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Fairness and Appeasement: Achievement and Affiliation Motives in Interpersonal Relations

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Subjects who were high on achievement or affiliation needs and who performed relatively well or poorly on a spatial orientation task were asked to distribute rewards between themselves and either an equitable, egalitarian, self-serving, or generous programmed partner. In general, regardless of the partner's behavior, subjects high in need for achievement demonstrated a general appreciation for performance differences and tended to allocate rewards equitably. Affiliation-oriented subjects, however, appeared to focus on the response tendencies of their partner and behave in kind; they divided points equitably with an equitable partner, equally with an egalitarian partner, and self-interestedly with a self-serving partner. Subjects high in both achievement and affiliation tended to exploit the generous partner. The results are explained in terms of the competitive and cooperative interpersonal styles that achievement-oriented and affiliation-oriented subjects, respectively, possess.

A paucity of research has addressed individual differences regarding justice in social behavior (Major and Deaux, 1982). Aside from the literature on sex differences, very little has appeared. Yet as Swap and Rubin (1983:218) maintain, "it is theoretically more appealing to be able to attribute variations in behavior to stable personality differences . . . than to . . . the merely descriptive and usually theoretically barren sex differences."

The need for achievement and the need for affiliation may be important personality variables in understanding characteristic ways in which individuals allocate rewards. Several converging pieces of evidence would indicate this. Theoretical statements (Deutsch, 1975; Sampson, 1975) as well as empirical work with the Protestant Ethic Scale (Greenberg, 1978a, 1979; MacDonald, 1972; Stake, 1983) suggest that distributions may be differentially affected by one's interpersonal orientation: more precisely, by competitive, achievement-oriented approaches to interpersonal encounters versus

cooperative and affiliative ones. Furthermore, research has shown that allocations vary as a function of the social environment; resources are distributed one way when conditions are arranged to emphasize the social and affiliative aspects of a relationship and allocated in other ways when the economic and competitive elements in an exchange are salient (Greenberg and Cohen, 1982).

Although prior experimentation has not directly examined the effect of achievement and affiliation motivations on individuals' distributions, the predominant distributive tactics that presumably would result from these respective motives are easily inferred from theoretical accounts that are widely accepted (Deutsch, 1975; Sampson, 1975). Competitive, achievement-oriented persons should be more responsive to relative contributions and favor equitable relations, while the more cooperative, affiliation-oriented individuals should try to preserve social harmony and solidarity by seeking an association with others that is based on equality. Closer inspection of the achievement and affiliation motives, however, suggests that the former supposition is most likely accurate, but that the latter claim is in need of amending. The respective rationales are detailed below.

Those who are high in need for achievement

We would like to thank Roger Shepard for generously providing us with stimulus materials. Requests for reprints should be sent to Michael N. O'Malley, Department of Social, Organizational, and Counseling Psychology, Box 6, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027.

attach importance to distinguishing themselves generally from others through competitive activities (Atkinson and Raynor, 1974; McClelland, 1961). Indeed, as Veroff et al. (1975) maintain, a person with a high achievement motivation typically defines accomplishment and excellence in relative terms; how well one has performed, say, compared to another. Thus, achievement-oriented persons tend to be sensitive to inputs such as relative performance, and subsequently they should prefer equitable exchanges.

According to Atkinson et al. (1954), a person who has a high need for affiliation attempts to establish, maintain, or restore a positive emotional tie with others. However, this craving for social connectedness generally involves acting in socially desirable ways. The clear, calculated intent is not to offend others and to avoid rejection (Boyatzis, 1973). Thus, in promoting amiable exchanges, those with high affiliation needs are often agreeable and conciliatory. In order to enhance the prospect that one will be liked and accepted, a person with a high need for affiliation tries to appease another by doing whatever it is that is perceived to be valued by the other party. If equality is thought to be preferred, equality is the required response; if a preference for equity is communicated, an affiliation-oriented person behaves equitably, and so forth.

To test these hypotheses, the present investigation probes a more complex array of exchanges than has been previously explored. We observe how those who are achievement and affiliation motivated interact not only with equitable and egalitarian others, but also with others who do not strive to be equitable or egalitarian (i.e., who are chronically selfish or generous). To reiterate, achievement-oriented subjects should act equitably regardless of the other's behavior; excellence can only be claimed if one abides by the rules of the game and rewards are fairly won or lost. This demands stringent adherence to a performance-based, or equitable, distribution of rewards. In order to preserve friendly relations and simultaneously avoid rejection, affiliation-oriented subjects should institute a behavioral scheme of reciprocity.

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects were 32 male and 32 female introductory psychology students who were selected to participate in a study ostensibly on abstraction abilities.

Design

The design was a $2 \times 4 \times 2$ factorial. There were two between-subjects variables, interper-

sonal orientation (achievement or affiliation) and the response tendencies of a programmed partner (equitable, egalitarian, self-serving or generous), and a within-subjects variable of performance (better or worse). The sex of the subject was controlled by assigning an equal number of males and females to each experimental condition. The primary dependent variable was subjects' recommended division of points between themselves and their partner.

Procedure

Students taking introductory psychology classes received one extra-credit point for completing the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) (Edwards, 1953). The EPPS has been a widely used personality inventory which consists of multiple subscales. Students' scores on the need-for-achievement and need-for-affiliation subscales were the only ones of interest in the present experiment.

After a few weeks elapsed, the same introductory psychology students were asked to participate in an experiment concerning abstraction abilities. Students were informed that they could earn an extra-credit point and have the opportunity to win a prize of \$50. Volunteers who met the qualifying conditions for participation, based on their need-for-achievement and need-for-affiliation scores, were contacted and scheduled.

Subjects reported individually to the experiment room and were greeted by a female experimenter. Subjects were told that the purpose of the experiment was to test the effects of positive reinforcement on one's ability to make mental rotations, and that they would be participating with another subject assigned to a different experiment room.

Each person was tested individually using the Shepard and Metzler (1971) mental rotation task. The mental rotation task requires that subjects view pairs of slides that contain three-dimensional designs and decide whether they are different figures or identical ones with different spatial orientations.

It was explained to subjects that they and their (fictitious) partner would view 10 pairs of slides for a number of trials. The exact number of trials, which was fixed at 12 for all subjects, was not specified but was said to be determined by how much time was available. Following the completion of each trial, subjects were provided with bogus feedback about their own and their partner's performance.

As an incentive, subjects could collect points from trial to trial which were exchangeable for raffle tickets at the termination of the study (one raffle ticket for every 100 points). The ex-

perimenter informed subjects that there were 100 points available on each trial, and that because they were being tested in pairs they would have to take turns dividing the points in whatever way they saw fit. Subjects divided the points on every even-numbered trial; the fictitious partner divided the points on every odd-numbered trial.

Independent variables. Subjects qualified for participation in the experiment on the basis of their achievement and affiliation scores as assessed by the EPPS. To be included, subjects needed to have scores above the third quartile on one scale and below the second quartile (median) on the other. Thus, relatively pure types formed the pool of eligible subjects: those high in need for achievement but low in affiliative needs, and those high in need for affiliation but low in achievement needs.

The performance feedback given to subjects was randomized across trials to control for order effects. The feedback was rigged so that subjects believed they outperformed their partner on six trials and did poorer on six (on the critical trials in which subjects divided the points, they were informed that they had performed twice as well on three occasions and half as well on three). The correct answers on the mental rotation task are not evident, making the task particularly suitable for false feedback.

A partner's allocation of rewards was predetermined for each subject. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four partner types: equitable, egalitarian, self-serving or generous. The equitable partner always kept an amount of points that was consistent with performance. The egalitarian partner always divided the points 50–50 regardless of how well either person performed. When the subject performed poorly in the generous condition, the partner kept the lesser amount of an equitable division, thereby overrewarding the subject. When the subject performed better, the generous partner kept 40% less than the equity point. The self-serving partner always took 20% above the equity point when the subject did not perform as well, but when subjects performed better, partners allocated to themselves what subjects could claim as their equitable share. If subjects played the same game as their partners when distributing points, they would make the following allocations: high performers who are equitable, egalitarian, self-serving or generous would retain 67, 50, 80 or 40 points, respectively; low performers who are equitable, egalitarian, self-serving or generous would keep 33, 50, 67 or 20 points, respectively.

Dependent variables. The primary dependent variable was the division of points made

by the subjects. Each subject allocated points for every even-numbered trial for a total of six trials. The three trials in which subjects performed better or worse than their partner were summed and averaged in order to form a stable measure of dispensation. The subjects were informed that they would be able to exchange their points for raffle tickets and that the more raffle tickets subjects could collect, the greater the likelihood of winning a \$50 prize.

Following the completion of the mental rotation task, each subject was asked to complete a short questionnaire. The questionnaire, interspersed with a series of filler items, assessed the following using 9-point scales: (1) subjects' perceptions of their partner's attributes, and (2) the motivations underlying subjects' allocations. Subjects' attributions of their partner's characteristics served as manipulation checks, with responses being made on scales anchored by bipolar adjectives (unfair–fair, selfish–generous). Subjects' motivations were evaluated by asking "How fairly or unfairly did you divide points?" (1=very unfairly, 9=very fairly); "How selfishly or generously did you divide points?" (1=very selfishly, 9=very generously); "To what extent would you say you exploited the other subject?" (1=not at all, 9=very much); and "To what extent would you say the other subject deserved to be harshly treated?" (1=not at all, 9=very much).

Following completion of the questionnaire, each subject was informed of the purpose of the experiment. Later, the raffle was held and the \$50 prize was awarded to the winning subject.

RESULTS

Manipulation Checks

Subjects were assigned to interpersonal-orientation conditions on the basis of their achievement and affiliation scores on the Edwards Personal Preference Scale. Persons high in need for achievement obtained scores that placed them, on average, in the 89th percentile on achievement and the 23rd percentile on affiliation; subjects high in need for affiliation averaged in the 89th percentile on affiliation and the 25th percentile on achievement.

The manipulation of the partner's behavior was perceived in the intended manner by subjects; they accurately described the unfairness–fairness and selfishness–generosity that partners were programmed to depict, as revealed by partner main effects ($F(3,56) = 7.90, p < .001$ and $F(3,56) = 7.82, p < .001$, respectively). The means for these effects are located in Table 1. Both the equitable and egalitarian partners were considered the most fair, the generous partner was perceived as

Table 1. Mean Perceived Unfairness/Fairness and Selfishness/Generosity of Partner^a

Dependent Measure	Type of Partner			
	Equitable	Egalitarian	Self-Serving	Generous
Unfairness/fairness	7.63 _a	7.56 _a	4.31 _c	6.31 _b
Selfishness/generosity	6.88 _a	7.31 _a	3.25 _b	7.69 _a

^a Row means not sharing common subscripts were determined to be different using Tukey's HSD procedure. The mean fairness ratings of subjects who were paired with the egalitarian and generous partners were found to differ at the .06 level of significance; all other differences are at or beyond the .05 level of significance.

moderately fair, and the self-serving partner was viewed as the least fair and as the most selfish. Equitable, egalitarian and generous partners were all rated as equally generous by subjects.

Allocations

Each subject divided the points on every even-numbered trial, resulting in a total of six allocations: three for low performance and three for high performance. The three self-allocations for both levels of performance were averaged, forming a multiple-act behavioral measure. This measure was then submitted to a 2 (interpersonal orientation: achievement or affiliation) × 4 (partner: equitable, egalitarian, generous or self-serving) × 2 (relative performance: lower or higher) analysis of variance.¹

Main effects for partner ($F(3,56) = 11.89, p < .001$) and performance ($F(1,56) = 73.39, p < .001$) indicated that subjects were behaviorally responsive to performance differences and to the distinctiveness of their partner's actions. Overall, subjects allocated less to themselves when they performed worse than their partner ($M = 43.77$) as opposed to better ($M = 60.28$). They also distributed rewards equally when the partner was equitable ($M = 51.76$) and egalitarian ($M = 50.73$), but kept significantly more points when the partner was self-serving ($M = 62.77$) and significantly fewer points when the partner was generous ($M = 42.83, p < .05$ using Tukey's HSD procedure).

¹ Preliminary analyses that incorporated the sex of the subject as a factor revealed no main effects or interactions involving gender. One three-way interaction (Partner by Group by Sex) did approach significance at $p = .06$, but the extremely small cell size of this interaction ($n = 4$) cautions against its interpretability. In addition, it is interesting to note that a posteriori comparisons using Tukey's HSD procedure detected no differences (at the .05 level of significance) in the way males and females allocated points to the various partners within both the achievement and affiliation conditions. As there were no gender effects of import, sex of subject was eliminated from the ANOVA model in the ensuing analyses in order to simplify the statistical presentation.

A main effect for interpersonal orientation—with subjects high in affiliation allocating a greater share of the points to themselves ($M = 56.09$) than subjects high in achievement allocated to themselves ($M = 47.95$)—was also found ($F(1,56) = 11.72, p < .001$), as were interactions between partner type and orientation ($F(3,56) = 6.33, p < .001$) and between performance and type of partner ($F(3,56) = 8.21, p < .001$). These effects, however, are most appropriately interpreted within the context of a three-way interaction of borderline significance ($F(3,56) = 2.41, p < .076$).

The simple main effects associated with the interaction between interpersonal orientation, type of partner, and relative performance are provided in Table 2. The interaction is depicted in Figure 1.

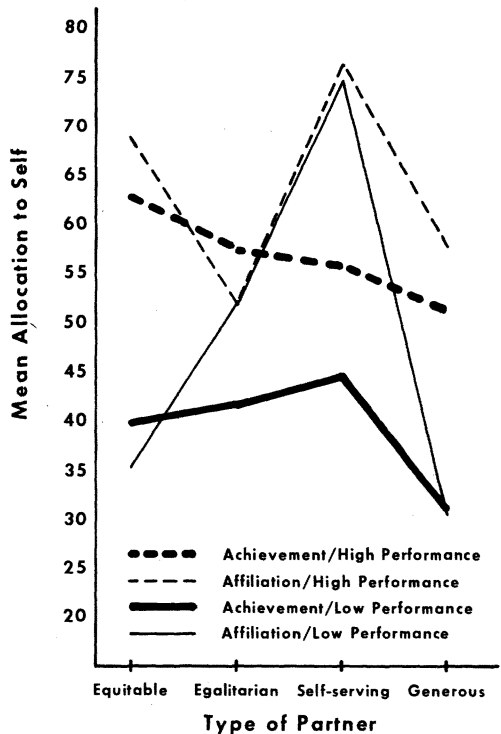


Figure 1. Mean Allocation as a Function of Interpersonal Orientation, Partner Type, and Performance

Table 2. Simple Main Effects of Three-Way Interaction between Interpersonal Orientation, Partner Type, and Performance^a

Source ^b	df	MS	F
A at bc ₁₁	1	73.66	0.49
A at bc ₁₂	1	416.87	2.79
A at bc ₁₃	1	3660.25	24.49**
A at bc ₁₄	1	3.36	0.02
A at bc ₂₁	1	121.61	0.81
A at bc ₂₂	1	126.57	0.85
A at bc ₂₃	1	1892.25	12.66**
A at bc ₂₄	1	156.25	1.05
Error	112	149.46	
B at ac ₁₁	1	2162.25	18.06**
B at ac ₁₂	1	1002.84	8.39**
B at ac ₁₃	1	444.48	3.72**
B at ac ₁₄	1	1749.96	14.65**
B at ac ₂₁	1	5034.30	42.13**
B at ac ₂₂	1	0.00	0.00
B at ac ₂₃	1	16.68	0.14
B at ac ₂₄	1	2756.25	23.06**
Error	56	119.49	
C at ab ₁₁	3	289.99	1.94
C at ab ₁₂	3	188.33	1.26
C at ab ₂₁	3	3089.11	20.67**
C at ab ₂₂	3	991.13	6.63**
Error	112	149.46	
AB at c ₁	1	201.36	1.69
AB at c ₂	1	501.42	4.20*
AB at c ₃	1	144.48	1.21
AB at c ₄	1	56.91	0.48
Error	56	119.49	
AC at b ₁	3	926.31	6.20**
AC at b ₂	3	506.38	3.39*
Error	112	149.46	
BC at a ₁	3	127.81	1.07
BC at a ₂	3	1341.65	11.23**
Error	56	119.49	

^a Procedures found in Kirk (1968:291).

^b Letter symbols within the table represent the following: A₁ = achievement, A₂ = affiliation; B₁ = low performance, B₂ = high performance; C₁ = equitable partner, C₂ = egalitarian partner, C₃ = self-serving partner, C₄ = generous partner.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Both high- and low-performance subjects who were affiliation oriented as opposed to achievement oriented showed greater flexibility in dealing with a range of partners, as evidenced by the variability of their allocations across partner conditions. Upon scrutiny, the findings reveal a remarkable similarity between the personal styles adopted by subjects high in need for affiliation and those used by their partners. When they performed relatively poorly, they allocated significantly more points to themselves when paired with a self-serving partner ($M = 74.75$) than an egalitarian one ($M = 51.87$). In turn, they kept significantly fewer points when interacting with an equitable ($M = 35.50$) and a generous partner ($M = 31.50$) than

an egalitarian one. When they performed well, they retained significantly more points when paired with an equitable partner ($M = 68.71$) than with an egalitarian one ($M = 51.88$). Again, they kept the greatest share of the points when they participated with a self-serving other ($M = 74.79$), holding on to significantly more points than when their partner was egalitarian ($M = 51.88$) or generous ($M = 57.75$). All comparisons were made using Tukey's HSD method ($p < .05$).

Overall, this pattern of means indicates that subjects with affiliative needs were willing to adjust their behavior in a manner that was consistent with the behavior of another; they seemingly conformed to the equity rule with an equitable partner, the equality rule with an egalitarian partner, and were selfish with a self-serving partner. The simple main effects that tested for performance differences across each partner type support this interpretation: performance differences were obtained when subjects interacted with an equitable other, who presumably considers performance to be a relevant basis on which to distribute goods, but were not found when subjects participated with an egalitarian or self-serving partner. Thus, in these latter instances, performance did not appear to be an important consideration in subjects' allocation decisions. Subjects who interacted with a generous partner also retained a greater share of the points when they performed relatively well versus relatively poorly. Because their mean allocations, however, did not differ from their division with an equitable partner—when their performance was low—or an egalitarian partner—when their performance was high—it would be difficult to construe their behavior as particularly generous.

On the other hand, the simple main effects indicate that the distributional patterns of high-achievement subjects were similar when they performed relatively well and poorly; they also treated partners rather uniformly despite the assortment of personal styles evinced by partners. In general, it appears that regardless of the partner's behavior, subjects who were high in need for achievement demonstrated a general appreciation for performance differences. In contrasting mean allocations between high- and low-performance conditions across each type of partner, achievement-oriented subjects who outperformed their partner always kept a greater share of the points. This difference was maintained even when the partner executed a self-interested behavioral scheme that had locked affiliation-oriented subjects into a much more selfish allocation mode in which relative performance tended to be disregarded.

Postexperimental Questionnaire

Using a 2 (interpersonal orientation: achievement or affiliation) \times 4 (partner type: equitable, egalitarian, self-serving or generous) multivariate analysis of variance, four measures regarding subjects' motivations for their allocations were analyzed: (1) "How fairly or unfairly did you divide the points?"; (2) "To what extent would you say the other subject deserved to be harshly treated?"; (3) "How selfishly or generously did you divide the points?"; (4) "To what extent would you say you exploited the other subject?" The results of the analysis show main effects for interpersonal orientation ($F(5,43) = 3.02, p < .026$) and for partner type ($F(12,165) = 2.39, p < .007$).

Follow-up univariate F -tests for the orientation main effect revealed a significant orientation effect only for the question pertaining to the fairness with which subjects divided points ($F(1,56) = 5.99, p < .018$). Subjects high in need for affiliation rated themselves as having distributed points less fairly ($M = 5.75$) than did subjects high in need for achievement ($M = 7.31$).

Univariate analysis that probed for partner effects found that subjects' perceptions of their own generosity as well as their perceptions of the extent to which they exploited their partner varied as a function of the type of person they were interacting with ($F(3,56) = 3.86, p < .014$; and $F(3,56) = 2.98, p < .039$, respectively). It can be seen from Table 3 that subjects stated that they allocated points more generously to an equitable or egalitarian partner than to a generous or self-serving partner. Furthermore, subjects with a generous partner rated themselves as significantly more exploitative in their allocations than subjects having an equitable, egalitarian or self-serving partner.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study support the general expectations that affiliation-oriented and achievement-oriented individuals have dif-

ferent modes of exchange. Overall, subjects high in need for achievement had a greater stated investment in the fairness of their allocations than did subjects high in need for affiliation. Achievement-oriented subjects' fairness-based decisions tended to take the form of equity. This finding confirms the hypothesis that individuals who attend to the competitive aspects of tasks consider relative inputs such as performance to be most relevant to how rewards should be dispensed. Regardless of the allocation rule employed by partners, subjects high in achievement needs always kept significantly more points when they performed comparatively well versus poorly. This invariable subscription to equity conforms to the past research findings of Greenberg (1978a, 1979), who demonstrated a general preference of high Protestant Ethic (achievement-oriented) subjects to be equitable. It also shows that the equity norm is a restraining force in their relationships. While they are competitively motivated to distinguish themselves and to get ahead, they are not willing to do so at any price. In general, they tended to take no more nor less than could be claimed on the basis of justice. This finding is in contrast to a recent article in which the integrity of highly achievement-motivated persons is questioned (Johnson, 1981).

Although the demeanor of affiliation-oriented subjects often appeared just, the evidence suggests that fairness was not a major concern to them. Rather, subjects high in affiliation needs focused on the response patterns of their partner and adopted a tit-for-tat strategy. The behavior of their partner made it desirable for subjects with affiliation needs to alter their behavior in kind. This is consistent with their overly cautious approach to interpersonal encounters. Their chief concern does not lie in establishing justice, since there is not resultant guarantee that such relations will be warm, but in avoiding endangering the stability of the relationship by engaging in behaviors that most likely are neither displeasing nor offensive.

Subjects high in need for affiliation behaved equitably with an equitable partner, equally with an egalitarian partner, and self-inter-

Table 3. Mean Perceived Generosity and Exploitation Toward Partner^a

Motive For Allocation	Type of Partner			
	Equitable	Egalitarian	Self-Serving	Generous
Generosity	6.44 _b	6.56 _b	4.81 _a	5.25 _a
Exploiteness	2.13 _b	2.13 _b	2.44 _b	3.69 _a

^a Row means not sharing common subscripts are significantly different at $p < .05$ according to Tukey's HSD procedure. The higher the values in the table, the more generous or exploitive subjects perceived themselves to be.

estedly with a self-serving partner. This highly imitative form of interdependence may be construed as cooperative or congenial. That is, exact reciprocity is an extremely agreeable way of interacting that may minimize conflict and consequently be conducive to a harmonious relationship. Indeed, in a turn-taking game the distal effect of reciprocity is to equalize outcomes, even though there may be a disparity of rewards on a given trial. A willingness to sustain temporary imbalances and to forego short-term settlements, and to adopt a long-range perspective, is characteristic of friendships and increases interpersonal attachment (Holmes, 1981). These results portray affiliation-oriented subjects as being more complex than previous research has indicated. Prior research and theoretical statements (Deutsch, 1975; Sampson, 1975) have described those who esteem cooperation in interpersonal encounters as preferring equality in the division of goods. It is perhaps more accurate, however, to characterize their behavior as cooperative, and that may take a variety of forms.

Subjects high in achievement or affiliation needs were not particularly generous as a consequence of their participation with a generous partner (since subjects perceived the generous partner to be less fair but no less generous than equitable and egalitarian partners, caution is required in interpreting these results). This observation is corroborated by the self-report data in which both achievement- and affiliation-oriented subjects admitted exploiting a generous partner. Achievement-oriented subjects who performed either well or poorly did not treat the generous partner significantly differently than they did any other partner. Subjects who were high in need for affiliation tended to allocate points to the generous partner in a manner consistent with their allocations to an equitable partner—when they were the low performers—and to an egalitarian partner—when they were the high performers. In other words, they distributed points equally between themselves and the generous partner when they performed relatively well, but distributed points equitably when they performed relatively poorly. Thus, affiliation-oriented subjects seem to be making maximal concessions to generous partners but without deviating from norms of fairness—without being generous. The tendency to exploit excessively generous people has been documented in both the bargaining and justice literatures. Persons who are always cooperative, or who have power but who refuse or are unable to exercise it, are perceived as suckers and are taken advantage of (Greenberg, 1978b; Lave, 1965).

Overall, these findings extend the justice lit-

erature by demonstrating the influence of stable personality differences on justice behavior. Furthermore, the effects of personality were examined across a wide range of partner types. Subjects' reactions to this assortment of character types have never been investigated by equity theorists. Future research, however, should acknowledge the variety of possible interpersonal encounters that individuals may become engaged in.

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