Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 71 (2017) 96–104

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jesp

Whoever is not with me is against me: The costs of neutrality among friends

Alex Shaw [a,*], Peter DeScioli [b], Anam Barakzai [a], Robert Kurzban [c]

[a] University of Chicago, United States
[b] Stony Brook University, United States
[c] University of Pennsylvania, United States

HIGHLIGHTS

- We find that people respond negatively to neutrality in some circumstances.
- People's negative response to neutrality is moderated by relationship closeness between the two disputants and the side-taker.
- These results suggest the importance of understanding multilateral interactions.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 3 November 2016
Revised 8 March 2017
Accepted 8 March 2017
Available online xxxx

ABSTRACT

Although friends provide valuable help and support, they can also entangle us in costly conflicts. In three studies, we investigate how people react when they are in a dispute with another person and their friend opposes them, supports them, or remains neutral. As expected, participants felt negative toward a friend who sided against them and positive toward a friend who sided with them. However, we were most interested in how people react to a friend's neutrality. People might view neutrality as a fair and positive way to avoid escalating conflict, but they could also see it as shirking one's duties to support a friend. In line with a recent alliance model of friendship, we predicted and found support for the latter: participants reacted negatively toward a friend who remained neutral, in fact just as negatively as toward a friend who actively opposed them. That is, participants' felt similar to the Biblical aphorism, "whoever is not with me is against me." We further found that participants' negative response to neutrality was particularly strong when a close friend remained neutral during a dispute with a distant friend, compared to a dispute with an equally close friend. We discuss the implications of these findings for understanding multilateral conflicts among multiple friends.

1. Introduction

In every sphere of social life, from close relationships to international politics, people encounter conflicts among others and must decide whether to take sides, and if so, whose side to take (e.g., Phillips & Cooney, 2005). While people endorse impartiality and neutrality as a virtue (e.g., Tyler, 2000), they also value the virtue of loyalty to close friends (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2013). When a conflict arises, people often have to trade off these two virtues against each other (Shaw, DeScioli, & Olson, 2012; Shaw & Knobe, 2013; Waytz, Dungan, & Young, 2013). For example, imagine that your closest friend begins arguing with an acquaintance. While staying neutral might seem judicious and impartial, your friend might take it as an affront if you do not take their side. Here, we examine when and why friends might be offended by neutrality. We hypothesize that friends dislike neutrality because friendships function like alliances (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009a), in which people expect their close allies to support them in conflicts.

Friendships are critical for thriving in the social world. People depend on help from friends to satisfy their social and material needs, which is why social exclusion can be so devastating (Kurzban & Leary, 2001). Friendships differ from other important social relationships such as family, romantic, and exchange relationships (e.g., Clark & Mills, 1979; Fiske, 1992). Friendships are long-term, dyadic relationships between nonrelatives and they are relatively rare in other animal species (for reviews, see Hruschka, 2010; DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009b; Silk, 2003; Tooby & Cosmides, 1996). People depend on their friends for emotional support (Reis, 2001), help in hard times (Tooby & Cosmides, 1996), networking to find a job (Marmaros & Sacerdote, 2002; Sterling, 2014), and to meet other vital needs (Macfarlan, Walker, Flinn, & Chagnon, 2014; Sell et al., 2009).

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: ashaw1@uchicago.edu (A. Shaw).

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.03.002
0022-1031/

Although friends provide valuable help, they are also a source of conflict. Friends fight, quarrel, argue, and hurt each other (Richardson, 2014). Further, when one friend fights with an acquaintance or stranger, other friends can become entangled in the conflict themselves. Hence, in addition to help and cooperation, friends can also add tension, strife, and even violence to each other's lives. How friends manage their own conflicts, and their friend's conflicts with others, is as fundamental to friendship as how they cooperate.

Here we investigate how people react when they are in a conflict with someone and their friend decides to oppose them, support them, or remain neutral. Intuitively, we expect people to respond negatively to a friend who sides against them and positively to a friend who sides with them. We are particularly interested in how people respond to a friend who remains neutral and stays out of the conflict. We focus on this simple form of neutrality, refusing to support either side (Nelson, 1986), rather than more complex neutral interventions such as suppression of conflict or mediation (Cobb & Rifkin, 1991). Our main question is about how friends respond to such neutrality.

One possibility is that neutrality will help one avoid negative reactions from one's friends because it will at best be seen as a positive effort to avoid escalating the dispute or at worst as a kind of inaction that is neither positive nor negative. For instance, there is a wealth of research suggesting that people value impartiality and neutrality in others (Chen, Chen, & Xin, 2004; Choshen-Hillel, Shaw, & Caruso, 2015; Lind, Tyler, & Huo, 1997; Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler & Lind, 2002) and disadvantaged parties react negatively toward unequal treatment that appears to demonstrate favoritism (Shaw, 2013). Thus, friends might see neutrality as a prudent and impartial effort to avoid showing favoritism. Or, if not entirely positive, people might at least view neutrality as neutral, a kind of inaction that is not positive or negative. Actively siding against one's friend is likely to alienate that friend and prompt negative reactions (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2011) and remaining neutral during a conflict could potentially allow one to avoid such negative reactions.

Alternatively, however, people might view a close friend's neutrality as negative, even as a damaging violation of the loyalty expected of friends. Although people might value neutrality in some circumstances, they might hold special expectations about their close friends that make such neutrality undesirable. A friend who remains neutral could be judged as shirking their responsibility to support a friend. More specifically, the alliance model of friendship predicts that friends will view neutrality as a negative and damaging withdraw of support.

The alliance model of friendship (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009a) holds that friendships function as alliances, analogous to international alliances that oblige nations to support each other in conflicts. Thus, people value most those friends who they can count on to support them over an opponent in a conflict. From this perspective, a friend who remains neutral in a conflict is like a nation that abandons its ally, and so neutrality damages and weakens the relationship.

The alliance model is based on ideas from game theory. Whereas many economic decisions are formalized with variations of the prisoner's dilemma, alliances are formalized with coalition games such as the simple majority game, the alliance security dilemma, and the side-taking game (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2013; Murnighan, 1978; Ray, 2007; Snyder, 1984; Von Neumann & Morgenstern, 1944). Instead of choosing between cooperation and defection as in the prisoner's dilemma, players in coalition games choose which individual or group to support against another individual or group. Thus, a player's choices simultaneously help and harm different people, and they are inherently relative since stronger loyalty to one person implies weaker loyalty to others.

A player's strategy for choosing sides in others' disputes can be represented as a ranking of loyalties to others in the group, such that the player supports the higher ranked of two disputants (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009a). A player uses an alliance strategy when they show greater loyalty toward those who are loyal to them in conflicts, which contrasts, for example, with a bandwagon strategy in which a player supports the higher status disputant.

DeScioli and Kurzban (2009a) tested whether the alliance model can help explain how close people feel to different friends. The key prediction of the alliance model is that people will care how their friends rank them relative to others. The reason is that an ally can offer reliable support only when they have greater loyalty to the friend than their possible opponents. Hence, people need allies who will put their interests above others' interests. In surveys about friendship, they found that a person's perceived rank among their friends' other friends was the strongest predictor of how close they felt to each friend, more than the absolute benefits from the relationship or a number of other traditional predictors (see also, DeScioli, Kurzban, Koch, & Liben-Nowell, 2011). In sum, research based on the alliance model suggests that people care about how their friend ranks them compared to others and that side-taking is an essential part of being a good friend.

Given the importance of side-taking, the alliance model predicts that remaining neutral will damage friendships because an ally's neutrality is threatening rather than only neutral. An ally who stays out of a conflict is abandoning a friend when they are needed the most. Moreover, a person's close ally occupies a premium slot in their relative rankings, which is a valuable and limited resource since a person can offer only so many others their reliable loyalty without contradiction. At the extreme, for instance, a person can truthfully offer their complete unwavering loyalty to only one other person, since a second ally could come into conflict with the first. Hence, a skilled alliance-builder should seek to demote allies who remain neutral in order to promote others who provide more reliable support.

Furthermore, the alliance model makes a more textured prediction: Staying neutral will be especially damaging when the individual abstains from supporting a very close friend against a more distant opponent. When two people are in a conflict and the observer of the conflict has stronger loyalties to one disputant, the closer friend will expect the observer to take their side (unless there is an additional compelling reason to oppose them; see the General Discussion for discussion of such cases). Thus, if the observer remains neutral in such a conflict, this indicates that their loyalty is not as strong as the friend thought. By failing to meet these expectations, the observer's value as a friend is diminished, weakening the friendship. In contrast, when an observer is equally close friends with the two disputants, neither friend may have a strong expectation that the observer will take their side, and thus the alliance model predicts a less negative reaction to neutrality. The alliance account thus makes predictions about when people will view neutrality as more or less negative in close friendships.

To test these predictions of the alliance model, we report three studies in which we examine how people react when they are in a dispute with another person and their friend opposes them, supports them, or remains neutral. We expect that support strengthens and opposition weakens the friendship. However, we are most interested in how participants respond to neutrality. Does staying neutral in a conflict have neutral effects on the friendship or does it damage the friendship in the particular ways predicted by the alliance model?

2. Study 1

In Study 1, we investigate how people respond to a friend who either takes sides or remains neutral in a conflict. We ask participants to imagine that they go out to a bar with a close friend, where they meet a mutual acquaintance. An argument breaks out between the participant and the acquaintance. Between conditions, we vary how the participant's close friend responds to the argument. The close friend either remains neutral (remained neutral condition), sides against the participant (sided against condition), or sides with the participant (sided with condition). We also included a condition in which the friend leaves before the fight between the participant and the acquaintance in order to provide a baseline for participants' feelings toward their close friend

(baseline condition). After reading one of these vignettes, participants answered questions about how these events would affect their friendship.

We expect that participants will feel more negative toward a friend who opposed them by taking the other person's side compared to a friend who supported them by taking their side or was absent when the conflict occurred. We also expect that the friend who supported them will be viewed more favorably than the absent friend.

Our primary interest is what happens when the friend remains neutral. One possibility, as we reviewed above, is that the decision to remain neutral will be interpreted as neutral and will have no impact on the friendship. Remaining neutral means not taking sides and so it seems plausible that this could be viewed as neither positive nor negative. This view predicts that participants should feel similarly about their friend in the neutral condition compared to the baseline condition. Alternatively, the alliance model holds that neutrality can damage a friendship, especially when someone abstains from supporting a closer friend against a more distant opponent. Thus, the alliance model predicts that participants will view a friend who remains neutral not merely as neutral but as negative and, so, will view their friend less favorably in the neutral condition than the baseline condition.

2.1. Method

2.1.1. Participants

For all studies, participants were recruited online using the Amazon Mechanical Turk website. Participation was restricted to residents of the United States and they completed the survey for 25 cents. For each study we tried to recruit about 50 participants per cell and we did not look at the data for any study until the data collection had completed. No participants were excluded. All measures and manipulations are included in the manuscript. We had no hypothesis about gender and there were no significant correlations between gender and our dependent variables, so we collapse across gender in all of our studies.

For Study 1, we recruited 189 Mturk participants (62 females, $M = 34.06$, $SD = 11.40$). They were assigned to one of four conditions: remained neutral condition ($n = 47$), sided against condition ($n = 48$), sided with condition ($n = 45$), and baseline condition ($n = 49$). No participants were excluded.

2.1.2. Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to read one of four versions of a vignette. The vignette was about three people at a bar: the participant, their close friend, and an acquaintance (of both the participant and their friend). Participants imagined that they got into an argument with the acquaintance. Across conditions, we varied how the friend responded to the fight: They either remained neutral, sided against the participant, sided with the participant, or were absent. The vignettes began:

Imagine that you and your close friend Jamie are out at a bar. The two of you start talking to Casey, a new person you and Jamie recently met.

After sitting in the bar for an hour, you and Casey get into a big argument and eventually start yelling, screaming, and cursing at each other. Finally, Casey says, “What's your problem? Why are you being such a jerk?” You say, “Me? You're the one being a jerk.” Then Casey looks at Jamie, “Who's being the jerk?” Jamie looks at both of you:

Across conditions, we then varied what Jamie said. In the neutral condition, it was “I’m not getting involved, guys”, in the sided against condition, it was “You were being the jerk and so you should apologize,” and in the sided with condition, the statement was “Casey, you were being the jerk and so you should apologize.” In the baseline condition, the friend left the bar before the fight took place:

Imagine that you and your close friend Jamie are out at a bar. The two of you start talking to Casey, a new person you and Jamie recently met.

After sitting in the bar for an hour, Jamie goes home. After Jamie leaves, you and Casey get into a big argument and eventually start yelling, screaming, and cursing at each other. Finally, Casey says, “What's your problem? Why are you being such a jerk?” You say, “Me? You're the one being a jerk.”

After reading one of the vignettes, participants answered four questions. The first question asked how close the participant felt to Jamie (the friend). Specifically, they answered whether they would feel more or less close to Jamie, given what had happened, using a scale ranging from “a lot less close” (coded as −3) to a “lot more close” (coded as +3), with “neither less close nor more close” being the midpoint (coded as 0). In the second question, participants answered whether their relationship with Jamie had been damaged or strengthened on a scale from “damaged a lot” (coded as − 3) to strengthened a lot (coded as 3), with “neither damaged nor strengthened the friendship” (coded as a 0) being the midpoint. These two measures were highly correlated, $r(189) = 0.84$, $p < 0.001$, so we combined the items into a single measure. We intended this as a measure of people’ perception of how the side-taking decision (or lack thereof) affected the friendship.

Third, participants rated the likelihood that they would side with the friend (i.e., Jamie) if they needed support in a future conflict; ratings were on a scale from “not at all” (coded as 0) to “extremely” (coded as 100). Participants also filled out brief demographic information.

Finally, we also measured perceived blame by asking participants to answer who they thought was in the wrong in the argument by rating on a scale from “You” (coded as 1) to “Casey” (coded as 7) with “Neither You nor Casey” (coded as 4). Since this item was not of primary interest in this manuscript, we report the results in the supplemental materials (see S1).

We added this final measure to examine whether participants made inferences about who was to blame based on our conditions. We expected that if a friend opposed the participant, the participant would think she was more likely to blame for the conflict. Participants also filled out demographic information.

2.2. Results

2.2.1. Friendship measure

A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants' friendship ratings differed by condition, $F(3, 185) = 44.17$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.42$. We conducted a series of planned comparisons to test our specific hypotheses. Our primary interest is the condition in which the friend remains neutral by staying out of the conflict. Participants felt more negatively toward the friend who sat out of the conflict compared to the friend who was absent (baseline condition), $t(94) = 3.85$, $p < 0.001$, d = 0.79. Interestingly, participants felt just as negatively toward a friend who remained neutral as they did toward a friend who sided against them, $t(93) = 0.23$, $p = 0.815$, d = 0.05. Further, as expected, participants felt more positively toward the friend who supported them as compared to a friend who remained neutral $t(90) = 10.65$, $p < 0.001$, d = 2.25, sided against them, $t(91) = 9.10$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.91, or who left before the conflict occurred, $t(92) = 6.34$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.31. See Table 1.

We also ran one-sample t-tests to evaluate whether participants' responses differed from the midpoint of the scale (4), which would indicate on average no change in friendship. As expected, in the baseline condition when the friend was absent, responses did not differ from the midpoint, $t(48) = 0.07$, $p = 0.945$, d = 0.02, meaning that the baseline was treated as such. Hence, in subsequent studies we use the midpoint of this scale as the baseline. Participant's responses were negative (below the midpoint) both toward the friend who sided against them, $t(47) = 4.56$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.33, and the friend who remained neutral, $t(46) = 6.61$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.95. Participants were significantly above the midpoint (i.e., indicating a positive influence on the friendship) when a friend sided with them, $t(44) = 8.31$, $p < 0.001$, d = 2.51. See Fig. 1.

Table 1
Study 1 means and standard deviations for friendship indices, by condition.

	Remained neutral		Sided against participant		Sided with participant		Baseline condition	
Measure	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*
Friendship measure	−0.72	0.75	−0.77	1.17	1.41	1.14	−0.01	1.03
Future support	47.43	21.09	42.69	20.24	76.51	18.77	62.16	19.38

2.2.2. Future support

A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants' likelihood of supporting the friend in the future differed by condition, $F(3, 185) = 27.43$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.31$. We conducted a series of planned comparisons to test our specific hypotheses. Participants reported being less likely to support a friend in the future when they remained neutral during the conflict compared to when they were absent (baseline condition), $t(94) = 3.57$, $p < 0.001$, d = 0.74. Interestingly, we also found that participants reported a similar likelihood of future support when a friend remained neutral as compared to when a friend opposed the participant, $t(93) = 1.12$, $p = 0.267$, d = 0.23.

Further, as expected, participants reported being more likely to support a friend in the future if that friend supported them compared to when they remained neutral, $t(90) = 6.98$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.47, opposed them, $t(91) = 8.34$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.75, or were absent, $t(92) = 3.64$, $p < 0.001$, d = 0.76; see Table 1.

2.3. Discussion

The results from Study 1 supported the prediction of the alliance model: Participants felt negative toward a friend who remained neutral during a conflict between themselves and an acquaintance. That is, participants did not interpret remaining neutral as a neutral action and instead responded negatively to this decision. Of course, we also found that participants felt more positive toward a friend who supported them than a friend who opposed them. Interestingly, participants felt as negative toward a friend who remained neutral as they did toward a friend who actively opposed them, suggesting that participants might view staying out of a conflict as nearly as offensive as siding against them.

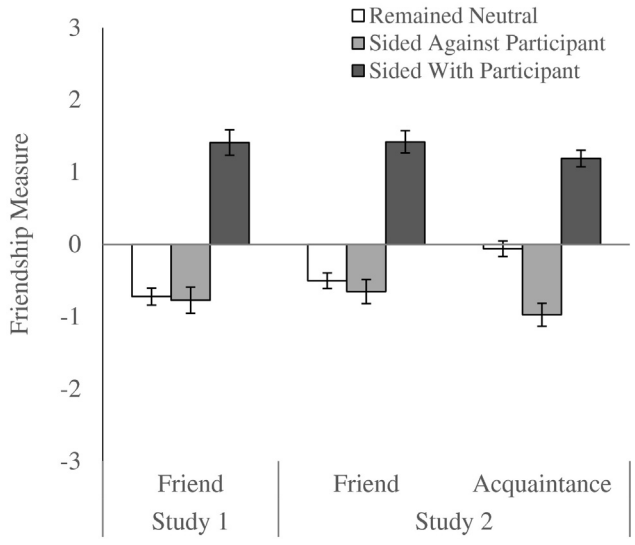

Fig. 1. Ratings on the friendship measure in Studies 1 and 2) by the participant's relationship with the side-taker (friend or acquaintance) and the side-taker's choice (remained neutral, sided against participant, or sided with participant). Error bars are standard errors.

Given that participants viewed a friend's neutrality so negatively, we wondered whether participants who took the role of an outsider to a friend's dispute would actually have considered remaining neutral. If few friends would remain neutral anyway, then perhaps reactions to neutrality would only rarely occur. We recruited a new group of $n = 63$ participants on Mechanical Turk (33 females, $M = 33.35$, $SD = 11.24$). We presented the same vignette from Study 1, except that now the participant swapped roles with Jamie, so that the participant ("You") was the side-taker and Jamie got into the fight with Casey. After reading the vignette, which ended with "…Then Casey looks at you, "Who's being the jerk?", participants answered what they would do in this situation by selecting: "I'm not getting involved, guys" (Remaining neutral), "Casey, you were being the jerk and so you should apologize." (Siding with friend), or "Jamie were being the jerk and so you should apologize," (Siding with acquaintance). (Each option corresponds to the associated condition in Study 1.) We found that 81% of our participants (51 out of 63) chose to remain neutral, 17.5% (11 out of 63) chose to side with the friend, and 1.5% (1 out of 63) chose to side with the acquaintance. Thus, many of our participants did choose neutrality when they were given the option to do so.

3. Study 2

The data from Study 1 demonstrate that people respond negatively to a close friend who remains neutral during a conflict. The alliance model predicts that this will be especially true when a close friend stays out of a dispute against a less close friend. The reason for this prediction is that the alliance model holds that people take sides based on how they rank their friends, and therefore a person has a stronger expectation that they will receive support from a close friend than a distant friend. Moreover, a closer friend occupies a more valuable slot in a person's ranked loyalties, which the person could otherwise offer to more reliable supporter.

Alternatively, people might instead judge neutrality as equally negative, regardless of the strengths of relationships. In fact, an alternative interpretation of the results of Study 1is that people just broadly think neutrality is negative, especially because we used a particular type of neutrality, staying out of a conflict. Staying out of a conflict altogether might convey indifference or an unwillingness to help resolve the conflict. If so, then participants will always see this type of neutrality as negative, and equally so regardless of the strengths of the different friendships.

Hence, the previous results from Study 1 are consistent with both an alliance model and this indifference account. In Study 2, we discriminate between these alternatives by using the same conflict as before, while adding cases when the participant is in the role of the acquaintance instead of the close friend. Specifically, we use a 2 (Role: Friend, Acquaintance) × 3 (Decision: Remained neutral, Sided Against, Sided With) design and measure how the side-taker's decision impacted the friendship.

If people simply respond negatively to the version of neutrality we chose in general, then participants will show the same negative reaction whether they are a friend or an acquaintance of the side-taker. In contrast, the alliance model predicts that participants will react more negatively toward neutrality when they are a friend rather than an acquaintance of the side-taker.

3.1. Method

3.1.1. Participants

We recruited 296 Mturk participants (126 females, ages ranged from 18 to 65, $M = 32.72$, $SD = 10.35$) for this study. They were assigned to one of six conditions: Neutral friend condition ($n = 48$), sided against friend condition ($n = 50$), sided with friend condition ($n = 54$), Neutral acquaintance condition ($n = 51$), sided against acquaintance condition ($n = 47$), and sided with acquaintance condition ($n = 46$). No participants were excluded.

3.1.2. Procedure

We used a 2 (Role: Friend, acquaintance) × 3 (Decision: Remained neutral, sided against, sided with) between-participants design. The vignettes and measures were similar to Study 1: participants read about three people at a bar, two of them were close friends and the other was a mutual acquaintance of both friends. The acquaintance and one of the friends got into a conflict and one of them asked the third individual to take sides. As before, we varied the side-taker's decision (remained neutral, sided with the participant, or sided against the participant). However, in Study 2, we also varied the participant's relationship with the side-taker (friend or acquaintance). The friend conditions were a direct replication of the same conditions from Study 1.

The acquaintance conditions were similar except the beginning of the vignette read, "Imagine that you are out a bar with two people you recently met named Jamie and Casey. Jamie and Casey are close friends." Hence, the participant is described as the acquaintance instead of one of the close friends.

After reading one of the six vignettes, participants answered the same questions as in Study 1 about closeness, damage to the friendship, future support, and blame. Answers to the first two questions (closeness to friend and relationship damage) again showed a strong correlation, $r(296) = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$; so we combined them into a single friendship measure.

3.2. Results

3.2.1. Friendship measure

A 2(Role: Friend, acquaintance) × 3(Decision: Remained neutral, sided against, sided with) ANOVA revealed a main effect of the side-taker's decision, $F(2, 290) = 125.10$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.46$. We found no significant main effect of Role, $F(1, 290) = 0.10$, $p = 0.75$, $\eta^2 = 0$. However, we found a significant Role × Decision interaction, $F(2, 290) = 4.84$, $p = 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.03$. As we predicted, this interaction was driven by the different reactions to the choice to remain neutral by side-takers.

We followed up on this interaction with planned comparisons. We first examined the effects of the side-taker's decision to remain neutral within each type of relationship. In the friend condition, we replicated the findings from Study 1. Specifically, participants' reaction to a friend who stayed out of the conflict did not statistically differ from their reaction to a friend who actively opposed them, $t(96) = 0.75$, $p = 0.454$, $d = 0.15$, again following the idea that a friend who stays neutral is as bad as an opponent. In the acquaintance condition, the results followed a different pattern. Participants responded less negatively to the side-taker who stayed out of the conflict than one who opposed them, $t(97) = 4.81$, $p < 0.001$, 0.98. Moreover, a one-sample t-test (with 4 as the midpoint) revealed that neutrality was only costly (different from the neutral point of on the scale) in the friend condition, $t(49) = 4.77$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.33$, but not the acquaintance condition, $t(48) = 0.55$, $p = 0.54$, $d = 0.16$. These results highlight how people respond differently to a friend who remains neutral compared to an acquaintance who remains neutral.

Next, as expected, participants in both roles felt most positive toward the friend who supported them. Participants felt more positive toward a supporter than a neutral side-taker, Friend: $t(100) = 9.89$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.98$; Acquaintance: $t(95) = 7.83$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.61$. They also felt more positive toward a supporter than someone who opposed them: Friend: $t(102) = 9.08$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.80$, Acquaintance: $t(91) = 10.91$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 2.29$. See Fig. 1.

Finally, we examined the effect of one's relationship to the side-taker on people's response to the side-taker's decisions. We first examined whether the effect of neutrality depends on whether the participant is a friend or acquaintance of the side-taker. In line with the alliance hypothesis, we found that neutrality was perceived as more negative when the participant was a friend of the side-taker compared to when the participant was an acquaintance of the side-taker, $t(97) = 2.89$, $p = 0.004$, $d = 0.59$. We also looked at whether the effects of other side-taking decisions (siding with or against the participant) differed depending on one's relationship with the side-taker. We found no significant difference between friends and acquaintances who sided against the participant, $t(95) = 1.38$, $p = 0.170$, $d = 0.28$, or sided with the participant, $t(98) = 1.16$, $p = 0.250$, $d = 0.23$ (it is worth noting that the non-significant trends in these conditions showed the opposite effect of relationship that we observed for neutrality).

3.2.2. Future support

A 2(Role: Friend, acquaintance) by 3(Decision: Remain neutral, sided against, sided with) ANOVA on future support revealed a main effect of the side taker's decision, $F(2, 290) = 40.98$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.22$. There was no significant main effect of Role,

$F(1, 290) = 2.71$, $p = 0.101$, $\eta^2 = 0.009$, and no significant interaction between Role and Decision, $F(2, 290) = 1.44$, $p = 0.239$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$.

We conducted planned comparisons to follow up on the main effect of Decision. Participants rated a higher likelihood of future support for the side-taker when the side-taker supported them than when the side-taker remained neutral, $t(197) = 6.15$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.88$, or sided against them, $t(195) = 9.03$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 1.29$. They also reported a higher likelihood of future support for the side-taker when the side-taker remained neutral than when the side-taker opposed them, $t(194) = 2.89$, $p = 0.004$, $d = 0.41$ (Table 2).

3.3. Discussion

The results from Study 2 replicated and extended our findings from Study 1: we again found that remaining neutral in a conflict damaged one's friendship and that the extent of the damage depended on the participant's relationship with the side-taker. When the participant was close friends with the side-taker, the side-taker's decision to remain neutral damaged the friendship and was rated to be about as bad for the friendship as when the side-taker opposed them. Participants' reaction to neutrality was much less negative when the side-taker was an acquaintance rather than a close friend. Participants' treated the acquaintance's decision to remain neutral as neutral, not negative, and clearly viewed neutrality as more positive than a decision to side against them. Thus, we did not find support for the notion that staying out of a conflict was viewed as negative regardless of the strengths of different friendships. On the contrary, and consistent with the alliance model, these results reveal that a person's relationship with the side-taker determines how negatively they view neutrality. We also again found that participants who were supported in a conflict felt more positive

Table 2
Study 2 means and standard deviations for friendship indices, by role and condition.

		Remained neutral		Sided against participant		Sided with participant	
Measure	Role	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*
Friendship measure	Friend	−0.50	0.74	−0.65	1.17	1.42	1.14
	Acquaintance	−0.06	0.77	−0.97	1.09	1.19	0.79
Future support	Friend	51.50	19.20	46.10	22.1	73.3	20.1
	Acquaintance	53.00	22.20	40.90	20.7	65.3	16.6

toward the side-taker and participants who were opposed felt more negative. This was true regardless of whether the participant was an acquaintance or a friend of the side-taker. We return to the issue of different types of neutrality (Cobb & Rifkin, 1991) in the General Discussion.

4. Study 3

Our results suggest that people react differently to neutrality from their close friends as compared to neutrality from their more distant friends—remaining neutral in a conflict was only damaging to the friendship when the person who remained neutral was the agent's close friend. We suggest that we observed this difference because when a conflict occurs between two individuals, people expect side-taking to be in the direction of friendship ranking (i.e., interpersonal closeness). Thus, if one thinks that a potential side-taker is a close friend (presumably highly ranked ally) and one gets into a conflict with the side-taker's casual acquaintance (less highly ranked ally), then one should expect the side-taker to support one in the conflict. An alternative account for these results is that people simply have expectations about support from a close friend, regardless of who the close friend is in conflict with. If people's negative response to neutrality is based on overall friendship strength rather than relative friendship strength, then we should expect that there will be a similar negative response to neutrality even when a dispute is between two of the side-taker's close friends. However, if the relative ranking is important, then we should expect to see a reduction in people's negative reaction to neutrality when the relationship between disputants is symmetric (they are equally close friends with the side-taker) as opposed to asymmetric (one is much closer friends with the side-taker).

In Study 3 we investigate this possibility by replicating our friend conditions from Study 2 (asymmetric condition) and comparing this to two conditions in which there is no asymmetry in friendship: where the participants are either all close friends (symmetric friends conditions) or all distant friends (symmetric acquaintances conditions). We again manipulated what action the side-taker pursued— remaining neutral, opposing the participant, or supporting the participant. If our previous results were driven by an expectation that a close friend should take an agent's side no matter what, then we should see an equally negative response to neutrality in both the asymmetric relationship condition and the symmetric friends condition as compared to the symmetric acquaintance condition because the two former conditions involve a side-taker remaining neutral rather than siding with a close friend. However, we predicted that remaining neutral would be view most negatively in the asymmetric condition. We based this prediction on the alliance model sketched above. If the negative impact of remaining neutral is predicated upon expecting others to take sides based on their rankings, then we should predict a stronger negative reaction to neutrality when there is a large discrepancy in the ranking between the two disputants.

4.1. Method

4.1.1. Participants

We recruited 429 Mturk participants (185 females, $M = 34.94$, $SD = 11.90$). They were assigned to one of nine conditions: Neutral asymmetric condition ($n = 50$), sided against asymmetric condition ($n = 49$), sided with asymmetric condition ($n = 53$), neutral symmetric acquaintance condition ($n = 42$), sided against symmetric acquaintance condition ($n = 39$), sided with symmetric acquaintance condition ($n = 41$), neutral symmetric friends condition ($n = 50$), sided against symmetric friends condition ($n = 52$), and sided with symmetric friends condition ($n = 53$). No participants were excluded.

4.1.2. Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to read one of nine vignettes in a 3 (Relationship: Asymmetric relationship, symmetric friends, symmetric acquaintances) × 3 (Decision: Remained Neutral, sided against, sided with) experimental design. The vignettes in the asymmetric conditions were identical to the friend conditions from Study 2. The remaining six conditions were almost identical, except that in the symmetric friend conditions, all three persons depicted were friends and the vignettes began with:

Imagine that you are at a bar with two of your really good friends, Jamie and Casey. The three of you have been friends for quite a while.

In the symmetric acquaintances conditions, all three actors were depicted as acquaintances and instead the vignettes began with:

Imagine that you are at a bar with two acquaintances you recently met, named Jamie and Casey. You have all known each other for only a little while.

As with the previous studies, participants were given a series of measures designed to assess perceptions of friendship after reading the vignette as well as demographic measures. As in Studies 1 and 2, the first two measures of friendship – perceived closeness and perceived relationship damage revealed a strong correlation, $r(439) = 0.85$, $p < 0.001$. Therefore, we again collapsed across these two variables creating a single friendship measure.

4.2. Results

4.2.1. Friendship measure

A 3(Relationship: Asymmetric relationship, symmetric friends, symmetric acquaintances) × 3(Decision: Remained neutral, sided against, sided with) ANOVA revealed a main effect of Decision, $F(2420) = 142.62$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.40$. We again found that participants felt more negatively toward someone who sided against them, as compared to someone who sided with them $t(285) = 15.57$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.84, or someone who remained neutral, $t(280) = 5.58$, $p < 0.001$, d = 0.67. Participants also felt more negatively toward someone who remained neutral as compared to someone who sided with them, $t(287) = 11.25$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.35. There was no significant main effect of relationship, $F(2, 420) = 1.49$, $p = 0.227$, $\eta^2 = 0.007$. There was a significant Decision by Relationship interaction, $F(4, 420) = 2.48$, $p = 0.044$ $\eta^2 = 0.02$. As with Study 2, this interaction was driven by the different reactions to the choice to remain neutral by side-takers.

We followed up on this interaction with planned contrasts. We first examined the effects of the side-taker's decision to remain neutral within each type of relationship. In the asymmetric relationship condition we replicated our findings from Studies 1 and 2. Here participants' negative reaction to a friend who stayed out of the conflict did not statistically differ from their negative reaction to a friend who opposed them, $t(97) = 1.21$, $p = 0.231$, d = 0.25, again following the idea that a friend who does not support someone is as bad as one who is against them. In the two symmetric conditions, the results followed a different pattern. Participants responded more negatively to the side-taker who opposed them as compared to someone who remained neutral, symmetric friends, $t(100) = 8.89$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.78, and symmetric acquaintances, $t(79) = 3.58$, $p < 0.001$, d = 0.81.

Moreover, a one-sample t-test (with 4 as the midpoint) revealed that remaining neutral was only costly (different from the neutral point of the scale) in the asymmetric condition, $t(42) = 5.78$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.78, but not the symmetric friends condition, $t(49) = 0.75$, $p = 0.454$, d = 0.21, or the symmetric acquaintance condition, $t(41) = 1.57$, $p = 0.124$, d = 0.49. See Fig. 2.

Furthermore, as expected, participants in all relationship conditions felt most positive toward the friend who supported them. Participants felt more positive toward someone who sided with them than someone who remained neutral: asymmetric: $t(101) = 7.50$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.49; symmetric friends: $t(101) = 6.36$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.27; symmetric acquaintances: $t(81) = 5.70$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.27. They also felt more positive toward someone who sided with them than someone who sided against them: asymmetric: $t(100) = 7.99$, $p < 0.001$; $p < 0.001$, d =

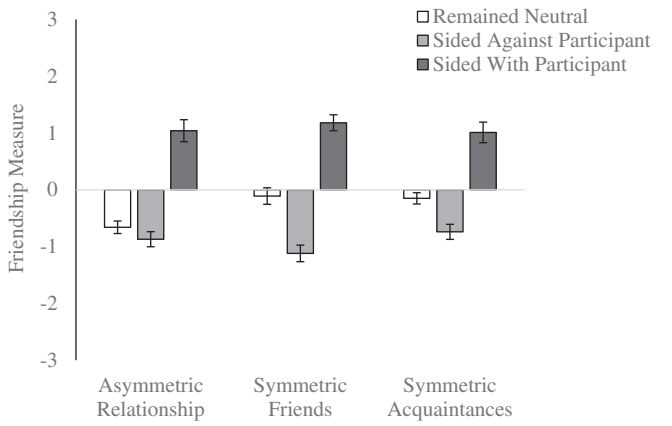

Fig. 2. Ratings on the friendship measure in Study 3 by the participant's relationship with the side-taker (friend or acquaintance) and the side-taker's choice (remained neutral, sided against participant, or sided with participant). Error bars are standard errors.

1.60; symmetric friends: $t(103) = 11.36, p < 0.001$, d = 2.24; symmetric acquaintances: $t(78) = 7.74, p < 0.001$, d = 1.75. See Fig. 2.

Finally, we examined the effect of relationship on people's response to the side-taker's decisions. First, we examined whether participants' response to neutrality depends on whether the interaction is between asymmetric friends, symmetric friends, or symmetric acquaintances. In line with our predictions, we found that remaining neutral was perceived much more negatively when the conflict involved a friend and an acquaintance (asymmetric condition), than either of the symmetric conditions, acquaintances: $t(90) = 3.36, p < 0.001$., d = 0.71, or friends: $t(98) = 3.01, p = 0.003$, d = 0.61. Participants' evaluations of remaining neutral did not statistically differ between the asymmetric friends or acquaintances conditions, $t(90) = 0.24$, $p = 0.807$, d = 0.05. We also found that siding against the participant was perceived as marginally more damaging in the symmetric friends condition compared to the symmetric acquaintance condition, $t(89) = 1.83$, $p = 0.071$, d = 0.39. Participants evaluations of being sided against did not statistically differ in the asymmetric friend condition as compared to either the symmetric friend condition, $t(99) = 1.26, p = 0.212$, d = 0.25, or the symmetric acquaintance condition, $t(86) = 0.65, p = 0.518$, d = 0.14. There were no significant differences in participants' reactions to being sided with when comparing the asymmetric friend condition to the all friends, $t(104) = 0.59$, $p = 0.556$, d = 0.12, or all acquaintances condition, $t(92) = 0.09$, $p = 0.925$, d = 0.02. There were also no differences between the all friends and all acquaintances conditions, $t(92) = 0.74$, $p = 0.461$, d = 0.15. See Table 3.

4.2.2. Future support

A 3 (Relationship: Asymmetric relationship, symmetric friends, symmetric acquaintances) × 3 (Decision: Remained neutral, sided against, sided with) ANOVA revealed a main effect of Decision, $F(2, 420) = 87.40, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.29$. There was no main effect of Relationship, $F(2, 420) = 0.88, p = 0.416, \eta^2 = 0.004$ and there was a marginally significant interaction between Relationship and Decision, $F(4, 420) = 1.98, p = 0.096$.

We conducted planned comparisons to follow up on the main effect of Decision. Participants rated a higher likelihood of future support when the side-taker supported them than when the side-taker remained neutral, $t(287) = 9.90$, $p < 0.001$, d = 1.19, or opposed them, $t(285) = 12.75, p < 0.001$, d = 1.51. They also reported a higher likelihood of future support for the side-taker when the side-taker remained neutral than when the side-taker opposed them, $t(280) = 3.12, p = 0.002$, d = 0.37.

4.3. Discussion

We replicated and extended our previous results: in the asymmetric friendship cases (when the participant is in a conflict with the side-taker's mutual acquaintance), we find that people respond negatively to a friend who remained neutral. Importantly, people did not respond negatively when the side-taker remained neutral in a conflict between two of the side-taker's close friends or acquaintances. These results show that the asymmetry in friendship between disputants, not only absolute levels of friendship between the disputant and side-taker, predicts the negative influence of remaining neutral. That is, people do not always construe a close friend's neutrality as a bad thing; they respond negatively only when the side-taker refuses to support them against a less highly ranked friend. While we found no influence of overall friendship strength, we acknowledge that in some cases absolute levels of friendship will influence how one responds to a friends' side-taking decisions.

We also conducted a supplemental study that sought to provide a replication of the three neutrality conditions from Study 3 (asymmetric relationship, symmetric friends, and symmetric acquaintances) and to deal with two possible concerns about our previous studies: that the future support measure we used was different from our friendship measures and that the midpoint of our DV's was not the word “neutral”. We made these changes to our DV's and also added a baseline condition and found the same pattern of results, see supplemental materials, S1.

5. General discussion

In three studies, we found that participants felt negative toward a friend who remained neutral by staying out of a conflict between them and an acquaintance. Indeed, participants felt as negative toward a friend who remained neutral as they did toward a friend who actively sided against them. In short, participants' attitude toward neutrality mirrored the Biblical aphorism, “whoever is not with me is against me” (Matthew 12:30, New International Version). This implies that neutrality can be costly, not merely neutral. Staying out of a friend's conflict can reduce closeness and damage valuable friendships.

Furthermore, reactions to neutrality showed a nuanced pattern predicted by the alliance model of friendship. Specifically, the costs of neutrality critically depend on how close the side-taker is to each disputant. When participants imagined being a more distant friend of the side-taker, they no longer responded negatively to neutrality (Studies 2 and 3). Related, participants tolerated neutrality from a side-taker,

Table 3
Study 3 means and standard deviation of friendship indices, by role and condition.

		Remained neutral		Sided against participant		Sided with participant	
Measure	Relationship	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*
Friendship measure	Asymmetric	−0.66	0.78	−0.87	0.93	1.04	1.41
	Symmetric friends	−0.11	1.03	−1.12	1.05	1.18	1.02
	Symmetric acquaintances	−0.15	0.64	−0.74	0.83	1.01	1.16
Future support	Asymmetric	45.04	18.25	43.94	19.26	72.55	21.35
	Symmetric friends	49.34	20.64	35.56	19.29	68.19	16.07
	Symmetric acquaintances	47.86	16.49	42.00	19.71	65.95	22.61

even when the side-taker was a close friend, when they were in conflict with another close friend of the side-taker (Study 3), showing the importance of relative friendship rankings.

Importantly, we acknowledge that other factors besides the strength of relationships will also affect perceptions of neutrality, and more generally how a friend responds to a side-taker's choices. One key factor is what the conflict is about and the exact events that transpired, such as who was first to attack, who is in the wrong, the power of the opponent, and how much each side stands to gain or lose. Although people generally expect their close friends to support them, this obligation could be reduced or even eliminated by these other factors. For instance, a person who resists arrest by the police would not typically expect their friend to attack the police, given their overwhelming power.

Similarly, as we mentioned in the introduction, people can justify remaining neutral or even siding against a friend if the friend has violated a moral rule (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009b). While a friend might argue that they were not in the wrong by drawing on selective evidence (Mercier & Sperber, 2011), there are at least some cases when even a friend themselves will recognize that they are in the wrong. In such cases, one's friend might be more tolerant of staying out of the conflict because the friend might not have the same expectation of support. Indeed, one of the key advantages of moral judgment could be that it allows people to minimize damage to the friendship caused by refusing to take a friend's side. In these cases of wrongdoing, people can reassure their ally that their abandonment was due only to the ally's wrongdoing, so the ally can still expect full support in situations where the ally is not clearly in the wrong (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2013). In the present studies, the scenarios did not say either party was in the wrong, and so people expected friends to take sides based on their loyalty rankings. Future research should investigate how moral wrongness influences people's judgment of their friends' side-taking decisions.

Related, people may construe neutrality more positively if a friend more actively intervenes to resolve a dispute while showing impartiality and understanding to both sides. For example, if a friend refuses to take sides, but instead listens carefully to arguments from both sides of a conflict, then both disputants might appreciate this impartial effort toward reconciliation. Indeed, previous research shows that people appreciate leaders who give them an opportunity to voice their concerns about difficult situations or conflicts (Shapiro & Brett, 1993; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Tyler, 2000). In the present studies, we focused on a very simple form of neutrality—staying out of a conflict—which we also found was a common strategy that participants favored for dealing with conflicts between friends (see Study 1, Discussion). Importantly, we found that this form of neutrality is not seen as universally negative; participants judged this same form of neutrality quite differently depending on their friend's relationship to their opponent. Future research should examine more active neutral interventions to see how people can most effectively diffuse conflict while also preserving their friendships.

The ways that friends react to neutrality might also provide insight into debates about the role of reciprocity in close friendships. Reciprocity is a key foundation of cooperation in humans (Axelrod, 1984; Delton, Krasnow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 2011; Rand & Nowak, 2013; Trivers, 1971), and it is a natural extension to see close friendships through this lens. However, researchers have found that multiple aspects of close friendship do not fit with standard reciprocity (Clark & Mills, 1979; DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009a; Fiske, 1992; Silk, 2003; Tooby & Cosmides, 1996); in particular, close friends do not keep careful account of benefits given and received. These observations create a puzzle about the evolutionary functions of friendship, which has spurred alternatives such as models based on alliances (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009a) and social insurance (Tooby & Cosmides, 1996).

When it comes to neutrality, a very simple application of reciprocity would predict that a person should view a friend's neutrality as neutral, since it causes neither a benefit nor a harm. In contrast, the present studies find that people view a friend's neutrality as negative, in some cases as negative as active opposition. Alternatively, a more elaborated version of reciprocity might hold that if friends frequently support each other, then they also expect support in return (e.g., Cole & Teboul, 2004; Kenny, Mohr, & Levesque, 2001; Laurenceau, Barrett, & Pietromonaco, 1998), which could explain why someone would view a close friend's neutrality as negative instead of neutral, while also viewing an acquaintance's neutrality as relatively neutral (as we found in Study 2). However, this elaboration too does not fit with the present pattern of results. Namely, Study 3 found that a participant's reaction to neutrality depends on their friend's relationship with their opponent. That is, participants did not see a friend's neutrality simply as failing to fulfill their reciprocal obligations, but instead, they judged neutrality in the larger social context of their partner's relationship with a third individual, their opponent. It might still be possible to further elaborate reciprocal strategies to allow this type of complex response, but such an account involves multiple steps beyond traditional forms of reciprocity (Axelrod, 1984; Trivers, 1971), and we are not aware of an existing reciprocity account that predicts this pattern, i.e., that a person will require less support from a friend who has a close relationship with a third individual.

In contrast, the alliance model of friendship directly predicts these nuanced reactions to neutrality because a friend who withholds support reveals much less loyalty when the opponent is an acquaintance rather than a close friend of the side-taker. For example, in international politics, if the U.S. remained neutral in a conflict between France and the U.K., France wouldn't be too offended due to the close alliance between the U.S. and U.K., but if the U.S. was neutral between France and Russia, France would learn that the U.S.'s loyalties are much weaker than previously supposed.

More generally, this research draws attention to how dyadic interactions differ from multilateral interactions among three or more players (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009a). In dyadic interactions, a player's behavior can be adequately described as either cooperation or defection because the player is balancing only two interests, their own welfare versus a partner's welfare. However, when there are three or more players with different interests, one player's behavior often cannot be adequately described by either cooperation or defection—a given action will often help some players and harm others (Pietraszewski, 2016). Indeed, for many interactions, including choosing sides in disputes, cooperating with one person requires defecting against another (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009a; Dungan, Waytz, & Young, 2014; Pietraszewski, 2016; Shaw, 2013; Shaw & Knobe, 2013; Waytz et al., 2013).

Unlike models of dyadic interactions, the alliance model formalizes a player's choice not as choosing cooperation or defection, but as choosing a ranking of loyalties to other players (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2009a). These rankings in turn determine how the player will choose sides in subsequent conflicts. Having such allies is important because, all else equal, a fighter with more supporters wins the resource in contention, such as a supply of food, a share of profits, a territory, or a political office (Harcourt, 1992). Hence, a player's ranked loyalties summarize their textured dispositions to help and harm other players to different degrees, and how their choices depend on who is in conflict with whom.

For instance, this mingling of cooperation with defection certainly applies to politics in which policies about divisive issues such as progressive taxation, health care, immigration, or gun control inevitably help some citizens and harm other citizens (Weeden & Kurzban, 2014). Hence, citizens who push for these policies are not well described as cooperators or defectors, and the political arena in general does not fit models such as the prisoner's dilemma or public goods game in which cooperation and defection are the only available moves. Instead, politics fits the alliance model: Citizens choose sides on policies and their decisions help some people and harm others. And many more particulars fit as well; partisans form pacts to side with each other, partisans are offended when their rivals cooperate with each other (rather than showing indirect reciprocity), partisans

urge independents to take a side, and many citizens view others negatively for staying out of political conflicts.

The same complexity arguably applies to moral judgment (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2013). People's moral judgments do not only favor cooperation and oppose defection. Instead, people advocate many moral rules that help some people and harm other people. For instance, moral rules that require obedience to authority favor those in positions of authority and disfavor those who are lower in the status hierarchy. Moral rules that require wealthy people to share money with the poor benefit the poor and harm the wealthy. A variety of other moral rules surrounding property rights, violence, sexual behavior, drug use, and supernatural beliefs benefit some people and restrict others. As a result, people's enforcement of these divisive rules is neither cooperation nor defection, but reflects more sophisticated strategies such as defending allies against enemies, and coordinating side-taking with other bystanders (DeScioli & Kurzban, 2013). We hope the present research helps direct more research attention toward the alliance dynamics underlying friendship, politics, morality, and other related spheres of social life.

In sum, disputants who need allies use a common refrain: you are either with them or against them. We find that people's judgments about their friends closely follow this exhortation. Participants felt less close to a friend who remained neutral, and in some cases neutrality was as damaging to the friendship as actively siding against them. However, people's judgments actually show a little more leeway than this warning suggests. Whether or not staying out of a fight really damages a friendship depends on the strengths of the side-taker's friendships with each disputant. These findings thus make a slight revision to the old adage: whoever is not with me (against a more distant opponent) is against me.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.03.002.

References

Axelrod, R. (1984). *The evolution of cooperation.* New York: Basic Books.

Chen, C. C., Chen, Y. R., & Xin, K. (2004). Guanxi practices and trust in management: A procedural justice perspective. *Organization Science*, *15*, 200–209.

Choshen-Hillel, S., Shaw, A., & Caruso, E. M. (2015). Waste management: How reducing partiality can promote efficient resource allocation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *109*, 210–231.

Clark, M. S., & Mills, J. (1979). Interpersonal attraction in exchange and communal relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *37*, 12–24.

Cobb, S., & Rifkin, J. (1991). Practice and paradox: Deconstructing neutrality in mediation. *Law & Social Inquiry*, *16*, 35–62.

Cole, T., & Teboul, J. C. B. (2004). Non-zero-sum collaboration, reciprocity, and the preference for similarity: Developing and adaptive model of close relational functioning. *Personal Relationships*, *11*, 135–160.

Delton, A. W., Krasnow, M. M., Cosmides, L., & Tooby, J. (2011). Evolution of direct reciprocity under uncertainty can explain human generosity in one-shot encounter. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *108*, 13335–13340.

DeScioli, P., & Kurzban, R. (2009a). The alliance hypothesis for human friendship. *PloS One*, *4*, e5802.

DeScioli, P., & Kurzban, R. (2009b). Mysteries of morality. *Cognition*, *112*, 281–299.

DeScioli, P., & Kurzban, R. (2011). The company you keep: Friendship decisions from a functional perspective. In J. I. Krueger (Ed.), *Social judgment and decision making* (pp. 205–224). New York: Psychology Press.

DeScioli, P., & Kurzban, R. (2013). A solution to the mysteries of morality. *Psychological Bulletin*, *139*, 477–496.

DeScioli, P., Kurzban, R., Koch, E. N., & Liben-Nowell, D. (2011). Best friends, alliances, friend ranking, and the MySpace social network. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *6*, 6–8.

Dungan, J., Waytz, A., & Young, L. (2014). Corruption in the context of moral trade-offs. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Economics*, *26*, 97–118.

Fiske, A. P. (1992). The four elementary forms of sociality: Framework for a unified theory of social relations. *Psychological Review*, *99*(4), 689–723.

Harcourt, A. H. (1992). Cooperation in conflicts: Commonalities between humans and other animals. *Politics and the Life Sciences*, *11*, 251–259.

Hruschka, D. J. (2010). *Friendship: Development, ecology, and evolution of a relationship. Vol. 5.*University of California Press.

Kenny, D. A., Mohr, C. D., & Levesque, M. J. (2001). A social relations variance partitioning of dyadic behavior. *Psychological Bulletin*, *127*, 128–141.

Kurzban, R., & Leary, M. R. (2001). Evolutionary origins of stigmatization: The functions of social exclusion. *Psychological Bulletin*, *127*, 187–208.

Laurenceau, J. P., Barrett, L. F., & Pietromonaco, P. R. (1998). Intimacy as an interpersonal process: The importance of self-disclosure, partner disclosure, and perceived partner responsiveness in interpersonal exchanges. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *74*, 1238–1251.

Lind, E. A., Tyler, T. R., & Huo, Y. J. (1997). Procedural context and culture: Variation in the antecedents of procedural justice judgments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *73*(4), 767.

Macfarlan, S. J., Walker, R. S., Flinn, M. V., & Chagnon, N. A. (2014). Lethal coalitionary aggression and long-term alliance formation among Yanomamö men. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *111*, 16662–16669.

Marmaros, D., & Sacerdote, B. (2002). Peer and social networks in job search. *European Economic Review*, *46*, 870–879.

Mercier, H., & Sperber, D. (2011). Why do humans reason? Arguments for an argumentative theory. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *34*, 57–74.

Murnighan, J. K. (1978). Models of coalition behavior: Game theoretic, social psychological, and political perspectives. *Psychological Bulletin*, *85*, 1130–1153.

Nelson, W. E. (1986). History and neutrality in constitutional adjudication. *Virginia Law Review*, 1237–1296.

Phillips, S., & Cooney, M. (2005). Aiding peace, abetting violence: Third parties and the management of conflict. *American Sociological Review*, *70*(2), 334–354.

Pietraszewski, D. (2016). How the mind sees coalitional and group conflict: The evolutionary invariances of n-person conflict dynamics. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, *37*, 470–480.

Rand, D. G., & Nowak, M. A. (2013). Human cooperation. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, *17*, 413–425.

Ray, D. (2007). *A game-theoretic perspective on coalition formation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reis, H. (2001). Relationship experiences and emotional well-being. In C. Ryff, B. Singer, & R. Davidson (Eds.), *The Wisconsin symposium on emotion* (pp. 57–86). New York: Oxford University Press.

Richardson, D. S. (2014). Everyday aggression takes many forms. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *23*, 220–224.

Sell, A., Cosmides, L., Tooby, J., Sznycer, D., von Rueden, C., & Gurven, M. (2009). Human adaptations for the visual assessment of strength and fighting ability from the body and face. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences*, *276*, 575–584.

Shapiro, D., & Brett, J. (1993). Comparing three processes underlying judgments of procedural justice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *65*, 1167–1177.

Shaw, A. (2013). Beyond "to share or not to share": The impartiality account of fairness. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *22*, 413–417.

Shaw, A., DeScioli, P., & Olson, K. R. (2012). Fairness versus favoritism in children. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, *33*, 736–745.

Shaw, A., & Knobe, J. (2013). Not all mutualism is fair and not all fairness is mutualistic. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *36*, 100–101.

Silk, J. B. (2003). Cooperation without counting: The puzzle of friendship. In P. Hammerstein (Ed.), *Genetic and cultural evolution of cooperation* (pp. 37–54). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Snyder, G. H. (1984). The security dilemma in alliance politics. *World Politics*, *36*, 461–495.

Sterling, A. D. (2014). Friendships and search behavior in labor markets. *Management Science*, *60*, 2341–2354.

Thibaut, J. W., & Walker, L. (1975). *Procedural justice: A psychological analysis.* L. Erlbaum Associates.

Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (1996). Friendship and the Banker's Paradox: Other pathways to the evolution of adaptations for altruism. In W. G. Runciman, J. Maynard Smith, & R. I. M. Dunbar (Eds.), *Evolution of social behaviour patterns in primates and man. Proceedings of the British Academy*, *88*. (pp. 119–143).

Trivers, R. (1971). Evolution of reciprocal altruism. *Quarterly Review of Biology*, *46*, 35–57.

Tyler, T. R. (2000). Social justice. *International Journal of Psychology*, *35*, 117–125.

Tyler, T. R., & Blader, S. L. (2000). *Cooperation in groups: Procedural justice, social identity, and behavioral engagement.* Psychology Press.

Tyler, T. R., & Lind, E. A. (2002). Procedural justice. *Handbook of justice research in law* (pp. 65–92). Springer US.

Von Neumann, J., & Morgenstern, O. (1944). *Theory of games and economic behavior.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Waytz, A., Dungan, J., & Young, L. (2013). The whistleblower's dilemma and the fairness-loyalty tradeoff. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *49*, 1027–1033.

Weeden, J., & Kurzban, R. (2014). *The hidden agenda of the political mind: How self-interest shapes our opinions and why we won't admit it.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.