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Retributive Philanthropy

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Retributive Philanthropy**ETHAN MILNE****KIRK KRISTOFFERSON****MIRANDA R. GOODE****Author Note:**

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Retributive Philanthropy

Abstract

Prosocial behavior research has historically considered altruistic or self-interested motives as the primary drivers for charitable giving. Recently, however, there have been many high-profile cases wherein consumers use their donations to harm others. We define this behavior, characterized by a desire for retribution resulting from witnessing or experiencing volitional wrongdoing, as “retributive philanthropy” and examine this phenomenon using a multi-method approach. Qualitative interviews with perpetrators and targets of retributive philanthropy reveal key themes of blameworthiness judgments, strong negative affect, and a desire to harm as a terminal goal of donation—all of which are not typically associated with prosocial behaviors. Analysis of real-world anti-vaccine protestor donation data find similar themes of perceived wrongdoing and outrage related to retributive donations in a large-scale context. Five lab studies and five supplementary studies then demonstrate the effects of perceived volitional wrongdoing, harm, efficacy, and authoritarianism on willingness to make retributive donations. Together, these findings offer critical insight into an emerging mode of donation that is emotionally, motivationally, and behaviorally distinct from traditional prosocial behavior and has important implications for consumers and charitable marketers.

Keywords: Prosocial Behavior, Donations, Consumer Aggression, Retribution

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2
3 “There’s one person who has a special place in our hearts: Mike Pence. Today, break his heart
4 and make a donation in his name.”—Planned Parenthood Action Fund (2019)
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7 After Donald Trump’s election win in 2016, organizations concerned with environmental
8
9 advocacy, women’s rights, and civil liberties received influxes of donations. Most notably, Planned
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11 Parenthood saw a 40-fold increase in donations in the months following the election (Preston
12
13 2017), an increase much larger than what other organizations experienced. What made Planned
14
15 Parenthood different? It could be that donors believed abortion rights were uniquely threatened
16
17 given the election of a conservative government. However, environmental protection and civil
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19 liberties were also at risk given the Trump platform yet did not realize the same increase. We
20
21 propose the influx of donations to Planned Parenthood may be attributed to a set of donation
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23 motives and behaviors that are distinct from those typically investigated by prosocial behavior
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25 researchers. Post-election, consumers began donating to Planned Parenthood in Vice President
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27 Mike Pence’s name and using his real address (Mettler 2016), resulting in the Vice President
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29 receiving thousands of letters thanking him for supporting an organization he morally opposed.
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31 Upon recognizing this unique donation behavior, Planned Parenthood leveraged this phenomenon
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33 in its official advertisements, a strategic decision that led to over 82,000 consumers donating to the
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35 organization in Pence’s name (Ryan 2016).
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41 This style of donation has recently expanded to multiple causes. For example, after Russia’s
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43 invasion of Ukraine in 2022, consumers donated to a Ukrainian NGO, “Sign my Rocket.” This
44
45 organization encouraged consumers to inscribe personalized retributive messages on artillery shells
46
47 to be shot at Russian soldiers in exchange for a donation to the NGO (Jankowicz 2022). Table 1
48
49 outlines further examples of this phenomenon. Importantly, these examples represent a diversity of
50
51 political and moral viewpoints, and the punitive actions taken are provoked by situations
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53 representing a wide range of potential wrongdoing. Nevertheless, from the perspective of the
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donating consumers, all of these situations involve punishment of perceived wrongdoers through donation. These donations differ considerably from contemporary examples of prosocial behavior studied in extant marketing and consumer research and, we argue, constitute a novel form of charitable giving that we refer to as retributive philanthropy. Specifically, we define retributive philanthropy as charitable acts undertaken to punish a volitional wrongdoer. In our research, we seek to establish empirical support for this type of philanthropy as retribution, thus demonstrating the relevance of retribution to our theoretical understanding of prosocial behavior and generating practical insights for charitable organizations interested in leveraging retributive donations.

Table 1: Examples of Retributive Philanthropy

Retributive Donation Examples in Practice	Source
In response to fatphobic statements from Abercrombie & Fitch's CEO, one consumer started a viral YouTube campaign that supported donations of A&F clothes to homeless people to harm the brand.	(Glazek 2013)
The Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservatory launched a Valentine's Day donation campaign. Consumers "nursing a broken heart" could donate \$25 to name a cockroach after their ex-partner. A certificate was sent to their ex informing them that they had a cockroach namesake.	(Djan 2023)
A Twitch streamer started a livestream that raised funds for Mermaids UK, a prominent transgender rights charity, to upset a transphobic comedy writer: "Well done ... tons of people know about Mermaids and support them just to spite you!"	(Griffin 2019)
In response to anti-abortion politician Rep. Matt Gaetz insulting a teenage activist for being overweight, the teen started a Planned Parenthood fundraiser with the hashtag "#MattGaetzIsProAbortion", which has raised over \$2 million.	(Latifi 2022)
A journalist made donations to vaccine funds in the name of anti-vaccine protestors she argued with on Twitter.	(Sommerland 2019)

Our mixed methods approach includes qualitative interviews, analysis of real-world donation data, and lab experiments to investigate this distinct phenomenon. We demonstrate that retributive philanthropy requires perceptions of volitional wrongdoing, negative moral judgments, and a desire to punish. These findings sharply contrast with past research suggesting prosocial behavior is characterized by positive emotions like love (Cavanaugh et al. 2015) or gratitude (Bartlett and DeSteno 2006), positive relationships (Sepehri et al. 2021), and wanting to help others (Batson 2022). Although recent research and popular press opinion pieces have begun to discuss how rage or spite might motivate donations (Taylor and Miller-Stevens 2022; Witkowsky 2021), these

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1 dialogues do not consider how donations might be used as a vehicle for punishment, and as such
2
3 are unlikely to be related to the antecedents (e.g., volitional wrongdoing), moderators (e.g.,
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5 authoritarianism, efficacy at punishment) and mediators (e.g., negative moral judgments, desire to
6
7 punish wrongdoers) that we investigate in our work. Retributive philanthropy, thus, represents a
8
9 theoretical advance by expanding the range of situations, emotions, and motives that can drive
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11 prosocial behavior. In doing so, we answer Labroo and Goldsmith's (2021) call for research that
12
13 explores the “dirty underbelly” of prosocial behavior.
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19 Substantively, we demonstrate the marketing relevance of retribution in prosocial contexts
20
21 by exploring features of retributive appeals and retributive donors that could guide charitable
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23 marketers in their decision-making. Specifically, we demonstrate that volitional wrongdoing, the
24
25 efficacy of punishing a wrongdoer, and authoritarianism make retributive donations more
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27 appealing to consumers. Collectively, our findings inform charitable marketers that retributive
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29 donation options have the potential to increase overall donations and attract new donors.
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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Retributive Philanthropy is Prosocial Behavior

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38 Contemporary work defines prosocial behavior as actions intended to benefit others or
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40 society at some cost to the self (Small and Cryder 2016; White et al. 2019). Based on this
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42 definition, we argue retributive philanthropy is prosocial behavior. All retributive cases in Table 1
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44 involve consumers bearing a personal and financial cost through their donation to a cause that
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46 benefits a greater good.
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50 However, retributive philanthropy differs from traditional prosocial behavior in that it
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52 involves punishing others. Is such an ulterior motive consistent with prosociality? Indeed, a range
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54 of theoretically distinct ulterior motives have been identified as underpinning prosocial behavior
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(Batson 2022). For example, prior work has found that prosocial behavior is often motivated by a variety of self-interested aims, such as impression management, happiness, life satisfaction, and financial benefits (Curry et al. 2018; Hui et al. 2020; Kristofferson, White, and Peloza 2014; Peloza and Steel 2005). Whether an individual donates for a tax break or to look generous is immaterial to classifying the action as prosocial. Therefore, whether an individual donates to humiliate or otherwise harm another has no bearing on the prosocial nature of the donation itself.

Nevertheless, some may argue that retributive philanthropy is morally distinct from self-interested donations by virtue of its harmful nature. On this view, harming others is *immoral*, and such acts should not be prosocial by definition. We contend this argument fails on three grounds.

First, self-interested donations are considered by many to be immoral, insofar as the use of moral engagement for self-promotion corrodes public discourse, fosters political conflict, and is leveraged by individuals with undesirable personality traits like psychopathy and narcissism (Grubbs et al. 2019; Tosi and Warmke 2016). Yet self-interested donations are still treated as prosocial behavior in contemporary literature. Retributive philanthropy should be treated similarly as prosocial behavior that is driven, in part, by non-altruistic motives.

Second, classifying behaviors in Table 1 as immoral fails to consider the individual beliefs, values, and expectations of donors, which are key to determining prosociality. To illustrate, consider two donors: one who donates to a pro-choice charity to protect the reproductive rights of women; one who donates to a pro-life charity to protect the rights of unborn children. Both donors believe they are doing good, despite representing mutually exclusive value systems. By the field's standards, both are engaged in prosocial behavior, because they *intend* to do good, regardless of whether this "good" impact materializes or has negative consequences for others (Small and Cryder 2016; White et al. 2019). We argue this logic applies similarly to retributive philanthropy:

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3 from a retributive donor's perspective, their *motives* are righteous, their *actions* are laudable, and
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5 punitive *outcomes* are desirable. Thus, to donors, retributive philanthropy is prosocial.
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8 Finally, retribution is frequently acknowledged as prosocial in adjacent fields of history,
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10 philosophy, and psychology. Recent work by feminist and political philosophers has stressed the
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12 importance of outrage, protest, and punishment as key factors in remedying injustices (Cherry
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14 2021; van Doorn, Zeelenberg, and Breugelmans 2014). Retribution can also be prosocial, because
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16 it maintains valuable social norms and encourages cooperation (Jackson et al. 2019; Sommers
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18 2022). Thus, we contend retributive philanthropy's punitive component may also be prosocial.
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21 ***What Makes Retributive Philanthropy Different?***

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24 Retribution is, put simply, punishment in response to perceived volitional wrongdoing
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26 (Sommers 2016; Feather 2005). Leveraging this definition, we define retributive philanthropy as
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28 *charitable acts taken to punish a volitional wrongdoer*. We draw on the retribution literature and
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30 abductive analysis from a qualitative study to develop hypotheses about the situations, traits, and
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32 features of donation appeals that ought to predict retributive donations. We further make
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34 predictions regarding the emotions, thoughts, and judgments that should be associated with
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36 retributive donation. We focus on elements of retributive behavior that depart from elements of
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38 traditional prosocial behavior explored in prior research.
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42 *What situations elicit retributive philanthropy?* With retributive philanthropy, we propose
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44 that perceived volitional wrongdoing is a key antecedent. What does it mean for an action to be
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46 wrong and volitional? Wrongdoing could mean many things, from "forbidden" action (Gold et al.
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48 2015), an intuitive judgment based on disgust (Wheatley and Haidt 2005), or the violation of a
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50 sacred norm or taboo (Tetlock 2002). What unites different types of wrongdoing judgments is a
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52 perceived violation of one's moral values (Kähr et al. 2016), strong other-condemning moral
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emotions such as anger, contempt, and disgust (Lindenmeier et al. 2012), and a subsequent desire for punishment. Taken together, we propose moral wrongdoing plays a critical role in eliciting retributive donations.

However, not all wrongs are equal; retribution is not merely concerned with the amelioration of *wrongs* but also the *volition* of wrongdoers. The extent to which one's behavior is volitional matters a great deal when forming inferences about whether an individual has acted with malicious intent, harmed others, and is blameworthy for their behavior. In other words, before one can make moral inferences about others, one must first establish that they had some degree of control over their behavior—that the behavior was voluntarily enacted (Williams 1981).

Wrongdoing that is volitional is then considered “worse” and more severe than accidental or involuntary wrongs (Ames and Fiske 2013). Individuals witnessing such wrongdoing are then motivated to act as “prosecutors” (Tetlock 2002), seeking to preserve valuable social norms by punishing violators with actions like reprimands (Przepiorka and Berger 2016), physical violence (Fitness 2001), or public shaming (Klonick 2016). Thus, when consumers are exposed to volitional (vs. non-volitional) wrongdoing, we propose they will be more likely to make retributive donations and do so in larger amounts. Formally,

H1a: Consumers exposed to volitional (vs. non-volitional) wrongdoing will be more willing to donate to charities that punish the wrongdoer.

H1b: Consumers exposed to volitional (vs. non-volitional) wrongdoing will donate in greater amounts to charities that punish the wrongdoer.

Volitional wrongdoing should elicit strong negative moral judgments, other-condemning moral emotions, and a desire to punish the wrongdoer (Jackson et al. 2019). In other words, when consumers perceive others deliberately doing wrong, they perceive them as more harmful, having engaged in their behavior with malicious intent to harm others, and blameworthy for their behavior, which in turn elicits a desire to cause some negative state (through punishment) in the wrongdoer.

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Volitional wrongdoing will also elicit emotions that previous research has associated with the condemnation of others such as contempt, anger, and disgust (CAD; e.g., Haidt 2001). Thus, we expect the following will characterize retributive (but not traditional) donations:

H2a: Negative moral judgments will increase retributive donations.

H2b: Stronger (vs. weaker) desire to punish a wrongdoer will increase retributive donations.

H2c: Other-condemning moral emotions associated with a wrongdoer will increase retributive donations.

Support for these serial mediation hypotheses would provide evidence that retributive mechanisms are capable of driving prosocial behavior, and that the behaviors we observe are not explained by tribalist or hedonistic accounts. Conceptually, these processes diverge considerably from past prosocial research demonstrating that positive experiences like gratitude (Goenka and van Osselaer 2019) and love (Cavanaugh et al. 2015) lead to prosocial actions. Indeed, situations where volitional wrongdoing is perceived and accompanied by other-condemning moral emotions, negative moral judgments, and a desire to punish should invite retributive donations.

What type of donors are attracted to retributive philanthropy? To further support our proposition that philanthropy can be retributive, we predict that donors with vengeful personalities will be more inclined towards punishment of wrongdoers (Tetlock 2002). Contemporary work suggests that positive personality traits like agreeableness (Caprara et al. 2012), benevolence (Caprara and Steca 2007), and empathy (Alessandri et al. 2009) predict prosocial behavior. In contrast, we predict that lower agreeableness, higher aggressiveness, and generalized anger, all of which are encompassed within the personality trait of authoritarianism, will positively predict retributive philanthropy. Authoritarianism is traditionally associated with *antisocial* behavior and inversely associated with *prosocial* behavior (Costello et al. 2022; Saleem et al. 2017), thus making it an ideal candidate for demonstrating the role of retribution in prosocial behavior. We predict that

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those higher in authoritarianism will be more predisposed towards punishment of volitional wrongdoers and will, therefore, be more likely to engage in retributive philanthropy:

H3: Individuals higher (vs. lower) in authoritarianism will be more willing to engage in retributive philanthropy when volitional wrongdoing is perceived.

What elements of donation appeals elicit retributive philanthropy? If the goal of retributive philanthropy is to harm a perceived wrongdoer, then the degree to which retributive donations successfully punish them should predict willingness to make retributive donations. Past work has shown that consumers are more likely to donate when donations are perceived as more effective at *helping* others (Gneezy et al. 2014) and are more impactful (Cryder et al. 2013; Sharma and Morwitz 2016). Donors are overhead averse, preferring charities that put lower proportions of their funds towards fundraising or administrative costs (Gneezy et al. 2014). We extend this work by proposing that donation efficacy, more broadly, refers to how effective a donation is at satisfying a donor's motives. With retributive philanthropy, the primary motive is to harm a wrongdoer. Thus, we predict consumers who hold negative moral judgments and a desire to punish a wrongdoer will find donation options that are effective at *punishing* the wrongdoer more appealing. Formally,

H4: Retributive donations perceived as more (vs. less) effective at punishing a volitional wrongdoer will be more appealing to consumers.

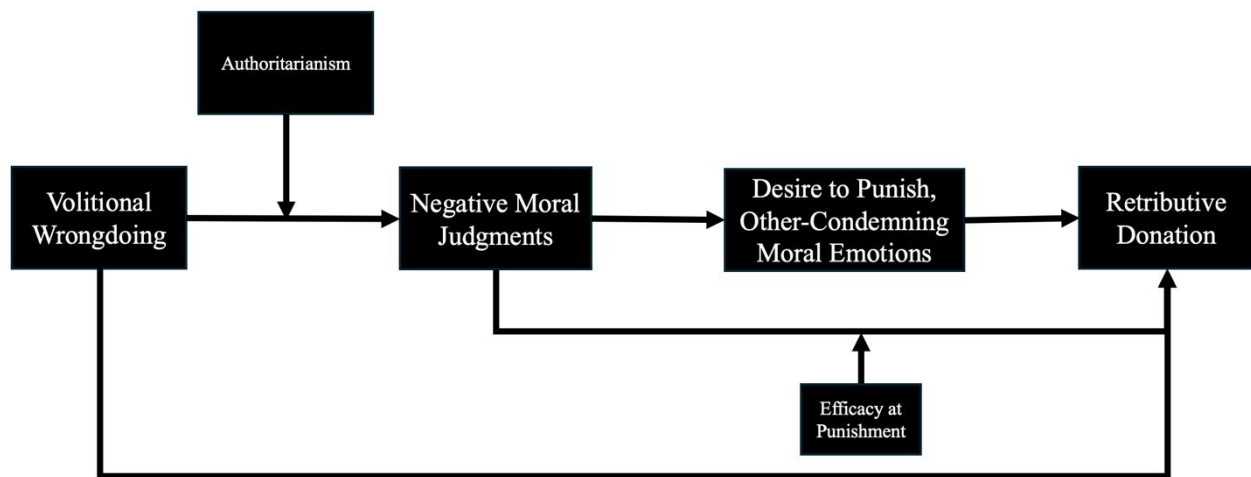
If supported, this efficacy-based moderation hypothesis would further support our proposition that philanthropy can be retributive. Theoretically, this finding would both parallel and depart from existing findings in the prosocial behavior literature, as no research to date has shown that efficacy at *punishing others* can positively influence donations.

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OVERVIEW OF STUDIES

We present 12 studies (seven primary, five supplementary; see Web Appendix A) that leverage a mixed methods approach and multiple real-world examples to examine the phenomenon of retributive philanthropy, the opportunity it provides to charitable marketers, and the role that retribution can play in increasing philanthropic behavior. Figure 1 provides a visual overview of our proposed Conceptual Framework, and Table 2 provides a summary of our primary studies.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



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Table 2: Overview of Studies

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: 2 (GoFundMe Mentioned vs. GoFundMe not Mentioned) • DV: Amount donated • Focal test: T-test between conditions • Focal result: between-group difference = \$23.43, $t(4064.49) = 5.22, p < .001$ 			
Study 2		GoFundMe Mentioned		GoFundMe not Mentioned	
<i>Real-World Evidence</i>		\$110.89		\$87.46	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: 2 (Wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x 2 (Retributive Option: present vs. absent) • DV: Choice to donate cash to retributive charity, non-retributive charity, or keep cash • Focal test: Multinomial logistic regression on choice between charities and not donating • Focal result: Volition x Retributive Option = 0.93, SE = 0.28, 95% CI: .18, 1.69, $p = .015$ 			
Study 3		Volitional		Non-volitional	
<i>Volitional Wrongdoing and Retributive Benefits</i>		Option Present	Option Absent	Option Present	Option Absent
Retributive Charity Choice		41.52% (retributive option)	37.07%	33.33% (retributive option)	51.30%
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: 2 (Wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x 2 (Identity: Jewish vs. non-Jewish) • DV: Likelihood of Retributive Donation • Focal test: Mediation with Negative Moral Judgments and Desire to Punish (Pre-registered) • Focal result: index of serial mediation = .02, SE = .006, 95% CI: .009, .033 			
Study 4		Volitional		Non-volitional	
<i>Psychological Mechanisms</i>		Jewish	non-Jewish	Jewish	non-Jewish
Donation Likelihood		3.65	3.10	3.63	2.78
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: 2 (Wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) • DV: Likelihood of Retributive Donation • Focal test: Mediation with Negative Moral Judgments and Other-Condemning Moral Emotions (Pre-registered) • Focal result: index of serial mediation = .255, SE = .039, 95% CI: .186, .336 			
Study 5		Volitional		Non-volitional	
<i>Other-Condemning Moral Emotions</i>		2.67		1.83	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: 2 (Sample: left-wing vs. right-wing) x 2 (Norm violation: left-wing vs. right-wing) • DV: Likelihood of Retributive Donation • Focal test: Moderation by Right- and Left-Wing Authoritarianism (Pre-registered) • Focal results: LWA x Left violation = .610, $t(396) = 3.58, p < .001$; RWA x Right violation = .997, $t(390) = 6.33, p < .001$ 			
Study 6		Left-Wing Sample		Right-Wing Sample	
<i>Donor Personalities</i>		Left-Wing Norm Violation	Right-Wing Norm Violation	Left-Wing Norm Violation	Right-Wing Norm Violation
Donation Likelihood		3.49	2.07	1.90	3.85
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: 2 (Wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x 2 (Punishment efficacy: high vs. low) • DV: Likelihood of Retributive Donation • Focal test: Mediation by Negative Moral Judgments, Moderation by Punishment Efficacy (Pre-registered) • Focal result: index of moderated mediation = 0.329, SE = 0.096, 95% CI: 0.145, 0.519 			
Study 7		Volitional		Non-volitional	
<i>Efficacy at Punishment</i>		High Punishment Efficacy	Low Punishment Efficacy	High Punishment Efficacy	Low Punishment Efficacy
Donation Likelihood		2.79	2.44	1.94	1.90

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Study 1: Qualitative Interviews

In Study 1, we took an exploratory qualitative approach to deeply investigate the motives, emotions, and experiences of retributive donors and their targets. Because no prior work on this phenomenon exists, this approach was critical to enable a rich, open-ended exploration (Schnurr et al. 2022; Whitley et al. 2022) and to bridge the philosophical, psychological, and marketing literatures that we theorize relate to retributive philanthropy. We conducted 10 interviews with self-identified retributive donors and targets with two aims: 1) to identify if retributive philanthropy empirically aligns with key elements of retributive and prosocial behaviors, and 2) to compare and contrast participants' experiences of retributive philanthropy with traditional prosocial behaviors. To achieve these aims, we asked participants to describe their target or retributive donor, the retributive donation, and their feelings throughout the experience.

Participants

We interviewed participants who made or were targeted by retributive donations. Six participants were recruited via TikTok, a platform used by researchers to investigate hard-to-reach, niche, or otherwise marginalized communities (MacKinnon et al. 2021). Four participants were recruited via email (see Web Appendix B for recruitment message). Our sample represents a diversity of genders, education levels, ages, careers, political perspectives, and retributive philanthropy cause areas (see Table 3). We sought diverse perspectives to identify elements of the phenomenon that either depend on or transcend participant demographics.

Interviews

Each interview lasted 20 to 30 minutes on average (McCracken 1988). Because participants were contacted online and from diverse regions, we interviewed them via Zoom or Discord. The researcher's camera was always on, and all participants elected to be visible. With

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participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded and immediately transcribed post-interview (see Web Appendix B for interview guide).

Table 3: Study 1 Participant Demographics

Nickname	Gender	Age	Education	Job	Region	Role
Emma	Female	25-34	Masters	Student	Canada	Donor
Alice	Female	35-44	Undergraduate	Service	UK	Donor
Abigail	Female	35-44	Masters	Design	USA	Donor
Cynthia	Female	18-24	Undergraduate	Temp	USA	Donor
Eunice	Female	25-34	Masters	Marketing	UK	Donor
Irma	Nonbinary	18-24	Undergraduate	Student	UK	Donor
Steven	Male	25-34	High School	Streamer	USA	Target & Donor
Ian	Male	25-34	Undergraduate	Streamer	USA	Target & Donor
James	Male	25-34	Masters	Photography	Canada	Donor
Max	Male	25-34	Undergraduate	Artist	USA	Target

There was significant variance in how participants pursued or experienced retributive philanthropy. Some made donations in others' names to charities their targets would dislike. Others made or were targeted by donations to charities that were in opposition to the target's values. Some used the platform afforded by a donation to communicate hurtful messages. Despite this variance, the key themes we observed remained consistent across participant experiences.

Analysis

We analyzed and coded interviews to identify key themes in participants' experiences of retributive philanthropy and to understand how it compared to more traditional prosocial behaviors. This was done in an iterative process, incorporating theoretical insights from each interview to insights gleaned from prior interviews until theoretical saturation was reached (Miles et al. 2014; Spiggle 1994). We identified several key themes that transcended participants' individual characteristics and were present in all cases of retributive philanthropy. This analysis was performed abductively with reference to the retribution literature to identify commonalities with previously explored themes of retribution. Participants' experiences with retributive philanthropy were universally characterized by 1) perceptions of volitional wrongdoing

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committed by a target, 2) strong other-condemning moral emotions, and 3) a desire to punish.

Further, retributive donors universally reported that retributive philanthropy was sharply distinct from traditional prosocial behaviors. We outline each theme in turn.

Volitional wrongdoing and Negative Moral Judgments. For retributive donors, their targets were universally characterized as having voluntarily committed a wrongful act, leading to negative judgments of targets such as “racist” or “[an] a**hole”. Importantly, these were not minor harms; no donor reported mere annoyance or irritation. Instead, they reported experiencing or witnessing harms extreme enough to warrant an aggressive response (Marwick 2021). For example, Cynthia described her experience of being sent to an anti-gay conversion therapy camp by her aunt:

“I was with a lot of my peers being held in a room and getting yelled at for hours on end, saying that we need to repent our sins and that being gay is a sin.” (Cynthia)

Cynthia ultimately made donations to LGBTQ+ charities in the name of homophobic family members, including their real addresses to ensure they received notice of the donation, with the understanding that such donations would upset them.

Other-Condemning Moral Emotions. Participants reported feeling some type of anger (e.g., “Anger”, “Fury”, “Pissed off”) as a result of experiencing or witnessing a wrongdoing. This aligns with the literature on negative moral judgments leading to anger (Antonetti 2016; Malle 2021). Participants also reported ruminating on their emotions and negative moral judgments of their target, which is consistent with other forms of retributive behavior (Kähr et al. 2016).

Desire to Punish. Participants then pursued punishment of the wrongdoer in a manner they described as vengeful, retributive, or punitive, often using language like “karma,” “offset,” or “revenge.” Accordingly, the donations offset the target’s wrongdoing in a poetically just way,

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matching the retribution to the offense. Their reported experiences generally tracked the “eye for an eye” mindset that characterizes retributive behavior:

“I’m a big equal exchange kind of guy ... And I love fighting with people. It’s a lot of fun for me. ... So if someone wants to attack me, I love it because I get to attack them back, but I try not to attack people if they don’t attack me first.” (Steven)

Importantly, many participants said that the potential for retribution was an essential element in choosing to donate (e.g., *“I would not have donated if I could not put [family members’] names on it”*; Cynthia). In cases where retribution was not the sole motivation for donating, participants reported that it made them donate sooner. These themes support our proposition that retributive philanthropy can potentially elicit new donations over and above traditional processes described in the prosocial behavior literature (e.g., White et al., 2019).

We found convergent evidence for this notion in our interview with James, who created a book of Ukrainian vistas titled “Russian Warship, Go F**k Yourself” (2022). James described how making all proceeds go towards Ukrainian charities made the retributive message feel more satisfying for consumers, but that the “go f**k yourself” message was a primary sales driver:

*“I don’t think we would have nearly a fraction of the sales if we didn’t have both of those things like the Russian warship Go F**k Yourself ... messaging gives it traction and the feel-good support Ukraine idea is ... what makes people hit buy.”* (James)

In summary, there is evidence in this qualitative data that donations can be retributive, consistent with the characteristics of retribution observed in the literature. Targets were perceived as volitional wrongdoers and subsequently judged as blameworthy, which is a critical component of negative moral judgments (Jackson et al. 2019; Malle 2021). In addition to experiencing other-condemning negative emotional states (e.g., the CAD trio of contempt, anger, disgust), participants expressed a desire to punish their targets, which motivated their donations. Importantly, participants’ descriptions of these states were distinct from emotions traditionally

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2
3 associated with prosocial behavior like moral elevation or love (Algoe and Haidt 2009;
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5 Cavanaugh et al. 2015).

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7 *Comparison with Traditional Donations.* As expected, participants' experiences with
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9 traditional donations matched well with extant literature on prosocial behavior. Most reported
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11 making donations that helped others. By contrast, their retributive donations were described as
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13 more concerned with achieving justice and involved other-condemning moral emotions like
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15 anger. Taken together, we find the overall experience of retributive philanthropy is clearly
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17 distinct from traditional prosocial behaviors in terms of emotions, motives, and behaviors.
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19

20 21 *Discussion*

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23 In these interviews, we observed points of similarity and points of departure from
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25 retribution and prosocial literatures. Retributive donations were similar to prior accounts of
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27 retribution and distinct from prior accounts of prosocial behavior in that they involved negative
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29 moral judgments (Jackson et al. 2019; Sommers 2016), other-condemning moral emotions, a
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31 desire to punish, and actively ensuring that punishment was realized. These observations mirror
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33 findings that donors are motivated by donation efficacy (White et al. 2019). While the
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35 phenomenon of retributive philanthropy shares conceptual similarities with retribution and
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37 prosocial behavior, these results suggest it is also conceptually distinct and that it can occur in the
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39 context of large-scale campaigns and individual giving. Study 2 finds convergent themes of anger
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41 at volitional wrongdoing in a large-scale retributive campaign with real donations.
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46 47 **Study 2: Real-World Evidence**

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49 Study 2 provides real-world evidence for retributive philanthropy in a large-scale donation
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51 context. Consistent with the findings of Study 1, we show that perceived volitional wrongdoing
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53 and negative moral judgments are critical to retributive donations. Our context was a campaign
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55 for a viral protest movement. In January 2022, a group of Canadian truckers occupied cities and
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3 blockaded highways to pressure the government to rescind COVID-19 policies. *GoFundMe*, a
4 crowd-funding platform, hosted “Freedom Convoy 2022,” a campaign that raised millions of
5 dollars to help protesting truckers refuel, eat, and supplement their lost income. In response, the
6 Canadian government froze protestors’ bank accounts, and GoFundMe subsequently removed the
7 campaign from the platform and refunded donations (McDade 2022). Organizers and donors
8 quickly moved to another donation platform called GiveSendGo and raised \$9 million in under
9 24 hours. Supporters expressed outrage at the campaign removal from GoFundMe, indicating that
10 they *perceived wrongdoing* by GoFundMe and the Canadian government.
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21 The GoFundMe campaign removal and subsequent shift to GiveSendGo presented the
22 opportunity to investigate how donors react to volitional wrongdoing. Specifically, both
23 platforms allowed donors to provide comments to accompany their donations, and an
24 examination of the comments suggests donors perceived the GoFundMe campaign freeze to be
25 morally wrong—describing it in morally loaded terms like “*disgusting*,” “*corruption*,” and
26 “*betrayal*”—and deliberately enacted (e.g., the government “*colluded with GoFundMe to defraud*
27 *donors*”). These perceptions of volitional wrongdoing were experienced and communicated
28 above and beyond a desire to support the truckers or seek revenge against the government.
29 Regardless of donors’ retributive desires during the initial GoFundMe campaign, there was
30 clearly *greater* cause for retribution after it was disbanded. We leverage this (perceived)
31 wrongdoing to see whether donors increase donation amounts when wrongdoing is volitional and
32 more salient.
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Method and Results

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51 We tested our hypothesized effect by investigating the donations of 100,270 individuals
52 who gave to the GiveSendGo campaign. This dataset included information about donors’ chosen
53 pseudonyms, their donation amounts, and any comments associated with their donation. We
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expected that moral outrage would be highest among donors for whom the GoFundMe campaign freeze was salient and that such donors would make larger donations.

We algorithmically classified each donation according to whether its associated comment contained the strings “go”, “fund”, “fraud”, and “me” (case-neutral) to accommodate different ways of spelling or referring to “GoFundMe” (e.g., “gofund me”, “GoFraudMe”). Of the 108,012 GiveSendGo donations, 2,037 (1.89%) mentioned GoFundMe. To validate that the GoFundMe removal was perceived as a volitional wrongdoing, donor comments were classified as containing moral outrage or not using a moral outrage text classification algorithm (Brady et al. 2021). Moral outrage is a response evoked when volitional wrongdoing is perceived (Jackson et al. 2019) and, thus, provides a good proxy for perceived volitional wrongdoing in our dataset. Overall, 6,836 (6.33%) of comments were identified as containing moral outrage. Example comments referencing GoFundMe and exhibiting outrage are provided in Table 4; importantly, these comments often included calls to shame, denounce, or otherwise punish the government, which was perceived as morally responsible for violations of donors’ freedoms.

Table 4: Examples of Comments Referencing GoFundMe that Contained Moral Outrage

Comment	
\$25	This donation is of dual intent. 2 support to good cause of Truckers Freedom Convoy and 2 denounce Go Fund Me as puppets who cannot be trusted to handle trust & money. 2 those at Go Fund Me I extent my right middle finger 2 U in disgust, contempt & derision 4 this fraud, bait & switch scam & their betrayal of those trusting them with their money. I foist upon them all the ill will I can extent.
\$50	Oh Canada, So Glorious and (ToBe) FREE! thank u truckers as defined by courage & morality, & all who u have inspired to seek freedom.I am doubling my GoFundMe pledgge because my blood is boiling: how dare they steal from Freedom Lovers. I am American, but Canadian blood runs through my veins: Mom’s fr Ottawa bacl to 1600’s and Dad is from Quebec: I am a first generation American. Viva la Canada!
\$150	My \$75 to GoFundMe was rejected, so I’ve doubled-down with \$150. If we all double-up, we’ll hit 20 million. The forced vax left me with permanent (so far 8 months) neurological damage. The jab don’t work- ’vaxxed’ still get/spread COVID, end up in the hospitals on ventilators or in the funeral parlour. Trudeau wants to force pain and suffering upon people and blame ’unvaxxed’ truckers. Freedom!

In line with our predictions, comments mentioning GoFundMe were four to five times more likely to contain moral outrage relative to those that did not (26.07% vs. 5.95%; $\Delta =$

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20.12%, CI_{95} : 18.18%, 22.05%, $\chi^2 = 1361.1$, $p < .001$). These results suggest that donors perceived the government's actions to be a volitional wrong, thus meriting retribution.

Importantly, we empirically observed that larger donations were made by donors mentioning GoFundMe ($M_{\text{donation}} = \$110.89$) compared to donors who did not ($M_{\text{donation}} = \$87.46$; $\Delta = \$23.43$, CI_{95} : 14.63, 32.23, $t(4064.49) = 5.22$, $p < .001$). Taken together, these results support H1b and H2c, suggesting that exposure to volitional wrongdoing motivates larger retributive donations and that anger, an other-condemning moral emotion, is characteristic of retributive donations.

Discussion

The results of Study 2 suggest that situations conducive to retribution can result in larger donations (H1b). Specifically, donors who perceived the GoFundMe freeze to be morally wrong and mentioned it made larger donations. Using real-world data, we demonstrate support for retributive donations, in general, and our hypotheses (H1b, H2c). In addition, observing these results in this context shows that retributive philanthropy is not limited to liberal causes, as the Freedom Convoy movement was primarily supported by conservatives (McDade 2022).

This study also revealed themes of retributive donation consistent with Study 1. We observed that for donors for whom a wrongdoing was salient (mentioned GoFundMe), there were more expressions of outrage and anger and some associated differences in donation amounts. In subsequent studies, we provide a controlled causal account of the role of volitional wrongdoing, as well as consequent negative moral judgments and desire to punish, on retributive donations.

Study 3: Volitional Wrongdoing and Retributive Benefits

In Study 3, we examine the causal effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation (H1a), as well as the effect of an organization's choice to offer a retributive benefit in their donation appeal. Specifically, we expect that retributive donation options are most appealing to consumers when volitional (vs. non-volitional) wrongdoing has occurred.

Method

Five hundred forty-eight undergraduate participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 18.96$, 43.25% female) from a large North American university completed this study in exchange for course credit and were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2 (wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x 2 (retributive option: present vs. absent) between-participants design (see Web Appendix C for measures and stimuli across studies).

Participants first read an article where a professor either 1) deliberately used a racial slur (the N-word), or 2) said a word that sounds like a racial slur (the Chinese word “nèige”), adapted from a true story reported by Flaherty (2020), but with locations and names changed (see Web Appendix D for a post-test of this manipulation). To maintain the cover story, participants shared their opinion about the situation in an open-ended response.

Participants were then given a \$1 cash bonus. They had the option to keep the \$1 or to donate to one of two fictional charities with relevant cause areas (adapted from Goenka and van Osselaer 2019). Both charities focused on promoting antiracism: Kentucky Antiracist Student Alliance (KASA) and Western Kentucky Black Students (WKBS). In the retributive option present condition, one of the organizations (KASA) also promised to send a letter to the Dean calling for the professor’s dismissal for every donation received—a consequential punishment. In the retributive option absent condition, both organizations promised to promote antiracism, but no act of retribution was mentioned.

Upon learning of the options, participants chose between keeping their bonus or donating to one of the two organizations. We predicted an interaction between our experimental conditions, such that participants would donate at greater rates to KASA when 1) the organization offered a retributive benefit, and 2) the professor’s wrongdoing was volitional.

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Results

We analyzed our data using a multinomial logistic regression to predict donation choice using the control charity (WKBS) as the base value. This analysis allowed us to directly test the relative appeal of our retributive charity (KASA) to more traditional options. The two sets of coefficients in Table 5 represent participants' likelihood of choosing either donations to KASA or keeping their bonuses instead of donating to WKBS.

Table 5: Multinomial Logistic Regression of Donor Choice

Parameter	Coefficient	SE	95% CI	z	p-value
Donate to KASA					
(Intercept)	0.05	0.19	-0.31, 0.42	0.28	0.8
Volition	-0.58	0.27	-1.11, -0.06	-2.17	0.030
Retributive Option	-0.75	0.28	-1.29, -0.2	-2.70	0.007
Volition:Retributive Option	0.93	0.39	0.18, 1.69	2.42	0.015
Keep my bonus					
(Intercept)	-0.81	0.24	-1.28, -0.34	-3.35	<0.001
Volition	-0.59	0.36	-1.29, 0.11	-1.66	0.10
Retributive Option	-0.25	0.33	-0.91, 0.4	-0.75	0.5
Volition:Retributive Option	0.55	0.49	-0.41, 1.51	1.13	0.3

First, offering a retributive option negatively affected donations to KASA when the professor's wrongdoing was not volitional ($\beta = -0.75$, $SE = 0.28$, $CI_{95}: -1.29, -0.20$, $p = .007$). This result is unsurprising, as consumers generally do not want to punish others who have done nothing wrong. Central to our theorizing, we found a significant interaction between volitional wrongdoing and the presence of a retributive option ($\beta = 0.93$, $SE = 0.39$, $CI_{95}: .18, 1.69$, $p = .015$), such that when KASA offered a retributive benefit and the professor's wrongdoing was volitional, participants were more likely to donate to KASA.

Discussion

The results of Study 3 support our conceptualization of retributive philanthropy and highlight the importance of perceived volitional wrongdoing as a precursor to retribution (H1a). We show that enabling retribution can be leveraged to drive donations, a behavior very distinct from more traditional forms of retribution such as admonishments or violence.

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3 These results also offer valuable managerial insights. First, we demonstrate that charities
4 can benefit from offering retributive donation options to consumers. In circumstances where
5 volitional wrongdoing is perceived, retributive donation options attract new donors relative to
6 traditional options. Second, we qualify this finding and advise charities to ensure that donors
7 actually perceive a wrongdoing as volitional before leveraging retributive donation appeals.
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12 Having established a causal effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation choice,
13 we next test our proposed process that negative moral judgments (proximal mediator) and desire
14 to punish (distal mediator) explain the effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation.
15 Observing this process would further support a retributive account of our phenomenon, as
16 retribution is concerned with the punishment of volitional wrongdoers.
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26 **Study 4: Psychological Mechanisms for Retributive Philanthropy**

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28 The goal of Study 4 was to provide process evidence for the effect of volitional
29 wrongdoing on retributive donation. We propose that perceiving volitional wrongdoing
30 influences retributive donations, because it is seen as morally worse and thus heightens one's
31 desire to punish. We test this serial mediation account in Study 4 (H1a, H2b) using another
32 current and relevant context; specifically, the recent controversy over Kanye West's antisemitic
33 statements. This controversy is well-suited to analysis of volitional wrongdoing and retributive
34 behavior, as there is debate over whether West's antisemitism is attributable to his bipolar
35 disorder (Levitz 2022). To examine our predictions, we manipulated whether participants were
36 informed that West's antisemitism was or was not caused by his mental health problems. Harmful
37 actions attributable to mental illness are seen as less volitional (i.e., not under one's control), less
38 reflective of one's character, and less deserving of punishment (Finkel and Slobogin 1995;
39 Mercier et al. 2018). We, therefore, expect that when West's statements are seen as unrelated to
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his mental health (i.e., more volitional), participants will be more punitive towards him and subsequently more likely to make a retributive donation.

We also test a potential alternative explanation for retributive donations: identity threat. An identity-threat account might suggest that consumers who are most affected by a volitional wrongdoing would be most likely to make a retributive donation (e.g., White and Argo 2009). Our retribution account predicts that consumers will make retributive donations when they perceive wrongdoing as volitional, and that this increase in donation will result even among consumers who are not personally affected by wrongdoing. We test this alternate account by recruiting Jewish and non-Jewish participants. An identity threat account of our phenomenon would predict a significant interaction between volitional wrongdoing and identity, such that when identity is relevant (i.e., Jewish population), retributive donations would be higher when a wrongdoing is volitional, but that no differences would emerge when identity is not relevant. However, our retribution account would predict only a main effect of volitional wrongdoing such that retributive donations would be higher when volitional wrongdoing was present vs. absent.

Method

Prolific Academic participants (N = 1198, ages 18-79, $M_{age} = 33.42$, 51.17% female) completed this study in exchange for financial payment and were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2 (wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x 2 (identity: Jewish vs. non-Jewish) between-participants design. This study was pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/8znz-nnsp.pdf>.

Per our pre-registration, our goal was to recruit a balanced sample of 600 Jewish people and 600 non-Jewish people. However, Jewish people are a small minority of Prolific Academic users, and thus we anticipated a risk of falling short of recruiting 600 Jewish participants. We therefore recruited participants in two waves. In our first wave, we recruited only Jewish

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3 participants for one week, after which point we halted collection and then recruited non-Jewish
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5 participants. We recruited 279 participants in Wave 1 and 919 participants in Wave 2. Of the 919
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7 participants recruited in the *non-Jewish* wave, 65 (7.07%) identified as either ethnically or
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9 religiously Jewish (which they had not self-disclosed on the Prolific platform) and were thus
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11 added to the Wave 1 data. Given this low proportion, we note all results are robust to these
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13 Jewish participants being treated as non-Jewish or Jewish in our analyses.
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17 Participants read an article discussing Kanye West's recent antisemitic remarks, which said
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19 that experts claim either 1) West's antisemitism is not attributable to his bipolar disorder
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21 (volitional wrongdoing), or 2) West's antisemitism is attributable to his bipolar disorder (non-
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23 volitional wrongdoing, see Web Appendix C for stimuli; see Web Appendix E for a post-test of
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25 this manipulation). We then measured negative moral judgments of West (harm: "I believe Kanye
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27 West was antisemitic"; malicious intent: "I believe Kanye intended to be antisemitic";
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29 blameworthiness: "I blame Kanye for being antisemitic"; 3-items, 1—7; 1="Strongly disagree",
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31 7="Strongly agree"; $\alpha = 0.89$), and their desire to punish him (adapted from Grégoire et al. 2010;
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33 e.g., "I would like to punish Kanye West"; 4-items, 1—7; 1="Strongly disagree", 7="Strongly
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35 agree"; $\alpha = 0.85$).
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41 Finally, participants were presented with a retributive donation option from a charity
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43 addressing injustice against Jewish people. Specifically, participants were informed that the Anti-
44
45 Defamation League (ADL) was soliciting funds to lobby for West's business partnerships to be
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47 cancelled to financially punish him for his behavior. Participants rated how likely they were to
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49 donate to the ADL on a 1 to 7 scale (1="Extremely unlikely, 7="Extremely likely").
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52 **Results**

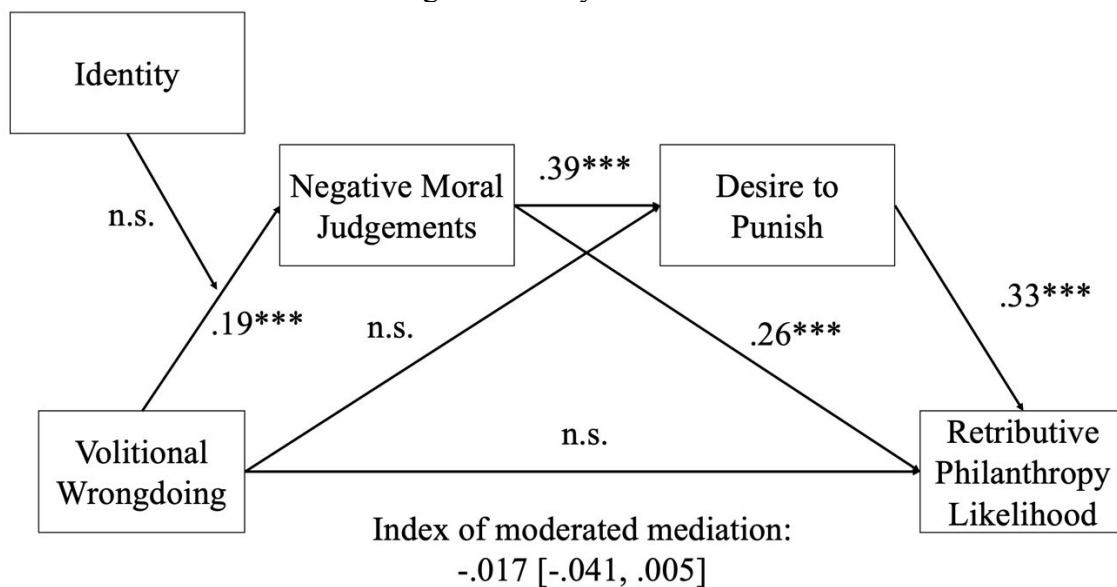
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54 Per our pre-registration, we used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS Model 83 with bootstrap re-
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56 sampling ($N=10,000$), to test the mediating pathway from volitional wrongdoing to negative
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moral judgments, desire to punish, and retributive donation likelihood, with Jewish identity moderating the relationship between our manipulation and negative moral judgments (Figure 2).

We first observed a significant effect of our manipulation on donation likelihood, such that participants in the volitional wrongdoing condition ($M = 3.26$) expressed greater likelihood of making a retributive donation relative to those in the non-volitional condition ($M = 3.02$; $t(1195.7) = 2.28, p = .022$).

Figure 2: Study 4 Results



Consistent with our proposed retribution account, we found a significant effect of our experimental manipulation on negative moral judgments ($\beta = .191, SE = 0.049, CI_{95}: .096, .287, t(1194) = 3.92, p < .001$), which in turn affected participants' desires to punish West ($\beta = .388, SE = .024, CI_{95}: .340, .435, t(1195) = 15.92, p < .001$) and, subsequently, increased participants' likelihood of making retributive donations ($\beta = .331, SE = .040, CI_{95}: .254, .409, t(1194) = 8.38, p < .001$). We note that there was no significant direct effect of volitional wrongdoing on desire to punish. We also did not observe a significant interaction between participants holding a Jewish identity and our manipulation. Jewish participants were not more sensitive to the volitional nature of Kanye's actions than non-Jewish participants ($\beta = -.136, SE = .091, CI_{95}: -$

.315, $-.050$, $t(1194) = -1.48$, $p = .138$). The index of moderated mediation in our model did not exclude zero ($\beta = -.017$, $SE = .012$, $CI_{95}: -.041, .005$), which suggests that participants holding a threatened identity does not elevate the focal retributive effect we observed in this study. A simpler Hayes PROCESS Model 6 model of the effect of volitional wrongdoing mediated by negative moral judgments and desire to punish (unmoderated by Jewish identity) did, however, show a significant index of serial mediation ($\beta = .02$, $SE = .006$, $CI_{95}: .009, .033$).

Discussion

The results of Study 4 provide direct process evidence for the key role that negative moral judgments and desire to punish play in retributive donations in yet another current and relevant context (e.g., antisemitism). Wrongdoing understood as volitional (vs. non-volitional) is taken as more (vs. less) reflective of an individual's moral character, increasing negative moral judgments and a subsequent desire to punish, which, in turn, increases the likelihood of making a retributive donation to a charity (H1a, H2a-b). In this study, we also rule out identity threat as an alternative explanation of our observed pattern of results. Finally, we directly replicate our observed serial mediation process in a follow-up pre-registered study that did not specifically recruit Jewish participants (Web Appendix F).

Study 5: Other-Condemning Moral Emotions and Retributive Donations

Thus far, we have accumulated qualitative and quantitative support for the operation of retributive processes and motives in prosocial behavior. In Study 5, we provide additional process support for our retribution account by examining the role of other-condemning moral emotions. Specifically, we sought to identify how other-condemning moral emotions influence the success of retributive donation appeals, while also demonstrating their relation to volitional wrongdoing and negative moral judgments. Prior research has identified the motivating role of positive emotions—such as love (Cavanaugh, Bettman, and Luce 2015b)—on donation. In contrast, we

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predicted that other-condemning moral emotions such as contempt, anger, and disgust will be salient and critical in transmitting the effect of negative moral judgments on retributive donation.

Method

Prolific Academic participants (N = 1200, ages 18-80, $M_{age} = 41.65$, 50.00% female) completed this study in exchange for financial payment and were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2-factor (wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) between-participants design. One participant failed to complete the study in its entirety and was therefore excluded. Our data collection and analysis plan were pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/t5kr-j9q7.pdf>. The stimuli, manipulations, and retributive donation DV from Study 3 were used. To assess other-condemning moral emotions, participants rated the extent to which the story made them feel anger, contempt or disgust using a 9-item, 7-point scale (1 = “Strongly disagree” to 7 = “Strongly agree”; $\alpha = .971$; adapted from Karppinen, King, and Russell 2023).

Results

We first observed a main effect of our manipulation, such that participants were more likely to make a retributive donation when the professor’s wrongdoing was voluntary ($M = 2.67$) versus accidental ($M = 1.83$; $t(1109.2) = 8.40$, $p < .001$). Consistent with the results of Study 4, we also observed a significant indirect effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation through negative moral judgments (PROCESS Model 4; $\beta = 1.03$, $SE = .074$, $CI_{95\%} : .887, 1.179$).

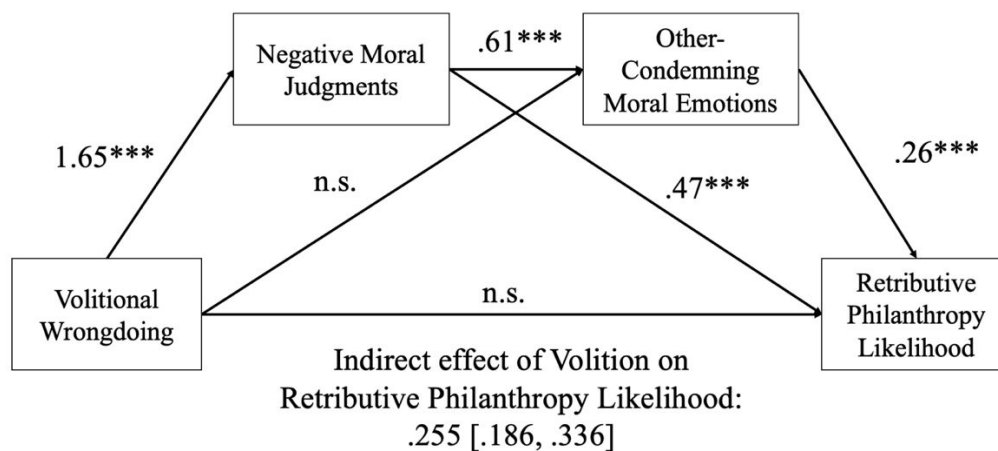
We next tested whether participants’ other-condemning moral emotions mediated the effect of negative moral judgments on retributive donation (PROCESS Model 6, 10,000 resamples). We found that negative moral judgments positively predicted increased other-condemning moral emotions ($\beta = .605$, $SE = .025$, $CI_{95\%} : .557, .654$, $t(1196) = 24.60$, $p < .001$), which in turn predicted higher likelihood of making a retributive donation ($\beta = .256$, $SE = .029$, $CI_{95\%} : .200, .312$, $t(1195) = 8.94$, $p < .001$). We did not observe a significant direct effect of volitional wrongdoing on other-condemning moral emotions. The index of serial mediation

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excluded zero ($\beta = .255$, $SE = .039$, $CI_{95}: .186, .336$). Other-condemning moral emotions significantly mediated the relationship between negative moral judgments and donation (see Figure 3).

In several complementary pre-registered PROCESS Model 6 analyses, we estimate the mediating effect of each sub-component of our emotion scale (contempt, anger, disgust) and find consistent results across each, such that contempt ($\beta = .194$, $SE = .033$, $CI_{95}: .133, .261$), anger ($\beta = .212$, $SE = .033$, $CI_{95}: .152, .279$), and disgust ($\beta = .260$, $SE = .040$, $CI_{95}: .186, .345$) all significantly mediated the effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation.

Figure 3: Study 5 Results



Discussion

The results of Study 5 support our theorizing that retributive donation, a manifestation of retribution, is related to and explained by other-condemning moral emotions. These results also align with our real-world investigations of retributive philanthropy in Studies 1 and 2, where we observed consistent themes of anger and disgust at perceived wrongdoers.

In the analyses presented, we assume that other-condemning moral emotions follow moral judgments. However, there are other plausible accounts of moral reasoning and emotions that

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propose that moral emotions precede moral judgments (e.g., Haidt 2001). We therefore test alternate specifications of our proposed model where the order of our mediators is reversed and find consistent results (see Web Appendix G).

Study 6: Donor Personalities and Willingness to Make Retributive Donations

In Study 6, we provide additional process support for our retribution account via individual-difference moderation. Specifically, we sought to identify whether certain personality traits known to be more retributive-oriented would be more receptive when retribution was paired with donation. Authoritarianism is a personality trait that is traditionally associated with punishment (Altemeyer 1996) and, therefore, likely to be more amenable to retributive donation.

We operationalize authoritarianism using Costello et al.'s (2022) Left-Wing Authoritarianism (LWA) and Altemeyer's (2007) Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scales. We expect left-wing partisans higher in LWA will be more likely to make retributive donations when presented with a violation of left-wing norms and that right-wing partisans higher in RWA will be more likely to make retributive donations when presented with a violation of right-wing norms. Such results would thus constitute evidence for a general effect of authoritarianism on retributive donation, rather than an effect of merely right wing or left-wing authoritarianism.

Method

Prolific Academic participants ($N = 794$, ages 18-94, $M_{age} = 45.37$, 50.1% female) completed this study in exchange for financial payment and were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2-factor (norm violation: left-wing vs. right-wing) between-participants design. Our data collection and analysis plans were pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/xgb4-sn7c.pdf>. We recruited two independent samples of left-wing and right-wing partisans in two waves on Prolific Academic. Our first wave of recruitment consisted of 400 self-identified Democrats, while our second wave consisted of 400 self-identified Republicans. Six participants

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3 in the second wave failed to complete the study and were thus excluded as per our pre-
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5 registration plan.
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7 All participants first completed one of the two authoritarianism scales. Democrats
8 completed the LWA scale, whereas Republicans completed the RWA scale. Participants were
9 then randomly assigned to read one of two stories that either violated left-wing or right-wing
10 norms. Participants in the left-wing norm violation condition read the same story used in Studies
11 3 and 5 of a professor using the N-word in front of students. Participants in the right-wing norm
12 violation condition read an adapted version of this story, wherein a professor exposes students to
13 “transgender ideology”, which is a contemporary social issue many right-wing media outlets
14 cover. The political valence of these two stories was pre-tested (Web Appendix H). Participants
15 then completed a brief filler task. Consistent with Studies 3 and 5, participants were then offered
16 a retributive donation option that promised to send letters to the professor’s school calling for
17 their dismissal for every donation received. Participants then rated their willingness to donate on
18 a 1—7 scale. See Web Appendix C for all stimuli and measures.
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31 **Results**

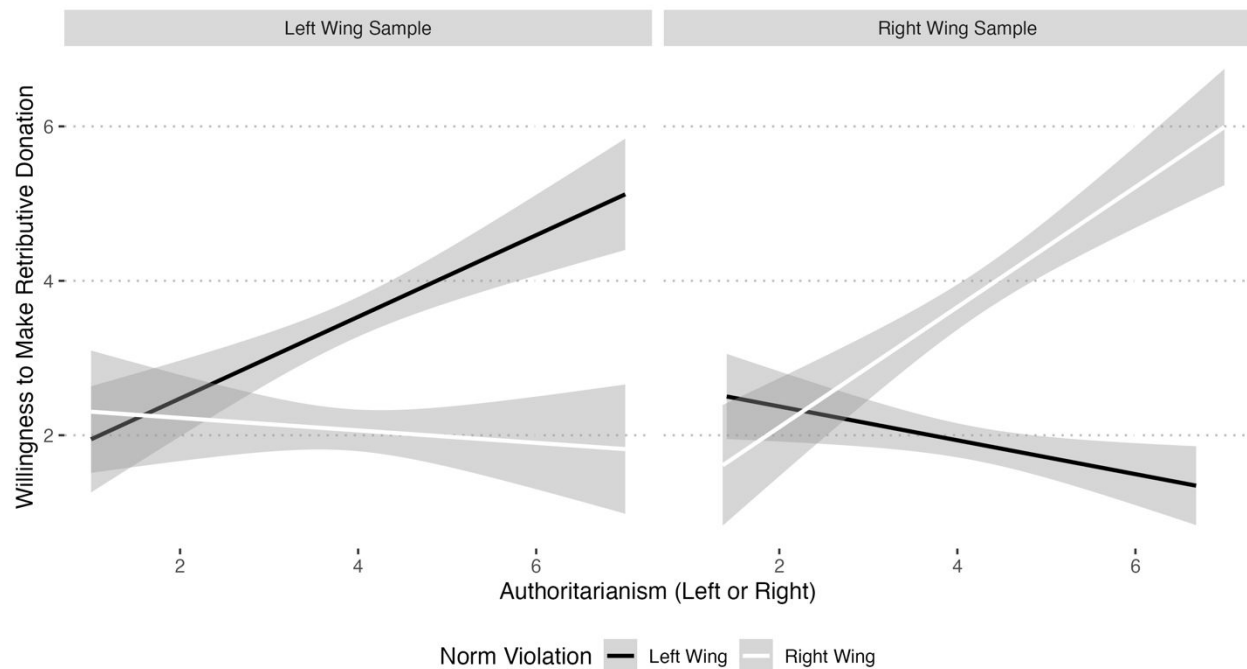
32
33 We first observed a significant main effect of ideological congruency in both samples on
34 participants’ willingness to make a retributive donation. Specifically, Democrats were more
35 willing to donate when they read about a left-wing norm violation ($M_{\text{Donation}} = 3.49$) relative to a
36 right-wing norm violation ($M_{\text{Donation}} = 2.07$; $t(397.97) = 7.37, p < .001$), and Republicans were
37 more willing to donate when they read about a right-wing norm violation ($M_{\text{Donation}} = 3.85$)
38 relative to a left-wing norm violation ($M_{\text{Donation}} = 1.90$; $t(355) = 10.08, p < .001$).
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46 Next, we fit two complementary linear regression models with an interaction term
47 between each sample’s relevant authoritarianism scale and our norm violation manipulation. In
48 both models, as predicted, we observed a significant and positive interaction between
49 authoritarianism and norm violation. Higher authoritarianism resulted in increased willingness to
50 make retributive donations when participants were exposed to an ideologically congruent norm
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violation. Specifically, Democrats higher in LWA were more likely to make a retributive donation when they read about a left-wing norm violation ($\beta = .610$, $SE = .171$, $t(396) = 3.58$, $p < .001$). Republicans higher in RWA were more likely to make a retributive donation when they read about a right-wing norm violation ($\beta = .997$, $SE = .158$, $t(390) = 6.33$, $p < .001$; Figure 4).

Figure 4



Discussion

The results of Study 6 indicate that authoritarianism is positively associated with prosocial behavior (H3) which, to our knowledge, has not been shown in the prosocial behavior literature. This theoretical distinction is important, because authoritarianism is the conceptual opposite of many traits previously found to positively predict prosocial behavior. Whereas past work has focused on positive traits like *agreeableness* (Caprara et al. 2012), *benevolence* (Caprara and Steca 2007), and *empathy* (Alessandri et al. 2009), we found evidence that a trait associated with *disagreeableness* and *antagonism* (Costello et al. 2022) positively influences prosocial behavior.

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We conceptually replicate these results and address potential limitations of this study across several follow-up studies in our supplementary Web Appendix. In Supplementary Study 2 (Web Appendix I), we replicate a similar interaction between LWA and volitional wrongdoing but using an incentive-compatible choice. We find that as LWA increases and volitional wrongdoing is present, donors shift from making normal donations to making retributive donations. Additionally, in Supplementary Study 2 (Web Appendix I), we rule out status-seeking aggression as an alternative explanation for the influence of authoritarianism on retributive donations. In Supplementary Study 3 (Web Appendix J), we show that individuals higher in LWA form stronger negative moral judgments of volitional wrongdoers, and thus express greater intentions to make retributive donations. Finally, in both Supplementary Studies 3 (Web Appendix J) and 4 (Web Appendix K), we also find that neither reactance nor moral identity interacts with the retributive psychological processes that we explore in this work.

In summary, Study 6 focused on traits of individuals that predisposed them to making retributive donations, which again satisfies our goal of demonstrating that prosocial behaviors can be motivated by retribution. We next investigate features of appeals that are conducive to retributive donations to provide substantive insights to charitable organizations.

Study 7: Efficacy at Punishment and Willingness to Make Retributive Donations

In Study 7, we examine a boundary condition consistent with our retribution account. Specifically, we examine the impact of punishment efficacy on retributive philanthropy. Past work has identified efficacy (and consumers' perceptions of efficacy) as a driver of donations (Sharma and Morwitz 2016). However, "efficacy" has traditionally been conceptualized as efficacy at helping others, often operationalized through minimization of overhead costs (Gneezy et al. 2014). With retributive philanthropy, we propose that efficacy considerations will shift from a focus on "helping" to *punishing* others and will be conditional on consumers forming negative moral judgments of a wrongdoer. In this study, we manipulate volitional wrongdoing using

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stimuli from Study 3 and measure negative moral judgments. Additionally, we manipulate donation efficacy at punishing a wrongdoer. We expect that willingness to make a retributive donation will significantly increase when participants have strong negative moral judgments of volitional wrongdoing and when presented with an effective (vs. ineffective) avenue for retributive donation. Finally, our focus on efficacy enables us to demonstrate that *actual* (vs. symbolic) punishment matters to retributive donors.

Method

Prolific Academic participants ($N = 1197$, ages 18-79, $M_{age} = 40.91$, 50.04% female) completed this study for payment and were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2 (wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) \times 2 (punishment efficacy: high vs. low) between-participants design. Our data collection and analysis plans were pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/665w-mjpg.pdf>.

Participants were presented with the same volition manipulation and measures used in Study 3. Participants were then informed that a local charity was offering a retributive benefit—letters sent to the professor’s dean calling for his dismissal—in exchange for donations. Efficacy was manipulated by informing participants that the dean stated he 1) does not consider public comments when making hiring or firing decisions (ineffective), or 2) that the public comments are making the dean reconsider the professor’s employment (effective). Participants then rated their likelihood of donating to the charity (1-7).

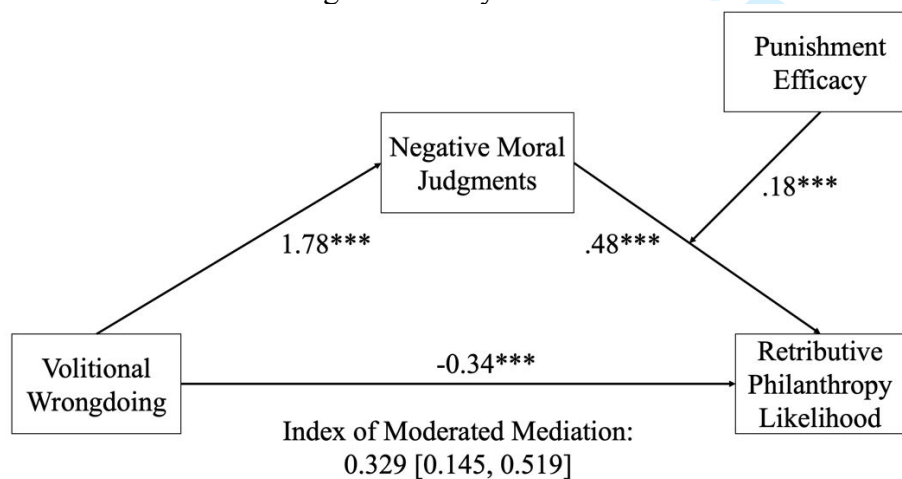
Results

We first observed a significant difference between our volitional and non-volitional wrongdoing conditions, such that participants expressed a greater likelihood of making a retributive donation when the professor’s use of a racial slur was framed as volitional ($M = 2.62$) versus non-volitional ($M = 1.92$; $t(1116.9) = 6.88$, $p < .001$).

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We next used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS Model 14 (10,000 resamples) to test the effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation likelihood through negative moral judgments and conditional on punishment efficacy (Figure 5). First, we observed an overall main effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation likelihood through negative moral judgments and conditional on punishment efficacy (Figure 5). First, we observed an overall main effect of volitional wrongdoing on negative moral judgments ($\beta = 1.782$, $SE = 0.094$, $CI_{95}: 1.597, 1.966$, $t(1195) = 18.94$, $p < .001$). Next, we examined the interactive effect of negative moral judgments (measured) and punishment efficacy on the likelihood of retributive donation. First, controlling for the effect of volitional wrongdoing, we observed direct effects of both negative moral judgment ($\beta = 0.485$, $SE = 0.034$, $CI_{95}: 0.417, 0.552$, $t(1192) = 14.16$, $p < .001$) and punishment efficacy ($\beta = -0.391$, $SE = 0.168$, $CI_{95}: -0.722, -0.061$, $t(1192) = -2.32$, $p = .020$). Importantly, as predicted and in line with our pre-registration analysis plan, we observed a significant interaction between negative moral judgments and punishment efficacy ($\beta = 0.184$, $SE = 0.046$, $CI_{95}: 0.095, 0.274$, $t(1192) = 4.04$, $p < .001$). Specifically, the effect of negative moral judgments on donation was strongest when punishment efficacy was high ($\beta = 0.669$, $SE = 0.035$, $CI_{95}: 0.600, 0.738$, $t(1192) = 19.11$, $p < .001$) versus low ($\beta = 0.485$, $SE = 0.034$, $CI_{95}: 0.417, 0.552$, $t(1192) = 14.16$, $p < .001$). The index of moderated mediation excluded zero (index = 0.329, $SE = 0.096$, $CI_{95}: 0.145, 0.519$), indicating that efficacy does influence willingness to make retributive donations.

Figure 5: Study 7 Results



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Discussion

The results of Study 7 demonstrate that if consumers believe that their retributive actions will effectively deliver punishment, they are more willing to make retributive donations, conditional on having rendered negative moral judgment of a volitional wrongdoer (H4). These results comport with past findings that prosocial behavior is partially driven by donors' desire to have material impact (White et al. 2019) but differs from prior theory in that the efficacy is related to punishing rather than helping. Importantly, the results of this study align with findings from our qualitative study: retributive donors desire for their donations to have an impact, with the desired impact being punishment (vs. helping). Additionally, these results suggest that managers would be better served by proactively highlighting the efficacy of punishment when it is high or highlighting the blameworthiness of the wrongdoer instead when it is low.

The results of Study 7 demonstrate that the unique benefit of retributive philanthropy—the possibility of enacting actual, effective punishment—influences willingness to donate.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Together, our twelve primary and supplementary studies employ multiple methods—qualitative, observational, and experimental—to explore the emerging phenomenon of retributive philanthropy and offer convergent evidence for its conceptual uniqueness relative to charitable giving motivated by altruism and self-interest. Studies 1 and 2 demonstrated the existence and conceptually distinct nature of retributive philanthropy as a form of donation characterized by different motives, emotions, and behaviors than self-interested or altruistic donations. Studies 3 and 4 provide strong evidence for the causal effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation and its downstream impact on (and the necessity of) negative moral judgments and desire to punish. Study 5 shows that other-condemning moral emotions also play a mechanistic role in retributive donations, such that volitional wrongdoing leads to increased contempt, anger,

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2
3 and disgust. Studies 6 and 7 demonstrate two moderators of this process that lend support for our
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5 retribution account—authoritarian personalities and efficacy at punishing others. To summarize,
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7 we found that willingness to make retributive donations was elevated when participants
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9 (especially those with authoritarian personalities) had negative moral judgments of a volitional
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11 wrongdoer, desired to punish them, and were presented with an effective means of enacting
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13 retribution via their donation. We demonstrated these effects in a variety of contexts (e.g.,
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15 antisemitism, racism, war) and using a variety of measures (e.g., donation likelihood, real
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17 donations, choice between charities).
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Theoretical Contributions

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24 Our work is the first to empirically and theoretically explore how retribution can encourage
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26 donations. Our findings should be of theoretical interest to researchers, as they expand the range
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28 of situations, motives, and personalities known to influence prosocial behavior. Retributive
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30 philanthropy is distinct, because it is uniquely driven by negative moral judgments, other-
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32 condemning moral emotions, and a desire to punish wrongdoers. Past work has linked moral
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34 emotions and values with donation behaviors but has largely focused on positive emotions and
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36 values like love, compassion, and gratitude (Bartlett and DeSteno 2006; Cavanaugh et al. 2015;
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38 Goenka and van Osselaer 2019). Future work could investigate how donors reconcile their mixed
39
40 motives of wanting to punish a wrongdoer and support valuable causes, as well as how reduced
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42 perceptions of personal risk interact with prior work on taboo trade-offs (Tetlock et al. 2000).
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47 In a recent editorial calling for research into the “dirty underbelly” of prosocial behavior,
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49 Labroo and Goldsmith (2021) note that extant literature has principally considered altruistic and
50
51 self-interested motives for prosocial behavior. Neglected, however, are interpersonal motives for
52
53 prosocial behavior: how do the relationships consumers have with others influence their
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55 behavior? Prior work suggests that *positive* interpersonal interactions drive contributions (Sepelri
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2
3 et al. 2021) and typically in dyadic donor-beneficiary relationships or triadic donor-fundraiser-
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5 beneficiary relationships (Chapman et al. 2022). By contrast, we introduce volitional wrongdoers
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7 as a fourth agent whose *negative* relationship with a donor (evidenced by negative moral
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9 judgments and desire to punish) in conjunction with other traditional features of donor-
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11 organization relationships like efficacy perceptions, can result in increased donation behavior.
12
13 Thus, in our research we answer Labroo and Goldsmith's (2021) call and start the conversation on
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15 how and why “darker” motives and relationships may lead to prosocial actions.
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17

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19 We also contribute to theory on the type of situations that are conducive to prosocial
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21 behavior. We demonstrate that the volition of a wrongdoer—something previously not considered
22
23 in the prosocial literature—has a causal effect on willingness to make retributive donations.
24
25 Future work could explore how specific types of wrongdoing alter retributive donor preferences.
26
27 For example, Goenka and van Osselaer (2019) demonstrated that matching positive emotions to
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29 positive moral foundations (e.g., compassion and care, gratitude and fairness) can lead to more
30
31 and greater donations. A similar effect may be observed in the opposite direction—perhaps
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33 retributive appeals referencing purity (or lack thereof) may be more effective for converting
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35 donors experiencing disgust or other purity-related moral emotions (Wheatley and Haidt 2005).
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39 Finally, we contribute to current theorizing on the link between efficacy and donations.
40
41 Contemporary research has stressed the effect of efficacy at helping others on donations (Dai and
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43 Zhang 2019; Gneezy et al. 2014; MacAskill 2016; Saeri et al. 2022; Sharma and Morwitz 2016;
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45 White et al. 2019). By contrast, our work suggests that charitable efficacy at punishing others
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47 positively predicts retributive donations. These findings encourage a broader view of efficacy as
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49 it pertains to donation behavior. Whereas current frameworks such as SHIFT (White et al. 2019)
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51 identify efficacy as related to prosocial outcomes, the integration of our work on retributive
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53 philanthropy suggests it may be better understood as “efficacy at achieving consumers’ goals.”
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Substantive Contributions and Managerial Implications

Our research offers important guidance for charitable organizations seeking to raise funds through donation. Though past work has outlined a variety of factors and motivations leading to donations (Batson and Powell 2003; Labroo and Goldsmith 2021; White et al. 2019), our work is the first to highlight retribution as a motivation for giving. In doing so, we extend the range of donation appeals charities can make. Specifically, in situations amenable to retribution—where there is a volitional wrongdoer the charity wishes to combat—retributive appeals for donations may help satisfy donors' desires to punish the wrongdoer and result in greater funding for the charity, both by causing larger donations and attracting new donors. This may be of particular interest to charities that are currently facing novel threats to abortion rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and other civil rights. For example, in response to the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* protections for abortion in America, organizations like Planned Parenthood may be able to solicit further funds by offering donation benefits like sending hostile messages to Supreme Court justices or anti-choice politicians. Additionally, such appeals may be more effective when the wrongdoing is framed as volitional (e.g., Studies 3, 4, 5) and the efficacy of retributive efforts (Study 7) are made salient and when a charity's target demographic is more authoritarian (Study 6).

Our findings also contribute to research on cancel culture, which has seen a surge in interest in academic and popular works (e.g., Tosi and Warmke 2016; Lukianoff and Schlott 2023). Indeed, some instances of retributive philanthropy could be considered manifestations of cancel culture, though the two concepts are conceptually distinct as many would-be cancellers do not care about the degree to which wrongdoers are in control of their actions (Lukianoff and Schlott 2023). Our work nevertheless demonstrates that cancellations can be leveraged to result in greater funding for valuable social causes, particularly in cases where consumers have strong beliefs as to the volitional nature of a wrongdoing (such as in the case of Kanye West). Future

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research should explore how charities can best leverage cancellation events and channel cancellers' energy to more productive ends.

Moreover, future research could seek to better understand why donation is a preferred avenue for retribution than more traditional means. We explored this question in an additional study (Web Appendix L) and reasoned that the prosocial elements of retributive philanthropy operate as a *fig leaf* that makes the aggressive elements (i.e., punishing others) less professionally, legally, and socially risky, thus leading consumers to prefer retributive donations over other means of enacting retribution.

Finally, future research can explore the long-term benefits (or costs) of charities implementing retributive appeals. Some work suggests charities with a “combative orientation” may suffer in the long run relative to less combative charities (Botner et al. 2015), and preliminary work on related phenomena like “spite philanthropy” (Witkowski 2021) suggests that spite-oriented campaigns tend to be short-lived. Future research could therefore explore how and why the darker motives inherent to retributive philanthropy interact with more traditional self-interested or altruistic motives. Specifically, future researchers could investigate how donors rationalize wanting to both help and punish others simultaneously, and how the positive elements of retributive philanthropy may provide social or moral license for the darker elements.

In conclusion, we introduce a phenomenon that represents a significant departure from prior accounts of prosocial behavior. Prior research has historically explored how positive emotions or traits drive donation behavior. However, just as love, compassion for others, and a desire to help those in need are fundamental elements of the human experience, so too are hatred, rage at injustice, and a desire to punish wrongdoers. Addressing the most pressing issues of our time without leveraging the latter is like fighting with one hand tied behind one's back. We hope

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that our work helps researchers refine their models of what drives donation behavior and provides charitable organizations with more tools with which to combat injustice wherever it may be.

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Web Appendix¹

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¹ Disclaimer: These materials have been supplied by the authors to aid in the understanding of their paper. The AMA is sharing these materials at the request of the authors.

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Table W1: Overview of Web Appendix Studies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design: 2 (Wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) ▪ DV: Likelihood of Retributive Donation ▪ Focal Test: Mediation with Negative Moral Judgments and Desire to Punish (Pre-registered) ▪ Focal result: index of serial mediation = .044, SE = 0.009, 95% CI: .028, .061 						
Supplementary Study 1 <i>Study 4 Follow-Up</i>							
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;"></th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Volitional</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Non-volitional</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Donation Likelihood</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3.21</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.93</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Volitional	Non-volitional	Donation Likelihood	3.21	2.93
	Volitional	Non-volitional					
Donation Likelihood	3.21	2.93					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design: 2 (Wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x continuous (Left-Wing Authoritarianism) ▪ DV: Choice of Retributive Charity ▪ Focal Test: Multinomial logistic regression on choice between charities and not donating ▪ Focal result: Volitional wrongdoing x LWA = 0.84, 95% CI: 0.15, 1.52, $p = .017$ 						
Supplementary Study 2 <i>Authoritarianism Follow-Up Study</i>							
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;"></th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Volitional</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Non-volitional</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Retributive Charity Choice</td> <td style="text-align: center;">27.03%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">16.39%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Volitional	Non-volitional	Retributive Charity Choice	27.03%	16.39%
	Volitional	Non-volitional					
Retributive Charity Choice	27.03%	16.39%					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design: 2 (Wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x Continuous (LWA, Reactance, Moral Identity) ▪ DV: Likelihood of Retributive Donation ▪ Focal Test: Mediation with Negative Moral Judgments (Pre-registered) ▪ Focal result: index of moderated mediation (LWA) = .072, SE = .029, 95% CI: .016, .128 						
Supplementary Study 3 <i>Personality Follow-up Study</i>							
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;"></th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Volitional</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Non-volitional</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Donation Likelihood</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.99</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.44</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Volitional	Non-volitional	Donation Likelihood	2.99	2.44
	Volitional	Non-volitional					
Donation Likelihood	2.99	2.44					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design: 2 (Wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x Continuous (Reactance, Moral Identity) ▪ DV: Likelihood of Retributive Donation ▪ Focal Test: Mediation with Negative Moral Judgments (Pre-registered) ▪ Focal result: Index of mediation = 0.138, SE = .043, 95% CI: .059, .228 						
Supplementary Study 4 <i>Reactance and Moral Identity Follow-Up Study</i>							
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;"></th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Charity</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">For-Profit</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Donation Likelihood</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3.36</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3.35</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Charity	For-Profit	Donation Likelihood	3.36	3.35
	Charity	For-Profit					
Donation Likelihood	3.36	3.35					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design: 2 (Retributive option: for-profit payment vs. non-profit donation) ▪ DV: Likelihood of Retributive Donation ▪ Focal Test: Mediation with Perceived Personal Risk (Pre-registered) ▪ Focal result: index of mediation = .161, SE = .043, 95% CI: .102, .572 						
Supplementary Study 5 <i>Retributive Donation vs. For-Profit Payment for Retribution</i>							
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;"></th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Volitional</th> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Non-volitional</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Donation Likelihood</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.36</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1.86</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Volitional	Non-volitional	Donation Likelihood	2.36	1.86
	Volitional	Non-volitional					
Donation Likelihood	2.36	1.86					

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Web Appendix B: Qualitative Interview Recruitment and Guide

Recruitment

The recruitment message was as follows:

“Are you interested in participating in a real scientific study? We’re currently recruiting participants on TikTok for a study that we plan to run over the next couple of months. We’re studying a phenomenon we call retributive philanthropy, or when people make donations in order to punish someone else. An example might be when people donated to Planned Parenthood in Mike Pence’s name to get back at him for his opposition to abortion rights, or if a teen donates to the Trevor Project to get back at parents who don’t accept their sexuality. If you’ve made a donation like this and you’re interested in sharing your experience, please go to the link in my bio and that will take you to a google form with some more information.”

Interview Guide

The interview guide used for this qualitative study was as follows:

1. Please tell me a bit about yourself
 - What region do you live in?
 - What’s your educational background?
 - What’s been your work history?
2. Please tell me about your general experiences with giving to charity
 - Do you donate to charity often?
 - When you donate, do you donate small amounts or large amounts?
 - What generally motivates you to give to charity?
 - How do you choose which charities to donate to?
 - How does donating to charity typically make you feel?
3. We specifically recruited participants who have had experience making what might be called a “retributive donation.” Could you tell me about that experience?
 - What’s the story behind you making that donation?
 - What motivated you to make that donation?
 - How did it feel to make that donation?
 - Would you make a similar donation in the future?
 - Did you donate more or less than you usually do?
 - Would you describe yourself as a petty or vengeful person?
4. Some charities are interested in attracting people who make retributive donations. Do you think this is a good idea for them to do?

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Web Appendix C: Stimuli and Measures (All Studies)

Study 3

Stimuli

Volitional Wrongdoing Present Condition

A professor at the University of Western Kentucky is currently being protested by several student groups for intentionally saying an anti-Black slur.

Late last month, John Gerber, the professor, was teaching a lesson on “friendly words” in English – think “pal,” “buddy” or “homie” in English – in his master’s level course on communication for management.

“Using friendly words can help bring the audience in,” Gerber said, according to a recording of one of the Zoom course sections and a transcription that appeared next to him on screen. Gerber then said the N-word as an example of a friendly word used in Black communities.

Gerber, who has worked in Black communities but is not himself Black, did not warn students that he would be saying the N-word. And some or all of the Black students across three sections of the course were offended by what they’d heard. So they wrote a letter to the dean of the Johnston School of Business, Kyle Karminsky, among others, describing Gerber as insensitive and incapable of teaching the three week intensive communications course.

“What we heard in class was a hurtful word with tremendous implications for the Black community,” wrote the students, who identified themselves as Black MBA Candidates c/o 2022. “There are many different ways to communicate that this word is used in Black communities, but Professor Gerber’s decision to say the word is hurtful and unacceptable to our University of Western Kentucky community. The negligence and disregard displayed by our professor was very clear in today’s class.”

The students said some of them had voiced their concern to Gerber during his lecture, but that he’d deliberately used the word in following class sections anyway. They also said he justified his use of the anti-Black slur by claiming that “the purpose of university is to make you uncomfortable”, and that he “hoped

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[his] students are made uncomfortable in every class, because that's the only way we can grow as communicators.”

Volitional Wrongdoing Absent Condition

A professor at the University of Western Kentucky is currently being protested by several student groups for saying a Chinese word that sounds like an anti-black slur.

Late last month, John Gerber, the professor, was teaching a lesson on “filler words” in other languages – think “err,” “um” or “like” in English – in his master's-level course on communication for management.

“Taking a break between ideas can help bring the audience in,” Gerber said, according to a recording of one of the Zoom course sections and a transcription that appeared next to him on screen. “In China,” for instance, he continued, “the common pause word is ‘that that that.’ So in China it might be ne ga, ne ga, ne ga.”

Gerber, who has worked in China but is not a scholar of Chinese, did not warn students that ne ga, (alternatively spelled nà ge, or neige) sounds something like the N-word – which it does. And some or all of the Black students across three sections of the course were offended by what they'd heard. So they wrote a letter to the dean of the Johnston School of Business, Kyle Karminsky, among others, describing Gerber as insensitive and incapable of teaching the three-week intensive communications course.

“The way we heard it in class was indicative of a much more hurtful word with tremendous implications for the Black community,” wrote the students, who identified themselves as Black MBA Candidates c/o 2022. “There are over 10,000 characters in the Chinese written language and to use this phrase, a clear synonym with this derogatory N-Word term, is hurtful and unacceptable to our University of Western Kentucky community. The negligence and disregard displayed by our professor was very clear in today's class.”

The students said some of them had voiced their concern to Gerber during his lecture, but that he'd used the word in following class sections anyway with proper pronunciation. Fellow Chinese students “confirmed that Professor Gerber properly pronounced the word in class.”

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*Measures***DV**

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Given the nature of this study, you will be awarded an additional \$1 as bonus compensation for your time.

Retributive Option Present Condition:

Participants were shown the following options:

You can either **keep this bonus for yourself**.

OR **donate it** to one of two Kentucky non-profits raising funds in response to the situation you read about in this study.

The **Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance** promises to use all funds raised to run a series of anti-racist workshops for students and faculty. For every donation, the organization also promises to send a letter to the university calling for Professor Gerber's dismissal.

The **Western Kentucky Black Students Group** promises to use all funds raised to run a series of anti-racist workshops for students and faculty.

Participants then selected one of three options presented in a horizontal list (order randomized): 1) Keep my bonus, 2) donate to the Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance, or 3) donate to the Western Kentucky Black Students Group. Participants who selected "keep my donation" were given a \$1 coin by a supervising research assistant.

Retributive Option Absent Condition:

Participants were shown the following options:

You can either **keep this bonus for yourself**.

OR **donate it** to one of two Kentucky non-profits raising funds in response to the situation you read about in this study.

The **Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance** promises to use all funds raised to run a series of anti-racist workshops for students and faculty.

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The **Western Kentucky Black Students Group** promises to use all funds raised to run a series of anti-racist workshops for students and faculty.

Participants then selected one of three options presented in a horizontal list (order randomized): 1) Keep my bonus, 2) donate to the Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance, or 3) donate to the Western Kentucky Black Students Group. Participants who selected “keep my donation” were given a \$1 coin by a supervising research assistant.

Peer Review Version

Study 4***Stimuli*****Volitional Wrongdoing Present Condition****No, Ye's mental health does not excuse antisemitism, experts say**

It's hard to ignore Ye's string of controversies. In the past few days, the critically acclaimed rapper has been making headlines for wearing a "White Lives Matter" T-shirt at Paris Fashion Week, bullying Vogue fashion editor Gabriella Karefa Johnson, and, most recently, sharing antisemitic statements before being locked out of his social media accounts.

The rapper, also known by his given name Kanye West, has opened up about his bipolar disorder diagnosis, though we don't know what role it is playing in his recent behaviors. In some cases, it's true that suffering from a manic episode can influence "aberrant behavior" that isn't indicative of one's general moral values. On the flip side, it can also expose suppressed personal beliefs.

"We want to recognize that this person may have their own very strong beliefs on religion or politics, and we want to call that out as being separate from the mental health diagnosis," says Carla Manly, a clinical psychologist and author of "Joy from Fear."

"There are many people who don't have mental health issues who are racist and bigoted. And there are people with mental health issues who are not racist or bigoted. We want to see those as two very different issues." In short, mental illness does not excuse racism, bigotry or misogyny.

Psychologists say unmanaged mental health conditions can cause people to act in seemingly uncharacteristic ways. But mental illness and bigotry are two distinct problems requiring two distinct solutions.

Whether or not he is suffering from an episode, his words cause irreparable harm. The Anti-Defamation League, which tracks antisemitic behavior nationwide, reported 2,717 incidents in 2021 – a 34% increase from the year prior. Celebrities like Jamie Lee Curtis and Sarah Silverman have condemned Ye for his hateful message.

"The holiest day in Judaism was last week. Words matter. A threat to Jewish people ended once in a genocide. Your words hurt and incite violence. You are a father. Please stop," Curtis tweeted Sunday.

We should hold people accountable for their bad behavior.

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4 With high-profile stars like Ye, whose words have a profound influence on his
5 young, impressionable fans, hateful rhetoric can be particularly damaging. But as
6 spectators who don't know him personally, the best thing we can do is to stop
7 rewarding his problematic behavior with attention.
8

9 This doesn't mean ignoring the severity of Ye's conduct. Rather "not sharing his
10 messages, not endorsing them, not repeating them – and rejecting them firmly
11 with the gentle suggestion (especially by those closest to him) that he is not his
12 best self right now and could use some kind of support to move away from this
13 toxic behavior," she suggests.
14
15

Volitional Wrongdoing Absent Condition

Ye's mental health likely caused antisemitism, experts say

16
17
18
19
20
21 It's hard to ignore Ye's string of controversies. In the past few days, the critically
22 acclaimed rapper has been making headlines for wearing a "White Lives Matter"
23 T-shirt at Paris Fashion Week, bullying Vogue fashion editor Gabriella Karefa
24 Johnson, and, most recently, sharing antisemitic statements before being locked
25 out of his social media accounts.
26

27 The rapper, also known by his given name Kanye West, has opened up about his
28 bipolar disorder diagnosis, which may play a role in his recent behaviors.
29 Suffering from a manic episode can often influence "aberrant behavior" that isn't
30 indicative of one's general moral values.
31

32 "We want to recognize that this person may have their own very strong beliefs on
33 religion or politics, and that their mental health may lead them to acting in ways
34 contrary to those beliefs during a manic episode," says Carla Manly, a clinical
35 psychologist and author of "Joy from Fear."
36

37 "There are many people who don't have mental health issues who are racist and
38 bigoted. And there are people who are not racist or bigoted but experiencing
39 mental health issues that make them act badly. We want to see those as two very
40 different issues." In short, mental illness could cause racism, bigotry, or
41 misogyny.
42
43

44 Psychologists say unmanaged mental health conditions can cause people to act in
45 seemingly uncharacteristic ways, which lead them to behave in a seemingly
46 bigoted manner.
47

48 Whether or not he is suffering from an episode, his words cause irreparable harm.
49 The Anti-Defamation League, which tracks antisemitic behavior nationwide,
50 reported 2,717 incidents in 2021 – a 34% increase from the year prior. Celebrities
51
52
53

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like Jamie Lee Curtis and Sarah Silverman have condemned Ye for his hateful message.

“The holiest day in Judaism was last week. Words matter. A threat to Jewish people ended once in a genocide. Your words hurt and incite violence. You are a father. Please stop,” Curtis tweeted Sunday.

We should show compassion while helping those suffering mental illness get the treatment they need.

With high-profile stars like Ye, whose words have a profound influence on his young, impressionable fans, hateful rhetoric can be “particularly damaging,” Bonior warns. But as spectators who don’t know him personally, the best thing we can do is to stop rewarding his problematic behavior with attention.

This doesn’t mean ignoring the severity of Ye’s conduct. Rather “not sharing his messages, not endorsing them, not repeating them – and rejecting them firmly with the gentle suggestion (especially by those closest to him) that he is not his best self right now and could use some kind of support to move away from this toxic behavior,” she suggests.

Measures

Negative Moral Judgments:

Participants rated their agreement (1—7; 1 = “Strongly disagree”, 7 = “Strongly agree”) with the following statements:

- I believe X was Antisemitic.
- I believe X intended to be Antisemitic.
- I blame X for being Antisemitic.

Desire to Punish:

Participants rated their agreement (1—7; 1 = “Strongly disagree”, 7 = “Strongly agree”) with the following statements:

- I would like to punish X.
- I have the impulse to attack X.
- I have the urge to insult X.
- I have the urge to say something nasty to X.

DV

Participants read the following information about a retributive donation campaign:

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The Anti-Defamation League, a prominent Jewish organization, is currently soliciting donations to fight Kanye's antisemitism.

All donations will go towards pressuring companies with sponsorship relationships with Kanye to cut ties, and financially punish Kanye for his behavior.

How likely are you to donate to this cause?

Participants then rated their likelihood of donation on a 1—7 scale (1 = “extremely unlikely”, 7 = “extremely likely”)

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Study 5

Stimuli

Volitional Wrongdoing Present vs. Absent conditions: same as Study 3

Measures

Negative Moral Judgments: Same as Study 4 with context updated.

Negative Emotions: We used a scale measure of Contempt, Anger, and Disgust (CAD) adapted from (Karppinen, King, and Russell 2023). Participants rated the extent to which the stimuli they were presented with made them feel the following emotions:

- Contempt emotions
 - Contempt
 - Disdain
 - Scorn
- Anger
 - Angry
 - Frustrated
 - Furious
- Disgust Emotions
 - Disgusted
 - Repulsed
 - Sickened

DV

Same as Study 3 (Retributive Option Present condition)

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Study 6*Stimuli*

Left-wing story: Same as Study 3

Right-wing story: Same as Post-Test Study 1

Measures

Left-Wing Authoritarianism: We used the following Left Wing Authoritarianism scale, adapted from Costello and Patrick (2021) and Costello et al. (2022) to measure authoritarianism. This scale uses a series of 7-point Likert scale items (1 = “Strongly disagree”; 7 = “Strongly agree”):

- The rich should be stripped of their belongings and status.
- We would be much better off if all of the rich people were at the bottom of the social ladder.
- When the tables are turned on the oppressors at the top of society, I will enjoy watching them suffer the violence that they have inflicted on so many others.
- We need to replace the established order by any means necessary.
- Anyone who opposes gay marriage must be homophobic.
- People who are truly worried about terrorism should shift their focus to the nutjobs on the far-right.
- The “old-fashioned ways” and “old-fashioned values” need to be abolished.
- All political conservatives are fools.
- Classroom discussions should be safe places that protect students from disturbing ideas.
- University authorities are right to ban hateful speech from campus.
- To succeed, a workplace must ensure that its employees feel safe from criticism.
- I am in favor of allowing the government to shut down right-wing internet sites and blogs that promote nutty, hateful positions.
- Getting rid of inequality is more important than protecting the so-called “right” to free speech.

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Right-Wing Authoritarianism: We used the Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale as described by Altemeyer (1996). The scale is comprised of a series of 7-point Likert scale items (1 = "Strongly disagree"; 7 = "Strongly agree"; note that many items are reverse-coded):

- The established authorities generally turn out to be right about things, while the radicals and protestors are usually just "loud mouths" showing off their ignorance.
- Women should have to promise to obey their husbands when they get married.
- Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy the radical new ways and sinfulness that are ruining us.
- Gays and lesbians are just as healthy and moral as anybody else.
- It is always better to trust the judgment of the proper authorities in government and religion than to listen to the noisy rabble-rousers in our society who are trying to create doubt in people's minds.
- Atheists and others who have rebelled against the established religions are no doubt every bit as good and virtuous as those who attend church regularly.
- The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas.
- There is absolutely nothing wrong with nudist camps.
- Our country needs free thinkers who have the courage to defy traditional ways, even if this upsets many people.
- Our country will be destroyed someday if we do not smash the perversions eating away at our moral fiber and traditional beliefs.
- Everyone should have their own lifestyle, religious beliefs, and sexual preferences, even if it makes them different from everyone else.
- The "old-fashioned ways" and the "old-fashioned values" still show the best way to live.
- You have to admire those who challenged the law and the majority's view by protesting for women's abortion rights, for animal rights, or to abolish school prayer.
- What our country really needs is a strong, determined leader who will crush evil, and take us back to our true path.
- Some of the best people in our country are those who are challenging our government, criticizing religion, and ignoring the "normal way things are supposed to be done."
- God's laws about abortion, pornography and marriage must be strictly followed before it is too late, and those who break them must be strongly punished.

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- There are many radical, immoral people in our country today, who are trying to ruin it for their own godless purposes, whom the authorities should put out of action.
- A "woman's place" should be wherever she wants to be. The days when women are submissive to their husbands and social conventions belong strictly in the past.
- Our country will be great if we honor the ways of our forefathers, do what the authorities tell us to do, and get rid of the "rotten apples" who are ruining everything.
- There is no "one right way" to live life; everybody has to create their own way.
- Homosexuals and feminists should be praised for being brave enough to defy "traditional family values."
- This country would work a lot better if certain groups of troublemakers would just shut up and accept their group's traditional place in society.

DV

Left-wing DV: Same as Study 3

Right-wing DV: Participants read the following statement:

An organization is currently raising funds to support the students and parents who feel harmed by John Gerber's speech:

The **Kentucky Concerned Parents Alliance** promises to use all funds raised to support family-friendly education at Kentucky middle schools. **For every donation, the organization also promises to send a letter to the middle school in question calling for John Gerber's dismissal.**

Would you be willing to donate to this organization?

Participants then rated their willingness to donate to the organization on a 1—7. Scale (1 = "Definitely not", 7 = "Definitely yes")

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Study 7

Stimuli

Volitional Wrongdoing Present vs. Absent conditions: same as Study 3.

High Efficacy Condition

Prior to being presented with the DV, Participants in this condition read the following text:

“In response to this incident, the Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance (KASA) is raising funds to support those harmed by the professor's speech. **For each donation, KASA promises to send a letter calling for the professor's dismissal.**”

The University has responded to these efforts:

"The volume of letters we have received is making us seriously reconsider Professor Gerber's future employment at our university.""

Low Efficacy Condition

Prior to being presented with the DV, Participants in this condition read the following text:

“In response to this incident, the Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance (KASA) is raising funds to support those harmed by the professor's speech. **For each donation, KASA promises to send a letter calling for the professor's dismissal.**”

The University has responded to KASA's efforts:

"We do not make employment decisions on the basis of letters from the public.""

Measures

Negative Moral Judgments: Same as Study 4.

DV

Participants were asked to “rate your likelihood of donating to KASA below”, on a 1—7 scale (1 = “extremely unlikely”, 7 = “extremely likely”)

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Post-Test 1 (Method & Results in Web Appendix D)

Stimuli

Volitional Wrongdoing Present vs. Absent manipulation: Same as Study 3

Measures

DV

“I believe Professor Gerber deliberately chose to say the N-word” (1—7; 1 = “Strongly disagree”, 7 = “Strongly agree”)

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Post-Test 2 (Method & Results in Web Appendix E)

Stimuli

Volitional Wrongdoing Present vs. Absent manipulation: Same as Study 4

Measures

DV

“I believe Kanye was in control of his actions when he made antisemitic statements” (1—7;
1 = “Strongly disagree”, 7 = “Strongly agree”)

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Supplementary Study 1 (Method & Results in Web Appendix F)

Stimuli

Volitional Wrongdoing Present vs. Absent manipulation: Same as Study 4

Measures

Negative Moral Judgments: Same as Study 4

Desire to Punish: Same as Study 4

DV

Same as Study 4

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Post-Test Study 1 (Method & Results in Web Appendix H)

Stimuli

Ukraine War: Same as Supplemental Study 5

Professor saying the N-word: Same as Study 3

Professor discussing transgender identity:

A teacher at a Kentucky middle school is currently being protested by several parents rights groups for pushing transgender ideology on students.

Late last month, John Gerber, the teacher, was teaching his students in a sexual education class, which typically provides students with information about practicing safe sex and abstinence.

“Some little girls and boys feel as though they are born in the wrong body and want to change genders,” Gerber said, according to a recording of one of the students. **Gerber then told the middle schoolers that if any of them were questioning their gender identity and considering gender transition, they should come to him if their parents were unsupportive.**

Gerber, who has worked with transgender youth but is not himself transgender, did not warn students or parents that he would be discussing gender ideology in the classroom. And some students and parents were concerned about what they heard Gerber discuss in class. So they wrote a letter to the principal of the school, Kyle Karminsky, describing Gerber as a danger to students for threatening to encourage their gender transitions without parental consent.

“What we heard in class was an existential threat to our children,” wrote the parents, who identified themselves as Concerned Parents for the Protection of our Children. “There are many different ways to introduce children to transgender ideology, but John Gerber's decision to discuss this without consent of us parents is unacceptable to our middle school community. The negligence and disregard displayed by John Gerber was very clear in today’s class.”

The students said some of them had voiced their concern to John Gerber during class, but that he’d **deliberately** made similar statements in following classes anyway. They also said he **justified** his pro-trans statements by claiming that "our mission as teachers is to support our students, whatever their gender is", and that he "hoped some parents are made uncomfortable by the class, because parents scared of their children learning about being transgender are themselves in need of education."

Measures

Identity Threat: Participants completed a measure of identity threat, adapted from Breakwell and Jaspal (2022). Participants were asked to think about the article they just read and to rate their agreement with a series of 7-point Likert scales (1 = “Strongly disagree”; 7 = “Strongly agree”):

- It undermines my sense of self-worth.
- It makes me feel less competent.
- I feel that my identity has changed.
- It makes me feel less unique as a person.

Political Valence: For the Professor saying the N-word and Professor discussing transgender identity stimuli, participants were asked to rate “Which group would you expect to be most upset by the professor saying the N word?”:

- Left-wing voters
- Right-wing voters
- Neither/Both

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Supplementary Study 2 (Method & Results in Web Appendix I)

Stimuli

Same as Study 3

Measures

Left-Wing Authoritarianism: Same as Study 6

Status-Seeking

We used the following Moral Grandstanding Motivations scale to measure status-seeking, adapted from Grubbs et al. (2019), is comprised of a series of 7-point Likert scale items (1 = “Strongly disagree”; 7 = “Strongly agree”). This scale is split into two sub-dimensions: Prestige-strivings and Dominance-strivings.

Prestige-Strivings:

- I hope that my beliefs cause other people to want to share those beliefs.
- I am particularly good at sharing my beliefs.
- My beliefs should be inspiring to others.
- I often share my beliefs in the hope of inspiring people to be more passionate about their beliefs.
- I want to be on the right side of history about moral/political issues.
- Even if expressing my views does not help anyone, it is important that I share them.

Dominance-Strivings:

- When I share my beliefs, I do so to show people who disagree with me that I am better than them.
- I share my beliefs to make people who disagree with me feel bad.
- When I share my beliefs, I do so to shame people who do not share those beliefs.
- When I share my beliefs, I do so in the hope that people different than me will feel ashamed of their beliefs.

DV

Same as Study 3, Retributive Option Present condition.

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Supplementary Study 3 (Method & Results in Web Appendix J)

Stimuli

Volitional Wrongdoing Present vs. Absent conditions: same as Study 3

Measures

Negative Moral Judgments: Same as Study 4 with context updated.

Left-Wing Authoritarianism: Same as Study 6

Moral Identity: We used the following moral identity scale, developed by Aquino and Reed (2003). Participants first read the following prompt:

Listed below are some characteristics that may describe a person: Caring, Compassionate, Fair, Friendly, Generous, Hardworking, Helpful, Honest, Kind

The person with these characteristics could be you or it could be someone else. For a moment, visualize in your mind the kind of person who has these characteristics. Imagine how that person would think, feel, and act. When you have a clear image of what this person would be like, answer the following questions.

The scale then uses a series of 7-point Likert scale items (1 = “Strongly disagree”; 7 = “Strongly agree”):

- It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics.
- Being someone who has these characteristics is an important part of who I am.
- A big part of my emotional well-being is tied up in having these characteristics.
- I would be ashamed to be a person who has these characteristics.
- Having these characteristics is not really important to me.
- Having these characteristics is an important part of my sense of self.
- I strongly desire to have these characteristics.
- I often buy products that communicate the fact that I have these characteristics.
- I often wear clothes that identify me as having these characteristics.
- The types of things I do in my spare time (e.g., hobbies) clearly identify me as having these characteristics.
- The kinds of books and magazines that I read identify me as having these characteristics.

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- The fact that I have these characteristics is communicated to others by my membership in certain organizations.
- I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics.

Reactance: We used the following scale from Hong and Page (1989) to measure participants' reactant personalities. The scale uses a series of 7-point Likert scale items (1 = "Strongly disagree"; 5 = "Strongly agree"):

- Regulations trigger a sense of resistance in me.
- I find contradicting others stimulating.
- When something is prohibited, I usually think "that's exactly what I am going to do."
- The thought of being dependent on others aggravates me.
- I consider advice from others to be an intrusion.
- I become frustrated when I am unable to make free and independent decisions.
- It irritates me when someone points out things which are obvious to me.
- I become angry when my freedom of choice is restricted.
- Advice and recommendations usually induce me to do just the opposite.
- I am contented only when I am acting of my own free will.
- I resist the attempts of others to influence me.
- It makes me angry when another person is held up as a role model for me to follow.
- It disappoints me to see others submitting to society's standards and rules.

DV

Participant then read the following statement:

Two organizations are raising funds in response to the controversy over Professor Gerber's class:

The Western Kentucky Black Students Group promises to use all funds raised to run a series of anti-racist workshops for students and faculty.

The Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance promises to use all funds raised to run a series of anti-racist workshops for students and faculty. **For every donation, the organization also promises to send a letter to the University calling for Professor Gerber to be fired to punish him for his racist behaviour.**

Participants were asked to "Please rate your preference of organization to donate to", on a 1—6 scale, with WKSb (1) and KASA (6) as scale anchors.

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Supplementary Study 4 (Method & Results in Web Appendix K)

Stimuli

Volitional Wrongdoing Present vs. Absent conditions: same as Study 4

Measures

Reactance: Same as Supplementary Study 3

Moral Identity: Same as Supplementary Study 3

DV

Same as Study 4

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Supplementary Study 5 (Method & Results in Web Appendix L)

Stimuli

Initial Story:

Air raid sirens are sounding out across multiple regions in Ukraine again on Tuesday with the emergency services warning of more Russian strikes, a day after a series of Russian attacks left at least 19 people dead and over 100 injured.

Ukrainian officials reported that energy infrastructure in the western city of Lviv had been hit earlier, while the city of Zaporizhzhia in the south was also targeted this morning.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in his nightly address Monday that Ukraine will not be intimidated by the strikes that took place Monday and which targeted various regions including the capital Kyiv. Urgent work was being done to repair and restore power supplies damaged during the strikes, he added.

The multiple attacks by Russia came several days after a blast partially destroyed the Kerch Bridge that links the Russian mainland to Crimea, which Moscow illegally annexed in 2014.

Kyiv has not said whether it was responsible for the attack on the bridge, although the blast was widely seen as humiliating for Moscow and President Vladimir Putin. The leaders of the Group of Seven of the world's most developed economies held an emergency meeting Tuesday to discuss Russia's war in Ukraine. Addressing the meeting via videolink, Zelenskyy asked for more air defense weapons.

Top officials in the United States, European Union and at the United Nations expressed shock and horror Monday over the strikes. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was "shocked" by the attacks, saying through a spokesperson that they represented an escalation of the war.

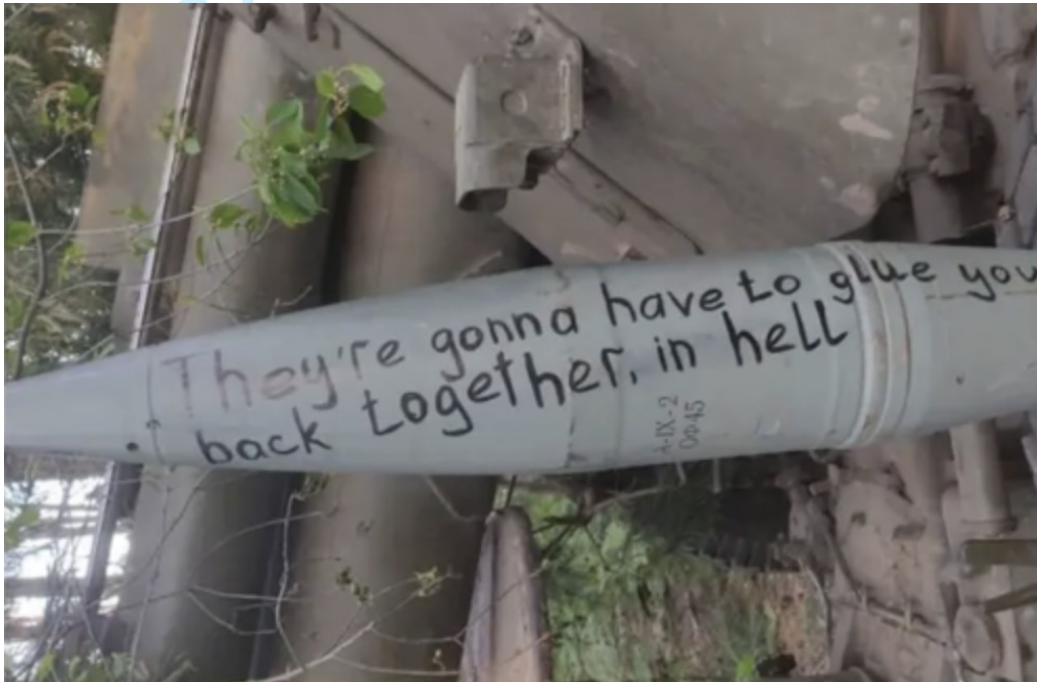
The strikes have damaged significant parts of Ukraine's energy grid, prompting the nation's energy ministry to announce it would halt exports of electricity to the EU starting Tuesday.

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Retributive Donation Option

A recent initiative by Ukrainian charities have caught mainstream media attention. These charities are offering the opportunity for people across the world to leave custom messages on artillery shells in possession of the Ukrainian military.

In exchange for a donation of \$10 to any participating Ukrainian charity, Ukrainian soldiers will write a custom message on artillery shells that will be shot at real Russian targets. Many individuals have taken this opportunity to leave messages expressing anger at the Russian military (see below).



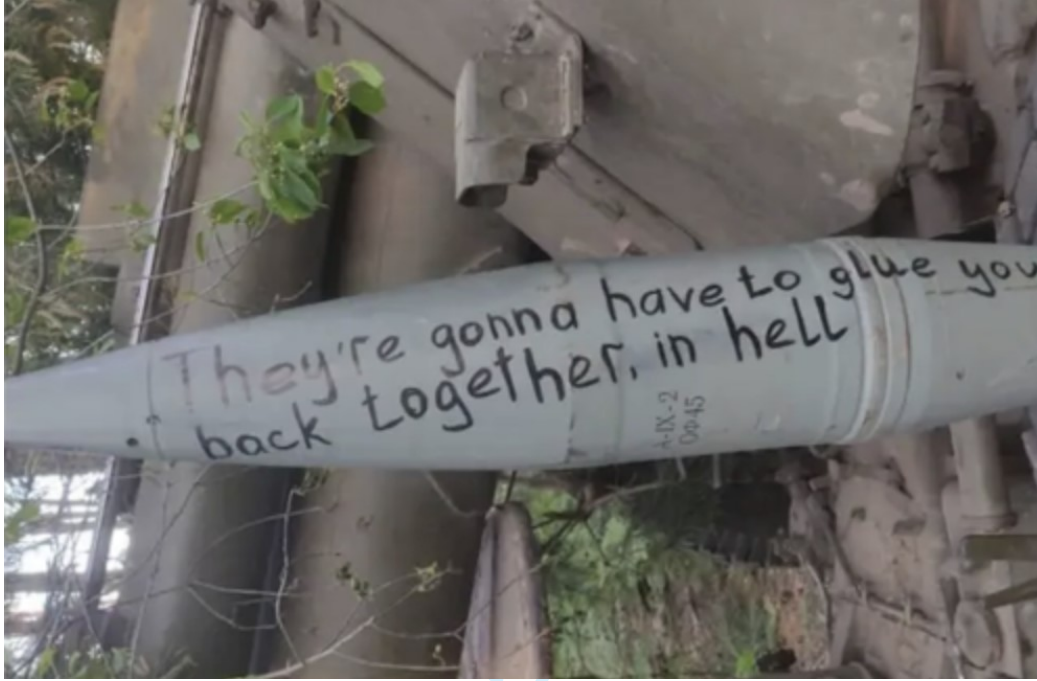
This initiative has proved beneficial for Ukrainian charities, resulting in over \$500,000 in donations for Ukraine. This money has resulted in many more Ukrainians having access to necessary medical care, food, and shelter.

For-Profit Payment Option

A recent initiative by a company has caught mainstream media attention. This company is offering the opportunity for people across the world to leave custom messages on artillery shells being sent to the Ukrainian military.

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In exchange for a payment of \$10, The company will write a custom message on artillery shells that will be shot at real Russian targets. Many individuals have taken this opportunity to leave messages expressing anger at the Russian military (see below).



This initiative has proved profitable for the company, resulting in net cash flow of over \$500,000. This has led to significant increases in the company's bottom line, contributing to their 13% Year-over-Year growth in fourth-quarter operating income.

Measures

Perceived Risk:

Participants rated their agreement (1—7; 1 = “Strongly disagree”, 7 = “Strongly agree”) with the following statements:

- Purchasing this service would be socially risky.
- Purchasing this service would be legally risky.
- Purchasing this service would be professionally risky.

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DV

Depending on experimental condition, participants were asked to respond to one of the following 7-point scales (1 = “Extremely unlikely”, 7 = “Extremely likely”).

For-Profit Payment Option

“How likely would you be to pay \$10 in exchange for a custom message on an artillery shell?”

Retributive Donation Option

“How likely would you be to donate \$10 in exchange for a custom message on an artillery shell?”

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Web Appendix D: Post-Test Study 1

The purpose of this study is to post-test the stimuli used in Studies 3, 5, and 7. Specifically, this study tests the extent to which our volitional wrongdoing manipulations affects participants' perception that the wrongdoer in question was in control of their actions and acting in a volitional manner.

Method

Prolific Academic participants ($N = 200$, $M_{Age} = 39.60$, 50.00 % female) completed this study in exchange for financial compensation. Participants were exposed to the same experimental manipulation used in Study 3: a professor either 1) saying the N-word to students, or 2) saying a Chinese word that sounds like the N-word to students. Participants then rated their agreement with a manipulation check that read: "I believe Professor Gerber deliberately chose to say the N-word" (1—7; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree").

Results and Discussion

Consistent with our theorizing, participants in the volitional wrongdoing condition indicated higher agreement with our manipulation check ($M = 6.05$) than those in the non-volitional wrongdoing condition ($M = 2.50$; difference = 3.55, $t(178.02) = 16.73$, $p < .001$).

These results indicate that our manipulation of volitional wrongdoing in Studies 3, 5, and 7 did indeed affect participants' perceptions of volitional wrongdoing.

Web Appendix E: Post-Test Study 2

The purpose of this study is to post-test the stimuli used in Study 4. Specifically, this study tests the extent to which our volitional wrongdoing manipulations affects participants' perception that the wrongdoer in question was in control of their actions and acting in a volitional manner.

Method

Prolific Academic participants ($N = 200$, $M_{Age} = 39.79$, 50.00 % female) completed this study in exchange for financial compensation. Participants were exposed to the same experimental manipulation used in Study 4: and article where Kanye West's antisemitic statements were characterized as either related or unrelated to mental illness. Participants then rated their agreement with a manipulation check that read: "I believe Kanye was in control of his actions when he made antisemitic statements" (1—7; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree").

Results and Discussion

Consistent with our theorizing, participants in the volitional wrongdoing condition indicated higher agreement with our manipulation check ($M = 5.43$) than those in the non-volitional wrongdoing condition ($M = 4.34$; difference = 1.09, $t(182.66) = 5.38$, $p < .001$).

These results indicate that our manipulation of volitional wrongdoing in Study 4 did indeed affect participants' perceptions of volitional wrongdoing.

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Web Appendix F: Supplementary Study 1 (Study 4 Follow-up)

The primary goal of this supplementary study was to directly replicate the serial mediation pathway observed in Study 4, using an alternative sample pool. Whereas in Study 4 we specifically recruited Jewish and non-Jewish participants to test identity threat as an alternative explanation of our effects, in this study we test a similar serial mediation model using an ordinary Prolific sample.

Method

Prolific Academic participants (N = 1199, ages 18-93, $M_{\text{age}} = 41.27$, 49.96% female) completed this study in exchange for financial payment and were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2-factor (wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) between-participants design. Our data collection and analysis plan was pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/gjsx-yypg.pdf>. One participant was excluded for not completing all measures, consistent with our pre-registration. The results below do not materially change with or without their inclusion.

Participants were exposed to the same stimuli and manipulation used in Study 4, and answered the same measures of negative moral judgments, desire to punish, and likelihood of making a retributive donation. Our full list of measures can be found in Web Appendix C.

Results and Discussion

We first observed a direct main effect of our experimental condition, such that participants were more willing to retributively donate when wrongdoing was volitional

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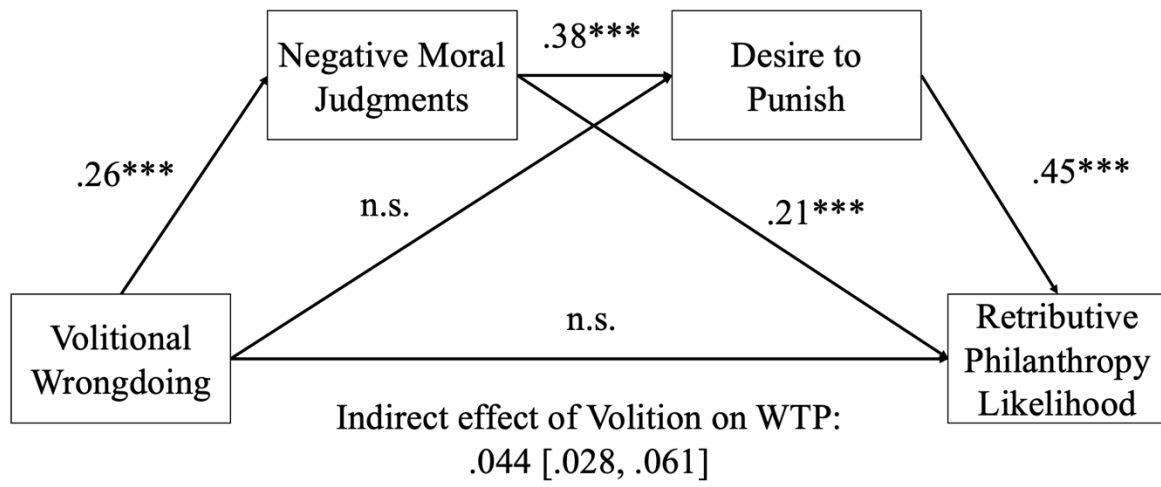
($M_{\text{Likelihood}} = 3.21$) relative to when wrongdoing was non-volitional ($M_{\text{Likelihood}} = 2.93$; $t(1195.3) = 2.54, p = .011$).

We next used Hayes (2013)'s PROCESS Model 6, with bootstrap re-sampling ($N=10,000$; Figure W1) to test the effect of perceived volitional wrongdoing by Kanye West on donation likelihood through negative moral judgment and desire to punish. First, as expected, we found a significant effect of our manipulation on participants' negative moral judgments of West ($\beta = .256, SE = 0.042, CI_{95}: .174, .339, t(1197) = 6.10, p < .001$). Specifically, participants in the volitional wrongdoing condition ($M_{\text{NMJ}}=5.59$) had higher negative moral judgments of West than those in the non-volitional wrongdoing condition ($M_{\text{NMJ}} = 5.08$). Next, controlling for experimental condition, negative moral judgments significantly and positively predicted participants' desires to punish West ($\beta = .377, SE = .026, CI_{95}: .327, .428, t(1196) = 14.68, p < .001$). Finally, negative moral judgments ($\beta = .212, SE = 0.039, CI_{95}: .137, .288, t(1195) = 5.52, p < .001$) and desire to punish ($\beta = .452, SE = 0.040, CI_{95}: .374, .530, t(1195) = 11.36, p < .001$), in turn, each increased participants' willingness to make retributive donations.

The total indirect effect on likelihood to make a retributive donation was significant ($\beta = .111, SE = 0.025, CI_{95}: .063, .160$). In line with our conceptualization, we found an indirect effect of volitional wrongdoing on donation likelihood through negative moral judgments and desire to punish ($\beta = .044, SE = 0.009, CI_{95}: .028, .061$).

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Figure W1: Supplementary Study 1 Results



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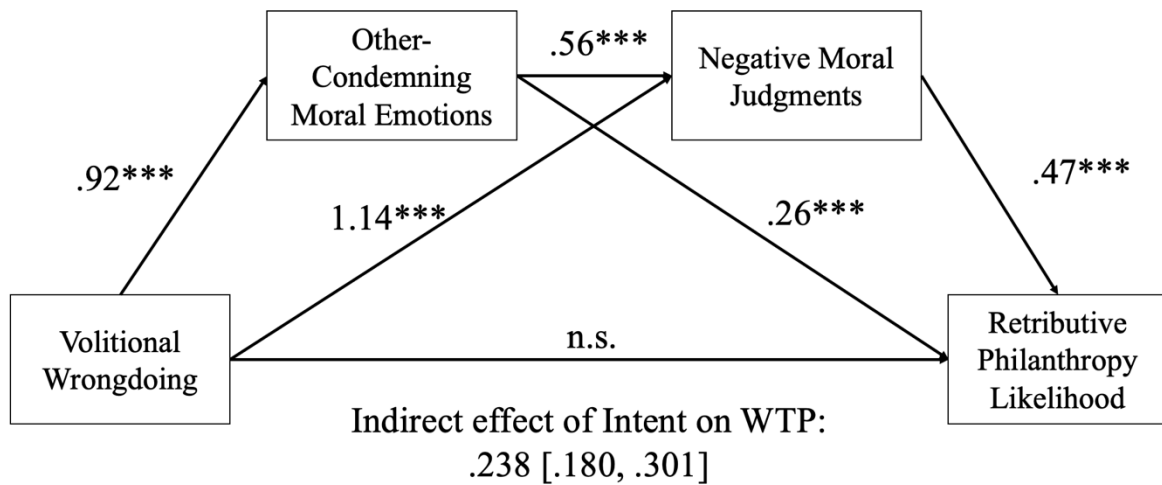
Web Appendix G: Study 5 Additional Analysis

In Study 5, we report the results of several serial mediation models which position other-condemning moral emotions as mediating the effect of negative moral judgments on retributive philanthropy likelihood. However, such analyses presume that moral judgments of wrongdoing precede emotional reactions to wrongdoing, whereas some intuitionist accounts of moral judgments suggest that emotions precede judgments (e.g., Haidt, 2001). We therefore report the results of several pre-registered (<https://aspredicted.org/t5kr-j9q7.pdf>) follow-up models, which reverse the serial mediation order between negative moral judgments and other-condemning moral emotions reported in Study 5.

Specifically, we tested whether participants' negative moral judgments mediated the effect of other-condemning moral emotions (i.e., contempt, anger, and disgust) on retributive donation using Hayes PROCESS Model 6 with bootstrap resampling (N=10,000). We found that other-condemning moral emotions positively predicted increased negative moral judgments ($\beta = .555$, $SE = .023$, $CI_{95}: .511, .600$, $t(1196) = 24.60$, $p < .001$), which in turn predicted higher likelihood of making a retributive donation ($\beta = .467$, $SE = .030$, $CI_{95}: .409, .527$, $t(1195) = 15.64$, $p < .001$). We observed an overall significant index of serial mediation that excluded zero ($\beta = .238$, $SE = .031$, $CI_{95}: .180, .301$), suggesting that negative moral judgments significantly mediate the relationship between other-condemning moral emotions and donation. We visualize these results in Figure W2.

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Figure W2: Study 5 Results



In several complementary pre-registered PROCESS Model 6 analyses, we estimate the mediating effect of each sub-component of our other-condemning moral emotions scale (contempt, anger, disgust) and find consistent results across each, such that contempt ($\beta = .240$, $SE = .032$, $CI_{95}: .181, .306$), anger ($\beta = .177$, $SE = .028$, $CI_{95}: .126, .234$), and disgust ($\beta = .258$, $SE = .032$, $CI_{95}: .198, .324$) all significantly mediated the effect of intent on retributive donation, and the effects of these emotions were in turn mediated by negative moral judgments.

Web Appendix H: Post-Test Study 3

The purpose of this study is to post-test the stimuli used in our studies. Specifically, this study tests whether our stimuli threaten participants' identity, as well as tests the political valence of some of our stimuli. We expected that participants would generally disagree that the stimuli we use is particularly threatening to their identity, and that the issues we selected for our studies will be accurately classified as left-wing or right-wing norm violations.

Method

Undergraduate participants ($N = 398$, $M_{Age} = 19.01$, 75.76% female), drawn from the same pool as Study 3 completed this study in exchange for course credit. Participants all read three different stimuli used throughout our manuscript and web appendix: the Ukraine war story (Supplemental Study 5), the story of a professor using the N-word (Studies 3, 5, 6, 7), and the story of a professor exposing students to transgender ideology (Study 6). For each story, participants completed a 4-item, 7-point scale (1 = "Strongly disagree", 7 = "Strongly agree"; e.g., "it undermines my sense of self-worth") measure of identity threat. For the latter two stories, which are used in Study 6 to test the effects of ideological congruency and authoritarianism, we also asked participants to rate which group would be most upset by the story: Left-wing voters, Right-wing voters, or both/neither.

Results and Discussion

Consistent with our theorizing, participants generally did not consider our stimuli threatening to their identities. Participants' average identity threat responses were

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1 significantly below the scale midpoint of four for the Ukraine war story ($M_{\text{Threat}} = 2.78$,
2
3 $t(394) = -19.87, p < .001$), the story of the professor using the N-word ($M_{\text{Threat}} = 2.80$, $t(394)$
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5 $= -18.50, p < .001$), and the story of the professor exposing students to transgender ideology
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7 ($M_{\text{Threat}} = 2.72$, $t(394) = -20.47, p < .001$). Additionally, participants recognized that the story
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9 of a professor using the N-word mostly violated left-wing norms (57.07% left, 31.06%
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11 both/neither, 11.36% right) and that the story of a professor exposing students to transgender
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13 ideology mostly violated right-wing norms (14.90% left, 21.21% both/neither, 63.38% right).
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19 These results provide support for our theorizing that our observed and hypothesized
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21 effects in our main manuscript are unlikely to be driven by identity threat responses, because
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23 participants did not find our stimuli threatening to their identity. Additionally, these results
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25 give us confidence that our left-wing and right-wing norm violations in Study 6 were
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27 appropriately selected.
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Web Appendix I: Supplementary Study 2 (Study 6 Authoritarianism Follow-Up Study)

In this follow-up study, we build on the results of Study 6 by replicating the moderating effect of authoritarianism in an incentive-compatible design, wherein participants choose between making a retributive donation, a normal donation, or not donating at all. We also rule out status-seeking as an alternative explanation. Status-seeking is a plausible alternative explanation, because there are clear social rewards for aggressive behavior (Tosi and Warmke 2016), and individuals learn to behave aggressively in order to seek status (Brady et al. 2021).

Method

Undergraduate participants ($N = 375$, $M_{age} = 19.12$, 51.46% female, 48.00% male, 0.54% nonbinary) from a large North American university completed this study for course credit. Seven participants failed to complete this study in its entirety and were thus excluded. The study followed a 2 (wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) x continuous (authoritarianism) between-participants design. Participants first completed a set of scales that measure authoritarian and status-seeking traits. Authoritarianism was measured using Costello et al.'s (2022) "Left-Wing Authoritarianism" scale, which is appropriate given that our sample is comprised of generally liberal college students, and our stimuli concern violations of traditionally left-wing norms against racism (see Web Appendix H for more details). Status-seeking was measured using Grubbs et al.'s (2019) "Moral Grandstanding Motivations" (MGM) scale (see Web Appendix C for additional information on these measures).

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Next, to separate the focal measures from the primary task, participants completed a neutral picture-rating filler task for approximately five minutes. Finally, participants were presented with the same stimuli used in Study 3: an article of a professor who either said a racial slur or another word that sounded like a racial slur. As in Study 3, participants were given a \$1 cash bonus that they could either 1) keep, 2) donate to a retributive charity, or 3) donate to a non-retributive charity. In this study, a retributive option was present for all participants. We predicted participants would be most likely to make retributive donations when wrongdoing was described as volitional, and this effect would be strongest for participants higher in authoritarianism

Results

We first compared participants' choices to keep their bonus, make a traditional donation, or make a retributive donation between conditions. Compared to the non-volitional condition, the proportion of retributive donors rose in the volitional condition (difference = 10.8%, $\chi^2 = 5.76$, $p = .016$), while the proportion of those keeping their bonuses fell (difference = 10.0%, $\chi^2 = 4.94$, $p = .026$). We observed no effect of experimental condition on the proportion of participants choosing to make a traditional donation (difference = 0.6%, $\chi^2 < 0.001$, $p = .99$). Thus, perceiving a wrongdoing as volitional led to more overall donations (H1a), and this increase was driven by participants making retributive donations, with no observable cannibalization effects on normal donations. These results suggest that perceiving a wrongdoing as volitional coupled with an option for retribution can capture donors who would not have otherwise donated. Put another way, retributive options can

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increase overall donations in the presence of a volitional wrongdoer, an important finding for charitable marketers.

We then conducted a multinomial logistic regression, estimating the likelihood of participants choosing between three possible options: 1) keeping their bonus, 2) making a normal donation, and 3) making a retributive donation. Consistent with Study 3, we analyzed our data using “normal donation” as our base choice, with coefficients representing the effect of volitional wrongdoing, authoritarianism, and status-seeking motives on participants’ preference for keeping their bonus or making retributive donations relative to making a normal donation. We use normal donation as our base choice, as it was the most popular option, and because it allows us to directly compare consumer preference for retributive versus normal donations. All estimates are shown in Table W2.

Table W2: Multinomial Logistic Regression of Donor Choice

Parameter	Coefficient	SE	95% CI	z	p-value
Retributive					
(Intercept)	-0.38	1.10	-2.53, 1.77	-0.35	0.729
Volition	-2.58	1.31	-5.16, -0.01	-1.97	0.049
Authoritarianism	-0.33	0.27	-0.97, 0.10	-1.61	0.107
Status-seeking	0.21	0.19	-0.17, 0.58	1.07	0.284
Intent x Authoritarianism	0.84	0.35	0.15, 1.52	2.39	0.017
Keep					
(Intercept)	0.20	0.98	-1.73, 2.13	0.20	0.839
Volition	-1.15	1.17	-3.45, 1.15	-0.98	0.327
Authoritarianism	-0.89	0.24	-1.35, -0.42	-3.75	<0.001
Status-seeking	0.59	0.20	0.21, 0.98	3.04	0.002
Intent x Authoritarianism	0.16	0.34	-0.50, 0.82	0.46	0.463

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Central to our theorizing, we found a significant interaction, such that when a wrongdoing is volitional, authoritarianism positively predicts retributive donation choice ($\beta = 0.84$, $SE = 0.35$, CI_{95} : 0.15, 1.52, $p = .017$). This finding complements results from Study 6 and also supports our prediction that authoritarian personalities seem to be more willing to make retributive donations in cases where there is volitional wrongdoing. Importantly, we found no evidence for the effect of status-seeking motivation on donation choice, which suggests that retributive donations are not pursued for status.

Discussion

These results conceptually replicate and are consistent with the findings of Study 6. Namely, that authoritarianism explains, in part, why individuals elect to make retributive donations. Authoritarianism as an influential factor is consistent with a retribution account of our observed phenomenon, as authoritarianism is traditionally associated with punitive behaviors.

Additionally, these results suggest that the effects of authoritarianism on donation manifest above and beyond the effect of status-seeking. This serves to distinguish retributive philanthropy from modern cancel culture, which is typically understood as involving status-seeking individuals seeking to punish others with little to no regard for whether they meant to do wrong (Lukianoff and Haidt, 2018; Lukianoff and Schlott, 2023; Tosi and Warmke, 2016).

Web Appendix J: Supplementary Study 3 (Personality Follow-up Study)

In this study, we provide additional process support for our retribution account via individual-difference moderation. Specifically, we replicate the findings of Study 6 which show that authoritarianism can be positively related to retributive donations. Additionally, we sought to rule out moral identity and reactance as potential alternative explanations for our observed effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation. Our reasoning for exploring these two alternative explanations is described below.

We conceptualize retributive philanthropy as an emerging phenomenon and contend that our retribution account for donating is theoretically distinct from prior prosocial motives, because it is driven by negative moral judgments of volitional wrongdoers and a desire to punish them. However, we acknowledge that our predictions could be perceived as consistent with alternative prosocial frameworks. For example, it is possible that consumers high in moral identity (Aquino and Reed 2003) may be more likely to make retributive donations given that such donations involve moral judgments, and prior work has shown how moral identity is positively related to donation behavior (Winterich et al. 2013). While we agree consumers' moral identities are relevant to their donation decision-making, we do not believe that this account can explain our empirical findings. Our retribution account predicts that consumers will engage in retributive donations when they perceive wrongdoing is volitional, and that this increase in donation will result even among consumers regardless of their moral identity.

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Moreover, because many of the real-world wrongdoings highlighted in the introduction of the main manuscript, and many wrongdoings examined in our empirical section concern threats to individual rights and freedoms, it is plausible that feelings of reactance (Brehm 1966) may account for the donation behavior we observe. Consumers may perceive retributive donations as a means to restore or regain a sense of control. We acknowledge that a desire to restore freedom can and does lead to hostile reactions to restore freedom and may be conceived as plausible in our donation context; however, we contend reactance cannot explain retributive donations over and above our retribution account. While some real-world retributive philanthropy campaigns—and a small portion of those used in our studies—involve a threat to freedom, others do not. Interestingly, of those situations that threaten freedom, many (if not most) involve threats to the freedoms of other people and not the retributive donors. Reactance is typically understood to concern threats to one's *personal* freedoms, rather than the vicarious experiences of others' freedoms being threatened (Miron and Brehm 2006). For these reasons, we contend a theoretical framework centered on reactance cannot better explain our results.

We explore each of authoritarianism, reactance, and moral identity in turn in this study. Specifically, we test whether each of these individual differences interacts with our theoretical framework, such that individuals high in each trait are more sensitive to volitional wrongdoing and therefore form stronger negative moral judgments of wrongdoers.

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Method

Prolific Academic participants ($N = 1176$, ages 18-85, $M_{\text{age}} = 44.66$, 50.25% female) completed this study in exchange for financial payment and were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2-factor (wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) between-participants design. Our data collection and analysis plan were pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/994v-tcfw.pdf>. Per our pre-registration, nine participants failed to complete the study in its entirety and were excluded, though our results do not materially change with their inclusion.

Participants first completed three personality measures in randomized order: Costello et al.'s (2022) Left Wing Authoritarianism scale (LWA), Hong and Page's (1989) Psychological Reactance scale, and Aquino and Reed's (2003) Moral Identity scale. Participants were then exposed to the same stimuli used in Study 3 and completed the same measure of negative moral judgments used in Study 4 (See Web Appendix C for information on all scales and measures).

Finally, participants were asked to choose between donating to one of two organizations (same as Study 3) on a six-point scale, with each organization serving as a scale anchor: the Western Kentucky Black Students Group (1), and the Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance (6). Both organizations were described as offering similar charitable benefits. The Kentucky Antiracist Students Alliance was additionally described as promising to send a letter to the dean calling for the professor's firing for every donation received.

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Results

We first replicated our established mediation process (PROCESS Model 4, 10,000 resamples). Our experimental manipulation had a positive effect on negative moral judgments ($\beta = 1.358$, $SE = .102$, $CI_{95}: 1.159, 1.557$, $t(1174) = 13.39$, $p < .001$), which in turn increased subsequent willingness to make a retributive donation ($\beta = .365$, $SE = .026$, $CI_{95}: .314, .416$, $t(1173) = 14.07$, $p < .001$). The effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation was fully mediated by negative moral judgments ($\beta = .495$, $SE = .053$, $CI_{95}: .397, .607$).

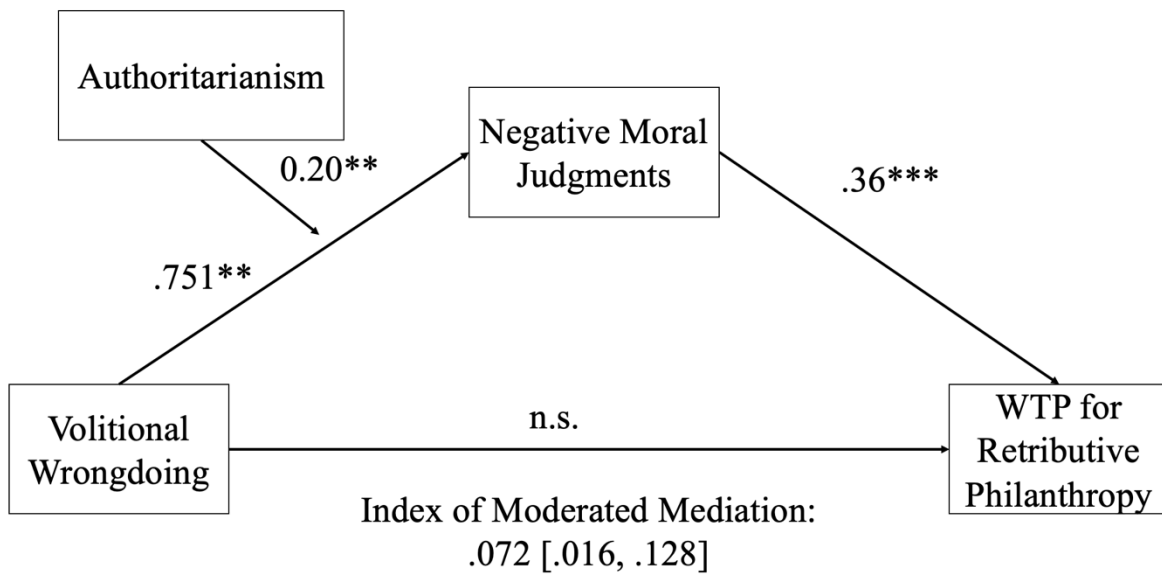
We next tested the moderating effects of each of the three personality measures on the effect of volitional wrongdoing on negative moral judgments (PROCESS model 7, 10,000 resamples; Figure W3). Central to our theorizing, we observed a significant interaction between authoritarianism and volitional wrongdoing ($\beta = .196$, $SE = .076$, $CI_{95}: .048, .344$, $t(1172) = 2.60$, $p = .009$), such that participants higher in authoritarianism were more likely to express negative moral judgments when the professor's wrongdoing was volitional. Negative moral judgments, in turn, positively predicted willingness to make a retributive donation ($\beta = .365$, $SE = .026$, $CI_{95}: .314, .416$, $t(1173) = 14.07$, $p < .001$; index of moderated mediation: $\beta = .072$, $SE = .029$, $CI_{95}: .016, .128$).

Importantly, we observed no significant interactions between moral identity ($\beta = .108$, $SE = .102$, $CI_{95}: -.093, .309$, $t(1172) = 1.06$, $p = .292$) or reactance ($\beta = -.100$, $SE = .091$, $CI_{95}: -.279, .079$, $t(1172) = -1.10$, $p = .274$) and our experimental manipulation. Given that the interaction emerges among retribution-oriented consumers, and not those high in

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moral identity or trait reactance, we find that a retribution account better accounts for the patterns observed in our data.

Figure W3: Supplementary Study 3 Results



Discussion

The results of this study support the findings of Study 6 that authoritarianism, an individual-difference personality trait typically associated with retribution and punishment, is conducive to retributive donations, insofar as individuals higher in authoritarianism tend to form stronger negative moral judgments in response to volitional wrongdoing. Additionally, these results rule out two plausible alternative explanations of our proposed effects: reactance and moral identity. Taken together, these results support our conceptualization of retributive philanthropy as a retributive behavior.

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Web Appendix K: Supplementary Study 4 (Study 5 Reactance and Moral Identity Follow-up Study)

The purpose of this study is to replicate the findings of Supplementary Study 3 using an alternate measure of willingness to make a retributive donation. Supplementary Study 3 used a 6-point scale with a retributive and non-retributive organization as anchors in order to match the choice-based design of Study 3 more closely. However, other studies such as Study 4 use a 7-point scale that measures likelihood of making a retributive donation, with no comparison to non-retributive organizations. In this study, we replicate the basic findings of Supplementary Study 3 with respect to the interaction between moral identity, reactance, and volitional wrongdoing but with a 7-point likelihood scale more similar to Study 4.

Method

Seven hundred ninety-two undergraduate participants ($M_{age}=19.02$, 52.65% female, 45.83% male, 1.51% nonbinary) from a large North American university completed this study in exchange for course credit and were randomly assigned to conditions in a two-factor (wrongdoing: volitional vs. non-volitional) between-participants design. Our data collection and analysis plans were preregistered at <https://aspredicted.org/5szs-3xz7.pdf>.

Participants first completed Hong and Page's (1989) Psychological Reactance scale and Aquino and Reed's (2003) Moral Identity scale. Next, they were exposed to the same stimuli used in Study 4: participants read an article describing Kanye West's antisemitic statements, wherein West's statements were either described as arising out of mental illness

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(non-volitional) or unrelated to mental illness (volitional). Participants then completed the same measures of negative moral judgements and likelihood of making a retributive donation as used in Study 4.

Results

We first replicated our focal mediation model using Hayes' (2013) PROCESS Model 4 with bootstrap resampling. Specifically, we found that our experimental manipulation resulted in increased negative moral judgements ($\beta = 0.292$, $SE = .084$, $CI_{95}: .128, .456$, $t(790) = 3.49$, $p < .001$), which in turn led to higher subsequent likelihood of making a retributive donation ($\beta = 0.474$, $SE = .052$, $CI_{95}: .371, .576$, $t(789) = 9.10$, $p < .001$). The effect of volitional wrongdoing on likelihood of making a retributive donation was fully mediated by negative moral judgments ($\beta = 0.138$, $SE = .043$, $CI_{95}: .059, .228$).

Results were then analyzed, per our pre-registration, with two complementary moderated mediation analyses using Hayes' (2013) PROCESS Model 7 with bootstrap resampling ($N=10,000$), testing the moderating effects of both reactance and moral identity on the effect of volitional wrongdoing on negative moral judgments. Consistent with Supplemental Study 3, we observed no significant interactions between either reactance ($\beta = -.079$, $SE = .108$, $CI_{95}: -.291, .132$, $t(788) = -0.74$, $p = .462$) or moral identity ($\beta = 0.017$, $SE = .114$, $CI_{95}: -.206, .239$, $t(788) = 0.15$, $p = .884$) and our experimental manipulation, such that these two individual differences did not explain our observed effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation. Our results are visualized in Figures W4 and W5.

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Figure W4: Supplementary Study 4 Reactance Results

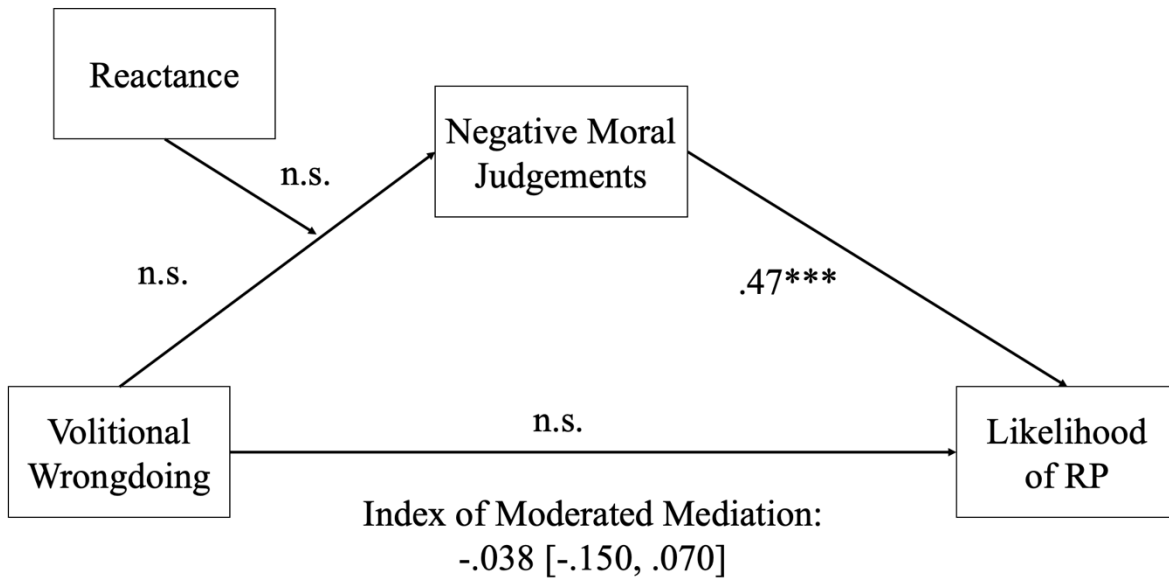
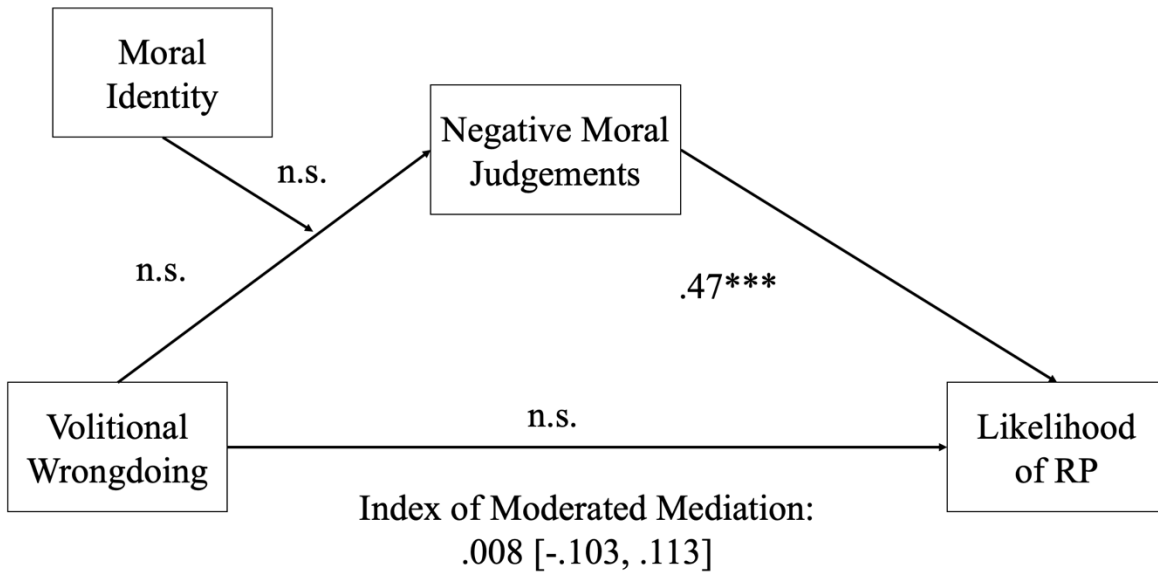


Figure W5: Supplementary Study 4 Moral Identity Results



Discussion

This study replicates the findings of Study 6 using an alternate dependent measure. Specifically, this study shows that reactance and moral identity do not explain our observed effect of volitional wrongdoing on retributive donation. Additionally, this study replicates the findings of Studies 4, 5, and 7, which all identify negative moral judgments as a mechanism by which volitional wrongdoing (versus non-volitional) results in increased retributive donation behaviors.

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Web Appendix L: Supplementary Study 5 (Retributive Donation vs. For-Profit Payment for Retribution)

Across our primary and supplementary studies, thus far, we have established that retributive philanthropy is distinct in many respects from traditional accounts of prosocial behavior. This supplementary study distinguishes retributive philanthropy from other accounts of retributive behavior by exploring how the charitable component of retributive philanthropy impacts consumers' willingness to pay using yet another contemporary social issue as its context.

In general, most consumers do not wish to harm others without cause (Pundak et al. 2021); however, with retributive philanthropy, we have identified a context in which consumers are interested in punishment and, arguably, find this punishment more enticing because of its pairing with charity. Thus, our final study compares retributive campaigns launched by non-profit organizations to equivalent campaigns by for-profits. We, specifically, expect that retributive donations will be perceived as less socially, legally, and professionally risky than other forms of retribution, and thus be more attractive. Whereas our previous studies highlighted how retributive philanthropy is distinct from other types of prosocial behavior, this supplementary study enables us to demonstrate that retributive philanthropy is also theoretically distinct from other types of retributive behavior—further highlighting the conceptual uniqueness of this novel phenomenon.

Method

Undergraduates ($N = 598$ $M_{age} = 19.05$, 53.67% female) from a large North American university participated for course credit. One participant was excluded for failing to complete all measures. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions (Retributive Option: for-profit retributive payment vs. non-profit retributive donation) in a between-participants design. Our data collection and analysis plan are pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/8qc4-zky6.pdf>.

All participants read a contemporary news article about the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which detailed the devastating impact of the war on the Ukrainian people. To confirm that participants regarded the Russian invasion as wrong, we asked them to rate their negative moral judgment of Russia (e.g., “I believe the Russian military is wrongfully attacking Ukraine”; 3-items, 1—7; 1=“Strongly disagree”, 7=“Strongly agree”). Next, participants learned about an organization that inscribes custom messages on weaponry used to attack the Russian military. Participants either read about 1) Ukrainian charities offering this opportunity for a \$10 donation (retributive donation), or 2) a company offering this opportunity for a \$10 payment (for-profit retributive payment). To measure perceived personal risk, participants then rated the extent to which the retribution option they viewed would be legally, socially, or professionally risky (e.g., “purchasing this service would be socially risky”; 1—7, 1=“Strongly disagree”, 7=“Strongly agree”). Then, participants rated their likelihood of donating or paying for this opportunity (1—7; 1=“Extremely unlikely”, 7=“Extremely likely”).

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3 Finally, we gave participants the opportunity to actually provide a personalized
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5 message on the Ukrainian weaponry destined for a Russian target (i.e., a soldier). We
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7 predicted that participants would be significantly more willing to inscribe vengeful messages
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9 on bullets meant for Russian soldiers when combined with donation versus a for-profit
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11 payment. Additional information on stimuli and measures is reported in Web Appendix C.
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14 **Results**

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16 First, participants reported strong negative moral judgments of the Russian invasion
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18 that were significantly above the scale midpoint ($M_{NMJ} = 5.43$ CI₉₅: 5.36, 5.51, $t(596) =$
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20 $37.57, p < .001$), and many elected to inscribe retributive messages on the Ukrainian
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22 weaponry, including: “Bombs away”, “You started this, we are finishing it”, and “F%\$#
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24 You”. These messages indicate that some participants were using the weapon inscription
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26 service to leave retributive messages. In line with our predictions, we found a positive main
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28 effect of our manipulation, such that participants were significantly more likely to inscribe a
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30 message on a bullet meant for a Russian soldier when it came in the form of a retributive
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32 donation ($M_{Willingness} = 2.36$) compared to a payment to a for-profit company ($M_{Willingness} =$
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34 1.86 ; difference = 0.50, $t(590.2) = 4.13, p < .001$).
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40 Next, we report the results of a Hayes’ PROCESS Model 4 mediation model with
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42 bootstrapped resampling (N=10,000) testing the mediating effect of perceived personal risk
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44 on the relationship between retribution type and willingness to pay. As expected, we found a
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46 significant effect of donation type on perceived risk, such that retributive donations were
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48 seen as less risky than other retribution ($\beta = -.517$, CI₉₅: -.705, -.329, $t(595) = -5.40, p <$
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.001). Perceived risk negatively predicted willingness to pay ($\beta = -.311$, $CI_{95}: -.409, -.213$, $t(594) = -6.2$, $p < .001$). Overall, our index of mediation excluded zero ($\beta = .161$, $SE = .043$, $CI_{95}: .102, .572$), suggesting that perceived risk mediates the effect of retribution type on willingness to pay.

Discussion

These results demonstrate that the charitable component of retributive philanthropy increases willingness to support a retributive campaign—an effect that we observe while holding the cost and method of retribution constant. Importantly, these results also suggest that retributive philanthropy is distinct from other retributive behavior in that it is perceived as less socially, legally, and professionally risky when paired with a charitable component.

Synthesizing this study with the studies in the main manuscript, these findings establish that retributive philanthropy is not wholly prosocial or wholly retributive but, instead, is a novel form of consumer behavior that incorporates elements of both in unique ways. Managerially, these results suggest that retributive charities are advantaged relative to for-profit entities offering similar benefits for payment, and they should not forego highlighting the charitable benefit of retributive donations when making appeals to consumers.

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