Personal Narratives About Guilt: Role in Action Control and Interpersonal Relationships

Roy F. Baumeister
Case Western Reserve University

Arlene M. Stillwell
State University of New York at Potsdam

Todd F. Heatherton
Dartmouth College

Two studies explored interpersonal and action-control aspects of guilt. Both spontaneous and partner-induced guilt were studied using first-person accounts of interpersonal transgressions and guilt manipulations. Guilt was associated with transgressions against valued partners in close relationships, especially involving interpersonal neglect, unfilled obligations, and selfish actions. Feeling guilty was associated with higher rates of learning lessons, changing subsequent behavior, apologizing, confessing the transgression, and recognizing how a relationship partner's standards and expectations differ from one's own. Inducing guilt also appears to be a costly but effective way of influencing the behavior of relationship partners. The results support the view of guilt as a mechanism that alters behavior in the service of maintaining good interpersonal relationships.

Although many traditional theories of guilt have portrayed it as a solitary, intrapsychic phenomenon, recent evidence has increasingly emphasized interpersonal contexts, causes, and consequences. Tangney's (1992) sample of accounts of incidents involving guilt were found to be heavily interpersonal, the only exception being a category of reports of guilt over failures in dieting. Hoffman (1982) proposed that guilt derives from empathy,

---

Requests for reprints should be sent to Roy F. Baumeister, Department of Psychology, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH 44106-7123.

which is an important form of interpersonal sensitivity. Guilt has also been linked to anxiety, and anxiety is often a reaction to perceived threats to interpersonal relationships (Bowlby, 1969, 1973; also Baumeister & Tice, 1990).

Baumeister, Stillwell, and Heatherton (1994) proposed that guilt serves several interpersonal functions. First, it motivates people to behave in ways that will maintain and benefit relationships. Second, it serves as an influence technique that enables people to get their way without overt coercion or power. Third, it operates to help relationships recover from transgressions by redistributing emotional distress and promoting harmony and equity. According to that analysis, the prototypical cause of guilt is inflicting harm or distress on a relationship partner.

A second theoretical perspective, involving action control, is also useful for understanding guilt. To be sure, this overlaps substantially with the interpersonal perspective; Frijda (1986) suggested that emotions in general should be understood in interpersonal contexts and as serving to initiate action. Indeed, Baumeister et al.'s (1994) notion that guilt functions to promote relationship-enhancing and prevent relationship-damaging actions already implies an action-control mechanism. And the notion of guilt as an influence mechanism presupposes that guilt is capable of changing behavior. More generally, guilt can be understood as an emotional signal that a particular line of action is unacceptable and ought to be interrupted or avoided.

Our research was designed to build on the interpersonal and action-control views of guilt by investigating first-person accounts of guilt episodes from everyday life. Study 1 was based on comparison of two sets of interpersonal transgressions: ones about which the subject felt guilty, and ones about which the subject did not feel guilty. Study 2 investigated the direct interpersonal genesis of guilt by comparing accounts in which the subject made someone else feel guilty with accounts in which someone else made the subject feel guilty.

SPECIFIC HYPOTHESES

Although the research was partly exploratory, several key hypotheses did structure the main codings and analyses and shape the investigation. These can be briefly summarized as follows.

The view of guilt as a form of action control predicts that the accounts involving guilt should show a higher rate of learning lessons and altering subsequent behavior than would accounts of transgressions that did not

lead to guilt. If guilt does serve adaptive functions of action control, it should at least produce changes designed to improve behavior in the wake of a transgression.

The interpersonal view also predicts that guilt should stimulate various meliorative interpersonal gestures in the wake of a transgression. Guilty transgressors should be more likely than nonguilty transgressors to confess their misdeeds and to make amends (presumably beginning with an apology) to their victims. Making up with a relationship partner shows a concern for the partner and/or an interest in maintaining the relationship in a positive fashion; if guilt is indeed a mechanism for preserving relationships, it should promote such meaningful gestures.

Baumeister et al. (1994) emphasized that guilt functions to preserve *communal* relationships, and so we predicted that guilt stories would be more likely to indicate communal relationships. Clark (1984) defined these relationships as marked by a norm of mutual concern for each other's welfare, in contrast to *exchange* relationships, in which people seek their own self-interest by negotiating equitable transactions. This analysis implies that the relationship is maintained by giving a high priority to the partner's welfare, even to the occasional detriment of short-term self-interest. If guilt is a mechanism that helps enforce such communal norms, then it may well focus particularly on preventing selfish actions, which place self-interest above the partner's welfare. Thus, selfishness should be a salient feature of the accounts involving guilt.

The mutual concern that marks communal relationships would presumably be accompanied in most cases by placing a high, positive value on the other person, and so people would tend to esteem their communal partners relatively highly (as in romantic love or ingroup favoritism). This predicts that guilt, as a product of communal relatedness, should be more likely to occur in response to a transgression that harms an esteemed other, as opposed to a neutral or disvalued person. The other side of the coin is that one way of reducing guilt over transgression is to deny or minimize, subjectively, the feeling of communion with one's victim. Lerner and Matthews (1967) and I. Katz, Glass, and Cohen (1973) found that transgressors will derogate their victims under some conditions. Although neither study showed that such derogation would reduce guilt, such a reduction would explain why people derogate their victims; our study could potentially supply the missing link, by showing that transgressions result in less guilt when the victim is disparaged. For both these reasons, it was predicted that the victim should be presented in a more positive, esteemed fashion in the guilt stories than in the not-guilty stories.

Study 2 involved incidents in which people sought to make others feel guilty. According to Baumeister et al. (1994), the use of guilt as an influence

technique does not depend on overt power, but it does depend on the relationship bond, because one generates guilt by conveying to the other person how much that person has hurt or disappointed you – which will only change that person's behavior if he or she cares about you. For this reason, it seems that these cases of interpersonal genesis of guilt will occur not only in communal but also in close relationships, where there are well-established patterns of mutual caring that can be used as a basis for manipulating the other's feelings and actions.

Traditional views have also tended to view guilt as linked to violations of standard moral principles, such as the Ten Commandments. Departing from the traditional view, Jones, Kugler, and Adams (1995) suggested that guilt is more commonly noted in connection with specifically relationship transgressions, that is, with actions that may harm or disappoint an intimate partner, regardless of how they fit traditional morality. This suggests that issues of differing expectations and standards may lead to divergent perceptions and interpersonal guilt manipulations; the difference in expectations should be more apparent to the target of the guilt induction, because the inducer presumably assumes that guilt is an appropriate response on the basis of shared values and expectations. More generally, we predicted that issues of relationship maintenance would figure prominently in the accounts of guilt manipulations, on both sides.

Baumeister et al. (1994) proposed further that guilt, although effective, can be a costly technique of influencing a partner's actions. These costs should be perceived differently by the two partners. To the target of a guilt induction, compliance involves overriding one's own wishes, and so the person may sometimes resent the other's use of guilt to dictate one's actions.

Meanwhile, to the guilt inducer, the most salient cost may be an ironic sense of guilt over inducing guilt. This prediction is based on the assumption that the prototypical cause of guilt is inflicting harm or distress on a relationship partner – but guilt is itself unpleasant. Therefore, inflicting guilt on a relationship partner should also be a reason to feel guilty. Such guilt over inducing guilt can be termed *metaguilt*.

Lastly, if guilt does redistribute emotional distress within the pair, then it should help reduce or even reverse the emotional disparity between victim and transgressor. Transgressors who are made to feel guilty should, of course, in the process feel worse; victims may begin to feel better if they perceive that the transgressing partner feels guilty. From a relational perspective, the main reason to feel better is that the transgressor's guilt indicates that he or she does care for the victim's welfare (which may have seemed questionable in light of the transgression itself) and, moreover, that he or she may decide to refrain from such transgressions in the future. The latter goes back to the notion of guilt as a mechanism for controlling action and eliminating objectionable behaviors.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVES

The methodology used in this work involved the collection of autobiographical narratives, that is, first-person accounts of experiences from the subjects' everyday lives (Gergen & Gergen, 1988; Harvey, Weber, & Orbuch, 1990; McAdams, 1985; Ross & Holmberg, 1990). This methodology has emerged in recent years as an important complement to conventional laboratory experimentation, on the assumption that social sciences benefit from having multiple and diverse methodologies. Autobiographical narratives have high external validity because they involve actual experiences from people's lives, as opposed to laboratory simulations. They are also useful for studying many phenomena which, for practical or ethical reasons, are difficult to reproduce in the laboratory, such as divorce and romantic breakup (Harvey, Flanary, & Morgan, 1988; Harvey, Weber, Galvin, Huszti, & Garnick, 1986; Vaughan, 1986), unrequited love (Baumeister & Wotman, 1992; Baumeister, Wotman, & Stillwell, 1993), criminal and antisocial activity (J. Katz, 1988), the interpersonal genesis of anger (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Wotman, 1990), major life change (Heatherton & Nichols, 1994), and sexual masochism (Baumeister, 1988a, 1988b, 1989).

Several researchers (e.g., Brooke, 1985; McGraw, 1987; Tangney, 1992) have noted the desirability of using autobiographical methods to study guilt, because it too is difficult to study in the laboratory. In the 1960s, an important early series of studies on transgression and compliance was generally interpreted in terms of guilt (e.g., Carlsmith & Gross, 1969; Cialdini, Darby, & Vincent, 1973; Freedman, Wallington, & Bless, 1967; Konecni, 1972; Rawlings, 1968; D. T. Regan, Williams, & Sparling, 1972; J. W. Regan, 1971; Silverman, 1967), but these studies lacked manipulation checks to verify that guilt was involved; in fact, Brock (1969) proposed that the entire body of findings could be interpreted with no reference to guilt. Although some more recent studies have indeed measured guilt in the context of laboratory studies, these have been rare, suggesting that it is still difficult to conduct successful laboratory studies on guilt. Meanwhile, several important works on guilt have used autobiographical methods. For example, McGraw (1987) found that many people report guilt over unintentional transgressions, contrary to traditional moral theorizing that associated guilt only with intentional violations of principles.

STUDY 1

Study 1 was an exploratory attempt to elucidate the differences between transgressions that induce guilt and those that do not. To define the

transgression in a comparable way, the instructions for all stories requested the subject to relate an incident in which he or she had done something that made someone else angry. Using anger as a criterion is an effective way of eliciting stories about interpersonal transgressions (cf. Baumeister et al., 1990), but, of course, it may not cover the full range of guilt-inducing episodes. Half the stories were to be chosen such that the transgressor did not feel guilty, and the other half were supposed to contain events in which the transgressor did feel guilty. Thus, the two sets were comparable in terms of another's condemnation and disapproval of the subject's actions, and they differed as to whether the subject felt guilty afterwards.

Method

Forty-seven subjects participated in the study. Participants were volunteers recruited from upper-level psychology courses who received a small amount of extra credit for their participation. They were told that the research was part of a broad investigation of emotionally important and powerful experiences that people have had. They were assured of confidentiality and were requested not to identify themselves or give full real names of other people in their story. The instructions went on to express the hope that the subject would respond to this confidentiality by giving a full and honest disclosure.

The instructions for the guilt story were as follows:

> Describe an incident in which you angered someone — and in which you felt guilty or regretful afterwards. That is, describe an occurrence in which you provoked someone or made someone really angry or mad, and afterwards you felt bad or suffered from a feeling of having done something wrong. Nearly everyone has experienced such things more than once; please choose an especially important and memorable event, preferably from the past two or three years. Please be as thorough as possible. Describe the background, the incident itself, and the consequences — the full story.

The instructions for the not-guilty stories were exactly the same except that the references to "felt" were replaced by "did not feel." Each subject was asked to write one story of each type, and the sequence was counterbalanced randomly. One subject neglected to write a not-guilty story.

Each subject received a written debriefing when he or she was finished. This debriefing explained the nature of the research and offered sample findings from another study as illustrative. (No deceptions were involved.)

The stories in Study 1 were typed prior to coding to remove any bias or identifiability due to handwriting. The stories were coded by one judge on

a dichotomous, conservative basis. That is, each feature was defined a priori and then each story was coded for the presence or absence of that feature. A story was coded *no* if it failed to include the feature, which does not necessarily entail a specific denial. Thus, for example, only stories explicitly mentioning an apology were coded as *yes* on apology; a *no* coding on apology, therefore, does not mean that no apology occurred, but merely indicates that the story did not include it.

Results and Discussion

Because each subject wrote two stories, the possibility of order effects was investigated by examining whether any of the main variables differed significantly between the first and second story. No effects approached significance. Inspection of the data also suggested that subjects' second stories were neither longer nor shorter than their first ones. These results confirm other evidence that when subjects write two stories, these are generally uncorrelated, independent, and unconfounded by order or carry-over effects (Baumeister et al., 1990, 1993).

The main results are presented in Table 1. We begin with the issue of action control. Guilt generally occurs *after* a transgression has occurred; in order for it to be an adaptive, functional state, it would have to exert some pressure to alter future or subsequent behavior. Consistent with this view, we found that the stories involving guilt were significantly more likely than the not-guilty stories to express some lesson that had been learned, often at the end where a story's "moral" is often presented, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = 23.37$, $p < .001$. By the same token, those stories were also more likely to indicate that the subject's behavior had changed, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = 8.13, p < .01$. These results thus support the view of guilt as a mechanism for behavior change. Of course, there is no way to verify objectively that subjects'

TABLE 1
Main Findings, Study 1

Coding Dimension	Percentage Coded Yes	
	Guilty	Not Guilty
Learned a lesson	40.4	0.0
Transgressor's behavior changed	21.3	2.1
Apology given	36.1	6.5
Transgressor confessed misdeed	8.5	0.0
Communal relationship	93.2	69.0
Transgressor regarded victim highly	85.1	36.9
Transgressor was selfish	42.5	8.7

Note. Numbers refer to percentage of stories coded as having the indicated feature.

behavior actually did change as a result of guilt. These results do indicate, however, that subjects perceive guilt as having had a significant impact on them in terms of indicating the need and direction for behavioral change and as being followed by such change.

The next issue concerned the interpersonal consequences of guilt. Guilty subjects appeared to engage in actions that reflected an interpersonal concern and focus, whereas transgressors who did not feel guilty showed no such solicitude toward their victims. Transgressors who felt guilty were significantly more likely to report confessing the misdeed, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = 4.09, p < .05$, and to report apologizing or making an effort at restitution to their victim, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = 12.11, p < .001$. By definition, a confession promotes truthful understanding, and an apology, by admitting the wrongfulness of one's actions, may be taken as an admission that one should not repeat that transgression in the future. Guilt thus seems to promote honest communication and shared understandings and to reduce the likelihood of continued or repeated offenses, and these effects of guilt seem likely to promote their interpersonal relationships.

Was guilt in fact associated with transgressions against valued partners in communal relationships? The answer appears to be yes. Stories were coded for whether the victim was depicted as someone with whom the subject had a communal relationship (defined as involving norms of mutual concern for each other's welfare, such as in family or romantic relationships; see Clark, 1984), and these were significantly more common in the guilty stories than in the not-guilty stories, $\chi^2(1, N = 86) = 8.27, p < .01$. A related issue has to do with evidence that the transgression was caused or at least marked by selfishness, because selfishness violates the spirit of communal relationships and is therefore likely to be an important target of guilt sanctions. Sure enough, guilty stories were significantly more likely than not-guilty ones to indicate that the transgressor had been selfish, $\chi^2(1, N = 89) = 13.92, p < .001$. Another conceptually related issue was the evaluative perception of the partner; guilt should mainly operate to protect positive relationships with esteemed, valued partners. Consistent with that hypothesis, guilty stories were more likely than not-guilty ones to be marked by indications of holding high regard or esteem for the victim, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = 22.72, p < .001$.

Apparently, then, holding a low opinion of one's victim is associated with a lesser tendency to feel guilty. This implication complements findings by Lerner and Matthews (1967) and I. Katz et al. (1973) showing that transgressors will sometimes actively derogate their victims. Our finding suggests that such derogation might indeed help reduce or prevent guilt feelings.

Several additional dimensions were coded. Not-guilty stories exceeded guilty stories in references to mitigating circumstances, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) =$

11.33, $p < .001$, in saying or implying that the victim had helped cause the incident and therefore shared the responsibility for it, $\chi^2(1, N = 90) = 14.41$, $p < .001$, in likelihood of containing self-justifying statements (by the transgressor), $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = 48.76$, $p < .001$, and in indications that the transgressor presumably was able to foresee the outcome of his or her actions, $\chi^2(1, N = 87) = 21.97$, $p < .001$. The last of these seems counterintuitive, in view of the traditional assumption that guilt should be mainly associated with intentional transgressions. McGraw (1987) found more reports of unintentional than of intentional transgressions leading to guilt, however, and so our results provide a conceptual replication of her effect. It is thus clear that people do feel guilty over actions whose harmful outcomes were not foreseen. Indeed, if one assumes that people generally avoid causing harm to valued relationship partners when they can avoid it, it seems likely that the majority of offenses against such partners—offenses that produce guilt—will have such an element of accident or unforeseeability. This conclusion provides further support for the notion that causing harm to a relationship partner, rather than intentionally violating abstract moral standards, should be taken as the prototypical cause of guilt.

STUDY 2

Study 2 examined a particular form of interpersonal causation of guilt, namely, efforts by one person to make someone else feel guilty. Vangelisti, Daly, and Rudnick (1991) found evidence that people do, in fact, deliberately strive to induce guilt in others, and they noted that such everyday manipulations provide support for a social dimension of guilt and indeed constitute a significant challenge to traditional theories of guilt as a phenomenon of private reflection and intrapsychic self-evaluation. In Study 2, we sought to compare incidents in which subjects made someone else feel guilty against a sample of incidents in which subjects were made to feel guilty by someone else.

Method

Subjects were recruited from visitors to the Ontario Science Centre and from an advanced psychology course. They ranged in age from 19 to 65. Half the subjects were asked for a story in which they made someone feel guilty (guilt-inducer stories); the other half were asked for a story in which someone made them feel guilty (target stories). Each subject wrote only one story, assigned at random. Subjects were asked for as much detail as possible. The initial briefing was the same as in Study 1. One hundred twenty-seven questionnaires were distributed but only 104 usable responses

were received. These consisted of 55 guilt-inducer stories and 49 target stories.

Two coders read the stories and coded them on a series of dichotomous dimensions (to be described in Results). Initial interrater agreement was above 80% on all dimensions; differences were resolved by conferring. Some stories were ambiguous or uncodable on some dimensions, and these "maybe" codings were deleted from the analyses. The number of deleted "maybe" stories ranged from 0% to 10% and averaged 4.18 per dimension.

Results and Discussion

Before proceeding to the comparisons between the guilt inducers' stories and the targets' accounts, it is useful to consider the level of interpersonal intimacy indicated in these accounts. Vangelisti et al. (1991) reported that 80% of their sample of accounts of interpersonal guilt induction took place in the context of close relationships, and the remaining 20% were in "somewhat close" (p. 16) relationships; none of their accounts pertained to interactions between strangers. They also reported that subjects' ratings of how typical guilt manipulations were correlated strongly with their ratings of the intimacy of the relationship. Our study offers a useful opportunity to ascertain whether this link between intimacy and guilt induction would hold true in an independent replication. Further, our method has greater generality than that of Vangelisti et al. because we examined accounts by both manipulators and targets of guilt induction.

We coded the relationship between the subject and the other person in the story on a 4-point scale: intimate, close relationships (4); causal acquaintanceships and work-based relationships, such as business associates or clients (3); strangers with whom some future interaction was expected (2); or strangers with no expectation of future interaction (1).

The results strongly confirmed that inducing guilt is linked to close relationships. Only one story in the entire sample involved strangers (it involved a lifeguard making a child feel guilty for unsafe behavior near the pool). Six fell into the casual or work-related category (most of these involved teacher–student interactions). Two stories were ambiguous, although they seemed to imply close relationships. The remaining 95 stories (thus, 93%) clearly indicated that a close or intimate relationship existed between the people. Thus, from the perspective of the guilt manipulators and from the perspective of their targets, guilt induction appears to be strongly linked to close relationships.

We also sought to classify the events or incidents that prompted one person to try to make someone else feel guilty. By far the largest category involved interpersonal neglect: failing to pay enough attention or spend enough time with one's partner. This is consistent with the view that one of

the main functions of guilt is to motivate people to act in ways that will benefit and maintain their close relationships (Baumeister et al., 1994).

The frequency of interpersonal neglect as the offense that led to guilt manipulation was not evenly distributed across the two conditions. Although it accounted for over one third of the stories by the guilt inducers, it accounted for over half of the stories by targets, and the difference was significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = 6.49, p < .001$. People thus find it especially salient or common when other people induce guilt as a way of placing demands on them for more time, attention, or affection. The main comparisons between the guilt inducers' and the targets' accounts are presented in Table 2.

We noted that there are certain costs involved in using guilt as an influence technique. One of these is resentment by the target, who may feel guilty and comply with the inducer's request but nonetheless may retain some negative feeling about having been manipulated in that way. Consistent with this view, over a third of the targets indicated some feelings of resentment over the other's manipulation of their guilt feelings. References to targets' resentment were much less common (only 2%) in the inducers' accounts, $\chi^2(1, N = 96) = 20.33, p < .001$, which suggests that this cost is much less evident or salient to the inducer than to the target.

Meanwhile, however, inducers may notice a different cost of using guilt to get their way, namely, guilt over inducing guilt (i.e., metaguilt). No targets of guilt manipulations made reference to inducers suffering from metaguilt, but a sizable minority of inducers did include it in their accounts, suggesting that metaguilt is indeed more salient to the inducer than to the target, $\chi^2(1, N = 100) = 11.41, p < .001$. Evidence of metaguilt fits the prototype of causing harm or distress to a relationship partner as the source of guilt, because guilt itself is a form of distress, and so making a relationship partner feel guilty should bring guilt to the inducer, too.

These last two findings suggest that using guilt as an influence technique may be generally perceived as somewhat illicit or objectionable. Targets of

TABLE 2
Main Findings, Study 2

Category	Target	Inducer
Interpersonal neglect as offense	58.7	32.7
Target resented manipulation	37.2	1.9
Metaguilt	0.0	21.2
Inducer felt better afterward	4.7	44.0
Reference to other's standards	55.1	13.0
Differing expectations as cause	49.0	29.1

Note. Numbers are percentage of codable stories that were coded as positive on the dimension.

guilt induction sometimes resent the manipulation, and inducers feel guilty themselves over inducing guilt. Although guilt may often be an effective way of getting one's way, it appears to be costly and to carry some stigma. This suggests that inducing guilt may be a technique that has to be used with caution and restraint.

There was some evidence that people who successfully make someone else feel guilty seem to feel better afterward. As one might expect, indicators that the guilt inducer did end up feeling better were more common in the inducers' own stories than in the targets' stories, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = 18.69, p < .001$. The important thing, however, is not the difference between the two conditions so much as the fact that the affective improvement occurs at all. Guilt clearly makes the transgressor feel worse, and if the transgressor's guilt also brings affective improvement to the victim, guilt can be regarded as a mechanism that restores emotional equity and, indeed, helps the relationship recover from the transgression by enabling the victim to feel better.

As we noted, traditional views of guilt have emphasized the violation of moral standards. Placing guilt in the context of interpersonal relationships and manipulations, as this study does, raises the possibility that the two people involved may hold different standards and expectations. One person may do something that is acceptable (or only slightly questionable) in his or her own eyes but that is highly objectionable to the partner, because the partner's assumptions about proper behavior and mutual obligations differ. Such cases seem especially likely to elicit efforts by the victim/partner to make the transgressor feel guilty, because unless the victim raises the issue, the transgressor may not realize the transgression (or its seriousness). In the face of such efforts to induce guilt, the transgressor may indeed feel guilty, especially given a strong bond of caring and the communal relationship norm of mutual concern. The transgressor may, however, feel that the inducer's reaction was excessive, that is, out of proportion to the transgression.

Several findings were consistent with that analysis. The incident was depicted as involving different standards or expectations in a substantial minority of all the accounts, although these indications were significantly more common in the targets' accounts, $\chi^2(1, N = 104) = 4.33, p < .05$. If one coded stories for any reference to the other person's standards, as an indication of awareness of the other's point of view, these too were much more common in the targets' accounts, $\chi^2(1, N = 103) = 19.34, p < .001$. Targets were also significantly more likely than inducers to depict the inducer as having overreacted to the problem, that is, as having displayed excessive objections, $\chi^2(1, N = 103) = 9.73, p < .01$.

Several other findings of lesser importance should be noted. A number of guilt inducers admitted frankly that they exaggerated their suffering or in other ways lied or falsified facts to make the other person feel guilty. Targets seemed largely unaware of the notion that their victims were

dissembling or exaggerating. Inducers were thus more likely than targets to indicate that the inducer lied, exaggerated, or otherwise falsified things, $\chi^2(1, N = 104) = 8.78, p < .01$. Some targets did depict the guilt inducer as frankly manipulative, but even those depictions were more common in the inducers' own accounts, $\chi^2(1, N = 103) = 4.59, p < .05$. This evidence of dishonesty and manipulativeness extends our earlier point about guilt induction being a somewhat illicit technique of getting one's way.

Lastly, references to the target's apology or regret were significantly more common in the inducers' stories than in the targets' stories, $\chi^2(1, N = 102) = 7.31, p < .01$. Study 1 found that feeling guilty was associated with an increase in references to apologizing, and the results of Study 2 are consistent with this.

The role of guilt helps explain a seeming inconsistency between this finding on apologies and an earlier study. Baumeister et al. (1990) found that perpetrators of transgressions were more likely to mention apologies (and other efforts at making amends) in their accounts than were victims. In the present study, however, it was the victims — the guilt inducers — who were more likely to mention the apologies. How can this difference be understood?

In the first place, it is apparent that the discrepancy lies in the victims' references to apologies, because the transgressors mentioned having apologized at almost exactly the same rate: 22% of the transgressors' (i.e., perpetrators') accounts in the 1990 study mentioned apologies, whereas 21% of the transgressors (i.e., targets of guilt induction) in the present study did so. But whereas a scant 4% of victims in the earlier study mentioned apologies, nearly half (46%) did so in the present study.

The difference between the two studies probably accounted for that radical change. In the 1990 study, victims were describing incidents that made them angry, and an apology would most likely reduce their reason for being angry, so they may have been inclined to downplay the apology or, indeed, to describe an incident in which the perpetrator did not apologize. In the present study, however, victims were describing an incident in which they deliberately undertook to make someone feel guilty, and the other person's apology would undoubtedly be a clear sign of the success of their efforts (and, presumably, of the fact that their efforts were justified and appropriate). That, combined with the higher rate of close relationships between transgressor and victim in the present study (which, as Study 1 showed, is linked to higher rates of feeling guilty and of apologizing) may explain why the victims in the present study reported so many more apologies.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

These two studies found a broad range of significant differences in accounts of transgressions in interpersonal circumstances. In Study 1, transgressions

that resulted in guilt were described in ways that differed systematically from the descriptions of transgressions that did not lead to guilt. In Study 2, descriptions of inducing guilt in someone else differed systematically from descriptions of being made to feel guilty oneself. The various findings extend the view of guilt as a mechanism that promotes good interpersonal relationships and that strengthens the self-control of action. We now discuss the relevance of our findings to these two theoretical frameworks separately, even though, as already noted, the two views are complementary and indeed overlapping. We then briefly examine our findings from the perspective of alternative, intrapsychic theoretical viewpoints.

Interpersonal Relatedness

Many of our findings here support and extend the view of guilt as functioning to strengthen and maintain close, communal relationships (Baumeister et al., 1994). Both studies found that accounts of guilt referred mainly to such relationships. In Study 2, 93% of the accounts involved partners in close relationships. In Study 1, there were many accounts of transgressions against people who were not close relationship partners—but only in the condition in which the transgression did not lead to guilt. When subjects described transgressions leading to guilt, they overwhelmingly referred to communal relationships and to people whom they regarded highly.

These results suggest that guilt should be understood a being particularly associated with transgressions against valued, esteemed partners in close, communal relationships. Combined with the findings of Jones et al. (1995), they suggest that people mainly feel guilty when they harm a relationship partner. If that is indeed the prototypical cause of guilt (as we have proposed), that would explain why transgressors may seek to reduce guilt by minimizing the extent of relatedness or fellow-feeling between themselves and their victims.

These results are also consistent with the hypothesized function of guilt as leading to behaviors that benefit or maintain good relationships, because such relationships do indeed seem to be the primary locus of guilt. A variety of findings from the two studies seem well-designed to promote just such relationship-enhancing behavior. Guilt makes people learn lessons and alter their subsequent behavior so as to avoid repetition of harmful acts (Study 1). It makes people confess their misdeeds and apologize to their victims, acts that seem likely to improve honesty, mutual understanding, and future harmony (Study 1). It punishes people for being selfish, thereby presumably inducing them to behave in more communally oriented ways (Study 1). It impels people to pay more attention to (and simply spend more time with) their relationship partners (Study 2). It helps them notice that their partner

may have expectations and standards that differ from their own, which seems likely to foster better mutual understanding and more harmonious behavior (Study 2). And it may even help relationships recover from transgressions by one partner, insofar as the victim may feel better when the transgressor feels guilty (Study 2).

All these conclusions are based on subjects' perceptions as expressed in their accounts, and we do not have independent verification that those consequences were actually, objectively caused. Yet even if guilt has only some of those effects only some of the time, they still seem wide-ranging and compelling enough that there would be a strong net benefit to interpersonal relationships. Objective verification hardly seems necessary with some of the effects, for the subjective perception of having felt better, or learned a lesson, or recognized a partner's discrepant expectations is the essence of the effect. (For example, it is difficult to imagine any objective basis for disputing someone's belief that he or she feels better now.)

Findings from both studies also supported and extended the view that guilt can operate as an influence technique. Study 1 apparently confirmed that guilt does induce people to change their behavior, so it is not surprising that people seek to manipulate other people's guilt to alter those people's behavior, as Study 2 showed (see also Vangelisti et al., 1991). Inducing guilt may be one way of influencing other people when they violate shared expectations or when their assumptions and expectations about proper behavior differ from one's own.

To be sure, the very high rate of reference to close relationships in Study 2 suggests that deliberate induction of guilt is mainly used as an influence technique on relationship partners; without further evidence, there is little basis for claiming that people may use guilt to influence other people in general. A likely reason for this is that guilt induction relies on the social bond—or, more precisely, on the other person's concern for oneself and on the other person's fear of losing the relationship. The notion that guilt is partly derived from separation or exclusion anxiety implies that someone can use guilt mainly to influence the behavior of people who fear to lose his or her love. The link to communal relationships implies that one can use the other's concern for one's own welfare to make the other feel guilty.

Guilt may indeed serve as a substitute for formal or objective power, in that it allows the powerless to get their way. People induce guilt in others by calling attention to how the other has hurt or distressed them. In that context, it is perhaps not surprising that people sometimes exaggerate the degree to which they have been hurt or disappointed by the other, as some of our subjects reported. As a means of getting one's way without needing power or status, guilt may seem too good to be true; and, in a sense, it is. Two costs of guilt as an influence technique were evident in Study 2. First, targets of guilt manipulations may resent the technique, even if they comply

with the guilt inducer's wishes. In the long run, such resentment may prove divisive and may promote resistance to other requests. Second, people who induce guilt sometimes seem to feel guilty themselves over doing so, a phenomenon we have termed *metaguilt*. Taken together, the resentment and metaguilt patterns seem to suggest that use of guilt manipulations is sometimes regarded as illicit in some sense; perhaps it seems to violate some of the norms that shape the way people in communal relationships are supposed to treat each other.

Although we have emphasized the positive, constructive, relationship-enhancing effects of guilt, it bears mention that destructive effects are possible. The evidence for occasional resentment of guilt manipulations is one indication. Ultimately, guilt is a bad feeling that is linked to the presumably positive interpersonal bond. If guilt were to become pervasive, partners might begin to feel that the bad outweighed the good, and it might impel them to reconsider or even leave the relationship. Still, nothing in our data indicated such negative outcomes.

Action Control

We also noted that guilt seems a plausible mechanism for regulating one's behavior. Simon (1967) proposed that models of the cognitive control of behavior need to include some sort of interrupt mechanism that can override an ongoing action sequence and redirect or terminate it prematurely, and he suggested that emotions may often serve this function. Guilt seems to be a perfect example of an aversive affective state that could stop people from doing things. More generally, guilt is often recognized as a means of diverting behavior, and people commonly refer to doing things or refraining from doing things because of guilt.

Our findings may underestimate the role of guilt in action control, because both studies focused on interpersonal transgressions and interactions. If these are solitary events that lead to guilt, these may be especially likely to serve action-control functions. Thus, for example, Tangney (1992) reported that the only category of accounts about guilt that did not involve interpersonal circumstances was that of breaking a diet. Feeling guilty because one ate too much may not be an interpersonal phenomenon, but it is a dramatic illustration of how guilt may serve action control. Guilt may interrupt an eating binge in the middle or, failing that, may be sufficiently aversive that the person refrains from repeating the transgression.

In Study 1, we found that guilt was strongly linked to reports of subsequent behavior change and, indeed, to indicating that one had learned a lesson from the episode. References to behavior change or learning lessons were much less likely to follow from transgressions that did not lead to guilt. Although our results are correlational in nature, it seems very

plausible that the causal link is in fact that guilt prompts people to alter their behavior and even to formulate conclusions that will guide subsequent action. If so, then guilt may indeed be a common and powerful means of action control.

Stories about transgressions that did not lead to guilt were more likely to include reference to mitigating circumstances. These external factors may be presented as an attributional strategy for reducing one's own blame, because the more external factors were involved, the less responsibility one has oneself. Possibly, therefore, the link between mitigating circumstances and absence of guilt was a purely defensive or rationalizing response on the part of the subject. This link may also be relevant to action control, however. If mitigating circumstances were partly responsible for the transgression, then issues of self-control are less relevant, and there is presumably less need to try to alter one's behavior in the future. Thus, guilt may show up mainly when there are no mitigating circumstances and so the need to prevent further transgressions falls entirely on the person's own need to control and alter his or her own behavior.

Lastly, we found that guilt was linked to transgressions of which the perpetrator was allegedly unable to foresee the outcome. This was a large effect, and it seems very plausible that at least part of it was due to an attempt to reduce one's blame by indicating that one did not foresee the outcome. Still, there is no obvious reason why such a defensive motivation would be absent when subjects were writing about transgressions about which they did not feel guilty; one might even have expected the reverse (i.e., that people would report less guilt when they did not foresee the outcome of their actions, rather than more).

The effect on foreseeable consequences may be another reflection of the action control aspect of guilt. That is, if one takes the finding at face value, it means that people are more likely to feel guilty when they failed to foresee the consequences of their acts. If so, then guilt may punish such lack of foresight. In the long run, it may motivate people to be more careful and thoughtful so as to anticipate the harmful consequences of their actions. Thus, this may be another way in which guilt promotes action control.

Intrapsychic Interpretations

Although this work was carried out in connection with our interest in extending our interpersonal analysis of guilt, it is necessary to acknowledge that not all theorists share in this view of guilt as an interpersonal phenomenon, and those theorists might prefer to seek intrapsychic interpretations for the present results. In this section, we briefly suggest how our findings might be explained by theories that treat guilt as an intrapsychic phenomenon. Because of the multiplicity of such theories (e.g., guilt as

castration anxiety, as a product of conflict between superego and ego, as ontologically based in the inevitable failure to fulfill all of one's possibilities, as a symptom of neurosis), this necessarily remains incomplete.

We confine our comments to a generic view of guilt as remorse over actions that violate personal standards. This view of guilt has much in common with cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957). In particular, dissonance has been reconceptualized by Aronson (1968; also Thibodeau & Aronson, 1992) as acting in ways that contradict one's favorable self-conceptions, and by Cooper and Fazio (1984) as distress over being personally responsible for foreseeable, aversive consequences. To be sure, these formulations do not fit all the phenomena of guilt (see Baumeister et al., in press), such as the facts that self-reports of guilt more commonly reflect unintentional than intentional transgressions (McGraw, 1987) and that people feel guilty over unforeseen positive inequities in their favor (Austin, McGinn, & Susmilch, 1980; Hassebrauck, 1986). It is also essential to acknowledge that although dissonance theory was originally stated in purely intrapsychic terms, research has shown it to have a strong interpersonal aspect (e.g., Baumeister & Tice, 1984; for interpretive reviews, see Baumeister, 1982; Schlenker, 1982), so the reality of dissonance phenomena may be quite consistent with our own analysis of guilt even if there is considerable overlap. Still, it is worth considering how these intrapsychic versions of dissonance would account for our findings.

Several findings are readily interpretable. That guilt led to learning lessons and changing behavior seems perfectly consistent with the view that dissonance over improper actions leads to subsequent behavior change. Also, to reduce dissonance one may try to make it up to the offended party; thus, our finding that guilt promoted apologies can also be integrated. Our finding that guilt was linked to an absence of external causes or mitigating circumstances is consistent with the view of dissonance as linked to personal responsibility, as Cooper and Fazio (1984) proposed. The findings from Study 2 that guilt seemed linked to the other person's standards seems contrary to the view that one's own standards and self-conceptions cause dissonance, but if one makes the assumption that those guilty subjects actually did find their behavior in conflict with their own standards, they might in consequence become motivated to attend more to the other person's standards and expectations to please that person better in the future. Dissonance theory has after all accepted the fact that people can produce dissonance in others by calling attention to inconsistencies in the others' behavior, as in recent work by Stone, Aronson, Crain, Winslow, and Fried (1994) who reminded subjects of past failures to practice safe sex.

The link between guilt and selfishness (Study 1) can also be interpreted in connection with dissonance theory, to the extent that selfishness contradicts people's preferred conceptions of themselves as morally decent and altru-

istic (see Aronson, 1968). Guilt over neglecting a relationship partner, and even the finding of metaguilt, may be reconciled to dissonance theory if one assumes that people have internal standards for treating relationship partners only in consistently thoughtful and considerate ways. The prevalence of close and communal relationships in our findings might suggest the need for an interpersonal analysis, but one could reconcile it to a dissonance view by adding the assumption that people have internal standards requiring them to treat relationship partners in special, desirable ways, making transgressions against relationship partners unusually prone to cause dissonance. (Of course, the more interpersonal assumptions one adds to dissonance theory, the less need there is to treat it as a separate, intrapsychic rival to our interpersonal analysis of guilt.)

It is also plausible that the prevalence of transgressions against valued relationship partners could be explained on another basis, namely, cue salience and a resulting increase in memory accessibility. For example, one might propose that a person would feel equally guilty over lying to a stranger and lying to her husband, but she could easily forget the former lie whereas the daily exposure to her husband would frequently revive that guilty memory.

The link between guilt and confession and the fact that people seem to feel better when their partner feels guilty are the findings that seem least consistent with a dissonance view. We also suspect that most people's internal standards call for them to treat everyone decently, rather than treating close relationship partners well and ignoring the rest; therefore, the prevalence of relationship transgressions could turn out to be contrary to a dissonance view. (Further research on the precise nature of such internal standards would be warranted if one seriously wanted to reinterpret guilt as an intrapsychic, dissonance phenomenon.) In addition, the finding that foreseeability appeared to be negatively related to guilt (in our Study 1) contradicts a central assumption of dissonance (Cooper & Fazio, 1984).

Another possibly relevant intrapsychic mechanism is suggested by self-perception theory (Bem, 1972). According to this theory, people infer their inner states from observing their overt behavior. Applied to our research, self-perception theory might suggest that our subjects could not properly retrieve memories of feeling guilty; instead, they reconstructed events which they assumed must have made them feel guilty because of their assumptions about what kinds of events lead to guilt. Thus, for example, instead of concluding that guilt made people learn lessons and change their behavior following a transgression, one might propose that our findings signified only that subjects assumed they must have felt guilty because they changed their behavior. The effort to reduce guilt to self-perception seems contradicted by findings in other investigations. Thus, research using an experience sampling (beeper) method has found that subjects are quite able to

report feeling guilty very often *and* that guilt arises more or less equally in connection with all sorts of behaviors, contrary to the view that people only infer their own guilt feelings by using specific a priori criteria (see Baumeister, Reis, & Delespaul, in press).

Still, some of our findings can be interpreted in self-perception terms, especially if one makes liberal assumptions that the circumstances we found linked to guilt correspond to people's a priori assumptions about what does cause guilt. People might assume, for example, that they would feel guilty mainly over transgressing against valued relationship partners, or they might assume that if they confessed the misdeed or apologized or made amends, then they must have felt guilty. Whether the self-perception view could be extended to cover the findings about making someone else feel guilty is doubtful, however, because to undertake to induce guilt in someone else, one would presumably have to have some direct understanding of inner states and the capacity to know one's own purposes. We also think that the prevalence of interpersonal neglect and the relative paucity of acts that violate conventional moral norms in our data make a self-perception view seem doubtful (see also Baumeister, Reis, & Delespaul, in press; Jones et al., 1995), because those patterns show discrepancies between actual reports of guilt and the acts that people presumably would most likely assume to be the common causes of guilt.

A last relevant theory concerns self-awareness, which is generally conceptualized as comparing aspects of oneself against relevant standards and as stimulating the desire to reduce discrepancies between self and ideals (Carver & Scheier, 1981; Duval & Wicklund, 1972; Wicklund, 1975). Guilt could be understood as one consequence of self-awareness and as a source of the drive to reduce such discrepancies. This view can easily accommodate most of the results of Study 2, if one assumes that people induce guilt in others by making them self-aware (particularly by calling someone's attention to discrepancies between his or her behavior and his or her standards). The finding that interpersonal neglect predominated in these reports, as opposed to failures to live up to conventional moral standards, is somewhat at odds with his view, but one could propose that people's internal standards are more concerned with interpersonal relations than with other issues. The resentment reported by targets of guilt inductions in Study 2 is also not readily explained by a self-awareness view, but it does not contradict the use of self-awareness to explain other findings.

Likewise, several findings from Study 1 seem to fit a self-awareness view. The fact that people claimed to learn lessons and change their behavior following guilt presumably reflects their efforts to reduce discrepancies between perceived self and relevant standards, as self-awareness theory emphasizes. People's efforts to make amends to their victim following guilt may signal similar aims. The link between guilt and perceived selfishness

might also mean that self-awareness causes guilt, because the self is the central focus of both selfishness and self-awareness.

The link we found between guilt and close or communal relationships poses one challenge for the self-awareness view. How one's degree of relationship to an interaction partner affects one's level of self-awareness is an empirical question that (to our knowledge) has not yet been answered, but it seems likely on an a priori or intuitive basis that people would be more self-aware when meeting new people than when interacting with very familiar partners. On the other hand, one could suggest that relationship partners have a greater capacity than strangers to make one aware of discrepancies between one's actions and one's ideals, because the partners know more about oneself and one's ideals, and possibly because the self is defined by the way one is perceived by long-term acquaintances (see Baumeister, 1986).

Why self-awareness should stimulate confession is unclear, rendering the link between guilt and confession difficult to integrate into a self-awareness view. The greater prevalence of self-justifying statements in the not-guilty accounts (as opposed to the accounts about feeling guilty) seems to suggest that self-awareness is high even when people do not feel guilty; this also weakens the self-awareness explanation of the guilt findings.

To conclude, it is apparent that many of our findings can be easily understood using an intrapsychic model of guilt, such as one based on cognitive dissonance, self-perception, or self-awareness theory. The plausibility of invoking such mechanisms is greatly enhanced if one abandons the requirement of parsimony, because each of them has difficulty explaining all our findings, whereas each can point to several of our findings that are consistent with the theory's central tenets. We have concluded elsewhere that an interpersonal analysis is necessary to handle the full body of accumulated research findings about guilt (Baumeister et al., 1994), and we see no reason to alter that conclusion based on the present pair of studies. Still, these studies were not motivated by an desire to provide a crucial test to discriminate between interpersonal and intrapsychic analyses, and it important to keep in mind that our interpersonal explanations for these findings are not the only ones possible. The majority of our findings can be reasonably interpreted according to several traditional, intrapsychic views.

Limitations and Future Research

Our results were based on autobiographical narratives, which despite their value for exploring subjective perceptions are not effective for teasing apart cognitive processes, establishing causal mechanisms, or verifying objective occurrences. It seems likely that the majority of subjective perceptions will bear substantial resemblance to actual events and will also reflect the

operation of various subjective, motivated biases. Guilt is a highly subjective phenomenon that is based on interpretations of events, including one's own actions, and this makes the use of autobiographical accounts a desirable means of studying guilt, but in general it also seems desirable to look for converging evidence from multiple methodologies. In particular, objective verification of the behavioral consequences of guilt is a priority for further work.

The social psychological study of guilt was greatly stimulated by the studies on transgression and compliance (e.g., Carlsmith & Gross, 1969; Cialdini et al., 1973; Freedman et al., 1967; Konecni, 1972; Rawlings, 1968; D. T. Regan et al., 1972; J. W. Regan, 1971; Silverman, 1967). These, however, lacked manipulation checks to verify that guilt was even involved, and in some cases one may doubt that people perceived themselves as having transgressed (see Brock, 1969). Our studies lack the advantages of experimental manipulation that those studies had, but they leave little doubt about the subjective perception of guilt. In those experiments, guilt was presumed to lead to various behaviors that would presumably benefit or restore interpersonal communion and equity, for example, by complying with a victim's request or performing a helpful action. We provided confirmatory evidence that guilt causes people to comply with others' expectations and do other interpersonally beneficial acts (although helpfulness per se was not generally reported). Future research should, however, examine the consequences of behaviors stimulated by guilt; in particular, under what circumstances do apologizing, making amends, confessing, and other guilt-induced behaviors succeed in removing that guilt?

Our studies differed from the transgression–compliance experiments in finding that guilt seems to operate most commonly and strongly in close relationships. In this, it accords with preliminary evidence from survey work (Vangelisti et al., 1991) and studies of individual differences (Jones et al., in press). To be sure, when researchers were conducting the bulk of the transgression–compliance studies, social psychology was not devoting much effort to studying relationships, but that has changed. Our results clearly point to an important subject for future research: long-term guilt dynamics in ongoing close relationships. Studying the course of guilt in long-term relationships may provide valuable evidence about how couples deal with transgressions against each other, negotiate expectations, prioritize mutual obligations, control each other, calculate levels of atonement, perceive how the partner's transgressions compare with one's own, and so forth.

One intriguing finding was that victims appeared to feel better after they induced their transgressors to feel guilty. Future research may extend this and investigate various possible reasons for it. Perhaps victims feel better (a) because making the transgressor suffer guilt constitutes a form of revenge, (b) because the transgressor's guilt implies a commitment not to

repeat the transgression, or (c) because the transgressor's guilt signifies that the transgressor cares about the victim and about the relationship, and in the wake of the transgression the victim may have wondered (with good reason) about the transgressor's level of concern and commitment.

CONCLUSION

Although guilt has traditionally been conceptualized as a mechanism for inducing people to conform to society's rules (e.g., Freud, 1930), our findings suggest a shift in emphasis. The interpersonal dynamics of guilt reported by our subjects mainly involved close, communal relationships, and so guilt should perhaps be understood as primarily regulating the interactions between long-term partners instead of between all members in the society.

Guilt may serve valuable functions to protect and preserve close, communal relationships. Our data fit the view that guilt encourages people to spend time with and pay attention to their relationship partners, avoid repeating transgressions against them, confess and apologize for misdeeds, avoid selfishness, and recognize the different standards and expectations that their partner may hold. There was also evidence that people use guilt as a technique of influencing the behavior of others, particularly partners in close or communal relationships, and that such influence may help restore or maintain equity in communal relationships by allowing people who lack power or status to get their way. Such influence appears to rely on exploiting the social bond (i.e., the other's affection and concern for oneself) to motivate the other to alter his or her behavior. Though it may often be effective, it incurs costs such as resentment and metaguilt. Still, even though people may sometimes feel guilty about trying to make someone feel guilty, they often feel better when they succeed at inducing guilt in someone who has wronged them.

Although the present investigation focused on interpersonal aspects of guilt, some findings point to the relevance of guilt for action control. People's accounts do link guilt to learning lessons and altering subsequent behavior. There was some suggestion that guilt may focus on events where self-control is most relevant (i.e., where the self was mainly responsible) and may promote efforts to foresee the effects of one's actions. We have acknowledged, too, that theories about intrapsychic processes (especially cognitive dissonance, self-perception, and self-awareness) can explain many of our findings, although an interpersonal perspective seems necessary for a full understanding of all the evidence about guilt.

Guilt is undeniably an aversive state and currently holds a dismal

stereotype in our culture. If guilt does indeed serve to promote self-control and interpersonal intimacy, however, it may be necessary to accord guilt an important place as a constructive and beneficial emotion.

REFERENCES

Aronson, E. (1968). Dissonance theory: Progress and problems. In R. Abelson, E. Aronson, W. McGuire, T. Newcomb, M. Rosenberg, & P. Tannenbaum (Eds.), *Cognitive consistency theories: A source book* (pp. 5–27). Skokie, IL: Rand McNally.

Austin, W., McGinn, N. C., & Susmilch, C. (1980). Internal standards revisited: Effects of social comparisons and expectancies on judgments of fairness and satisfaction. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 16,* 426–441.

Baumeister, R. F. (1982). A self-presentational view of social phenomena. *Psychological Bulletin, 91,* 3–26.

Baumeister, R. F. (1986). *Identity: Cultural change and the struggle for self.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Baumeister, R. F. (1988a). Gender differences in masochistic scripts. *Journal of Sex Research, 25,* 478–499.

Baumeister, R. F. (1988b). Masochism as escape from self. *Journal of Sex Research 25,* 28–59.

Baumeister, R. F. (1989). *Masochism and the self.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Baumeister, R. F., Reis, H. T., & Delespaul, P. (in press). Subjective and experiential correlates of guilt in daily life. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin.*

Baumeister, R. F., Stillwell, A. M., & Heatherton, T. F. (1994). Guilt: An interpersonal approach. *Psychological Bulletin, 115,* 243–267.

Baumeister, R. F., Stillwell, A., & Wotman, S. R. (1990). Victim and perpetrator accounts of interpersonal conflict: Autobiographical narratives about anger. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 59,* 994–1005.

Baumeister, R. F., & Tice, D. M. (1984). Role of self-presentation and choice in cognitive dissonance under forced compliance: Necessary or sufficient causes? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46,* 5–13.

Baumeister, R. F., & Tice, D. M. (1990). Anxiety and social exclusion. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 9,* 165–195.

Baumeister, R. F., & Wotman, S. R. (1992). *Breaking hearts: The two sides of unrequited love.* New York: Guilford.

Baumeister, R. F., Wotman, S. R., & Stillwell, A. M. (1993). Unrequited love: On heartbreak, anger, guilt, scriptlessness, and humiliation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 64,* 377–394.

Bem, D. J. (1972). Self-perception theory. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 6, pp. 1–62). New York: Academic.

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment.* New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 2. Separation anxiety and anger.* New York: Basic Books.

Brock, T. C. (1969). On interpreting the effects of transgression upon compliance. *Psychological Bulletin, 72,* 138–145.

Brooke, R. J. (1985). What is guilt? *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, 16,* 31–46.

Carlsmith, J. M., & Gross, A. (1969). Some effects of guilt on compliance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 11,* 232–239.

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (1981). *Attention and self-regulation: A control theory approach to human behavior.* New York: Springer-Verlag.

Cialdini, R. B., Darby, B., & Vincent, J. (1973). Transgression and altruism: A case for hedonism. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 9*, 502-516.

Clark, M. S. (1984). Record keeping in two types of relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 47*, 549-557.

Cooper, J., & Fazio, R. H. (1984). A new look at dissonance theory. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 17, pp. 229-266). New York: Academic.

Duval, S., & Wicklund, R. A. (1972). *A theory of objective self-awareness.* New York: Academic.

Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Freedman, J. L., Wallington, S., & Bless, E. (1967). Compliance without pressure: The effect of guilt. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 7*, 117-124.

Freud, S. (1930). *Civilization and its discontents* (J. Riviere, Trans.). London: Hogarth.

Frijda, N. H. (1986). *The emotions.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Gergen, K. J., & Gergen, M. (1988). Narrative and the self as relationship. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 21, pp. 17-56). San Diego, CA: Academic.

Harvey, J. H., Flanary, R., & Morgan, M. (1988). Vivid memories of vivid loves gone by. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 3*, 359-373.

Harvey, J. H., Weber, A. L., Galvin, K. S., Huszti, H. C., & Garnick, N. N. (1986). Attribution in the termination of close relationships: A special focus on the account. In R. Gilmour & S. Duck (Eds.), *The emerging field of personal relationships* (pp. 189-201). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Harvey, J. H., Weber, A. L., & Orbuch, T. L. (1990). *Interpersonal accounts: A social psychological perspective.* Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell.

Hassebrauck, M. (1986). Ratings of distress as a function of degree and kind of inequity. *Journal of Social Psychology, 126*, 269-270.

Heatherton, T. F., & Nichols, P. (1994). Personal accounts of successful versus failed attempts at life change. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 20*, 664-675.

Hoffman, M. L. (1982). Development of prosocial motivation: Empathy and guilt. In N. Eisenberg (Ed.), *The development of prosocial behavior* (pp. 281-313). New York: Academic.

Jones, W. H., Kugler, K., & Adams, P. (1995). You always hurt the one you love: Guilt and transgressions against relationship partners. In K. Fisher & J. Tangney (Eds.), *Self-conscious emotions* (pp. 301-321). New York: Guilford.

Katz, I., Glass, D. C., & Cohen, S. (1973). Ambivalence, guilt, and the scapegoating of minority group victims. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 9*, 423-436.

Katz, J. (1988). *Seductions of crime: The moral and sensual attractions of doing evil.* New York: Basic Books.

Konecni, V. J. (1972). Some effects of guilt on compliance: A field replication. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 23*, 30-32.

Lerner, M. J., & Matthews, G. (1967). Reactions to suffering of others under conditions of indirect responsibility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 5*, 319-325.

Lewis, H. B. (1971). *Shame and guilt in neurosis.* New York: International Universities Press.

McAdams, D. P. (1985). *Power, intimacy and the life story: Personological inquiries into identity.* Homewood, IL Dorsey.

McGraw, K. M. (1987). Guilt following transgression: An attribution of responsibility approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53*, 247-256.

Rawlings, E. I. (1968). Witnessing harm to others: A reassessment of the role of guilt in altruistic behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 10*, 377-380.

Regan, D. T., Williams, M., & Sparling, S. (1972). Voluntary expiation of guilt: A field experiment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 24*, 42-45.

Regan, J. W. (1971). Guilt, perceived injustice, and altruistic behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 18,* 124-132.

Ross, M., & Holmberg, D. (1990). Recounting the past: Gender differences in the recall of events in the history of a close relationship. In J. M. Olson & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), *Self-inference processes* (The Ontario symposium, Vol. 6, pp. 135-152). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Schlenker, B. R. (1982). Translating action into attitudes: An identity-analytic approach to the explanation of social conduct. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 15, pp. 193-247). New York: Academic.

Silverman, I. W. (1967). Incidence of guilt reactions in children. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 7,* 338-340.

Simon, H. A. (1967). Motivational and emotional controls of cognition. *Psychological Review, 74,* 29-39.

Stone, J., Aronson, E., Crain, A. L., Winslow, M. P., & Fried, C. B. (1994). Inducing hypocrisy as a means of encouraging young adults to use condoms. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 20,* 116-128.

Tangney, J. P. (1992). Situational determinants of shame and guilt in young adulthood. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 18,* 199-206.

Thibodeau, R., & Aronson, E. (1992). Taking a closer look: Reasserting the role of the self-concept in dissonance theory. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 18,* 591-602.

Vangelisti, A. L., Daly, J. A., & Rudnick, J. R. (1991). Making people feel guilty in conversations: Techniques and correlates. *Human Communication Research, 18,* 3-39.

Vaughan, D. (1986). *Uncoupling.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Wicklund, R. A. (1975). Objective self-awareness. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 8, pp. 233-275). New York: Academic.