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ABSTRACT

Allyship is a growing phenomenon in many organizational contexts, and the involvement of advantaged group allies in identity-oriented social movements (e.g., men in the feminist movement) is ubiquitous. However, the impression that these advantaged group allies make on their intended beneficiaries is unclear. Over the course of four studies, we explore disadvantaged group activists' attitudes toward their advantaged group allies. We find converging evidence that disadvantaged group activists prefer advantaged group allies who engage in actions that demonstrate high levels of trustworthiness (e.g., selflessness, loyalty) and low levels of influence (e.g., centrality, power) in the movement, whereas non-activists show only a significant preference on the influence dimension. This evidence was observed in a survey of 117 social movement activists (Study 1), and in three experiments with 752 liberal women and nonbinary individuals (Study 2), 305 feminist social movement activists (Study 3), and a separate sample of 805 feminist social movement activists (Study 4). Taken together, our research documents the causal effects that different allyship behaviors have on beneficiaries' attitudes toward advantaged group allies (Studies 2, 3, & 4) while recruiting samples of currently engaged movement activists to solicit their unique perspectives (Studies 1, 3, & 4). We thereby identify the specific ways of being an advantaged group ally that elicit the most positive impressions from their intended beneficiaries, which have direct implications for supporting intergroup coalitions and social change.

Social movements are sustained, collective challenges to the social structure by people who share a common purpose of changing the status quo (Tarrow, 1994). Social movements are fundamentally organized around the goal of social change (McCarthy & Zald, 1977), though they vary in size, scope, and ideology (Snow and Soule, 2010). Since the mid-1960s, social movements in western societies have increasingly considered not only economic concerns, but also social and cultural concerns as the guiding reason for action (i.e., "New Social Movements";

Buechler, 1995). A subset of these new social movements is called *identity-oriented social movements*, which derive their principles for collective action based on inequities associated with social identities such as gender, race, and sexuality (Bernstein, 2005; Eskridge, 2002; Touraine, 1981).¹ In these movements (e.g., the feminist movement), activists must confront outside forces that resist change, and navigate conflict within the movement's own membership base (Droogendyk, Wright, Lubensky, & Louis, 2016). In identity-oriented social movements, this

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¹ The *identity-oriented* aspect of these movements differs from the notion of collective *identification*, which underlie most forms of collective action (Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; Wright, 2010). For instance, while the Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA; Van Zomeren et al., 2008) uses the term identity "as an explanation of collective action in terms of peoples' subjective sense of identification with a group" (p. 505), social movements that are *identity-oriented* refer to movements where inequities tied to a social identity govern the logic for collective action. For example, even though both the environmental and feminist movements might entail identification as environmentalists or feminists, only the latter would be considered an identity-oriented movement.

conflict often occurs between two categories of activists: disadvantaged group activists and advantaged group allies.

Disadvantaged group activists are social movement activists who belong to structurally and historically marginalized groups working to empower their group and address their vulnerabilities which are the focus of an identity-oriented social movement, and advantaged group allies are activists in the same movement who belong to structurally and historically dominant groups with respect to the same identity dimension and presumably aim to improve the treatment of a disadvantaged group (Ashburn-Nardo, 2018; Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Droogendyk et al., 2016; Ostrove & Brown, 2018; Russell & Bohan, 2016). Even though members of movements espouse the same broad goals and objectives, many disadvantaged group activists, who stand to benefit directly from the achievement of movement goals, are dissatisfied with their advantaged group allies' involvement (Carmon, 2017; Linly, 2016). This research examines the foundations of disadvantaged group activists' perceptions of their advantaged group allies to understand activists' varying attitudes toward their allies.

1. Understanding disadvantaged group activists' perceptions of advantaged group allies

Involvement in identity-oriented movements is a deeply personal endeavor for disadvantaged group activists. Women and nonbinary activists in the feminist movement, for example, fight for the recognition of their basic human rights, including equitable access to healthcare, education, and employment. When disadvantaged group activists encounter potential allies in this high-stakes environment, two questions might be particularly useful for them to consider when evaluating their advantaged group allies: Can these advantaged group allies be trusted? Are advantaged group allies engaging appropriately in the movement?

To understand how activists make assessments of their advantaged group allies, we integrate research on impression formation from social (Brambilla & Leach, 2014; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Fiske & Dupree, 2014) and organizational psychology (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). We situate our research within the two core dimensions of social cognition and judgment—communion and agency—and we theorize that, when advantaged group allies join movements, disadvantaged group activists consider these allies' levels of communion and agency, which we translate into the social movement context as trustworthiness and influence, respectively.

When disadvantaged group activists work with their advantaged group allies, assessments of allies' communion or their "intent" (Fiske et al., 2002) requires disadvantaged group activists to assess whether these allies are trustworthy members of the movement. We use the term trustworthiness to capture the communion dimension of impression formation for several reasons. First, previous research and theorizing has noted how trustworthiness is a key component of the communion dimension (Brambilla & Leach, 2014; Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008), and among the most desirable personal characteristics a person can have (Cottrell, Neuberg, & Li, 2007). Second, research in applied and organizational psychology has examined the importance of trustworthiness in impression formation in contexts where people work together, finding that, in various work settings, trustworthiness includes assessments of others' benevolence (concern), integrity (fairness), and ability (task-specific knowledge) (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011; Mayer et al., 1995).² These components of trustworthiness shape people's acceptance or resistance to help from outgroup members (Carton & Knowlton, 2017), and are consistent with previous work on perceptions of advantaged group allies (Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Ostrove & Brown, 2018), which

identify affirmation (e.g., care, respect) and informed action (willingness to be active on social issues) as key components of allyship. Given the high-stakes context of social movements, judgments of trustworthiness based on observable signs of loyalty, morality, and knowledge about disadvantaged group activists' experiences are likely to play an important role in these activists' attitudes toward advantaged group allies.

We extend upon previous research on perceptions of advantaged group allies, which has typically not involved social activist samples, and posit that the social movement context requires disadvantaged group activists to attend to an additional dimension: their advantaged group allies' level of influence in the movement. Throughout history, advantaged group allies have co-opted social movements, such as the LGBTQ movement (Elbaz, 1997), by prioritizing their own goals at the expense of disadvantaged group activists (Bernstein, 2005). This history of co-optation, enabled by the societal power and privilege held by advantaged group allies, requires disadvantaged group activists to assess whether their allies are engaging appropriately as movement members. Specifically, disadvantaged group activists must consider their advantaged group allies' agency or level of *influence* in the movement, which serves as a signal of allies' capacity to encroach on the movement. Influence, which refers to someone's ability to "generate change in the social world" (Cialdini & Trost, 1998), manifests in movements through the roles people play, as leaders or followers, which correspond to their ability to make decisions. This enactment of (internal) influence within the movement differs from the (external) influence that advantaged group allies might have outside of the movement through their privileged societal positions, occupational statuses, and associated resources (e.g., elites in social movements; Tarrow, 1994). In our current research, we use the term influence to refer to the influence that allies have *in* movements to pursue a psychological understanding of disadvantaged group activists' experiences with their allies.³

In the following sections, we outline two divergent paths that disadvantaged group activists might take as they form their attitudes toward advantaged group allies based on perceptions of trustworthiness and influence. Consistent with contemporary frameworks of allyship research (Louis et al., 2019), we situate these competing hypotheses in research on confrontations of bias, intergroup relations, and intergroup prosociality. Further, we answer calls for research that extend upon previous research on allyship (Radke, Kutlaca, Siem, Wright, & Becker, 2020), which various researchers note have been predominantly qualitative (Louis et al., 2019), uncritically positive of allyship (Droogendyk

² The term ability refers to knowledge or dedication required to perform a specific task (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011) and is not to be confused with the term competence from the stereotype content model (Fiske et al., 2002), which mirrors the agency dimension of social cognition.

³ We acknowledge that the concepts of trustworthiness and influence are interrelated. A history of co-optation, for instance, has implications not only for the level of movement influence disadvantaged group activists might want for their allies, but also for the level of trustworthiness they might perceive. High levels of trustworthiness might reduce concerns about co-optation or misbehavior associated with high levels of influence (Robinson, 1996). Nonetheless, we posit that the separable, independent effects of each dimension are perhaps more notable than their interaction. As in the example of co-optation, the proximal concern for disadvantaged group activists is the potential derailment of the movement by advantaged group allies, which would primarily rely on their allies' level of influence in the movement. Furthermore, although it is possible that advantaged group allies who demonstrate high levels of trustworthiness may be afforded higher movement influence, we agree with Droogendyk et al. (2016) that a movement "led by members of the group that currently holds power is inconsistent with this vision of a new and more equal world—no matter how benevolent the intentions of these 'leaders'" (p. 324). Therefore, we expect that, on average, disadvantaged group activists will consider trustworthiness and movement influence as independent contributors to their attitudes toward allies. By considering both trustworthiness and influence at the same time as distinct components of disadvantaged group activists' perceptions of their allies, we further research on allyship with a framework that aims to capture the key components of the complex dynamic between disadvantaged group activists and their advantaged group allies.

et al., 2016; Russell & Bohan, 2016), and written from the perspective of advantaged group allies and not beneficiaries (Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Ostrove & Brown, 2018). In addition, emerging research on allyship has focused on allyship in traditional workplaces (Cheng, Ng, Traylor, & King, 2019; Sabat, Martinez, & Wessel, 2013), educational settings (Broido, 2000), or clinical contexts (Utsey, Gernat, & Hammar, 2005), domains which will benefit from the insights generated from studying the organizational context of social movements, a context where allyship is perhaps most salient and deliberated.

We directly contribute to the nascent and growing literature on allyship by conducting experimental research with social activist samples that examine, from the perspective of disadvantaged group activists, the potential challenges to advantaged group ally participation in movements. At a time when organizational initiatives to increase ally involvement are becoming increasingly prevalent (Sherf, Tangirala, & Weber, 2017), understanding the perspectives of intended beneficiaries can identify behaviors that result in effective allyship and create sustained pathways for social change (Cheng et al., 2019).

2. The trustworthiness of advantaged group allies in movements

Allyship in identity-oriented social movements involves engaging in actions that promote the equitable treatment of traditionally low-status social identity groups. Within this framework, there are two primary reasons why acts of allyship might be associated with positive beliefs about the trustworthiness (i.e., benevolence, integrity, and ability) of advantaged group allies. First, research on confrontations of bias suggests that disadvantaged group activists should be inclined to trust their advantaged group allies because confronting injustice as an advantaged group ally is costly. As one example, observers tend to derogate male bystanders who acknowledge sexism on behalf of women more than male bystanders who do not acknowledge it at all (Eliezer & Major, 2012).

However, beneficiaries of these acts are likely to view their advantaged group allies favorably (Kutlaca, Becker, & Radke, 2020). People respect powerful individuals who act in prosocial ways that do not directly benefit their own self-interest, and subsequently view these powerful actors as more selfless (Willer, 2009; Willer, Younggreen, Troyer, & Lovaglia, 2012). Therefore, when advantaged group allies make sacrifices to confront injustice, their actions signal to disadvantaged group activists a high level of investment in the movement, and by implication, inspire heightened trust (Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster, & Agnew, 1999). That is, these costly actions communicate high levels of the benevolence (concern) and integrity (fairness) components of trustworthiness (Mayer et al., 1995).

Second, allyship might be associated with higher levels of trustworthiness due to its potential to lead to positive outcomes. Men who confront sexism, for instance, are taken more seriously and viewed as more legitimate than women who carry out the same confrontations (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Drury & Kaiser, 2014), and compared with women, men are more effective in mobilizing other men to fight for gender equality (Subašić et al., 2018). Allies who use their privilege to fight for social equity engage in informed action (Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Ostrove & Brown, 2018) that signals high levels of the ability (i.e., relevant, task-specific knowledge and dedication) component of trustworthiness (Mayer et al., 1995). Based upon this potential to create positive change and help the movement through privilege-aware allyship behaviors, disadvantaged group activists may perceive advantaged group allies as highly trustworthy. Taken together, this research highlights the reasons why beneficiaries of prosocial behavior can be assumed to hold allies in high regard and be appreciative of their support.

On the other hand, historical circumstances surrounding social movement participation and problematic actions taken by advantaged group allies may lead disadvantaged group activists to develop legitimate concerns about their allies' trustworthiness. Throughout history,

members of marginalized groups, especially those fighting for equality, have been ostracized by dominant majority group members. For example, since the birth of the American feminist movement in the late 1700s, men have often sought to deride and discredit the movement by branding feminism as an enterprise for "man-haters" (Kanner & Anderson, 2010; Scott, 2004). In addition, advantaged group allies can directly harm social movements in ways that erode disadvantaged group activists' trust. For instance, advantaged group allies can fail to explicitly communicate opposition to social inequities or be misinformed about their privilege when participating in social movements (Droogendyk et al., 2016). Given the contentious legacies of social movements and the problematic behaviors of some advantaged group allies, disadvantaged group activists have reasonable concerns about the trustworthiness of their allies.

Reducing this distrust may be especially challenging in identity-oriented movements—where divides based on social identity are salient—because intergroup interactions between dominant and subordinate group members are cognitively taxing and psychologically uncomfortable (Richeson & Shelton, 2007). Even people who are socially liberal or implicitly unbiased toward racial outgroups tend to make their interaction partners feel uncomfortable or suspicious of their motives, despite their progressive beliefs (Dupree & Fiske, 2019; Major et al., 2016; Shelton, Richeson, Salvatore, & Trawalter, 2005). Moreover, differing perspectives between these groups can promote misalignment between what beneficiaries want and what advantaged group allies provide (Rattan & Ambady, 2014). Consequently, activists may view allies' behaviors as "missing the mark" despite their best intentions (Russell & Bohan, 2016).

Based on the above evidence, we posit that trustworthiness is an important facet of disadvantaged group activists' assessments of their advantaged group allies, and that high levels of trustworthiness would be deemed ideal. However, instead of perceiving their allies as meeting the mark, disadvantaged group activists may be disappointed in their allies' level of demonstrated trustworthiness given the structural and interpersonal dynamics underlying advantaged group allies' involvement in social movements. More formally, we put forward the following hypotheses relating to perceptions of the trustworthiness of advantaged group allies in identity-oriented movements.

Hypothesis 1a. Disadvantaged group activists will rate advantaged group allies as falling below their ideal expectations of trustworthiness in the movement.

Hypothesis 1b. Higher ratings of trustworthiness will be associated with (and cause) more positive attitudes toward advantaged group allies.

3. The influence of advantaged group allies in movements

The involvement of advantaged group allies forces leaders of social movements to engage in boundary work to negotiate different goals and styles of participation (Flesher Fominaya, 2010). A major component of this boundary work involves ascertaining the appropriate role of advantaged group allies within the movement. How much decision-making power should allies have? To what extent should allies be leaders or followers within the movement? These central questions around influence have implications for disadvantaged group activists' perceptions of advantaged group allies, as they must assess the ideal level of influence that allies should have in the movement.

On one hand, disadvantaged group activists might appreciate advantaged group allies who take on leadership roles in the fight for social change. This line of reasoning stems from two different programs of research. First, research on accountability suggests that victims of wrongdoing prefer people who apologize by taking responsibility for their actions over those who offer excuses or shift blame to others (Chaudhry & Loewenstein, 2019). In the social movement context, advantaged group allies are, in part, making amends for the harm their

ingroup has caused. In turn, disadvantaged group activists should approve of advantaged group allies who take ownership of rectifying existing social inequities. Second, social movement theories indicate that advantaged group allies are uniquely positioned to effect change in movements by lending access to valuable resources (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) and opportunities (Tarrow, 1994) that are not available to disadvantaged group activists. If one believes that those who are best equipped to make change should be the ones to lead the change, disadvantaged group activists should view their allies favorably when allies take on leadership roles in supporting disadvantaged groups.

A key distinction exists between the influence advantaged group allies have inside versus outside of the movement. Though powerful advantaged group allies can lend access to valuable resources from outside of the movement (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003), influential advantaged group allies within movements can come with a price. Specifically, there are two primary reasons disadvantaged group activists may want advantaged group allies to have lower levels of influence in the movement: the potential for co-optation and the reification of status differences (Macomber, 2018; Wiley & Dunne, 2019). Historically, movements with highly influential advantaged group allies tend to move away from the equitable treatment of their most vulnerable members (Bernstein, 2005; Elbaz, 1997), and this co-optation might stem from psychological processes that underlie the experience of heightened status. Research suggests that people with higher status are more likely to report greater entitlement, narcissism, and higher self-esteem (Kraus & Park, 2014; Piff, 2014; Twenge & Campbell, 2002). In line with these tendencies, advantaged group allies have indeed been found to view themselves more positively than how beneficiaries actually view them (Brown & Ostrove, 2013). Although incumbent disadvantaged group activists may value the contributions of advantaged group allies in movements, activists may prefer that allies act deferentially in order to avoid mission drift (Domhoff, 2013).

Furthermore, disadvantaged group activists may resist dependence upon their advantaged group allies. A growing body of research has applied work on intergroup helping to the allyship domain (Droogendyk et al., 2016; Radke et al., 2020), building on the idea that dependence on higher status group members can reinforce existing status hierarchies by providing paternalistic help that fosters continued dependency among lower-status beneficiaries (Nadler & Halabi, 2006). Droogendyk et al. (2016), for instance, consider the potential challenges of allyship by noting how allies can co-opt movements by actively seeking to be leaders and offering unwanted, dependency-oriented support. Recent theorizing by Selvanathan, Lickel, and Dasgupta (2020) also supports the notion that allies should play a follower role in social movements, as disadvantaged group activists' desire for empowerment is in tension with advantaged group allies' desire for moral acceptance, which they pursue through their involvement in a movement's decision-making efforts. These analyses are also consistent with recent work theorizing and documenting the multiple motives that allies can hold (Radke et al., 2020), such as paternalism when confronting sexism (Estevan-Reina et al., 2021; Estevan-Reina, de Lemus, & Megías, 2020) or concerns about their group's image (Teixeira, Spears, & Yzerbyt, 2020).

Recent studies provide empirical support for the prediction that lower-status group members prefer their allies to hold less influence. Iyer and Achia (2021), for example, find that the presence of influential high-status group leaders can discourage members of low-status groups from engaging in social change efforts. Wiley and Dunne (2019) also find that feminist women prefer feminist men who offer autonomy-oriented support and view them as better allies than feminist men who offer dependency-oriented support. We extend upon this empirical work by examining disadvantaged group activists' perceptions of their allies' influence in the movement. We expect that activists view allies who make decisions on their behalf as engaging in dependency-oriented help that is disempowering, especially when considering the social movement context where the stability of the advantaged group's status is challenged (Shnabel, Ullrich, Nadler, Dovidio, & Aydin, 2013).

Given concerns over co-optation, decision-making power, and the reification of status differences, disadvantaged group activists may have negative conceptions of allies who are higher in within-movement influence, and as a result, will prefer their allies to hold low levels of influence within the movement. Having higher levels of internal influence, in turn, would result in less positive attitudes toward allies. Based on the above evidence, we put forward the following hypotheses relating to perceptions of the influence of advantaged group allies in identity-oriented movements:

Hypothesis 2a. Disadvantaged group activists will rate advantaged group allies as being too influential in the movement compared with their ideal expectations of influence.

Hypothesis 2b. Lower ratings of influence in the movement will be associated with (and cause) more positive attitudes toward advantaged group allies.

4. Research overview

To test our predictions, we conducted four studies. Study 1 is an exploratory study of social movement activists, in which activists from a variety of identity-oriented movements reported their perceptions of different social movement actors on dimensions of trustworthiness and influence, as well as their attitudes toward these groups. Study 2 extends the findings of Study 1 using an online experiment with liberal women and nonbinary participants, a sample meant to approximate feminist disadvantaged group activists. In this study, we manipulated the perceived trustworthiness and influence of male allies to test our causal predictions about the effect of these perceptions on attitudes toward advantaged group allies. Study 3 uses the same experimental approach, but with a sample of self-identified disadvantaged group activists in the feminist movement. Study 4 modifies the experimental stimuli and was conducted with a separate sample of disadvantaged group activists in the feminist movement. Informed consent was obtained in all of our studies.

We used a variety of methods to check that we were recruiting social movement activists, including explicit recruitment materials mentioning the phrase "social activist" when using snowball sampling (Studies 1 & 3), open-ended responses about participants' involvement in social movements (Study 1), self-report measures indicating involvement in the feminist movement as well as duration of involvement (Studies 3 & 4), and identification as an activist (Studies 3 & 4).

The studies we report here contribute most directly to the growing literature on organizational allyship by better understanding factors that shape beneficiaries' attitudes toward advantaged group allies. Previous research has documented how activists experience burnout due to the problematic behaviors of allies (Gorski, 2019; Gorski & Erakat, 2019), and we believe that understanding the factors that shape activists' attitudes toward allies can help minimize the costs and stressors that activists face in movements. By soliciting the unique perspectives of currently engaged movement activists (Studies 1, 3, & 4) and documenting the causal effects of different allyship behaviors on activists' perceptions of advantaged group allies (Studies 2, 3, & 4), these studies begin to identify the types of allyship behaviors that leave a more positive impression on their intended beneficiaries, which can support long-term cooperation and foster equitable societal change.

5. Study 1

To test our hypotheses, we conducted an exploratory survey study using a snowball sample of social movement activists who were asked to make judgments of advantaged group allies on items related to trustworthiness and influence. We also asked activists to report their attitudes toward advantaged group allies to examine whether perceptions of trustworthiness and influence are significant predictors of attitudes toward allies.

In this study, we measured disadvantaged group activists' judgments of allies on both the ideal and actual levels of trustworthiness and influence for three reasons. First, given the paucity of data on social movement activists' perceptions of advantaged group allies, we hoped to provide descriptive statistics on activists' baseline expectations of allies in addition to their beliefs about how these allies fare relative to their expectations. Second, measuring both ideal and actual ratings offers additional context for interpreting perceptions of advantaged group allies as well as greater precision for estimation as a function of having multiple ratings for each individual to increase comparability of ratings (King, Murray, Salomon, & Tandon, 2004). Third, based on our theorizing, it was necessary for us to measure deviations from the ideal to capture whether activists viewed their allies as demonstrating too much or not enough trustworthiness and influence.

In line with the exploratory nature of Study 1, we also collected data on activists' beliefs about other disadvantaged group activists in the same movement. By comparing activists' perceptions of allies with their perceptions of fellow disadvantaged group activists, we can determine whether activists' perceptions of movement actors are specific to allies or generalize to other members of the movement.

Furthermore, we recruited activists who are members of two different social movements: a movement in which they are an advantaged group ally, and a movement in which they are a disadvantaged group activist. This recruitment procedure reflects observed patterns of movement participation among social activists: Previous research on activism has noted how activists commonly engage in multiple movements, some in which they are an ally and some in which they are a beneficiary (Curtin, Kende, & Kende, 2016). In addition, since it is possible that disadvantaged group activists hold less positive attitudes toward advantaged group allies simply due to outgroup animus, we utilized this participant pool to attenuate concerns about this alternative explanation. That is, because our sample of disadvantaged group activists has experience being advantaged group allies in other social movements, this methodology should provide a conservative test of our hypotheses. For this current study, as well as all subsequent studies, we predetermined the sample size and collected all data before conducting analyses that tested our hypotheses. We report all manipulations, exclusion criteria and all the items used in the analyses for each study. Additional exploratory measures and control variables for each study can be found in the Online Supplemental Materials.

5.1. Method

5.1.1. Participants

We recruited social movement activists using snowball sampling in Facebook groups and email listservs created for undocumented immigrants, queer people of color, and first-generation/low-income student populations. We solicited social movement activists in these groups because they were the most convenient sample of this unique population based on an author's personal involvement in these groups. A total of 172 social activists expressed initial interest in participating, and when they were contacted directly, 117 activists (68%) completed the full survey and 14 activists (8%) partially completed the survey. Participants who partially completed the survey were retained for applicable analyses, and our general findings remain unchanged when these participants are excluded. All activists were compensated \$10.00 for completing the study. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, we fielded the study for a period of 2 weeks as an initial test of recruitment with social movement activists, and we initially aimed for a minimum sample size of 100. A sensitivity power analysis using G*power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) indicated that the final sample of 117 participants provides 80% power ($\alpha = 0.05$; two-tailed) to detect an effect as small as $d = 0.26$ in a paired t -test.

Table 1 presents the counts and percentages of our activist sample's participation in five social movement categories, based upon representation: Feminism; Race; Immigration; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,

Table 1

Counts and percentages of movement participation as a disadvantaged group activist.

Movement type	Counts (Percentages)
Feminism	32 (27.35%)
Race	27 (23.08%)
Immigration	19 (16.24%)
LGBTQ	16 (13.68%)
Other	23 (19.66%)

Note. The Other category includes movements regarding issues around labor, Islamophobia, or disability. LGBTQ = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer.

Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ); and Other (e.g., religion, disability). Our sample size is insufficient to conduct subgroup analyses of the five main categories of social movements, so we collapse across all identity-oriented movements for all of our analyses.

5.1.2. Procedure

At the start of the survey, we presented activists with a working definition of terms referring to disadvantaged group activists and advantaged group allies, and we gave examples of each term. Specifically, to reference disadvantaged group activists, we used the phrase "affected actors" to refer to people involved in social movements who are directly targeted by the social system that the movement is trying to address (e.g., women supporting feminism, gay people supporting same-sex marriage), and the term "allies" to refer to people involved in social movements who are *not* directly targeted by the particular social system that the movement is trying to address (e.g., men supporting feminism, straight people supporting same-sex marriage). We used this more neutrally worded language in this study to minimize potential reactance, and we asked participants to take the survey according to the working definitions we provided even if they may or may not use same labels in their own activism.

We then asked each activist to think about the social movement that they are most involved in as an affected actor (i.e., disadvantaged group activist) and to name the allies (i.e., advantaged group allies) they have encountered as an activist in the movement.⁴ Activists then answered questions regarding their perceptions of and attitudes toward both disadvantaged group activists and advantaged group allies in their chosen movement. Afterwards, they self-reported their demographic information.

5.1.3. Measures

5.1.3.1. Ideal and actual qualities of movement activists. On a slider scale from *minimally* (0) to *maximally* (100), activists reported their beliefs about how much disadvantaged group activists and advantaged group allies should *ideally* display characteristics within the specific social movement, and also how much they *actually* display those

⁴ We also asked activists to answer the same questions for a social movement in which they are an advantaged group ally (counterbalanced within-subject design), as part of a larger study on social activists' perceptions. For the purpose of our research question, we only use the relevant data pertaining to disadvantaged group activists' perceptions. We examined order effects to test if the order that social activists thought about movements (as a disadvantaged group activist or as an advantaged group ally) resulted in systematic differences between responses. None of our primary variables of interest were significantly different. As a result, we carried out our analyses collapsing across the order of the movement that activists were asked to think about.

characteristics.⁵ The 10 characteristics were: *central, impactful, powerful, warm, moral, passionate, selfless, loyal, helpful, and knowledgeable*.⁶

A principal components factor analysis of the 10 *ideal* characteristics of advantaged group allies items using varimax rotation was conducted, showing strong support for a 2-factor solution with eigenvalues of 4.63 (for trustworthiness with seven items) and 1.67 (for influence with three items) that explained 63% of the variance using a minimum criteria of having a primary factor loading of 0.6 or above. Therefore, the seven trustworthiness items (*warm, moral, passionate, selfless, loyal, helpful, knowledgeable*) were averaged to create a composite Ideal Trustworthiness Score (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.87$) and the three influence items (*central, impactful, powerful*) were averaged to create a composite Ideal Influence Score ($\alpha = 0.81$). We followed the same procedure with the 10 *actual* characteristics of advantaged group allies to create an Actual Trustworthiness Score ($\alpha = 0.95$) and an Actual Influence Score ($\alpha = 0.87$).⁷

5.1.3.2. Attitudes toward advantaged group allies. On a Likert scale from *very negative* (1) to *very positive* (7), activists reported their attitudes toward advantaged group allies using a single-item measure: “with respect to [participant's chosen movement], how positively or negatively do you view allies in the social movement?”

5.1.3.3. Demographics. Activists self-reported their age ($M = 21.22$, $SD = 3.70$), gender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity (22 White, 11 Black, 49 Asian, 26 Latino/a, 1 Middle Eastern, and 10 Multiracial), political orientation, and level of education. The demographics of our activists deviate significantly from the general US population: a greater percentage of our sample consists of women (71.79% vs. 50.8%), people of color (81.51% vs. 39.40%), and LGBTQ individuals (38.39% vs. 5.40%), compared with population statistics gathered by the U.S. Census Bureau (2019) and the General Social Survey (GSS; Smith, Hout, & Marsden, 2016). These differences in demographics are unsurprising based on our recruitment efforts as well as previous research documenting that disadvantaged group members have the highest propensity for social justice behaviors (Perrin et al., 2013).

5.2. Results

5.2.1. Trustworthiness

We begin by examining disadvantaged group activists' views on the

⁵ As an exploratory step, our sample also answered the same set of questions for the self as well as a small subset of additional measures. Interested readers can refer to the supplementary materials for a full listing of additional survey questions used across all of our studies as well as the descriptive statistics of these variables and other demographic items (Appendix A; Online Supplemental Materials); further analyses including these variables are also available upon request. We report in the main text only the variables relevant to our current research hypotheses.

⁶ This list of items was chosen from a combination of words commonly used in the impression formation and trustworthiness literatures as well as words from social movement activists themselves when activists described their perceptions of advantaged group allies online. Based on the results of Study 1, we inductively revised the list of items for conceptual clarity in subsequent studies.

⁷ A factor analysis using the 10 *actual* characteristics of advantaged group allies using varimax rotation showed weaker support for a 2-factor solution with eigenvalues of 6.92 (for trustworthiness with seven items) and 0.85 (for influence with three items) that explained 78% of the variance, and the corresponding scree plot's eigenvalues leveled off most noticeably after the first factor. Though the second factor's eigenvalue is below the conventional cutoff of 1, all of the items loaded onto only one of the two factors based on the factor loading criteria of 0.6 or above and loaded onto the same factors as the analysis on ideal characteristics. We suspect that this result may have been due to sampling error. In our subsequent studies we consistently observe strong evidence for this 2-factor solution.

trustworthiness of advantaged group allies in the movement (Fig. 1). Disadvantaged group activists could demonstrate that they perceive advantaged group allies as being trustworthy if their actual trustworthiness ratings of allies are at or above their ideal expectations; conversely, activists could demonstrate that they perceive allies as being relatively untrustworthy if their actual trustworthiness ratings are below their ideal expectations (Hypothesis 1a). When we compare disadvantaged group activists' ratings of allies' ideal and actual trustworthiness, we find that allies fall short of disadvantaged group activists' ideal expectations: Disadvantaged group activists report significantly lower actual trustworthiness ratings regarding their advantaged group allies ($M = 53.47$, $SD = 21.86$) relative to their ideal trustworthiness ratings ($M = 81.57$, $SD = 15.77$), $t(121) = 14.14$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.28$.

Moreover, activists were more critical of advantaged group allies than of other disadvantaged group activists. Although activists see other disadvantaged group activists' actual trustworthiness ($M = 65.98$, $SD = 19.46$) as significantly lower than their ideal trustworthiness ($M = 78.48$, $SD = 18.30$), $t(120) = 7.82$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.71$, when we examine the difference scores between ideal and actual trustworthiness ratings, activists perceive advantaged group allies as falling below their ideals ($M = 28.09$, $SD = 21.98$) significantly more than activists see other disadvantaged group activists doing so ($M = 12.51$, $SD = 17.40$), $t(120) = -7.89$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.72$. We interpret this set of findings to be largely consistent with Hypothesis 1a, providing evidence that disadvantaged group activists question the trustworthiness of allies: though they are held to similar expectations of ideal trustworthiness, activists report allies as demonstrating significantly lower levels of trustworthiness compared with other disadvantaged group activists.

Though we find significant differences in average trustworthiness ratings, it is possible that the averages are skewed by a handful of activists who report low trustworthiness ratings. Therefore, we examine the distribution of the differences between ideal and actual ratings of trustworthiness to complement our initial findings. We find additional evidence of disadvantaged group activists' dissatisfaction with the trustworthiness of their advantaged group allies: Only 9.84% of disadvantaged group activists rated advantaged group allies as meeting or exceeding their ideal expectations of trustworthiness compared with 25.62% of activists who held those beliefs about other disadvantaged group activists. A significant association between ally status and falling below trustworthiness expectations was observed, $\chi^2(1) = 9.34$, $p = .002$. Even though activists hold relatively similar ideal standards for both advantaged group allies and other disadvantaged group activists, a greater percentage of activists rate advantaged group allies as failing to meet ideals of trustworthiness in movements relative to other disadvantaged group activists. Again, this suggests that disadvantaged group activists doubt the trustworthiness of advantaged group allies, lending support to Hypothesis 1a.

5.2.2. Influence

Next, we examine disadvantaged group activists' views on the influence of advantaged group allies in the movement (Fig. 2). Disadvantaged group activists could demonstrate that they perceive advantaged group allies as being too influential in the movement if their actual influence ratings of allies are significantly higher than their ideal expectations (Hypothesis 2a). Contrary to our hypothesis, disadvantaged group activists report significantly lower actual influence ratings for their advantaged group allies ($M = 50.83$, $SD = 23.37$) relative to their ideal ratings ($M = 57.99$, $SD = 24.82$), $t(121) = 3.44$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.31$. Furthermore, other disadvantaged group activists' actual influence ratings ($M = 64.86$, $SD = 21.14$) score significantly below their ideal ratings ($M = 78.53$, $SD = 19.58$), $t(120) = 8.13$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.74$. When we examine the difference scores, this deviation is significantly larger for other disadvantaged group activists ($M = 13.66$, $SD = 18.45$) than for advantaged group allies ($M = 7.16$, $SD = 23.02$), $t(120) = 2.57$, $p = .01$, $d = 0.23$. According to these results, although activists believe that advantaged group allies should *ideally* be less influential than other

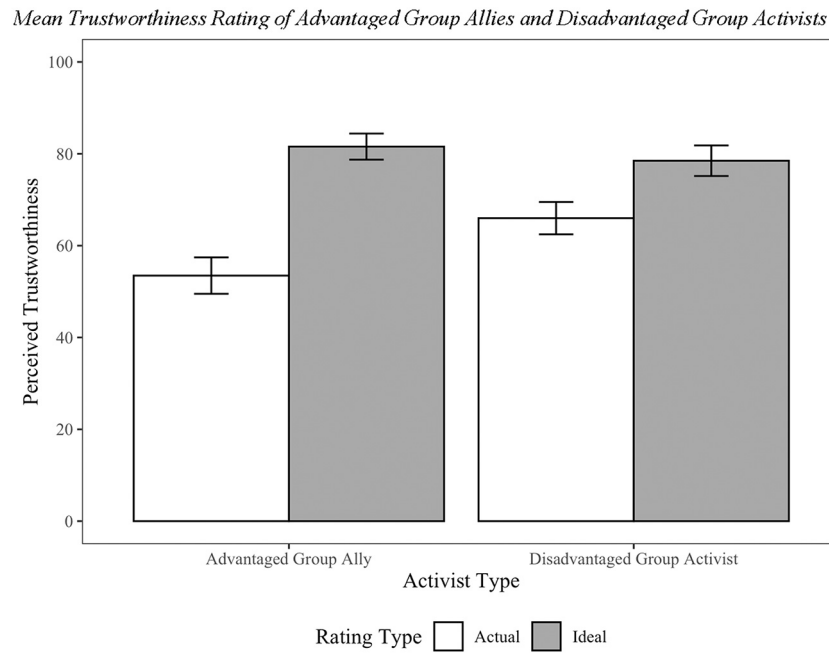


Fig. 1. Mean trustworthiness rating of advantaged group allies and disadvantaged group activists.
Note. Error bars show two standard errors above and below the mean.

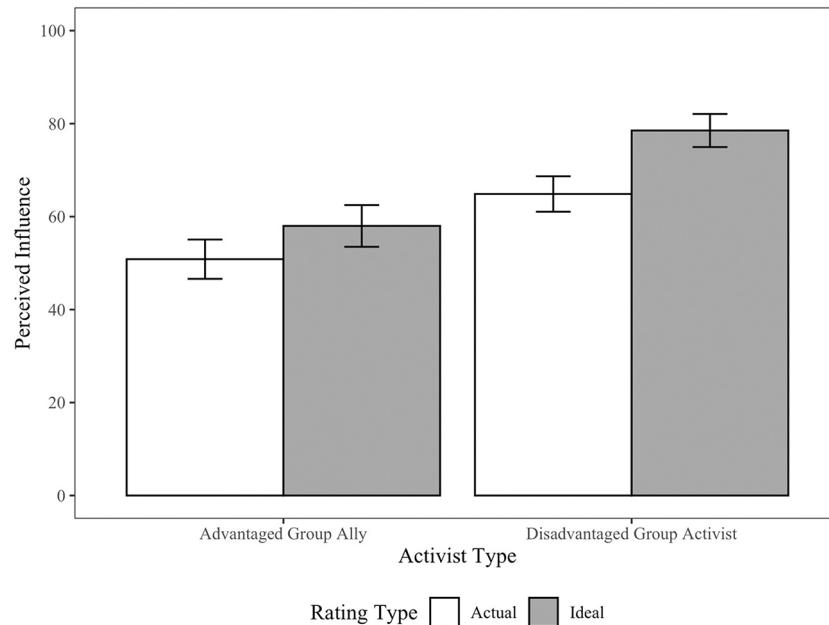


Fig. 2. Mean influence rating of advantaged group allies and disadvantaged group activists.
Note. Error bars show two standard errors above and below the mean.

disadvantaged group activists, $t(120) = 8.87, p < .001, d = 0.81$, they also believe that allies have *actually* been less influential in the movement in comparison to disadvantaged group activists, $t(121) = 6.21, p < .001, d = 0.56$, thus contradicting [Hypothesis 2a](#).

When we examine the distribution of the difference between ideal and actual ratings of influence, we do, however, find some evidence of activists' concern about allies having too much influence: 33.61% of activists rated advantaged group allies as possessing more influence than is considered ideal compared with only 19.83% of activists who held those beliefs about other disadvantaged group activists. A significant association between ally status and excessive influence was observed,

$\chi^2(1) = 5.20, p = .02$, which suggests that a sizable proportion of activists view advantaged group allies as overstepping their bounds of influence. [Hypothesis 2a](#) is thus partially supported.

5.2.3. Attitudes toward advantaged group allies

To examine which characteristics of advantaged group allies are associated with positive attitudes toward advantaged group allies, we conducted a multiple linear regression to predict disadvantaged group activists' attitudes toward allies based on their ratings of trustworthiness and influence. Recall that we hypothesized higher trustworthiness ([Hypothesis 1b](#)) and lower influence ([Hypothesis 2b](#)) would be

associated with more positive attitudes toward advantaged group allies. To test these hypotheses, we built our regression model using controls for the ideal scores of trustworthiness and influence to take into account initial baselines, and we created standardized difference scores for each dimension by subtracting the ideal ratings from the actual ratings (i.e., more positive scores reflect higher actual ratings relative to ideal ratings).⁸ Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations.

In this model, we found a significant regression equation, $F(8, 113) = 5.08, p < .001$, with an R^2 of 0.26. Trustworthiness difference scores significantly predicted attitudes toward advantaged group allies, $b = 0.77, p < .001$, and influence difference scores also significantly predicted attitudes, $b = -0.59, p = .02$ (Table 3). We interpret these findings as evidence in support of Hypotheses 1b & 2b, which posit that higher ratings of trustworthiness and lower ratings of influence (relative to ideal ratings) in the movement will be associated with more positive attitudes toward allies.⁹

5.3. Discussion

Study 1 examined disadvantaged group activists' perceptions of advantaged group allies on dimensions of trustworthiness and influence, which predict their attitudes toward advantaged group allies. On average, disadvantaged group activists view advantaged group allies—relative to how they view other disadvantaged group activists—as less trustworthy and influential. In addition, relative to their perceptions of other disadvantaged group activists, a significantly greater percentage of participants report that their allies are less trustworthy and more influential than ideal. This set of findings provides strong support for Hypothesis 1a and mixed support for Hypothesis 2a. The mixed support for Hypothesis 2a may be due to a lack of clarity in the terms we used for the influence dimension (e.g., impactful), which we revised to refer more explicitly to influence within the movement in subsequent studies. Lastly, in line with our Hypotheses 1b & 2b, we found support for both trustworthiness and influence as significant predictors of attitudes toward allies. Given the correlational nature of our present study, an experimental test of our primary findings was a natural next step in our research. This experimental test would provide causal evidence for the claim that beneficiaries respond more favorably to advantaged group allies higher in trustworthiness and lower in movement influence.

6. Study 2

Based on the findings of Study 1, we conducted an experiment to test whether perceptions of trustworthiness and influence are causal mechanisms in shaping disadvantaged group activists' attitudes toward advantaged group allies. We also expanded our measure of attitudes to a multi-item measure in subsequent studies to address the limitation of

⁸ In an analysis that excludes baseline controls, the difference scores for our two dimensions remain significant, and our conclusions identical. Additionally, in our base model, we included a binary term for whether advantaged group allies were rated as being above ideal levels of influence to examine a potential interaction between difference scores based on whether allies exceeded the ideal. We also include a trustworthiness binary variable and interaction term for consistency; however, the estimates for these variables are imprecise due to the majority of participants rating allies as being below ideal ratings of trustworthiness. Excluding the trustworthiness binary variable does not change the significance nor conclusion of our main results.

⁹ We also conducted an analysis that includes potential alternative variables, such as those related to perceptions of similarity with allies, idiosyncratic positive personal experiences in the movement, perceived movement effectiveness, or traits related to system justification, agreeableness, and emotional stability. The significant relationships of trustworthiness and influence are robust to the inclusion of all of these plausible explanatory variables, and the results are available in the Online Supplemental Materials.

using a single item measure of attitudes, as we did in Study 1. We chose to conduct our experiment using the feminist movement context due to the movement's prominence, both historically and in contemporary society (Freedman, 2002; Harris, 2018; LeGates, 2001); additionally, out of all social movements mentioned in Study 1, activists most frequently indicated involvement in the feminist movement.

In addition to being an initial test of our hypotheses, Study 2 also served as an opportunity for us to validate our experimental stimuli, a task we deemed critical given the limited opportunities to recruit and work with samples of social activists. In this study, we prescreened for self-identified politically liberal women and nonbinary people (NBPs) because they closely resemble our target population of feminist disadvantaged group activists on many key dimensions and can serve as an illuminating comparison sample. In this between-subjects online experiment, participants read a Medium article about the experiences of a disadvantaged group activist who worked with male allies in the feminist movement. We chose to use a Medium article because activists commonly write about their experiences on this online publishing platform to share their experiences and opinions with other activists. In the article we created, a disadvantaged group activist's experience varied based on the apparent trustworthiness (higher, lower) and movement influence (higher, lower) of male allies. These articles were created from a compilation of actual articles written by disadvantaged group activists in the feminist movement.

6.1. Method

6.1.1. Participants

We aimed to recruit 800 participants, 200 in each condition, based on our budget for this project using Prolific (www.prolific.ac), an online crowdsourcing platform (Peer, Brandimarte, Samat, & Acquisti, 2017). A total of 766 participants completed our study, but 14 participants were excluded for not identifying as women or gender nonbinary,¹⁰ resulting in a final sample of 722 politically liberal women and 30 nonbinary people residing in the United States. All participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 32.87, SD_{\text{age}} = 11.90$) were compensated \$1.00 for completing this 5-min experiment. A sensitivity power analysis using G*Power (Faul et al., 2007) revealed we were adequately powered to find an effect size of $f = 0.102$ (i.e., small effect size) at $p < .05$ for a between-subjects ANOVA with 4 groups and 1 degree of freedom in the numerator.

6.1.2. Procedure

At the start of the survey, we presented women and NBPs with our definition of advantaged group allies and gave an example of the term (e.g., men in feminist movements). We then randomly assigned each participant to read one of four Medium articles discussing a disadvantaged group activist's experience with male allies (see Appendix B in the Online Supplement for full article). An activist in the feminist movement purportedly wrote these articles, and the content of these articles was the same across conditions except for the two paragraphs that contained our manipulations of trustworthiness and influence. After reading their assigned Medium article, participants answered questions related to their perceptions of and attitudes toward the male allies they read about. Next, to provide descriptive information about our sample, participants answered questions about their personal identification as a social activist and their experience—or lack thereof—as an activist. Finally, we asked participants about their demographics.

6.1.3. Manipulations

6.1.3.1. Trustworthiness manipulation. We manipulated the

¹⁰ The 14 excluded participants did not differ across influence condition, $\chi^2(1, N = 766) = 3.49, p = .061$, or trustworthiness condition, $\chi^2(1, N = 766) < 0.001, p = 1.00$.

Table 2
Study 1 descriptive statistics and correlation matrix.

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Attitudes toward allies	5.19	1.33	–				
2. Trustworthiness difference	28.13	21.98	0.34**	–			
3. Influence difference	7.16	23.02	–0.03	0.24**	–		
4. Ideal trustworthiness	81.57	15.77	0.16	–0.37**	–0.07	–	
5. Ideal influence	57.99	24.82	0.32**	0.26**	–0.53**	0.39**	–

Note. *N* = 119–131 due to missing data. **p* < .05. ***p* < .01.

Table 3
Regression of attitudes toward advantaged group allies on trustworthiness and influence.

Predictors	<i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)
Trustworthiness difference (TD)	0.77 (0.19)***
Influence difference (ID)	–0.59 (0.26)*
Above ideal trustworthiness ^a	–2.83 (4.49)
Above ideal influence ^b	0.38 (0.39)
TD × Above ideal trustworthiness	2.14 (3.25)
ID × Above ideal influence	0.49 (0.40)
Ideal trustworthiness	0.45 (0.16)**
Ideal influence	–0.06 (0.20)
<i>N</i>	122
<i>R</i> ²	0.26

Note. Unstandardized beta coefficients are reported along with standard errors in parentheses.

^a 0 = actual trustworthiness less than or equal to ideal trustworthiness, 1 = actual trustworthiness greater than ideal trustworthiness.

^b 0 = actual influence less than or equal to ideal influence, 1 = actual influence greater than ideal influence. **p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

trustworthiness of male allies by presenting one of two paragraphs that signaled either higher or lower trustworthiness. In order to induce perceptions of higher trustworthiness of advantaged group allies, participants read the following paragraph consisting of behaviors—taken from the repertoire of actual allyship behaviors—that signal high levels of loyalty, morality, and knowledge about the social issue:

The allies I have worked with in Feminism Now can generally be described as highly dependable. These male allies commit a significant amount of time each week to help us push for gender equity, and they do this because they believe it's the right thing to do. These male allies 1) attend teach-ins to learn more about social issues, 2) canvass their neighborhoods to gain local support, 3) show up at protests and even risk getting arrested for blocking traffic, and 4) fundraise for feminist causes.

In order to induce perceptions of lower trustworthiness of advantaged group allies, participants read the following paragraph:

The allies I have worked with in Feminism Now can generally be described as somewhat dependable. These male allies commit a little bit of time each month to help us push for gender equity, and they do this because they think it's the right thing to do. These male allies 1) write Facebook posts and tweets about organizing, 2) wear safety pins on their shirts to show people that they can be trusted, 3) sign online petitions, and 4) change their Facebook profiles for popular feminist causes.

6.1.3.2. Influence manipulation. We manipulated the influence of male allies by presenting one of two paragraphs that signaled either higher or lower levels of movement influence. In order to induce perceptions of higher influence of advantaged group allies, participants read the following paragraph consisting of behaviors that signal high levels of power and centrality in the movement:

Behind the scenes, these male allies play a central role in making decisions. The more I think about it, the clearer this dynamic becomes. The men in this group have a lot of decision-making power, and they offer their opinions freely. They not only voice what they think we should do next, but they also have a lot of influence in deciding what we actually do. In this way, these male allies play more of a leader role than a supporter role.

In order to induce perceptions of lower influence of advantaged group allies, participants read the following paragraph:

Behind the scenes, these male allies play a peripheral role in making decisions. The more I think about it, the clearer this dynamic becomes. The men in this group do not have much decision-making power, and they defer to the input of womxn.¹¹ They sometimes voice what they think we should do next, but they have little influence on deciding what we actually do. In this way, these male allies play more of a supporter role than a leader role.

6.1.4. Measures

6.1.4.1. Attitudes toward male allies. On a slider scale from *minimally* (0) to *maximally* (100), participants rated how much they *liked*, *trusted*, *viewed positively* and *negatively* (reverse-coded), and *would feel safe around* the male allies they read about in the Medium article. We averaged these five items and created a composite Attitude Score ($\alpha = 0.92$).

6.1.4.2. Characteristics of male allies. On a slider scale from *minimally* (0) to *maximally* (100), participants rated how much they thought the male allies were *central*, *powerful*, *influential*, *moral*, *selfless*, *loyal*, *helpful*, *knowledgeable*, *dependable*, *effective*, and *self-sacrificing*.

A factor analysis indicated that a 2-factor solution was the best fit for the data, aligning with two subscales for Trustworthiness and Influence.¹² Therefore, the eight trustworthiness items (*moral*, *selfless*, *loyal*, *helpful*, *knowledgeable*, *dependable*, *effective*, *self-sacrificing*) were averaged to create a composite Trustworthiness Score ($\alpha = 0.93$) and the three influence items (*central*, *powerful*, *influential*) were averaged to create a composite Influence Score ($\alpha = 0.86$).

6.1.4.3. Activist identification, experience, and demographics. To provide descriptive information about our sample's involvement in activism, participants reported, on a Likert scale from *not well at all* (1) to *extremely well* (7), their identification as a social activist on three items: "I consider myself an activist," "My friends would describe me as an activist," and "I identify myself as an activist to other people" ($\alpha = 0.96$). Importantly,

¹¹ The term "womxn" is oftentimes used in social justice spaces to be more explicitly inclusive of transgender and nonbinary individuals. We explained this term to our participants in a brief note before presenting the article.

¹² The factor analysis using these 11 perceived characteristics of advantaged group allies using varimax rotation showed support for a 2-factor solution with eigenvalues of 6.51 (for trustworthiness with eight items) and 1.49 (for influence with three items) that explained 73% of the variance. All of the items loaded onto only one of the two factors based on the factor loading criteria of 0.6 or above.

although activist identification was measured after the manipulation, as expected, we do not find any significant differences based on experimental condition.¹³

To measure their experiences in activism, we asked participants if they have ever been involved in social activism (“yes” or “no”), and if they responded in the affirmative, we asked them to report how many years they have been involved in social movements. Since these activism-related variables do not vary as a function of the manipulations, we report their means and standard deviations after collapsing across the conditions (Table 4).

Participants reported their age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity (543 White, 50 Black, 62 Asian, 34 Latino/a, 4 Middle Eastern, 2 Native American, and 55 Multiracial), political orientation (−100 = *extremely liberal* to 100 = *extremely conservative*), level of education, and employment status. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics.

6.2. Results

6.2.1. Manipulation checks

6.2.1.1. Trustworthiness and influence ratings. Analyses revealed that both manipulations were successful. Participants in the higher trustworthiness condition ($M = 69.54$, $SD = 19.72$) rated male allies as more trustworthy than those in the lower trustworthiness condition ($M = 60.44$, $SD = 20.34$), $t(750) = 6.23$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.45$. Participants in the higher influence condition ($M = 68.27$, $SD = 19.55$) rated male allies as more influential than those in the lower influence condition ($M = 47.38$, $SD = 23.25$), $t(750) = 13.32$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.97$.

6.2.2. Primary analyses

6.2.2.1. Attitudes toward advantaged group allies. A Trustworthiness \times Influence analysis of variance (ANOVA) on attitudes toward advantaged

Table 4
Descriptive statistics of key variables and demographics (Studies 2–4).

Variable	Prolific (Study 2)		Activist (Study 3)		Activist (Study 4)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Attitudes toward allies	74.72	18.93	59.58	22.60	55.29	26.33
Age	32.87	11.90	25.22	6.87	31.15	11.29
Person of color ^a	0.28	0.45	0.59	0.49	0.28	0.45
Nonbinary ^b	0.04	0.20	0.21	0.41	0.06	0.23
LGBQ ^c	0.36	0.48	0.60	0.49	0.47	0.50
Activism experience ^d	0.39	0.49	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Activist identification	3.04	1.70	4.91	1.39	4.05	1.53
Years of activism	3.11	6.65	6.02	5.51	11.58	10.47
College degree	0.65	0.48	0.70	0.46	0.70	0.46
Employed ^e	0.67	0.47	0.51	0.50	0.66	0.47
Political orientation	−74.27	26.85	−70.53	34.81	−83.14	19.45

Note. Political orientation ranged from −100 (*extremely liberal*) to 100 (*extremely conservative*).

^a 0 = White, 1 = Black, Asian, Latinx, Native, Middle Eastern, or Multiracial.

^b 0 = woman, 1 = nonbinary.

^c 0 = heterosexual, 1 = lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer.

^d 0 = no, 1 = yes.

^e 0 = unemployed or student, 1 = employed full time or part time.

¹³ Exploratory moderation analyses involving the activist identification variable were not significant in Studies 2 and 3, but were significant in Study 4. Given this inconsistency, we report these findings in the Online Supplemental Materials for interested readers.

group allies revealed a nonsignificant main effect of trustworthiness, $F(1, 748) = 0.91$, $p = .339$, $d = 0.07$, but a significant main effect of influence, $F(1, 748) = 22.22$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.34$. On average, participants in the lower influence condition ($M = 77.91$, $SD = 17.39$, $n = 378$) rated male allies more positively than did participants in the higher influence condition ($M = 71.49$, $SD = 19.88$, $n = 374$) (Fig. 3). The interaction effect was nonsignificant, $F(1, 748) = 0.004$, $p = .952$, $d = 0.004$.

Overall, this pattern of results is consistent with the prediction that male allies who are higher in influence will be perceived less positively compared with male allies who are lower in influence, lending support to Hypothesis 2b. We fail to find, however, support for the prediction that male allies who are higher in trustworthiness will be perceived more positively than male allies who are lower in trustworthiness, which contradicts Hypothesis 1b.

6.3. Discussion

The results of Study 2 are partly consistent with our predictions and with the findings from Study 1. The main effect of influence from this experiment is consistent with Hypothesis 2b that lower levels of movement influence boost positive attitudes toward advantaged group allies. However, we fail to find the main effect of trustworthiness that we observed in Study 1, counter to Hypothesis 1b. One possible explanation of this non-significant main effect of trustworthiness is that the allies mentioned in the lower trustworthiness condition were still engaging in actions that signal support for the movement. Though this support was largely symbolic, this distinction may not be readily apparent to participants in this study, consisting primarily of nonactivists.

This study extends Study 1 by demonstrating that movement influence is a causal mechanism in shaping attitudes toward advantaged group allies. However, since Study 2 did not specifically use an activist sample, we do not know if this pattern of findings will generalize to our primary population of interest. Therefore, we collected data from feminist disadvantaged group activists using the same stimuli and experimental design.

7. Study 3

In an effort to combine the external validity of Study 1 with the internal validity of Study 2, we ran an experiment with self-identified disadvantaged group activists in the feminist movement. Study 3 was pre-registered prior to data collection,¹⁴ and we chose a target sample size of 300 to ensure greater than 90% power to detect a $d = 0.34$ effect size based on our findings from Study 2.

Before discussing this study further, it is important to note that activists are often considered a vulnerable population, and difficult to recruit for studies. As evidenced by researchers who engage in community-based participatory research (George, Duran, & Norris, 2014; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Minkler, 2004), activists and other members of vulnerable communities historically faced discrimination from institutions of power, and can thus be skeptical toward social science research (Huang & Coker, 2010), especially if such research is seen as being extractive and conducted by members of elite academic institutions (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; Walker & Christidis, 2018). We therefore took special consideration when recruiting from this population. The authors self-disclosed their history of activism and motivation in soliciting input from activists. In an effort to be inclusive of the full population of feminist activists, in this study we modified the recruitment materials to use more gender and nonbinary inclusive language (e.g., “women” was changed to “womxn” to signal inclusivity to trans and nonbinary activists in the feminist movement). We also purposefully allowed open-ended responses for demographic items, instead of using traditional forced-choice responses, which can often exclude

¹⁴ The pre-registration is available on AsPredicted: <https://bit.ly/2VKYYeE>

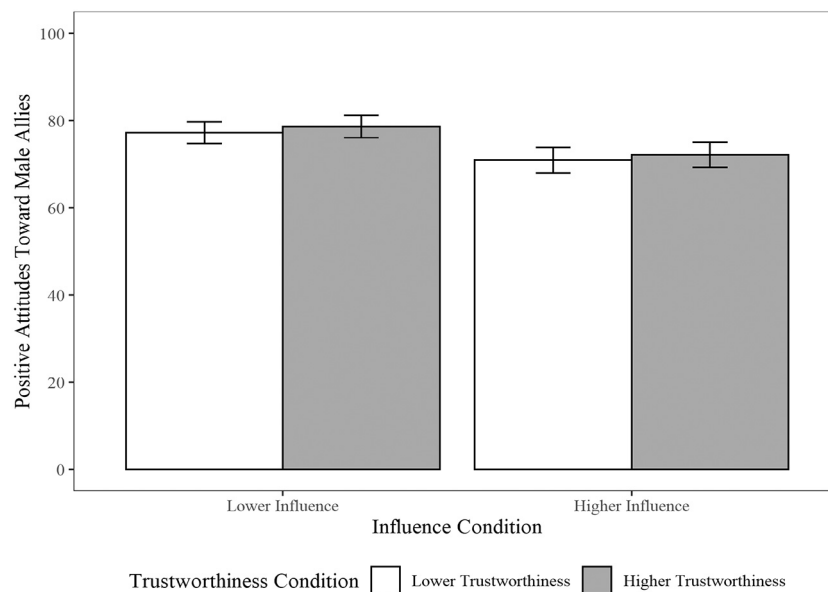


Fig. 3. Mean attitude ratings by trustworthiness and influence conditions (Study 2).
Note. Error bars show two standard errors above and below the mean.

underrepresented identities.

7.1. Method

7.1.1. Participants

We recruited feminist disadvantaged group activists using snowball sampling in Facebook groups and email listservs created for activists, feminists, women of color, undocumented immigrants, queer people of color, and first-generation/low-income student populations. As in Study 1, we solicited feminist activists in these groups because they were the most convenient sample of this special population, based on several authors' affiliations in these groups. Over a 9-month period, a total of 505 participants, presumably feminist activists, expressed initial interest in participating, and when they were contacted directly, 370 participants (73%) completed the full survey and 6 participants (1%) partially completed the survey. Participants who partially completed the survey were retained for applicable analyses, and our general findings remain unchanged when these participants are excluded.

We excluded 14 participants for not identifying as women or gender nonbinary, and an additional 53 participants for not reporting any experience in activism.¹⁵ Therefore, we limit our analyses to a sample of 305 self-identified feminist activists (60% of interested participants). All participants were compensated \$10.00 for completing the study. A sensitivity power analysis using G*Power (Faul et al., 2007) revealed we were adequately powered to find an effect size of $f = 0.161$ (i.e., small to medium effect size) at $p < .05$ for a between-subjects ANOVA with 4 groups and 1 degree of freedom in the numerator.

7.1.2. Procedure and measures

The procedures for this experiment are the same as those in Study 2.

7.1.2.1. Attitudes toward male allies. Attitudes toward advantaged group allies were measured using the five-item scale from Study 2, which was averaged to create a composite Attitude Score ($\alpha = 0.93$).

7.1.2.2. Characteristics of male allies. Perceptions of male allies were measured using the same 11-item scale from Study 2. A factor analysis indicated that a 2-factor solution was the best fit for the data, resulting in the same subscales as Study 2.¹⁶ Therefore, the eight trustworthiness items were averaged to create a composite Trustworthiness Score ($\alpha = 0.93$) and the three influence items were averaged to create a composite Influence Score ($\alpha = 0.81$).

7.1.2.3. Activist identification, experience, and demographics. Disadvantaged group activists' identification as activists and their experience with activism were measured using the same items from Study 2. We averaged the three-item scale measuring activist identification to create a composite Identification Score ($\alpha = 0.88$). Activists reported their age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity (124 White, 19 Black, 76 Asian, 37 Latino/a, 5 Middle Eastern, 3 Native American, and 40 Multiracial), political orientation ($-100 = \text{extremely liberal}$ to $100 = \text{extremely conservative}$), level of education, and employment status (Table 4). As in Study 1, our activist sample was highly diverse, comprising primarily people of color and LGBTQ individuals, with sizable representation from gender nonbinary feminist activists.

7.2. Results

7.2.1. Manipulation checks

7.2.1.1. Trustworthiness and influence ratings. Analyses revealed that both manipulations were successful. Participants in the higher trustworthiness condition ($M = 51.70$, $SD = 20.26$) rated male allies as more trustworthy than those in the lower trustworthiness condition ($M = 39.73$, $SD = 20.87$), $t(303) = 5.08$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.58$. Participants in the higher influence condition ($M = 59.48$, $SD = 19.46$) rated male allies as more influential than those in the lower influence condition ($M = 41.00$, $SD = 23.31$), $t(303) = 7.52$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.86$.

¹⁵ The 71 excluded participants did not differ across influence condition, $\chi^2(1, N = 377) = 1.06$, $p = .304$, or trustworthiness condition, $\chi^2(1, N = 377) = 0.191$, $p = .662$.

¹⁶ A factor analysis using varimax rotation showed support for a 2-factor solution with eigenvalues of 5.88 (for trustworthiness with eight items) and 1.70 (for influence with three items) that explained 69% of the variance. All of the items loaded onto only one of the two factors based on the factor loading criteria of 0.6 or above.

7.2.2. Primary analyses

7.2.2.1. Attitudes toward advantaged group allies. A Trustworthiness \times Influence ANOVA on attitudes toward advantaged group allies revealed a significant main effect of Trustworthiness, $F(1,301) = 3.89, p = .049, d = 0.22$, and a significant main effect of Influence, $F(1, 301) = 14.74, p < .001, d = 0.44$. On average, participants in the lower trustworthiness condition ($M = 56.87, SD = 22.96, n = 148$) rated male allies less positively than did participants in the higher trustworthiness condition ($M = 62.14, SD = 22.02, n = 157$). Participants in the lower influence condition ($M = 64.62, SD = 21.41, n = 149$) rated male allies more positively than did participants in the higher influence condition ($M = 54.77, SD = 22.71, n = 156$) (Fig. 4). The interaction effect was nonsignificant, $F(1, 301) = 0.002, p = .966, d = 0.005$.

Overall, this pattern of results is consistent with our prediction that male allies who are higher in influence will be perceived less positively than male allies who are lower in influence, lending support to Hypothesis 2b. Unlike in Study 2, we find strong support for the prediction that male allies who are higher in trustworthiness will be perceived more positively than male allies who are lower in trustworthiness, lending support to Hypothesis 1b.

7.3. Discussion

This study extends both Studies 1 and 2 by demonstrating the causal effects of trustworthiness and influence on disadvantaged group activists' attitudes toward advantaged group allies, and the results of Study 3 are consistent with our predictions. In this sample of feminist activists, we found significant main effects of trustworthiness and influence on attitudes toward allies, lending support to Hypotheses 1b and 2b. Furthermore, when we compare the results of Study 2 and Study 3, it is clear that disadvantaged group activists, on average, hold less positive attitudes ($M = 59.58, SD = 22.60$) toward advantaged group allies than non-activists ($M = 74.72, SD = 18.93$) (Table 4). This 15-point difference is striking given how, compared with non-activists, activists are more likely to be in contact with, and perhaps receive benefits from, male allies in the movement.

8. Study 4

Study 4 is a conceptual replication of Study 3, with a stronger emphasis on internal validity. In Studies 2 and 3, a limitation of the trustworthiness manipulation was that the set of behaviors described varied between the higher and lower trustworthiness conditions. As a result, the behaviors differed not only in the perceived trustworthiness of the behaviors, but also in terms of other key dimensions of social action such as normativity (Thomas & Louis, 2014), modality (Wilkins, Livingstone, & Levine, 2019), and symbolic or performative support, which obscure the interpretation of our trustworthiness manipulation. Although some of these elements may naturally covary with perceived trustworthiness in the allyship context, Study 4 aims to negate concerns about these potential confounds and to increase the face validity of our manipulation by explicitly describing the same behaviors as either trustworthy or untrustworthy. That is, instead of indirectly manipulating the perceived trustworthiness of advantaged group allies through differences in behaviors, we directly manipulate the trustworthiness of these allies. Study 4 was pre-registered prior to data collection,¹⁷ and we chose a target sample size of 872 to ensure greater than 90% power to detect a $d = 0.22$ effect size based on our findings from Study 3.

8.1. Method

8.1.1. Participants

We recruited feminist activists on Prolific Academic in two stages. First, we sampled 2050 liberal women and non-binary participants from Prolific and asked them to fill out a survey asking about involvement in the feminist movement as well as identification as an activist, along with a host of other variables to mask the eligibility requirement for our subsequent survey. Second, we followed up with 920 participants from the first survey who indicated involvement in the feminist movement. A total of 806 participants (87.6% of those contacted) completed the full survey. We excluded one participant for not identifying as a woman or gender nonbinary individual.¹⁸ Therefore, we limit our analyses to a sample of 805 self-identified feminist activists. All participants were compensated \$1.00 for completing this 4-min study. A sensitivity power analysis using G*Power (Faul et al., 2007) revealed we were adequately powered to find an effect size of $f = 0.099$ (i.e., small effect size) at $p < .05$ for a between-subjects ANOVA with 4 groups and 1 degree of freedom in the numerator.

8.1.2. Procedure

The procedures for this experiment are the same as those in Study 3, with the exception of a different trustworthiness manipulation in the Medium article.

8.1.3. Manipulations

8.1.3.1. Trustworthiness manipulation. We directly manipulated the trustworthiness of male allies by presenting a set of two paragraphs that described advantaged group allies as being either highly trustworthy or untrustworthy. Importantly, to control for the potential confounds in our previous experimental stimuli, we held constant the example of allyship behaviors and outcomes across the two conditions.

The allies I have worked with in Feminism Now can generally be described as highly trustworthy [untrustworthy]. As a concrete example, these male allies recently held a public, online fundraiser on social media. They raised \$300 for a local group focused on women's empowerment.

Instead of highlighting themselves [the local feminist group] during this fundraiser, these male allies mentioned how the local feminist group was [they, as allies, were] making an important difference in the community. The allies' actions demonstrate their high [low] level of trustworthiness because they [don't] go out of their way to support the cause for the right reasons. They have generally been very helpful [unhelpful] in our efforts to end gender-based discrimination.

8.1.3.2. Influence manipulation. We manipulated the influence of male allies in the movement using the same paragraphs from Studies 2 and 3.

8.1.4. Measures

8.1.4.1. Attitudes toward male allies. Attitudes toward advantaged group allies were measured using the five-item scale from Study 3, which was averaged to create a composite Attitude Score ($\alpha = 0.95$).

8.1.4.2. Characteristics of male allies. Perceptions of male allies were

¹⁸ The exclusion of participants did not differ across influence condition, $\chi^2(1, N = 806) < 0.001, p = .996$, or trustworthiness condition, $\chi^2(1, N = 806) < 0.001, p = .994$.

¹⁷ The pre-registration is available on AsPredicted: <https://bit.ly/33PFYzs>

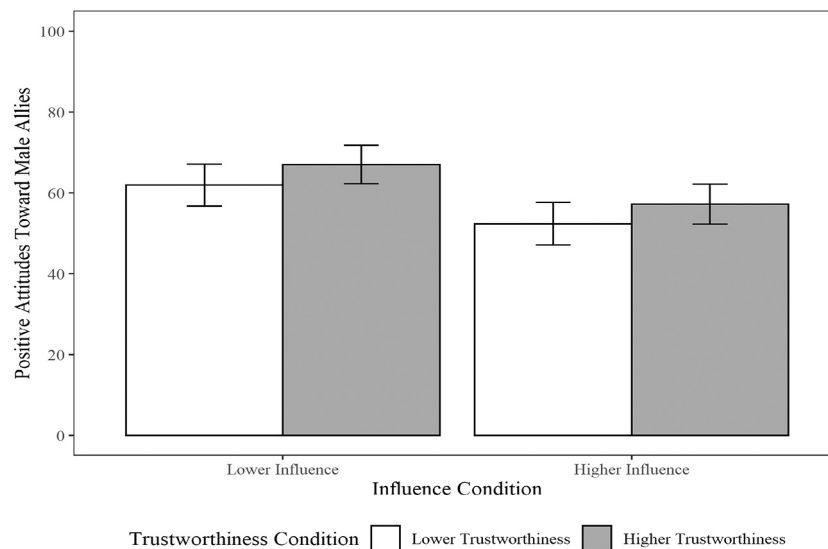


Fig. 4. Mean attitude ratings by trustworthiness and influence conditions (Study 3).

Note. Error bars show two standard errors above and below the mean.

measured using the same 11-item scale from Study 3. A factor analysis indicated that a 2-factor solution was the best fit for the data, resulting in the same subscales as Study 3.¹⁹ Therefore, the eight trustworthiness items were averaged to create a composite Trustworthiness Score ($\alpha = 0.96$) and the three influence items were averaged to create a composite Influence Score ($\alpha = 0.87$).

8.1.4.3. Activist identification, experience, and demographics. Disadvantaged group activists' identification as activists and their experience with activism were measured using the same items from Study 3. We averaged the three-item scale measuring activist identification to create a composite Identification Score ($\alpha = 0.93$). Activists reported their age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity (579 White, 42 Black, 69 Asian, 40 Latino/a, 3 Native American, and 72 Multiracial), political orientation ($-100 = \text{extremely liberal}$ to $100 = \text{extremely conservative}$), level of education, and employment status (Table 4).

8.2. Results

8.2.1. Manipulation checks

8.2.1.1. Trustworthiness and influence ratings. Analyses revealed that both manipulations were successful. Participants in the trustworthy condition ($M = 61.12$, $SD = 20.67$) rated male allies as more trustworthy than those in the untrustworthy condition ($M = 28.11$, $SD = 19.12$), $t(803) = 23.51$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.66$. Participants in the higher influence condition ($M = 60.36$, $SD = 21.53$) rated male allies as more influential than those in the lower influence condition ($M = 36.61$, $SD = 22.17$), $t(803) = 15.42$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.09$.

8.2.2. Primary analyses

8.2.2.1. Attitudes toward advantaged group allies. A Trustworthiness \times Influence ANOVA on attitudes toward advantaged group allies revealed a significant main effect of Trustworthiness, $F(1, 801) = 457.43$, $p <$

.001, $d = 1.49$, and a significant main effect of Influence, $F(1, 801) = 18.52$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.24$. On average, participants in the untrustworthy condition ($M = 39.43$, $SD = 21.22$, $n = 399$) rated male allies less positively than did participants in the trustworthy condition ($M = 70.88$, $SD = 21.03$, $n = 406$). Participants in the lower influence condition ($M = 58.43$, $SD = 26.10$, $n = 400$) rated male allies more positively than did participants in the higher influence condition ($M = 52.19$, $SD = 26.22$, $n = 405$) (Fig. 5). The interaction effect was nonsignificant, $F(1, 801) = 2.05$, $p = .152$, $d = 0.08$.

8.3. Discussion

This study replicates the findings from Study 3 and demonstrates the robust causal effects of trustworthiness and influence on disadvantaged group activists' attitudes toward advantaged group allies using a more face valid manipulation of trustworthiness. As in Study 3, the results of Study 4 are consistent with our predictions. In this separate sample of feminist activists, we once again found significant main effects of trustworthiness and influence on attitudes toward advantaged group allies, lending support to Hypotheses 1b and 2b. Of note, the importance of trustworthiness and influence is present even when the outcome of allyship behaviors is positive.

9. General discussion

Identity-oriented social movements such as the Women's March have made salient the issues that affect members of marginalized groups, galvanizing people to fight for equality from across identity lines. Present in many different organizational contexts, these advantaged group allies engage in a variety of behaviors to support their intended beneficiaries. Over the course of four studies, we examine disadvantaged group activists' attitudes toward advantaged group allies in social movements with a focus on understanding the perceptions that shape their attitudes.

We find converging evidence for our predictions that beneficiaries perceive their advantaged group allies less positively when these allies engage in actions that demonstrate lower levels of trustworthiness (e.g., selflessness, loyalty) and higher levels of influence (e.g., centrality, power) in the movement. In an observational study of social movement activists (Study 1), we found that disadvantaged group activists believe their allies are not trustworthy enough (Hypothesis 1a) and found mixed support for the notion that allies are too influential (Hypothesis 2a).

¹⁹ A factor analysis using varimax rotation showed support for a 2-factor solution with eigenvalues of 7.25 (for trustworthiness with eight items) and 1.53 (for influence with three items) that explained 80% of the variance. All of the items loaded onto only one of the two factors based on the factor loading criteria of 0.6 or above.

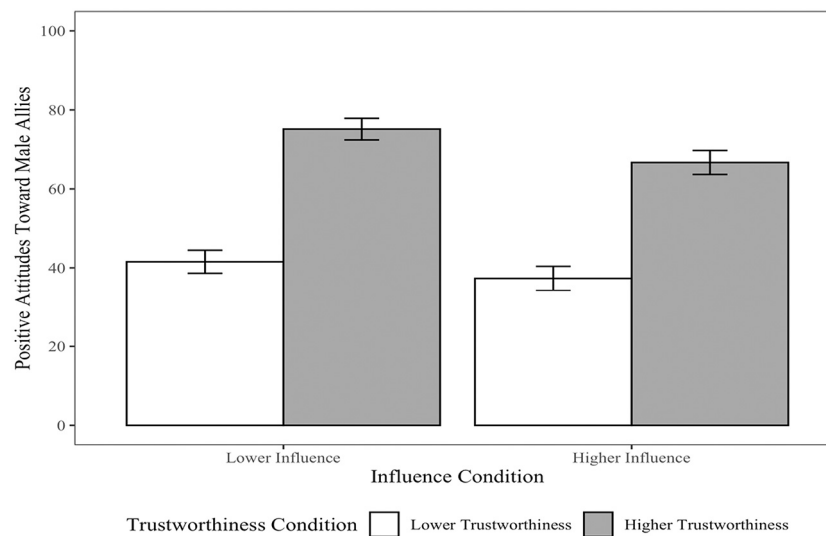


Fig. 5. Mean attitude ratings by trustworthiness and influence conditions (Study 4).

Note. Error bars show two standard errors above and below the mean.

Further, we found evidence for the importance of higher trustworthiness and lower influence in predicting disadvantaged group activists' positive attitudes toward advantaged group allies (Hypotheses 1b & 2b). In a follow-up experiment (Study 2) that directly manipulated trustworthiness and influence of advantaged group allies in a sample of mainly non-activist liberal women and nonbinary people, we found only a significant main effect of influence in the predicted direction. However, we found additional support for both of our main hypotheses in two separate samples of feminist activists (Studies 3 & 4), such that both higher trustworthiness and lower influence increased positive attitudes toward male advantaged group allies. In sum, in all of our activist samples, we find consistent evidence that perceptions of trustworthiness and influence shape disadvantaged group activists' attitudes toward their advantaged group allies. Of note, however, is the possibility that some differences may exist between activists and non-activists with regard to trustworthiness, with activists potentially picking up on more subtle differences in the trustworthiness of allyship behaviors. This is consistent with prior work demonstrating that non-activists are less sensitive to instances of injustice (Wright, 2010). Taken together, our research provides insight into the causal effects of different allyship behaviors on beneficiaries' attitudes toward advantaged group allies (Studies 2, 3, & 4) while recruiting diverse samples of social movement activists (Studies 1, 3, & 4).

9.1. Theoretical contributions

Our research contributes to emerging scholarship on allyship in two ways. First, our studies extend upon previous research on perceptions of advantaged group allies (e.g., Brown & Ostrove, 2013) by soliciting the perspectives of social movement activists to identify movement influence as an additional dimension of advantaged group ally perception. This unique social movement context, wherein allyship is highly deliberated, allows us to generate and test theories on allyship that have not yet been demonstrated in other empirical settings. For instance, by considering both trustworthiness and influence in activist samples, our research provides an empirical test of theories on the impact of allies in social movements (Selvanathan et al., 2020) and extends prior work on perceptions of allies (Estevan-Reina et al., 2021; Wiley & Dunne, 2019).

Second, our research documents some of the difficulties of ally activism (Droogendyk et al., 2016; Russell & Bohan, 2016), which reflect the realities of collective action embedded in societal power dynamics. Although interactions between advantaged group allies and

disadvantaged group activists can be thought of as occurring under some of the ideal conditions for intergroup contact (e.g., having a superordinate goal and engaging in intergroup cooperation), structural differences in people's ascribed status in society can lead to skepticism and mistrust from disadvantaged group activists. By definition, advantaged group allies come into a movement with privileged experiences (with respect to a particular issue), and their position in society can be a liability in the context of a social movement, which aims to upend illegitimate status differences. In an organizational context that is meant to oppose hierarchies associated with status-based identities (Flesher Fominaya, 2010), having higher ascribed status in society may not bring its typical benefits and affordances. Our research highlights the importance of considering the historical and structural dynamics of intergroup relations, which go beyond minimal groups and identities (Kraus & Torrez, 2020; Richeson & Sommers, 2016) to consider these group dynamics in the context of shifting power.

From this vantage point, we can understand why beneficiaries of prosocial behavior might react with dissatisfaction instead of gratitude, which counters lay and empirical expectations of receiving help (Bartlett & DeSteno, 2006). Though people typically experience feelings of gratitude when a benefactor offers help, the dynamics surrounding intergroup relations can minimize the value of what might otherwise be seen as prosocial behavior. In addition, though research on confrontations of bias typically demonstrates that beneficiaries of interventions appreciate the confronter's actions (Kutlaca et al., 2020), the same behaviors may backfire depending on the level of trustworthiness and influence that those behaviors signal to the beneficiary, especially in the context of social activism.

9.2. Practical implications

Many organizations are undertaking allyship initiatives or trainings to increase feelings of inclusion for their marginalized members and to promote progressive social change more broadly. In line with the ways that social movements inform behaviors relevant to other types of organizations (McDonnell & Werner, 2016) and research focused on empowering members of marginalized communities through identifiable cues and actions (Pietri, Drawbaugh, Lewis, & Johnson, 2019; Pietri, Johnson, & Ozgumus, 2018), our research has several practical implications for promoting allyship behaviors that are effective in supporting members of marginalized groups.

First, our findings provide insight into the importance of

trustworthiness for building sustainable solidarity when beneficiaries and advantaged group allies work together across identity lines. Trustworthiness is particularly important in the social movement context and plays a key role in forming impressions of advantaged group allies, especially given that allies are oftentimes distrusted for having ulterior motives (Droogendyk et al., 2016; Radke et al., 2020; Russell & Bohan, 2016). If beneficiaries view their advantaged group allies as less trustworthy, beneficiaries are likely to be dissatisfied with the involvement of their allies and subsequently be less inclined to continue working alongside these allies. For disadvantaged group activists to avoid burnout when working with advantaged group allies (Gorski, 2019; Gorski & Erakat, 2019), allies must demonstrate high levels of trustworthiness through their actions and not take the presence of trust for granted. This means that allies need to become knowledgeable about the issues that affect marginalized groups, make sacrifices to push for change, and remain loyal in their support for members of marginalized groups. Striving for these goals may include engaging in behaviors mentioned in our studies: attending teach-ins, canvassing their neighborhoods, showing up at protests, and fundraising to support the cause.

Our findings about perceived influence suggest that advantaged group allies need to also consider how they engage in their social activism with respect to their level of influence. For instance, if advantaged group allies' voices outweigh the voices of marginalized individuals, allies still maintain a position of power, which makes beneficiaries less receptive to allies' help and involvement. Therefore, advantaged group allies should defer to the guidance of beneficiaries whenever possible and center the voices of intended beneficiaries in the movement. Even when allies possess higher levels of influence outside of the movement, they can wield their position of relative privilege and exercise their greater external influence in ways that still respect the autonomy of disadvantaged group activists. Groves (1995), for example, notes how predominantly female animal rights activists in North Carolina would strategically use men as spokespeople because they thought that a man who spoke with emotion about animal cruelty would be more effective in justifying the movement's legitimacy.

Importantly, our research highlights how these recommendations will depend on the beneficiary because certain segments of beneficiary audiences respond differently to the same allyship behaviors. For non-activist beneficiaries, engaging in allyship behaviors that are respectful of the autonomy of the beneficiary may be all that is required to maintain positive relations. For activist beneficiaries, however, engaging in allyship behaviors that signal high trustworthiness and low influence may be most satisfactory.

Finally, we urge advantaged group allies to consider the goal of allyship, which is to pursue justice and equity, and to reflect on how their engagement with the movement directly impacts the people they intend to support. We caution against interpreting our findings as a way to "look good" in front of disadvantaged group activists for the sake of social or reputational gains (Teixeira et al., 2020). Furthermore, it is important to avoid engaging in allyship behaviors that are both low in trustworthiness and high in influence because this combination may be perceived as disingenuous and undesirable (i.e., "performative allyship"). If the goal of allyship is to meaningfully support the efforts of disadvantaged group activists, advantaged group allies must deeply assess their allyship behaviors—in terms of both *what* they are doing and *how* they are doing it—because their actions can have detrimental consequences to the people they hope to uplift (Gorski, 2019). As commonly vocalized in activist communities, "ally" is a verb and not a noun, and those seeking to work as advantaged group allies in movements should engage in an ongoing process of involvement and examine the effect of their allyship behaviors on their intended beneficiaries.

9.3. Limitations and future directions

Though our research makes several important contributions to empirical work on allyship, it is not without its flaws. In Studies 1 and 3,

our snowball sampling procedures give rise to justifiable concerns about non-representativeness and bias in our results, which we have attempted to mitigate. Although activists were recruited based upon shared membership in online groups, we do not personally know the vast majority of activists who were recruited from various activist groups and listservs. In addition, based on the comments activists wrote in our surveys, they did not report suspicions about our experimental conditions or hypotheses. We also suspended recruitment during times of relevant widespread political unrest (e.g., The Women's March, Brett Kavanaugh Hearings, etc.) to avoid recruiting during times of heightened intergroup tension. Furthermore, we recruited a separate online sample of feminist activists in Study 4 who demonstrated consistent results with our snowball samples, which provides additional confidence in our findings. Based on our efforts to recruit from an active population of social movement participants, we believe that our findings reflect the true experiences and opinions of activists.

However, it is possible that members of different movements differ in the degree of their attitudes, given the varying histories of each identity-oriented social movement. For instance, rhetoric surrounding men's gender roles in society highlight their paternalistic tendencies, which might result in greater vigilance about male allies' influence in the feminist movement that may not exist to the same extent in other identity-oriented movements. The unique histories of advantaged group allies in a movement, such as in Black Lives Matter, may lead to different primary considerations than those we find in the feminist movement even though both are based in relations of dominance and subordination. In particular, allies in Black Lives Matter include middle-status or intermediary racial groups, such as Asian Americans (Kim, 1999), who have a different history with Black people than White allies. As another example, the LGBTQ movement consists of different subgroups of disadvantaged group activists, each with a complex history with cis and/or heterosexual advantaged group allies. Study 1 showed some initial possibility for generalization in that activists from different movements showed a pattern of results similar to the findings from our experiment with activists from the feminist movement. Nevertheless, future research will be necessary to better understand how our findings generalize to other activist contexts. If crosstalk and stereotypes about advantaged group allies span different movements, we would expect to find similar results in other activist samples.

Relatedly, it will be necessary for future research to pursue an intersectional analysis of not only the social identities of the advantaged group ally, but also the social identities of the disadvantaged group activist. In our studies, our experimental stimuli included photos suggesting that the male allies being referenced were White or White-passing, which may elicit a response that is specific to the category of White male allies. Disadvantaged group activists might respond to male allies who hold a minoritized identity (e.g., a Black man) with more positive assessments because their ally experiences identity-based discrimination, which can result in a feeling of solidarity through shared disadvantage (Cortland et al., 2017). Furthermore, activists with multiple marginalized social identities (e.g., women of color) might respond to their allies with a different understanding of the dynamics between activists and allies than those with both advantaged and disadvantaged social identities (e.g., White women).²⁰ For instance, it is

²⁰ In our exploratory analyses, we find inconsistent evidence of moderation in each of our experiments. In Study 2, we observed a three-way interaction by participant race, such that the relationship between trustworthiness and influence on attitudes significantly differed between White participants and participants of color. However, this finding was not replicated in Studies 3 and 4. In Study 3, political radicalism was the only significant moderator, and in Study 4, activist identification was the only significant moderator of the effect of trustworthiness and influence on attitudes toward advantaged group allies. Interested readers can find the full set of moderation analyses in the Online Supplemental Materials.

possible that, since breaches of trust are particularly costly to lower status individuals as well as communities of color (Kraus, Piff, Mendoza-Denton, Rheinschmidt, & Keltner, 2012; Lount Jr & Pettit, 2012; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986), activists with multiple marginalized identities will be more sensitive to the trustworthiness of their advantaged group allies. In sum, it would be prudent for future research to examine the multiplicity of activists' and allies' social identities and social movement participation, considering the heterogeneity in activists' involvement in identity-oriented movements for which they are an advantaged group ally and a disadvantaged group activist to varying degrees (Curtin et al., 2016).

Future research can also dig deeper into the dimensions of trustworthiness and influence as they pertain to attitudes toward allies. For instance, the various components of trustworthiness (i.e., benevolence, integrity, and ability) may differ in the magnitude of their importance for inspiring more positive attitudes of allies. In our current studies, we examined trustworthiness as a composite of the three components and manipulated all of them in the same direction, which limits our ability to make causal claims about which component of trustworthiness is most important for allies to demonstrate. There is reason to suspect that there would be a difference, for instance, between benevolence and integrity, given research on the distinctive predictive power of sociability and morality on impression formation (Brambilla & Leach, 2014).

With regard to influence, future research can examine the role of both internal (within) and external (outside) movement influence. As our current studies do not experimentally manipulate influence outside of the movement, our research may not capture an important factor in disadvantaged group activists' perceptions of their advantaged group allies. Studying the role of external influence is critical because disadvantaged group activists face a dilemma when it comes to the influence of their advantaged group allies. Although advantaged group allies may have more influence and leverage outside of the movement to create change, more influence in the movement can be disempowering and disrespectful to disadvantaged group activists. Given how societal power reifies itself across different contexts, disadvantaged group activists may struggle to balance their allies' influence and could possibly prefer allies who do not have immense external influence. Future research can examine the interplay between trustworthiness and influence, both internal and external, to uncover the types of allies that disadvantaged group activists prefer to work with in their movements. It is possible that trustworthiness and external influence interact such that externally influential advantaged group allies are only liked when they demonstrate high levels of trustworthiness.

In addition, contextual factors may moderate the relationship between trustworthiness and influence as they pertain to attitudes toward allies. Though we study the social movement context in our studies, the dynamics of influence may differ in different kinds of organizational contexts, such as the workplace. For instance, in a workplace, the formal leadership roles that an advantaged group ally might occupy (e.g., as a male manager of a team) may provide greater legitimacy for an ally to act on behalf of disadvantaged group members (Sherf et al., 2017). In this scenario, the male manager's actions to help a disadvantaged group member (e.g., a female team member) may not be viewed as paternalistic because it is consistent with the expectations that people have about the role of a leader. The norms that govern what is appropriate allyship behavior can shift from context to context, and future research can elucidate when and why advantaged group allies' influence is received favorably.

In the long term, research should examine if these sorts of beliefs about advantaged group allies are unique to the liberal and progressive identity-oriented movements present in our studies. Would we expect to find a similar pattern of results in right-wing identity-oriented movements such as the men's rights movement? One possibility is that since activists in these movements (e.g., men) also believe that they are fighting against an unjust system that privileges their allies (e.g., women), they would engage in similar processes to assess the

trustworthiness and influence of their allies to form their attitudes. A different possibility is that since so few women support the men's rights movement, male activists may elevate these female allies in the movement for engaging in the same conservative status quo maintenance that they themselves engage in. A host of unforeseen processes might surface in relation to how activists think about allies in right-wing movements, which could inform and refine research on allyship.

Finally, though our research makes significant contributions to understanding the perspective of disadvantaged group activists in movements, it is important to consider allyship as a fundamentally relational process, occurring across a wide range of social contexts. Social activism takes many forms and involves working alongside allies with varying levels of personal familiarity (strangers at a protest vs. colleagues at a workplace initiative). Future research should consider a dyadic level of analysis (e.g., Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Ostrove & Brown, 2018) that examines these varying contexts for a deeper understanding of allyship as it unfolds during interpersonal interactions. While our research makes a strong first step in identifying the desires of disadvantaged group activists, additional work should examine allyship as a dynamic, relational process that shapes—and is shaped by—both activists and allies.

10. Conclusion

Research on allyship typically examines this intergroup phenomenon using non-experimental studies that focus on the perspective of advantaged group allies. Our research is one of very few cases to conduct experimental research with people currently engaged in the work of social movements. As a result, we find strong evidence that activists hold varying perceptions of the allies who support them, dynamics which reflect some of the complications and complexities of intergroup interactions. Our findings have direct implications for people and organizations who want to pursue effective allyship, noting the importance of engaging in behaviors that demonstrate high levels of trustworthiness and low levels of influence in the movement. As a next step, we call for further research examining allyship in the context of other movements and using multiple levels of analysis in an effort to understand the complexity of social activism on an individual and dyadic level. Since disadvantaged group activists and advantaged group allies work together on some of society's most pressing social issues, it is imperative that we understand the mechanisms that underlie potential tensions when connecting and collaborating across differences.

Declarations of interest

None.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2021.104226>.

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