The Morality of Organization vs. Organized Members:

Organizations are Attributed More Control and Responsibility for Negative Outcomes in

the Organization Frame than the Members Frame

Simone Tang[1], Christy Zhou Koval[2], Rick Larrick[3], and Lasana Harris[4]

[1]Cornell University, [2]Michigan State University, [3]Duke University, [4]University College London

Corresponding author:
Simone Tang
Statler Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca NY 14853
simone.tang@cornell.edu

Abstract

Seven experiments demonstrate that framing an organizational entity (the target) using an organization frame ("an organization comprised of its constituent members") versus a members frame ("constituent members comprising an organization") alters people's attribution of responsibility to the target following a negative outcome, despite identical information conveyed. Specifically, the target in the organization (vs. members) frame was perceived to have more control over a negative outcome, which led to an increased attribution of responsibility (Studies 1-3). This effect surfaced for both for-profits and non-profits (Study 5). However, when the target in the members frame had explicit control over the outcome (Study 3), or when participants held strong beliefs in individual free will (Study 4), the effect of frame on responsibility attenuated. To the extent that framing increased perceptions of control, punishment for the target also increased (Studies 6a and 6b). By demonstrating how a subtle shift in framing can impact people's perceptions and judgments of organizations, we reveal important knowledge about how people understand organizations and the psychological nature of organizational and group perception.

Keywords: morality, moral judgment and decision-making, framing, perceived control, responsibility, member-organization discontinuity

The Morality of Organization vs. Organized Members:

Organizations are Attributed More Control and Responsibility for Negative Outcomes in

the Organization Frame than the Members Frame

After Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, the delivery of thirty million meals was urgently needed. For this $156 million task, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) retained Tiffany Brown, an Atlanta entrepreneur who is the sole owner and employee of her company, Tribute Contracting. However, she and Tribute Contracting ended up creating a second disaster: by the time 18.5 million meals were due, only 50,000 meals had been delivered (Begnaud, 2018). As a one-person operation, Tiffany Brown was arguably perceptually interchangeable with her organization, Tribute—in reporting the fiasco, for example, journalists referred to them interchangeably (Anapol, 2018; Mazzei & Armendariz, 2018). That is, people could have thought of Tribute as the organization consisting of one worker, or they could have thought of Tiffany Brown as the worker that constituted the organization. Although this one-person organization is an extreme example, and most businesses have more than one person (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2018), this possibility raises an important question: Does framing the organizational entity differently influence people's judgment of it after a bad outcome?

Research on judgment and decision-making has long documented that people react to the same information in different ways depending on how it is presented (Bazerman, 1984; Kahneman, 2003; McNeil, Pauker & Tversky, 1988; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981, 1986). For example, people are more likely to support a policy that is framed as lives saved compared to one that is framed as other lives lost (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). Past work has revealed the importance of many factors in influencing how people attribute responsibility and blame,

including victim namelessness (Gino, Shu, & Bazerman, 2010) and moral character (Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011). Following the tradition of framing research, we propose in this paper that a subtle shift in how an organization is framed—that is, how the same information about it is presented—can affect people's moral judgments of the organization. Specifically, we suggest that following a bad outcome, which we define as outcomes that have negative consequences for external stakeholders (e.g., customers), people will perceive the target as having more responsibility in the organization frame (e.g., "The Organization comprised of five members") than in a constituent members frame (e.g., "The five members who comprise The Organization") because of an increased perception of control. By demonstrating and understanding how a subtle shift in framing can impact people's moral judgments of organizations, we reveal important knowledge about how people understand organizations and the psychological processes underlying group perception. In the following, we discuss how organizations can be framed differently, before discussing how framing influences perceptions of control and moral consequences.

Perceptions of Organizations

Organizational and legal scholars have defined organizations as a collection of people, structured in a specific way to achieve a series of shared goals (Black's Law Dictionary, 2016; Blau and Scott, 1962; Ouchi, 1980). As such, they can be perceived either as organizations ("*organization frame*") or as organized constituent members ("*members frame*," Black's Law Dictionary, 2016; Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc., 2014; Bank of the United States v. Deveaux, 1806; Winkler, 2018). We can think of an organization as "The Organization comprised of its members," thereby making the organizational collective salient, or "The members who comprise The Organization," thereby making the member elements salient. For

example, one could refer to the highest court of the land as the organization (the Supreme Court, which has nine justices) or as its constituent members (the nine justices, which comprise the Supreme Court; e.g., Barnes, 2016). Similarly, a family-owned grocery store could be referred to as "*The grocery store*, owned and operated by the mother, father, and daughter" or as "*The mother, father, and daughter*, who own and operate the grocery store." In the United States, about 20 million small businesses are owned and operated by less than 20 people (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2018), with all small organizations employing 47.5% of U.S. employees (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2018), suggesting that the organization vs. members framing is highly relevant to many organizations.

In addition to how people respond differently to the information itself depending on how the information is framed (e.g., Kahneman, 2003; McNeil, Pauker & Tversky, 1988; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981), nascent research has found that people's judgment of a target depends on how the target is framed. For example, framing a crime using the passive voice (e.g., The victim was attacked by the assailant) compared to the active voice (e.g., The assailant attacked the victim) increases victim blaming (Niemi & Young, 2016). Additionally, recent work has found that reframing a group from "a group of people" (e.g., an association comprised of 15 people) to "people in a group" (e.g., 15 people who compose the association) increases evaluators' attribution of human characteristics to the target (e.g., ability to feel emotional pain; Study 2, Cooley et al., 2017). Our work dovetails the work on framing, on moral judgments of organizations, and by Cooley and colleagues. Importantly, however, overall, the research by Cooley et al. differs from our current research in that (1) their focus was on attribution of minds rather than moral judgments of responsibility and blame, (2) we draw from the literature on framing and the Culpable Control Model to examine perceptions of control, and (3) as part of the

paper's motivation was to examine when people attribute minds to groups or organizations as they do individuals (building off Rai & Diermeier, 2015, who found that people attribute more minds to organizations than individuals), the majority of their studies (two out of three) do not keep the framing (and thus number of individuals in each condition) constant.

Closer to our current research question of moral responsibility and blame, past related work suggests that people may judge an organizational actor more harshly in the organization frame than in the members frame when a negative outcome occurs. For example, following a negative incident, people express greater anger at the organization than at its CEO for the transgression (Hans & Ermann, 1989; Rai & Diermeier, 2015) and assign greater blame and responsibility to an organization actor than an individual actor (Lee Hamilton & Sanders, 1999; MacCoun, 1996). Furthermore, they are more likely to believe that an organization would use its legal rights to harm others than individuals would (Jago & Laurin, 2017), and to judge the same transgression by an organization as more immoral than that by an individual (Jago & Pfeffer, 2018).

Interestingly, one study found that people judged an organization (vs. an individual) less harshly when it broke a contract to pursue a more lucrative option (Haran, 2013). Specifically, Haran found that compared to a person, when an organization breaks a contract, people view it as a reasonable business decision and think the behavior is less unethical. However, this finding may be limited to contractual contexts, as this difference disappeared when the transgression harmed the environment rather than the individual. Haran posits that "honoring a contract may not constitute as important a dimension of an organization's (compared to an individual's) moral rectitude" (Haran, 2013, p. 2844). It appears that overall, people tend to judge organizations more harshly than individuals in most situations involving negative outcomes.

However, to be clear, these findings speak to how perceivers react differently to an organization (or a group) of multiple actors versus a single, individual actor. That is, these studies examining moral outcomes generally compare the whole organization to a lone individual. One crucial distinction between the different conditions, therefore, is that people are judging different actors – the organization versus a person. Importantly, other differences between the conditions include the number of people involved, perceived amount of resources, structure of the target that is judged, and presence of social relationships. In contrast to these past studies, we seek to understand how perceivers judge the same actor depending on whether it is framed as the organization or its constituent members. That is, like "Tiffany Brown of Tribute Contracting" and "Tribute Contracting of Tiffany Brown," we seek to examine how framing the target as the organization versus the target as its constituent members impacts moral judgments.

Although Study 2 by Cooley et al. (2017) examined how people perceive the mind of an organization depending on how it is framed, the literature has been silent on how people make moral judgments of an organization based on its framing. One important distinction between previous research and our current research question, therefore, is that whereas past research on organizational wrongdoing compared evaluators' moral judgments of organizations to individual actors, we compare evaluators' moral judgments of the same actor, but only framed differently. That is, we keep the number of organizational members constant, and we only change how we frame the way in which information about an organization is presented. By doing so, we can also address the potential alternative explanation that people simply have different (and often worse) impressions or expectations of organizations or large groups than they do of individuals (Hoyle, Pinkley, & Insko, 1989; Insko, Schopler & Sedikides, 1998; Jago & Laurin, 2017; Pemberton, Insko & Schopler, 1996; Wildschut et al. 2004), as people receive the same information about

the organization, just framed differently. In particular, we posit that framing the target as an organization composed of its constituent members (organization frame), versus constituent members comprising an organization (members frame), would increase people's perception that the target had control over a negative outcome, which would then increase how responsible or blameworthy it is perceived.

Framing Influences Perceived Control

Some extant research supports our hypothesis that the organization frame—in which an organization is made salient compared to its members—indicates to people that the target has more control, or the "freedom to affect desired behaviors and outcomes or to avoid undesired ones" (Alicke, 2000; p. 557; see also Berofsky, 1966; Fischer, 1986; Melden, 1961), than the members frame. Organizations can exert control over both their internal and external stakeholders through both formal and informal control mechanisms (Sitkin & Roth, 1993; Schein, 1971). Formally, organizational hierarchies can facilitate subordination and coordination of members within the organization to bring about an outcome (Brief & Smith-Crowe, 2016; Halevy, Chou, & Galinsky, 2011). An organization's ability to be centralized, in which planning and decision-making are concentrated within a particular location or group, allows the organization to impose control over its members (Egelhoff, 1988; Miller & Dröge, 1986). Informally, organizations can exert control over its members through socialization tactics, peer pressure, and social norms (e.g., Ashforth, 1989; Feldman, 1981). After a review of wrongdoing by corporate actors, Lee Hamilton and Sanders (1999) speculate that it is possible people hold organizations to a higher degree of responsibility than individuals because people appear to believe that organizations have a greater capability for control than individual actors.

In contrast, in a members frame—in which the members are made salient compared to the organization itself—people may not infer the same level of control when thinking about individual actors within an organizational environment. First, individuals are bounded in their rationality (Simon, 1972), making it difficult for them to process and integrate information that is often diffused across different parts of the organization or to plan for every contingency (Darley, 1996). Organizations, on the other hand, are capable of restricting the personal control of individual members.

Second, organization actors are acquiring more power—a form of social control that can alter another target's states (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003)—than individual actors (Babic, Fichtner & Heemskerk, 2017; Burson-Marsteller, 2014; Dwoskin, 2018; Robbins, 2008). Organizations have increasingly more power over economic and social resources (Davis, 2015; Roach, 2007; Brief & Smith-Crowe, 2016; Quigley, 2003), have influence over government decisions (Center for Responsive Politics, n.d.) such as who is installed in a governmental office (KellogInsight, 2017), have influence over how we as humans interact with each other (Oremus, 2016), and are large trackers of data about our personal lives (Fowler, 2019; Moynihan, 2016).

Further support of our theorizing that an organization frame (vs. members frame) elicits greater perception of control comes from research in anthropomorphization of organizations. Specifically, while organizations are often perceived as capable of being a perpetrator, it is viewed as incapable of being a victim as individuals could (Rai & Diermeier, 2015; 2019), and thus elicit more moral outrage than individuals do. This asymmetry in moral outrage happens because, unlike human beings, organizations are perceived as capable of carrying out actions (agency) but not capable of feelings (experience; Rai & Diermeier, 2015; Tang & Gray, 2018). Given that control is a form of agency, these findings support the idea that people more readily

attribute a target the ability to have control over outcomes when it is framed as an organization than as its members, *even when the information presented is identical.*

Consequences of Increased Perceived Control

   Attribution of responsibility and blame[1]. People appear to be naturally inclined to attribute responsibility and blame after a negative event (Clark et al., 2014; Nahmias, Morris, Nadelhoffer & Turner, 2005), assigning responsibility to not only individual human beings, but also to groups, animals, nature, and divine beings (e.g., Bankoff, 2004; Goodwin & Benforado, 2015; Schiermeier, 2011; Selby & Hulme, 2015; Tilley & Hobolt, 2011; Waytz et al., 2010). In particular, perception of control has been identified as an important antecedent of attribution of responsibility (Alicke, 2000; Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1972; Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy & Doherty, 1994; Kelley & Michela, 1980; Ross, 1977; Zukerman, 1979). For example, when an actor is thought to have control over their mental state leading to their behavior, they are more likely to be judged responsible for the harm (Fincham & Roberts, 1985). Furthermore, when people are reminded of counterfactuals – that is, how the actor could have behaved differently, thus evoking thoughts of control – they are more likely to blame the actor (Alicke et al., 2008).

   Increased punishment. In addition to attributions of responsibility and blame, research has also documented that increased control leads to increased punishment. This is true for both formal punishment, such as legal and bureaucratic sanctions (Posner 1996; United States Sentencing Commission, 2016), and informal or social punishment, such as dissuading others from purchasing a product (Sundaram, Mitra, & Webster, 1998; Verhagen, Nauta, & Feldberg, 2013). For example, a person is likely to assign punishment to her partner over a bad outcome in an economic game, even if the bad outcome was caused by randomness, if her partner had some

---

[1] Past research has used responsibility and blame interchangeably, referring to the moral culpability of the target. We thus do not distinguish these two words in our paper here.

control over how the game is played (Cushman, Dreber, Wang, & Costa, 2008). Further research has shown that someone's ability to control the outcome of a negative event is linked to the participant's stronger intent to punish her (Cushman, 2008), and we thus suggest that as perceived control increases due to the organization frame, people will also desire harsher punishment for the target.

The Present Research

Across eight studies and one supplemental study, we test whether framing a target as an organization ("*organization frame*"), rather than as its constituent members ("*members frame*"), would increase people's perception of its control over outcomes, and whether perceptions of control would in turn affect perceptions of its responsibility and blame for that outcome, as well as punishment assigned to the target. In Studies 1 and 2 (and Supplemental Study S1), we test whether people perceive a target in the organization (vs. members) frame as having greater control over an outcome, and whether this increases attribution of responsibility. Study 3 manipulates control to further test the mediating mechanism of perceived control. Study 4 tests whether an individual difference in perceived control—belief in free will—moderates the effect of framing on the attribution of responsibility. Study 5 tests whether the framing effects are bounded by profit orientation of the organization. Studies 6a and 6b investigate how framing influences political and social punitive consequences. Across the studies, we also address alternative explanations, including perceived competence, perceived entitativity, liking, dehumanization, and perceived resources.

Based upon the recommendations of Simmons, Nelson and Simonsohn (2011), we aimed to recruit at least 50 participants per cell across all studies. We include all participants unless

otherwise noted and we report all manipulations and measures in all of our studies. We conducted all data analyses after data collection was complete.

Study 1

In Study 1, we tested whether people attributed more responsibility to an organization for a bad outcome when it is framed as an organization versus when it is framed as its constituent members, and whether this is due to an increased perception of control. Importantly, we kept the number of people present in the organization consistent in both conditions, and only manipulated the framing. We conducted this study when we were also interested in how the valence of an outcome (negative vs. positive) would impact people's judgement of organizations, before we focused on negative outcomes. This study thus employed a 2 (framing) x 2 (outcome valence) design. We give further details for our motivation and interest in outcome valence in the Supplemental Online Materials. Although our focus in this paper is on how people evaluate the target following a bad outcome, for transparency, we include the full details of the design and results here.

In this scenario, we used a service setting, in which a restaurant was using processed ingredients. We used this particular issue as our context because in recent years, the use of non-natural ingredients has been increasingly perceived as a moral issue and there has been a push for organic, non-processed ingredients in the public discourse (e.g., Associated Press Science, 2003; Daniels, 2017; Sugar, 2018). Additionally, research has shown that people are moral opposed to non-natural foods, such as genetically modified foods (Scott & Rozin, 2017; Scott, Rozin, & Inbar, 2016).

Method

Participants. In this first study, as aforementioned, we aimed to recruit at least 50 participants per cell (Simmons et al., 2011). In total, 213 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers participated in this study (36% female; age $M = 32.61$, age $SD = 8.98$). We did not have exclusion criteria and no participants were excluded.

Procedure. Participants read about a catering organization, Keller's Market, which consisted of three people (see Supplementary Online Materials for complete scenario). In the organization frame condition, participants read that "Keller's Market is a catering company of three caterers who own and operate it: Pauline, Trevor and Jan." In the members frame condition, participants read that "Pauline, Trevor and Jan are caterers who own and operate the catering company Keller's Market." Next, participants either read about a good outcome or a bad outcome. In the bad outcome condition, participants read that the target received complaints that people disliked the processed ingredients, and that it was disappointing when it mishandled an important order. In the good outcome condition, they read that the target received compliments that people liked the organic ingredients, and that it was wonderful when it catered for a last-minute large order.

To measure perceived control, participants rated the extent to which they believed the target had "control" and "influence" over the outcome ($r = .72$, $p < .001$). To measure perceived responsibility, participants rated the extent to which they believed the target was "responsible" and "accountable" for the outcome ($r = .79$, $p < .001$). These items were measured on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) scale.

Results

Perceived control. A 2 (framing) x 2 (outcome valence) ANOVA revealed that there were no main effects of framing, $F(1,209) = 1.13$, $p = .289$, or outcome valence, $F(1,209) = .001$,

$p = .972$, on perceived control. However, there was a significant interaction between framing and

outcome valence, $F(1,209) = 9.44$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$ (Figure 1). A contrast test revealed that

people attributed more control in the organization frame ($M = 6.16$, $SD = .88$) than in the

members frame ($M = 5.52$, $SD = 1.06$) when the outcome was bad, $t(209) = 2.93$, $p = .004$, $d =$

0.57. However, there was no difference between the organization frame ($M = 5.68$, $SD = 1.22$)

and the members frame ($M = 5.99$, $SD = 1.31$) when the outcome was good, $t(209) = 1.42$, $p =$
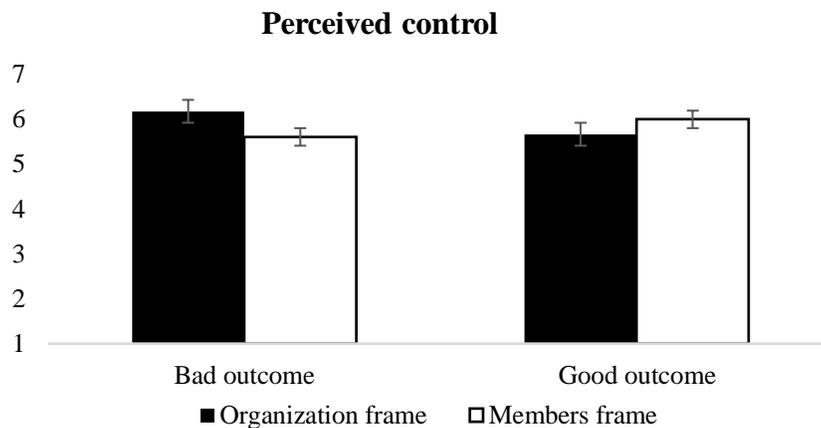
.157.

Perceived control

Figure 1. Organizational (vs. members) frame increased perceived control for bad outcomes.
Error bars ±1 SE.

Attribution of responsibility. A 2 (framing) x 2 (outcome valence) ANOVA revealed

that there were no main effects of framing, $F(1,209) = 1.16$, $p = .284$, or outcome valence,

$F(1,209) = .02$, $p = .897$, on responsibility. However, there was a significant interaction between

framing and outcome valence, $F(1,209) = 4.53$, $p = .035$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$ (Figure 2). A contrast test

revealed that people attributed more responsibility in the organization frame ($M = 6.14$, $SD =$

.88) than in the members frame ($M = 5.65$, $SD = .96$) when the outcome was bad, $t(209) = 2.27$, p

$= .024$, $d = 0.43$. However, there was no difference in perceived responsibility between the

organization frame ($M = 5.83$, $SD = 1.21$) and the members frame ($M = 5.99$, $SD = 1.33$) when

the outcome was good, $t(209) = .74$, $p = .457$. Responsibility was also correlated with control, $r = .88$, $p < .001$.
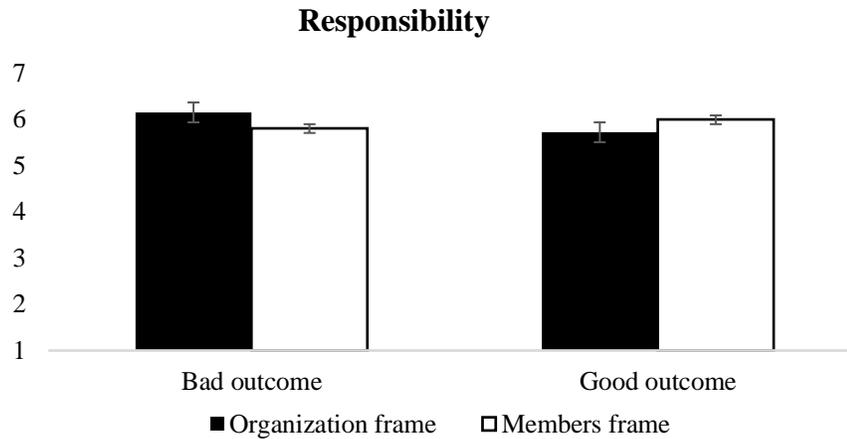
Responsibility

Figure 2. Organizational (vs. members) frame increased attributed responsibility for bad outcomes. Error bars ±1 SE.

Moderated mediation analysis. Next, we conducted a moderated mediation analysis with 5000 samples using the bootstrap method in the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Hayes, 2013; Model 8). We entered frame as the independent variable, perceived control as the mediator, responsibility as the dependent variable and outcome valence as the moderator. Results revealed that the overall model was supported, $b = .83$, SE = .29, 95% CI = [.2724, 1.3937]. Specifically, perceived control significantly mediated the relationship between framing and responsibility in the bad outcome condition, $b = .53$, SE = .18, 95% CI = [.1776, .8776], but not in the good outcome condition, $b = -.29$, SE = .22, 95% CI = [-.7375, .1348].

Discussion

Supporting our hypothesis, Study 1 found that the organization frame, compared to the members frame, increased perceptions of control and attribution of responsibility for a bad outcome. However, for a good outcome, framing did not make a difference. We also ran a supplemental study (S1), in which the results conceptually replicated the findings of Study 1 (see

Supplemental Online Materials for details). We discuss why this might be in the General

Discussion. To further illuminate the psychological processes involved this effect, in the next

study, we examine competing explanations for our effect.

Study 2

Study 2 built upon Study 1 in several respects. First, we continue to test our hypothesized

mechanism through perceived control, and in order to address potential alternative explanations

of our effect, we tested five other theoretically derived variables: entitativity, competence,

dehumanization, liking, and wealth of resources. Although our manipulation merely manipulates

the framing, and not how entitative the target is or how competent it is, past research suggests

that how entitative a group, such as an organization, is perceived to be (Campbell, 1958;

Feldman, 1981) and how competent it is perceived to be (Halevy, Chou & Galinsky, 2011) may

influence its perceived control and agency. We thus included measures of these constructs as part

of our experimental controls. Additionally, given that people tend to withhold individuality from

groups compared to single individuals (Small & Loewenstein, 2004), and people dehumanize

homogeneous groups more than heterogeneous groups (Deska, 2018), people may dehumanize

the target when it is framed as an organization, and thus judge it more harshly. In addition,

people tend to have negative views of organizations (Burson-Marsteller, 2014), so it is also

possible that they may view the target negatively when framed as an organization. Lastly, people

may view the target in the organization frame as having a wealth of resources (Brief & Smith-

Crowe, 2016), and thus have more resources at its disposal to prevent a negative outcome.

Although past research has not supported for this deep-pocket hypothesis—organizations are in

fact *not* blamed more than individuals because organizations have more resources (Chin &

Peterson, 1985; MacCoun, 1996; Vidmar, 1993)—we included a measure of perceived resources

to account for this possibility. In sum, to account for these five alternative explanations, we measured perceived entitativity, perceived competence, dehumanization, positive attitudes towards the target, and the amount of perceived resource.

We pre-registered this study at http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=un8f7h.

Method

Participants. A power analysis using G*Power showed that we should recruit at least 96 participants in order to detect an effect using the effect size of $d = 0.57$ from Study 1 with power of 0.80. To be conservative, we recruited at least 100 participants per cell. In total, 222 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers participated in this study (46% female, 1% other/non-binary, age $M = 36.81$, $SD = 11.61$). As pre-registered, we excluded participants who answered that they had done "this exact study" or "an extremely similar study" before, leaving 214 participants.

Procedure. All participants were first introduced to the owner-operators of an organization, AllExpress, a delivery business in Ohio. Specifically, we presented all participants with an organizational chart so that they could see the whole organization and all of its constituent members (Figure 3).
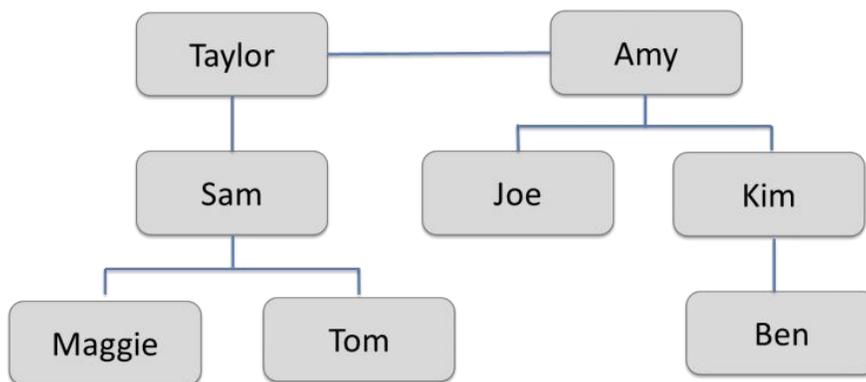

Figure 3. Organizational chart of AllExpress.

We explained to all participants that "Taylor and Amy are usually in charge of the direction of the company and investment, whereas the others take care of the day-to-day operations, such as customer service and delivery times." One advantage of a visual representation is to eliminate the possibility that participants would perceive the organization frame as more abstract or misidentify the number of members in the organization. As a pretest (see Supplementary Online Materials for details), we tested our materials with a different participant sample to ensure that participants indeed understood that the chart represented the whole organization, rather than a subset of it. Only five participants misidentified the correct workers by name, and participants in the organization frame were just as likely as those in the members frame to correctly select all workers, $X^2(1, N = 152) = .24$, $p = .628$, indicating that participants in both conditions understood the organizational chart correctly.

Participants were randomly assigned to read about the target either in the organization or members frame condition. In the organization frame condition, the target was first described as, "The organization AllExpress is a delivery business in Ohio. These are all the people who work there," and subsequently as "AllExpress." In the members frame condition, the target was first described as "These are all the people who work in AllExpress, a delivery business in Ohio," and subsequently as "Taylor, Amy, and the others" or "They" (see Online Supplemental Materials for complete scenario).

Next, participants read that one day, the target received furious complaints and angry phone calls. This was because it had been charging customers for extra services that customers did not sign up for. Participants subsequently completed the following measures.

Perceived control. To measure perceived control, we asked participants the extent to which they think that the target had "control" and "influence" over the charges ($r = .94$, $p < .001$) on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) scale.

Responsibility. To measure responsibility, we asked participants the extent to which they think that the target was "responsible," "accountable," and "blameworthy" for the charges (α = .86) on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) scale.

Alternative explanations

To account for possible alternative explanations for our results, we also measured five constructs that would be theoretically linked to organization perception. These items were measured on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) scale, except for the measurement of resources, which used a 1 (*none at all*) to 7 (*very much*) scale.

Entitativity. We used nine items from past work to measure entitativity (Campbell, 1958; Lickel, 2000; Waytz & Young, 2011). Example items include, "To what extent do you think that everyone is alike," "In your opinion, how much interactions would there be" among or within the group (see Supplemental Online Materials for all items; α = .81).

Dehumanization. We captured dehumanization using the 12-item dehumanization scale (Bastian & Haslam, 2010), which measures the extent to which people deprive a target of human characteristics, including attributes that distinguish humans from other animals, such as refinement and higher cognition, and attributes that are seen as shared fundamental features of humans, such as emotionality and warmth. Higher scores indicated stronger dehumanization of the target. We adapted the measures for this context (e.g., ''In general, to what extent do you feel that [target is]:'' "interpersonally warm" (R), "refined and cultured"). Although this scale has two dimensions, we averaged the 12 items to form one index of dehumanization, as reliability for the combined scale was high (α = .91), and past research (e.g., Ruttan & Lucas, 2018) has combined the two dimensions due to high combined reliability.

Competence. We measured competence by asking participants how "competent," "capable," and "coordinated" they would perceive the target to be ($\alpha = .89$).

Liking. We measured positive attitude towards the target using the items, "How much do you like" and "How positive do you feel towards" the target ($r = .88$, $p < .001$).

Resources. We measured perceived amount of resources available using the item, "In your opinion, how much resources do you think the group has?"

Results

Perceived control. A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants perceived more control in the organization frame ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 1.25$) compared to the members frame ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 1.80$), $F(1, 213) = 45.53$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.92$ (Figure 4). Importantly, using linear regression and entering frame as the first step and the alternative explanations as the second step (see below for analyses), the effect continued to hold even controlling for the alternative explanations, B = .79, SE = .21, $\beta = .23$, $t = 3.82$, $p < .001$.

Responsibility. A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants attributed more responsibility to the target in the organization frame ($M = 6.08$, $SD = 1.09$) compared to the members frame ($M = 4.59$, $SD = 1.61$), $F(1, 213) = 62.25$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.08$ (Figure 4). Importantly, even controlling for the alternative explanations using linear regression as above (see below for analyses), the effect continued to hold, B = 1.22, SE = .20, $\beta = .39$, $t = 6.13$, $p < .001$. Responsibility was also correlated with control, $r = .74$, $p < .001$.
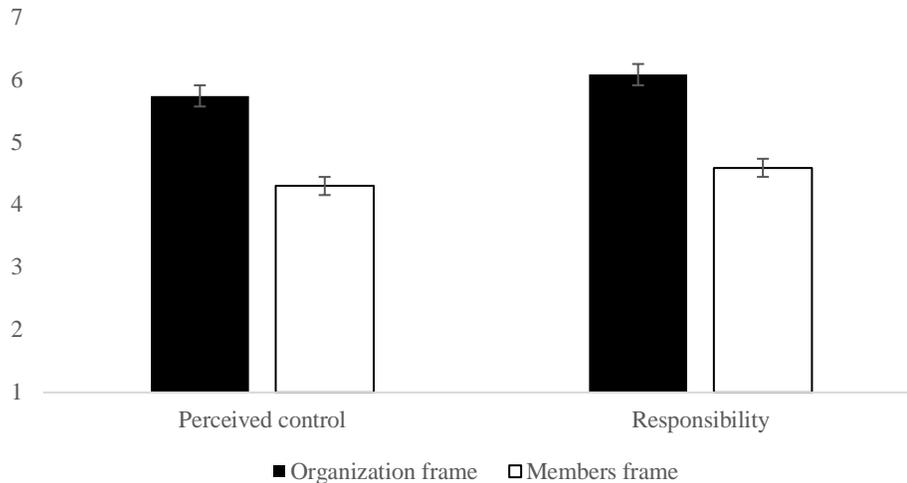
Figure 4. People perceive more control and attribute more responsibility to the organization (vs. members) frame. Error bars ±1 SE.

Entitativity. A one-way ANOVA revealed no difference in entitativity between the organization frame ($M = 4.31$, $SD = .81$) and the organization frame ($M = 4.19$, $SD = .87$), $F(1,213) = 1.04$, $p = .309$.

Liking. A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants liked the target in the organization frame ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.39$) less than the members frame ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 1.31$), $F(1,213) = 19.88$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.61$.

Competence. A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants perceived the target in the organization frame ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.29$) to be *less* competent than the members frame ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 1.16$), $F(1,213) = 14.65$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.52$.

Dehumanization. A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants dehumanized the target in the organization frame ($M = 4.22$, $SD = .97$) more than in the members frame ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.06$), $F(1,213) = 44.51$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.91$.

Resources. A one-way ANOVA revealed no differences in perceived resources between the organization frame ($M = 4.52$, $SD = 1.32$) and the members frame ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 1.04$), $F(1,213) = .003$, $p = .959$.

Mediation analysis. To test for mediation, we used a bootstrap model in the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Hayes, 2013) with 5000 samples. We ran three models. In the first model, we entered target frame as the independent variable, perceived control as the mediator, and responsibility as the dependent variable. Results showed that the organization frame increased perceived control (above), and perceived control increased attributed responsibility, B = .61, SE = .05, $t = 13.44$, $p < .001$. The indirect pathway was significant, B = .87, SE = .16, 95% CI = [.5639, 1.1919]. These results held in the second model, in which we entered the alternative explanation variables as covariates, B = .49, SE = .14, 95% CI = [.2335, .7702].

In the third model, we entered the alternative explanation variables as parallel mediators along with perceived control. Results showed that indirect pathway through perceived control remained significant, B = .89, SD = .17, 95% CI = [.5959, 1.2482]. None of the other variables significantly mediated the effect of frame on responsibility (all confidence intervals crossed the 0 threshold) apart from dehumanization, in which interestingly, increased dehumanization through the organization frame subsequently *decreased* attributed responsibility, B = -.23, SE = .10, 95 % CI = [-.4336, -.0631].

Discussion

Study 2 showed that framing influenced people perceptions of control and attribution of responsibility. This finding held even after controlling for entitativity, liking, competence, dehumanization, and resources available. All of these variables, except for dehumanization, also did not significantly mediate the frame to responsibility relationship. Interestingly, while

dehumanization by itself was positively associated with responsibility ($r = .31$, $p < .001$), when it was entered along with other variables in our mediation model, it became negatively associated with responsibility. This may be because, once we take away the variance explained by perceived control, targets that are stripped of a mind capable of agency, cognition, and feelings would be viewed as less responsible for an outcome. We discuss this further in the General Discussion.

Study 3

In Studies 1 and 2, we tested our hypothesized mechanism by measuring perceptions of control; in Study 3 we examined the role of control by experimentally manipulating it. MacKinnon and colleagues (Mackinnon & Fairchild, 2007; Pirlott & MacKinnon, 2016) and Spencer et al. (2005) suggest manipulating the mediator to show a causal direction from the mediator to the outcome variable. One way to do so is the moderation-as-process design, in which the mediator is manipulated along, or crossed, with the independent variable. If an interaction occurs, then there is evidence of the proposed psychological mechanism driving the effects. In Study 3, we use this method to test causality. We predicted that the difference in attributed responsibility between the organization and members frame would be smaller when the target has explicit control (vs. no information on control).

A secondary goal of Study 3 was to generalize our results by situating our investigation in a different context with a different transgression. Rather than the hospitality and service industries that we used in previous studies, here we contextualize our study in the manufacturing industry.

This study was preregistered at http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=332qq4.

Method

Participants. A power analysis using G*Power showed that we should recruit at least 96 participants in order to detect an effect using the effect size of $d = 0.57$ from Study 1 with power of 0.80. To be conservative, we recruited at least 100 participants per cell. In total, 403 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers participated (50% female, 0.1% other/non-binary, age $M = 36.62$, $SD = 11.75$). As preregistered, we excluded participants who reported that they have done the exact study or a very similar study before, leaving 377 responses for analyses.

Procedure. We manipulated the frame and explicit control in a 2 x 2 design. Participants read about Bon Vivant, a bakery organization that caters and delivers hot and cold food items, and which is made up of three owner-operators called Pauline, Trevor, and Jan, based upon the scenario in Study 1. In the organization frame, the target was first described as "Bon Vivant is a catering organization made up solely of three caterers: Pauline, Trevor, and Jan," and subsequently referred to as "Bon Vivant" or "it." In the members frame, the target was first described as "Pauline, Trevor, and Jan are caterers who are the sole owner-operator caterers who make up the catering organization Bon Vivant," and subsequently referred to as "Pauline, Trevor, and Jan," "the three of them," or "they."

Participants then read that one day, the target received complaints and angry phone calls. Many people had become sick from their food because the target sourced ingredients from an uncertified supplier (see Supplemental Online Materials for full scenario).

Within each frame, we then manipulated whether the target had explicit control over the outcome. In the no-control-information conditions, no further information was presented. In the explicit-control conditions, participants additionally read that "It turns out that [target] had complete control over the quality of the food. As part of the sourcing process, [target] was supposed to ask for certification, but [target] deliberately did not do so in order to save money."

Next, participants rated perceived control ($r = .73$, $p < .001$) as a manipulation check and responsibility ($\alpha = .62$) using the same items as in Study 2.

Results

 Manipulation check of perceived control. A one-way ANOVA showed a main effect of manipulated control, in which a target which had control was perceived to have more control ($M = 6.14$, $SD = 1.16$) than a target which had no control ($M = 5.61$, $SD = 1.36$), $F(1,747) = 34.91$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.43$. Thus, our manipulation of control was successful.

 Responsibility. A 2 x 2 ANOVA revealed a main effect of manipulated control, in which a target which had control was attributed more responsibility ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.46$) than a target which had no control ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.41$), $F(1, 747) = 6.36$, $p = .012$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. The main effect of framing on responsibility was not significant, $F(1,747) = 1.43$, $p = .232$. Importantly, as predicted, there was an interaction between framing and manipulated control, $F(1,747) = 4.29$, $p = .039$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$ (Figure 6). Specifically, when the target had no control, the organization frame was attributed more responsibility ($M = 5.17$, $SD = 1.41$) than the members frame ($M = 4.83$, SD = 1.40$), $t(747) = 2.30$, $p = .022$, $d = 0.24$. However, when the target had control, the organization frame ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.52$) was attributed similar amounts of responsibility as the members frame ($M = 5.31$, $SD = 1.39$), $t(747) = .62$, $p = .535$. Responsibility was also correlated with control, $r = .39$, $p < .001$.
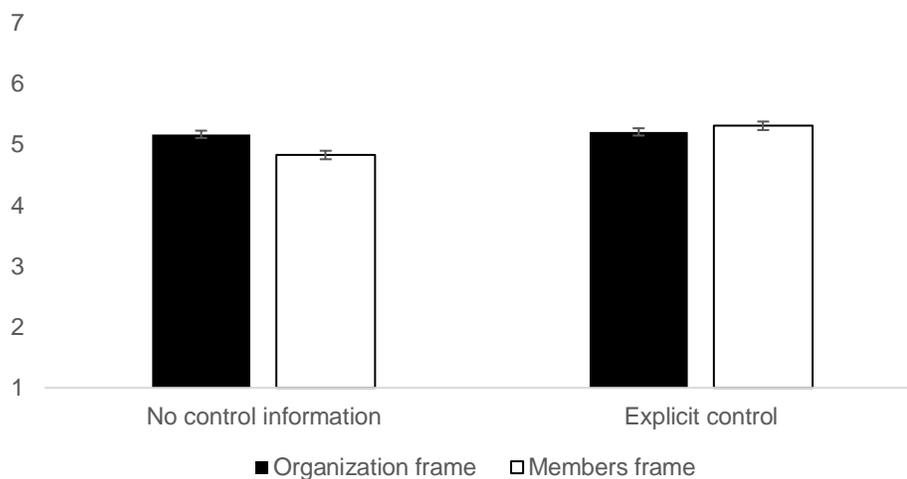
Figure 6. The difference in attributed responsibility between the organization and members frame attenuates when there is explicit control information. Error bars ±1 SE.

Discussion

Study 3 conceptually replicated the findings of the previous studies by experimentally manipulating our hypothesized mechanism of control. As we found in previous studies, when no additional information regarding control was given about the target, participants attributed more control and responsibility to the organization frame compared to the members frame. Providing support for our proposed mechanism, and as we found in Study 3, when explicit information about control was given, the difference attenuated, and participants attributed similar amounts of responsibility to both frames.

Study 4

In Study 4, we continue examining perceived control as the mechanism for the observed effect of framing via a different approach. We reasoned that if the difference in moral judgments for the organization (vs. members) frame is driven by perceived control, then people who hold stronger (vs. weaker) belief that individuals have control over their outcomes should show less of this difference. To this end, we included a measure of belief in freewill as a proxy for individual

differences in perceived control. Belief in free will is conceptually related to and positively predicts perceived control, and previous research has used it to examine the effect on choice and control in moral settings (e.g., Clark et al., 2014; Paulhus & Carey, 2011; Shariff et al., 2014). As such, the effect of framing may be bounded by the degree of belief in free will, where the difference in judgments between the two frames should decrease as people's belief in free will increases.

We based our study on a real, recent case of Foster Farm, in which the poultry meat produced by this organization led to salmonella and hospitalization of hundreds of people (CNN, 2014), with one of its ensuing legal cases only recently resolved in 2018 (Hahn, 2018).

This study was preregistered at http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=8525up. As preregistered, we asked participants if they had heard of Foster Farm and what transpired. Whether or not participants knew about the incident with Foster Farms did not affect the results, and so we do not discuss this further.

Method

Participants. A power analysis using G*Power showed that we should recruit at least 96 participants in order to detect an effect using the effect size of $d = 0.57$ from Study 1 with power of 0.80. To be conservative, we recruited at least 100 participants per cell. In total, 403 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers participated (41% female, age $M = 34.84$, $SD = 10.68$). As preregistered, we excluded participants who gave a nonsensical response to "What did you have for lunch today?" (three participants wrote "50000" or a date) and those who answered "Yes, I have done this exact study" or "Yes, I have done a very similar study" to the question, "Have you done this study before?" This left a total of 356 responses for analyses.

Procedure. We manipulated frame and measured individual difference in belief in free will". Participants first completed the Belief in Free Will scale (Paulhus & Carey, 2011), a seven-item scale which measures the extent to which people believe individuals have free will. Example items include, "People can overcome any obstacles if they truly want to" and "People have complete free will" ($\alpha = .89$). The items were measured on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) scale.

Next, participants read a news article (which we adapted from a news report in order to manipulate the framing) about Foster Farm, a privately-owned farm owned and operated by Max, Verda, George, and Tom Foster, and we manipulated how the farm was framed. In the organization frame, participants read that "Foster Farm is a privately-owned organization owned and operated by Max, Verda, George and Tom Foster." In the members frame, participants read that, "Max, Verda, George and Tom Foster own and operate Foster Farm, a privately-owned organization" (see Supplemental Online Materials for full article). Next, participants read that the target's meat "recently caused the outbreak of salmonella, leading to over 600 people becoming sick in 29 states" and that an official report showed that it was due to the target's negligence that led to hundreds of people being hospitalized.

After reading the article, participants rated perceived control ($r = .72$, $p < .001$) and responsibility ($\alpha = .77$) using the same items as Study 2.

Results

Perceived control. A linear regression analysis revealed a main effect of frame on perceived control, such that the organization frame was perceived to have more control ($M = 5.97$, $SD = 1.02$) than the members frame ($M = 5.57$, $SD = 1.24$), $F(1,354) = 10.50$, $p = .001$, $d = 0.34$. There was also a main effect of belief in free will on perceived control, in which the more

participants believed in individual free will, the more they perceived the target as having control, B = .34, SE = .06, β = .31, t = 6.11, p < .001.

There was also a trending interaction, B = -.15, SE = .11, β = -.12, t = -1.33, p = .184. A spotlight analysis (Spiller et al., 2009) revealed that when participants have a strong belief in individual free will (+1SD of the mean), there was no difference between the organization and members frames, B = .21, SE = .16, β = .09, t = 1.31, p = .193. However, when they have a weak belief in individual free will (-1SD of the mean), they perceived more control in the organization frame than the individual frame, B = .52, SE = .16, β = .23, t = 3.18, p = .002.

Responsibility. A linear regression analysis revealed a main effect of frame on responsibility, such that the organization frame (M = 6.11, SD = .88) was attributed more responsibility than the members frame (M = 5.58, SD = 1.13), $F(1,354)$ = 24.29, p < .001, d = 0.52. There was also a main effect of belief in free will on responsibility, B = .30, SE = .05, β = .30, t = 6.17, p < .001, in which the more participants believed in individual free will, the more they attributed responsibility to the target. Responsibility was also correlated with control, r = .68, p < .001.

These main effects were qualified by a marginally significant interaction, B = -.18, SE = .10, β = -.48, t = -1.84, p = .067 (Figure 7). A spotlight analysis (Spiller et al., 2009) revealed that when participants have a strong belief in individual free will (+1SD of the mean), the difference in responsibility between the organization and members frames was smaller (B = .32, SE = .14, β = .15, t = 2.21, p = .028) than when they have a weak belief in individual free will (-1SD of the mean), B = .69, SE = .14, B = .22, t = 4.80, p < .001.
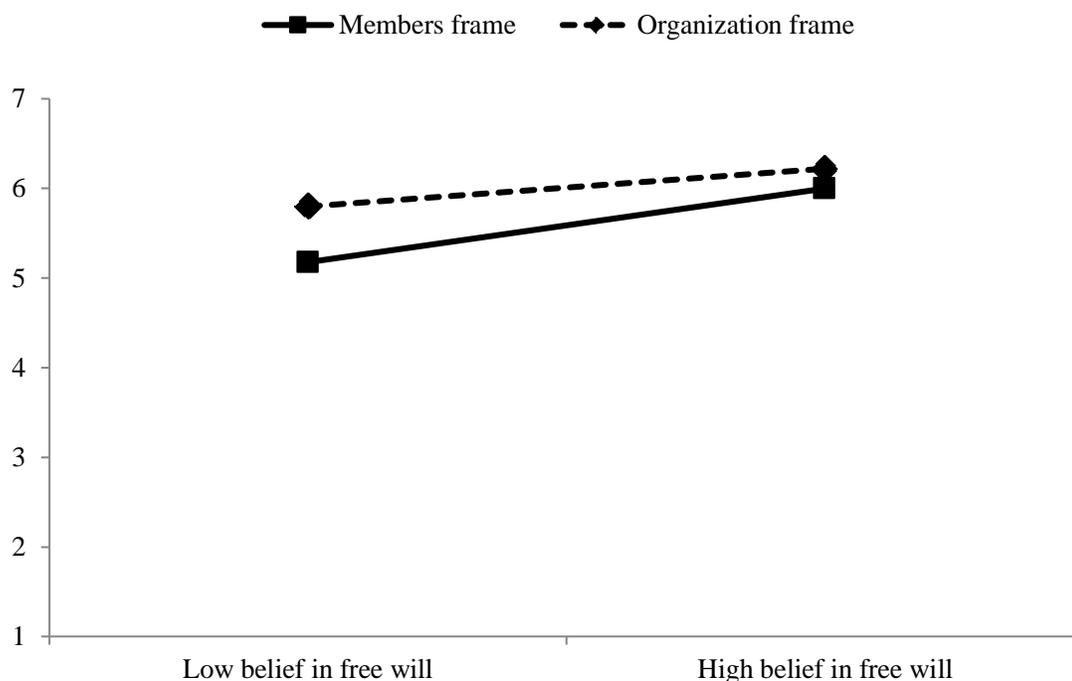
Figure 7. The difference in attributed responsibility is smaller when people have a high (vs. low) belief in free will.

Discussion

Supporting our predictions, Study 4 showed that belief in free will—an individual difference in perceptions that individuals have choice and control—moderated our effects. Specifically, consistent with the account that increased attribution of responsibility to the organization (vs. members) frame is due to perceived control, the difference in judgments between the organization and members frame was greater for those who had a weaker (versus stronger) belief in individuals' free will.

Study 5

In Study 5, we expanded the scope of our investigation to include non-profit organizations. Although we discussed the framing effect regarding organizations, we have so far only examined for-profits. Given that people tend to perceive non-profits as warmer and more

likeable than for-profits (Aaker, Vohs, & Mogilner, 2010; Bhattacharjee, Dana, & Baron, 2017), and likeable targets may evoke more lenient moral judgments, it is unclear whether our patterns of results would hold for non-profit organizations. Given these findings, organization type is thus an important theoretical and practical boundary condition to explore.

In this study, we measure and control for baseline liking of the different organizational entities, before participants were informed of the transgression. If the difference in judgment between the organization and members frame for non-profits is the same as that of for-profits, even controlling for baseline positive attitudes towards the two types of organizations, then it would suggest that our findings apply to organizations more broadly and unlikely due to positive attitudes. Another benefit of measuring baseline liking is that it creates a stronger test to address whether our results so far have been due to participants liking the organization frame less than the members frame. In Study 2, we measured liking towards the target *after* participants learned of the transgression. It is possible that there was a difference in liking at the baseline (e.g., before learning about the transgression), which could have influenced perception of control. The design in the current study addresses this potential confound.

We employed a 2 x 2 factorial design, in which we crossed frame and profit orientation. Our primary prediction was that there would be two main effects—that is, the framing effect would hold for both for-profits and non-profits—given past research (e.g., Rai & Diermeier, 2015). Furthermore, we predicted that for-profits are also judged more harshly than non-profits. However, we had no strong prediction about whether there would be an interaction effect. We preregistered this study at http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=jr2hr3.

Method

Participants. A power analysis using G*Power showed that we should recruit at least 274 participants in order to detect an effect using the smaller effect size of $d = 0.34$ from Study 4 with power of 0.80. We originally preregistered for 400 participants aiming for at least 100 participants per cell; however, because the results for responsibility was trending in the predicted direction but not statistically significant[2], we doubled our sample size. In total, 801 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers participated in this study (50% female; 1% non-binary, age $M = 36.27$, $SD = 11.87$). As preregistered, we excluded participants who answered "Yes, I have done this exact study" or "Yes, I have done a very similar study" to the question, "Have you done this study before?" This left a total of 742 responses for analyses.

Procedure. Participants read about an organization of three people that serves food. In the for-profit condition, the target was described as a restaurant owned and operated by three people. In the non-profit condition, the target was described as a non-profit founded and operated by three people that provides food to homeless people. Within each condition, we manipulated the framing of the target. For example, in the organization/non-profit frame, the target was described as, "The Arch is a non-profit that provides food to homeless people. It was founded and is owned by Amy, Oliver, and Jack," and in the members/for-profit frame, the target was described as, "Amy, Oliver, and Jack, who own and operate a restaurant called The Arch" (see Supplemental Online Materials for full scenarios).

After introducing the target, we captured baseline liking by asking participants to report how much they liked the target using the item, "Given this information so far, how positive do you feel towards [target]?" on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) scale.

---

[2] The *p*-values for the effect of framing on perceived control and responsibility were $p = .038$ and $p = .176$, respectively.

Next, participants read that the target received furious complaints and angry phone calls one day because the target had been cutting costs and not fully inspecting the quality of food it was serving.

Afterwards, participants rated how much control they perceived the target to have had ($r = .70, p < .001$) and the extent to which they were responsible ($\alpha = .82$) using the same items as in Study 2.

Results

Liking. A 2 x 2 ANOVA analysis revealed two main effects. There was a main effect of frame, in which people liked the target in the organization frame ($M = 5.79, SD = 1.02$) less compared to the members frame ($M = 5.93, SD = .97$), $F(1, 738) = 3.87, p = .050, \eta_p^2 = .01$. There was also a main effect of profit orientation, in which people liked the for-profit target ($M = 5.54, SD = 1.03$) less than a non-profit target ($M = 6.18, SD = .86$), $F(1, 738) = 85.16, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .10$. There was no significant interaction, $F(1, 738) = .12, p = .734$.

Perceived control. As pre-registered, a 2 x 2 ANOVA analysis with liking entered as a covariate revealed two main effects (Figure 8). There was a main effect of frame on perceived control, in which the organization frame ($M = 5.78, SD = 1.17$) was perceived to have more control than the members frame ($M = 5.62, SD = 1.23$), $F(1, 737) = 4.90, p = .027, \eta_p^2 = .01$. There was also a main effect of profit orientation on perceived control, in which participants perceived the for-profit target to have more control ($M = 5.79, SD = 1.22$) compared to the non-profit target ($M = 5.62, SD = 1.18$), $F(1, 737) = 9.81, p = .002, \eta_p^2 = .01$. There was no interaction, $F(1, 737) = .001, p = .979$.
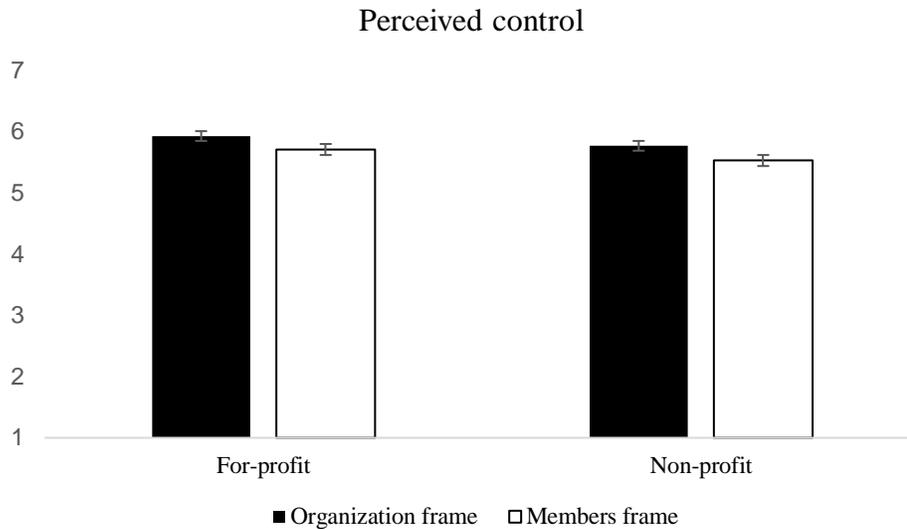
Perceived control

Figure 8. People perceive more control in the organization (vs. members) frame. Error bars ±1 SE.

Responsibility. As preregistered, a 2 x 2 ANOVA analysis with liking entered as a covariate revealed two main effects (Figure 9). Supporting our hypothesis and consistent with our previous findings, there was a main effect of frame on responsibility, in which participants attributed more responsibility to the organization frame ($M = 5.86$, $SD = 1.23$) compared to the members frame ($M = 5.61$, $SD = 1.33$), $F(1,737) = 8.25$, $p = .004$, $\eta = .01$. There was also a main effect of profit orientation on responsibility, in which participants attributed more responsibility to the for-profit target ($M = 5.82$, $SD = 1.32$) compared to the non-profit target ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.25$), $F(1,737) = 7.40$, $p = .007$, $\eta = .01$. Responsibility was also correlated with control, $r = .51$, $p < .001$.

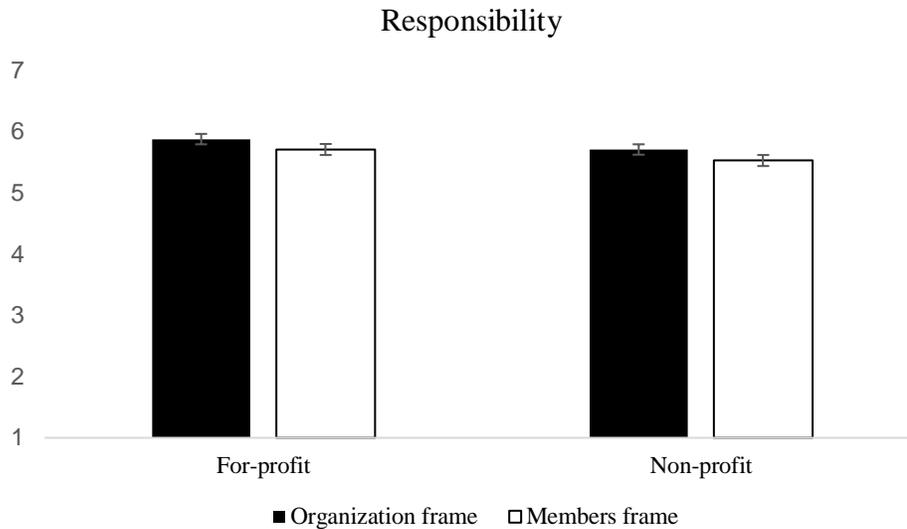There was no significant interaction, $F(1,737) = .01$, $p = .930$.

Responsibility

Figure 9. People attribute more responsibility to the organization (vs. members) frame. Error bars ±1 SE.

Mediation analyses. Using Model 4 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) with 5000 samples, we entered framing as the independent variable, control as the mediator, and responsibility as the dependent variable, with liking as a covariate. Framing increased perceived control (above), which subsequently increased attributed responsibility, B = .54, SE = .03, t = 15.98, $p < .001$. Results showed that the pathway was significant, B = .10, SE = .05, 95% CI = [.0110, .2019].

Discussion

In Study 5, we tested whether the framing effect would generalize to different types of organizations, and we found that for both for-profit and non-profit organizations, people attributed more control and responsibility to the organization frame compared to the members frame, even when we control for positive attitudes towards the target. These results further suggest that our results are not likely explained by having a more negative view of the target in the organization frame.

Study 6a

So far, Studies 1-5 suggest that people perceive the organization frame to have more control and responsibility over identical bad outcomes. Study 6 built upon these previous studies by further investigating the consequences of whether greater perceived control would also lead to greater punishment. Past research has shown that the more a target is perceived to have control over an outcome, the more they are attributed responsibility and blame (Alicke, 2000; Fincham & Roberts, 1985), and that the more responsible a target is, the harsher the target's punishment (Ask & Pina, 2011; Cushman, 2008; Shariff et al., 2014). Together with our results, these findings suggest that framing increases perceived control and subsequently responsibility (present Studies 1-5), and that perceived control increases responsibility and punishment (extant findings). We thus test this serial mediation model—from framing to perceived control to attributed responsibility to punishment—in Study 6a.

Method

Participants. One hundred and eighty-seven students from a university in the southeastern United States (71% female; 0.5% non-binary, age $M = 26.74$, $SD = 9.51$) participated in this study as part of a mass study session that was conducted over one week by the university's behavioral lab. Two participants took the survey twice due to an internet outage, and one student experienced difficulty completing the survey due to the outage. Their responses were excluded from analyses, leaving 184 responses for analyses.

Procedure. Participants read about the catering organization from Study 1, Keller's Market, which consisted of three people. In the organization frame condition, participants read that "Keller's Market is a catering organization owned and operated solely by three caterers: Pauline, Trevor, and Jan." In the members frame condition, participants read that "Pauline,

Trevor are the sole owners and operators of the catering organization, Keller's Market." Next, participants read about a bad outcome that occurred, in which people were angry because "some of the ingredients went bad" due to the cold storage room not , causing some customers "to get sick, from stomach aches to food poisoning."

We then measured perceived control using the items from Studies 1 to 4 ($r = .74$, $p < .001$). We also measured responsibility using the items from Study 2 ($\alpha = .91$). Finally, we assessed punishment by asking participants to assign a restaurant grade to the target. Punishments are intended to make the transgressor suffer (Darley, Carlsmith & Robinson, 2005) and to motivate the transgressor to behave according to social or moral norms (Andreoni, Harbaugh & Vesterlund, 2003; Mulder 2008). Restaurant grade assignment is thus a good measure of punishment, as they have a significant impact on dining organizations—restaurants with low scores earn less revenue (e.g., a 5% decrease from A to B; Jin & Leslie, 2003) and is a significant motivator in changing restaurants' unsanitary practices to more hygienic practices (Wong et al., 2015)[3].

To assess punishment, participants read about the Better Business Bureau (BBB), a genuine consumer-oriented non-profit organization that collates consumer feedback and translates them into a grade for businesses. We explained to participants that the BBB receives feedback and complaints, which it uses to update scores for businesses. We then explained the metrics that BBB uses to do so based on the information on its website (for complete materials, see Online Supplemental Materials). We then asked participants to indicate the score, from A+ to

---

[3] We also measured informal punishment, in which participants rated how likely they would inflict a social consequence on the restaurant, such as "post on social media to warn others about" the restaurant. However, a set of reviewers suggested, and we agreed, that this measure would also be conflated with avoidance. We thus removed this measure of informal punishment in the body of our paper, though we include it and the results in Supplementary Online Materials.

F, which they would assign to the target if they were part of the BBB reviewing this case, and to keep in mind that their grade has important business repercussions for the target. There were 13 grades available from which to select (A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F), and the highest grade was coded as 13, while the lowest grade was coded as 1.

Results

  Perceived control. There was a main effect of framing, in which people were more likely to perceive the organization frame ($M = 5.17$, $SD = 1.34$) as having more control than the members frame ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.66$), $F(1,183) = 19.30$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.65$.

  Attribution of responsibility. There was a main effect of framing, in which people were more likely to attribute more responsibility to the organization frame ($M = 5.81$, $SD = 1.18$) than the members frame ($M = 5.15$, $SD = 1.48$), $F(1,183) = 11.18$, $p = .001$, $d = 0.49$. Responsibility was also correlated with control, $r = .64$, $p < .001$.

  Punishment. There was no main effect of framing for formal punishment ($M_{org} = 8.03$, $SD_{org} = 2.38$, $M_{member} = 8.09$, $SD_{member} = 2.15$), $F(1,183) = .03$, $p = .871$.

  Mediation for responsibility. We first attempted to replicate our results from Studies 1 and 2, in which the organization framing increased perceptions of control, which subsequently increased perceived responsibility. Using Model 4 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) with 5000 samples, we entered framing as the independent variable (organization and members framing coded as 1 and 0, respectively), perceived control as the mediator, and responsibility as the dependent variable. The pathway was supported, $b = .53$, SE $= .13$, 95% CI $= [.2878, .8245]$.

  Mediations for punishment. Next, we tested the full serial mediation model involving punishment using Model 6 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) with 5000 samples. We entered framing as the independent variable, control as the first mediator, responsibility as the

second mediator, and punishment as the dependent variable. Although the pathway from organization framing to increased perceived control to a lower grade was significant, 95% CI = [-.9418, -.1183], the overall pathway from framing to perceived control to perceived responsibility to punishment was not, 95% CI = [-.3094, .1986] (Figure 10).
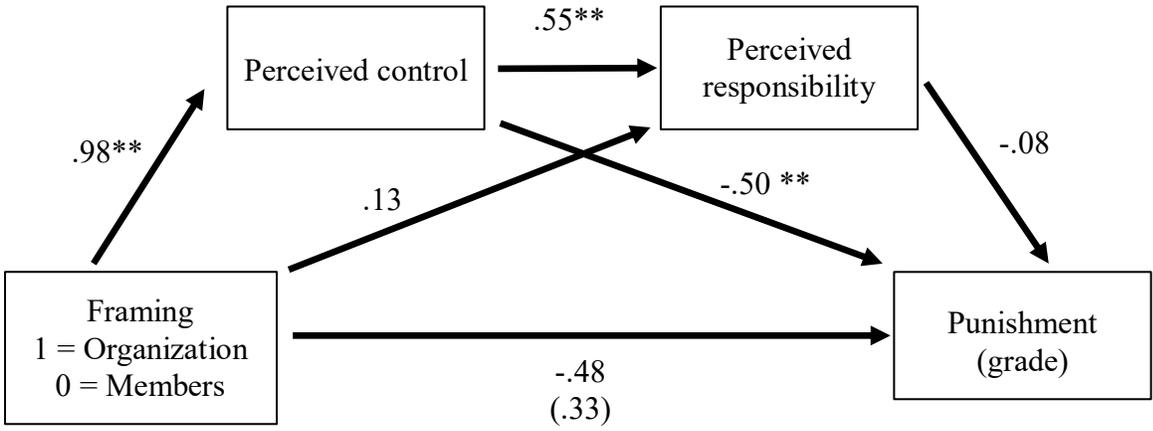

Figure 10. An organization frame increased perceived control, leading to increased responsibility and lower grade rating.

Together, our results suggest that perceived control mediated the effect of framing on responsibility and punishment separately (Figure 11).
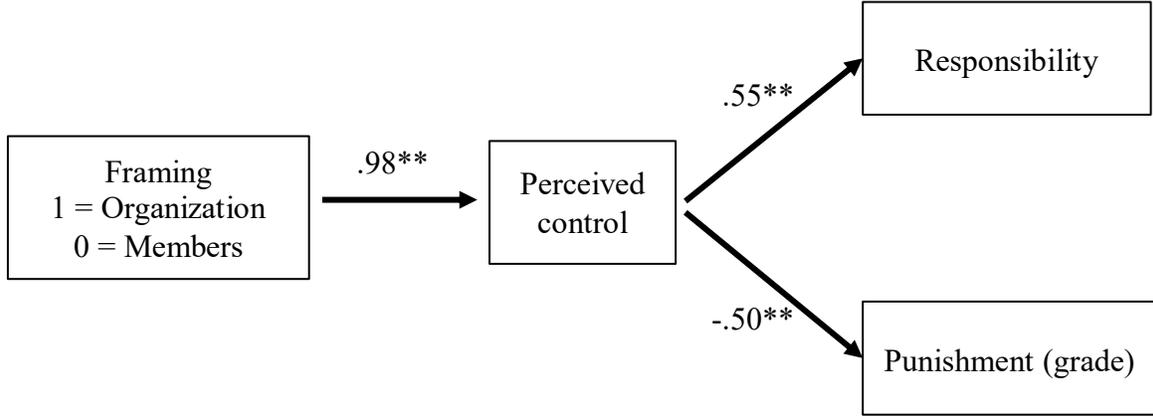

Figure 11. An organization frame increased perceived control, leading to increased perceived responsibility, harsher informal punishment, and a lower grade.

Discussion

Our results replicated the core findings, in which the organization frame increased perceptions of control over the bad outcome, and in which perceived control mediated the effect of frame on attribution of responsibility. However, the serial mediation from frame to perceived control to responsibility to punishment was not significant. That is, increased responsibility from framing via control did not increase punishment. Instead, increased control subsequently led, separately, to increased responsibility and to punishment.

Additionally, the direct effect of frame to punishment was not significant, suggesting a distal relationship between framing and punishment. This may be because while people thought the target warranted responsibility and blame, some people thought that it also deserved punishment whereas others thought that it did not deserve harsh punishment for temporary malfunctioning apparatus. It is also possible that using BBB as a punishment rating did not accurately capture how punitive participants felt towards the target. For example, the BBB rating may have reflected what participants thought how the BBB itself would rate the restaurant or reflected participants trying to relay accurate information for future consumers. Alternatively, while some participants may have perceived assigning a lower BBB grade as a sufficient form of punishment, others did not. We ran a preregistered replication of Study 6a to address these concerns.

Study 6b

The main goals of Study 6b were twofold. First, we doubled the total number of participants per cell, as it is possible that our lack of serial mediation was due to an underpowered study (Rucker, Preacher, Tormala, & Petty, 2011). Second, we captured punishment using a more subjective scale. Additionally, because it is possible that participants

interpreted the malfunctioning cold storage room as a glitch rather than due to the target's actions, we also made clear that the target was cost-cutting, which led to poor functioning equipment that caused food poisoning among its customers.

We preregistered this study on http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=68y28h.

Method

Participants. We preregistered for 400 participants based on doubling the sample size from Study 6a and a power analysis showing that at least 274 participants were needed in order to detect an effect using the effect size of $d = 0.34$ from Study 4 with power of 0.80. In total, 432 participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk (71% female; 0.5% non-binary, age $M = 36.82$, $SD = 11.11$) completed this study. As preregistered, we excluded participants who responded that they had "done this exact same study" or "done a very similar study" to the question, "Have you done this study before?" leaving 407 responses for analyses.

Procedure. Participants read the same scenario from Study 6a, except we explained that due to the target cutting costs, the cold storage room did not function properly, causing food poisoning among the customers.

We then measured perceived control ($r = .80$, $p < .001$) and responsibility ($\alpha = .74$) using the items from Study 6a. Finally, we assessed punishment by asking participants "If you were to impose a fine on [target], how heavy of a fine would you impose?" and "If you were to impose a penalty on [target], how severe of a penalty would you impose?" on a 1 (*no fine/penalty at all*) to 7 (*extremely heavy fine/severe penalty*) scale ($r = .84$, $p < .001$).

Results

Perceived control. There was a main effect of framing, in which people were more likely to perceive the organization frame ($M = 5.96$, $SD = 1.23$) as having more control than the members frame ($M = 5.54$, $SD = 1.55$), $F(1,405) = 8.72$, $p = .003$, $d = 0.29$.

Attribution of responsibility. There was a main effect of framing, in which people were more likely to attribute more responsibility to the organization frame ($M = 6.04$, $SD = 1.23$) than the members frame ($M = 5.76$, $SD = 1.27$), $F(1,407) = 4.96$, $p = .027$, $d = 0.22$. Responsibility was also correlated with control, $r = .55$, $p < .001$.

Punishment. There was a main effect of framing, in which people wanted harsher punishment in the organization frame ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.32$) than the members frame ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 1.35$), $F(1,407) = .8.72$, $p = .003$, $d = 0.29$.

Mediation for responsibility. As in Study 6a, the pathway from framing to increased perceived control to increased responsibility was supported, $b = .20$, SE $= .07$, 95% CI $= [.0659, .3398]$.

Mediations for punishment. Again, as in Study 6b, although the pathway from framing to increased perceived control to a harsher punishment was significant, $b = 14$, SE $= .06$, 95% CI $= [.0435, .2712]$, the overall pathway from framing to perceived control to perceived responsibility to punishment was not, $b = .01$, SE $= .01$, 95% CI $= [-.0154, .0413]$.

Again, our results suggest that perceived control mediated the effect of framing on responsibility and punishment separately.

Discussion

Our results again replicated the core findings, in which the organization (vs. members) frame increased perceptions of control over the bad outcome, which led to increased attribution

of responsibility. However, the serial mediation from frame to perceived control to responsibility to punishment was again not significant.

Statistically, the lack of serial mediation implies that the variance perceived control shares with responsibility and the variance perceived control shares with punishment do not overlap (Mackinnon & Fairchild, 2009). This may have been due to two possibilities. First, research in neuroscience suggests that responsibility and punishment operate via separate brain mechanisms (Buckholtz et al., 2008; Capestany & Harris, 2014), in which responsibility is based on inferring the actor's mental state, whereas punishment is based on affect. Control may therefore be associated with both separately, but not allow for serial mediation. Second, prior research has found that there are different facets of control (e.g., Alicke, 2000; Cushman, 2008), and it is possible that while some of our participants were thinking about one type of control, others had other types of control in mind. This is important to note because not all types of control are associated with responsibility attributions. In a supplementary study we conducted (S1, see Supplementary Online Materials), we examined the effect of framing on three specific types of control: foresight, causality, and intention, as well as their subsequent effects on responsibility. We found that only causality significantly mediated the relationship between frame and responsibility. Thus, to the extent that some of our participants were thinking about foresight and intention when interpreting the meaning of control, the variance between the three variables may not sufficiently overlap for serial mediation to surface.

General Discussion

Across seven experiments, we found that a subtle shift in how a target is framed can have a significant impact on how people attribute control, responsibility and punishment following a transgression. When framed as an organization (versus its constituent members), the target was

deemed more responsible for the negative outcome because it had more control over a negative outcome (Studies 1-3). This effect surfaced for both for-profits and non-profits (Study 5), and did not appear to be sufficiently explained by alternative explanations, including dehumanization, entitativity, liking, competence, or resources (Study 2). We also delved further into the psychological process of perceived control by explicitly manipulating control over the outcome using the moderation-as-process design (Study 3), in addition to using individual differences conceptually related to perceived control (Study 4). Specifically, when the target in the members frame had explicit control over the outcome (Study 3), or when participants held strong beliefs in individual free will (Study 4), the effect of framing on responsibility attenuated. We also found that these framing effects have important consequences. People were more punitive towards a target when it was framed as an organization (Studies 6a and 6b).

An important contribution of this work is, because the same information about the target was constant across conditions, the target was compared to itself between the experimental conditions, rather than a comparison between two targets (e.g., an individual vs. a group or organization, as in past work). This work thus suggests that, beyond victim identifiability (e.g., Slovic, 1997), person-organization differences (e.g., Haran, 2013; Rai & Diermeier, 2015), and negative impressions or expectations of organizations (e.g., Burson-Marsteller, 2014; Insko et al. 1998), the framing of the target as either the organization or its members can influence perceptions of control and responsibility. Together, these studies show how moral judgments can be subject to a small twist in framing. Interestingly, whereas Cooley et al. (2017) found that the group frame ("an accounting company comprised of 15 people") had less agentic mind than the group composition frame ("15 people that compose an accounting company"), whereas we find that the organization frame had more perceived control (arguably a form of agency) than the

members frame. This may be because the items measuring agency in Cooley et al. (2017) were more strongly associated with human capacity (e.g., remembering, exercising self control) than our control items which were more general (influence and control).

Additionally, although increased perceived control through framing increased perceived responsibility and punishment separately in Studies 6a and 6b, as consistent with past research (e.g., Alicke, 2000; Laurent, Nuñez, & Schweitzer, 2016; Robbins & Litton, 2018), the indirect effect of framing on punishment was not mediated serially by perceived control and responsibility. This finding appears to contrast with extant research suggesting a serial relationship from control, to responsibility and blame (Alicke, 2000; Alicke et al., 2008; Fischer, 1986), to punishment (Ask & Pina, 2011; Cushman, 2008; Shariff et al., 2014). It is possible that, as discussed previously, responsibility and punishment have different antecedents (in which responsibility is based on inferring the actor's mental state, whereas punishment is based on affect; Buckholtz et al., 2008; Capestany & Harris, 2014), or that participants were thinking of different facets of control (Alicke, 2000; Cushman, 2008). Both possibilities would have diluted the variances shared by the framing-control-responsibility link and the framing-control-punishment link, leading to a nonsignificant serial mediation. Nonetheless, our results showed overall that an organization frame increases perceived control when a bad outcome occurs, which has important moral consequences. Future research may further examine the relationships between control, responsibility, and punishment.

Theoretical Implications

Whereas previous research has compared how people react to one person versus a group of people (such as that of the identifiable victim effect, Kogut & Ritov, 2005; Small, Loewenstein, & Slovic, 2007), here we use a subtle framing technique to compare a target

against itself. In doing so, we control for the number of individuals present, the amount of

resources, the structure of the group, and social relationships that may be present in one

condition but not the other. By doing so, we gain greater insight into how people make different

judgments depending on whether they think of a target as an organization or its constituent

members. Specifically, harsher moral judgments may occur beyond the identifiability,

entitativity, and competence of the actor, how much resources ("deep pockets") the actor has,

and how much people dehumanize the actor. In particular, the present research also contributes

to the research on perceived control and attribution of responsibility. Though previous research

has extensively examined the factors that influence the attribution of responsibility, it has not

examined how a simple framing shift of the same situation would impact the perception of

responsibility. Here, we demonstrate the powerful effects of framing on this moral judgment.

Practical Implications

Our results also have social and political implications. In the United States, about 20

million small businesses are owned and operated by less than 20 people—many of which are

unincorporated—and in 2015 alone, there were 240,000 start-ups, in which the owner *is* the

company (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2018). These organizations play a significant

role in the economy and are frequented by a substantial number of people (U.S. Small Business

Administration, 2012). What we find here is that people make harsher judgements when the

target is framed as an organization rather than its constituent members, suggesting that to

minimize backlash when a bad outcome happens, an organization may prefer to present itself as

using a members frame—such as making salient its workers, managers and owners—rather than

as a monolithic organization.

However, this strategy also has a dark side in terms of holding organizations accountable. Organizations may evade blame in cases of wrongdoing. Tiffany Brown of Tribute Contracting LLC, the one-person company that failed to deliver meals for victims of Hurricane Maria, for example, frames her company as being "no stranger to hard work and putting forth a strong effort to create success"[4] – as a person rather than as a company. This research shows that framing herself in the members frame, rather than the organization frame, will reduce perceptions of control, and subsequently responsibility and blame, that she may have otherwise deserved.

Overall, our results also speak to emerging forms of organizations. Flash organizations, for example, are becoming more and more popular (Scheiber, 2017). In flash organizations, individuals assemble to achieve an organizational goal, and once the goal is achieved, the organization and its members disband. They can appear in the arts (e.g., film), medicine, and technology, such as one that is building a new app for a smartphone. Our results suggest that if these organizations frame themselves as individuals forming an organization (rather than an organization formed by individuals), they may be granted more leniency when something goes wrong, such as missing a deadline or failing to address bugs in the system.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our studies had several limitations, which provide fruitful venues for future research. First, we limited our examination of this phenomenon to economic (profit and non-profit) organizations. There are other types of organizations, including legal (e.g., the Supreme Court vs. the nine justices), political (e.g., Washington vs. Obama and his cabinet members), and social (e.g., the Red Sox vs. the baseball players), that researchers have yet to examine. It is possible

---

[4] http://www.tiffanycbrown.com/about-me/

that our results would extend to these other kinds of organizations, given that the organization frame (a singular court) would be perceived as supposedly being more capable of imposing order and control than the members frame (nine individual justices). We also did not examine extremely large or enterprise-level organizations, such as multinationals or conglomerates. On one hand, it is possible that once the size of an organization reaches a certain threshold, the difference between the organization and members frame will increase as people will perceive a coordination problem among all the members(thus having less control compared to fewer members). On the other hand, it is possible that by its sheer size, the relationship between framing and moral judgements will decrease because people expect every facet of the operation to be well covered. It would therefore be interesting to dig deeper into this phenomenon and investigate whether this framing effect also applies to these other types of organizations, and how people judge the actions and decisions that these groups make depending on the frame.

Second, we found that increased dehumanization *reduced* responsibility and blameworthiness. As this was documented only in one study, more research should investigate why this occurred. However, we speculate that it is possible that when an actor is dehumanized to a high extent—similar to a rock or a piece of furniture— the actor is stripped of all agency, without which responsibility cannot be assigned (Alicke, 2000; Nadelhoffer et al., 2014).

A third area of pursuit may be examining how people judge organizations for good outcomes. In Studies 1 and S1, people attributed more control to the organization frame when the outcome is bad, but not when the outcome is good. We believe there may be two possibilities. First, paying more attention to bad than good is evolutionarily adaptive—doing harm is more detrimental to societal functioning and personal well-being than doing good, and this theoretical position is supported by research showing that there is often an asymmetry in moral judgments

between good and bad outcomes in a variety of domains, including learning, relationships, memory, and moral judgments (e.g., Baumeister et al., 2001; Chen & Lurie, 2013; Knobe, 2003; Pizarro, Uhlmann, & Salovey, 2003; Rozin & Royzman, 2001; Siegel, Crockett, & Dolan, 2017). This perhaps speaks to people's perceptions that the goals of businesspeople and organizations is to provide good outcomes, with the expectation that they should meet customers' needs and even go beyond what is required of them (Carroll, 1998; Knobe, 2003; Matten & Crane, 2005; McWilliams, 2015; Pierce & Doh, 2005). Additionally, based on expectancy violation theory (Bettencourt, Dill, Greathouse, Charlton, & Mulholland, 1997; Burgoon, 1993), people will judge a target differently depending on whether the target conformed to how they expected the target to behave. The inherent goal of an organization is often to produce positive outcomes, and so people may only judge the organization frame differently when the target violates that expectation. Given that past research has pointed to the asymmetry of judgments for good versus bad outcomes (see Baumeister et al., 2001 for a review), more research may examine when and how framing has an impact on judgments for good outcomes.

Finally, and interestingly, it is unclear why, although increased perceived control through the organization frame also increased perceived responsibility and punishment separately, the serial mediation of frame to control to responsibility to punishment was not significant. Statistically, this implies that the variance control shares with responsibility and the variance control shares with punishment do not overlap. As a result, framing affects both responsibility and punishment through control, but responsibility does not play a role in the framing-control-punishment relationship. It is possible that causal control is necessary but not sufficient for harsher punishment. We remain tentative, as most theories of blame and punishment would suggest that responsibility and blame should increase punishment, and the relationship between

these variables is likely complex and in need of further investigation. Nonetheless, we set out to investigate how the framing or an organizational entity can influence perceptions of control and responsibility, and we observe this link over multiple studies.

Conclusion

People increasingly scrutinize outcomes – particularly bad outcomes – brought about by organizations. The question of how moral judgments are impacted by their framing – either through an organization or members frame – has important legal, political, and social implications. Legally, in trial, barristers may choose to pierce the corporate veil to reveal the defenders behind the wrongdoing. Politically, pundits may discuss the strategy of Washington, Beijing, or Berlin versus the cabinet members involved in each decision. Socially, community members can judge the behaviors of the American Nazi Party or the individual White nationalists. Given the broad implications and contexts in which people can cognitively frame an entity – either as the "organization of members" or "members that compose the organization" – and our society's increasing dependence on organizations, it is important to examine how we make moral judgments regarding organizations.

References

Aaker, J., Vohs, K. D., & Mogilner, C. (2010). Nonprofits are seen as warm and for-profits as competent: Firm stereotypes matter. Journal of Consumer Research, 37(2), 224-237.

Alicke, M. D. (2000). Culpable control and the psychology of blame. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126, 556-574.

Aleccia, J. (2013). *USDA threatens to shutter Foster Farms plants tied to salmonella outbreak.* Retrieved from http://www.nbcnews.com/health/usda-threatens-shutter-foster-farms-plants-tied-salmonella-outbreak-8C11363370

Anapol, A. (2018). Contractor awarded $156 million to provide 30 million meals to Puerto Rico only delivered 50,000: report. Retrieved from https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/372515-contractor-awarded-156-million-to-provide-30-million-meals-to-puerto

Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of management review*, *14*(1), 20-39.

Ask, K., & Pina, A. (2011). On being angry and punitive: How anger alters perception of criminal intent. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *2*(5), 494-499.

Associated Press Science (2013). The Moral Implications of GMOs. Retrieved from https://www.wired.com/2003/11/the-moral-implications-of-gmos/

Babic, M., Fichtner, J., & Heemskerk, E. M. (2017). States versus Corporations: Rethinking the Power of Business in International Politics. *The International Spectator*, *52*(4), 20-43.

Bank of the United States v. Deveaux, 9 US 61 (1809)

Bankoff, G. (2004). In the eye of the storm: the social construction of the forces of nature and the climatic and seismic construction of God in the Philippines. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, *35*(01), 91-111.

Barnes, R. (2016). The political wars damage public perception of Supreme Court, Chief Justice Roberts says. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/the-political-wars-damage-public-perception-of-supreme-court-chief-justice-roberts-says/2016/02/04/80e718b6-cb0c-11e5-a7b2-5a2f824b02c9_story.html

Baumeister, R. F., Bratslavsky, E., Finkenauer, C., & Vohs, K. D. (2001). Bad is stronger than good. *Review of general psychology*, *5*(4), 323.

Begnaud, D. (2018). Woman behind botched FEMA contract to deliver meals in Puerto Rico speaks out. Retrieved from https://www.cbsnews.com/news/woman-behind-botched-fema-contract-to-deliver-meals-in-puerto-rico-speaks-out/

Berofsky (1966) Berofsky, B. (Ed.). (1966). Free will and determinism. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Bettencourt, B. A., Dill, K. E., Greathouse, S. A., Charlton, K., & Mulholland, A. (1997). Evaluations of ingroup and outgroup members: The role of category-based expectancy violation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *33*(3), 244-275.

Black's Law Dictionary (2016). What is organization? Retrieved from https://thelawdictionary.org/organization/

Brief, A. P., & Smith-Crowe, K. (2016). Organizations matter. *The social psychology of good and evil*, 390-414.

Buckholtz, J. W., Asplund, C. L., Dux, P. E., Zald, D. H., Gore, J. C., Jones, O. D., & Marois, R. (2008). The neural correlates of third-party punishment. *Neuron*, *60*(5), 930-940.

Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc., 573 U.S. ___ (2014)

Brief, A. P., & Smith-Crowe, K. (forthcoming). Why organizations matter. In A. G. Miller (Ed.), *The social psychology of good and evil* (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

Bump, P. (2013). *Does more campaign money actually buy more votes: An investigation.* Retrieved from https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/11/does-more-campaign-money-actually-buy-more-votes-investigation/355154/

Burgoon, J. K. (1993). Interpersonal expectations, expectancy violations, and emotional communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *12*(1-2), 30-48.

Capestany, B. H., & Harris, L. T. (2014). Disgust and biological descriptions bias logical reasoning during legal decision-making. *Social neuroscience*, *9*(3), 265-277.

Carroll, A. B. (1998). The four faces of corporate citizenship. *Business and society review*, *100*(1), 1-7.

Center for Responsive Politics. Influence and Lobbying. Retrieved from https://www.opensecrets.org/influence/

Chen, Z., & Lurie, N. H. (2013). Temporal contiguity and negativity bias in the impact of online word of mouth. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *50*(4), 463-476.

Chin, A., & Peterson, M. A. (1985). *Deep pockets, empty pockets*. Rand Corporation.

Clark, C. J., Luguri, J. B., Ditto, P. H., Knobe, J., Shariff, A. F., & Baumeister, R. F. (2014). Free to punish: A motivated account of free will belief. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *106*(4), 501.

CNN (2014). California firm recalls chicken over salmonella fears. Retrieved from https://www.cnn.com/2014/07/04/health/salmonella-chicken-recall/index.html

Cooley, E., Payne, B. K., Cipolli III, W., Cameron, C. D., Berger, A., & Gray, K. (2017). The

paradox of group mind:"People in a group" have more mind than "a group of

people". *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *146*(5), 691.

Cushman, F. (2008). Crime and punishment: Distinguishing the roles of causal and intentional

analyses in moral judgment. *Cognition*, *108*(2), 353-380.

Cushman, F., Dreber, A., Wang, Y., & Costa, J. (2009). Accidental outcomes guide punishment

in a "trembling hand" game. *PloS one*, *4*(8), e6699.

Daniels, M. (2017). Avoiding GMOs isn't just anti-science. It's immoral. Retrieved from

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/avoiding-gmos-isnt-just-anti-science-its-

immoral/2017/12/27/fc773022-ea83-11e7-b698-

91d4e35920a3_story.html?utm_term=.47deaeb12abb

Darley, J. M. (1996). How organizations socialize individuals into evildoing. In D. M. Messick

&A. E. Tenbrunsel (Eds.), Codes of conduct: Behavioral research into business ethics (pp.

13-43). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Gerald F. Davis, 2015. "Corporate power in the 21st century." In Subramanian Rangan (ed.),

Performance and Progress: Essays on Capitalism, Business and Society. Oxford: Oxford

University Press.

Dwoskin, E. (2018). Facebook thought it was more powerful than a nation-state. Then that

became a liability. Retrieved from

https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/inside-facebooks-year-of-

reckoning/2018/01/22/cfd7307c-f4c3-11e7-beb6-

c8d48830c54d_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.015fb09d9bb0

Dzur, A. W., & Mirchandani, R. (2007). Punishment and democracy: The role of public deliberation. *Punishment & Society*, *9*(2), 151-175.

Egelhoff, W. G. (1988). Strategy and structure in multinational corporations: A revision of the Stopford and Wells model. *Strategic Management Journal*, *9*(1), 1-14.

Fischer, J. M. (1986). Moral responsibility. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Feldman, D. C. (1981). The multiple socialization of organization members. *Academy of management review*, *6*(2), 309-318.

Fincham, F. D., & Roberts, C. F. (1985). Intervening causation and the mitigation of responsibility for harm doing: II. The role of limited mental capacities. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 21*, 178-194.

Goodwin, G. P., & Benforado, A. (2015). Judging the goring ox: retribution directed toward animals. *Cognitive science*, *39*(3), 619-646.

Gorsuch, R. L., & Smith, C. S. (1983). Attributions of responsibility to God: An interaction of religious beliefs and outcomes. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 340-352.

Gray, K., & Wegner, D. M. (2011). To escape blame, don't be a hero—Be a victim. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *47*(2), 516-519.

Hahn, J.D. (2018). Family Wins $1.9 Million Lawsuit After Salmonella Infected From Chicken Almost Kills Toddler. Retrieved from https://people.com/human-interest/family-wins-salmonella-lawsuit-foster-farms/

Hall, R. (1977). Organizations: structure and process. Englewood Cliffs, CA: Prentice Hall.

Halevy, N., Y. Chou, E., & D. Galinsky, A. (2011). A functional model of hierarchy: Why, how, and when vertical differentiation enhances group performance. *Organizational Psychology Review*, *1*(1), 32-52.

Hans, V. P., & Ermann, M. D. (1989). Responses to corporate versus individual wrongdoing. *Law and Human Behavior*, *13*(2), 151-166.

Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Methodology in the social sciences. Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach.* New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.

Haran, U. (2013). A person–organization discontinuity in contract perception: Why corporations can get away with breaking contracts but individuals cannot. *Management Science*, *59*(12), 2837-2853.

Heider, F. (1958). The psychology of interpersonal relations. New York: Wiley.

Hetey, R. C., & Eberhardt, J. L. (2014). Racial disparities in incarceration increase acceptance of punitive policies. *Psychological Science*, *25*(10), 1949-1954.

Hoyle, R. H., Pinkley, R. L., & Insko, C. A. (1989). Perceptions of social behavior: Evidence of differing expectations for interpersonal and intergroup interaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *15*(3), 365-376.

Insko, C. A., Schopler, J., & Sedikides, C. (1998). Differential distrust of groups and individuals. *Intergroup cognition and intergroup behavior*, 75-107.

Jago, A. S., & Laurin, K. (2017). Corporate personhood: Lay perceptions and ethical consequences. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, *23*(1), 100.

Jago, A. S., & Pfeffer, J. (2018). Organizations Appear More Unethical than Individuals. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-17.

Jin, G. Z., & Leslie, P. (2003). The effect of information on product quality: Evidence from restaurant hygiene grade cards. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *118*(2), 409-451.

Kahneman, D. (2003). *Thinking, fast and slow.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1st Eds.

Kelley, H. H. (1972). Attribution in social interaction. In E. E. Jones, D. E. Kanouse, H. H. Kelley, R. E. Nisbett, S. Valins, & B. Weiner (Eds.), Attribution: Perceiving the causes of behavior (pp. 1-26). Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press

Kelley, H. H., & Michela, J. L. (1980). Attribution theory and research. *Annual review of psychology*, *31*(1), 457-501.

KellogInsight (2017). When Corporations Donate to Candidates, Are They Buying Influence?. Retrieved from https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/do-corporate-campaign-contributions-buy-influence

Keltner, D., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Anderson, C. (2003). Power, approach, and inhibition. *Psychological review*, *110*(2), 265.

Knobe, J. (2003). Intentional Action and Side Effects in Ordinary Language. *Analysis*, 63, 190-193.

Kogut, T., & Ritov, I. (2005). The "identified victim" effect: An identified group, or just a single individual?. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, *18*(3), 157-167.

Kwet, M. (2019). In Stores, Secret Surveillance Tracks Your Every Move. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/14/opinion/bluetooth-wireless-tracking-privacy.html?em_pos=large&ref=headline&te=1&nl=sunday-best&emc=edit_owr_20190616?campaign_id=94&instance_id=10249&segment_id=14346&user_id=472925bff529ecfd358d34a2d42e1e4b&regi_id=91123382dit_owr_20190616

Lagnado, D. A., & Channon, S. (2008). Judgments of cause and blame: The effects of intentionality and foreseeability. *Cognition*, *108*(3), 754-770.

Läkens, D. (2017). Equivalence tests: a practical primer for t tests, correlations, and meta-analyses. *Social psychological and personality science*, *8*(4), 355-362.

Laurent, S. M., Nuñez, N. L., & Schweitzer, K. A. (2016). Unintended, but still blameworthy: the roles of awareness, desire, and anger in negligence, restitution, and punishment. *Cognition and emotion*, *30*(7), 1271-1288.

Lee Hamilton, V., & Sanders, J. (1999). The second face of evil: Wrongdoing in and by the corporation. *Personality and social psychology review*, *3*(3), 222-233.

MacCoun, R. J. (1996). Differential treatment of corporate defendants by juries: An examination of the" deep-pockets" hypothesis. *Law and Society Review*, 121-161.

MacKinnon, D. P., & Fairchild, A. J. (2009). Current directions in mediation analysis. *Current directions in psychological science*, *18*(1), 16-20.

Martin, J. W., & Cushman, F. (2016). Why we forgive what can't be controlled. *Cognition*, *147*, 133-143.

Matten, D., & Crane, A. (2005). Corporate citizenship: Toward an extended theoretical conceptualization. *Academy of Management review*, *30*(1), 166-179.

Mazzei, P. & Armendariz, A. (2018). FEMA contract called for 30 million meals for Puerto Ricans. 50,000 were delivered. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/06/us/fema-contract-puerto-rico.html

McNeil, B. J., Pauker, S. G., & Tversky, A. (1988). On the framing of medical decisions.

McWilliams, A. (2015). Corporate social responsibility. *Wiley encyclopedia of management*, 1-4.

Melden, A. I. (1961). Free action. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Miller, D., & Dröge, C. (1986). Psychological and traditional determinants of structure. *Administrative science quarterly*, 539-560.

Mirels, H. L. (1980). The Avowal of Responsibility for Good and Bad Outcomes The Effects of Generalized Self-Serving Biases. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *6*(2), 299-306.

Moynihan, T. (2016). Alexa and google home record what you say. But what happens to that data? Retrieved from https://www.wired.com/2016/12/alexa-and-google-record-your-voice/

Nahmias, E., Morris, S., Nadelhoffer, T., & Turner 1, J. (2005). Surveying freedom: Folk intuitions about free will and moral responsibility. *Philosophical Psychology*, *18*(5), 561-584.

Oremus, W. (2016). Who controls your Facebook feed? Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/cover_story/2016/01/how_facebook_s_news_feed_algorithm_works.html

Pemberton, M. B., Insko, C. A., & Schopler, J. (1996). Memory for and experience of differential competitive behavior of individuals and groups. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *71*(5), 953.

Pizarro, D., Uhlmann, E., & Salovey, P. (2003). Asymmetry in judgments of moral blame and praise: The role of perceived metadesires. *Psychological science*, *14*(3), 267-272.

Posner, E. A. (1996). The regulation of groups: The influence of legal and nonlegal sanctions on collective action. *The University of Chicago law review*, *63*(1), 133-197.

Quigley, W. (2003) Catholic social thought and the amorality of large corporations: Time to abolish corporate personhood. *Loyola J. Public Interest Law*, *5*, 109–134.

Rai, T. S., & Diermeier, D. (2015). Corporations are cyborgs: Organizations elicit anger but not sympathy when they can think but cannot feel. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *126*, 18-26.

Ratner, R. K., & Miller, D. T. (2001). The norm of self-interest and its effects on social action. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *81*(1), 5.

Roach, B. (2007). Corporate power in a global economy. Global development and environment institute. Retrieved from

http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/education_materials/modules/Corporate_Power_in_a_Global_Economy.pdf

Robbins, R. H., & Dowty, R. (2008). *Global problems and the culture of capitalism*. Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

Robbins, P., & Litton, P. (2018). Crime, punishment, and causation: The effect of etiological information on the perception of moral agency. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, *24*(1), 118.

Ross, L. (1977). The intuitive psychologist and his shortcomings: Distortions in the attribution process. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, *10*, 173-220.

Rozin, P., & Royzman, E. B. (2001). Negativity bias, negativity dominance, and contagion. *Personality and social psychology review*, *5*(4), 296-320.

Scheiber, N. (2017). The Pop-Up Employer: Build a Team, Do the Job, Say Goodbye. Retrived from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/12/business/economy/flash-organizations-labor.html

Schiermeier, Q. (2011). Increased flood risk linked to global warming. *Nature*,*470*(7334), 316-316.

Schlenker, B. R., Britt, T. W., Pennington, J., Murphy, R., & Doherty, K. (1994). The triangle model of responsibility. *Psychological review*, *101*(4), 632.

Sedgwick, P. (2015). How to read a forest plot in a meta-analysis. *Bmj*, 351, h4028.

Selby, J. & Hulme, M. (2015). Is climate change really to blame for Syria's civil war? *The Guardian*. Retrieved from http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/29/climate-change-syria-civil-war-prince-charles

Shariff, A. F., Greene, J. D., Karremans, J. C., Luguri, J. B., Clark, C. J., Schooler, J. W., ... & Vohs, K. D. (2014). Free will and punishment: A mechanistic view of human nature reduces

retribution. *Psychological science*, *25*(8), 1563-1570.

Shaver, K. G. (1985). The attribution of blame: Causality, responsibility, and blameworthiness. New York: Springer-Verlag

Simon, H. A. (1972). Theories of bounded rationality. *Decision and organization*, *1*(1), 161-176.

Simmons, J. P., Nelson, L. D., & Simonsohn, U. (2011). False-positive psychology: Undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant. *Psychological science*, *22*(11), 1359-1366.

Sitkin, S. B., & Roth, N. L. (1993). Explaining the limited effectiveness of legalistic "remedies" for trust/distrust. *Organization science*, *4*(3), 367-392.

Small, D. A., Loewenstein, G., & Slovic, P. (2007). Sympathy and callousness: The impact of deliberative thought on donations to identifiable and statistical victims. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *102*(2), 143-153.

Sugar, R. (2018). Why "natural" food has become a secular stand-in for goodness and purity. Retrieved from https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2018/10/22/18009468/alan-levinovitz-natural-food-morality

Sundaram, D. S., Mitra, K., & Webster, C. (1998). Word-of-mouth communications: A motivational analysis. *ACR North American Advances*.

Tilley, J., & Hobolt, S. B. (2011). Is the government to blame? An experimental test of how partisanship shapes perceptions of performance and responsibility. *The Journal of Politics*, *73*(02), 316-330.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1981). The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice. *science*, *211*(4481), 453-458.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1986). Rational choice and the framing of decisions. *Journal of business*, S251-S278.

U.S. Small Business Administration (2012). Frequently asked questions. Retrieved from https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/FAQ_Sept_2012.pdf

U.S. Small Business Administration (2018). 2018 Small business profile. Retrieved from https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/advocacy/2018-Small-Business-Profiles-US.pdf

United States Sentencing Commission. (2016). Fines under the organizational guidelines. Retrieved from https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/training/primers/2016_Primer_Organizational_Fines.pdf

Verhagen, T., Nauta, A., & Feldberg, F. (2013). Negative online word-of-mouth: Behavioral indicator or emotional release?. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *29*(4), 1430-1440.

Vidmar, N., & Rice, J. (1993). Assessments of noneconomic damage awards in medical negligence: A comparison of jurors with legal professionals. *Iowa Law Review*, *78*, 883–911

Waytz, A., & Young, L. (2012). The group-member mind trade-off attributing mind to groups versus group members. *Psychological Science*, *23*(1), 77-85.

Wildschut, T., Pinter, B., Vevea, J. L., Insko, C. A., & Schopler, J. (2003). Beyond the group mind: a quantitative review of the interindividual-intergroup discontinuity effect. *Psychological bulletin*, *129*(5), 698.

Winkler, A. (2018). *We the Corporations: How American Businesses Won Their Civil Rights*. Liveright; 1st Eds.

Weber, M. (2009). *From Max Weber: essays in sociology*. Routledge.

Wong, M. R., McKelvey, W., Ito, K., Schiff, C., Jacobson, J. B., & Kass, D. (2015). Impact of a

    letter-grade program on restaurant sanitary conditions and diner behavior in New York

    City. *American journal of public health*, *105*(3), e81-e87.

Zuckerman, M. (1979). Attribution of success and failure revisited, or: The motivational bias is

    alive and well in attribution theory. *Journal of personality*, *47*(2), 245-287.