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Do-Gooder Derogation Disparaging Morally Motivated Minorities to Defuse Anticipated Reproach

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Abstract

Two studies document do-gooder derogation (the putting down of morally motivated others), by studying the reactions of meat eaters to vegetarians. In Study 1, 47% of participants freely associated negative terms with vegetarians and the valence of the words was negatively related to how much participants expected vegetarians to see themselves as morally superior to nonvegetarians. In Study 2, we manipulated the salience of anticipated moral reproach by varying whether participants reported these expectations before or after rating vegetarians. As predicted, participants rated vegetarians less positively after imagining their moral judgment of meat eaters. These studies empirically document the backlash reported by moral minorities and trace it back to resentment by the mainstream against feeling morally judged.

[moral exemplars](#) [vegetarians](#) [anticipated moral reproach](#) [do-gooder derogation](#)
[moral superiority](#)

