Toward a more complete understanding of the reciprocity of liking effect

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Abstract

It is proposed that the reciprocation of interpersonal attraction is a multifaceted process involving affective, cognitive, and behavioral elements, and that reciprocation can be interpreted using interdependence theory. Two studies investigated whether expressed attraction implies benevolent intentions and whether such intentions are differentially critical to reciprocated affective and behavioral attraction. Study 1 (N = 52) demonstrated that (a) an admirer’s expressed attraction suggests an admirer’s benevolent intentions toward the target, and (b) that benevolent intentions mediate reciprocated affective and behavioral attraction. Study 2 (N = 173) found a difference between affective and behavioral attraction: affective attraction was reciprocated in all cases; but behavioral attraction was not reciprocated when stated behavioral intentions were not consistent with intentions implied by the expressed attraction. Results support an interdependence theory perspective as particularly important for understanding why and what type of reciprocated attraction will occur.

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Extensive literature, beginning with Gouldner’s (1960) seminal treatise, has demonstrated that we like those who express liking for us. Reciprocated attraction (hereafter referred to as the reciprocity effect) has been demonstrated between individuals (e.g., Wilson & Henzlik, 1986), including among adolescents (e.g., Clark & Drewry, 1985; Tiwari, 1985), and between groups (Burleson, 1983). It is generally considered to be one of the more reliable phenomena in social psychology (e.g., McCroskey & Richmond, 2000; Sperling & Borgaro, 1995; Sprecher, 1998). Despite the prevalence of the phenomena, numerous exceptions have been reported: For example, attraction may not be reciprocated when the expressed attraction is insincere (Jones, 1964), restricts our freedom (Brehm, 1966), or is inappropriate (Kiesler, 1966; Schopler & Thompson, 1968). Inconsistencies in the findings may derive from an overly simplistic view of the attraction construct itself. Recent research has suggested that the interpersonal attraction attitude is in fact somewhat complex, containing different dimensions (cognitive, affective and behavioral) that respond differently to different situations. For example,
attraction dimensions differ under conditions of self-esteem threat (e.g., Amabile, 1983; Herbst, Gaertner, & Insko, 2003; Montoya & Horton, 2004) and specific goal orientation (e.g., Michinov & Monteil, 2002). Conditions under which individuals reciprocate attraction—as well as the reason for why individuals reciprocate attraction—may be better understood using social-exchange theory (Homans, 1961) that is encompassed by interdependence theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Interdependence theory has been successfully used to integrate affect and cognition into theory (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003; Rusbult, Van Lange, Wildschut, Yovetich, & Verette, 2000), to model interdependent relationships (Kelley et al., 2003), and to predict reciprocity in relationships (e.g., Ostrom & Walker, 2003).

SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY AND THE NORM OF RECIPROCITY

Gouldner’s (1960) seminal treatise on the norm of reciprocity was the initial foundation for research on the reciprocity effect. In its simplest form, the norm implies that individuals should help those who have helped them, and do no harm to those who have given to them. Such receipt of aid has been generalized to receiving a benefit in the form of another’s affections. If someone expresses affection for another, the recipient reciprocates the affection. Hecato (2nd century B.C.; as cited in Berscheid & Walster, 1969) stated, “I will show you a love potion without any witch’s spell; if you wish to be loved, love.”

The norm of reciprocity, however, can also be conceptualized as a basic social exchange. A social exchange develops when two or more individuals interact such that each individual is rewarded (i.e., cooperation for mutual benefit; Emerson, 1976). Drawing on the basic notions of operant conditioning, social exchange theorists posit that individuals interact with others to the extent they are rewarded for doing so. Although it might be assumed that individuals should desire to increase the frequency of beneficial interactions, it is important to note that rarely are the benefits of a social exchange conferred simultaneously. Most commonly, one provides a benefit to another with the expectation that the promised reciprocated benefit will be provided in the future. One concern that then dominates such sequential social exchanges is whether the promised benefit will ever be exchanged. If the other fails to provide the promised benefit, the individual has been exploited and abandoned—a situation the individual is obviously motivated to avoid. As a result, one essential element to social exchange is trust that reciprocation will occur (Blau, 1964; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). The critical role of trust in facilitating successful social exchanges has been evidenced in studies of ad hoc exchanges (Cosmides & Tooby, 1989; Cosmides & Tooby, 1992; Sally, 2000), close relationships (e.g., Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985; Rempel, Ross, & Holmes, 2001), intergroup relations (Wildschut, Pinter, Vevea, Insko, & Schopler, 2003), and cross-cultural processes (Buchan, Croson, & Dawes, 2002).

Role of Expressed Attraction

How does the role of trust in social exchanges relate to the reciprocity effect? We propose that expressed attraction represents the admirer’s intent to act in a trustworthy and benevolent fashion during the social exchange. In other words, one cue to identify someone who is likely to act in a trustworthy fashion (i.e., act cooperatively) during a social exchange is if the other exhibits some
expression of liking. This proposition has empirical support. Boone and Buck (2003), for instance, have shown that the perception of “willingness to be conditionally cooperative” within a social exchange is represented by positive emotional expressivity, whereas Doney and Cannon (1997) found that the degree to which another was perceived as trustworthy and benevolent was correlated positively with the amount of attraction. Similarly, close relationship researchers (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985; Rempel, Ross & Holmes, 2001) have found a relationship between the benevolent intentions and attraction.

We approach the reciprocity effect and the role of trustworthiness from the perspective of the tripartite model of attitudes (see Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, 1998). The tripartite model of attitudes (e.g., Katz & Stotland, 1959; Rosenberg, Hovland, McGuire, Abelson, & Brehm, 1960) postulates that one’s attitude toward a particular object includes three components: affective (the emotional response toward the attitude object), cognitive (the thoughts and beliefs about the attitude object), and behavioral (the tendency to act in a particular way toward the attitude object). Although interpersonal attraction is most frequently discussed as one’s attitude toward another person, interpersonal attraction is most commonly operationalized in research using only the affective component (i.e., “How do you feel about the target person?”; Ajzen, 1974; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1972; Foa & Foa, 1974; Walster, 1970).

There is support for measuring interpersonal attraction using only the affective component. Within the attraction literature, researchers have typically found high correlations between affective and behavioral attraction ($r = 0.85$; Byrne, 1971), as well as high correlations between affective and cognitive attraction, and between behavioral and cognitive attraction (Montoya & Horton, 2004; Singh, 2005). However, contrary to the assumption that the three components of the tripartite model are essentially the same, the rewards-of-interaction model (e.g. Davis, 1981; Werner & Parmelee, 1979) suggests that behavioral evaluations can differ from affective evaluations. Proponents of this model argue that, although an affective evaluation is universal to all aspects of another person, a behavioral response is more dependent on the social context and self-interest considerations. For example, although an individual may experience affective attraction for another person who shares similar hobbies or attitudes, the same individual may desire to affiliate only in a behavioral context specific to the hobby or attitude. In this way, behavioral attraction will accompany or even exceed affective attraction when there is clear indication of self-interest. Behavioral attraction is tied closely to self-interests because it (a) increases the frequency of beneficial and rewarding interactions (Michinov & Monteil, 2002), (b) increases the amount of information gained about future interactions (Davis, 1981), (c) provides for a more pleasurable interaction (Werner & Parmelee, 1979), and (d) promotes behaviors with immediate consequences. Michinov and Monteil (2002), for example, demonstrated that behavioral and affective attraction were consonant when attitude similarity was irrelevant to the situation; however, behavioral attraction—but not affective attraction—was influenced by attitude similarity when the attitude similarity was relevant to the social context and goals.

The cognitive component of attitudes relates to the thoughts and beliefs about a particular attitude object. In the case of interpersonal attraction, the cognitive component may include beliefs about the target person’s morality, intelligence, charisma, personality, and the like. However, although a cognitive evaluation of the intelligence or morality of the target person may be important for predicting attraction, we posit that it is benevolent intentions inferred about the target person (i.e. trust) that is critical to predicting attraction in the context of the reciprocity effect.

Thus, we propose that considering reciprocated attraction as multifaceted can aid in explaining both the reasons for why attraction is reciprocated as well as the conditions under which there may be both affective and behavioral reciprocation. Under conditions in which the recipient of attraction is able to infer benevolent intentions from the expressed attraction, both affective and behavioral reciprocation should follow. However, if there are cues associated with the expressed attraction that suggest uncertainty about the admirer’s benevolent intentions, affective reciprocation may follow but
behavioral reciprocation may not. Thus, we assume that belief in an admirer’s benevolent intentions should have a greater effect on behavioral attraction than on affective attraction.

As an example of our proposed model, take the hypothetical persons Seth and Laura. After Laura expresses some interest in Seth, Seth’s perceptions of the benevolence of Laura’s actions toward him increase. As such, Seth will not only feel more warmly toward her, but will also experience more desire to affiliate with her. However, if Laura’s benevolence is questioned, although Seth may still feel lingering affection for her, his behavioral attraction toward Laura will decrease. This drop in behavioral attraction is assumed to be caused by a reduction in Laura’s benevolent intentions. Laura’s anticipated actions have a greater impact on behavioral attraction due to behavioral attraction’s greater association with immediate consequences.

**PROPOSED MODEL**

We argue that reciprocated attraction is driven by the perceived benevolent intentions implied by the receipt of attraction. The purpose of these studies was to investigate the operative mechanism underlying the reciprocity effect by (a) assessing the intentions implied by the receipt of attraction on both behavioral and affective reciprocated attraction, and (b) investigating whether benevolent intentions mediate the reciprocated behavioral and affective attraction. Figure 1 illustrates the proposed pathways of the reciprocity effect. The receipt of attraction implies benevolent intentions that in turn mediate the link to both behavioral and affective attraction. However, there is also a direct link from the receipt of attraction to affective attraction, implying that reciprocated affective attraction is less dependent on benevolent intentions than behavioral attraction. Our proposition is that reciprocated behavioral attraction is more exclusively dependent on benevolent intentions because of the more immediate consequences of behavioral attraction.

**STUDY 1**

**Purpose of This Study**

Study 1 was designed to provide initial support for the implied meaning of attraction in an interdependent context. In this study, half of the participants learned that their future interaction partner...
liked them. We expected to replicate the basic reciprocity effect, such that participants should like those partners more who liked them. But further, we also expected participants who learned that their partner liked them would evaluate their partner as more likely to act benevolently, and as having more mutually beneficial motivations. Finally, because we hypothesized that benevolent intentions were critical for reciprocated attraction, we hypothesized that the perception of benevolent intentions would mediate reciprocated behavioral attraction.

It is important to note that, although much of the previous research on the reciprocity effect has contrasted a liking partner with a disliking partner, the present research contrasted a liking partner with a no-feedback, or control, partner. We focused on contrasting a liking partner with a control partner because our interest was to specifically understanding the role that the presence of attraction had on reciprocated liking; rather than the potentially different processes associated with attraction versus rejection (e.g., Berkowitz, 1989; 1990; 1993). This is true of both Study 1 and Study 2.

Method

Participants

Fifty-two women participated in this study in partial fulfillment of an introductory psychology class requirement.

Independent Variable

The sole independent variable was partner evaluation: positive vs. control. This variable was manipulated through bogus feedback received from the partner.

Dependent Variables

Manipulation Check  Participants responded to two questions that assessed the degree to which the participant believed their partner liked them (e.g. “How much do you think that your partner likes you?”; 1 = not at all, 9 = very much). These questions served as a manipulation check for the receipt of attraction manipulation. The Spearman–Brown corrected reliability for these questions was 0.89.

Affective Attraction Assessment  Five items, each on a nine-point scale, were used to assess the affective evaluation of the target person. Ratings on the five items (e.g., “How unpleasant/pleasant do you feel toward your partner?” “How positive/negative do you feel toward your partner?”) were averaged to form an index of affective attraction (α = 0.93). Each one of these items for this assessment is presented in the Appendix.

Behavioral Attraction Assessment  Two items, each on a nine-point scale, assessed the participant’s behavioral evaluation of the target person. The two items (“I would like to meet my interaction partner.” “To what extent do you want to interact with your interaction partner?”) were averaged to form an index of behavioral attraction (α = 0.89).
Benevolent Intentions Assessment Four items, each on a nine-point scale, assessed perceptions of the partner’s intent to act benevolently. The four items (e.g. “On the upcoming interaction with my partner, I believe that my partner will act benevolently,” “I believe that my partner will look out for my interests.”) were averaged to form an index of perceived benevolent intentions (α = 0.83). Each of the items for this assessment is presented in the Appendix.

Perceived Partner Motives Ten questions assessed the participant’s perception of the partner’s motives on the upcoming task. The partner motives measure seven different motivations for distributing resources between individuals. Each motivation represents a distinct allocation strategy (Bornstein, Crum, Wittenbraker, Harring, Insko, & Thibaut, 1983; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Participants used a seven-point scale (1 = not at all, 7 = very much) to rate each item. The items measured five potential motivations indicating to what degree the partner’s motives were to: maximize her own outcomes (max own; “to maximize my earnings” and “to earn as much as possible”), maximize the difference between individuals (max rel; “to earn more than the other person” and “to maximize the difference between the individuals in my favor”), minimize the difference between individuals (min diff; “to minimize the difference between persons” and “to earn an equal amount”), maximize the joint outcomes (max joint; “to earn as much as possible together” and “to maximize the joint outcomes of both individuals”), and distrust (“defend herself against my actions” and “did not want to lose”). The Spearman-Brown corrected reliabilities for these pairs were: 0.80 for max own, 0.86 for max joint, 0.79 for min diff, 0.82 for max rel, and 0.68 for fear.

Procedure

Participants reported to the experimental session in groups of four or six persons. Participants were seated immediately in individual, private rooms. Care was taken to avoid verbal and visual contact between participants before the experiment. The experimenter initiated the cover story by informing the participants that the study involved two sections. In the first section, participants were told they would engage in a short task with their future partner to ensure that everyone involved in the “second task” would be well acquainted. Participants first completed a brief “Initial questionnaire” containing such items as: “What is your favorite movie of all time? And why?” After completion, the questionnaires were ostensibly exchanged between partners. In reality, each participant received a rather nondescript standardized questionnaire that reflected responses consistent with a typical female undergraduate. For the second section of the experiment, participants were told that they would interact with their partner in an interdependent task.

Consistent with previous prisoner’s dilemma game (PDG) research (e.g., Insko, et al., 1988; Schopler, Insko, Graetz, Drigotas, & Smith, 1991), participants received explicit instructions regarding choice combinations of the PDG matrix, were tested individually concerning their understanding of the matrix, and had their tests corrected individually by the experimenter. Participants were told to expect between 8 and 10 PDG interactions with their partner.

Before participants engaged in the interdependent task, the experimenter asked the participants to “share their thoughts about the experiment” using a short questionnaire. After completing the questionnaire, participants were told that they were assigned randomly to either “give” this questionnaire to their partner or to “receive” their partner’s completed questionnaire. In actuality, each participant was assigned to the “receive” condition, and thus obtained their presumed partner’s completed questionnaire without relinquishing their own questionnaire.
Participants assigned randomly to the positive-evaluation condition received the following statement (adapted from McWhirter & Jecker, 1967):

This has been a fairly interesting experiment. I enjoyed reading my partner’s responses. She seems like a really fun and interesting person. I would really like to get to know her better.

Participants in the control-evaluation condition received the following statement:

This has been a fairly interesting experiment. It was interesting to be able to read my partner’s responses. This experiment seems like it will be really fun and interesting. I would really like to do more experiments like this one.

Participants then completed the postexperimental questionnaire and were told that the experiment was over and that no actual interactions would take place. Participants were then debriefed and dismissed.

Results

Manipulation Check

Validating the partner evaluation manipulation, participants in the positive-evaluation condition believed that their partner liked them more ($M = 7.06, SD = 1.14$) than did participants in the control-evaluation condition ($M = 5.86, SD = 1.26$), $t(50) = 3.69$, $p < 0.05$.

Receipt of Attraction Effects

Reciprocated Attraction An independent samples $t$-test found that participants in the positive-evaluation condition returned more affective attraction to their partner ($M = 7.38, SD = 1.33$) than did participants in the control-evaluation condition ($M = 6.55, SD = 1.54$), $t(50) = 2.06$, $p < 0.05$. Also, participants expressed more behavioral attraction in the positive-evaluation condition ($M = 6.91, SD = 1.15$) than in the control-evaluation condition ($M = 6.12, SD = 1.28$), $t(50) = 2.33$, $p < 0.05$.

Benevolent Intentions Participants believed that partners who expressed attraction had more benevolent intentions ($M = 6.44, SD = 1.19$) than those partners who did not ($M = 5.04, SD = 1.25$), $t(50) = 3.96$, $p < 0.05$.

Perceived Partner Motives Each of the motives was subjected to an independent samples $t$-test. Participants believed that partners who expressed attraction were less interested in maximizing their own outcomes (max own; $M_{positive} = 4.48$ vs. $M_{control} = 5.42$), $t(50) = 2.11$, $p < 0.05$, marginally less interested in maximizing the difference between partners (max rel; $M_{positive} = 3.32$ vs. $M_{control} = 4.09$), $t(50) = 1.95$, $p < 0.06$, and marginally more interested in minimizing the difference between the partners (min diff; $M_{positive} = 5.25$ vs. $M_{control} = 4.57$), $t(50) = 1.97$, $p < 0.06$. No significant differences were found for the perception that the admiring partners were more interested in maximizing joint outcomes (max joint; $M_{positive} = 5.63$ vs. $M_{control} = 5.21$), $t(50) = 1.07$, $p = 0.28$, or the perception that the admiring partners were motivated by fear (fear; $M_{positive} = 3.25$ vs. $M_{control} = 3.60$), $t(50) = 1.00$, $p = 0.31$. 

Mediation Analyses

The potential mediation of reciprocity of behavioral attraction by benevolent intentions was assessed using MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, and Sheets’ (2002) modification of Baron and Kenny’s (1986) procedure. According to MacKinnon et al., mediation is established when (a) the independent variable significantly influences the mediating variable, (b) the influence of the proposed mediator is significant when including the proposed mediator and the independent variable as predictors of the dependent variable, and (c) the indirect effect of the mediating variable is significant.

An initial analysis tested for heterogeneity of regression. With behavioral attraction as the dependent variable, we entered benevolent intentions along with evaluation type as predictors. There was no support for heterogeneity of regression for benevolent intentions, Benevolent Intentions × Partner Evaluation interaction, \( F(1, 48) = 0.19, p = 0.65 \).

The first mediation condition was satisfied: As mentioned above, participants evaluated admiring partners as possessing more benevolent intentions compared with control partners, \( B = 1.34, SE = 0.339, p < 0.05 \). Benevolent intentions predicted behavioral attraction significantly when including benevolent intentions and the partner evaluation as predictors of behavioral attraction, \( B = 0.55, SE = 0.16, p < 0.05 \). Using MacKinnon et al.’s (2002) empirically derived critical values for the assessment of indirect effects (critical values for \( z' \) of 0.05 and 0.01 are 0.97 and 1.1, respectively), the indirect effect of partner evaluation on behavioral attraction via benevolent intentions was significant, \( z' = 2.59, p < 0.05 \). The effect of partner evaluation on behavioral attraction was not significant when the benevolent intentions assessment was included in the model, \( B = 0.13, SE = 0.45, p = 0.75 \). This result is consistent with total mediation of behavioral attraction by benevolent intentions.

We also tested mediation of affective attraction by benevolent intentions. An initial test for heterogeneity of regression with affective attraction as the dependent variable was not significant, Benevolent Intentions × Partner Evaluation interaction, \( F(1, 48) = 0.65, p = 0.42 \). Benevolent intentions predicted behavioral attraction significantly when including benevolent intentions and the partner evaluation as predictors of behavioral attraction \( B = 0.44, SE = 0.15, p < 0.05 \). Finally, the indirect effect of the evaluation type on affective attraction via benevolent intentions was significant, \( z' = 2.35, p < 0.05 \). The effect of partner evaluation on affective attraction was no longer significant when benevolent intentions was included in the model, \( B = 0.24, SE = 0.43, p = 0.57 \). As with behavioral attraction, this result was consistent with total mediation of affective attraction by benevolent intentions.

Discussion

Consistent with expectations, participants who believed their partner liked them believed that their partner possessed more benevolent intentions, and were perceived as less interested in maximizing their own outcomes. Similar effects for maximizing the difference in outcomes and minimizing the difference in outcomes were not significant, but marginal \( (p < 0.06) \). In addition, the results were consistent with the hypothesis that benevolent intentions mediated the link between received attraction from another and reciprocated behavioral and affective attraction. The present results are consistent with Rempel, Ross, and Holmes’s (2001) perspective that perceptions of benevolent intentions (i.e., trust) are a cognitive consequence of attraction in long-term relationships. Finding support for the mediational role of benevolent intentions is also consistent with related research demonstrating the crucial role of cognition to the experience of attraction (e.g., Anderson, 1971; Montoya & Horton, 2004).
In one obvious respect the results were not consistent with the proposed model in Figure 1. According to the Figure 1 model, affective attraction is only partially mediated by benevolent intentions. However, the mediation analysis produced results consistent with total mediation of affective attraction by benevolent intentions; i.e., the effect of partner evaluation on affective attraction became nonsignificant ($p = 0.57$) when benevolent intentions were covaried out.

Despite the present evidence for total mediation of affective attraction by benevolent intentions, there is reason to believe that there is a direct pathway from partner evaluation to affective attraction. For instance, Drachman, deCarufel, and Insko (1978) obtained evidence indicating that a positive evaluation led to an increase in liking for the flatterer even when the flatter had ulterior motives for expressing the attraction. This finding, along with similar findings (e.g., Jones, 1964), suggests that the receipt of a positive evaluation may not be associated with a thorough processing of all the relevant information; and thus, there may be a simple unmediated reciprocity for affective attraction. Montoya and Horton (2004) further support this proposition by observing that the effect of a similarity of attitudes manipulation on attraction was stronger when cognitive processing preceded an assessment of affective attraction. Without careful consideration, being admired may lead to an emotional response toward others who admire us, even if they are not “good” for us (see Baumeister, Wortman, & Stillwell, 1993; Stroud, Tanofsky, Wilfley, & Salovey, 2000).

If there is indeed a direct path from partner evaluation to affective evaluation, why did not we find a direct path, but rather, an indirect path through benevolent intentions? It is important to recognize that a mediation analysis is essentially a correlational procedure and thus can produce misleading results. Consistent with previous research that reports high correlations between affective and behavioral components in consonant contexts (e.g., Woodmansee & Cook, 1967), the correlation between affective and behavioral attraction in Study 1 was 0.73. Such a strong relationship between affective and behavioral attraction could have guaranteed that the covariation between behavioral intentions and behavioral attraction would have resulted in covariation between benevolent intentions and affective attraction.

Second, in addition to a path from benevolent intentions to affective attraction, there might also be a reverse path from affective attraction to benevolent intentions; i.e., affective attraction and benevolent intentions may be related in a feedback loop—so, not only do benevolent intentions lead to increased affective attraction, but affective attraction might lead to perceiving more benevolent intentions. Whether or not there are paths in both directions, we do find it plausible that positive feelings for some person could lead to trust in that person.

In sum, the mediation tests resulted in full mediation for both affective and behavioral attraction (rather than partial for affective attraction). This mediation may have resulted from either (a) the strong covariation between affective and behavioral components of the attraction construct, or (b) a reverse feedback loop between affective attraction and benevolent intentions. In Study 2, we addressed these issues by manipulating experimentally their partner’s intentions during an interdependent task—a procedure that should disaggregate the participant’s affective and behavioral evaluations and clarify the causal order of affective attraction and benevolent intentions.

**STUDY 2**

**Purpose of the Study**

In Study 1, there was no reason for the participants in the positive evaluation condition to discount the benevolent intentions of the partner (i.e., the receipt of attraction always predicted benevolent intentions). In Study 2, we addressed these issues by manipulating experimentally their partner’s intentions during an interdependent task—a procedure that should disaggregate the participant’s affective and behavioral evaluations and clarify the causal order of affective attraction and benevolent intentions.
intentions), and as such, there was no reason for affective attraction to differ from behavioral attraction. We examined this matter directly in Study 2 by including a manipulation of partner intentions. Study 2 tested the role of benevolent intentions implied by the partner’s expressed evaluation by investigating the reciprocity effect when the evaluation was presented concurrently with manipulated partner intentions that were either consistent or inconsistent with that evaluation.

One condition under which the receipt of attraction should less likely lead to reciprocated behavioral attraction is when an explicitly expressed intention is inconsistent with the intention implied by the stated evaluation. Inconsistent information should make it difficult to infer benevolent intentions from the positive evaluation, and this should result in a reduction of reciprocated behavioral attraction. Alternatively, inferences about intent should be clear when the expressed intent is consistent with an expressed positive evaluation, and this should lead to stronger reciprocated behavioral attraction.

In Study 2, as in Study 1, participants first exchanged bogus questionnaires, and half of the participants were led to believe that their partner liked them. Participants then received bogus feedback from their partner suggesting the choice she might make on a subsequent Prisoner’s Dilemma Game. Participants were led to believe that their partner would either act in a way to facilitate mutually good outcomes (a cooperative partner), act to maximize their own outcomes (a competitive partner), or was uncertain about how to behave (an ambiguous partner). In a final condition, participants were given no information about their partner’s intent (the control condition).

**Hypotheses** We expected an interaction between partner evaluation (positive evaluation versus neutral evaluation) and partner intentions (cooperative, competitive, ambiguous, control). The reciprocity effect was hypothesized to be present both when an admiring partner was paired with expected future behavior that was consistent with the positive evaluation and when there was no explicit statement of their partner’s behavioral intention (as in the control condition). Note that the implied cooperative intention flowing from the positive evaluation is not contradicted with either stated cooperative intentions or with no statement of intent.

Alternatively, behavioral attraction should be reciprocated to a lesser extent when a partner’s expressed intent is inconsistent with a positive evaluation. Reciprocated behavioral attraction should be reduced if an admirer suggests that she would behave competitively and should also be reduced if the partner expressed uncertainty about how to behave. In other words, reciprocated attraction should be reduced because the expressed intentions were inconsistent with an admirer whose implied intentions were benevolent. The ambiguous condition provides an important contrast: Unlike the competitive condition, which perhaps suggests antagonistic or competitive information about the partner’s intent, the ambiguous condition is not menacing or antagonistic, but is still inconsistent with a partner who should be helpful.

Note further that the competitive and ambiguous conditions also provide the opportunity to differentiate between affective and behavioral attraction. Because interactions with others from whom benevolent intentions cannot be inferred can hinder one’s self-interests, the rewards-of-interaction model proposes differential responsiveness of behavioral and affective attraction. Whereas there may be a general increase in affective attraction following the receipt of attraction from another, behavioral attraction should be greater when expressed attraction is accompanied by information that the partner will act consistently with the expressed positive evaluation (i.e. when the partner’s benevolent intentions can be inferred). The argument suggests a triple interaction, such that the predicted double interaction between partner evaluation and partner intent should be stronger for behavioral attraction than for affective attraction.

Finally, consistent with the results of Study 1, we hypothesized that the reciprocity effect would be mediated by benevolent intentions. However, because the reciprocity of behavioral attraction should result only when the partner’s expressed behavioral intentions are consistent with a positive evaluation,
we expected that benevolent intentions should mediate the Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions interaction only for behavioral attraction.

Method

Participants

One hundred and seventy-three women participated in partial fulfillment of an introductory psychology class requirement.

Independent and Dependent Variables

The experiment included two manipulated variables: One of the manipulated variables was partner evaluation, and the other was partner intentions. Partner evaluation was manipulated as in Study 1. The partner intentions variable was manipulated by varying partner feedback regarding the upcoming PDG choice, or by providing no such feedback. The dependent variables were the same as in Study 1.

Procedure

The first half of Study 2 was identical to Study 1. Participants arrived at the experimental room individually and were seated in separate rooms. Participants completed and supposedly exchanged an initial background questionnaire and then received another questionnaire from their partner in which thoughts about the experiment were indicated. As in Study 1, the second questionnaire provided the context for the partner evaluation manipulation (positive or control).

The second half of Study 2 began by introducing the PDG. As in Study 1, the PDG was first described and then the participant’s understanding of the PDG was tested. Participants were told to expect between 8 and 10 PDG interactions with their partner. The actual PDG interaction followed a timed sequence. Following the message, “Look at your sheet,” participants were told that they had 1 minute to look over the matrix and think about their X (the cooperative choice) or Y (the competitive choice) choice. Next, participants were told that they would have the opportunity to communicate with their partner. Participants were then handed a “Communication sheet” and told that the sheets would be exchanged between partners. The participants were told they could write anything they desired on the sheet with the knowledge that this sheet would be handed to their partner. At this time, the second independent variable was introduced. Participants received one of three messages from their partner. In the cooperative condition, participants received a message that read, “I will probably pick X”; in the competitive condition, “I will probably pick Y”; and in the ambiguous condition, “I don’t know whether to select X or Y.” Each participant was again told that she was in the “receive” condition and, as a result, the only communication that would occur between participants was the receipt of the bogus communication from the partner. Participants in the control condition were told that no exchange of the communication sheets would occur.

Before completing the first trial, participants were asked to complete the behavioral and affective attraction assessments. Immediately after responding to the attraction items, participants were instructed to “make a decision”–to make a choice in the PDG (select either X or Y). Participants next completed the benevolent intentions assessment and then rated how much they thought their partner liked them. After turning in their decision sheets and questionnaires, participants were debriefed and dismissed.
Results

**Manipulation Check**

The degree to which participants thought their partner liked them was entered into a 2 (partner evaluation: positive, control) × 4 (partner intentions: cooperative, competitive, ambiguous, control) ANOVA. There was a significant main effect for partner evaluation, *F*(1, 165) = 16.21, *p* < 0.05, such that participants perceived more liking from their partners in the positive condition (*M* = 6.76, *SD* = 1.13) than in the control condition (*M* = 6.04, *SD* = 1.09). The main effect for partner intentions was also significant, *F*(3, 165) = 5.02, *p* < 0.05, but did not interact significantly with partner evaluation, *F*(3, 165) = 0.24, *p* = 0.86.2

**Overall Model**

Table 1 displays the means for behavioral attraction, affective attraction, and behavioral intentions as a function of partner evaluation and partner intentions. We entered the attraction indices into a 2 (Partner Evaluation: positive, control) × 4 (Partner Intentions: cooperative, competitive, ambiguous, control) × 2 (Attraction Indices: affective, behavioral) mixed ANOVA with attraction Indices as a within-subjects factor. The main effects for partner intentions and partner evaluation were both significant, *F*(3, 165) = 8.34, *p* < 0.05, and *F*(1, 165) = 20.47, *p* < 0.05, respectively. However, these effects were qualified by the critical three-way interaction, *F*(3, 165) = 3.68, *p* < 0.05. Because different predictions were expected for behavioral and affective attraction, we probed the three-way interaction by investigating behavioral and affective attraction separately.

Table 1. Mean ratings (and standard deviations) of behavioral attraction, affective attraction, and benevolent intentions by Partner Evaluation and Partner Intentions in Study 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner intentions</th>
<th>Consistent</th>
<th>Inconsistent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral attraction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive evaluation</td>
<td>7.51 (0.86)</td>
<td>7.39 (1.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control evaluation</td>
<td>6.22 (1.17)</td>
<td>6.15 (1.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective attraction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive evaluation</td>
<td>8.27 (0.79)</td>
<td>8.33 (1.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control evaluation</td>
<td>7.22 (1.06)</td>
<td>7.33 (1.66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benevolent intentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive evaluation</td>
<td>6.95 (1.34)</td>
<td>6.41 (1.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control evaluation</td>
<td>5.33 (1.52)</td>
<td>5.95 (1.32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *N* = 173. Ratings ranged between 1 and 9, with higher values indicating increased attraction or benevolent intentions.

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2We also recorded the participant’s PDG choice. An “X” choice was coded as “0” and a “Y” choice was coded as “1.” The participant’s choice behavior was entered into a 2 (partner evaluation) × 4 (partner intention) logistic regression with the dichotomous choice behavior as the dependent variable. There was a significant main effect for partner intentions, *χ*²(3, *N* = 173) = 24.95, *p* < 0.05, but neither the partner evaluation main effect, *χ*²(1, *N* = 173) = 0.49, *p* = 0.82, nor the Partner Evaluation × Partner Intention interaction was significant, *χ*²(3, *N* = 173) = 4.57, *p* = 0.20.

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Behavioral Attraction There was a significant Partner Evaluation x Partner’s Intentions interaction, $F(3, 165) = 2.85, p < 0.05$, that was explored using orthogonal contrasts. To conduct the first contrast, the cooperative and control conditions were combined to form the consistent condition (i.e., conditions in which behavioral intentions were consistent with expressed liking), whereas the ambiguous and competitive conditions were combined to form the inconsistent condition (i.e., conditions in which behavioral intentions were inconsistent with expressed liking). We then used these computed variables to test the interaction with partner evaluation. The first orthogonal contrast assessed the Partner Evaluation x Partner Intentions (consistent, inconsistent) interaction. Figure 2 displays behavioral attraction expressed as a function of partner intentions and partner evaluation. This contrast revealed a significant interaction, $F(1, 165) = 7.84, p < 0.05$, such that the receipt of a positive evaluation had a greater impact on reciprocated attraction in the consistent condition than in the inconsistent condition. Simple-effect tests indicated that the effect of a positive evaluation was significant for the consistent condition ($M_{positive} = 7.45$ vs. $M_{control} = 6.19$), $t(165) = 4.81, p < 0.05$, but not for the inconsistent condition ($M_{positive} = 6.00$ vs. $M_{control} = 5.82$), $t(165) = 0.63, p = 0.52$.

The final two contrasts assessed the Evaluation Type x Partner’s Intent interaction first within the two consistent conditions (cooperative and control) and then within the two inconsistent conditions (competitive and ambiguous). The Partner Evaluation x Partner’s Intentions interaction was not

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3One may question if the means are sufficiently similar within the consistent and inconsistent conditions to support collapsing them into the consistent and inconsistent conditions. For behavioral attraction, there was not a significant difference between the cooperation and control condition, $t(168) = 0.48, p = 0.62$; or a difference between the competitive and ambiguous condition, $t(168) = 1.17, p = 0.24$. For affective attraction, neither the difference between cooperation and the control condition was significant, $t(168) = 0.40, p = 0.68$; nor was the difference between the competitive and ambiguous condition, $t(168) = 1.64, p = 0.10$. 

Affective Attraction

Unlike for behavioral attraction, for affective attraction the overall Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions interaction was not significant, $F(3, 165) = 0.44, p = 0.72$. Figure 3 displays affective attraction across partner intentions (consistent vs. inconsistent) and partner evaluation.

Benevolent Intentions

The benevolent intentions data were subjected to a 2 (Partner Evaluation) × 4 (Partner Intentions) ANOVA. The main effect for partner evaluation was significant, $F(1, 165) = 12.69, p < 0.05$, as was the main effect for the partner intentions, $F(3, 165) = 9.55, p < 0.05$. The expected interaction was significant, $F(3, 165) = 2.60, p < 0.05$, and explored using the orthogonal contrasts that were used for attraction.

The Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions (consistent, inconsistent) interaction was marginal, $F(1, 165) = 2.83, p = 0.09$. The interaction indicates that the receipt of a positive evaluation had a greater impact on perceived benevolent intentions in the consistent conditions than in the inconsistent conditions. Simple-effect tests indicate that the effect of a positive evaluation was significant for the consistent conditions ($M_{\text{positive}} = 6.65$ vs. $M_{\text{control}} = 5.62$), $t(165) = 3.63, p < 0.05$, but not for the inconsistent conditions ($M_{\text{positive}} = 5.58$ vs. $M_{\text{control}} = 5.34$), $t(165) = 0.84, p = 0.39$.

The final two orthogonal contrasts relate to the Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions interaction separately within the two consistent conditions and within the two inconsistent conditions. The interaction was significant within the consistent conditions, $F(1, 165) = 4.54, p < 0.05$, and indicates that the effect of a positive evaluation was greater in the cooperative condition than in the control.

Figure 3. Affective attraction expressed as a function of partner intentions and partner evaluation.

significant for either the consistent conditions, $F(1, 165) = 0.10, p = 0.74$, or the inconsistent conditions, $F(1, 165) = 0.65, p = 0.42$. 
condition. The Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions interaction was not significant within the inconsistent conditions, $F(1, 165) = 0.12, p = 0.72$.

**Mediated Moderation of Behavioral Attraction**

We did not test for the mediation of the Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions interaction on affective attraction by benevolent intentions for the simple reason that the interaction was not significant; i.e., there was no significant effect to mediate. We could, however, test for mediation of the interaction for behavioral attraction.

In order to test for heterogeneity of regression, we entered benevolent intentions along with partner’s consistent versus inconsistent intentions and partner evaluation as predictors, with behavioral attraction as the dependent variable. There was no support for heterogeneity of regression for benevolent intentions: Benevolent Intentions × Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions interaction, $F(1, 165) = 1.08, p = 0.39$.

As indicated above, the Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions (consistent vs. inconsistent) interaction was significant for behavioral attraction, $F(1, 165) = 2.52, p < 0.05$, and marginal for benevolent intentions, $F(1, 165) = 2.83, p = 0.09$. Further analyses indicated that the predictive power of benevolent intentions on behavioral attraction was significant when partner evaluation, partner intentions, interaction terms, and benevolent intentions were included in the model, $B = 0.37, SE = 0.07, p < 0.05$. The indirect effect of the Partner Evaluation × Partner Intent interaction on behavioral attraction via benevolent intentions was significant, $z' = 1.99, p < 0.05$. The interactive effect of partner evaluation and partner intentions on behavioral attraction was no longer significant when the assessment of benevolent intentions was included in the model, $B = 0.25, SE = 0.50, p = 0.61$. These results are consistent with total mediation of the moderating effect of partner intentions on partner evaluation by benevolent intentions.

**Discussion**

Study 2 provided evidence for both the different conditions necessary for reciprocated attraction as well as an explanation for the reciprocation of affective and behavioral attraction. For behavioral attraction but not affective, partner intentions acted as a moderator such that the reciprocation of behavioral attraction occurred more prominently when the partner’s evaluation was consistent with the partner’s stated intentions than when the partner’s evaluation was inconsistent with the partner’s stated intentions. Simple-effect tests, in fact, indicated that the partner’s evaluation had a significant effect only within the consistent condition. Within the inconsistent condition (i.e., when the partner’s intentions were either competitive or ambiguous), partner evaluation had no significant effect. This pattern of results indicates, as is implied by the reward-of-interaction models (e.g., Davis, 1981; Werner & Parmelee, 1979), that behavioral attraction is particularly responsive to self-interest.

For behavioral attraction, the mediational analysis of behavioral attraction yielded results consistent with the experimental results. The analysis indicates that the greater tendency toward reciprocated behavioral attraction with consistent intentions was mediated by benevolent intentions. Given the correlational nature of any mediational analysis, the agreement between this mediational analysis and the experimental findings is consistent with our expectations. To put simply the findings for behavioral attraction, the data imply that the degree to which we might desire to affiliate with an admiring other is impacted by how much we believe that person will look out for us.
Affective and behavioral attraction followed different patterns. Unlike behavioral attraction, affective attraction continued to be reciprocated despite expressed intentions of competitive or antagonistic behavior from the admiring other. This result implies, in contrast to the complete mediation of affective attraction by benevolent intentions in Study 1, that there is a direct path from partner evaluation to affective attraction—or at least a path that does not involve benevolent intentions. In view of the present experimental results, it is possible that the Study 1 mediational pattern was not due to an effect of benevolent intentions on affective attraction, but rather, was either due to the covariation between behavioral and affective attraction or the effect of affective attraction on benevolent intentions. In either case, we are reassured by the clear experimental evidence of a direct link between partner’s evaluation and affective attraction found in Study 2 as well as its consistency with previous research.

Finally, one interpretation of the strong correlation between affective and behavioral attraction (Study 1: \( r = 0.73 \), Study 2: \( r = 0.65 \)) is that affective and behavioral attraction constructs are not independent measures. The distinctiveness of affective attraction from behavioral attraction, however, is evident in the changes in the affective-behavioral attraction correlation across experimental conditions consistent with the predictions of our model. In the positive-consistent condition, for example, in which we would expect both affective and behavioral attraction to be experienced, the correlation was 0.59. In the positive-inconsistent condition, however, in which we would expect affective attraction but not behavioral attraction, the correlation was significantly lower (\( r = 0.38, z = 2.34, p < 0.05 \)). Second, the Partner Evaluation × Partner Intentions × Attraction Indices triple interaction also provides evidence for the uniqueness of the constructs. As discussed by Cronbach and Meehl (1955), one technique for demonstrating construct validity is to investigate the constructs in different theoretical situations: Support for the construct validity of the measures is demonstrated if the different measures change according to theoretical predictions. Study 2 found evidence for this: Affective attraction, but not behavioral attraction, was reciprocated when there was an expression of attraction but benevolent intentions could not be inferred from the expressed attraction.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The present research both demonstrates the complexity of the seemingly simple reciprocity effect, as well as outlines how the processes that underlie the reciprocity effect lead to a better understanding of the phenomenon in general. We have argued that expressions of liking from another (e.g., “I like you”) represent the admirer’s intent to act benevolently toward the admired; reciprocated attraction results from these perceived benevolent intentions. Toward this end, Study 1 found that a positive evaluation increased both affective and behavioral attraction and showed evidence for mediation of both affective and behavioral attraction by benevolent intentions. Study 2, however, demonstrated that behavioral, but not affective, attraction was significantly reduced when there was evidence that the benevolent intentions implied by the partner’s attraction could not be taken at face value. The difference between the determinants of behavioral and affective attraction is consistent with there being greater relevance of self-interested consequences for behavior than for feelings. Taken in sum, these results provide compelling evidence for the mediational role of benevolent intentions to the reciprocation of attraction.

**Benevolent Intentions and Reciprocated Attraction**

The relationship between benevolent intentions and reciprocated attraction is particularly interesting given research on the development of trust and benevolent intentions in ongoing relationships. Rempel,
Holmes, and Zanna (1985) note that trust develops via extensive social learning in interactions which allow individuals to develop an understanding of their partner’s intents and motives. Alternatively, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk, and Tazelaar (2002) suggest that over the long run, benevolent intentions in combination with the perceived generosity of the relationship partner, resulting in reciprocated attraction. The present research, however, demonstrated that benevolence and trust may be inferred via cognitive processes from brief, initial interactions with others and, even more so, from the basic expression of liking.

The present research is not to first to provide evidence for a cognitive process that precedes a behavioral evaluation. Devine (1989), for instance, demonstrated that the amount of discrimination one directs toward an outgroup (behavioral response to a group) is dependent on the stereotype of the group (cognitive evaluation). Whereas we have argued that a cognitive evaluation focused on benevolent intentions (i.e. trust) is critical for the reciprocity effect, previous research has suggested that there are other cognitive evaluations that can also influence the experience of attraction. In the evolutionary psychology literature, for example, researchers propose that individuals should evaluate both (a) a mate’s ability to facilitate good outcomes (i.e., good earning capacity, physically attractive, intelligent; Buss, 2003; Trivers, 1972) as well as (b) a mate’s willingness to facilitate good outcomes (i.e., cooperatively motivated, trustworthy, friendly; Buss, 2004; Trivers, 1972). Whereas considerable research has demonstrated the cognitive processing associated with the evaluation of another’s ability to facilitate good outcomes (e.g., Anderson, 1971; Buss & Barnes, 1986), the present research provides initial evidence for the cognitive evaluation that assesses the willingness component of one’s overall cognitive evaluation of a target person.

Toward a Model of Reciprocated Behavioral Attraction

These studies provided support for benevolent intentions as critical to the reciprocity of attraction. We have proposed that the expression of attraction implies benevolent intentions (i.e., trust). These benevolent intentions, in turn, suggest that the admirer is willing to support the admired’s self-interests, which then leads to the reciprocation of behavioral attraction.

Jones (1964), in a famous short book on ingratiation, discussed numerous potential limitations and facilitators of the reciprocity effect. The list includes many of the most pervasive real-world concerns associated with the receipt of attraction, namely, the perceived sincerity of the expressed attraction, the presence of ulterior motives for the expression of attraction, the amount of sacrifice the other makes for the admired, and others. He argued that each of these is critical to reciprocated attraction because they allow individuals to make accurate attributions regarding the intentions of the admirer—if an individual can infer that the attraction is true, attraction will be reciprocated.

Jones’ arguments (1964) seem plausible, but unlike Jones, we believe that the tripartite model provides a superior beginning for the conceptualization of the reciprocation process. More specifically, we believe that when modeling reciprocated attraction, the most important cognitive evaluation to the experience of attraction is the belief that the other person is benevolently motivated. The emphasis on benevolent motivations is consistent with Jones’ theory but the differential effects of trust on behavioral and affective attraction are not. As demonstrated in Study 2, participants did not care to affiliate with admirers who said they liked them but then did not look out for their interests. This result is generally consistent with Jones’ theory and past research on sincerity and ulterior motives (e.g., Ayers, Nacci, & Tedeschi, 1973; Brehm & Cole, 1966; Esser & Komorita, 1975, but also see Drachman, deCarufel, & Insko, 1978); however, the fact that a parallel result was not found for affective attraction is not consistent with Jones’ theory.
We, however, acknowledge that in a context in which there is extreme certainty of trust, such trust may have an effect on affective attraction. There is, for example, evidence that reciprocated affective attraction is greater when an admirer also sacrifices his/her own self-interests for the admired (e.g., Fisher & Nadler, 1974; Gergen, Morse, & Kristeller, 1973; Tesser, Gatewood, & Driver, 1968). This effect can be understood if attraction paired with self-sacrifice leads to extreme certainty that the expressed attraction does indeed imply the admirer’s benevolent intentions.

**Reciprocation of Affective Attraction**

If benevolent intentions implied by expressed attraction do not typically mediate, or totally mediate, the effect of partner evaluation on affective attraction why does such an effect occur? One possibility involves an application of Byrne’s (1971) general interpretation of the similarity-attraction effect (a model predominately used to explain the attitude similarity-to-attraction link; i.e., similarity of preference for the death penalty, discotheques, books) to the specific similarity of self-liking to the liking of one’s self by another person. Byrne argues that agreement with another person serves as a reinforcer for our desire to be correct, and that the affect resulting from such reinforcement becomes associated with the agreeing person. This theoretical explanation is certainly possible. However, in as far as the reinforcement-produced affect implies a general shift in affective state or mood (see Clore & Gormly, 1974), we find no support for the interpretation. In both Study 1 and Study 2 we assessed mood using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). In neither study was positive mood significantly altered by partner evaluation (Study 1, \(F[1, 49] = 0.03, p = 0.86;\) Study 2, \(F[1, 182] = 0.70, p = 0.70\)), nor were there significant changes in positive mood in Study 2 for the Partner Evaluation \(\times\) Partner Intentions interaction, \(F(3, 182) = 0.87, p = 0.45\).

**Balance Theory**

Another possible interpretation of the effect of partner evaluation on affective attraction is Heider’s (1946; 1958) balance theory. Heider argues that there is a tendency to reciprocate other \((o)\) to person \((p)\) sentiment with same sign \(p\) to \(o\) sentiment in order to achieve balance or consistency. Balance is then achieved when we like someone who likes us or dislike someone who dislikes us. Although not accepted by Heider (1988) or Abelson and Rosenberg (1958), it is now recognized that if sentiment is restricted to the two values of positive and negative, balance is a simple implication of ordinary deductive logic (Insko, 1981, 1990, 1999; Runkel & Peizer, 1968).

**Consistency with Self-esteem**

Still another possible interpretation involves the consistency of being liked with self-esteem (Insko, 1984). Heider’s account of reciprocated sentiment emphasized the \(p-o\) dyad or cycle. However, if the self-concept can be considered an element separate from \(p\), a triad or cycle can be stated in which it is consistent for \(p\) to like an \(o\) that agrees with \(p\)’s evaluation of his or her self—thereby generating three positive signs. As with all applications of Cartwright and Harary’s (Cartwright & Harry, 1956) multiplicative rule, consistency in a two-valued version of the self-concept triad can be considered a simple implication of deductive logic.
Self-esteem Support

An alternative perspective on a possible role for self-esteem is to argue that it is not the consistency with self-esteem produced by being liked that is important, but rather the support for self-esteem produced by being liked. Schlenker (1982) makes such an argument for various dissonance effects. We would simply point out that support for self-esteem requires a consistency principle to account for the existence of support. Since a consistency account and a support-for-self-esteem account both require both positive self-esteem and consistency it is pointless to debate which is more fundamental.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES


Affective Attraction Assessment Items

1. How unpleasant/pleasant do you feel about your partner?
2. How cold/warm do you feel about your partner?
3. How positive/negative do you feel about your partner?
4. How friendly/unfriendly do you feel toward your partner?
5. How distant/close do you feel to your partner?

Benevolent Intent Assessment Items

1. If given the opportunity, my partner would probably exploit my trust in him/her. (reverse)
2. I believe that my partner will look out for my interests.
3. During the upcoming interaction with my partner, I believe that my partner will act benevolently.
4. If my partner were placed in a situation where s/he could gain at my expense, I believe that my partner would do so. (reverse)