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Deconstructing the "Reign of Error": Interpersonal Warmth Explains the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of Anticipated Acceptance

Danu Anthony Stinson
University of Waterloo

Jessica J. Cameron
University of Manitoba

Joanne V. Wood
Danielle Gaucher
John G. Holmes
University of Waterloo

People's expectations of acceptance often come to create the acceptance or rejection they anticipate. The authors tested the hypothesis that interpersonal warmth is the behavioral key to this acceptance prophecy: If people expect acceptance, they will behave warmly, which in turn will lead other people to accept them; if they expect rejection, they will behave coldly, which will lead to less acceptance. A correlational study and an experiment supported this model. Study 1 confirmed that participants' warm and friendly behavior was a robust mediator of the acceptance prophecy compared to four plausible alternative explanations. Study 2 demonstrated that situational cues that reduced the risk of rejection also increased socially pessimistic participants' warmth and thus improved their social outcomes.

Keywords: self-fulfilling prophecy; social expectations; acceptance; self-esteem; warmth

The specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy creates a reign of error. For the prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning.

R. K. Merton, 1948

Andrew was in line at the grocery store when he noticed that the women in front of him were from his psychology class. One of them was named Tara, and although Tara actually thought Andrew was cute and funny, he was convinced that she did not like him. Intent on avoiding an awkward social situation, Andrew pretended that he had not seen the women, feigning interest in his cell phone when Tara looked his way. When the women left without speaking to him, Andrew thought to himself, "I knew Tara didn't like me!"

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Such are the "perversities of social logic" that characterize self-fulfilling prophecies (Merton, 1948, p. 195): A perceiver holds an initially incorrect belief about a target person, and the belief causes the perceiver to behave in a manner that causes the target to confirm the perceiver's expectations (e.g., Darley & Fazio, 1980). In this case, Andrew thinks that Tara does not like him, so he acts in a way that could be perceived as cold and aloof. In response to Andrew's cold manner, Tara thinks he is unfriendly and avoids him, thus confirming Andrew's belief that she does not like him.

Self-fulfilling prophecies have been demonstrated for a diverse range of beliefs (for reviews, see Darley & Fazio, 1980; Jussim, 1986; Snyder, 1992). In our view, one of the most important self-fulfilling prophecies is *the acceptance prophecy,* which is illustrated in the story of Andrew and Tara. For example, when people receive false feedback indicating that a novel acquaintance accepts them, and then they interact with that person for 10 to 20 min, the stranger ends up liking them; if people are led to believe that the novel acquaintance does not like them, the stranger does, indeed, reject them (e.g., Curtis & Miller, 1986). If one's expectations about acceptance from novel acquaintances can create a self-fulfilling prophecy, then unwarranted doubts about acceptance may sabotage one's ability to satisfy one's relatedness needs (e.g., Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000).

Despite its potential importance to the acquisition of new relationships, the acceptance prophecy has received relatively little empirical attention. To our knowledge, in the past 40 years, only four studies have directly examined the acceptance prophecy. Rabiner and Coie (1989) induced acceptance expectancies in young children who were typically unpopular and found that compared to control participants, such children were more liked by their peers. Jones and Panitch (1971) induced acceptance or rejection expectancies in male and female participants and found that partners of male participants liked the acceptance-expectancy men more than the rejection-expectancy men. Curtis and Miller (1986) induced acceptance or rejection expectancies in female participants and found that such expectancies predicted actual acceptance by interaction partners. Moreover, participants who anticipated acceptance self-disclosed more, disagreed less, expressed dissimilarity less, and had a more positive tone of voice and general attitude than participants who anticipated rejection. Finally, Downey, Freitas, Michaelis, and Khouri (1998) examined naturally occurring acceptance prophecies in romantic relationships and found that high levels of dispositional rejection sensitivity predicted relationship dissolution.

Not only has there been little empirical attention directed at the acceptance prophecy, but there has been little consideration of the behavioral and psychological mechanisms that explain how one's expectations come to create the acceptance or rejection that one anticipates. Although Curtis and Miller (1986) described behaviors associated with the self-fulfilling prophecy, they did not propose a theoretical account of the links among the behaviors they observed nor did they suggest a reason *why* the observed behaviors varied as a function of participants' acceptance expectancies. Moreover, although Downey et al. (1998) found that women's hostile behavior during conflicts explained the self-fulfilling prophecy within romantic relationships, we suspect that the behavioral mechanism may be quite different in first-meeting situations. Hence, our goal is to understand the mechanisms that underlie the self-fulfilling prophecy of acceptance in novel social interactions.

The mediation model that we propose and test suggests that if Andrew expects acceptance, he will be warm, which in turn will lead to acceptance by his interaction partners; if Andrew expects rejection, he will be cold or withdrawn, which in turn will lead to less acceptance (i.e., anticipated acceptance → warmth → actual acceptance). In this model, the behavioral key to the acceptance prophecy involves one's level of interpersonal warmth. Along with competence, warmth is one of two fundamental dimensions underlying personality, social behavior, and person perception (for a review, see Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashima, 2005). Warmth corresponds to one's level of agreeableness (McCrae & Costa, 1989) and is evident in friendly, prosocial behaviors such as responsiveness and self-disclosure (e.g., Moskowitz, 1994). Such warm behaviors convey important social information to one's interaction partners: Interpersonal warmth suggests that one has a positive social agenda aimed at promoting positive relationships (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; McCrae & Costa, 1989). Perhaps in reflection of its social import, people are remarkably adept at judging an interaction partner's level of interpersonal warmth, forming accurate impressions in as little as 30 s (Ambady, Bernieri, & Richeson, 2000). Of import for the present research, considerable evidence also indicates that interpersonal warmth is an exceptionally strong determinant of liking (e.g., Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993; Bernieri, Gillis, Davis, & Grahe, 1996; Fiske et al., 2002). This makes sense given Fiske et al.'s (2002) functional account of the importance of interpersonal warmth: People like interaction partners who appear to have positive, communal, and prosocial motivations, which means that people like interaction partners who are warm.

Hence, the second half of our mediation model is well established in the literature. However, the link between anticipated acceptance and warmth has only been implied in the literature. Chronic doubts about

whether others will be accepting appear to inhibit one's warmth toward others. For example, social anxiety inhibits self-disclosure (DePaulo, Epstein, & LeMay, 1990) and intimacy (Meleshko & Alden, 1993), and concerns about a romantic partner's regard inhibit desires for closeness (Murray, Bellavia, Rose, & Griffin, 2003). Moreover, in one study that manipulated acceptance expectations, participants who anticipated rejection were perceived as less self-disclosing and friendly than those who anticipated acceptance (Curtis & Miller, 1986). However, no previous research has examined whether such variations in warmth actually explain the acceptance prophecy nor has research tested warmth as a behavioral mechanism against alternative behavioral or psychological explanations. Therefore, Study 1 uses a correlational method to examine in detail the proposed behavioral mechanism underlying the acceptance prophecy, and it tests our model against four plausible alternative explanations for the associations among anticipated acceptance between anticipated acceptance, warmth, and actual acceptance.

In addition to examining the behavioral mechanism of the acceptance prophecy, we seek to understand *why* anticipated acceptance predicts warmth. We propose that anticipated acceptance affects interpersonal warmth because of people's strategies for managing the risk of rejection (i.e., anticipated acceptance → risk regulation strategies → warmth). When people are anxious about whether others will like them, they tend to adopt a variety of *self-protective* strategies that are aimed at avoiding the pain, humiliation, and embarrassment that accompany rejection (e.g., Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006). It can be risky to reveal oneself to another person (e.g., Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989; Gaucher et al., 2009) and especially risky to show that one likes that person (Murray et al., 2006). For example, if Andrew's liking for Tara is not reciprocated, he may be hurt or humiliated, especially if he has made his liking apparent (e.g., Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell, & Evans, 1998). Therefore, displaying less warmth may be a self-protective method of regulating one's interpersonal risk by minimizing one's social engagement (e.g., "You won't like me, so I am not going to risk showing that I like you!" DePaulo et al., 1990).[1] In Study 2 we test this risk-regulation account of the association between anticipated acceptance and warmth by experimentally manipulating the risk of rejection. We then examine whether our manipulation increases socially pessimistic participants' warmth and thereby improves their social outcomes. Therefore, Study 2 provides causal evidence for the mechanism responsible for the link between anticipated acceptance and warmth: social risk.

Our method for assessing actual acceptance in our studies also deviates from previous research, which has typically asked participants' interaction partners to indicate their acceptance for the participant. This method is problematic because it cannot account for potential reciprocal effects of the interaction partners' behavior (e.g., Curtis & Miller, 1986). In contrast, in both of the studies we present, we use 1-min thin slices of participants' videotaped behavior (e.g., Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993) as the method of "communication" between participants and impartial observers. We examine whether a thin slice of the participants' behavior is sufficient to influence observers' actual acceptance of participants and whether a thin slice of warmth is strong enough to explain the association between participants' anticipated acceptance and impartial observers' actual acceptance.

In addition to the aforementioned variables, we include global self-esteem in both studies. We expect that self-esteem will influence situationally based anticipated acceptance because lower self-esteem individuals (LSEs) tend to anticipate less acceptance than higher self-esteem individuals (HSEs; Anthony, Wood, & Holmes, 2007; Leary, Tambor, Terdal, & Downs, 1995). Furthermore, we expect that self-esteem will moderate the acceptance prophecy. LSEs tend to be more self-protective than HSEs (e.g., Baumeister et al., 1989), and LSEs' behavior is more dependent than HSEs' behavior on the level of acceptance they anticipate (Anthony et al., 2007). Hence, LSEs may be more likely than HSEs to self-protectively inhibit their interpersonal warmth when they experience doubts about acceptance from others, and therefore the acceptance prophecy may occur more strongly for LSEs than HSEs.

STUDY 1: DECONSTRUCTING THE PROPHECY

The present study uses a correlational method to test our model. Participants were invited to join an existing social group and were asked to report their anticipated acceptance by the group members. Participants then filmed a video in which they introduced themselves to the group. In this constructed first-impression context, we anticipate that the risk of rejection will be salient, as it is in most real-world first-meeting interactions. Two different sets of observers watched 1-min excerpts from the participants' interviews and rated either the warmth/friendliness of the participants *or* the observers' own acceptance of the participants.

This method offers a conservative test of our model. First, we used different reporters to assess the predictor (i.e., participants' expectations of whether they would be accepted by the group), the mediator (i.e., observers' impressions of participants' warmth), and the outcome variable (i.e., a second set of observers' acceptance of

participants). Using different reporters eliminates shared-method variance among the variables. Second, in this first study we test our model against four plausible alternative explanations for the association between anticipated acceptance and observers' actual acceptance. Hence, we assessed participants' mood and interest in joining the group, and additional observers rated participants' assertiveness and sociability.

Method

Participants

During a mass testing session, introductory psychology students at the University of Waterloo completed, among other questionnaires, Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), which was modified to include a 9-point response scale for each item rather than the original 4-point scale. Participants in the current study were selected from the top third (HSEs: $M_{\text{self-esteem}}$ = 7.86; n = 37; 20 females, 17 males) and bottom third (LSEs; $M_{\text{self-esteem}}$ = 5.21; n = 34; 18 females, 16 males) of the distribution of scores, and were between 18 and 25 years of age (M_{age} = 20.22, SD = 1.32). Hence, the terms *HSE* and *LSE* refer to people with higher and lower self-esteem relative to the population distribution rather than relative to absolute values on the self-esteem scale. Participants received either $5 or partial course credit in appreciation for their time.

Procedure

Participants were telephoned by a same-sex interviewer and invited to an individual lab session to participate in a study about "group dynamics." The researcher who ran the experimental session was blind to participants' self-esteem. An elaborate cover story was devised to make the context of social evaluation realistic and meaningful (see Anthony et al., 2007). In the lab, the participant was told that the experimenter was a representative of the "Center for Group Dynamics" and that he or she was currently recruiting a replacement member for a five-person market research focus group that meets about once a month to assess a product. Next, participants were told that the current focus group members had viewed some anonymous questionnaires from the introductory psychology mass testing session and that a sample of the participants' questionnaires was among those viewed by the group. Supposedly, the group had been asked to provide feedback about whether they thought the person who filled out the questionnaire would be a good addition to their group. The participant was assured that the group members did not know the identity of the people whose questionnaires they viewed. To heighten the salience of social

evaluation, the participant was also informed that the experimenter would show to him or her the comments made by the current group members. Feedback consisted of four apparently handwritten comments on four separate sheets of paper.[2]

After the participants read the feedback in private, they completed a questionnaire that assessed their interest in joining the group and the degree to which they anticipated acceptance by the group (assuming he or she chose to join the focus group). All items were accompanied by a 9-point response scale (1 = *not at all,* 9 = *very much*). Participants' willingness to join the group was assessed with three items (Anthony et al., 2007): "How much would you like to join this focus group?" "How many meetings would you like to attend?" and "How willing are you to attend meetings held late in the evenings, and on Saturday and Sunday mornings at 8:00 am?" These items were averaged to form a reliable *interest in joining the group* composite (α = .82). Participants' anticipated acceptance was assessed with the items: "How likely do you think it is that you will get along with the other group members?" "How likely is it that you will fit in with the group?" "How much will the group as a whole like you after the first meeting?" and "How much will the group as a whole like you after the fourth meeting?" These items were averaged to form a reliable *anticipated acceptance* composite (α = .88).

Next, the experimenter filmed a structured interview with each participant, which the participant thought would be shown to the focus group. The structured interview consisted of eight open-ended questions (e.g., "What personal qualities are important to how you see yourself?").

After the interview, participants completed a second questionnaire that included the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), in which participants were asked to indicate how well a list of emotion words described how they felt at that moment (1 = *not at all or very slightly,* 3 = *moderately,* 5 = *very or extremely*). Positive affect (PA) terms were averaged to form a reliable PA index (α = .83), and negative affect (NA) terms were averaged to form a reliable NA index (α = .85).

To assess actual acceptance, five undergraduate research assistants who were unaware of the experimental hypothesis acted as observers. They were instructed to "imagine that [they] are going to meet [the participant] soon, perhaps in a small study group of about six other people." Three of the acceptance items began with the phrase, "How likely would you be to . . ." and ended with the phrases: ". . . talk to this person?" ". . . want this person in your study group?" and ". . . enjoy hanging out with this person?" Three additional items began with the phrase, "After a few weeks of knowing

TABLE 1: Variables Assessed in Study 1, Their Means and Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations Between the Variables

	M	SD	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Anticipated acceptance by the group	7.35	1.01	.38**	.41**	.54**	−.41**	.51**	.26*	.30*
2. Actual acceptance by observers	3.78	0.87	—	.77**	.09	−.12	.11	.37**	.44**
3. Participants' warmth/friendliness	4.21	0.99	—	—	.06	−.22*	.28*	.60**	.55**
4. Interest in joining the group	5.70	1.30	—	—	—	−.42**	.47**	−.09	−.20
5. Negative affectivity	1.73	0.64	—	—	—	—	−.24†	−.22	−.05
6. Positive affectivity	3.28	0.63	—	—	—	—	—	.06	.01
7. Participants' assertiveness/confidence	4.30	1.28	—	—	—	—	—	—	.74**
8. Sociability	4.04	1.25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

†p = .054. *p < .05. **p < .01.

each other, how likely would you be to . . ." and ended with the phrases: ". . . hang out/play sports with this person?" ". . . invite this person to hang out with a group of your friends?" ". . . hang out one-on-one with this person?" Two final questions asked "How likely would it be that you would become friends with this person?" and "Would this person be a valuable friend to have?" All items used 7-point response scales (1 = *not at all likely,* 7 = *extremely likely*). The five observers showed adequate agreement about each rating (all intraclass consistency correlation coefficients [ICCC] > .68, ps < .001), so acceptance scores were averaged for all five coders, and then all eight scores were averaged to form a reliable *actual acceptance* composite (α = .88).

An independent set of three observers also watched each participant's taped interview and used a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all,* 7 = *extremely*) to answer the question: "How warm/friendly does this person appear?" Once again, observers were unaware of the experimental hypothesis. Observers showed adequate agreement in their impressions of participants' warmth/friendliness (ICCC = .68, p < .001). The same observers also rated participants' assertiveness using a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all,* 7 = *extremely*) to answer the question: "How assertive/confident does this person appear?" Observers showed good agreement about participants' assertiveness/confidence (ICCC = .77, p < .001). A third set of three observers rated participants' sociability using the same 7-point scale (1 = *not at all,* 7 = *extremely*) to answer the question, "How sociable does this person appear?" Once again, coders showed adequate agreement (ICCC = .70, p < .001).

Results and Discussion

During the debriefing, 8 participants indicated that they doubted the cover story (2 LSE and 3 HSE males, 1 LSE and 2 HSE females). These participants' data were excluded from further analyses. Preliminary analyses indicated that gender did not moderate any of the results we describe, so we report results without this

variable. Means and standard deviations for all assessed variables and the zero-order correlations between variables are presented in Table 1.

Unless otherwise stated, in all of the analyses that follow, we begin with the same basic regression model to predict the dependent variables: At Step 1, we enter dummy coded self-esteem (0 = *LSEs*, 1 = *HSEs*) and mean-centered anticipated acceptance, and at Step 2 we add the interaction between the variables. Interactions are interpreted based on the results of Step 2, whereas main effects are interpreted based on the results of Step 1.

The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

We hypothesized that because LSEs are more self-protective than HSEs (e.g., Baumeister et al., 1989), LSEs, but not HSEs, would display the self-fulfilling prophecy of anticipated acceptance because LSEs, but not HSEs, would inhibit their warmth when they experience social doubts.

Consistent with prior research (e.g., Anthony et al., 2007; Leary et al., 1995), a preliminary regression in which dummy-coded self-esteem was used to predict anticipated acceptance revealed that LSEs (M = 7.08, SD = 1.31) were less optimistic than HSEs (M = 7.59, SD = 0.55) that they would be liked by the group, β = .26, t(61) = 2.13, p = .039. However, results using our basic regression model to predict actual acceptance revealed that, contrary to our prediction, self-esteem was not uniquely associated with actual acceptance, β = −.07, t < 1, and self-esteem and anticipated acceptance did not interact, β = .05, t < 1. Instead, only anticipated acceptance uniquely predicted actual acceptance, β = .40, t(59) = 3.21, p = .002.

We hypothesized that participants' warmth/friendliness would explain this association. Results of our basic regression model revealed that anticipated acceptance strongly predicted warmth/friendliness, β = .41, t(59) = 3.41 p < .001, and once again this association was not moderated by self-esteem, β = .22, t(59) = 1.65, p = .104, nor did self-esteem directly predict warmth/friendliness,
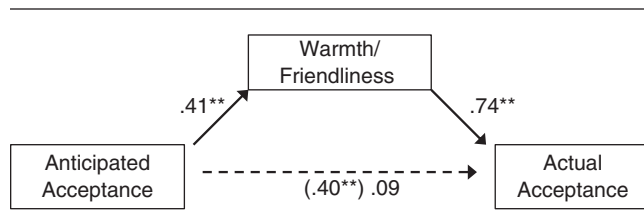
Figure 1 Mediation model testing whether observers' ratings of participants' warmth/friendliness explain the association between anticipated and actual acceptance in Study 1.

NOTE: Participants rated their anticipated acceptance by the group, one set of observers rated participants' warmth/friendliness, and a second set of observers rated actual acceptance of participants.
**p < .01.

β = .01, t < 1. Finally, when warmth/friendliness was added to Step 1 of the basic regression model predicting actual acceptance, the direct association between anticipated and actual acceptance diminished completely, β = .09, t < 1, whereas the association between warmth/friendliness and actual acceptance was very strong, β = .74, $t(59)$ = 8.31 p < .001. This mediation model is depicted in Figure 1. Sobel's test confirmed that warmth/friendliness completely explained the association between anticipated and actual acceptance, Sobel's z = 2.41, p = .001.

Hence, although LSEs anticipated less acceptance than did HSEs, our hypothesis that only LSEs would inhibit their warmth was disconfirmed. Global self-esteem was only indirectly associated with actual acceptance via its association with anticipated acceptance (i.e., self-esteem $\rightarrow$ anticipated acceptance $\rightarrow$ actual acceptance), Sobel's z = 1.75, p = .061.

Exploring Alternative Explanations

Next, we examined four plausible alternative explanations for the observed associations among anticipated acceptance, warmth, and actual acceptance. Preliminary analyses indicated that self-esteem did not moderate any of the results that follow. However, in each of the analyses we controlled for participants' level of self-esteem to statistically account for the fact that we selected groups of low- and high-self-esteem participants.

Interest in joining the group predicts warmth/friendliness. Anticipated acceptance from a social group is strongly related to one's willingness to join that social group (Anthony et al., 2007). Hence, it is possible that the participants who anticipated little acceptance did not plan to join the group. This lack of interest may have caused them to be apathetic and thus less warm, which caused them to be less liked by observers. If so, interest in joining the group, not anticipated acceptance, would be the true cause of actual acceptance. Replicating

Anthony et al. (2007), interest in joining the group was strongly related to anticipated acceptance from the group, β = .52, $t(60)$ = 4.99, p < .001. However, interest in joining the group was not related to participants' warmth/friendliness, β = .06, t < 1, nor did it predict actual acceptance, β = .09, t < 1. Additionally, including participants' interest in joining the group in the mediation analysis examining the associations among anticipated acceptance, warmth/friendliness, and actual acceptance did not alter the results described previously, Sobel's z = 3.53, p < .001. Thus, it does not appear that a lack of interest in joining the group can explain the finding that anticipated acceptance predicts actual acceptance.

Mood predicts warmth/friendliness and acceptance. People who doubt that they will be liked by others often experience negative mood (Leary et al., 1998). People experiencing negative moods are unlikely to behave in a warm manner (e.g., Coyne, 1976). Hence, negative mood, not anticipated acceptance, could be the true predictor of actual acceptance. Although NA was marginally related to warmth/friendliness, β = –.21, $t(60)$ = –1.64, p = .11, it was not related to actual acceptance, β = –.12, t < 1. Additionally, the inclusion of NA in each step of the mediation analysis relating anticipated acceptance to warmth/friendliness and actual acceptance did not alter the results described previously, Sobel's z = 3.30, p < .001. Similar results emerged for PA, which was also not significantly associated with actual acceptance, β = .11, t < 1.

Perceptions of assertiveness/confidence predict actual acceptance. Assertiveness or confidence reflects another fundamental dimension of person perception—specifically, dominance—that is typically thought to be orthogonal to warmth (e.g., Judd et al., 2005). Given its social importance, a third alternative explanation for the acceptance prophecy is that decreased anticipated acceptance predicts decreased assertiveness, and this lack of assertiveness, not a lack of warmth, predicts actual acceptance by observers. Results of our usual regression revealed that anticipated acceptance was only marginally predictive of assertiveness/confidence, β = .21, $t(60)$ = 2.12, p = .089. When both anticipated acceptance and assertiveness/confidence were entered simultaneously in the regression to predict actual acceptance, anticipated acceptance remained a significant predictor of actual acceptance, β = .33, $t(59)$ = 2.72, p = .009, and although assertiveness/confidence predicted actual acceptance, β = .32, $t(59)$ = 2.65, p = .010, Sobel's test indicated that this indirect path was not significant, z = 1.63, p = .103. Because ratings of warmth/friendliness and assertiveness/confidence were correlated in the present study, r = .60, p < .001, we conducted an additional mediation

analysis in which both warmth/friendliness and assertiveness/confidence were entered into the second step of the mediation analysis simultaneously. Results of this analysis indicated that warmth/friendliness remained a strong predictor of actual acceptance, $\beta = .82$, $t(58) = 7.56$, $p < .001$, and explained the association between anticipated and actual acceptance even when shared variance with assertiveness/confidence was controlled, Sobel's $z = 3.31$, $p < .001$. In contrast, the association between assertiveness/confidence and actual acceptance was eliminated when warmth/friendliness was controlled, $\beta = -.12$, $t(58) = -1.18$, $p = .244$, and the indirect path from anticipated acceptance to actual acceptance through assertiveness/confidence was also eliminated, Sobel's $z = 1.17$, ns. These results suggest that although one's anticipated acceptance by the group predicts others' impressions of both assertiveness/confidence and warmth/friendliness, only warmth/friendliness uniquely predicts actual acceptance by observers. This result is consistent with research suggesting that warmth is associated with acceptance whereas agency is associated with other outcomes, such as respect or status (e.g., Fiske et al., 2002).

Perceptions of sociability predict actual acceptance. Observers' actual acceptance of participants may depend on participants' sociability rather than their warmth. McCrae and Costa (1989) distinguished warmth from sociability by suggesting that warmth reflects the underlying personality dimension of agreeableness, whereas sociability reflects extroversion. Moreover, they suggest that warmth reflects an individual's positive social intentions, whereas sociability reflects an individual's interest in social relationships. Although distinct aspects of personality, these two dimensions are uniquely social and therefore it is possible that participants' sociability—or social interest—is the true predictor of actual acceptance. Anticipated acceptance indeed predicted sociability, $\beta = .26$, $t(60) = 2.10$, $p = .040$, and when anticipated acceptance and sociability were entered into regression simultaneously to predict actual acceptance, sociability predicted actual acceptance, $\beta = .37$, $t(59) = 3.13$, $p = .003$, and this indirect path was significant, $z = 1.97$, $p = .049$. However, the direct path between anticipated acceptance and actual acceptance remained significant when sociability was included in the regression, $\beta = .30$, $t(59) = 2.49$, $p = .016$. Moreover, even though different sets of coders rated each variable, sociability and warmth/friendliness were correlated, $r = .54$, $p < .001$. Therefore, we conducted a second mediation analysis in which warmth/friendliness and sociability were entered simultaneously into the second step. Controlling for sociability, observers' impressions of participants' warmth/friendliness remained a strong predictor of

actual acceptance, $\beta = .73$, $t(58) = 6.97$, $p < .001$, and explained the association between anticipated and actual acceptance, Sobel's $z = 3.26$, $p = .001$. In contrast, the association between sociability and actual acceptance was eliminated when warmth/friendliness was controlled, $\beta = .03$, $t < 1$.

Taken together, these results offer support for our model, suggesting that warmth/friendliness plays a key behavioral role in explaining the self-fulfilling prophecy of acceptance. However, given that Study 1 was correlational, these results cannot definitively nail down the causal nature of the associations among variables. Hence, Study 2 uses an experimental method to replicate and extend the results of Study 1.

STUDY 2: CHANGING THE PROPHECY

Study 2 experimentally tests our hypothesis that strategies for regulating social risk explain the association between anticipated acceptance and warmth (i.e., anticipated acceptance → strategies for risk regulation → warmth). Specifically, we test the hypothesis that when people with pessimistic social expectations are in a socially risky situation, such as a first impression situation, they regulate the risk of rejection by displaying inhibited interpersonal warmth and therefore garner less acceptance from others. Single male participants engaged in a videotaped face-to-face conversation with an attractive female confederate. At a later date, female observers watched a 1-min slice of the participants' behavior during the interaction and rated their acceptance for each participant. A second group of female observers rated the participants' warmth. As in Study 1, in the control condition we expected that the risk of rejection would be salient to participants in this first-impression context. Thus, participants low in anticipated acceptance would regulate this risk by displaying inhibited warmth and in turn would be less liked by observers.

Our experimental condition was designed to subtly decrease the rejection anxieties of people low in anticipated acceptance, thereby allowing these participants to abandon their self-protective risk-regulation strategy and behave more warmly. Our intention was to reduce the self-focused attention and evaluation that so often accompany social anxiety (e.g., Mor & Winquist, 2002) by instead focusing the participants' attention on their interaction partner. Thus, before the face-to-face interaction, participants in the experimental condition received a handwritten personal disclosure from the confederate in which she admitted that *she* was often anxious about whether other people like her. Cameron, Stinson, Gaetz, and Balchen (in press) demonstrated that this disclosure reduced receivers' perceived risk of

rejection by the discloser, compared to a control condition in which no disclosure was offered. This disclosure effect on perceived risk of rejection was not moderated by participants' gender.

In addition to decreasing self-focused attention and evaluation, the disclosure manipulation may reduce rejection concerns in other ways. For example, (a) the disclosure suggests that the confederate, who experiences social anxiety herself, may not negatively judge the participant's own shy or nervous behavior, or (b) the confederate is admitting that she has a personal flaw, which may cause participants to feel superior to the confederate.

In the present study, we anticipate that the disclosure manipulation will not affect the behavior or social outcomes of participants high in anticipated acceptance. By definition, these participants are not concerned about rejection by the confederate, and thus the confederate's disclosure should hold little import to them. In contrast, the experimental manipulation should have a marked effect on participants low in anticipated acceptance. These participants are concerned about being rejected by the confederate, and thus her disclosure and its implications for the likelihood of rejection are very important for them. We predict that relative to the control condition, the confederate's disclosure will decrease socially pessimistic participants' rejection anxieties, removing the need to regulate the risk of rejection and thereby allowing them to behave in a warm and friendly manner. In turn, increased warm behavior will cause these participants to be more liked by observers. Thus, the present study examines whether situational cues that limit the need to self-protectively regulate the risk of rejection can increase socially pessimistic participants' interpersonal warmth and thereby improve their social outcomes.

Method

Participants

Twenty-eight men from the University of Waterloo were recruited to participate in the present study; 8 were recruited from the introductory psychology subject pool and 20 were recruited from a campus student center. Participants received partial course credit or an $8 gift certificate and two chocolate bars (or a stationary set) in appreciation for their time. All participants were between 18 and 24 years of age ($M = 20$ years, $SD = 1.56$), all were single, and all reported being fluent in English.

Procedure and Measures

Participants were recruited for a study about "communication styles and media." Participants were informed that they would watch an excerpt from a television program and then discuss the television program and other topics with a second participant. The other "participant" was actually a confederate. To bolster the believability of the confederate's "participant" identity, the research assistant met both the confederate and the participant in the same location before the study and then separated them into different rooms for the first part of the study.

In his individual lab room, the participant first completed a preliminary survey in which he reported his self-esteem using the same self-esteem scale used in Study 1 ($\alpha = .86$). In addition, the participant reported his anticipated acceptance by the confederate with four items: "How likely is it that you will get along with your interaction partner?" "How enjoyable do you think it will be to spend time with your interaction partner?" "How comfortable will you feel when speaking to your interaction partner?" "How likely is it that your interaction partner will like you?" All four items were averaged to form a reliable index of *anticipated acceptance* ($\alpha = .82$). The preliminary survey also included demographic questions (e.g., age) and filler items intended to disguise our focus on self-esteem and anticipated acceptance.

Next, the participant watched an 8-min clip from a documentary about the international coffee industry. The participant was reminded that he would be asked to discuss the documentary with the other participant and thus was provided with a pen and notepad to make notes for his later discussion.

After watching the documentary, the participant was given a sealed envelope that contained an information sheet about the confederate. Ostensibly, this information was provided to allow the participant to get to know the confederate before they interacted. In actuality, the information sheet constituted the experimental manipulation. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions, and because a second researcher prepared the envelopes containing the information sheet, the researcher running the experimental session was blind to the condition. In the *control condition,* participants were provided with neutral information about the confederate: She was a 20-year-old, single, Canadian female, whose first language was English. This condition was designed to mimic the level of risk salience that is typical in first-meeting situations. In the *disclosure condition,* in addition to receiving the same neutral information about the confederate that was provided in the control condition, participants also received the confederate's supposed handwritten answers to two additional questions: "What are your best qualities?" and "What are some things you'd like to improve about yourself?" The confederate's answer to the first question was: "I'm pretty good at creative writing, especially

short stories. And I'm open to trying new things." Her answer to the second question was a personal disclosure designed to suggest that she was socially anxious: "I wish I could feel more confident in social situations. Especially when I meet someone new (like now!), I find myself worrying about whether the other person likes me or not. I'd like to improve that."

After the participant read this information about the confederate, the researcher brought the confederate to the participant's lab room and gave to both of them the interaction task instructions:

> [Participant], you were randomly assigned to be the communicator in this study, so that means that you will give your opinions about each of the questions on this sheet of paper, and [Confederate], you were randomly assigned to be the listener, which means that you are supposed to ask [Participant] the questions and then listen to his answers.

In actuality, the participant was always assigned the role of communicator, making the confederate the listener. For all participants, the confederate, who was blind to condition, acted in a warm, attentive manner with the goal of making the other participant feel comfortable. She did not cross her legs, she leaned toward the participant as he spoke, and smiled, nodded, and maintained eye contact. In addition, she responded to some of the participant's comments with scripted lines. All interactions were videotaped.

Following the interaction task, the participant returned to his individual lab room and completed a second questionnaire that included a manipulation-check question among other items that are not relevant to the present research (see Cameron et al., in press). Participants indicated their agreement with the statement, "The listener was probably feeling shy and nervous during our interaction," using a 7-point scale (1 = completely disagree, 7 = completely agree). After completing this survey, participants were thoroughly debriefed as to the true purposes of the study.

At a later date, two independent sets of observers watched the 1st min of each participant's interaction with the confederate and rated him on a number of dimensions. First, observers rated the participants on two variables intended to index participants' rejection anxieties: nervous and insecure. We assessed these variables as a manipulation check to determine whether our disclosure manipulation successfully reduced the rejection anxieties of participants low in anticipated acceptance. In a second coding session, these same three coders again watched the 1st min of each participant's interaction and rated his interpersonal warmth using five variables: maintains eye contact, engaged, responsive,

inhibited, and uncomfortable (the latter two variables were reverse-coded before analyses). At a third coding session, a second group of five female observers watched the 1st min of each interaction and rated their acceptance for the participant by answering three questions: "Based on how the male participant is behaving, how much would you enjoy interacting with him?" "How interested would you be in meeting him again?" and "How likely would you be to hang out with him one-on-one?" All ratings involved a 7-point scale (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely). Interrater agreement for all variables was high (all ICCCs < .80, all ps < .001). Thus, the observers' ratings for each variable were averaged, and traits assessing each construct were averaged to create reliable indices of *anxiety* (α = .98), *warmth* (α = .97), and *actual acceptance* (α = .95).

Results and Discussion

One participant in the control condition and 4 participants in the disclosure condition indicated during debriefing that they did not believe that the confederate was an actual participant. These skeptical participants were excluded from the analyses.

As in Study 1, preliminary analyses indicated that self-esteem did not moderate any of the results. However, because we were particularly interested in assessing the influence of *situational* cues on the self-fulfilling prophecy of social acceptance (i.e., the confederate's disclosure), we included self-esteem as a main-effect predictor in each of the analyses that follow. By controlling for self-esteem, we are statistically removing personality variance in the mediator and dependent variables and thus increasing our power to detect the effects of our situational manipulation of risk. As in Study 1, self-esteem was modestly correlated with anticipated acceptance, $r = .36$, $p = .095$, suggesting that regressions including both of the variables would not overresidualize either variable. Unless otherwise indicated, self-esteem was not directly related to the dependent variables.

We used the same hierarchical regression procedure to test each of our hypotheses. In addition to controlling for mean-centered self-esteem, we entered mean-centered anticipated acceptance and dummy coded condition (0 = *control*, 1 = *disclosure*) as main effects at Step 1, and entered the two-way interaction at Step 2. We interpreted the main effects from Step 1 of the analyses and the two-way interactions obtained at Step 2. When a significant interaction emerged at Step 2, simple-effects analyses were conducted according to Aiken and West's (1991) recommendations. Means and standard deviations for all assessed variables and zero-order correlations are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2: Variables Assessed in Study 2, Their Means and Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations Between the Variables

	M	SD	2	3	4
1. Global self-esteem	6.94	1.37	.36	.54*	.31
2. Anticipated acceptance by the group	6.30	1.04	—	.19	.46*
3. Actual acceptance by observers	3.78	0.87	—	—	.75**
4. Warmth	1.73	0.64	—	—	—

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Manipulation Checks

Did participants understand the confederate's disclosure? As intended, participants in the control condition thought that the confederate was less shy and nervous during the interaction task ($M = 2.42$, $SD = .51$) than did participants in the disclosure condition ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 1.36$), $\beta = .57$, $t(19) = 3.44$, $p = .003$. In addition, anticipated acceptance was associated with participants' perceptions of the confederate, such that participants who anticipated higher levels of acceptance thought that the confederate was less shy and nervous than did participants who anticipated lower levels of acceptance, $\beta = -.39$, $t(19) = -2.51$, $p = .021$. Condition and anticipated acceptance did not interact to predict perceptions of the confederate's shyness and nervousness.

Did the confederate's disclosure reduce participants' anxieties? If our disclosure manipulation successfully reduced the rejection anxieties of participants low in anticipated acceptance, these participants should appear less anxious in the disclosure condition than in the control condition. To test this hypothesis, we used our usual regression to predict observers' impressions of participants' anxiety ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.36$). Consistent with this prediction, the experimental manipulation interacted with participants' anticipated acceptance to predict participants' anxiety, $\beta = .87$, $t(18) = 3.06$, $p = .007$. This interaction is depicted in Figure 2. In the control condition, anticipated acceptance was strongly related to observers' impressions of participants' anxiety, $\beta = -.89$, $t(18) = -3.14$, $p = .006$, such that participants who were low in anticipated acceptance appeared much more anxious than participants who were high in anticipated acceptance. However, the confederate's disclosure eliminated this effect of anticipated acceptance, $\beta = .34$, $t(18) = 1.21$, *ns,* because the confederate's disclosure successfully decreased the anxiety of participants who were low in anticipated acceptance, $\beta = -.68$, $t(18) = -2.90$, $p = .008$. Also as expected, the experimental manipulation did not influence the anxiety of participants who were high in anticipated acceptance, $\beta = .34$,
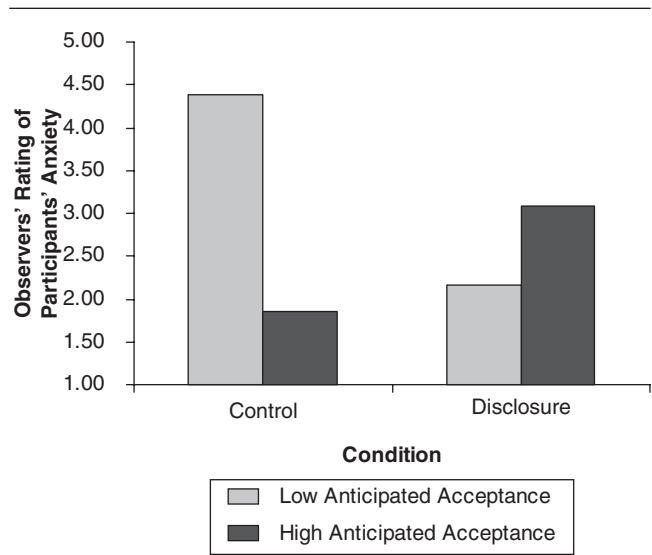

Figure 2 Observers' ratings of participants' anxiety as a function of participants' anticipated acceptance and experimental condition in Study 2.
NOTE: Anticipated acceptance is graphed for values 1 *SD* above and below the mean.

$t(18) = 1.44$, *ns.* These results suggest that our experimental manipulation successfully reduced socially pessimistic participants' rejection anxieties, which should reduce their reliance on self-protective risk-regulation strategies.

The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

Next, we examined whether anticipated acceptance and condition uniquely or interactively predicted observers' actual acceptance of participants. In this case, results of the regression revealed a main effect for self-esteem, $\beta = .58$, $t(19) = 2.39$, $p = .027$, such that observers liked HSEs more than they liked LSEs. Yet results also revealed the predicted interaction between anticipated acceptance and condition, $\beta = -.63$, $t(18) = -2.18$, $p = .042$. No other effects emerged. The interaction between anticipated acceptance and condition is depicted in Figure 3. In the control condition, where rejection was possible, anticipated acceptance was strongly associated with observers' actual acceptance of the participants, $\beta = .59$, $t(18) = 2.02$, $p = .056$. This result replicates the results obtained in Study 1 but in the more naturalistic social context of a face-to-face interaction. However, as expected, the experimental manipulation markedly increased actual acceptance for participants low in anticipated acceptance, $\beta = .62$, $t(18) = 2.36$, $p = .029$, bringing their actual acceptance by observers to a level similar to that of participants high in anticipated acceptance, $\beta = -.29$, $t(18) = -1.07$, *ns.* The experimental manipulation did not influence observers' actual
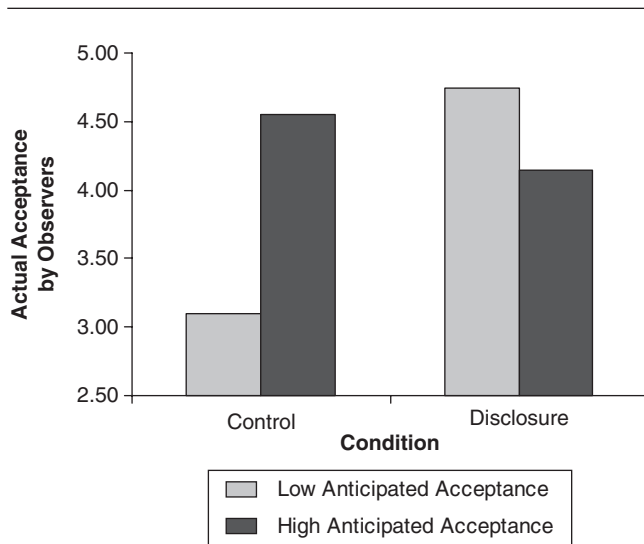
Figure 3 Observers' actual acceptance of participants as a function of participants' anticipated acceptance and experimental condition in Study 2.
NOTE: Anticipated acceptance is graphed for values 1 *SD* above and below the mean.

Figure 4 Mediated moderation model testing whether the Condition × Anticipated Acceptance interaction effect on actual acceptance is explained by warmth in Study 2.
NOTE: Participants rated their anticipated acceptance by the group, one set of observers rated participants' warmth/friendliness, and a second set of observers rated actual acceptance of participants.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

acceptance of participants high in anticipated acceptance, $\beta = -.13$, $t < 1$.

Explaining the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

We predicted that our experimental manipulation would eliminate the self-protective inhibition of warmth that is typical of participants who are low in anticipated acceptance when the risk of rejection is present, thereby allowing them to garner greater acceptance from observers. Because we did not predict or observe an effect of our experimental manipulation for participants high in anticipated acceptance, our prediction is a *mediated moderation hypothesis*: We proposed that for participants low in anticipated acceptance, but not for participants high in anticipated acceptance, condition influences participants' warmth, which in turn determines how well they are liked (i.e., Anticipated Acceptance × Condition → warmth → actual acceptance). To test this hypothesis, we conducted mediated moderation analysis (see Muller, Judd, & Yzerbyt, 2005), and the results are depicted in Figure 4. Next, we present a detailed account of the procedures we used to obtain the results depicted in Figure 4.

We have already presented results indicating that anticipated acceptance and condition interacted to predict actual acceptance by observers, such that the confederate's disclosure increased actual acceptance of participants low in anticipated acceptance but did not influence actual acceptance of participants high in anticipated acceptance (see Figure 3). Results also
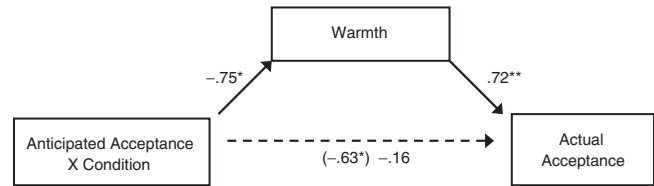
revealed the expected interaction between anticipated acceptance and condition predicting observers' ratings of participants' warmth, $\beta = -.75$, $t(18) = -2.56$, $p = .021$. No other main effects or interactions emerged from the regression predicting warmth. This interaction is depicted in Figure 5. Results parallel those depicted in Figure 3. In the control condition, when the risk of rejection was present, anticipated acceptance was strongly related to observers' ratings of participants' warmth, $\beta = .98$, $t(18) = 3.30$, $p = .004$, such that observers thought that participants low in anticipated acceptance exhibited much less warmth than participants high in anticipated acceptance. This is a replication of the results observed in Study 1 but using a more behavioroid operationalization of the proposed mediator, interpersonal warmth. However, when the risk of rejection was reduced by the confederate's disclosure, observers perceived that participants low in anticipated acceptance displayed increased levels of warmth, $\beta = .58$, $t(18) = 2.09$, $p = .049$, and in fact did not differ from their counterparts high in anticipated acceptance, $\beta = -.08$, $t < 1$. In contrast, the experimental manipulation did not influence observers' impressions of the warmth of participants high in anticipated acceptance, $\beta = -.29$, $t(18) = 1.05$, *ns*.

In the next step of the mediated moderation analyses, we added warmth to the usual regression equation predicting observers' actual acceptance of participants. As Figure 4 indicates, warmth was strongly predictive of actual acceptance by observers, $\beta = .72$, $t(17) = 3.98$, $p = .001$. Moreover, when warmth was included in the regression, the interaction between anticipated acceptance and condition no longer predicted actual acceptance by observers, $\beta = -.16$, $t < 1$. Sobel's test confirmed that the indirect path from the interaction term through warmth to actual acceptance was significant, $z = 2.53$, $p = .011$.[3]

Taken together, these mediation results suggest that when the risk of rejection is present, as in the control condition, low anticipated acceptance causes people to exhibit inhibited warmth, which we suggest is a
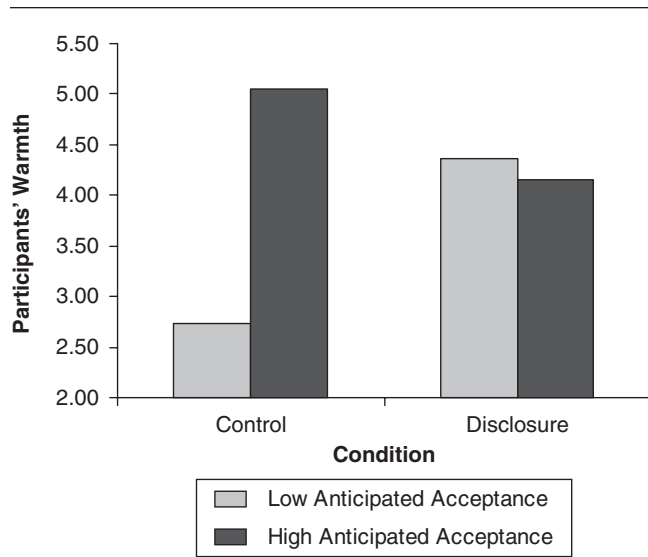
Figure 5 Observers' ratings of participants' warmth as a function of participants' anticipated acceptance and experimental condition in Study 2.
NOTE: Anticipated acceptance is graphed for values 1 *SD* above and below the mean.

self-protective method of regulating the risk of rejection. In turn, such inhibited warmth predicts the very social outcome that such individuals fear: low actual acceptance. However, the effect of our experimental manipulation also suggests that when socially pessimistic people's rejection anxieties are assuaged, the need to regulate the risk of rejection may be removed, allowing them to behave more warmly and thus garner increased acceptance by observers.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Results supported our model of the self-fulfilling prophecy of acceptance. In Study 1, these results were obtained even though all three variables in the mediation analysis were from different sources (i.e., the participants and two independent sets of observers), which eliminated shared method variance. Despite this conservative test of mediation, warmth emerged as a robust mediator. A 1-min slice of warmth was sufficient to explain the association between anticipated acceptance and actual acceptance. Controlling for self-esteem did not alter the results of the mediation analysis. Moreover, although observers' perceptions of participants' warmth were associated with perceptions of assertiveness/confidence and sociability, controlling for both of these variables did not diminish the strength of the mediating role of warmth. Results also indicated that participants' negative mood and willingness to join the group did not predict actual acceptance by observers. Controlling for

these variables in the mediation analyses did not diminish the association between anticipated acceptance and actual acceptance, nor did it diminish the mediating power of warmth.

Study 2 offered experimental support for our model. Not only did results conceptually replicate those of Study 1 in the control condition, using the more naturalistic social context of a face-to-face interaction and a more behavioroid index of warmth (i.e., responsiveness, eye contact, discomfort), but results also demonstrated one important mechanism responsible for the self-fulfilling prophecy of acceptance: interpersonal warmth. When socially pessimistic participants' rejection anxieties were alleviated by the confederate's disclosure, observers reported equal acceptance for participants high and low in anticipated acceptance. Moreover, this increase in actual acceptance of participants low in anticipated acceptance was explained by increases in these participants' warmth. Taken together, these results suggest that when people doubt that they will be accepted by others, they self-protectively inhibit their warm behavior as a method of regulating the risk of rejection in the social situation.

These results offer an important addition to the risk-regulation literature in a number of ways. The majority of research testing Murray et al.'s (2006) risk-regulation model has focused on the social context of romantic relationships (e.g., Murray et al., 2003) or other intimate relationships (e.g., DeHart, Murray, Pelham, & Rose, 2003). By testing the risk-regulation model in the context of a first-impression situation, the present research illustrates the remarkable generalizability of the risk-regulation model across a number of social contexts (see also Anthony et al., 2007). In addition, to our knowledge, these results are among the first to demonstrate that risk-regulation processes influence *behavior*. The majority of risk-regulation research has examined the effects of social risk on people's thoughts and feelings (see Murray et al., 2006). Recent studies have also demonstrated that risk regulation affects people's behavioral intentions (e.g., Anthony et al., 2007) and their social perceptions (Cameron et al., 2009). However, the present research demonstrates that risk regulation affects people's actual social behavior, specifically, their level of interpersonal warmth. Once again, then, the present research helps demonstrate the predictive power of the risk-regulation model.

The results of Study 2 are particularly notable given the subtle nature of our manipulation of the risk of rejection. Most research examining the self-fulfilling prophecy of acceptance has used very direct and obvious methods to alter participants' social expectations (e.g., false feedback stating that the participants' interaction partners did or did not like them; Rabiner & Coie, 1989). Despite the fact that our manipulation of

social risk was indirect, via the confederate's disclosure, it nevertheless had a very large influence on participants' social behavior and successfully eliminated the association between anticipated acceptance and social outcomes that was observed in both Study 1 and in the control condition of Study 2. These results suggest that the self-fulfilling prophecy of anticipated acceptance is *not* explained by a social skills deficit. Socially pessimistic participants in the experimental condition of Study 2 were perfectly capable of behaving in a warm and friendly manner, and indeed they behaved as prosocially as their socially optimistic counterparts. These results suggest that the negative social consequences of unwarranted social pessimism can be overcome with simple psychological interventions that limit the risk of rejection and alleviate social anxieties.

Given the negative consequences of self-protectively inhibiting warmth, an important question to ask is whether people are consciously aware that they are using this risk-regulation strategy. Like many social behaviors, inhibition of warmth in response to social risk could occur at a relatively uncontrolled level, and people may not be aware of their particular level of warmth in a given risky social situation. If this is the case, the negative consequences of such a risk-regulation strategy could affect more than one's immediate social outcomes. If people are not able to reflect on their own social behavior following an unsuccessful social interaction and note their own cool or unfriendly behavior, they cannot blame the unsuccessful social interaction on something controllable (i.e., their own behavior; "She didn't like me because I wasn't being myself!"). Instead, they may blame their poor social outcomes on something internal about the self (i.e., their personality or character; "She didn't like me because I am a loser!"). Over time, such internal attributions for failed social interactions could undermine people's self-esteem, further contributing to the self-fulfilling prophecy of acceptance by increasing the likelihood that people will harbor pessimistic social expectations.

Contrary to what we expected originally, self-esteem did not moderate the pattern of associations among variables involved in the acceptance prophecy. In retrospect, these results are not entirely surprising. Consistent with research on the attitude–behavior connection (e.g., Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005), we found that generalized attitudes about one's value as a relational partner (i.e., global self-esteem; Leary et al., 1995) predicted situation-specific attitudes about one's value as a relational partner (i.e., anticipated acceptance), which in turn predicted participants' behavior and actual social outcomes. This model (i.e., self-esteem → anticipated acceptance → behavior) is also consistent with past research suggesting that situation-specific social expectations explain

the association between self-esteem and social behavior (e.g., Anthony et al., 2007).

Our goal was to deconstruct the "reign of error" (Merton, 1948) to understand why people's expectations of acceptance or rejection predict actual acceptance or rejection from others. To that end, we tested our hypothesis that a thin slice of warmth is sufficient to explain the association between anticipated acceptance and actual acceptance. Results strongly supported this hypothesis, demonstrating the interpersonal power of being warm and friendly.

NOTES

1. At first blush, self-protectively inhibiting one's warmth seems a counterintuitive social strategy for protecting the self from rejection because it actually increases the likelihood that one will be rejected. A more sensible response to social doubts would be to increase one's warmth, thereby increasing the likelihood of acceptance. Unfortunately, increasing one's interpersonal warmth would also increase one's social involvement, thus increasing the risk inherent to the social situation, making this a highly unlikely social strategy for socially pessimistic individuals.

2. The feedback was originally included in an attempt to manipulate participants' anxieties about being evaluated by the group. Participants received one of three types of feedback, which varied in the amount of positivity that the group expressed toward the participant (e.g., "This person sounds nice, I hope they join us" vs. "We seem pretty different, but I'm willing to give it a try"). Unfortunately, this manipulation failed. Feedback condition did not directly, or interactively, influence any of the variables assessed or any of the results presented in this article. Therefore, data were collapsed across feedback conditions in analyses.

3. These mediated moderation results are the same if we do not control for global self-esteem: The interaction term predicts participants' warmth, $\beta = -.65$, $t(19) = -2.21$, $p = .041$; participants' warmth predicts actual acceptance, $\beta = .85$, $t(18) = 4.58$, $p < .001$; and Sobel's test indicated that this indirect path was significant, $z = -1.99$, $p = .046$.

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