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“No Planet B”

An analysis of the collective action framing of the
social movement Fridays for Future

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ABSTRACT

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In 2019, the public discourse on climate change has been significantly influenced by the advent of the social movement Fridays for Future. The movement has been calling for measures to mitigate climate change and is composed mostly of young protestors.

This research aims to identify, how Fridays for Future protestors in Germany frame their engagement and what specific role these frames play in their social movement. To do so, the study employs framing theory, theory on collective action frames and core framing tasks.

The study employs a frame analysis of protest signs used within Fridays for Future protests in 10 German cities.

The analysis reveals, how the young protestors frame their engagement through specific climate change related political issues and through their demand for intergenerational climate justice. While the latter frame motivates the youth as an in-group to participate in the movement, the former plays an important role in problem diagnosis and prognosis. Furthermore, protestors frequently frame the underlying problem definition and solution of climate change transnationally.

Keywords: Fridays for Future, Social Movements, Collective Action Frames, Core Framing Tasks

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Introduction

“L’affaire du siècle” (The issue of the century) was the slogan written on a banner carried around during a climate protest in Paris on March 3rd, 2019 (Mouchon, 2019). This protest was one of many that happened on that day in cities all around the world, where young people assembled under slogans such as “Fridays for Future” in order to protest, what they define as one of the most pressing issues of this century.

Despite the global nature of what would become of it, the beginnings of these protests could not have been more mundane. It all started with the actions of a 15-year-old Swedish schoolgirl named Greta Thunberg who went on a school strike in August 2018 in order to protest Sweden’s policies on climate change. Her unconventional political action gradually caught the attention of the media, inspiring likeminded young activists all over the world (AFP & The Local, 2019) who shared her concern for climate change and consequently came together to rally for the global climate protest network known as Fridays for Future (fridayforfuture.org, 2019). An unconventional movement, that has ever since been assembling in many cities of this world.

But what is so exciting about this movement, that would warrant further scientific inquiry within this thesis? Social movements within the field of environmental and climate politics have a long tradition. But in contrast to other climate movements, Fridays for Future unites an almost exclusively young demographics among its ranks. Out of this fact arises a foreshadowed problem questioning in what way this young demographic shapes the sense-making processes of the social movement Fridays for Future.

Background

In order to familiarize the reader with the social movement, more information on its beliefs, participants and communication channels must be provided. This section is ordered by following Diani’s (1992) theory of social movement characteristics, who defines *social movements* to be a social process of actors with a shared collective identity that stands in opposition to a clearly identified opponents and are linked by dense informal networks (Della Porta & Diani, 2006).

Social Movement or Movement Organization?

An important separation within social movement theory reflects the distinction between social movements and social movement organizations. In contrast to the above description of a social movement, Diani, McCarthy and Zald (1987) define a *social movement organization* as a “[...]”

complex, or formal, organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or countermovement and attempts to implement those goals.” (p.1218). While both definitions share obvious similarities, a main point of divergence can be found in the existence of formal structures of organization and communication. The structure of Fridays for Future on a global level is very diverse – as is evident in the usage of a variety of terms such as Fridays for Future, *School strike for the climate* or simply *school strike*¹. Its sub-unit in Germany has somewhat formal structures: The movement has hosted its first ”Sommerkongress” in August 2019 to democratically discuss the movement organization and its program (Schirmer, 2019) and maintains largely consolidated communication channels on a national level. At the same time, the movement is not a registered NGO in accordance with German law and lacks formal organizational hierarchies (Schirmer, 2019). Following McCarthy and Zald’s (1977) understanding of social movement and organizations’ interrelations, we can define Fridays for Future as a global social movement that is structured alongside national sub-units. The sub-units maintain varying levels of formality with the German sub-unit that is best described as somewhere in between a social movement and a social movement organization with a trend towards the latter.

Shared Beliefs of Fridays for Future

Fridays for Future activists share the belief of the demand for radical action to decrease worldwide carbon emissions to prevent further global warming and climate change (fridaysforfuture.org, 2019a). The positions of the Fridays for Future movement has been actively reaffirmed by climate researchers (see Hagedorn et al., 2019). Researchers agree on the significant greenhouse effects caused by man-made carbon emissions onto the earth’s climate and conclude that increasing greenhouse gas emissions have resulted in an overall warming of the earth’s climate. They further conclude that global warming will continue to increase, if drastic measures to decrease worldwide greenhouse gas emission are not implemented. A warming climate will have significant effects on the world’s geographic landscape and ecosystem, such as desertification, sea level rise and a mass extinction of species (P. G. Harris, 2013).

Through this shared belief, the protestors are a part of the wider collective of climate change movements, that itself shares significant connectivity to the broader environmental

¹ We will use the description *Fridays for Future* since it is most commonly used within discourse in Germany.

movement. First activities in the climate change movement started in the 1990s as the scientific consensus on carbon-induced climate change began to consolidate. As a result, a range of organizations on climate change were founded and environmental movement organizations began to increasingly focus on the issue of climate change (Nulman, 2015). Over the years, climate change movement activity, and public attention thereof, has been subject to fluctuations - frequently condensing around significant intra-governmental summits on climate change like the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (BBC News, 2009). The development of a climate change movement in Germany was assisted by the existence of an early environmental movement – whose political “arm” entered parliament in the 1980s (Uekötter, 2015).

The Protestors of Fridays for Future

The discursive practices, like the choice of the alternative name “School strike for the climate”, indicate, that the movement protestors perceive themselves to be part of a grass-roots youth movement (see Wright, 2015). While such proclamations by movements may not always correspond with its actual characteristics², a survey by Zajak et al. (2019) confirms the overall young age of the Fridays for Future protestors: It finds, that the average age of Fridays for Future protestors is 25,8 years and a majority (52,8%) of them are between 14-19 years of age (Zajak et al., 2019)³. Furthermore, the survey provides details into the socio-democratic features of the protest participants: 55,6% of them have obtained or are seeking a university-entrance diploma (*Abitur*), while 31,4% are in university or have obtained a university degree. Only 7,1% of protestors have lower levels of education⁴. The high levels of education are similarly visible in the education levels of the protestor’s parents with half of them holding a university degree. A majority (57,6%) of protestors are female, an aspect unusual for most gender-unrelated social movements. Analogue to this finding, the German and international movements distinguish themselves by having female leader figures: Greta Thunberg, seen as the initiator of the protest movement, is active in the movement in a quasi-diplomatic role regularly meeting with international government officials and engaging in other publicity

² see the concept of *Astrourfing* e.g. in Cho et al. (2011)

³ the authors designate the survey as “largely representative” (p. 6) controlled through parallel method of surveying within protests and a comparison with an online questionnaire.

⁴ This includes the German education levels *Realschulabschluss*, *Hauptschulabschluss*, elementary school (*Grundschule*) and no education.

events (@GretaThunberg, 2018). In the German media sphere, movement activists like the 23-year old Luisa Neubauer have gained a significant media profile (Kaiser, 2019) by participating in German political talk shows or writing op-eds in newspapers (Ritter, 2019).

The Networks and Operation of Fridays for Future

The informal networks of the global protest movement are transnational in nature claiming to have held protests “in more than 125 countries and in well over 2000 places” (fridayforfuture.org, 2019). Similarly transnational is the loose organizational structure of the network that is indicated in the existence of a hierarchy of region-specific movement websites (fridaysforfuture.org, 2019b). It is therefore historically situated as part of a long timeline of transnational social movements. Having such social movements on a transnational scale is not a new phenomenon but goes in hand with the globalization of policy fields (Cohen, 2004). Hochschild (1999) documents the mobilization of a proto-social movement in Western countries against the exploitation of the Kongo by the Belgian King Leopold II in the middle of the 19th century. In the 20st century, central transnational political movements revolved around issues of global social justice criticizing economic globalization and its political institution like the G7 (formerly G8) summit (Porta et al., 2007).

The informal networks underlying Fridays for Future manifest themselves both virtually using computer-mediated communication and through their main messaging vehicle of repeated, globally networked protests in cities. The protest uses *computer-mediated communication* technology (see McQuail, 2005) for the functions of both external protest messaging and internal protest coordination. The German city groups sampled in this study all maintain at least a Facebook page and, in some cases, further social media platforms (e.g. Twitter). A frequent posting type within social media are photos of previous city protests of the sub-group, featuring many protest signs.

Structure of the Thesis

The introduction section has broadly familiarized the reader with the social movement Fridays for Future. The study now introduces the aim of research as well as the underlying research question. In the following section, the body of existing research on subjects similar to the research question are investigated. The study then specifies the applied theories and provides information on the methodology used in this study. The main section then describes in detail the information generated through the analysis of the empirical data of this study. The answer to the research question is then discussed in light of the previous research and further conclusions are drawn.

Aim and research questions

Research Aim

The research background has provided us with knowledge about the central aspects of the Fridays for Future movement: its shared belief in climate change mitigation, the special demographics of the protest participants and its reliance on networked city protests to make their voices heard.

Drawing from this background, the aim of this research is to identify, how Fridays for Future protestors in Germany make sense of their own engagement to combat climate change within their central communicative medium, the street protests. A further aim is to define, what roles these different ways of sense-making play within the organization of the social movement.

Research Question

As a result, we arrive at the following research question consisting of two sub-research questions:

How do the youth protestors of the social movement Fridays for Future in Germany frame their engagement in the street protests?

- Which sense-making frames do the youth protestors employ within their street protest?
- What tasks do these frames fulfill within the social movement organization and processes?

Previous research

Research on Fridays for Future

Having held its first major protest on March 15, 2019, Fridays for Future is a relatively new social movement. As a result, the body of research on it is significantly limited, and to the present author's knowledge there does not exist any peer-reviewed qualitative studies on this protest movement - including those applying a *framing theory* approach. What do exist are quantitative surveys of the protest movement that survey and analyze sociodemographic characteristics of the Fridays for Future protestors. A representative survey by the German *Institut für Protest-und Bewegungsforschung* finds that German Fridays for Future protests are predominantly visited by teenagers and adolescents (52,8% of participants are between 14-19 years old) confirming the protests self-description as a movement of young people (Zajak et al., 2019). The researchers identify a gender imbalance with a majority (57,6%) of the protestors being female – a ratio that is, as the authors describe, unusual for political demonstrations. Furthermore, most participants identify themselves as part of the left-wing political spectrum. These sociodemographic findings are reproduced by an international, representative study (Steinebach, 2019).

Climate Justice and other Climate Change Frames

Similar to the research question at hand, Wahlström et al. (2013b) investigate the collective action framing of climate change activists during protests in the cities of Copenhagen, Brussels and London. Their research questions revolve around the concrete demographics of the protestors, the employed collective action frames and the reasoning, why these framings vary among protestors. They do so by conducting a quantitative analysis of protestor surveys. Wahlström et al. find a variety of different frames active throughout the protests. The most frequently invoke framing of climate change by protestors (44%) was through a solution through “changing individual opinions and behaviours” (p. 18). Followed by a solution through “legislation and policy change” (p. 18), which is preferred by 41% of all protestors. A more radical framing of solving climate change through “system change” is invoked by around 15% of the protestors. Interestingly, they do not find significant emergence of a global justice framing among the protestors, although a majority of protestors consider themselves as part of the global justice movement.

Despite the lacking evidence of a climate justice framing in Wahlström's study, this frame is the dominant subject in climate movement frame research. Summarizing most researchers definition of the climate justice frame (Della Porta & Parks, 2014; Pettit, 2004; Schlosberg &

Collins, 2014; Wahlström et al., 2013a), Scholl (2013) names the four central pillars of climate justice: This frame perceives climate change as a transnational problem and fundamentally questions the ability of the current economic system to tackle it appropriately. It furthermore challenges the inequality of responsibility between the *Global North* and *Global South* in the struggle against climate change and criticizes the Western dominance in climate politics. Furthermore, Chatterton's et al. (2013) investigation of the practices of the COP15 climate summit protest in Copenhagen 2009 asserts, that this framing entails three central logics: A climate justice framing is predominantly an antagonistic framing that reacts to the attempts of the dominant political discourse to portray climate change as a technical and "post-political issue" (p. 15). It also constructs and expands the idea of a *Commons*, meant as the human perception of being closely in common with others as well as the sum of collectively owned territorial entities. Thirdly, the protest creates networks of transnational unity and solidarity between different locales across the Global South and the Global North, that can adequately contest the existing transnational power structures. Comparing the transnational diffusion of the climate justice frame after the Copenhagen climate summit to other social justice frames, Scholl (2013) finds that the climate justice frame lacks a transnational *political subjectivity*, the definition of the central agent of change, which caused a national differentiation of the protest.

Researchers frequently invoke a gradual shift in importance over the recent years from a technocratic and non-political climate change frame to a socio-critical climate justice frame. In line with Scholl's definition, Pettit (2004) identifies that the issue of climate change has been predominantly framed by the countries of the North as an environmental issue. Whereas in the South, it is a matter of social development, as climate change more acutely threatens the livelihood of their populations. He adds, that the emergence of a climate justice movement in the North, together with its issue framing, is related to an increased understanding of the climate-poverty links among the populations of the North.

Similarly, Della Porta and Parks (2014) make out a significant shift in importance of movement organizations, from those applying a moderate frame on climate change, like Greenpeace, to those that apply a more radical and system-critical climate justice frame. The researchers focus their investigation on these two dominant framings of climate change and analyze the differences in terms of their diagnostic, prognostic and motivational *collective action tasks* (see Benford & Snow, 2000). As far as the diagnostic and prognostic framing tasks are concerned, the moderate climate change organization accept the existence of the political and economic status quo and advocate for changes through existing channels. Climate justice organizations, however, see the political and economic status quo as the root cause of the

climate emergency and demand solutions that overhaul the entirety of the political and economic system. While both organizations advocate direct-action techniques to organize, differences exist in the character of such actions. The climate justice organizations more explicitly invoke the need to “shift gears” (p. 10) and promote civil disobedient or illegal actions to achieve the movement goals. More classic climate change organizations’ direct action, mostly, has the goal to attract people’s attention by going through the media as a conduit - an action which conforms with the conventional rules of political action. The direct-action radicalism of the climate justice frame plays a role in its motivational framing task, as the need for radicalism is used as a key component to attract supporters. The fundamental differentiation between moderate and radical movement organization framing is similarly visible in Reitan’s and Gibson’s (2012) study on the Canadian climate movement networks. They find, that these movement networks can be differentiated between those that promote regulation through policy change and technological development and those that include significant aspects of “leftist tendencies of reform, revolution and radicalism” (p. 399) in their framing.

Given their theoretical relatedness, studies into the prevalence of certain climate change discourses might also prove rewarding: Bäckstrand and Lövbrand (2007) analyze the dominant stakeholder discourses during and after the climate change negotiations of 2012. Conceptualizing a discursive framework of the power-knowledge relationships at play, they uncover three climate change discourses dominating in this debate: The *green governmentality* discourse refers to a “science-driven and centralized multilateral negotiation order, associated with top-down climate monitoring and mitigation techniques implemented on global scales” (p. 124). The discourse of *ecological modernization* “represents a decentralized liberal market order that aims to provide flexible and cost-optimal solutions to the climate problem” (p. 124). The discourse on *civic environmentalism* “includes radical and more reform-oriented narratives that challenge and resist the dominance of the two former discourses” (p. 124). While these discourses do not relate to grassroots social movement participants, they do resemble the above-described different frame types proposed by other researcher. While the green governmentality and ecological modernization discourses make use of the existing political and economic structures to find solutions to climate change and, therefore, resemble the more conventional climate change frames; the civic environmentalism discourse invokes the radicalism and antagonism present in the more climate justice frames outlined by Della Porta and Parks (2014) and others.

Framing in Environmental or Youth Movements

As researchers indicate, the climate change movement and their respective frames are a direct offspring of their equivalents within the sphere of environmentalism. As a result, collective action frames within environmental movements are similarly worth investigating.

Within environmental movements, a social justice frame is similarly a frequent subject of research. Taylor (2000) takes the body of case studies involving environmental justice, and identifies this frame's strengths for social movements. Using Goffman's (1974) theory on frame alignment processes, she identifies the strengths in its ability to bridge the interests of involved social actors as well as to sync the environmental cause with that of social justice: "The [Environmental Justice Movement] uses the [Environmental Justice paradigm] to amplify or clarify the connection between environment and social justice" (p. 566) and extends the audience of the movement to include people "not normally recruited by reform environmental organizations" (p. 566). McGurty (2000) investigates the shifting of environmental frames in a cases study of one U.S. county's environmental policy discourse. She identifies the frame "Not in my Backyard (NIMBY)" as being the predominant frame of residents, as far as the construction planning of environmentally polluting infrastructure was concerned. Through this framing, residents of more affluent areas were able to push the location of waste management sites in the vicinity of less affluent areas. These areas were predominantly inhabited by ethnic minorities – uncovering the NIMBY frame's functional relationship with *environmental racism*. Through collective action, thought leaders were able to shift the dominant framing of environmental policy in this county from a NIMBY frame to a socio-critical environmental justice frame.

Whereas the trend towards climate justice framing implies a shift towards more radical and adversarial tactics of collective action, the work by Pellow (1999) focuses on environmental movement frames that involve a collaborative and consensus-oriented solution prognosis. Drawing from Benford and Snow's (2000) core framing tasks, he derives four concurring frames from his open-ended interviews with movement participants: In the political economic frame, the activists identify the source of the issue (frame diagnosis); the environmental justice frame is an articulation of their demands (frame prognosis); the collaborative frame is created as a result of their interaction with opponents; and the tactical frame is an articulation of the movement's tools and tactics. The author considers this collaborative framing as the result of the movement maturation and realization, that consensus-oriented collective action can help achieve movement goals. On a similar note, Morrill and Owen-Smith (2002) investigate the role of collective action frames in the successful implementation of environmental conflict resolution strategies across different environmental stakeholders.

Since Fridays for Future is a youth movement, research on collective action framing in youth movements may also prove worthwhile for this study.

Mochizuki (2009) performs a case study on the collective action framing of a popular youth movement in the Niger delta. His focus lies *not* on the different frames used by the youth movement itself, but the effects of other stakeholder's framing of the movement as a youth movement. According to the researcher, this label helped the activists in the early stages of the protest to appeal to other social agents to join their cause and pressure the political elites to commit to reforms. Later, the effectiveness of the youth frame faded as programmatic differences between the youth movements and politically aligned organizations began to deepen and the youth frame became more negatively connotated. Similarly, Scott (2014) examines the youth frame existing in the New Left political movement of the 1960s USA. Their youth frame enabled young people to group around a shared identity and contest their perceived oppression by society through displays of political radicalism. While maintaining different research objects, both studies highlight the political leverage unleashed through the youth frame's associating characteristics of being young, agile and the radical part of society.

Terriquez et. al. (2018) perform a study on the undocumented youth movement in the USA that demonstrates, how activists deploy intersectionality as a multipurpose collective action frame. Their study makes use of semi-structured interviews of movement activists and is guided by Benford and Snow's theory of core framing tasks. They find *intersectionality* to be a diagnostic frame that helps activists "make sense of their own multiply-marginalized identities" (p. 1); a motivational frame that inspires action; and a prognostic frame that "guides how activists build inclusive organizations and bridge social movements" (p. 1). Furthermore, the researchers identify a need for youth movements to be a positive space, inclusive to diverse identities, so that the negative political experiences inherent in antagonistic collective action can be absorbed by a solidly united movement.

While not exclusively a phenomenon of the youth, the emergence of social networking and other internet-related phenomena has opened the question, in what way social media affects the dynamics inherent in social movements. One such proposed effect relates to the process of *frame diffusion*. Research on social movement frames traditionally assume that frames primarily diffuse from the organization head and movement leaders to the individual movement member (Buechler, 2016). The unique viral distribution dynamics inherent in social media and the Internet has led researchers to assign participant frames a heightened importance in their role to develop master frames (Bennett, 2003; Hara, 2008; Hara & Huang, 2011). Nonetheless, in Bashir's (2012) quantitative analysis of leader and participant frames of

an Egyptian youth movement, he found a strong overlap between leader and participant frames.

Framing in Other Movement

Benford (1993) investigates the collective action framing of the nuclear disarmament movement and identifies four frames, or “*vocabularies of motive*” (p. 195), that provide the movement participants with the compelling “rationales to take action on behalf of the movement and/or its organizations” (p. 195). These vocabularies revolve around the severity of the political issues at hand, the sense of urgency attached to the issues, as well as the efficacy of movement action and a sense of propriety or moral ownership of the problem. Chesters’ and Welsh’s (2004) frame analysis of a global, social justice movement march identifies three dominant collective action frames, which they represent by the three dominant colors of the march. While the *Blue* frame promotes confrontation, direct-action and, if necessary, violence during the event; the *Pink* frame tries to occupy the street through “playful, ludic and carnivalesque forms of protest” (p. 328). The *Yellow* frame orientates towards mediation and communication and appeals to the other movement stakeholder for multiplying effects. Reese and Newcombe (2003) show in their study on collective action frames of the US welfare movement organizations, that social movement organizations, unsurprisingly, employ frames that are in line with their core beliefs and ideologies. However, they find also that the level of ideology dogmatism within a social movement has a negative influence on the capability of social movement organizations to adopt strategically maximizing collective action frames.

Drawing from the concept of *frame resonance* (Benford & Snow, 2000), the connectivity between collective action framing and the cultural environment is researched by Gamson et al. (W. A. Gamson, 1988; W. A. Gamson, Gamson, et al., 1992; W. A. Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) They coined the concept *cultural resonance* to mean the synchronization of collective action frames and symbols and contents of the cultural capital (see Bourdieu, 1986) of the protestors, that, if in sync, can facilitate the core framing tasks. Kubal’s (1998) social movement field study of a US grassroots movement advances this concept to show that the movement activists’ collective action frames vary depending on the audience and the differing cultural environments the audiences are inhabiting. He divides these environments into the more private backend and more public frontend settings.

Positioning the Study

The analysis of previous research has identified a number of research gaps, that legitimize the research at hand. Despite the significance of Fridays for Future in climate change discourse in

Western countries, there, to the knowledge of the researcher, does not exist any significant quantitative or qualitative study on this climate movement.

Furthermore, this analysis has identified *frame analysis* to be a frequently applied theoretical lens in the examination of the sense-making of climate, environmental and other social movements. Especially the thematically strongly related studies of climate movements by Wahlström et al. (2013b) and Della Porta and Parks (2014) make use of a frame analysis approach, including theories on collective action framing and framing processes by Benford and Snow (2000, etc.). An investigation of the Fridays for Future movement using these theories is therefore reasonable and adequate.

Also, the analysis of previous research has uncovered an emphasis on the climate or environment justice frame as the focus of frame analysis research on climate and environmental movement. As the arguably most important climate movement in recent years, an investigation into whether and, if yes, how this frame is resonant within the Fridays for Future movement is highly warranted. Furthermore, the unusual characteristic of Fridays for Future as a youth movement opens the question, what influence this characteristic has on the sense-making processes in the social movement.

Theoretical frame and concepts

Social and Environmental Movements

This research draws from Diani's (1992) conceptualization of a *social movement* as a social process of actors with a shared collective identity. These movements maintain a set of beliefs ordered by, what Zald and McCarthy (1977) call, a "preference structure towards social change" (p.20). It stands in opposition to clearly identified opponents and is linked by dense informal networks (Della Porta & Diani, 2006). Participation in a movement is a manifestation of *strategic resistance* towards a societal status quo that is a form of individual agency emerging from a person's *critical consciousness* (action + reflection = praxis; Freire, 2018; Noguera & Cannella, 2006). Environmental movements maintain a close relationship to science as the epistemic origin of their beliefs and basis of core arguments. Environmental movement movements often have an international character – both in relation to the transboundary nature of the issue and its solution. They often offer sound criticism as well as alternatives to capitalist industrialism (Yearley, 2005).

Framing Theory and Collective Action Frames

A *frame* is an interpretation of an aspect of reality that is conceived in accordance with the individual's pre-existing thought system or *frame in thought*. The concept was first developed by Ervin Goffmann (Della Porta & Parks, 2014). Revealing its roots in the constructionist perspective (Della Porta & Parks, 2014), framing is said to have a structuring function as it "organizes everyday reality" (Tuchman, 1980, p. 193) and promotes the individual's view on aspects of it (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Framing relates to the communicative practice, as it is a "process by which a communication source [...] defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy" (Nelson et al., 1997, p. 221). It is a widely used theoretical approach in the research of communication studies, investigating political and news discourses. Furthermore, framing theory is considered a valuable tool in the analysis of social movements and their participants (Della Porta & Parks, 2014).

According to Della Porta and Parks (2014), framing was first theorized for social movements by Benford and Snow (see Hunt et al., 1994). Since social movements consist of individuals that frame reality, these movements are similarly in a constant collective process of building and interpreting the real world, including "events, persons and symbols" (Della Porta & Parks, 2014, p. 4), through their cognitive schemes. As the result of these cognitive processes, these frames provide characteristics and definition to the social movement interactions (Ward & Ostrom, 2006) and fulfill a social movement's central function to diagnose a problem, to define

the necessary solutions and to designate means to achieve this goal (Benford & Snow, 2000). These frames do not adhere naturally to the real-world, but are the result of interpretative processes of social interactions performed by the movement with internal and external stakeholder (Benford & Snow, 2000). When the collective action frames of a movement and its intended audience become congruent and complementary, they achieve a state of *frame alignment*, which in turn creates *frame resonance* between those of the movement and the audience (D. Snow & Benford, 1988). Frames within social movements frequently apply a reductive approach in defining group allegiances and distinguish between movements protagonists and antagonists. This process is described by the concepts of *boundary framing* as proposed by Hunt et al. (1994) and by *adversarial framing* by Gamson (1995). The fundamental process shares resemblance with the concept of *othering* (see Jensen, 2011), which describes the cognitive understanding of the self in relation to a constructed other.

Given the distinct hierarchies and communicative patterns in social movements, scholar have further differentiated various kinds of collective action frames. One such differentiation follows the vertical hierarchies within a movement's organization. As a result, researchers differentiate between *organization or leader frames*, those frames that are propagated by the movement leadership or individual leaders of the movement, and *participant frames*, those frames that are held by the movement participants (Buechler, 2016). Another frame category exists in relation to hierarchies of the frames itself. Snow and Benford (1992) define a *master frame* as a generic type of collective action frame that is wider in scope and influence than normal collective action frames. The characteristics and attributions of this master frame are elastic and flexible enough, so that other social movements can also adopt this framing successfully in their cause (Benford, 2013).

Nonetheless, a framing perspective on social movement suffers from some short comings. Works involving frame analyses tend to portrait the complex and dynamic processes in a too static, reductionist and oversimplistic fashion. Furthermore, such research tends to show elite biases by focusing too frequently on leadership frames and neglecting participant frames (Benford, 1997).

Framing Devices and Core Framing Tasks

Gamson and Lasch (1983) state, that all frames contain a specific set of *frame elements*, that together make up a unique *frame signature*. The authors divide the signature elements into framing devices, elements that “suggest a framework within which to view [an] issue” (p. 4), and reasoning devices, those that “provide reasoning or justification for a position” (p. 4). The

theory on frame signature and frame elements by Gamson and Lasch is a frequently employed frame analysis technique (e.g. Azad & Faraj, 2013; Blyth et al., 2012; Creed et al., 2002).

Furthermore, frames can be investigated in relation to their underlying action-oriented function, the core framing tasks. The *diagnostic framing task* relates to the frame's capacity to locate and vocalize an issue existing in the real world and to associate responsibility of this issue to a certain social actor. The *prognostic framing task* corresponds with the object of social movement to define a solution to the given problem and to find strategy and tactics to achieve this solution. The *motivational framing task* meets the movement's need to organize its in-group and out-group alliances and motivate all actors to join their call to action (Benford & Snow, 2000; D. Snow & Benford, 1988; Wahlström et al., 2013a). Collective action frames vary in relation to their capacity to achieve these core framing tasks (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). The question of how to empirically measure and analyze collective action frames has been describes as "controversial" (Vicari, 2010, p. 504). To fit the demands of the research object, this research combines the operationalization of Vicari's (2010) *frame semantic grammar*, that is suited for written texts, with a general content analysis of written texts and visual imagery. The concrete operationalization is outlined in the Methodology section.

Method and Data

General Research Design

The goal of a research method is to adequately address the research questions of a study (Hansen & Machin, 2013). As outlined above, our research investigates the complex cognitive process of *sense-making* of the shared beliefs of young climate protestors within the context of a social movement. The investigated object is therefore a complex cognitive process performed by individual protestors within broader social movement dynamics. The benefit of a qualitative research approach lies in its capability to discover and explore complex social processes deeply and in detail – a specific demand originating out of the research question (Atieno, 2009). The method of a qualitative *frame analysis* sets forward to “sort out the underlying logic” (Creed et al., 2002, p. 39) implicit within this cognitive process of sense making. The method maintains a stringent micro-sociological lens onto broad and complex social processes (Mills et al., 2010) and highlights the significance of a social actor perspective within the sense-making process (Creed et al., 2002) – especially important for our shifting protest participant and social movement approach. Furthermore, the review of literature within this study as well as Creed et al. (2002) indicate, that frame analysis is a commonly used tool in the research of sense-making schemes of social movements.

Data Types, Collection and Analysis

While framing is principally a purely cognitive phenomena, it becomes salient through its manifestations in communicated *texts* (Entman, 1993). As a result, media researchers can make use of social movement texts in order to uncover the underlying cognitive processes of the movement participants. The text types, that are being analyzed in our study, are protest signs, including both written statements and visual illustrations. Protest signs are extensive carriers of discourse (Kasanga, 2014) and as a result adequate for frame analysis.

The data collection strategy includes the following steps: After selection of the sampled cities, the Internet is checked for social media accounts of the Fridays for Future sub-groups. The social media accounts are manually checked for published photos that contain protest signs. These photos are then transferred into the document management tool OneNote and categorized according to the Fridays for Future sub-groups.

Observing active frames within social movements without extensive cognitive derivative work is difficult (Azad & Faraj, 2013). At the same time, processing social movement speech through deep analysis of texts introduces a level of opaqueness into the analysis process (David et al., 2011; Scheufele & Scheufele, 2010). To counteract this opaqueness, the demand arises to devise

an analytical framework that makes the underlying procedural steps and cognitive processes on the researcher's part as transparent as possible. The theory underlying this research is a composite largely of the theoretical work of Benford and Snow (2000) and Gamson and Lasch (1983). The analysis theory of frame elements and his operationalization including the frame signature matrix technique that has been adopted frequently by frame researchers (e.g. Azad & Faraj, 2013; Blyth et al., 2012; Creed et al., 2002) and the methodology by Vicari (2010) to operationalize collective framing tasks. The concrete elements of these operationalizations are described in detail in the Theory section.

The data analysis follows the following procedural steps:

1. The material is analyzed superficially resulting in the emergence of a set of pre-cursory frames. These pre-cursory frames will then be categorized into frame material clusters within the note taking software OneNote. These material cluster are the basis for the deep analysis of the data (see David et al., 2011).
2. The data will then be coded and analyzed in accordance with the frame signature elements (see W. A. Gamson & Lasch, 1983):
 - a. A *metaphor* tries to invoke an increased understanding of a principal subject by linking it to an associated subject whose attributes and relationships provide implications to the principal object. For Gamson and Lasch, a political cartoon is an example of a carrier of dynamic metaphors.
 - b. An *exemplar* is a real event in the past or present that is used by the framer in order to provide understanding of the frame. The authors see the Korean War as an exemplar for the US governments indirect aggression framing of the justification behind the Vietnam War.
 - c. A *catch phrase* is a "statement, tag line, title or slogan" (p. 5) that summarizes the central statement relating to the principal subject in a short and pointed manner. The report title "Invasion from the North" is an example of a catch phrase used by the U.S. administration that provides indications of its framing of the Vietnam war. *Depictions* are short characterizations of the principle subject through metaphors, exemplars or "colorful strings of modifiers" (p. 5). Lyndon Johnson described his critics of his Vietnam policy as "nervous nellies".
 - d. *Visual imagery* are icons and other visual images that describe the nature of a certain frame. For example, the U.S. flag is the dominant visual imagery symbolizing the country USA and their military effort in Vietnam.
3. The data will then be analyzed according to Vicari's (2010) framing task operationalization:

Verb Modality	Verb Category	In-Group Subjectivity	Out-Group Subjectivity
Modal	Obligation	Diagnosis	Diagnosis
	Ability/Possibility	Prognosis	Diagnosis
	Intention	Prognosis	Diagnosis
Non-Modal	Action	Motivation	Diagnosis
	Character	Motivation	Diagnosis
	Definition	Motivation	Diagnosis

This is augmented with an analysis of the concrete content and themes of the catch phrase and visual imagery and its relevance for the core framing tasks.

4. Insofar as the analysis uncovers a mismatch of pre-cursory frame and frame elements, the procedure will start anew by the re-stating of pre-cursory frame (step 1). The first process part is finished, as soon as frame elements and pre-cursory framing match.

Sampling and Material

The complex, qualitative nature of the research object, involving a variety of different sense-making frames, requires us to apply a research method that allows us to inductively accept theory based upon the analysis of the material. As a result, we will make use of a *grounded theory* approach (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967) within our research and apply a *theoretical sampling method* whereby the researcher chooses to collect and analyze material based upon their productivity to construct an *emerging theory*.

The sample is composed of a total of 432 protest signs, that were published on the Facebook site of the Fridays for Future sub-groups in Ulm, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, München, Augsburg, Hamburg, Bremen, Köln, Leipzig and Dresden. The cities were selected in order to include a geographically balanced set of German cities. The publishing date considered ranges from January 2019 to July 2019.

A full breakdown of material investigated is visible in Appendix. Implications relating to the scope of meaningfulness will be discussed in the *conclusion* chapter.

Ethical Considerations & Role of Researcher

Ethical consideration must continuously be taken into account within the research process (Seale, 2017). Central to all research lie the codes of ethics to conduct research accurately and neutrally (Christians, 2005). Furthermore, the nature of research including non-adult populations requires us to briefly discuss resulting ethical challenges. While all ethical considerations for adult participants apply also to children, questions relating to a child's competence to consent, and the child's vulnerable status in society, require special consideration (Morrow & Richards, 1996). While this research investigates frames employed by children, it does not conduct any data gathering directly from young participants. All research data is drawn from social media platforms of the Fridays for Future protests. The analyzed data is therefore public through its presentation within a public protest and its dissemination through a public medium. Nonetheless, protestor faces are blacked out on all photos.

For a researcher engaged in non-positivistic research, it is due diligent to reflect on their own interpretive research process through the lens of social construction. We must acknowledge the role of the researcher not as an objective recorder of truths but as a subjective interpreter of the social world. This interpretation of reality will always be to some extent influenced by the ideological system of the researcher (Creed et al., 2002). Accepting this limitation of scientific inquiry does not negate the results; but helps us to find ways to improve the validity of the research through acts of "self-interrogation" (p. 49). The findings must not only be questioned within the confines of the applied theory and concepts – but within the context of the social position of the researcher. The personal demographic and ideological position of the researcher as a young university graduate, who has previously engaged in environmental activism, puts the researcher in a special position in relation to the research object. On one hand his demographic and ideological features puts him in close proximity to those of the regular Fridays for Future protestor (see Zajak et al., 2019). As a result, the acquired knowledge would have to be categorized as *emic* knowledge (see M. Harris, 1976) and appropriate conclusion be drawn. Nonetheless, while there might be ideological overlap, the age difference between the researcher and most of the protestors is so significant, that the research cannot be reasonable considered *emic*. The present research considers this aspect by "interrogating" its findings in the conclusion.

Reliability of Research

The reliability of research is improved through the relatively large sample of included cities and amount of protest signs investigated. For practical purposes, the investigation of frames,

employed during the street protests, has to make use of data that was published on the online platforms of the respective Fridays for Future sub-group. While this data collection technique somewhat pre-filters the sample of images, it is all things considered an appropriate data collection technique. A data collection through presence at the demonstrations is not feasible in the case of 10 sampled cities. At the same time, this potential “filtering” is performed by the social movement itself – a filter that corresponds with the target of the research question. Making use of press media, on the other hand, would have introduced an out-group filter.

Analysis

The data analysis has uncovered three dominant collective action frames: the *Issue Field* frame, the *Intergenerational Justice* frame and the *Transnational* frame. Each frame-related sub-section will describe in detail the individual frame elements that are employed in the three collective action frame and then analyze the role of this frame for the core framing tasks.

Frame A: Climate Change as the Totality of Individual Issue Fields

This collective action frame portrays climate change through specific political issue fields by “atomizing” climate change into its component parts. The frame is present on a total of 68 protest signs. These issue fields are articulated on the protest signs in the form of climate change causes and climate change solutions. The different issue fields vary in terms of their relatedness to climate change. While energy, transport and food/agriculture policy are the predominant sub-frames of this collective action frame, some protestors invoke issue fields unrelated to climate change on their protest sign, like LGBT rights, far-right populism or cannabis legalization. The issue fields furthermore vary in terms of the political radicalism and the spatial scope of the political issue.

The issue fields identified on the signs can be categorized into those, that are causally linked to climate change and are therefore an original part of climate change discourse; issue fields that are environmental concerns but only indirectly related to climate change; and issue fields that are both unrelated to climate change and the environment.

Table 1: Different political issue fields displayed on protest signs of the Friday for Future protests.

Relation to Climate Change	Political Issue Field	Sub-Themes / Exemplars	Number of Signs
Directly Related	Energy	<i>Issue diagnosis:</i> coal energy, “RWE” <i>Issue prognosis:</i> renewable energies including wind and solar, “Hambacher Forst”	27
	Transport	<i>Issue diagnosis:</i> cars and other automotive transport; traffic congestion and smog	11

		<i>issue prognosis: bike and its infrastructure</i>	
	Food & Agriculture	<i>Issue diagnosis: meat consumption, herbicides (glyphosate), insect extinction, “Bayer”</i> <i>Issue prognosis: veganism, ecological agriculture</i>	8
Indirectly Related / Mostly Unrelated	Consumerism	<i>Issue diagnosis: plastic products; plastic pollution in ocean</i> <i>Issue prognosis: Recycling</i>	11
	System Criticism	<i>Issue diagnosis: capitalism</i>	8
	LGBT	<i>Issue prognosis: LGBT rights, “Stonewall riots”</i>	3
	Migration Policy	<i>Issue prognosis: “no borders”</i>	2
	Drug policy	<i>Issue prognosis: cannabis legalization</i>	2
	Far-Right Politics	<i>Issue diagnosis: far-right party “AfD”</i>	1
	Foreign Policy	<i>Issue prognosis: Kurdish State</i>	1

Energy Policy

The most referenced policy issue of this collective action frame is energy policy with a total of 27 protest signs⁵. One frequent exemplar is the reference to the political debate around coal energy. A significant part of Germany’s energy mix is produced from coal-powered power plants and therefore subject of sustained criticism from environmentalists. Next to political debate on the national level, some energy policy exemplars are specifically local in nature: The

⁵ If the occurrence count of the frame element is not mentioned directly in the text, it is listed within brackets. A complete set of frame elements and its occurrence counts is depicted in the Appendix.

Fridays for Future protest in Hamburg references the pre-existing environmental movement against the deforestation of the Hambach forest (3), a German forest that is planned to be demolished for a surface coal mine extension and is therefore subject to frequent protests (see dw.com, 2018). Next to locally distinct protest events, the activists emphasize the role of energy companies as an exemplar through the distinct mentioning of the company RWE on their signs (3).

The protest signs of this issue field feature a diverse set of catch phrases, that generally do not re-occur more often than twice. The predominant number of phrases build their meaning around the German word “Kohle” (coal). The word is used individually as part of a meaningful word play or compound words such as “Kohleausstieg” (exit from coal energy), “Kohlestopp” (coal stop) or “Braunkohle” (brown coal). The sign mentioning the pre-existing Hambacher protest movement features the slogan “Hambi bleibt!” (*Hambi stays!*) – a slogan frequently used within the Hambach Forest protest movement (see dw.com, 2018) and mentioned twice on signs. The company RWE is mentioned twice on the protest signs within the slogans “Stop RWE” and “Lieber THC statt RWE” (THC instead of RWE)⁶.

Visual imagery of these protest signs feature in 6 cases the silhouettes of the industrial complexes of coal energy generation, including a surface mine excavator with its characteristic bucket-wheel and coal power plants. In contrast, two protest signs depict a wind turbine as a symbol for renewable energy production. The protest sign with the catch phrase “Stop RWE” is designed in the visual appearance of a European traffic stop sign.

The phrases and imagery of this issue field carry certain important symbolisms. As the issue field of energy production doesn’t materialize directly within the life reality of most individuals, the protestors employ certain objects to symbolize the criticized industry - the most prominent being the term “coal” and its visual representation. This transfer is exemplified in the catch phrase “- Sag mir ‘was schmutziges, Baby. - Braunkohle” (-Tell me something dirty, baby. - rown Coal). Firstly, the material itself and its features carry certain negative cultural meanings – that are associated with its black color and ability to stain the material it touches. Secondly, the word “Kohle” has the secondary colloquial meaning in the German language of money or cash. The catch phrase “Keine Kohle für die Kohle“ (no cash for coal) makes use of this double meaning in order to construct a critical political statement. It implies somewhat of a capitalism-critical value judgement, positioning the coal industry as an industry safeguarded

⁶ Further meaning of this catch phrase is discussed in following sections.

by the moneyed classes of society – whilst standing in opposition to the people. This symbolic meaning connects neatly to the symbolism represented by the mentioning of the company RWE. While protestors criticize RWE’s business practices themselves, the company also represents the energy industry as a whole. As a result, protestors criticize the capitalistic profit interest that is a key driver of their carbon-intensive business practices. This anticapitalistic symbolism is neatly exemplified in the catch phrase “Scheiß auf das Monopol der Macht namens Kohlekraft!” (Fuck the monopoly of power, that is carbon power!) occurring once during the protests.

Transport Policy

References to the issue field of transport are invoked less often with a total of 11 mentions on protest signs. While the previous issue field of energy policy predominantly uses the political debate around Germany’s reliance on coal energy as an exemplar and maintains therefore a more abstract relationship to the protestors, the exemplars for transport policy are situated well within the daily experiences of the young protestors, through their participation in urban transport. As a result, the applied catch phrases, visual imagery and symbolisms reference these daily experiences as exemplars. They furthermore invoke a necessity on the side of the citizens to change habits, whilst other protest signs reference existing political debates around further regulation of Diesel-powered cars and the higher taxation of air transport.



Figure 1: Protest sign mentioning energy policy and the energy producer “RWE” featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Cologne (left). Protest sign mentioning both plastic pollution and transport policy featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Dresden (right).

Within the catch phrases of this issue field, no particular phrase is dominating. In their messaging, the catch phrases both invoke the liability of the political system and individuals: The slogan “Nimmst du statt dem Auto mal das Bike, kommst du besser durch den Schülerstreik” (When you take the bike instead of the car, it’s easier for you to pass through

the student protest) directly references the traffic disruptions caused by the protests and invokes a responsibility for motorists to change their habits (1). Another protest sign stating “ÖPNV instead of SUV” (public transport instead of SUVs) demands from individuals to frequent public transport more often. The twice used slogan “Verkehrswende statt Weltende” (transport turnaround instead of end of the world) invokes the political depiction “Verkehrswende”, that is a frequently used German key word for the transition to less-carbon intensive transport alternatives. The catch phrase “Airplanes cheaper than trains - why?” references air traffic and the need to increase ticket costs for carbon-intensive modes of transport (1).

The visual imagery attached to this issue field almost exclusively includes depictions of transport vehicles. Illustrations of bicycles are used a total of 4 times, whilst cars are depicted a total of 3 times. These illustrations are frequently augmented with qualifying symbols such as checkmarks and cross bars.

The transport vehicles depicted on the protest signs are used as symbols for the different modes of transportation in society. The protest signs thereby construct a clear polarity between modes of transport deemed as environment-friendly and environment-unfriendly. Depictions and mentions of bikes and public transport (“ÖPNV”) serve as symbols for the former, while those of cars and planes serve for the latter. This unequivocal polarity is exemplified in the catch phrase “ÖPNV statt SUV” (Public transport instead of SUVs). Within this polarity, the car category sports utility vehicle (SUV) is used as the prime symbol for environmentally-unfriendly transport modes – given its high carbon emissions and non-essential utility.

Food & Agriculture Policy

References to the issue field of food and agriculture are invoked less often with a total of 8 mentions on protest signs. The protestors invoke the exemplars of everyone’s daily diet to advocate for less-carbon intensive diets, such as meat-free or vegan diets (4). They also invoke political responsibility to act by mentioning political debates around the regulation of the herbicide Glyphosate. This exemplar is frequently mentioned by protesters in combination with the concern regarding dying bee population commonly attributed to herbicide use. Like the issue field energy policy, the protestors include the main manufacturer of Glyphosate Bayer into their used exemplars (2).



Figure 2: Protest sign mentioning food policy featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Ulm (left). Protest sign featuring the company Bayer as well as bee illustrations featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Cologne (right)

The catch phrases used in this issue field are again very diverse in nature. The catch phrases advocating veganism like “Stop eating meat” (1), “Save lives go vegan” (1), “Vegan for the animals” (1) direct their plea towards individual’s habit. Catch phrases regarding the use of Glyphosate are in two cases targeting the company Bayer, for example in the once used slogan “Für mehr Umweltschutz + sichere Arbeitsplätze bei Bayer weltweit” (pro environmental protection + secure jobs at Bayer worldwide). One protest sign in the city in Munich states: “Kein Glyphosat im Freistaat” (No glyphosate in the free state [of Bavaria]).

The signs promoting dietary shifts do not feature any visual imagery. On the other hand, catch phrases featuring the company Bayer and its use of Glyphosate frequently go together with its corporate logo – in one example augmented with two red bars crossing out the logo. In another case, the Bayer logo is fused with a stop sign illustration and the characteristic letters of the logo are replaced by illustrations of flames. Next to the corporate logo, the exemplar of diminishing insect population manifests itself in the visual imagery through usage of bee illustrations on the protest signs (2). One sign featuring the exemplar of political debates on herbicides is illustrated with the head of the agricultural minister of Germany superimposed on a child’s body. The figure holds a bee in his hand and is framed by the catch phrase “Kein Glyphosat im Freistaat” (No glyphosate in the free state [of Bavaria]).

Whereas the call to dietary change predominantly employs literal and non-symbolic language, the exemplar of Glyphosate use is frequently enriched with symbolic meanings. Firstly, the use of the Bayer logo and the depiction of specific German politicians on protest signs employ a similar symbolic meaning as in the case of energy policy. These symbols stand as representatives of the societal actors, politics and the herbicide industry, that the protestors deem responsible for issue. The depiction of a skull and bones, the traditional symbol of death,

next to Glyphosate forms a single-valued metaphor (see W. A. Gamson & Lasch, 1983) attaching the characteristic of deadliness to the herbicide.

Other, unrelated issue fields

Next to these issue fields, the protestors show protest signs highlighting the issue of consumerism and plastic waste (11). This issue field similarly makes use of exemplars situated within the live reality of the protestors and invokes an individual responsibility to avoid plastic pollution. Next to the reduction of plastic use, protestors invoke the need to transition towards a consumption culture of reusing daily items. Furthermore, protestors employ issue fields that are not directly related to climate change or environmental protection: These issue fields include LGBT rights (2), migration policy (2), Cannabis legalization (1), criticism of right wing populism (1) and Kurdish independence (1). Another important issue field refers to protest signs that offer general criticism of the economic system (5).

Catch phrases on the topic of plastic pollution frequently employ the word “Plastik” (plastic) in order to convey a meaning. One catch phrase displayed twice states “Wir wollen kein Plastik mehr!” (We don’t want to have plastic anymore!). The phonetic similarity of the word “mehr” (more) and “Meer” (sea) creates a secondary meaning of “We don’t want to have a plastic sea!”. One protest sign demands from people to pick up their trash: “Einmal Müll aufheben kostet nix“ (Picking up your trash is free of charge). The issue field of migration policy is mentioned through the catch phrase “Burn borders, not coal” that - next to the energy policy-specific message - also carries a political message critical to restrictive migration policies. A similar merging of two political messages - one related and one unrelated to climate change - is visible in the case of drug policy: The once used catch phrase “THC statt RWE” (THC instead of RWE) signals the protestors opinion on drug policy as well as energy policy. One protest sign featuring the catch phrase “Keine Zukunft, kein Frieden” (no future, no peace) also features the hash tag “#riseup4rojawa” which is used in activism around Kurdish nationalism. Criticism towards the economic system is voiced through the catch phrases: “System change, not climate change” (5); “Kapitalismus abschaffen!” (Abolish capitalism!; 1) and “smash capitalism!” (1)



Figure 3: Protest sign voicing system criticism featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Augsburg (left). Protest sign mentioning drug policy featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Cologne (right).

The signs featuring the issue field of plastic pollution do not feature any visual imagery. The issue field of LGBT policy is signaled by the use of the rainbow-colored LGBT flag by a total of two protestors. Furthermore, one protest sign explicitly references the “Stonewall Riots”, a violent demonstration by members of the gay community in the 60s USA. The topic of right-wing populism finds mentioning in the use of an illustration with the words “FCK AFK” (Fuck AFD) referencing the German right-populist party “AfD”.

Core Framing Tasks of the Frame

This *Issue Field* frame plays a significant role in the diagnostic and prognostic framing tasks, as it defines clearly the underlying political issue and its solution. Furthermore, the inclusion of issues unrelated to climate change serves a motivation framing task, as it locates the social movement within the field of left-wing social movements.

The findings of the previous section relating to this frame’s elements proves also helpful for the discovery of its core framing tasks. As the analysis has shown, core elements of this frame are the depictions of concrete policy issues, that are causal to climate change (e.g. coal power) and the policy solutions to climate change (e.g. solar energy). As a result, the discovered elements of this frame mimic the features of both the diagnostic and prognostic core framing task. But while this frame provides the movement with a sense of what is wrong and how to fix it, it less so delivers a sense of who is to blame for climate change.

Next to this, a semantic grammar analysis provides further indications of the diagnostic and prognostic task of this frame. The catch phrases of this frame frequently emphasize certain political issues negatively, whilst highlighting corresponding Green political solutions positively. These catch phrases frequently make use of a certain grammatical form, combining an action verb (e.g. “abolish”) and a particular aspect of a political issue (e.g. “coal power”) in

the imperative form. Vicari defines phrases making use of action verbs in combination with an out-group subjectivity as indicative of a diagnostic framing task. In this study's case, this group of catch phrases makes use of action verbs, but it lacks an explicit indication of its subjectivity. Nonetheless, one can assume, given the concrete design of these catch phrases, that they are at least partially intended for the out-group and imply a "they" subjectivity. The most common catch phrases employing this grammatical form are: "Kapitalismus abschaffen" (Abolish capitalism), "Stoppt die Kohle für die Pole!" (stop coal for the poles) and "Save lives go vegan!". Other notable mentions are "Einmal Müll aufheben kostet nix" (Picking up the trash won't cost you anything).

Among the catch phrases of the *Issue Field* frame, two phrases contain semantical grammar that indicates a prognostic framing task. This category of catch phrases frequently makes use of a grammatical form combining an in-group subjectivity with a modal verb, predominantly one that marks intentions, and references to a particular political issue. A combination that is described by Vicari as indicating a prognostic framing task. The two catch phrases following this scheme is "All I want for Christmas is Kohleausstieg!" (All I want for Christmas is an exit from coal!) and "Wir wollen kein Plastik meer" (We have had enough of plastics!). While the subjectivity of some of these phrases are 1st person singular, one can assume that its subjectivity is not limited to only this specific individual but to the entire in-group.

The presence of a range of issue fields unrelated to climate change can be analyzed in relation to its role as motivational framing task. Significantly, all these discovered issue fields (Consumerism, System Criticism, LGBT Rights, Migration Policy, Drug policy, Far-Right Politics, Foreign Policy) and their underlying prognostic or diagnostic statements fall within the spectrum of common left-wing political positions. It can therefore be assumed, that there exists a certain ideological linkage or proximity between these political ideologies and the core ideology of Fridays for Future protests. Aware of the closeness of ideologies, the inclusion of climate change unrelated protest signs can be interpreted regarding its role within the social movement's motivation. Beyond a mere display of the prognosis and diagnosis of these unrelated issue fields, their display has the goal to signal the political and ideological location of the Fridays for Future movement for other protestors or members of the in-group.

Frame B: Climate Change as the Failure of Adults and Intergenerational Justice

The second collective action frame uncovered in this research invokes climate justice as a matter of intergenerational justice and is present on 105 protest signs. The elements of this collective action frame display significant *adversarial framing* across generational lines, constructing a protagonist group of *the young* and an antagonist group of *the old*. Exemplars of their interactions with the adult society, predominantly the school and family life, are important event categories that exemplify their end of the bargain as part of the symbolic intergenerational contract. At the same time, adult inaction on climate change is articulated as a breach of this intergenerational contract. The breach of contract and notions of threatening the retreat from these societal commitments are a key theme in the catch phrases of this collective action frame. This frame furthermore includes references to the protestor's pop-cultural environment within their frame elements.

This collective action frame makes use of frame exemplars that are taken out of the daily experiences of the youth protestors. As a result, the events, that the protestors reference, reflect the central areas of young individual's life in society and their families. Most references are made in connection to their societal responsibility to attend school and to educate themselves. A total of 27 protest signs include a reference to the education system or school. Next to this exemplar, the protestors also invoke their position within their own families (4), making references to family members, as well as aspects relating to their private sphere (1), referencing common youth concerns.

These varying exemplars are visible in the catch phrases used throughout the protest. The protestor's contact with the education system is referenced often within catch phrases and these catch phrases are generally diverse in nature. The most frequent catch phrase for the school exemplar is "Das Klima ist aussichtsloser als mein Abi"⁷ (The climate is more hopeless than my final exams) with a total of 3 mentions. Other catch phrases of this exemplars mentioned twice are "Der Klimawandel wartet nicht, bis wir unseren Abschluss haben" (Climate change won't wait until we have our diploma); "Why should we go to school, if you won't listen to the educated?"; and "Wozu Bildung ohne Zukunft" (Why educate ourselves, when there's no future). Another exemplar referenced in catch phrases is the protestor's private existence as part of their family. In these catch phrases, the protestors reference family members as characters of authority: 3 protest signs read "Respect your Mother", with one

⁷ Slight variation exists in the phrasing of the individual cases.

superimposing a depiction of the earth over the “o” in the word “Mother” and creating a metaphoric connection between the two terms. Another protest sign reads “Mutti empfiehlt: Bildungstreik fürs Klima” (Mother recommends: Education Strike for the Climate). Next to the student’s partaking in school and family life, one protest sign references the exemplar of a young person’s private sphere: It reads “Das Wetter ist unregelmäßiger als meine Tage” (The weather is more irregular than my period).



Figure 4: Protest sign making use of the school exemplar featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Cologne (left). Protest sign making use of the family exemplar featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Cologne (right).

Furthermore, this collective action frame is expressed in catch phrases invoking a call to mitigate climate change targeted at the two central stakeholder groups of this frame. These catch phrases can be distinguished between those that invoke guilt and responsibility to act on side of the group of *the adults* (28) and those catch phrases that express a need onside of *the youth* to act through self-empowerment (22). While being categorizable into these two broad themes, the catch phrases are again very diverse in nature. The most common catch phrase (2) invoking adult responsibility is “Wir streiken, bis ihr handelt.” (We strike until you act); and “Geht nicht so mit dem Umwelt um“ (Do not treat the environment like that). The two themes of adult responsibility and youth empowerment often occur simultaneously on protest signs, as the former catch phrase indicates. Whereas this phrase demands adults to “act”, it also indicates youth agency through their capacity to strike and influence politics. Furthermore, the catch phrases targeting adults make use of reductive personal and reflective pronouns in their definition of who is responsible (21). A good example is found in the catch phrase “In welche Tonne gehört eure Klimapolitik?” (In which garbage can does your climate policy belong?) shown on the Facebook profile of Fridays for Future Stuttgart.

The most used phrases, containing elements that address fellow young people and that are invoking youth empowerment, are “March now or swim later!” (3); “Raise your voice, not the sea level” (2) and “It’s our future” (2). This category frequently employs words that express ownership and agency: the word “voice” (3) is used as an expression indicating decision-making authority, whereas the personal and reflexive pronouns “our”, “us” and “we” signal ownership. Furthermore, the frequent use of words indicating atemporal dimensions are noteworthy. 6 protest signs use the words “future” or the German equivalent “Zukunft” in phrases that forecast both the positive (a livable world) and negative case (disaster) of climate change action and inaction. In contrast, words that indicate the present tense including “now”, “jetzt” (now), are used as part of phrases formulating a demand for *the adults* to act situated in the present (5).



Figure 5: Protest sign (“Earth to Politics - Act!”) appealing to the out-group of adults to act - featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Cologne (left). Protest sign appealing to youth empowerment featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Stuttgart (right).

While most protest signs do not specify the spatial scope of their catch phrase, some catch phrases (8) of this collective action frame make explicit reference to a transnational scope – and therefore overlap with the *Transnational* collective action frame. Some catch phrases have a transnational agency appeal: “We are the world. We are the children” (1); “Our Planet, our voice!” (1); “Fickt lieber einander, statt unseren Planeten” (Rather screw yourselves than our planet); “Rettet die Welt” (Save the world!) or “Because it’s our only planet” (1). While others just reference transnational symbols (1 occurrence): “Rettet die Welt” (Save the world!).

The young character of the movement in-group is a central element of this frame and is furthermore present in catch phrases that make use of cultural references of popular culture or Internet culture. In total, 10 catch phrases used during these protests make use of such references. Internet culture references are frequently depicted in the format of Internet memes (see Bauckhage, 2011). The most frequently used catch phrase with pop-cultural reference (5) follows the template “Earth is getting hotter than [person]”. The addressed individuals in this

catch phrase are either characters from popular culture, like the singer Harry Styles or other individuals. Other protest signs reference movie culture, like one protest sign featuring the famous quote “Run Forest Run!” of the popular movie “Forrest Gump”. The protest sign is illustrated with three trees running away from a construction vehicle. Furthermore, some protest signs make use of the visual imagery of Internet memes in order to convey their message (5). One such protest sign (see Figure 6) makes use of the Internet meme Distracted Boyfriend (see knowyourmeme.com, 2019c) in order to criticize misaligned priorities of politicians. This meme depicts a woman and a man walking together past another woman on a street. As the man turns his head to look at the passing woman, the accompanying woman looks at him angrily. In the usual style of this meme, the labels “Save Banks”, “Politicians” and “Save Climate” are superimposed over the passing woman, the man and the accompanying woman, respectively. Other Internet memes used by protestors are the Surprised Pikachu meme (see knowyourmeme.com, 2019d) and the Drakeposting meme (see knowyourmeme.com, 2019b) – all visible once on protest signs. One Internet meme features a photo collage with the head of Greta Thunberg superimposed on the illustration of a dragon neck. Next to the illustration, “Greta is coming” is written, invoking the popular Winter is coming meme (see knowyourmeme.com, 2019a) with symbols of the TV show Game of Thrones. Other protest signs make use of visual imagery of PC culture depicting, in one case, a computer progress bar at 99% with the text “Selbsterstörung läuft...” (self-destruction running...) and, in one other case, an illustration of the main character of the PC game “Pacman” eating a stylized earth. The text “Game over?” is written underneath the illustration.

Apart from the use of Internet memes, this collective action frame rarely makes use of visual imagery. The only protest sign related to this frame containing imagery is from the Facebook account of Fridays for Future Ulm and features a self-illustrated cartoon. It depicts an old man handing a burning globe to a young kid. Next to the old man, a man in a suit is lying in a coffin. The coffin is labeled with the German political party acronyms “CDU”, “FDP” and “AfD”. Above the cartoon, it is written “Das haben sie euch überlassen“ (That is what they left to you).



Figure 6: Protest signs depicting cultural references in the form of Internet memes (left). Protest sign depicting a cartoon featured on the Facebook site of Fridays for Future Ulm (right).

The frame elements of this collective action frame convey a range of symbolic meanings, It sees climate justice as maintaining elements of intergenerational justice. The above-mentioned cartoon (see Figure 6), as carrier of dynamic metaphors (see W. A. Gamson & Lasch, 1981), readily provides indications to this connection: The cartoon metaphorically compares the symbolic intergenerational handover of the earth as the living space of humankind to the legal practice of inheritance. But whereas an actual inheritance provides a net positive for the inheritor, the metaphor reverses the concept and states, that the youth and future generation inherit a living space that has been made unlivable – symbolized by the illustration of a burning planet. The collective action frame criticizes the justness of this reality – constructing a climate justice argument.

A central feature of the argument for climate justice as Intergenerational Justice is the clear definition of which group is suffering and which is to blame for the issue at hand – a process described by the terms *boundary framing* (1994) or *adversarial framing* Gamson (1995). This effort is clearly visible in the elements of this frame. It is visible in the cartoon, where the age of the depicted actors follows the young and old dichotomy: The kid receiving the inheritance symbolizes the younger and future generations and the deceased individual and person in the middle are representatives of the older generation. The mentioning of political parties in this context further enhances the definition of the group to blame by it being a symbol for the powerful segment of the old.

But this critique is not merely a definition of grievances but is aggregated with a distinct call to action both to young people to empower themselves and for adults to use their political power for change. The breach of this generational contract and notions that threaten the retreat from these societal commitments are a key theme in the catch phrases of this collective action frame.

Core Framing Tasks of the Frame

The *Intergenerational Justice* frame plays a significant role in the motivation of the movement participants. The choice of grammar and the polarization between “us” and “them” inherent in the catch phrases deliver the necessary call to action to motivate in-group activities. This is similarly demonstrated in the adoption of youth cultural codes (Internet memes etc.), that narrow the audience of the catch phrase towards the movement’s in-group. Furthermore, the frame plays a role in the personified issue diagnosis and prognosis.

Vicari (2010) sees a combination of nonmodal verbs and first person plural subjectivity as a clear indication for an underlying motivational framing task. This choice of linguistic features is strongly visible within catch phrases of the *Intergenerational Justice* frame. A total of 21 protest signs depict catch phrases that make use of the words “we”, “us” or “our” in combination with nonmodal verbs. Examples for such catch phrases are “Wir streiken, bis ihr handelt” (We strike until you act) with 2 occurrences, “Why should we go to school, if you don’t listen to the educated” (2) or “Wir streiken, weil nur so unsere Stimme gehört wird” (We are striking because that’s the only way our voice will be heard) with one occurrence. Further 3 catch phrases make use of the words ‘I’, ‘me’ or ‘my’ and nonmodal verbs, a combination that could reasonably be assumed to maintain a group-inclusive secondary meaning.

Occurrences of 1st person plural (or singular) viewpoints without an action verb also occur on a regular basis. Examples are “Mein Abi ist aussichtsloser als das Klima” (My exams have less perspective than the climate; 3 occurrences), “It’s our future” (2) or “I have a voice” (1). Despite the lack of verbs, these phrases serve a motivational framing task through their group-specific power and agency attribution.

While Vicari states, that a phrase with a 3rd plural subjectivity is an indication of a diagnostic framing tasks, it plays a similarly – or arguably more important – role in motivational framing. A total of 18 catch phrase reference the group of adults through words such as “you”, “they”, etc. The most frequent catch phrases are “Wir streiken, bis ihr handelt” (We strike, until you act) and “Why should we go to school, if you don’t listen to the educated” with both 2 occurrences. Other such catch phrases include “Mit Abschalten⁸ ist nicht euer Hirn gemeint” (We don’t mean your brain, when we talk about shutting off) and “If you don’t act like adults, we will” (both 1 occurrence). These catch phrases make use of the transactional polarity of

⁸ “Abschalten” is the German word for to shut off as well as, in its imperative form, a frequently used slogan of the anti-nuclear and anti-coal power movement.

antagonist action and protagonist reaction and are therefore a vehicle indicative of the adversarial framing of the protests. This is only effective, since the protestors announce their action specifically in re-action to the antagonist's action – turning the “you” statement into a vehicle for the motivational framing task. Consequently, the catch phrases lay bare, how confrontation and radicalism can be used as a key component to attract supporter.



Figure 7: Protest signs depicting a cultural references (left) and a catch phrase including action verb and “we”-subjectivity vs. “they” subjectivity (right).

Furthermore, the catch phrases and visual imagery including popular and Internet culture references are also indicative of the motivational core task of the frame. These elements are used in order to convey a protest related meaning (e.g. articulate a policy preference), that is encoded by a particular cultural repertoire. In turn, these messages can only be decoded, if the recipient is aware of the specifics of the popular culture reference or Internet meme and shares that cultural repertoire. This can be demonstrated by one illustrated protest sign (see Figure 7). It featured the slogan “FCK KHL” as part of a red and white illustration on black background. Only with the necessary cultural repertoire, individuals can deduce the meaning of this illustration, which is related to the logo of 90’s Hip-hop band RUN DMC. This logo has previously been adopted by other political organizations to convey political messages. Aware of this practice, it is now easy to decode the catch phrase to mean “Fuck Kohle” (Fuck Coal). This process of culture-specific coding and decoding underlines every communicative practice, but it arises to special importance as far as the motivational framing task of the Internet and popular cultural references on the protest signs are concerned. It can be deduced, that by coding it in this particular way, protestors sub-consciously or consciously target these protest signs not primarily towards the out-group of adults but towards members of their own group of young people. As a result, the inclusion of Internet and pop-cultural catch phrases and visual imagery serves a motivational framing task, as these cultural symbols signal the protestor’s belonging to the in-group.

Apart from its dominant role within motivational framing, this frame can also be attributed a diagnostic and prognostic framing task. The, previously mentioned, highly personified nature of many catch phrases, that are instrumental to the construction of the adversarial framing of this frame, also plays a role in the issue diagnosis and prognosis. Whereas the *Issue Field* frame outlines the policy solutions, that cause and solve climate change, the *Intergenerational Justice* frame provides the issue diagnosis and prognosis a personified level of who's to blame and who's responsible. Whereas the personified component of the issue diagnosis clearly shifts the blame onto the movement antagonists, the old generation, the personified issue prognosis of who is responsible to affect change, is shared both by the movement antagonists and movement protagonists. This is due to this frame's employment of both youth empowerment and adult responsibility within its frame elements.

Frame C: Climate Change as Transnational in Scope and in Responsibility

Protestors frame both the issue of climate change and their own engagement as transnational in scope and responsibility and is present on 144 protest signs. For this purpose, they make use of a range of frame elements, that symbolize globalism and transnationality. Catch phrases frequently feature synonyms for the planet earth and depict the globe as visual images on their protest signs. This frame overlaps significantly with the other two frames.

The collective action frame manifests itself in a range of different exemplars. Firstly, it does so through the mentioning of certain political issue fields that have previously been discussed in the *Issue Field* frame. In this case, the issue field of migration policies in favor of open border policies, mentioned twice on posters, maintain a significant transnational character. At the same time, protestors employ transnational exemplars by referencing political discourses, that are situated outside of the national political spectrum. In two cases, protestors reference the US president Donald Trump directly or indirectly within their protest signs.



Figure 8: Protest sign featuring an illustration of the globe and the common catch phrase “There is no Planet B” featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Cologne (left). Protest sign with an illustration of ice bears, an animal that is not native to Germany, featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Stuttgart (right).

Most frequently, catch phrases of this frame are created through the mentioning of words that convey belonging beyond national boundaries. These words are most often the English and German term for “planet” as well as “world” - but also metaphors of these words like “house” (1). Catch phrases using these words frequently appear in the protests. The most used catch phrase throughout all collective action frames is the phrase “There is no planet B”, employed a total of 26 times. Other catch phrases including these words are “We are the world, we are the children” (2); “Our house is on fire” (1); and “Our planet, our choice” (1).

A catch phrase exemplar voicing preference towards open migration policies is the phrase “Burn borders, not coals” (2). And a catch phrase referencing a foreign political discourse is “Climate change ain’t fake news” (1).

Next to the catch phrases, the *Transnational* frame becomes visible in the choice of illustrations used as part of the protest signs. The protestors very frequently add illustrations of the planet earth to their protest signs. These illustrations are with a total of 97 cases by far the most common illustration used throughout all protest signs. Frequently these illustrations are augmented with specific modification, that add another layer of meaning to the illustrations. Some protest signs depict the planet as an ice cream ball that is visibly melting; other protest signs depict the world as burning. One protest sign shows the world quartered like a pizza pie, whereas another depicts the earth as a toy balloon.

Core Framing Tasks of the Frame

The *Transnational* frame and its corresponding textual and visual contents also play a role in the core framing tasks. As documented previously, this frame does not stand monolithic but is strongly interwoven with the two other collective action frames of the social movement. As a result, this *Transnational* frame augments the existing framing tasks of the other frames.



Figure 9: Protest sign featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Dresden (left). Protest sign featured on the Facebook website of Fridays for Future Hamburg (right).

In the case of the *Issue Field* frame, the *Transnational* frame provides the issue diagnosis and issue prognosis with an extension of the scope of its validity. It defines the cause and diagnose of climate change to be not merely national in nature – but global. This is indicative in the contents of frame elements that describe a clear diagnostic and prognostic role. The catch phrase “Verkehrswende statt Weltende” (transport revolution instead of end of the world; 1 occurrence) combines both a positive and negative issue prognosis, but, more importantly, indicates, how the achievement of a *national* policy solution will contribute to the avoidance of a *global* environmental catastrophe (see Figure 9).

This extension is to an extent also visible in the motivational framing task of the *Intergenerational justice* frame. Some catch phrases of this frame make use of the *Transnational* frame in order to extend the scope of group-belonging. The catch phrases “We are the world, we are the children” (2) constructs a claim of in-group ownership and agency to the issue of climate change, whilst extending the scope of the movement into the transnational (see Figure 9).

Discussion and Conclusion

Answer to Research Question

The research at hand sets out to investigate what collective action frames the Fridays for Future protestors in Germany use in their engagement and what task these frames play in the underlying social movement processes.

The analysis performed in this research has uncovered three dominant collective action frames prevalent among the protests. The first collective action frame portrays the issue by “atomizing” it into its component parts and articulating it through specific political issue fields. These issue fields are articulated on the protest signs as part of the problem of climate change, as the issue diagnosis, or as part of the solution to climate change, the issue prognosis. The individual issue fields mentioned vary in terms of their relatedness to climate change. While energy, transport and food/agriculture policy as issue fields are the predominant sub-frames of this collective action frame, some protestors invoke issue fields unrelated to climate change like LGBT rights, far-right populism or cannabis legalization on their protest sign. The issue fields furthermore vary in terms of the political radicalism and the spatial scope of the political issue. This *Issue Field* frame plays a significant role in the diagnostic and prognostic framing tasks, as it defines clearly the underlying political issues and its solutions. Furthermore, the inclusion of issues unrelated to climate change serves a motivation framing task, as it locates the social movement within the field of left-wing social movements.

The second collective action frame uncovered in this research invokes climate justice as a matter of intergenerational justice. The elements of this collective action frame display significant adversarial framing across generational lines constructing a protagonist group of the young and an antagonist group of the old. Exemplars of their interactions with the adult society, predominantly the school and family life, are important event categories that exemplify their end of the bargain as part of the symbolic intergenerational contract. At the same time, the adult inaction on climate change is voiced as a clear breach of this intergenerational contract. This breach of contract and notions relating to the cancellation of these societal commitments are a key theme in the catch phrases of this collective action frame. The *Intergenerational Justice* frame plays a significant role in the motivation of the movement participants. The choice of grammar and the polarization between “us” and “them” inherent in the catch phrases delivers the necessary call to action to motivate in-group activities. This is similarly demonstrated in the adoption of youth cultural codes (Internet memes etc.), that narrow the audience of the catch phrase towards the movement’s in-group. This frame furthermore provides the issue diagnosis and prognosis with a level of personification.

Within the third frame, protestors frame both the issue of climate change and their own engagement as transnational in scope and responsibility. For this purpose, they make use of a range of frame elements, that symbolize globalism and transnationality. Catch phrases frequently feature synonyms for the planet earth and depict the globe as visual images on their protest signs. This frame overlaps significantly with the other employed frames. The *Transnational* frame plays a role in the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing task, as it extends the scope of the issue diagnosis, prognosis and the movement's perceived territory from the national into the transnational.

Discussion

This study stands in direct line of succession with previous research performed in the field of collective action framing of climate, environmental and social movements. As a result, it is reasonable to discuss the findings of this study in light of the those of previous research. This will enable us to gain clarity over the question, in what way the social movement may diverge from previous social movement.

Most previous research describes the climate justice frame, that has developed out of the environmental justice frame and is related to the social justice frame, as a potent collective action frame of climate movements. The *Intergenerational Justice* frame, that is identified within this research, fits well within the broad category of justice frames. It runs counter to the portrayal of climate change as a mere technical and “post-political issue” (Chatterton et al., 2013, p. 15) and offers a sound critique of the social and political status quo. The movement's location within the left-wing political spectrum, as identified in this research and affirmed by previous research (see Zajak et al., 2019), underlines that fact. Nonetheless, this collective action frame cannot be considered entirely congruent with previous definitions of the climate justice framing. While the existence of the *Transnational* frame shows, that the movements contains significant elements of transnationality – one of which being the most frequently referenced catch phrase “There is no planet B” – and clearly conceives of climate change as a transnational problem, this transnationality is mostly predominantly expressed as part of both the issue diagnosis and issue prognosis of climate change, while only implicitly invoking elements of transnational *human* solidarity. In contrast, the transnationality of the social struggle against climate change and, as a result, the transnational solidarization with peoples from all over the globe can only be found, if one considers the movement in-group to be implicitly transnational. And in that case, one could argue that the social movement Fridays for Future in Germany employs a devolved version of transnationality that betrays the original

core value of the social justice perspective. Instead of broadening the political subjectivity of the climate issue to provide agency to less powerful populations of the Global South, it conceives of transnational solidarity to be valid primarily across a specific generation of young people. Mapping the lines of power uncovered by the social justice perspective generationally, and not across the scope of Global North and Global South, devolves the concept and takes away agency from groups of people who have fought hard to gain it over the recent decades. This uncovered, qualified version of a climate justice frame resonates somewhat with Wahlström et al. (2013a)'s finding of only a devolved climate justice frame among protestors – opening the question, if the climate justice frame is largely a movement leader frame.

The categories of collective action frames discovered in this research are similar to the findings of Della Porta and Parks (2014) that broadly distinguish between those climate movements, that apply a system-conforming and pragmatic climate change frame, and those that apply a radical and system-nonconforming climate justice frame. While it is not the explicit goal of this research, it might prove interesting to briefly discuss the location of the Fridays for Future movement on this spectrum. Both pragmatic and radical policy solutions are part of the diagnostic and prognostic framing of the movement. When it comes the task of motivating in- and out-groups, the antagonistic character and strongly personified nature of the *Intergenerational Justice* frame does significantly more heavy lifting than the other frames. By applying this youth-focused frame, the movement smartly multiplies the organic motivational leverage youth movements possess and was described by Mochizuki (2009) and Scott (2014). Nonetheless it is apparent, that the movement combines aspects of both movement categories of Della Porta and Park - making a clear-cut classification impossible. This definitory opaqueness is most likely the result of the young age of both, its protestors and the movement itself. Having only existing for a few months at the time of sampling, significant frame diffusion processes among the protestors, that would create certain master frames, haven't happened yet. Similarly, the protestors might lack the necessary pre-education in political theories that would enable them to form more nuanced political opinions. Nonetheless, the young age of the protestors might also have benefits for the movement, since the motivational task behind the *Intergenerational Justice* frame creates an inclusive bond among protestors (see Terriquez et al., 2018).

The discovery of a significant more radical system critical variant within the *Issue Field* frame is also in line with the findings by Wahlström (2013a) who identifies system change to be an active frame among the protestors. Instead of defining system change as its own collective action frame, this research puts it within the more general, policy-specific *Issue Field* frame. The reason behind it is, that system change is also in principle a policy solution – albeit a more

radical one than, for example, a carbon tax. Similarly, the *Intergenerational Justice* frame shares resemblance with the civic environmentalism discourse of Bäckstrand and Lövgren (2019) and the *Issue Field* frame with the green governmentality discourse (ibid). The latter connection is evident in the top-down order of some of the prognostic demands of the protestors.

Lastly, the frequent use of Internet cultural symbols, including Internet memes, gives credence to Gamson et al. (1988; 1992; 1989) and Kubal's (1998) work on the significance of the cultural environment for collective action frames in social movements. As they rightly assessed, the youth's existence in a broad set of cultural environments, and as owners of specific cultural capital, has significant effects on the framings employed by the protestors. The protestors shaped their messaging relative to the cultural environment of their young audience.

Limitation of Research & Follow Up Research

Despite all efforts, limitations of the research must be addressed. A first qualification results out of the geographical location of the Fridays for Future sub-groups. Fridays for Future is a global network and, depending on the country of origin, may maintain substantially different movement organizations and processes. The author would therefore advise caution to apply the results of this research to all Fridays for Future sub-groups worldwide. Naturally, the applicability for sub-groups of socioeconomically similar locations is higher. As mentioned in the previous section, this work tries to investigate frames using a bottom-up approach looking specifically at Fridays for Future sub-groups in cities and their respective protestors. This research does not consider social movement hierarchies and does not directly investigate collective action frames employed by the movement leaders on a global and national level. As a result, this research does not provide insights into the discursive practice of Greta Thunberg, Luisa Neubauer and other movement leaders. Future research could use this study as a starting point in order to comparatively investigate the collective action framing employed by the movement base and its leaders, as is routinely done in collective action framing research (see e.g. Bashir, 2012).

For practical purposes, this study investigates only protest signs as a medium. But social movements express themselves in a large quantity of different ways through offline and online channels. Each medium's special characteristics may have an influence on the collective action frames discovered. For example, the lack of protest signs mentioning protest leaders may be a result of the choice of communication medium. An analysis of protest speeches or protestor interviews may result in the uncovering of more leader-focused framing attempts. Each medium is dispositioned to convey some frames better or worse and all findings must be

considered in light of the communicative medium investigated. Future research with more available time could use a more holistic approach and investigate the framing within a bigger variety of different protest media. Similarly, the investigation of collective action frames with quantitative methods might provide a more substantive account on the presence of frames found in this research.

Lastly, while the researcher's position outside of the protestor's age group did not cause any significant hinderance to answering the research question, a research method more adapt to the complexity of youth's life reality could provide a more nuanced telling of the group's framing attempts. One such research method could be a multi-sited ethnography (see Atkinson et al., 2014) or *Netnography* (see Kozinets, 2010).

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Links to Fridays for Future social media platforms investigated

Cities	Social Media Platforms
Augsburg	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/FFFAugsburg/
Bremen	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/fridaysforfuture.bremen/
Dresden	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/Fridays-for-Future-Dresden-1142297562615638/
Hamburg	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/fridaysforfuturehh/
Karlsruhe	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/Fridays-for-Future-Karlsruhe-217186979113457/?
Köln	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/FridaysforFutureKoeln/
Leipzig	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/FFFAugsburg/k
München	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/fridaysforfuturemuenchen/
Stuttgart	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/fridaysforfuturestuttgart/
Ulm	<u>Facebook:</u> https://www.facebook.com/ulm.fridaysforfuture/

Appendix 2: Overview of amount of material in relation to collective action frames

Cities	Sampled Protest Signs	Frame A	Frame B	Frame C
Augsburg	17	3	2	3

<i>Bremen</i>	26	5	2	6
<i>Dresden</i>	116	10	25	53
<i>Hamburg</i>	32	5	3	7
<i>Karlsruhe</i>	5	1	2	0
<i>Köln</i>	161	30	50	60
<i>Leipzig</i>	16	5	5	4
<i>München</i>	4	0	4	0
<i>Stuttgart</i>	38	6	7	2
<i>Ulm</i>	17	3	5	9
TOTAL	432	68	105	144

Appendix 3: List of catch phrases and visual imagery of the collective action frames

Frame A: Catch Phrase	Amount
System Change, Not Climate Change	5
Burn Borders, not coal!	2
ÖPNV statt SUV	1
Wir wollen kein Plastik meer!	2
All I want for X-mas ist Kohleausstieg	1
Stop eating meat.	1
Für Kohleausstieg, für Klimaschutz	1
- Sag Mir was schmutziges baby - "Braunkohle"	1
Einmal Müll aufheben kostet nix.	1
Make love not coal	1

Kapitalismus abschaffen	2
Keine Kohle für Kohle	1
Kohle ist so 18. jahrhundert	1
Reuse, not abuse	1
Wir sind gegen Plastik	1
Früher war der Fisch in der Verpackung, heute ist die Verpackung im Fisch.	1
Scheiß auf Kohle. Ich bin heiß genug.	1
Stoppt die Kohle für die Pole	2
Kohle Stopp	1
Diesel Retten??? Echt jetzt?	1
ZUKUNFT STATT KOHLE	1
vegan for the animals	1
#riseupforrojava	1
Klimaschutz statt kohleschmutz	1
Hopp, hopp, hopp, kohlestop!	1
Verkehrswende statt Weltende	2
Hambi bleibt!	1
ÖPNV vergesellschaften	1
Stonewall - remember and act	1
fck afd	1
save lives, go vegan!	2
STOP RWE	1
Airplanes cheaper than trains - why?	1

THC statt RWE	1
Smash Capitalism	1
Scheiß auf das Monopol der Macht namens Kohlekraft	1
Verbrennt Kalorien, Keine Kohle	1
Planet before Profit	1
Küssen statt Kohle	1
Grünkohl statt Braunkohle	2

Frame B: Catch Phrase	Amount
Bitte schaut nicht weg. Handelt jetzt!	1
Nimmst du statt dem Auto mal das Bike, kommst du besser durch den Klimastreik	1
Sie zerficken unseren Planeten und wollen es einfach nicht erkennen	1
Handelt Jetzt	
Mit abschalten ist nicht euer Hirn gemeint	1
We spoke. Act now	1
Taten statt Worte	1
Fickt lieber einander, anstelle unseres Planeten	1
Geht nicht so mit der Umwelt um	2
Fürs Klima geht auch Schule fasten	1
Das Klima ist aussichtsloser als mein Abi	3

Raise your voice, not your sea level	2
Wir sind hier wir sind laut, weil man uns die Zukunft klaut	2
We are the world, we are the children	1
Das Wetter ist unregelmäßiger als meine tage	1
wir schwänzen nicht, wir kämpfen.	3
I have a voice	1
Rettet die Welt.	
Change the politics not the climate	
Respect existence or expect resistance	1
If you don't act like adult, we will	1
Der Klimawandel wartet nicht bis wir unseren Abschluss haben	2
March now or swim later	3
It's our future	1
Rettet die Erde, bevor wir mit ihr utnergehen	1
Lasst uns nicht im Regen stehen.	
We will go to school, if you keep the climate cool	3
Erde an Politik: handelt!	1
Why should we go to the school, if you won't listen to the educated	2
Climate now, homework later	1

Meer Ferienstreik	
Our planet, our choice.	1
Ich streike, weil nur so meine Stimme gehört wird.	1
Wir lernen nicht für eine zerstörte Zukunft	2
Wozu bildung ohne zukunft	1
Act now.	1
Hört auf zuzuschauen.	1
Wir machen Mathe, wenn ihr euren Job macht	1
Hör auf, ausreden zu suchen. Fang an zu handeln.	1
Stop Nein lasst es sein	1
Respect your mother	3
Warum für eine Zukunft büffeln, die es nicht gibt.	2
Weltbilder: vor 1700: Geozentrisch; 17. Jh. – 20. Jh. Heliozentrisch; 20Jh - * : Egozentrisch	1
Wir streiken, bis ihr handelt	1
Dieses Plaket ist so ranzig wie eure Klimapolitik	1
In welche Tonne gehört eure Klimapolitik?	1
Don't fuck with our future.	1
Climate Justice Now	1
#lasstunsnichtimregenstehen	1

Wenn ich groß bin, möchte ich leben.	1
Your report card ... FFF	2
Lessing Gymnasium für Klimaschutz	1
es ist unsere zukunft ihr lachsaffen	1
Mutti empfiehlt: Bildungsstreik fürs Klima	1
Get Active	1
Ich streike damit meine Kinder eine Zukunft haben.	1
Denkt an die Kinder.	1
Fehlstunden verkraftet man - Klimawandel eher nicht so	1
"Sag mir was schmutziges“ „Braunkohle“	1
Run Forest Run	1
FCK KHL	1
Dinosaurier dachten auch sie hätten mehr Zeit.	4
This planet is getting hotter than...	6
Game over?	1
Stück für Stück	1

Frame C: Catch Phrase	Amount
Burn Border, Not Coal.	2

There is no planet B.	26
Climate change ain't fake news.	1
We are the world, we are the children.	2
Our hose is on fire.	1
Our planet, our choice	1
Because it's our only planet.	1

Frame A: Visual Imagery	Amount
Photos of Politician	2
Stop signs & traffic signs	4
Silhouette of power plant & mines	6
Bicycles	4
Glyphosate Skull	1
Wind Power plant	1
LGBT flag	3
Atom symbol	1
Peace symbol	1

Frame B: Visual Imagery	Amount
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Dinosaur	4
Internet Memes	5
Pacman	1
Pizzabox	1
Loading Bar	1
Banksy Mural	1

Frame C: Visual Imagery	Amount
Earth	97
International animals	4