To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Ariane K. Schratter entitled "Accounts of Betrayal in Interpersonal Relationships." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Psychology.

Warren H. Jones, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Kathleen Lawler, Ph.D.

Deborah P. Welsh, Ph.D.

Julia A. Malia, Ph.D.

Accepted for the Council:

Interim Vice Provost and
Dean of The Graduate School

ACCOUNTS OF BETRAYAL IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

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Ariane K. Schratter

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ABSTRACT

Since all relationships are vulnerable to a variety of transgressions, researchers have developed several models of betrayal, each providing a definition and explanation of the construct. Though theories of betrayal share many common elements, there is little uniformity or consensus in the conceptualization of betrayal. Furthermore, results are inconclusive regarding what factors influence the perception of betrayal. Therefore, this paper studied perceptions of betrayal by examining written accounts of betrayal from two samples varying in demographic composition (i.e., age, gender), psychological characteristics (i.e., psychiatric versus non-psychiatric respondents), and victim versus perpetrator perspectives.

Using the qualitative data analysis techniques of grounded theory, the ways in which people described and managed experiences of betrayal were examined. Examination of both non-psychiatric and psychiatric data revealed that betrayals involve breaches of three certain types of expectations; that is, the expectation those closest to us will (a) maintain the principles of the relationship, including honesty and thoughtfulness (i.e., trust); (b) provide emotional and physical support, free of embarrassment or humiliation (i.e., social support); and (c) behave respectfully in the best interest of society (i.e., standards of conduct).

Results also indicated that males and females differed on the types of betrayals they reported as well as the effect that betrayal had on their relationship. Furthermore, the type of relationship the respondent described was related to the type of reported betrayal and the perspective of victim versus perpetrator. This study also revealed that, following

betrayal, relationships reportedly improved when forgiveness was offered and worsened when it was withheld.

Results of these studies provide evidence that expectations concerning trust, social support, and conduct exist in all relationships. Further, these breaches of expectations should be examined in the context of (a) the relationship in which they occur, (b) the perceived consequences of the betrayal, and (c) various demographic characteristics.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have recently paid much attention to investigating forgiveness because it may be, at least in part, a mechanism for restoring relationships threatened by betrayal (Worthington & DiBlasio, 1990). It is also necessary to understand the process of betrayal in conjunction with forgiveness. Studies of betrayal typically focus on specific acts (e.g., adultery, physical abuse, jealousy). This paper examines betrayal from a more global perspective—examining betrayal across a variety of incidents. Therefore, this paper will explicate perceptions of betrayal across two samples using brief narrative accounts. Several variables are examined as possible influences on perceptions of betrayal, including mental illness, demographic differences, outcome of relationships, and forgiveness.

The present research project begins with a discussion of the various ways betrayal has been conceptualized or defined. The first chapter offers conceptual models of betrayal that fall into two general categories: *direct models* and *indirect models*. Direct models of betrayal relate directly to betrayal and consist of violations of relational norms and expectations, breaches of commitment and trust, and hurt feelings. Other models of betrayal are derived from related constructs and are considered indirect models. Examples include social justice and evolutionary theories. Special attention is paid to empirical findings of betrayal studies. The second chapter reviews existing models of

forgiveness as well as the empirical evidence in support of these models. A synthesis of betrayal and forgiveness theories is undertaken to identify convergent patterns across various domain-specific theories and empirical research. Such a synthesis may serve as groundwork for further research on betrayal and forgiveness as interrelated constructs, generating a more comprehensive view of both betrayal and forgiveness. Only models of interpersonal betrayal and forgiveness are included. Thus, betrayal or forgiveness that occurs outside of intimate relationships (e.g., betrayal within organizations or forgiveness offered to an entire nation) as well as self-forgiveness will not be examined. Although these are important research issues, they are beyond the scope of this paper.

The present research project will identify and examine patterns of betrayal based on written narrative accounts. Using the qualitative data analysis techniques of grounded theory, I will explore the ways in which people describe and manage experiences of betrayal. The grounded theory method involves (a) identifying distinctions within the narratives (i.e., assigning codes to the betrayal texts), (b) refining distinctions through sub-categorization (i.e., sorting through the material to identify similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes), (c) integrating categories (i.e., isolating patterns, commonalties and differences), and (d) developing generalizations discerned throughout the data to integrate with existing theory.

I will conduct two different studies that examine accounts of betrayal varying in demographic composition (i.e., age, gender) and psychological characteristics (i.e., psychiatric versus non-psychiatric respondents) and that use similar instruments (i.e., respondents from different samples respond to similar survey questions). In addition,

chi-square analyses will be used to explore the relationships among the classification of betrayal, tendency to forgive, and sample demographics. This approach—qualitative methodology supplemented with quantitative analyses—aims to contribute to the understanding of implicit and explicit perceptions underlying betrayal and its relationship to forgiveness.

CHAPTER II

MODELS OF BETRAYAL

Various incidents known to disrupt interpersonal relationships—including hurt feelings (e.g., Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell, & Evans, 1998), deception (e.g., Miller, Mongeau, & Sleight, 1986), and infidelity (e.g., Lampe, 1987)—have been frequently referred to as betrayals. Since relationships are vulnerable to a variety of transgressions, several models of betrayal have been developed, each providing a definition and explanation of the construct. These models of betrayal can be grouped into categories based on whether (a) the model was generated specifically for the study of betrayal or (b) the model was generated to account for relationships more broadly considered. Therefore, in the following review, a distinction will be made between research that emphasizes a direct model of betrayal and theories that have emerged from related constructs such as relationship development.

Direct Models of Betrayal

For the purpose of this paper, theories that seek to explain the fundamental processes and characteristics of betrayal are referred to as *direct* models of betrayal. These models attempt to explain betrayal generally, regardless of the specific incident or interpersonal context.

Norm Violation

Several researchers have conceptualized betrayal as a serious violation of the norms and expectations of a relationship (e.g., Jones & Burdette, 1994; Flanigan, 1992). Expectations constitute the "rules" of the relationship (e.g., monogamy, emotional support), serve as the foundation for trust within the relationship, and help to maintain the intimacy and cohesiveness of relational partners. As a relationship grows, expectations are developed based on socially communicated norms and unique understandings arising from the interactions of relationship partners. These expectations are both general (e.g., support, responsiveness, lack of abuse) and specific (e.g., coming home for dinner on time) (Jones & Burdette, 1994). Betrayal also has been defined as an instance in which an expected benefit is actively withheld, given to parties outside of the central relationship, or both (Shackelford, 1997). In either case, betrayal occurs when expectations established by relational partners are breached and the predictability and dependability of the relationship is threatened.

Violation of Commitment and Trust

In addition to violations, Jones and his associates (Jones & Burdette, 1994; Jones, Couch, & Scott, 1997) proposed that behaviors that lessen the degree of perceived commitment and trust within the relationship also are considered acts of betrayal. For example, if one partner focuses his/her commitment outside the relationship, the other partner may feel betrayed due to the lack of attention or consideration. Relational trust (i.e., the ability to rely on one's relational partner to do what he/she promises) is also an important contributor to relationship satisfaction. For example, as a relationship deepens,

partners develop a sense of trust that their private thoughts and feelings will be held in confidence by their partners and will not be subject to ridicule. Thus, when a person perceives his/her partner to be untrustworthy, he/she is likely to feel betrayed.

Sociometer Theory of Hurt Feelings

Leary et al. (1998) explained that people's feelings are hurt by a range of events from those with potentially serious consequences (e.g., sexual infidelity) to those with less severe consequences (e.g., a non-returned phone call). Leary et al. proposed that devaluing of a relationship—when one partner does not value the relationship to the same degree as the other partner—and some degree of disassociation (e.g., rejection or exclusion) are common to all instances of hurt feelings. Relational devaluation may occur explicitly (e.g. active withdrawal, overt rejection) or implicitly (e.g., thoughtlessness, teasing). These authors further proposed that hurt feelings arise from what they called the sociometer, a cognitive-affective system that monitors the social environment for signs of relational problems (e.g., rejection, disapproval). When individuals are aware of these cues, negative affect prompts them to minimize the probability of social exclusion by enhancing the threatened relationship.

Relational Conscience

Vangelisti and Sprague (1997) proposed that individuals adhere to particular relationship standards, a moral code that inhibits guilt-evoking behaviors. These relationship standards are used to identify betrayals and may reflect a *relational conscience*, an understanding of the amount of freedom appropriate for the given relationship. Understanding individuals' relational standards and the ways in which these

standards can be breached may lead to a better understanding of how relationship transgressions are perceived and handled (Vangelisiti & Sprague, 1997). Understanding the nature of transgressions, in turn, can ultimately improve relationship quality.

Self-State Transformation

Serious betrayal by a close relational partner often compels reevaluation of assumptions about loving and being loved. Theories that emphasize the degree to which interpersonal betrayal may transform important attitudes, one's view of life, other people, the world, and even one's sense of self are subsumed under the heading of self-state transformation. Injuries caused by betrayal are deeply personal, threatening one's belief system and sense of morality. Based on her clinical observations, Flanigan (1992) organized betrayal into several categories: (a) physical and emotional abuse; (b) abandonment; (c) infidelity, (d) loss of money, job, or reputation; (e) loss of health or life; or (f) loss of freedom (e.g., forced hospitalization). Furthermore, according to Flanigan, betrayal can damage an individual's beliefs at three levels: (a) The victim's assumption that the other person's behavior is predictable is shattered, resulting in a loss of faith in the loyalty of relationship partners (e.g., friends, children); (b) victims question their control of their own judgment, faith, talents, values, and so on; and (c) the betrayal destroys beliefs about the larger forces of life, such as goodness, fairness, justice, God, etc. Similarly, Brothers (1995) suggested that trauma occurs when self-trust or the trust of others is shattered. Self-trust is defined as the hopeful expectation of receiving or offering the experiences required for development, maintenance, and restoration of the self. Trust of others has been defined as a confident set of expectations about a partner (Holmes, 1991).

Betrayal can occur along three "pathways," which do not always lead to transformation (Flanigan, 1992): (a) Both individuals recognize the violation; (b) despite superficial reconciliation, one partner decides to live by a new set of rules; or (c) the betrayal appears unforgivable and destroys the relationship completely. It is also possible that one partner may recognize the violation while the other fails to even perceive it or disagrees that the behavior is a violation (Jones, 1982). With respect to the first pathway, the perpetrator of the betrayal often will apologize, the anger of the offended party dissipates, and the partners recommit to their old relationship rules or amend them. The second pathway's perpetrator may seem apologetic while the relationship remains threatened; although truth, communication, and intimacy may diminish partially or completely, the relationship may not dissolve. These relationships often merge onto the third pathway, in which the betrayal alters the victim's beliefs about his/her own character, relationships, and morality. In this case, it is not the actual betrayal that has the greatest adverse effect, but rather the changes following the betrayal.

Furthermore, the degree to which an individual's self-esteem and identity are connected to a relationship largely determines whether betrayal constitutes a threat to the self and one's sense of well-being (Jones & Burdette, 1994). Therefore, increased longevity and greater investment in a relationship leads to an increased risk of great emotional pain caused by betrayal (Couch, Jones, & Moore, 1999).

Similarly, Freud proposed that psychological trauma consisted of subjectively feeling overwhelmed, inundated, and helpless (Lachman & Beebe, 1997). Theorists in the Freudian tradition generally have argued that trusting and secure relationships are

eventually transformed into a need to feel protected that ultimately becomes the focus of one's self-identity. For example, Kohut (1977) conceptualized betrayal as a loss of a necessary tie, which challenges one's assumptions of being understood, accepted, and protected in a reliable, responsible world. In this view, betrayal results from a violation in a previously safe and protected interpersonal world, leading to self-transformations that encourage depression, helplessness, hopelessness, and restriction of emotional responsiveness.

Model of Individual Differences

Based on earlier findings that adults adept at deception tended to have well developed social skills, Hogan and Hogan (1994) suggested examining individuals with admirable characteristics—intelligence, social grace, self-confidence, and charisma—as a means of understanding betrayal. In this view, traditional measures of deviant behavior will not be suitable for measuring the tendency to betray. Instead, they proposed a conceptual model of the ideal betrayer: (a) demeanor—charm, attractiveness, ability to flatter; (b) self-centeredness—selfishness, self-absorption, lack of empathy; (c) emptiness—self-doubt, insecurity; and (d) self-deceptive—lying to oneself.

Indirect Models of Betrayal

Indirect models of betrayal refer to theories that were not initially intended to describe betrayal between relationship partners. For example, exchange theories account for several relational phenomena (e.g., costs and benefits, perception of justice) and have not been specifically applied to betrayal. For the purpose of this paper, these indirect theories will

be distinguished from theories directly addressing betrayal.

Social Justice Theories

Social justice theories, including social exchange and equity theories, are useful in understanding betrayal because they explore justice, entitlement, and fairness in close relationships (Mikula & Lerner, 1994). Social exchange theorists argue that individuals' expectations of what they are entitled to in a close relationship as compared to the reality of the relationship is important in determining the stability of the relationship. According to social exchange theory, individuals judge the equity of their relationships by comparing their inputs and outputs to those of their partners. Individuals become distressed when the perceived profits (e.g., amount of affection received) of the relationship are inequitably distributed. Thus, equity theory proposes that an individual may feel betrayed when the costs of a relationship exceed the expected benefits (Murstein, 1999). For example, a person may insist on spending all of his/her spare time in pursuits not involving the spouse, for whom the costs of this absence may exceed the benefits of the relationship. All relationships undergo periodic changes, which may leave relational partners feeling insecure about their investments (e.g., love, affection) in the relationship (Baxter & Wilmot, 1984). When one partner fails to invest equitably, the uncertainty may result in feelings of betrayal.

Evolutionary Theories

Evolutionary approaches conceptualize interpersonal behavior as the cumulative product of hundreds of generations of human evolution (Shackelford, 1997). In this view, psychological mechanisms guiding contemporary human behavior exist because they were

successful solutions to problems confronted by our ancestors. Significant long-term relationships (e.g., mateships, same-sex friendships, coalition relationships) have demonstrated adaptive problem-solving potential throughout evolutionary history. Historically, a common problem in long-term mateships is ensuring sexual fidelity. Exclusive sexual access to one's relational partner benefits the couple by reducing paternity uncertainty and health risks and increasing resource contributions. It is true in other instances as well that the expected benefits of a relationship influence the interpretation of betrayal. From an evolutionary standpoint, the diversion of resources to individuals outside of a relationship—due to sexual infidelity, for instance—impedes the survival of the partnership. Humans therefore develop psychological mechanisms to avoid such diversion (Shackelford & Buss, 1996). This understanding of betrayal may serve to deter the betrayer from committing future betrayals or motivate the betrayed to seek out a new relationship where benefits are not diverted (Shakelford, 1997). Based on evolutionary principles, researchers have predicted that a long-term mate's infidelity would be perceived as a greater betrayal if it occurs with a close friend of the partner rather than an enemy. A betrayed woman may fear a loss of resources as well as a gain for her intra-gender competitor, while a betrayed man may lose certainty of his paternity if his partner develops another relationship (Shackelford & Buss, 1996).

CHAPTER III

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON BETRAYAL

Research on betrayal typically has focused on the empirical differences among experiences of betrayal. Therefore, in addition to the conceptualization of betrayal offered in the previous section, several empirical illustrations of the different ways betrayal is described are reviewed here.

Researchers have studied betrayal using various strategies. Some study single incidents of betrayal through the use of participant-generated narratives and interviews. This method explicates variations among individuals, such as motives for betrayal, change in relationships following betrayal, types of betrayal, gender differences, and victim-versus-perpetrator perspectives. Others study individual differences, through psychological assessment such as personality, biographical information, and relational characteristics associated with victims and perpetrators of betrayal. Still others study the types of relationship and social network members that have been involved in betrayal. The following review of empirical literature focuses on various characteristics that influence how betrayal is perceived and managed.

Single Incidents of Betrayal

With the use of interviews or personal accounts, researchers have examined a variety of issues such as the kinds of incidents perceived as acts of betrayal, the relationships

commonly involved, what motivates betrayal, and how experiences of betrayal influence the relationship. Research findings suggest that these important features vary largely as a function of differences in biographic characteristics (e.g., age and life circumstances) and perspective as either the offender or the victim.

Age and Life Circumstances

Types of Betrayal

In principle, a variety of behaviors may be perceived as betrayal. Based on their previous research on college students and adults, Jones, Couch, and Scott (1997) cited a diversity of experiences that were commonly perceived as betrayals, including deceit and dishonesty, romantic unfaithfulness, and physical abuse, as well as less obvious or dramatic transgressions like angry words, lack of attention and affection, insensitivity, carelessness, or "brutal" honesty. Furthermore, research participants who are asked to describe their most significant betrayal experiences tend to refer to types of incidents that seem to vary with age and life circumstance. Within such cohorts, however, most betrayals are readily classified into one of relatively few discrete categories. For example, Jones and Burdette (1994) reported that cheating on one's dating partner and/or rejection were the most common betrayals reported by college students. Similarly, Leary et al. (1998) found that the most hurtful events among college students could be classified into one the following four categories: criticism, betrayal, active disassociation (e.g., explicit rejection, abandonment), or passive disassociation (e.g., implicit rejection, being ignored). More dramatic experiences such as abandonment, physical and sexual abuse, and incest were the least frequently reported betrayal among research participants (Jones et al.). These

extreme cases tend to have a low base rate, making them more difficult to study (Hogan & Hogan, 1994).

Descriptions of betrayal for college students and elderly adults appear to be relatively similar (although elderly respondents tend to report betrayals that occurred many years previously). Hansson, Jones, and Fletcher (1988) found that, among elderly respondents, extramarital affairs and telling lies were equally common, followed by disappointments, broken promises, and betraying a confidence. The elderly also reported that they were most commonly betrayed by being cheated out of money, followed by extramarital affairs, being lied to, and betrayals of confidence.

Jones, Cohn, and Miller (1991) examined the differences in perceived betrayal incidents between institutionalized and non-institutionalized boys. They found that institutionalized boys most commonly reported betraying others by disappointing them or breaking promises (e.g., failing school, continuing their drug use) and being betrayed by virtue of being ignored, avoided, and/or abandoned. A comparison group of non-institutionalized boys cited teasing, lies, false accusations, gossip, and/or betrayed confidences as the most common forms of betrayal they encountered.

A sample of psychiatric patients reported betrayals that appeared generally more serious than those associated with other samples (Jones & Burdette, 1994; Negel, Moore, & Jones, 1997). In some cases, psychiatric patients claimed that they had never experienced betrayal as either a victim or offender, but this was apparently due, in their opinion, to never having had an emotionally close, significant relationship.

Some writers have focused on the magnitude and frequency of the betrayal rather

than the type of incident. For example, because betrayals presumably could vary from failing to return a telephone call to deliberate sabotage, Hogan and Hogan (1994) proposed that betrayals should be viewed along a continuum of severity. Couch's (1996) prototyping analysis of betrayal incidents suggested that serious betrayals are prototypical betrayals. Specifically, betrayals judged by participants to be prototypical examples of the cognitive category of betrayal (e.g., cheating on a romantic partner) also were judged to be the most serious violations of interpersonal expectations.

Types of Relationships

When asked about their experiences with betrayal, respondents will describe, almost without exception, incidents involving their closest and most important relationship partners. For example, college students are most likely to refer to incidents involving romantic partners, college friends, or their parents, whereas children and adolescents more frequently cite their parents or siblings (Jones & Burdette, 1994; Jones et al., 1991). Spouses, along with friends, parents, siblings, and one's own children, are cited most often as both targets and instigators of betrayal among adults. In older cohorts, men are more likely than women to describe betrayals involving work colleagues, bosses, and subordinates, whereas all age levels recounted incidents of betrayal of and by their best same-sex friends (Couch, Jones, & Moore, 1999). However, clearly the most significant and disruptive betrayals involve one's closest and most important relationship partners.

Gender Differences

Another issue explored was whether men and women differed in the characteristics of

betrayal incidents they reported. Women are more likely than men to feel betrayed by a violation of confidence, attachment, promises, or privacy (Metts, 1994) and by fighting and arguing (Hansson et al., 1990). In addition, women reported betrayals involving extramarital affairs—on the part of their spouses or themselves—more frequently than any other single type of offense (Jones & Burdette, 1994). Among men, lies and extramarital affairs were equally common. Overall, in this and other studies of this type, both male and female respondents reported having been betrayed by a man more frequently than having been betrayed by a woman.

Examining the aftermath of betrayal, Thompson (1984) discovered that women thought that sexual affairs led to greater negative consequences for a primary relationship than did men. Furthermore, men displayed greater psychological, physical, and behavioral distress while imagining a mate's sexual infidelity, whereas women displayed greater distress while imagining their mate's romantic-emotional infidelity (Buss, Larsen, Westen, & Semmelroth, 1992; Shakelford, 1997). Shakelford and Buss (1996) reported the degree to which betrayals disrupt relationships varied across three types of relationships: long-term mate, close same-sex friend, and coalition member. Extra-relationship involvement of a mate almost always was perceived as betrayal regardless of the identity of the third party.

Perspective Differences

A consistent finding in this body of literature are differences associated with accounts of respondents' betrayals of relationship partners versus their descriptions of instances of having been betrayed. These differences are evident with respect to several aspects of

betrayal, including, for example, (a) the attributed motives of betrayal and consequences of betrayal, and (b) perceptions of injustice.

Motives for Betrayal

Several researchers (Jones & Burdette, 1994; Hanson et al., 1990; Moore, 1997) found that respondents explained other people's betrayals as more negative and intentional than their own. Taken as a whole, the explanations people give for betrayal tend to be self-serving (Hansson et al., 1990; Moore, 1997). When explaining a betrayal, those involved seek to understand their relationships, maintain their positive self-concept and social image, and feel a sense of control over the situation (Mikula, 1994). Research findings indicate that respondents attribute less fault to themselves for their betrayals than to partners who betrayed them and they attribute more responsibility to their victims than they are willing to accept for their own betrayals. Roscoe et al. (1988) conducted several studies exploring motivations behind extramarital affairs and found that common motivations are feelings of enticement (e.g., experimentation, attraction to another person, curiosity) or lack of satisfaction in the primary relationship. Some motivations are passive (e.g., boredom, loneliness), while others are more active in nature (e.g., revenge, retaliation, jealousy). In a more general study of betrayal, Moore (1997) found that respondents most frequently cited temptation or excitement as explanations for having betrayed their relationship partners.

Perceptions of Injustice

Perceptions of injustice often will differ between the individuals who committed an act of betrayal (victimizers) and those whose trust was violated (victims), especially regarding

the motives of the offense. For example, victims often rate critical acts as more unjust and attribute more responsibility and blame to the victimizers than do the victimizers themselves. Specifically, victimizers tend to excuse their own transgressions by attributing them to external, uncontrollable, unintentional, and transitory causes such as anger (Weiner, Folkes, Amirkhan, & Verette, 1987).

Consequences of Betrayal

Furthermore, respondents describing incidents in which they were victimized overwhelmingly (> 90%) indicate that their relationship was diminished (e.g., less trust, less satisfying) or terminated as a consequence of the betrayal (Hansson et al., 1990; Jones & Burdette, 1994; Jones et al., 1991; Moore, 1997; Negel et al., 1997). By contrast, these same respondents indicated that their relationship had remained the same or even improved when they were guilty of the betrayal, with only 50% of these latter instances characterized as resulting in terminated or diminished relationships.

Other discrepancies between offender and victim have been reported or hypothesized. For example, some researchers have reported that some individuals use betrayal in order to purposely terminate a relationship. Vaughan (1986) found that some individuals violate a relational rule so important to their partner that the partner terminates the relationship. In these cases, betrayal serves as a method for indirectly ending the relationship. In a similar vein, Harkness (1990) proposed that both children and adults use language strategically to gain resources and that one method for doing so is to use language to deceive others. Acquisition of resources and maintenance of social power may motivate both children and adults to deceive other people and, hence, to

betray their relationship partners.

Individual Differences

Researchers have found relationships between betrayal and individuals' personality traits, personal and relational problems, as well as relationship dynamics.

Personality Correlates

Using the Interpersonal Betrayal Scale (IBS), a 15-item self-report measure designed to assess the tendency to betray in relationships, Jones and Burdette (1994) identified links between personality traits and the tendency to betray. IBS items represented commonly reported incidents of betrayal, such as breaking a promise or confidence, gossiping, and lying. Other incidents less commonly associated with betrayal—agreeing with someone you disagree with or failing to stand up for what you believe in to gain acceptance, taking someone for granted, and wishing harm to someone you dislike—also were included.

IBS scores were found to be directly correlated with measures of shame, guilt, suspiciousness, resentment, and resistance to authority, as well as inversely correlated with measures of moral standards. Participants with high (as compared to low) IBS scores were also more likely to describe themselves as sullen, vengeful, jealous, and suspicious and less likely to use positive characteristics such as responsible, self-controlled, and tolerant. Also, IBS scores were correlated directly with measures of personality disorders, especially histrionic, dependent, antisocial, and passive-aggressive dimensions.

Biographical Correlates

A strong relationship was found between self-reported betrayal and measures of both personal and relational problems. More specifically, self-identified alcoholics, psychiatric patients, divorced individuals, adult children of alcoholics, delinquents, adult children of divorced parents, and both victims and perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse tended to score higher on the IBS than participants without these designated characteristics (Jones & Burdette, 1994). Furthermore, the tendency to betray was highest among younger and less highly educated individuals and those without a specific religious affiliation. Several other biographical variables were found to be unrelated to the tendency to betray as operationalized by the IBS. In contrast to narrative studies of betrayal, men and women did not differ significantly in their endorsement of these items assessing the frequency of betraying others.

Interpersonal Correlates

Jones et al. (1991) explored interpersonal correlates of IBS scores of institutionalized and non-institutionalized boys. For institutionalized boys, higher IBS scores were associated with fewer adults in their social network and fewer long-term relationships. By contrast, for non-institutionalized boys IBS scores were associated directly with the proportion of adults in their social network. Among a sample of adults, IBS scores were inversely related to family satisfaction and, for men only, marital commitment. As expected, among married respondents, IBS scores predicted the frequency of marital problems such as loss of interest in marriage and dissatisfying sexual relationships (Jones & Burdette, 1994).

Relationship Characteristics

As noted above, betrayal clearly occurs most frequently between emotionally close, intimate partners although variations in the specific relationships involved have been observed based on biographic and perspective differences. An alternative approach to examining the relational context of betrayal involves assessing whether members of one's social network—individuals who provide social support—are listed as perpetrators or victims of betrayal. Furthermore, because one's level of social support is largely determined by the quality of one's personal relationships, researchers have examined the association between betrayal and the characteristics of the relationships comprising the social network Results of these analyses indicated that almost half of the individuals surveyed had betrayed at least one member of their current social network and slightly more than half of these respondents reported they had been betrayed by at least one social network member (Hansson et al., 1990; Jones & Burdette, 1994; Jones et al., 1991; Jones & Burdette, 1994). The proportion of network members listed as having betrayed or having been betrayed by respondents varies between 20% and 25%. As expected, respondents' relationships with network members cited as having betrayed them were rated lower on positive characteristics (i.e., lower on satisfaction, closeness, reciprocity) and higher on negative characteristics (e.g., conflict, disagreement, regret).

Summary

Most direct and indirect theories of betrayal emphasize the link to expectations of trust. Such views place the emphasis on the breach of relational rules leading to a loss of trust,

which is then perceived as betrayal. Theories of betrayal share many common elements, yet there is little uniformity or consensus in the definition of betrayal.

Betrayal has been defined as a violation of norms (Jones, Cohn, & Miller, 1991), a breach of expectations (Flanigan, 1992), relational inequity (Mikula & Lerner,1994), or a loss of a necessary tie (Kohurt, 1977). Central to most theories of betrayal is a serious violation of the norms and expectations of a close personal relationship (Jones & Burdette, 1994; Jones et al., 1997). More specifically, a betrayal is said to have occurred when one partner perceives an intentional violation of relationship trust and commitment. Betrayal is a behavior inconsistent with the rules and expectations of the relationship (Couch et al., 1999; Metts, 1994). Therefore, betrayal has two fundamental features: (a) psychological and/or material injury due to violation of normative relational processes (e.g., commitment, expectations), and (b) loss of trust (Jones & Burdette, 1994). These two features seem to emerge in all theories of betrayal. It is also important to note that, in cognitive terms, betrayal is a "fuzzy concept" (with permeable and shifting categorical boundaries) that is perhaps best viewed as a graded structure (Couch, 1996).

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH ON FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness has been defined as the deliberate relinquishing of bitterness, resentment, disapproval, and revenge directed towards an offender, in conjunction with reconciliation, compassion, generosity, and/or love toward that offender (Enright, 1996; Enright, Gassin, & Wu, 1992; McCullough & Worthington, 1994; Murphy, 1982; North, 1987). The following review presents various models of forgiveness in conjunction with supporting empirical work. This review also covers findings on the effects of forgiveness, obstacles to forgiveness, and the contexts in which the tendency to forgive may differ.

Forgiveness is a complex system of affective, cognitive, and behavioral components. When an individual forgives someone, negative emotions are substituted for more positive emotions (e.g., compassion); thoughts of revenge and condemnation are replaced with positive thoughts toward the other; and, instead of acts of revenge, reconciliation may be possible (Enright et al., 1992). North (1987) delineated two primary processes involved in forgiving a person: a termination of negative affect (revenge) and the presence of positive affect (trust, affection). Cunningham (1985) proposed a more egotistic definition of forgiveness as a process in which an individual matures due to increased self-awareness. In order to forgive, an individual must confront his or her own feelings, morality, sense of pride, and righteousness.

Forgiveness commonly may be confused with condonation. Freedman and Enright

(1996) clarified the distinction. The forgiving individual is well aware that a wrong was committed, while an individual condoning betrayal may not believe that a wrong was committed. A condoning individual carries fewer negative feelings towards the offender than one who recognizes that a wrong was committed. For example, a woman may be aware that her husband is unfaithful but condones the behavior by blaming herself for his behavior; hence, she does not recognize that a wrong has been committed against her. Enright et al. (1992) similarly distinguished forgiveness from forgetting, reconciliation, excusing, or weakness. Trainer's (1981) description of forgiveness asserts that, in the presence of anger, forgiveness requires psychological strength as well as a respect for others.

Freedman and Enright (1996) also drew attention to the paradoxical nature of forgiveness: The forgiver gives up ill will (to which he or she is entitled) and offers compassion (to which the offender has no entitlement). In such cases, to forgo retribution appears to be contrary to an individual's self interest (Hope, 1987). This paradoxical nature of forgiveness may contribute to criticism that forgiveness serves to justify offenses.

Effects of Forgiveness

Several researchers, in a variety of contexts, have demonstrated the positive effects forgiveness has on both the self and interpersonal relationships (e.g., Coyle & Enright, 1997; DiBlasio & Proctor, 1993; Fitzgibbons, 1986). Specifically, forgiveness intervention is shown to reduce anxiety and depression, as well as increase self-esteem in individuals

who have suffered serious betrayals (e.g., incest, parental-neglect) (Al-Mabuk, Enright, & Cardis, 1995; Freedman & Enright, 1996). In addition, forgiveness enhances feelings of freedom and personal power (Trainer, 1981) and bolsters physical heath. Researchers have discovered that forgiving results in lowered blood pressure (e.g., Lawler, 2000), as well as relief from pain and cardiovascular problems (Pettit, 1987).

Models of Forgiveness

Forgiveness has been viewed from a variety of perspectives, including theological, psychotherapeutic, process, social cognitive, cognitive developmental, and developmental.

Theological

Forgiveness was first described in depth within Jewish scripture and tradition but is also a component of various other religious systems, including Christianity, Confucianism, and Islam (Enright et al., 1992). In the Jewish and Christian traditions, forgiveness refers to God's removal of sin from people: God forgives those who repent and improve their behavior. By extension, forgiveness is viewed as a moral duty to imitate "God as forgiver." Thus, this kind of unconditional love will bring about a sense of peace and restore the relationship in question.

Although little empirical literature exists regarding forgiveness and religion, some preliminary studies have demonstrated a relationship between the two constructs (Fitzgibbons, 1986). For instance, Gorsuch and Hao (1993) found that the more religious one is, the more one will report being forgiving. More specifically, Meek, Albright, and McMinn (1995) examined differences among extrinsically-oriented (i.e., religious beliefs

based on others' needs) and intrinsically-oriented (i.e., religion is the primary motive) individuals in their tendency to forgive and feel forgiven. The results indicated that intrinsically religious individuals were more likely to forgive others and feel forgiven and, consequently, experienced greater emotional health.

Clinical/Psychotherapeutic

Where a lack of forgiveness is thought to perpetuate familial and relational dysfunction, forgiveness techniques could help clients create new patterns of interaction. These new patterns serve to change distorted ways of thinking and perceiving, thus freeing individuals from feelings of guilt and anger and other dysfunctional patterns. Accordingly, forgiveness is instrumental to the therapeutic process (Hope, 1987). A skillful therapist will model acceptance and lack of condemnation, despite a client's revelations of shortcomings and failures. With this approach, the therapist can teach clients to forgive their past as well as to develop a more forgiving attitude in the present. Forgiveness has been shown to benefit clients experiencing anger, depression, personality disorders, broken relationships, etc. (DiBlasio & Proctor, 1993; Hebl & Enright, 1993).

DiBlasio and Proctor (1993) discovered that, despite these positive findings, many clinicians reported applying forgiveness techniques within their practices only infrequently. They found that older clinicians, who were open to using clients' spiritual beliefs in practice, were the most likely to implement therapeutic forgiveness techniques. Many clinicians avoided integrating any techniques that may be associated with religion.

Forgiveness intervention has been specifically applied to anger management. Fitzgibbons (1986) defined anger as a feeling of displeasure and antagonism aroused by a

sense of injury or wrong. Similar to some theories of betrayal, anger occurs when an expectation of love, praise, or acceptance is not met. Anger, if not recognized and released, may lead to a desire for revenge. According to Fitzgibbons (1986), anger will not be fully resolved until the desire for revenge is relinquished or the decision to forgive is made. Forgiveness decreases the likelihood that anger will be misdirected, releases individuals from guilt and depression, and improves their ability to express anger appropriately, which results in better overall physical health.

The debate regarding what forgiveness is (e.g., lowered resentment, compassion) and what forgiveness is not (e.g., excusing, condoning) has led some researchers to conclude that forgiving for some serious offenses such as sexual abuse is dangerous or inappropriate. Forgiveness may perpetuate the abuse (e.g., Engel, 1989). Freedman and Enright (1996) argued that this debate results from confusing forgiveness with reconciliation. In this regard, these researchers aimed to assess the effectiveness of using forgiveness as an intervention tool for incest survivors and found that no participants suffered any negative effects as a result of forgiving.

Process

Process models integrate the cognitive, affective, and behavioral strategies used in the decision to forgive. Enright et al. (1992) described the process of forgiveness as consisting of several steps, including recognition of defense mechanisms, anger, shame, a decision to change, an exploration of options, and the eventual commitment to forgive. These steps include the process of cognitive reframing (i.e., viewing the offender in a different context) and affective reframing (i.e., the onset of empathy and emergence of compassion) towards

the offender. The decrease of negative affect towards the offender is an indication that forgiveness is occurring. Throughout this process, great individual variations exist; individuals do not necessarily experience the stages in the same order, and some stages may be experienced repeatedly.

Cunningham (1985) described four stages of forgiveness: acknowledging the betrayal, experiencing feelings of humility versus humiliation, relinquishing feelings of revenge, and redefining the relationship with the offender. According to Cunningham (1985) rather than occurring linearly, these stages were intended to be experienced intermittently if necessary. This model of forgiveness proposed that individuals must first recognize and face the betrayal as well as their own humility before completing the forgiving process.

Gordon and Baucom (1998) proposed that forgiveness consisted of stages similar to the recovery of psychological trauma: the aggregation of information regarding the offense and the defense against future harm (Stage 1); reaching an understanding of why the offense happened (Stage 2); and "moving forward" characterized by a decrease in anger, feelings of retribution, and general negative emotions related to the offense (Stage 3). Before the forgiveness process is can be considered complete, particular cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes must occur at each state. These authors emphasized that the cognitive tasks associated with each stage must by accomplished before the process is completed. During State 1, one must recognize and assess the need to forgive. Stage 2 should bring about an understanding of the context of the offense (e.g., offender's level of stress, state of the relationship). The process is completed with Stage 3 and a decreased need for negative information regarding the partner, creating new attributions of

the partner's behavior, and creating a new, more realistic perception of the relationship. Completion of all stages indicates that the individual has regained a more realistic view of his/her relationship, relinquished the negative affect directed towards the offender, and reconstructed the relationship based on more accurate attributions and expectations (Gordon & Baucom, 1998).

A misguided yet commonly held assumption of process models is that forgiveness is a rational decision rather than an impulsive one; rational decisions to forgive may in fact be unusual (McCullough & Worthington, 1994). McCullough and Worthington (1994) questioned the validity of stage models in particular since they found it often unclear whether the stages must be sequential or if skipping stages will result in psychological harm. They also maintained that process models neglect to account for individual differences.

Social Cognitive

McCullough et al. (1998) proposed a social cognitive model that places forgiveness within a basic motivational system that governs responses to interpersonal offenses. More specifically, two negative affective states correspond to the motivational system governing responses to offenses: (a) feelings of hurt—perceived attack leads to avoidance and (b) feelings of righteous indignation—indignation leads to revenge seeking. These motivations, working together, create forgiveness; the individual no longer avoids the offender nor seeks revenge. According to this model, empathy serves as a mediating variable between avoidance/revenge and forgiveness. Therefore, the presence or absence of empathy for the offender is a primary determinant of forgiveness. According

McCullough et al., the most salient characteristics of forgiveness are social-cognitive variables related to the way the offended individual thinks and feels about the offender and the offense. The social-cognitive variables affecting forgiveness include empathy towards the offender, judgments of responsibility and blame, perceived intentionally, severity, avoidability of the offense, and rumination about the offense.

Cognitive Developmental

Some theorists (e.g., Enright, 1994) are searching for a cognitive mechanism that makes forgiveness possible and explains what psychological mechanisms are present throughout the forgiveness process. Cognitive developmentalists have focused on problem-solving strategies, especially in relation to resolving moral dilemmas. Cognitive models often describe forgiveness in the context of justice. Forgiveness may be prompted by the obstruction of justice. In an early attempt to develop a cognitive model of forgiveness, Enright, Santos, and Al-Mabuk (1989) proposed that the morality of justice was distinct from the morality of forgiveness. Using a cognitive-developmental model based on Kohlberg's justice sequence, Enright et al. (1989) examined how forgiveness was related to (yet distinct from) justice based on individual perceptions of conditions that make forgiveness easier. The results indicated a strong relationship between age and forgiveness and a moderate relationship between forgiveness and Kohlbergian justice reasoning.

Developmental

Piaget placed forgiveness in a developmental and cognitive framework (Enright et al., 1994). According to Piaget, forgiveness includes maturation, manipulation of the "object,"

social input (e.g., religious beliefs), and equilibration (i.e., balance resulting from periods of confusion and stress). A parallel exists between logical and ethical norms—neither are innate (Piaget, 1965). Forgiveness may emerge in late childhood, once the child enters the autonomous moral reasoning stage of development. Through cooperation and respect, children develop an understanding of justice, and subsequently, forgiveness. Further described by Enright et al. (1994) from Piaget's perspective, the cognitive developmental operation known as reciprocity is a key element of the forgiveness process. Reciprocity is the process by which children understand that "an original operation when combined with its reciprocal yields equivalence" (Piaget, 1965, p. 321)—one should give back exactly what one receives. By extension, justice resides in reciprocity rather than revenge (Piaget, 1965). However, it is "ideal" reciprocity—the notion of what ought to be, rather than what necessarily is—that leads to forgiveness (Enright et al., 1994). When children/adolescents are able to purposefully behave in ways they wish to be treated, forgiveness is possible.

The Piagetian theory of reciprocity has received some criticism within the literature. Enright et al. (1994) argued that ideal reciprocity does not demand a return. Therefore, when a person forgives, he or she is not necessarily seeking anything in return. Consequently, forgiving may be an act of self-sacrifice rather than an act characterized by reciprocity and equality.

From a different perspective, Cunningham (1985) proposes that, throughout the developmental process, individuals' capacity to forgive is shaped by previous experiences of forgiveness or lack thereof. Individuals' are consequently limited by their own

experiences.

Obstacles to Forgiveness

Within the family, obstacles to forgiveness may include no parental modeling for this process, the inability of others to accept responsibility for their wrongs, and family members that disappoint with regularity (Fitzgibbons, 1986). Individuals who deny their emotional pain or feelings of anger or attempt forgiveness out of duty also may have difficulty offering forgiveness. In addition, misconceptions of forgiveness, such as believing that forgiveness is a rapid process, that vulnerability is a side effect of forgiveness, or that those who forgive lack self-respect, may serve as additional barriers (Fitzgibbons, 1986; Murphy, 1982).

Forgiving also may be difficult if the offense was especially severe. Encouraging to forgive severe traumas, such as rape, murder, or abandonment, may exacerbate the victim's feelings of low-self worth that often accompany offenses of this nature (McCullough & Worthington, 1994).

Pseudo-Forgiveness

Very little attention has been given to "pseudo-forgiveness", a form of forgiveness that is qualified with conditions and expectations. One study had several individuals qualify the nature of their forgiveness with statements such as "I forgave, but don't trust him blindly anymore," "I forgave to an extent," "I forgave, but will never forget" (Schratter, Jones, & Negel, 1998). This pseudo-forgiveness was most strongly noted when respondents reported a time they were asked to forgiveness (rather than when they themselves were

forgiven).

Though pseudo-forgiveness appears non-forgiving, it may in fact be a *response* to forgiveness. Several researchers (e.g., Droll, 1984) postulated that forgiveness may lead the forgiver to be unduly sensitive to future betrayals, thus, exaggerating minor interpersonal offenses. This "exaggeration of offenses" may manifest itself in behaviors such as recapitulation, jealousy, and distrust.

Most would not consider pseudo-forgiveness to be equal to "true forgiveness." In true forgiveness, pain and anger is overcome and sensitivity to offenses is decreased. North (1987) proposed that forgiveness may begin with "outward gestures" of forgiveness—reconciliation, friendliness, new relational promises—however, these gestures may be empty early in the forgiveness process. The actual emotional change which should accompany these gestures may occur at a later date. Through these outward gestures, the forgiving response may grow stronger. Pseudo-forgiveness may also occur when an individual chooses to "give in" and reconcile in order to avoid confrontation (Cunningham, 1985). This false forgiveness could eventually lead to pent up feelings of hostility, resentment, and anxiety. False forgiveness may also come into play when an individual does not terminate the relationship because the costs of doing so may appear too high. The cost of leaving may be economical, psychological, social, or otherwise (Attridge & Berscheid, 1994). Therefore, these relationships may continue under the guise of forgiveness.

Individual Differences

The literature suggests that people may be dispositionally predisposed to forgive or not forgive and that those who have a high capacity for forgiveness may share some personality characteristics. Additionally, researchers have attempted to determine whether gender influences the tendency to forgive.

Personality Differences

Studies have shown that people with a positive orientation towards others and an empathetic flexibility possess a tendency to forgive (Bucello, 1991). In addition, a trusting personality has been shown to underlie a forgiving personality (Droll, 1984). Other research has found that characteristics such as non-defensiveness, respect, responsibility, empowerment (Trainer, 1981), individuation (Bucello, 1991), and self-esteem (Droll, 1981) are all associated with a person's tendency to forgive.

Researchers have also found that dimensions of social support (i.e., family satisfaction, agreeableness, need to belong) were more strongly related to a tendency to forgive than sociability (i.e., extroversion) (Schratter, Iyer, Jones, Lawler, & Jones, 2000). Interpersonal characteristics with negative consequences for relationship quality (i.e., loneliness, rejection sensitivity, jealousy, neuroticism, cynicism) were negatively related to a tendency to forgive. In addition, the tendency to forgive was positively related to conscientiousness. This suggests that forgiveness may be associated with dependability, dutifulness, and rule-following behavior. These results support theories emphasizing a dispositional readiness to forgive and suggest that the capacity to forgive is related to measures of relationship quality.

Gender Differences

Little evidence has been found to support the influence of gender differences on the tendency to forgive. Although some researchers have argued that women may be more likely to forgive because they are more socialized to offer conciliatory behaviors (Droll, 1984), no other empirical work appears to support this finding (Enright, Santos, & Al-Mabuk, 1989; Park & Enright, 1997).

Forgiveness Contexts

Differences in forgiveness may reflect complexities within particular relationships. For instance, romantic relationships may share dynamics that are related directly to the tendency to forgive.

Relationships

For example, previous research has demonstrated that a higher degree of commitment may be associated with more complex reasoning (Boon & Sulsky, 1997); greater reasoning skills may then be associated with the tendency to forgive. However, Boon and Sulsky (1997) found that romantically involved individuals reported less consistency in their decisions to forgive than those who were unattached. Therefore, complex reasoning does not necessarily lead to consistent behavior. These researchers proposed that it is the complexity of the relationship itself that may lead to inconsistent decisions regarding forgiveness.

Integrating Betrayal and Forgiveness

The constructs of betrayal and forgiveness appear to refer to diametrically opposed processes—betrayal involves inflicting undeserved harm whereas forgiveness requires giving up bitterness toward an undeserving person. Despite this appearance, these two constructs are interconnected because, by definition, there is no occasion for forgiveness without a preceding offense. In a sense then, the irony of forgiveness is that its promise is initiated by the pain of violation and indignity. In order to explore how these apparently opposing forces relate, even though researchers are only now beginning to examine both processes simultaneously, the areas in which they seem to converge or overlap and the ways in which they diverge will be discussed. This will be followed by speculative suggestions for examining the two constructs further through future research in this area.

Theoretical Convergence and Divergence

The phenomena of betrayal and forgiveness converge in numerous ways. Both emerge from the complex processes of interpersonal interactions and, despite their importance, both are difficult to conceptualize and study precisely because of the dynamic, elaborate, and complicated nature of human relationships. Everyday minor offenses and discourtesies are frequently excused or indulged without serious impact on a relationship. However, the occurrence of either a serious betrayal of trust or commitment or its forgiveness in the face of serious implications almost inevitably eventuates in dramatic changes in relationship quality, satisfaction, and stability. Also, both betrayal and forgiveness are deeply contacted to the unique perspective of the experiencing individual. Sometimes the seriousness or even the existence of a betrayal is in the "eye of the beholder" and even when there is

dyadic agreement on the "facts" of an incident the divergence between the offender and the victim is striking with respect to attributed motives, responsibility, and consequences. Similarly, various features of the forgiveness process including necessity, appropriateness, urgency, and authenticity often reduce to matters of opinion and argument between relationship partners.

Another point of connection, albeit in opposition, between betrayal and forgiveness is illustrated by the characteristics that typify an individual who is likely to betray as compared to an individual who is likely to forgive a relationship partner. For example, individuals apparently more likely to betray their partners typically describe themselves as suspicious, cynical, and jealous. Also, higher scores on measures of dispositional betrayal are inversely related to indexes of sense of responsibility, well-being, and self-control. By contrast, individuals with an apparently greater tendency to forgive describe themselves as more secure in their relationships (i.e., less jealous and neurotic) and demonstrate higher conscientiousness than individuals reporting a lesser tendency to forgive.

On the other hand, betrayal and forgiveness are not perfectly opposed nor complementary. One important difference is that the concept of betrayal generally assumes the context of a close relationship or at least the development of mutual expectations and norms. By contrast, any instance of harm, injury, or mischief potentially could be forgiven in principle, presumably with the same benefits of resolution and peace to the forgiver whether the offender was an intimate partner or a total stranger.

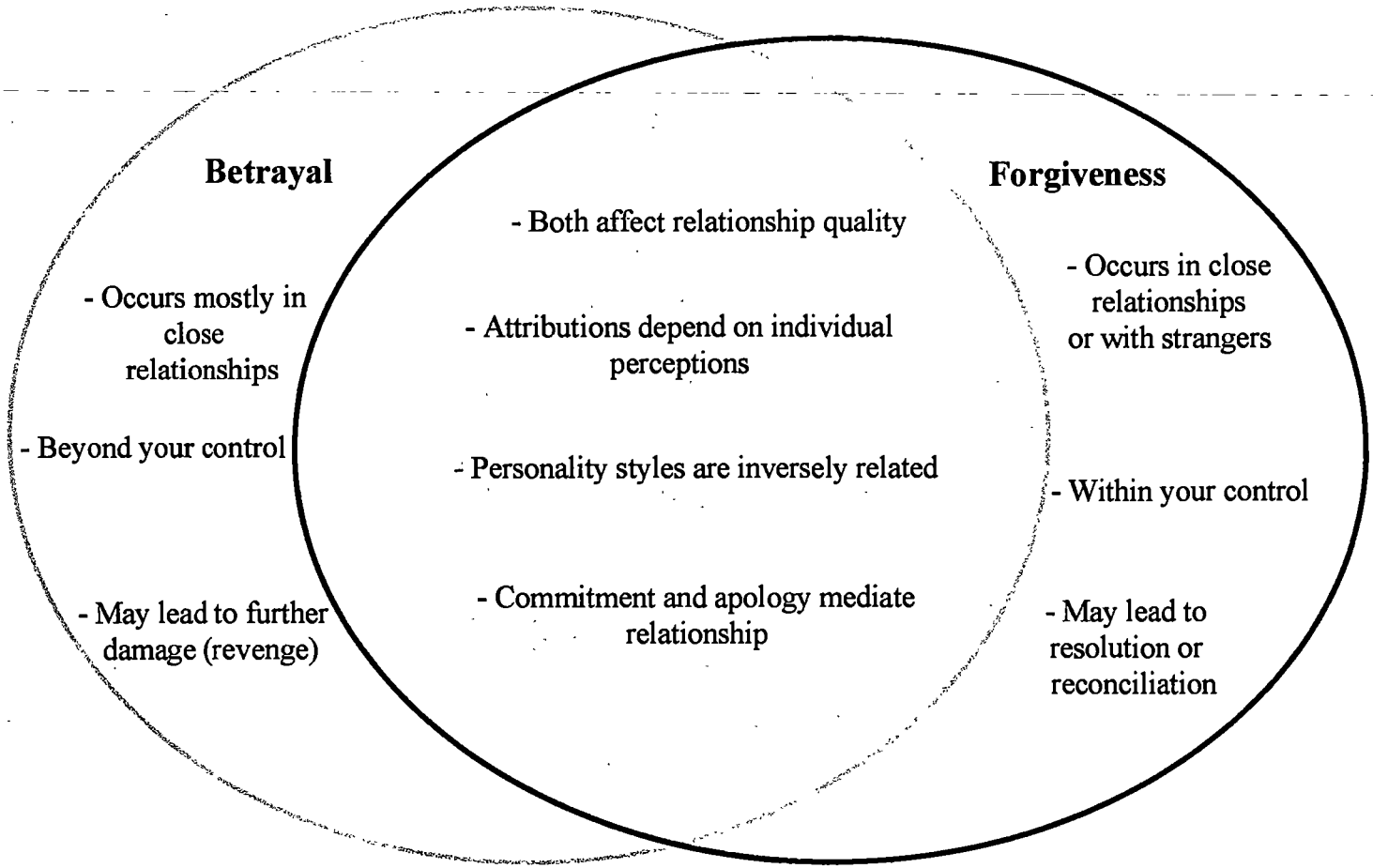
Another difference which is perhaps even more important is that betrayal and forgiveness diverge with respect to the dimension of control. Presumably betrayals occur

beyond the control, and often despite the best efforts of the victim. In this regard, betrayal is something that happens to or is perceived by the injured party. By contrast, forgiveness involves thoughts, feelings, and actions on the part of the forgiver. Such states and behaviors may be strongly influenced by what the offender says or does (e.g., apologies, acceptance of responsibility, expressions of regret and shame, etc.). But forgiveness is not contingent on any particular appeal or act of contrition and perhaps it is the logical requirement that forgiveness must be freely given in order to be genuine that provides a sense of control and helps to initiate the process in its earliest stages.

Finally, to an extent it may illuminate the obvious to note that betrayal and forgiveness diverge in their likely consequences. However, if betrayal typically results in either retaliation, resentment, or ill-will of some kind vs. forgiveness then another contrast emerges. Writers from several disciplines and philosophical perspectives (cf., North, 1987; Stuckless and Goranson, 1992; Zillmann, Bryant, Cantor & Day, 1975) have raised questions about the morality of revenge or almost any form of retributive justice due, for example, to the difficulty of retaliating fairly (e.g., exactly in degree and/or in kind), the attitude retribution—as opposed to rehabilitation—tends to foster in offenders, and the ethical and psychological implications of impulses toward "an eye for an eye." In this view, punishment for its own sake, and especially, punishment without a plan of remediation and eventual reconciliation is itself a moral violation tantamount to an act of betrayal. Furthermore, responding to betrayal with retaliation or resentment often perpetuates or exacerbates the original problem. Betrayal may lead to retaliation which may, in turn, bring escalation and further damage. By contrast, forgiveness transforms the

downward spiral of offense and retribution into the promise of resolution and reconciliation. Based on the theoretical and empirical research on betrayal and forgiveness, Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between these two constructs.

Figure 1. Theoretical convergence and divergence of betrayal and forgiveness constructs.


Betrayal
- Occurs mostly in close relationships
- Beyond your control
- May lead to further damage (revenge)
- Both affect relationship quality
- Attributions depend on individual perceptions
- Personality styles are inversely related
- Commitment and apology mediate relationship
Forgiveness
- Occurs in close relationships or with strangers
- Within your control
- May lead to resolution or reconciliation

CHAPTER V

METHOD AND ANALYSIS

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative methodology allows for a richness which may not be achieved through purely quantitative methods. Furthermore, the study of betrayal entails the disclosure of highly personal, intimate areas of respondents' lives. This approach captures the process by which individuals interpret their own experiences, allowing for an understanding based upon the individual's unique perspective. Therefore, using a theory-generating approach in which the data are examined for patterns and relationships was deemed appropriate. For this study, the grounded theory approach was employed to examine how participants described experiences of betrayal. In contrast to using confirmatory analysis, which tests or further explicates a known theory, employing grounded theory allowed for the theory to emerge from the data.

Grounded Theory

The primary purpose of grounded theory is to generate explanatory models of human behavior that are grounded in the personal accounts of respondents (i.e., narratives) (Morse & Field, 1995). Using a grounded approach, theory is generated from the narrative data and, when appropriate, existing (grounded) theories are elaborated and modified in relation to the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The generation of the theory is based on comparative analyses between and within groups, and incidents are

compared with other incidents and categories; this process continues with comparing categories with each other (Morse & Field, 1995). This study proposed to identify patterns of betrayal and relationships between these patterns. Data not fitting within any categories (e.g., incidents not referring to betrayal) were sorted out.

The grounded theory method involved the following stages: (a) the identification of preliminary distinctions within the data around which the data were organized (i.e., assigning codes to the betrayal texts); (b) the development of more refined distinctions through sub-categorization (i.e., sorting through the material to identify similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes, distinct differences between subgroups, and common sequences); (c) the development of a more integrated approach by linking and integrating the categories (i.e., isolating patterns and processes, commonalties and differences); (d) gradual development of a small set of generalizations that covered the consistencies discerned throughout the data; and (e) integration of the generalizations with existing theory (Dey, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Subsequently, the data were compared on the basis of gender, perspective (i.e., whether the respondent was the victim or perpetrator of the betrayal), and other relevant variables. For the purpose of this study, the analysis was partitioned into three phases: (a) first-level coding, (b) second-level coding, and (c) third-level coding.

First Level Coding—Data Reduction

Miles and Huberman (1994) specified data reduction as the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming data that begin as narratives. This process included selecting the conceptual framework in which to work, identifying research

questions to address, coding, isolating themes, forming clusters, etc. During this process, all betrayal narratives were analyzed line by line, and descriptive code names were applied to relevant segments. These codes referred to phrases, sentences, or groups of sentences within the data that represented common concepts. Codes were considered descriptive (e.g., common-sense categories), interpretative (e.g., assessing motives), or patterns (i.e., an inferential pattern discerned in experiences and relationships). For example, if the first narrative described an instance such as *"my wife and I rarely speak,"* the category *rarely speak to spouse* might be created. If the second narrative described an instance such as *"my wife cheated on me,"* the category *cheated on by wife* might be created. The coding proceeded in this manner wherein subsequent accounts were placed in existing categories or new categories were created.

First level coding was used to aggregate the established themes or constructs. Each incident in the data was coded into as many codes as possible to allow emerging theory to fit the data and explain behavioral variations (Morse & Field, 1995). Thus, it was possible for one sentence to have more than one assigned code, or, at times, two or three sentences were combined to form one code. This first level of coding is referred to as open coding (Morse & Field, 1995)—the researcher restates the facts as closely as possible to the participant's words. Open codes were clustered based on similarity or dissimilarity of content. The primary purpose was to illustrate the theoretical properties of each category. Open coding was concluded when a core category was defined—the "essence" of the phenomenon (Morse & Field, 1995). This coding process is analogous to the cluster or factor analysis of quantitative data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Additional information, such as researcher insights and thoughts about emerging theory, were recorded as memos and integrated only when the analysis became more streamlined.

Though seldom, on a few occasions it was necessary to assign two different codes to the same text. For example, *I lied to my mother about using drugs*, could have been coded as *lying* as well as *drug use*. In cases like this, a decision (during Second Level Coding) was made to interpret a primary betrayal (i.e., lying) or keep the text coded as two separate betrayals (i.e., lying and drug use).

Second Level Coding—Selective Coding

As described by Morse and Field (1995), the second step in the coding process was to categorize, recategorize, and condense all first-level codes, ensuring that all concepts remained unchanged unless they became irrelevant as more incoming data were analyzed and interpreted. The goal was to identify the relationships between categories. As the process continued, the categories became more descriptive, and linkages, or the relationships between categories, became more clearly defined. For example, hypothetical categories of *don't speak to spouse*, *mother stopped talking to me*, and *boyfriend ignores me* might be grouped into a more global category: *lack of communication.*

Third Level Coding

Eventually, other global categories, such as *lack of intimacy*, may be grouped with *lack of communication* if commonalties existed between these two categories. This grouping may result in a final comprehensive category: *lack of social support.*

The emergence of relationships represented the beginning of theory development. The variables that explained most of the process became the basis for emerging theory. These core variables may have been conditions, consequences, or processes. The question as to what constitutes betrayal was examined, as well as the basic social processes involved. The basic social processes intended to explain all variations of betrayal, predict behaviors, and show how these processes evolved over time (Morse & Field, 1995).

Saturation was reached when no new information that would indicate new categories were emerging or old codes needed expanding was identified (Morse & Field, 1995). Subsequently, following comparison with existing literature, the theoretical explanations were summarized. The themes were reported with supportive direct quotes to provide evidence for these categories. Further recommendations were made in order to aid development of a theory.

Reliability

Inter-rater reliability—the degree of agreement or consistency that exists between multiple coders—was conducted to ensure that the results remain stable across researchers. Multiple coders separately coded portions of the transcribed narratives at two levels of coding. Kappa statistics assessed the consistency among the raters as well as agreement of each rater with the original codes.

Data Management

To facilitate data analysis, Qualitative Solutions and Research for Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching, and Theorizing (QSR NUD*IST) software was

used. QSR NUD*IST is a computer software package designed to support the process of coding data in an index system, searching text or searching patterns of coding, and theorizing about the data. In addition, this software provided procedures for enumerating the degree of empirical support for the categories and connections identified throughout data analysis. To supplement the qualitative data, QSR NUD*IST also allowed the importation of quantitative data. For example, a file from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was directly imported to QSR NUD*IST, creating the index categories needed to store that data for analysis of the open-ended material in QSR NUD*IST.

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative methods of analysis (e.g., chi-square tests) were used to test for association between respondents' description of betrayal and remaining variables, including gender, age, change in relationship, and forgiveness (non-clinical population only). This procedure involves a goodness-of-fit test wherein the sample frequencies that actually fall within certain categories are contrasted with those that might be expected on the basis of the hypothetical distribution. Therefore, if a marked difference exists between the *observed* (actual) frequencies falling into each category and the frequencies *expected* to fall into each category on the basis of chance, then the chi-square test will yield a numerical value large enough to be interpreted as statistically significant.

Association between variables were examined within and between perspectives of both the victim and perpetrator.

CHAPTER VI

STUDY 1: BETRAYAL AND FORGIVENESS

Participants

Introductory psychology students (N = 354; 209 females, 145 males) at The University of Tennessee participated in this research project for nominal course credit. The mean age for the sample was 19 years (range = 19 - 45).

Procedure and Materials

Student respondents were asked to describe two significant experiences with forgiveness—one instance in which someone in an important, on-going relationship had forgiven them and another in which they forgave someone (see Appendix A). Respondents were instructed to (a) provide a brief account of each incident, (b) specify their relationship with the other person (e.g., friend, spouse, parent, sibling), (c) indicate whether an apology was given, (d) indicate whether forgiveness occurred, and (e) describe how, if at all, an effort towards forgiveness influenced the relationship. The questionnaire was administered during a single testing session. The experimenter handed each student a survey with the necessary instructions. After all students had completed the questionnaire, the group was debriefed.

Data Analysis

The primary purpose of the analysis was to identify common themes as well as differences across narratives. Interpretation of the narratives relied primarily on descriptions and terminology offered by respondents rather than opinions or speculation beyond evidence provided by the narratives. The goal of the interpretation was to understand the meaning of the betrayal experience and to describe any common patterns or themes that emerged.

Using a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1994), all narratives were coded at three levels. The first level of coding revealed a specific description of the narrative, such as *cheated on wife with her best friend* or *had affair while married.* Codes were then collapsed into broader categories for second level coding. For example, the above codes were categorized as *cheating.* The third phase of coding consisted of further consolidation of codes to reveal the "core" or primary categories. Narratives coded as *cheating*, for example, were further combined into *lack of relationship integrity.*

Results

The section begins with a reliability analyses that establishes inter-rater reliability. Following this, the qualitative analysis section includes all analyses involving the qualitative data (i.e., narratives), as well as any quantitative analyses performed on the narrative data. For the purpose of clarity, a time in which respondents reported someone sought forgiveness from them is described as a *victim* account and a time in which respondents reported seeking forgiveness is identified as a *perpetrator* account. Overall

differences among the types of relationships (e.g., family members, romantic partners) involved in incidents, the tendency to forgive, whether apology was used, and the subsequent change in the relationship following betrayal are then examined.

Reliability Analyses

Three separate raters were used to determine inter-rater reliability. Initially, each rater was provided a random selection (approximately 35% of narrative accounts from both the victim and perpetrator perspective) of narrative descriptions and were asked to rate these narratives into Level 1 codes. For instance, narratives consisted of statements such as *kissed another guy while dating*, *lied about where I had been*, *didn't visit friend in hospital*, *stood up date*, *stole money from parents*, and so on. Raters were asked to code all narratives into Level 1 categories (e.g., Cheated, Neglectful, Broke Rules, Accidental Loss/ruin of Object, Alcohol/drug Use, Termination of Relationship, Making Fun of Someone).

From the victim perspective, inter-rater agreement of codes revealed an average Kappa of .94 (Rater 1/Rater 2 = .92, Rater 1/Rater 3 = .95, Rater 2/Rater 3 = .97). The average Kappa from the perpetrator perspective was .92 (Rater 1/Rater 2 = .93, Rater 1/Rater 3 = .89, Rater 2/Rater 3 = .95). From the victim perspective, the ratings of each rater were compared to the original codes, demonstrating an average Kappa of .97 (Rater 1 = .95, Rater 2 = .97, Rater 3 = 1.0). Comparing raters with the original perpetrator codes revealed an average Kappa of .95 (Rater 1 = .95, Rater 2 = .93, Rater 3 = .98).

Regarding the victim and perpetrator perspectives, the same raters used in the Stage 1 analysis were given a list of Level 2 codes, such as Cheated, Family Abandonment, Lying,

Drug/Alcohol Abuse, Terminated Relationship, and so on. The raters were requested to code these Level 1 codes into more global Level 2 codes, consisting of: Lack of Relationship Integrity, Carelessness, Negative Attention, Lack of Attention, Lawlessness, and Interpersonal Respect. To avoid confusion regarding particular labels, each label was followed by a brief description. For instance, *Lawlessness* was described as "a lack of law or rule-abiding behavior," *Lack of Attention* was described as a "withdrawal of support/attention or a lack of consideration," etc.

Regarding the victim perspective, inter-rater agreement of codes revealed an average Kappa of .88 (Rater 1/Rater 2 = .88, Rater 1/Rater 3 = .83, Rater 2/Rater 3 = .94). The average Kappa from the perpetrator perspective was .87 (Rater 1/Rater 2 = .81, Rater 1/Rater 3 = .94, Rater 2/Rater 3 = .87). Furthermore, regarding the victim perspective, the ratings of each rater were compared to the original coding, demonstrating an average Kappa of .81 (Rater 1 = .71, Rater 2 = .83, Rater 3 = .89). Comparing raters with the original perpetrator codes revealed an average Kappa of .78 (Rater 1 = .74, Rater 2 = .81, Rater 3 = .81).

Qualitative Analysis

As a result of the first phase of coding, 114 different incidents were identified from the perspective of the perpetrator and 125 incidents were reported from the victims' perspective. These codes were condensed during second level coding into 22 categories from the perpetrators' perspective and 27 categories from the victims' perspective. The third and final phase of coding resulted in three broad categories for both the perpetrator and victim. These categories included (a) Violation of Trust, (b) Withholding Social

Support, and (c) Breach of Conduct. Each final theme is further clarified with subthemes.

Overall, a violation of trust was commonly reported from both the perspective of the victim (n = 162; 48%) and perpetrator (n = 174; 49%). However, perpetrators were more likely to report instances involving a violation of a standard (n = 124; 35%) than were the victims (n = 49; 14%). In addition, a withdrawal of social support was more likely to be reported from the perspective of the victim (n = 129; 38%) than of the perpetrator (n = 58; 17%). Figure 2 provides an overview of all themes, subthemes, and incidents that define each theme/subtheme. Tables 1 - 3 display the observed and expected frequencies for all narrative themes as a function of gender, age, and relationship to perpetrator/victim aspects of perspective (victim versus perpetrator).

Violation of Trust

The predominant theme that emerged from the data was a violation of trust. This theme consists of two major subthemes: Lack of Relationship Integrity and Carelessness. The first subtheme represents a general lack of ethical behavior while the second theme suggests an unintentional act.

Results of chi-square analysis indicated a significant difference in the proportion of perpetrator relationships (i.e., spouse, family member, friend) as a function of whether or not the incident involved a breach of trust, $\chi^2(2, N = 318) = 22.39, p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .27). A greater proportion of respondents than expected reported their romantic partner (rather than a family member or friend) breached their trust. An additional analysis also found a greater proportion of respondents than expected reported seeking forgiveness from their romantic partner (as compared to family

Figure 2. Study 1 thematic patterns.

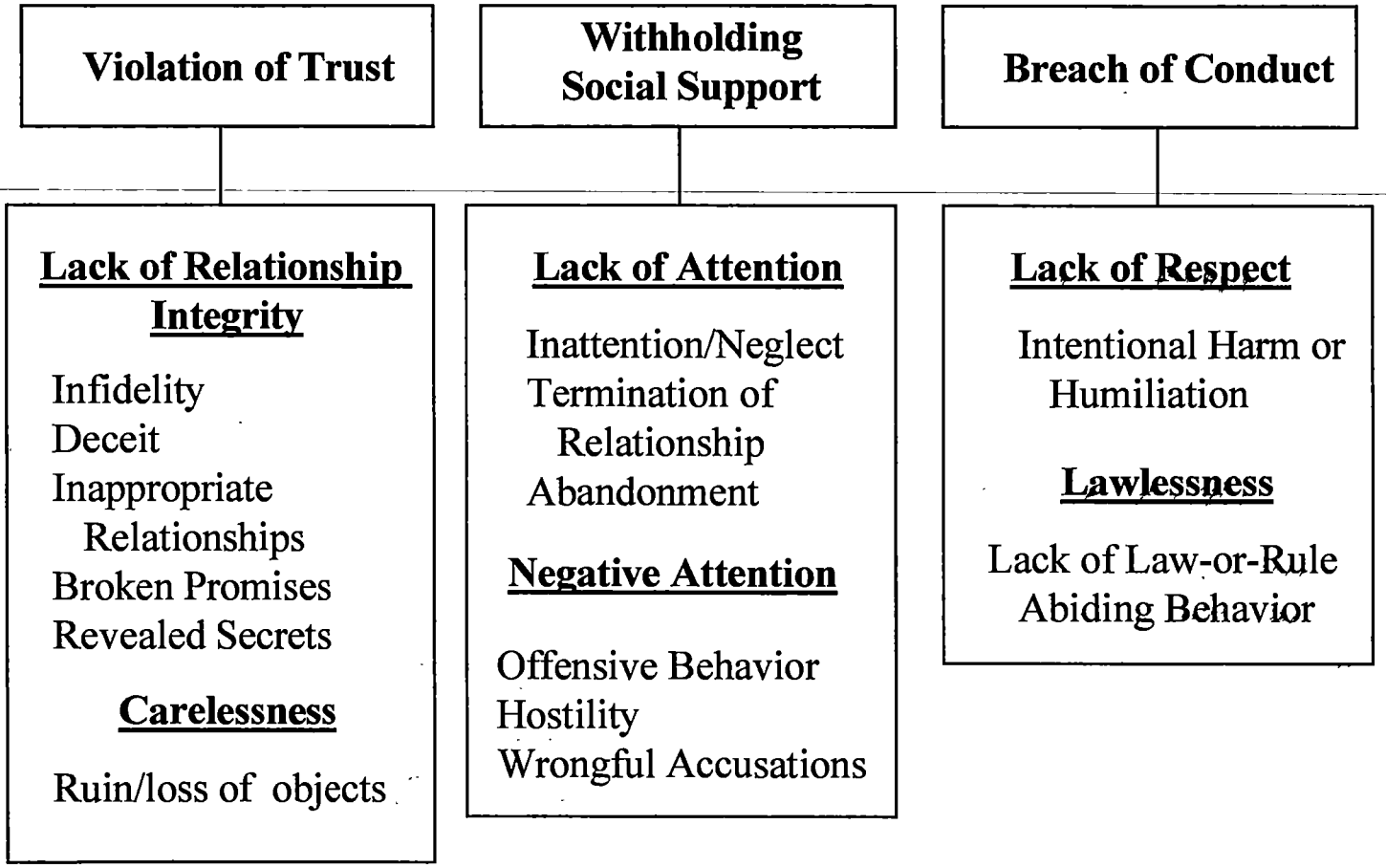

Violation of Trust
Withholding Social Support
Breach of Conduct
Lack of Relationship Integrity
Infidelity
Deceit
Inappropriate Relationships
Broken Promises
Revealed Secrets
Carelessness
Ruin/loss of objects
Lack of Attention
Inattention/Neglect
Termination of Relationship
Abandonment
Negative Attention
Offensive Behavior
Hostility
Wrongful Accusations
Lack of Respect
Intentional Harm or Humiliation
Lawlessness
Lack of Law-or-Rule Abiding Behavior

Table 1

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Themes as a Function of Gender and Perspective

	Victim Perspective						Perpetrator Perspective					
	Men			Women			Men			Women		
Themes	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%
Breach of Trust	69	66	50_a	93	96	46_b	67	72	46_c	107	102	52_d
Relationship Integrity	52	58	37_a	89	84	44_b	51	61	35_c	96	89	47_e
Carelessness	17	9	12_a	4	12	2_b	16	11	11_f	11	16	5_d
Social Support Withdrawal	50	53	36_a	79	76	39_b	29	24	20_c	29	34	14_d
Lack of Attention	21	21	15_a	30	30	15_b	15	13	10_c	17	19	8_d
Negative Attention	30	31	22_a	46	45	23_g	14	10	10_c	11	15	5_e
Standards of Conduct	19	20	14_a	30	29	15_b	50	51	14_c	74	73	36_d
Interpersonal Respect	16	15	12_a	21	22	10_i	29	34	20_j	53	48	26_d
Law Breaking Behavior	3	5	2_a	9	7	5_b	21	18	14_j	22	25	11_d

Note. $n_a = 139$. $n_b = 202$. $n_c = 145$. $n_d = 207$. $n_e = 206$. $n_f = 144$. $n_g = 199$. $n_h = 199$. $n_i = 201$. $n_j = 146$.
O = Observed frequencies; E = Expected frequencies. % = percent of gender categories.

Table 2

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Themes as a Function of Age and Perspective

	Victim Perspective						Perpetrator Perspective					
	16 - 18 years old			19 years and older			16 - 18 years old			19 years and older		
Themes	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%
Breach of Trust	94	96	47_a	68	67	49_b	111	103	53_c	63	71	44_d
Relationship Integrity	82	83	41_a	59	58	42_b	96	87	46_e	51	60	35_d
Carelessness	12	12	6_a	9	9	6_b	15	16	7_e	12	11	8_d
Social Support Withdrawal	76	76	38_a	53	53	38_b	35	34	17_c	23	24	16_d
Lack of Attention	34	30	17_a	17	21	12_b	21	19	10_c	11	13	8_d
Negative Attention	41	45	21_f	35	31	25_g	13	15	6_e	12	10	8_d
Standards of Conduct	30	29	15_a	19	20	14_b	67	73	32_c	57	51	40_d
Interpersonal Respect	23	22	12_f	14	15	10_b	40	48	20_c	40	34	28_h
Law Breaking Behavior	7	7	4_a	5	5	4_b	25	25	12_c	18	18	12_h

Note. $n_a = 201$. $n_b = 140$. $n_c = 208$. $n_d = 144$. $n_e = 207$. $n_f = 200$. $n_g = 138$. $n_h = 145$.
O = Observed frequencies. E = Expected frequencies. % = percent of age group

Table 3

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Themes as a Function of the Relationship to the Perpetrator or Victim and Perspective

	Victim Perspective									Perpetrator Perspective								
	Family Member			Romantic Partner			Friend			Family Member			Romantic Partner			Friend		
Themes	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%
Trust	13	24	26_a	96	77	61_b	46	54	30_c	50	65	39_d	93	74	54_e	28	32	45_f
Integrity	4	21	8_a	95	67	61_b	37	48	33_c	33	55	26_d	90	63	62_e	22	27	15_f
Carelessness	9	3	18_a	1	9	$.6_b$	9	7	8_c	17	10	13_d	3	11	12_g	6	5	10_f
Social Support	27	19	54_a	45	59	29_b	48	42	40_c	11	21	9_d	32	24	22_e	13	10	21_f
No Attention	15	8	30_a	22	25	43_b	14	18	13_c	3	12	2_d	21	14	15_e	7	6	11_f
Neg. Attention	11	10	22_h	22	33	14_i	34	23	31_j	8	9	6_d	11	11	8_e	5	4	8_k
Conduct	10	7	23_a	17	22	39_b	17	15	39_c	71	43	56_d	24	50	17_e	19	21	17_f
Respect	8	5	16_a	11	16	7_i	13	11	12_c	34	28	27_d	22	32	15_l	18	14	29_f
Lawlessness	2	2	4_a	6	6	4_b	4	4	4_c	38	16	30_d	2	18	1_l	1	8	2_f

Note. $n_a = 50$. $n_b = 157$. $n_c = 111$. $n_d = 127$. $n_e = 145$. $n_f = 62$. $n_g = 144$. $n_h = 49$. $n_i = 156$. $n_j = 110$. $n_k = 61$. $n_l = 146$.
O = Observed frequencies. E = Expected frequencies. % = percent of relationship category

members or friends) for a violation of trust, $\chi^2(2, N = 334) = 17.73, p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .23).

Chi-square analysis also detected significant differences in the proportion of perceptions of relationship change (i.e., relationship worsened, improved/remained the same) following the betrayal as a function of betrayal type (i.e., violation of trust), $\chi^2(2, N = 320) = 7.93, p < .05$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .16). More respondents than expected reported that the relationship worsened (rather than improving) following a breach of trust. Analyses also indicated significant differences between the reported perceptions of change in the relationship following the incident as a function of the perpetrator or victim perspective ($\chi^2(2, N = 331) = 26.16, p < .01$ and $\chi^2(2, N = 320) = 7.93, p < .05$, respectively); the effect size for the perpetrator accounts was relatively large (Cramer's V = .28), while the effect size for the victim accounts was small (Cramer's V = .02). A greater proportion of respondents, from both the victim and perpetrator perspectives, revealed that their relationship worsened (compared to improving) following an incident in which the trust of the relationship was violated.

Further analyses indicated that when the incident involved a breach of trust, a greater proportion of respondents reported that forgiveness was withheld (rather than offered), $\chi^2(1, N = 341) = 10.66, p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .18).

Lack of relationship integrity. Respondents reported incidents in which trust was breached when the integrity of the relationship was jeopardized. Betrayals involving infidelity, deceitfulness, initiating inappropriate relationships (e.g., dating the partner of a friend; dating the friend of a current partner), broken promises, or revealing a secret were

considered acts that violated the integrity of the relationship. This type of betrayal was almost equally reported from the perspective of the perpetrator (n = 147; 42%) and victim (n = 141; 40%). Betrayals categorized as lacking integrity ranged on a continuum from severe (e.g., infidelity) to moderately or less severe (e.g., lying). Examples of narratives from this subtheme included:

My ex-husband had several affairs. [victim]

My best friend lied to me about graduating high school. [victim]

My close friend went out with my boyfriend. [victim]

My best friend told one of my deepest secrets. [victim]

I was seeing other guys and not telling my boyfriend. [perpetrator]

I had been continuously lying to my parents. [perpetrator]

I slept with a friend's girlfriend while he was out of town for four hours. [perpetrator]

A chi-square test of homogeneity revealed that a greater proportion of women than men admitted to acts violating the integrity of the relationship, $\chi^2(1, N = 351) = 4.57, p < .05$, although the effect size was small (Cramer's V = .03) (see Table 1). In addition, a greater proportion of perpetrators 18 years and younger reported acts breaching integrity, compared to perpetrators aged 19 years and above, $\chi^2(1, N = 351) = 4.19, p < .05$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .11) (see Table 2).

A greater proportion of respondents also reported that romantic partners (compared to family members or friends) sought forgiveness from them for acts lacking integrity, $\chi^2(2, N = 318) = 48.92, p < .01$, with a large effect size (Cramer's V = .39). In addition, a greater proportion of perpetrators than expected reported an incident demonstrating lack

of relationship integrity involving their romantic partner (rather than family members or friends), $\chi^2(2, N = 334) = 37.83, p < .01$, with a large effect size (Cramer's V = .34) (see Table 3).

Chi-square analysis found that more respondents than expected reported their relationship worsened (as compared to improving/remaining the same) following an incident that involved a lack of integrity, χ^2 (2, N = 320) = 23.08, $p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .27). A greater proportion of respondents also reported that forgiveness was withheld from them when the incident involved a lack of relationship integrity, $\chi^2(1, N = 340) = 15.36, p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .21).

Carelessness. Trust also was damaged by acts of carelessness (i.e., accidentally ruining or losing an object). From the perspective of the perpetrator, respondents (n = 27) were slightly more likely to report an act of carelessness than victims were (n = 21). Acts of carelessness involved harming or losing tangible objects; betrayals in which a person's feelings were hurt by acts of thoughtlessness were classified as a breach of social support rather than trust. Examples of narratives from the carelessness subtheme included:

My mom broke my Star Wars Star Cruiser. [victim]

My friend broke my TV. [victim]

I wrecked my parent's car. [perpetrator]

I lost one of my good friend's book of poetry he had written. [perpetrator]

Chi-square test of homogeneity indicated a significant difference between males and females and the perpetrators' and victims' tendency to report acts of carelessness, [$\chi^2(1, N$

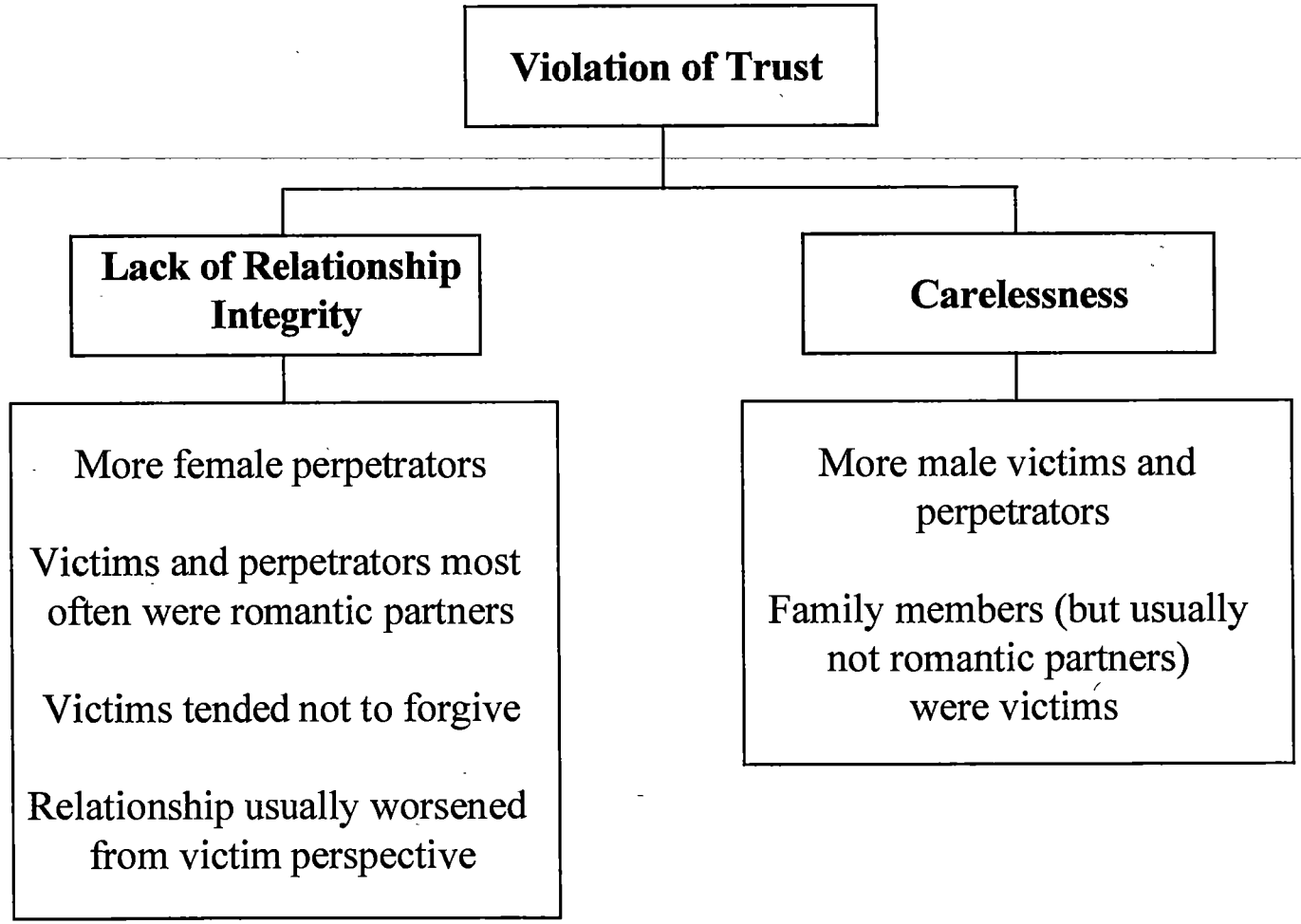
$= 351) = 4.02, p < .05$ and $\chi^2(1, N = 341) = 14.97, p < .01$, respectively]. The effect size for perpetrators was small (Cramer's V = .05), while the effect size for victims was fairly large (Cramer's V = .21). Comparisons of observed and expected frequencies, for both victims and perpetrators, revealed that a greater proportion of men than women reported acts of carelessness (see Table 1).

A smaller proportion of respondents than expected reported that romantic partners (as compared to family members or friends) sought forgiveness from them for acts of carelessness, $\chi^2(2, N = 318) = 21.73, p < .01$, with a large effect size (Cramer's V = .26). Furthermore, from the perpetrators' perspective, a greater proportion of respondents reported an incident of carelessness involving a family member (rather than romantic partner or friend), $\chi^2(2, N = 334) = 12.34, p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .19) (see Table 3). Significant results for the Violation of Trust theme are summarized in Figure 3.

Withholding Social Support

The second major theme that emerged from the data was Withholding Social Support. This theme was comprised of two subthemes: Lack of Attention and Negative Attention. Both victims and perpetrators reported incidents involving close personal relationships in which they received inadequate attention or failed to provide attention. This implies a somewhat passive (i.e., not direct) breach of social support. The second subtheme, Negative Attention, describes a more overt breach of social support in which an individual

Figure 3. Summary of significant findings for Violation of Trust theme.


Violation of Trust
Lack of Relationship Integrity
Carelessness
More female perpetrators
Victims and perpetrators most often were romantic partners
Victims tended not to forgive
Relationship usually worsened from victim perspective
More male victims and perpetrators
Family members (but usually not romantic partners) were victims

actively sought to be hurtful. Victims were more likely to report acts involving inadequate attention ($n = 51$; 15%) or negative attention ($n = 76$; 23%) as compared to perpetrators ($n = 32$; 9%, $n = 25$; 7%, respectively).

Further analysis revealed a significant difference in the proportion of those who sought forgiveness from the victim as a function of whether or not the incident involved a withdrawal of social support, $\chi^2 (2, N = 318) = 12.56$, $p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .20). A smaller proportion of respondents than expected reported that their romantic partner (rather than family member or friend) jeopardized social support. In addition, a greater proportion of respondents reported an incident in which social support was withheld from a romantic partner (rather than family member or friend), $\chi^2 (2, N = 334) = 9.68$, $p = .01$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .17) (see Table 3).

Lack of attention. An apparent lack of consideration or withdrawal of attention was cited as a cause for offering or seeking forgiveness. This category of behavior included lack of consideration or attention, terminating relationships, or abandonment. Several narratives representative of this subtheme included:

> My friend was supposed to meet me at a place and never showed up. [victim]
>
> My girlfriend stood me up one night when she said she would call or be at my house. It was our anniversary, and I had planned a romantic evening. [victim]
>
> She had not paid any attention to me and had almost forgotten that I was alive. [victim]
>
> My boyfriend left me for someone else. [victim]
>
> My mother left my father, sister, and me. [victim]

I told my boyfriend that I would meet him somewhere, but I never showed up. [perpetrator]

I left my mother out of major decisions of my life. [perpetrator]

I broke off a long-term relationship with someone after we moved here together. [perpetrator]

I started ignoring and not acknowledging my girlfriend. [perpetrator]

I had forgotten our anniversary. [perpetrator]

I dumped my girlfriend. [perpetrator]

The tendency to report an incident involving a lack of attention, χ^2 (2, N = 318) = 8.68, p = .01, varied significantly across the types of persons who sought forgiveness from victims (i.e., family member, romantic partner, friend); the effect size was moderate (Cramer's V = .17). The results indicated that a greater proportion of respondents than expected reported a family member (rather than romantic partner or friend) sought forgiveness for an incident involving a lack of attention. Also, a greater proportion of respondents sought forgiveness for not paying adequate attention to their romantic partner (rather than a family member or friend), χ^2 (2, N = 334) = 12.18, p < .01, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .19) (see Table 3).

Negative attention. Respondents reported seeking or offering forgiveness due to a lack of social support caused by negative attention, such as talking badly behind their back, saying offensive/hurtful things, public embarrassment, or wrongful accusations. Representative narratives included:

My friend talked about me behind my back to another friend. [victim]

She called me a lot of ugly names. [victim]

My ex-girlfriend hurt my feelings and embarrassed me in front of my friends. [victim]

My boyfriend called me a name in front of people. [victim]

I had been a jerk. [perpetrator]

After my father had gone to rehab for alcoholism, I wrongly made a big scene accusing him of drinking again. [perpetrator]

I hurt my father at a hard time in his life. [perpetrator]

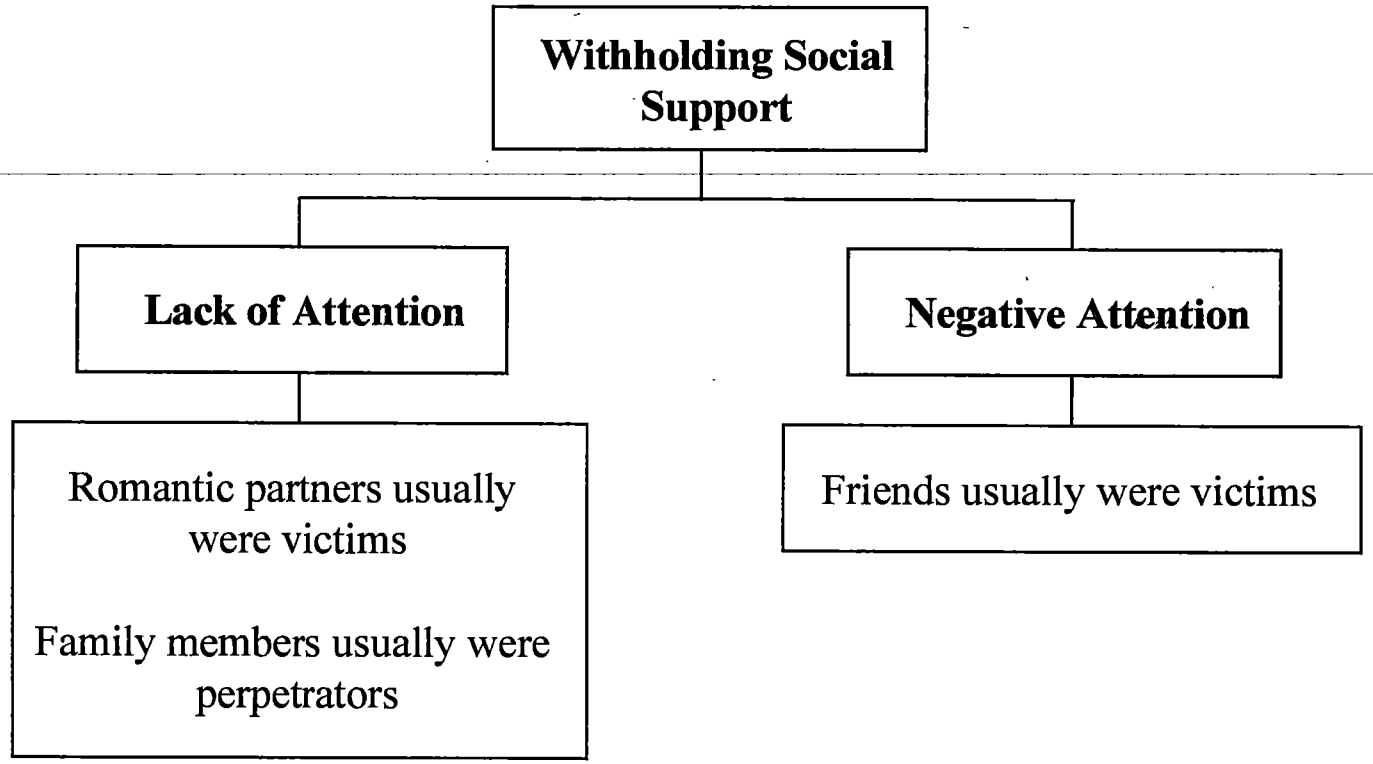
The tendency to report an incident involving negative attention, χ^2 (2, N = 315) = 10.93, p = .01, varied significantly across the types of persons who sought forgiveness from the victim (i.e., family member, romantic partner, friend); the effect size was moderate (Cramer's V = .19). The results indicated that, for incidents involving negative attention, a greater proportion of respondents than expected reported a friend (rather than a family member or romantic partner) sought forgiveness (see Table 3). Significant results for the Withholding of Social Support theme are summarized in Figure 4.

Breach of Conduct

The third major theme, Breach of Conduct, consisted of two subthemes: Lawlessness and Lack of Interpersonal Respect. The first subtheme suggested a relationship between a need for forgiveness and rule-abiding behavior. The Interpersonal Respect subtheme is representative of the (primarily implicit) expectation of respect and consideration within all interpersonal relationships. Offenses categorized as a lack of respect and lawlessness were more likely to be reported by the perpetrators (n = 82; 23% and n = 43; 12%, respectively) rather than the victims (n = 37; 11% and n = 12; 4%, respectively).

Chi-square test of homogeneity revealed a greater proportion of perpetrators reported breaching a standard of conduct with their parent or sibling as compared to their romantic

Figure 4. Summary of significant findings for Withholding Social Support theme.


Withholding Social Support
Lack of Attention
Negative Attention
Romantic partners usually were victims
Family members usually were perpetrators
Friends usually were victims

partner or friend, $\chi^2(2, N = 334) = 47.05, p < .01$, with a large effect size (Cramer's V = .38) (see Table 3).

Chi-square test of homogeneity also detected a significant difference in the tendency to forgive as a function of whether or not the incident involved a breach of conduct, $\chi^2(1, N = 341) = 8.20, p < .01$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .16). A greater proportion of respondents reported that forgiveness was received (rather than withheld) following an incident where codes of conduct were breached.

Additional analysis revealed a smaller proportion of respondents than expected reported the worsening of relationship quality (rather than improving/remaining the same) following a breach of conduct, $\chi^2(2, N = 331) = 16.52, p < .01$, with a fairly large effect size (Cramer's V = .22).

Lawlessness. A lack of law-abiding or rule-following behavior often was reported to be a cause for offering or seeking forgiveness. This subtheme is based on the respondents' expectations that others should abide by rules, including laws, absence of drug or alcohol use, family-rules (e.g., curfew), etc. Though a law or rule was broken, the respondent was not necessarily the direct victim of the offense (e.g., "My boyfriend got caught shoplifting some transmission fluid"). Some narratives representative of this subtheme included:

> My boyfriend received a DUI. [victim]
>
> When she told me she wouldn't drink or smoke but did anyway. [victim]
>
> He started selling cocaine out of my house. [victim]
>
> I had sold drugs out of their house, stolen over $1500 from them, and wrecked their car. [perpetrator]

I was caught drinking and needed forgiveness from my parents. [perpetrator]

I snuck out [of the house] to hang with some friends. [perpetrator]

Chi-square analysis detected a significant difference in the proportion of the types of victims the perpetrator sought forgiveness from and whether or not the perpetrator reported breaking the law, χ^2 (2, N = 335) = 59.55, $p < .01$, with a large effect size (Cramer's V = .42). A comparison of observed and expected frequencies revealed that a greater proportion of respondents reported seeking forgiveness from their family member (as compared to a romantic partner or friend) for breaking the law (see Table 3).

Lack of interpersonal respect. For the participants in this study, not demonstrating interpersonal respect was often a predecessor to offering or seeking forgiveness. This subtheme represented the expectation that individuals involved in any interpersonal relationship will receive a certain degree of consideration—that is, individuals expect those closest to them will not intentionally harm or humiliate them. For instance, respondents reported:

My ex-girlfriend grabbed my ear in a restaurant when I wouldn't pay attention to her. I wasn't there with her, she just showed up. [victim]

My ex-boyfriend was really horrible to me and badly hurt me. [victim]

One of my best friends punched me in the face during a high school trip. [victim]

I sought forgiveness when I yelled and punched my brother. [perpetrator]

I made a friend's life really hard on purpose. [perpetrator]

I said mean and hurtful things. [perpetrator]

Chi-square analysis detected that a greater proportion of respondents reported seeking forgiveness from their romantic partner (as compared to a family member or friend) for

demonstrating a lack of respect, χ^2 (2, N = 335) = 7.54, p < .05, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .15) (see Table 3).

A significant difference also was found in the proportion of forgiveness as a function of whether the incident involved a breach of interpersonal respect, χ^2 (1, N = 342) = 4.94, p < .05, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .12). A greater proportion of respondents than expected reported receiving forgiveness (rather than having forgiveness withheld) following an act involving a lack of interpersonal respect.

Further analysis revealed a smaller proportion of respondents than expected reported their relationship worsened following incidents involving a lack of interpersonal respect, χ^2 (2, N = 331) = 28.28, p < .01, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .29). Significant results for the Breach of Conduct theme are summarized in Figure 5.

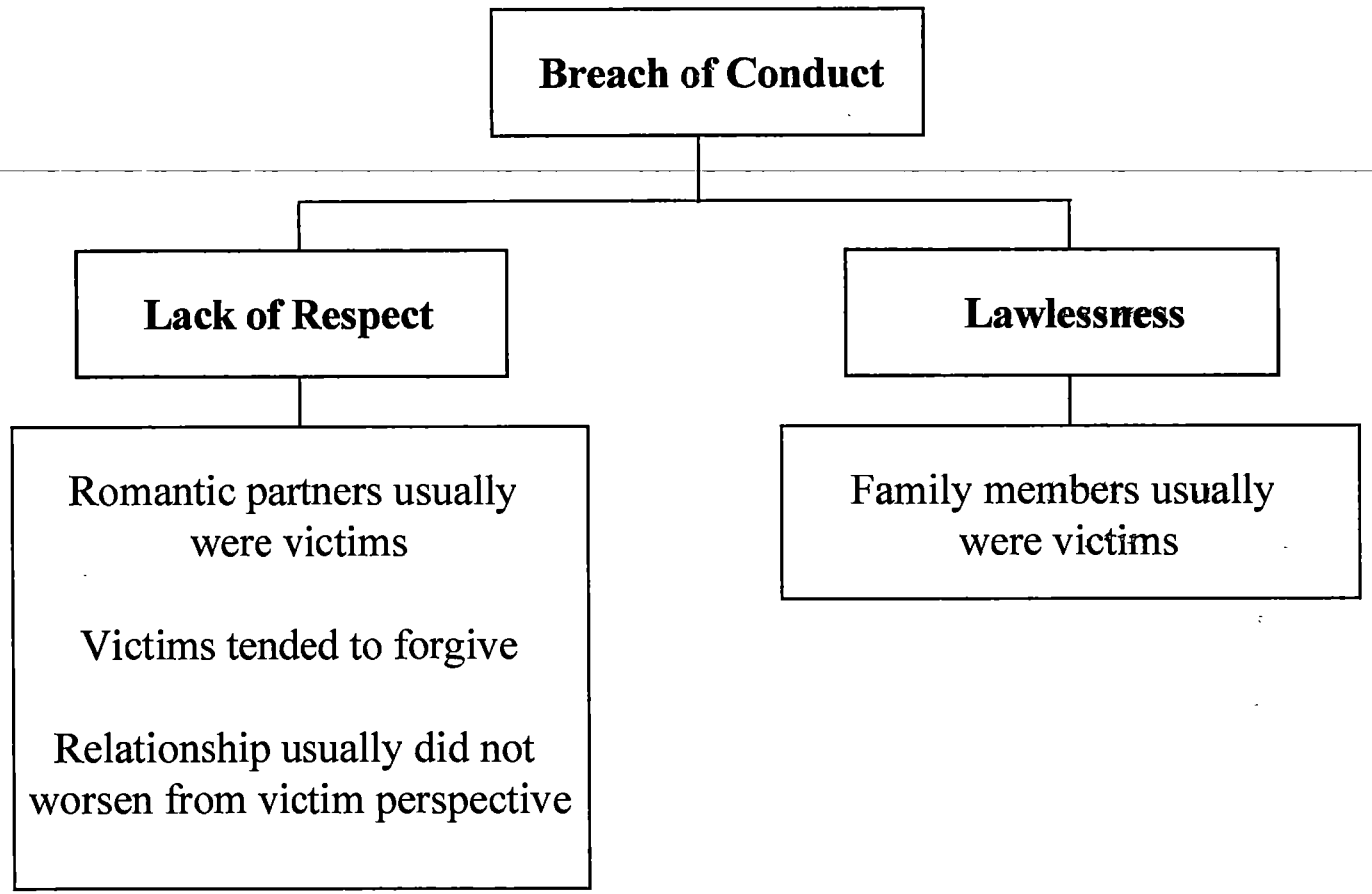
Quantitative Analysis

Overall differences among the types of relationships (e.g., family members, romantic partners) involved in incidents, the tendency to forgive, whether apology was used, and the subsequent change in the relationship following betrayal were examined. Comparisons were made between the victims (when someone sought forgiveness from them) and perpetrators when they sought forgiveness from someone else), gender, and age groups.

Offering Forgiveness (Victim Perspective)

Overall, respondents reported that romantic partners (45%), followed by friends (33%), most often sought forgiveness from them. The majority of respondents (70%) from the victim's perspective reported that they forgave the perpetrator and an apology (86%) was

Figure 5. Summary of significant findings for Breach of Conduct theme.


Breach of Conduct
Lack of Respect
Lawlessness
Romantic partners usually were victims
Victims tended to forgive
Relationship usually did not worsen from victim perspective
Family members usually were victims

offered to them. Though most victims received an apology, over one-third of all respondents (36%) expressed the relationship in question worsened following the incident.

Age and gender differences. Respondents were divided at the mean into one of two age groups, 16-18 years or 19 years and older. A chi-square test of homogeneity showed that the relationships of the people who sought forgiveness from the respondents differed significantly as a function of age, $\chi^2(4, N = 347) = 12.66, p = .01$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .19). A greater proportion of respondents 19 years of age and older reported that their romantic partner (rather than friends, parents, siblings, or other relationships) sought forgiveness from them. The relationship of the victim to the perpetrator did not significantly vary across gender, $\chi^2(4, N = 347) = 4.55$, *n.s.*

The tendency to offer forgiveness did not significantly vary across age groups, χ^2 (2, N = 345) = 2.15, *n.s.*, or gender, χ^2 (2, N = 345) = 3.47, *n.s.* In addition, the rate of receiving apologies did not vary significantly across gender, χ^2 (1, N = 344) = .23, *n.s.*, or age groups, χ^2 (1, N = 344) = .35, *n.s.*

Perceptions of relationship change (i.e., relationship worsened or improved/stayed the same) varied significantly as a function of gender, $\chi^2(3, N = 327) = 18.86, p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .24). Comparisons of the observed and expected frequencies revealed that: (a) a greater proportion of women rather than men reported that the relationship worsened following the incident and (b) a greater proportion of men rather than women reported that the relationship remained the same following the incident.

Type of relationship. The types of relationships (e.g., parents, romantic partners, friends) that respondents reported were classified into two categories: voluntary or involuntary relationships. Voluntary relationships refer to relationships that individuals self-initiate and could possibly terminate (e.g., romantic partnerships, friendships). Involuntary relationships refer to relationships that individuals have not self-initiated and are impossible to terminate (e.g., parental or sibling relationships).

A chi-square test of homogeneity indicated a significant difference between the type of relationship (voluntary versus involuntary) as a function of receiving forgiveness, $\chi^2(2, N = 324) = 8.52$, $p = .01$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .16). A greater proportion of respondents in voluntary relationships reporting having expressed forgiveness (rather than withholding).

Apology and forgiveness. No significant difference was found in the proportion of apologies as a function of forgiveness, $\chi^2(2, N = 342) = 1.34$, *n.s.*

Change in relationship quality and forgiveness. Chi-square test of homogeneity detected significant differences in the proportion of forgiveness as a function of the victims' perception of relationship quality following the incident $\chi^2(6, N = 324) = 67.62$, $p < .01$, with a large effect size (Cramer's V = .46). A greater proportion of respondents reported that: (a) their relationship improved (rather than worsening) after offering forgiveness, (b) their relationship worsened (rather than improving) when forgiveness was withheld, and (c) their relationship worsened after they offered a "qualified forgiveness" (e.g., "I forgave him *but* I will never trust him again").

Receiving Forgiveness (Perpetrator Perspective)

Overall, perpetrators most often cited incidents seeking forgiveness from their romantic partners (42%) followed by their parents (32%). The majority of perpetrators (80%) reported that they were forgiven, and most (94%) stated that they offered an apology to their victim. Many perpetrators (29%) expressed that their relationship with the victim improved following the incident. However, many respondents (28%) expressed the relationship temporarily worsened before improving.

Age and gender differences. Chi-square analysis found that the person from whom the perpetrator sought forgiveness did not significantly vary across age groups, $\chi^2(4, N = 354) = 6.35$, *n.s.*, or gender, $\chi^2(4, N = 354) = 3.83$, *n.s.* In addition, no differences were found in receiving forgiveness between age groups, $\chi^2(2, N = 342) = 1.16$, *n.s.*, or gender, $\chi^2(2, N = 342) = .35$, *n.s.* However, a significant difference between men and women was found as a function of apology when seeking forgiveness $\chi^2(1, N = 351) = 3.96$, $p < .05$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .11). A greater proportion of males than females reported not offering an apology when seeking forgiveness.

No significant differences were found in the perpetrators' perception of relationship change following the incident based on their age groups, $\chi^2(3, N = 333) = 1.51$, *n.s.*, or gender, $\chi^2(3, N = 333) = 3.72$, *n.s.*

Type of relationship involved. No significant differences were found between the types of relationship involved (i.e., voluntary or involuntary) as a function of forgiveness (offering "true" forgiveness, pseudo-forgiveness, or no forgiveness), $\chi^2(2, N = 321) = .08$, *n.s.*

Apology and forgiveness. No differences were found between the victims' tendency to forgive as a function of the perpetrators' use of apology, $\chi^2(2, N = 339) = .14$, *n.s.*

Change in relationship quality. Chi-square testing of homogeneity revealed significant differences between the perpetrators' perception of relationship change following betrayal as a function of forgiveness, $\chi^2(6, N = 323) = 90.39$, $p < .01$, with a large effect size (Cramer's V = .37). Comparisons of the observed and expected frequencies revealed that a greater proportion of respondents reported that: (a) their relationship improved (rather than worsened) after forgiveness was offered and (b) their relationship worsened when forgiveness was withheld.

Victim versus Perpetrator Accounts

Perceptions of relationship quality following the incident varied significantly between victims and perpetrators, $\chi^2(9, N = 312) = 16.83$, $p = .05$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .13). A greater proportion of respondents, from both the perspective of the victim and perpetrator, reported that their relationship improved following the incident. In addition, a chi-square test of homogeneity approached significance regarding differences between the types of relationship cited by the victim and the perpetrator, $\chi^2(4, N = 311) = 8.90$, $p = .06$. A greater proportion of both victims and perpetrators reported an incident involving a friend rather than family member or romantic partner.

CHAPTER VII

STUDY 2: BETRAYAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CLIENTS

Participants

Clients (N = 120; 60 women, 60 men) from a community mental health clinic were the participants of the second study; data were collected in conjunction with a larger study (see Carver, 1990). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 66 years (M = 34 years). Approximately 63% of participants had been married at least once, while 33% were currently single, 19% were married, and 46% were divorced.

Participants' case records were examined (see Carver, 1990), using DSM-III-R (American Psychiatric Association, 1987) criteria. The most frequent Axis 1 clinical syndrome diagnoses were depressive disorders (51%), substance abuse (49%), schizophrenia (22%), and adjustment disorders (11%). Approximately 50% of participants received an Axis II (i.e., personality/developmental disorder) diagnosis, most of which were Borderline Personality Disorders, characterized by an instability of self-image, interpersonal relationships, and mood.

Procedure and Materials

For participation, respondents either were recommended by therapists or responded to a posted notice; all were paid a nominal fee for their participation. Participants completed a questionnaire, which included open-ended questions about betrayal experiences (see

Appendix B). Respondents were asked to describe significant experiences in which they had betrayed a relationship partner and in which they had been betrayed. Specifically, respondents were asked to (a) provide a brief account of each incident, (b) specify the relationship, (c) state how long ago the incident occurred, (d) explain their reasons for the incident, and (e) describe how, if at all, the incident changed the relationship. The purposes, requirements, and safeguards (e.g., confidentiality) of the study were explained to each participant. All participants were assured of anonymity and informed they could refuse to answer any question.

Results

This section includes all analyses involving the qualitative data (e.g., narratives), as well as quantitative analyses performed on the narrative data. For the purpose of clarity, betrayals in which the respondent betrayed someone else are identified as *perpetrator* accounts, whereas betrayals in which the respondent was betrayed by someone else are identified as *victim* accounts. Variables including the type of relationship involved in the incident (i.e., romantic partner, family members, or friends) and how the incident affected their relationship also are examined.

Qualitative Analysis

The first phase of coding resulted in 49 different incidents identified from the perspective of the perpetrator and 52 incidents from the perspective of the victim. These codes were condensed during the second phase of coding resulting in 15 perpetrator categories and 14 categories from the perspective of the victim. From both the victim and

perpetrator perspectives, the third stage of coding resulted in three categories. Frequencies and percentages of narratives in each theme were calculated. For example, 49 narratives were coded as a "relationship integrity;" this frequency represents 50% of all the narratives ($n = 100$).

The third level categories of betrayal consisted of (a) Lack of Relationship Integrity ($n = 49$, 50%-victim; $n = 63$, 66%-perpetrator), (b) Withholding Social Support ($n = 29$, 29%-victim; $n = 22$, 23%-perpetrator) (with subthemes of Withdrawal of Social Support and Negative Attention, and (c) Lawlessness ($n = 8$, 8%-victim, $n = 6$, 6%-perpetrator). All themes, subthemes, and incidents that define each theme are shown in Figure 6.

Lack of Relationship Integrity

A predominant theme among victim and perpetrator accounts of betrayal was a breach of relationship integrity. Breaches of integrity include acts of infidelity, deceit, physical abuse, initiating inappropriate relationships (e.g., dating the partner of a friend), broken promises, or revealing a secret. Betrayals categorized as a breach of integrity ranged in severity from severe (e.g., lying about son's death) to less severe (e.g., being lied to in the 4th grade). Examples of narratives from this theme included:

My friend went out with my wife. [victim]

First husband had an affair with another woman. [victim]

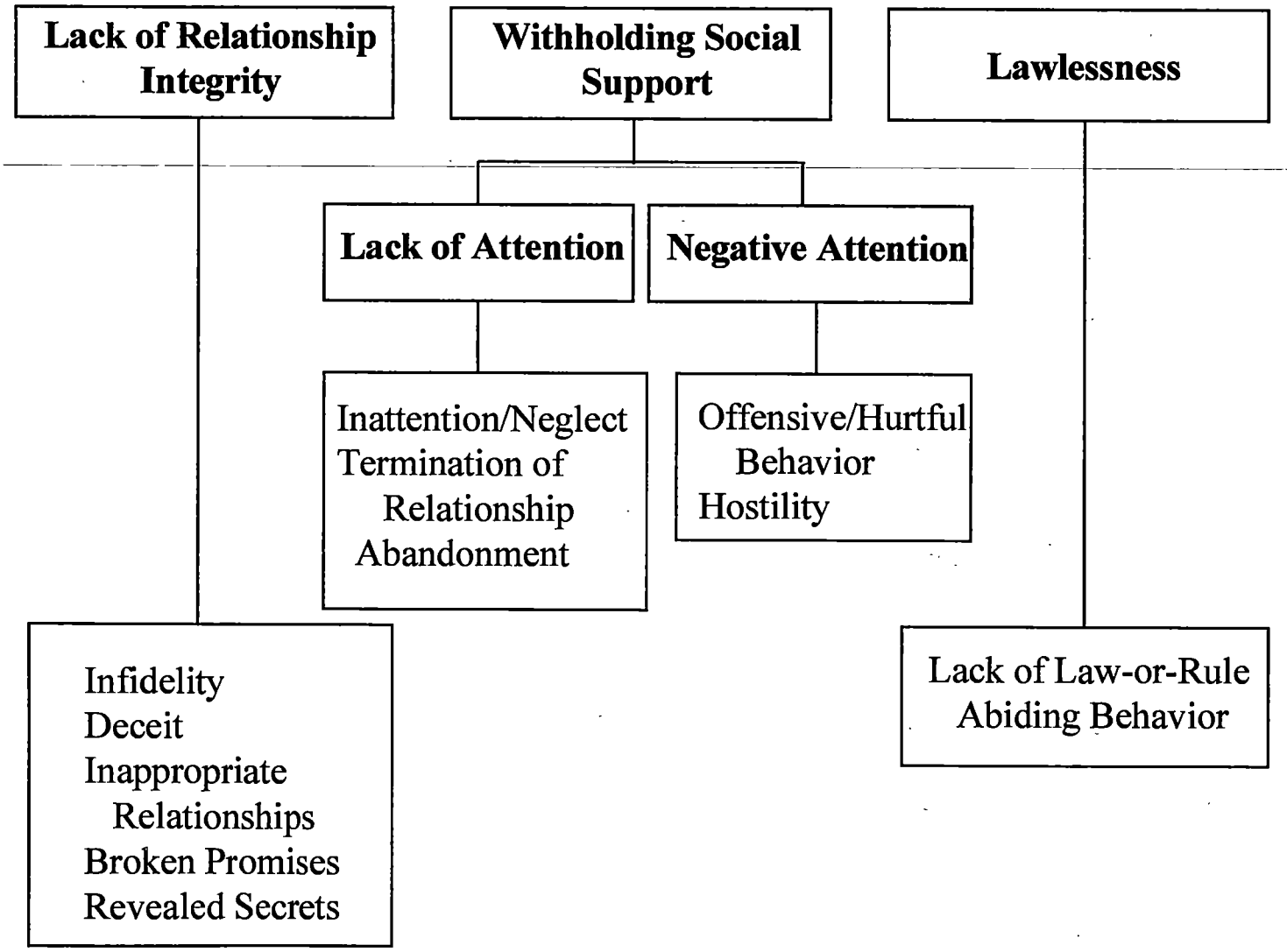
My father lied to me. [victim]

A girl told someone else some stuff I told her in confidence. [victim]

I was brainwashed by an unscrupulous therapist. [victim]

Had several affairs when married. [perpetrators]

Figure 6. Study 2 thematic patterns.


Lack of Relationship Integrity
Withholding Social Support
Lawlessness
Lack of Attention
Negative Attention
Inattention/Neglect
Termination of Relationship
Abandonment
Offensive/Hurtful Behavior
Hostility
Infidelity
Deceit
Inappropriate Relationships
Broken Promises
Revealed Secrets
Lack of Law-or-Rule Abiding Behavior

Our 1st born was brain-damaged during birth by careless and inept Dr. He was brain dead but living. One night a Dr. missed a vein and his anti-seizure medicine didn't get in. He had seizures and died. I didn't let anyone know he was dead until an hour went by, so they wouldn't try to bring him back. I never told my husband. [perpetrator]

I slept with my sister's boyfriend and had his child. [perpetrator]

I shared with a doctor my roommate's psychiatric history. [perpetrator]

I told some secretive information that was personal between my husband and I. [perpetrator]

Told my mother I went looking for a job when I didn't even intend to. [perpetrator]

As shown in Table 4, chi-square test of homogeneity revealed that a greater proportion of victims than expected reported that their romantic partners (rather than family members or friends) breached the integrity of their relationship, $\chi^2(2, N = 80) = 6.46, p < .05$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .28). Similarly, a greater proportion of perpetrators than expected reported they betrayed their romantic partner (rather than a family member or friend) by breaching the integrity of their relationship, $\chi^2(2, N = 80) = 11.05, p < .01$, with a moderately large effect size (Cramer's V = .37). As shown in Table 5, results of a chi-square analysis indicated no significant differences in the proportion of men and women who reported an incident characterizing a breach in integrity from the victim, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = .16$, *n.s.*, or perpetrator perspective, $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = .13$, *n.s.* In addition, a breach of ethics did not significantly vary as a function of age for either victims, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = .87$, *n.s.*, or perpetrators, $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = .07$, *n.s.*

Though many respondents expressed a single act of betrayal, many alluded to a pattern of troubled relationship dynamics, as evidenced in quotes such as these:

Table 4

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Themes as a Function of Relationship to the Victim or Perpetrator and Perspective

	Victim Perspective									Perpetrator Perspective								
	Family Member			Romantic Partner			Friend			Family Member			Romantic Partner			Friend		
Themes	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%	O	E	%
Lack of Integrity	5	9	29_a	29	24	62_a	6	8	38_a	6	11	35_e	35	28	79_e	9	11	50_e
Social Support																		
No Attention	5	5	31_b	15	15	19_b	5	5	6_b	7	4	41_f	8	11	18_f	4	4	22_f
Neg. Attention	4	2	24_c	1	5	2_c	4	2	25_c	1	1	6_g	1	3	2_g	3	1	17_g
Lawlessness	6	6	8_d	2	4	4_d	1	1	6_d	3	1	18_d	1	3	2_d	2	1	11_d

Note. $n_a = 40$. $n_b = 25$. $n_c = 9$. $n_d = 6$. $n_e = 50$. $n_f = 19$. $n_g = 5$.
O = Observed frequencies. E = Expected frequencies. % = percent of relationship category

Table 5

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Themes as a Function of Gender and Perspective

	Victim Perspective						Perpetrator Perspective					
	Male			Female			Male			Female		
Themes	O	E	%$_a$	O	E	%$_a$	O	E	%$_c$	O	E	%$_d$
No Relationship Integrity	21	25	42	27	24	56	31	35	60	32	29	74
Social Support Withdrawal												
Lack of Attention	12	15	24	17	14	35	14	12	27	7	10	16
Negative Attention	10	7	20	3	6	6	3	3	6	2	2	5
Lawlessness	7	4	14	1	4	2	4	3	8	2	3	5

Note. $n_a = 50$. $n_b = 48$. $n_c = 52$.
O = Observed frequencies. E = Expected frequencies. % = percent of gender.

He turned against me and treated me like dirt and trash.

My dad was an alcoholic and wasn't easy to live with.

The last three or four years he was drunk, he made advances at my daughters.

Every time, I get a boyfriend, my sister slides in to get him.

My wife lied to me a lot.

My best friend moved someone into my apartment against my wishes. [manipulation]

In addition, due to the circumstances surrounding many incidents of infidelity or sexual relationships, these incidents also demonstrated a degree of risk-taking. Some instances of risk-taking included:

Had an affair with my employer's spouse.

Had sexual intercourse with girlfriend's husband in exchange for drugs.

I slept with my sister's boyfriend and had his child.

Taking out my wife's cousin.

My best friend's girlfriend ask me to go out with her and I did so we went to the movies and he was there.

My wife had an affair with my best friend.

Betrayed my wife by having affair with neighbor.

Wife got drunk and had sex with a friend.

Withholding Social Support

Respondents also described a time in which social support of some time was lacking. This theme consisted of two subthemes: Withdrawal of Social Support and Negative Attention. A withdrawal of social support was characterized by incidents in which social support was removed, such as abandonment, neglect, or a general lack of attention. The

second subtheme, Negative Attention, describes a more overt breach of social support, characterized by acts that were purposefully hurtful. Slightly more victims (n = 29; 29%) than perpetrators (n = 22; 23%) described an incident where social support was taken away. Similarly, more victims (n = 13; 13%) than perpetrators reported betrayals that were overtly hurtful (n = 5; 5%). Examples of a lack of social support include:

> My real parents ran off and left my brother and four sisters and myself, they never did come back. [victim]
>
> Divorce. [victim]
>
> My wife changed her mind about sex. [victim]
>
> My husband said he was leaving. [victim]
>
> Best friend dropped me for another friend. [victim]
>
> My wife was dying of Fredrics ataxia and she wanted me to put her to sleep with an overdose of insulin but I would not so she went into a nursing home and died alone. It was desertion on my part. [perpetrator]
>
> Left wife moved in with another woman. [perpetrator]
>
> I abandoned a very good friend who moved to CA with me. [perpetrator]
>
> Failed to visit because of closer relationship with friend. [perpetrator]
>
> Quit seeing him without reason. [perpetrator]

Examples of Negative Attention include:

> One friend offered me a job and another friend that worked with him told him behind my back that I didn't want it. [victim]
>
> I was provoked into a quarrel. [victim]
>
> One night when I was playing pool a person kept making remarks about my performance. [victim]

Told lies about my family and their background. [perpetrator]

Kept calling the person and pushed her to her limit. [perpetrator]

Two people were friends. I met one and already knew the other. I became jealous of their relationship. [perpetrator]

I hit some patient or person. [perpetrator]

A lack of social support did not significantly vary as a function of the relationship to the perpetrator, $\chi^2(2, N = 80) = .04$, *n.s.*, or victim, $\chi^2(2, N = 80) = 3.79$, *n.s.* Negative attention also did not vary significantly vary as a function of the relationship to the perpetrator, $\chi^2(2, N = 80) = 4.58$, *n.s.*, $\chi^2(2, N = 80) = 9.51$, *n.s.* (see Table 4).

Chi-square analysis revealed that a greater proportion of younger respondents (aged 35 years and younger) than expected reported a time in which social support was removed, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 3.72$, $p = .05$, though the effect size was small (Cramer's V = .05). However, a withdrawal of social support did not significantly vary as a function of age for perpetrators, $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = .66$, *n.s.*

Approaching significance, a greater proportion of younger respondents (35 years and younger) than expected reported that they demonstrated negative attention, $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = 3.68$, $p = .06$, though, due to small cell sizes, the assumption of adequate cell sizes was violated. No age differences were found as a function of betrayal characterized as negative attention for victims, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = .12$, *n.s.*

Further analysis indicated that more males than expected reported being betrayed by an act of negative attention, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 4.02$, $p < .05$, with a moderate effect size (Cramer's V = .20). Negative attention reported by perpetrators did not vary as a function of gender, $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = .06$, *n.s.* In addition, fewer respondents than expected reported

that the relationship worsened (rather than staying the same) following negative attention, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = 4.03, p = .05$. From either perspective, a withdrawal of social support did not significantly vary as a function of gender, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 1.53$, *n.s.* (victim), $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = 1.55$, *n.s.* (perpetrator) (see Table 5).

Lawlessness

Incidents characterized as Lawlessness included incidents such as breaking the law or rules, illegal drug use, or sexual abuse. Clearly, several of these incidents (e.g., sexual abuse) also could be considered a breach of relationship ethics. Due to the scarcity of incidents such as sexual abuse, they were distinguished from the incidents that breached relationship ethics without breaking the law (e.g., deceit). Examples of this theme include:

When someone stole from me. [victim]

I was contracting janitor work from my employer and he didn't pay me. [victim]

My second husband . . . he had sexual play with his daughters at three and four years old. [victim]

Sexual abuse by grandfather. [perpetrator]

Taking tuition money and buying drugs. [perpetrator]

Brought boyfriend home for weekend when parents were away. [perpetrator]

Pawned (borrowed) for money a close friend's personal things. [perpetrator]

Acts of lawlessness did not significantly vary as a function of the relationship to the perpetrator, $\chi^2(2, N = 80) = .04$, *n.s.*, or victim, $\chi^2(2, N = 80) = 4.66$, *n.s.* (see Table 4).

Chi-square analysis indicated that a greater proportion of males than expected reported being victimized by an act of lawlessness, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 4.64, p < .05$, though, due to small cell sizes, the assumption of adequate cell sizes was violated. Lawless did not

significantly vary as a function of gender for perpetrators, $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = .54$, *n.s.* (see Table 5). For both victims and perpetrators, lawlessness did not significantly vary as a function of age, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 2.07$, *n.s.* (victim), $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = .16$, *n.s.*

Some respondents also described acts of betrayal that may have occurred due to a lapse of judgment or discernment within their relationships. These narratives include incidents where they appeared to be manipulated. Examples of these narratives included:

My brother sold my car and all household goods.

When $10,000 disappeared and my Cadillac was sold.

While I was on a trip to California a friend used $500 of long distance telephone.

My best friend moved someone into my apartment against my wishes.

Someone with whom I lived with for 6 months fraudulently withdrew the balance of my bank account and prevented my re-entry into our apartment.

Quantitative Analysis

Variables including the type of relationship involved in the incident (i.e., romantic partner, family members, or friends) and how the incident affected their relationship were examined. Based on the respondents' written response to how the betrayal changed their relationship, the response was coded as either *relationship improved*, *relationship stayed the same*, or *relationship worsened.* Comparisons of the various types of betrayal were made also between the victim's and perpetrator's gender and age.

Victim Accounts

Table 6 displays the frequencies of betrayal as a function of their relationship to the perpetrator. Overall, respondents reported betrayals by their romantic partners most frequently (50%), followed by their friends (18%), and family members (18%). Most victims (88%) reported that their relationship with the perpetrator worsened following the betrayal.

Age and gender differences. Respondents were divided at the mean into one of two age groups, 35 years and younger or 36 years of age and older. A chi-square test of homogeneity revealed no significant differences between age groups, χ^2 (2, N = 85) = 1.06, *n.s.*, or gender, χ^2(2, N = 84) = 2.97, *n.s.*, as a function of who betrayed them.

In order to avoid violating the basic chi-square assumption that no cell will have an expected count less than five (Ott, 1993), two of the categories for relationship change (i.e., "remained the same" and "improved") were combined. As shown in Table 7, a chi-square test of homogeneity indicated a significant difference in the proportion of men and women as a function of their perceived relationship change (i.e., relationship remained the same/improved or worsened) following the betrayal, χ^2(1, N = 103) = 5.49, $p < .05$, with a fairly small effect size (Cramer's V = .02). Comparisons of the observed and expected frequencies revealed that (a) a greater proportion of males than females reported the relationship remained the same or improved (rather than worsening) following the betrayal and (b) a greater proportion of females than males reported that the relationship worsened following the betrayal.

Table 6

Frequencies of Betrayal as a Function of Relationship Type and Perspective

Variables	Victim		Perpetrator	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Relationship				
Romantic Partner	50.0	58.1%$_a$	48.0	56.5%$_b$
Parent/Sibling	18.0	20.9%$_a$	18.0	21.2%$_b$
Friend	18.0	20.9%$_a$	19.0	22.4%$_b$
Effect of Betrayal				
Improved	2.0	1.9%$_c$	5.0	5.0%$_d$
Same	11.0	10.6%$_c$	19.0	19.0%$_d$
Worse	91.0	87.5%$_c$	76.0	76.0%$_d$

Note. $n_a = 86$. $n_b = 85$. $n_c = 104$. $n_d = 100$.

Table 7

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Change in Relationship as a Function of Gender and Perspective

Variables	Victim			Perpetrator		
	Observed	Expected	Percent	Observed	Expected	Percent[b]
Effect of Betrayal						
Improved/Same						
Men	11.0	7.1	19.6%[a]	11.0	12.6	21.2%[c]
Women	2.0	5.9	4.3%[b]	13.0	11.4	27.7%[b]
Worse						
Men	45.0	48.9	80.4%[a]	41.0	39.4	78.8%[c]
Women	45.0	41.1	95.7%[b]	34.0	35.6	72.3%[b]

Note. Percent = percent within gender
n_a= 56. n_b = 47. n_c = 52.

Perpetrator Accounts

Overall, respondents reported they were most likely to betray their romantic partners (57%), followed by their friends (22%). Most perpetrators (76%) reported that their relationship worsened following the betrayal (see Table 6).

Age and gender differences. No significant differences were found in the proportion of perpetrator relationships (e.g., spouse, parent) as a function of age group, $\chi^2(2, N = 84) = .77$, *n.s.*, or gender, $\chi^2(2, N = 84) = .59$, *n.s.* Also, no significant differences were found between age groups, $\chi^2(1, N = 99) = .74$, *n.s.*, or gender, $\chi^2(1, N = 99) = .57$, *n.s.*, as a function of the perceived relationship change following betrayal (see Table 7).

CHAPTER VIII

DISCUSSION

The examination of both the non-psychiatric and psychiatric data revealed that betrayals consist of a breach of three types of expectations. Within relationships, expectations exist that those closest to us will (a) maintain the principles of the relationship, including honesty and thoughtfulness (i.e., trust); (b) provide emotional and physical support, free of embarrassment or humiliation (i.e., social support); and (c) behave respectfully in the best interest of society (i.e., standards of conduct). When one or more of these expectations have been breached, a betrayal has occurred.

Betrayal Conceptualized

These studies provide evidence consistent with previous observations that all betrayals share a common quality—an intentional breach of trust and commitment—as well as a violation of relational expectations (i.e., *rules* of the relationship) (Couch, Jones, & Moore, 1999; Jones & Burdette, 1994). Thus, a breach of relational expectations appears to be a consistent factor underlying almost all accounts of betrayal.

Violation of Trust

Many of the non-clinical respondents reported that their relationship was either temporarily or permanently weakened by some breach of trust—by either a romantic partner's lack of integrity or a family member's act of carelessness. The degree of

intentionality appeared to be a distinguishing factor between these breaches of trust. Acts that demonstrate a lack of integrity (e.g., deceit, infidelity) suggest the perpetrator intentionally breached the integrity of the relationship. In contrast, acts of carelessness appeared to be thoughtless yet accidental in nature.

According to the clinical respondents, neither victims nor perpetrators were involved in acts of carelessness. This discrepancy across samples may be due to demographic differences. The clinical respondents tended to be older, living independently (e.g., not necessarily living with roommates), and further removed from their immediate families (e.g., not driving parent's car or borrowing items from parents) than the non-clinical respondents. Therefore, the non-clinical sample may have had greater opportunities to lose or ruin objects belonging to others (especially family members).

Though infidelity is also a commonly reported betrayal for respondents without a history of mental illness (e.g., Jones & Burdette, 1994), clinical respondents described instances of infidelity that were characterized by a high degree of risk-taking behavior. For instance, clinical respondents reported perpetrating infidelity with their best friend's spouse, sibling's partner, wife's cousin, employee's spouse, a complete stranger, and so on. Though all infidelities involve risk-taking, it appeared that the aforementioned instances involved a heightened degree of risk-taking due to their relationship with whom they committed the betrayal.

Withholding Social Support

The term *social support* often refers to the availability of individuals to care for, value, and love one another (Sarason & Sarason, 1984). Respondents from both studies

reported incidents in which social support was either directly or indirectly breached. An indirect breach of support was illustrated by neglect or abandonment, while a more direct breach of social support was illustrated by incidents in which the perpetrator demonstrated overtly negative behavior (e.g., offensive behavior).

Stroebe and Stroebe (1986) emphasized the importance of social support systems by stating that these systems are most acutely perceived when absent. Furthermore, these authors delineated several types of social support and the subsequent impact these supports have on the recipient. Closely resembling Stroebe and Stroebe's (1986) typologies of social support—Validation, Companionship, and Social Identity Support—respondents in the present study described instances in which members of their social support network no longer offered confirmation of their love, commitment, or self-worth. Similar to betrayals causing a self-state transformation (Flanigan, 1992), this loss of social support may compel the victim to reevaluate assumptions about loving and being loved.

Breach of Conduct

Respondents reported many instances that were representative of the expectation that respect and lawfulness should exist in all interpersonal relationships. This finding reflects societal expectations regarding how we act towards each other—the expectations between intimate relationship partners (e.g., parents, friends, spouses) being the most important. Respondents described breaches of the fundamental expectations that others will adhere to basic social etiquette and law—that is, they expected to not be hit or otherwise demeaned, and they expected that others will not break the law. Though these rules may not be stated explicitly, they constitute the basis of all relationships; relationship maintenance is based

often on the perceptions of exchange, equity, and fairness (Wright, 1999). According to all respondents, when one relationship partner disregarded, was unable to uphold, or failed to recognize the rules of the relationship, a betrayal had occurred.

Like the non-clinical sample, several narratives from clinical respondents emphasized acts of lawlessness. However, unlike the non-clinical narratives, several clinical victim accounts portrayed a potential lapse of judgment that may have increased their vulnerability to deception and treachery. While not proposing these victims are directly responsible for their victimization, their lapse of judgment implied an inability to detect manipulation, which may have increased their vulnerability to betrayal. For instance, several cases of grand theft were reported—$10,000 "disappeared," a car was sold, an entire balance of bank account was withdrawn, all household items sold, someone created a $500 phone bill in their name, and so on. The majority of these betrayals were perpetrated by individuals close to them. Therefore, perpetrators were trusted to be in the homes of victims (e.g., be in close access to banking codes, have easy entry to residences) before committing acts of theft. Based on previous empirical studies of betrayal (e.g., Jones & Burdette, 1994), as well as evidence from Study 1, these acts against individuals appear atypical of most and may indicate a lack of discernment within their interpersonal relationships. As an alternative explanation, these unusual betrayals may be experienced primarily by older respondents (i.e., clinical respondents) who may have had a broader array of life events. Furthermore, though not measured in this study, the community clinic patients may come from a lower socioeconomic level than the university students. If this

was the case, a greater likelihood existed that the clinical respondents, rather than the college students, were exposed to individuals who perpetrate these types of theft.

Factors Influencing Perception of Betrayal

Several variables were examined as possible influences on perceptions of betrayal, including demographic differences, types of relationships, outcome of relationships, forgiveness, and mental illness.

Gender

Consistent with previous research (e.g., Metts, 1994), males and females differed on the types of betrayals they reported as well as the effect that betrayal had on their relationship. For instance, though the effect size was small, more women than men reported acts violating the integrity of the relationship. Though popular belief is that men perpetrate more infidelity than women, previous research found that women report betrayals involving extramarital affairs—as victims and perpetrators—more frequently than any other single type of offense (Jones & Burdette, 1994). Additionally, women were more likely than men to feel betrayed by a violation of confidence or promises (Metts, 1994). In the present study, threatening the integrity of the relationship included serious transgressions, such as infidelity, as well as broken promises, lying, and revealing secrets. Therefore, to the extent that women reported these various acts of deceit, the finding is consistent with previous research.

Women also were less likely to report perpetrating careless acts rather than acts violating the integrity of the relationship. This divergence may suggest that women did not

assess acts of carelessness as men did—men and women may define such betrayal differently. For instance, more men than women reported that they "crashed a car," thus betraying the owner of the vehicle. An accidental or unintentional act may not, according to women, constitute a betrayal.

In addition, women tended to report that their relationship worsened following an incident of betrayal, while men reported their relationship stayed the same.

Type of Relationship

In support of previous findings (Jones & Burdette, 1994; Jones et al., 1991), most respondents reported an experience of betrayal involving a romantic partner or family member. The type of relationship the respondent most likely described was related to the type of reported betrayal and the perspective of victim versus perpetrator. From the victim's perspective, respondents tended to report that more family members or friends than romantic partners showed a lack of attention or negative attention or behaved carelessly. Conversely, victims reported that more romantic partners had breached the trust of the relationship and, more specifically, demonstrated a lack of relational integrity. From the perpetrator's perspective, more respondents reported they demonstrated a lack of integrity or respect towards, as well as neglect of their romantic partners. However, perpetrators reported they perpetrated more acts of lawlessness directed towards their family members rather than romantic partners or friends. Therefore, there appears to be a discrepancy between victim and perpetrator perspectives regarding social support: Victims were less likely to describe losing the social support (e.g., being abandoned) of a romantic partner, while perpetrators were more likely to describe withdrawing social support from a

romantic partner. This contradiction may imply that victims were less likely to admit being abandoned or neglected by a romantic partner due to the negative stigma that may be associated with such an incident.

Relationship Change and Forgiveness

Researchers have suggested several factors that may contribute to an individual's decision to forgive. The factors include whether an apology was given (Moore, 1997), the type of relationship involved (Jones & Burdette, 1994), the effect the betrayal had on the relationship (Couch, Jones, & Moore, 1999), and the type of betrayal. Overall, the present study revealed that, following betrayal, relationships reportedly improved when forgiveness was offered and worsened when it was withheld. This is consistent with previous studies (e.g., Hope, 1987) that show the tendency to forgive is associated with positive outcomes. However, this study also revealed that, although relationships reportedly worsened following a breach of conduct (a lack of respect for individuals or the law), forgiveness was offered in most cases. Moreover, both victims and perpetrators reported their relationship worsened following a breach of trust (including incidents lacking integrity), which may be associated with their tendency to forgive; forgiveness often was withheld following these breaches of trust, which may have influenced the perceived decrease in relationship quality.

Several other respondents reported *pseudo-forgiveness*—the qualified offering of forgiveness. Examples of accounts demonstrating pseudo-forgiveness include:

I forgave, but I don't trust him blindly anymore.

I have forgiven, but not forgotten.

I forgave him to an extent.

I forgave, but our relationship will never be the same.

Based on betrayal outcomes, *pseudo*-forgiveness appears distinct from *true*-forgiveness because respondents who qualified their forgiveness also reported that their relationship worsened following the betrayal.

Assessment of voluntary (i.e., with romantic partners or friends) versus involuntary (i.e., with family members) relationships revealed that forgiveness is most likely offered in involuntary relationships. This finding may imply that individuals feel a sense of obligation to forgive family members since there is no literal method of termination (other than abandonment).

Evolutionary theorists propose that individuals are more likely to demonstrate altruistic behavior towards others who are genetically similar to them (i.e., relatives) (Wright, 1999). To ensure family genes are represented in future generations, it may be in the individual's best interest to promote cooperation and affiliation among their relatives. From this perspective, individuals may be more ready to forgive family members rather than friends or romantic partners.

Age Differences

The results revealed that a greater proportion of younger respondents (18 years and younger) reported acts breaching integrity rather than older respondents (19 years and older). Though the evidence might be limited by a lack of age variability, this finding is not consistent with previous research. For instance, Jones and Burdette (1994) found that

older respondents reported similar betrayals to that of younger respondents. Therefore, more research is needed to explore the relationship between age and betrayal.

Mental Illness

No design was in place to directly compare the samples of betrayal narratives (i.e., demographics and instruments differed), so differences in the categories of narratives across samples warrants further research. Previous research has indicated that mental disorders, such as the ones suffered by these mental health respondents, often are considered psychosocial disorders due to their psychological and social consequences (Segrin, 1998). Researchers (Erickson, Beiser, Iacono, Fleming, & Lin, 1989; Lively, Friedrich, & Buckwalter, 1995) have found that schizophrenic patients tend to have a limited social support system characterized by few close friends, less closeness, and increased conflict among family members. Similarly, depressed individuals exhibit disrupted social skills (e.g., increased self-focus) and often are involved in low quality, disrupted relationships characterized by low levels of intimacy and influence (Hinchliffe, Hooper, & Roberts, 1978; Nezlek, Imbrie, & Shean, 1994). According to Segrin (1998), depressed individuals with poor social skills have difficulty averting negative social outcomes due to their inability to establish long-term and rewarding relationships. Furthermore, they tend to be vulnerable to interpersonal rejection (Elliott, MacNair, Herrick, Yoder, & Byrne, 1991).

Thus, individuals diagnosed with personality disorders varying in symptoms may have problems with interpersonal relationships in common (Segrin, 1998). Whether the disorder predated their relationship disruption is yet to be properly determined. However, it is

likely their mental health problems and disruptive relational patterns negatively impact each other.

Limitations and Future Directions

Some limitations existed within these present studies, including reliability methodology, quality of evidence (i.e., quality of written narratives), and design restraints. However, these restrictions provide direction for future research.

Reliability

Since qualitative analysis relies on the interpretation of the researcher, qualitative researchers traditionally have faced issues concerning how their work is to be evaluated. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) explained that qualitative analysis is "endlessly creative and interpretative" and both "artful and political (p. 15)." They further expressed that there is no "one interpretative truth . . . there are multiple interpretative communities, each having its own criteria for evaluating an interpretation (p. 15)". Field work, of any kind, tends to be dependent on one person's perception at a given point in time. Punch (1994) asserted that this is the fundamental difference between qualitative analysis and more formal methods of assessment, thus making reliability more difficult to assess.

To demonstrate that the themes identified in this study were not purely idiosyncratic, multiple raters were used to re-code portions of the data. For both levels of coding (Level 1 and Level 2), the results revealed acceptable reliability coefficients. Due to the limited amount of inference needed to assign Level 1 codes (e.g., *cheated on wife* was coded as *cheated*), high reliability coefficients were expected. However, when assessing Level 2

codes, the inter-rater reliability decreased. There are several possible explanations for this decrease in reliability, such as (a) the raters were only given a subsection of the data and did not have the benefit of seeing how all the narratives related to each other (there were over 700 narratives including both perspectives), (b) the raters received no prior training on qualitative data methodology, (c) not every rater was experienced in studying interpersonal relationships, and (d) a weak code emerged. To elaborate on the final possible explanation, the reduction in reliability may have been caused by a "weak" code—that is, two codes that raters had difficulty differentiating existed. Upon closer inspection, it appeared that raters had difficulty identifying differences between a *Lack of Relationship Integrity* and a *Lack of Interpersonal Respect*. The narratives that originally were coded as a *Lack of Interpersonal Respect* were intended to communicate that societal expectations (rather than just interpersonal expectations) were breached. Arguably, a breach of societal expectations also constitute a breach of integrity.

Researchers have proposed that traditional measures of reliability may be problematic for qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Though inter-rater reliability was successfully utilized in this research, Morse (1994) asserted that using other raters to affirm codes may violate the process of induction, since the original researcher has a bank of knowledge based on all the narrative accounts—knowledge that a second rater does not have. Furthermore, since the induction process involves linking several categories, one cannot expect another investigator to have the same insight from a limited portion of the data (Morse, 1994). Smith (1986) suggested that providing raters with the opportunity for

group discussion along with the coding process will prove to be a more effective method of assessing reliability.

Quality of Evidence

Qualitative researchers rely on respondents' perceptions or accounts of situations and events. In this regard, the qualitative researcher depends on the respondent to provide an unbiased and accurate report of their experience. Since the betrayal narratives could not be verified (e.g., Was an apology really given? Did you actually seek forgiveness?), the narrative remained embedded in the perceptual world of the respondent. In addition, respondents may have been reluctant to honestly describe experiences of betrayal that potentially carried a negative stigma (e.g., abandonment, physical or sexual abuse).

The quality of evidence also was determined by the length or depth of responses. Due to the restraints of the questionnaires (e.g., the amount of writing space provided) most accounts did not exceed one sentence and very few exceeded two or three sentences. For future research, expanding on the categories delineated in this project would be important for developing a true understanding of betrayal and the complicated relationship between victims and perpetrators. The use of more extensive narratives would provide valuable insight into the betrayal process. Extended narratives should include inquiries such as (a) respondents' definition of betrayal, (b) descriptions of the condition the relationship was in prior to betrayal, (c) perceptions regarding the severity of the incident, (d) efforts to cope with betrayal, and (e) the use of forgiveness, if it is used at all.

Due to the wording of the questions posed on the questionnaires as well as the resulting brevity of responses, respondents did not elaborate on their intentions from the

perpetrator perspective or on the perceived motives of their perpetrators from the victim perspective. Therefore, an assumption of intention was assumed for all betrayals—that is, all betrayals (e.g., infidelity, deceit, public embarrassment, law breaking) were assumed intentional unless otherwise specified. Acts of carelessness that were described as accidental (e.g., car accident, accidentally ruined object) were assumed to be unintentional. I recommend that future research efforts explore the motives of each betrayal, from the victim and perpetrator perspective, to better differentiate types of betrayal.

Furthermore, the quality of evidence became especially salient when examining written narratives of the clinical respondents. Several descriptions of betrayal were noticeably disjointed and incoherent possibly providing evidence that these narratives were written by respondents with disordered thinking; examples include:

> As early as my fourteenth year, trust and blind faith was our greatest strength when a friend of 20 years had made off in the night as a thief with us.
>
> We were attempt a reconciliation of our marriage vows.
>
> And then his said to be wife which was mental. I'll after seven years call the police and her family.
>
> I went back to a bar to shoot a friend of mine. We had an argument and she jump with an ice pick and went to stab me.
>
> Brother took me to the cleaners financial.
>
> Friend promised and I didn't answer request for some time.
>
> Instead rode by with another woman and didn't come back till late that evening.
>
> A real close friend of mine didn't accept my non-acceptance of her words and actions.

My friend Debbie told the church me and I had her in confidence.

Due to their disorganization, some narratives were considered non-interpretable and dismissed from the study.

Design Restraints

Due to design restraints consisting of non-identical questionnaires and demographic differences, this study was unable to make direct comparisons of betrayal descriptions across the samples. Examining two samples that vary on one major characteristic only (e.g., mental health diagnosis), using identical measures of betrayal, would be a valuable extension of these present studies. Further research is needed across age groups since the lack of age variability was a limitation of this study. Examining betrayal experiences across the life-span would allow researchers to examine how experiences of betrayal change according to age and maturity.

Additionally, the questionnaire used for Study 1 asked the respondents to respond to a time in which "forgiveness was offered" and a time in which "forgiveness was sought." The use of the word forgiveness in these questions may have been inherently biasing. Respondents may have reported only incidents in which forgiveness was involved (either actively offered or withheld). Therefore, betrayals in which forgiveness was never considered may have not been represented. The tendency to forgive was associated with the perception that the relationship improved following the betrayal.

Data Management

Due to the large number of narratives analyzed in these studies, NUD*IST 4.0 (Non-numerical Unstructured Data* Indexing Searching and Theorizing, Version 4) software

was used to help manage and analyze the data. NUD*IST has two main features: (a) a document system that holds all the textual data (i.e., written narratives) and (b) an index system that stores all the codes and allows them to be organized and manipulated. Use of this software can facilitate thematic comparisons as well as the copying or merging data. In addition, data coded in NUD*IST can be imported directly into a statistical software package (i.e., SPSS) and merged with quantitative variables. Though a very useful tool, there are some limitations to its utility in data analysis. Before using NUD*IST, the researcher must be very familiar with the rules and methods inherent to the software. For instance, unlike word processing programs, the researcher cannot "undo" a previous command. Therefore, data must be cautiously manipulated. However, a more updated version of NUD*IST recently has been released, so this aforementioned issue may be resolved.

Implications

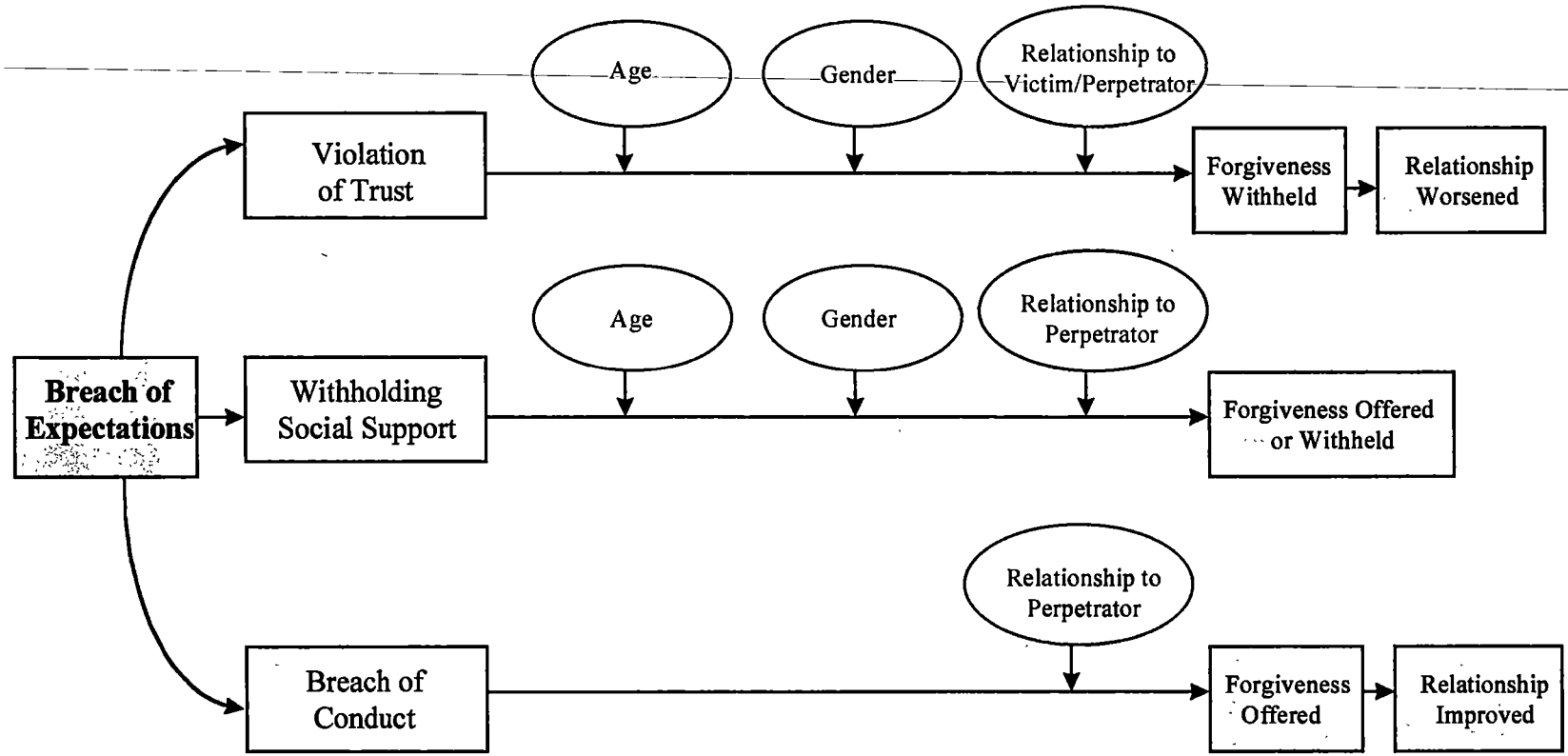
Previous researchers have conceptualized betrayal as a serious violation of the norms and expectations of a relationship (e.g., Jones & Burdette, 1994; Flanigan, 1992). Expectations constitute the "rules" of the relationship (e.g., monogamy, emotional support), serve as the foundation for trust within the relationship, and help to maintain the intimacy and cohesiveness of relational partners. As a relationship grows, expectations are developed based on socially communicated norms and unique understandings arising from the interactions of relationship partners. Though researchers (Jones & Burdette, 1994) have distinguished between general (e.g., support, responsiveness, lack of abuse) and

specific (e.g., coming home for dinner on time) expectations, researchers have yet to identify the specific expectations breached in betrayal as well as additional variables that influence types of betrayal and how betrayal affects relationships.

According to the results of these studies, expectations concerning trust, social support, and conduct exist in all relationships. When these expectations are breached, betrayal has occurred. However, betrayals vary in severity and in their subsequent impact on relationships. The tendency towards forgiveness, or lack thereof, may provide an indication of betrayal severity—violations of interpersonal trust (e.g., infidelity, deceit) appeared more difficult to forgive than breaches of societal expectations (e.g., breaking the law). Moreover, forgiveness affected how particular betrayals were perceived. Incidents in which forgiveness was offered resulted in the perception that the relationship improved; the opposite was true when forgiveness was withheld.

Further, these breaches of expectations should be examined in the context of (a) the relationship in which they occur and (b) demographic characteristics. The perpetrators' relationships to their victims was related to every type of betrayal. In addition, the types of betrayal reported and whether forgiveness was offered may be mediated by the respondents' age and gender. This conceptualization of betrayal is demonstrated in Figure 7. Therefore, these studies extend previous findings by specifying the ways in which expectations are violated across different relationships and demographic characteristics and how particular betrayals may or may not lead to forgiveness.

Figure 7. Conceptualization of betrayal and mediating variables.


Age
Gender
Relationship to Victim/Perpetrator
Violation of Trust
Forgiveness Withheld
Relationship Worsened
Age
Gender
Relationship to Perpetrator
Breach of Expectations
Withholding Social Support
Forgiveness Offered or Withheld
Relationship to Perpetrator
Breach of Conduct
Forgiveness Offered
Relationship Improved

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Betrayal/Forgiveness Narrative Form

APPENDIX A

Betrayal/Forgiveness Narrative Form

☐ Male ☐ Female Your Age _____

Directions: Please consider the following questions in the context of important and on-going relationships only (e.g., parent, romantic partner, friend, sibling, neighbor, spouse, etc.)

SOMEONE FORGIVING YOU

1. Briefly describe the most significant or important instance in your life when you sought forgiveness from one of your relationship partners (i.e., what had you done to need forgiveness):

2. Did you apologize, If so, briefly describe:

If not by apology, how did you seek forgiveness:

3. What was your relationship to the person whose forgiveness you sought (e.g., mother, same gender friend, roommate, romantic partner):

4. How did your effort to be forgiven change or influence your relationship with this person, if at all:

5. In your opinion, did your effort lead the other person to forgive you:

6. How did you know whether the person forgave you or not:

YOU FORGIVING SOMEONE

1. Briefly describe the most significant or important instance in your life when a relationship partner sought your forgiveness (i.e., what had they done to need forgiveness):

2. Did they apologize, If so, briefly describe:

If not by apology, how did they seek forgiveness:

3. What was your relationship to the person seeking forgiveness (e.g., mother, same gender friend, roommate, romantic partner):

4. How did their effort to be forgiven change or influence your relationship with this person, if at all:

5. Did you forgive the person who sought your forgiveness:

6. How does he/she know whether or not you forgave him or her:

APPENDIX B

Clinical Betrayal Narrative Form

APPENDIX B

Clinical Betrayal Narrative Form

People often betray interpersonal relationship to a greater or lesser degree by their words or actions. Betraying a confidence, having an affair, or lying to someone would be acts that might be considered examples of this kind of deception in a relationship. Think about an incident in your life that you consider your greatest act of interpersonal betrayal. This might involve a spouse, family member, significant other or close friend. Keeping this incident in mind, please answer the following questions:

1. Briefly describe the incident_____

   _____

2. What was your relationship with the person involved?

   (If friend, please indicate gender)_____

3. How long ago did this occur?_____

4. What were your reasons for doing this?_____

   _____

5. Did this person become aware that he or she was betrayed? _____ Yes____No

6. How did this incident affect your relationship with this person?_____

   _____

Sometimes we are betrayed by someone in our interpersonal lives. Some person that we trust deceives us by their words or actions. Think about a time when you felt the most betrayed in an interpersonal relationship. Keeping this incident in mind, please answer the following questions:

1. Briefly describe the incident_____

   _____

2. What was your relationship with the person involved?

   (If friend, please indicate gender)_____

3. How long ago did this occur?_____

4. Why do you think he or she did this?_____

   _____

5. How did this incident affect your relationship with this person?_____

   _____

   _____

VITA

Ariane Kim Schratter was born in Basel, Switzerland on March 28, 1970. She graduated in May, 1991 from the California State University, Sonoma with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. In August, 1996 she earned her Master of Arts Degree in Psychology from the California State University, Sacramento. Ariane then attended the University of Tennessee and received her doctorate in Psychology in December, 2000. Currently, Ariane is a visiting instructor at Maryville College and resides with her husband, Adam, in Knoxville, Tennessee.