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THE EFFECTS OF EXTENDING TRUST AND DISTRUST TO THE OUTGROUP IN NORTHERN IRELAND: INTERGROUP EMOTIONS AND ANTICIPATED INTERGROUP RELATIONS

JARED B. KENWORTHY
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

ELISSA MYERS
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

LAUREN E. COURSEY
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

JASON R. POPAN
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-PAN AMERICAN

MILES HEWSTONE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Two studies examined perceptions of risk, threat, and emotions experienced once a community leader has made the decision to extend trust or distrust to the outgroup, in the context of Northern Ireland. Study 1 examined the impact of three factors — the extension of trust or distrust, a social climate of threat or reduced threat, and high/low group identification — on perceived risk and group-level emotion. Study 2 examined the impact of these factors on expected negative intergroup relations and symbolic and realistic outcomes. Results from both studies demonstrated that: (1) evaluation of a community leader's extension of trust or distrust toward the outgroup under threat/reduced threat was moderated by group identification, and (2) the leader's extension of distrust toward the outgroup elicited greater anger and less positive emotion, and was seen as more damaging to intergroup relations than was the extension of trust.

Key words: Intergroup trust; Intergroup distrust; Ingroup identification; Intergroup relations; Intergroup threat.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Jared Kenworthy, Department of Psychology, Box 19528, University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, TX 76019, USA. Email: kenworthy@uta.edu

Despite significant progress made by the peace process in Northern Ireland, including cessation of most paramilitary violence, there is empirical evidence to suggest that divisions between Catholic and Protestant communities are becoming deeper (Brady, 2004; Hughes, 2003). Distrust has been cited as one of the major factors in a growing desire for segregation between communities in Northern Ireland (Shirlow, 2003). Distrust can exacerbate and prolong conflict by

creating cycles of revenge (Brewer & Gaertner, 2001; Lewicki & Tomlinson, 2003; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Yamagishi, Kikuchi, & Kosugi, 1999).

It is now recognized that there is a need to reduce distrust and build trust in order to improve relations between the divided communities in Northern Ireland (Foley & Robinson, 2004; Huyse, 2005; Mitchell, 1999). Unfortunately, developing trust and reducing distrust between disparate communities is a difficult process (Brady, 2004). At present, there is scant conceptual analysis of, or empirical research into, group-level trust and distrust in real-life contexts. The present research aims to investigate perceptions of an act of trust versus distrust toward the "other community" (outgroup) in the context of Northern Ireland.

Conceptualizations of Trust and Distrust

Most definitions of trust include vulnerability to uncertainty, and a positive belief or expectancy about another's intentions or behaviors (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994). Themes which emerge from definitions of distrust, on the other hand, include negative belief or expectancy about others' intentions or behaviors, fear (anxiety) and protection from uncertainty (Kasperson, Golding, & Tuler, 1992; Lewicki & Wiethoff, 2000; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

Although social psychologists have primarily focused on trust in interpersonal relations, trust and distrust can be considered at the intergroup level as well (Hewstone et al., 2008; Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy, & Cairns, 2009) According to the social identity perspective (Turner, 1999), intergroup settings involve a psychological shift from personal to social identity. Intergroup-level trust can differ qualitatively from interpersonal trust. Research carried out in Northern Ireland has found that outgroup trust was associated with behavioral tendencies toward outgroup members, whereas general level of interpersonal trust was not (Tam et al., 2009).

Although trust is necessary for harmonious intergroup relations and conflict reconciliation (Lewicki & Tomlinson, 2003; Lewicki & Wiethoff, 2000), trust between parties often does not exist because it leaves the trusting party open to the risk of exploitation or defection on behalf of the trusted party (Baier, 1985; Cook et al., 2005; Hardin, 2002). During and following intergroup conflict, distrust between groups becomes a pervasive phenomenon which acts as a barrier to conflict resolution (Lewicki & Tomlinson, 2003). Distrust between groups acts to impede cooperation by eliciting fear, anxiety, and negative belief about the others party's intentions. As the level of distrust deepens, parties focus on self-protection and defensive action, rather than on cooperation (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000).

To date, research has generally failed to examine reactions to the extension of trust and distrust to the outgroup in the context of real-world conflict and has instead been conducted in the context of minimal groups (e.g., Moy & Ng, 1996) and Prisoner's Dilemma Games (PDG; see Insko et al., 2001; Insko, Schopler, Hoyle, Dardis, & Graetz, 1990). Application of this research to the conflict in Northern Ireland is problematic for a number of reasons. First, it is limited to PDGs, which are necessarily competitive. Cooperative matrices, on the other hand, have been found to produce cooperative behavior (Axelrod & Greer, 1994). Second, these investigations have been carried out using minimal groups in simple laboratory-bound contexts, which lack ecological validity. In a context of real-world postconflict reconciliation, like that of Northern Ire-

land, it is likely that factors such as level of group identification and level of threat to one's community, will be relevant to reactions to the extension of trust and distrust to the outgroup.

In both communities in Northern Ireland, a very real fear of violence has led to reluctance to take the risks involved in trusting the other community. Shirlow (2003) suggests that fear and mistrust of "the other community" is in part dependent on the assessment of threat. Perceived levels of threat or risk to the ingroup may influence reactions to the extension of trust versus distrust in the context of Northern Ireland. We investigated level of threat as a predictor of reactions to the extension of trust and distrust. Perceived risk was measured as a subjective reaction, predicted to vary as a function of extending trust versus distrust, level of threat, and level of group identification. Level of threat was manipulated via images depicting the shrinking of the ingroup community in relation to the outgroup community. Participants were then asked the likelihood that the safety of the self or the community was at risk due to the situation depicted.

Consequences of Trust and Distrust

Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) theorize that trust is a device which allows people to deal with the social uncertainty of others' intentions. Trust activates a positive cognitive bias, which facilitates a positive evaluation of potential interactions. Cognitively, trust is associated with a higher likelihood of exploitation, but greater benefit from outside opportunities, whereas distrust is associated with a lower likelihood of exploitation, but a higher likelihood that outside opportunities will be missed.

It is unlikely, however, that these evaluations are purely cognitive. Stephan and Stephan (1999) contend that negative emotion and anxiety are associated with distrust. They suggest that in intergroup interactions, levels of anxiety are determined by the situational circumstance (potential threats), previous relations between groups, personal experience and intergroup cognitions. In Study 1, we predicted that distrust would be associated with greater negative emotion and anxiety.

Ingroup Identification

Strength of group identification has been identified as a predictor of many intergroup effects (Jetten & Spears, 2003; Jetten, Spears, & Postmes, 2004; Stephan & Stephan, 1999). Those with high ingroup identification tend to demonstrate stronger group-based effects than those whose identification is low. For example, those who strongly identify with their ingroup are more likely to experience feelings of outgroup threat (Stephan & Stephan, 1999). Specifically in Northern Ireland, the majority of people identify with either the Catholic or Protestant community (Gallagher, 1989; Hewstone et al., 2005). Gallagher has demonstrated, in experimental research using Catholic and Protestant participants, that strength of religious ingroup identification is related to outgroup discrimination and to ingroup favouritism (see also Cairns, Kenworthy, Campbell, & Hewstone, 2006). In the present research, ingroup identification was expected to moderate reactions to the extensions of trust and distrust toward the outgroup, such that effects would be stronger as an increasing function of ingroup identification.

STUDY 1

In Study 1, we investigated the level of perceived risk and group-level emotion, following the extension of trust or distrust by a Northern Ireland community leader, under high or low threat, and dependent on level of group identification. We predicted that the extension of distrust would provoke greater negative emotions in participants (Stephan & Stephan, 1999), when compared to extension of trust. Given the cyclical nature of distrust in intergroup conflict (Lewicki & Tomlinson, 2003; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Yamagishi et al., 1999), it is likely that the extension of distrust will attune participants to group-level threat and potential violence. We also predicted that higher ingroup identification would be associated with a more pronounced reaction to the group-based manipulations on all dependent measures.

METHOD

Participants

Two hundred twelve students from two universities in Northern Ireland participated in a study into relations between the Catholic and Protestant religious communities in Northern Ireland. One hundred participants identified themselves as Protestant (32 males, 68 females) and 112 identified themselves as Catholic (59 males, 53 females).

Design, Procedure, and Measures

Participants were asked to fill out a pre-questionnaire containing basic demographic questions (sex, age, religion) and an ingroup identification index, adapted from Luhtanen and Crocker (1992), and Cassidy and Trew (1998). Items included: "Being a member of my community[1] is an important reflection of who I am"; "Being a member of my community is very rewarding"; "Being a member of my community is central to my sense of who I am"; "I am a good member of my community"; "I am a proud member of my community." Ratings were made on 7-point scales ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 6 (*extremely*). An index of ingroup identification was calculated by averaging all five items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$).

Following the pre-questionnaire, participants were given one of four scenarios, based on random assignment. Scenarios were created by crossing two factors (extension of trust vs. distrust, and climate of threat vs. reduced threat) to yield four conditions: (1) trust and high threat, (2) distrust and high threat, (3) trust and low threat, (4) distrust and low threat. The first part of the scenario manipulated high or low threat and the second part of the scenario depicted the extension of trust or distrust by a community leader.

In high threat conditions, participants were asked to imagine themselves living in a small enclave of ingroup members, surrounded by the outgroup. The scenario was depicted visually in a series of three maps, which illustrate an ingroup enclave diminishing in size over time, in response to an increasing outgroup population, with the following accompanying description: "over the past few years members of your community have been moving out of the area in increasing

numbers because there has been an increase in sectarian incidents and paramilitary activity in this area. These incidents have led to a shrinking of your community in size, in comparison to the other community." A low threat condition was depicted using three maps to show an ingroup population growing in size relative to the outgroup population, over time, with the accompanying description: "over the past few years members of your community have been moving into the area in increasing numbers because there has been a decrease in sectarian incidents and paramilitary activity in this area. These incidents have led to a growth of your community in comparison to the other community." The manipulations used for high and low threat conditions are presented in Figures 1a and 1b, respectively.

The threat manipulation was based on some actual residential areas found in Northern Ireland, where residential enclaves of one community are surrounded by an area occupied by the other community (O'Kane, 2001). These enclaves have been the scene of violent attacks between the two communities, resulting in rapid population movement in these areas (e.g., Short Strand, East Belfast; see Mortiarty, 2002; Shirlow, 2003).

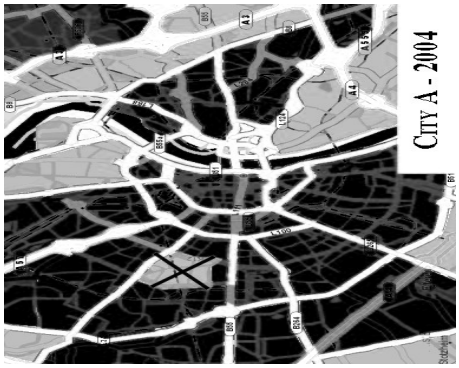
The trust and distrust manipulations required participants to imagine that a community leader, representing their ingroup, extends trust or distrust toward the other community. In the trust scenario, a community leader argued that an outgroup festival should be permitted to take place on the border of the ingroup's area of residence. The community leader voiced his opinion that "allowing the festival to take place would be a chance to demonstrate trust in the other community." In the distrust condition, the community leader argued against allowing the festival to take place, claiming that "allowing the festival to take place would be placing too much trust in the other community."

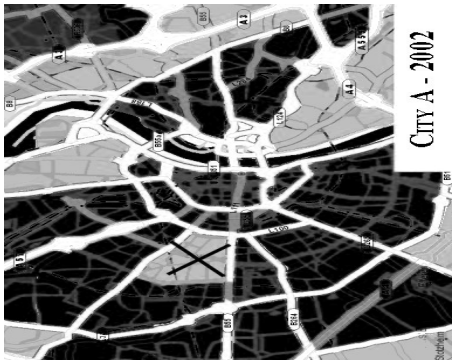
Participants were asked to imagine themselves in the situation presented to them in the scenario they were given. After reading the scenario, participants were then asked to complete a post-questionnaire. For all of the measures, ratings were made on 7-point response scales, ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 6 (*extremely*).

Manipulation checks. To ensure that the scenario successfully manipulated increased or reduced threat and trust or distrust, two manipulation checks headed the post-questionnaire. Participants were asked "In the scenario, do you feel your community was under increased threat from the other community?" and "In the scenario, how strongly do you think your community leader showed trust?"

Emotional responses. Emotional response was measured using a 12-item scale of intergroup emotions, adapted from Mackie, Devos, and Smith, (2000), which contained four angry emotions (contempt, angry, irritated, disgust), four anxious emotions (nervous, anxious, worried, afraid), and four positive emotions (happy, cheerful, pride, admiration). Participants were asked to rate each of the items while considering the situation depicted in the scenario.

Perceived risk to the ingroup. Participants' perceived risk to the ingroup, as a result of the situation depicted in the scenario, was assessed with six items: "The other community may take advantage of the situation to harm us"; "My community will be more at risk of being harmed"; "My community will be under less threat" (reversed); "The communities will experience greater conflict"; "People in my community will feel less safe"; "People in my community will feel more secure" (reversed). A measure of perceived risk to the ingroup was created by averaging all six items ($\alpha = .75$).





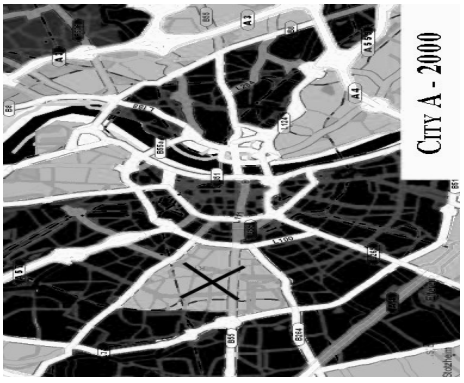
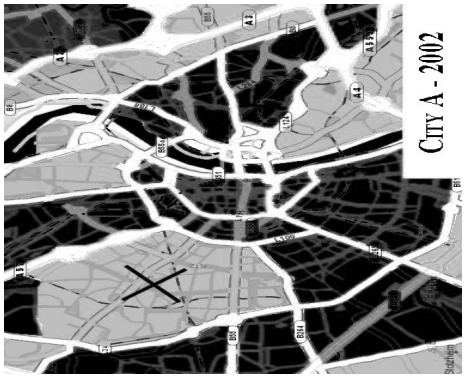


FIGURE 1A
The "X" indicates the location of the shrinking ingroup enclave.



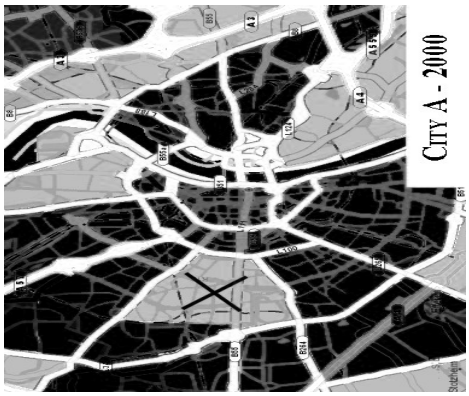


FIGURE 1B
The "X" indicates the location of the growing ingroup enclave.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Combination of Catholic and Protestant Samples

To investigate the difference between Catholic and Protestant samples, we carried out multiple regressions using cross-products to look for main effects and interaction effects for each dependent variable. We found no significant main effects or interaction effects for religion (Catholic vs. Protestant), so all results are collapsed across this factor.

Manipulation Checks

Participants reported significantly greater threat in the high threat condition (M = 3.12, SD = 1.46) compared to the low threat condition (M = 2.53, SD = 1.46), $F(1, 208) = 7.45$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .04$ confirming a successful threat manipulation. Participants did not report significantly greater threat in the distrust condition (M = 2.90, SD = 1.62) compared to the trust condition (M = 2.75, SD = 1.49), $F(1, 208) = .40$, $p = .53$, $\eta^2 = .002$, and there was no interaction between threat and trust/distrust, $F(1, 208) = .004$, $p = .95$, $\eta^2 = .00$.

Confirming that the trust/distrust manipulation was successful, participants judged that the community leader showed significantly higher levels of trust in the trust condition (M = 4.41, SD = 1.26) compared to the distrust condition (M = 1.86, SD = 1.78), $F(1, 210) = 144.70$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .41$. Participants did not rate significantly greater trust in the high threat condition (M = 3.17, SD = 1.96) compared to the low threat condition (M = 3.19, SD = 2.03), $F(1, 210) = .04$, $p = .85$, $\eta^2 = .001$, and there was no interaction between trust/distrust and threat, $F(1, 210) = .03$, $p = .87$, $\eta^2 = .001$.

Test of Hypotheses

To investigate how extensions of trust and distrust function in relation to level of threat to one's community and ingroup identification, a full three-way regression model was carried out for each of the dependent variables in the analyses presented below. Step 1 of the regression model included trust versus distrust, the two levels of threat, and ingroup identification. Step 2 contained all two-way interactions, and the three-way interaction was entered on step 3. The threat (–1 for low threat and +1 for high threat) and trust (–1 for trust and +1 for distrust) variables were effect-coded, and identification was centred to the mean.

Emotions

A principal-components analysis with oblique rotation (factors were expected to be correlated) of the twelve items yielded three main factors (eigenvalue > 1). These three factors explained 65% of the variance. Factor 1 explained 34% of the variance and included four items tap-

ping anxious emotion ("nervous," "anxious," "worried," "afraid"). Factor 2 explained 19% of the variance and included four positive emotion items ("happy," "cheerful," "pride," "admiration"). Factor 3 explained 12% of the variance and comprised all four angry emotions ("contempt," "angry," "disgust," "irritated"). We therefore computed three scores by averaging items that corresponded to each dimension: *anxious emotion* (α = .86), *positive emotion* (α = .77), and *angry emotion* (α = .80). Each dimension of emotion was analyzed as a separate dependent variable.

Anxious emotion. In Step 1, R^2 = .05, $F(3, 207) = 3.40$, $p < .05$, the main effect of identification was significant. As predicted, higher group identification was associated with greater anxious emotion, β = .20, $p < .01$. In Step 2, the full set of two-way interactions were entered, without a significant change in explained variance, R^2 = .05, $\Delta F(3, 204) = .28$, p = .84, *ns*. In Step 3, the three-way interaction was entered, which significantly increased the amount of explained variance, β = .22, $p < .01$, R^2 = .10, $\Delta F(1, 203) = 10.31$, $p < .01$.

To interpret this interaction, simple slopes were estimated (Aiken & West, 1991; Preacher, Curran, & Bauer, 2006) for the regression of anxious emotion on level of identification in all four combinations of trust/distrust and low/high threat. The simple slope analyses revealed that identification was only significantly positively associated with anxious emotion in the distrust and low threat condition, β = .50, p = < .05. When the extension of distrust is made under low threat, higher group level identification is associated with greater anxious emotion.

Angry emotion. In Step 1, R^2 = .12, $F(3, 207) = 9.00$, $p < .001$, the main effects of the extension of trust/distrust and ingroup identification were both significant. The extension of distrust, β = .26, $p < .001$, and ingroup identification, β = .21, $p < .01$, were associated with greater angry emotion. None of the two- or three-way interactions were significant.

Positive emotion. In Step 1, R^2 = .18, $F(3, 203) = 15.25$, $p < .001$, the main effects of both trust/distrust and ingroup identification were significant. The extension of distrust was negatively associated with positive emotion, β = –.32, p <.001, while ingroup identification, β = .28, $p < .001$, was positively associated with positive emotion. None of the two- or three-way interactions were significant.

Perceived Risk to the Ingroup

In Step 1, R^2 = .05, $F(3, 207) = 3.82$, $p < .01$, the main effect of identification was significant, and the main effect of threat was marginally significant. Higher ingroup identification, β = .17, p <.01, and high threat, β = .13, p = .06, were associated with greater perceived risk to the ingroup. None of the two- or three-way interactions were significant.

Although the manipulations of both trust and threat were successful, trust had a greater impact on emotion ratings. As predicted, extension of distrust by a community leader was associated with more angry emotion and less positive emotion, than the extension of trust. It may be that, with a long history of The Troubles, and currently more positive intergroup relations, distrust of the outgroup is seen as more threatening to intergroup relations between the two communities. This will be explored further in Study 2.

The threat manipulation had a main effect on perceived risk to the ingroup, as expected. The threat manipulation, interacting with trust/distrust and ingroup identification, also had an effect on anxious emotion. Specifically, under reduced threat, and when distrust is extended by a community leader, higher group identification is associated with greater anxious emotion. It is

possible that, when a community leader advocates distrust in situations of low threat (i.e., no reason for distrust), high identifiers are anxious that this move may produce a worsening of intergroup relations. Higher identification was associated with a greater reaction to the group-based scenarios on all dependent measures, whether positive emotion, angry emotion, anxiety, or perceived ingroup risk.

STUDY 2

Study 2 was designed to extend Study 1 by investigating different types of specific intergroup outcomes that participants might expect following the extension of trust or distrust to the outgroup under conditions of high versus low threat. In Study 2, we explored the interaction of threat, trust, and ingroup identification on different types of negative intergroup outcomes.

In their integrated threat theory, Stephan and Stephan (1996, 1999) contend that outgroups can pose "realistic" and "symbolic" threats. Realistic threats are actual threats to the existence of one's group, including physical threats, threat to group resources, and threats to economic and political power (Jussim, Ashmore, & Wilder, 2001; Stephan & Stephan, 1996; Verkuyten & Nekuee, 1999). Symbolic threats consist of threats to the ingroup worldview, such as perceived differences in beliefs, morals, values, practices, and attitudes. We adapted the symbolic and realistic threat scales for use in measuring participants' expected outcomes along these dimensions. Thus, rather than measuring symbolic and realistic threats based on past experience, here we measure them as expected intergroup outcomes as a function of the manipulations.

Study 2 also identified and measured other intergroup anxieties and fears specific to the conflict in Northern Ireland. Pressure, in the form of intimidation from one's own community, to conform to ingroup norms has been identified as a worry experienced by both communities in Northern Ireland (Shirlow, 2003). Another current fear in Northern Ireland is political polarization, characterized and exemplified by increasingly polarized voting patterns (see Carmichael & Knox, 1999; Hughes & Carmichael, 1998), with religion continuing to be the key determining factor.

Cross-community contact is also important in Northern Ireland. Contact between the two communities in Northern Ireland is a well-established means to improve community relations (Hewstone et al., 2005). Hughes and Carmichael (1998) reported that people in Northern Ireland are increasingly supportive of mixed religious neighbourhoods which necessitate an increased level of intercommunity contact. The possibility of decreased cross-community contact will therefore be seen as another challenge to good community relations.

Using these types of threats, new dependent variables were added for Study 2 in order to explore the specific types of negative intergroup outcomes resulting from the extension of trust or distrust to the other community, under high or low threat, and level of group identification.

Predictions

Based on the findings of Study 1, we predicted that for high ingroup identifiers, the extension of distrust (compared to trust) would elicit higher ratings of negative intergroup relations and outcomes. Secondly, we predicted that higher identification would be associated with greater negative intergroup relations and outcomes following the group-based scenarios.

METHOD

Participants

One hundred ninety-seven students from two universities in Northern Ireland participated in a study investigating relations between the Catholic and Protestant religious communities in Northern Ireland. Seventy-four participants identified themselves as Protestant (39 males, 35 females) and 123 identified themselves as Catholic (57 males, 66 females).

Design, Procedure, and Measures

The pre-questionnaire, scenarios, and main questionnaires were nearly identical to those used in Study 1. However, the main questionnaire was changed to focus on the types of intergroup outcomes that participants expected in response to the events depicted in the scenario. The measures included in the post-questionnaire assessed negative intergroup relations and negative symbolic and realistic outcomes. All ratings were made on 7-point scales, ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 6 (*extremely*).

Negative intergroup relations. This scale measured three different aspects of threat to intergroup relations, employing two items for each aspect: (1) ingroup intimidation, "Members of my community will feel intimidated by the other members in our community" and "Members of my community will feel pressurised to take action by other members of our community"; (2) political polarization, "There will be an increase in extremist politics" and "political view points will become more polarised"; (3) decreased contact between the two communities, "There will be fewer shared activities between the two groups" and "Contact between the two communities will decrease." Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they thought these items would be a consequence of the events depicted in the scenario.

Negative symbolic and realistic outcomes. We created scales based on Stephan and Stephan's (1996, 1999) distinction between realistic and symbolic threats. Items for realistic threat included: "My community will be more vulnerable to intimidation from the other community"; "There will be greater risk of sectarian attacks"; "There will be an increase in paramilitary activity"; "My community will be driven out of the area." Items for symbolic threat included: "The values of my community will not be respected"; "My community's way of life would be in jeopardy"; "The other community won't understand the way people in my community view the world"; "Traditions of my group would be challenged by the other community."

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Combination of Catholic and Protestant samples

As with Study 1, we found no significant main effects or interaction effects for religion (Catholic vs. Protestant) on any of the dependent variables, and results are collapsed across this factor.

Manipulation Check

Participants judged that the community leader showed significantly higher levels of trust in the trust condition (M = 4.13, SD = 1.52) compared to the distrust condition (M = 1.70, SD = 1.51), $F(1, 190) = 120.97$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .39$. Participants did not rate significantly greater trust in the high threat condition (M = 2.82, SD = 1.93) compared to the low threat condition (M = 2.80, SD = 1.95), $F(1, 190) = .06$, $p = .80$, $\eta^2 = .001$, and there was no interaction between trust/distrust and threat, $F(1, 190) = .11$, $p = .74$, $\eta^2 = .001$. To avoid demand characteristics with respect to our negative intergroup relations items (i.e., symbolic and realistic outcomes) we did not include a manipulation check for the threat manipulation.

Test of Hypotheses

A full three-way regression model was carried out for each of the dependent variables in the analyses presented below. The regression model included trust versus distrust, the two levels of threat, ingroup identification, all two-way interactions, and the three-way interaction. The threat (–1 for reduced threat and +1 for increased threat) and trust (–1 for trust and +1 for distrust) manipulations were effect-coded, and identification was centred to the mean.

Expected Intergroup Relations and Outcomes

A principal components analysis with oblique rotation, including the six items used to measure negative intergroup relations and the eight items used to measure negative symbolic and realistic outcomes, yielded two factors (eigenvalues > 1), explaining 62% of the variance. These factors corresponded to (a) the six negative intergroup relations items which explained 48% of the variance ($\alpha = .88$), and (b) the eight negative symbolic and realistic outcomes which explained 12% of the variance ($\alpha = .90$), and were respectively combined into indexes of *negative intergroup relations* and *negative symbolic and realistic outcomes*.

Negative intergroup relations. Following the findings of Study 1, we predicted that the extension of distrust toward the other community would elicit greater expectations of negative intergroup relations, compared to the extension of trust. We also predicted that higher identification would be associated with greater negative intergroup relations. In Step 1, $R^2 = .17$, $F(3, 189) = 12.73$, $p < .001$, the main effects of trust/distrust and identification were significant. As predicted, distrust, $\beta = .37$, $p = .001$, and higher group identification, $\beta = .20$, $p < .01$, were associated with greater negative intergroup relations. For this dependent variable, none of the two- or three-way interactions were significant.

Negative symbolic and realistic outcomes. In Step 1, $R^2 = .12$, $F(3, 189) = 8.88$, $p < .001$, the main effects of trust/distrust and identification were significant. As predicted, higher group identification, $\beta = .23$, $p < .001$, and distrust, $\beta = .26$, $p = .001$, were associated with greater negative symbolic and realistic outcomes. For this dependent variable, none of the two- or three-way interactions were significant.

In Study 2 the extension of distrust was perceived as a greater impediment to peaceful intergroup relations and was associated with more negative symbolic and realistic outcomes. Again, strength of ingroup identification was a predictor of intergroup outcomes following the manipulation of trust/distrust and low/high threat. Together, these findings add to those of Study 1 by demonstrating that, in Northern Ireland, the extension of distrust is seen as a greater threat to future intergroup relations than is the extension of trust.

General Discussion

To our knowledge, this is the first experimental research to examine how participants evaluate the extension of trust or distrust toward an outgroup in the context of a real conflict, in this case The Troubles of Northern Ireland. We examined perceptions of risk, group-level emotions and negative intergroup relations and outcomes experienced once an ingroup representative (in this case, a community leader) has made the decision to extend trust or distrust to the outgroup. Given the paucity of empirical research on group-level trust and distrust in real-life contexts, these studies offer valuable initial insights. We discuss these findings, first, in terms of trust and distrust; then, we consider the strength of ingroup identification; finally, we draw conclusions and explore some implications of trust building in Northern Ireland, and acknowledge some limitations of this research and suggest areas for future research.

Trust and Distrust

The results suggest that, in some circumstances at least, the perceived cost of distrusting the outgroup can be higher than the perceived risks associated with the extension of trust, in the context of Northern Ireland. Extension of distrust to the other community was associated with greater angry emotion, less positive emotion, and increased expectations of both negative intergroup relations and increased symbolic and realistic threats. The findings suggest that it is too simplistic to see group-level trust and distrust as only a matter of a universal tendency to distrust outgroups, as suggested by laboratory-based empirical work with ad hoc groups (e.g., Insko, Schopler, Gaertner, et al., 2001; Moy & Ng, 1996). Instead, it is more likely that in real-life intergroup contexts, the evaluation of the extension of trust and distrust toward an outgroup may vary depending on a wide number of different contextual factors. In the context of Northern Ireland, outgroup distrust is more costly than outgroup trust because it risks a return to sectarian violence and poses a threat to improved community relations.

We can explain the results from this investigation, in part, via Yamagishi and Yamagishi's (1994) theory, which contends that general trust is an option when the opportunity cost of forgoing interactions with outsiders is higher than the risk of exploitation. In the current studies, the cost of distrusting the outgroup is potentially higher than the risks of exploitation (associated with trust). Demonstration of distrust is costly because it risks instigating violence and threatens current peaceful intergroup relations. Extending Yamagishi and Yamagishi's (1994) cognitive-based analysis of evaluations of trust and distrust, Study 1 demonstrated that group-level emotions are also involved. Consistent with Stephan and Stephan's (1996, 1999) theory, the extension

of distrust toward the outgroup (compared to extension of trust) was found to provoke higher angry emotion from the ingroup and less positive emotion.

Both studies demonstrated that the trust/distrust manipulation produced stronger effects than the threat manipulation. It is possible that the extension of trust or distrust by a community leader is more salient for our participants than the situation depicted in the threat manipulation, despite the fact that the latter manipulation was stronger in terms of face validity, because it was presented by means of high impact, visible maps.

Strength of Ingroup Identification

Those who identified with their religious group/community (Catholic or Protestant) more strongly experienced greater anxious emotion, greater angry emotion, less positive emotion, greater perceived risk to the ingroup, and greater expected negative intergroup relations and outcomes. These findings are consistent with previous research that has found that high identifiers tend to demonstrate stronger group-based effects than low identifiers (Doosje & Branscombe, 2003; Hodson, Dovidio, & Esses, 2003; Hutchison & Abrams, 2003; Jetten & Spears, 2003; Jetten et al., 2004; Stephan & Stephan, 1999) and extend this phenomenon to perceptions of ingroup risk and experienced emotion following group-based manipulations of trust/distrust and threat in Northern Ireland.

Strength of group identification was found to predict anxious emotion in interaction with trust versus distrust and level of threat (Study 1). Following the extension of distrust under reduced threat, higher group identification was associated with greater anxious emotion. In the context of Northern Ireland, those who identify strongly with their religious community may be particularly anxious that distrusting the other community will reignite intergroup violence and create further hostilities between the two communities, which is most salient when there is relative peace. For high identifiers, when a community leader is advocating distrust in situations of low threat (i.e., no reason for distrust), it is possible that this move is interpreted as a marked worsening of intergroup relations. Results from Study 2 confirmed that those with higher group identification did, indeed, expect more negative intergroup relations and more negative symbolic and realistic threat-based outcomes.

Conclusions and Implications for Trust-Building in Northern Ireland

The present results suggest the need for continued trust-building community relations projects in Northern Ireland (Foley & Robinson, 2004; Huyse, 2005) and similar conflicts. The reported studies show that, overall, the demonstration of trust between the two communities (generally understood as a necessary step toward reconciliation) is perceived as less threatening to community relations than distrust. Further, those who identify strongly with their ingroup religious community, compared to those who identify less strongly, may require different reassurances during trust-building projects. It is also important that community relations projects do not try to ignore or eradicate strongly-felt community identities, which play a central part in the lives of many Northern Irish citizens. In recent reconciliation initiatives it has been pointed out that individuals in Northern Ireland have a real fear of losing their identity. Kelly and Hamber (2005)

argue that people in Northern Ireland would not cooperate in any reconciliation initiatives which aim to make them lose part of their own identity. The present research supports this view and indicates that strength of religious ingroup identification should be considered as an important moderating factor in trust-based reconciliatory initiatives in Northern Ireland.

Caveats and Future Research

Our results are based on university samples and generalization of these results to other demographic groups in Northern Ireland should be made cautiously. An important aspect of the scenarios was the use of a community leader as representing the ingroup's decision to extend trust or distrust to the other community. Group member reactions may depend on whether this representative is seen as trustworthy, reliable, and competent in the first place. Kasperson et al. (1992) suggest that for the development and maintenance of social trust, authorities need to demonstrate commitment, competence, caring, and predictability. A useful extension of the current research would be to identify the qualities in a community leader that are most effective in gaining community support on decisions to take the crucial step of trusting the other group.

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NOTE

1. In Northern Ireland, the phrases "my community" and "the other community" refer directly, yet neutrally, to one's religious ingroup and outgroup, respectively.

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