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We are mounting a crusade to improve editorial and review procedures. Existing procedures of current journals have been shown to have an unethical lack of reliability and validity. We are using an unusual set of procedures to promise editorial decisions in five weeks and publication in an average of four months with courteous and tested procedures. In return, accepted papers share some of the costs of publication—but this is independent of editorial decisions!

"Reluctantly, one must conclude that the contents of prestigious behavioral science journals are largely chance determined...which raises questions as to what fails, in such a system, ever to see the light of day."
Belver C. Griffith,
School of Library Science, Drexel University

I think that what has been demonstrated by this study [of psychology journals] is...reviewer and editorial incompetence..."
Rosalyn S. Yalow
Nobel Laureate in physiology/medicine

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND PERSONALITY
Vol. 7 No. 3 1992

pp. 363-510

ISSN: 0886-1641

CODEN: JSBPE9

JOURNAL
of
SOCIAL
BEHAVIOR
and
PERSONALITY

7

An Interdisciplinary Journal

Vol. 7, No. 3 1992

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Helper Reactions:
When Help is Rejected by Friends or Strangers

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This experiment investigated whether prior relationship with a needy recipient (friend vs. stranger) moderates helpers' expectancy that their offer of help would be accepted, the degree to which subsequent rejection (vs. acceptance) of their offer was experienced as an expectancy violation, and the coping reactions that a rejection elicited. The model guiding this experiment viewed rejection of help as stressful for would-be helpers because of its unfavorable implications for their self-image. Undergraduate "tutors" observed a close friend or stranger "fail" two easy word-assembly practice tasks, then offered help. As prearranged, the offer was rejected or accepted. Helpers' responses to questionnaires revealed, as hypothesized, that the friend, more than the stranger, was expected to accept help, and that subsequent acceptance by the friend, more than the stranger, was conducive to positive reactions. Contrary to predictions, rejection by a friend resulted in less negative evaluation and reduced attraction than rejection by a stranger. An explanation based on friendship norms was proposed for these disconfirmations.

A Model on Helpers' Reactions and Empirical Support

Much has been learned about help giving (e.g., Derlega & Grzelak, 1982) and help seeking (e.g., DePaulo, Nadler, & Fisher, 1983). Recently investigation began on the reactions of would-be helpers whose offers of

Authors' Notes: The study reported here was part of a dissertation by the first author under the supervision of Sidney Rosen in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Georgia. The first author would like to thank the members of his committee for their constant support, encouragements, and invaluable advice. We sincerely thank the editor and three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to the first author.

Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 1992, Vol. 7, No. 3, 445-458.

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help are rejected (Rosen, Mickler, & Spiers, 1986; Rosen, Mickler, & Collins, 1987).

The "spurned helper" model proposes that prospective helpers generally expect their offers of help to be accepted by a recipient whose level of resources appears inadequate for attaining the ostensible goal unaided. If the offer is then rejected, the rejection is experienced by the would-be helpers as a stressful expectancy violation. The violation is stressful in that it carries unfavorable implications for the helpers' self-image of being efficacious and caring, especially if the helpers had attached importance to attaining a favorable *outcome* (i.e., inducing acceptance, as opposed to rejection, that confirms one's self-image).

The model further proposes that spurned helpers try to cope with such self-threat through various reaction modalities (i.e., cognitive, evaluative, affective, and behavioral) to maintain or restore their self-perceptions of being efficacious and caring. One cognitive mechanism is to attribute the cause of the rejection to an unflattering profile of recipient characteristics suggestive of excessive defensiveness on the recipient's part. (e.g., that the recipient is stubborn, too proud for own good) By generating such an explanation, spurned helpers can, in essence, locate the blame for the rejection in the rejecter rather than in the self. Another cognitive mechanism is to claim that the decision to offer help had not been totally up to them. In so doing they diffuse their own personal responsibility for the rejection.

Spurned helpers can also cope by devaluing the recipient (e.g., that the recipient is incapable, egotistic) to a greater extent (relative to the self) following rejection rather than following acceptance, thus still maintaining a relatively positive self-image. They can cope, too, by professing relatively less attraction to the rejecter (in terms of both informal further association and further task-related association).

Finally, the model proposes that there are situational and personal factors that can moderate the strength of the expectancy violation, and/or the importance of the outcome to the helper, the recipient, or both. Situational factors might include for instance the pre-existing relationship, if any, between helper and recipient, and the nature of the help being offered. Personal factors might include individual differences in self-perceptions of being competent enough and caring enough to help.

Thus far empirical support has been found for some aspects of the model in a series of role-play simulations (Rosen, Mickler, & Spiers, 1986) and laboratory experiments involving actual rejection/acceptance of the help (Rosen, Mickler, & Spiers, 1987; Rosen, Mickler, Cochran, Cheuk, McIntosh, Rawa, & Harlow, unpublished). For example, both role-play simulations and experimental studies showed that rejected

helpers express more expectancy violation than do accepted helpers. To cope, rejected (compared to accepted) helpers attribute the outcome (rejection) more to uncomplimentary characteristics suggestive of recipient defensiveness, express relatively low attraction to the recipient, and voice relatively more negative affect.

The experimental studies further revealed that rejected helpers also cope by devaluing the recipient even more than the self, claiming to have had relatively less freedom to decide whether to offer help, and yet claiming that they had expected rejection. The mediational role of perceived expectancy violation was also demonstrated. When its magnitude was held constant the effects of rejection were considerably reduced if not eliminated.

Hypothesized Effects of Outcome and Relationship

Of present concern are the posited moderating effects of the prior helper-recipient relationship on helpers' outcome reactions. To date, the empirical evidence for this, cited in the role-play studies of Rosen and his co-workers (1986), is mixed. Some subjects were presented with a variety of imaginary scenarios in which they had supposedly offered some forms of help (skill-relevant or skill-irrelevant) to a hypothetical friend or hypothetical stranger, and the help was rejected (or accepted).

As predicted, "rejected" helpers evaluated the recipient more negatively and expressed more negative affect than did "accepted" helpers. It was also predicted, on the ground that mutual caring and give-and-take are distinguishing characteristics of a close friendship, that the outcome reactions of would-be helpers would be more extreme if the recipient was a friend than a stranger. The results provided support in the case of affect but not of evaluation. No determination was made as to whether rejection was perceived by those subjects as an expectancy violation.

Other subjects were not presented with the outcome, but were asked instead to guess whether such forms of help to a friend or a stranger would be accepted. Their responses indicated that acceptance was considered more likely than rejection, for the most part. Contrary to prediction, however, subjects expected more acceptance from the stranger than from the friend.

It seems plausible that the failure to obtain some of the hypothesized moderating effects of type of relationship in the role-play studies is because the role play was not sufficiently involving. Subjects may fall back on response sets and stereotypic thinking.

The present experiment involved actual rejection/acceptance of help when the recipient is an actual friend or stranger. It examined how the relationship status affected would-be helpers' expectations and percep-

tions of rejection and subsequent cognitive and evaluative reactions to the outcome of their offer.

The literature on friendship suggests that close friendships involve the exchange of a variety of resources, such as information, money, services, evidence of caring and of acceptance (e.g., Aries & Johnson, 1983; Rands & Levinger, 1979; Sapadin, 1988; Wright & Keple, 1981). The friendship partners develop and share beliefs concerning the particular norms or rules that apply to resource exchange between themselves (e.g., Argyle & Furnham, 1983; Argyle & Henderson, 1984). Such shared beliefs would induce a friend who wished to help a partner who needed a particular resource to harbor a greater level of expectancy that the offer of help would be accepted, a level grounded on their past history of aiding one another, than would be the case if the resource were to be offered to a stranger. Prospective helpers may anticipate that a needy stranger may not want to incur an obligation accepting help (e.g., Morris & Rosen, 1973). This should not be a relevant concern in the case of a needy friend (Mills & Clark, 1982).

The relationship literature also suggests that in long-term relationships it seems inevitable that conflicts arise between partners. Such conflicts involve the incompatibility of one partner's goals relative to those of the other partner, possibly due to the increasing behavioral interdependence of the two partners (e.g., Levinger, 1979; Rusblut, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986).

One source of such incompatibility that could arise between friends on a particular occasion is the mistaken assumption by the would-be helper that the partner wished to be helped by him or her. If an offer of help is then made but is rejected by the friend, this would be even more stressful to the helper than if the rejection came from a stranger. The rejection by the friend would be even more of an expectancy violation. Furthermore, the rejection would carry unfavorable implications not only for the helper's self-image, but also for the quality of the friendship. Thus, the rejection might imply that the rejecting partner doubted the goodness of the relationship, or that the helper had made an unwarranted assumption concerning their level of closeness.

Such belief, in turn, might imply that the rejecting partner questioned the worth or suitability of the rejected helper as a close friend. The relatively greater stress of rejection by the friend might be expected, in turn, to elicit relatively more intense coping reactions in the helper of a rejected friend than in the helper of a rejected stranger.

On the other hand, acceptance of help by a friend would be more gratifying than its acceptance by a stranger. A stranger's acceptance would serve to affirm the helper's self-image as someone who was

competent and caring enough to help other people. A friend's acceptance would, in addition, serve to reaffirm the closeness of their relationship (Shumaker & Brownell, 1984).

In keeping with earlier results (Rosen, et al., unpublished), it was hypothesized that rejection, compared to acceptance, would elicit greater attributed defensiveness, lower perceived decision freedom, less positive evaluation of the recipient, and lower attraction to the recipient. It was further predicted that type of relationship would moderate these hypothesized main effects of outcome, such that rejection by the friend would elicit relatively more attributed defensiveness, lower perceived freedom, lower evaluation, and lower attraction, than rejection by the stranger. In the case of acceptance, type of relationship would have the opposite effects.

METHOD

Participants

Female students from the introductory psychology research participants pool at the University of Georgia were invited to sign up for a word-game study in exchange for course credit.¹ A total of 266 students volunteered.

Design and Procedure

The basic study involved a 2 (Type of relationship: recipient a friend/recipient a stranger) X 2 (Outcome: acceptance/rejection of offer of help)² experimental design. For the recipient-a-friend condition, signees (one per session) were asked to bring along a close or fairly close female friend who was also a University of Georgia undergraduate, but who was not presently enrolled in introductory psychology. Each signee in this condition was assigned to the role of tutor (prospective helper) whereas her

¹ Only female undergraduates were included in the study on the grounds that in our past studies females have shown themselves to be relatively more conscientious and involved. Whether the results thus obtained are only applicable to female pairings, or are generalizable to male-male and cross-gender pairings can only be answered empirically.

² Although both emotional and informational help may often be relevant in many situations (Cohen & Wills, 1985), it was reasoned that offering emotional help was relatively more appropriate (being more indicative of closeness and therefore more to be expected) in a relationship of friends (see also Rook, 1987; Tomblom & Fredholm, 1984), whereas informational help was at least as, if not more, appropriate in a relationship of strangers (see also Shumaker & Brownell, 1984). Therefore, rejection of emotional help by the friend and informational help by the stranger would be particularly disconcerting. Unfortunately, manipulation checks revealed that both types of help, as operationalized, were perceived as equally appropriate, thus nullifying the intended impact of this variable. Consequently, although type of help was included in the analysis to obtain a clearer picture of the contribution of the other independent variables, this variable will not be discussed further.

asked to fill out a questionnaire. In the case of acceptance, the tutor sent the learner the helpful suggestions (on handwritten cards), and the learner pretended to study them.

After this outcome manipulation both partners completed their respective questionnaires (the learner's was a bogus document), with the tutor still harboring the mistaken belief that the test task would follow after the completion of the questionnaires. (The tutor's questionnaire addressed the remaining dependent variables). The tutor was then probed for suspicion, debriefed, and given participation credit. The learner in the stranger condition also received credit.

Manipulation Checks

To check on the manipulations, helpers (tutors) were asked whether the person they had tutored was their friend or a stranger, and whether their offer of help was accepted or rejected.

Dependent Variables

Expectancy of acceptance of the offer was the only dependent variable measured before the outcome. It was assessed by helpers' rating, on an 11-point scale, as to how likely it was that their offer of help would be accepted (0 = 0 in 10 chances that learner would accept, 10 = 10 in 10 chances that learner would accept). Variables measured after the outcome included expectancy violation, the two cognitive coping reactions (attributed defensiveness and decision freedom), and the two evaluative coping reactions (evaluation of and attraction to the recipient). Expectancy violation was measured by helpers' rating on an 11-point scale, of the extent to which they were surprised at their partner's reaction to their offer of help (1 = not at all surprised, 11 = very surprised).

Attributed defensiveness was assessed by averaging each helper's extent of agreement (via seven 11-point rating scales) that the outcome was due to the recipient being too proud for own good, stubborn, easily embarrassed, shy, concerned about appearing inferior, distrustful of the helper's ability to help, and unaware of how much help was needed (when it was obvious that the person's goal could not be achieved without some help from others) ($\alpha = .80$). Decision freedom was measured (via an 11-point rating scale) by the extent to which the helper had felt before making the offer that the decision to offer help had been up to her (1 = entirely up to me, 11 = not at all up to me).

Evaluation of the recipient was measured by averaging each subject's responses to twelve bi-polar 11-point scales, namely, whether the recipient was capable/incapable, skilled/unskilled, strong/weak, sophisticated/naive, competent/incompetent, poised/awkward, altruistic/egotistic, modest/vain, sympathetic/unsympathetic, sensitive/insensitive, kind/cruel, and

friend was assigned to be the learner (recipient). There were a total of eighty-six tutors in this condition.

For the recipient-a-stranger condition, two signees (per session) were each asked to bring along a close or fairly close female friend who was also a University of Georgia student. However, only the two (research pool) signees were included in the study, with one of them randomly assigned to be the tutor, the other to be the learner, provided they gave assurance of not really knowing one another. (Their friends were dismissed with an apology). There were altogether ninety tutors in this condition.

When a pair of participants arrived, they were told that the researcher, in collaboration with the (alleged) University Office of Remedial Studies, was attempting to establish effective peer-tutoring procedures. Accordingly, the (true) subject would be "randomly assigned" to the role of tutor, her partner to that of learner.

The learner was to go through two practice tasks, then a test task, on word assembly. Through observing the learner's performance on the practice tasks, the tutor could then decide whether to offer the learner some help (in the form of written suggestions) as preparation for the test task.

On the pretext of obtaining their independent expectations, the learner was separated from the tutor, briefed about the true purpose of the study, and persuaded to act out a sequence of behaviors. The sequence involved failing the two practice tasks, then accepting or rejecting the offer of help from the tutor.

The learner "failed" to reach a passable level of performance, judging from the (bogus) printed norms on hand. The tutor was asked whether, in view of the learner's performance, she had decided to offer help to the learner. If the tutor agreed to help, she sent the learner a memo indicating that she had some help that she wanted to offer.³ At the same time the tutor was asked to rate the likelihood that her offer would be accepted.

The learner, as pre-arranged, then wrote on the memo received from the tutor, whether she was accepting or rejecting the offer, then returned the memo to the tutor. In the case of rejection, the partners were each

³ In Rosen, Mickler, and Collins (1987) and in Rosen, et al. (unpublished), a pretext was given for communicating via written memo only, and a similar pretext was used in the present experiment. In still another experiment involving strangers (Cheuk & Rosen, in press), the offer and reply were transmitted by the helper and recipient, respectively, by microphones, with essentially the same main effects as in Rosen, et al. (1987). In addition, we were especially concerned in the present case that oral communication would considerably increase the likelihood that the friends would feel free to start talking about both related and unrelated matters, and that such an eventuality would make relevant comparisons with subjects in the stranger condition of dubious value.

TABLE 1 Mean Effects of Outcome Offer and Type of Relationship on Helpers' Cognitive and Evaluative Coping Reactions

Coping Reaction	Outcome of Offer			
	Rejection Relationship of		Acceptance Relationship of	
	Strangers	Friends	Strangers	Friends
Attributed defensiveness	7.05 _c	6.19 _b	3.94 _a	4.05 _a
Decision freedom	4.18 _{ab}	5.55 _c	4.95 _b	2.90 _a
Evaluation of recipient	6.28 _a	7.35 _b	8.31 _c	8.70 _c
Attraction to recipient	6.96 _a	9.03 _c	8.64 _b	10.11 _d

Note. Higher mean scores denote greater attribution of defensiveness to the recipient, less perceived decision freedom to make the offer, more positive evaluation of the recipient, and greater attraction to the recipient, respectively. Scores could range from 1 to 11. Cell means not sharing the same subscript within a given row differ significantly from each at the $p < .05$ level.

There was also a main effect of relationship, $F(1, 151) = 4.43, p < .05$, indicating that the friend's response to the offer was less surprising ($M = 5.73$) than was that of the stranger ($M = 6.51$). No support was obtained for the hypothesized two-way interaction effect on how surprised the helpers felt at the outcome of the offer, $F < 1.00$.

Examination of the cell means reveals that, as hypothesized, the accepting friend's response ($M = 2.72$) was significantly less surprising than was that of the accepting stranger ($M = 4.02$), $F(1, 151) = 6.10, p < .02$. Contrary to our hypothesis, however, rejection by the friend ($M = 8.73$) was no more surprising than was rejection by the stranger ($M = 9.00$), $F < 1.00$.

Cognitive Coping

The three-way ANOVA on attributed defensiveness yielded a main effect for outcome, indicating that rejected helpers attributed greater defensiveness to their partner ($M = 6.62$) than did accepted helpers ($M = 3.99$), $F(1, 152) = 125.42, p < .0001$. This main effect of outcome was qualified by an Outcome X Type of Relationship interaction effect, $F(1, 152) = 4.23, p < .05$. Rejected helpers attributed significantly less defensiveness to the friend ($M = 6.19$) than to the stranger ($M = 7.05$), $F(1, 152) = 6.73, p < .02$, whereas accepted helpers considered the friend ($M = 4.05$) and the stranger ($M = 3.94$) equally low in defensiveness, $F < 1.00$ (see Table 1). This pattern is contrary to the hypothesized interaction pattern.

likeable/not likeable ($\alpha = .87$). Attraction was assessed by averaging each helper's responses (via two 11-point scales) as to how much she would like to work in the future with the recipient on tasks similar to word assembly, and to continue associating informally with the recipient ($r = .53, p < .0001$).

RESULTS

The responses of 16 out of 176 helpers were not included in the analyses for several reasons: One friend did not wish to play the role of learner. Two tutors decided that it was unnecessary to offer help. Four (all in the stranger condition) were in mixed-race pairings. Four (all in the rejection condition) explicitly voiced their suspicion that their reactions to rejection were being studied. Five not only offered emotional support, as instructed, but also offered informational support. All but four of the remaining 160 responded correctly to the manipulation checks on outcome and relationship. However, further probing suggested that the mistakes of these four were due to their not having paid enough attention to the options provided, consequently, their responses were included in analyses on the dependent variables. The Ns vary somewhat across analyses, due to incomplete responding.

Expectancy of Acceptance

A two-way (Type of Relationship X Type of Help) analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test the pre-outcome hypothesis concerning the perceived expectancy/likelihood of acceptance.⁴ As predicted, a main effect of type of relationship was obtained, $F(1, 156) = 14.23, p < .0002$, such that acceptance from the friend was considered more likely ($M = 8.41$) than from the stranger ($M = 7.48$).

Expectancy Violation

A three-way (Outcome X Type of Relationship X Type of Help) ANOVA performed on the expectancy violation measure revealed a main effect of outcome, $F(1, 151) = 215.95, p < .0001$. As hypothesized, rejected helpers expressed more surprise at the outcome ($M = 8.86$) than did accepted helpers ($M = 3.30$).

⁴ The initial Multivariate ANOVA indicated that only the main effect for Outcome exceeded the .05 level of significance. We proceeded to conduct univariate ANOVAs since in Rosen et al.'s (1986) role-play studies, Outcome and Relationship did not produce the predicted consistency across measures of similar dependent variables. It can be argued that some of the significant results reported here could have partly been the outcome of experimentwise error. We think, in retrospect, the nonsignificant Multivariate ANOVA results could have been an artifact of the very different effects that the dependent measures exhibited.

would-be helpers, on finding themselves in an unfamiliar setting where their friend appeared to need help that they could provide, would harbor a relatively higher expectancy that their offer of help would be accepted than if their needy partner was a stranger. This prediction was supported.

On the surface, the direction of this effect appears opposite to that found by Rosen, et al. (1986) in a role-play simulation. Strictly speaking, however, the two studies are not directly comparable in a number of respects. The expectancy estimates in the role-play study were summed across a variety of hypothetical settings and tasks, also across a variety of imaginary, undifferentiated friends and strangers, whereas the present study involved one flesh-and-blood partner, an actual friend or stranger, and only one specific type of task (word assembly) on which the partner appeared to need help.

We predicted, too, that rejection, as opposed to acceptance, would be perceived as an expectancy violation, but that this main effect would be moderated by the type of relationship. The hypothesized main effect on expectancy violation was clearly supported, thus replicating a similar result reported by Rosen, et al. (unpublished). The predicted moderating role of relationship on expectancy violation only held, however, in the acceptance condition, consistent with the relatively greater pre-outcome expectancy for acceptance in the case of friends. There was no difference due to relationship in the rejection condition. Perhaps what happened is that the rejection by the friend was indeed more surprising, but that the would-be helpers were reluctant to admit this, partly because to do so would have been a tacit admission that they really did not know their friend as well as they "should have."

We had predicted that, in order to cope with rejection stress, rejected (compared to accepted) helpers would attribute greater defensiveness to the recipient, claim that they had had lower freedom in the decision to offer help, express less positive evaluation of the recipient, and profess less attraction to the recipient. These hypothesized main effects were supported. They constitute successful replications of similar results reported by Rosen, et al. (unpublished).

We had also predicted that type of relationship would qualify these main effects of outcome on the coping reactions. Specifically, we had hypothesized that rejection by the friend would induce greater attributed defensiveness, lower perceived decision freedom, lower evaluation, and lower attraction, than rejection by the stranger. In the case of acceptance, we hypothesized that relationship would have the opposite effects. These predictions with regard to the directions of influence of relationship under rejection versus acceptance were supported only in the case of decision

With respect to helpers' perceived decision freedom to offer help, there was a marginally significant main effect of outcome in the predicted direction, $F(1, 152) = 3.68, p < .10$. Rejected helpers claimed to have had less decision freedom ($M = 4.86$) than did accepted helpers ($M = 3.93$). This effect was qualified by an Outcome X Type of Relationship interaction effect, $F(1, 152) = 12.29, p < .001$. As hypothesized (see Table 1), helpers claimed to have had less decision freedom in connection with the rejecting friend ($M = 5.55$) than the rejecting stranger ($M = 4.18$), $F(1, 152) = 3.93, p < .05$, but more decision freedom in connection with the accepting friend ($M = 2.90$) than the accepting stranger ($M = 4.95$), $F(1, 152) = 8.80, p < .005$.

Evaluative Coping

An ANOVA performed on the evaluation measure revealed a main effect of outcome, $F(1, 153) = 69.82, p < .0001$. As hypothesized, rejected helpers evaluated their partner less favorably ($M = 6.82$) than did accepted helpers ($M = 8.50$). There was also a main effect of type of relationship, $F(1, 153) = 13.12, p < .001$, such that helpers evaluated the friend more positively ($M = 8.03$) than they did the stranger ($M = 7.30$). These main effects were qualified by a marginal Outcome X Type of Relationship effect, $F(1, 153) = 2.86, p < .10$.

Examination of the pattern revealed that rejected helpers' evaluations of the rejecting friend were significantly more favorable ($M = 7.35$) than of the rejecting stranger ($M = 6.28$), $F(1, 153) = 14.43, p < .0002$. Helpers' evaluations of the accepting friend ($M = 8.70$) and of the accepting stranger ($M = 8.31$) did not differ significantly, $F(1, 153) = 1.82, ns$.

An ANOVA performed on the attraction measure revealed a main effect of outcome, $F(1, 152) = 20.98, p < .0001$, in the hypothesized direction of less attraction to the rejecting partner ($M = 7.99$) than to the accepting partner ($M = 9.38$). A main effect of relationship was also obtained indicating greater attraction toward the friend ($M = 9.57$) than toward the stranger ($M = 7.80$), $F(1, 152) = 34.41, p < .0001$.

No significant interaction effect was obtained on attraction, $F < 1.00$. There was relatively greater attraction to the friend both under rejection and under acceptance.

DISCUSSION

The literature on relationships suggests that friends dependably support one another by transmitting available resources to one another when needed, and in so doing come to develop shared beliefs (norms) governing such resource exchange. Based on this, we reasoned that

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freedom. However, contrary to predictions, rejection still elicited relatively greater attraction, more positive evaluation, and less attributed defensiveness to the friend than to the stranger.

One possible explanation for this partial failure to find consistent support for the moderating role of relationship is that helpers possessed far more developed evaluative schemas regarding their rejecting friend than their rejecting stranger, and that well-developed schemas would be relatively resistant to change. This interpretation would explain why outcome had had less of an impact on defensiveness, evaluation, and attraction. The relatively greater effect of outcome on decision freedom in the case of the friend than of the stranger may be a choice to blame the experimenter rather than the friend.

Another interpretation is of a relationship-specific, impression management nature. According to this line of reasoning, it would be unseemly to offer negative evaluations of the friend "behind her back," so to speak, when communicating with the experimenter. To do so would be to violate a friendship norm that calls for defending a friend's actions when we talk about her with third parties (see Argyle & Henderson, 1984, on their rule 18). To admit to such negative evaluations might also reflect unfavorably on our wisdom in choice of friends. Such an interpretation does not presuppose that the evaluative schema concerning the rejecting friend is invulnerable. Clearly, the effects of outcome were significant on all the coping measures even when the rejecter was a friend, thus suggesting that privately the rejected friend did not fully condone the rejection.

The effects of outcome on decision freedom were relatively greater where the recipient was a friend. It may be that the outcome had the predicted effect on this particular variant of responsibility diffusion because perceived decision freedom is a considerably subtler measure than are the evaluative ones, and so managed to escape the normative censor.

Further studies are needed to determine whether any of these proposed explanations are correct. It would be useful to test directly the implication that the rejected friend privately condemns the rejection while publicly appearing to condone it. Does the result put a strain on the viability of the relationship? If so, how does the rejected party go about trying to deal with this strain in her subsequent interactions with her friend. More generally put, what happens to a "communal relationship" (as defined by Mills & Clark, 1982) if offers of needed help are rejected by a communal partner?

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