaged group members can fulfil a prefiguration function by modelling the future society being sought by the disadvantaged group (Iyer & Leach, 2010; Maeckelbergh, 2011; Mizock & Page, 2016).

A number of factors have been found to motivate the participation of advantaged group members; for example, affective responses such as sympathy, moral outrage, group-based anger and group-based guilt (Iyer & Ryan, 2009; Mallett, Huntsinger, Sinclair, & Swim, 2008; Thomas & McGarty, 2009), identification with disadvantaged group members (e.g., van Zomeren, Postmes, Spears, & Bettache, 2011), efficacy evaluations (Thomas & McGarty, 2009) as well as perceptions about the pervasiveness of the injustice (Iyer & Ryan, 2009). However, while identification with one's own social group is fundamental for the mobilisation of disadvantaged group members, evidence suggests that psychological group membership is a better predictor of collective action in advantaged group allies (Curtin, Kende, & Kende, 2016).

Simon and Klandermans (2001) introduced the concept of politicised collective identities. These are a form of psychological group membership that underpins a group member's explicit motivation to engage in collective action, for example identification with a specific activism organisation. Importantly, behaviour in terms of politicised identities is an intentional act to engage in an active power struggle. In contrast, political outcomes that result from behaviour in terms of a *social* identity may or may not be intended by the individuals. Although politicised identities are important in mobilising disadvantaged group participation (e.g., Alberici & Milesi, 2016; Simon & Klandermans, 2001), they are also integral to the mobilisation of third-party groups. Research suggests politicised identities are a key predictor of collective action in advantaged group members, and can underpin other important motivators of collective action such as moral outrage and identification with the disadvantaged group (e.g., van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2011; van Zomeren, Postmes, Spears, & Bettache, 2011).

Opinion-based groups are another form of psychological group membership that mobilise collective action (Bliuc, McGarty, Reynolds, & Muntele, 2007). Opinion-based

groups are psychological groups that are mostly grounded on shared opinions; for example pro-Palestine or pro-Israeli groups. Bliuc and colleagues argue that increased levels of identification with an opinion-based group should lead to greater willingness to take action in accordance with the group's norms. Importantly, it is the *content* of opinion-based group identities, such as being pro- or anti- a particular issue, that motivates collective action. In contrast, identification with social categories may not contain the same norms and values for collective behaviour, therefore they tend to be weaker predictors of collective action. Research suggests that opinion-based group membership can be an important motivator for collective action in advantaged group members, moreover shared emotional reactions such as outrage may form the basis for emergent opinion-based groups (Thomas & McGarty, 2009; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009b).

However, psychological group memberships are not only important mobilisers for advantaged group members. Bystander groups – who are neither direct targets nor perpetrators of the group-based injustice – are integral to social change. Research indicates that opinion-based groups and politicised identities can mobilise bystander participation (e.g., Blackwood & Louis, 2012; Honeyman, Stukas, Marques, 2016; Saeri, Iyer, & Louis, 2015)[2]. Accordingly, there are a number of similarities between bystander and advantaged group mobilisation. For example, research suggests that efficacy perceptions, moral outrage and sympathy towards disadvantaged group members facilitate collective action in bystander groups. More specifically, Saab and colleagues (2014) propose a dual-pathway model of solidarity-based collective action in bystander group members. Building on work by van Zomeren et al. (2004, 2012), they suggest two pathways to mobilisation; an efficacy-based

[2] It should also be noted that politicised identities and opinion-based group memberships are important in the mobilisation of *disadvantaged* group members (e.g., Alberici & Milesi, 2016; Simon & Grabow, 2010; Wiley, Figueroa, & Lauricella, 2014)

pathway, where identity consolidation efficacy and political efficacy considerations each predict bystander mobilisation, as well as an emotion-based route where perceived injustice underpins sympathy and moral outrage to facilitate engagement.

Taken together, this research demonstrates how third parties can come to act as allies in collective action, and the social psychological processes that facilitate third-party mobilisation. However, moving beyond their role as active participants in solidarity-based action, the wider public can also have a broader influence on social change. Although there is significant interest in how collective action functions to affect society, limited research has empirically examined the social psychological processes that motivate social change (Louis, 2009; Thomas & Louis, 2013). Nevertheless, a number of researchers suggest that third parties are integral to social change processes (e.g., Hopkins & Reicher, 1997; Klandermans, 2014; Simon & Klandermans, 2001), with several theoretical contributions considering how third parties can generate change.

Shared social identity between disadvantaged groups and third parties is thought to be fundamental for social change. In their political solidarity model of social change, Subašić et al. (2008) argue that although intergroup conflict is necessary to challenge existing relations, the success of collective action depends on the movement's ability to gain widespread support from others. Specifically, when intergroup distinctions between third-party and disadvantaged group members are overcome, and third parties share superordinate identity with the disadvantaged group rather than the authority, social change is possible. Likewise, Simon and Klandermans (2001) also emphasise inclusive superordinate identity. They argue that collective action represents a struggle between the two antagonistic groups to appear prototypical for a superordinate category. Importantly, social change is said to occur when the disadvantage group attempts to win the support of third parties; this transforms their

relationship with society, as society is forced to takes sides with either the disadvantaged ingroup or their opponents.

However, third parties can also inhibit social change, both through their actions as participants in collective action and by their reactions to the efforts of disadvantaged groups. Louis (2009) describes how collective action can cause a backlash from third-party group members. For example, it can provide normative messages about the prevalence of discrimination, and increase third-party identification with the more powerful group. Interactions between third parties and disadvantaged group members during collective action can also be problematic for social change, particularly when those third parties are members of the advantaged group. A growing body of research suggests that intergroup contact between advantaged and disadvantaged group members can inhibit mobilisation due to the reduced salience of intergroup inequalities and disadvantaged group members' reduced identification with their subordinate ingroup (e.g., Cakal, Hewstone, Schwar, & Heath, 2011; Greenaway, Quinn, & Louis, 2011; Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009). Moreover, while doing the work of activism, advantaged group members can display behaviour that reinforces status inequalities, such as dominating a movement, engaging in strategic helping to boost the advantaged group's reputation, and failing to recognise their own group's role in maintaining the inequality (Droogendyk et al., 2016). Thus, while third parties play a key role in ensuring the success of collective action, their actions and responses can also function to undermine mobilisation and social change.

Digital Technology

Up to this point, we have focused on traditional forms of collective action, demonstrating how social identity affects mobilisation, behaviour and third-party responses. We have also considered what makes collective action more or less effective; how participation in collective action can transform social identity, as well as how changes in

social identity produce social change. We now progress the literature review by examining whether and how digital technology can affect these processes.

Digital technology is ubiquitous in contemporary society. Therefore it is unsurprising that it is used with the aim of facilitating collective action and social change. Nevertheless, the effects of digital technology on collective action are unclear. As already mentioned, on the one hand, activists, governments and social movement organisations tend to perceive digital technology to be beneficial for the achievement of their own political aims (e.g., Kavanaugh et al., 2012; Obar, Zube, & Lampe, 2012; Sayed, 2012). In contrast, many social commentators and critics are cynical about the effectiveness of digital technology for collective action, and expect digital technology to undermine efforts for social change (e.g., Gladwell, 2010). However, empirical evidence is beginning to present an increasingly complex view (e.g., Fuchs, 2014).

The aim of this section is to present theoretical and empirical literature that examines the role of digital technology in collective action and social change. Research within the social identity approach has primarily considered how digital technology affects mobilisation. However, research from other disciplines – such as sociology, political science, communication studies and critical theory – has tended to take a broader consideration of the effects of digital technology. Therefore we begin this section by outlining research within the social identity approach that examines the effects of digital technology on collective action mobilisation; we then move on to broaden our focus by presenting research from other disciplines and considering processes beyond initial mobilisation. In the final subsection, we consider critical approaches to digital technology, with a focus on their implications for collective action research. Rather than providing a definitive account of the literature conducted in all disciplines, here we aim to provide an overview of research themes. In

addition, we present key theoretical concepts and pieces of literature that will be drawn upon in the empirical chapters of the thesis.

The social identity approach. The internet is used as a tool to receive information and communicate with others. Digital technology enables quick and easy access to diverse information; it also increases the speed and accessibility of one-to-one and one-to-many communication (e.g., Livingstone, 2004). Accordingly, social psychological research has begun to examine how the affordances conferred by information and communication technologies affect collective action, and has identified a key role for social identity in these processes. Although research within the SIA has tended to focus on the mobilisation process, digital technology has been found to affect mobilisation in a number of different ways.

Information and communication received through digital technology can have a key impact on the psychological antecedents of collective action. Spears and Postmes (2015) highlight how – for example – social media has the potential to affect perceptions of efficacy by indicating how many individuals will attend a protest, while information shared on Twitter could increase injustice appraisals, which facilitate mobilisation. In an empirical examination of the effects of digital information on collective action mobilisation, Chan (2016) tested how alternative news on social media can stimulate collective action. Consistent with the antecedents identified in SIMCA, Chan found that alternative news on social media promoted collective action participation when it increased individuals' feelings of identification with the disadvantaged group, anger about the injustice and efficacy appraisals. In this way, the information obtained via digital technology can support mobilisation by facilitating the group identity, efficacy and injustice antecedents of mobilisation. However, information consumption is a relatively passive use of digital technology, and research indicates that interactive engagement with digital technology can also have an important influence on collective action mobilisation (Kende, van Zomeren, Ujhelyi, & Lantos, 2016).

Social communication via the internet is a form of interactive engagement with digital technology (e.g., Kende et al., 2016). Accordingly, the communication capabilities afforded by digital technology have been found to affect collective action mobilisation. In particular, research indicates that online communication can facilitate mobilisation through its effects on perceptions of group identity (e.g., Alberici & Milesi, 2016; Schumann, 2015). For example, Kende and colleagues (2016) found that using social media to express one's own politicised group identity facilitates mobilisation by increasing group identification. In their analysis of how social media contributed to the growth of opposition in the Arab Spring, McGarty, Thomas, Lala, Smith, and Bliuc (2014) also argue that the sharing of images of dissent mobilised individuals offline by enabling the formation of a new social identity that was positioned as loyal to the people, but opposed to the government. Consistent with theoretical approaches to mobilisation and social change (e.g., Smith, Thomas, & McGarty, 2015), these findings indicate that the communicative functions of digital technology, when used to build politicised identities and identification, have an integral role in supporting mobilisation.

Taken together, rather than identifying a unique role for digital technology in collective action, this literature suggests that information consumption and communication via the internet strengthen collective action by building key psychological antecedents required for mobilisation. In this way, online and offline information consumption and communication perform similar mobilising functions. However, research also indicates that digital technology can confer novel affordances that have important, distinct implications for mobilisation.

The social identity model of deindividuation effects (SIDE; Reicher, Spears & Postmes, 1995; Spears & Lea, 1994) has identified key roles for *anonymity of self* and *homogenous group representations* online for collective action mobilisation. The SIDE model argues that situational factors, such as being anonymous and submerged in a group,

affect behaviour via cognitive and strategic social identity routes. Cognitively, anonymity within the group acts by reducing the perception of differences between group members and increasing the salience of the group, thereby strengthening depersonalisation and conformity to group norms. While strategically, anonymity to the outgroup functions by diminishing accountability, allowing ingroup members to perform ingroup normative actions that would normally be reprimanded by the outgoup (Reicher et al., 1995; Spears & Lea, 1994).

The SIDE model can aid our understanding of how the anonymity afforded by technology can interact with group identities to affect psychological processes such as influence, attraction and stereotyping (e.g. Postmes, Spears & Lea, 1998). More recent research has demonstrated that it is the homogenous representation of group members, rather than anonymity *per se*, that is important in the relationship between technology and psychological outcomes (Lea, Spears & Watt, 2007; Spears & Postmes, 2015). Although the SIDE model has implications for the understanding of physical protest behaviour, it has also been used to understand how the anonymity afforded by technology can facilitate collective action mobilisation.

Research examining more traditional forms of collective action identifies a key role for persuasive processes in facilitating mobilisation (e.g., Klandermans, 1984). Accordingly, research examining how social influence processes operate online to affect collective action mobilisation has identified a key role for SIDE effects (for review see Spears & Postmes, 2015). For example, in a field test of the SIDE model, Chan (2010) tested whether visually anonymous email increased individuals' willingness to engage in collective action for their group. Consistent with the SIDE model, he found greater levels of mobilisation when individuals were asked to participate via email compared to face-to-face. Chan reasoned that the lack of visual cues in email communication reduced perceptions of intragroup difference and increased the salience of group norms. Thus, the anonymity afforded by digital

communication technologies can function to facilitate mobilisation through social influence routes.

Aside from the its information and communication capacities, the internet offers new modes of collective action that are made possible by digitally-networked technologies; for example, e-petitions, virtual sit-ins and social media ‘likes’ (Brandtzaeg & Haugstveit, 2014; Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010). Research indicates that internet-enabled collective action can affect mobilisation in a number of different ways. Many of these internet-enabled actions are individualistic in nature (Postmes & Brunsting, 2002), offering lower degrees of commitment and effort compared to traditional forms of engagement (Vaccari et al., 2015). Accordingly, internet-enabled forms of collective action are often perceived as a method for mass mobilisation due to their low-threshold (low cost/risk) nature (Karpf, 2010).

At the same time, there is also concern about the efficacy of internet-enabled action and the effect of online participation on traditional modes of engagement (e.g., Gladwell, 2010). Although this is an important question within a range of disciples, research indicates that social identity plays a key role. Schumann and Klein (2015) recently tested whether participating in low-threshold internet-enabled action affected engagement in traditional forms of offline action. In line with more sceptical critiques, they found that internet-enabled participation inhibited offline mobilisation; however, this was due to the feeling of having already made a satisfactory contribution to the group, rather than individual motives. In this way, group motives were found to be fundamental to the relationship between online and offline mobilisation.

Research examining the effect of internet-enabled participation on future mobilisation highlights the importance of examining how digital technology affects collective action beyond initial engagement. Although the aforementioned research has primarily been concerned with the effects of digital technology on collective action mobilisation, there is

also research to indicate that digital technology plays an important role later in the social change process. For example, Bliuc, McGarty, Hartley, and Muntele Hendres (2012) examined how digital technology was used in response to the 2005 Cronulla riots in Australia. They argue that online discussions between supporters and opponents of the riots represented an intergroup conflict where each group attempted to claim dominant status in society. Specifically, rhetoric was used to align their opinion-based group identities with positively valued superordinate social categories, such as the Australian national identity. In line with the political solidarity model of social change (Subašić et al., 2008), this research indicates how digital technology can be used to influence third-party responses to collective action through social identity processes. Moreover, it highlights the importance of examining the relationship between digital technology and collective action beyond initial mobilisation processes.

Beyond mobilisation. Research examining the relationship between digital technology and mobilisation can provide an insight into how digital technology can affect individuals' willingness to engage in collective action, which may have important implications for the number of people mobilised and the type of action engaged in. However, when considering what makes collective action effective, research suggests that additional factors may also be important for social change. One such area that has received less attention in the psychological literature is individuals' behaviour during instances of collective action and the relationship between digital technology and behaviour.

One way that technology affects behaviour during instances of collective action is by changing the organisational structure of social movements (for a review see Schumann, 2015). A large body of literature indicates that in contemporary social movements, leaderless and horizontal organising structures are becoming more prevalent, while the organising role of social movement organisations is declining (e.g., Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Bimber,

Flanagin, & Stohl, 2005; Flanagin, Stohl, & Bimber, 2006; Tufekci, 2013; Walgrave et al., 2011). Moreover, digital technology is thought to contribute directly to this trend (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2011). These changing patterns of organisation are argued to have an important effect on participants' behaviour during collective action events.

Examining instances of direct action in the USA and Australia, McDonald (2002) argues that changes associated with globalisation are causing collective action to become less unified and structured; rather, the individual interests of participants are coming to the forefront of behaviour. Pointing to the significance of affinity groups, which are small groups of personally-connected individuals who work on a specific project, McDonald details how group members are able to express their individual interests during action through projects such as puppet making, massage and music performance. Although these observations are consistent with inductive theories of social identity formation and the role of opinion-based groups in contemporary collective action (e.g., Bluic et al., 2007; Postmes et al., 2005; Smith et al., 2015), it is a large departure from traditional collective action behaviour that was perceived to be strategically choreographed by large organising structures such as the church (e.g., Polletta, 2006) and social movement organisations (e.g., Smith & Siplon, 2006).

Bennet and Segerberg (2011) refer to this change as the personalisation of collective action and suggest that it is enabled by digital media, as it allows individuals greater opportunity to network with others and define issues in their own terms. In addition to the effects on collective action behaviour, the personalisation of collective action is thought to have negative consequences for the effectiveness of social movements. For example, horizontal organising structures are thought to be associated with reductions in group-based solidarity, collective identity, social movement longevity and strategic planning (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2011; Kreiss & Tufekci, 2013; McDonald, 2002). Thus, by encouraging

leaderless organisational structures, digital technology may reduce the effectiveness of collective action.

Moving away from how structural changes enabled by digital technology have affected protest participation, research suggests that improvements in communication ability have also affected behaviour in collective action. Mobile devices providing near-ubiquitous internet access have been found to affect collective action behaviour in a number of ways. The ability to rapidly and flexibly respond to information received online, irrespective of time and place, is described by Bertel (2013) as flexible alignment. He argues that the instrumental use of smartphones for information access has become a necessary and integrated part of daily life that has individual- and societal-level implications. There are examples where mobile internet technology has been used tactically during collective action to organise and coordinate behaviour in real time. Observing demonstrations in two case studies, Neumayer and Stald (2014) describe how during the protest, activists were able to change their individual behaviour to act upon news updates that were received in situ via mobile phones; as well as how text messages were used to encourage participants to engage in peaceful, rather than violent, behaviour during the action. Gergen (2008) also describes how information about police action was similarly relayed via mobile phones during protests and this enabled protesters to take action to avoid arrest. On a broader level, Borum and Tilby (2005) suggest that tactical communications to exchange operational information during collective action are critical for success and that technology is enabling these communications to become more sophisticated.

While this research has considered how the communication and information-receiving capabilities of mobile digital technology affect collective action behaviour, there is evidence to suggest that digital technology's information capture capabilities have also had a marked effect on behaviour during collective action. One such effect is expanding the repertoire of

action available to participants during protest events. Hundreds of people can now be observed engaging in media activism during instances of direct action; that is, individuals recording what is happening on the streets with photos, videos and interviews, and circulating this content through global networks, often in real time (Juris, 2005). Mann and colleagues describe this practice of using surveillance technology to confront and resist repressive institutions as sousveillance, or watching from below. In this way, sousveillance can be used as a form of collective action, challenging bureaucratic organisations by reflecting practices back at them (Mann, 1998; Mann, Nolan & Wellman, 2003).

Nevertheless, research indicates that surveillance technology not only expands the repertories of contention that are available to disadvantaged groups and activists, but also expands repertoires of protest *control* (Gillham, Edwards, & Noakes, 2013). Gillham (2011) describes how in the late 1990s strategies of protest policing shifted from "negotiated management" (p. 1), where police could be seen to cooperate with protesters during collective action to provide mutual benefits for police and social movement organisations, to one of "strategic incapacitation" (p. 1) rooted in a philosophy of social control. Gillham details how, in contemporary forms of protest, police can be observed to be engaging in specific behaviours characteristic of strategic incapacitation in an attempt to prevent citizens from committing crime; such as measures to control space as well as the movement of protesters, non-protesting public and the press. He suggests that the use of surveillance technology is a key aspect for the facilitation of this style of protest control (see also Gillham et al., 2013).

However, as well as affecting behaviour by increasing repertoires of actions, digital technology may also be able to influence the behaviour of protesters and authorities during protest (Marx, 2003), with evidence to suggest that this can be done in more or less direct ways. Nuemayer and Stald (2014) detail how protesters used the knowledge that police were

monitoring mobile phone communication to provide incorrect information to confuse and disrupt efficient policing. Less directly, examining the use of sousveillance during the G-20 protests, Bradshaw (2013) details how the recording of police violence against the public during the G-20 protests led to two police officers being reprimanded for misconduct. She states that although sousveillance is yet to tame police brutality, it may be help to regulate police behaviour in the longer-term. Consistent with this, Cronin and Reicher (2009) describe how the accountability concerns brought on by surveillance during protest affected police decisions in real time, specifically how the visibility of police actions to the audience was a key factor for senior offices when making decisions about how to direct junior officers during protest.

On the whole, this research suggests that digital technology and online processes can act in complicated ways to affect both collective action mobilisation and behaviour. However, when examining the role of digital technology in effective collective action and social change, research would suggest that a trajectory of collective action needs to be considered. For example, there are a number of pieces of research to suggest that mobilisation and behaviour are not entirely distinct, but rather they can be related in a variety of ways. Stott and Reicher (2011) describe how the institutions that were targeted by participants in the London 2011 riots were not chosen randomly during the action, but rather chosen because they symbolised the injustices that mobilised people to protest. In her analysis of free spaces in social movements, Polletta (1999) describes how group members' behaviour can be important for sustaining enduring mobilisation as well as mobilising new movements. She suggests that participant behaviour – specifically the modelling of relationships that are representative of the society that the movement hopes to build – are key associative structures for mobilisation and although difficult to sustain, can supply leaders and participants for later mobilisations. Likeiwse, Klatch (2004) interviewed former members of the New Left

organisation Students for a Democratic Society, for whom group membership and political activism had previously permeated their everyday lives. She describes how negative group dynamics and behaviour such as physical fighting, personal attacks and peer pressure, along with the group's tactical focus on conflict and violence, led to the demobilisation of a number of her interviewees. In addition to this, there is also evidence to suggest that this trajectory does not only include the mobilisation and behaviour of collective action participants; rather, Simon and Klandermans (2001) suggest that in order to understand how collective action affects society, the role of those not implicated in the conflict also needs to be considered.

A number of researchers have begun to consider the role of digital technology in the overall trajectory of collective action and how this works to create social change, particularly in the area of counternarratives, or challenges to the mainstream discourse about collective action. Examining what Borum and Tilby (2005) have termed the strategic use of technology, after and between examples of direct action, a number of researchers have investigated how images of police violence recorded during previous examples of direct action are used online to promote the movement's philosophy, foster engagement and affect policy change. Consistent with research within the SIA, which has examined the effects of alternative news and images of dissent (e.g., Chan, 2016; McGarty et al., 2014), it has been argued that images such as these have helped to challenge the mainstream media's presentation of protester violence to create feelings of injustice, mobilise hundreds of thousands of protesters, and propel small movements into global phenomena (Bayerl & Stoynov, 2016; Greer & McLaughlin, 2010; Holland, 2011; Juris, 2005). In this way, the behaviour occurring during collective action, documented by digital technology, can be turned into a form of collective action itself that can be used to mobilise others (Bradshaw, 2013). Neumayer and Stald (2014) suggest that by creating visibility and challenging mainstream discourses, digital technology can ultimately influence both public opinion and policy makers.

Batel and Castro (2015) have also examined the role of digital technology for social change. However, rather than viewing third-party members solely as the audience for collective action they demonstrate how technology can also be used by the wider public to shape collective action itself. In their analysis of a collection of protests about a local neighbourhood transformation in Lisbon, as well as internet blog discussions between activists and other citizens about the protests, Batel and Castro (2015) suggest that by endorsing or invalidating activists' arguments online, those who were not involved in the protests were able to shape collective action. They describe how activists reoriented their arguments online – and their actions offline – in response to discussions with those not directly involved in the protest; this allowed the activists to simultaneously continue fighting for their own goals and include goals with a larger societal impact. Batel and Castro argue that this process of re-presenting claims to an engaged audience was key for promoting social change, as it both acted to bring wider-citizens' perceptions about the situation in line with those of the protesters and attracted support for the cause. Although not exhaustive, these examples demonstrate that mobilisation, behaviour and third-party responses are all important components in the development of effective collective action, as well as the ways that digital technology is being used in this process.

Critical approaches. The previous examples demonstrate different ways that digital technology is being used for collective action. However, although a large number of researchers from multiple disciplines have examined whether digital technology can affect collective action, the exact nature of the relationship between the digital and the physical in collective action is one that has been less well explored. Thus, in the following subsection, we present three areas of critical thinking that provide a general critique of lay and academic perspectives about the effects of digital technology in society. Our aim in this subsection is to outline common pitfalls for researchers, and critical thought about key issues, which need to

be considered to advance an understanding of collective action in a digitally-networked society.

As empirical research examining the relationship between digital technology and society progresses, the theoretical literature has become increasingly critical about scientists' and lay persons' conceptions of digital and physical realities. In a recent analysis, Jurgenson (2012, para. 2) makes a distinction between "digital dualism" and "augmented reality" approaches to digital technology. In the former, the digital and physical are treated as separate realms, and a sharp distinction is drawn between what happens online and offline. In contrast, an augmented reality approach views the world as a blend between the digital and physical. Advocating an augmented reality perspective, Jurgenson details how, for example, what happens on social media can influence how individuals experience life offline when viewing physical experiences as potential status updates or Tweets. Similarly, he argues that in order to meaningfully understand contemporary forms of collective action, the *interplay* between online and offline should be examined.

In accordance with this, Bastos, Mercea, and Charpentier (2015) recently examined the interplay between digital communication on social media and ongoing physical protest activity during the 2011 Occupy movement, 2011 Spanish Indignados and 2013 Vinegar protests in Brazil. Across these settings, Bastos and colleagues were able to demonstrate a feedback loop between digital communication and onsite protest activity. Consistent with the augmented reality perspective, they demonstrated the mutual influence of online and offline processes in ongoing forms of collective action, with social media communication both being able to causally predict digital communication on other social media platforms and onsite protest activity, while onsite protest activity was able to causally predict both digital communication and other types of onsite protest activity.

Jurgenson's (2012) work is also supported by empirical research that indicates that similar factors predict both online and offline forms of collective action (e.g., Brunsting & Postmes, 2002; Thomas et al., 2015), taxonomies including online forms of collective action that do not prioritise an online-offline distinction (e.g. Postmes & Brunsting, 2002; Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013; Vanccari et al., 2015; Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010), as well as research demonstrating how technology and digital interactions are seamlessly incorporated into contemporary repertoires of collective action (e.g. Borum & Tilby, 2005; Gergen, 2008; Neumayer & Stald, 2014). In this way, it can be suggested that the digital and the physical are reciprocally influential during collective action. Rather than representing separate spheres of contention, there is an interplay between the digital and the physical to co-create collective action.

While the augmented reality critique centres on operationalisations of the relationship between digital and physical phenomenon, other criticisms focus on how the relationship between digital technology and society is conceptualised in theory and empirical research. Fuchs (2012a) points to two related perspectives – technological determinism and internet-centrism – that aim to explain the role of networked digital technologies in society. While a technological deterministic perspective assumes, either with optimism or pessimism, that digital technology is the single factor causing social outcomes, internet-centrism is the more subtle belief that digital technology is highly significant for social processes, and is a prerequisite for technological determinism (Freelon, Merritt, & Jaymes, 2015).

Technological determinism is perceived to be problematic because it assumes, either with optimism or pessimism, that a particular piece of technology or medium has one specific effect. Rather than acknowledging the interplay between technology and society, technological determinism suggests that there are only one-sided effects – either technology affects society or society affects technology (Fuchs, 2012a). Regarding digital technology

and collective action, Fuchs (2012a) argues that technological determinism overemphasises the role of digital technology; social media does not cause collective action or revolutions, rather collective action more accurately reflects social structure in society. He suggests that the Egyptian revolution was not caused by social media, rather it was caused by injustices in a highly class-stratified society where social media was used as a tool for information and organisation. Likewise, he argues that BlackBerry Messenger did not cause the London 2011 riots, instead youth unemployment and high income inequality provided the context for the unrest.

In this way, the technological determinism critique highlights the importance of considering the internet as one of many potential factors that affect collective action (Freelon et al., 2015). Moreover, it emphasises the dialectical relationship between technology and society, where digital technology not only affects social processes such as collective action, but social processes have an important effect on technology (Fuchs, 2012a). These perspectives are consistent with work within the social identity approach that (1) considers social psychological processes central to the effect of the digital technology on collective action, and (2) also acknowledge the potential of collective action and social identity to shape digital technology use (e.g., Bluic et al., 2012; McGarty et al., 2014; Spears & Postmes, 2015).

The internet-centrism critique similarly explores how the relationship between digital technology and society is conceptualised in research and popular culture. However, in contrast to technological determinism, internet-centrism accepts that digital tools may or may not work as intended, rather it overstates the ability of digital technology to transform society (Fuchs, 2012b; Morozov, 2011; 2013). Fuchs (2012b) argues that internet-centrism is represented in terms such as ‘internet age’ and ‘internet society’, which are reductionist approaches that ignore the multidimensionality of society. Importantly, internet-centrism is

the perspective that the internet has its own internal logic that reshapes society and industries; that the internet has inherent social influence and will reform any environment that it is introduced to (Morozov, 2011, 2013).

Pointing to the Occupy movement as an example, Morozov (2013) criticises suggestions that the increased use of the internet for communication would inevitably lead to horizontally-organised social movements. Rather, he highlights that decentralisation is often an active choice based on the ideas of horizontalism rather than ‘the internet'. In this way, internet-centrist approaches suggest that digital technology plays a considerable role in collective action, downplaying the importance of alternative factors (Freelon et al., 2015).

Freelon and colleagues (2015) suggest that although technological determinism is less common in academic literature, internet centrism is still prevalent in academia and journalism as a framing practice. Emphasising the potential of digital technology to affect social change, internet centrism advises the reader that it is valuable to have an opinion about this issue and therefore may encourage the reader to overrate the value of digital technology as an explanatory variable, and underestimate its context dependence.

While aiming to avoid technological determinism and digital dualism, at times in the present thesis we purposefully adopt an internet-centrist frame, with the aim of situating the research within popular discourse about the relationship between digital technology and collective action. However, by opening with a comprehensive literature review, which emphasises the multiple antecedent factors that contribute to collective action and social change, we hope that digital technology will be perceived as one of many factors that have the potential to influence collective action. Moreover, as an outcome of the research, we hope that the findings will go a way to answering key empirical questions about underlying process, the role of context and limits to the observed effects.

The Present Thesis

Our overarching aim in this thesis is to gain a greater understanding of the evolution of collective action within digitally-networked societies. We attempt to address several gaps in the literature, which were introduced in the preceding subsections and will be expanded subsequently in more detail. In four empirical chapters, we consider the potential of digital technology to facilitate and undermine social change by both accentuating and minimising group-based social psychological barriers to collective action (Chapters 2-5) and social change (Chapter 5). More specifically, we examine when and how social media provides a bridge between different identity groups and social issues, and how this can function to affect social change. In the following chapters, we aim to examine a trajectory of collective action that goes beyond initial mobilisation, thus we examine: (1) initial mobilisation, (2) subsequent participation, and (3) the management of an ongoing campaign. Moreover, we also explore the influence of a variety of different technological affordances on these processes, including flexible digital environments, internet-enabled collective action, and digitally-facilitated communities. In the following subsections we introduce the specific topics examined in the empirical chapters, along with key research questions.

Digital environments and initial mobilisation. Being asked to participate in collective action is crucial for successful mobilisation (McAdams, 1986; Snow, Zurcher, & Ekland-Olson, 1980). Unless individuals are introduced to – and informed about – a particular piece of collective action, participation in that action is unlikely to occur (Snow et al., 1980). Being asked to participate in collective action can raise awareness about an issue, provide incentives for participation and contribute to the building of activist networks (McAdams, 1986; Snow et al., 1980). Accordingly, prior contact with a mobilising agent has been found to be strongly associated with collective action participation (e.g., Briet, Klandermans, & Kroon, 1984; Gerlach & Hine, 1970; Snow et al., 1980).

Likewise, online calls to collective action serve important mobilisation functions. Online forms of communication are the most important source of protest information for a large proportion of collective action participants (e.g., Fisher & Boekkooi, 2010). Of particular interest here is the effectiveness of calls to action disseminated via social media, as mobilisation messages communicated via social media are integral to the mobilisation of individuals who are new to the cause and unaffiliated with movement organisations (Juris, 2012; Lim, 2012; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

The use of social media to ask others to participate in collective action is perceived to be beneficial due to a variety of factors, including its low cost, ease of access and popularity (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Naughton, 2001; Obar et al., 2012). Accordingly, social media is commonly used to disseminate mobilisation messages that ask others to participate in collective action (Guo & Saxton, 2014; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Obar et al., 2012). Nevertheless, despite the organisational benefits afforded by social media, only a handful of digital campaigns successfully recruit large numbers to participate in collective action (Lim, 2013). Thus, although contemporary social movements often rely on social media to disseminate calls to action – and typically perceive these types of messages to be beneficial for their aims – the effectiveness of digital mobilisation messages is unclear.

The mobilising efficacy of social media for *third-party* group members has also received limited attention in previous research. Social media is increasingly used to encourage third-party group members to engage in collective action (Penney, 2015; Thomas et al., 2015). However, although collective action by third parties can be crucial for the advancement of social change, collective action by allies can also be problematic for disadvantaged group members. For instance, while there are examples of third parties playing a key role in actualising policy change – such as the transnational AIDS treatment movement – there are also concerns that they can take over social movements and strengthen group-

based inequality (Droogendyk et al., 2016; Smith & Siplon, 2006). Thus, the effect of digital mobilisation messages on third-party mobilisation is an issue of prominent concern that we address in first two empirical chapters of the thesis.

Although primarily concerned with mobilisation among disadvantaged group members, research has begun to examine how the affordances of digital technology, as well as the *signals* within digital environments, have the potential to both facilitate and suppress the mobilising efficacy of a mobilisation message. Work within the SIDE model suggests that signals to social identity are fundamental for influence processes in digital environments (e.g., Lea et al., 2007). In particular, when text-based computer-mediated-communication removes visual signals to a communicative partner's personal identity, mobilisation in response to a mobilisation message is increased (e.g., Chan, 2010). Previous research within the SIA has primarily examined how the *visibility* (vs. anonymity) of a communicative partner can act as a signal to their social identity and thereby shape social influence and collective action mobilisation. However, how do identity signals that are unrelated to a communicative partner's visibility affect third-party mobilisation in response to a digital mobilisation message?

Although limited visual signals was a novel affordance of early text-based computer-mediated-communication, social media environments are often visually rich, with multiple possible signals to social identity. Research indicates that identity signals within social media have the potential to affect how individuals respond to social movements, even when they do not affect the visibility of the mobilising agent. For instance, Xu, Schmierbach, Bellur, Ash, Oeldorf-Hirsch, and Kegerise (2012) examined the effect of affiliate characteristics in social media groups. They found that the number and race of those visibly affiliated with a food bank organisation on social media affected evaluations of the advocacy group – with white participants reporting more positive evaluations when there were many white or few black

affiliates – and suggest that perceptions of group efficacy may mediate this effect. Although Xu and colleagues did not examine mobilisation in response to a digital mobilisation message, their work suggests that key evaluations can be affected by identity signals on social media, even when those signals do not affect the visibility of a communicative partner.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned research, there is limited understanding of how identity signals within social media affect third-party mobilisation. In particular, we do not know the extent to which features of the digital environment, which are ostensibly independent of the visibility of a mobilising agent's social category membership, affect the mobilising efficacy of an online call to action. Given the prominence of social media in the dissemination of mobilisation messages to third parties (e.g., Kavada, 2014; Penney, 2015; Thomas et al., 2012), and the large variety of visual signals within social media environments (e.g., Xu et al., 2012), the empirical work in this thesis commences by examining whether and how identity signals within social media affect the mobilising impact of a mobilisation message among recipients who are members of third-party groups.

We begin by considering whether third-party responses to a mobilisation message are affected by peripheral information within social media – that is, information that is ostensibly unrelated to the main content on the website (Chapter 2). Specifically, we test whether digital advertisements on social media affect social categorisation of the mobilising agent, and whether the effect of social categorisation on mobilisation depends on social identification with the disadvantaged group. We then move on to consider how more central features within social media affect the efficacy of a mobilisation message (Chapter 3). Specifically, we test whether the social movement organisation that a mobilising agent is affiliated with affects mobilisation, and whether the effect of organisational affiliation on collective action mobilisation depends on the social identity of the message recipient.

Nevertheless, research suggests that a consideration of the effects of digital technology on collective action needs to move beyond questions about how to motivate people to engage in collective action (Louis, 2009). Thus, Chapter 4 broadens the focus of the thesis by considering what happens after initial mobilisation, and the role of digital technology for continued engagement.

Internet-enabled action and subsequent participation. Continued engagement is integral to effective collective action (Clary & Snyder, 2002). Research suggests that ongoing commitment to social and political issues can support social change in a number of different ways. For example, it can sustain the organising structures of social movements, facilitate the mobilisation of others, and contribute to the formation of new social movements (Curtin & McGarty, 2016; Mannarini & Fedi, 2012; Smith et al., 2015). Accordingly, factors that facilitate continued participation in collective action are often perceived to be beneficial for social change (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2005; Kende et al., 2016).

Although a variety of social, economic, and psychological factors can support continued engagement (e.g., Curtin & McGarty, 2016; Mannarini & Fedi, 2012), digital technology has also been found to play a role (e.g., Diani, 2000; Harlow & Guo, 2014; Polat, 2005). In particular, recent debate has considered whether participation in internet-enabled collective action can act as a gateway for higher-threshold engagement, with research strongly suggesting that online collective action inhibits higher-threshold action, at least for the same cause (Schumann & Klein, 2015). However, does participation in internet-enabled action affect broader patterns of engagement?

Social movements can attract participants who are concerned about multiple social issues (e.g., Bennett, Givens, & Willnat, 2004). Research suggests that participation in collective action for more than one social issue can positively advance social change. For example, individuals who are currently engaged, or have a history of engagement, with more

than one cause can provide important connections between issues, movements and groups; the ties created by these individuals can facilitate the spread of protest information to external communities and support mobilisation around global issues (e.g., Andersen & Jennings, 2010; Diani, 2003; della Porta & Mosca, 2007; Walgrave, Bennett, Van Laer, & Breunig, 2011). Therefore there is substantial recent interest in the factors that support generalised socio-political engagement (e.g., Bastos & Mercea, 2016; Louis, 2016; Walgrave et al., 2011).

Although research suggests that digital technology can help activists to sustain engagement with multiple social issues (e.g., Bastos & Mercea, 2016; Mercea & Bastos, 2016; Walgrave et al., 2011), there is also scepticism about the potential of internet-enabled action to stimulate future collective action for other social issues (e.g., Zuckerman, 2008). Research shows that online participation for one cause does not always lead to engagement across multiple social issues, and multi-issue engagement may be atypical rather than the norm (Bastos & Mercea, 2016).

Despite the popularity of internet-enabled action, we do not know how online participation for one campaign affects engagement with other causes or social issues. Considering the apparently detrimental effects of internet-enabled participation on future engagement for the same cause (Schumann & Klein, 2015) and the importance of multi-issue engagement in contemporary social movements (e.g., Bennett et al., 2008; Walgrave et al., 2011), Chapter 4 tests whether and how participation in internet-enabled collective affects future engagement with other social issues.

Digitally-facilitated communities and the management of ongoing campaigns. In our final empirical chapter, we move on to examine *behaviour* during internet-enabled action, and how this affects social change. Given that language is a form of behaviour (e.g., Skinner,

1957), we consider how communication on Twitter – as a mode of internet-enabled action – is used to advance disparate aims for social change.

Although Chapters 2-4 conceptualise participation in collective action as a way to achieve a movement's tangible goals (e.g., policy reform), the practice of participating in collective action – and the means by which this participation is carried out – can itself advance social change, irrespective of concrete movement 'success'. Social science literature typically distinguishes between the *means* and *ends* of collective action. On the one hand, instrumental approaches to collective action view activism as a way to achieve future goals. They prioritise the end results of collective action. For example, an instrumental approach may look to a revolutionary figurehead to seize power. Or it could seek reform within the current political system (Leach, 2013). Because of this, an instrumental approach prioritises actions that will achieve these end goals. On the other hand, prefigurative approaches to collective action strive to achieve equal social relations in the present (Yates, 2015). These immediate aims can be traced to the logic of prefigurative politics.

Prefigurative politics argues that a social movement's achievements are determined by the methods it employs, and therefore social movements should employ ways of acting that embody – or prefigure – the future society they wish to create (Leach, 2013). Thus, while alternative strategies for social change may look to a radical leader to take power, or transformation in the current system, a prefigurative approach strives to develop styles of interaction or practice that will create the desired society in the present (Leach, 2013). In this way, prefigurative approaches have been contrasted with more instrumental forms of politics, which view activism as a way to achieve future goals, and prioritise the direction of movement demands to powers in authority. However, it should also be noted that although instrumental and prefigurative approaches have contrasting features, they do not exist on a

dichotomy. Rather social movements can (and do) adopt both strategies for social change (for discussion see Maeckelbergh, 2016).

In the present chapter we are interested in how disadvantaged-group activists balance instrumental and prefigurative concerns on social media. Specifically, we ask: How is social media used to balance a social movement's instrumental aims, such as promoting collective action and growing the movement beyond disadvantaged-group members, with the need to maintain disadvantaged-group control over the movement (including the prevention of advantaged-group domination, dilution or diversion of their message)? As already outlined, social media is popularly used to mobilise advantaged-group participation in collective action (e.g., Penney, 2015; Thomas et al., 2015). However, the actions of advantaged groups can have both positive and negative effects on social change. Specifically, while advantaged-group participation may advance the instrumental aims of social movements, it may also have detrimental consequences for disadvantaged-group empowerment and equal status relations in the present (e.g., Droogendyk et al., 2016; Mizock & Page, 2016). In order to explore our research question, we build on existing literature that has examined the rhetoric of protest movements (e.g., Hopkins & Reicher, 1997; Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 2001). More specifically, we investigate how the mobilisation and social change functions of Tweets are achieved rhetorically, through identity work.

Political rhetoric, as a topic, is concerned with the strategies that are used to build persuasive arguments during debates and disputes (Condor et al., 2013). Rather than considering language as an expression of intrinsic psychological processes, it approaches communication as strategic action. A rhetorical approach to language examines both the function and structure of a persuasive argument, and rhetoric as a means to gain an understanding of human mentality (Condor et al., 2013). Within social movement literature, it

has been argued that it is not sufficient to examine only the objective conditions that lead to mobilisation and social change. Rather, in order to understand the direction and nature of social movements, researchers must examine the communicative processes through which movement issues and actions come to be defined as such (e.g., Benford & Snow, 2000; Hopkins & Reicher, 1997). Regarding the specific content of political rhetoric, research within the SIA has identified a key role for social category construction in the mobilisation and direction of collective action (e.g., Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 2001).

Although a growing body of literature has examined the rhetoric of traditional/offline protest movements, limited research has examined the rhetorical functions of internet-enabled collective action. Thus, in Chapter 5 we extend existing literature by examining how rhetoric on social media is used by disadvantaged groups to advance disparate aims for social change. Adopting a qualitative methodology and analysing rhetoric on Twitter during the ongoing Black Lives Matter social movement, our final empirical chapter in the thesis takes a closer consideration of the communicative processes that occur during internet-enabled action. Specifically, we examine how the mobilisation and prefigurative functions of Tweets are achieved rhetorically through social identity work.

CHAPTER 2

DIGITAL ADVERTISEMENTS AND COLLECTIVE ACTION: PERIPHERAL IDENTITY SIGNALS AFFECT SOCIAL CATEGORISATION

Social media is often used to influence others. It is a space where individuals believe they have – and can enact – control. Political leaders and organisations use social media to direct socio-political behaviour (e.g., Booth & Hern, 2017). In particular, social media messages are frequently used to persuade others to engage in collective action; they are integral to many contemporary collective action campaigns (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). However, the perception of user control within digital environments is often illusory, for example Twitter and Facebook have recently come under criticism for dishonest advertising that is thought to have influenced the American presidential elections (e.g., Solon, 2017). Thus, the effect of peripheral content within social media – information that is *unrelated* to the main content displayed on the platform – on political attitudes and behaviour is an area of great concern.

Digital advertisements are one common peripheral feature within social media. Literature indicates that exposure to digital advertisements can influence behaviour in a variety of domains (e.g., Bray, Straney, & Finn, 2015; Hwang, Yoon, & Park, 2011; Kim et al., 2012). While research is yet to examine how advertisements affect engagement in collective action, existing literature suggests that peripheral content can have a fundamental influence on political mobilisation. For example, in the infamous Facebook voting

experiment, a statement situated above users' News Feeds encouraged an extra 340,000 people to vote in the 2010 US congressional elections (Bond et al., 2012; Corbyn, 2012). However, there is limited knowledge about when and how peripheral information affects responses to mobilisation messages of more central content.

In Study 1, we were particularly interested in the effects of digital advertisements on bystander mobilisation. This is collective action by groups who are neither the direct targets nor perpetrators of the injustice (Saab et al., 2015).[3] Social media is perceived to be particularly beneficial for the mobilisation of bystander groups for several reasons. For example, it can increase the visibility of political campaigns and supporters, provide global connections to physically-distant groups, and enable two-way conversations between organisations and the public (e.g., Briones, Kuch, Liu, & Jin, 2011; Obar et al., 2012; Penney, 2015). Accordingly, social media has been found to play a key role in the mobilisation of bystander allies in collective action campaigns (e.g., Abu-Ayyash, 2015; Srikanth, 2015).

In Study 1, we built on existing research examining the relationship between social media communications and collective action mobilisation by considering the impact of both the digital environment and social identification on collective action mobilisation in bystander group members. Specifically, we tested whether digital advertisements have the potential to act as identity signals, affecting how people categorise the source of a central mobilisation message in terms of group membership. We also tested whether message source

[3] Although different types of third-party groups can engage in collective action (e.g., advantaged groups, authority groups), here we were particularly interested in the participation of bystander group members. This is because, as neither the direct targets nor perpetrators of injustice, they occupy a unique location to provide social movement support. Specifically, the success of collective action should neither advance nor undermine their own group's position. In Study 1, the English social category was selected to operationalise bystander identity. Disadvantaged social categories were Welsh (Study 1.1) and Scottish (Study 1.2; 1.3). Due to time constraints, rather than examining the meaning of these group memberships for the group members (i.e., psychological group membership) we chose to employ social category membership, which reflects our primary interest in the effects of digital technology. However, future research could examine the meaning of these social identities for the group members themselves.

categorisation in turn predicts collective action mobilisation, and whether this effect depends on social identification with the disadvantaged group.

Solidarity-Based Collective Action

Social movements often rely on the participation of third-party allies for success (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001). For example, the transnational AIDS treatment movement demonstrates how bystander groups can engage in collective action to help improve the situation of disadvantaged groups (see Grebe, 2008; Smith & Siplon, 2006). Taking collective action in solidarity with disadvantaged groups can facilitate social change by influencing those in authority, the wider public, and bystander participants' self-definitions (Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subašić et al., 2008). As a result, solidarity-based collective action is thought to be fundamental for social change processes (Subašić et al., 2008).

Several factors facilitate collective action in bystander groups; efficacy perceptions, moral outrage about the injustice, sympathy towards disadvantaged group members, and a shared superordinate identity have each been found to play a role (e.g. Saab et al., 2015; Subašić et al., 2008). Moreover, when individuals are asked to show support for a disadvantaged group, shared identity with the message source also facilitates mobilisation (Platow et al., 1999).

Social media is frequently used to ask bystander groups to engage in action (e.g., Kavada, 2014). Nevertheless, peripheral features within social media may have the potential to affect how bystander group members respond to a central mobilisation message. Existing literature indicates that supplementary information on social media, which is *related* to the main content, can have a fundamental influence on how individuals respond to a central message. For example, Walther, DeAndrea, Kim, and Anthony (2010) found that user

comments on an anti-marijuana video affected message evaluations and marijuana attitudes. However peripheral information, which is ostensibly *unrelated* to the central message, may also facilitate or undermine the central message's effects. Research indicates that exposure to peripheral information in the form of digital advertisements can affect attitudes and behaviour in a variety of behavioural domains. For example, digital adverts have been purposefully employed in the hopes of influencing purchasing decisions, health behaviours and emergency response (Bray et al., 2015; Hwang et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2012). Nevertheless, research is yet to examine whether and how incidental advertisement exposure affects bystander mobilisation.

There are several reasons why digital advertisements may affect collective action mobilisation in bystander group members, such as their effect on emotional arousal, feelings of sympathy, and self-efficacy perceptions (Lindenmeier, 2008; Small & Verrochi, 2009). We expected digital advertisements to affect mobilisation in bystander group members by acting as identity signals for social categorisation of the source of the mobilisation message (e.g. Joyce & Harwood, 2014; van Twuyver & van Knippenberg, 1995). Moreover, we expected the effect of social categorisation on collective action mobilisation to depend on social identification with the disadvantaged group (Chan, 2010; Joyce & Harwood, 2014).

Social Categorisation

Social categorisation is fundamental for intergroup behaviour (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). Social identity theory suggests that when people perceive another person as a group member rather than as an individual, their attitudes and behaviour towards that person will change from the interpersonal to the intergroup level (Tajfel, 1978, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Accordingly, categorising an individual as an ingroup or outgroup member has been found to have important implications in a variety of behavioural domains, affecting

attitudes, evaluations, and behaviour towards that individual (Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997; Marques & Paez, 1994; Tajfel et al., 1971). Likewise, social categorisation is integral to decisions to help an outgroup. Existing research demonstrates that outgroup helping will be reduced when the target is categorised as an outgroup member. In contrast, prosocial behaviour will be facilitated when an outgroup target is categorised within a more inclusive superordinate category (Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005).

Turning to online behaviour, there is some evidence to indicate that social categorisation of the source of an online mobilisation message has the potential to affect collective action mobilisation in response to that message. For example, Nekmat, Gower, Gonzenbach, and Flanagin (2015) found that mobilisation for an ingroup was increased when the source of an online call to action was perceived to be a member of the message recipient's own personal network rather than a distant or unfamiliar source. Similarly, Chan (2010) found that church community members were more likely to donate to their church when asked via email compared to face-to-face. Chan reasoned that the salience of ingroup characteristics was increased, and perceptions of difference reduced, under visually-anonymous email. Although these papers did not examine the effect of social categorisation directly, and only examined willingness to take collective action for one's own group, the findings do suggest that perceiving the source of mobilisation message as an ingroup (rather than outgroup) member facilitates collective action.

Although untested in previous research, digital advertisements have the potential to act as signals as to the social categorisation of the message source, particularly under certain circumstances. Blanz's (1999) theoretical model proposes that the salience of a social categorisation is heightened when a categorisation is situationally accessible, there is normative fit and when the meta-contrast ratio is high (see also, Turner 1985; Turner et al.,

1987). Thus, digital advertisements have the potential to influence social categorisation when they increase the situational accessibility of a social category, are relevant to the issue at hand and when an intergroup context is salient. Accordingly, existing research indicates that social categorisation can indeed be affected by contextual cues. For example, van Twuyver and van Knippenberg (1995) primed the categorisation of either university major or university town through a questionnaire. They found that relative use of the primed categorisation increased, compared to the not-primed categorisation, during a who-said-what paradigm.

In the present research, we expected social categorisation of the message source to mediate the effect of digital advertisements on bystander mobilisation. Specifically, we expected digital advertisements to affect social categorisation of the message source when they pertained to contextually-relevant social identities (H1). This is based on previous research that found that normative fit increases the salience of accessible social categorisation (Blanz, 1999). Thus, we expected individuals to categorise the message source as a disadvantaged (outgroup) member when they were exposed to digital advertisements relating to the disadvantaged group. Furthermore, we expected social categorisation of the message source to affect bystander mobilisation. However, a shared sense of identity is also thought to be important for bystander mobilisation (e.g., Subašić et al., 2008; Platow et al., 1999). Therefore we expected the effect of social categorisation on bystander mobilisation to depend on an important moderating factor; specifically, the message recipient's own social identification with the disadvantaged group.

Social Identification

A large body of research indicates that ingroup members are more likely to engage in collective action when they identify highly with other members of the disadvantaged group (e.g., Kelly, 1993; Klandermans, 2002; van Zomeren et al., 2008; Wright & Tropp, 2002).

Likewise, social identification predicts bystander mobilisation. Existing literature has identified key roles for ingroup, outgroup, and superordinate identification in bystander mobilisation. For example, increased levels of identification with the disadvantaged outgroup are associated with an increased willingness to financially donate to outgroup victims following natural disaster (Zagefka, Noor, & Brown, 2013). In contrast, Mallett et al., (2008) found that ingroup identification positively predicted heterosexuals' willingness to take collective action on behalf of non-heterosexuals. They reasoned that because heterosexual individuals rarely think about the meaning of own sexual orientation, those who have might represent a type of heterosexual who has thought in general about the impact of sexual orientation on life. Likewise, a shared superordinate identity with the disadvantaged outgroup – and greater levels of identification with that superordinate identity – encourages solidarity-based collective action (Subašić, Schmitt, & Reynolds, 2011). Although these findings suggest that social identification with different reference groups can be implicated in bystander mobilisation, taken together they indicate that increased feelings of social connection and oneness with the disadvantaged outgroup have a positive effect on solidarity-based mobilisation (see also Subašić et al., 2008).

Social identification can also affect how individuals respond to digital communications. Although limited research has examined how social identification affects responses to mobilisation messages, social identification is integral to how individuals respond to persuasive messages more generally. For example, Joyce and Harwood (2014) examined the persuasive efficacy of digital communications, from seemingly different message creators, which warned against the dangers of sexting. They found that greater levels of social identification with the message creator predicted greater levels of message-consistent attitudes. These findings are consistent with research in offline settings that indicates that social identification with a message source enhances the persuasive impact of

the communication (see Fleming & Petty, 2000; Mackie & Queller, 2000; Van Knippenberg, 2000).

In summary, we expected the effect of digital advertisements on bystander mobilisation to be mediated by social categorisation of the message source. We predicted that digital advertisements would affect social categorisation when they pertained to contextually-relevant social identities (H1). Furthermore, we expected social identification with the group that the action is on behalf of to moderate the effect of social categorisation on collective action mobilisation (H2). Specifically, when the message source was categorised as an outgroup member, collective action mobilisation was expected to be enhanced in individuals who had high levels of social identification with the disadvantaged outgroup. In contrast, for individuals with low levels of outgroup identification, categorising the message source as a member of the disadvantaged outgroup would inhibit mobilisation (Joyce & Harwood, 2014).

Study 1.1

Our goal in Study 1.1 was to test these predictions in the context of a social media campaign to prevent the building of a nuclear power plant in Wales. English participants viewed an online blog that was written by an anonymous source. The blog contained ostensibly incidental banner advertisements relating to either a superordinate social category (British) the outgroup category (Welsh) or neither (Control). The blog presented the building of the power plant as negative for the people of Wales. It contained a mobilisation message asking readers to take collective action to oppose the building of the power plant, and thereby support the people of Wales. Social categorisation of the blog writer, and participants' social identification and collective action mobilisation were measured after participants viewed the blog article.

Method

Design. The study was conducted as an online experiment and employed a one-way between-participants design. The independent variable was the identity signal presented on the blog, which was operationalised as a digital advertisement, with three conditions (Superordinate identity vs. Subordinate outgroup identity vs. Control). The dependent variables were social categorisation of the message source and collective action in support of the campaign. Social identification with the outgroup was measured as a moderator.

Participants. One hundred and thirty participants took part in the study. Participants were recruited by responding to links for the experiment placed on online forums and social media groups, and in person at the host University campus. Forty-three participants were excluded due to non-English nationality and one participant was excluded due to more than 80% missing data. This left a final sample of eighty-six participants (61 female). The mean

age of participants was 23.74 years, ranging from 18 to 50 years (*SD* = 7.59). Payment for the study was raffle entry for one £50 voucher.

Regarding sample size and power, as – to our knowledge – there have been no previous examinations of the effect of digital advertisements on collective action, sample size calculation was not performed a priori. However, sensitivity analysis using g*power for the present design indicated that the sample of the current study is sufficient to detect an effect size of $f = 0.35$ ($\eta_p^2 = .11$) with 80% power for the main effect of digital advertisement and the 2-way interaction ($df_{num} = 2$), and an effect size of $f = 0.31$ ($\eta_p^2 = .09$) with 80% power for the main effect of social categorisation ($df_{num} = 1$).

Procedure. To reduce demand characteristics, we introduced the experiment as a study to examine how individuals view the content of webpages. Participants were randomly allocated to one of the three identity signal conditions (Superordinate identity $n = 25$, Subordinate outgroup identity $n = 34$, Control $n = 27$). They were presented with a screenshot of an online blog entitled "Blogging Britain" (blog text illustrated in Appendix A) that asked individuals to take collective action to prevent the construction of a nuclear power plant in Wales. To perform the manipulation of identity signal, a set of two banner advertisements were presented alongside the main text of the blog. In the experimental conditions the banners advertised tourism in Britain (Superordinate identity) or Wales (Subordinate outgroup identity), in the control condition they advertised an engineering conference and sports injury prevention. Participants self-determined when they had finished viewing the blog by selecting a continue button. After viewing the blog the following variables, along with participant demographics, were measured.

Measures. All items employed a 7-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) unless otherwise stated.

Collective action. As a quasi-behavioural measure of collective action in support or opposition to the campaign, participants were advised that in the interest of impartiality, the researchers were giving them the opportunity to contribute to both sides of the debate. They were asked whether they wanted to either: (1) find out more about the campaign to prevent the power plant, (2) find out more about the campaign to build the nuclear power plant, or (3) continue with the study without receiving any further information.

Pro-movement action. Participants who indicated that they wanted to find out more about the campaign to prevent the nuclear power plant (0 = no, 1 = yes) were then asked to indicate whether they wanted to engage in any of three further actions to prevent the nuclear power plant being built (sign a petition, write to your MP, attend a demonstration). Responses to each subsequent item were also given a dichotomous score (0 = no, 1 = yes) and all four were summed to form a scale of pro-movement collective action, with higher scores indicating greater motivation to take collective action to support the campaign (Min = 0, Max = 4; M = 0.44, SD = 0.89).

Counter-movement action. Participants who indicated that they wanted to find out more about the campaign to build the nuclear power plant (0 = no, 1 = yes) were then asked to indicate whether they wanted to engage in any of three further actions to support the building of the nuclear power (sign a petition, write to your MP, attend a demonstration). Responses to each subsequent item were also given a dichotomous score (0 = no, 1 = yes) and all four were summed to form a scale of counter-movement collective action, with higher scores indicating a greater motivation to take collective action in opposition to the campaign (Min = 0, Max = 2; M = 0.18, SD = 0.52).

Pro-movement attitudes. Overall appraisals of the power plant were measured with three pairs of semantic differential items (I feel the development at Wylfa B would be: Bad –

Good, Negative – Positive, Dangerous – Beneficial). Participants responded to each item on a 7-point scale (1 = positive anchor, 7 = negative anchor). While attitudes in support of the campaign were measured with three items (e.g., "I believe that the nuclear development at Wylfa B could pose serious risks to the environment"). Responses to these six items were highly correlated ($\alpha = .86$) and were averaged to form a single scale, with higher scores indicating a greater level of pro-movement attitudes (Min = 1.83, Max = 7.00; $M = 4.83$, $SD = 1.12$).[4]

Social identification. Three scales were used to measure social identification with the subordinate ingroup (English people), subordinate outgroup (Welsh people) and superordinate category (British people).

Subordinate ingroup identification. Identification with the English ingroup was measured with four items adapted from Doosje, Ellemers, and Spears (1995): I don't feel strong ties with English people (reversed), I don't identify with English people (reversed), I am glad to be English, I see myself as English. Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale of subordinate ingroup identification, with higher scores indicating a greater level of identification (Min = 2.00, Max = 7.00; $M = 5.60$, $SD = 1.14$, $\alpha = .87$).

Superordinate category identification. Identification with the British superordinate category was measured in a similar scale comprised of the same four items (Doosje et al.,

[4] We included a measure of pro-movement attitudes as we were interested in their potential role as either: (1) a mediator in a serial mediation model, as a more proximal predictor of collective action; or (2) a moderator of the effect of social categorisation. Despite being correlated with pro-movement action, r_s (84) = .25, $p = .020$, exploratory analysis revealed that they did not fulfil either of these purposes: all Fs < 1.40, ps > .240, η_p^2 s < .02.

1995), but referring to the British category (Min = 1.75, Max = 7.00; M = 5.66, SD = 1.14, α = .86).

*Subordinate outgroup identification***.** Identification with the disadvantaged Welsh outgroup was measured with a similar scale comprised of two items (Doosje et al. 1995): I don't feel strong ties with Welsh people, I don't identify with Welsh people. The condition mean was used to compute the score for one participant who failed to answer the subordinate outgroup identification items (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; M = 4.35, SD = 1.54, $r(83) = .54$, $p < .001$).

Overlap of self, ingroup, and outgroup**.** The overlap of self, ingroup and outgroup (OSIO; Schubert & Otten, 2002) scale was used to measure participants' subjective perception of the self in the intergroup situation. Participants used three pictorial items to indicate, on a scale of 1 (no overlap) to 7 (complete inclusion), the overlap between the self and English people (Min = 2.00, Max = 7.00; M = 5.78, SD = 1.20), the self and Welsh people (Min = 1.00, Max = 6.00; M = 3.52, SD = 1.34), and English people and Welsh people (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; M = 4.24, SD = 1.38).

Message source categorisation**.** In order to assess social categorisation of the message source, participants were asked to indicate, yes (n = 31) or no (n =55), whether they had an indication of the blog writer's nationality. Participants who answered "yes" were ask to state the perceived nationality in a free text field. Responses to these items were combined

to provide a dichotomous measure of whether participants categorised the blog writer as Welsh (n = 24) or not (n = 62).[5] [6]

Results

Preliminary analysis. Randomisation checks revealed no significant difference between conditions in terms of age, $F(2, 83) = 1.39$, $p = .225$ or gender, $\chi^2(2, N = 86) = .02$, $p = .990$. A visual examination of the frequency distribution for the pro-movement action scale revealed that data had a high positive skew and leptokurtosis that could not be transformed to normality. As a result, we employed bootstrapping to calculate bias corrected means, standard errors and confidence intervals where appropriate.

Main analysis.

Message source categorisation. In order to test whether digital advertisements affected social categorisation of the message source (H1), binary logistic regression was performed with identity signal condition as the IV (indicator contrast: control = 0, 0; superordinate identity = 1, 0; subordinate outgroup identity = 0, 1) and message source categorisation as the DV (not Welsh = 0, Welsh = 1). Results revealed a significant association between identity signal and message source categorisation, $\chi^2(2, N = 86) = 13.88$, $p = .001$, with participants in the subordinate outgroup identity signal condition (Welsh

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[5] Participants who stated they had an indication of the blog writer's nationality and specified that nationality as "Welsh" were recorded as perceiving the blog writer as Welsh. Those who had no indication of the blog writers nationality, or those who perceived the blog writer as being a member of another national group (e.g. English n = 1, British n = 5) were recorded as not perceiving the blog writer as Welsh.

[6] A complete list of all the variables assessed can be found in Appendix B.

tourism advertisements) more likely to categorise the blog writer as Welsh than those in the control, $B = 2.08$, $SE = .70$, $p = .003$, Exp(B) = 8.00, Exp(B) 95% *CI* [2.021, 31.662]. There was no difference between the superordinate identity and control conditions, $B = 0.42$, $SE = .82$, $p = .608$, Exp(B) = 1.52, Exp(B) 95% *CI* [0.305, 7.604] (see Table 1 for cross-tabulations).

Table 1. Cross-tabulations between identity signal condition and message source categorisation

	Not Welsh	Welsh
Control	24	3
Subordinate outgroup identity	17	17
Superordinate ingroup identity	21	4

Collective action. Although H2 predicted a conditional indirect effect of identity signal on collective action through categorisation of the message source, it was also possible that digital advertisements had a direct effect on collective action. In order to test the conditional direct effect of identity signal on pro-movement action, a 3(identity signal: superordinate identity, subordinate outgroup identity, control) X outgroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the pro-movement action scale. However the main effects of identity signal and outgroup identification, and the two-way interaction were non-significant, $F(2,80) = 0.56$, $p = .571$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, $F(1,80) = 1.47$, $p = .229$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, and, $F(2,80) = 1.46$, $p = .239$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Thus there was no direct effect of digital advertisements on collective action.

Moving on to consider the indirect effect of identity signal on collective action through message source categorisation, in order to test whether the effect of message source

categorisation on pro-movement action depended on outgroup identification, a 2(message source categorisation: Welsh, not Welsh) X outgroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the pro-movement action scale. Although the main effects of message source categorisation and outgroup identification were non-significant, $F(1, 82) < 0.01$, $p = .950$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$ and, $F(1, 82) = 0.20$, $p = .654$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, the two-way interaction was significant, $F(1, 82) = 4.62$, $p = .035$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. Therefore the effect of message source categorisation on pro-movement action for the outgroup depended on social identification with that outgroup. Specifically, for those with high levels of outgroup identification, categorising the blog writer as Welsh was associated with greater levels of pro-movement collective action, compared to not categorising the blog writer as Welsh; while for those with low levels of outgroup identification categorising the blog writer as Welsh was associated with reduced levels of pro-movement collective action (illustrated in Figure 1).

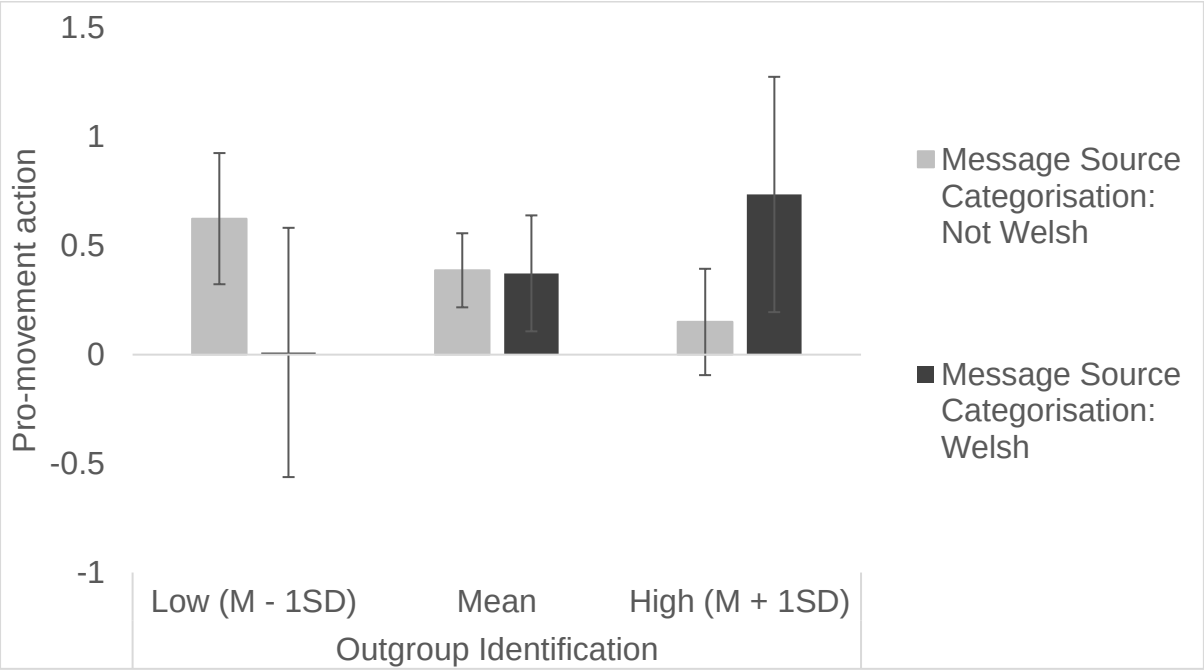

Figure 1. The effect of message source categorisation on pro-movement action for an outgroup depends on social identification with that outgroup. Error bars represent bias corrected 95% confidence intervals.

Further analysis revealed that the simple main effect of message source categorisation was non-significant for those with low (*M* – 1*SD*) levels of outgroup identification, $F(1, 82) = 2.17$, $p = .145$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, but significant for those with high (*M* + 1*SD*) levels of outgroup identification, $F(1, 82) = 3.99$, $p = .049$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. However, due to the skewness and kurtosis of the dependent variable, SPSS was used to compute bootstrapped confidence intervals (95%) for pairwise comparisons with 1,000 bias corrected bootstrapped samples; this analysis revealed marginally significant differences between the means in the Welsh vs. Not Welsh groups for those with low and high levels of subordinate outgroup identification: Bias = -0.030, *SE* = 0.33, *p* = .055, 95% *CI* [-1.258, -0.069], and Bias = 0.030, *SE* = .34, *p* = .085, 95% *CI* [-0.020, 1.373]. Thus as a trend, while perceiving the blogger as Welsh (vs. not Welsh) was associated with greater levels of pro-movement action in those with high levels of subordinate outgroup identification, the opposite was true for those with low levels of subordinate outgroup identification.

Mediation analysis. In order to test whether social categorisation of the message source (0 = not Welsh, 1 = Welsh) mediated the relationship between identity signal (dummy coded: control = 0, 0; superordinate identity = 1, 0; subordinate outgroup identity = 0, 1) and pro-movement action, moderated mediation was performed (theoretical model in Figure 2).

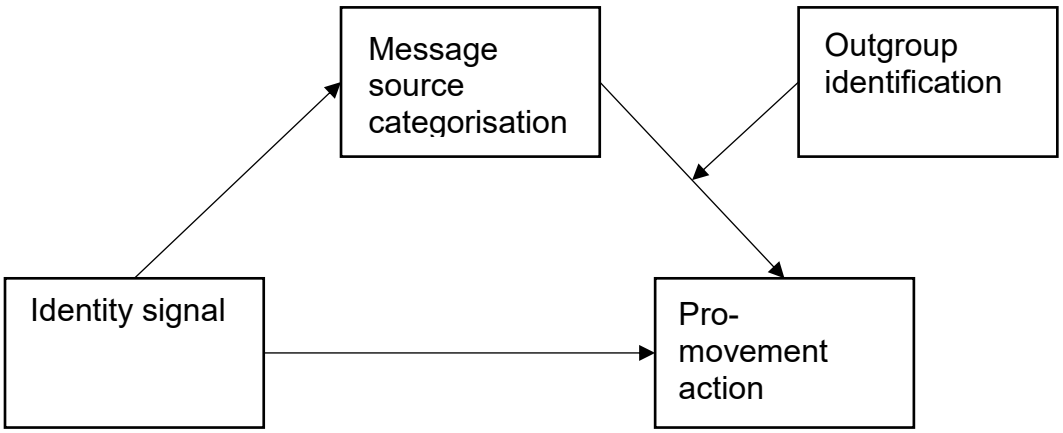

Figure 2. Theoretical moderated mediation model outlining the predicted effect of identity signal on pro-movement action through message source categorisation.

As message source categorisation is a binary variable, the procedure outlined in Iacobicci (2012) was followed to test the mediated pathway. In this procedure, an equation utilising the standardised elements of the coefficients is used to test the indirect effect of identity signal on collective action mobilisation through message source categorisation. The equation gives a test score ($Z_{Mediation}$), which is compared against the critical value of 1.96 for a 2-tailed test with $\alpha = 0.05$. If the test value exceeds the critical value, the indirect effect of X on Y through the mediator is significant.

SPSS was used to compute bootstrapped standard errors with 1,000 bias corrected bootstrapped samples. Results revealed that, compared to the control condition, the indirect effect of identity signal on pro-movement action through message source categorisation was non-significant for individuals with low (M – 1SD), mean and high (M + 1SD) levels of outgroup identification in both the superordinate identity and subordinate outgroup identity digital advertisements conditions (see Table 2). Thus, there was no indirect effect of identity signal on pro-movement action through message source categorisation.

Table 2. The indirect effect ($Z_{Mediation}$) of identity signal on pro-movement action through message source categorisation at different levels of outgroup identification. Comparison group is control.

	Subordinate outgroup identification		
	Low (*M* – 1*SD*)	Mean	High (*M* + 1*SD*)
Superordinate identity	-0.43	0.04	0.43
Subordinate outgroup identity	-1.46	-0.08	1.47

All $Z_{Mediation's}$ N.S. at $\alpha = 0.05$

Exploratory analysis. Although we predicted that message source categorisation would mediate a conditional effect of digital advertisements on pro-movement action this did not emerge. However, there were some plausible alternatives to the hypothesised model. For one thing, literature also identifies a key role for superordinate and subordinate ingroup category identification in solidarity-based collective action and pro-social behaviour (e.g., Mallett et al., 2008; Zagefka et al., 2013), and we wanted to see the degree to which these alternatives were separate constructs. We therefore explored whether outgroup identification had a unique role in moderating the effect of message source categorisation on pro-movement action, or whether subordinate ingroup identification and/or superordinate identification could also act as moderators.

***Intercorrelations between social identification scales*.** In order to explore the relationships between different levels of identification, Pearson product-moment correlations were performed. The associations between subordinate outgroup, subordinate ingroup and superordinate category identification were all positive and significant (see Table 3). This indicated that the social identification scales were correlated, thus one could possibly play a role that was ascribed (in theoretical terms) to one of the others.

Table 3. Intercorrelations between social identification scales

Measure	1	2
1. Superordinate identification		
2. Subordinate ingroup identification	.81***	
3. Subordinate outgroup identification	.29**	.32**

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

Collective action. *Ingroup identification.* To explore whether digital advertisements had a direct effect on collective action moderated by ingroup identification, a 3(identity signal: superordinate identity, subordinate outgroup identity, control) X subordinate ingroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the pro-movement action scale. Although the main effect of ingroup identification was significant, $F(1, 80) = 4.41$, $p = .039$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$, the main effect of identity signal and the two-way interaction were non-significant, $F(2, 80) = 0.88$, $p = .419$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$ and, $F(2, 80) = 2.05$, $p = .136$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$ respectively. Thus, the direct effect of identity signal on pro-movement action did not depend on subordinate ingroup identification.

Regarding the indirect effect of identity signal through message source categorisation, to explore whether the effect of message source categorisation on pro-movement action depended on ingroup identification, a 2(message source categorisation: Welsh, not Welsh) X subordinate ingroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the pro-movement action scale. Although the main effects of ingroup identification and message source categorisation were non-significant, $F(1, 82) = 0.03$, $p = .854$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, and $F(1, 82) = 0.09$, $p = .762$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, the two-way interaction was significant, $F(1, 82) = 4.82$, $p = .031$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. Therefore *ingroup* identification also moderated the effect of message source categorisation on pro-movement action. Specifically,

for those with high levels of ingroup identification (*M* + 1*SD*), categorising the blog writer as Welsh (vs. not Welsh) was associated with greater levels of pro-movement collective action. In contrast, for those with low levels of ingroup identification (*M* - 1*SD*), categorising the blog writer as Welsh was associated with lower levels of pro-movement collective action (illustrated in Figure 3).

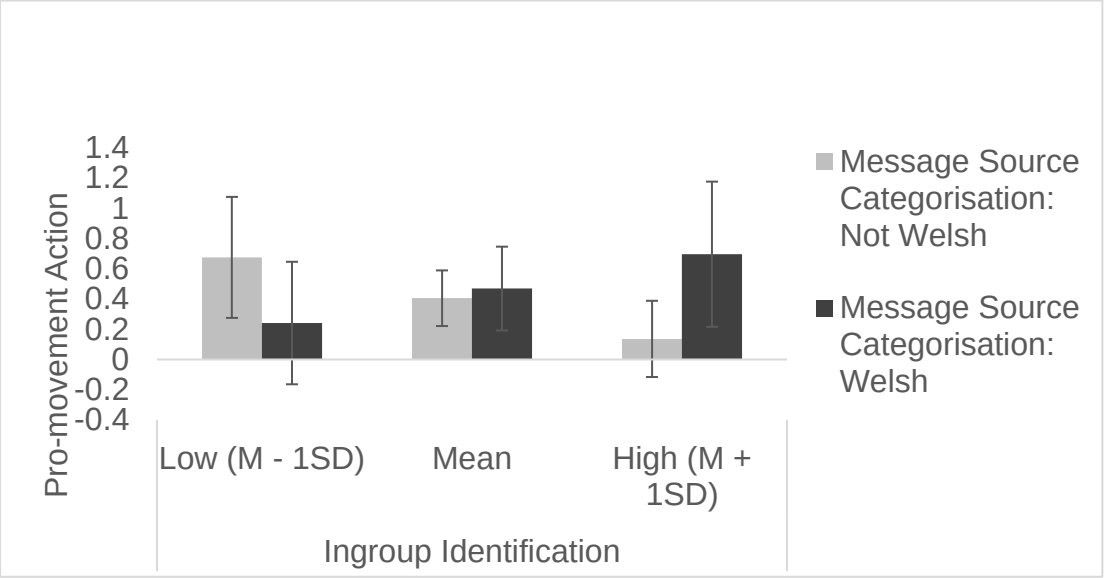

Figure 3. The effect of message source categorisation on pro-movement action for an outgroup depends on social identification with the the ingroup. Error bars represent bias corrected 95% confidence intervals.

Further analysis revealed that the simple main effect of message source categorisation was non-significant for those with low (*M* – 1*SD*) levels of ingroup identification, $F(1, 82) = 1.79$, $p = .185$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, and high (*M* + 1*SD*) levels of ingroup identification, $F(1, 82) = 3.87$ $p = .092$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. However, due to the skewness and kurtosis of the dependent variable, SPSS was used to compute bootstrapped confidence intervals (95%) for pairwise comparisons with 1,000 bias corrected bootstrapped samples; this analysis also revealed no significant differences between the means in the Welsh vs. Not Welsh groups for those with low and high levels of ingroup identification: Bias < 0.001, *SE* = .33, *p* = .169, 95% *CI* [-1.089, 0.267], and Bias = -0.002, *SE* = .30, *p* = .073, 95% *CI* [-0.010, 1.157].

In order to test whether social categorisation of the message source (0 = not Welsh, 1 = Welsh) mediated the relationship between identity signal (dummy coded: control = 0, 0; superordinate identity = 1, 0; subordinate outgroup identity = 0, 1) and pro-movement action, with the message source categorisation → pro-movement action pathway moderated by ingroup identification, moderated mediation analysis was performed on the pro-movement action scale using the procedure outlined in Iacobicci (2012) for binary mediators.

SPSS was used to compute bootstrapped standard errors with 1,000 bias corrected bootstrapped samples. Results revealed that the indirect effect of identity signal on pro-movement action through message source categorisation was non-significant for individuals with low (M – 1SD), mean and high (M + 1SD) levels of ingroup identification in both the superordinate category and subordinate outgroup identity signal conditions. $Z_{Mediation}$ was less than the critical value of 1.96 (for a 2-tailed test with α = 0.05) in all cases (see Table 4). Thus there was no indirect effect of digital advertisements on pro-movement action through message source categorisation, moderated by subordinate ingroup identification.

Table 4. The indirect effect (ZMediation) of identity signal on pro-movement action through message source categorisation at different levels of ingroup identification. Comparison group is control.

	Subordinate ingroup identification		
	Low (M – 1SD)	Mean	High (M + 1SD)
Superordinate identity	-0.39	0.14	0.43
Subordinate outgroup identity	-1.15	0.29	1.48

All $Z_{Mediation's}$ N.S. at $\alpha = 0.05$

*Superordinate identification***.** To explore whether identity signal had a direct effect on collective action moderated by superordinate identification, a 3(identity signal: superordinate identity, subordinate outgroup identity, control) X superordinate identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the pro-movement action scale. Although the main effect of superordinate identification was significant, $F(1, 80) = 6.09$, $p = .016$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, the main effect of identity signal and the two-way interaction were non-significant: $F(2, 80) = 1.03$, $p = .363$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$ and, $F(2, 80) = 2.58$, $p = .082$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. Thus the direct effect of identity signal on pro-movement action did not depend on superordinate identification.

To test whether the effect of message source categorisation on pro-movement action depended on superordinate category identification, a 2(message source categorisation: Welsh, not Welsh) X superordinate category identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-

participants ANOVA was conducted on the pro-movement action scale. However, all main and interaction effects were non-significant, all Fs < 2.54, ps > .116, η_p^2 s < .04.

Discussion

Our results provided evidence to demonstrate that peripheral identity signals, in the form of digital advertisements, can affect social categorisation. Previous research has demonstrated how content created by other users, which is directly relevant to the central message contained on a website, can affect how central messages are evaluated and responded to (e.g., Walther et al., 2010). In the present study we extended this argument to peripheral information, content that is ostensibly independent to main information contained within the website. Although digital banner advertisements promoting tourism in Britain did not affect how the message source was categorised, advertisements promoting tourism in Wales facilitated social categorisation, leading to a greater likelihood that the message source would be categorised as Welsh.

We also found an effect of message source categorisation on collective action for the disadvantaged group, moderated by social identification. As a trend, high outgroup identifiers had greater levels of collective action mobilisation when they categorised the message source as an outgroup member (vs. not categorised as an outgroup member). In contrast, as a trend, categorising the message source as an outgroup member inhibited collective action for those with low levels of outgroup identification. Previous research has found that when individuals identify with the source of a digital message, attitude change in response to that message is enhanced (Joyce & Harwood, 2014). Study 1.1 advanced these findings to a new domain of behaviour and a quasi-behavioural measure.

In addition to the moderating effect of outgroup identification, our exploratory analysis revealed that subordinate ingroup identification also moderated the effect of social categorisation on pro-movement collective action for the outgroup. Although this was not hypothesised, this unexpected finding is consistent with previous research that has found that ingroup identification can affect willingness to take collective action on behalf of an outgroup, at least under certain circumstances (Mallett et al., 2008). In the present study, we found a moderate positive correlation between subordinate ingroup and subordinate outgroup identification, which may help to explain the moderating effect of ingroup identification in this context. Although approaching significance, superordinate identification did not reliably moderate the effect social categorisation on collective action in this study.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned strengths, there were also some limitations to this study. When we tested the indirect effect of digital advertisements on collective action through social categorisation of the message source, we did not find any significant effects. This may in part be due to the study's small sample size and relatively low power. In order to corroborate the findings obtained in Study 1.1, in Study 1.2 we replicated the experiment in a different context and included a larger sample size. In order to increase the power of the design, and due to the superordinate identity signal condition having no effect on social categorisation of the message source, we only included two experimental conditions in Study 1.2: Subordinate outgroup identity vs Control. In other words, an identity signal was either present or not. Given the unexpected moderating effect of ingroup identification, and the fact that we were omitting an identity signal that could affect the salience of social identity at different levels of abstraction, there were limitations to simplifying the design in this way. Nevertheless, as there was no effect of superordinate identity signal on social categorisation compared to control, we felt that the benefits to power achieved by this design modification outweighed the costs.

Study 1.2

To test our primary hypotheses, Study 1.2 was conducted in the context of a social media campaign to prevent the closure of steel mines in Scotland. English participants viewed an online blog that was written by an anonymous source. The blog contained ostensibly incidental banner advertisements, which either related to the disadvantaged outgroup category (Scotland) or not (Control). The blog presented the closure of the steel mines as negative for the people of Scotland and contained a mobilisation message asking readers to take collective action to save the steel plants from closure, and thereby support the people of Scotland. Social categorisation of the blog writer, social identification and collective action mobilisation were measured after participants viewed the blog article.

Method

Design. The study was conducted as an online experiment and employed a one-way between-participants design. The independent variable was the identity signal presented on the online blog, with two conditions (Subordinate outgroup identity vs Control). The dependent variables were social categorisation of the message source and solidarity-based collective action. Social identification with the subordinate outgroup, subordinate ingroup and superordinate category were measured as potential moderators.

Participants. One hundred and sixty-eight participants took part in the study. Participants were recruited by responding to links for the experiment placed on online forums and social media groups, and in person on the host University campus. Sixty-seven participants were excluded due to non-English nationality. This left a final sample of ninety-six participants (76 female), whose ages ranged from 18 to 46 years (M = 21.91, SD = 6.13). Payment for the study was raffle entry for one £50 voucher.

Regarding sample size and power, sensitivity analysis using g*power for the present design indicated that the sample of the current study was sufficient to detect an effect size of f = 0.29 (η_p^2 = .08) with 80% power for all main effects and interactions.

Procedure. To reduce demand characteristics, the experiment was introduced as a study to examine how individuals view the content of webpages. Participants were randomly allocated to one of the two identity signal conditions (Subordinate outgroup identity n = 52, Control n = 44). They were presented with a screenshot of an online blog entitled "Blogging Great Britain" that asked individuals to take action to prevent the closure of steel plants in Scotland (blog text illustrated in Appendix C). To perform the manipulation of identity signal, a set of two banner advertisements were presented alongside the main text of the blog. In the subordinate outgroup identity condition the banners advertised tourism in Scotland, while in the control condition they advertised an engineering conference and sports injury prevention. Participants self-determined when they had finished viewing the screenshot by selecting a continue button. After viewing the blog the following variables, along with demographics, were measured.

Measures. All items were measured on a 7-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) unless otherwise stated.

***Solidarity-based action*.** Two scales were employed to measure motivation to take collective action on behalf of the outgroup. One measured participants' reported willingness to engage in collective action to support the campaign and the other was a quasi-behavioural measure of actual engagement.

*Collective action willingness***.** Willingness to engage in collective action was measured with eight items. Participants were asked to indicate how willing they would be to

perform each of the following actions to prevent the closure of the steel plants: sign a petition, write to your MP, attend a demonstration, like a campaign on social media, write a blog post, email key individuals, make a financial donation. Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (not at all willing) to 7 (extremely willing). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale with higher scores indicating greater willingness to engage in collective action (Min = 1.00, Max = 5.71; *M* = 2.89, *SD* = 1.22, α = .91).

Quasi-behavioural engagement. A quasi-behavioural measure of collective action was employed to measure motivation to engage in collective action to support the campaign. Participants were advised that in the interest of impartiality, the researchers were giving them the opportunity to contribute to the debate. They were then asked whether they wanted to engage in any of eight actions to prevent the closure of the steel plants (e.g., sign a petition; write a blog post). Responses to each item were dichotomous (0 = no, 1 = yes), and were summed to form a scale of quasi-behavioural engagement, with higher scores indicating greater levels of quasi-behavioural engagement (Min = 0, Max = 7.00; *M* = 1.44, *SD* = 1.53).

***Social identification*.** Three scales were used to measure social identification with English people (subordinate ingroup identification: Min = 2.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 5.64, *SD* = 1.01, α = .83), Scottish people (outgroup identification: Min = 2.00, Max = 6.75; *M* = 4.10, *SD* = 1.16, α = .84) and British people (superordinate category identification: Min = 3.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 5.66, *SD* = 0.96, α = .86). Each scale was constructed from four items adapted from Doosje et al. (1995): I identify with [English/British/Scottish] people, I have a lot in common with…, I feel solidarity with…, I don’t feel a bond with…(reversed). Responses to each item were averaged to form three scales of social identification, with higher scores representing a greater level of identification with the relevant social group.

Message source categorisation. In order to assess social categorisation of the message source, participants were asked to indicate, yes (n = 63) or no (n = 33), as to whether they had any indication of the blog writer's nationality. Participants who answered "yes" were asked to state the perceived nationality in a free text field. Responses to these items were combined to provide a dichotomous measure of whether participants categorised the blog writer as Scottish (n=38) or not (n=58)[7].

Appraisals of the issue. Overall appraisals of the planned closure of the steel plants were measured with five semantic differential items (e.g., I feel the closure of the steel plants in Dazell and Clydebridge would be: Bad – Good, Negative – Positive). Participants responded to each item on a 7-point scale (1 = negative anchor, 7 = positive anchor). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores representing a greater level of positive appraisal (Min = 1.00, Max = 6.20; M = 3.05, SD = 0.79, α = 81).[8]

Overlap of self, ingroup, and outgroup. As in Study 1.1, participants were asked to indicate the overlap between the self and English people (Min = 2.00, Max = 7.00, M = 5.75,

[7] Participants who stated they had an indication of the blog writer's nationality and specified that nationality as "Scottish" were recorded as perceiving the blog writer as Scottish. Those who had no indication of the blog writer's nationality, or those who perceived the blog writer as being a member of another national group (e.g. British n=22) were recorded as not perceiving the blog writer as Scottish.

[8] We included a measure of appraisals of the issue as we were interested in their potential role as a either (1) a mediator in a serial mediation model, as a more proximal predictor of collective action; or (2) a moderator of the effect of social categorisation. Despite being correlated with quasi-behavioural engagement, $r_s(94) = -.32$, $p = .001$ and willingness to engage in collective action, $r(94) = -.35$, $p < .001$, exploratory analysis revealed that they did not fulfil either of these purposes: all Fs < 1.61, ps > .208, η_p^2 s < .02.

SD = 1.32), the self and Scottish people (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00, *M* = 3.35, *SD* = 1.52), and English people and Scottish people (Min = 1.00, Max = 6.00, *M* = 3.70, *SD* = 1.39).[9]

Results

Preliminary analysis. Randomisation checks revealed no significant differences between conditions in terms of participant age, $F(1, 94) = 0.92$, $p = .443$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, or gender, $\chi^2(2, N = 96) = 2.29$, $p = .231$. A visual examination of the frequency distribution for the quasi-behavioural engagement scale revealed that the data had high positive skew and leptokurtosis that could not be transformed to normality. As a result, we employed bootstrapping to calculate bias corrected means, standard errors and confidence intervals where appropriate.

Main analysis.

Message source categorisation. In order to test whether identity signal affected message source categorisation, a binary logistic regression was performed with identity signal as the IV and message source categorisation as the DV (not Scottish = 0, Scottish = 1). Contrary to H1 and the findings of Study 1.1, results revealed no significant association between identity signal and social categorisation of the message source, $\chi^2(2, N = 96) = 0.35$, $p = .552$.

Solidarity-based action. Although H2 predicted a conditional indirect effect of identity signal on collective action through categorisation of the message source, as in Study 1.1 it was also possible that digital advertisements had a direct effect on collective action. In order to test the conditional direct effect of identity signal on solidarity-based action, a

[9] A complete list of all the variables assessed can be found in Appendix D.

2(identity signal: subordinate outgroup identity, control) X outgroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness action scale. The main effects of identity signal and outgroup identification, and the two-way interaction were all non-significant, $F(1,92) = 0.22$, $p = .642$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, $F(1,92) = 2.35$, $p = .129$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$ and, $F(1,92) = 0.18$, $p = .669$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$. A similar ANOVA was conducted on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale. Again, all main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 2.43, ps > .123, η_p^2 s < .03. Thus there was no direct effect of identity signal on collective action.

We then moved on to consider the conditional effect of message source categorisation on collective action mobilisation. In order to test whether the effect of message source categorisation on willingness to engage in collective action depended on outgroup identification, a 2(message source categorisation: Scottish, not Scottish) X outgroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. The main effects of message source categorisation and outgroup identification were non-significant, $F(1, 92) = 0.02$, $p = .879$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, and $F(1, 92) = 1.99$, $p = .162$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Likewise, the two-way interaction between message source categorisation and outgroup identification was also non-significant, $F(1, 92) = 1.00$, $p = .322$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$.

A similar ANOVA was conducted on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale. However, the main effects of message source categorisation and outgroup identification were non-significant, $F(1, 92) = 2.91$, $p = .092$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, and $F(1, 92) = 3.22$, $p = .076$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Likewise, the two-way interaction between message source categorisation and outgroup identification was also non-significant, $F(1, 92) = 0.71$, $p = .401$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Thus, contrary to

H2, the effect of message source categorisation on solidarity-based collective action did not depend on social identification with the outgroup.

Exploratory analysis. Maintaining the exploratory analytic strategy adopted in Study 1.1, we further explored whether identification with other relevant social categories could moderate the effect of message source categorisation on solidarity-based action.

***Intercorrelations between social identification scales*.** In order to explore the relationships between different levels of identification, Pearson product-moment correlations were performed. As in Study 1.1, the associations between subordinate outgroup, subordinate ingroup and superordinate category identification were all positive and significant (see Table 5).

Table 5. Intercorrelations between social identification scales

Measure	1	2
1. Superordinate identification		
2.Subordinate ingroup identification	.86***	
3.Subordinate outgroup identification	.42***	.41***

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

***Collective action*.** *Subordinate ingroup identification*. In order to explore whether the direct effect of identity signal on solidarity-based action depended on subordinate ingroup identification, a 2(identity signal: subordinate outgroup, control) X subordinate ingroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. However, all main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 0.50, ps > .483, η_p^2s < .01. A similar ANOVA on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale also revealed no significant effects, all Fs < 0.94, ps > .335, η_p^2s < .01.

Regarding the conditional effect of message source categorisation on collective action, a 2(message source categorisation: Scottish, not Scottish) X subordinate ingroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. Although the main effects of message source categorisation and ingroup identification were non-significant, $F(1, 92) = 0.33$, $p = .570$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$ and, $F(1, 92) = 0.70$, $p = .404$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, the two-way interaction was significant, $F(1, 92) = 8.78$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$. Therefore the effect of message source categorisation on willingness to engage in collective action for Scotland depended on social identification with the subordinate English ingroup. Specifically, for those with high levels of English identification, categorising the blog writer as Scottish was associated with reduced willingness to engage in collective action, compared to not categorising the blog writer Scottish. In contrast, for those with low levels of English identification categorising the blog writer as Scottish was associated with greater willingness to engage in collective action (illustrated in Figure 4).

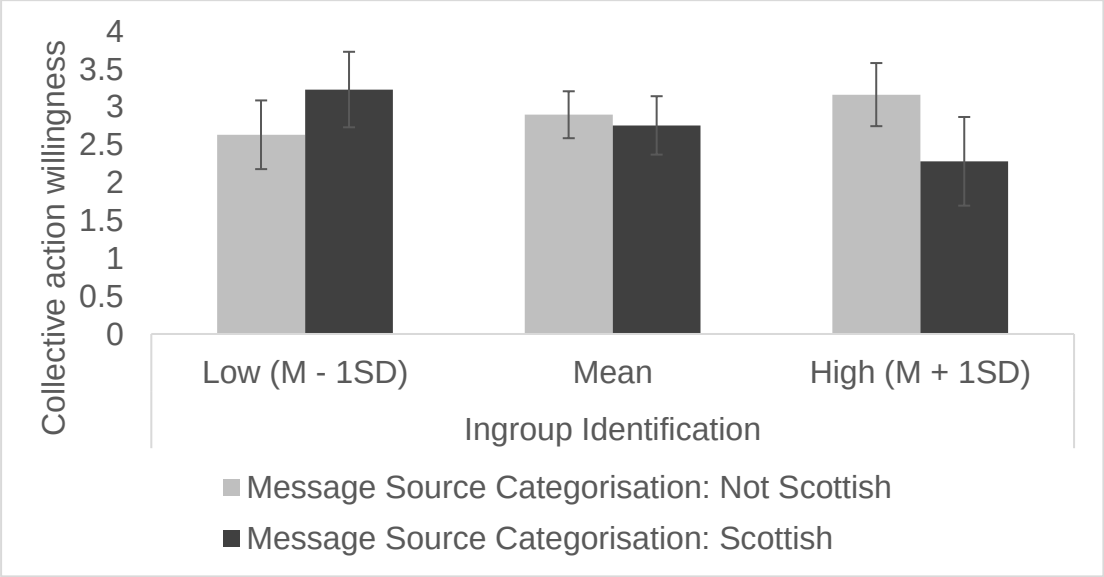

Figure 4. The effect of social categorisation on willingness to engage in collective action for an outgroup depends on social identification with the ingroup. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Further analysis revealed that the simple main effect of message source categorisation was approaching significance for those with low (*M* – 1) levels of ingroup identification, $F(1, 92) = 3.04$, $p = .085$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, and significant for those with high (*M* + 1) levels of ingroup identification, $F(1, 92) = 5.93$, $p = .017$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. For those with high levels of English identification, perceiving the blog writer as Scottish *reduced* willingness to engage in collective action, which was the *opposite* effect to that observed in Study 1.1.

A similar ANOVA on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale revealed no significant main effects, all *F*s < 1.64, *p*s > .205, η_p^2s < .02. However, the two-way interaction was approaching significance, $F(1, 92) = 3.42$, $p = .068$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, revealing a similar pattern of effects to the collective action willingness scale (illustrated in Figure 5).

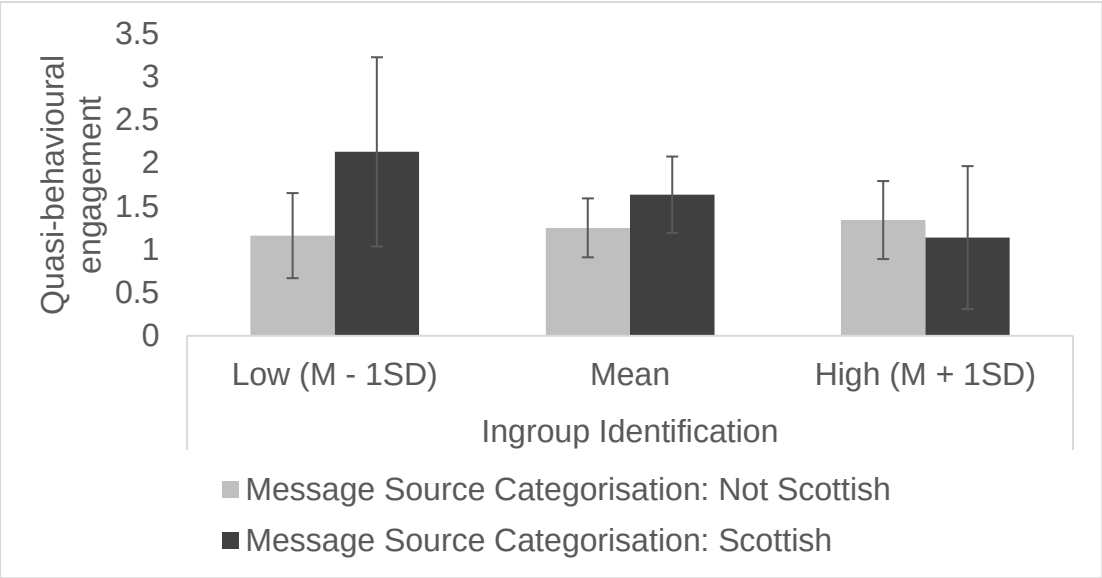

Figure 5. The effect of social categorisation on quasi-behavioural engagement in collective action for an outgroup depends on social identification with the ingroup. Error bars represent bias corrected 95% confidence intervals.

Further analysis revealed that the simple main effect of message source categorisation was significant for those with low (*M* – 1) levels of ingroup identification, $F(1, 92) = 4.94$, $p = .029$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$, but non-significant for those with high (*M* + 1) levels of ingroup identification, $F(1, 92) = 0.20$, $p = .659$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$. However, due to the skewness and kurtosis

of the dependent variable, SPSS was used to compute bootstrapped confidence intervals (95%) for pairwise comparisons with 1,000 bias corrected bootstrapped samples; this analysis revealed no significant differences between the means in the Scottish vs. Not Scottish groups for those with low and high levels of ingroup identification: Bias = -0.032, *SE* = 0.61, *p* = .115, 95% *CI* [-0.365, 2.065], and Bias = 0.024, *SE* = 0.45, *p* = .643, 95% *CI* [-1.082, 0.656].

*Superordinate identification***.** In order to explore whether the direct effect of identity signal on solidarity-based action depended on superordinate identification, a 2(identity signal: subordinate outgroup, control) X superordinate identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. However, all main effects and interactions were non-significant, all *F*s < 0.73, *p*s > .394, η_p^2s < .01. A similar ANOVA on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale also revealed no significant effects, all *F*s < 1.25, *p*s > .225, η_p^2s < .02.

A 2(message source categorisation: Scottish, not Scottish) X superordinate identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. Although the main effects of message source categorisation and superordinate identification were non-significant, $F(1, 92) < 0.28$, $p = .597$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$ and $F(1, 92) = 0.32$, $p = .573$, $\eta_p^{2 <} .01$, the two-way interaction was significant, $F(1, 92) = 7.06$, $p = .009$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. Therefore the effect of message source categorisation on willingness to engage in collective action for Scotland depended on social identification with the superordinate British category. Specifically, for those with high levels of British identification, categorising the blog writer as Scottish was associated with reduced willingness to engage in collective action, compared to not categorising the blog writer as Scottish. In contrast, for those with low levels of British identification, categorising the blog writer as Scottish was associated with greater willingness to engage in collective action

(illustrated in Figure 6). This pattern of effects is similar to that observed for subordinate ingroup (English) identification.

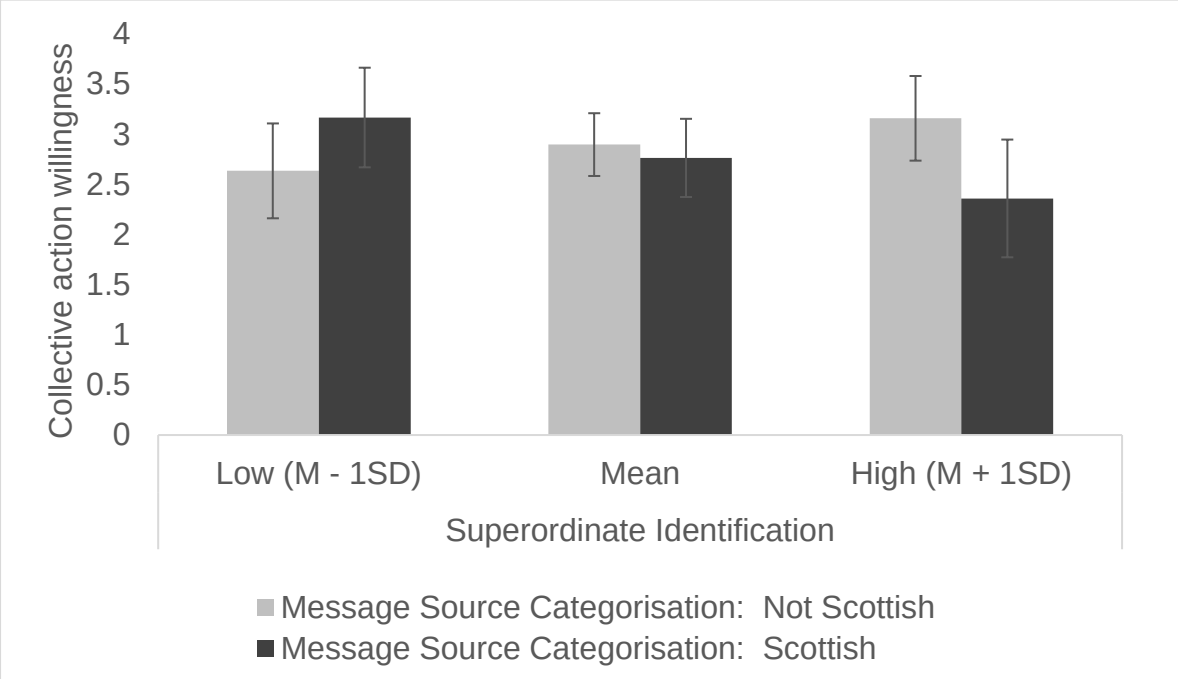

Figure 6. The effect of social categorisation on willingness to engage in collective action for an outgroup depends on social identification with the superordinate category. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Further analysis revealed that the simple main effect of message source categorisation was non-significant for those with low (*M* – 1) levels of British identification, $F(1, 92) = 2.37$, $p = .127$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, but significant for those with high (*M* + 1) levels of British identification, $F(1, 92) = 4.81$, $p = .031$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. For those with high levels of British identification, perceiving the blog writer as Scottish was associated with lower willingness to engage in collective action.

A similar ANOVA on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale revealed no significant main or interaction effects, all *F*s < 2.70, *p*s > .105, η_p^2s < .03.

Overlap of self, ingroup and outgroup. Although the data provided no support for either H1 or H2, we were particularly surprised by the null findings in relation to H2. Moreover, while exploratory analysis in Study 1.1 revealed that as a trend, for individuals with high levels of ingroup identification, categorising the message source as an outgroup member (vs. not categorised as an outgroup member) was associated with greater levels of collective action. The opposite pattern of effects was found in the present experiment: high levels of ingroup identification were associated with greater levels of willingness to engage in collective action when the message source was *not* categorised as an outgroup member, compared to when the message source was categorised as an outgroup member. An additional novel finding was the moderating effect of superordinate identification on solidarity-based collective action, however it was not in the expected direction. High levels of superordinate identification were associated with greater willingness to engage in collective action when the message source was not categorised as an outgroup member, compared to when the source was categorised as an outgroup member. Thus the moderating effects of subordinate ingroup identification and superordinate identification essentially looked the same.

While previous literature suggests that a sense of shared superordinate identity is required for solidarity-based collective action (e.g., Subašić et al., 2008; 2011), the data for Study 1.2 were collected around the period of uncertainty around the relationship between England and Scotland within Britain. Specifically, Scotland had recently held a referendum on Scottish independence from the United Kingdom. Scotland voted against independence by only a narrow margin, and the tone of the debate at the time reflected a sense that many Scottish people did not hold, or were actively rejecting, a superordinate British identity. Comparison between the datasets lend some support to this idea; a one-way ANOVA with dataset as the IV (Study 1.1 vs. Study 1.2) and ingroup-outgroup overlap as the DV revealed a significant main effect of dataset, $F(1,180) = 7.04$, $p = .009$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Specifically,

participants in Study 1.1 perceived greater levels of closeness between the ingroup and the outgroup (England and Wales; M = 4.24, SD = 1.38) than those in Study 1.2 (England and Scotland; M = 3.70, SD = 1.39).

Discussion

The findings of Study 1.2 did not replicate the findings of Study 1.1. In contrast to our hypothesised effect, there was no association between digital advertisement and social categorisation of the message source. There was therefore little support for the suggestion that peripheral content within social media environments can affect social categorisation or collective action mobilisation. The null effect of digital advertisements may be in part due to alternative cues to social categorisation present within the digital environment. The blog was entitled “Blogging Great Britain” and had Union flags displayed in the title panel. This prominent display of national identity may have overpowered any effect of digital advertisement.

The conditional effect of message source categorisation on collective action mobilisation, moderated by outgroup identification was also not replicated. Rather, we found that the effect of social categorisation depended on subordinate ingroup and superordinate identification. Although exploratory analysis in Study 1.1 revealed that ingroup identification moderated the effect of social categorisation on collective action mobilisation, categorising the message source as an outgroup member (vs. not categorised as an outgroup member) was associated with *greater* levels of collective action in individuals with high levels of ingroup identification. In contrast, our findings in the present study indicated that categorising the message source as an outgroup member was associated with *reduced* levels of collective action for high ingroup identifiers. Likewise, categorising the message source as an outgroup member was associated with reduced levels of collective action for individuals with high levels of superordinate identification.

As a result of the inconsistencies between the findings of Study 1.1 and Study 1.2, in Study 1.3 we aimed to provide a further test of the effect of digital advertisements on collective action mobilisation on behalf of an outgroup, through social categorisation of the

message source. In an attempt to reduce alternative cues to social categorisation, we changed the name of the blog, and removed the pictures of Union flags. We conducted the study via Prolific Academic to achieve greater sample size and power. Moreover, we also included a subordinate ingroup identity condition to examine whether identity signals have the potential to inhibit social categorisation as an outgroup member.

Study 1.3

To test our primary hypotheses, Study 1.3 was conducted in the context of a social media campaign to prevent the end of subsidies for Scottish onshore wind generation. English participants viewed an online blog that was written by an anonymous source. The blog contained ostensibly incidental digital banner advertisements that either related to the disadvantaged outgroup category (Scotland) the ingroup (England) or neither national identity (Control). The blog presented the end of onshore wind subsidies as negative for the people of Scotland; it contained a mobilisation message asking readers to take collective action to prevent the end of onshore wind subsidies, and thereby support the people of Scotland. Social categorisation of the blog writer, social identification and collective action mobilisation were measured after participants viewed the blog article.

Method

Design. We conducted the study as an online experiment and employed a one-way between-participants design. The independent variable was the identity signal presented on the blog, with three conditions (Subordinate ingroup identity vs. Subordinate outgroup identity vs. Control). The dependent variables were social categorisation of the message source and solidarity-based collective action. Social identification with the outgroup was measured as a moderator.

Participants. Two hundred and fifty-two participants took part in the study. Participants were recruited using Prolific Academic and were paid £1.50 for their participation. Twenty-four participants were excluded due to non-English nationality and

three participants were excluded due to insufficient effort responding[10]. This left a final sample of two hundred and twenty-five participants (157 female, 1 unspecified, 1 other gender identity). The mean age of participants was 35.41 years, ranging from 18 to 65 years (*SD* = 11.01).

Regarding sample size and power, sensitivity analysis using g*power for the present design indicated that the sample of the current study was sufficient to detect an effect size of $f = 0.21$ ($\eta_p^2 = .04$) with 80% power for the main effect of digital advertisement and the 2-way interaction ($df_{num} = 2$), and an effect size of $f = 0.19$ ($\eta_p^2 = .03$) with 80% for the main effect of social categorisation ($df_{num} = 1$).

Procedure. To reduce demand characteristics, we introduced the experiment as a study to examine how individuals view the content of webpages. Participants were randomly allocated to one of the three identity signal conditions (Subordinate ingroup identity $n = 75$, Subordinate outgroup identity $n = 80$, Control $n = 70$). They were presented with a screenshot of an online blog entitled "Scene hub" that asked individuals to take collective action to protect Scottish subsidies for onshore wind (blog text in Appendix E). To perform the manipulation of identity signal, a set of two banner advertisements were presented in the side margins – alongside the main text of the blog, and one was presented in the website header. In the experimental conditions the banners advertised tourism in England (Subordinate ingroup identity) or Scotland (Subordinate outgroup identity), in the control condition they advertised an engineering conference and sports injury prevention. Participants self-

[10] Two participants were excluded due to response patterns: one answered "1" to 74.07% of response scale items, one answered either "1" or "7" to 81.48% of response scale items. "1" sample *M* = 22.59%, *SD* = 14.30%; "7" sample *M* = 12.44%, *SD* = 13.78%. One participant was excluded due to inconsistent responding, within person correlation = -.47

determined when they had finished viewing the blog by selecting a continue button. After viewing the blog the following variables, along with participant demographics, were measured.

Measures. All items were measured on a 7-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) unless otherwise stated.

***Solidarity-based action*.** Two scales were employed to measure motivation to take collective action on behalf of the outgroup. One measured participants' reported willingness to engage in collective action to support the campaign and the other was a quasi-behavioural measure of actual engagement.

*Collective action willingness***.** Willingness to engage in collective action was measured with eight items. Participants were asked to indicate how willing they would be to perform each of the following actions to prevent the end of onshore wind subsidies: sign a petition, write to your MP, attend a demonstration, like a campaign on social media, write a blog post, email key individuals, make a financial donation. Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (not at all willing) to 7 (extremely willing). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale with higher scores indicating greater willingness to engage in collective action (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; M = 3.13, SD = 1.51, α = .92). Condition means were used to compute the responses of six individuals who failed to answer any items.

Quasi-behavioural engagement. A quasi-behavioural measure of collective action was employed to measure motivation to engage in collective action to support the campaign. Participants were advised that in the interest of impartiality, the researchers were giving them the opportunity to contribute to the debate. They were then asked whether they wanted to engage in any of eight actions to prevent the end of onshore wind subsidies (e.g., sign a

petition; write a blog post). Responses to each item were dichotomous (0 = no, 1 = yes), and were summed to form a scale of quasi-behavioural engagement, with higher scores indicating greater levels of quasi-behavioural engagement (Min = 0.00, Max = 8.00; *M* = 1.77, *SD* = 1.63).

Social identification. The three scales outlined in Study 1.2 were used to measure social identification with English people (subordinate ingroup identification: Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 5.75, *SD* = 1.14, α = .84), Scottish people (outgroup identification: Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 4.26, *SD* = 1.42, α = .86), and British people (superordinate category identification: Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 5.67, *SD* = 1.13, α = .84).

Message source categorisation. In order to assess social categorisation of the message source, participants were asked to indicate, yes (*n* = 148) or no (*n* = 76), whether they had any indication of the blog writer's nationality[11]. Participants who answered "yes" were asked to state the perceived nationality in a free text field. Responses to these items were combined to provide a dichotomous measure of whether participants categorised the blog writer as Scottish (*n* = 138) or not (*n* = 87)[12].

Appraisals of the issue. Overall appraisals of the end of onshore wind subsidies were measured with five semantic differential items (e.g., I feel the end of onshore wind subsidies would be: Bad – Good, Negative – Positive). Participants responded to each item on a 7-point scale (1 = negative anchor, 7 = positive anchor). Responses to each item were averaged to

[11] One response was unanswered

[12] Participants who stated they had an indication of the blog writer's nationality and specified that nationality as "Scottish" were recorded as perceiving the blog writer as Scottish. Those who had no indication of the blog writers nationality, or those who perceived the blog writer as being a member of another national group (e.g. English *n* = 1, British *n* = 4, American *n* = 1) were recorded as not perceiving the blog writer as Scottish.

form a scale, with higher scores representing a greater level of positive appraisal (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; M = 3.01, SD = 1.37, α = .94).[13]

Overlap of self, ingroup, and outgroup. The same items used in Study 1.2 were used to measure the overlap between the self and English people (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 5.59, *SD* = 1.47), the self and Scottish people (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 3.30, *SD* = 1.81), and English people and Scottish people (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 3.43, *SD* = 1.53).[14]

Results

Preliminary analysis. Randomisation checks revealed no significant differences between conditions in terms of participant age, $F(2, 222) = 1.68$, $p = .188$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, or gender, $\chi^2(6, N = 225) = 6.68$, $p = .352$. A visual examination of the frequency distribution for the quasi-behavioural engagement scale revealed that the data had a high positive skew and leptokurtosis that could not be transformed to normality. As a result, we employed bootstrapping to calculate bias corrected means, standard errors and confidence intervals where appropriate.

Main analysis.

[13] We included a measure of appraisals of the issue as we were interested in their potential role as a either (1) a mediator in a serial mediation model as a more proximal predictor of collective action; or (2) a moderator of the effect of social categorisation. Despite being correlated with quasi-behavioural engagement, $r_s(223) = -.30$, $p < .001$ and willingness to engage in collective action, $r(223) = -.20$, $p = .003$, exploratory analysis revealed that they did not fulfil either of these purposes: all *F*s < 2.33, *p*s > .100, ηp^2s < .03.

[14] A complete list of all the variables assessed can be found in Appendix F

Message source categorisation. In order to test whether identity signal affected message source categorisation a binary logistic regression was performed with identity signal as the IV (indicator contrast: Control = 1, 0; Subordinate ingroup = 0, 1; Subordinate outgroup = 0, 0) and message source categorisation as the DV (not Scottish = 0, Scottish = 1). Results revealed a significant association between identity signal condition and message source categorisation, $\chi^2(2, N = 225) = 8.83$, $p = .012$, with participants in the subordinate ingroup identity signal condition (English tourism advertisements) less likely to categorise the blog writer as Scottish than those in the subordinate outgroup identity signal condition (Scottish tourism advertisements), $B = -1.00$, $SE = .34$, $p = .003$, Exp(B) = .37, Exp(B) 95% *CI* [.189, .720]. There was no difference between the subordinate outgroup identity signal and control conditions, $B = -0.50$, $SE = .35$, $p = .51$, Exp(B) = .60, Exp(B) 95% *CI* [.304, 1.201].

A similar logistic regression was conducted to compare the subordinate ingroup identity signal and control conditions (indicator contrast: Control = 0, 0; Subordinate ingroup = 1, 0; Subordinate outgroup = 0, 1), however there were no differences between these conditions, $B = -0.49$, $SE = .34$, $p = .144$, Exp(B) = .61, Exp(B) 95% *CI* [.316, 1.184] (see Table 6 for cross-tabulations).

Table 6. Cross-tabulations between identity signal condition and message source categorisation.

	Not Scottish	Scottish
Control	27	43
Subordinate outgroup identity	22	58
Superordinate ingroup identity	38	37

***Solidarity-based action*.** Although H2 predicts a conditional indirect effect of identity signal on collective action through categorisation of the message source, as in the previous experiments we also tested whether identity signal had a direct effect on collective action. In order to test the conditional direct effect of identity signal on solidarity-based action, a 3(identity signal: subordinate ingroup identity, subordinate outgroup identity, control) X outgroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale. Although the main effect of outgroup identification was significant, $F(1,219) = 13.92$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 < .06$, the main effect of identity signal and the two-way interaction were non-significant: $F(2,219) = 0.73$, $p = .482$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$ and, $F(2,219) = 0.10$, $p = .906$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$.

Having previously found evidence of a relationship between identity signal and categorisation of the message source, we examined the indirect effect of identity signal on collective action through categorisation of the message source. To test whether the effect of message source categorisation on quasi-behavioural engagement in collective action depended on outgroup identification, a 2(message source categorisation: Scottish, not Scottish) X outgroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale. The main effect of message source categorisation was non-significant, $F(1,221) = 0.19$, $p = .662$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$. However, the main effect of outgroup identification and the two-way interaction were significant, $F(1,221) = 15.50$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, and $F(1,221) = 4.43$, $p = .036$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. The effect of message source categorisation on quasi-behavioural engagement in collective action for the outgroup thus depended on social identification with that outgroup. However, the direction of the two-way interaction was opposite to our hypothesised effect, and the effect observed in Study 1.1. Specifically, for those with high levels of outgroup identification, categorising the blog writer as Scottish was associated with *reduced* levels of

collective action compared to not categorising the blog writer as Scottish; while for those with low levels of outgroup identification, categorising the blog writer as Scottish was associated with *increased* levels of quasi-behavioural engagement (illustrated in Figure 7).

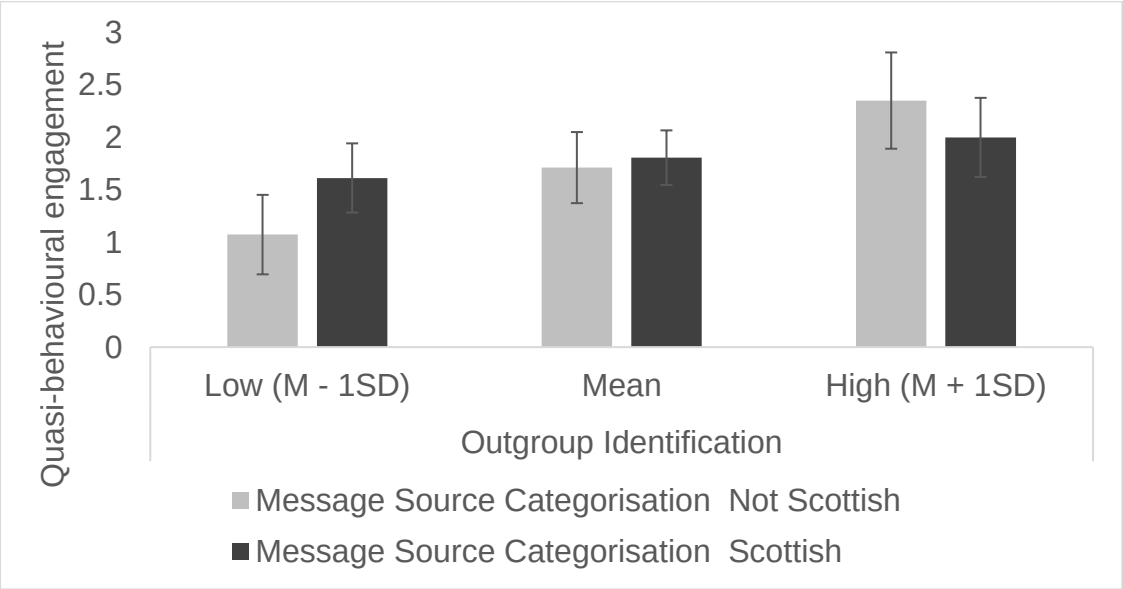

Figure 7. The effect of message source categorisation on quasi-behavioural collective action for an outgroup depends on social identification with that outgroup. Error bars represent bias corrected 95% confidence intervals.

Further analysis revealed that the simple main effect of message source categorisation was non-significant for those with low (*M* – 1*SD*) and high (*M* + 1*SD*) levels of outgroup identification: $F(1, 221) = 3.17$, $p = .076$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$ and, $F(1, 221) = 1.35$, $p = .247$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. However, due to the skewness and kurtosis of the dependent variable, SPSS was used to compute bootstrapped confidence intervals (95%) for pairwise comparisons with 1,000 bias corrected bootstrapped samples; this analysis revealed a significant difference between the means in the Scottish vs. Not Scottish groups for those with low levels of subordinate outgroup identification, Bias = -0.006, *SE* = 0.28, $p = .047$, 95% *CI* [0.013, 1.100], but no significant difference for those with high levels of outgroup identification, Bias = -0.010, *SE* = 0.30, $p = .235$, 95% *CI* [-0.926, 0.192]. Thus, while perceiving the blog writer as Scottish

(vs. not Scottish) was associated with greater levels of quasi-behavioural engagement in those with low levels of subordinate outgroup identification, there was no association for those with high levels of subordinate outgroup identification.

To test whether the effect of message source categorisation on willingness to engage in collective action depended on outgroup identification, a 2(message source categorisation: Scottish, not Scottish) X outgroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. The main effect of outgroup identification was significant, $F(1, 221) = 15.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 < .07$. However, the main effects of message source categorisation and the two-way interaction were non-significant, $F(1, 221) = 0.20$, $p = .655$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$ and, $F(1, 221) = 1.67$, $p = .198$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Thus, the effect of message source categorisation on willingness to engage in collective action did not depend on social identification with the outgroup.

Mediation analysis. In order to test whether social categorisation of the message source (0 = not Scottish, 1 = Scottish) mediated the relationship between identity signal (dummy coded: Control = 1, 0; Subordinate ingroup = 0, 1; Subordinate outgroup = 0, 0) and solidarity-based action, with the message source categorisation → solidarity-based action pathway moderated by outgroup identification, moderated mediation was performed on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale using the procedure outlined in Iacobicci (2012) for binary mediators.

SPSS was used to compute bootstrapped standard errors with 1,000 bias corrected bootstrapped samples. Results revealed that the indirect effect of identity signal on pro-movement action through message source categorisation was non-significant for individuals with low (M – 1SD), mean and high (M + 1SD) levels of outgroup identification in the subordinate outgroup identity signal condition, compared to both the subordinate ingroup

identity signal and control conditions. $Z_{Mediation}$ was less than the critical value of 1.96 (for a 2-tailed test with $\alpha = 0.05$) in all cases (see Table 7). Thus there was no indirect effect of identity signal on solidarity-based action through message source categorisation.

Table 7. The indirect effect (ZMediation) of identity signal on solidarity-based action through message source categorisation at different levels of outgroup identification. Comparison group is subordinate outgroup identity.

	Subordinate outgroup identification		
	Low (*M* – 1*SD*)	Mean	High (*M* + 1*SD*)
Control	-1.06	-0.35	0.77
Subordinate ingroup identity	-1.55	-0.42	0.99

All $Z_{Mediation's}$ N.S. at $\alpha = 0.05$

Exploratory analysis. As in Studies 1.1 and 1.2, we also wanted to examine whether superordinate and subordinate ingroup identification moderated the direct effect of identity signal on collective action, or the indirect effect through message source categorisation.

***Intercorrelations between social identification scales*.** In order to explore the relationships between different levels of identification, Pearson product-moment correlations were performed. The association between subordinate outgroup, and superordinate category identification was positive and significant. However the relationship between subordinate ingroup and outgroup identification was non-significant (see Table 8).

Table 8. Intercorrelations between social identification scales

Measure	1	2
1. Superordinate identification		
2.Subordinate ingroup identification	.80***	
3.Subordinate outgroup identification	.30***	$.09^{n.s.}$

[n.s.] non-significant, *p <.05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Collective action. *Subordinate ingroup identification***.** In order to explore whether the direct effect of identity signal on collective action depended on subordinate ingroup identification, a 2(identity signal: subordinate outgroup, subordinate ingroup, control) X subordinate ingroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. However, all main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 0.48, ps > .622, η_p^2s < .01. A similar ANOVA was conducted on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale, likewise all main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 1.32, ps > .269, η_p^2s < .02.

Regarding the conditional effect of message source categorisation on collective action, a 2(message source categorisation: Scottish, not Scottish) X subordinate ingroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. However, all main effects and interactions were non-significant, Fs < 0.47, ps > .494, η_p^2s < .01. A similar ANOVA was conducted on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale, likewise all main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 0.28, ps > .604, η_p^2s < .01.

*Superordinate identification***.** In order to explore whether the direct effect of identity signal on solidarity-based action depended on subordinate ingroup identification, a 3(digital advertisement: subordinate ingroup, subordinate outgroup, control) X superordinate ingroup identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA was conducted on the collective action willingness scale. However, all main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 2.79, ps > .095, η_p^2s < .02. A similar ANOVA was conducted on the

quasi-behavioural engagement scale, while the main effect of superordinate identification was significant, $F(1, 219) = 4.78$, $p = .030$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, the main effect of identity signal and the two-way interaction were non-significant, $F(2, 219) = 0.72$, $p = .488$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$ and, $F(1, 219) = 1.50$, $p = .225$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$ respectively.

Likewise, a 2(message source categorisation: Scottish, not Scottish) X superordinate identification (continuous, mean-centred) between-participants ANOVA on the collective action willingness scale revealed no significant main effects or interactions, all Fs < 0.61, ps > .435, η_p^2s < .01. A similar ANOVA on the quasi-behavioural engagement scale also revealed no significant main or interaction effects, all Fs < 2.98, ps > .087, η_p^2s < .02.

Discussion

In the present study, we found that digital advertisements can affect social categorisation; while there was no difference between the control and subordinate outgroup conditions, relative to the subordinate outgroup condition, identity signals relating to the subordinate ingroup were associated with reduced likelihood that the message source would be categorised as an outgroup member. In Study 1.1 we also found evidence of an association between digital advertisements and social categorisation of the message source: compared to a control condition, identity signals relating to the outgroup were associated with greater likelihood that the message source would be categorised as an outgroup member. Thus, the present results extend these findings by demonstrating that identity signals relating to the ingroup can also affect social categorisation.

Studies 1.1 and 1.2 also provided some evidence of an effect of social categorisation on solidarity-based action, moderated by social identification with the outgroup (Study 1.1), ingroup (Study 1.1 and 1.2) and superordinate identities (Study 1.2). However, rather than

reconcile these disparate findings, the present study added a further layer of inconsistency. Although the effect of message source categorisation on solidarity-based action depended on outgroup identification, in Study 1.1 categorising the message source as an outgroup member (vs. not categorised as an outgroup member) was associated with *greater* levels of collective action in individuals with high levels of outgroup identification, and as a trend lower collective action in low outgroup identifiers. In contrast, there was a trend in the present study for categorising the message source as an outgroup member to be associated with *reduced* levels of collective action for high outgroup identifiers, and greater collective action in low outgroup identifiers. Thus, the conditional effect of message source categorisation on solidarity-based action remains unclear.

Regarding the effect of digital advertisements on solidarity-based action, as in Study 1.1 and 1.2 no direct effects were observed, although these were not hypothesised. However, we were also unable to find evidence for the expected indirect effect of digital advertisements on solidarity-based action, mediated by social categorisation of the message source.

General Discussion

Popular accounts depict social media as a tool that empowers social movements (e.g., Bertone, De Cindio, Stortone, 2015; DeLuca, Lawson, & Sun, 2012; Pohl, 2015); as a means to raise awareness of political causes, increase the reach of protest messages and widen the base of participation (e.g., Barberá et al., 2015; Patton, 2015). The global reach and popularity of web 2.0 further add to the perceived benefits of using social media for mobilisation; namely, social media serves as a platform to mobilise solidarity-based collective action (e.g., Bennett & Toft, 2009; Hitchcock, 2016; Mercea & Bastos, 2016; Wetherspoon, 2016). However, in recent years, debate has emerged about the lack of user-control within social media environments and the effects that this may have on political attitudes, behaviours and social change (e.g., Griffin, 2016; Hern, 2017; Parsier, 2012; Rogowsky, 2016; Schneier, 2015; Tufekci, 2016). In particular, previous literature has demonstrated that peripheral information displayed to users on social media can affect real-world political mobilisation in the form of voting behaviour (Bond et al., 2012).

Findings from the three experiments in this chapter contribute to this discourse by examining whether and how peripheral content – in the form of digital advertisements – can affect solidarity-based collective action in response to a central mobilisation message. Our results are partially in line with previous research that has demonstrated that user-generated content can affect how individuals respond to a central message (e.g., Purnawirawan, Pelsmacker, & Dens 2012; Walther et al., 2010). We found some evidence to suggest that supplementary content within digital environments can have the potential to affect how individuals respond to a central message. However, our results also extend previous findings by examining the influence of a novel stimulus, namely digital banner advertisements; indicating that information that is ostensibly unrelated to the main content of the webpage

may also have an important effect. More precisely, when there were limited available cues to the identity of the source of the mobilisation message, information contained within digital banner advertisements affected whether or not that source was categorised as an outgroup member.

This research adds weight to concerns about the lack of user-control within social media environments. Our findings demonstrate more specifically that digital advertisements have the potential to act as identity signals, affecting how the source of a mobilisation message is socially categorised; in different contexts, the likelihood that the message source would be categorised as an outgroup member was increased by adverts relating to the outgroup, and decreased by adverts related to the ingroup. These results are consistent with previous literature demonstrating that digital advertisements can affect attitudes and evaluations (e.g., Hwang et al., 2011; Lindenmeier, 2008), extending previous findings by indicating that digital adverts can also affect social categorisation. The present findings also provide some evidence that these categorisations may have the potential to affect collective action on behalf of an outgroup. Consistent with work examining how the source of a message can affect the efficacy of digital communications (e.g., Joyce & Harwood, 2014), we found that the effect of perceived message source on collective action was moderated by social identification.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

Nevertheless, there are some important limitations to the findings that must be borne in mind. For one thing, although the overall pattern of effects was consistent with a conditional indirect effect of digital advertisements on solidarity-based collective action, through social categorisation of the message source, a direct test of mediation was not statistically significant. This feeds into the second limitation; the size of the conditional effect

of social categorisation on collective action was quite small across all three studies, moreover our sample sizes were particularly limited in Studies 1.1 and 1.2. However, most noticeably, our conclusions are limited because the conditional effect of social categorisation was not consistent across all three studies. More specifically, we do not know in which contexts outgroup, rather than ingroup or subordinate category identification will moderate the effect of message source categorisation on collective action mobilisation. We also do not know in which contexts different combinations of social identification and message source categorisation will lead to the greatest levels of solidarity-based engagement.

Regarding disadvantaged group identification as an unreliable moderator of social categorisation, this may reflect the nested structure of the superordinate British category and the high correlation between identification measures across these experiments. In order to disentangle the effect of disadvantaged outgroup identification, from ingroup or superordinate category identification, future research could examine mobilisation on behalf of a socially distant or stigmatised group. Identification with the ingroup or superordinate category is unlikely to be positively associated with disadvantaged group identification in this context.

Turning to consider the inconsistent effect of social categorisation at different levels of social identification, this may – at least in part – be due to differences in the particular arguments employed in the mobilisation messages. Recent literature suggests that the effect of message source on solidarity depends on communication style. Politi, Gale, and Staerklé (2017) examined Swiss individuals' solidarity with refugees after being exposed to a solidarity-promoting message. They found that for high ingroup identifiers, while messages that promoted assimilation were most influential from a refugee (outgroup) source, messages promoting multiculturalism were most influential from a Swiss (ingroup) source. Politi and

colleagues reason that *unexpected* agreement with outgroup members, and disagreement with ingroup members, stimulates uncertainty and induces influence. Thus, in regards to the arguments used in the present mobilisation messages, there may have been unintended differences in the normative position of outgroup members between the studies, which may have contributed to the inconsistent effects of social categorisation of the message source. At the same time, we must also acknowledge the possibility that there may, in fact, be no consistent effects to find.

Notwithstanding these limitations, there are also some key strengths that should be acknowledged, including: (1) the inclusion of a control condition to demonstrate that digital advertisements can both inhibit and facilitate social categorisation as an outgroup member, (2) the utilisation of a quasi-behavioural measure of collective action, and (3) the replication of the effect of digital advertisements on social categorisation in different contexts for different national identities.

In regards to more general areas for future research, we need to examine when and how peripheral content will affect individuals' motivation to take collective action for their own group. The present study focused on collective action that is taken on behalf of an outgroup. However, digital advertisements can also influence emotional appraisals and efficacy evaluations (e.g., Lindenmeier, 2008; Small & Verrochi, 2009), fundamental predictors of disadvantaged group mobilisation. Exposure to peripheral content that increases participative efficacy and affective feelings of injustice may play a key role in promoting collective action for one's own group (van Zomeren et al., 2008; van Zomeren, Saguy, & Schellhass, 2013).

A further area for future research is the effect of peripheral information on the expression of sentiment and collective action in opposition to an outgroup. The present

experiments only examined mobilisation in support of an outgroup. However, recent years have (arguably) seen a rise in populism and right-wing ideology, even in national politics (Inglehart & Norris, 2016); with active opposition directed towards disadvantaged groups through social media and physical protests (e.g., Benček & Strasheim, 2016; Kreis, 2017). Exposure to peripheral information – such as news headlines in the sidebar of a website, or an embedded social media feed – may play a role in promoting collective action in opposition to an outgroup when it contains anti-outgroup norms, or perceptions about discrimination against the ingroup (e.g., Louis, 2009).

Activists, scholars and social commentators have shown increasing concern about the effects of social media on political attitudes and engagement. The present chapter has helped to shed some light on the ways that a lack of user-control within social media environments can affect persuasive processes, such as social categorisation of a message source. Thus, although social media may empower social movements to strategically present themselves and their message, algorithms within social media – and the people who write those algorithms – also have power, which may have the potential to undermine the core aims of the user and efforts for social change (see also Tufekci, 2016). Nevertheless, while we aimed to examine the sensitivity of the audience to the social information that is communicated (often unknowingly and unintentionally) through peripheral features of the digital environment, the present evidence does not present a clear or consistent picture of the effects of peripheral cues, especially relative to other more central identity factors – such as group identification. Therefore, our next step was to move on to consider more central features of online mobilisation attempts, and their relationship to social identity and collective action. Specifically, in Chapter 3 we directly examined when and how the source of a mobilisation message affects third-party mobilisation.

CHAPTER 3

MESSAGE SOURCE REPUTATION AND MESSAGE RECIPEINT SOCIAL IDENTITY AFFECT THIRD-PARTY MOBILISATION

Digital technology has created new ways for social movement organisations (SMOs) and individual activists to connect with new audiences and ask others to participate in collective action. For example, Asma Mahfouz's YouTube video urging others to protest against the Egyptian Government is widely credited for helping to stimulate the Egyptian uprising, while WWF and Earth Hour have used a variety of social media platforms to mobilise action against climate change (e.g., Goodman, 2011; Sniderman, 2011). Using social media to ask others to participate in collective action is particularly appealing due to the accessibility, speed and popularity of web 2.0 (Obar et al., 2012). Accordingly, calls to action communicated via social media are crucial for mobilisation in contemporary collective action campaigns (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

Nevertheless, despite the potential benefits of using social media to organise collective action, some have argued that digital communication technologies may actually weaken social movements (Morozov, 2013; Tufekci, 2014). There are anecdotal examples – such as Invisible Children’s Kony 2012 campaign – where popular online calls to action, disseminated by SMOs, have failed to mobilise on-the-ground participation (e.g., Shringarpure, 2015; Thomas et al., 2015). Moreover, digital activism organisations have been

criticised for using social media to market ineffective campaigns, damaging the core of social movements and failing to promote social change (e.g., White, 2015). In particular, it has been suggested that the openness of social media may suppress the mobilising influence of formal movement organisations by shifting attention to individual activists and personalised action frames (Tufekci, 2013). Moreover, these changing patterns of political organisation may have negative consequences for social movements, for example they may limit efforts to build strategy and community (Kreiss & Tufekci, 2013).

Consistent with the perspective that social media reduces the relative influence of formal SMOs, recent experimental research suggests that online calls to collective action disseminated by SMOs are less persuasive than digital messages from individual activists, at least when those receiving the message are interpersonally close to the individual mobilising agent and unconnected to the SMO (Nekmat, Gower, Gonzenbach et al., 2015). However, standing in contrast to more sceptical perspectives about digital activism organisations, there is some evidence to suggest that formal movement organisations can use social media to effectively mobilise collective action, at least under certain circumstances (e.g., Obar et al., 2012). The effect of the organisational affiliation of a digital mobilising agent on collective action mobilisation is therefore an unresolved issue, and one that the present studies examined.

Previous literature in this area has primarily considered how the source of the mobilisation message affects collective action; identifying key roles for personalised action frames, source credibility and microcelebrity status in the increasing influence of individual activists (e.g., Boyraz, Krishnan, & Catona, 2015; Nekmat, Gower, Gonzenbach et al., 2015; Nekmat, Gower, Zhou, & Metzger, 2015; Tufekci, 2013). The present research built on previous literature by examining the effect of message source. Specifically, we examined

how the mobilising effect of a given message differs as a function of: (1) whether it comes from SMOs or an individual activist, and (2) the reputation of a SMO.

In addition to examining the impact of the source of a mobilisation message, the present research also considered the effect of the *social identity of the message recipient* on collective action mobilisation among those recipients. A large body of research indicates that social identity is fundamental for mobilising collective action in online and offline settings (e.g., Kende et al., 2016; McGarty et al., 2014; Schumann & Klein, 2015; van Zomeren et al., 2008). Nevertheless, it has also been suggested that group identities are becoming less important in digitally-networked campaigns, contributing to the reduced influence of SMOs (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2012; 2013). Research is yet to examine whether the social identity of a message recipient shapes how individuals respond to a mobilisation message from different message sources on social media.

While disadvantaged group members are often the intended recipients of mobilisation messages, social media is increasingly used to encourage participation among third-party group members; individuals who are neither direct targets nor perpetrators of the injustice (Penney, 2014; Saab et al., 2015; Thomas et al., 2015).[15] On the one hand, these more inclusive forms of protest communication have contributed to the suggestion that group identities have become less important for mobilisation (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2013).

[15] Although different types of third-party groups can engage in collective action (e.g., advantaged groups, authority groups, bystander groups), here we applied the general term third-party, rather than a more precise definition. This is because, due to the nature of the campaign under investigation, the social identity of the message recipient was operationalised as gender identity. Thus, participants included men who although not presently members of the (incidentally) disadvantaged group have the potential to become members in the future. Likewise, women participants were not members of the (incidentally) advantaged group, but had the capacity to become members in the future. Because of this, we did not feel it was accurate to refer to non-parents as bystanders. It is also worth noting that we examined social category membership, rather than psychological group membership. As in Study 1, this was due to the limitations of time and our primary interest in the effects of digital technology. However, future research examining how social identities shape the efficacy of a mobilisation message from different message sources would do well to examine the meaning of these social identities for the group members themselves.

Moreover, this (apparent) reduced role for social group identities is thought to be a factor in the decreasing influence of formal movement organisations; for example, fewer resources are required for control, or for the construction of a united collective identity (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2012). In contrast, other research suggests that social identities are integral for the dynamic between disadvantaged groups and their allies in collective action, including third-party mobilisation, regardless of communication strategy (e.g., Droogendyk et al., 2016; Subašić et al., 2008; Subašić et al., 2011).

Thus, while the social identity of the message recipient is thought to be related to the increasing influence of individual activists, research is yet to empirically examine the role of social identity in this process. The present research sought to address this gap by examining whether and how the social identity of the message recipient shapes the mobilising efficacy of online calls to action from different mobilising agents. Specifically, we tested whether the source of an online call to action affects collective action mobilisation among third-party group members, and whether the effect of message source depends on the social identity of the message recipient.

Message Source

Persuasion is a fundamental component of every collective action campaign (Klandermans, 1997). Individuals' decisions to participate in collective action are based on the perceived costs and benefits of participation, and these perceptions can be influenced by others (Klandermans, 1984). Mobilising agents are essential for persuading others to participate in collective action; they create and define core grievances and direct feelings of discontent (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Accordingly, existing literature suggests that some mobilising agents are more effective than others at persuading individuals to engage in collective action (e.g., Nekmat, Gower, Gonzenbach et al., 2015).

Historically, SMOs have been primary mobilising agents, taking a lead role in persuading others to participate in collective action; for example the social movement organisation ACT UP played a key role in mobilising individuals during the AIDS treatment movement during the 1980s-1990s (Smith & Siplon, 2006). SMOs disseminate mobilisation messages, raise awareness among the public, and organise supporters for action (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). However, with the rise of digital technology the role of the formal movement organisation is declining, according to some scholars (e.g., Putman, 2000). Individual activists – who are unaffiliated with SMOs – have become increasingly important in spreading the mobilisation message, 'leaderless' political organisation is becoming more popular, and people with no formal group ties or membership are increasingly taking part in collective action (e.g., Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Bimber et al., 2005; Flanagin et al., 2006; Tufekci, 2013; Walgrave et al., 2011). This "personalisation" of collective action (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2012, p. 739) is argued to have negative consequences for social movements, for example by limiting strategic choices, weakening activists' ability to focus public attention on overarching issues, and inhibiting community-building efforts (Kreiss & Tufekci, 2013; Poell & van Dijck, 2015). Moreover, advances in digital technology have been argued to directly contribute to this changing pattern of political organisation (for a review, see Schumann, 2015).

In contrast to this view, some evidence does suggest that SMOs can effectively use social media to mobilise others. For example, social media use by the British organisation Momentum has been popularly credited with helping Jeremy Corbyn increase Labour's vote share in the 2017 General Election (e.g., "How Momentum helped sway", 2017; Peggs, 2017). While qualitative work by Obar and his colleagues has revealed that SMOs tend to believe that social media is beneficial for the advancement of their activism goals, although the relationship between their beliefs and real achievements are untested (Obar, 2014; Obar et

al. 2012). Thus, although an important social issue, the effect of the organisational affiliation of a message source on collective action is unclear.

Individual vs. SMO. Previous literature has considered how the structural changes associated with digital technology – such as network structure and the distribution of attentional resources – are contributing to the increasing influence of individual activists (e.g., Bennett & Sergerberg, 2012; Poell & van Dijck, 2015; Tufekci, 2013). However, Bennett and Sergerberg (2013) also suggest that a fundamental shift in individuals' motivations for participating in socio-political action is contributing to the declining influence of SMOs.

As already touched upon in the introduction, advances in communication technologies, rising globalisation and the increased interconnection of social and political issues, have led to the suggestion that group identities are becoming less important for mobilisation in contemporary social movements (e.g., Bennett & Sergerberg, 2012; Bobel, 2007; McDonald, 2002). Rather, digital technology is enabling a new "logic of connective action" (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2013, p. 19), where personal expression and individual motives are paramount. This declining role for group-based motivations in the mobilisation of collective action is arguably reflected in the use of personal action frames and inclusive communication strategies. Moreover, it is said to contribute to the reduced prominence of SMOs; for example, capitalising on personal motives means that fewer resources are required for the development of collective action frames or the bridging of organisational differences (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2013).

Nevertheless, limited research has tested whether mobilisation messages from individual activists actually are more influential than those from SMOs online. One notable exception is recent experimental work by Nekmat, Gower, Gonzenbach et al. (2015) who

found that individual mobilising agents are more effective at mobilising collective action than SMOs on social media, at least when the individual is part of the message recipients' social network and the SMO is unknown. Although the process remains untested, they theorise that the desire for social approval and greater integration within personal networks underlie this effect. However, due to the study's design, its findings cannot distinguish between the effect of interpersonal familiarity with the message source and the effect of being an individual *per se* (vs. SMO). Therefore in the present study we included a comparison of an unfamiliar SMO and an unfamiliar individual, as well as a comparison with a more familiar SMO.

There are a number of reasons why individuals and SMOs may vary in their mobilising efficacy. On the one hand, mobilisation messages from individuals may appear more personal, facilitating collective action via increased sympathy or a sense of interpersonal identification with the message giver (e.g., Saab et al., 2015; Trevisan, 2017; Walgrave & Verhulst, 2006). Individuals may also appear to be more prototypical of certain target audiences; research suggests that sources who are perceived to be highly prototypical of the audience are thought to be more successful in eliciting collective action (Hogg, 2010; Rooyackers & Verkuyten, 2012). Conversely, messages from SMOs may increase efficacy evaluations and the belief that collective action will be instrumental in achieving its goal (e.g., Benford & Snow, 2000). However, there has been no direct test of whether independent activists are inherently more persuasive than SMOs *per se*, or other factors such as the reputation of the mobilising agent also shape their mobilising effect.

Organisational reputation. Knowledge of an other's reputation affects how we perceive and respond to them (Emler, 1990). Although individuals can have direct knowledge of – and interpersonal familiarity with – others, they can also know others indirectly by repute. Unlike direct perceptions, reputations do not reside in the mind of a sole individual;

rather, they are community-level knowledge and judgements about an other's qualities that are based on the reported experiences of third parties (Emler, 1990). Reputations have been found to affect behaviour across a variety of domains. For example, reward decisions for helpful behaviours are decreased when the target has a bad reputation (abrasive, self-promoting, insincere) among colleagues (Johnson, Erez, Kiker, & Motowidlo, 2002), while women who kill their partners after experiencing domestic violence and argue self-defence are less likely to be judged as not guilty if they have a bad reputation as a wife or mother (Follingstad, Brondion, & Kleinfelter, 1996).

Likewise, reputations are important for how individuals respond to persuasive messages online. Existing research indicates that the reputation of the source of a persuasive message affects message efficacy. For example, the persuasive efficacy of an online product review is affected by the hosting website's reputation as an established brand (Park & Lee, 2009). Similarly, individuals are more likely to seek out online news from sources with reputations as quality press rather than tabloid or regional sources (Winter & Krämer, 2014). Overall, evidence suggests that message source reputation affects fundamental evaluations including source credibility, competence and trustworthiness (Metzger, Flanagin, & Medders, 2010).

Although research is yet to examine whether and how the reputation of a message source affects the mobilising efficacy of an online call to action, there is some evidence to indicate that the reputation of a mobilising agent can play an important role in the mobilisation process. Resource mobilisation theory makes it clear that reputations are a key resource to be mobilised (e.g., Stoker, 1998), while organisational reputations have been found to affect essential outcomes such as mainstream media coverage and disidentification from the organisation (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004; Rohlinger & Brown, 2013).

The present study therefore included a manipulation of reputation to test whether the reputation of a message source shapes the mobilising effect of a campaign message over and above the effect of being a SMO *per se* (vs. an individual activist). Operationalised in the context of a social media campaign to increase fathers' rights, participants viewed a message on a social media page that asked them to take collective action to support the cause. In order to manipulate message source reputation, the page belonged to either Fathers4Justice, which are a known British SMO with a reputation for hostility towards women (e.g., Dugan, 2014; Ellen, 2008, 2013; Rustin, 2015), or Fathers4Equal Rights, a fictional SMO developed for the purposes of the study, and therefore unknown to participants. In order to test the effects of an individual vs. SMO, the study also included an unknown individual condition.

In turn, social identities are integral to how individuals respond to persuasive messages in general and political messages in particular (van Zomeren et al., 2008; Simon & Klandermans, 2001). In the present study, the effect of message source reputation was expected to depend on a crucial moderating factor: the social identity of the message receiver. In the context of this study, a salient and accessible social identity was likely to be the message recipient's gender.

Social Identity

Social identity engenders group behaviour (Turner, 1982). When individuals define themselves as members of a social or psychological group, intergroup behaviour can occur (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987). Likewise, social identities are integral to collective action (e.g., Thomas et al., 2009a; Thomas et al., 2012; van Zomeren et al., 2008).

Of particular relevance here is the social identity model of helping (Reicher, Cassidy, Wolpert, Hopkins, & Levine, 2006), which outlines a fundamental role for category interests in promoting and inhibiting third-party mobilisation. It suggests that collective action on behalf of an outgroup will be increased when helping is perceived to be in the ingroup's best interest. Accordingly, in their examination of the mechanisms behind rival Ukrainian solidarity campaigns, Chayinska, Minescu, and McGarty (2017) found that Ukrainian action on behalf of the disadvantaged Crimean Tatar outgroup was motivated by the perception that the Crimean Tatars were loyal to the Ukrainian ingroup.

Although research is yet to examine how social identities affect the efficacy of an online call to action from different message sources, social group membership is important for how people respond to persuasive and political messages. For example, a large body of research indicates that shared group membership between a message source and message recipient increases the persuasive efficacy of general communications (for a review, see Mackie & Queller, 2000). For example, Vernet, Vala, and Butera (2011) examined attitude change in response to a message that promoted feminism. They found that sources who were the same gender as the message recipient induced more positive attitude change than sources who were a different gender to the message recipient, due to reduced perceptions of threat.

In the present study, message recipient social identity was predicted to moderate the effect of message source on collective action mobilisation (e.g., Vernet et al., 2011). Specifically, due to its reputation for hostility towards women, negative perceptions of the known SMO were expected to be enhanced in female message recipients, due to perceptions that the SMO is not acting in the ingroup's interests (e.g., Reicher et al., 2006). Thus we expected the known SMO to inhibit collective action in women, however we did not expect the same effect to occur in men (H1).

Study 2.1

Study 2.1 aimed to test whether a social media-based mobilisation message received from an individual, unaffiliated campaigner was more effective in mobilising support than when the message came from a SMO, and whether the message was more effective when the SMO was unknown vs. already known to participants. The effect of message source was expected to depend on the message receiver's social identity. We tested this prediction in the context of a social media campaign to increase fathers' rights. Participants viewed a social media page that belonged to either Fathers4Justice (known SMO), Fathers4Equal Rights (unknown SMO) or an independent individual (unknown individual).[16] The social media page contained a mobilisation message asking others to take collective action to support fathers' rights. Message recipient social identity was quasi-experimental, in that participants were either male or female. Collective action mobilisation was measured after participants viewed the mobilisation message.

Method

Design. The study employed a 3(message source: unknown individual vs. unknown SMO vs. known SMO) X 2(participant social identity: male vs. female) between-participants design. The dependent variable was a quasi-behavioural measure of collective action. Perceptions of the man in the video and efficacy perceptions were measured as mediators. All data were collected using online survey software.

Participants. One hundred and ninety-eight participants took part in the study. Participants were recruited in person on the host University campus and by responding to

[16] We thought about making the manipulation of organisational affiliation (individual vs. SMO) and prior knowledge (known vs. unknown) fully orthogonal. However, we could not find a known individual with an equivalent reputation to Fathers4Justice.

links for the experiment placed on online forums and social media groups. Five participants were excluded due to insufficient effort in responding[17]. The responses of seventeen participants who indicated they were parents were not analysed. This left a final sample of 176 participants (71 female) whose ages ranged from 18 to 49 years (M = 22.31, SD = 4.78). Payment for the study was raffle entry for one £50 voucher.

Regarding sample size and power, the effect size of message source found by Nekmat (2013) was η^2 = .157. Power analysis using g*power for the present design indicated that a sample of 56 would be sufficient to find an effect of this size (f = 0.43) with 80% power (alpha = .05) for the main effect of message source (df_{num} = 2). Nevertheless, given the effect found by Nekmat (2013) was so large, we treated it as an overestimate and aimed to recruit more participants. The sample of the current study was sufficient to detect an effect size of f = 0.23 (η^2 = .05) with 80% power for the main effect of message source and the 2-way interaction (df_{num} = 2), and an effect size of f = 0.21 (η^2 = .04) with 80% for the main effect of participant social identity (df_{num} = 1).

Procedure. To reduce demand characteristics, the experiment was introduced to participants as a study to examine how individuals view the content of social media pages. Participants were randomly allocated to one of the three experimental conditions. They were presented with a screenshot of a social media page that included a video of a man telling his personal story about losing contact with his child after the breakdown of a relationship (video transcript in Appendix G). The page also included a post that asked individuals to take collective action to support “equal parental rights” (text from social media post illustrated in Appendix H).

[17] One participant due to 48% missing data, three participants due to giving the same response to every item, one participant due to giving the same response to all but one item.

To manipulate message source, the social media page cover photo, profile picture and page owner name were varied between conditions. In the known SMO condition (female *n* = 12, male *n* = 32), the page was ostensibly owned by Fathers4Justice, who are a British fathers' rights organisation selected due to their ambivalent reputation as a well-known and principal British fathers' rights organisation on the one hand, but also an organisation that is hostile towards women (e.g., Dugan, 2014; Ellen, 2008, 2013; Rustin, 2015). In the unknown SMO condition (female *n* = 30, male *n* = 33), the page was owned by a fictional fathers' rights organisation called Fathers for Equal Rights. In the unknown individual condition (female *n* = 29, male *n* = 40), the page owner was the individual who appeared in the video. Participants self-determined when they had finished viewing the page by selecting a continue button, after which the following variables were measured.

Measures. Unless otherwise stated, all items employed a 7-point response scale on which participants were asked to rate the extent they agreed or disagreed with each statement (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

***Collective action*.** A quasi-behavioural measure of collective action was employed. Participants were asked to indicate whether they wanted to engage in any of seven actions to support equal parental rights (find out more information, sign a petition, write to their MP, attend a demonstration, like the post on social media, share the post on social media, follow the page on social media). Responses to each item formed a dichotomous score (0 = no, 1 = yes) that were summed to form a scale of collective action engagement (Min = 0, Max = 7; *M* = 0.64, *SD* = 1.39).

***Perceptions of the man in the video*.** *Interpersonal identification.* Interpersonal identification with the man in the video was measured with five items adapted from Doosje et al. (1995): "I identify with the person in the video", "I feel solidarity with the person in the video", "I am similar to the person in the video", "I do not have a lot in common with the

person in the video" (reversed) and "I do not feel a bond with the person in the video" (reversed). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale of interpersonal identification, with higher scores representing a greater level of identification (Min = 1, Max = 6.60; *M* = 3.56, *SD* = 1.00, α = .62).

Emotional response. Emotional response to the man in the video was measured with seventeen items. In order to determine the underlying factor structure of the items, maximum likelihood exploratory factor analysis was used with orthogonal rotation. Inspection of eigenvalues and the scree plot revealed a marked gap between the second and remaining factors (Factor 1 eigenvalue = 5.30; Factor 2 eigenvalue = 3.00; Factor 3 eigenvalue = 1.25).

Eleven items loaded on the first factor, all with factor loadings of greater than .48 (e.g. "I felt compassion for the man in the video", "hearing about the man's situation made me feel moved"). This first factor accounted for 31.16% of the variance across factors, and represented empathy towards the man in the video. Responses to each of these eleven items were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores representing a greater level of empathy towards the man in the video (Min = 2.00, Max = 6.91; *M* = 4.63, *SD* = 0.96, α = .87).

Six items loaded on the second factor, all with factor loadings of greater than .50 (e.g. "hearing about the situation made me feel happy", "I felt anger towards the person in the video"). This second factor accounted for 17.65% of the variance across factors, and represented negative affect towards the man in the video. Responses to each of these six items were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores representing a greater level of negative affect in response to the man in the video (Min = 1.00, Max = 5.67; *M* = 2.18, *SD* = 0.88, α = .75).

Prototypicality. The extent to which the person in the video was perceived as a prototypical father was measured with eight items (e.g. "I think that the person in the video is similar to the average father", "I think the person in the video is a typical example of a

father"). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale of prototypicality, with higher scores representing greater perceptions that the person in the video was prototypical of the group fathers (Min = 1.38, Max = 6.38; M = 4.33, SD = 0.97, α = .84).

***Efficacy perceptions*.** Efficacy perceptions were measured with three scales adapted from van Zomeren et al. (2012).

Individual efficacy. Individual efficacy was measured with four items (e.g. "I believe that I, as an individual, can help to bring about equality in relation to parenting rights"). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale of individual efficacy, with higher scores representing greater perceptions of individual efficacy (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; M = 3.37, SD = 1.33, α = .91).

Group efficacy. Group efficacy was measured with four items (e.g., "I believe that, as a group, we can bring about equality in relation to parenting rights"). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale of group efficacy, with higher scores representing greater perceptions of group efficacy (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; M = 5.28, SD = 1.22, α = .95).

Participative efficacy. Participative efficacy was measured with two items (e.g. "I believe that my contribution to the group will help bring about equality in relation to parenting rights"). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale of participative efficacy, with higher scores representing greater perceptions of participative efficacy (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; M = 3.49, SD = 1.50; $r(174) = .79$, $p < .001$).[18]

Results

Randomisation checks. Randomisation checks revealed no significant differences between conditions in terms of participant gender, $\chi^2(2, N = 176) = 4.59$, $p = .101$, or age, all $Fs < 0.95$, $ps > .387$, η_p^2s $< .02$.

[18] A complete list of all the variables assessed (which were not relevant to the present hypotheses) can be found in Appendix I.

Main Analysis.

Collective action. In order to test whether the effect of message source on collective action depended on the social identity of the message receiver, a 3(message source: known SMO, unknown SMO, unknown individual) X 2(participant social identity: male, female) ANOVA was performed on the collective action scale. The main effects of message source and participant social identity were non-significant, all *F*'s < 0.34, *p*s > .714, η_p^2s < .01. Likewise, the interaction between message source and participant social identity was non-significant $F(2, 170) = 2.55$, $p = .081$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. However, as a trend, while women reported greater levels of collective action than men in the unknown individual (*M* = 0.72, *SD* = 1.56 vs. *M* = 0.40, *SD* = 0.93) and unknown SMO (*M* = 0.90, *SD* = 1.60 vs. *M* = 0.55, *SD* = 1.48) conditions, the opposite was true in the known social movement condition (*M* = 0.08, *SD* = 0.29 vs. *M* = 0.94, *SD* = 1.61). This pattern is illustrated in Figure 8.

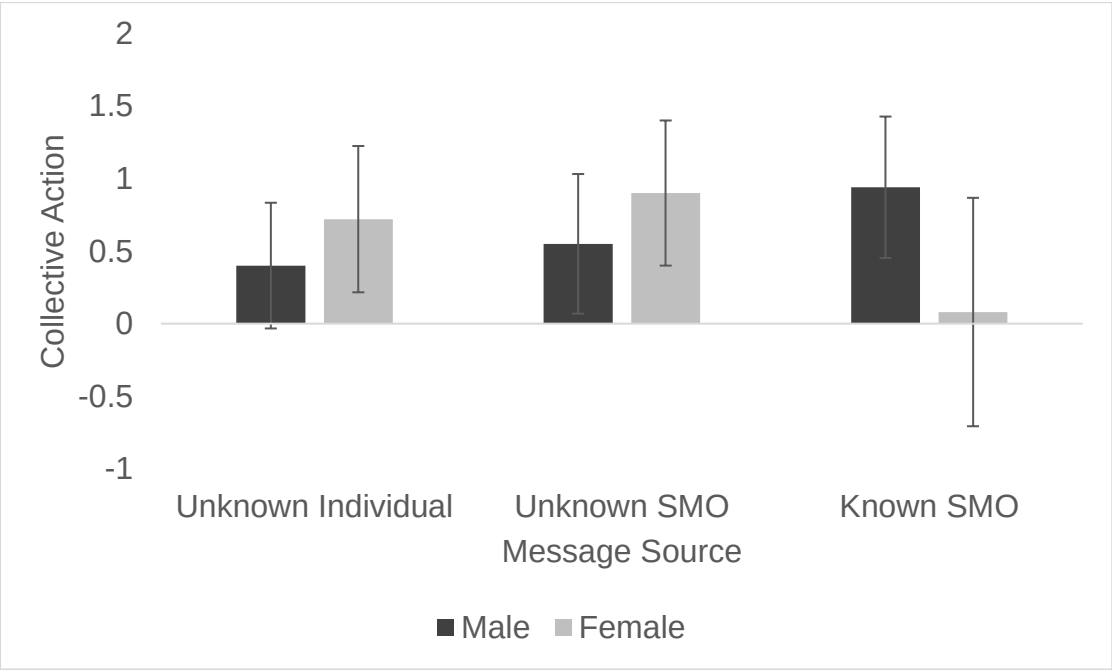

Figure 8. The effect of message source on collective action depends on the participant social identity of the message receiver. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Although the overall effect of message source did not reliably depend on message recipient social identity, in order to provide a more precise test of the hypothesis we performed interaction contrasts on the collective action scale. These were needed because although message source is a one-way independent variable, it actually varies on two factors: unknown individual vs. unknown SMO, and known vs. unknown SMO. As already outlined, due to the practical limitations of finding a known individual with the same reputation as Fathers4Justice, the design was not fully orthogonal. Thus, the interaction contrasts allowed us to test whether the effect of each of these two factors (individual/SMO, and SMO reputation) on collective action were moderated by social identity.

In order to perform these contrasts, we collapsed the two independent variables (social identity and message source) into one independent variable with 6 levels: known SMO male, unknown SMO male, unknown individual male, known SMO female, unknown SMO female, unknown individual female. We then used this new IV in one-way ANOVA on the collective action scale and performed two special contrasts. The first contrast was to test whether the effect of individual vs. SMO on collective action depended on message recipient social identity (contrast weighs: 0, 1, -1, 0, -1, 1). However, this test was non-significant, $F(1, 170) < 0.01$, $p = .950$, 95% *CI* [-0.639, 1.282]. The second interaction contrast was significant, $F(1, 170) = 4.26$, $p = .041$, 95% *CI* [0.053, 2.365]; it tested whether effect of message source *reputation* on collective action depended on message recipient social identity (contrast weighs: 1, -1, 0, -1, 1, 0). Thus, while the unknown SMO led to greater levels of collective action than the known SMO in women, in men the known SMO led to greater levels of collective action than the unknown SMO.

Exploratory analysis. A few more speculative tests were possible with the data. Given our interest in examining whether a mobilisation message from an individual was more efficacious than one from a SMO *per se*, we considered the possibility that rather than

affecting collective action directly, SMO vs. individual affected key antecedents of collective action. For example, compared to a SMO, an individual message source may elicit greater levels of interpersonal identification or empathy, or be perceived to be more prototypical of the group fathers, which may in turn lead to greater levels of mobilisation. In contrast, a SMO may lead to greater efficacy perceptions and consequently greater levels of collective action than an individual message source (e.g., Benford & Snow, 2000; Saab et al., 2015; Trevisan, 2017; Walgrave & Verhulst, 2006).

Perceptions of the man in the video. *Interpersonal identification.* In order to test whether the effect of message source on interpersonal identification depends on the social identity of the message receiver, a 3(message source: known SMO, unknown SMO, unknown individual) X 2(participant social identity: male, female) ANOVA was performed on the interpersonal identification scale. The main effect of message source was approaching significance, $F(2, 170) = 2.98$, $p = .053$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. As a trend, individuals in the unknown SMO condition ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 0.94$) reported greater levels of interpersonal identification with the man in the video than those in the unknown individual condition ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 0.97$) *and* the known group condition ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.09$).

The main effect of participant social identity, and the two-way interaction between participant social identity and message source were both non-significant, all Fs < 3.28, ps > .072, η_p^2s < .03. Thus, the effect of message source on interpersonal identification did not depend on the social identity of the message receiver.

Prototypicality. In order to test whether the effect of message source on perceived prototypicality depends on the social identity of the message receiver, a similar ANOVA was performed on the prototypicality scale. The main effect of participant social identity was significant, $F(1, 170) = 4.16$, $p = .043$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Compared to men, women felt that the man in the video was more prototypical of fathers ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.93$ vs. $M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.00$).

The main effect of message source and the two-way interaction were both non-significant, all *F*s < 0.63, *p*s > .536, η_p^2s < .01. Thus message source had no effect on perceived prototypicality.

Empathy. In order to test whether the effect of message source on empathy depends on the social identity of the message receiver, a similar ANOVA was performed on the empathy scale. The main effect of gender was significant $F(1, 170) = 4.34$, $p = .039$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Compared to men, women expressed more empathy towards the man in the video ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.97$ vs. $M = 4.83$, $SD = 0.91$). The main effect of message source and the two-way interaction were both non-significant, all *F*s < 0.57, *p*s > .567, η_p^2s < .01. Thus message source had no effect on empathy.

Negative affect. A similar ANOVA on the negative affect scale revealed no significant effects, all *F*s < 2.02, *p*s > .136, η_p^2s < .03.

Efficacy perceptions. In order to test whether the effect of message source on efficacy perceptions (individual, group, participative) depended on the social identity of the message recipient, a 3(message source: known SMO, unknown SMO, unknown individual) X 2(participant social identity: male, female) MANOVA was performed. The multivariate main effect of gender was approaching significance, Wilks' Lamdba = .96, $F = 2.43$, $p = .067$, η_p^2's = .04. However, the multivariate main effect of message source and the two-way interaction effects were non-significant, all Wilks' Lamdba < .99, *F*s < 1.08, *p*s > .375, η_p^2s < .02. Univariate tests revealed that the main effect participant social identity on group efficacy perceptions was significant, $F(1, 170) = 4.58$, $p = .034$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$: compared to men, women held greater group efficacy perceptions ($M = 5.18$, $SD = 1.27$ vs. $M = 5.52$, $SD = 1.15$). All other univariate main effects of participant social identity and message source, and the two-way interaction effects were non-significant all *F*s < 1.52, *p*s > .221, η_p^2s < .02. Thus message source had no effect on efficacy perceptions.

Discussion

The results of this study resonate with the proposition that the source of an online call to action does affect collective action mobilisation. Previous research has suggested that interpersonal motives contribute to this effect; individuals wish to connect with others at a personal level and gain greater integration within personal networks (Nekmat, Gower, Gonzenbach et al., 2015). The findings of the present study advance this argument to an intergroup perspective, they indicate that message recipient social identity – and as an extension, group-based concerns – also have the potential to shape how individuals respond to different mobilising agents.

The mobilising efficacy of the online call to action was not affected by whether the source of the message was a SMO or individual *per se*: The unknown individual and the unknown SMO elicited equivalent levels of collective action. Moreover, perceptions of the target and message recipients' own efficacy perceptions were not affected by whether the source of the message was an individual or SMO. Rather, the findings are consistent with the suggestion that message source reputation and message recipient social identity combine to affect the efficacy of a digital mobilisation message. Specifically, the effect of message source reputation on collective action mobilisation was different for men and women. While women reported greater levels of collective action than men in response to the unknown SMO, the opposite was true when presented with a message from an organisation with a reputation for hostility towards women. In other words, message recipients' own category interests appear to be substantial drivers in how they respond to a particular message source. Nevertheless, in Study 2.1, prior knowledge of the message source was assumed rather than directly assessed. Moreover, the process underlying the different pattern of results for men and women was not tested. Therefore, in order to substantiate this interpretation of the

findings, perceptions of, and affective responses to, the two SMOs were examined in Study 2.2. Due to the unknown individual message source condition having no effect on message efficacy it was not included in Study 2.2.

Study 2.2

Study 2.2 aimed to replicate and extend the findings of Study 2.1. As in Study 2.1, we expected the effect of message source on collective action to depend on the message recipients' social identity. Specifically, relative to the unknown SMO, we expected the known SMO to reduce collective action in women, but not in men (H1). Extending the findings of Study 2.1, we expected perceptions of the SMO to mediate this effect (H2). To investigate these hypotheses, male and female participants were randomly assigned to either an unknown social movement condition (Fathers for Equal Rights) or a known social movement condition (Fathers4Justice) and were presented with a section of a social media page belonging to the relevant group. Willingness to engage in collective action, perceptions of the SMO and affective response to the SMO were measured after viewing the page section.

Method

Design. The study employed a 2(message source: unknown SMO vs known SMO) X 2 (participant social identity: male vs female) between-participants design. The dependent variable was participants' willingness to engage in collective action. Perceptions of the SMO and affective response to the SMO were measured as mediators. Prior knowledge of the SMO was measured as a manipulation check, and participants' gender identification was measured as a potential moderator.[19] All responses were collected via online survey software.

[19] Exploratory analyses were conducted to test alternative models where the effect of message source on (1) perceived gender equality goals, (2) negative affect, and (3) collective action, was moderated by social identity and gender identification. All analyses were 2(message source: known SMO, unknown SMO) X 2(participant social identity: male, female) X gender identification (continuous, mean centred) ANOVAs. However all three-way interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 2.34, ps > .128, $\eta_p^2 < .02$.

Participants. One hundred and sixty-eight participants took part in the study. Participants were recruited in person on host University campus and by responding to links for the experiment placed on online forums and social media groups. The responses of twenty participants who indicated they were parents were not analysed. This left a final sample of one hundred and forty-eight participants (84 female) whose ages ranged from 18 to 50 years (M = 22.81, SD = 5.38). Payment for the study was raffle entry for one £50 voucher.

Regarding sample size and power, sensitivity analysis revealed that the sample of the current study was sufficient to detect an effect size of $f = 0.24$ ($\eta^2 = .05$) with 80% power for all main effects and the 2-way interaction ($df_{num} = 1$).

Procedure. To reduce demand characteristics, the experiment was introduced to participants as a study to examine how individuals view the content of social media pages. Participants were informed that they would be presented with a section of a social media page; the page was said to belong to a SMO who campaigned for equal parental rights regarding child custody for parents who divorce or separate. Participants were randomly allocated to one of the two conditions, in which they were presented with a social media cover photo and profile picture that either belonged to Fathers4Justice (known SMO: female n = 36, male n = 33) or Fathers for Equal Rights (unknown SMO: female n = 48, male n = 31). Perceptions of the SMO and willingness to engage in collective action for that SMO were then measured.

Measures. Unless otherwise stated, all items employed a 7-point response scale on which participants were asked to rate the extent they agreed or disagreed with each statement (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

***Collective action willingness*.** Willingness to engage in collective action for the SMO was measured with seven items (I would be willing to: receive more information about the campaign, sign a petition, write to my MP, attend a demonstration, like the campaign on

social media, share the campaign on social media, follow the SMO on social media). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores indicating a greater willingness to engage in collective action for the SMO (Min = 1, Max = 7; M = 3.74, SD = 1.40, α = .91).

***Prior knowledge*.** Prior knowledge of the SMO was measured with one item (I have heard of [SMO] before), with higher scores indicating a greater level of prior knowledge.

Perceptions of the SMO*.** *Gender equality goal.** The extent to which the SMO was perceived as endorsing a gender equality goal was measured with two items ([SMO] aim to benefit: men and women equally, fathers and mothers equally). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores indicating greater perceptions that the SMO endorsed a gender equality goal (Min = 1.50, Max = 7; M = 4.16, SD = 1.39; r = .59, p < .001).

*Global evaluations***.** Global evaluations of the SMO were measured using eight pairs of semantic differentials (e.g., I think [SMO] are: good – bad, positive – negative, dangerous – beneficial). Each pair was rated on a seven-point scale (1 = positive anchor, 7 = negative anchor). Responses to each pair were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores indicating more negative global evaluations of the SMO (Min = 1.00, Max = 5.38; M = 2.98, SD = 1.04; α = .93).

*Bias against women***.** The extent to which the SMO was perceived to be biased against women was measured with eight items (e.g., [SMO]: have no interest in the rights of women, act against the rights of mothers). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores indicating greater perceptions that the SMO was biased against women (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; M = 3.45, SD = 1.44; α = .89).

Affective response*.** *Negative affect.** Negative affect in response to the SMO was measured with seven items ([SMO] make me feel: worried, fearful, anxious, angry, annoyed,

embarrassed, ashamed). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores indicating greater negative affect in response to the SMO (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 2.01, *SD* = 1.11, α = .94).

*Challenge emotions***.** Challenge emotions were measured with three items adapted from Folkman and Lazarus (1985) ([SMO] make me feel: confident, eager, hopeful). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores indicating greater levels of challenge emotions in response to the SMO (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 3.45, *SD* = 1.44; α = .89).

***Gender identification*.** Participants' social identification with their own gender was measured with four items adapted from Leach et al. (2008) (I identify with other [men/women], I don't feel strong ties with [men/women] (reversed), I see myself as a [man/woman], I am glad to be a [man/woman]). Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale, with higher scores indicating greater identification with gender ingroup (Min = 1.00, Max = 7.00; *M* = 4.99, *SD* = 0.95; α = .75). [20]

Results

Preliminary analysis.

***Randomisation checks*.** Randomisation checks revealed no significant differences between conditions in terms of participant gender, $\chi^2(2, N = 148) = 0.29$, $p = .293$, or age, all $Fs < 2.76$, $ps > .099$, $\eta_p^2s < .02$.

***Manipulation check*.** To test that individuals in the known SMO condition had greater levels of prior knowledge about the SMO than those in the unknown SMO condition, a 2(message source: unknown SMO, known SMO) X 2(participant social identity: male, female) ANOVA was performed on the prior knowledge scale. The main effect of message

[20] A complete list of all the variables assessed (which were not relevant to the present hypotheses) can be found in Appendix J.

source was significant $F(1, 144) = 4.62$, $p = .033$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$: participants in the known SMO condition ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 2.58$) had greater levels of prior knowledge about the SMO than those in the unknown SMO condition ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 2.27$). This suggests that the manipulation of prior knowledge about the message source was successful. All other main effects and interactions were non-significant, all $Fs < 0.82$, ps $> .369$, η_p^2s $< .01$.

Main analysis. Unless otherwise stated, the analyses reported below were 2(message source: known SMO, unknown SMO) X 2(participant social identity: male, female) ANOVAs.

Affective response. *Negative affect***.** The main effect of message source on negative affect was significant $F(1, 144) = 7.19$, $p = .008$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$: the known SMO elicited greater negative affect ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.32$) than the unknown SMO ($M = 1.80$, $SD = 0.82$). No other main effects or interactions were significant, all $Fs < 0.08$, ps $> .787$, η_p^2s $< .01$.

*Challenge emotions***.** All main effects and interactions were non-significant, all $Fs < 1.48$, ps $> .225$, η_p^2s $< .01$.

Perceptions of the SMO. *Gender equality goal***.** Although the main effects of message source and participant social identity were non-significant, the two-way interaction between message source and participant social identity was significant $F(1, 144) = 7.58$, $p = .007$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. This interaction is illustrated in Figure 9.

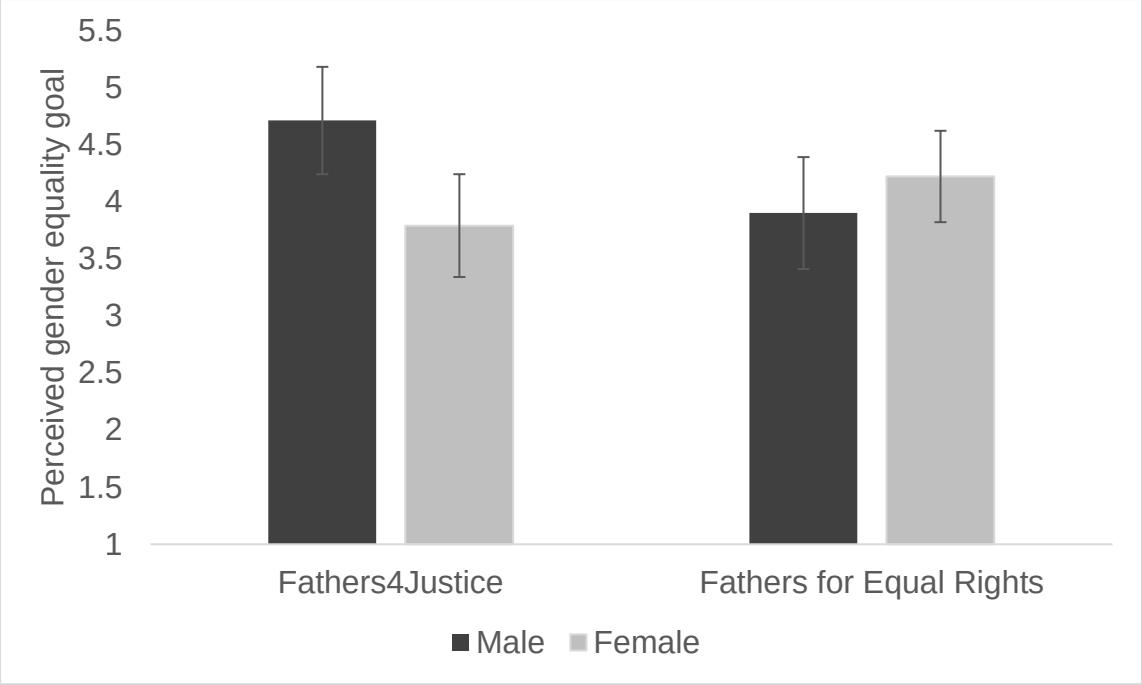

Figure 9. The effect of message source on perceived group motives depends on the participant social identity of the message receiver. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Further analysis revealed that the simple main effect of participant social identity was significant in the known SMO condition $F(1, 144) = 7.92$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$, but not in the unknown SMO condition $F(1, 144) = 1.09$, $p = .299$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Specifically, compared to men ($M = 4.71$, $SE = .24$), women had reduced perceptions that the known SMO endorse a gender equality goal ($M = 3.79$, $SE = .23$). Reframing these analyses in terms of the simple main effect of message source, this was significant for men $F(1, 144) = 5.68$, $p = .019$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, but not women $F(1, 144) = 2.14$, $p = .146$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Specifically, men felt that the known SMO ($M = 4.71$, $SE = .24$) endorsed gender equality to a greater extent than the unknown SMO ($M = 3.90$, $SE = .24$).

*Bias against women***.** The main effect of participant social identity was significant, $F(1, 144) = 5.67$, $p = .019$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$: compared to men, women had greater perceptions that the SMO was biased against women ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.26$ vs. $M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.15$). All other main effects and interactions were non-significant, all $Fs < 0.02$, $ps > .898$, η_p^2s $< .01$.

*Global evaluations***.** All main effects and interactions were non-significant, all *Fs* < 2.64, *p*s > .107, η_p^2s < .02.

***Collective action*.** All main effects and interactions were non-significant, all *Fs* < 1.83, *p*s > .180, η_p^2s < .02.

Structural model. To test whether negative affect and gender equality goal mediated the conditional relationship of message source on collective action, conditional process modeling was performed using structural equation modeling in AMOS with 10,000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples, following the steps outlined in Hayes and Preacher (2013). Specifically, this model tested whether message source (unknown SMO = 0, known SMO = 1) affected perceived gender equality goal, which in turn predicted negative affect, which in turn predicted willingness to engage in collective action, with the path between message source and perceived gender equality goal moderated by participant social identity, reflecting the interaction reported above. It also tested a direct path between message source and negative affect. The model is illustrated in Figure 10[21].

[21] We tested an alternative model which included a direct path between perceived gender equality goal → collective action, constrained to be equal across gender group. This path was non-significant βs < .17, *p*s > .087; although as a trend, greater perceptions that the SMO endorsed a gender equality goal predicted greater willingness to engage in collective action. The model with this path included did not have significantly better fit than the outlined model without the path: χ^2_1 Δ = 3.37, *p* = .07, thus the more parsimonious model was selected.

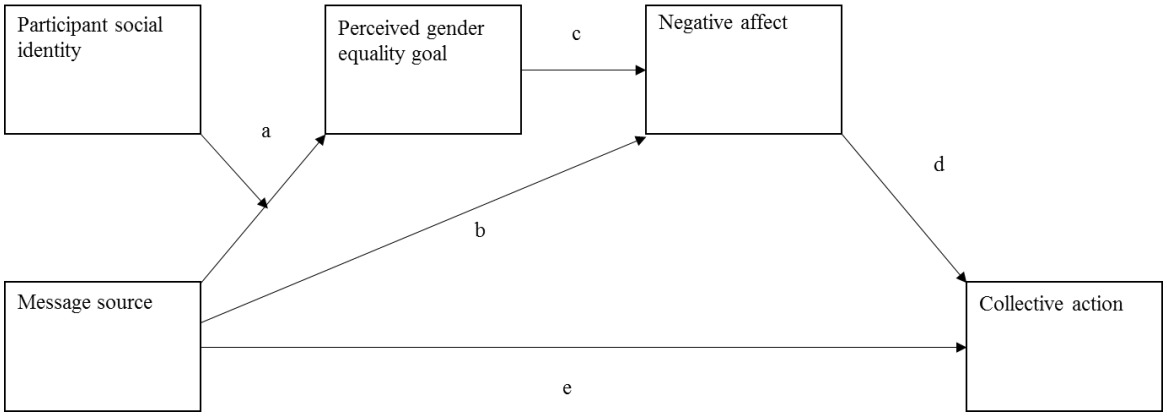

Figure 10. The effect of message source on collective action through perceived gender equality goal and negative affect. Theoretical moderated mediation model. Paths b – e were constrained to be equal across social identity groups.

Perceived gender equality goal. A model in which the path between message source and perceived gender equality goal was unconstrained had better fit than a model in which this path was constrained to be equal across men and women: χ^2_1 Δ = 6.83, *p* = .009. This reflects the two-way interaction between message source and participant social identity reported earlier. For men, the path between message source and perceived gender equality goal was positive and significant, β = .25, *SE* = .12, *p* = .046, 95% *CI* [0.005, 0.469]: male participants felt that the known SMO endorsed a gender equality goal to a greater extent than the unknown SMO. In contrast, the message source → perceived gender equality goal pathway was negative and non-significant for women, β = -.19, *SE* = .11, *p* = .095, 95% *C*I [-0.398, 0.032]: as a trend, female participants felt that the unknown SMO endorsed a gender equality goal to a greater extent than the known SMO. All other direct paths in the model were constrained to be equal across gender groups.

Negative affect. The direct path between message source and negative affect was positive and significant, the known SMO elicited a greater level of negative affect than the unknown SMO (men: β = .19, *SE* = .07, *p* = .007, 95% *CI* [0.052, 0.318]; women: β = .24, *SE* = .08, *p* = .004, 95% *CI* [0.078, 0.393]). The direct path between perceived equality goal and negative affect was negative and significant, greater perceptions that the SMO endorsed a

gender equality goal predicted reduced levels of negative affect (men: β = -.27, *SE* = .08, *p* = .001, 95% *CI* [-0.449, -0.118]; women: β = -.24, *SE* = .06, *p* = .001, 95% *CI* [-0.366, -0.117]).

The indirect path from message source to negative affect through perceived equality goal was different for men and women. For men, the path was negative and significant β = -.07, *SE* = .04, *p* = .032, 95% *CI* [-0.169, -0.005]: men had lower levels of negative affect in response to the known SMO compared to the unknown SMO due to greater perceptions that the known SMO endorsed a gender equality goal. In contrast, for women this path was positive and marginally significant, β = .05, *SE* = .03, *p* = .058, 95% *CI* [-0.002, 0.109]: as a trend, women had *greater* levels of negative affect in response to the known SMO compared to the unknown SMO due to reduced perceptions that the known SMO endorsed a gender equality goal. For women, the known SMO directly and indirectly predicted greater levels of negative affect than the unknown SMO. For men, while the known SMO directly predicted greater levels of negative affect than the unknown SMO, it indirectly predicted *less* negative affect due to the perception that the known SMO endorsed a gender equality goal to a greater extent than the unknown SMO.

The total effect of message source on negative affect was also different for men and women. For men, the total effect was non-significant, β = .12, *SE* = .08 *p* = .121, 95% *CI* [-0.034, 0.266], reflecting the competing negative direct and positive indirect paths between message source and negative affect in men. For women, the total effect of message source on negative affect was positive and significant, β = .28, *SE* = .08, *p* = .001, 95% *CI* [0.121, 0.441]: the known SMO elicited greater levels of negative affect than the unknown SMO. Thus, compared to the unknown SMO, the known SMO elicited greater levels of negative affect in women. However, the same was not true for men.

Collective action. The direct path between message source and willingness to engage in collective action was non-significant, βs < .04, *p*s > .691, reflecting the results of the

ANOVA reported earlier. The path between negative affect and collective action was negative and significant, reduced negative affect in response to the SMO predicted greater willingness to engage in collective action (men: β = -.39, *SE* = .07, *p* < .001, 95% *CI* [-0.531, -0.247]; women: β = -.36, *SE* = .08, *p* < .001, 95% *CI* [-0.524, -0.211]).

The indirect path from message source to collective action through perceived equality goal and negative affect was different for men and women. For men, the path was non-significant, β = -.05, *SE* = .08, *p* = .095, 95% *CI* [-0.118, 0.008]. However, for women the path was negative and significant, β = -.10, *SE* = .04, *p* = .001, 95% *CI* [-0.200, -0.036]: compared to the unknown SMO, women reported reduced willingness to engage in collective action for the known SMO, due to reduced perceptions that the known SMO endorsed a gender equality goal and greater negative affective response. Thus, for women, although message source did not directly predict willingness to engage in collective action, indirectly the known SMO predicted reduced willingness to engage in collective action compared to the unknown SMO. For men, message source neither directly nor indirectly predicted willingness to engage in collective action. In other words, the known SMO reduced willingness to engage in collective in women in a manner that was not evident for men.

The total effect of message source on collective action was non-significant for men β = -.01, *SE* = .08, *p* = .847, 95% *CI* [-0.176, 0.139] and women, β = -.06, *SE* = .09, *p* = .473, 95% *CI* [-0.245, 0.114]. Path coefficients for men and women are illustrated in Figure 11.

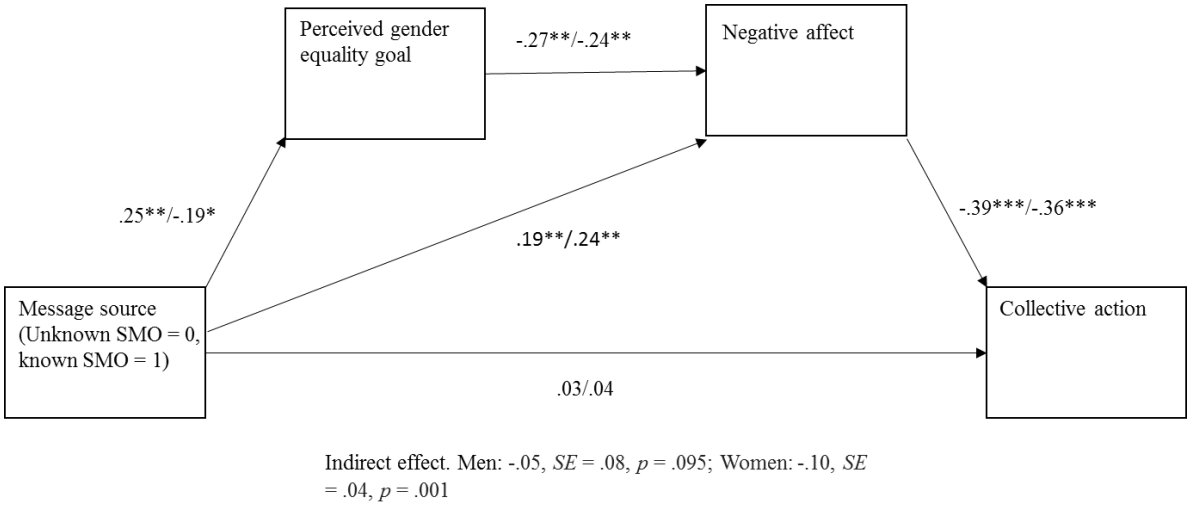

Figure 11. The effect of message source on collective action through perceived gender equality goal and negative affect. Path coefficients for men/women. All path coefficients are standardized regression weights. *p < .10, **p < .05, ***p < .001.

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest a more nuanced perspective on motivations to participate in digitally-networked collective action. More precisely, what has been argued to be primarily motivated by personal interests (e.g., Bennet & Sergerberg, 2012; 2013) appears to be sensitive to social identity concerns. Even though there was no direct effect of message source on willingness to engage in collective action, for women the known (vs. unknown) SMO indirectly predicted reduced willingness to engage in collective action, driven by reduced perceptions that the organisation endorsed a gender equality goal and increased negative affect. The results emphasise the relevance of a group-level approach to digitally-networked collective action. Building upon Study 2.1, in which participants' motives for engaging in collective action were not captured explicitly, the present study showed that concerns for ingroup category interests (gender equality) affected willingness to engage in collective action. Male and female participants felt reduced negative affect and greater inclination to engage in collective action when the SMO was perceived to endorse a gender equality goal. This finding is consistent with the social identity model of helping (Reicher et

al., 2006) and work examining how ingroup category interests shape third-party mobilisation in offline settings (Chayinska et al., 2017).

In contrast to the findings of Study 2.1, there was no direct effect of message source on collective action mobilisation, moderated by message recipient social identity. This difference may be due to differences in the studies' designs. In Study 2.1 participants were presented with an actual online call to action that they were asked to respond to, and a quasi-behavioural measure of collective action was employed. In contrast, in Study 2.2, no mobilisation message was delivered; rather, participants were asked more generally whether they would be willing to take collective action on behalf of the SMO. In this context, the discrepancy may in part represent an attitude-behaviour gap. Additionally, the effect of "message source" is likely to be stronger when the source delivers a specific mobilisation message.

General Discussion

New communication technologies are often heralded as a means to revolutionise political engagement (e.g., Cogburn & Epinoza-Vasquez, 2011; Xenos, Vromen, & Loader, 2014), and as a tool to promote autonomy and break down hierarchies within social movements (e.g., Bennett, 2012; Earl & Schussman, 2002; Juris, 2012). The increasing popularity of self-organised 'connective' actions further points to the innovative potential of digital media. Specifically, social media enables individuals to take a lead role in mobilising others to participate in collective action campaigns (Bennett & Sergerberg, 2012; Tufekci, 2013; Walgrave et al., 2011). However, concerns have been raised about the efficacy of self-organised and connective action. In particular, research suggests that a reduced influence for SMOs may limit the instrumental efficacy of social movements (Kreiss & Tufekci, 2013). Nevertheless, very little work has examined whether individuals are more effective than SMOs at mobilising others. The first aim of the present research was to address this omission, by testing whether a mobilisation message from an individual was more mobilising than the same message from a SMO. The second aim was to examine the role of message recipient social identity in shaping the efficacy of a given message from different mobilising agents.

Findings from the two studies support the prediction that the effect of message source on collective action mobilisation would depend on the social identity of the message recipient, driven by ingroup category interests. The results are consistent with previous work that indicates that the source of a mobilisation message can affect collective action mobilisation (e.g., Nekmat, Gower, Gonzenbach et al., 2015). However, this research also extends these findings by suggesting that: (1) the reputation of a mobilising agent has a key effect on message efficacy, and (2) the identity of the message recipient shapes how different mobilising agents are perceived. Although there was no evidence to suggest that an individual

was more persuasive than a SMO *per se*, we found that male and female message recipients reported different levels of collective action in response to a mobilisation message from a known and an unknown SMO.

The present research also challenges the suggestion that social identities are not needed to understand contemporary forms of digitally-networked engagement (e.g., Bennett & Sergerberg, 2013; Earl & Kimport, 2011). More precisely, female participants' negative affect and inaction in response to the known SMO was underpinned by the perception that the group did not endorse a gender equality goal (Study 2.2). In contrast, the same demobilising effect was not observed in men, driven by greater perceptions that known SMO endorsed a gender equality goal. The suggested group-level approach to digitally-networked activism is consistent with the idea that decisions to participate in collective action are subject to considerations of ingroup category interests (Chayinska et al., 2017; Reicher et al., 2006). When category memberships are made contextually salient, group-based motives affect individuals' attitudes and behaviour (Turner et al., 1987).

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

There are several strengths of the present research including: (1) the inclusion of an unknown individual condition, to differentiate the effects of social movement reputation from that of being a SMO *per se*; and (2) the use of real category memberships and a real-world campaign. However, there were also limitations that should be considered. One of these is that, due to the practical constraints of finding a known individual with an equivalent reputation to Fathers4Justice, we did not include a known individual condition, this means that the design of Study 2.1 was not fully orthogonal. A further limitation is that although we discuss message recipient social identity, we did not measure or manipulate core components of social identity, such as identity salience or content. Existing literature demonstrates that

the content and salience of social identity are fundamental for particular forms of intergroup behaviour, such as helping or conflict; an individual will behave in accordance with the norms and values associated with a particular identity when that identity is salient (e.g., Haslam, Reicher, & Levine, 2012; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). In the present study, because we were interested in examining the influence of social identities in realistic online settings we chose not to include a manipulation of social identity salience, rather we expected gender identities to become contextually salient due to the content of the campaign. Nevertheless, it is also possible that the different message sources in the study differently affected social identity salience. Moreover, because we did not include a measure of the norms or values associated with the different gender identities, message source reputation may have affected the extent to which cooperative behaviour was normatively prescribed in each gender identity group. In sum, there may have been other pathways to mobilisation that were not explored in the studies.

Nevertheless, the study of digitally-networked activism is still in its infancy and more research is needed on a broader level to examine how changes in communication strategies and to the organisation of collective action affect social change. The present work only examined participation in collective action in general; however, the nature of collective action that third parties engage in – dependency or autonomy oriented – is integral to social change (e.g., Halabi & Nadler, 2017). Future research should examine how different message sources affect third-party preferences for autonomy- vs. dependency-oriented forms of action. Message sources who pose a threat to message recipient social identity may promote dependency orientated and status maintaining strategies of engagement (e.g., Nadler, Harpaz-Gorodeisky, & Ben-David, 2009).

The present studies were also limited to examining third-party mobilisation; however, collective action participation by disadvantaged group members – and the psychological empowerment that occurs as a result – is key in the social change process (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2009). Future research should examine how the personalisation of collective action is affecting disadvantaged group, relative to third-party, mobilisation. For example, while personal rather than collective action frames may appeal to third parties due to relatively lower levels of identification with disadvantaged group participants, the opposite may be true for disadvantaged group members who are not yet part of the movement.

The individualised dimensions of digitally-networked activism have received recent and mounting attention, particularly regarding the unconventional roles for individual agents and personal motives in mobilising action. The present findings speak to this work by indicating the important effect that the source of a mobilisation message can have on collective action mobilisation. By the same token, they also emphasise that an exclusively personalised approach to socio-political action – where social identity considerations are deemed redundant – is not likely to be effective, and may indeed be impossible. This is because the interests of individuals may most fittingly be met by not only considering, "what does this action mean for me?", but also "what does this action mean for my group?"

Regarding the ways that digital technology affects collective action more generally, the present research supports the conclusions of the previous chapter that the efficacy of a digital mobilisation message is enhanced when the identity of the message source ties in with the social identity of the message recipient. Taken together, these findings highlight that individuals' motivations to participate in collective action are not only driven by the information presented on digital technology, but also by what individuals themselves bring to the table in identity terms. In terms of how digital environments in general function to

advance (or undermine) social change, the findings from both chapters indicate that flexibility – in terms of how users present themselves and their media – is a key affordance of social media, which can provide a psychological bridge (or barrier) between disparate identity groups to facilitate (or inhibit) mobilisation for an other's cause. More specifically, our findings suggest that the presentational features within the digital environment can affect perceptions of contextually relevant others, which can either increase or reduce the identity-based barriers to third-party mobilisation.

Nevertheless, Chapters 2 and 3 are limited by only considering initial mobilisation. As Louis (2009) suggests, in order to gain a greater understanding of how collective action creates change, social psychologists need to consider what happens after these initial participation decisions. The next chapter addresses this limitation by considering how a different feature of digital technology – internet-enabled modes of action – affects longer-term patterns of engagement. Specifically, it considers when and how political expression on social media affects subsequent collective action for the same and other causes.

CHAPTER 4

ALL CLICK, NO ACTION? ONLINE ACTION, EFFICACY PERCEPTIONS, AND PRIOR EXPERIENCE COMBINE TO AFFECT FUTURE COLLECTIVE ACTION

Political leaders, organisations and individuals are increasingly using the internet to gain support for their cause. Nevertheless, the internet's ability to advance social change is widely debated. On the one hand, several large-scale protests, such as the Arab Spring uprisings, have been linked to online actions, particularly social media use (e.g., Lotan et al., 2011). Conversely, social media activism has been disparagingly characterised as 'slacktivism': low-impact action that derails future engagement and social change (e.g., Gladwell, 2010). Consistent with this latter view, recent experimental research suggests that online activism does produce a slacktivism effect, decreasing supplementary action, at least in the short-term for the same social issue (Schumann & Klein, 2015). However, does this detrimental effect of online activism generalise to affect broader patterns of engagement? In contrast to the slacktivism hypothesis, correlational and qualitative evidence suggests that online action can facilitate future action, for the same and other social issues, at least under certain circumstances (e.g., Bastos & Mercea, 2016; Kende et al., 2016). Therefore, the effect of online action on future engagement is an unresolved issue that the present study seeks to address.

In Study 3, we extended research into the relationship between online action and higher-threshold (higher cost and/or risk) engagement by considering the impact of both past

behaviour and perceived efficacy on subsequent behaviour. Specifically, we tested whether online social action in relation to one issue affects future engagement with other social issues. Although past behaviour and perceived efficacy are key predictors of behaviour in various settings (see Ajzen, 2005; Bandura, 1997), research is yet to examine whether they shape the ability of online action to mobilise engagement across different social issues. We therefore tested whether perceived efficacy and prior experience with activism change the effect of online participation on cross-issue engagement.

The 'Slacktivism' Effect

Collective action is as a key strategy for social change (Ellemers et al., 1990). Historically, collective action has commonly involved high-threshold activities, such as strikes and boycotts, which are typically perceived as effective for advancing social change (Vaccari et al., 2015). However, collective action varies in form and effectiveness; Wright et al. (1990, p. 995) suggest that: "A group member engages in collective action anytime that he or she is acting as a representative of the group and the action is directed at improving the condition of the entire group". With the ubiquity of the internet, early research was hopeful that technological advances would further advance social change (e.g., Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005). Specifically, online forms of collective action, such as 'liking' a page on social media – also referred to as internet-enabled actions (e.g., Morozov, 2011) to acknowledge their physical footprint – are often seen as methods for mass mobilisation due to their low-threshold nature (Karpf, 2010). Consistent with this view, existing research has demonstrated that online participation can facilitate future collective action, at least under certain conditions (e.g., Kende et al., 2016).

However, in contrast to this optimistic perspective, other researchers have characterised internet-enabled action as low-efficacy, token support or lazy activism (e.g., Christensen, 2011; Kristofferson, White, & Peloza, 2014; Morozov, 2011). The slacktivism

hypothesis embodies this view, suggesting that internet-enabled actions inhibit future engagement (for a review, see Fuchs, 2014, Ch. 8). Consistent with the slacktivism hypothesis, Schumann and Klein (2015) found that engaging in online action inhibits offline participation for the same cause due to the feeling of making a satisfactory contribution to the group.

Nevertheless, there is some evidence to suggest that internet-enabled action can enhance future engagement, at least in certain contexts. Vaccari et al. (2015) found that the more users acquired information and expressed themselves online, the more likely they were to engage in higher-threshold action. Although the process underlying this effect was not tested, they theorised that increased self-efficacy beliefs mediated this relationship. Meanwhile, Choi and Park's (2014) analysis of a Twitter community revealed that online communication can materialise into offline action for the same cause, particularly when it builds collective identity. However, they did not examine whether engagement for other social issues was affected. These findings suggest that the slacktivism hypothesis may underestimate the capacity of online participation to ferment future engagement, under the right conditions. However, it remains unclear as to when online action will encourage future action, or how it affects collective action for other social issues.

Although previous literature has primarily examined the relationship between internet-enabled action and future participation for the same cause, technology's potential to foster engagement across multiple social issues has also been considered (e.g., Walgrave et al., 2011). Online participation for one cause could affect future engagement with other issues for several reasons; collective action participation can increase political knowledge, influence efficacy perceptions and build a generalised activist identity (Kinder, 1998; Louis, Amiot, Thomas, & Blackwood, 2016). Accordingly, Bastos and Mercea (2016) identified a small number of prolific Twitter users who were highly engaged in multiple social issues, online as

well as offline. However, serial activists are believed to be atypical. Moreover scepticism exists about the potential of internet-enabled action to stimulate cross-issue engagement (e.g., Zuckerman, 2008). Rather than having a universal inhibition or facilitation effect, the effect of internet-enabled action on future engagement for other social issues may instead depend upon how participants perceive the efficacy of that online action (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2005), and on their prior experience with activism (e.g., Brunsting & Postmes, 2002).

Participative Efficacy

Efficacy beliefs are fundamental for a variety of human behaviour. In particular, beliefs about one's own ability to effect change are key for sustaining behaviour (Bandura, 1994). The importance of efficacy beliefs has been shown across several domains and behaviours (e.g. Condiotte & Lichtenstein, 1981; Devonport & Lane, 2006).

Similarly, efficacy evaluations are important for collective action (e.g., van Zomeren et al., 2008). Efficacy beliefs can refer to different objects, and of particular interest here is the perceived efficacy of a previous action. Van Zomeren et al. (2013) suggest that increased perceptions about the efficacy of collective action can both inhibit and facilitate future action, depending on whether or not these perceptions lead to the belief that one's own participation will matter. Specifically, greater participative efficacy beliefs – or the belief that the self can make a difference through one's own contribution – are key to facilitating participation. Accordingly, research examining offline engagement demonstrates that although prior participation can motivate future action by increasing feelings of subjective power, this process will only occur when initial participation is perceived as effective (Drury & Reicher, 1999; 2005).

The present study included a manipulation of the efficacy of an online action in order to test whether the effect of taking online action on action for other causes depends on the perceived efficacy of that prior action (H1). This is based on previous research that found that

prior participation can motivate future action by increasing feelings of subjective power, but only when initial participation is perceived as effective (Drury & Reicher, 1999; 2005). Specifically, for individuals who engage in social action online, perceiving that action as having high (vs. low) effectiveness should facilitate future engagement by generating greater participative efficacy beliefs. In contrast, when prior participation is perceived to be ineffective, these beliefs are likely to be undermined and higher-threshold engagement inhibited (see Bandura, 1994).

Nevertheless, as the findings of Schuman and Klein (2015) indicate, the feeling of 'having made a difference' is also implicated in the slacktivism effect. The moderating role of action efficacy is thus in turn likely to be contingent on another critical moderating factor that has not been considered in prior work on the slacktivism effect: namely, prior experience with online activism.

Prior Experience with Activism

Past behaviour is one of the strongest predictors of future behaviour (Ajzen, 2005). The frequency of past behaviour can predict the occurrence of future behaviour beyond well-founded antecedents such as behavioural evaluations and intentions (e.g., Ouellette & Wood, 1998; Sutton, 1994). For instance, quitting smoking is predicted by the smoker's history of past cessation attempts (Cummings, Hellmann, & Emont, 1988*)*.

Likewise, past history of activism is important for future mobilisation. In offline contexts, members of activist organisations tend to report greater levels of collective action participation (e.g., Brunsting & Postmes, 2002), likewise individuals who identify as activists report increased intentions to engage in future action (Hornsey et al., 2006). Furthermore, past activism experience can produce psychological change that mobilises future action, increasing perceptions about the self's ability to generate change (Drury & Reicher, 2005;

Drury et al., 2015) and contributing to a generalised activist identity that can motivate engagement in novel causes (Louis et al., 2016).

Although less research has examined whether prior activism experience affects the relationship between internet-enabled action and future engagement, studies examining how the internet affects civic and political participation have identified a key role for past behaviour. For example, although Xenos and Moy (2007) found that internet use facilitated offline political participation, this effect was enhanced in individuals who were already politically inclined. Likewise, Weber, Loumakis, and Bergman (2003) found that internet use only increased engagement in those who were already politically active.

In the present case, prior experience of online activism was predicted to moderate the interaction between taking online action, and efficacy beliefs. Specifically, the positive effects of perceiving one's own participation as effective are likely to be enhanced in those who have prior experience of online activism (e.g., Ajzen & Madden, 1986; Drury et al., 2015; Drury & Reicher, 2005). Thus, we expected online action – when perceived as effective – to facilitate future engagement in those who typically engage in internet-enabled action (H2) (Weber et al., 2003; Xenos & Moy, 2007).

Study 3

Study 3 aimed to test when and why taking internet-enabled action in relation to one issue will inhibit or facilitate future collective action for other social issues. The effect of online action was expected to depend on prior online activism experience and the in-situ appraisal of the effectiveness of taking internet-enabled action. We tested these predictions in the context of a social media campaign to end domestic violence against migrant women. Internet-enabled action was varied quasi-experimentally, in that participants chose whether or not to share the campaign on social media. They were then informed that sharing on social media has a big (high action efficacy) or small (low action efficacy) impact on achieving the campaign's goal. Prior levels of internet-enabled activism were measured before the experiment, and future collective action for other social issues was measured one week after the experiment.

Method

Design. The study employed a 2(action efficacy feedback: low vs. high) X 2(internet-enabled action: no action taken vs. action taken) X prior levels of online activism (continuous) between-participants quasi-experimental design. Data were collected in three phases: a screening questionnaire, a lab session, and a follow-up questionnaire one week after the lab session. All questionnaires were completed using online survey software.

Participants. A total of 147 participants were recruited via the host University's online participant recruitment system. One participant was excluded from analysis for not being a social media user, and three participants were excluded for indicating levels of typical online activism greater than four standard deviations above the mean. This left a final sample of 143 participants (28 male) whose ages ranged from 18 to 37 years (M = 19.94, SD = 2.84).

Payment for the study was either £5 or partial fulfilment of undergraduate course requirements.

Regarding sample size and power, the average effect size of taking online action found by Schuman and Klein (2015) was $\eta^2 = .07$. Power analysis using g*power for the present design indicated that a sample of 107 would be sufficient to find an effect of this size ($f = 0.27$) with 80% power (alpha = .05). The sample of the current study was sufficient to detect an effect size of $f = .236$ ($\eta^2 = .053$) with 80% power.

Procedure and Materials.

Cover story. A cover story was employed to reduce demand characteristics. Participants were advised that the study was being run in conjunction with the "STOP! Campaign" – a fictional campaign aiming to end domestic violence against migrant women – for two aims: to investigate psychophysiological responses to novel websites, and to provide feedback to improve the campaign's website. In an adaptation of the bogus pipeline technique (Jones & Sigall, 1971; Roese & Jamieson, 1993), an eye-tracking device and BIOPAC Systems respiratory effort transducer were utilised. We advised participants that we would record their psychophysiological data while they interacted with the website, and match this to their self-report responses. However, the measuring equipment was not active and its purpose was simply to encourage honest responses. When questioned, no participant reported suspicion about the cover story's validity.

Screening questionnaire. Inclusion criteria were tested prior to the lab session, and included that participants needed to be a user of at least one of the social media platforms employed in the study (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr).

Laboratory session. Participants were tested individually in our laboratory. Participants were randomly allocated to either a high or low action efficacy feedback

condition. After reading an information sheet that delivered the cover story, participants completed the pre-manipulation measures.

*Pre-manipulation measures: Typical online activism***.** Participants were asked to indicate how many minutes in a typical week they spend on campaign websites, and on using social media for campaign-related activity. Responses to both items were summed to form a scale (final sample: Min = 0, Max = 45; *M* = 5.58, *SD* = 7.90; before participant exclusion: Min = 0, Max = 100; *M* = 6.97, *SD* = 12.71).

*Experimental procedure and manipulations***.** Following the pre-manipulation measures, our bogus pipeline procedure was implemented. The psychophysiological equipment was attached to participants and configured. Participants were advised that they would be interacting with a website belonging to the STOP! Campaign. They were instructed to interact with the website naturally, as if they came across it in real life, and once finished to select a 'continue' button. The website included information about the campaign and a genuine opportunity to participate in internet-enabled action by sharing an article about the issue on their own social media page. Whether or not participants shared the article was the basis of the quasi-experimental internet-enabled action variable (shared = action taken; not shared = action not taken).

Participants received the efficacy manipulation after sharing the article on social media (high efficacy *n* = 17, low efficacy *n* = 19) or selecting the continue button without sharing the article (high efficacy *n* = 52, low efficacy *n* = 55). An on-screen message stated that supporting the campaign on social media would have a large (high efficacy) or small (low efficacy) impact on achieving the campaign's goal. The message contained an opportunity to engage in further action for this specific issue (signing a petition, signing-up to attend a demonstration, signing-up to write to an MP). Participants who took one or more of these actions were recorded as engaging in further collective action for the same cause

(scored as 0 = no further action taken; 1 = further action taken). Following this, when participants selected the continue button, post-manipulation measures were taken.

Post-manipulation measures: Participative efficacy. Participants were asked to indicate, on a seven-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree), the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with two items adapted from van Zomeren et al. (2013): "I believe that my contribution will help the group to end violence towards migrant women" and "I believe that my individual effort will help the group to end violence towards migrant women". Responses to each item were averaged to form a scale ($r(141) = .53$, $p < .001$) with higher scores indicating greater levels of participative efficacy ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.30$).

Follow-up questionnaire of longer-term, cross-domain engagement. One week after the lab session participants were emailed a link to the follow-up questionnaire, in which participants were asked to indicate on a binary scale (yes = 1, no = 0) how many of a list of 20 online (e.g., "signed an online petition") and 13 offline (e.g., "attended a demonstration") collective actions they had engaged in for any cause in the previous week, after the lab session. Responses to each list were averaged to form two scales: one for online (Min = .00, Max = .70; $M = .08$, $SD = .11$) and one for offline (Min = .00, Max = .42; $M = .05$, $SD = .07$) collective actions. A composite scale was also computed by averaging responses to all items (Min = .00, Max = .52; $M = .07$, $SD = .08$). Condition means were used to compute scores for 10 participants who failed to complete the follow-up questionnaire. This was our key dependent variable.[22]

Results

Preliminary analysis.

[22] A complete list of all the variables assessed (which were not relevant to the present hypotheses) can be found in Appendix K.

Randomisation check. Randomisation checks revealed no significant differences between conditions in terms of age or gender, all *B*s < 1.30, *F*s < 2.19, *p*s > .096, η_p^2s < .03. A 2(action efficacy feedback: low, high) X 2(internet-enabled action: taken, not taken) X typical online activism (continuous, mean centred) binary logistic regression indicated that non-completion of the follow-up questionnaire (0 = not completed, 1 = completed) was evenly distributed across conditions. All main and interaction effects were non-significant, all *B*s < 0.74, *p*s > .274. Likewise, binary logistic regression revealed no relationship between typical online activism and self-selection into the internet-enabled action condition, *B* = .04, *SE* = .02, *p* = .116, *Exp(B)* = 1.04, 95% CI Exp(B) [.991, 1.084].

Immediate, same domain action. To test whether participating in internet-enabled action (0 = no action taken, 1 = action taken) affected engagement in immediate, same domain action (0 = same domain action not taken, 1 = same domain action taken), binomial logistic regression was performed. The effect of internet-enabled action was significant: consistent with the slacktivism hypothesis, individuals who shared the campaign on social media were less likely to engage in immediate, same-domain action than those who did not share the campaign online, *B* = -.90, *SE* = .40, *p* = .026, *Exp(B)* = .41, 95% CI Exp(B) [.184, .897].

Main analysis.

Longer-term, cross-domain action. To test whether the effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action depended on action efficacy and typical online activism, a 2(action efficacy feedback: low, high) X 2(internet-enabled action: no action taken, action taken) X 2(action type: online, offline) X typical online activism

(continuous, mean-centred)[23] mixed ANOVA was conducted, with action type as the repeated-measures factor. Although the repeated-measures factor was not directly relevant theoretically, distinguishing between online and offline action in the analysis tests whether the pattern of effects was the same or different between the two media. Specifically, any interactions involving the repeated-measures factor would indicate that the pattern of effects was different for online and offline action.

The main effect of action type was significant, $F(1, 135) = 9.79$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, indicating that participants performed more online actions ($M = .08$; $SD = .11$) than offline actions ($M = .06$; $SD = .07$). Typical online activism was reliably associated with longer-term, cross-domain collective action, $F(1, 135) = 24.24$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .15$. This was qualified by the three-way interaction between efficacy feedback, typical online activism and internet-enabled action, $F(1, 135) = 11.53$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$. The effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action thus depended on participants' typical levels of online activism and the action efficacy feedback they received. This interaction is illustrated in Figure 12 (top panel).

[23] To correct for positive skewness, analyses were re-run using Tukey's ladder of power (Tukey, 1977) transformed typical online activism measure (see Appendix L). Findings for tests of hypotheses did not change qualitatively.

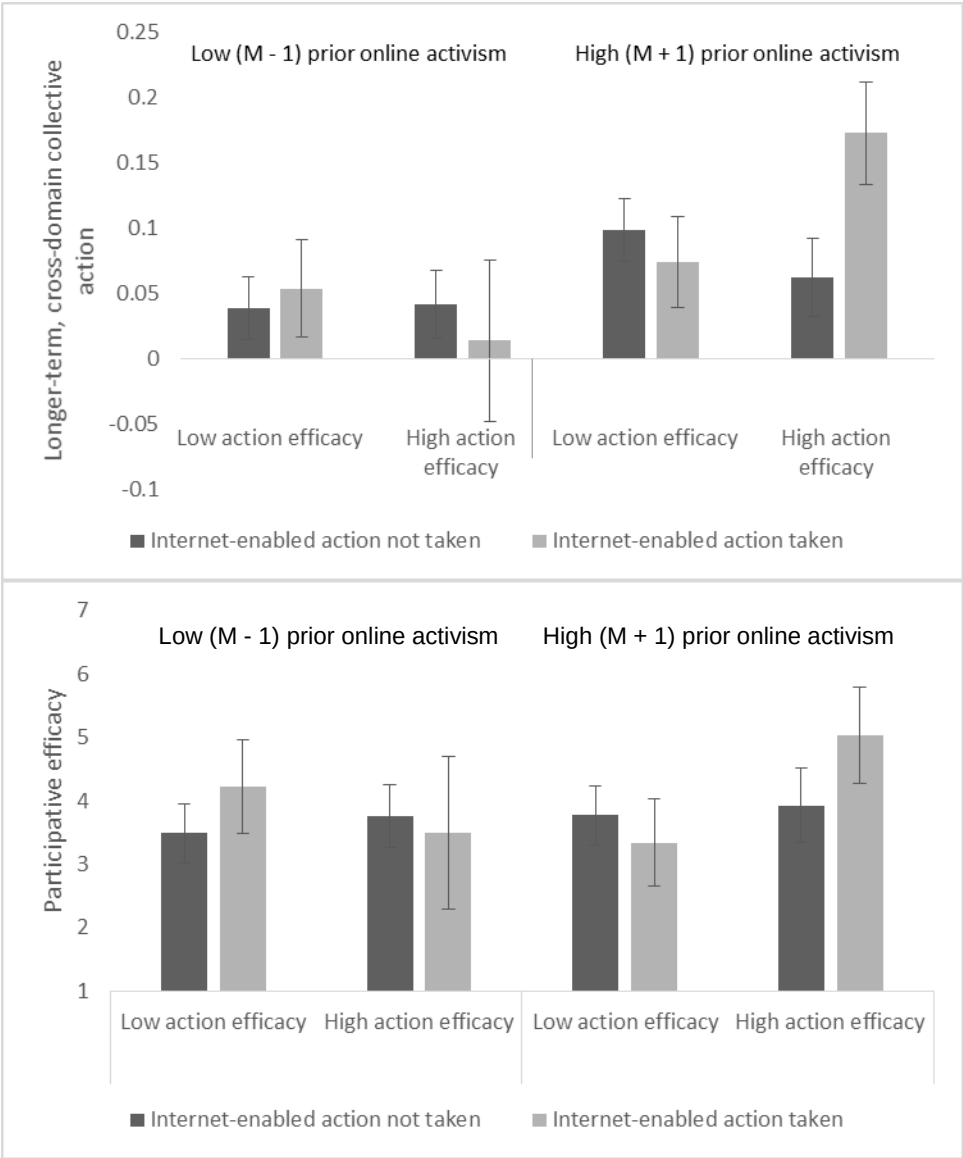

Figure 12. The effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain action (top panel) and participative efficacy (bottom panel) depends on typical online activism and action efficacy feedback. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Further analysis indicated that the two-way interaction between action efficacy feedback and internet-enabled action was significant for those with high (*M* + 1*SD*) levels of typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 16.69$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$, but non-significant for those with low (*M* – 1*SD*) levels of typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 1.17$, $p = .281$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. In turn, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was significant for individuals with mean and high (*M* + 1*SD*) levels of typical online activism in the high action efficacy

condition, $F(1, 135) = 4.43$, $p = .037$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$ and, $F(1, 135) = 19.49$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .13$ respectively. Specifically, taking internet-enabled action led to greater levels of longer-term, cross-domain action for participants with mean ($M = .05$, $SE = .01$ vs $M = .09$, $SE = .02$) and high ($M = .06$, $SE = .02$ vs $M = .17$, $SE = .02$) levels of typical online activism who also received high action efficacy feedback. In contrast, in the low action efficacy condition, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was non-significant for individuals with low (M - 1SD) mean and high (M + 1SD) levels of typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = .48$, $p = .487$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, $F(1, 135) = .07$, $p = .789$ $\eta_p^2 < .01$ and $F(1, 135) = 1.29$, $p = .257$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$ respectively.

Although all other main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 3.61, ps > .059, η_p^2s < .03 (see Table 9), the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was in the direction of the slacktivism hypothesis for those with low (M - 1SD) levels of typical online activism in the high action efficacy condition (see Figure 12 for illustration).

Source	*F*	*p*	η_p^2
Internet enabled action	1.99	.160	.02
Action efficacy feedback	.22	.641	<.01
Typical online activism	24.24	<.001	.15
Action type	9.79	.002	.07
Internet-enabled action* Action efficacy feedback	3.07	.082	.02
Internet-enabled action* Typical online activism	3.48	.064	.03
Internet-enabled action* Action type	1.07	.303	.01
Action efficacy feedback* Typical online activism	3.61	.059	.03
Action efficacy feedback* Action type	.05	.820	<.01
Typical online activism* Action type	1.88	.172	.01
Internet-enabled action* Action efficacy feedback* Typical online activism	11.53	<.001	.08
Internet-enabled action* Action efficacy feedback* Action type	.47	.496	<.01
Internet-enabled action* Typical online activism* Action type	.11	.741	<.01
Action efficacy feedback* Typical online activism* Action type	.54	.463	<.01
Internet-enabled action* Action efficacy feedback* Typical online activism* Action type	.07	.800	<.01

Table 9. Internet-enabled action X Action efficacy feedback X Typical online activism X Action type mixed Analysis of Variance for longer-term, cross domain action. In each case df = 1, 135.

***Participative efficacy*.** To examine the processes that underlie the conditional effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action, a 2(action efficacy feedback: low, high) X 2(internet-enabled action: no action taken, action taken) X typical online activism (continuous, mean centred) between-participants ANOVA was performed on the participative efficacy scale.

Although the main effect of action efficacy was non-significant, $F(1, 135) = 1.91$, $p = .169$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, the 2-way interaction between action efficacy feedback and typical online

activism, $F(1, 135) = 5.04$, $p = .026$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, and the 3-way interaction, $F(1, 135) = 6.10$, $p = .015$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, were both significant. All other main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 1.23, ps > .250, η_p^2s < .01. The effect of internet-enabled action on participative efficacy thus depended on participants' typical levels of online activism and the action efficacy feedback they received. This interaction is illustrated in Figure 12 (bottom panel).

Further analysis indicated that the two-way interaction between action efficacy feedback and internet-enabled action was significant for participants with high (M + 1SD) levels of typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 5.66$, $p = .019$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, but not for participants with low (M - 1SD) levels of typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 1.61$, $p = .206$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. In turn, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was significant in the high efficacy condition for people with high (M + 1SD) levels of typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 5.07$, $p = .026$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Specifically, taking internet-enabled action ($M = 5.03$, $SE = .38$) compared to not taking internet-enabled action ($M = 3.94$, $SE = .30$) led to greater perceptions of participative efficacy. In contrast, in the low efficacy condition, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was non-significant for people with high levels of typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 1.07$, $p = .303$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Reframing these analyses in terms of the simple main effect of action efficacy feedback, this was significant for participants with high levels of typical online activism when they took internet-enabled action $F(1, 135) = 10.67$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. Specifically, when participants with high levels of typical online activism took internet-enabled action, receiving high ($M = 5.03$, $SE = .38$) compared to low ($M = 3.39$, $SE = .35$) action efficacy feedback led to greater perceptions of participative efficacy.

Moderated mediation analysis. To test whether participative efficacy mediated the conditional effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action, moderated mediation analyses were performed using Model 11 of PROCESS (Hayes, 2013).

Specifically, this model tested whether taking internet-enabled action affects participative efficacy, which in turn predicts further action, with the internet-enabled action – participative efficacy path moderated by action efficacy and typical online activism; this model reflects the three-way interaction reported earlier. Bootstrap analysis — including the participative efficacy scale as the mediator — indicated a significant positive indirect effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action for individuals with high levels of typical online activism in the high efficacy feedback condition, through greater feelings of participative efficacy: 95% CI [0.0020, 0.0438], indirect effect: 0.02, *SE* = .01, 10,000 bias-corrected bootstraps. The indirect effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action was non-significant under all other combinations of the moderators. The direct effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action was also positive and significant 95% CI [0.0009, 0.0580], direct effect: 0.03, *SE* = .01, 10,000 bias-corrected bootstraps; specifically, engaging in internet-enabled action facilitated longer-term, cross-domain action. The model is illustrated in Figure 13.

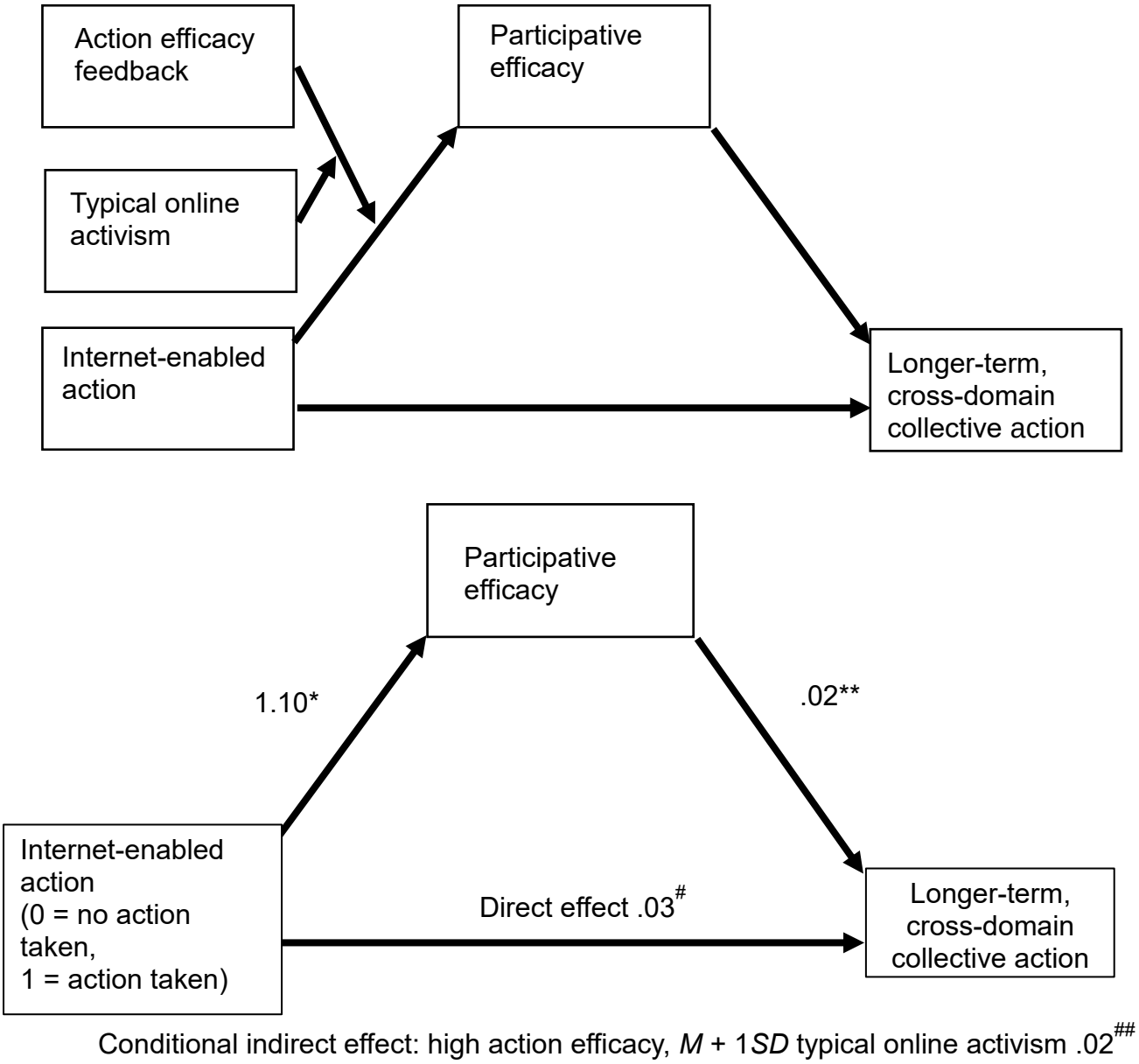

Figure 13. The effect of internet-enabled action on Longer-term, cross domain collective action through participative efficacy beliefs. Theoretical moderated mediation model (top panel) and path coefficients for participants with high (M +1 SD) levels of typical online activism in the high action efficacy feedback condition (bottom panel). All path coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. #95% CI [.0009, .0580], ## 95% CI [.0015, .0434], * 95% CI [.1333, 2 .0658], ** 95% CI [.0320, .2896].

Discussion

The relationship between internet-enabled action and future engagement has been widely debated in popular culture. Echoing this concern, recent research has considered whether participating in internet-enabled action facilitates or inhibits engagement in traditional and more demanding forms of collective action (e.g., Vaccari et al., 2015). However, limited research has tested the causal effects of online participation (for an exception see Schumann & Klein, 2015) or how online participation for one cause affects engagement across different social issues. In this study, we examined how internet-enabled action affects future action for other causes, extending previous literature by manipulating action efficacy perceptions and measuring subsequent collective action relating to different social issues. Findings indicate that participating in internet-enabled collective action can indeed affect longer-term, cross-domain collective action. However, rather than a universal facilitation or inhibition effect, the relationship between internet-enabled action and higher-threshold engagement is sensitive to prior activism experience and perceptions about the efficacy of the action taken.

Replicating previous literature (Schumann & Klein, 2015), we found that participating in internet-enabled action reduced willingness to engage in higher-threshold action for the same cause. This finding is consistent with the slacktivism hypothesis that suggests a demobilising role for online participation (e.g., Morozov, 2011). However, our results also extend this literature by demonstrating that internet-enabled action can in fact *facilitate* future collective action under specific conditions. In the longer-term, when participants had the opportunity to engage in action for other causes outside of the experimental setting, no detrimental effect of online participation occurred. On the contrary, taking internet-enabled action actually predicted *greater* levels of longer-term, cross-domain collective action when participation led to greater participative efficacy beliefs.

This study makes a significant contribution to the debate over the effect of internet-enabled action on subsequent collective action. Our findings demonstrate more specifically the conditions under which internet-enabled action can facilitate future action. For individuals who typically engage in internet-enabled action, taking an online action – when perceived as effective – mobilises future engagement for other causes. This result is consistent with previous literature observing a mobilising role for internet-enabled action (e.g., Choi & Park, 2014; Kende et al., 2016; Vaccari et al., 2015), and includes future collective action in both online and offline contexts. The present study also provides evidence for the psychological mechanisms behind this facilitation effect. Consistent with work examining enduring empowerment and participative efficacy in offline contexts (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2005; van Zomeren et al., 2012) we found that greater participative efficacy beliefs partially mediated the relationship between taking online action and longer-term, cross-domain collective action. Although not statistically significant, our findings also contained patterns consistent with an inhibitory effect for internet-enabled action on cross-domain engagement for individuals with low levels of typical online activism. This pattern indicates that, under certain circumstances, there may be a potential for the slacktivism effect to persist into social action in other domains. Taken together, these findings suggest that internet-enabled collective action for one cause can affect future action for other social issues; however, when it leads to greater beliefs about the benefits of one's own participation, online action can perform an important facilitation role.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

Key strengths of the present study relative to previous work are that it (1) employed realistic self-selection of whether to take internet-enabled action rather than enforced participation; (2) directly manipulated the key situation-specific appraisal of action efficacy; and (3) employed a two time-point design to assess actual collective action taken in relation

to a range of social issues outside of the experimental setting. Nevertheless, some limitations must also be borne in mind. For one thing, self-selecting to partake in internet-enabled action meant that this was a quasi- rather than true manipulation, notwithstanding the increased realism and external validity that this provides.

The findings are also limited because there was no manipulation check for the action efficacy manipulation. This means that we cannot be sure that the participants who received the high action efficacy manipulation perceived higher levels of action efficacy than those in the low action efficacy condition. Moreover, we do not know whether the action efficacy manipulation was perceived differently depending on whether or not individuals engaged in internet-enabled action. In sum, we were unable to evaluate whether or not the efficacy manipulation was successful and equivalent across conditions.

More generally, future research is needed to examine when and how online participation for one social issue leads to sustained engagement for other causes. While the present study examined overall levels of cross-domain action, it did not test whether this action was part of a sustained commitment to the cause or a singular act. Online participation for one cause does not always lead to sustained engagement across multiple issues (Bastos & Mercea, 2016; Mercea & Bastos, 2016). Internet-enabled action that builds a generalised activist identity may be particularly beneficial for sustaining engagement with multiple social issues (Louis et al., 2016).

A further area for further research is the effect of internet-enabled participation on non-normative collective action. The present study focused on moderate, normative action. However, internet-enabled action may also influence radical participation (e.g., Stuart, 2017). Prior online participation that is perceived as ineffective may play a role in promoting future action that is non-normative, particularly when feelings of contempt are increased and

reconciliatory intentions reduced (Becker & Tausch, 2015; Saab, Spears, Tausch, & Sasse, 2016).

Although recent thought has been sceptical about the ability of the internet to mobilise collective action, our work emphasises the potential role of lower-threshold actions for providing meaningful activism experience and a basis for participative efficacy beliefs. However, we also highlight that technologically-deterministic perspectives, which presume – either with optimism or pessimism – that technology directs society (Fuchs, 2014), are oversimplifications that ignore the social psychological economy of events. Although online participation may create feelings of satisfaction, inhibiting further engagement for the immediate cause (see Schumann & Klein, 2015), it may also provide an opportunity to build experience and participative efficacy perceptions that stimulate participation in other domains.

Regarding the effect of digital technology on collective action more generally, Study 3 extended the conclusions of the previous chapters by suggesting that online participation can develop self-evaluations that support future engagement. While the findings of Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate how the affordances of digital technology can interact with pre-existing social identities and feelings of social identification to affect collective action, the findings in Chapter 4 indicate that the use of digital technology for collective action can work to develop key psychological antecedents that promote further participation. Taken together, these findings highlight the dynamic relationship between digital technology and the social psychological concerns of technology users that affect mobilisation. In regards to our more general question of how digital technology functions to advance social change, the findings of the present chapter indicate that lower-threshold modes of participation – as an affordance of social media – can build beliefs about the self that act as a bridge between different social issues, thereby facilitating future mobilisation for other causes. In this way, Chapter 4 extends

the conclusions of the previous empirical chapters; whereas the findings of Chapters 2 and 3 indicated that the affordances of social media can affect perceptions of contextually relevant others to provide a psychological bridge between different identity groups to facilitate change, the present findings indicate that social media can affect how the self is perceived to provide a connection or bridge between disparate issues and causes.

Nevertheless, although the present chapter broadened the focus of the thesis by examining the consequences of internet-enabled participation, like Chapters 2 and 3 it still focused on mobilisation processes. Moreover, being experimental in nature, the previous empirical chapters take key psychological constructs – such as social identity – for granted, rather than investigating how these are constituted through action. As Hopkins and Reicher (1997) point out, in addition to examining the objective conditions that elicit antecedents of action, such as feelings of efficacy or identification, we must also consider the processes through which issues and identities themselves are created and made to be relevant. In order to address these limitations, in Chapter 5 we examined internet-enabled action for a real cause in the real world; specifically we considered how the collective action-based functions of Tweets are achieved via identity work. The benefit over our experimental work is that social identity is not taken for granted, rather in Chapter 5 we examined how people work to make social identity integral to the actualisation of social change aims.

CHAPTER 5

POLITICAL RHETORIC ON SOCIAL MEDIA: THE STRATEGIC CHARACTERISATION OF SELF AND OTHER CATEGORIES FOR THE DIRECTION OF BLACK LIVES MATTER

When examining the relationship between collective action and social media, the previous chapters in this thesis have taken social categories – such as ingroup identity and legitimate targets for action – for granted. However, these representations are neither automatic nor uncontested; rather, they are socially constructed (e.g., Klandermans, 1992). This means that activists, mobilising agents and political leaders must actively work to make them important. For example, they must *create* a sense of 'we-ness' and make this identity *matter*. In our final piece of empirical work, we aimed to extend the thesis by examining how social media is used to define social identity within an ongoing and contested social movement, and how these definitions are used strategically to shape social change. More specifically, we examined how Twitter was used to mobilise collective action and challenge social relations of domination and subordination during a phase of the Black Lives Matter social movement.

Political Rhetoric

Language and communication are key for advancing social change. In particular, persuasive arguments are fundamental for leadership and influencing others to act in a way

that furthers a social movement's aims (e.g., Klandermans, 1984). For example, individuals must be convinced of the benefits of participating in collective action, effective modes of participation, and legitimate targets for action. Existing literature suggests that rhetoric, or "the practical art of effective communication" (Condor, Tileaga, & Billig, 2013, p. 4), is essential for achieving such aims (e.g., Hopkins & Reicher, 1997).

Political rhetoric, as a topic, is concerned with the strategies that are used to build persuasive arguments during debates and disputes (Condor et al., 2013). Rather than considering language as an expression of intrinsic psychological processes, it approaches communication as strategic action; a rhetorical approach to language examines both the function and structure of a persuasive argument, and rhetoric as a means to gain an understanding of human mentality (Condor et al., 2013). For example, regarding our sense of self, rather than considering it purely a product of individual cognitions, a rhetorical approach argues that identity is actively constructed and contested through discourse and rhetoric (Billig, 1985, 1996; Edwards, 1991). A key aspect of rhetorical analysis is that any given assertion has force because it exists in contrast to (and rules out) alternative characterisations, which are often implicit within the communication (Billig, 1996).

The rhetorical approach has been used to understand spoken and written language in a variety of contexts. Here we were particularly interested in the rhetoric of protest movements. Within social movement literature, it has long been recognised that it is not sufficient to examine only the objective conditions that lead to mobilisation and social change. Rather, in order to understand the direction and nature of social movements, researchers must examine the communicative processes through which movement issues and actions come to be defined as such (e.g., Benford & Snow, 2000; Hopkins & Reicher, 1997). Communication shapes social reality (e.g., Billig, 1985, 1996; Edwards, 1991). For example, communication about a

social issue can create group memberships and norms for action, which underpin mobilisation and social change (e.g., Smith et al., 2015). Accordingly, existing literature demonstrates that political leaders and activists use rhetoric strategically during social movements to construct issues, conflicting parties and audiences in ways that benefit movement aims (e.g., Hopkins & Reicher, 1997; Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 2001).

Regarding the specific content of political rhetoric, research within the social identity approach (SIA) has identified a key role for social category construction in the mobilisation and direction of collective action (e.g., Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 2001). Hopkins and Reicher (1997) suggest that social category construction can influence behaviour in two ways. Firstly, the content of a social category – its norms and values – will direct the behaviour of individuals who self-categorise and identify with that category. The SIA suggests that we know how to act by first knowing who we are; thus when an individual identifies with a category, and their category membership is salient, they will behave in accordance with the content of that category (e.g., Abrams et al., 1990). Secondly, leaders who are perceived to be prototypical ingroup category members will more influential – and able to define a category's content – than those who are not seen to be part of the ingroup. As a consequence, constructing oneself as a prototypical ingroup member facilitates influence. Applied to social movements, Hopkins and Reicher (1997) suggest that mobilisation and social change depend on individuals adopting self-categorisations whose contents uphold and promote movement aims. In this way, when political leaders use rhetoric for social category construction of the self and other, they gain influence over the social movement and are able to advance its aims.

Existing literature examining political rhetoric has considered how social movement actors construct themselves, their audience and the issue at hand in order to advance the

movement's aims and discredit movement opposition. For example, Reicher and Hopkins (1996a) examined how rhetoric was used in a speech arguing against abortion to a medical audience. They found that category definitions of the self and other were integral to the speaker's arguments. The speaker defined himself as a member of a common ingroup category with his audience, and defined the whole category as standing against abortion and argued that abortion was in opposition to the audience's medical identity. Similarly, although not examining a social movement *per se*, Reicher and Hopkins' (1996b) analyses of Thatcher's and Kinnock's leadership speeches during the British miners' strike revealed a fundamental role for category constructions in attempts to mobilise electoral action. While Thatcher defined the strike as terrorist action, the British as anti-strike, and working miners as defending themselves against union executives, Kinnock defined the issue as "Thatcherism against society" (p. 369), British people as pro-strike, and striking miners as defending themselves against Thatcherism. In sum, both leaders defined the strikes in a way that was compatible with their own political party, and used this representation to define their own party as consonant (and the opposing party as incompatible) with the British electorate. Although examining different contexts, both of these papers indicate that how a self-category is defined (its inclusiveness, content and who is a prototypical member) affects the reach and direction of collective action, as well as who is able to direct that action (Reicher & Hopkins, 1996b).

Advantaged Groups and Social Change

An important component of successful collective action campaigns is the ability of disadvantaged groups to be able to harness the support of members of the privileged group

itself. This is often referred to as 'ally activism'.[24] Ally activism is collective action that is engaged in on behalf of, or in conjunction with, a disadvantaged group, with the aim of advancing social change (e.g., Montgomery & Stewart, 2012). An example, is the case of heterosexual individuals participating in collective action to support same-sex couples' access to marriage (e.g., Russell, 2011). Allies are often members of advantaged groups, these are groups who have relatively higher power, status, and/or other resources compared to the disadvantaged group (e.g., Droogendyk et al., 2016). Social media is often perceived to be beneficial for the mobilisation of advantaged group allies (e.g., Thomas et al., 2015). The United Nations HeForShe campaign, and the viral #BringBackOurGirls hashtag are two examples of how social media can be used to promote activism in advantaged groups. Nevertheless, although social media is increasingly used to encourage advantaged groups to engage in collective action, the participation of advantaged group allies can have positive and negative effects on social change.

Considering first the positive effects of ally activism, there are a number of different ways that advantaged group participation can advance social change. For one thing, advantaged groups have increased privilege, resources and power that can be used strategically by social movements; for example, to disseminate movement demands, or place pressure on authorities to enact change (Mizock & Page, 2016). Ally activism can also change the way that advantaged group participants perceive themselves and their own group membership. For example, active participation in social movements can increase power

[24] Although different types of third-party groups can engage in collective action, here we were particularly interested in the participation of advantaged group members. This is because, as those who benefit from group-based inequality, they occupy a unique location when deciding whether to adopt a position as a movement ally or opponent. Specifically, the success of collective action will undermine their own group's position. As our previous empirical chapters were primarily concerned with social category membership, in Study 4 we wanted to examine the meaning of those categories form the group members themselves (i.e., psychological group membership). This is because the meaning of social identities has an important influence on behaviour.

sensitivity and privilege awareness, this can lead to more egalitarian interpersonal relations with disadvantaged group members (Mizock & Page, 2016). Furthermore, a number of models suggest that social change occurs precisely because advantaged groups choose to side with the disadvantaged group, thereby transforming relations between the disadvantaged group and society at large (Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subašić et al., 2008). Because of this, the participation of advantaged group allies is often perceived to be integral to social change.

At the same time, concerns have been raised about advantaged group members exhibiting behaviour that is detrimental for social change. For example, Louis (2009) describes how collective action can cause a backlash from advantaged group members; it can provide normative messages about the prevalence of discrimination and increase advantaged-group identification with the authority group. Likewise, a growing body of literature suggests that intergroup contact can also inhibit disadvantaged-group mobilisation; specifically, it can reduce the salience of intergroup inequalities and disadvantaged group members' subordinate ingroup identification (e.g., Cakal et al., 2011; Greenaway et al., 2011; Saguy et al., 2009). Moreover, while participating in social movements, advantaged group members can also engage in behaviour that reinforces status inequalities, such as dominating the movement, engaging in strategic helping to boost their own reputation, and failing to acknowledge their own group's role in maintaining inequality (Droogendyk et al., 2016). Thus, while advantaged-group mobilisation can be fundamental for the achievement of movement aims, everyday interactions between advantaged and disadvantaged group members can undermine social change, by reproducing power asymmetries and the subordination of disadvantaged groups.

Rhetoric on Social Media

While there is substantial interest in the effects of advantaged groups on social change, limited research has considered whether and how disadvantaged group activists balance these competing concerns on social media. This is despite the fact that online spaces can be a key place for interactions between advantaged and disadvantaged groups during social movements (e.g., Raynauld, Richez, & Boudreau Morris, 2017). In particular, to our knowledge, research is yet to examine how political rhetoric is used on social media by activists to: (1) promote collective action in advantaged group members, and (2) prevent advantaged group domination, dilution of their message, or more generally the movement going off track. Previous literature has primarily examined internet-enabled action in regards to its instrumental efficacy for mobilising higher-threshold modes of engagement (e.g., Schumann & Klein, 2015), or building psychological antecedents of mobilisation (e.g., Chan, 2016). Limited research has considered the rhetorical functions of internet-enabled action and how these advance or undermine social change. In particular, we know little about how disadvantaged groups use internet-enabled action for the strategic management of social movements in view of the tension between advantaged group support and domination. Nevertheless, there are some relevant findings that should be acknowledged.

Research examining rhetoric in offline contexts indicates that rhetoric can be used to define the relationship between advantaged and disadvantaged groups, and mobilise advantaged group support. For example, Reicher and colleagues (2006) examined the arguments that were used to mobilise the Bulgarians against the deportation of Jewish people during WWII. They found that by defining Jewish people as part of a common ingroup with Bulgarians, depicting help as integral to Bulgarian identity, and arguing that harm would come to Bulgarians if Jewish people were harmed, mobilisation became essential for the

Bulgarian advantaged group. Thus, definitions of inclusive categories, category norms for action, and advantaged-group category interests, are thought to be integral to advantaged-group mobilisation. Nevertheless, to our knowledge, research is yet to directly examine whether and how rhetoric can be used to manage advantaged group members' impact on social movements.

Turning to examine internet-enabled modes of participation, there is evidence to suggest that activists can use inclusive category constructions online to build support for the movement among the broader public. Batel and Castro (2015) examined an ongoing protest by local residents to prevent the transformation of a local convent. Analysing conversations between protestors and third party group members in an online forum, they found that the arguments used by protestors changed over time to include the broader goals of non-local citizen groups. By using global goals and inclusive identities, activists were able to gain the support of third-party group members, which could be leveraged against the authority to advance the movement's instrumental aim. Although this research did not explicitly examine political rhetoric, consistent with analyses of rhetoric in offline settings (e.g., Reicher et al., 2006) it indicates that inclusive goals and identities can be used strategically to mobilise third parties to support collective action.

There is also work of relevance that examines the use of rhetoric online to obtain influence in the face of a hostile countermovement. A countermovement is a social movement that is actively opposed to another social movement; for example in the case of movements that are for and against same-sex marriage. Bliuc and colleagues' (2012) research demonstrates how rhetoric can be used online by movements and counter movements in an attempt to claim dominant status in society. Examining responses made in an online forum to the 2005 Cronulla riots in Australia, they found that opponents and supporters of the riots

attempted to gain influence and legitimacy for their groups by using arguments that aligned their own opinion-based identity with positively-valued ethnic and national categories. Although this research examined conflict between opinion-based groups, where there are no objective power or status asymmetries, digital platforms may also be an important site of contestation for disadvantaged groups to play out debates, power struggles and conflicts.

In our final study, we considered how disadvantaged group members manage competing concerns within an ongoing and contested social movement. More specifically, we explored how they balance more instrumental goals, such as growing the movement beyond the disadvantaged group, with the need to maintain disadvantaged-group control of the movement; we also examined how social media is employed to satisfy these disparate aims. Operationalised in the context of the ongoing Black Lives Matter social movement and drawing on existing literature that examines political rhetoric in offline settings, we examined conversations on the Twitter social media platform that used the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag[25]. Analysing rhetoric used within this public forum, we considered the bases on which activists sought to mobilise social movement participation in disadvantaged group members and (potential) advantaged group allies. We also considered how they argued for disadvantaged group control in a context of power asymmetries, as well as the bases on which they opposed ideologies and behaviours that were problematic for desired movement outcomes.

Black Lives Matter as Context

'Black Lives Matter' is broadly recognised as a social movement (e.g., Langford & Speight, 2015). According to the Black Lives Matter website, it began as a member-led,

[25] A hashtag is a function of the Twitter social media platform that categorises the Tweet by that keyword

chapter-based organisation; it aims to “build local power and to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes” (About, para 1; blacklivesmatter.com). It is self-described as a Black-centred project. The movement began with the use of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag in July 2013 on social media (Freelon, McIlwain, & Ckark, 2016a). The hashtag was created by three Black women activists in America: Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi. They created the hashtag after George Zimmerman was acquitted for murdering Trayvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year old Black boy. Sometime after August 2014, Black Lives Matter was introduced as a chapter-based organisation by Garza, Cullors, Tometi and others (Freelon et al., 2016a). Although Black Lives Matter began in America, there have been movement protests across the globe (e.g., Winsor, 2016).

The phrase ‘Black Lives Matter’ can refer to a number of different objects that, although overlapping, are not synonymous. Following Freelon and his colleagues (2016a), in the present chapter we have used ‘Black Lives Matter’ to refer to the official organisation; ‘#BlackLivesMatter’ to refer to the hashtag, which is used both by those who are and are not members of the organisation; and ‘BLM’ to refer to the overall movement, which is all organisations, individuals, protests etc. who seek to raise awareness about and end anti-Black violence.

Anderson and Hitlin (2016) and Freelon et al. (2016a) have provided detailed timelines of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag in relation to key events during the movement, we have summarised notable aspects of these timelines in the following paragraph to provide contextual information for our study. From its creation in July 2013, #BlackLivesMatter was slow to gain widespread use. During the latter half of 2013 it was used 5,106 times on Twitter (Anderson & Hitlin, 2016). The hashtag grew rapidly in popularity from June 2014, where it

was only used in 48 public Tweets, to August 2014 where it was used in 52,288 Tweets; this dramatic increase has been linked to its frequent use in connection with the Ferguson protests, which occurred as a response to the fatal shooting of Mike Brown (who was a Black teenager) by the police (Freelon et al., 2016a). Although the hashtag has been in continuous use since late 2014, its use peaked around specific events, including: 4th December 2014, the day after a New York grand jury decision to not indict police officers responsible for the death of Mike Brown, when it was used 189,210 times; on 13th October 2015 when Senator Bernie Sanders defended BLM, it was used 127,000 times; and 9th August 2015 on the anniversary of Mike Brown's death, when it was used 120,067 times. In total, between July 2013 and March 2016, the hashtag was used almost 11.8 million times (Anderson & Hitlin, 2016). On Twitter's 10-year anniversary in March 2016, it was named as the third most used social-issue hashtag in the platform's history (Sichynsky, 2016). Thus, #BlackLivesMatter is a prominent and important social change hashtag.

Nevertheless, BLM has attracted negative attention, criticism, and resistance from members of the public and those in authority alike (e.g., Matthews & Cyril, 2017). In particular, a number of counter-hashtags appeared on social media that were used in arguments against BLM. Three of the most prominent counter-hashtags are #BlueLivesMatter, #WhiteLivesMatter, and #AllLivesMatter. In their analysis of these hashtags as countermovements, Langford and Speight (2015) highlight how each hashtag attempts to retain White dominance by diverting attention from anti-Black violence. They argue that by promoting institutionalised force, claiming reverse racism, and denying the importance of race, the counter-hashtags function rhetorically to reject the claims of the movement, suggest that it is endangering police officers, and characterise BLM as illegitimate and racist. Thus, BLM is also a contested social movement.

While the insidious nature of certain counter-hashtags – such as #WhiteLivesMatter – is widely recognised (e.g., Jenkins, 2017), ‘all lives matter’ as a phrase and hashtag has received considerable use and defence, including from individuals who claimed to uphold the value of Black lives (e.g., Victor, 2016). Rather than openly defend anti-Black violence, proponents of the #AllLivesMatter hashtag argue that equal attention should be given to all lives, asserting a ‘colourblind’ stance on race relations (Langford & Speight, 2015). While the #AllLivesMatter hashtag was frequently used to defend groups who were criticised by BLM, and also to criticise BLM itself (Anderson & Hitlin, 2016), there is also evidence to suggest that it was, at times, used by those who wanted to show solidarity with BLM (e.g., Carney, 2016; Gallagher, Reagan, Danforth, & Dodds, 2016). Thus, whether the use of the hashtag represents an intentional act of prejudice or an innocent misunderstanding has been debated (see Langford & Speight, 2015). Nevertheless, the individuals who promote these hashtags are typically perceived to be white people in popular media (e.g., Craven, 2014; Damiani, 2016; Halstead, 2017), with some evidence to support this idea (Carney, 2016). Moreover, the use of such hashtags is said to represent a power struggle between #BlackLivesMatter and counter-hashtag advocates; the power struggle is an attempt to control the narrative about the deaths of Black people at the hands of police and the judicial system’s response to these events (Carney, 2016). Popular media indicates that these power struggles were ultimately played out during offline collective action, where ‘rules for white people’ were created for protests to prevent the marginalisation of Black voices (de Graaf, 2014).

A growing body of research has examined BLM. This includes participation in the movement over time (De Choudhury, Jhaver, Sugar, & Weber, 2016), how different hashtags were used to talk about race (Carney, 2016), and an identification of who had power on social media to command attention over movement issues (Freelon, McIlwain, & Clark, 2016b).

However, previous research has tended to focus on the period after the death of Mike Brown, when movement issues had gained widespread prominence. Limited research has engaged in a detailed consideration of the period prior to Mike Brown's death. This early timeframe provides a fertile opportunity to examine strategies to grow the movement, and maintain disadvantaged group control, in the absence of toxic alternatives – such as #AllLivesMatter – that activists need to struggle against.

Aims and Strategy of the Present Research

In the present chapter, our overarching aim was to examine how social media is used to balance a social movement's instrumental aims, such as promoting collective action and growing the movement beyond disadvantaged group members, with the need to maintain disadvantaged group control over the movement (including the prevention of advantaged group domination, dilution or diversion of their message). Specifically, we examined how Tweets including #BlackLivesMatter were used for the strategic management of the scope and content (e.g., aims, ideology) of BLM in view of the aforementioned contestation. Following earlier research examining social identity and political rhetoric we aimed to analyse the different ways in which the movement is defined, in terms of its scope and agenda. We also aimed to examine how these different definitions function to (1) prevent appropriation, dilution, or more generally going off track, and (2) suggest specific forms and targets of action as being appropriate. In regards to our theoretical approach, which was informed by the social identity approach, we were particularly interested in how the self and other categories, including ingroup and outgroup members, were defined, and how these definitions were used strategically to balance and advance movement aims.

Our analysis began by illustrating that movement issues are contested. We identified three points of contention when hashtag users defined the *issues that the movement*

represents; namely, (1) who is responsible for the injustice, (2) the disadvantaged groups that the movement represents, and (3) the nature of the problem. As well as defining the groups and the issues that the movement represents, conversation on Twitter was used to define those who were in *opposition to the movement*. Two separate representations of Otherness were identified in the discourse surrounding movement opponents: specifically, (1) as immoral groups of people, and (2) as a subversive system. Finally, our analysis illustrated that *advocates of the movement* were described in two discourses: (1) disadvantaged group members, and (2) allies who perform movement endorsing acts.

Although we aimed to address the aforementioned theoretical considerations, the analysis itself was also partly driven inductively by the data. Drawing on the procedure of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and building on Reicher and Hopkins' (1996a, 1996b, 2001) framework, we performed a qualitative analysis of political rhetoric in 326 public Tweets that were posted on the Twitter microblogging platform from 1st June 2014 – 10th August 2014 (inclusive), and included the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag. This time period was selected because it represented a period before #BlackLivesMatter gained widespread use on Twitter; the start date was confined by the availability of the data (see *data collection and preparation* section) and the end date was the day after Mike Brown was killed.

Method and Analytic Strategy

Data Collection and Preparation

Data came from a dataset of Tweet IDs released by Freelon et al. (2016b). Twitter's Terms of Service prohibits its users from publishing any Twitter data other than Tweet IDs, however it is possible to programmatically recreate a dataset from a list of Tweet IDs. This recreated dataset will contain all the original Tweets (plus metadata), minus any Tweets that have been deleted or made private since the original dataset was compiled. The dataset released by Freelon and his colleagues was generated from Twitter's Firehose, so it contained *all* Tweets that were posted between 1st June 2014 – 31st May 2015 that matched at least one of 45 keywords (including #BlackLivesMatter), and had not been deleted or removed from public view as of July 2015.

The data used in our analysis represented a subset of these Tweets. As it was compiled in May 2017, it only included Tweets that had not been deleted or protected as of this date. Programming languages R and Python were used to recreate the entire dataset from the list of Tweet IDs, and then create a subset of the data based on the following criteria. Due to practical time constraints, and its close association with BLM, we only included Tweets that included #BlackLivesMatter (case insensitive). Moreover, as we were interested in social change strategies prior to the materialisation of hostile countermovements, we only included Tweets that were posted up to and including 10th August 2014.

We justified this end date because it was before #AllLivesMatter emerged as a hashtag in our reconstruction of Freelon and colleagues' whole dataset. Although the hashtag was visible on Twitter prior to the Ferguson Protests in August 2014, some of these uses were related to other social issues (e.g., animal rights). It did not appear regularly until after 25th November 2014 when the Ferguson grand jury announced their decision to not indict the

police officer involved in the death of Mike Brown (Anderson & Hitlin, 2016). It is generally agreed that November 2014 is when #AllLivesMatter acquired the negative connotations and countermovement status that are now ascribed to it (Hitlin, personal communication). Nevertheless, as will become apparent in the analysis of the data, there is evidence that the #AllLivesMatter hashtag, or at least the sentiment contained in the hashtag, was salient to (some) #BlackLivesMatter users in our dataset. Our final dataset contained 861 Tweets from 532 unique users. Of these 861 Tweets, 326 were unique (removing duplicates and retweets) from 184 unique users[26]. In order to make inferences about the advantaged/disadvantaged group membership of hashtag users, we obtained demographic information from user's Twitter profiles where available, which we present alongside the analysed extracts where relevant to the analysis. We have also given each Tweet author a unique user number, which we present alongside each Tweet, to enable the reader to determine which of the example Tweets originate from the same author.

Ethical Considerations

Although Study 4 received ethical approval from the University of Exeter's ethics committee, it is worth acknowledging that the use of Twitter data for research raises important and unresolved ethical questions. In particular, the individuals whose Tweets have been analysed did not consent to participate in the research study.

Public Tweets can be obtained from Twitter because it is a public micro blog, and Twitter's Terms of Service (2018, 3. Content on the Services, Your Rights and Grant of Rights in the Content, para. 2) authorise "others" to make an individual's Tweets "available to the rest of the word". Although this means that Twitter data share features with other forms of secondary data that have traditionally been used in qualitative research (e.g., books,

[26] It is worth nothing that the end value of 184 unique users entirely depends on which duplicate Tweets are removed. The duplicates that were selected for removal were chosen at random.

newspaper articles, speeches), it also presents novel ethical challenges. In particular, research indicates that users are not always aware that their Tweets could be used by researchers (Fiesler & Proferes, 2018).

Rather than a concrete set of rules, The British Psychological Society (BPS) has a number of general guidelines that are relevant to the question of consent on Twitter. To begin with, the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018, p.1) acknowledges that, "We live in a rapidly changing world, where new ethical challenges come from many sources." Thus, it encourages psychologists to use their judgement when new ethical dilemmas arise. However, the BPS has outlined four principles that must be upheld in all research: respect (for the autonomy, privacy and dignity of individuals), competence, responsibility (to do no harm), and integrity. The two that are most relevant for the question of consent on Twitter are respect for privacy and responsibility to do no harm. Nevertheless, the BPS also has Ethics Guidelines for Internet-mediated Research (2017) that address the question of consent online more explicitly. It states:

"Valid consent should be obtained where it cannot reasonably argued that online data can be considered 'in the public domain'" (p. 9).

Following recent research (e.g., Freelon et al., 2016; Cavazos-Rehg, Zewdie, Krauss, & Sowles, 2018; Chow-White, Struve, Lusoli, Lesage, Saraf, & Oldring, 2018; Hanna, Sambrook, Armfield, & Brennan, 2017; Karamshuk, Shaw, Brownlie, & Sastry, 2017; Patton, MacBeth, Schoenebeck, Shear & McKeown, 2018), and given Twitter's status as a public micro blog, we feel that it can be reasonable argued that the data are in the public domain. Thus, no further consent for participation was sought.

However, there is a further ethical dilemma that must be considered. This is around the Tweets we quote as examples in our analysis section; specifically, the protection of user privacy. Twitter Developer terms outlines a set of "display requirements" for developers who

"display Tweets" (para. 1). This includes displaying the username and avatar of the Tweet author, along with the Twitter logo. We felt that including the author's name and avatar would violate the author's privacy. Thus, rather than displaying specific Tweets, we made the decision to quote text from relevant Tweets. Moreover, following existing research (e.g., Cavazos-Rehg et al., 2018; Chow-White et al., 2018; Hanna et al., 2017; Karamshuk et al., 2017; Patton et al., 2018) we chose to omit user information from the quoted text.

There remains the risk that someone could perform a Twitter search using the quoted text and find the author's username. However, given that Twitter is a public platform – and the dataset has been released publically by authors of previously published research – the Tweet along with author information is already readily available publically. Nevertheless, if a user whose text we have quoted wants to be completely dissociated from the quote, they can make the Tweet private or delete it from their Twitter account. When a Tweet is deleted or made private it can no longer be found through a Twitter search. Given these concerns, we believe our choices meet a balance between Twitter terms, the rights of Tweet authors, and public/scientific interest to know how a significant social movement manages social relations online.

Thematic Analysis

Once our final dataset had been created, all Tweets were submitted to a thematic analysis using a hybrid coding process (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006), supported by the computer program Nvivo 11. We adopted a contextualist approach to the analysis. A contextualist framework allows for both realist and constructionist elements. Realism or essentialism suggests that individuals express meaning and experience through language; thus, individuals' experiences and the meanings they attach to those experiences can be accessed through their language (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In contrast, social constructionism argues that meaning and experience are socially produced; so rather than being a direct

reflection of experience or meaning, language is a specific reading of those conditions and can be used to engender different ways of perceiving or understanding phenomenon (Willig, 2001). Both approaches have unique strengths and limitations. For example, although an essentialist approach assumes that individuals are willing, able, and motivated to objectively express their experience through writing or speech, it supports the notion that conversations on Twitter are affected by users' subjective experiences of society and social movements (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Potter & Wetherall, 1987). A constructionist framework informs our analysis of the strategic use of language, as it enables us to gain an understanding of how the social context shapes – and is shaped by – the rhetoric used in the Tweets.

The hybrid coding process. We adopted a hybrid coding process to identify the themes and patterns in the data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). A hybrid coding processes combines top down (deductive) and bottom up (inductive) coding strategies. The deductive aspect enables theoretical concerns to shape the data, while the inductive coding allows the incorporation of data-driven themes. In our analysis, theoretical concerns determined the categories that we used to organise the data and thus inform the analysis. However, the association between the categories, as well as their organisation, form and content – including subthemes – were driven by the data and therefore not pre-determined.

The hybrid coding process and its stages are outline in Figure 14 (adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2013; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Although it has been visualised as a linear process with sequential steps, the analysis itself was iterative and reflexive. To begin with, the data were divided into three deductive categories: (1) characterisations of issues that the movement represents; (2) characterisations of those who are in opposition to the movement; and (3) characterisations of movement advocates. Following the process outline in Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), these categories were

defined a priori, based on our research questions and theoretical framework. Our process then followed the six steps for thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). After we familiarised ourselves with the data, we organised the data around the initial categories. The categories themselves were not exclusive; rather, extracts were coded to all relevant categories. It should be noted that organisation of the data around the deductive categories is not thematic analysis in and of itself. Rather, it is an organisational process; analysis begins after the data are separated into data sets that are structured by the deductive categories (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Following this initial organisation, we performed inductive thematic coding within each of the categories. This enabled us to inductively identify subsidiary themes and connections between the themes. The value of a hybrid methodology is that it allows for theory to inform the analysis, but it is also sensitive to, and driven by, the content of the data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

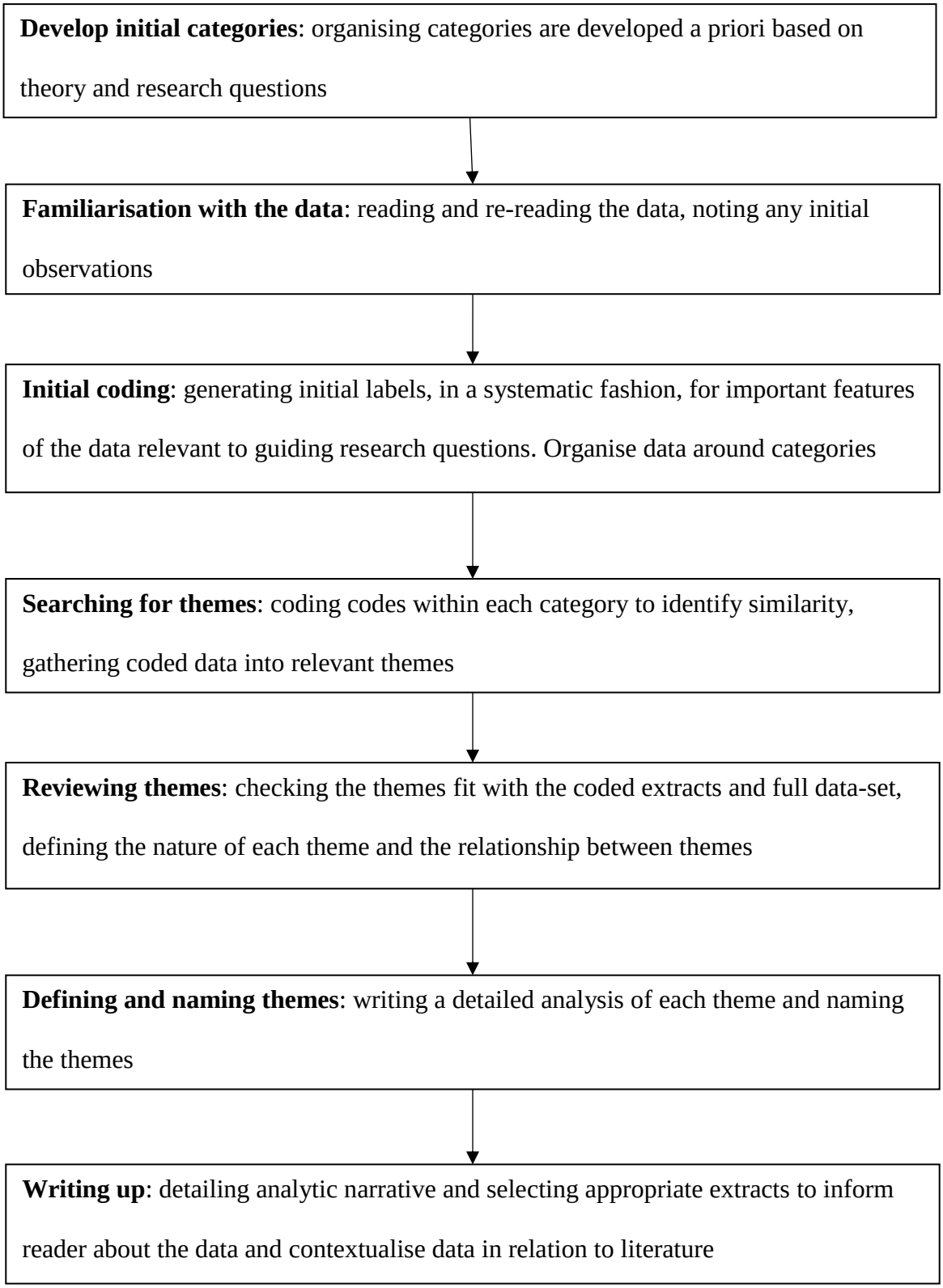

Figure 14. Steps of thematic analysis including hybrid coding process

The themes themselves, as well as the connections between the themes and organising categories, were identified primarily at the semantic level, within the explicit meanings of the data. Theme identification at the semantic level does not look for anything beyond what has been written; the process progresses from ‘description’, where data have been organised and summarised to illustrate patterns in explicit content, to ‘interpretation’, where the analyst theorises about the significance, broader meaning and implication of the patterns. This stands in contrast to identification at the latent level, which attempts to identify the underlying ideas, assumptions and conceptualisations that shape the explicit content (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Nevertheless, although our analysis was *primarily* performed at the semantic level, during the analysis itself, we have theorised about some of the underlying ideas that shape the data’s semantic content.

The final analysis identified three themes in the category of *issues the movement represents*: (1) the perpetrators of injustice, (2) the targets of injustice, (3) the nature of the problem. Two themes were identified in the category of *movement opponents*: (1) immoral groups of people, (2) subversive systems. Two themes were identified in the category of *movement advocates:* (1) disadvantaged group members, (2) movement-endorsing actions. Additional sub-themes were identified within some of these themes. These sub-themes were created to structure the complexity of the themes and to illustrate hierarchy within the data (thematic map illustrated in Figure 15; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

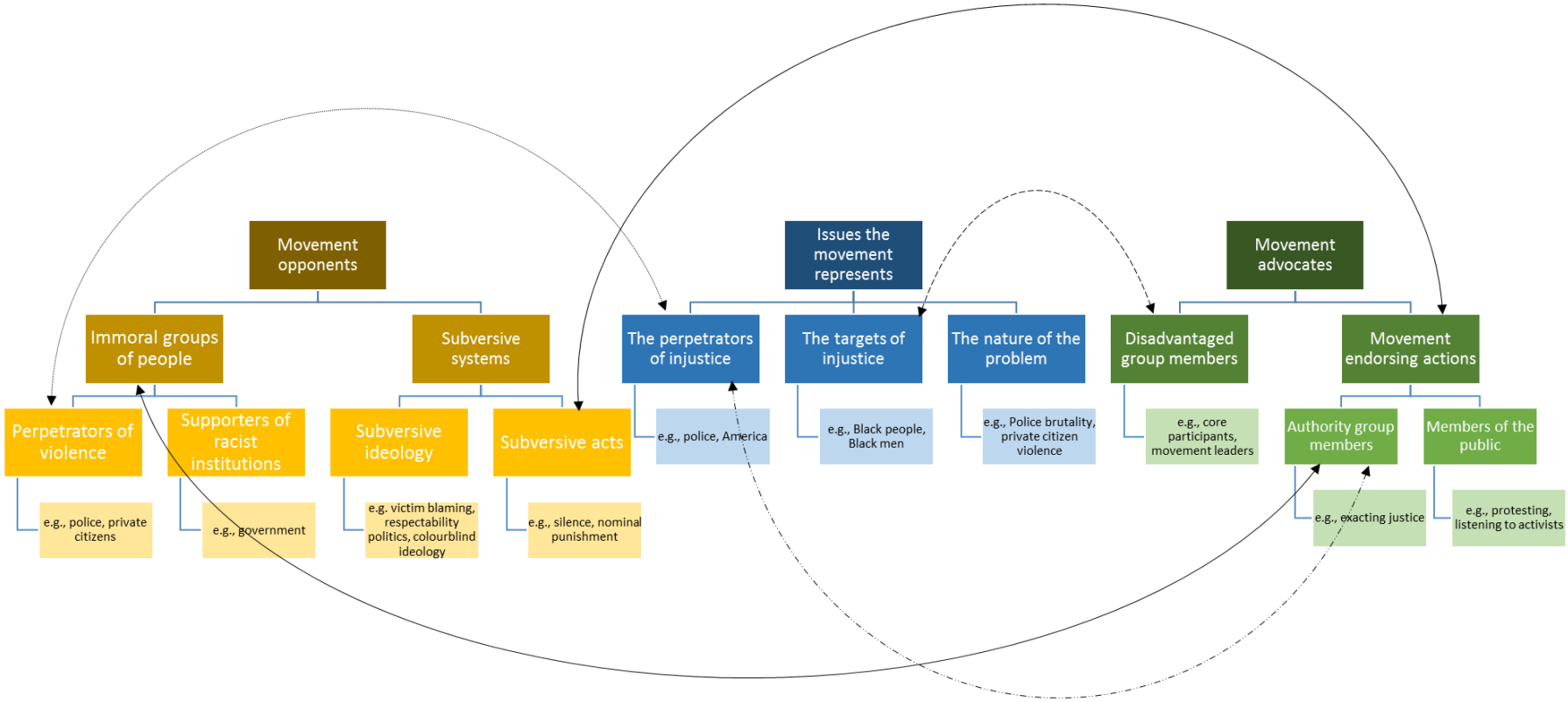

Figure 15. Thematic map of categories, themes and sub-themes. Links between the themes are illustrated with double-ended arrows.

Analysis

In our analysis, we argue that while BLM activists take action to grow the movement, they also employ rhetorical, identity and technological resources to advance and defend disadvantaged-group control of the movement. Our first point is that hashtag users promote different, and often competing, definitions of the issues that the movement represents. Given the contention over growing the movement and preventing the movement's focus going off track, different rhetorical and identity strategies are used to advance inclusive definitions that focus on racism. There are instances when hashtag users address alternative definitions of movement actors and issues. Here, representations of Otherness are used to characterise the proponents of these definitions as being in opposition to the movement. Finally, our analysis illustrates that one way of resolving the tension between growing the movement and maintaining disadvantaged group control is by using identity and technology resources, both to define how different groups can be movement advocates, and to define action strategies for social change.

The Issues the Movement Represents

We begin our analysis by illustrating that movement issues are contested. There are three points of contention when hashtag users define the issues that the movement represents; namely, (1) who is responsible for the injustice, (2) the disadvantaged groups that the movement represents, and (3) the nature of the problem. Although referring to different objects, what is common across these themes is the tension between more vs. less inclusive definitions of movement actors and issues. However, given the role of inclusive definitions in facilitating mobilisation among broader groups of participants (e.g., Batel & Castro, 2015; Bennett & Sergerberg, 2016; Subašić et al., 2008), what is surprising about this tension is that rather than endorsing boundless and universal definitions of disadvantaged group

membership and the problem itself, movement activists police other users' characterisations of the issues that the movement represents, and only endorsed definitions that focus on racism.

The perpetrators of injustice. This discourse is concerned with who the movement stands against. There are a number of different categories talked about in the data, with different groups and individuals defined as perpetrators of injustice who BLM stands against. Some categories are very inclusive and general, such as America (7 codes). For example:

(1) #RememberRenisha and whose lives amount to so much strange fruit in #Amerikkka #RenishaMcBride #BlackLivesMatter https://t.co/oZhpPPKIEY

- User 1

Other categories are more specific. For example, the American Government (2 codes) and penal system (1 code) are also mentioned, as demonstrated in two separate Tweets:

(2) RT @[user31]: State sanctioned ethnic cleansing. Where's the fucking humanity? #Ferguson #blacklivesmatter #whatfuckingyearisthis

- User 2

(3) The view that folks who benefit from the prison industry have of #black bodies is #expendable. rip #mikebrown #blacklivesmatter

- User 3

Nevertheless, the most prominent category in the time period is the police, which is the category that we focus on here.

The perpetrators of injustice in general, and police in particular, are defined on an inclusive level when they are represented in intergroup rather than interpersonal terms. For example, one user Tweets:

(4) Eric Garner's death & exasperation with police violence http://t.co/D33DTB0qIh #BlackLivesMatter #Justice4EricGarner @thenation @mychalsmith

- User 4

Alongside the main text, the author also includes a link to an article in thenation.com. The article has the same title as the Tweet text. The Tweet itself refers to Eric Garner, a Black man who was killed by the police. Although the extract references a specific example of police violence, namely Eric Garner's death, the word "exasperation" characterises the concern as a pervasive issue rather than discrete occurrence. Moreover, the author does not define specific guilty individuals, instead they attribute guilt at the group-level "police violence". This characterisation implicitly defines the whole police group as perpetrators. Together these definitions characterise police violence as a pervasive and intergroup concern, which functions to mobilise action (e.g., Iyer & Ryan, 2009; van Zomeren & Iyer, 2009). The representation of the police as deviant also functions to delegitimise the police group.

Nevertheless, inclusive and group-based definitions of the perpetrators of injustice are not universal. Rather, other users advance more exclusive and interpersonal representations of the guilty parties. For example, on a separate occasion one user writes:

(5) Shameful. Good cops should take these men to task. RT @[user15] #BlackLivesMatter #BrownLivesMatter #MikeBrown #Ferguson

- User 5

The extract includes a number of hashtags, one of which is “#MikeBrown”, who was killed by police. In this extract, the guilt for Mike Brown’s death is located within a specific subsection of the police; rather than criticising the whole group of police, police violence is constructed as an individual problem. In other words, the author defines the issue as a ‘rotten apple’ (as opposed to a ‘rotten barrel’) problem. This definition has implications for both the perceived prevalence of the issue and the proposed solutions. The juxtaposition between “good cops” and “these men” distinguishes between different types of police officer, firmly locating the problem within a subset of deviant individuals rather than the whole group. This functions to rarefy the issue of police brutality, downplaying its prevalence and importance in society, and as a consequence the need for large-scale collective action. The author also suggests that good police officers could take the guilty individuals “to task”, therefore implying that the police can regulate and reform themselves. This representation places the catalyst for change within the hands of the police, which functions to reduce the need for public engagement in collective protest.

Thus, the conceptualisation of the police as a homogenous and dangerous outgroup serves mobilising and prefigurative functions. However, it is also evident that this representation is neither automatic nor uncontested. Rather, activists do work on Twitter to explicitly define the outgroup in this way:

(6) If I know some1 did a crime & don't tell, I can get arrested. "Good cops" know abt dirty ones, say nothing then what? Smh #BlackLivesMatter

- User 6

In this extract, the notion of the “good” police officer is directly contested and discredited. The author is explicit in stating that there are no good police officers; even the individuals who are not directly responsible for the deaths are characterised as corrupt for protecting follow guilty officers. In this extract, the construction of an indirect responsibility for violence broadens the inclusiveness of the perpetrator outgroup; by drawing a parallel between this behaviour and criminal behaviour, the author paints the whole organisation as criminal, but not subject to the confines of the law. Thus, by explicitly challenging other users’ representations of the police as a heterogeneous and largely good organisation, the Tweet serves a policing function, to suppress – as well as discredit – alternative conceptualisations of the outgroup.

In addition to challenging the representation of the police as a heterogeneous organisation, work is done to challenge the idea that a police-led solution can be successful. For example, one user Tweets:

(7) Modified assignment??? Enough is ENOUGH #ChangeTheNYPD #BlackLivesMatter #JusticeforEricGarner http://t.co/qc7cVqGSw7

- User 7

Included within the Tweet is a link to an ABC news article entitled, “NYPD Cop in Chokehold Death Loses Gun, Badge”. The Tweet text refers to the penalty that Officer Daniel Pantaleo received for killing Eric Garner. “Modified assignment???” expresses horror and outrage at the ostensible punishment that was handed down by the police department to the officers directly responsible for Eric Garner’s death. Not only does this characterise police-led solutions as inadequate, it also represents the police as an organisation that is unable to serve just punishment to their ingroup members, further characterising the police as

a corrupt group. In this way, the Tweet functions to police and discredit popular notions that change can come from within the police, further accentuating the need for collective action, and disempowering the police outgroup as leaders of change.

It can be seen, then, that Twitter talk about "who the movement stands against" functions to construct the perpetrators of injustice in a certain way. It is also apparent that characterising the perpetrators of injustice at an interpersonal vs. intergroup level serves mobilising functions to different extents. Inclusive and group-based definitions are employed strategically by BLM activists to advance instrumental and prefigurative social change goals. However, it is also clear that exclusive and interpersonal constructions can be used by movement opponents to downplay movement concerns. Unsurprisingly, there are also examples of activists using Twitter to police and counter less-exclusive representations of the perpetrator group. Nevertheless, Twitter talk does not only focus on who the movement is fighting against: the problem itself and the individuals that the movement represents are also defined through Tweets.

The targets of injustice. This discourse describes the targets of injustice, with the disadvantaged group defined at varying levels of inclusivity. In very general terms, a limited but inclusive definition of the target group is presented, with Black people represented as the disadvantaged group. This is explicit within the hashtag itself "#BlackLivesMatter" and also within the large majority of Tweets within the corpus, which represents specific concerns in racial terms (26 codes) or define the targets of injustice by race (56 codes). For example, one user writes:

(8) Thinking of Michael Brown and all the other unnamed black boys killed by police violence. #BlackLivesMatter #racism #JusticeForMikeBrown

- User 8

In this extract, the author clearly defines the issue in racial terms with the hashtag "#racism", the targets of violence are also explicitly defined as Black people. This rhetorical strategy is evident in a number of other Tweets. For example, in a separate Tweet:

(9) @[user32] A white policeman murders an unarmed black child again.... This has happened a dozen times! #racism #BlackLivesMatter

- User 9

Here the author of the Tweet uses specific rhetorical strategies to define an inclusive group of Black people as the disadvantaged group. For one thing, they construct asymmetries between the target of injustice and the perpetrator in terms of guilt. The use of child vs. murderer imagery represents the target as an innocent party and places full guilt upon the police. This works to construct the injustice as indiscriminate, in that any Black person – irrespective of their age or guilty status – could be a target of police violence. This serves to mobilise action by promoting feelings of injustice and moral outrage, which are key antecedents of collective action (van Zomeren et al., 2008; van Zomeren et al., 2011), and by characterising the threat as personal to Black audiences (van Zomeren & Lodewijkx, 2005).

The Tweet also constructs racial asymmetries between the target and perpetrator. By defining Black people – rather than all people – as the targets of police violence, movement concerns are characterised in racial terms more generally. A historical reference ("This has happened a dozen times") is further used to cement this construction, which speaks to the prevalence of the issue. Rather than being an isolated incident, police violence is defined as frequent in occurrence, which functions to increase the imperative for action. Finally, the hashtag "#racism" is used to make an explicit claim of racism. The framing of the concern as

an issue about race places a limit on the inclusivity of the target group, this functions to increase public attention – a key resource for social movements (Tufekci, 2013) – on injustice within the Black community.

Nevertheless, a limited definition that represents Black people as the disadvantaged group does not go uncontested. For example, on a separate occasion one user Tweets:

(10) **Don't all matter?** RT @[user11]: Follow @[user33] for the minute by minute update on what's happening in #Ferguson #BlackLivesMatter

- User 10

Here the author uses Twitter's Quote Tweet function to repost another user's content to their own followers (in roman), with their own text added (bold added). Rhetorically, the author of the Tweet is disputing the legitimacy of #BlackLivesMatter. More specifically, they are directly challenging the limited definition of the target group as Black people, instead suggesting an inclusive definition, unbound by race.

Although it could be argued that this is an attempt to increase the inclusiveness of the movement, it also functions to divert attention away from racial inequality and delegitimise the movement by providing alternative definitions of its aims and activists. For one thing, the author represents race as irrelevant to the issues being discussed. This functions to discredit the aims of the movement by denying the importance of race-based injustice, and absolve the perpetrator group of racism. However, implicit within the Tweet is the characterisation of BLM as a movement that ignores White people. This functions to define movement activists as the real deviant and racist group. They are characterised as a group that both unnecessarily highlights race within a 'post-racial' society, and excludes White targets from the movement. In sum, as a whole, a universal construction of the targets of injustice defines racial

disparities as irrelevant, and constructs movement activists as a deviant perpetrator group. This functions to delegitimise the movement and thereby limit the use of the hashtag for protest. It also works to centre Whiteness and marginalise Black people within the social movement; reproducing the power inequalities the movement is fighting against.

Unsurprisingly, movement activists are proactive in policing such universal constructions (5 codes); other users Tweet in direct response to extract 10. For example, one user writes:

(11) .@[user10] your retort is basic. has there ever been any doubt about the value of white life? Ergo, #BlackLivesMatter

- User 11

Here, the @mention function is used, which would notify the author of extract 10 that they have been mentioned in the Tweet. Along with a direct criticism of extract 10 ("basic", which defines the Tweet as unintelligent and uninteresting), a rhetorical question is used to make clear why White lives are not the focus of the movement: White lives are already valued by society. Thus, by policing and rejecting universal constructions of the target group, the Tweet denounces the associated demobilising representations of movement aims and activists. This functions to restore legitimacy to the movement and advance its instrumental aims. Extract 11 also works prefiguratively. Examining Twitter profile information, it is apparent that the author of extract 10 is a White individual, while the author of extract 11 is a Black person. In extract 11, as a disadvantaged group member enacting power over advantaged group domination, the act of contestation itself advances disadvantaged group empowerment and control. The policing of an 'all lives' construction more specifically, re-centres Black people within the social movement.

It can therefore be seen that activists work to define the targets of injustice on the inclusive, but limited level of all Black people. However, there are also instances where more exclusive definitions are advanced. For example, one user Tweets:

(12) Black & Unarmed in America. Our men, we must remember their humanity. We must love & protect them. #BlackLivesMatter [broken link]

- User 12

In this extract, the author explicitly defines the prototypical target as male, this creates the impression that police violence predominantly affects an exclusive group of Black men. In contrast, those outside of this target group are delegated the task of protecting Black men. The Tweet uses an interesting discourse of love and humanity, rather than one of fighting to protect Black men. Additionally, it does not draw on the "child" construction evident in extract 9. There are also some implicit characterisations within the Tweet. There is the characterisation of the author themselves; the use of the phrase "our men" suggests that the Tweet is not written by a man, and an examination of the author's profile information supports the idea that the author is a woman. On a latent level, the Tweet is perhaps suggesting that different sections of the community (women, men) should mobilise differently due to their different experiences, with women as protectors. Nevertheless, this exclusive representation of the target group marginalises disadvantaged group members who are not male. It also functions to conceal the gender-specific ways that non-male individuals and groups are affected by anti-Black violence, in a manner that echoes gender-based power asymmetries.

However, there is some effort to counter this male-centred representation, and advance a more inclusive definition of the target group that includes cis women and trans folk (80 codes). One user Tweets:

(13) Marlene was assaulted by CA highway patrol. @[user34] honors her #IAmMarlene #BlackLivesMatter [URL1]

- User 13

Several hashtags are used in the Tweet including "#IAmMarlene", which refers to Marlene Pinnock who was assaulted by a highway patrol officer. In addition to the Tweet text, a link is included to a Facebook post. The Facebook post contains the text:

"Because Marlene [Pinnock] Still matters #blackwomenmatter #iammarlene"

Below the text are four photographs; each photograph is of a different Black woman holding a hand-written sign, with "I am Marlene #BlackWomenMatter" written on the sign. The substitution of "Lives" with "Women" in the hashtag "#BlackWomenMatter" serves a strategic function to bring attention to female victims of police violence, increasing the inclusivity and intersectionality of the movement. "#IAmMarlene" is not only an expression of solidarity with the victim, but also constructs the sense of fungibility – that this could have happened to any Black woman.

Likewise, while specific hashtags and Tweets are created to bring attention to Black women in general, there are also instances where Twitter is used to highlight violence against trans women in particular. As in the case for #BlackLivesMatter and Black men, although conversations about Black women – and the often accompanying "#BlackWomenMatter" hashtag – are ostensibly about women as a whole group, trans women are often marginalised

in these discussions. For instance, there are examples where Tweets have referred to women in general, but only explicitly named cis women (5 codes), which functions to exclude trans women and reproduce gender-based inequality. In order to counter this, there are instances where users centre the stories of trans women in particular (13 codes). For example:

(14) Spontaneous show of support and memory for Mia Henderson and Kandy Hall #BlackTransAdvocacy #BlackLivesMatter [URL2]

- User 14

In this extract, the user names Mia Henderson and Kandy Hall, two trans women who were killed in Baltimore. The post also includes a photograph of activists protesting outside Baltimore City Hall. The user strategically uses the hashtag "#BlackTransAdvocacy" and names two trans women to counter the marginalisation of trans women as a group in conversations about anti-Black violence, thereby increasing the inclusiveness of the movement.

There is also some evidence of further attempts to increase the inclusivity of the target group to include other people of colour (8 codes):

(15) #BlackLivesMatter #BrownLivesMatter #MikeBrown #Ferguson

- User 15

Here the user uses the hashtag "#BrownLivesMatter" alongside the original #BlackLivesMatter. #BrownLivesMatter was created by activists to highlight racist violence against Latinx individuals (Akokou Thompson, 2015). In extracts 14 and 15, the authors of the Tweets use intra-group differentiation as a strategy to make the movement more inclusive. Interestingly, in our dataset, there was no evidence of other users pushing back, or

policing against, intra-group differentiation of this kind; for example, arguing that the movement should concentrate on one issue at a time. These extracts – in particular extract 15 – can also be contrasted to extract 10, where the attempt to increase the racial inclusivity of the movement worked strategically to absolve the perpetrator group of racism. In the present extract it instead highlights the multifaceted ways that racism operates to affect communities of colour. Thus while the inclusive definition in extract 10 functions to demobilise action, the inclusive definition in extract 15 works to increase the imperative for action, as well as the base of core movement participants.

In sum, it is evident that Twitter talk constructs the targets of injustice at varying levels of inclusivity. Characterising the disadvantaged group members at more vs. less inclusive levels serves to affect change in different ways. Inclusive definitions of disadvantaged groups promote mobilisation by broadening the base of participation, while universal definitions have the potential to undermine movement aims. Unsurprisingly, there are examples of activists using Twitter to push back against exclusive and universal representations, as both have the capacity to overshadow the concerns of marginalised identity groups.

The nature of the problem. In addition to representations of the targets and perpetrators of injustice, there is a discourse that describes what the movement represents by defining the problem itself. Different users define the problem at different levels of inclusivity. This is an important representation, as different definitions have different implications in terms of how the problem should be managed and addressed. In the analysed Tweets, *exclusive* definitions of the problem are constructed through a narrow focus on specific issues. Concerns such as private citizen violence and police brutality are presented as the primary concerns of the movement. For example, one user Tweets:

(16) Police brutality is out of control. No one should fear being shot 10 times when walking down the street #BlackLivesMatter #RipMikeBrown

- User 16

In this extract, the author explicitly defines police brutality as a problem the movement should be addressing, representing the violence as in stark violation of moral standards ("being shot 10 times"), and unpredictable ("when walking down the street"). Implicit within this representation is the juxtaposition of the victim as an innocent and ordinary individual, and the perpetrator as an immoral deviant. This representation increases the perceived injustice of the act, which functions to mobilise action and disempower the police. Rather than providing exclusive definitions of the perpetrator and victim, there is a level of universality in these constructions that functions to mobilise broad patterns of participation (e.g., Bennett & Segerberg, 2016); "out of control" defines police brutality on a general and widespread level, while "no one" indicates that it could happen to anyone. Thus the representation of a narrow movement concern as highly unjust and universal functions strategically to mobilise action around that specific movement issue.

Nevertheless, the corpus as a whole supports an *inclusive* definition of the problem at hand. On the one hand, there are Tweets that represent other narrowly-defined issues as relevant to movement aims. Examples include breastfeeding (1 code), individual fundraising attempts (1 code) and rape (2 codes) among others. Considering these Tweets as a whole corpus indicates that hashtag users are concerned with a wide range of societal problems. However, there are also individual Tweets that promote inclusive definitions of movement issues. For example, on one user Tweets:

(17) Question for me is how can we stop the criminalization of our people? #JusticeForEricGarner #RememberRenisha #BlackLivesMatter #every28hours

- User 17

In contrast to extract 16, this Tweet provides a more inclusive definition of movement concerns. Rather than focus on a single problem, such as police brutality or private citizen violence, this Tweet represents a variety of issues and defines them as interrelated. The author achieves this in two ways. For one thing, different hashtags are used to represent different problems including "#every28hours", which refers to the claim that in the United States, every 28 hours a Black person is killed by the police; #RememberRenisha, which refers to Renisha McBride who was killed by a private citizen; and #JusticeForEricGarner who was killed by police. In addition to the hashtags, the Tweet explicitly defines the problem as "criminalization", which alludes to a number of smaller injustices working together to transform individuals into criminals (Michalowski, 1985). In this way, alongside the inclusive representation of movement issues, the author characterises the perpetrator group as highly inclusive, as the process of criminalisation would involve a number of individuals and institutions. This inclusive definition of the perpetrator group functions to mobilise action by demonstrating the pervasive nature of the issue. In general, a broad definition of problems and perpetrators functions to increase mobilisation around a variety of movement issues; the characterisation of a variety of state institutions as illegitimate also works in the present to disempower the state. However, the construction of the victim group is more exclusive: the use of the phrase "our people" and the "#every28hours" hashtag defines the victim ingroup as Black people in particular, which functions to focus attention on Black issues resulting from criminalisation.

Nevertheless, although definitions of the problem as a whole are characterised at an inclusive level, as with definitions of the disadvantaged group, hashtag users place restrictions on social issues that are accepted as part of the movement. For example, one user Tweets:

(18) Don't tell me how many blacks kill other blacks. It was WHITE cops who killed #MikeBrown. Tonight we mourn #Ferguson. #BlackLivesMatter

- User 18

Although it is unclear precisely who or which statement the Tweet responds to, by defining intragroup crime within the disadvantaged group as not relevant to movement aims, the author of the Tweet delimits boundary conditions for the problems that the movement represents. In order to justify this exclusion, the author highlights the race of the individuals responsible for Mike Brown's death, thus defining the scope of the movement – or the problems that it is concerned with – as of an intergroup and race-based nature. This exclusive representation of the problem functions to focus public attention on issues of racism, thereby advancing movement aims for the end of anti-Black racism. It should further be noted that the Tweet also performs a policing function, in that the author reprimands those who use intragroup crime as a response to the movement. This representation, where the response of intragroup crime is defined as in opposition to the movement, is one that will be examined more fully later in the analysis. Nevertheless, while intragroup crime is placed outside the remit of the movement, the author does not characterise the resulting deaths as irrelevant. Rather, by defining a time for the period of mourning ("Tonight we mourn #Ferguson") the author recognises that these are issues, but defines it as an issue that does not need to be dealt with in the first instance. It also communicates collective suffering and collective coping within the movement.

On the whole, it can be seen that the discourse about what the movement represents constructs movement concerns at varying levels of inclusivity, with activists using inclusive definitions to increase the need for action, disempower the state, and bring attention to a variety of issues. At the same time, in order to focus public attention on Black issues and to prevent the marginalisation of Black people within the movement, hashtag users place boundaries on the issues that are considered legitimate concerns for the movement, which are represented as concerns about racism. Thus, as with characterisations of the targets of injustice, hashtag users endorse an inclusive, but limited definition of problems the movement represents, bound by a focus on racism.

To summarise, the definition of *what the movement represents* characterises the problem, perpetrators and targets of injustice at varying levels of inclusivity. It uses representations of race and racism as rhetorical resources to justify what and who is included in the movement. Moreover, hashtag users actively police other groups' and individuals' constructions of movement actors and issues, to delegitimise definitions that undermine the movement's prefigurative (e.g., the location of Black vs. White people in the movement) and instrumental (e.g., public attention) aims. As the following analysis will show, this policing activity involves representations of Otherness, which are used to characterise the proponents of these 'illegitimate' definitions – as well as the definitions themselves – as in opposition to the movement.

Movement Opponents

As well as defining the groups and the issues that the movement represents, rhetoric on Twitter is used to define those who are in opposition to the movement. Two separate representations of Otherness are identified in the discourse surrounding movement

opponents: specifically, as a subversive system and as immoral groups of people. These representations perform different strategic functions.

Subversive system. This discourse describes movement opponents as particular ideologies and actions that are in opposition to the movement. For example, one user writes:

(19) Even if #MikeBrown did sag his pants, only in a world of white supremacy is that punishable by death of 10 bullets! #BlackLivesMatter

- User 19

In this Tweet, the author defines a particular school of thought as opposed to movement aims. Although it is unclear the precise statement that this Tweet responds to, it addresses attempts to portray Mike Brown as less-than-innocent and therefore blame him for his own death: “Even if #MikeBrown did sag his pants”. The idea under criticism is an example of a victim-blaming discourse that suggests that victims are responsible for their own fate, for example through their behavioural conduct or style of dress (e.g., Crawford, 1977). These narratives function to demobilise collective action by suggesting that the target in some way received what they deserved. The author delegitimises this line of thought by representing it as irrational and racist in the line “only in a world of white supremacy is that punishable by a death of 10 bullets!”

Here the user characterises the ‘punishment’ of death as excessive for the supposed ‘crime’ of wearing a particular style of clothing. The author further denounces this line of thinking by defining those who promote it as racist. Although not directed at a particular individual or example, as a public micro-blog, Twitter enables the sentiment to be directed towards the public in general. The characterisation of victim-blaming discourse as being in opposition to the movement serves a policing function to control how movement issues are

represented; limiting the dissemination of similar narratives and promoting definitions that advance instrumental aims.

In addition to victim-blaming narratives, ideologies that state that disadvantaged groups must earn the respect of the majority through their behaviour are also characterised as in opposition to the movement. For example, one user Tweets:

(20) Here comes the idiots who say "until we stop killing each other they won't respect us". B*tch u heard of Slavery, right? #BlackLivesMatter

- User 19

Although the group membership of the individuals who hold these ideas is not explicitly stated, the use of the first person plural pronouns “we” and “us” defines the offenders as fellow disadvantaged group members. The particular form of reasoning under criticism in the Tweet is an example of respectability politics, which suggests that marginalised groups can minimise discrimination by demonstrating that their own values are compatible with those of the majority group; this ideology has historically been used as a strategy by marginalised groups to police their own members’ behaviour (Higginbotham, 1993). When used as a response to BLM, this ideology functions to divert attention from the conduct of perpetrator groups to the conduct of the disadvantaged group, thus blaming Black people as a group for experiences of anti-Black violence. In this way, the politics of respectability is a powerful ideological strategy to inhibit social change; by redefining Black people as responsible for their own situation it reduces the onus for change among advantaged and authority group members.

The author of the Tweet uses several rhetorical strategies to discredit this line of thought and define it as in opposition to the movement. For one thing, they draw a parallel

between the issues that the movement is protesting and slavery. This defines anti-Black violence as racist in nature, driven by the actions of the majority group and unrelated to the actions of Black people. More specifically, that anti-Black violence pre-dates so-called ‘Black-on-Black’ violence in the United States, and also surpasses it in scale. This functions to place the responsibility for change among perpetrator group members, rather than individuals within disadvantaged group. Moreover, the author also discredits the individuals who profess these ideas, characterising them as “idiots” and “bitches”.

In addition to victim blaming and respectability politics discourses, a ‘colourblind’ ideology (e.g., extract 10) – which suggests that society can end racism by ignoring race – is also represented as being in opposition to the movement. Colourblind ideologies function to divert attention away from racial inequality, prioritise White people and their concerns, and delegitimise movement aims and activists (Langford & Speight, 2016). Unsurprisingly, there are several examples of movement activists directly challenging this line of thinking and placing it in opposition to the movement (5 codes). In one example a user writes:

(21) Black folks be like: #BlackLivesMatter. Indignant white folks retort with "don't all lives matter?" Word? I didn't get the memo.

- User 11

Although there are a number of representations within this Tweet, for the purpose of this analysis we have focused on one specific characterisation: that colourblind definitions are an angry and intergroup response to the movement. By defining the advocates of a colourblind approach as “indignant”, the author presents the ideology as a retaliation against the movement. Moreover, the author characterises the prototypical colourblind advocate as White, and juxtaposes their identity against that of Black activists. In this way, the author

represents colourblind ideology as an intergroup response of racist origins, rather than a legitimate attempt to end racism, thereby characterising the proponents of the ideology as racist. This characterisation functions to limit the expression of such notions that can undermine collective action and change. This extract also functions to advance the movement's prefigurative aims for Black power by challenging attempts for White dominance over movement issues.

In addition to ideologies that function to subvert the aims of the movement, hashtag users also represent specific acts as contrary to the movement. The main act of opposition that is addressed by movement activists is the act of silence (8 codes). For example:

(22) @[user28] @CNN @msnbc @ABC @CBS @nbc #BlackLivesMatter Why Are You Not Covering #Ferguson #MikeBrown #FergusonShooting

- User 20

(23) Why isn't #MikeBrown trending? Why isn't #Ferguson trending? Remember #blacklivesmatter Not one more #TrayvonMartin not one more #MikeBrown

- User 18

In these two separate Tweets, hashtag users target traditional media organisations (extract 22) and Twitter, as a platform (extract 23), for their silence around Ferguson. Turning first to examine extract 22, specific news organisations are criticised for not reporting the shooting of Mike Brown and subsequent events in Ferguson. The use of Twitter's @mention function directs the Tweet to the offending organisations, thus calling them to account for their actions. Likewise, extract 23 criticises Twitter for not including #MikeBrown and #Ferguson in its 'trending topics', which is a list of words or phrases

mentioned at a greater rate than others that Twitter provides for its users. Going further than extract 22, the latter half of the extract 23 implicitly defines silence around these issues as a contributing factor to the continuation of anti-Black violence and therefore in opposition to movement aims. Although directed at different objects, by defining silence as a movement opponent – and putting pressure on offending parties to change their practices – these Tweets function to increase attention to the movement, which is a key resource for social change.

Other acts that are represented as opponents to the movement include nominal punishment for the perpetrators of injustice (2 codes; see extract 27 for example) and the act of silencing movement activists (1 codes), for instance:

(24) Wow--I've lost FIFTEEN followers since I started tweeting abt #MikeBrown being MURDERED in #Ferguson.Sorry you don't think #blacklivesmatter

- User 18

Although there are a number of interesting points that could be considered in this Tweet, for the purpose of the present analysis we have focused on the representation of the act of unfollowing on Twitter as an indication of movement opposition. Here the author suggests that they were unfollowed because they Tweeted about Mike Brown's death. In this way, unfollowing is represented as an act that functions to silence legitimate consciousness-raising activities. The latter part of the Tweet ("Sorry you don't think #blacklivesmatter") locates this act as being in opposition to the movement, indicating disagreement with movement aims. Although the individuals who have unfollowed the author are unlikely to ever see the Tweet, it is a public condemnation of the action and therefore operates to dissuade the action in others. This works to preserve attention on movement issues and activists, and thereby advance instrumental aims.

Immoral groups of people. In addition to particular ideologies and actions, hashtag users also represent specific groups of people as in opposition to the movement. These groups are described as immoral individuals and are represented as both the perpetrators of violence themselves, and those who support these racist institutions. For example, one user writes:

(25) If he was an animal, please believe justice would've been served in a hurry...smh #BlackLivesMatterToo #MikeBrown

- User 21

In this Tweet, the author presents a criticism of the justice system in general, characterising it as an entity that values the lives of animals above Black people. Implicit within this Tweet is the idea that the justice system is in opposition to the movement as it is failing to do justice upon the perpetrators of violence. Although some of the Tweets define movement opponents on a general, system-level, other characterisations are more specific in defining who is an opponent of the movement.

Regarding those who are guilty of violence, many of the groups who are represented as perpetrators of injustice are explicitly defined as in opposition to the movement. For example, one user Tweets:

(26) While #MikeBrown 's body laid in a pool of blood. 15 police depts militarized the area against protesters in #Ferguson . #BlackLivesMatter

- User 22

In the first half of the Tweet, the author defines the police as apathetic towards the death of Mike Brown. By highlighting their disinterest in properly caring for the body, they are characterised as a group that both evades professional responsibility and is void of basic

moral decency. The author furthers this characterisation by juxtaposing this inactivity against a representation that paints the police as eager to mobilise against movement activists. The inclusion of a large number of police departments and the description of the action in military terms functions to characterise the police's response as excessive, violent and unethical. This further constructs the police as an immoral perpetrator group, as they are willing to use military-like force against their country's own people. Nevertheless, this definition goes further than earlier extracts, as it presents the police in opposition to movement activists and, as an extension, the movement. This serves several strategic functions. For one thing, it presents the group of police as unwilling to work with activists for change, which furthers the need for large-scale collective protest rather than a police-led solution. Moreover, given the police's position as a powerful and authoritative group, it is likely that they will generate and endorse definitions of movement issues and actors that preserves their own reputation. Thus, the definition of the police as inherently opposed to the movement limits their influence and authority on these issues, which in turn empowers activists relative to the police.

Beyond immediate perpetrator groups, movement activists also define the supporters of these institutions as opponents to the movement. For example, one user Tweets:

(27) All his murderers get is a #PAID #VACATION from the government!! #BlackLivesMATTER [URL3]

- User 23

In addition to the text, the Tweet contains a link to an Instagram post that includes a picture of John Crawford who was killed by the police. Above the picture is the text,

(27.1) "John Crawford, a 22 yr-old father was shot + killed in a Ohio Walmart for holding a toy gun → http://bet.us/X7vbg0 When will it end?"

This text refers to John Crawford who was killed by police. The link within the Instagram post is to an article by BET entitled,

(27.2) “Update: Walmart Video Shows John Crawford Shot ‘On Sight’ From Behind”

Extract 27 represents the Government as a group that supports the police. The author constructs a juxtaposition between the crime of “murder” and the Government’s response of a “paid vacation” for the perpetrator. By representing the Government’s response as a reward, the authors characterise this group as corrupt. This works to locate the Government in opposition to the movement, implicitly characterising them as unwilling to support the movement’s aims for justice. As with the construction of the police in extract 26, this representation of the Government functions to give activists power, as it positions activists as a (relatively) credible authority on movement issues. In contrast, the state as a system is presented as acting in its own interests, and therefore untrustworthy in how it defines the movement. In this way the powerful groups and institutions who are defined as either perpetrators of violence or supporters of these institutions are also defined as opponents to the movement; this functions to advance the need for collective action and gives activists authority over movement issues.

In sum, the representation of *movement opponents* consisted of two discourses; namely, opponents as immoral groups of people and opponents as oppressive systems. These discourses enabled hashtag users to attempt to control contested representations of the movement, and to promote actions that advance movement aims. The act of challenging these forms of resistance to BLM itself advances prefigurative aims, as it actualises disadvantaged group power in the present. Nevertheless, only defining movement opponents risks alienating certain groups who may be sympathetic to movement aims, which could damage the pursuit of instrumental goals. As the following analysis will illustrate, one way that disadvantaged

group members balance the social change needs of growing the movement and maintaining control is by constructing representations of legitimate movement advocates, encompassing both disadvantaged group members and advantaged group allies. These representations characterise specific actions and attributes as integral to movement aims.

Movement Advocates

Advocates of the movement are described in two discourses: as disadvantaged group members and allies who perform movement-endorsing acts. The *disadvantaged group* discourse represent Black people as the leaders and core participants of the movement. These representations perform different strategic functions to advance movement aims, which will be outlined during the course of the analysis. The *movement-endorsing acts* discourse outlines how powerful and advantaged group members can be advocates of the movement, and functions to mobilise majority group action by representing collective action as integral to allyship.

Disadvantaged group members. In the same way that Black people are defined as the targets of injustice, on a general level, they are also constructed as the core members and advocates of the movement. For example, one user writes:

(28) Then I realize that our blackness is beautiful & we must fight to protect our babies, our black men by any means necessary #BlackLivesMatter

- User 12

In this Tweet, the author urges the audience to take action against anti-Black violence. The characterisation of “our babies” reflects the chid imagery used in other extracts (e.g.,

extract 9); while “fight to protect” and “our men” can be compared to the rhetoric used in extract 12.

By using first person plural pronouns “our” and “we”, the author constructs a common category between themselves (as the author), the audience, and the individuals who have been killed, explicitly defining each of these actors as being part of the same group of Black people. This serves several strategic functions. At a general level, the construction of a common category increases the author’s influence (e.g., Hopkins & Reicher, 1997). By defining themselves as part of an ingroup with the audience (e.g., “we must fight”) the author gives themselves the legitimacy to speak on the audience’s behalf and direct them. Likewise, the creation of a common category between the author and the victim group (e.g., “our babies, our black men”) gives the author the authority to speak on behalf of the disadvantaged group and to tell others what the ingroup needs for change. However, the Tweet also contains a more specific claim: that the call to action has originated from a Black person and is addressed to other Black people in particular. This construction works prefiguratively to locate Black people in a dominant position in the movement as core members and activists. It also puts white people and other advantaged groups outside the circle of activism.

Other Tweets more explicitly address the role of Black people as activists within the movement, defining a key role for Black-led organisations. For example, one user writes:

(29) #BlackLivesMatter, it's not a scary thing to say. In fact, the articulation comes from Black organizers. #BOLD

- User 24

In this Tweet, the author defends the concept behind #BlackLivesMatter; specifically, they use the racial identity of the hashtag creators (and founders of Black Lives Matter) to

legitimise the hashtag and what it stands for. They also use the "#BOLD" hashtag, which stands for "Black Organizing for Leadership & Dignity", an American organisation that trains community leaders (boldorganizing.org). Taken together, this works to define Black leadership as integral to the movement. The location of Black people as movement leaders functions strategically to enable Black people as a group to retain control of the movement. For one thing, it gives Black people a dominant position in the movement, which prioritises Black-led narratives and constructions over those of advantaged group members. This provides a defence against other groups who may seek to re-define core issues or otherwise dominate the movement.

The position of Black people as core activists and leaders within the movement is further upheld through the videos and images of protest that are shared through Twitter, as well as the involvement of Black-led social movement organisations. For example, extract 13 includes photographs of Black women protesting against the violence against Marlene Pinnock. There are also instances of prominent Black-led organisations adopting key roles in the dissemination of news and information, for example:

(30) YES!! RT @BYP_100: BREAKING: Theodore Wafer found guilty on all charges in the killing of #RenishaMcBride #BlackLivesMatter

- User 25

Here the author retweets a Tweet by the Black Youth Project 100, which is an activist member-based social justice organisation of Black 18-35 year olds. Although extracts 13 and 30 utilise different features within Twitter, the ability of users to share pictures and content created by other users are specific affordances conferred by social media. In this particular instance, these features were used by activists to share images of black activists, as well as

news information from Black-led organisations; this functions prefiguratively to place Black leadership and participation at the centre of the movement. In this way, it can be seen how specific features of the technology are used to support the definition of Black individuals as core movement participants, actualising movement aims for the empowerment of Black people in the here-and-now.

There is also some evidence of allies acknowledging the primacy of Black actors in this context. For example, one user Tweets:

(31) .@[user35] also not romanticized this. I am not Eric Garner and I stand fiercely and unwavering with those who are #blacklivesmatter

- User 26

In this extract, the author constructs a distinction between themselves and disadvantaged group members ("I am not Eric Garner"); in this way, the author characterises themselves as advantaged relative to Black people who are the targets of violence. This can be contrasted against the construction of fungibility between the Black activists and the target of injustice used in extract 13, where the phrase "I am Marlene" was used. Nevertheless, in extract 31 the author does specify a place for themselves in the movement, as an ally to the disadvantaged group.

Movement-endorsing acts. The final theme that we identified characterised movement advocates by movement-endorsing acts, and functioned as the antithesis of the *subversive acts* discourse. In particular, the requirement for collective action on behalf of the movement is defined as integral to legitimate movement support. It is comprised of two discourses, the first of which addresses authority group members, while the second addresses the general public.

Authority group members. In addition to disadvantaged group members, hashtag users also characterise specific institutions and individuals within the state as advocates of the movement, or at least potential advocates. Importantly, their advocacy role is constructed in such a way that it is contingent on them performing acts to endorse the movement's aims. These authority group members are given the role of ending deviant behaviour and/or exacting justice for past wrongs, thereby helping to restore morality and change their group from within. For example, one user Tweets:

(32) .@CommissBratton #LatinoLivesMatter #BlackLivesMatter and #WomensLivesMatter. Do the right thing! #JusticeforEricGarner

- User 27

In this extract, the Twitter public mention function (".@CommissBratton") is used to publically challenge New York City's Police Commissioner Bill Bratton. Implicit in this extract is the claim that Commissioner Bratton – as a police leader – could help to bring about justice for Eric Garner. Although this mirrors heterogeneous representations of the perpetrator group that advance the representation of "good" police officers (see extract 5), using an @mention to separate out a specific member of the police from the larger deviant group serves a strategic function in creating a moral bind for the mentioned individual. Specifically, Commissioner Bratton would be notified that a Tweet has been posted about him, and due to the public nature of the platform, if he fails to meet activist demands it publically demonstrates that he is one of the 'bad' police officials. In this way, action to support the movement by Commissioner Bratton is integral to his characterisation as a movement advocate rather than opponent.

In addition to specific police officials, Barack and Michelle Obama are singled out in their roles as national leaders and represented as authority group members who are potential advocates of the movement. For example, one user states:

(33) #POTUS, @BarackObama & @FLOTUS @MichelleObama They're Killing Our Kids! R.I.P #MikeBrown [URL4] #BlackLivesMatter #Ferguson

- User 28

In this extract, Twitter's reply "@" function is used, making the Tweet visible to people who follow both the sender and the receiver. Similar to extract 32, the strategic use of this Twitter function creates a moral bind for the President and First Lady. Specifically, if they fail to take action against Mike Brown's death they reveal themselves to be part of the Government group who are supporting immoral acts (e.g., extract 27). Thus, by putting pressure on powers in authority, the Tweets uphold the prefigurative aims of the movement for disadvantaged group empowerment by creating a moral imperative for authority group members in a manner that reverses traditional power inequalities in society.

However, extract 33 also contains some novel rhetorical features that should be acknowledged. While Barack and Michelle Obama are identified in their roles as President of the United States (POTUS) and First Lady of the United States (FLOTUS), "They're Killing Our Kids" clearly locates Barack and Michelle Obama as part of the target ingroup, rather than the outgroup. This representation is made possible due to their dual identities as both Black people and members of Government. This positioning functions strategically to strengthen the case for action by the Obamas; inaction not only demonstrates membership of the deviant outgroup, but it also exposes ingroup betrayal and ascribes to the Obamas – on a personal and professional level – the negative qualities associated with traitorhood.

***Members of the public*.** The final discourse that we shall analyse characterises the public in general (35 codes) – and advantaged group members in particular (6 codes) – as movement advocates through movement-endorsing acts; similar to the authority group discourse, requirement for collective action on behalf of the movement is defined as integral to legitimate movement support. For example one user Tweets:

(34) RT @[user36]: "**Ally is not an identity it's an action**" [URL5] #girlslikeus #mfom14 #blacklivesmatter #translivesmatter

- User 29

Although there are a number of representations in the Tweet that could be analysed, of particular interest here is the text in bold (bold added), which characterises action as integral to the definition of movement allies. Allies are typically perceived as advantaged group members, rather than members of the core disadvantaged group whose interests the movement aims to advance (e.g., Droogendyk et al., 2016; Montgomery & Stewart, 2012). Thus this representation works to dismiss claims of advantaged group allyship merely on the basis of shared opinions or values. This representation functions instrumentally to mobilise action among advantaged group members who want to be seen as legitimate allies to the movement.

While extract 34 provides a rather general representation of movement-endorsing acts, other hashtag users provide more specific definitions of acts that the general public can engage in that signal movement support. As the antithesis to the *subversive acts* discourse, it is unsurprising that some endorsing acts are represented merely as the opposite of subversive acts; for example speaking out about/ protesting movement issues (20 codes) or listening to others (8 codes). However, what is novel about this discourse are examples where movement

activists reach out via Twitter to correct the behaviour of (supposed) advantaged group allies to promote actions that advance movement aims. For example, one user Tweets:

(35) If you are white & silent about police killings of unarmed blacks, ask why. #blacklivesmatter. #MikeBrown was EVERYONE'S kid. #Ferguson

- User 18

In this extract, the author engages in strategies to prevent inaction by defining standards of behaviour. For example, by asking the audience “why” they are silent about police brutality, the author defines inaction (silence) as abnormal in as much as it is something that should be questioned. In this way, the author constructs collective action as a normal standard of behaviour for the advantaged group. The author also distinguishes White people as a group from the broader spectrum of individuals who have not spoken about police violence. This characterises the White majority as potential movement opponents; implicitly it defines the difference in race between the victims and the audience as a factor contributing to the audience’s inaction. This creates a moral bind for the audience: if they continue to be silent in the face of anti-Black violence, it suggests that they are racist and opponents to the movement.

In addition to advantaged group members, hashtag users are keen for the participation of national social movement organisations. However, as with members of the public, these groups also receive criticism for failing to take action. For example, one user Tweets:

(36) Because, #BlackLivesMatter. Yet, #TheseOrgsAintLoyal. #LGBT #QPOC #CivilRights1964

- User 30

Several hashtags are contained within this Tweet including: “#LGBT” which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; and “#QPOC” which stands for Queer People of Color. Of particular interest here is “#TheseOrgsAintLoyal”, which was a hashtag created to challenge conventional LGBT rights organisations who did not acknowledge the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act (Rupert, 2014). By defining inaction in terms of loyalty, the author constructs LGBT organisations as betraying their commitments to Black people who have supported the LGBT movement in general, and Black members of the LGBT community in particular (“#QPOC”), thus constructing a moral dimension to their inaction. In addition to defining active allyship as a standard of behaviour for mainstream LGBT movement organisations, this serves a policing function to correct undesired behaviour.

In summary, the representation of *movement advocates* consists of two themes; namely, advocates as disadvantaged group members and advocates as those who perform movement-endorsing acts. Our analysis illustrates how these discourses function to grow the movement beyond the core group of disadvantaged members, but also maintain disadvantaged-group control in a context where there is an asymmetry of power between core group members and their (potential) allies. Core group members are represented as movement leaders and an ingroup audience for calls to actions, while members of authority and advantaged groups are represented as allies through movement-endorsing acts.

Discussion

Our analysis of Tweets containing #BlackLivesMatter provides evidence of the ways that disadvantaged group members can engage in internet-enabled action for the regulation of social identities and social movements. Bridging the gap between online mobilisation and political rhetoric literatures, it demonstrates the different ways that hashtag users rhetorically deploy social identities in a digitally-networked environment to obtain influence and advance social change within a contested social movement. It also provides evidence for how the use of social identities for the advancement of movement aims within online spaces is tied up with broader social relations offline.

In our analysis, definitions of intergroup relations – in particular characterisations of racial asymmetries and Black subordination – were used to legitimise how the scope and direction of the movement was defined, as well as who had the power to influence these definitions. Moreover, definitions of the content of social identities – their norms, values and behaviour – provided a basis for how advocates and opponents of the movement were defined. Thus, characterisations of the intergroup context and the content of social identities were used to provide an impetus for action in advantaged and disadvantaged group members alike. It was also used to guard against actions by advantaged and powerful outgroup members that could derail the movement's broader aims for social change.

An important conclusion of our analysis is that one of the key social change functions of internet-enabled action is the regulation of social identities and the characterisation of intergroup relations (e.g., Livingstone, Spears, & Manstead, 2009). Although this conclusion is in line with research examining political rhetoric in traditional or offline settings (e.g., Reicher et al., 2006; Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 2001), it extends research that examines the social change functions of internet-enabled action. Specifically, digitally-networked spaces

are not only a space for building (or undermining) key psychological antecedents for mobilising higher-threshold modes of collective action (e.g., Spears & Postmes, 2015); rather, it is a space where new social identities and modes of social relations are actively constructed and enacted in the present.

This conclusion is particularly relevant to a consideration of the role of advantaged-group allies within social movements. Although research is beginning to examine the ways that advantaged groups can have positive and negative effects on social change (e.g., Droogendyk et al., 2016; Mizock & Page, 2016), limited research has examined empirically the strategies that disadvantaged groups engage in to counter and resist the potentially problematic behaviours of advantaged groups, particularly in online settings. Our findings in the present chapter suggest that characterisations of movement opponents and advocates not only reflect the behaviour of advantaged group members, but also function as attempts to influence it. For example, as well as merely criticising the behaviour, defining advantaged group silence as in opposition to the movement in turn creates an imperative for movement sympathisers to speak out. Likewise, rather than purely reflecting intergroup relations, disadvantaged groups can engage in strategies online to create new relations of equality in the present, assisted by the affordance of digital technology. For example, the case of disadvantaged group and sub-category members creating new hashtags and circulating pictures to resist attempts to marginalise their identities. Thus, on a general level, our work demonstrates that rather than being passive recipients of the actions by powerful and advantaged groups, even in online settings disadvantaged group members can be active in advancing their ingroup's position.

Our findings also shed light on how individuals negotiate burgeoning and contested social movements online. A growing body of literature has considered the formation of social

movements; particularly how disadvantaged and third-party group members come to be part of new social movements and how the formation of *new* social identities can contribute to social change (e.g., Bluic, McGarty, Reynolds, & Muntele, 2007; McGarty, Thomas, Lala, Smith, & Bliuc, 2014). Although previous research has highlighted a key role for consensus and validating interactions in the formation of new social identities and associated movements (e.g., Smith et al., 2015), our findings indicate that there is also a process of contestation, where already existing social identities can be brought to bear. Importantly, our findings indicate that contestation and resistance within and between groups are integral to the process of growing new social movements and advancing social change. Thus, where previous literature examining internet-enabled action has examined communication as a mechanism to form opinion-based groups (e.g., McGarty et al., 2014), our work in the present chapter considers online communication as a means to rhetorically-manage the movement category and to define proper and possible forms of action against alternatives.

Strengths, Limitations and Future Research

This study had several key strengths, including: (1) the use of qualitative methodology, which enabled an examination of real behaviour in a real-world social movement with online and offline components, and (2) the inclusion of a longer 10-week time frame for analysis. These strengths extended the work in the thesis by allowing us to examine how ‘offline’ affects ‘online’, as well as the relationship between mobilisation processes and collective action behaviour. Nevertheless, there were also some limitations to the findings that must be acknowledged.

Firstly, I must engage in the reflective process of acknowledging that my own identity affected my reading and interpretation of the data. As a British, heterosexual, cis woman of biracial (White European and Black Caribbean) heritage, although I share some aspects of

identity with core participants in BLM, I am also in a position of relative advantage and privilege compared to African-American individuals as a group, due to the British social context and my biracial heritage. I must also acknowledge the privilege associated with my heterosexual and cis identities as these also have affected the analysis. Although I cannot remove my own subjectivity, and the impact that it has had on the analysis and the study findings, I have attempted to make the research process transparent by adhering to the procedures of thematic analysis and presenting an in depth analysis of the extracts from the dataset.

There were also limitations associated with the methodology itself. Due to the parameters of the dataset and qualitative methodology, we are unable to generalise our findings beyond the immediate context. More specifically, we cannot (and do not try to) argue that internet-enabled action will always perform the functions we have discussed; although the point that internet-enabled action could potentially perform all of the functions is more generalisable. With that in mind, future research would benefit from examining how rhetoric is used for the management of identities and social movements over a longer time frame. This would enable us to examine how rhetoric is used in the very early and later stages of a social movement. In order to generalise findings, research could also examine the rhetorical functions identified in our study in other contexts; for example, to establish whether the same identity and social movement management strategies are evident when international activists – who have both advantaged and disadvantaged identities – offer help to local social movements, as in the case of British or American LGBT activists campaigning for LGBT rights abroad.

Future research should also examine the psychological consequences of engaging in internet-enabled action that enacts strategies for identity management and disadvantaged

group control over the movement. Literature examining collective psychological empowerment in offline contexts demonstrates that participating in crowd action – when it enables participants to act in a way that brings reality to accord with their identity – can lead to profound, positive and enduring psychological transformation (Drury & Reicher, 2000; 2005; 2009). Although our research found evidence that rhetoric can be used to resist domination and actualise aspects of the future social relations that the movement hopes to bring about, we do not know how this is experienced subjectively by the participants themselves. In particular, we do not know whether internet-enabled action such as this results in collective psychological empowerment, and how this empowerment is similar to (and different from) the psychological outcomes of crowd protest.

Conclusion

The role of internet-enabled action in contemporary social movements has received increasing attention of late, especially regarding its capacity to facilitate or undermine social change. Our findings in the present chapter contribute to this discourse by examining the rhetorical functions of internet-enabled action and indicating its capacity as a means to manage identity and social movements. At the same time, they also emphasise the human dimension of digitally-networked activism; social media is not an abstract space that is separate from the ‘real world’; rather, the interactions that occur ‘online’ affect and are affected by social relations ‘offline’ (Jurgenson, 2012). Thus, although internet-enabled action can be used strategically as a tool to advance social change aims, social identities and the social context shape – and are shaped by – the ways that technology is used for activism.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL DISCUSSION

This thesis has examined some of the relationships between digital technology and collective action. We have drawn on social psychological research that emphasises the importance of social identity, efficacy and rhetoric in collective action, to add to current perspectives on the effects of social media on collective action and social change. On a very broad level, our goal was to examine when and how digital technology facilitates collective action and when it holds back efforts for social change. However, we also wanted to gain a greater understanding of how social identity in particular operates within digitally-augmented contexts to affect collective action and social change. Our approach has been diverse in terms of research questions and methodology, as well as the specific collective action processes and features of social media that were examined. Nonetheless, as a whole our findings suggest that social media can both work with already existing social identities, and develop self-evaluations and different kinds of social categories, to affect collective action and social change. In this way, social media serves a key ‘psychological drawbridge’ function in collective action, where the affordances of social media have the potential to act as both a bridge and a barrier between different identity groups and social issues, and thereby affect collective action and social change.

Summary of Findings

Chapter 1 opened by giving a broad introduction to the topic of the thesis. We outlined relevant theoretical and empirical literature, as well as lay perspectives, to frame our research within its historical and social context. We suggested that despite interest in the topic, limited research has examined the social psychological dimensions of digitally-networked collective action. We also argued that where social psychological approaches have examined internet-enabled collective action, this research has tended to focus on initial mobilisation processes, rather than continued engagement, or behaviour during and after collective action. In sum, we concluded that there was a gap in our understanding of how using digital technology for collective action affects, and is affected by, the social psychological concerns of technology users. Our aim in the thesis was to begin to address this gap by drawing on social psychological literature that has examined traditional or 'offline' modes of engagement and social change, as well as research beyond social psychology that has explored digital technology and social change processes.

We started our empirical investigation in Chapter 2 by considering digital environments and initial mobilisation; we examined whether peripheral features within social media environments can operate as identity signals to affect how bystander group members respond to a mobilisation message from an anonymous source. In three experiments, we tested the effect of peripheral identity signals, in the form of digital advertisements, on bystander mobilisation through social categorisation of the message source. We expected the identity signals to affect social categorisation when they pertained to a contextually relevant social identity. In turn, we expected the effect of social categorisation on collective action to depend on social identification with the disadvantaged outgroup. Specifically, we expected categorising the message source as an outgroup member to lead to greater mobilisation in

high outgroup identifiers. Although we found an effect of peripheral identity signal on social categorisation in Studies 1.1 and 1.3, there was no consistent effect of social categorisation on bystander mobilisation moderated by social identification. Thus, while the identity signals contained within peripheral features of digital environments have the potential to affect key social cognitive processes, such as categorisation, the effect of these signals on collective action is unclear.

In Chapter 3, we continued to examine how digital environments affect third-party mobilisation. However, due to the inconsistent findings of the studies in Chapter 2, we decided to examine the effect of a more central feature within social media; specifically the organisational affiliation of the message source. Operationalised in the context of a real-world campaign for fathers' rights, we tested whether a mobilisation message from an unknown individual was more effective in mobilising support than the same message from an unknown social movement organisation (SMO; Study 2.1). We also tested whether the reputation of the SMO affected the mobilising efficacy of the message by including a known SMO with a reputation for hostility towards women (Study 2.1 and Study 2.2). We expected the effect of message source to depend on the message recipient's social identity, with the known SMO reducing collective action among women in a way that was not apparent for men.

In Study 2.1, we found that the mobilising efficacy of the message was not affected by whether the message source was an individual or SMO *per se*. Rather, our findings indicated that message recipients were sensitive to the reputation of the SMO; the effect of message source reputation on collective action mobilisation depended on the social identity of the message recipient. In Study 2.2 we examined the process underlying this effect. We found evidence to support our proposition that ingroup category interests – in terms of the extent to

which the social movement was perceived to endorse a gender equality goal – and the associated affective response, underpinned the reduced mobilising efficacy of the known SMO in women. Specifically, in women, compared to the unknown SMO, the known SMO indirectly predicted reduced willingness to engage in collective action, due to (1) reduced feelings that the SMO endorsed a gender equality goal, and (2) increased negative affect; in contrast, the same indirect effect of message source on collective action motivation was not observed in men. Thus, while the source of a digital mobilisation message can affect collective action mobilisation, the message recipient's own social identity also plays an integral mobilising role. Taken together, the findings of Chapters 2 and 3 provide evidence to indicate that individuals' motivations to participate in collective action are not only affected by central and peripheral information presented within digital technology, but also by what individuals themselves bring to the table in identity terms.

In Chapter 4 we moved on to examine when and how participation in low-threshold, internet-enabled collective action affects future mobilisation for other social issues, operationalised in the context of a campaign to prevent domestic violence against migrant women. In a quasi-experimental design, we tested whether choosing to participate in internet-enabled action – in the form of sharing a campaign on social media – affected future engagement for the same and other social issues. We also tested whether the effect of internet-enabled action on future participation for other social issues depended on the effect of prior activism experience and the perceived instrumental efficacy of online participation. While participating in internet-enabled action was associated with reduced willingness to engage in higher-threshold action for the same cause, it facilitated future engagement for other social issues under certain conditions. Specifically, for individuals with greater levels of prior experience with online activism, participating in internet-enabled action – when it was perceived to be effective – was associated with greater levels of future engagement,

underpinned by greater participative efficacy beliefs; that is, the belief that group goals can be achieved through collective action, combined with the belief that one's own involvement will matter to the group's efforts (van Zomeren et al., 2012). In this way, although internet-enabled participation may inhibit future engagement for the same cause in the immediate future, it can also provide an opportunity to build experience and participative efficacy perceptions that stimulate collective action for other social issues.

In Chapter 5, we concluded our empirical work by examining participation in internet-enabled action as a strategy for the management of ongoing and contested social movements. Whereas Chapters 2-4 treated key psychological constructs – such as social identity – as relatively fixed, Chapter 5 investigated how these constructs were constituted and made to matter through collective action. Performing a qualitative analysis of rhetoric used in conversations on Twitter that included the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag, we examined how the collective action-based functions of Tweets were achieved through identity work. Specifically, we considered how disadvantaged group members used internet-enabled action to balance competing concerns for the Black Lives Matter social movement; such as encouraging advantaged and powerful outgroup members to engage in collective action, and preventing advantaged group domination or the movement going off track.

We found that although hashtag users promoted different, and often competing, definitions of the issues that the movement represents, rhetorical and identity strategies were used to advance inclusive definitions that focused on racism. When hashtag users addressed alternative definitions of movement actors and issues, representations of Otherness were used to characterise the proponents of these definitions as in opposition to the movement. Finally, we found that one way of resolving the tension between growing the movement and maintaining disadvantaged group control was by using identity and technology resources to

define how different groups can be movement advocates, and action strategies for social change. Thus, while internet-enabled action can be used as a tool to advance a social movement's social change aims, social identity and the social context also play a fundamental role; they shape, and are shaped by, the ways that social media is used for activism.

Contributions of the Present Thesis

As already mentioned, the individual chapters within this thesis have asked a range of distinct research questions; because of this, during each chapter's discussion section we have provided a detailed consideration of the study implications for that specific chapter's research question. In order to avoid repetition, in the present section we focus on the thesis' contributions to digitally-networked activism literature more generally.

Previous research has indicated that one of the most important functions of social media for facilitating collective action is to provide a structural bridge – or network – between physically distant individuals and groups (e.g., Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). Research has also indicated that once these physical connections have been made, psychological connections – for example, in the form of shared social identity – can be built that work to mobilise collective action and social change (e.g., McGarty et al., 2014). Our work in the present thesis extends this view, demonstrating that by utilising the affordances of social media – such as flexible environments, lower-threshold modes of participation, and networks between powerful and subordinated groups – psychological bridges and barriers between different identity groups and issues can be built. In particular, we found that information within-, participation through-, and communication via- social media, can affect representations of the self and salient others. Our work also indicates how this 'psychological drawbridge' function operates to advance and undermine social change.

Digital environments and initial mobilisation. In Chapters 2 and 3 we found evidence that digital environments can stimulate collective action by providing a psychological bridge between disparate identity groups. However, whereas previous research has focused on the capacity of digital technology to facilitate the building of *new* identities that bring individuals together for action (e.g., McGarty et al., 2014), our findings indicate the importance of *already existing* social groups. Theoretical literature suggests that shared identity between disadvantaged group members and their allies is integral to third-party mobilisation and social change (e.g., Subašić et al., 2008). Accordingly, existing literature that has examined how third-party group members respond to digital social movement campaigns has identified a key role for *emergent* opinion-based social identity – that arises as a result of efficacy and injustice appraisals – and mobilisation (Thomas et al., 2015). Our work extends these findings by indicating that pre-existing social identity can shape how third parties respond to social media campaigns.

Our findings in Chapters 2 and 3 also highlight the ways that social media can affect this process. We found that identity signals contained within social media environments have the capacity to affect cognitions about, and social evaluations of, contextually-relevant others. We also found evidence of how these cognitions and evaluations affect collective action mobilisation. Although previous research has indicated that social media can contain visual signals that affect how SMOs are evaluated (e.g., Xu et al., 2012), there is limited evidence for the psychological mechanisms behind these effects. Where previous research has examined how *identity* signals within digital environments work psychologically to affect mobilisation (e.g., Chan, 2010), it has tended to focus on text-based computer-mediated-communication and has examined the effect of a communicative partner's visibility (vs. anonymity). Our work extends these findings by indicating that identity signals that are unrelated to the visibility of a communicative partner also have the potential to affect

mobilisation, through their influence on social categorisation, affect, and perceptions of ingroup category interests.

Thus, whereas previous literature has found that homogenous representations of (in)group members are important in the relationship between technology, psychological outcomes, and ingroup mobilisation (Chan, 2010; Lea et al., 2007; Spears & Postmes, 2015), our work examining third parties highlights that, where communicative partners are identifiable as an outgroup member, there needs to be fit between the social identities of the communicating agent and the message recipient. This conclusion has important implications for recent research that suggests that digital technology is contributing to a personalisation of collective action, where individual motives are paramount and group identities of limited importance (e.g., Bennett & Sergerberg, 2012; 2013). Specifically, our findings demonstrate the influence of technology on group-level cognitions and evaluations – such as social categorisation and ingroup category interests – as well as the potential for these representations to affect mobilisation.

More generally, the findings in Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate that flexibility within digital environments, in regards to how a mobilising agent presents themselves and their message, is a key affordance of social media. They also reiterate the risks that a lack of user control can pose to socio-political influence and mobilisation. Specifically, our findings suggest that identity signals can be contained within social media that affect social categorisation, affect, perceived ingroup category interests and mobilisation. When social media corporations control the information that is presented to an audience – for example, in the case of peripheral information/digital advertisements – they can also influence these psychological processes. Although academics and social commentators have previously argued that there is a lack of neutrality and user control within social media, which can have

negative effects of political attitudes and behaviour (e.g., Parsier, 2012; Tufekci, 2016), research is only beginning to find evidence for these effects (e.g., Bond et al., 2012). Our findings speak to critical considerations of social media's effects on socio-political outcomes by demonstrating how user-controlled flexibility within social media can have an important effect on evaluations, social categorisation and mobilisation. Specifically, they suggest that mobilising agents can only have full control over their message, and how they themselves are perceived, when they control the central and peripheral information that is presented to their audience.

Internet-enabled action and subsequent participation. In Chapter 4 our findings provided evidence that, under certain circumstances, participating in internet-enabled action for one cause can build group-level self-evaluations that promote future collective action for other social issues. In this way, internet-enabled participation can provide a psychological bridge between different causes. Whereas previous research examining the psychological dimensions of internet-enabled participation has considered how engagement in low-threshold action affects subsequent and higher-threshold participation for the same cause (e.g., Kende et al., 2016; Schumann & Klein, 2015), our work extends this literature by examining the effect of low-threshold, internet-enabled action on higher-threshold participation for *other* social issues. Moreover, while there is a body of literature that has begun to consider how digital technology can help individuals engage with multiple social issues (e.g., Bastos & Mercea, 2016; Mercea & Bastos, 2016; Walgrave et al., 2011), this work has tended to focus on the structural/network affordances of digital technology; our findings highlight the psychological consequences of participation and how this can provide a bridge between different social issues.

On a more general level, regarding the relationship between digital technology and social change, our findings in Chapter 4 indicate that internet-enabled participation does not only affect society at large or the instrumental aims of social movements; therefore the efficacy of internet-enabled action should not only be evaluated on this basis. Rather, consistent with research examining the effects of traditional crowd protest (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 1999; 2005), our findings indicate that internet-enabled participation can have key consequences for group-level beliefs about the self; participative efficacy is not merely an individual-level evaluation, but concerns the effectiveness of one's own contribution to the group (van Zomeren et al., 2012). Group-level self-relevant consequences such as these should also be considered when evaluating the costs and benefits of internet-enabled action. Thus, by examining the self-evaluative consequences of internet-enabled action, our findings extend previous literature that has examined the effect of crowd action for self-evaluation and future participation (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 1999; 2005).

Digitally-facilitated communities and the management of ongoing campaigns. Finally, in Chapter 5 our findings indicated that digital technology can also raise psychological *barriers* between different identity groups, which can be used to advance social change aims. Whereas previous research has highlighted the importance of inclusive and superordinate identity for advancing social change goals, particularly in regards to the relationship between disadvantaged groups and third-party allies (e.g., Reicher et al., 2006; Subašić et al., 2008), our findings highlighted the role of intra- and intergroup differentiation as a strategy for advancing movement aims. In particular, our findings indicate that the affordances conferred by social media platforms – such as the ability to create hashtags and post photographs – play a key role in facilitating differentiation of this kind.

The findings also demonstrate a key role for rhetoric and the construction of social categories in the relationship between digital technology, collective action and social change. Extending previous literature that has primarily focused on the instrumental and mobilisation functions of internet-enabled action (e.g., Kende et al., 2016; Schumann & Klein, 2015), our findings indicate how social media can be used to advance the prefigurative aims of a movement through the rhetorical construction of social categories. As well as using rhetoric to prevent marginalisation through differentiation, hashtag users also constructed categories to argue for disadvantaged group control, and to exert pressure on advantaged and powerful outgroup members for collective action and change. Thus, our findings demonstrated how mobilisation and prefigurative functions of internet-enabled action were achieved rhetorically through social category construction, extending previous literature that has examined the role of category construction for mobilisation in traditional settings (e.g., Hopkins & Reicher, 1996a; Reicher et al., 2006).

As a whole, our findings in Chapter 5 speak to literature that has examined disadvantaged group empowerment and the detrimental role of advantaged groups in social change (e.g., Droogendyk et al., 2016; Drury & Reicher, 2009; Louis, 2009). Although previous research has suggested that advantaged and powerful groups can have a negative effect on social change, limited research has considered the strategies that disadvantaged groups engage in for resistance, particularly in digitally-networked spaces. By examining disadvantaged group resistance on social media, our findings extend existing literature that examines how disadvantaged groups secure their social change aims in traditional settings (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2009; Gordon, 2007; Nadler, 2002). Specifically, our work indicates how disadvantaged group members can use rhetoric and technological features within social media to balance disparate aims for social change, such as growing the movement beyond

disadvantaged group members while also preventing appropriation of their message. It identifies a key role for social category construction in this process.

On a more general level, and consistent with our findings in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 reiterates the need to look beyond the instrumental functions of internet-enabled action. In particular, it highlights the importance of interaction through internet-enabled action in the construction of social reality. It also indicates how the construction of new or alternative sets of social relations though social media can work to advance social change. Consistent with the ideas represented in existing literature examining traditional social movements (e.g., Hopkins & Reicher, 1997), rather than taking key social categories – such as the identity of disadvantaged group members and legitimate targets for protest – as givens, our findings indicate that these constructs are constituted through internet-enabled action. Moreover, our work indicates how these representations shape the nature and direction of collective action, as well as who has power within the movement to direct collective action. In sum, our findings in Chapter 5 extend existing literature examining internet-enabled action by examining how the rhetorical construction of social categories can be used in combination with the technological features within social media to advance social change.

Real-World Implications

Although the work in the thesis has provided the aforementioned theoretical contributions, there are also some real world implications for policy, SMOs and marketers of digital activism, which can be extrapolated from our findings.

Regarding the implications for policy and social media, our findings in Chapters 2 and 3 add weight to already existing concerns about limited transparency and user control within social media. As already outlined, our findings indicate that: (1) identity signals can be

contained within social media that affect cognitions, evaluations and socio-political behaviour, and (2) flexibility in how individuals present themselves and their message is a key affordance of social media. Specifically, they suggest that the regulation of social media needs to be user-led, particularly in regards to transparency, user freedom and control.

Many social media platforms make money by advertising to users. Algorithms are also used to promote content that users are more likely to interact with (share, like, comment) to generate more data and increase the value of their audience (Tufekci, 2015; van Dijck & Poell, 2013). Users often have limited control over the user-generated content and advertising they see; if they do not agree with a platform's business model, their only option (at least in most instances) is to not use the platform (Fuchs, 2014; Raynes-Goldie, 2010). Moreover, from a user's perspective, there is limited transparency about why they have been presented certain content rather than others and whether that content is an advert/paid for or not (e.g., Kennedy & Moss, 2015; Rawlinson, 2016). Although calls have been made for social media corporations to improve these areas, their own initiatives have been token at best (e.g., Tiku, 2017).

Concerns about transparency and user control could be (at least partly) attenuated by introducing policy that prioritises public accessibility, freedom and control over profits for corporations. Although an ideal situation for social media users could be new government regulation that makes an opt-in option mandatory, whereby users decide whether or not they want advertisements and algorithmically-filtered content, this proposal is likely to be unsatisfactory for social media corporations due to reduced profit. A compromise would be policy that mandates: (1) more user control over the information they see on social media (e.g., most recent posts/most popular posts/let platform decide), and (2) clear and transparent labelling of paid for content/adverts (e.g., clear and obvious labelling when content is paid

for, who has paid for the content, why that specific content is being displayed to the user). This would enable social media organisations to maintain their current business models, while also hopefully increasing accountability and attenuate some of the negative effects that social media can have on socio-political freedom.

Moving on from policy considerations, our findings also have relevance for how SMOs and influential activists conduct their work on social media. Chapter 5 indicated that digitally-networked spaces can be a key site of contestation in social movements, where intergroup contact is made between disadvantaged and powerful groups, and long-standing power asymmetries are both resisted and reproduced. Our findings also indicate that social media can be a place where debates are played out about the direction and scope of social movements. Thus, while social media can be a place for decision making within social movements, it is also a place where power inequalities exist.

In physical spaces, activists and SMOs have become increasingly aware of the power inequalities that operate within social movements and the ways that these inequalities can affect decision making (e.g., Mansbridge, 2002). For example, many western democracy systems neglect the voice of the minority; they use majority voting for decision making – where one individual has one vote and elected leaders make decisions – and the minority is expected to comply with the decision of the majority. Because this decision-making process can have negative impacts on social minorities, group commitment and affect (see Mansbridge, 2002), social movements have adopted strategies for consensus decision making ‘offline’. These strategies aim to create a dialogue between equals to find a solution that works for everyone; the strategies include the use of meetings, hand gestures, facilitators and formal guidelines (e.g., seedsforchange.org.uk). Nevertheless, there are limited tools and

guidance for consensus decision making in digitally-networked spaces, particularly for new and informal social movements that have grown from social media hashtags.

Considering the risks to inclusivity of using social media for activism, such as the marginalisation of minority voices and algorithms that afford attention to certain issues at the expense of others, our findings in Chapter 5 could have significance for SMOs operating on social media. In particular, they highlight the need to develop strategies, guidance and tools for inclusive and consensus decision making online. Established SMOs may also want to consider whether it is appropriate for them to fulfil certain strategic functions within new and 'connective' social movements. For example, they could help build capacity by giving attention to the new movement among their own followers; or they could engage in strategies to increase the movement's inclusivity, such as policing representations that marginalise social minorities. Influential individuals – such as "mircocelebrity activists" (Tufekci, 2013, p. 850) and community leaders – may also be able to add value in this area. In sum, a set of tools and guidelines for consensus decision making in new and predominantly 'connective' social movements, facilitated by established social movement actors, may help attenuate power inequalities and marginalisation when making decisions that determine the scope and direction of these movement.

Finally, we suggest that our findings also have relevance for platforms dedicated to promoting (and marketing) internet-enabled action. These platforms – like MoveOn.org, change.org and thunderclap.it – are digitally-networked spaces that host petitions and campaigns for multiple causes and social issues. They encourage their users to engage in internet-enabled action, such as signing an e-petition or sharing a campaign on social media, to create social change. Although the organisations responsible for these platforms have been criticised for promoting low impact action, over-simplifying issues and diverting attention

from radical social movements (e.g., White, 2015), the platforms themselves can have a large user base, and are able to garner a high volume of support for different causes. Chapter 4 may have particular relevance for organisations such as these, as our findings suggest that in addition to their work in marketing specific campaigns, these platforms could play a strategic role in developing activists who are concerned with multiple social issues by developing capacity building initiatives for their users.

In particular, our findings suggest that digital activism platforms could contribute to the development of self-evaluations that promote further activism by providing: (1) positive feedback after internet-enabled participation, and (2) opportunities for users to participate in other campaigns. Although many of these organisations already engage in marketing to promote new campaigns to platform users, these marketing communications typically focus on strategies that promote engagement within their own platform, rather than a longer-term or deeper commitment to socio-political issues in general (Karpf, 2016; White, 2015). For example, organisations involved in marketing digital activism could adapt their communications – based on the findings within this thesis and other research – to promote socio-political engagement in general. By engaging with empirical research and critical theory, digital activism organisations could design initiatives to facilitate higher-impact action, increased political interest and commitment, and the building of networks between their user-base and local SMOs. In particular, communications to their users could look to build key psychological antecedents, such as participative efficacy and a generalised activist identity, which promote generalised engagement in activism. In this way, rather than engaging in practices that look to market social change – and potentially result in reduced political engagement (White, 2015) – these platforms could contribute to the building of activists who are committed to social change.

Strengths, Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Although the General Discussion sections of the empirical chapters have already outlined some strengths, limitations, and future directions, there were also some general considerations that we have decided to highlight. The thesis as a whole has several key strengths, especially considering the breadth of the topic of interest: (1) we examined the effect of a number of different features of digital technology, including digital environments, internet-enabled action, and digitally-facilitated communities; (2) we considered different collective action processes, including initial mobilisation, continued engagement, and collective action behaviour; and (3) we adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods to support generalisations about phenomena and detailed analysis of a specific case.

Nevertheless, there were also some general limitations to our work. For one thing, in the empirical chapters, we predominantly relied on student samples. Previous research indicates that students aged 18-25 typically have reduced levels of social and political engagement compared to prior generations (see Beaumont, Colby, Ehrlich, & Torney-Purta, 2006). In each of the empirical chapters, participants reported low levels of collective action in response to quasi-behavioural and self-report measures. If the studies were to be repeated with older members of the general public, or individuals who were committed to activism, we would expect to find much greater levels of collective action engagement.

In addition to this, and as already acknowledged in the empirical chapters, we have not considered non-normative or more radical forms of collective action. We have also not tested the effect of the digital environment and internet-enabled modes of engagement on ingroup mobilisation. It is important to recognise these limitations because existing literature indicates that there may be different antecedents for, and consequences of, non-normative, radical and/or own group action (e.g., Becker & Tausch, 2015; Iyer & Ryan, 2009; Tausch et

al., 2011; Thomas & Louis, 2014). Nevertheless, other processes, such as the effect of identity signals on social categorisation and the effect of internet-enabled action on participative efficacy, may be the same in certain cases. As a consequence, future research is warranted to consider these processes.

Our findings are also limited because we have focused on collective action aimed at promoting social change; however, digital technology can also be used to act *against* social change (e.g., Carney, 2016; Gillham, 2011; Gillham et al., 2013). Although action for and against social change share some of the same psychological motivations, such as perceived injustice and ingroup identification (e.g., Doosje, van den Bos, Loseman, Feddes, & Maan, 2012; van Zomeren et al., 2008), literature also highlights unique predictors. For example, Right-Wing Authoritarianism and Social Dominance Orientation have been found to be positively associated with action to support an advantaged group, but negatively associated with, or unrelated to, collective action in support of the disadvantaged group (Saeri, Iyer, & Louis, 2015). While existing literature has begun to demonstrate some of the ways that digital technology can be used to repress social change movements and maintain inequality, limited research has examined the psychological dimensions of this relationship. For example, although we were unable to examine social media users' subjective experiences, our findings in Chapter 5 indicate that social media can be used to advance specific ideologies and actions that discredit and divert attention from social change attempts, while promoting advantaged-group interests. Future research should examine how the use of digital technology for maintaining the status quo is shaped by the psychological concerns of technology users, as well as the psychological consequences of using technology for these aims.

Future research should also examine how the affordances of new and emerging technologies have the potential to affect collective action and social change. Our work in the

present thesis focused on Web 2.0, or social media; these are applications that emphasise user-generated content and social relations (e.g., Giustini, 2006). Nevertheless, new technologies are continually being developed that do not centre around these things; for example, virtual reality, distributed-ledger technology, quantum computing, artificial intelligence and robotics. Although in some cases versions of these technologies have been around for many years (e.g., virtual reality), and other instances represent recent technological breakthroughs (e.g., quantum computing), these technologies are likely to become increasingly available, accessible and sophisticated over future years and decades. As a consequence, their potential influence on socio-political action, and the socio-political landscape more generally, should be examined in future research. In many cases, social commentators and entrepreneurs have already begun to identify possible risks and opportunities for activism and social change. For example, initiatives exist that are trialing the use of distributed-ledger technology for activism; in one such initiative (bcdc.online), individuals are given tokens when they recycle that can in turn be used to finance renewable energy projects. In the area of virtual reality and robotics, activists are reportedly excited about the development of ‘beaming’ technology – which allows one individual to interact with another via a robot – for enhancing workers’ rights; for example, it has been suggested that an activist could beam into a robotic ant that could go into a mine to check working conditions and the treatment of workers (Dack, n.d.). Nevertheless, scant empirical or theoretical literature has examined the risks and opportunities of these emerging technologies, many of which are likely to have uses and affordances that are different from social media. Thus, future research is warranted in this area also.

Conclusion

Our goal in the present thesis was to consider the ways that digital technology can be used to advance and undermine collective action and social change. Although activists, social commentators and political leaders have become increasingly optimistic about the ways that digital technology in general – and social media in particular – can be used to promote socio-political action, there is also concern that new media technologies are undermining social change. Our work in the thesis has helped to elucidate some of ways that technology use in collective action shapes, and is shaped by, the social psychological concerns of technology users. In particular, our findings emphasise the importance of social identity for determining the effect of digital technology on collective action. They also highlight that the social and psychological economy of events can itself be influenced by technology use. The thesis has extended previously literature by demonstrating how the mobilisation and social change functions of internet-enabled action are facilitated and undermined by the group-level concerns of technology users. Our contribution is therefore most appropriately captured as: emphasising the importance of group-based evaluations of the self and salient others in the relationship between digital technology, collective action and social change. Because – as detailed by Drury and Reicher (2000; 2009) – it is only by understanding the position of the self and others in the intergroup context that collective action and social change are made possible.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Stimulus text for Study 1.1

Hot topic: Should we do more to stop nuclear development in Britain?

In late 2012, the UK energy company Horizon secured a £20 billion investment in new nuclear at Wylfa B on the isle of Anglesey in Wales. This investment is supported by the UK Government who has entered a cooperation agreement with Horizon; subject to ministerial approval, by the end of 2016 the Government hopes to have agreed an in-principle guarantee to financially support the nuclear power plant. Horizon plan to start work on the new site in 2015, with the first nuclear construction planned for 2019.

The Politics

The UK Government welcomes the development of the nuclear site as it is in line with two of their official policies: "Helping local economies to grow" and "Increasing the use of low-carbon technologies". The investment in the site is expected to bring between 5,000 and 6,000 construction jobs to the area, as well as up to 1,000 well paid, high quality employment opportunities once the site is operational. In addition to this, the plant will be a source of low-carbon energy; the Government has made a commitment to an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Although these are positive statistics, some argue that the costs associated with nuclear power far outweigh the benefits and do not want this power station to be built.

The Risks of Nuclear

The impact of nuclear accidents has been a topic of debate since the first nuclear reactors were constructed. It has also been a key factor in public concern about nuclear facilities. Some technical measures to reduce the risk of accidents or to minimize the amount of radioactivity released to the environment have been adopted. Despite the use of such measures, there have been many accidents with varying impacts as well near misses and incidents. Mistakes do occur and in the last three years alone, over 1600 people have died as a result of nuclear accidents. Statistics like these cast doubt on whether nuclear power can ever really be “safe”.

Even in the absence of nuclear accidents, the evidence suggests that nuclear power plants are far from safe. New research has found that people living near nuclear power stations stand a heightened risk of developing cancer. Radiation expert Dr Chris Busby found that children living near one nuclear power station were 11 times more likely to develop myeloid leukaemia than the national average; water sources near the site were also found to contain high levels of radioactive particles. The most shocking fact about these findings is that the nuclear station in question was emitting radioactive discharges that were well within the levels permitted by the UK Government. Are we willing to sit back and allow these risks to our own health and the health of our children?

Wylfa B

The radioactive waste that will be produced at Wylfa B will be so hot that needs to be stored on site for at least 150 years; so much waste will be produced that the storage facilities will

be the size of three football pitches. This amount of waste, along with the amount of time that it will need to be stored on site, should be a real cause for concern.

Plans reveal that the Wylfa B nuclear site will be 230 hectares (568 acres) in size. The area around the site is of huge environmental importance; the Heritage Coast lies adjacent to the proposed site and almost the whole coastline of Anglesey is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Appraisal of Sustainability in the National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure identified the potential for adverse effects on sites of international significance if Wylfa B is developed. With green spaces and areas of natural beauty on the decline, do we really want to risk irreversible damage to the environment? Nuclear products can remain hazardous for thousands of years and it is clear from previous incidents that any nuclear accident would have long lasting and irrevocable consequences to the local area.

A way forward

The risks of nuclear have made some international communities rethink their opinions about the sustainability of nuclear power. Many nations who previously invested in nuclear have decided to phase out the technology, making a financial commitment to renewable energy sources instead; so why aren’t our health and environmental resources valued in the same way?

Research has indicated that Wales uses 24TWhr of electricity annually and is capable of producing at least 33TWhr annually from renewable resources if the potential of sea, wind and biomass were used effectively. The "People Against Wlyfa B", an organisation heavily involved in the protests against the development, have created a manifesto outlining how 2500-3000 sustainable jobs could be created in the area if the renewable energy sector was

invested in instead of the nuclear plant. This manifesto will be submitted to the UK Government, along with a petition against the site, at the end of July.

A Call to Action

Taken together, I do feel that it is our duty to stop the development of this power station; it represents a real threat to us as inhabitants and poses real risks to the environment. The whole of the UK Government needs to know that the nuclear development at Wylfa B is something that we do not want. Two other sites were rejected from the initial list of potential locations following objections from the public, so with enough people taking a stand this build can be blocked too. I urge everyone reading this to think about what we want for our nation's future and if you agree that a nuclear power station is not part of it, please take action and say no to the development at Wylfa B. You can sign the petition, contact your MP, join a protest near you or share this story with your friends by following the links below.

SIGN THE PETITION HERE

WRITE TO YOUR MP

VIEW UPCOMING DEMONSTRATIONS

Appendix B: Additional variables measured in Study 1.1

- Comprehension check ("Was the author for or against the nuclear development?"; "Where is the proposed nuclear development to be built?")
- Demographics ("Please describe your nationality"; "What is your age?"; "What is your gender?")
- Welsh identification ("I am glad to be Welsh"; "I see myself as Welsh")
- Prior knowledge ("Prior to taking part in this study, how knowledgeable did you feel about nuclear power in general and the issues or debates surrounding the topic?"; "Prior to taking part in this study, how knowledgeable did you feel about the nuclear development at Wylfa B specifically and the issues or debates surrounding the topic?")
- Distraction ("In the course of completing this study did you look up or otherwise do your own research on nuclear power, Wylfa B, related campaigns or associated companies?")

Appendix C: Stimulus text for Study 1.2

Hot Topic: Should we do more to save the UK's steel industry?

The UK's long tradition of steel making is teetering on the brink. Tata, the owning company, confirmed that 270 jobs would be cut from the closure of Scotland's last two major steel plans at Dalzell in Motherwell and Clydebridge in Cambuslang. The firm blamed a flood of cheap steel from overseas and high energy costs for its decision to close the sites.

The news has been devastating, not only for the workers and their families, but also for the surrounding communities. The steel industry is iconic in Lanarkshire, sustaining jobs and boosting the local economy. The loss is significant, not only because work in steel-making communities is hard to find, but a host of ancillary jobs will also go. There is also the emotional attachment to these kinds of skilled jobs that made the Clyde the manufacturing powerhouse of the UK. The workers at the Dalzell and Clydebridge plants are highly skilled and make a valuable contribution to their communities. Local leaders have argued that allowing the plants to close is allowing these skills to "wither on the vine" and that the workers must be allowed to maintain the skills that they have built up over so many years, as this is vital for securing a manufacturing future for the area.

Local leaders have said they will leave "no stone unturned" looking for a new outside buyer for the Scottish operations, though the lack of a market makes this an uphill task, and no firms have yet expressed an interest to union leaders. Meanwhile, a task force has been established to bring together key representatives who will discuss further options to keep the plants open. Its goal is to "seek a viable alternative" to the loss of Dalzell and Clydebridge, which opened

in 1872 and 1887 respectively, and were once at the heart of a Scottish steel industry employing more than 10,000 people at its peak. However, on Friday, Tata announced £1.5m funding to help job creation in the communities around the Scottish plants - implying it views job losses there as inevitable.

Union leaders said more should be done to safeguard the existing workforce, with a number of measures being proposed by a number of different sources. The UK Government have received calls to step in to counter the dumping of cheap overseas steel into the market which has propelled the closures, as well as brining forward help for industries with high energy costs. Others have suggested that they should also be considering public ownership of the sites. However, at present the response has been minimal.

A Call to Action

It is our duty to save the steel plants at Dazell and Clydebridge; the steel making industry is not just central to the local economy and the soul of the local community, but also representative of the manufacturing industry in the UK. The whole of the UK Government needs to know that local industrial centres like these are worthy of being saved. If you believe that more should be done to save the steel plants at Dazell and Clydebridge you can take action by sharing #SaveOurSteel on social media; you can also sign the petition, write to your MP or attend a demonstration near you.

Appendix D: Additional variables measured in Study 1.2

- Comprehension check ("Was the author of the blog for or against the closure of the steel plants?"; "Where was the location of the steel plants that were discussed in the blog?")
- Demographics ("Please describe your nationality"; "What is your age?"; "How would you describe your gender?")
- Prior knowledge ("Prior to taking part in this study, how knowledgeable were you about the closure of steel plants in the UK?")
- Distraction ("In the course of completing this study did you look up or otherwise do your own research on any of the issues discussed in the blog?")

Appendix E: Stimulus text for Study 1.3

New figures produced by Scottish Renewables have shown that one in six jobs in Scotland's renewable sector will be put in jeopardy as a result of changes to government subsidies. The industry body said thousands of posts could go as a result of changes to UK government support schemes. The job losses are likely to be felt within the next year.

Changing government policies

At the election, the UK government said that it would be scrapping the existing wind energy subsidy schemes for onshore developments. It said that its support had allowed Scotland to create a strong industry in onshore wind. Brutally cutting subsidies now will effectively destroy Scotland's onshore sector at a critical time in its development. This makes no economic sense.

Bad for the Scottish economy

Changing government policies have reduced the size of the market, cut the order book and led to a lesser requirement for staff. Scottish Renewables are predicting a 17% drop in employment over the coming 12 months. There are currently 21,000 people working in the renewables industry in Scotland.

CASE STUDY: Wind turbine manufacturer and project developer ENERCON UK employs 155 people in Scotland but anticipates this number could fall by up to a third in the next 12 months. Country Manager Richard Hatton said the primary reason for this potential decline was: "Government policy on onshore wind, leading to a much smaller market, reduced orders and a reduction in requirements for staff across the business."

Take action

The UK government needs to take action to protect Scotland's onshore wind sector.

Together, we can convince the government to stand up for Scottish onshore wind.

Will you join us? Sign up to throw your weight behind Scottish onshore wind.

Appendix F: Additional variables measured in Study 1.3

- Comprehension check ("Was the author of the blog for or against keeping subsidies for onshore wind?"; "Where was the location of the onshore wind industry discussed in the blog?")
- Blog author identity salience ("While reading the blog article, to what extent did you perceive the blog writer as being of Scottish nationality?"; While reading the blog article, to what extent did you perceive the blog writer as being of English nationality?")
- Demographics ("Please describe your nationality"; "What is your age in years?"; "How would you describe your gender?")
- Prior knowledge ("Prior to taking part in this study, how knowledgeable did you feel about the end of onshore wind subsidies?")
- Distraction ("While completing this study did you look up or otherwise do your own research on any of the issues discussed in the blog?")

Appendix G: Transcript from the video used in Study 2.1

I want to give a little blog about what's happened with me trying to get access to see my children. Start from the beginning. About a year ago…I separated from my partner, my then-partner. We weren't getting on, it seemed like the right thing to do. We probably got on better afterwards, to an extent, we at least could talk to one another. Saw my children everyday when they finished school and nursery and I finished work. Used to go to the park, went to the house, play in the garden. Everything I was doing before just not in the relationship with her. This lasted for a couple of months and then my ex-partner said that she thinks it's the best idea if I don't see them as often because they'd got other things going on after school – after-school clubs for instance and homework for my older child. Not happy about it. But, you know I thought that – she probably knows best – it probably is interfering, a little bit with it. Again, started seeing them maybe one or two days in the week and then on the weekends. And then I go into the house for my normal Saturday and nobody's answering the door. So I ring. I text. No response. Uh…sit there for a little while, well, stand there for a little while, hoping to get a response. And…uh…basically a police officer comes, car pulls up, tells me that I'm making a nuisance of myself and I'm not wanted at the property. Go home, try ringing my ex, no response. So I just send a few texts asking why I couldn't see my children and when I can see my children again. Get a text back eventually saying that she doesn't want me to see them anymore. Obviously I ask why. She said I'm not…the right influence for them at this time. She said if I don't like it, take me to court. End result was that the judge...uh, basically said that I could have access to my children. So this goes on fo- for a good five, six, maybe seven weeks. I'm seeing my children every other weekend at my

property and I get to speak to them as often as I'd like. I go to pick them up one Saturday morning, to bring them around to mine, and she's refusing to – to let me see them. I….this – this – this was last weekend. I'm a bit at a loss at the moment. The police said…they're not going to arrest her, they won't arrest her for breaking the court's order she's the mother and she's their…their main carer, main responsible adult. They won't even fine her because of the same reasons. She's got….complete control, basically. Even the courts won't do anything against the mother. This…cannot be right. I'm going to have to go through court again and try again to get what I already had. And again it's going to cost me more money, seemingly because I'm male. I have no idea.

Appendix H: Text from the social media post used in Study 2.1

I am [just a regular dad/ a member of Fathers 4 Justice/ a member of Fathers 4 Equal Rights] and this is my own personal story.

My experiences of being a father in the UK's family court system.

[VIDEO]

Every year in the UK, thousands of fathers like me lose contact with their children. No child should be denied their human right to a father, yet Britain's current legislation allows and legitimises violations of this very right.

The Government's current policy means that as a default, mothers are automatically afforded full parental rights if a separation occurs. Fathers, on the other hand, are treated as second class citizens and re ultimately left to rely on the mother's good graces to determine if and when he can see his child. As a testament to this, in the UK, 200 children lose contact with their fathers every day; this means that currently there are nearly 4 million fatherless children.

Change is needed to grant fathers the same rights as mothers when it comes to parenting. As a starting point, fathers need the right to see their child when a divorce or separation occurs; in the UK fathers do not have this right.

If you believe that fathers and mothers deserve equal parental rights, like or share this post.

Please join the campaign to give fathers equal rights to see their children after separation.

You can sign a petition, write to your MP or join a demonstration near you.

Appendix I: Additional variables measured in Study 2.1

- Social categorisation (what groups, or types, of people do you think the issues discussed in the post are most relevant for? Please write as much or as little as you wish)
- Issue relevance (e.g., “The issues discussed in the post and video are irrelevant to most people”; “The issues discussed in the post and video are relevant to everybody”; “The issues discussed in the post and video are relevant to most single fathers”)
- Familiarity with fathers’ rights organisations (“How familiar are you with [Father4Justice/Fathers 4 Equal Rights]?”; “How familiar are you with [other] Fathers’ rights organisations?”)
- Trust in fathers’ rights organisations (“How much do you trust [Father4Justice/Fathers 4 Equal Rights]?”; “How much do you trust [other] Fathers’ rights organisations?”)
- General feelings towards fathers’ rights organisations (“what are your general feelings towards the following organisations? Please enter any feelings or thoughts into the relevant boxes below”)

Appendix J: Additional variables measured in Study 2.2

- Salience of intergroup context ("Please select the option that best describes the current closeness of: men and women; mothers as a group and women as a whole; fathers as a group and men as a whole")

Appendix K: Additional variables measured in Study 3

Screening questionnaire

- Internet and social media use ("Do you have access to the internet?", "How often do you use the internet?", "Do you use social media?", "Do you have any of the following social media accounts and if so, how often do you use them?")
- Contact details (e.g. name, email address)

Pre-manipulation measures

- Prior know and perceptions of the STOP! Campaign (e.g. "How interesting does the STOP! Campaign sound", "Before taking part in the experiment, how knowledgeable were you about the STOP! Campaign")
- Global evaluations of the STOP! Campaign and its aim (e.g. "I think the STOP! Campaign is [good-bad]", "I think ending violence against migrant women would be [good-bad]")
- Qualitative activism experience (e.g. "Which social media platforms have you used to campaign related activity in the last week", "What online or offline campaign related activity have you taken in the last week")

Post-manipulation measures

- Distractor items (e.g. "I found the website easy to use", "The website had a clear layout")
- Perceived importance of online collective action (e.g. "I believe that sharing the campaign on social media, in itself, is only a small contribution towards ending violence against migrant women")

- Perceived group and individual efficacy (e.g. “I believe that the STOP! Campaign can end violence against migrant women”, “I believe that I can help to end violence against migrant women”; van Zomeren et al., 2013)
- Affective response to campaign (e.g. “Thinking about the situation that these women face makes me feel guilty”)
- Perceived injustice (e.g. “I think that it is unfair that migrant women are unable to access domestic violence shelters”)
- Identification with STOP! Campaign supporters and those who support its aim (e.g. “I identify with supporters of the STOP! Campaign”, “I don’t feel strong ties with people who want to end violence against migrant women”; Leach et al., 2008)
- Global evaluations of the STOP! Campaign and its aim (e.g. “I think the STOP! Campaign is [good-bad]”, “I think ending violence against migrant women would be [good-bad]”)
- Demographics

Follow-up questionnaire

- How many minutes did you spend on each activity?

Appendix L: Additional analyses in Study 3

To correct for positive skewness, all analyses were re-run using the Tukey's ladder of power (Tukey, 1977) transformed typical online activism measure (Min = 0, Max = 6.10; *M* = 1.57, *SD* = 1.57).

Preliminary analysis

Randomisation check. Randomisation checks revealed no significant differences between action efficacy feedback and internet-enabled action conditions in terms of age or gender, all χ^2s < 1.79, *B* < 1.45, *F*s < 2.30, *p*s > .077, η_p^2s < .02. Binary logistic regression revealed a small, but significant relationship between Tukey transformed typical online activism and self-selection into the internet-enabled action condition, *B* = .24, *SE* = .12, *p* = .048, *Exp(B)* = 1.27, *Exp(B)* 95% *CI* [1.002, 1.616]. Unsurprisingly, people who typically take online action were more likely to take online action in this study. However, the size of this effect in no way precludes the typical online activism measure being used as a moderator (see Engelen, Cupta, Strenger, & Brettel, 2015).

Main analysis

Longer-term, cross-domain action. To test whether the effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action depended on action efficacy and typical online activism, a 2(action efficacy feedback: low, high) X 2(internet-enabled action: no action taken, action taken) X 2(action type: online, offline) X Tukey transformed typical online activism (continuous, mean-centred) mixed ANOVA was conducted, with action type as the repeated-measures factor. Although the repeated-measures factor is not directly relevant theoretically, distinguishing between online and offline action in the analysis tests whether the pattern of effects is the same or different between the two media. Specifically,

any interactions involving the repeated-measures factor indicate that the pattern of effects is different for online and offline action.

The main effect of action type was significant, $F(1, 135) = 7.87$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$, indicating that participants performed more online actions ($M = .08$; $SD = .11$) than offline actions ($M = .06$; $SD = .07$). Likewise, Tukey transformed typical online activism was reliably associated with longer-term, cross-domain collective action, $F(1, 135) = 34.03$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .20$.

The main effect of Tukey transformed typical online activism was qualified by a two-way interaction with action type, $F(1, 135) = 5.49$, $p = .021$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Further analysis revealed that the simple main effect of action type was non-significant for individuals with low ($M - 1SD$) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 0.06$, $p > .250$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, but significant for individuals with high levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 20.30$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .13$. Individuals with high levels of Tukey transformed typical levels of online activism preformed more online actions ($M = .13$; $SD = .01$) than offline actions ($M = .08$; $SD = .08$). Thus the tendency to take more online than offline actions was particularly apparent for individuals with high levels of Tukey's transformed typical online activism.

The main effect of Tukey transformed typical online activism was also qualified by the two-way interaction between action efficacy condition and Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 4.85$, $p = .029$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, the two-way interaction between internet-enabled action and Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 5.01$, $p = .027$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, and the three-way interaction between efficacy feedback, Tukey transformed typical online activism and internet-enabled action $F(1, 135) = 11.11$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$. The effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action thus

depended on participants' typical levels of online activism and the action efficacy feedback they received.

Further analysis indicated that the two-way interaction between action efficacy feedback and internet-enabled action was significant for those with high (*M* + 1*SD*) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 12.19$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$, but non-significant for those with low (*M* – 1*SD*) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 2.78$, $p = .098$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. In turn, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was significant for individuals with high (*M* + 1*SD*) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism in the high action efficacy condition, $F(1, 135) = 16.78$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$. Specifically, taking internet-enabled action led to greater levels of longer-term, cross-domain action for participants with high ($M = .07$, $SE = .14$ vs $M = .16$, $SE = .02$) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism who also received high action efficacy feedback. In contrast, in the low action efficacy condition, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was non-significant for individuals with low (*M* - 1*SD*) mean and high (*M* + 1*SD*) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 0.22$, $p > .250$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, $F(1, 135) = 0.09$, $p > .250$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$ and $F(1, 135) = .80$, $p > .250$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$ respectively.

Although all other main effects and interactions were non-significant, all *F*s < .47, *p*s > .250, η_p^2s < .01, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was in the direction of the slacktivism hypothesis for those with low (*M* - 1*SD*) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism in the high action efficacy condition, $F(1, 135) = 2.73$, $p = .101$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$ (action not taken: $M = .04$, $SE = .01$ vs action taken: $M = -.03$, $SE = .04$).

***Participative efficacy*.** To examine the processes that underlie the conditional effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action, a 2(action efficacy feedback: low, high) X 2(internet-enabled action: no action taken, action taken) X Tukey

transformed typical online activism (continuous, mean centred) between-participants ANOVA was performed on the participative efficacy scale.

Although the action efficacy feedback main effect was non-significant, the 2-way interaction between action efficacy feedback and Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 4.20$, $p = .042$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, and the 3-way interaction, $F(1, 135) = 4.78$, $p = .030$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, were both significant. All other main effects and interactions were non-significant, all Fs < 1.11, ps > .250, η_p^2s < .01. The effect of internet-enabled action on participative efficacy thus depended on participants' typical levels of online activism and the action efficacy feedback they received.

Further analysis indicated that the two-way interaction between action efficacy feedback and internet-enabled action was significant for participants with high (M + 1SD) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 4.73$, $p = .031$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$, but not for participants with low (M - 1SD) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 1.39$, $p = .241$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. In turn, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was marginally significant in the high efficacy condition for people with high (M + 1SD) levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 3.71$, $p = .056$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Specifically, taking internet-enabled action ($M = 4.84$, $SE = .35$) compared to not taking internet enabled action ($M = 3.99$, $SE = .30$) led to greater perceptions of participative efficacy. In contrast, in the low efficacy condition, the simple main effect of internet-enabled action was non-significant for people with high levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism, $F(1, 135) = 1.35$, $p = .246$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Reframing these analyses in terms of the simple main effect of action efficacy feedback, this was significant for participants with high levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism when they took internet-enabled action, $F(1, 135) = 8.99$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. Specifically, when participants with high levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism took internet-enabled action, receiving high (M =

4.84, *SE* = .35) compared to low (*M* = 3.27, *SE* = .39) action efficacy feedback led to greater perceptions of participative efficacy.

Moderated mediation analysis

To test whether participative efficacy mediated the conditional effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action, moderated mediation analyses were performed using Model 11 of PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). Specifically, this model tested whether taking internet-enabled action affects participative efficacy, which in turn predicts further action, with the internet-enabled action – participative efficacy path moderated by action efficacy and Tukey transformed typical online activism; this model reflects the three-way interaction reported earlier. Bootstrap analysis — including the participative efficacy scale as the mediator — indicated a significant positive indirect effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action for individuals with high levels of Tukey transformed typical online activism in the high efficacy feedback condition, through greater feelings of participative efficacy: 95% *CI* [0.0002, 0.0358], indirect effect: 0.01, *SE* = .01, 10000 bias corrected bootstraps. The indirect effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action was non-significant under all other combinations of the moderators. The direct effect of internet-enabled action on longer-term, cross-domain collective action was also positive and significant: 95% *CI* [0.0009, 0.0580], direct effect: 0.03, *SE* = .01, 10000 bias corrected bootstraps; specifically, engaging in internet-enabled action facilitated longer-term, cross-domain action.