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Relational aggression and victimization in acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic relationships

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RELATIONAL AGGRESSION AND VICTIMIZATION
IN ACQUAINTANCESHIPS, FRIENDSHIPS, AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Thesis

Submitted to

The College of Arts and Sciences of the
University of Dayton

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for

The Degree

Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology

by

Kristen Michele Turi


UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

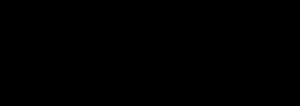
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ABSTRACT

RELATIONAL AGGRESSION AND VICTIMIZATION IN ACQUAINTANCESHIPS, FRIENDSHIPS, AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

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Research has indicated that relational aggression is a distinct form of aggression and may have negative effects on both aggressors and victims. This study explored relational aggression across the relationship contexts of acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic relationships in a sample of undergraduate students. Both aggressor and victim roles were considered, as well as one's predicted future use of relationally aggressive behaviors. In accordance with past research that indicated gender differences in relational aggression disappear by adulthood, it was hypothesized that males and females would report equal amounts of relational aggression. It was also hypothesized that closer relationships would be marked by more relational aggression, since research has indicated that negative interpersonal behaviors occur in intimate interpersonal interactions. Results indicated that males reported greater amounts of relational aggression than females in some contexts. In contrast to the second hypothesis, there were no differences in the amounts of relational aggression across relationship contexts. This study also found that the relational aggression strategy used may depend on gender

and relationship context. The results may be useful in determining target audience and target behaviors for prevention and intervention efforts.

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Finally, I would like to remember Papa, whose picture sits beside me and who I hope I'm making proud. I miss you.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Aggression towards others has been a widely researched area due to its effects on adjustment (see Parker and Asher, 1987, for a review). Despite an abundant literature on aggression, however, there are several limitations to previous studies. Most samples in the study of aggression have used males as subjects (Bjorkqvist & Niemela, 1992). Furthermore, most research has examined the form of aggression, physical aggression, that is more characteristic of males than females (Bjorkqvist & Niemela, 1992; Crick & Dodge, 1994; Crick & Rose, 2000; Crick et al., 1999b). The literature had led researchers to conclude that a gender discrepancy in aggression exists, with males being notably more aggressive than females (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974), and perhaps to go as extreme to conclude that females are not aggressive (Bjorkqvist & Niemela, 1992).

Recent research indicates that examining other types of aggression results in a new perspective and new research findings. Whereas physical or overt aggression occurs when someone is harmed or controlled by physical damage or the threat of physical damage, other types of aggression harm others through manipulation and damage (or threat of damage) to relationships, acceptance, self-esteem, or group inclusion (Crick, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Galen & Underwood, 1997). Although some definitional differences exist, this general type of aggression has been termed relational aggression

(Crick, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), indirect aggression (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992a) or social aggression (Galen & Underwood, 1997; Underwood, 2003). With this broadened view of aggression, numerous empirical questions have been raised. For example, the gender bias in aggression must be reconsidered and the effects of less overt forms of aggression must be explored (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Werner & Crick, 1999). Indeed, evidence demonstrates that the gender difference in aggression decreases or disappears when relational aggression is included in the assessment of aggressive behaviors (Crick & Rose, 2000). Also, relational aggression appears to contribute uniquely to social and psychological maladjustment for both aggressors and victims (Crick & Bigbee, 1998; Owens, Slee, & Shute, 2000; Rys & Bear, 1997).

The aim of the current study was to investigate relational aggression in a young adult population. The study assessed aggressor and victim roles as well as gender differences in relational aggression for this age group. Furthermore, the three relationship contexts of acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic relationships were considered. Since most research in the area of relational aggression has been conducted with children and adolescents, relevant studies and concepts extracted from research with these younger age groups will be reviewed before addressing previous research specifically using adult participants.

Relational, Indirect, and Social Aggression

Though numerous researchers have recognized the need to investigate non-physical forms of aggression, the terminology and definitions that have been employed differ between researchers. Terms that have been used to refer to behaviors that hurt others through relationships include relational aggression, (Crick & Bigbee, 1998; Crick

& Grottpeter, 1995; Crick et al., 1999b), indirect aggression (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992a; Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukiainen, 1992b), and social aggression (Galen & Underwood, 1997; Paquette & Underwood, 1999).

Relational aggression is conceptualized as acts that damage or threaten to damage the target's relationships or feelings of inclusion or acceptance, and it includes behaviors such as spreading rumors, excluding someone from social activities, or threatening to end a friendship in order to get one's own way (Crick et al., 2001; Crick et al., 1999b).

Relational aggression is usually contrasted with physical or overt aggression, which is conceptualized as acts that threaten or cause physical damage and includes behaviors such as kicking, shoving, or threatening to beat someone else unless he or she complies with a request (Crick & Bigbee, 1998; Crick et al., 1999b). It should be noted that relational aggression is not synonymous with verbal aggression because some behaviors that are considered verbal aggression would fall into the category of physical aggression (i.e. threats to another's physical well-being) and not all verbally aggressive acts focus on damaging relationships (i.e. "You can't do anything right."; Crick et al., 1999b).

Another type of non-physical aggression is indirect aggression, which is usually contrasted with direct aggression. Bjorkqvist et al. (1992a) define indirect aggression as a "type of behavior in which the perpetrator attempts to inflict pain in such a manner that he or she makes it seem as though there has been no intention to hurt at all" (p. 118). In this form of social manipulation, the probability of being identified, and thus being the target of a counterattack or receiving disapproval from others, is substantially decreased (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992a; Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, & Peltonen, 1988). Examples of behaviors that are considered indirect aggression include manipulating someone to attack

the victim, spreading rumors, or manipulating the social structure (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992a; Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Lagerspetz, 1994a; Lagerspetz et al., 1988).

A third type of non-physical aggression, social aggression, has been defined as acts that are “directed toward damaging another’s self-esteem, social status, or both, and may take direct forms such as verbal rejection, negative facial expressions or body movements, or more indirect forms such as slanderous rumors or social exclusion” (Galen & Underwood, 1997). This term is preferred by some researchers because it captures the setting of the aggression as being within a social interaction and the goal of the behavior as doing social harm (Galen & Underwood, 1997; Underwood, 2003).

Overall, the three approaches reflect related constructs with similar underlying logic (Goldstein & Tisak, 2004; Underwood, 2003) and have each made important contributions to the study of the forms that aggression may take (Underwood, 2003). Espelage, Mebane, and Swearer (2004) have noted common characteristics for the three terms. All three approaches describe behaviors that are social in nature, involve damaging the victim’s relationships, and do not include the use of physical means. Also, examination of the items included in peer rating techniques used to assess indirect and relational aggression show similar items with slightly different wording (Underwood, 2003). For example, the indirect aggression scale includes the item “Says to others: Let’s not be with him or her” (Lagerspetz et al., 1988, p. 407) and the relational aggression scale includes the item “When mad at a person, gets even by keeping the person from being in their group of friends” (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995, p. 713).

Despite these similarities, one must proceed with caution as there are differences among the behaviors that encompassed by each term. Though relational aggression and

social aggression overlap with indirect aggression, indirect aggression is a narrower term that would not include direct relationally aggressive behaviors such as overt manipulation of friendships to get one's own way (Crick et al., 1999b). Furthermore, unlike social and relational aggression, indirect aggression may include physical acts as long as they are not direct, such as gluing together someone's locker (Goldstein & Tisak, 2004). The most salient difference between social aggression and relational aggression is that social aggression explicitly includes subtle, non-verbal behaviors such as facial expressions, gestures, and body language while relational aggression does not include those behaviors (Goldstein & Tisak, 2004; Paquette & Underwood, 1999; Underwood, 2003).

Though it is accepted that the behaviors being assessed exist and should be given empirical attention, it can be argued that none of the three current terms accurately reflect the construct of interest. For example, the three terms reflect the means of harm or the goal of the behavior, but most of these behaviors hurt in multiple ways and serve multiple goals (Underwood, 2003). Furthermore, the terms relational and social aggression may be too broad in that almost all aggressive behaviors occur in the context of relationships and social interactions (Underwood, 2003). Further review of definitional issues and directions for future conceptualization can be found in Underwood (2003).

Relational Aggression as a Distinct Type of Aggression

Relational aggression was established as a separate construct, which was necessary before research in the area could proceed. At least three early studies investigated types of aggression in order to determine whether relational aggression was a distinct form of behavior. For example, in their sample of 8-year-olds, Bjorkqvist et al. (1992a) found that items reflective of aggressive behavior loaded onto two separate

constructs, which they termed direct means and indirect means. Crick and Grotpeter (1995) also found support that relational aggression was a separate construct. The relational aggression items on their peer nomination instrument loaded onto a subscale that was separate from prosocial behaviors, isolation behaviors, and overt aggressive behaviors.

Crick, Bigbee, and Howes (1996) conducted research to determine whether students considered behaviors that manipulate relationships as aggressive in nature. In their first study, these researchers asked 459 third through sixth graders to respond to the questions "what do most boys do when they are mad at someone?" and "what do most girls do when they are mad at someone?" (p. 1005). All responses were coded into one of the following eight categories: physical aggression, verbal threats, verbal insults, nonverbal aggression, relational aggression, telling, avoidance, or other. Results indicated that relationally aggressive behaviors were viewed as typical responses made when angry, especially for girls.

In the second study, Crick et al. (1996) sought to expand on children's normative beliefs and perceptions of relational aggression. They asked 162 third through fifth grade children the following question, with each of the four combinations of gender variations asked separately: "What do most boys/girls do when they want to be mean to another boy/girl?" (p. 1009). Results indicated that girls viewed relational aggression as a normative behavior, especially when girls were the aggressor. Physical aggression was viewed by boys as a normative behavior for instances in which a boy was the victim. Verbal insults were commonly cited as taking place in boy-girl interactions.

Overall, these two related studies assessed both the anger aspect and the harmful aspect of aggression (Harre & Lamb, 1983). The researchers concluded that relationally manipulative behaviors were viewed by children as aggressive. Furthermore, these results are important to consider because children were not prompted to consider relationally manipulative behaviors when responding to the questions.

Relational Aggression and Gender

Once relational aggression was recognized as a separate form of aggression, researchers considered how males and females differed in aggressive behaviors (Crick & Rose, 2000). Overall findings for childhood and adolescence differed from findings for adulthood. Hypotheses have been generated to explain the findings regarding gender for both age groups.

Relational Aggression and Gender in Childhood and Adolescence

Males and females have been compared on the amount of relational aggression used, on the amount of relational aggression received, and on the beliefs about different types of aggression have been studied in childhood and adolescence. Overall findings have indicated that there is a gender difference in all three of these areas during these ages.

Gender Differences in the Use of Relational Aggression.

Numerous studies have illustrated gender differences in the types of aggression most often utilized. Empirical evidence has generally indicated that females are more relationally aggressive than males and that males are more physically aggressive than females in childhood and adolescence (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992a; Craig, 1998; Crick &

Grottpeter, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997). The methodology and findings from select studies are reported below.

Examining gender differences was one of the goals that Crick and Grottpeter (1995) established in their pioneering study in the area of relational aggression. These researchers first constructed a peer nomination scale that would assess relational aggression, overt aggression, prosocial behavior, and isolation. The 491 participants from the third grade through the sixth grade were asked to nominate up to three classmates for each of the 19 items provided. For example, they would nominate up to three peers who best fit the description of “good leader”, “starts fights”, or “tells friends they will stop liking them unless friends do what they say” (p. 713). The peer nomination scores were summed and each child was placed into one of the following four categories: relationally aggressive, overtly aggressive, both overtly and relationally aggressive, and nonaggressive. Statistical analyses indicated that a gender difference did not exist in the number of children classified as nonaggressive; however, gender differences did exist for the other three categories. Boys were more likely to be classified as overtly aggressive (15.6% of boys compared to 0.4% of girls). The relationally aggressive group consisted of 2% of boys and 17.4% of girls. Finally, the overtly and relationally aggressive group included 9.4% of boys and 3.8% of girls. Overall, these findings indicated that gender differences exist in the type of aggression used, with boys being more likely to use overt aggression and girls being more likely to use relational aggression. Furthermore, this study indicates that boys and girls may be considered approximately equal in aggressiveness when both types of aggression are assessed (27% of boys and 21.7% of girls).

Lagerspetz et al. (1988) examined gender differences in the use of direct and indirect aggression. This team of Finnish researchers measured aggressive behavior in fifth graders (ages 11 to 12). Participants answered the question "What do I/they do when angry with another boy/girl in the class?" in regards to themselves and each same gender classmate. The children also responded to open-ended questions to obtain information about classroom friendship patterns, and a portion of the children participated in interviews. Results indicated that direct aggressive behavior was more common and more intense among boys, as they were more likely to engage in behaviors such as tripping, kicking, or shoving. Girls were more likely than boys to use indirect aggressive behaviors such as telling lies behind another's back, being someone else's friend in revenge, or telling others not to be with someone.

Bjorkqvist et al. (1992a) expanded the above study by including two additional age groups, resulting in age cohorts of 8 years old, 11 years old, and 15 years old. The aggression assessment techniques were similar to those described above; however, some items differed slightly between age groups due to developmental differences. Results indicated that gender differences in the types of aggression used were not consistent across age groups. In the 8-year-old group, boys displayed more direct aggression, but the difference in indirect aggression was insignificant. The older two groups, however, indicated that girls displayed more indirect aggression than boys.

Although females have been found to utilize more relational or indirect aggression in some studies, not all research has supported this gender difference conclusion. For example, Goldstein and Tisak (2004) conducted a study with 292 adolescents and 95 college students. Responding to six vignettes, participants made a

number of ratings related to relational aggression. Results of this study indicated that males and females reported similar amounts of relational aggression. The study of third and sixth grade children conducted by Rys and Bear (1997) did not find a significant gender difference in mean scores of relational aggression. Only when children were classified into one of four aggressive groups did the findings become significant.

Gender Differences in Receiving Relational Aggression.

Researchers have also considered gender differences in amounts of relational victimization. Relational victimization can be conceptualized as being the target of relationally aggressive behaviors; in other words, relationally victimized individuals are in relationships in which others control them through the relationship, they are excluded from social activities, or they are the targets of gossip or rumors (Crick et al., 2001). The methodology and findings from select studies of relational victimization are reported below.

Crick and Bigbee (1998) utilized self-report measures to assess overt victimization, relational victimization, and receipt of prosocial acts. They also utilized peer-nomination methods to assess overt aggression and relational aggression in 383 fourth and fifth grade students. Analyses indicated that girls were more relationally victimized and boys were more overtly victimized. Another study of victimization was conducted with a younger age group (Crick, Casas, & Ku, 1999a). Using preschool children, these researchers asked teaching staff to rate each child on overt and relational aggression, overt and relational victimization, and social-psychological adjustment. Results of this study indicated that boys were significantly more physically victimized and girls were significantly more relationally victimized.

With a sample of seventh and eighth grade students, Paquette and Underwood (1999) conducted personal experience interviews and administered a self-report measure to assess frequency of relational victimization, overt victimization, and experiencing prosocial acts. These researchers worked within the framework of social aggression, so their measure included assessment of negative facial expressions. Results from the self-report measures indicated that boys and girls did not differ in the frequency in which they were victims of relational aggression; however, when asked to recall a specific instance of relational aggression during the personal interview, many boys were not able to identify a specific occurrence.

Gender Differences in Perceptions of Relational Aggression.

Even if there are mixed results about whether or not females are more relationally aggressive than males, the two genders have consistently been shown to perceive relational aggression differently. In the first phase of their study, Galen and Underwood (1997) elicited relational aggression in a laboratory experience. These videotaped vignettes were then utilized in the second phase of the study. Participants were shown segments that included negative facial expressions and stares of disapproval and then responded to questions about the feelings of the aggressor, how they would feel as the target, and how much the aggressor liked the target. The researchers concluded that girls viewed the relationally aggressive behaviors as indicating more anger than the boys. Also, girls were found to view relationally and physically aggressive behaviors as equally hurtful.

As previously reported, Goldstein and Tisak (2004) found that males and females reported similar amounts of relational aggression; however, this study did find other

significant gender differences. Adolescents and college students responded to six vignettes that illustrated either gossip or social exclusion within the context of acquaintances, friendships, and romantic relationships. One of the responses made to each vignette regarded the perceived dyadic consequences of the relational aggression; participants rated how likely it would be that the victim would wish to remain friends with the aggressor. Females, as compared to males, viewed relational aggression to be more hurtful and damaging to all three types of relationships measured.

As noted earlier, Paquette and Underwood (1999) studied relational and overt victimization in seventh and eighth grade students. After completing self-report measures, each participant took part in a personal experience interview. During this interview, the individual responded to the prompt "Sometimes kids do mean things to other kids, like make faces at them, or not let them be part of their group, or gossip about them. Has anything like this ever happened to you?" (p. 251) and a similar prompt about physical aggression. Participants were also asked a number of follow-up questions, such as how the act made them feel, whether they think about the event, and what they did when the event occurred. Findings indicated that boys confronted the aggressor in cases of physical but not relational aggression, while girls confronted the aggressor in both types of situations. The researchers concluded that girls, but not boys, perceive both relational and physical aggression as unjust occurrences that should be confronted. Also, girls' responses indicated that they thought about the occurrences of relational aggression (why they were victimized, whether the behavior was wrong, trying to be friends with the aggressor) more often than did boys, supporting the view that relational aggression is more distressing for girls than for boys.

Rationale for Gender Differences.

According to Crick and Grotpeter (1995), the goal of aggression is to hurt or harm others. These researchers reasoned that it would be most effective for someone to damage the goals that would be most valued by the victim and that these goals appear to differ for each gender. Boys' peer groups focus on the goals of instrumentality and physical dominance (see Block, 1983, for a review), so physical aggression would be effective in impeding goal attainment for boys (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Girls' peer groups, on the other hand, focus on the goals of establishing close interpersonal connections with others (see Block, 1983, for a review). In order to inflict harm or hurt on a female peer while staying consistent with peer group values, aggressive behaviors by females would occur within a relationship context and would result in disruption of friendships or the exclusion of the victim (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

Another hypothesis for why gender differences in aggressive style would occur is based on the effect/danger ratio. As explained by Bjorkqvist et al. (1994a), the aggressor wants to choose an act that will result in being as effective as possible and as least dangerous as possible. In other words, the aggressor wants to maximize the effectiveness of the strategy while minimizing the physical, social, and psychological effects on himself or herself. Females are generally physically weaker than males, so they are more likely to avoid becoming involved in a physically aggressive act and to use relational aggression strategies instead. Furthermore, since relational aggression increases anonymity, the danger from counterattack or disapproval is decreased (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992a; Bjorkqvist et al., 1994a). Consideration of the effect/danger ratio, therefore, indicates that relational aggression becomes an effective strategy for females to employ.

Relational Aggression and Gender in Adulthood

Research on relational aggression in adulthood is relatively scarce, but a few researchers are beginning to extend the study of this phenomenon to an older population. The gender differences evident in younger samples have not been found with adult populations. For example, as they established psychometric properties for a scale to be used to measure indirect aggression in adults, Forrest et al. (2005) found that there were no significant gender differences for either using indirect aggression or being the target of indirect aggression. Also, Richardson and Green (1999) collected self-report data about direct and indirect aggression from 113 university students. They found that males used approximately equal amounts of indirect and direct aggression; however, females continued to use indirect methods. When comparing how much indirect aggression males and females used, they found similar amounts.

Some research has suggested that characteristics of one's social network may influence the effect of gender on relational aggression in adulthood. For example, using a college sample of 148 individuals, Green, Richardson, and Lago (1996) examined the relationship between aggression types and network density. Self-report methods were used to gather information on the frequency of direct and indirect aggression as well as the relationships among the people with whom they interacted most frequently. Results indicated that males used more direct methods than females, but males and females used similar amounts of indirect methods. Also, males with high-density social networks reported more indirect aggression and less direct aggression than males with low-density social networks; however, there was no relationship between indirect aggression and

network density for women. The researchers noted that the aggression pattern of males with high-density social networks resembles the pattern generally found in females.

Another study investigated social network characteristics while also considering gender roles rather than merely gender. Walker, Richardson, and Green (2000) examined aggressive strategies among an older adult population, ranging in age from 55 to 89 years old. This study examined social network characteristics as well as gender roles. Results indicated that network size and knowingness but not network density were related to the type of aggression. Social networks that were large and loosely connected were associated with more indirect than direct methods. The use of direct methods was associated with holding a less feminine gender role and the use of indirect methods was associated with holding a more masculine gender role.

The workplace is a setting that enables the study of peer interactions in adulthood, so relational aggression research has considered occupational situations. Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Hjelt-Back's study (1994b) utilized a broad definition of harassment, which included items such as being unjustifiably criticized, being exposed to accusations, belittling of one's opinions, rumors being spread behind one's back, and being shouted at loudly. The results indicated that women reported receiving more harassment than men. Also, employees in superior positions harassed more often than employees in subordinate positions.

Bjorkqvist et al. (1994a) performed a factor analysis on the items used in the above study, which resulted in establishing two subscales of indirect aggression in the workplace. The subscale of rational-appearing aggression included items such as "having one's work judged in an unjust manner" and "reduced opportunities to express oneself"

(p. 30). The social manipulation subscale consisted of items such as “insulting comments about one’s private life” and “spreading of false rumors” (p. 30). After administering the scales to 726 employees, these researchers found that males used rational-appearing aggression more often than females, while females used social manipulation more often than males.

Most recently, these Finnish researchers conducted a study with 169 participants that assessed aggression using items that formed four subscales: direct overt, indirect manipulative, covert insinuating, and rational-appearing (Kaukiainen et al., 2001). The results showed that indirect manipulative (i.e. isolating someone, spreading rumors, ignoring) and rational-appearing aggression (i.e. questioning judgment, reducing opportunities, dismissing opinions) were the most commonly used aggression types used in the workplace. Also, men used more of each type of aggression when in a predominantly male workplace, but women’s aggression did not differ depending on the relative number of male or female coworkers.

Rationale for Lack of Gender Differences.

Hypotheses for why males use more relational aggression in adulthood than they did at younger ages have been generated. Lagerspetz and Bjorkqvist (1994) suggest that males’ social intelligence skills develop later than females’ social intelligence skills and they are able to more aptly use relational aggression as they mature. Also, the disapproval of physical aggression by society increases for older individuals as opposed to children or adolescents, so men must find new ways to express their anger and harm their targets (Crick & Rose, 2000; Lagerspetz & Bjorkqvist, 1994). Relational aggression would allow men to avoid the disapproval of society because of the covert and subtle

nature of the actions. Also, males interact with females more in adulthood than in childhood and adolescence; they may learn relationally aggressive styles from interacting with women, either by observing the females interact with each other or by being targeted by a female (Crick & Rose, 2000).

Relational Aggression across Age Groups

Many researchers have also focused on the manifestation of relational aggression across developmental stages. Investigators have been interested in whether or not relational aggression is evident in the very young as well as adult populations and how the expression of less overt forms of aggression changes across different ages. Research considering preschool and adult populations has expanded the knowledge of relational aggression beyond the initially studied age groups of childhood and adolescence.

Preschool and Early Childhood

Investigations into relational aggression have included samples with children as young as preschool age and evidence suggests that relational aggression does exist at this age. For example, after analyzing data from both teacher and peer measures of social behavior, Crick, Casas, and Mosher (1997) concluded that relational aggression and physical aggression were evident in this young age group, with girls being more relationally aggressive than boys. Examples of relationally aggressive items included on the teacher measure were "Tells a peer that they won't be invited to their birthday party unless he or she does what the child wants" or "When mad at a peer, this child keeps that peer from being in the play group" (Crick et al., 1997, p. 581). Relationally aggressive items that peers evaluated were similar to the teacher items. Crick et al. (1999a) also studied the preschool age group, focusing on victims rather than aggressors. These

researchers determined that relational victimization and physical victimization were both present in accordance with the expected gender differences. Crick et al. (1999b) summarized the expression of relational aggression in preschool and early childhood contexts. Consistent with cognitive and social abilities of this age group, the manifestation of relational aggression is in direct and obvious ways. Furthermore, relationally aggressive behaviors are immediate responses to a transgression rather than a past event and are focused on shared activities rather than friendship loyalty.

Middle Childhood and Adolescence

Most investigations of relational aggression have focused on middle childhood and early adolescence because of the social atmosphere and number of changes that take place during this time (Crick & Rose, 2000; Crick et al., 1999b). In general, the manifestation of relationally manipulative behaviors reflects the cognitive and social maturation that occurs during middle childhood and again during adolescence. Aspects of development that contribute to the manifestation of relational aggression in middle childhood include developing an increased cognitive ability to realize that a strategy would be effective, developing the ability to take another's perspective, improved memory, and increased vocabulary. Furthermore, the greater need for acceptance from peers and for friendships that occurs at this age influences the way that relational aggression is expressed (Crick et al., 1999b). In middle childhood, relationally aggressive behaviors become more covert and less confrontational. Such behaviors become responses to past and current transgressions, and the aggressor increasingly utilizes the peer group to reach the objective. Common forms of relational aggression at

this developmental stage are lying, spreading rumors, exclusion, writing notes, and talking behind the target's back.

Relationally aggressive behaviors continue to become more complex and more calculated as adolescence begins. Though tactics remain similar (i.e. spreading rumors, social exclusion, withdrawing friendship), relational aggression now begins to incorporate opposite-sex peers. For example, the aggressor may share the victim's secrets with the opposite sex, may use the opposite sex to make the victim jealous, or interfere with the victim's romantic relationships. These types of expressions reflect adolescents' developing needs for love, affection, intimacy, and romantic relationships as well as the shifting gender composition of peer groups (Crick et al., 1999b).

Adulthood

Discussions of developmental changes of relational aggression tend not to comment past the age of adolescence. It has been noted that relational aggression in this older population differs from that of childhood and adolescence, but such discussions have only made vague references to workplace and romantic relationships as being important influences on the manifestation of relational aggression in adulthood (Crick et al., 1999b). The development and use of questionnaires designed for adults, such as the Indirect Aggression Scale (Forrest et al., 2005) and the subscales utilized in workplace research (direct overt, indirect manipulative, covert insinuating, and rational-appearing; Kaukiainen et al., 2001) will hopefully aid in describing adults' relational aggression as research continues.

Effects of Relational Aggression

Findings from the previously discussed research indicate that relational aggression is present across gender and across development. The widespread nature of relational aggression has made such behaviors important topics to study. In addition, the negative consequences that relational aggression has on both the aggressors and the victims are perhaps the most compelling evidence that these behaviors are important areas of research.

Effects on Aggressors

Initiating relational aggression against others has consistently been associated with higher levels of peer rejection in preschool (Crick et al., 1997), childhood and adolescence (Crick, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997), and college students (Storch, Werner, & Storch, 2003; Werner & Crick, 1999). In addition, relational aggression has often explained variance in peer rejection beyond that explained by overt aggression, though this unique information was sometimes present for females and not males (Crick, 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997). It is important to recognize, however, that causal conclusions cannot be made from these findings. It is possible that relational aggression leads to being disliked by peers, but it is also possible that the relationally aggressive child may be retaliating against peers for his or her own lack of successful peer relationships (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

Relational aggression has been linked with adjustment problems in addition to peer rejection. In third through sixth graders, performing relationally aggressive behavior has been associated with increased depression, isolation, and loneliness (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). In a study of collegiate athletes, Storch et al. (2003) found that

relational aggression was associated with alcohol use and a lesser amount of prosocial behavior for females only; however, relational aggression was not associated with depression, social support, or borderline personality features. In another study of college students, Werner and Crick (1999) found that relationally aggressive behaviors were associated with the aggressor having more antisocial personality features, more borderline personality disorder features, and less prosocial behaviors for both genders as well as more bulimic behaviors for females only. Similarly, relational aggression (as well as victimization) in the context of a romantic relationship has been associated with negative characteristics, specifically antisocial and borderline personality features in both men and women as well as depression in women (as cited in Linder, Crick, & Collins, 2002). Again, the causal direction is not known because it is possible that being relational aggressive leads to these maladjustments or that these feelings and traits lead to the use of relational aggression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

Effects on Victims

Relational victimization has also been associated with increased psychological and social maladjustment, and the assessment of relational victimization has been shown to provide unique information about adjustment difficulties for both boys and girls (Crick et al., 1999a) and for girls only (Crick & Nelson, 2002). Being the target of relationally aggressive behaviors has been associated with peer rejection, lack of prosocial skills, and internalizing problems in preschool children (Crick et al., 1999a). Internalizing problems such as emotional distress (Crick & Bigbee, 1998), anxiety (Craig, 1998; Owens et al., 2000), loneliness (Crick & Bigbee, 1998), depression (Owens et al., 2000), and loss of self-esteem (Owens et al., 2000) have been linked with relational victimization in

childhood and adolescence. Furthermore, frequent experiences of relational aggression have been correlated with lower self-perceptions of athletic competence, physical appearance, romantic appeal, behavioral conduct, close friendships, and global self-worth in girls but only with lower self-perceptions of close friendships in boys (Paquette & Underwood, 1999). Relational victimization has also been correlated with increased externalizing behaviors (Crick & Nelson, 2002) and self-restraint problems such as difficulty inhibiting anger and greater impulsivity (Crick & Bigbee, 1998).

The negative impact of relational victimization in adulthood has focused on workplace harassment and aggression. Bjorkqvist et al. (1994b) noted that targets of workplace aggression frequently reported insomnia, apathy, lack of concentration, and sociophobia. They also experienced higher levels of anxiety, depression, and aggression. In interviews with individuals who reported the most severe history of workplace harassment, it was found that many victims experienced symptoms suggestive of post-traumatic stress disorder. In another study of workplace aggression, Kaukiainen et al. (2001) found that aggression was associated with physical symptoms, affective-cognitive problems, and psychosocial problems, especially among men.

As was the case with relationally aggressive behaviors, causal conclusions cannot be drawn about the effects of relational victimization. Due to the lack of longitudinal designs, the extent to which existing characteristics or problems make a person vulnerable to being a target of relational aggression and the extent to which these symptoms and maladjustments result from being victimized is currently unclear. In other words, the above-mentioned symptoms and problems may be antecedents or consequences of relational victimization.

Relational Aggression across Relationship Contexts

The research that has been reviewed so far has considered relational aggression within the context of relationships with acquaintances or with friends, since such behaviors have been most widely studied within these interpersonal relationships. However, relational aggression can also occur within the context of romantic relationships. Relational aggression and victimization within the context of dating relationships, termed romantic relational aggression, has been less widely studied (Linder et al., 2002).

Though most dating violence research has focused on physical violence (Jackson, 1999), psychological aggression and emotional abuse have been investigated as well. Stets (1991) has defined psychological aggression as verbally offending or degrading others in the form of insults or behavior aimed at making another feel guilty, upset, or worthless. Other researchers have considered different types of emotional abuse: verbal attacks including ridicule and name calling; social or financial isolation; jealousy and possessiveness; verbal threats of abuse, harm, or torture; emotional blackmail including threats of abandonment or adultery unless demands are met; and damage to personal property (Follingstad, Rutledge, Berg, Hause, & Polek, 1990). Though there is some overlap and similarity among psychological aggression, emotional abuse, and relational aggression, it is important to note that the findings from studies on the former two constructs should not be automatically generalized to relational aggression. The definition of relational aggression indicates a more specific subset of aggressive behaviors and has been validated as a distinct type of aggression (Crick and Grotpeter, 1995).

A handful of studies specifically investigating romantic relational aggression and victimization have been conducted, but an even fewer number have been published. In a study conducted by Linder et al. (2002), college students completed self-report measures of aggression and victimization as well as a questionnaire about their current or most recent romantic relationship. Findings indicated that men and women reported equal amounts of romantic relational aggression used, but men were more likely to be a victim of romantic relational aggression. The amount of relational aggression and of relational victimization were positively correlated with negative relationship qualities and negatively correlated with positive relationship qualities. More specifically, romantically relationally aggressive individuals were more frustrated, jealous, and clingy but less trusting in their romantic relationship. Romantic relationally victimized individuals were more self-reliant and less associated with proximity seeking in their romantic relationship.

There is evidence that romantic relational aggression is perceived as more harmful than relational aggression that occurs in other contexts. For example, Goldstein and Tisak (2004) investigated adolescents' expectancies about relational aggression across the three contexts of acquaintanceships, friendships, and dating relationships using a vignette-based methodology. Their findings indicated that adolescents reported that relational aggression would have more harmful consequences within a dating relationship than in a friendship or acquaintanceship. Also, older adolescents and college students judged the victim as being most hurt by relationally aggressive behavior in a dating context.

Though unpublished, additional research regarding romantic relational aggression within a college sample has been conducted by Morales, Crick, and colleagues. Research has indicated that both men and women cite relational aggression as responses that individuals use to be hurtful within the context of a romantic relationship (as cited in Linder et al., 2002). Also, researchers have found that both men and women use romantic relational aggression, but that women indicate more frequent use than men (as cited in Linder et al., 2002).

Relational Aggression and Degree of Closeness

The above literature review indicates that relational aggression occurs in acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic relationships. One purpose of the current study is to determine the relationship context in which relational aggression is most likely to occur. Since the three relationships of interest differ in the degree of closeness or intimacy between individuals (Kowalski, 2001) and relational aggression is consistently viewed as a way to harm others (Crick, Bigbee, & Howes, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), the association between intimacy and hurtful behaviors was reviewed.

Researchers have reported that the likelihood of aversive interpersonal behaviors as well as the amount of hurt created by a particular event depends on the relationship of the people involved (Leary & Springer, 2001; Miller, 1997). In general, the more intimacy that characterizes a relationship, the higher the likelihood that aversive interpersonal behaviors will occur in that relationship (Miller, 1997). For example, Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell, and Evans (1998) investigated hurt feelings, including the role that familiarity with the other person played in such emotions. Participants wrote summaries of incidents in which their feelings were hurt by someone or they hurt another

person's feelings. The majority of summaries involved incidents with whom the participants had close relationships. Over 80 percent of the perpetrators in the victims' summaries and 74 percent of the victims in the perpetrators' summaries were close friends, romantic partners, or family members. Strangers were reported as hurtful in less than 2 percent of the summaries.

Numerous reasons for why hurtful interchanges are more likely to take place in close relationships have been proposed. One suggested explanation is based on the concept of relational devaluation, which has been defined as "the perception that another individual does not regard his or her relationship with the person to be as important, close, or valuable as the person desires" (Leary et al., 1998, p. 1225). Relational devaluation may also occur if the person views another individual as not valuing the relationship as much as one valued it previously (Leary & Springer, 2001). Relational devaluation has been associated with episodes of hurt feelings. Research by Leary et al. (1998) has indicated that people's feelings are hurt by events and interactions that indicated relational devaluation, with evidence of relational devaluation present in all participants' accounts of hurtful events. Since people desire their family members, romantic partners, and friends to value and place importance on their relationships, it is more likely that relational devaluation would occur in one of these close relationships than between acquaintances or strangers (Leary & Springer, 2001). In other words, relational devaluation can only be experienced if there is a relationship to be devalued (Leary et al., 1998).

The expectations that people place on their intimate relationships also influence the effect that hurtful behaviors have on those relationships. Because people expect

loved ones to be respectful and caring, failure to meet such expectations is hurtful and significant (Leary et al., 1998; Vangelisti, 1994). In other words, as relational intimacy increases, so does the individual's tendency to perceive behaviors as aversive (Kowalski, 2001). Essentially, by attributing importance to a relationship, which is done with romantic partners, friends, and family, one is granting the other person the power to hurt them (L'Abate, 1997).

Another reason for the occurrence of more hurtful behaviors in the context of a close relationship may be the simple rationale that more frequent interactions with loved ones result in more opportunities to inflict harm (Leary et al., 1998). Also, hurtful behaviors enacted by friends and romantic partners usually involve more important matters than those enacted by acquaintances or strangers (Leary & Springer, 2001). As intimacy between two people increases, the individuals become aware of more detailed information about more sensitive topics. This sensitive information is a unique tool that has now become available to inflict harm (Miller, 1997). It is also possible that people view others who are close to them as safer targets than strangers (Leary et al., 1998). Perhaps people estimate the repercussions to be less with people who are supposed to care about them.

Leary et al. (1998) also suggest that when one has a close relationship with someone, the consequences of their behaviors are more serious. They explained by noting that "when intimates are aloof, critical, neglectful, nasty, or avoidant, the victim cannot help but worry about whether the behavior communicates something about the perpetrator's feelings toward him or her and commitment to the relationship" (p. 1234). Another suggested reason is that negative behaviors from someone unfamiliar (i.e.

stranger or acquaintance) are less likely to be viewed by the victim as a reflection of true interpersonal value (Leary et al., 1998). When people are criticized or devalued by those who know them, they are more apt to take the actions or comments personally. Miller (1997) suggests that hurtful behaviors are intensified in close relationships because the loss of approval and acceptance from others causes more distress than never having such approval in the first place. He also suggests that once people are accepted by others (i.e. close relationships), people no longer put forth effort to maintain good impressions, thereby creating opportunity for hurtful behaviors to enter into the relationship. Finally, emotions are stronger in close relationships than in distant ones (Berscheid, 1983); therefore, people would feel a more intense hurt when being treated negatively by intimates than acquaintances.

Since relationally aggressive acts are aversive behaviors that occur in an interpersonal context, the relationship between intimacy and aversive interpersonal behaviors discussed above would be expected to transfer to relational aggression. In other words, relational aggression would be expected to occur more frequently in relationships that are characterized by closeness and intimacy (i.e. romantic relationships) than in relationships that are not close or intimate (i.e. acquaintanceships).

Present Study

The present study is designed to enhance knowledge about relational aggression in several ways. First, this study focused on college students, a population often ignored by relational aggression researchers. Second, this study assessed the occurrence of romantic relational aggression in addition to relational aggression in acquaintanceships and friendships. Though limited research has considered romantic relational aggression,

only one other known study (Goldstein & Tisak, 2004) had the same set of participants report on relational aggression and relational victimization across all three relationship contexts. Third, three subscales of relational aggression (social exclusion, malicious humor, guilt induction) were assessed, which will provide more detailed information about relationally aggressive behaviors.

Furthermore, the present study assessed the participants' past usage of relationally aggressive behaviors, their anticipated usage of the behaviors in the future, and their past receipt of the behaviors. Other research (Crick & Bigbee, 1998; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Forrest et al., 2005) has included assessment of aggressor and/or victim roles, but the current study also asked about predicted future usage for two reasons. The first reason was to allow the participant to estimate his or her usage of relational aggression if given either the first opportunity or another opportunity for its use. The second reason was to allow participants who already reported high levels of relational aggression usage to reflect on how effective the methods had been.

Based on the findings from the above literature review, the following questions and hypotheses have been generated for the present study:

Q1). Are there gender differences in relational aggression among college students?

H1). There will be no gender difference in the amount of relational aggression used.

H2). There will be no gender difference in the likelihood of relational aggression use in the future.

H3). There will be no gender difference in the amount of relational aggression experienced.

Q2). How does relational aggression vary as a function of relationship context?

H1). Relational aggression has been used most often in romantic relationships, less often in friendships, and least often in acquaintanceships.

H2). Participants will report future use of relational aggression the most often in romantic relationships, less often in friendships, and least often in acquaintanceships.

H3). Relational victimization occurs most often in romantic relationships, less often in friendships, and least often in acquaintanceships.

Q3). Does previous use of relational aggression predict future willingness to use relational aggression?

H1). Participants who endorsed previous use of relational aggression would be more likely to endorse using relational aggression in the future.

Since a lot of the research in the area of relational aggression remains exploratory, additional questions addressing areas such as gender differences across subtypes of relational aggression and across relationship contexts will also be considered.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

The participants consisted of 223 undergraduate students (88 men and 135 women) from a large Midwestern Catholic university. Participants were recruited from Introductory Psychology courses via the psychology department's online research sign-up system. The mean age of the participants was 18.81 years with 57.4% of participants being freshman, 29.6% being sophomores, 5.8% being juniors, and 5.4% being seniors. The majority of participants were Caucasian (92.8%) and the remaining groups represented were African American (4.0%), Latino (2.2%), and other (0.9%). Participants reported that they were involved in an average of 1.86 extra-curricular activities. Forty-six were members of athletic teams, 23 were members of social fraternities or sororities, 89 were involved in a community service organization, and 96 had a part-time or full-time job.

Information regarding the participants' romantic relationship was collected (see Appendix M). Participants reported that on average, they have had 2.71 significant romantic relationships. Eighty-seven participants considered a current relationship, 82 participants considered past relationships, 38 participants considered both current and past relationships, and 16 considered opposite-sex friendships.

Measures

Demographic Information

An initial demographic sheet asked participants to report their age, gender, year in school, race, and involvement in extra-curricular activities. An additional demographic sheet asked participants to report information about their romantic relationships, such as total number of significant romantic relationships and whether the relationship was current or past. Participants were also asked to rate the degree of closeness and their overall level of satisfaction for each of the three relationship contexts; these ratings were used as control variables.

Relational Aggression

The present study used the Indirect Aggression Scale Aggressor version (IAS-A) and Target version (IAS-T; Forrest et al., 2005) to assess relational aggression. Both the IAS-A and the IAS-T are self-report indices of indirect aggression in an adult population, with the IAS-A measuring the use of indirect aggression towards someone else and the IAS-T measuring the experience of being the victim of indirect aggression. The items for the two scale versions only differ in the wording and order of items. Items were created based upon interviews in which indirect aggression was defined as behavior where the respondent hurt a person (or was hurt) in covert and manipulative ways; the items were consistent with the conceptualization of relational aggression considered in this study. Higher scores indicated a greater amount of relational aggression.

The IAS-A was modified slightly for use in this study. In addition to indicating past use of the behaviors, participants were also instructed to indicate whether they would consider using each behavior in the future. The answer choices were yes, no, or depends,

with the response of depends being scored as equivalent to a yes response. Higher scores indicate a greater reported likelihood of future use.

Factor analysis on the original items resulted in 25 total items, which broke down into three subscales: Social Exclusionary (10 items), Malicious Humor (9 items), and Guilt Induction (6 items). Responses to each item are scored from a range of 1 (never) to 5 (regularly) with the total score resulting from the summing of each subscale.

Therefore, higher scores on each subscale indicate a higher frequency of those behaviors, with possible scores ranging from 10 to 50 for the Social Exclusionary subscale, from 9 to 45 for the Malicious Humor subscale, from 6 to 30 for the Guilt Induction subscale, and from 25 to 125 for overall relational aggression. Though recently developed, psychometric evaluation suggests that both scales are reliable and valid, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.84 for the IAS-A and from 0.81 to 0.89 for the IAS-T (Forrest et al., 2005).

Social Desirability

Because relationally aggressive behaviors are negative and aversive, participants may have a tendency not to answer the questions honestly. A measure of social desirability was therefore included in the study as a control variable. The Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) evaluates one's overconfidence in judgments and exaggerated claims of positive attributes. This scale measures self-deceptive positivity (SDE; 20 items), which is the tendency to give self-reports that are honest but positively biased, as well as impression management (IM; 20 items), which is deliberate self-presentation to an audience.

After reversing the negatively keyed items, each response of a six or seven receives one point, which results in a possible score ranging from 0 to 20 on SDE and from 0 to 20 on IM. Average SDE scores for college students have been reported as 7.5 for males and 6.8 for females. Average IM scores for college students have been reported as 4.3 for males and 4.9 for females (Paulhus, 1991). Internal consistency for this scale has been reported as .68 to .80 for the SDE scale, .75 to .86 for the IM scale, and .83 overall. Test-retest reliability has been reported as .69 (SDE) and .65 (IM). Paulhus (1991) reports acceptable convergent, discriminant, and concurrent validity.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from Introductory Psychology courses via the online research sign-up system. Testing sessions were completed in groups of approximately ten people. Participants began the session by reading and signing a consent form (see Appendix A). An overview of the study was read to participants, indicating that the interpersonal relationships of acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic relationships were being studied. Participants were also reminded that responses would remain confidential as they were only identified by the four-digit code provided by the participant (see Appendix B). Demographic information was collected from participants (see Appendix C). Beginning with acquaintanceships, definitions and examples were given for this type of relationship. Participants were instructed to think about the interactions they have with their acquaintances, the types of conversations they have, and the way that being around their acquaintances makes them feel. Participants then indicated their level of satisfaction with this relationship type (see Appendix D). The participants then completed the IAS-A, including the modification, and the IAS-T for

acquaintanceships (see Appendices E and F). The participants then heard equivalent directions and completed the same series of questionnaires in regards to their friendships (see Appendices G through I) and romantic relationships (see Appendices J through M). Participants who have never had a romantic relationship were instructed to consider opposite-sex friendships. Additional information, such as length of relationship and frequency of contact, was collected in regards to each participant's romantic relationships (see Appendix K). The participants finished the study by completing the BIDR measure of social desirability (see Appendix N). Upon completion of the questionnaires, the participants received a debriefing form that described the study in more detail, offered sources for further information, and provided contact information for the researcher and her advisor in case of questions or concerns (see Appendix O).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

All analyses were performed using the statistical program, SPSS, and a significance level of 0.05. For each of the repeated measures multivariate analyses of covariance or repeated measures multivariate analyses of variance, Mauchly's Test of Sphericity was conducted and, when necessary, the Greenhouse-Geisser epsilon was used to correct the degrees of freedom in determining the critical F-value. Descriptive analyses for the relational aggression scales and social desirability scales are provided in Table 1. Reliability analyses indicated that subscale items on the Indirect Aggression Scale were internally consistent (see Table 2).

Gender Differences

The first set of hypotheses predicted no gender difference would be found in the amount of relational aggression used in the past, predicted to be used in the future, or experienced in the past. Gender differences were explored for each of the three relationship contexts (see Table 3). There were no gender differences in ratings of satisfaction, closeness, and social desirability for acquaintanceships, so a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted rather than a multivariate analysis of covariance. Results indicated no gender difference in the amount of relational aggression used in the past or experienced in the past. There was a significant gender difference, however, in

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics by Gender

Variable	Possible Range	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Males (N = 88)					
Acquaintanceships					
Past use	25-125	26	68	46.15	10.22
Future use	25-50	25	50	35.41	6.28
Experienced	25-125	25	107	50.32	14.55
Friendships					
Past use	25-125	26	74	46.30	10.96
Future use	25-50	25	50	35.67	6.33
Experienced	25-125	25	106	46.30	12.65
Romantic Relationships					
Past use	25-125	26	74	40.36	9.99
Future use	25-50	25	50	33.48	6.73
Experienced	25-125	25	86	42.42	11.87
Social Desirability	40-280	94	231	153.98	23.57
Females (N = 135)					
Acquaintanceships					
Past use	25-125	26	79	43.47	11.22
Future use	25-50	25	49	33.19	5.71
Experienced	25-125	25	93	48.18	15.45
Friendships					
Past use	25-125	25	69	41.41	9.63
Future use	25-50	25	50	33.05	5.18
Experienced	25-125	25	86	44.64	11.83
Romantic Relationships					
Past use	25-125	25	68	39.24	9.16
Future use	25-50	25	49	32.19	4.89
Experienced	25-125	25	74	39.09	11.68
Social Desirability	40-280	88	227	153.58	20.02
Total (N = 223)					
Acquaintanceships					
Past use	25-125	26	79	44.52	10.89
Future use	25-50	25	50	34.06	6.03
Experienced	25-125	25	107	49.02	15.11
Friendships					
Past use	25-125	25	74	43.34	10.43
Future use	25-50	25	50	34.09	5.79
Experienced	25-125	25	106	46.30	12.65
Romantic Relationships					
Past use	25-125	25	74	39.69	9.49
Future use	25-50	25	50	32.70	5.55
Experienced	25-125	25	86	40.40	11.84
Social Desirability	40-280	88	231	153.74	21.44

Table 2

Cronbach Alpha Values for Indirect Aggression Subscales

Relationship and Role	Subscale	Cronbach's Alpha
Acquaintanceships		
Past use	Social Exclusion	.84
	Malicious Humor	.83
	Guilt Induction	.75
Experienced	Social Exclusion	.91
	Malicious Humor	.91
	Guilt Induction	.85
Friendships		
Past use	Social Exclusion	.80
	Malicious Humor	.88
	Guilt Induction	.74
Experienced	Social Exclusion	.90
	Malicious Humor	.90
	Guilt Induction	.79
Romantic Relationships		
Past use	Social Exclusion	.77
	Malicious Humor	.84
	Guilt Induction	.79
Experienced	Social Exclusion	.84
	Malicious Humor	.87
	Guilt Induction	.86
Romantic Relationships (current relationship only)		
Past use	Social Exclusion	.73
	Malicious Humor	.87
	Guilt Induction	.79
Experienced	Social Exclusion	.77
	Malicious Humor	.90
	Guilt Induction	.87

Table 3

Multivariate Analysis of Variance Results for Gender Differences

Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Direction of Effect
Acquaintanceships				
Past use	1, 221	3.262	.072	
Future use	1, 221	7.467	.007	males > females
Experienced	1, 221	1.070	.302	
Friendships				
Past use	1, 220	10.627	.001	males > females
Future use	1, 220	11.177	.001	males > females
Experienced	1, 220	4.665	.032	males > females
Romantic Relationships				
Past use	1, 218	.486	.486	
Future use	1, 218	3.411	.066	
Experienced	1, 218	4.210	.041	males > females

the predicted use of relational aggression in the future, with males ($M = 35.41$, $SD = 6.28$) reporting a greater future likelihood of using relational aggression within acquaintanceships than females ($M = 33.90$, $SD = 5.71$).

Gender differences within friendships were explored next. Reported rating of satisfaction and social desirability scores did not significantly differ for men and women for friendships, but females reported being closer to their friends than males, $F(1, 221) = 4.757$, $p = .030$. Degree of closeness to friends was therefore a covariate, and a multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted. Results indicated a significant gender difference for the amount of relational aggression used in the past, with males ($M = 46.30$, $SD = 10.96$) reporting greater use of relational aggression in friendships than females ($M = 41.41$, $SD = 9.63$). There was also a significant gender difference in the amount of predicted use of relational aggression in the future, with males ($M = 35.67$, $SD = 6.33$) predicting greater future use of relational aggression in friendships than females ($M = 33.05$, $SD = 5.18$). Also, there was a significant gender difference in the amount of relational aggression experienced with males ($M = 48.86$, $SD = 13.49$) reporting greater relational victimization in friendships than females ($M = 44.64$, $SD = 11.83$; see Table 3).

Gender differences within romantic relationships were explored next. Ratings of satisfaction, closeness, and social desirability did not significantly differ for men and women for romantic relationships, but females reported having longer relationship lengths ($M = 11.1$ months) than males ($M = 8.5$ months), $F(1, 221) = 4.753$, $p = .030$. The average length of relationship was therefore a covariate, and a multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted. Results indicated no gender difference in the amount of relational aggression used in the past or predicted use of relational aggression in the

future. There was a significant gender difference, however, in the amount of relational victimization experienced, with males ($M = 42.42$, $SD = 11.87$) reporting more relational victimization in romantic relationships than females ($M = 39.03$, $SD = 11.73$; see Table 3).

Relational Aggression Strategies

As previously noted, the relational aggression scales were comprised of three subscales or relational aggression types (social exclusion, malicious humor, and guilt induction); therefore, additional analyses were performed to explore gender differences in strategy used, predicted, and experienced within each of the three relationship contexts were explored (see Table 4). Due to the different number of items per subscale, the average item rating was used rather than the total score for all items.

Subscales were first explored for past use of relational aggression within acquaintanceships. There was a significant interaction of strategy and gender on past use of relational aggression, $F(2, 442) = 6.339$, $p = .002$. In order to explore this significant interaction, a repeated measures ANOVA using only male participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on past use of relational aggression, $F(2, 174) = 5.854$, $p = .003$. Follow-up paired sample t -tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor used ($t(87) = -2.218$, $p = .029$) and between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction used ($t(87) = 3.227$, $p = .002$), but there was not a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction used ($t(87) = 1.263$, $p > .05$). In acquaintanceships, males reported using malicious humor more than social exclusion and

Table 4

Relational Aggression Strategies across Relationships and Gender

	Males			Females		
	Past	Future	Experienced	Past	Future	Experienced
Acquaintanceship						
Social exclusion	1.82 (.52)	1.41 (.28)	1.99 (.63)	1.82 (.52)	1.36 (.28)	2.03 (.68)
Malicious Humor	1.95 (.56)	1.44 (.30)	2.08 (.69)	1.72 (.52)	1.30 (.27)	1.87 (.69)
Guilt Induction	1.74 (.47)	1.39 (.28)	1.95 (.68)	1.63 (.47)	1.30 (.25)	1.84 (.68)
Friendship						
Social exclusion	1.46 (.41)	1.27 (.29)	1.62 (.55)	1.49 (.38)	1.26 (.24)	1.69 (.56)
Malicious Humor	2.21 (.73)	1.57 (.34)	2.31 (.73)	1.75 (.56)	1.35 (.28)	1.88 (.64)
Guilt Induction	1.96 (.54)	1.48 (.29)	1.98 (.67)	1.78 (.49)	1.37 (.26)	1.80 (.57)
Romantic Relationship						
Social exclusion	1.25 (.30)	1.18 (.24)	1.31 (.30)	1.18 (.24)	1.11 (.17)	1.20 (.29)
Malicious Humor	1.57 (.52)	1.33 (.33)	1.66 (.54)	1.51 (.52)	1.26 (.27)	1.48 (.60)
Guilt Induction	2.01 (.67)	1.53 (.31)	2.02 (.76)	1.81 (.53)	1.39 (.28)	1.56 (.59)

guilt induction. A repeated measures ANOVA using only female participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on past use of relational aggression, $F(2, 268) = 13.903, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor used ($t(134) = 2.847, p = .005$), between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction used ($t(134) = 5.294, p < .001$), and between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction used ($t(134) = 2.384, p = .019$). In acquaintanceships, females reported using social exclusion the most, malicious humor less, and guilt induction the least. Further follow-up exploration was conducted using a between subjects t-test. Males and females reported equal amounts of social exclusion ($t(221) = -.083, p > .05$) and guilt induction ($t(221) = 1.671, p > .05$), but males reported a greater use of malicious humor ($t(221) = 3.166, p = .002$) within acquaintanceships. The main effect of strategy on past use of relational aggression in acquaintanceships was significant, $F(2, 442) = 11.708, p < .001$. The main effect of gender on past use of relational aggression in acquaintanceships was not significant, $F(1, 221) = 3.659, p > .05$.

Subscales were also explored for past use of relational aggression within friendships. The significant main effects were qualified by a significant interaction of strategy and gender on past use of relational aggression, $F(1.777, 392.775) = 21.258, p < .001$. In order to explore this significant interaction, a repeated measures ANOVA using only male participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on past use of relational aggression, $F(1.782, 155.066) = 62.620, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor used ($t(87) = -9.985, p < .001$), between the amount of social

exclusion and guilt induction used ($t(87) = -9.038, p < .001$) and between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction used ($t(87) = 3.463, p = .001$). In friendships, males reported using malicious humor the most, guilt induction less, and social exclusion the least. A repeated measures ANOVA using only female participants was conducted, and significant finding for strategy on past use of relational aggression, $F(1.770, 237.235) = 29.7715, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor used ($t(134) = -5.754, p < .000$) and between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction used ($t(134) = -8.780, p < .001$), but there was not a significant difference between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction used ($t(134) = .491, p > .05$). In friendships, females reported using malicious humor and guilt induction more than social exclusion. Further follow-up exploration was conducted using a between subjects t-test. Males and females reported equal amounts of social exclusion ($t(221) = -.554, p > .05$), but males reported a greater use of malicious humor ($t(151.887) = 5.009, p < .001$) and guilt induction ($t(221) = 2.542, p = .012$) within friendships. The main effect of strategy on past use of relational aggression in friendships ($F(1.777, 392.775) = 99.516, p < .001$) and the main effect of gender on past use of relational aggression in friendships ($F(1, 221) = 12.780, p < .001$) were significant.

The next subscales explored were for past use of relational aggression within current romantic relationships. The interaction between strategy and gender on past use of relational aggression ($F(2, 170) = .834, p > .05$) was not significant nor was the main effect of gender on past use of relational aggression ($F(1, 85) = 1.754, p > .05$). The main effect of strategy on past use of relational aggression ($F(2, 170) = 66.405, p < .001$) was

significant. Follow-up paired sample *t*-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor used ($t(86) = -5.630, p < .001$), between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction used ($t(86) = -11.365, p < .001$), and between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction used ($t(86) = -6.101, p < .001$). In romantic relationships, males and females reported using guilt induction the most, malicious humor less, and social exclusion the least.

Exploration of the relational aggression subscales continued with the predicted future use of relational aggression in acquaintanceships. There was a significant interaction of strategy and gender on predicted future use of relational aggression, $F(2, 442) = 3.904, p = .021$. In order to explore this significant interaction, a repeated measures ANOVA using only male participants was conducted, and there was not a significant effect of strategy on predicted future use of relational aggression, $F(2, 174) = 1.878, p > .05$. In acquaintanceships, males reported that they would be equally likely to use social exclusion, malicious humor, and guilt induction in the future. A repeated measures ANOVA using only female participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on predicted future use of relational aggression, $F(2, 268) = 5.277, p = .006$. Follow-up paired sample *t*-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor used ($t(134) = 2.748, p = .007$) and between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction used ($t(134) = 2.710, p = .008$), but there was not a significant difference between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction used ($t(134) = .043, p > .05$). In acquaintanceships, females reported that they would be more likely to use social exclusion than malicious humor or guilt induction in the future. Further follow-up exploration was conducted

using a between subjects t-test. Males and females reported that they would likely use the same amounts of social exclusion ($t(221) = -1.172, p > .05$), but males reported a greater likelihood of future use of malicious humor ($t(221) = -3.570, p < .001$) and guilt induction ($t(168.112) = -2.406, p < .001$) within acquaintanceships. The main effect of strategy on predicted future use of relational aggression was not significant ($F(2, 442) = 2.504, p > .05$). The main effect of gender on predicted future use of relational aggression was significant, ($F(1, 221) = 7.942, p = .005$).

Predicted use of relational aggression in friendships was explored next. There was a significant interaction of strategy and gender on predicted future use of relational aggression, $F(1.930, 426.640) = 13.894, p < .001$. In order to explore this significant interaction, a repeated measures ANOVA using only male participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on predicted future use of relational aggression, $F(2, 174) = 43.286, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor used ($t(87) = -9.144, p < .001$), between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction used ($t(87) = -7.124, p < .001$) and between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction used ($t(87) = 2.434, p = .017$). In friendships, males reported being most likely to use guilt induction, less likely to use malicious humor, and the least likely to use social exclusion in the future. A repeated measures ANOVA using only female participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on predicted future use of relational aggression, $F(1.9105, 255.994) = 12.931, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor used ($t(134) = -3.629, p < .001$) and between the amount of social

exclusion and guilt induction used ($t(134) = -5.237, p < .001$), but there was not a significant difference between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction used ($t(134) = .436, p > .05$). In friendships, females reported being more likely to use guilt induction or malicious humor than social exclusion in the future. Further follow-up exploration was conducted using a between subjects t-test. Males and females reported that they would likely use the same amounts of social exclusion ($t(221) = .165, p > .05$), but males reported a greater likelihood of future use of malicious humor ($t(161.947) = 4.948, p < .001$) and guilt induction ($t(221) = 2.864, p = .005$) within friendships. The main effect of strategy on predicted future use of relational aggression ($F(1.930, 426.640) = 56.460, p < .001$) and the main effect of gender on predicted future use of relational aggression ($F(1, 221) = 12.386, p = .001$) were significant.

The next analyses conducted were for predicted future use of relational aggression in romantic relationships. The interaction between strategy and gender on past use of relational aggression ($F(2, 170) = .766, p > .05$). The main effect of gender on past use of relational aggression was significant, ($F(1, 85) = 4.201, p = .043$). The main effect of strategy on past use of relational aggression ($F(2, 170) = 44.522, p < .001$) was significant. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor predicted for future use ($t(86) = -4.848, p < .001$), between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction predicted for future use ($t(86) = -9.200, p < .001$), and between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction predicted for future use ($t(86) = -4.766, p < .001$). In romantic relationships, males and females reported they would be most likely to use guilt

induction, less likely to use malicious humor, and least likely to use social exclusion in the future.

Exploration of the relational aggression subscales continued with relational victimization in acquaintanceships. There was a significant interaction of strategy and gender on relational victimization experienced, $F(2, 442) = 6.358, p = .002$. In order to explore this significant interaction, a repeated measures ANOVA using only male participants was conducted, and the effect of strategy on relational victimization experienced was not significant, $F(2, 174) = 2.598, p > .05$. In acquaintanceships, males reported experiencing equal amounts of social exclusion, malicious humor, and guilt induction. A repeated measures ANOVA using only female participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on relational victimization experienced, $F(2, 268) = 10.571, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor experienced ($t(134) = 3.944, p < .001$) and between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction experienced ($t(134) = 3.985, p < .001$), but there was not a significant difference between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction experienced ($t(134) = .569, p > .05$). In acquaintanceships, females reported experiencing more social exclusion than malicious humor or guilt induction. Further follow-up exploration was conducted using a between subjects t-test. Males and females reported experiencing equal amounts of social exclusion ($t(221) = -.517, p > .05$) and guilt induction ($t(221) = 1.176, p > .05$), but males reported experiencing more malicious humor ($t(221) = 2.289, p = .023$) within acquaintanceships. The main effect of strategy on relational victimization experienced

was significant, $F(2, 442) = 4.944, p = .008$. The main effect of gender on relational victimization experienced was not significant, $F(1, 221) = 1.277, p > .05$.

The next analyses conducted were for amount of relational victimization in friendships. There was a significant interaction of strategy and gender on relational victimization experienced, $F(2, 442) = 16.790, p < .001$. In order to explore this significant interaction, a repeated measures ANOVA using only male participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on relational victimization experienced, $F(2, 174) = 52.708, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor experienced ($t(87) = -9.622, p < .001$), between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction experienced ($t(87) = -5.971, p < .001$) and between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction experienced ($t(87) = 4.738, p < .001$). In friendships, males reported experiencing malicious humor the most, guilt induction less, and social exclusion the least. A repeated measures ANOVA using only female participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on relational victimization experienced, $F(2, 268) = 113.763, p = .002$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor experienced ($t(134) = -3.432, p = .001$), and between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction experienced ($t(134) = 2.191, p = .030$), but there was not a significant difference between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction experienced ($t(134) = 1.506, p > .05$). In friendships, females also reported experiencing malicious humor the most, guilt induction less, and social exclusion the least. Further follow-up exploration was conducted using a between subjects t-test. Males and females reported

experiencing equal amounts of social exclusion ($t(221) = -.920, p > .05$), but males reported experiencing more malicious humor ($t(221) = 4.553, p < .001$) and guilt induction ($t(221) = 2.214, p = .028$) within friendships. The main effect of strategy on relational victimization experienced ($F(2, 442) = 52.925, p < .001$) and the main effect of gender on relational victimization experienced ($F(1, 221) = 6.841, p = .010$) were significant.

The final subscale analyses were conducted for relational victimization within romantic relationships. There was a significant interaction of strategy and gender on relational victimization experienced, $F(2, 170) = 41.781, p < .001$. In order to explore this significant interaction, a repeated measures ANOVA using only male participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on relational victimization, $F(2, 64) = 23.727, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor experienced ($t(32) = -3.791, p = .001$), between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction experienced ($t(32) = -6.399, p < .001$), and between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction experienced ($t(32) = -3.417, p = .002$). In romantic relationships, males reported experiencing guilt induction the most, malicious humor less, and social exclusion the least. A repeated measures ANOVA using only female participants was conducted, and there was a significant finding for strategy on relational victimization, $F(2, 106) = 15.787, p < .001$. Follow-up paired sample t-tests indicated a significant difference between the amount of social exclusion and malicious humor experienced ($t(53) = -4.321, p < .001$) and between the amount of social exclusion and guilt induction experienced ($t(53) = -5.413, p < .001$), but there was not a significant

difference between the amount of malicious humor and guilt induction experienced ($t(53) = -1.101, p > .05$). In romantic relationships, females reported experiencing guilt induction and malicious humor more than social exclusion. Further follow-up exploration was conducted using a between subjects t-test. Males and females reported experiencing equal amounts of social exclusion ($t(85) = 1.652, p > .05$) and malicious humor ($t(85) = 1.422, p > .05$), but males reported experiencing more guilt induction ($t(85) = 3.166, p = .002$) within romantic relationships. The main effect of strategy on relational victimization experienced ($F(2, 170) = 41.781, p < .001$) and the main effect of gender on relational victimization experienced ($F(1, 85) = 6.740, p = .011$) were significant.

Relationship Context Differences

The second research question concerned whether amounts of relational aggression differed across the three relationship contexts. This question was explored using only participants who considered a current romantic relationship when answering the items. The participants were limited in this way in order to decrease variability across relationship contexts; the relationships considered for the acquaintanceship and friendship contexts were current relationships. Since reported levels of satisfaction and closeness differed as a function of relationship context, these variables were covariates in a repeated measures multivariate analysis of covariance. The first hypothesis regarding relationship context predicted that relational aggression has been used most often in romantic relationships, less often in friendships, and least often in acquaintanceships. Results indicated that the main effect of relationship context on the amount of relational aggression used was not significant, $F(1.768, 139.678) = .438, p > .05$. The main effect of

gender on the amount of relational aggression used was significant ($F(1, 79) = 4.458, p = .038$), with males reporting a greater use of relational aggression than females. The interaction of relationship context and gender on the amount of relational aggression used was not significant, $F(1.768, 139.678) = 2.385, p > .05$.

The second hypothesis regarding relationship context predicted that future use of relational aggression would occur most often in romantic relationships, less often in friendships, and least often in acquaintanceships. Results indicated that the main effect of relationship context on the future use of relational aggression was not significant, $F(1.721, 139.956) = 1.125, p > .05$. The main effect of gender on the future use of relational aggression used was significant ($F(1, 79) = 9.211, p = .003$), with males reporting more future use of relational aggression than females. The interaction of relationship context and gender on the future use of relational aggression used was not significant, $F(1.721, 139.956) = 2.264, p > .05$.

The third hypothesis regarding relationship context predicted that relational victimization occurs most often in romantic relationships, less often in friendships, and least often in acquaintanceships. Results indicated that the main effect of relationship context on the amount of relational victimization experienced was not significant, $F(1.857, 146.707) = 1.912, p > .05$. The main effect of gender on the amount of relational victimization experienced was significant ($F(1, 79) = 6.585, p = .012$), with males reporting more relational victimization experienced than females. The interaction of relationship context and gender on the amount of relational victimization experienced was not significant, $F(1.857, 146.707) = .361, p > .05$.

An additional analysis was conducted in order to examine the whether the romantic relationship considered (current or past) would affect the amount of relational aggression used in the past, predicted for use in the future, or experienced in the past. Results from a between subjects multivariate analysis of variance indicated that participants who considered a past romantic relationship reported a greater use of relational aggression ($F(1, 167) = 6.064, p = .015$) as well as a greater experience of relational aggression ($F(1, 167) = 9.640, p = .002$), but no difference in the amount of predicted future relational aggression ($F(1, 167) = 1.319, p > .05$) from participants who considered a current romantic relationship.

Relational Aggression Patterns

The third research question concerned whether previous use of relational aggression predicts future willingness to use relational aggression. It was hypothesized that participants who endorsed previous use of relational aggression would be more likely to endorse using relational aggression in the future. A significant positive correlation was found between past use of relational aggression and estimated future use of relational aggression within acquaintanceships ($r = .652, p < .001$), friendships ($r = .682, p < .001$), and romantic relationships ($r = .572, p < .001$). These correlations indicate that past use of relational aggression is related to an increased likelihood of future use of relational aggression (see Table 5).

To further explore patterns of estimated future use of relational aggression, the relationship between relational victimization and future willingness to use relational aggression was considered (see Table 5). Significant positive correlations were found between relational victimization and estimated future use of relational aggression within

Table 5

Relational Aggression and Victimization across Relationships

	Acquaintanceships			Friendships			Romantic Relationships		
	Past	Future	Experienced	Past	Future	Experienced	Past	Future	Experienced
Acquaintanceship									
Past use	--	.652**	.589**	.539**	.393**	.397**	.473**	.306**	.348**
Future use		--	.447**	.393**	.688**	.306**	.328**	.594**	.260**
Experienced			--	.368**	.261**	.558**	.359**	.203*	.424**
Friendship									
Past use				--	.682**	.738**	.603**	.358**	.504**
Future use					--	.515**	.443**	.708**	.387**
Experienced						--	.480**	.266**	.540**
Romantic Relationship									
Past use							--	.572**	.813**
Future use							--	--	.490**
Experienced									--

*significant at the .01 level (two-tailed) **significant at the .001 level (two-tailed)

acquaintanceships ($r = .447, p < .001$), friendships ($r = .515, p < .001$), and romantic relationships ($r = .490, p < .001$). These correlations indicate that experiencing relational victimization is related to increased likelihood of future use of relational aggression.

In order to determine whether reported likelihood of future use was related more strongly to past use or to past victimization, the correlations were transformed into z -scores using the Fisher r -to- z transformation. Within acquaintanceships, the difference between the correlation for past use of relational aggression and future use of relational aggression and the correlation for relational victimization and future use of relational aggression was significant ($z = 3.13, p < .001$). Past use of relational aggression was more strongly related to future use of relational aggression than was relational victimization for acquaintanceships. Within friendships, the difference between the correlation for past use of relational aggression and future use of relational aggression and the correlation for relational victimization and future use of relational aggression was significant ($z = 2.76, p = .003$). Past use of relational aggression was more strongly related to future use of relational aggression than was relational victimization for friendships. Within romantic relationships, the difference between the correlation for past use of relational aggression and future use of relational aggression and the correlation for relational victimization and future use of relational aggression was not significant ($z = 1.21, p > .05$).

Further analyses were conducted to examine the relation between using relational aggression and experiencing relational victimization (see Table 5). Significant positive correlations were found between relational aggression and relational victimization within acquaintanceships ($r = .589, p < .001$), friendships ($r = .738, p <$

.001), and romantic relationships ($r = .813, p < .001$). These correlations indicate that it is likely a person will be both an aggressor and a victim of relational aggression.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the relational aggression and victimization patterns of young adults. Because of the negative impact that relational aggression has been found to have on both the aggressor and the victim, it is important to recognize the context in which such negative interpersonal behaviors are likely to occur. Learning more about who uses or experiences which relational aggression strategy and in which contexts these strategies are used will aid in identifying appropriate target audiences and behaviors for prevention and interventions efforts.

Gender Differences

The first research question addressed gender differences in relational aggression, and it was hypothesized that males and females would not differ in the amount of relational aggression used, predicted, or experienced. This hypothesis was only partially supported, as males reported greater amounts of relational aggression in some contexts. Males reported greater past use and greater past experience of relational aggression within friendships. They also reported being more likely than females to use relational aggression in the future in both acquaintanceships and friendships. These findings are in contrast to past research, which found no gender differences in relational aggression in adulthood (Forrest et al., 2005; Richardson & Green, 1999). Furthermore, when gender

differences in relational aggression are found, which typically occurs in childhood and adolescence, females report greater use and experience of relational aggression than males (Crick & Bigbee, 1998; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). It may be that males use relationally aggressive behaviors to a greater extent than previously thought. It is also possible that the types of relationally aggressive behaviors considered in the current study included behaviors that males would be more likely to endorse, such as playing practical jokes, name-calling, and making fun of others. These ideas will be further discussed in the following section on relationally aggressive strategies. Another possibility is that there may be gender differences in willingness to report negative behaviors within relationships. Though there were no gender differences on the measure of social desirability included in this study, it is possible that there may be relationally-specific differences that a global social desirability scale would not be able to detect.

Relationships are often viewed as women's forte, so it may be difficult for women to admit that they are utilizing objectionable behaviors in the realm of relationships.

Furthermore, women may perceive themselves as failing within an area in which they are supposed to excel if they report being targeted by peers.

An additional gender difference was found for the amount of relational aggression experienced in romantic relationships, with males reporting more victimization than females. Since only heterosexual relationships were considered, this result implies that females are using more relational aggression in romantic relationships than males; however, there was no gender difference in the amount of relational aggression reported in the past within this relationship context. The possibility that women may be reluctant to report relationally aggressive behaviors would help explain this mismatch in reports.

Alternatively, it is possible that females do not recognize their use of relational aggression toward significant others; therefore, men are endorsing having received relational aggression more often than women are reporting it. It could also be that males are misinterpreting the behavior of their romantic partners, and thus over-reporting their victimization.

Relational Aggression Strategies

In order to obtain more specific information about relationally aggressive behaviors, the specific strategies assessed by the subscales (social exclusion, malicious humor, guilt induction) of the Indirect Aggression Scale were examined. In acquaintanceships, males reported using malicious humor more often than social exclusion or guilt induction, while females reported using social exclusion the most, malicious humor less, and guilt induction the least. Males and females did not differ on the amounts of social exclusion and guilt induction used, but males reported using more malicious humor than females. In friendships, males reported using malicious humor the most, guilt induction less, and social exclusion the least, while females reported using guilt induction and malicious humor more than social exclusion. Males and females did not differ on the amounts of social exclusion used, but males reported using more malicious humor and guilt induction than females. In romantic relationships, participants reported using guilt induction the most, malicious humor less, and social exclusion the least. Males and females did not differ on the amounts of malicious humor, social exclusion, or guilt induction that they used.

Reports of predicted future use of relational aggression in acquaintanceships indicated that males would use all three strategies equally, while females reported a

greater likelihood of using social exclusion than malicious humor or guilt induction. In friendships, males reported that they would use malicious humor the most, guilt induction less, and social exclusion the least, while females reported that they would use guilt induction and malicious humor more often than social exclusion. In romantic relationships, males and females reported that they would use guilt induction the most, malicious humor less, and social exclusion the least. Males and females did not differ on the amount of social exclusion predicted within any relationship, but males reported a greater likelihood of future use of malicious humor and guilt induction within acquaintanceships and friendships.

Reports of relational victimization in acquaintanceships indicated that males experienced the strategies equally, while females experienced social exclusion more than malicious humor or guilt induction. In friendships, both males and females reported experiencing malicious humor the most, guilt induction less, and social exclusion the least. In romantic relationships, males reported experiencing guilt induction the most, malicious humor less, and social exclusion the least, while females reported experiencing guilt induction and malicious humor more than social exclusion. Males and females did not differ on the amounts of social exclusion experienced within any relationship, but males reported experiencing more malicious humor than females in acquaintanceships and friendships and more guilt induction than females in friendships and romantic relationships.

Exploration of the above findings reveals numerous interesting patterns in regards to gender differences and relationship context differences in the choice of strategy. Consideration of gender differences for the strategies illustrated that males and females

do not differ in the amount of social exclusion they have used, would use in the future, or have experienced in any of the three relationship contexts. There was, however, a consistent gender difference in regards to malicious humor; males reported that they have used, would use, and have experienced more malicious humor than females in the contexts of acquaintanceships and friendships. Not only did males report using more malicious humor than females in acquaintanceships and friendships, but malicious humor was also the most commonly used strategy by males within these relationships, the most likely strategy to be used in the future by males within friendships, and the strategy most often experienced by males in friendships. These patterns help explain the finding that males reported a greater use and experience of relational aggression in some settings. The majority of previous studies have not asked specifically about malicious humor strategies, the types of relationally aggressive behaviors that males employed the most in this study. The measures for the majority of previous studies included primarily social exclusionary tactics; if only social exclusionary tactics had been assessed in this study, the findings would have been consistent with the hypothesis of no gender differences in adulthood. When the assessment of relational aggression was expanded to include the type of strategies used more often men (i.e. malicious humor), the findings in regards to overall gender differences changed. Consistent with the suggestions made by Goldstein and Tisak (2004) and Underwood (2003), these findings highlight the need to form a consistent definition of relational aggression in order for studies to be compared to one another and in order to design the most useful prevention and intervention efforts.

It is possible to speculate on why males used malicious humor more than females in acquaintanceships and friendships. The behaviors labeled as malicious humor may be

used more often by males than females in everyday, nonmalicious interactions.

Numerous researchers have studied the use of irony, which includes sarcastic and mocking interactions (e.g. Colston & Lee, 2004; Gibbs, 2000; Pexman & Zvaigzne, 2004). In regards to sarcasm, findings have indicated that the majority of sarcastic remarks are interpreted as humorous and that males use sarcasm more frequently than females (Gibbs, 2000). These past findings suggest that males may not always perceive these behaviors as indicating malicious intent. Some males may perceive using sarcasm and playing jokes as common ways to interact with friends in order to establish camaraderie rather than as behaviors utilized to weaken bonds. If this were the case, the items could have been endorsed due to their occurrence in typical interactions rather than due to intent of damaging a relationship or harming the target. Additionally, males may capitalize on the idea that these behaviors may not always be viewed as malevolent in order to use them in harmful ways. The occurrence of the behaviors would not be obvious and the attack could go undetected by peers. In other words, peers may not be able to distinguish the true intent, and the danger to the aggressor is decreased; this idea of minimizing danger is consistent with the effect/danger ratio described by Bjorkqvist et al. (1994a). Finally, the studies on irony also highlight the inherent ambiguity of the interactions (Pexman & Zvaigzne, 2004). Colston and Lee (2004) found that this risk of misinterpretation may account for gender differences in that males are generally riskier than females.

It was also possible to compare whether or not the strategies that participants reported likely using in the future were consistent with the strategies that participants reported using in the past. The pattern of results indicated that both males and females

indicated the same use of strategies in the future as in the past within friendships and romantic relationships as well as a similar use of strategies in the future as in the past within acquaintanceships. For example, females reported using guilt induction and malicious humor more than social exclusion within friendships in the past, and they also reported a likelihood of using guilt induction and malicious humor more than social exclusion within friendships in the future. These findings imply that participants likely found their past choice of strategy effective in that behavior that achieves the desired response is subsequently repeated (Skinner, 1953).

Since romantic relationships are the only context considered in which males and females are a part of the same dyad, and since romantic relationships are less researched in the literature, relational aggression strategies within this relationship context warrant special note. Guilt induction was the strategy most used in the past, most likely to be used in the future, and most experienced by males and females within romantic relationships (with the exception of females experiencing equal amounts of guilt induction and malicious humor in romantic relationships), while social exclusion was the strategy least used in the past, least likely to be used in the future, and least experienced by males and females within romantic relationships. These results make intuitive sense because of the dyad nature of a romantic relationship; the guilt induction strategies tend to only involve two people (i.e. pretended to be hurt or angry to make him/her feel bad; tried to influence them by making them feel guilty), while social exclusion tactics (i.e. excluded him/her from a group; turned other people against them) require interaction with a greater number of people. Also, the guilt induction strategies involve direct manipulation of the victim's feelings, which is likely easier to accomplish in a close

relationship such as with a romantic partner. In regards to gender differences for the strategies used in romantic relationships, the results indicated that there were no gender differences in the amounts of social exclusion, malicious humor, or guilt induction used in the past or likely to be used in the future. Also, males and females reported having experienced equal amounts of social exclusion and malicious humor in romantic relationships, but males reported experiencing more guilt induction than females.

Possible reasons why guilt induction is the most used strategy in romantic relationships is further elucidated by the research of Baumeister, Stillwell, and Heatherton (1994) on guilt in interpersonal relationships. These researchers first differentiate between communal relationships, which are those in which individuals "do things simply to benefit each other without expecting equal or immediate benefits in return," from exchange relationships, which are those "who benefit each other only when anticipating equal or greater benefits in return" (p. 245). Closer relationships are more likely to be communal. Baumeister et al. (1994) also summarize the functions of guilt. First, guilt motivates behaviors that will ultimately enhance relationships. The interpersonal bond is protected as relationship damage is repaired and behaviors are changed to become more satisfactory to a partner; feeling guilty about hurting a partner leads to changing behaviors to avoid further guilt. This enhancement occurs primarily in communal relationships; guilt in an exchange relationship often leads to reducing contact with the person who is causing guilt. Second, guilt is a technique that a less powerful person can use to influence another person and get his or her own way, thus increasing equity in the relationship. In other words, someone may induce guilt so that the victim finds the guilt aversive and complies with the aggressor in order to escape feeling guilty.

This influence is more common and more effective in communal relationships because the individuals care about each other. Furthermore, though the elicitor is achieving influence and power, the victim is not receiving a reciprocal benefit; this inequality is more characteristic of communal relationships than exchange relationships. Third, guilt functions to redistribute emotional distress in the relationship so that negative feelings are not experienced by only one member of the dyad.

This research on guilt in interpersonal contexts can be applied to the current study. Baumeister et al. (1994) reported that the occurrence of guilt was more frequent and more effective in closer relationships, which is consistent with the finding that guilt induction was the most commonly used strategy in romantic relationships. The finding that guilt has many relationship-enhancing qualities, however, suggests that participants may not be using it to damage relationships. Individuals may use guilt to manipulate partners, but they may be doing so in order to change behaviors or distribute negative emotions, consequences that may ultimately serve to strengthen the relationship. Finally, Baumeister et al. (1994) noted that guilt induction may be used by a less powerful person to influence a more powerful one. This idea offers a possible explanation for why males reported experiencing more guilt induction than females within romantic relationships in the current study. It is possible that females perceive themselves in an inferior position to males at times and utilize guilt induction as a discrete way to approach a feeling of equality.

Relationship Context Differences

The second research question addressed relational aggression across relationship contexts. It was hypothesized that closer relationships would be marked by more

relational aggression because research has indicated that negative interpersonal behaviors occur more frequently in intimate interactions (Leary et al., 1998; Miller, 1997). This hypothesis was not supported; there were no differences across relationship contexts in the amount of relational aggression used in the past, predicted for future use, or experienced in the past. In other words, individuals reported that they use, would use, and experience the same amounts of relational aggression in their acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic relationships. One reason for the lack of a relation between aggressive behavior and the level of intimacy may be that relationally aggressive behaviors were not viewed as harmful. Research by Werner and Nixon (2005) has indicated that there is a relationship between relational aggression use and perceived acceptability; adolescents who view relational aggression as normative are more likely to engage in relationally aggressive behaviors. Perhaps the reported use of relationally aggressive strategies results from individuals' view that it would be a typical and acceptable response rather than because they are trying to be aggressive. Since these behaviors are not aggressive, one would not find an increase as intimacy and familiarity increases.

An alternative possibility is that the results are limited by an overall low amount of relational aggression reported by participants. The average scores for the relationally aggressive items indicated that participants were reporting the frequency of use or receipt as between never and once or twice. With low levels of reported behaviors, it would be difficult to find statistically significant differences across groups. It is possible that individuals who utilize relationally aggressive strategies on a more regular basis exhibit differential usage across relationships.

Another possibility is that the previous analyses considered relationships which were current, but the status of the relationship may affect how the relationship is viewed. Though this study did not differentiate between past and current acquaintanceships and friendships, it was possible to examine how status affects the occurrence of relational aggression within romantic relationships. An additional analysis, therefore, was conducted to compare participants who considered a past romantic relationship to those who considered a current romantic relationship. Participants who considered a past relationship reported a greater use of relational aggression and a greater experience of relational aggression than participants who considered a current romantic relationship. There are a number of possible explanations for this pattern. Research conducted by Linder et al. (2002) suggests that the presence of relational aggression or victimization within a romantic relationship is related to perceiving the relationship quality as negative. For example, partnerships marked by relational aggression reported experiencing less trust and more frustration and jealousy within the relationship and the victims were less likely to rely on their partner during a time of need. Similarly, Bookwala, Frieze, and Grote (1994) found that physical aggression and romantic relationship satisfaction were associated. The finding that past relationships were marked by greater amounts of relational aggression suggests that they were also characterized by a poorer relationship quality and greater dissatisfaction. In other words, the past relationships may have ended due to the presence of relational aggression. Another possible explanation is that there is actually no difference in the amounts of relational aggression in current and past relationships and the findings are due to unintended distortions about current partners. Murray and Holmes (1993; 1994) have utilized narratives to explore couples'

representations of their partners. They have found evidence of various cognitive transformations, in which a partner's negative characteristics are neutralized or restructured in a more positive way. In other words, individuals may view their partner's faults as virtues and/or may exaggerate strengths in order to compensate for weaknesses. The researchers cite reducing doubt and increasing confidence about the relationship as possible reasons for the cognitive restructuring.

In regards to the current study, it is possible that individuals in a current romantic relationship may not recognize the presence of relational aggression because they are generally content and satisfied with the relationship; they may engage in various forms of cognitive restructuring in order to reinterpret or minimize negative interactions or concerns about their partner. Though this study did not ask about past acquaintanceships and friendships, the use of cognitive transformations is likely evident in these relationships as well; self-report of the use of relational aggression in past acquaintanceships and past friendships would likely be greater than the presence of relational aggression in current relationships. In contrast, relational aggression may be easily recognized in a past relationship because it may be easier to pinpoint weaknesses in relationships that have ended; there is no longer a need to protect against feelings of doubt or minimize a partner's faults. Also, individuals may even exaggerate the amounts of relational aggression in the past relationship in order to justify its end or because the individual has an overly negative view of their past partner due to the failed relationship.

Despite the differences in past use of relational aggression in participants who considered a past relationship and those who considered a current relationship, there was no difference between the two groups in the amount of predicted future use of relational

aggression in a romantic relationship. A possible explanation is that people with a past relationship estimate using relational aggression less in the future. If the participants viewed the presence of relational aggression as contributing to the end of the relationship, as discussed above, then the participants would indicate a likely decrease of use in the future in order to maintain interpersonal ties. Also, participants may conceptualize that relationally aggressive behaviors occurred in the past due to specific qualities of those interactions. In other words, they may view the behaviors as situational and therefore unlikely to occur in future relationships.

Relational Aggression Patterns

The third research question addressed the relationship between past use and future use of relational aggression. The hypothesis that past use of relational aggression would be related to future use of relational aggression was supported in that there was a significant positive correlation between past use and future use; this finding is intuitively not surprising. There are numerous possible reasons why someone who used relational aggression in the past would be likely to use it again in the future. Aggressors may have found their methods to be effective in obtaining their goals or may have received social reinforcement from peers. Behaviorism and social learning theory support that the frequency of a behavior is affected by its consequences (Bandura, 1977; Skinner, 1953). These theories have been directly applied to the area of aggression. Tapper and Boulton (2005) investigated the consequences of physically and relationally aggressive behavior occurring within a group of children. They found support that positive reinforcement from peers often supported the aggressor. Also, victims negatively reinforced the aggression, largely through withdrawal. Farmer (2000) suggests that the aggressors'

ability to influence the social atmosphere, to be affiliated with popular individuals, and to obtain a sense of dominance among peers contribute to the reinforcement of the aggressive behavior and subsequent continuation of its use. Furthermore, individuals tend to socialize with similar peers, so aggressive behavior is supported by contact with others who hold comparable beliefs, values, and patterns of interaction.

Another possible reason for why past use of relational aggression is related to future use of relational aggression is that the aggressor's behavioral repertoire lacks other responses; in other words, the aggressor may have a skills deficit and resort to his or her only known behavioral responses. Evidence from social skills training programs with aggressive individuals lends support to a relationship between skills deficits and aggression (e.g. Fraser et al., 2005). Thus, without instruction on new skills, one would expect past and future aggression to be positively correlated. Similarly, repetitive use of relational aggression by an individual suggests that there may be a relatively stable character trait leading to the behaviors. For example, Dodge and Crick (1990) have developed a model of social information-processing that explains a behavioral response to a social stimulus follows a five step progression. This model explains a process by which some individuals have a tendency to infer a hostile intent in ambiguous situations, which leads to the use of aggression. Crick (1995) and Crick, Grotpeter, and Bigbee (2002) have found evidence that the hostile attribution bias is relevant to relational forms of aggression; furthermore, the types of social situations that elicit the hostile attribution bias appear to differ for relational aggression and physical aggression. It is possible that participants who reported using relational aggression have employed such behaviors as a result of mistakenly interpreting the behavior of others as antagonistic.

Further exploration of the data presented here indicated that past relational victimization was related to both past use and future use of relational aggression. In other words, it is likely that an individual will be both an aggressor and a victim of relational aggression. It is possible to speculate about reasons why an individual would both use and experience relational aggression. Perhaps the individual learned the behavior by experiencing the effects firsthand; the victim may realize how hurtful or how effective the strategies can be and therefore use them in order to hurt another peer. Another explanation may be related to the findings that both aggressors and victims are generally rejected by peers (Crick et al., 1997; Crick et al., 1999a; Werner & Crick, 1999). The individual could be relationally aggressive toward another person, which leads to rejection by the peer group; subsequently, the rejected status of this individual causes him to be a target of relational aggression by others. A cyclical pattern could begin in which victimization leads to retaliation against peers in the form of relational aggression, and this aggression augments the level of peer rejection.

The last finding in regards to relational aggression patterns was that past use of relational aggression was more strongly related to predicted future use than was past experience within acquaintanceships and friendships; past use and past experience were equally related to future use for romantic relationships. This pattern suggests that the use of aggression within acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic relationships in the future is generally more affected by a pattern of past use and possibly by the personality traits that led to the initial aggression as opposed to being motivated by attempts at retaliation or compensating for peer rejection. When victimized in a romantic relationship, however, the dyadic nature of the interaction makes it easier to pinpoint the

aggressor; the victim's knowledge of who should be the target of retaliation may make it more likely that the victim becomes an aggressor in the future. In other words, the experience of relational aggression in a romantic relationship indicates that the source of the aggression must be the partner; victims are more likely to become aggressors when it is clear who should be the target.

Strengths and Limitations

In order to guide future research in the area, the strengths and weaknesses of the current study should be examined. This study addressed some of the gaps in the literature by considering a college student population and by including assessment of relational aggression within a romantic relationship as opposed to more broadly defined negative behaviors such as verbal abuse or psychological aggression. Furthermore, this study was one of the first to consider three relationship contexts for the same sample of participants, which allowed for comparison across relationships. Additionally, this is the first known study in the area to inquire about predicted future use of relational aggression. A further strength of the current study was the inclusion of a social desirability measure and consideration of degree of satisfaction with and closeness of the relationship as possible confounding variables; these variables were used as covariates when necessary to account for their potential impact. Finally, this study considered three different relational aggression strategies, which resulted in more specific information about the behaviors included in the relational aggression construct.

Severable notable limitations were also present in this study. The self-report nature of the measures may have impacted the data, as recall of the past may be inaccurate. Also, a very limited sample, particularly for age, was utilized, so caution

must be exercised when generalizing the results. Another weakness of the study is that there was an overall low level of relational aggression reported. It is also possible that social desirability caused some participants to report lower levels of aggression than they actually use or experience. Also, the participants greatly varied on how much relational aggression they reported in their relationships; this suggests that there may be another variable moderating whether or not a person uses or experiences relational aggression. In other words, the individuals who reported low levels of relational aggression might differ in a significant way from those who reported high levels of relational aggression, but potential intervening variables were not explored in the current study. Also, general lack of knowledge in the field about how relational aggression may manifest in adulthood may have limited the findings in the current study. Though the three subscales of social exclusion, malicious humor, and guilt induction were considered, other research has examined slightly different strategies such as rational-appearing and covert insinuation (Kaukiainen et al., 2001). Finally, the relational aggression measures did not specify the intent of the behaviors. It is possible that participants, particularly males, may have endorsed items that have occurred within their relationships for reasons other than to harm others or damage relationships.

Future Research

The recognition of relational aggression is a relatively recent development in the literature on aggression. Although knowledge of non-physical forms of aggression has increased greatly in recent years, many areas continue to need further investigation and development. In general, the field would benefit from clarification regarding the different types of aggression, such as relational, indirect, and social. Agreement

regarding the specific behaviors would lead to improved assessment instruments and techniques, which would ultimately create greater consistency in the area.

In response to the limitations noted above, future research should investigate personal characteristics that are related to relational aggression. For example, an individual's level of empathy or social intelligence has been suggested as one possible influence on aggressive behaviors (Kaukiainen et al., 1999). Other research has suggested that normative beliefs about relational aggression are associated with its use (Werner and Nixon, 2005). Further examination of the consequences of relational aggression and the social reinforcement that maintains the behaviors is warranted. Also, future research should aim to clarify the specific relationally aggressive behaviors used by individuals of different age groups. Qualitative studies may be useful in providing knowledge about the most common strategies. Additionally, future research should clearly specify the intent of the behaviors in the instructions to the participant. Finally, if future research considers participants' estimations of future use of relational aggression, it is recommended that the same scale be used for past use and future use in order to assess whether the use increases or decreases. Though this information would provide speculation on perceived effectiveness, it would also be beneficial to directly ask the participants to rate the effectiveness of the strategy.

With these suggestions taken into account, future research on the topic of relational aggression will likely arrive at more definitive explanations for why relational aggression is used, why some people use relational aggression more than other people, and why some individuals are frequently victims of relational aggression. As knowledge in these areas is enhanced, efforts in prevention and intervention of relational aggression

will be successfully developed and implemented. The relatively low levels of relational aggression reported by college students in this study suggests that the best use of resources for this age group would occur by focusing on tertiary intervention. Because relational aggression was not widespread among college students according to this study, intervention should be aimed at the individuals who are using and experiencing relationally aggressive behaviors. Furthermore, the current study suggests that both males and females should be included in prevention and intervention efforts and that behaviors classified as malicious humor should be included in addition to the more commonly considered social exclusionary behaviors. As additional studies further clarify the role of normative beliefs about relational aggression, intervention efforts would likely benefit from targeting beliefs about acceptability of relational aggression in addition to education about the negative psychological effects.

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Project

Project Title: Interpersonal Relationships Study

Investigator(s): Kristen Turi
Dr. Carolyn Roecker Phelps

Description of Study: I am being asked to participate in a research project that will study my relationships with acquaintances, friends, and romantic partners/opposite-sex friendships. The study requires that I complete questionnaires that assess my use of negative and potentially hurtful behaviors within these relationships as well as how often I am the target of negative behaviors. I will also complete a brief questionnaire regarding my relationship with romantic partners or opposite-sex friendships. Finally, I will complete a measure concerning my emotional experiences and reactions.

Adverse Effects and Risks: It is possible, though not expected, that completing these questionnaires may cause feelings of emotional discomfort because you will be reflecting on some hurtful behaviors you have been involved in. In the event that I do experience distress as a function of completing these questionnaires, I am aware that I can contact the Counseling Center at 937-229-3141. I am also aware that services are provided at the Counseling Center free of charge to all undergraduate students at the University of Dayton.

Duration of Study: This study will last approximately 1 hour.

Confidentiality of Data: I understand that my name will not be associated with any of my responses. My answers will only be matched by the four digit code that I provide.

Contact person: If I have any questions concerning my participation in this study, Kristen Turi can be contacted at 937-229-2175, turikrim@notes.udayton.edu, or St. Joseph's 313. Dr. Roecker Phelps can be contacted at 937-229-2618, carolyn.roecker-phelps@notes.udayton.edu, or St. Joseph's 303. The chair of the Research Review and

Ethics Committee, Dr. Charles Kimble, can be reached at 937-229-2167, Charles.Kimble@notes.udayton.edu, or in St. Joseph's 319.

Consent to Participate: I have voluntarily decided to participate in this study. The investigator named above has adequately answered any and all questions I have about this study, the procedures involved, and my participation. I understand that the investigator named above will be available to answer any questions about research procedures throughout this study. I also understand that I may voluntarily terminate my participation in this study at any time and still receive full credit. I also understand that the investigator named above may terminate my participation in this study if s/he feels this to be in my best interest. In addition, I certify that I am 18 (eighteen) years of age or older.

Signature of Student	Student's Name (printed)	Date
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Signature of Witness	Date
----------------------	------

APPENDIX B

Overall Instructions

Today you will be participating in a study about interpersonal relationships. You will be asked to answer questions about your use of certain behaviors within your relationships as well as how often you are the target of the behaviors. As you consider the items, please realize that all people have both positive and negative interactions. Answer each question honestly. Remember that your answers will be confidential; responses will only be identified by the four digit code that you provide. It is expected that participation will take approximately one hour, and you will receive one research credit for your participation.

APPENDIX C

Cover Sheet

Interpersonal Relationships Study
Cover Sheet

Four Digit Code: _____

Age: _____

Race:

☐ Caucasian☐ Asian☐ Other☐ African American☐ Latino/a

Year in School:

☐ First Year☐ Second Year☐ Third Year☐ Fourth Year☐ OtherGender: ☐ Male☐ Female

Number of extra-curricular activities you participate in: _____

Please check any of the following that apply to you:

☐ I am a member of an athletic team.☐ I am a member of a social fraternity or sorority.☐ I have a part-time or full-time job.☐ I am involved in a community service organization.

APPENDIX D

Acquaintanceships Definition and Directions

Four Digit Code: _____

ACQUAINTANCESHIPS

Please think about your acquaintances. The definition of an acquaintance that I would like you to use is someone you know but would not consider as a friend. Examples of acquaintances may be people that live on your hall, people that you work with, or people that are in your classes. Think about the interactions you have with your acquaintances, the types of conversations that you have, and the way that being around your acquaintances makes you feel.

Please circle a number to indicate your current overall level of satisfaction with your acquaintances:

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unsatisfied		Neutral		Very Satisfied

Please circle a number to indicate how close you generally feel to your acquaintances:

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at All		Somewhat Close		Very Close

Now please carefully read and consider your answer to each question in this packet in regard to your acquaintanceships.

APPENDIX E

IAS-A for Acquaintanceships

A.) How often have you used each of the following behaviors against an acquaintance in the past year?

B.) Would you use the behavior against an acquaintance in the future?

1. Used my relationship with them to try and get them to change a decision

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

2. Used sarcasm to insult them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

3. Tried to influence them by making them feel guilty

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

4. Withheld information from them that the rest of the group is let in on

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

5. Purposely left them out of activities

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

6. Made other people not talk to them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

7. Excluded them from a group

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

8. Used their feelings to coerce them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

9. Made negative comments about their physical appearance

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

10. Used private inside jokes to exclude them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

11. Used emotional blackmail on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

12. Imitated them in front of others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

13. Spread rumors about them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

14. Played a nasty practical joke on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

15. Done something to try and make them look stupid

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

16. Pretended to be hurt and/or angry with them to make them feel bad about him/her-self

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

17. Made them feel that they don't fit in

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

18. Intentionally embarrassed them around others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

19. Stopped talking to them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

20. Put undue pressure on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

21. Omitted them from conversations on purpose

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

22. Made fun of them in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

23. Called them names

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

24. Criticized them in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

25. Turned other people against them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

APPENDIX F

IAS-T for Acquaintanceships

How often has an acquaintance directed each of the following behaviors at you in the past year?

1. Made other people not talk to me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

2. Withheld information from me that the rest of the group is let in on

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

3. Intentionally embarrassed me around others

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

4. Excluded me from a group

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

5. Called me names

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

6. Stopped talking to me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

7. Used their relationship with me to try and get me to change a decision

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

8. Used my feelings to coerce me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

9. Made fun of me in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

10. Pretended to be hurt and/or angry with me to make me feel bad about myself

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

11. Turned other people against me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

12. Made me feel that I don't fit in

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

13. Spread rumors about me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

14. Used emotional blackmail on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

15. Criticized me in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

16. Used private inside jokes to exclude me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

17. Put undue pressure on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

18. Used sarcasm to insult me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

19. Played a nasty practical joke on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

20. Made negative comments about my physical appearance

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

21. Omitted me from conversations on purpose

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

22. Imitated me in front of others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

23. Purposefully left me out of activities

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

24. Done something to try to make me look stupid

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

25. Tried to influence me by making me feel guilty

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

APPENDIX G

Friendship Definition and Directions

Four Digit Code: _____

FRIENDSHIPS

Please think about your friendships. The definition of a friend that I would like you to use is someone who you spend time with and know well. Generally, if you would describe a person as a friend to a third party, then consider that person a friend for this purpose as well. Examples of friends may be people that you eat meals with, people you go out with on the weekends, and people you talk to about your problems. Think about the interactions you have with your friends, the types of conversations that you have, and the way that being around your friends makes you feel.

Please circle a number to indicate your current overall level of satisfaction with your friendships:

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unsatisfied		Neutral		Very Satisfied

Please circle a number to indicate how close you generally feel to your friends:

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at All		Somewhat Close	Very Close	

Now please carefully read and consider your answer to each question in this packet in regards to your friendships.

APPENDIX H

IAS-A for Friendships

A.) How often have you used each of the following behaviors against a friend in the past year?

B.) Would you use the behavior against a friend in the future?

1. Used my relationship with them to try and get them to change a decision

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

2. Used sarcasm to insult them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

3. Tried to influence them by making them feel guilty

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

4. Withheld information from them that the rest of the group is let in on

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

5. Purposely left them out of activities

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

6. Made other people not talk to them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

7. Excluded them from a group

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

8. Used their feelings to coerce them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

9. Made negative comments about their physical appearance

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

10. Used private inside jokes to exclude them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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11. Used emotional blackmail on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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12. Imitated them in front of others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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13. Spread rumors about them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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14. Played a nasty practical joke on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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15. Done something to try and make them look stupid

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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16. Pretended to be hurt and/or angry with them to make them feel bad about him/her-self

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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17. Made them feel that they don't fit in

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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18. Intentionally embarrassed them around others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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19. Stopped talking to them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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20. Put undue pressure on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

21. Omitted them from conversations on purpose

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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22. Made fun of them in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

23. Called them names

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

24. Criticized them in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

25. Turned other people against them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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APPENDIX I

IAS-T for Friendships

How often has a friend directed each of the following behaviors at you in the past year?

1. Made other people not talk to me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

2. Withheld information from me that the rest of the group is let in on

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

3. Intentionally embarrassed me around others

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

4. Excluded me from a group

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

5. Called me names

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

6. Stopped talking to me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

7. Used their relationship with me to try and get me to change a decision

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

8. Used my feelings to coerce me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

9. Made fun of me in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
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10. Pretended to be hurt and/or angry with me to make me feel bad about myself

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

11. Turned other people against me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

12. Made me feel that I don't fit in

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
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13. Spread rumors about me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

14. Used emotional blackmail on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

15. Criticized me in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

16. Used private inside jokes to exclude me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

17. Put undue pressure on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
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18. Used sarcasm to insult me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
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19. Played a nasty practical joke on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

20. Made negative comments about my physical appearance

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

21. Omitted me from conversations on purpose

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
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22. Imitated me in front of others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
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23. Purposefully left me out of activities

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

24. Done something to try to make me look stupid

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

25. Tried to influence me by making me feel guilty

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
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APPENDIX J

Romantic Relationship Definition and Directions

Four Digit Code: _____

ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP

Please think about your current or recent significant romantic relationships. The definition of a romantic relationship that I would like you to use is anyone who you would refer to as your boyfriend or girlfriend. Think about the interactions you have/had with your romantic partners, the types of conversations that you have, and the way that being around your romantic partners makes you feel. If you have never had a significant romantic relationship as defined above, then please consider your opposite-sex friendships for the remainder of this section.

Please circle a number to indicate your current overall level of satisfaction with your romantic partner(s):

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unsatisfied		Neutral		Very Satisfied

Please circle a number to indicate how close you generally feel to your romantic partner(s):

1	2	3	4	5
Not Close at All		Somewhat Close	Very Close	

Now please carefully read and consider your answer to each question in this packet in regards to your romantic partners.

APPENDIX K

Romantic Relationship Demographics

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|--------|
| 1. Your gender | Male | Female |
| 2. Your romantic partner's gender | Male | Female |
3. I am going to consider:
- ____ A current romantic partner
- ____ Past romantic partner(s)
- ____ Both a current and past romantic partner(s)
- ____ Opposite-sex friendships
4. Total number of significant romantic relationships (as defined) I have had: _____
5. Average length of considered relationship(s) in months: _____

APPENDIX L

IAS-A for Romantic Relationship

A.) How often have you used each of the following behaviors against a romantic partner in the past year?

B.) Would you use the behavior against a romantic partner in the future?

1. Used my relationship with them to try and get them to change a decision

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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2. Used sarcasm to insult them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

3. Tried to influence them by making them feel guilty

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

4. Withheld information from them that others are let in on

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

5. Purposely left them out of activities

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

6. Made other people not talk to them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

7. Excluded them from a group

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

8. Used their feelings to coerce them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

9. Made negative comments about their physical appearance

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

10. Used private inside jokes to exclude them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

11. Used emotional blackmail on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

12. Imitated them in front of others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

13. Spread rumors about them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

14. Played a nasty practical joke on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

15. Done something to try and make them look stupid

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

16. Pretended to be hurt and/or angry with them to make them feel bad about him/her-self

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

17. Made them feel that they don't fit in

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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18. Intentionally embarrassed them around others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
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19. Stopped talking to them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

20. Put undue pressure on them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

21. Omitted them from conversations on purpose

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

22. Made fun of them in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

23. Called them names

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

24. Criticized them in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

25. Turned other people against them

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly	Yes	No	Depends
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------	-----	----	---------

APPENDIX M

IAS-T for Romantic Relationship

How often have your romantic partner(s) directed each of the following behaviors at you in the past year?

1. Made other people not talk to me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

2. Withheld information from me that others are let in on

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

3. Intentionally embarrassed me around others

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

4. Excluded me from a group

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

5. Called me names

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

6. Stopped talking to me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

7. Used their relationship with me to try and get me to change a decision

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

8. Used my feelings to coerce me

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Regularly

9. Made fun of me in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

10. Pretended to be hurt and/or angry with me to make me feel bad about myself

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

11. Turned other people against me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

12. Made me feel that I don't fit in

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

13. Spread rumors about me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

14. Used emotional blackmail on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

15. Criticized me in public

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

16. Used private inside jokes to exclude me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

17. Put undue pressure on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

18. Used sarcasm to insult me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

19. Played a nasty practical joke on me

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

20. Made negative comments about my physical appearance

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

21. Omitted me from conversations on purpose

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

22. Imitated me in front of others

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

23. Purposefully left me out of activities

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

24. Done something to try to make me look stupid

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

25. Tried to influence me by making me feel guilty

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Regularly
-------	--------	-----------	-------	-----------

- _____ 1. My first impressions of people usually turn out to be right.
- _____ 2. It would be hard for me to break any of my bad habits.
- _____ 3. I don't care to know what other people really think of me.
- _____ 4. I have not always been honest with myself.
- _____ 5. I always know why I like things.
- _____ 6. When my emotions are aroused, it biases my thinking.
- _____ 7. Once I've made up my mind, other people can seldom change my opinion.
- _____ 8. I am not a safe driver when I exceed the speed limit.
- _____ 9. I am fully in control of my own fate.
- _____ 10. It's hard for me to shut off a disturbing thought.
- _____ 11. I never regret my decisions.
- _____ 12. I sometimes lose out on things because I can't make up my mind soon enough.
- _____ 13. The reason I vote is because my vote can make a difference.
- _____ 14. My parents were not always fair when they punished me.
- _____ 15. I am a completely rational person.

- _____ 16. I rarely appreciate criticism.
- _____ 17. I am very confident of my judgments.
- _____ 18. I have sometimes doubted my ability as a lover.
- _____ 19. It's all right with me if some people happen to dislike me.
- _____ 20. I don't always know the reasons why I do the things I do.
- _____ 21. I sometimes tell lies if I have to.
- _____ 22. I never cover up my mistakes.
- _____ 23. There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone.
- _____ 24. I never swear.
- _____ 25. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.
- _____ 26. I always obey laws, even if I'm unlikely to get caught.
- _____ 27. I have said something bad about a friend behind his or her back.
- _____ 28. When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening.
- _____ 29. I have received too much change from a salesperson without telling him or her.
- _____ 30. I always declare everything at customs.
- _____ 31. When I was young I sometimes stole things.
- _____ 32. I have never dropped litter on the street.
- _____ 33. I sometimes drive faster than the speed limit.
- _____ 34. I never read sexy books or magazines.
- _____ 35. I have done things that I don't tell other people about.
- _____ 36. I never take things that don't belong to me.
- _____ 37. I have taken sick-leave from work or school even though I wasn't really sick.
- _____ 38. I have never damaged a library book or store merchandise without reporting it.
- _____ 39. I have some pretty awful habits.
- _____ 40. I don't gossip about other people's business.

APPENDIX O

Debriefing Form

Interpersonal Relationships Study Debriefing Sheet

Thank you for participating in the interpersonal relationships study. You will be receiving one research credit for your participation. This study examined relational aggression across the relationship contexts of acquaintanceships, friendships, and romantic partners. Relational aggression is conceptualized as acts that damage or threaten to damage the target's relationships or feelings of inclusion or acceptance, and it includes behaviors such as spreading rumors, excluding someone from social activities, or threatening to end a friendship in order to get one's own way (Crick et al., 1999). It is hypothesized that more relational aggression will occur as the level of intimacy and close ties increases (the most relational aggression occurring in romantic relationships followed friendships and then acquaintanceships). People who are close to us have more opportunities to hurt us and are more likely to involve important matters. Furthermore, the purpose of relationally aggressive behaviors is to cause hurt or harm in the victim. Since it is expected that people who are close to us will not hurt us, relationally aggressive behaviors are likely to have a large negative effect on the victim (Leary & Springer, 2001).

If you are feeling any distress after completion of this study or are experiencing difficulties in your interpersonal relationships, you are encouraged to consult either Dr. Roecker Phelps (937-229-2618, carolyn.roecker-phelps@notes.udayton.edu) or a staff member at the University of Dayton Counseling Center (937-229-3141).

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