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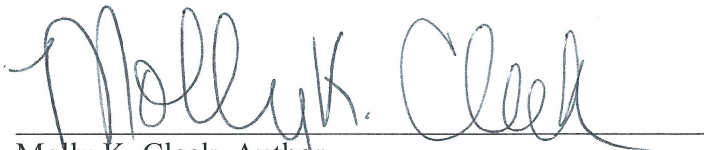
Emotional Responses to Varying Sources of Interpersonal Rejection

By


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Abstract

Baumeister and Leary (1995) propose with their Need to Belong Theory that negative affect would occur upon the disruption of an existing or even potential social connection. The present paper presents two studies that sought to resolve past contradictory research by examining how rejection by various sources (romantic partners, family members, close friends, or strangers) impact the rejectee's emotional responses. The first study, which used a recalled memory of rejection, yielded no significant differences in mood, need to belong, threat to the four fundamental needs, or state self-esteem for the different sources. However, the second study, which used imagined scenarios, found that the source of rejection had a significant effect on the rejectee's levels of hurt feelings, sadness, and perceived level of rejection, indicating that the effects of rejection are influenced by the relationship people have with their rejecters. This has many implications on how we understand relational dynamics and rejection.

Keywords: Social rejection, social acceptance, interpersonal relationships, need to belong, emotional response

Emotional Responses to Varying Sources of Interpersonal Rejection

Human beings are inherently social creatures. One of the first researchers to discuss the extreme importance of functional social connections was Maslow (1943). In his paper on human motivation, Maslow discussed a hierarchy of basic human needs. After physiological and safety needs, he believed the next most essential category to be what he titled the love needs, which included, in addition to love, affection and belongingness; that is, people will strive to find a place of belonging with others (Maslow, 1943). This notion was expanded upon by Baumeister and Leary (1995), who explored the idea that belonging was a definitive need as opposed to a mere desire. If this were true, they asserted, a lack of belongingness would result in negative effects in multiple facets, such as mood and health, that were substantial and long term and not simply temporary (Baumeister & Leary). Moreover, Baumeister and Leary believed this need to belong would drive emotional responses relating directly to a social interaction such that positive affect would stem from the formation of relationships and negative affect would occur upon the disruption of an existing or even potential social connection.

Deci and Ryan (2000) also discussed the concept that human connection is an integral part of life comes in their Self-determination theory (SDT). Made up of competency, autonomy, and relatedness, the theory seeks to explain human motivation. It is the relatedness factor in particular that illustrates this need for connection. Relatedness is defined by Deci and Ryan as the desire for social connection. SDT finds that relatedness is an integral part of intrinsic motivation, adoption of values, and overall well-being (Deci & Ryan). Because much research has found connectedness to be an important part of our lives, the idea that a loss of this connection is detrimental has been supported in a variety of research. For instance, a meta-analysis by Blackhart, Nelson, Knowles, and Baumeister, (2009) evaluated the results of 192

articles focusing on social rejection and acceptance found that being accepted leads to an increase in positive mood as well as a slight increase in self-esteem.

Equally, rejection leads to many changes in mood and emotion (Allen, de la Horne, & Trinder, 1996; Besser & Priel, 2009; Blackhart et al, 2009; Buckley, Winkel & Leary, 2004; Craighead, Kimball, & Rehak, 1979). This often includes an increase in negative emotions such as anger, sadness, and hurt feelings (Besser & Priel, 2009, Blackhart et al, 2009; Buckley, Winkel & Leary, 2004). Specifically, Besser and Priel (2009) found that levels of rejection, self-esteem, and pride were lower after participants imagined a rejection scenario, whereas levels of dysphoria, anger, hostility, and even somatic symptoms were significantly higher. Anxiety, too, has been found to increase after rejection (Baumeister & Tice, 1990; Besser & Priel, 2009). Other health factors, such as decreased immune system functioning (Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 1984; Cassel, 1976), increases in blood pressure (Sommer, Kirkland, Newman, Estrella, & Andreassi, 2009), tuberculosis, schizophrenia, death by suicide (Cassel 1976), and a high rate of involvement in accidents (Cassel, 1976; Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978) have been related to social rejection. Social rejection, it would seem, is therefore detrimental to a person's well-being.

Although most researchers accept that being rejected has a negative emotional impact, little research has been done to determine how the source of the rejection might impact the rejectee's emotional response. Some in the field have investigated the differences in the bonds that are formed in different types of relationships. Berscheid, Snyder, and Omoto (1989) indicate that the level of interdependence in the relationship will have an impact on perceived level of closeness; that is, the more our lives are intertwined with someone on a day to day basis, the more importance we give to the relationship. In that study, respondents identified romantic relationships as their most important relationships, most often followed by close friends and then

family (Berscheid et al., 1989). Baumeister and Leary (1995) suggested that an interaction with a stranger would not result in the same sense of belonging that a person would obtain through a long-term relationship. Therefore, one might presume that being rejected by a stranger would be less of a threat to the fundamental need to belong.

Additionally, some research has shown that rejection from those to whom we are close leads to more negative results than rejection by those to whom we are not as close. Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell, and Evans (1998) found that participants' hurt feelings were significantly higher when recalling scenarios in which they were rejected by romantic partners than when recalling scenarios involving acquaintances. Sommer et al. (2009) found that participants who imagined a scenario in which they were rejected by a significant other suffered from more negative emotions such as greater anger and lower self-esteem than those who imagined a scenario in which they were rejected by friends.

Conversely, some research indicates rejection by a stranger can be more impactful than rejection by a close other. For instance, Snapp and Leary (2001) found that participants who were rejected by confederates who had little to no personal connection to them experienced more negative feelings than those who were rejected by a confederate who they felt knew them pretty well. This phenomenon is possibly explained by an idea proposed by Baumeister and Leary (1995), who said that people may look at an interaction with a stranger as a potential future intimate relationship. Therefore, losing this potential relationship might be quite painful. Furthermore, Nelson et al. (2013) conducted a study in which participants came into the laboratory and completed a series of tasks with either a non-specified close other or a stranger. Some participants were led to believe they were being rejected by the person in the experiment

with them, which resulted in more negative results when the partner was a stranger than when it was someone they knew (Nelson et al., 2013).

The current research was designed to examine how the source of rejection plays a role in the level of the emotional response. Despite the contradictions in results, it seemed evident that there is something to the idea that different sources of rejection lead to different emotional outcomes. Because of the research by Berscheid et al. (1989) stating that most participants indicated that their romantic relationship as the most important relationship, in combination with the results from Sommer et al. (2009) showing the effect of rejection from a romantic partner, I hypothesized that rejection by a romantic partner would result in more negative emotions than rejection by others, such as close friends or family members. The following studies were designed to examine this hypothesis.

Study 1

The first study examined the effects of rejection by romantic partners, family members, close friends, or strangers on impacted mood state, fundamental needs, and self-esteem by having participants recall an instance of rejection by one of those individuals/groups. The meta-analysis by Blackhart et al. (2009) recognized that when prompted to recall an incident of rejection, participants often chose a salient memory. Because such a memory would be likely to evoke an emotional response, I chose to use this type of relived rejection recollection for the first study.

Method

Participants. Participants consisted of 113 volunteers from northeast Tennessee and southwest Virginia ranging from 18 to 63 (83% female, $M_{Age} = 24.62$, $SD = 10.37$). Those

participating in the study were volunteers who were largely recruited from a local state University in exchange for course credit. Volunteers were also recruited through the use of social media.

Materials and Procedure. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four groups based on a source of rejection: Rejection from a romantic partner, family member, close friend, or stranger. Participants were sent a link with a URL to an online questionnaire where they were first asked to recall a time when they were socially rejected by someone from their assigned source category (see Appendix). Directly after this, participants answered a battery of questions designed specifically to assess mood (Buckley, Winkel, & Leary, 2004), threats to the fundamental needs of belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence (Zadro, Williams, & Richardson, 2004). Additionally, I used a measure of state self-esteem (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). Participants then answered some demographic questions as well as questions about their participation in the study.

Results and Discussion

A MANOVA was conducted in SPSS with the group to which participants were assigned (reliving rejection from a romantic partner, family member, close friend, or stranger) as the independent variable and mood (positive mood, sadness, hurt feelings, anger, anxiety, feelings of rejection), need to belong, threats to the four fundamental needs, and state self-esteem as the dependent variables. The overall results were non-significant, Wilks' $\lambda = .711$, $F(42, 282.55) = .83$, $p = n.s.$, and no significant differences were found between the groups for any of the dependent variables. There was a pattern, though not statistically significant, indicating that mood scores for those recalling rejection from strangers and from close friends tended to cluster closer to each other in the domains of sadness and hurt feelings whereas sadness and hurt

feelings scores were similar for those participants recalling rejection from a family member or from a romantic partner (see Table 1).

Based on these results, the source of rejection did not significantly affect emotional responses of participants when recalling rejection from individuals of varying closeness. As a result, my hypothesis was not supported. A limitation to Study 1 was that I used the term *significant other* when asking participants to recall rejection from a romantic partner. This was problematic as some participants were confused by the term *significant other* in that they thought of all those to whom they were close as significant others. Although all data were coded to correct for this possible confusion, it is an issue that I hoped to remedy in Study 2 by specifically using the term *romantic partner* instead of *significant other*.

In addition, in their meta-analysis, Blackhart et al. (2009) evaluated the differences in responses to various methodologies of manipulating social rejection and found that relived experiences often elicited different reaction from participants than did other methods, such as imagined scenarios or primed scenarios. Therefore, since the methodology of the rejection delivery has been found to impact on the results, I found it important to see whether these results would hold true if we were to use another rejection manipulation.

Study 2

In an attempt to further understand the findings from Study 1, research was continued on this topic using a different method of manipulating rejection. If the same results were found, it would further indicate that the rejection source might not make a significant impact on the emotional response of the rejectee. If the results differed, it would further enforce the results found by Blackhart et al. (2009) that relived scenarios invoke a different response than other rejection methodologies. When analyzing the results from different methodologies of rejection

studies, imagines scenarios have been found to have the largest effect size (Blackhart et al., 2009) and many studies have found these scenarios impact mood and emotion (Allen, de la Horne, & Trinder, 1996; Craighead, Kimball, & Rehak., 1979). For this reason, this method was used for Study 2. Further, to correct for the issue I had in Study 1 with the terminology *significant other*, the term *romantic partner* was used exclusively in Study 2. For Study 2, my hypothesis remained that there would be a difference in response based on the source of the rejection, specifically that those imagining rejection by romantic partners would report more negative mood state and experience greater threats to the four fundamental needs (self-esteem, control, belongingness, and meaningful existence) than those imaging rejection from a family member, close friend, or stranger.

Method

Participants. A total of 272 participants completed the study survey. Thirty two participants were eliminated from the analyses of the data, however, for failure to complete the survey or to adhere to the instructions given by not answering all questions, finishing the survey in too short of a time to have read the questions, or by submitting multiple surveys. As a result, the final sample size was 240 participants between the ages of 18 and 53 (70.4% female, $M_{Age} = 22.33$, $SD = 6.53$). Participants were comprised of college students from a state university in the southeast who volunteered using the university's research participation system. They received course credit in exchange for their time and efforts.

Materials and Procedure. Participants were randomly assigned to imagine rejection from either a stranger, a close friend, a family member, or a romantic partner. After signing up, participants were sent a link with a URL to an online questionnaire where they were first asked to read a social rejection scenario. Scenarios for each of the four categories were derived from

the scenarios used in the study conducted by Sommer et al. (2009). Careful consideration was given to ensure that the scenarios were similar in length, realism, wording, format, and severity for each of the categories (see Appendix for scenarios). Participants were then given the same assessments used in Study 1 to measure mood, need to belong, state self-esteem, and threat to the four fundamental needs. As in Study 1, they answered some demographic questions as well as questions about their participation before completing the study.

Results and Discussion

Data were analyzed using a MANOVA with the group to which participants were assigned (imagining rejection from a stranger, close friend, family member, or romantic partner) as the independent variable and mood (positive mood, sadness, hurt feelings, anger, anxiety, feelings of rejection), need to belong, threat to the four fundamental needs, and state self-esteem as the dependent variables. Results showed a significant overall effect Wilks' $\lambda = .665$, $F(42, 662.29) = 2.32$, $p < .05$. Specifically, there were significant differences on sadness $F(3, 236) = 8.24$, $p < .05$; hurt feelings, $F(3, 236) = 10.15$, $p < .05$; and on feeling rejected $F(3, 236) = 3.174$, $p < .05$. A marginally significant effect was also found for anxiety, $F(3, 236) = 2.50$, $p = .06$. Moreover, an additional pattern was evident where the mean score for those who imagined rejection from family were highest, followed by those for the romantic partner group, then the close friend group, with the mean scores lowest for those who imagined rejection from a stranger (Figures 1-3). This pattern was true for sadness, hurt feelings, and feelings of rejection,

A Tukey's HSD post hoc test found those who imagined rejection by family reported significantly higher levels of sadness ($M = 20.75$, $SD = 6.06$) than those who imagined rejection by strangers ($M = 15$, $SD = 7.30$; $p < .05$) or by close friends ($M = 17.00$, $SD = 6.81$; $p < .05$). Those who imagined rejection by a romantic partner also reported higher sadness scores ($M =$

19.26, $SD = 6.93$) than those who imagined rejection by a stranger ($M = 15$, $SD = 7.30$; $p < .05$). In addition, I found that those in the family group reported significantly higher levels of hurt feelings ($M = 21.39$, $SD = 6.91$) than in the other three groups, strangers ($M = 14.52$, $SD = 7.44$; $p < .05$), close friends ($M = 17.83$, $SD = 7.31$; $p < .05$) and romantic partners ($M = 19.84$, $SD = 7.12$; $p < .05$). Those in the romantic partner group also reported significantly higher scores for hurt feelings ($M = 19.84$, $SD = 7.12$) than those in the stranger group ($M = 14.52$, $SD = 7.44$; $p < .05$). The difference in hurt feeling scores for those imagining rejection from a close friend ($M = 17.83$, $SD = 7.31$) and from a stranger ($M = 14.52$, $SD = 7.44$; $p = .051$) was marginally significant, with the stranger group reporting lower hurt feelings scores than those imagining rejection by a close friend. Further, the analysis showed that those in the family group scored significantly higher in feelings of rejection ($M = 24.05$, $SD = 5.70$) than those who imagined rejection by a stranger ($M = 20.90$, $SD = 7.00$; $p < .05$). The analysis did not find any significance differences for positive mood, anger, anxiety, state self-esteem, need to belong, or the fundamental needs (belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence) .

Results from Study 2 indicate that, in line with my hypothesis, the emotional response will vary depending on the source of the rejection. Contradictory to the hypothesis, however, it was those who imagined rejection from a family member, not from a romantic partner, who reported more negative feelings.

General Discussion

Although many studies have attempted to understand the impact of the source of rejection, the current studies are the first to go so far as to classify the rejecters into four distinct categories. Previous studies often look at close relationships and those who are strangers or

acquaintances. Yet most would agree that not all close relationships are equal. This research sought to understand how these differences in relationship impact rejections.

Contrary to previous research, Study 1 found that reliving rejection experiences from varying sources of rejection did not lead to significant differences in mood (positive mood, sadness, hurt feelings, anger, anxiety, feelings of rejection), in the need to belong, in threats to the four fundamental needs (belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence), or in state self-esteem. Study 2, using a different rejection manipulation (i.e., having participants imagine rejection) found different results, that the source of rejection had a significant effect on the rejectee's levels of hurt feelings, sadness, and perceived rejection, indicating that the effects of rejection are influenced by the relationship people have with their rejecters.

In Study 2, those that imagined rejection by family reported significantly higher levels of sadness than those who imagined rejection by close friends or strangers, reported significantly higher levels of sadness than those in the other three groups, and significantly higher feelings of rejection than those who imagined rejection by a stranger. Those in the romantic partner group also reported higher levels of sadness and hurt feelings than those in the stranger group, and those imagining rejection by close friends reported marginally higher levels of hurt feelings than those in the stranger group. Although none of the results for Study 1 were significant, the results for those that recalled rejection from a family member or from a romantic partner were clustered closely together in the metrics of hurt feelings and sadness, with the scores being higher than the scores from those recalling rejection from a close friend or from a stranger. Despite these results being non-significant, it is worthy of noting that these are two of the three metrics where a significant difference was observed in Study 2, with the scores clustering similarly (Figures 1-2). Although the results of Study 2 do show a difference in certain metrics of mood based on

rejection source, neither study's results support my original hypothesis that those in the romantic partner condition would report more negative responses overall than the other groups. Perhaps the best explanation for this is found in the research by Berscheid et al. (1989), which indicates that the level of interdependence in the relationship will have an impact on perceived level of closeness. The fact that our lives may be more intertwined with family than with close friends or even romantic partners may lead us to believe that losing those relationships would be more impactful.

As for the discrepancy in results between the two studies, the most logical explanation is the differing methods of simulating rejection. As stated earlier, experiments using imagined scenarios of rejection typically result in larger effect sizes (Blackhart et al., 2009) than studies using other methods to manipulate rejection. This method of manipulation is ideal for measuring the impact of social rejection. Further, to help understand Study 1, Blackhart et al. found that the effect sizes from a relived experience were similar to those from anticipated future rejection (2009). Perhaps this explains the differences in results. It is possible that those in Study 1 were going through a different emotional process than intended. Perhaps instead of invoking the feelings participants originally experienced at the time of the rejection, they were using a more logical process than those who participated in the imagined scenarios, similar to one that would be used in the anticipation of future rejection.

Because of the varying results from these two studies, it is necessary to determine which of these results, if either, is comparable to actual instances of interpersonal rejection in real-time. To answer this question, it will be essential that future research continues to focus on the best ways to accurately manipulate and measure rejection and responses to rejection.

Limitations and Future Research

In Study 1, participants were asked to recall instances of rejection. Because these were directly from the participant's own memories, there is no way to ensure that the rejection events recalled by participants were of relatively equal intensity. Further, the amount of time that passed between when the rejection event occurred and when participants recalled that event was not controlled for nor assessed. Both of these factors could have influenced the results in Study 1. The hope was to correct for this in Study 2 by providing set scenarios for each of the four conditions. Although these scenarios were based on scenarios used in other studies of this type (Sommer et al., 2009), it is impossible to guarantee that they exemplified the same level of impact for each of the four conditions.

Another limitation to the current studies was the sample demographics, most notably age and male to female ratio. These factors may impact the generalizability of the results. With a sample taken from university students, the mean age of Study 1 was 24.62 years old and the mean for Study 2 was 22.33. It is quite possible that an older sample may have responded differently. As for the disproportionately large number of females in both studies, Blackhart et al. (2009) found larger percentages of women engaging in rejection manipulations led to slightly greater effect sizes. It is possible this is due to different reactions from each gender when dealing with rejection or ostracism, or societal pressures regarding gender norms for emotional expression (Williams & Sommer, 1997). Regardless of explanation, the impact of gender ratio could very well have influenced the results of the current studies.

Perhaps the most obvious limitation to these studies is one that has a great potential for inspiring future research. The contradictory results of the two studies likely indicates that the manner of rejection manipulation plays the largest role in obtaining and measuring results. It prompts us to ask what methodology is best for the type of rejection we wish to study. In the

studies by Nelson et al. (2013), where rejection was simulated in a laboratory setting, being rejected by a stranger was more impactful than perceived rejection by a close other. Because the same rejection technique was used for strangers as for close others, it is possible the event, while damaging enough from a stranger, was not enough to ruin a relationship with a close other. In Study 2 of this paper, I had to attempt to overcome the obstacle of making the scenarios equally impactful regardless of the rejecting group. These are but two examples of the difficulties in studying the impact of various sources of interpersonal rejection.

Future research could help to determine the reason for the discrepancies between these results and the conclusions drawn by Nelson et al. (2013) or Snapp and Leary (2001) by forming a better understanding of the dynamics between relational closeness and the events necessary to break the relational bond. Perhaps it is not so much that our results are contradictory as that different types of threats are perceived as more damaging to some relationships than it is to others, depending on the strength and duration of the relationship. Furthermore, in hopes of overcoming the issues found when using a relived method of manipulation and potentially creating better experimental design, further research focusing on how the amount of time between the rejection event occurring and when the emotional response is measured might impact the strength of negative feelings the participants report.

Conclusion

These studies assessed whether the source of social rejection impacts the degree of the emotional response. Although I did not find evidence to support my original hypothesis, the results of these studies suggest that the role that the source of the rejection plays may be heavily dependent on whether a person is recalling the past or imagining a future event. Specifically, the results suggest when recalling an impactful rejection memory, the source may not actually

matter. When imagining a potential future rejection, however, scenarios involving rejection from a family member has the most negative impact on participants reported levels of feelings of sadness, hurt, and rejection.

Future research is needed to determine the differences in a predicted emotional response to potential future rejection, an emotional response immediately after rejection, and a retrospective emotional response after time has passed. Other research using a more subjective approach to independent variable categorization, such as relational importance as opposed to socially defined categorization may also lead to a better understanding of the complex relationship between social rejection and emotional response. The results of the current and future studies in this area can be used to create more effective therapy practices to help people cope with rejection, loss, family dynamics, and even social anxiety.

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Table 1

Means and standard deviations for Study 1

	<i>Stranger</i>	<i>Close Friend</i>	<i>Family Member</i>	<i>Romantic Partner</i>
<i>n</i>	28	25	29	31
Positive Mood	16.46 (6.78)	15.72 (6.15)	12.9 (6.16)	14.39 (6.93)
Sadness	9.96 (5.87)	9.52 (5.78)	12.9 (7.01)	11.74 (6.7)
Hurt Feelings	8.82 (5.9)	8.96 (5.48)	12.38 (8.17)	12.19 (8.04)
Anger	8.89 (5.78)	11.2 (6.18)	12.48 (6.36)	12.23 (6.54)
Anxiety	10.46 (5.6)	10.32 (5.48)	12.83 (6.83)	11.81 (6.74)
Feelings of Rejection	11.39 (5.52)	11.76 (5.78)	14.24 (6.91)	12.19 (6.53)
Need to Belong	33.07 (6.62)	31.88 (6.89)	34.41 (5.92)	34.77 (7.58)
Threat to Fundamental Needs	22.21 (12.07)	24.6 (13.12)	28.21 (12.97)	26.32 (10.77)
State Self-Esteem	71.82 (16.51)	72.64 (16.94)	68.52 (15.91)	66.45 (14.65)

Note. Standard deviations are provided in parentheses.

Figure 1.

Mean sadness scores for each group for Study 2

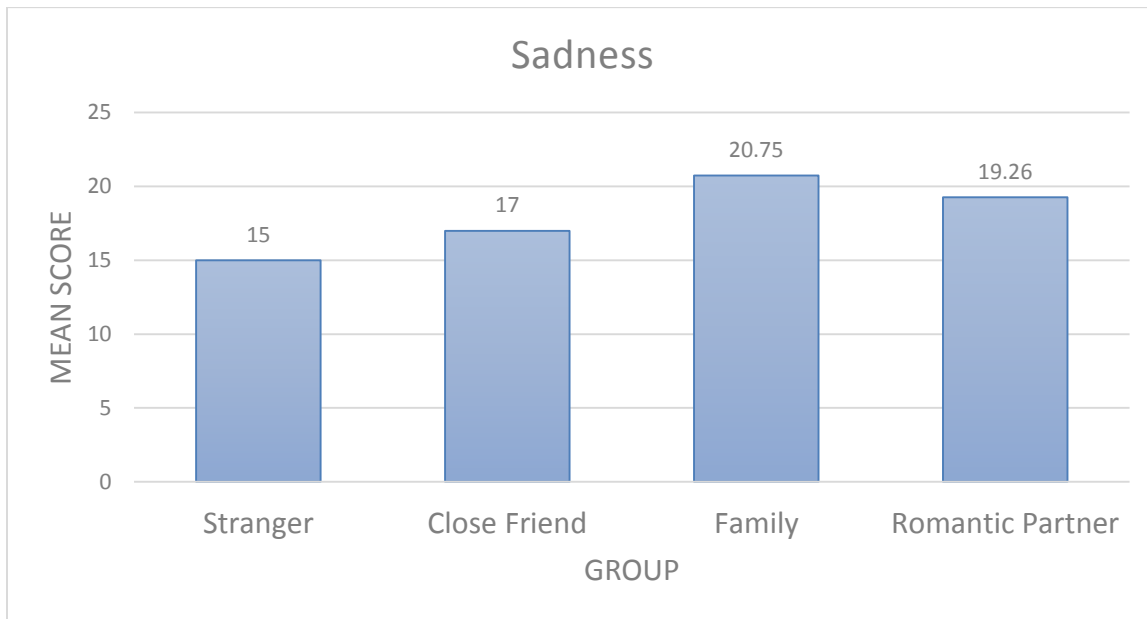


Figure 2.

Mean hurt scores for each group for Study 2

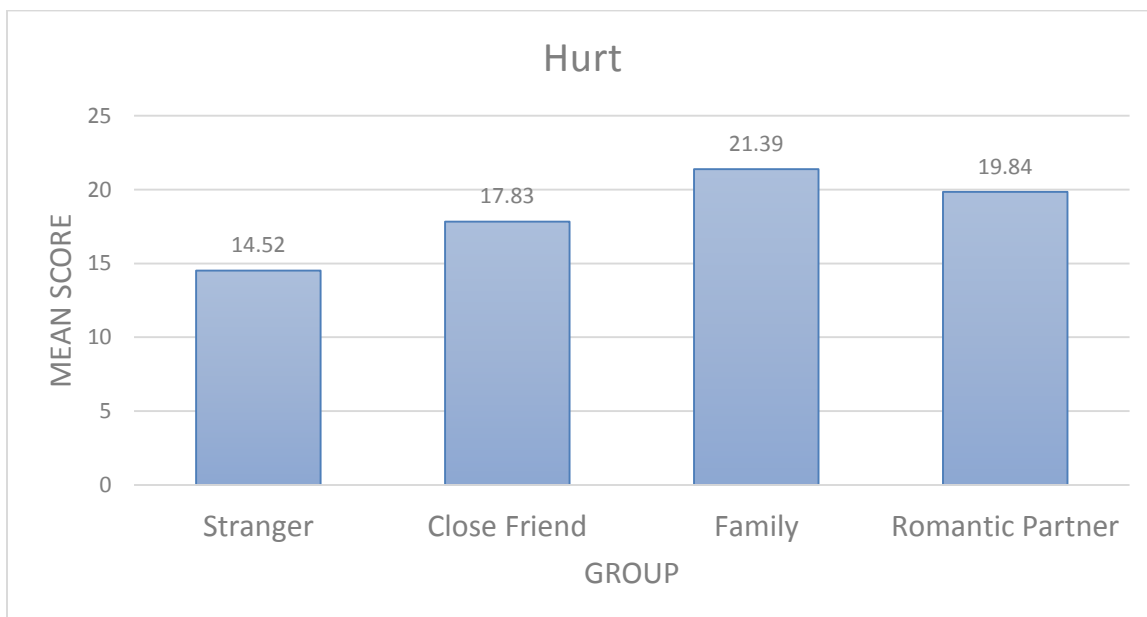
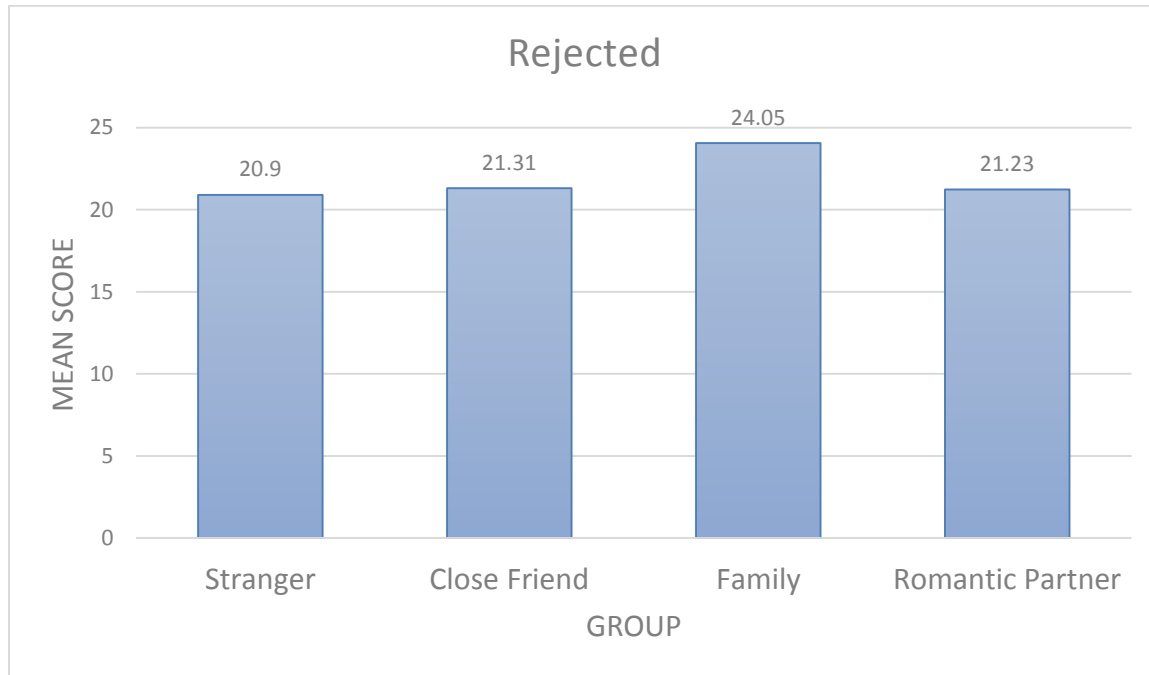


Figure 3

Mean rejected scores for each group for Study 2



Appendix

Writing Instructions (Study 1)

Stranger. *Please recall and write about a time when you experienced rejection, exclusion, or ostracism by a stranger or strangers (i.e., a person or persons you did not know); a time that you felt as if you didn't belong. Nearly everyone has experienced such an event more than once; please choose an especially important and memorable event.*

Close Friend. *Please recall and write about a time when you experienced rejection, exclusion, or ostracism by a close friend or close friends. For example, perhaps your best friend quit speaking to you, or your best friends excluded you from an activity. Nearly everyone has experienced such an event more than once; please choose an especially important and memorable event.*

Family. *Please recall and write about a time when you experienced rejection, exclusion, or ostracism by a family member or family members. For example, perhaps you felt that you didn't belong, or a family member quit speaking to you. Nearly everyone has experienced such an event more than once; please choose an especially important and memorable event.*

Romantic Partner. *Please recall and write about a time when you experienced rejection, exclusion, or ostracism by a significant other. For example, perhaps your significant other excluded you from an event or activity with family or friends, or broke up with you. Nearly everyone has experienced such an event more than once; please choose an especially important and memorable event.*

Scenarios (Study 2)

Stranger. *The professor in one of your courses has just announced that students will complete a group project during the semester. Your professor decides to randomly assign people*

to groups and begins numbering students to assign them to the groups. Once you are assigned your number, you walk across the room to where the rest of your group has already gathered. You do not recognize any of your group members as people you know outside of class. Before your group members see you approaching, you overhear one of your new group members say "Oh great. I can't believe we have to work with (your name)." Another group member replies "I know! I can't stand him/her. This is going to be awful."

Close friend. *You have made plans with your two closest friends for an evening out. You are running a little late to the restaurant where the three of you agreed to meet. When you arrive, you see them seated across the restaurant with their backs to you. As you walk up to join them, you overhear one of your friends say "You know, I've never really liked (your name)." Your other friend nods and says "Me neither. I don't know why we ever invite him/her to come out with us."*

Family. *Your family has decided to have a family gathering one weekend day during a long weekend. Initially, when invited, you told your family members that you would be a little late due to work. Your boss lets you off work a little early, however, and you arrive earlier than anticipated. You hear everyone in the back yard, so you head back. As you are about to round the corner, you overhear one of your family members say "I wish (your name) wasn't coming. He/she has never really fit in with this family." Another family member agrees, "No, he/she isn't really one of us. It's always better when (your name) isn't here."*

Romantic Partner. *You have made plans to meet your romantic partner and his/her sibling for dinner one day after work. You are running a little late to meet them at the restaurant. When you arrive, you see them seated across the restaurant with their backs to you. As you walk up to join them, you overhear your romantic partner say "Things are not really working out with*

(your name). I think I am going to end my relationship with him/her soon, maybe this week."

Your partner's sibling nods and replies "I can tell you aren't happy in the relationship. I think you're right, it's time to end it."