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The Relationship Between Type of Teasing and Outcome: An Examination of Teasing Motivations, Constructions, and Reactions

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ABSTRACT

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Teasing is commonplace in our social interactions (Kowalski, 2007). Due to its paradoxical nature it can be employed to produce both positive and negative outcomes (Keltner et al., 1998) however, the ambiguity and subjectivity in teasing can make it susceptible to misinterpretation (Kowalski, 2000; 2007; Kruger et al., 2006). The present study extends prior research to sort out complexities within teasing. From the perspective of the teaser, it examines how type of teasing (prosocial and antisocial) and outcome (successful and unsuccessful) interact to influence motivations for, the construction of, and reactions to teasing episodes. The influence of type of teasing and outcome on motivations for teasing are explored using a scheme developed in hurtful communication research (e.g., Vangelisti & Young, 2000). The construction of teasing messages, specifically the focus of teasing content, nonverbal mitigators, and verbal aggravators are examined to assess the extent to which teasers modify their messages to achieve designated goals in teasing. The reactions of targets to teasing and the emotional impact of them on teasers are explored for significant variance across teasing conditions. Finally, the anxiety teasers experience when engaging in the risky social practice of teasing is examined across teasing types and outcomes.

A sample of 172 undergraduates at Northwestern University completed questionnaires to assess their experiences as instigators of teasing that were antisocial or prosocial and successful or

unsuccessful. Results provided insight into the influence of type of teasing and outcome on teasing communication. Strategic and self-centered motivations for teasing were predicted by an interaction of teasing type and outcome in prosocial, antisocial, and successful teasing conditions. Type of teasing and outcome did interact to influence how directly targets responded negatively to teasing and teasers reported negative emotional responses to in unsuccessful, prosocial, and antisocial teasing conditions. It was found that teasers do little to modify their teasing topic and use of mitigators and aggravators across teasing types and outcomes. Additionally, type of teasing and outcome did not interact to predict teaser anxiety during teasing. Implications, limitations and future directions are discussed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The richness of the human existence lies in our need and ability to interact with one another and form relationships. Indeed, there are numerous ways individuals engage one another to this end. The diversity within our interpersonal communication repertoires is reflected in the vast array of social practices employed for the achievement of prosocial (positive) and antisocial (negative) goals, many of which are examined within the field of communication studies. Among these various methods of engagement, few exhibit the degree of complexity and versatility inherent in the unique social practice of teasing.

Diverse in its characterizations and manifestations, teasing permeates ages, cultures, relationships and communication contexts. Its use has been examined across stages in human development; from early childhood (e.g., Eisenberg, 1986; Shapiro, Baumeister, & Kessler, 1991) and adolescence (e.g. Agliata, Tantleff-Dunn, & Renk, 2007; Jones, Newman, & Bautista, 2005; Voss, 1997), to adulthood (e.g., Alberts, 1992a; Aronson et al., 2007; Beck et al., 2007; Keltner, Young, Heerey, Oemig, & Monarch, 1998). Similarly, studies have explored teasing practices across cultures, including African (e.g., Radcliffe-Brown, 1940) African-American (e.g., Yoo & Johnson, 2007), Asian (e.g., Endo, 2007), Asian-American (e.g., Campos, Keltner, Beck, Gonzaga, & John, 2007), European (e.g., Pichler, 2006), and Mexican (e.g., Eisenberg, 1986) cultures.

The social practice of teasing also functions in a variety of situational and relational contexts. For example, investigations of teasing have been situated in educational (e.g., Eder, 1991; 1993; Mottet & Thweatt, 1997), organizational (e.g., Alberts, 1992b; Meyer, 1997), and

even health-related contexts (e.g., Grainger, 2004; Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 2005). Further, many health-related studies have explored the impact of teasing on emotional, physical, and psychological well-being (e.g., Eisenberg, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story, 2003; Kostankski & Gullone, 2007; Yoo & Johnson, 2007), while others have investigated the impact of teasing history on later interpersonal functioning (e.g., Bollmer, Harris, Milich, & Georgesen, 2003; Ledley et al., 2005; Storch et al., 2004). Indeed, teasing permeates numerous contexts.

Due to the overwhelming prevalence of irritations in close relationships (Kowalski, 2003; Miller, 1997) and the intimacy commonly implied through teasing exchanges (Keltner et al., 1998; Kowalski, 2004), much research has examined teasing within family, peer, and romantic relationships. Within families, the use of teasing has been examined between parents and children (e.g., Eder, 1993; Miller, 1986) and siblings (e.g., Martin, Anderson, Burant, &Weber, 1997). The use of teasing within friendships has also been explored (e.g., Eder, 1991; Keltner et al., 1998; Mooney, Creeser & Blatchford, 1991). However, the usefulness of teasing to convey affection, flirtation, and intimacy, has made the investigation of teasing in romantic relational contexts an area of substantial interest (e.g., Alberts, 1992a; Baxter, 1992; Campos et al., 2007; Keltner et al., 1998; Kruger, Gordon, & Kuban, 2006). Indeed, the vast influences and uses of teasing across individual differences, and situational and relational contexts have made it and continue to make it an area worthy of much research and attention.

Though traditionally the prevalence of teasing in our daily interactions has not been matched in the research literature, recent years have seen a resurgence of teasing research programs examining the uses, influences, and effects of teasing across perspectives and contexts

(e.g., Aronson et al., 2007; Beck et al., 2007; Bollmer et al., 2003; Campos et al., 2007; Endo, 2007; Jones et al., 2005; Keltner, Capps, Kring, Young, & Heerey, 2001; Keltner et al., 1998; Kowalski, 2000; 2003; 2004; 2007; Kowalski, Walker, Wilkinson, Queen, & Sharpe, 2003; Kruger et al., 2006; Lampert & Ervin-Tripp, 2006; Ledly et al., 2006; Mills & Babrow, 2003; Pichler, 2006; Storch et al., 2004; Tholander & Aronsson, 2002; Tragesser & Lippman, 2005). Despite the extent of research and attention the social practice of teasing has increasingly garnered to date, theoretical frameworks governing its use and manifestations remain limited (Kowalski, 2007; Mills & Babrow, 2003). These limitations have been attributed to the complexities within the social practice of teasing. To this point, Kowalski (2007) notes:

> Teasing is an "eye of the beholder" phenomenon in that the interpretation of a tease may differ greatly across teasers, targets, and observers. In light of this, it is difficult to operationally establish when teases have and have not occurred. [Also] because teasing has both positive and negative connotations, it has been a difficult concept to define. This has been further complicated by the fact that teasing shares elements in common with joking, bullying, sarcasm, flirting, and harassment (p. 170).

Like Kowalski, Keltner and colleagues (1998) vividly illustrate this complexity in their observation that "teasing is paradoxical. [It] criticizes yet compliments, attacks yet makes people closer, humiliates yet expresses affection" (p. 1231). Indeed, these characteristics challenge efforts to adequately examine its practice.

As a long time representative of the *dark* (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007) and *offensive* (Kowalski, 2003) sides of human interaction, the use of teasing to achieve antisocial functions is universally agreed upon and likely a predominate perception. That is, individuals may generally have a tendency to perceive the social practice of teasing as antisocial in nature. Whether directly or indirectly, all have witnessed the maliciousness attributed to antisocial (cruel) teasing, a

behavior closely related to bullying. Such hostility has long been a characteristic attributed to school hallways, playgrounds, sibling relationships, and even the workplace environment. However, teasing also serves many prosocial functions that make it extremely useful to achieving goals regarding issues such as socialization and relational escalation and maintenance. Hence, there are extreme contrasts between the functions of antisocial and prosocial teasing. Antisocial and prosocial teasing do have some similarities in that they each contain elements of the same three components: ambiguity, humor (Shapiro et al., 1991) and identity confrontation (Kowalski et al., 2001). The similarities and differences between antisocial and prosocial teasing can be difficult to detail due to the challenges to define and operationally establish teasing episodes (Kowalski, 2007; Partington, 2006). Consequently, the limited theoretical developments in teasing research leave many nuances of teasing inadequately explained at best. Cognizant of this fact following their examination of teasing as a means of social influence, Mills and Babrow (2003) assert that "as scholars, we must more clearly and thoroughly sort out [the complexities within teasing]. When we do, we will at last be able to replace simplistic, atheoretical cookbooks with more powerful and principled guidelines and training programs" (p. 284). This charge encouraged the present dissertation research of factors characterizing types of teasing and their outcomes.

The paradoxical complexities inherent to teasing can complicate the consistency and accuracy with which it is perceived, enacted, and responded to. Many scholars have addressed these complexities through examinations of target perceptions and reactions to teasing messages (e.g. Alberts, Kellar-Guenther, & Corman, 1996; Kowalski, 2000). Primarily, this research has given special attention to the negative affect targets experience as well as the positive. Although

much research has examined how targets interpret and react to teasing episodes (e.g., Alberts et al., 1996; Bollmer et al., 2003; Kowalski, 2000; Tragesser & Lippman, 2005), the purpose of the present research is to examine if and how teaser perceptions of factors central to the social practice differ across types (antisocial and prosocial) and outcomes (successful and unsuccessful). Specifically, how are teaser motivations for teasing influenced by the type of teasing enacted and the outcomes that result? What communication behaviors do teasers employ to achieve prosocial and antisocial outcomes? How do teasers perceive target reactions to their teasing? What emotional reactions do teasers have during teasing episodes of different types and outcomes?

In order to sort out the complexities within teasing episodes as teasers experience them, the present study details factors characterizing the successful and unsuccessful enactment of prosocial and antisocial teasing. The study begins with an examination of the influence of type of teasing and outcome on motivations for teasing. Next, the construction of teasing is examined across three factors: the topic of the teasing message (i.e., the target's physical appearance, personality, behavior, etc.), nonverbal mitigators, and verbal aggravators. The following section explores teaser and target responses to teasing. Through this research, the present dissertation aims to contribute to the research litertature regarding the motivations for, construction of, and reactions to prosocial and antisocial teasing episodes. By taking steps to thoroughly sorting out the similarities and differences between antisocial and prosocial teasing and across teasing outcomes, the greater complexities within teasing interactions can be better understood.

Chapter Two establishes the rationale for an examination of factors characterizing the antisocial and prosocial teasing episodes wherein which, following an overview of the social

practice of teasing, the relevant research reviewed introduces each research question and hypothesis proposed by this study. The review of the literature begins with a section entitled, *Defining Teasing* to provide an overview of the attributes, diversity, and complexity in current conceptualizations of teasing. This section also establishes the usefulness of the present study to contribute to efforts to improve operational establishments of teasing. Motivations of antisocial and prosocial teasing are discussed in the section, *Motivations for Teasing*. Next, in *Constructing Teasing,* the communicative structures of teasing are examined using a face threat analysis of teasing. Here, literature regarding the focus of teasing message content, and the use of mitigators and aggravators across types of teasing and outcomes will be reviewed. The review concludes with a section entitled, *Reactions to Teasing.* This section addresses the impact of type of teasing and outcome on target and teaser reactions to teasing messages. Specifically, the interpersonal responses of targets and the intrapersonal emotional responses of teasers during a teasing episode will be examined.

Chapter Three outlines the methodological approaches employed in this dissertation research. The collection of data to examine factors characterizing the successful and unsuccessful enactments of prosocial and antisocial teasing attempts was conducted using survey methodology. The sample population of 172 is adequately described in this chapter and the procedures concerning the manipulations are then thoroughly detailed. Next, the measures and open-ended coding procedures used in this study are described. Finally, information regarding tests of reliability and descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation are provided.

Chapter Four provides a detailed examination of the correlations among the variables and descriptions of the results for the particular regression analyses conducted to address each

research question and hypothesis presented in Chapter Two. The interaction of type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant variance for hypotheses examining the use of mitigators and the stress teasers experience while engaged in prosocial and antisocial teasing. Excluding these instances, the majority of hypotheses were found to be partially supported at the least.

In the fifth and final chapter results from the present dissertation research are examined. The chapter begins with an overview and discussion of findings and implications resulting from each research question and hypothesis presented in Chapter Two. Next, study limitations are addressed and chapter concludes with a discussion of directions for future research and brief conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The present chapter provides an overview of the literature relevant to this research study. It begins by defining teasing and then examining the motivations for, construction of, and reactions to teasing. These discussions provide support for the research questions and hypotheses put forth in this research.

Teasing, an ambiguous form of communication (Aronson et al., 2007; Kruger et al., 2006), is paradoxical (Keltner et al., 1998) and can yield multiple interpretations which make it a difficult communication behavior to conceptualize (Kowalski, 2007; Partington, 2006). Indeed, complexities within the interpretation of teasing are reflected in the many definitions scholars have formulated to illustrate the nuances of this unique social practice.

Defining Teasing

Teasing is a communication behavior "directed by an agent toward a target" (Shapiro et al., 1991, p. 146). Traditionally, that which is commented upon by an agent toward a target has face threat potential. Indeed, teasing is inherently face-threatening as it contains criticism (Keltner et al, 1998; Kowalski et al., 2001). Whether overt or covert, criticism is unique to teasing compared to other forms of humor communication (Attardo, 1994). Kowalski and colleagues (2001) further highlight the face threat inherent to teasing communication in their conceptualization of teasing as "*identity confrontation* couched in humor" (p.178, italics added). Moreover, their juxtaposition of an act prone to produce negative arousal (identity confrontation)

with an act commonly associated with positive arousal (humor) highlights the paradoxical element central to the social practice of teasing.

The observations of additional scholars further reflect the paradoxical nature of teasing. Alberts (1992a) classifies teasing as "an aggressive verbalization couched in some situational qualifiers indicating playfulness" (p. 155) while La Gaipa (1977) asserts that teasing lightheartedly "focus[es] on a negative quality or weakness of the butt of the joke" (p. 422). In similar fashion, others have described teasing as an oil-and-water type mixture of kindness and aggression (e.g., Radcliffe-Brown, 1940; Keltner et al., 1998). Hence, the construction of teasing is ambiguous because it veils aggressive acts (i.e., identity confrontation) in elements of playfulness and humor. The use of indirect communication in this way allows teases to be interpreted in different ways ranging in degrees of playfulness and hostility.

Further definitions of teasing detail characteristics specific to its communication form, intention, and interpretation. With regard to communicative delivery, scholars have noted that teasing can be enacted nonverbally (Pawluck, 1989; Reddy, 1991) as well as verbally (Schieffelin, 1990; Eder, 1991). Specifically, Schieffelin (1990) characterizes teasing as a "sequence or speech act with a particular rhetorical force" (p. 166) of which scholars commonly consider taunts to be representative (Boulton & Hawker, 1997; Eder, 1991; Voss, 1997). In addition to communication form, others describe teasing as a deliberate behavior (Dunn & Munn, 1986; Keltner et al., 2001; Warm, 1997) that involves embellishments (Eder, 1993).

Building upon the exaggerative element in teases, some assert that teasing is intentionally unserious in nature. For example, Radcliffe-Brown (1940) describes teasing as a communication

behavior that is "not meant seriously [by the teaser] and must not be taken seriously [by the target/audience]" (p.104). Similarly, Mills and Babrow (2003) assert that their "conceptualization of teasing—as playful challenge to the target's goals—clarifies that teasing need not be taken to be serious" (p. 279). It can, however, prove difficult to not take teasing seriously when it is perceived to reflect an intent to evoke shame. In noting the relationship between teasing and shaming, Partington (2006) explains that "teasing is the deliberate attempt to provoke embarrassment by accusing the target of having failed to be, act or think, in accordance with the standards the community accepts as proper" (p. 144). Eisenberg (1986) presents a perspective that softens the seriousness in such deliberate acts of embarrassment by noting that "a key feature of the teasing sequence [is] that the teaser did not intend the recipient to continue to believe the utterance was true, although he or she might intend the recipient to believe initially" (pp.183-84). Based upon these diverse perspectives one can draw many conclusions about the intentionality of teasing to produce positive and negative outcomes.

In provocations employed to communicate affection and to not deliberately threaten a target's face, it is logical to assume that the objective is to have the truth in the tease eventually disregarded by the target and perceived as unserious. However, in provocations where the intent is to communicate hostility, a teaser may not desire the sting of truth to quickly disappear from the target as he or she may in fact be serious. How then do well-intentioned individuals manipulate the casting of their teasing such that it contains enough truth to make it relevant to the target, but is buffered in a manner that causes it to be disregarded as play? To address this, I turn to additional definitions of teasing that specifically characterize components of its communicative delivery.

The presence of nonverbal cues in provocations to signal a teaser's constructive (playful) or destructive (hostile) intentions is of noted importance to teasing communication. To this point, Eder (1993) states that "the playful meaning [in teasing] is determined in part by cues from the teaser indicating that the remark should be taken in a playful manner" (p. 17). Similarly, Keltner and associates (2001) define teasing as "an intentional provocation *accompanied by playful markers* that together comment on something of relevance to the target" (Keltner et al., 2001, p. 234, italics added). It is important to note that the off-record markers (or cues) that accompany teasing can, like the act itself, be communicated verbally as well as nonverbally (Keltner et al., 2001). Although the ability for teasing practices to be both affectionate and hostile in nature (e.g., Alberts, 1992a; Beck et al., 2007; Keltner et al., 2001; Kowalski et al., 2001; Tragesser & Lippman, 2005) creates the need for teasers to incorporate off-record markers to signal the correct intent, some argue that such cues are inherent to teasing communication. That is to say that "the construct of off-record markers helps differentiate teasing from other social behaviors [and consequently,] if the provocation is not accompanied by off-record markers, it is not teasing" (Keltner et al., 2001, p. 234). Hence, the use of such cues should characterize teasing practices and be vital in differentiating between affectionate and hostile intentions in teasing.

Overall, the aforementioned definitions describe a variety of characteristics and perspectives constructing the social practice of teasing. The inability of scholars to agree on one definition of teasing further speaks to the depths of variation and subsequent ambiguity in the motivations, manifestations, and consequences of teasing. Although different, when taken together in their simplest forms the above definitions highlight interplay between humor, playfulness and aggression in teasing practices. To this point, Shapiro and colleagues (1991)

describe teasing as involving a combination of "aggression, humour, and ambiguity" (p. 460), while others have characterized the "aggressive" element in teasing as "identity confrontation" (Kowalski et al., 2001). The present study subscribes to the latter perspective and to the assumption that the intent of a teasing message can be deduced from the manner in which these factors are combined and perceived (Kowalski et al., 2001).

Prosocial and Antisocial Teasing

In its simplest form, the social practice of teasing has been conceptualized across two extremes—prosocial (positive) and antisocial (negative) teasing. Prosocial teasing is high in humor, low in ambiguity, and medium in identity confrontation (Kowalski et al., 2001; cf. Shapiro et al., 1991). The humor and reduced uncertainty in the meaning of a provocation highlight the playful and friendly elements in prosocial teasing. Although there is identity confrontation, as there is in all teasing (Alberts et al., 1996; Kowalski et al., 2001), the potential face threat within it is overwhelmed by the humor and clarity within which it was delivered in a prosocial manner.

Antisocial teasing, on the other hand, is medium in humor, medium in ambiguity, and high in identity confrontation (Kowalski et al., 2001; cf. Shapiro et al., 1991). Here, the humor present in the tease is perceived more by the teaser (and, if present and of like mind, a third party) than it is by the target. In addition to these three elements, antisocial and prosocial teasing also require the use of off-record markers (Keltner et al., 2001). Hence, this review combines the observations of previous scholars to define the social practice of teasing as:

> A deliberate [prosocial or antisocial] provocation (Keltner et al., 2001) containing elements of ambiguity, humor, and identify confrontation (Kowalski, 2000; 2004;

> Kowalski et al., 2001; cf. Shapiro et al., 1991) that is "directed by an agent toward a target" (Shapiro et al., 1991, p. 146) and "accompanied by [off-record] markers that together comment on something of relevance to the target" (Keltner et al., 2001, p. 234).

While an awareness of the varying degrees of ambiguity, humor, and identity confrontation that comprise the contrasting types of teasing refines knowledge of the complexities within teasing, these elements are nonspecific and restricted to subjective interpretations. Indeed, scholars note the "eye of-the-beholder phenomenon" in teasing interpretations (Kowalski, 2007, p. 170). Due to this subjectivity, conceptualizations of high, medium, and low levels of ambiguity, humor, and identify confrontation are likely to significantly vary across individual differences and relational and situational contexts. Not only does this subjectivity confound efforts to differentiate between prosocial and antisocial teasing, but it also complicates efforts to differentiate teasing from other behaviors also characterized by elements of ambiguity, humor, and identity confrontation.

Scholars note that teasing shares similarities with joking, bullying, flirting, and sexual harassment and that these commonalities further challenge efforts to adequately define and operationally establish teasing apart from them (Kowalski, 2007; Kowalski, et al., 2001). For example, the construct of joking is described as being low in ambiguity, high in humor, and low in identity confrontation while flirting is perceived to be high in ambiguity, medium in humor, and low in identity confrontation (Kowalski et al., 2001). The more negative behaviors of bullying and sexual harassment are differentiated in a similar manner. Bullying is low in ambiguity, low in humor, and high in identity confrontation and sexual harassment is medium in ambiguity, low in humor, and medium in identity confrontation (Kowalski et al., 2001). Hence, though helpful in providing a foundation upon which to discuss and illustrate the complexities in

manifestations of teasing and other similar behaviors, this method of conceptualization does not account for the specific verbal and nonverbal behaviors that individuals employ to adapt their style of teasing so that it accomplishes the intended prosocial or antisocial goal(s).

Through teasing individuals seek to evoke a reaction from the target which differs depending on whether the tease stems from prosocial or antisocial intentions. For example, antisocial teasing is enacted with the intent of producing negative emotional and behavioral responses from the target such as hurt feelings and embarrassment. Conversely, prosocial teases are intended to communicate affection and play in order to produce positive emotional and behavioral responses from targets (see Beck et al., 2007; Keltner et al., 2001). In regard to these respective intentions, teasers should make a deliberate effort to employ verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors appropriate for achieving the desired outcome. Indeed, it would be imprudent to use degradation as a means of expressing affection and evoking a positive response from a target. Similarly, words of affirmation are likely ineffective means for expressing dislike to another. Consequently, teasers would be unwise to employ communication behaviors that are incompatible with their goals as this would enhance the likelihood that the correct intent is not conveyed.

Targets do not always correctly perceive teasers' intentions (e.g., Kowalski, 2000; Kruger et al., 2006) and therefore, teasing attempts are often misinterpreted. Contrary to successful attempts, prosocial teasing that is unsuccessful may be misperceived as antisocial and consequently, evoke a negative response from the target. On the other hand, antisocial teasing that is unsuccessful fails to negatively affect the target. Instead, unsuccessful antisocial teasing may produce indifference or even a positive reaction from the target who misinterprets its intent.

This logic suggests that when unsuccessful, antisocial and prosocial teasing may take on characteristics similar to those of their successful counterparts. That is to say, teasers may include communication behaviors in their provocations that are incompatible with their intended goal of being either affectionate or hostile. Hence, efforts to sort out the communicative complexities within the construction of prosocial and antisocial teasing should, in addition to teaser intentions, take into account the paradoxes in their outcomes (successful and unsuccessful).

The purpose of the present study is to refine understanding of teasing in this way. Much research has focused on target perceptions of teasing (e.g., Alberts et al., 1996; Kowalski, 2000), paying special attention to instances where hostile intentions were perceived. Consequently, less is known about teasing intentions from a success/failure perspective, particularly one that takes into account intentional antisocial teasing that is unsuccessful. In order to identify more specific factors and communication behaviors that may characterize the deliberate construction of prosocial and antisocial teasing, I will examine the influence of type of teasing (prosocial/antisocial) and teasing outcome (successful/unsuccessful) on multiple intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects of teasing episodes from the perspective of the teaser. I begin by investigating how motivations for teasing may be influenced by type of teasing and outcome. Next, I use a face threat analysis of teasing to examine factors and behaviors specific to the construction of a teasing episode. These include the focus of teasing message content and the use of mitigators and aggravators to signal whether a tease is intended for prosocial or antisocial purposes respectively. Following that, I move to the interpersonal component of a teasing episode and examine how type of teasing and outcome influence a target's response to teasing

and the emotional impact of that response on the teaser. I conclude with a discussion of the risk and potential intrapersonal traumas that teasers may experience when engaged in teasing across types and outcomes.

Motivations of Teasing

Scholars note that teasing is goal oriented and employed for the purpose of fulfilling both constructive and destructive functions (e.g., Keltner et al., 1998; Kowalski et al., 2001; Tragesser & Lippman, 2005). For example, prosocial (or affectionate) teasing can benefit relational goals through which individuals communicate liking, romantic interest, and/or relational attachment (Baxter, 1992; Beck et al., 2007; Keltner et al., 1998; Keltner et al., 2001; Kowalski et al., 2001). Indeed, Baxter (1992) found that teasing was a common form of verbal play in which romantic couples engaged. Similarly, Beck and colleagues (2007) found that prosocial teasing was a common method of engagement employed by college men and women. Due to its indirect and playful nature, teasing is also considered a means through which individuals can negotiate interpersonal conflict (e.g., Alberts, 1990; Beck et al., 2007; Eder, 1993; Keltner et al., 2001). Antisocial functions of teasing, on the other hand, include goals such as, to annoy (Beck et al., 2007), embarrass (Partington, 2006), establish superiority (Tragesser & Lippman, 2005), and to retaliate or communicate dislike (Beck et al., 2007; Shapiro et al., 1991) to name a few.

Additionally, there are functions of teasing such as exerting influence, socializing others, and influencing others to disclose personal information (Kowalski et al., 2001) that can stem from either prosocial or antisocial intentions. For example, individuals employ teasing to address the norm violations of others (Keltner et al., 2001; Kowalski, 2007; Kowalski et al., 2001) in

areas such as personal characteristics (see Alberts et al., 1996), child-rearing (see Eisenberg, 1986) and substance abuse and promiscuity (see Keltner et al., 1998). However, the manner in which one uses teasing to address norm violations can be either antisocial or prosocial. To simplify the diversity in teasing functions, scholars developed four categories to characterize them. Kowalski and colleagues (2001) identify teasing as serving the following functions: "socialization, self-disclosure, power and control, and self-presentation and identity regulation" (p. 186). These functions do not explicitly lend themselves to prosocial or antisocial teasing and therefore, also account for the paradoxical nature of teasing. Moreover, the neutrality within these functions further supports the need for teasers to employ communication behaviors to signal whether the intent of their provocation is prosocial or antisocial.

Although these functions are beneficial to understanding teasing episodes, they only illustrate strategic reasons for teasing; those which are employed for the purpose of achieving interpersonal goals, be they self-presentation, instrumental, or relational. In addition to goal achievement, there may be other factors that motivate teasing communication and/or the manner in which it is enacted. That is to say, although an individual may strategically employ teasing to achieve various interpersonal goals the manner in which he or she does so may reveal other additional motivations as well. For example, the way in which one uses teasing to address a target's norm violations (socialization function of teasing) may be further influenced by his or her mood. A teaser's pleasant mood may provoke a prosocial tease while an unpleasant mood may spark an antisocial tease to address the target's abnormal behavior. The former approach is expected to evoke a positive response from the target, while the latter will likely yield a negative response. Similarly, one's use of teasing may be reactive wherein which he or she uses teasing to

respond to the present situation or in response to being provoked by the target. Building upon this logic, it is possible that there exist similar other motivations for enacting prosocial and antisocial teasing.

It is important to examine the diverse reasons individuals associate with their teasing behavior not only because they may influence how teasers construct their teases, but because perceptions of such motivations also influence how targets react to teasing messages. Indeed, there exists research on target perceptions and reactions to teasing cites the importance of target perceptions in this way (e.g., Alberts et al., 1996; Kowalski, 2000; Kruger et al., 2006), particularly in instances where the teasing is perceived to be hostile. It is in response to such teasing that targets can report negative emotions like hurt feelings. Research on hurtful communication research is important to investigations of teasing practices because teasing can intentionally and unintentionally yield such negative outcomes. Consequently, a target's negative emotional response does not always reflect the intent of the teaser.

To obtain potential reasons for teasing that may also account for its paradoxical nature, I turn to hurtful communication research by Vangelisti and Young (2000) as perceptions of perpetrator motivations are central to hurtful communication research (e.g., Vangelisti & Young, 2000; Vangelisti, 2007). The researchers identified reasons targets associated with hurtful messages that they perceived to be unintentional. The motivations identified reflect intrapersonal, interpersonal, and situational factors also likely to influence individuals to communicate teasing messages termed: expressive, strategic, descriptive, supportive, justified, self-centered, and trait-oriented. For example, *expressive* motivations described messages that were enacted because of "a consequence of the speaker's emotional or physical state" while

descriptive motivations reflected "an accurate description of, or honest response to a situation at hand" (Vangelisti & Young, 2000, p. 404). When applied to teasing practices these motivations do not, by definition, lend themselves to one type of teasing over another and consequently, can account for the paradoxical nature of teasing. As a result, it is possible that certain motivations may be more common in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing that is successful and vice versa. In order to refine understanding of the reasons teasers associate with their teasing and whether they are characteristic of certain teasing types and outcomes, I pose the following research question:

RQ 1: To what extent are the perceived motivations for hurtful messages reflected in the motivations that individuals have for teasing and how are they related to type of teasing and outcome?

Constructing Teasing

Scholars note that the ability to engage in and understand teasing requires advanced communication skills and social understanding (Heerey, Capps, Keltner, & Kring, 2005). Indeed, the construction of teasing messages is, in and of itself, complex. Just as targets need to be able to perceive and correctly interpret teasing messages, so too, must teasers be able to effectively construct a tease so that its correct intent is perceived. As the initiator of teasing episodes, teasers are like artists with a blank canvas upon which they can mix paints of humor, ambiguity, identity confrontation, and off-record markers. The variations in paint combinations help shape the provocation into an antisocial or prosocial exchange. Indeed, it is through these communicative "brush strokes" that teasers can enhance or reduce the face threat in a provocation. I turn to a

face threat analysis of teasing (Alberts et al., 1996; Keltner et al., 2001; Keltner et al., 1998) to examine how teasers manipulate their communication behaviors to yield prosocial and antisocial outcomes.

Face Threat Analysis of Teasing

As conceptualized, the face threat model of social interaction suggests that concerns for protecting face (or social identity) of self and other dominate social interaction (Goffman, 1967). The literature identifies two types of face needs—positive and negative face—where *positive* face reflects one's positive social value and *negative* face denotes one's need for self agency (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Individuals interact with one another with the goal of maintaining rather than threatening the face needs of self and other. This goal is particularly salient when interacting with intimate partners because intimates, in contrasts to non-intimates, are expected to support one another's face needs and wants during interactions (Goffman, 1967). Indeed, intimates are expected to maintain one another's wants and needs (Roloff, Janiszewski, McGrath, Burns, & Manrai, 1988). Individuals work to maintain these face needs and the quality of their relationship by avoiding face-threatening acts and preventing the relational detriment that would potentially result (Goffman, 1967). Although face-threatening acts frustrate the efforts of the target to protect and maintain his or her face needs individuals cannot always avoid them because some communication behaviors inherently threaten one's positive and/or negative face needs (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Indeed, this is the case in teasing communication. Whether prosocial or antisocial, teasing content is potentially face-threatening because it is a deliberate act in which one comments upon something pertinent to the target's identity (Beck et al., Keltner et al., 1998; Kowalski, 2000; Kowalski et al., 2001).

Aware of the relationship between face threat and teasing messages, several scholars have applied Goffman's (1967) face threat model of social interaction to the social practice of teasing (see Alberts et al., 1996; Keltner et al., 2001; Keltner et al., 1998). Primarily, this has been discussed in terms of softening teasing messages with mitigators so that the face threat is minimized and the provocation is perceived as playful. The present study, however, is equally interested in successful and unsuccessful prosocial teasing as it is in successful and unsuccessful antisocial teasing. Therefore, deliberate means of softening as well as enhancing the face loss incurred by teasing messages will be examined. The degree to which teasing yields a prosocial or antisocial effect should be influenced by the communication behaviors teasers employ and their influence on the target's face loss. This study examines two central ways of manipulating a message so that it yields the intended prosocial or antisocial outcome. First, individuals can modify the focus of the teasing message (e.g., what they tease the target about) in order to mitigate or aggravate the face threat in the provocation. Second, teasers can enact verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors that mitigate or aggravate face loss.

Teasing Message Features

Focus of Teasing Message Content

Teasers may avoid certain topics when engaging in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing and vice versa. La Gaipa (1977) notes that teasing addresses a shortcoming or negative aspect of the target. Similarly, Keltner and colleagues (2001) state that through teasing, individuals "comment on something of relevance to the target" (p. 234). Indeed, there are a variety of topics relevant to one's identity about which a person can be teased. Most notably, the

topics examined in previous research have included physical appearance, relationships, behavior (Kowalski, 2000; Kruger et al., 2006), intelligence (Kowalski, 2000) and competence (or abilities, Alberts et al., 1996). Some topics may be perceived as being more central to one's social identity than others and consequently considered to be more face-threatening and likely to elicit more negative responses than those that are less face-threatening.

Previous studies of target perceptions of the focus of teasing content find mixed support in this regard. Alberts and colleagues (1996) found that the topic of the teasing did not interact to predict the response of a target. Conversely, the finding by Aronson and colleagues (2007) that individuals perceived certain topics as unacceptable for teasing suggests that they might respond more negatively to those topics compared to others. Regardless of the target's response to teasing, it is possible that teasers strategically manipulate the focus of their teasing content in prosocial and antisocial teasing attempts so that they are more face-threatening in the latter than in the former. For example, in order to minimize face threat, individuals who desire to engage in prosocial teasing might avoid focusing on key aspects of another's identity as prosocial teasing is lower in identity confrontation. Antisocial teasing, on the other hand, has the goal of creating face threat since it is high in identity confrontation. Such confrontation would be better achieved through attacking characteristics that are central to an individual's identity. These might include topics like those identified as unacceptable for teasing by Aronson and colleagues (2007) such as "appearance, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion and race" (p. 174). Assuming that some topics of teasing may be perceived as more characteristic of, and beneficial to, the successful enactment of certain types of teasing suggests that the absence of those topics may characterize failed teasing attempts. Thus, type of teasing and outcome may interact to influence the focus of

teasing content employed by teasers. However, in the absence of a theoretical model upon which to posit hypotheses to examine this relationship, I pose the following research question.

RQ2: How is the focus of teasing content related to the type of teasing and its outcome?

Mitigators and Aggravators

A second method for influencing the face threat in a message involves enacting mitigators to provide face support and aggravators to enhance face loss. The social practice of teasing is marked by the presence of off-record markers (Keltner et al., 2001). There are a wide variety of verbal and nonverbal off-record markers that teasers can employ to signal that a provocation is of a prosocial intent to be playful or affectionate rather than of malicious intent (Keltner et al., 2001). Although Keltner and colleagues (2001) developed a model to generally account for these modifications in prosocial and antisocial teasing, a framework to explain if and how the behavioral modifications that differentiate antisocial from prosocial teasing characterize their success and failure remains underdeveloped.

Keltner and colleagues (1998) note the use of redressive actions as a means of softening the face threat in a teasing episode so that it is perceived as playful. Prosocial teasing is lower in identity confrontation than antisocial teasing because it involves more redressive actions. Such mitigation reduces the ambiguity in teasing intent, allowing the good-natured humor and playful intent to be more easily perceived by the target, consequently reducing the face threat. Similarly, teasing that is antisocial should employ communication behaviors likely to enhance rather than soften the face threat in order to convey the intended hostility. Antisocial teasing is high in identity confrontation, in part, due to the lack of redressive actions included in it (Keltner et al.,

1998; Kowalski, 2007). The absence of such mitigation should increase the ambiguity, minimize the humor, and sustain the face threat in the teasing message, consequently increasing the likelihood that the target will perceive it as a hostile attack. Thus, it is likely that the successful enactment of prosocial and antisocial teasing may be differentiated by the presence or absence of mitigators and aggravators in their teasing messages.

Through the use of verbal and nonverbal politeness tactics and positive off-record markers, a teaser can couch his or her provocation in playful humor and exaggeration that allows the target to perceive the tease as prosocial rather than antisocial. Keltner and colleagues (2001) attribute such redressive actions to teasers who are "highly skilled communicators, overly sensitive to socially appropriate behavior, and/or fearful of face-threatening situations" (p. 236). Therefore, successful prosocial teasing should employ more positive politeness tactics as mitigators than antisocial teasing that is successful. Conversely, successful antisocial teasing should include more negative markers, be they verbal (e.g., verbally aggressive speech) or nonverbal (e.g., unfriendly facial expressions, aggressive touch), than prosocial teasing that is successful. Furthermore, the framework put forth in this study assumes that when unsuccessful, prosocial and antisocial teasing exhibit characteristics traditionally exhibited by their successful counterparts. Unsuccessful prosocial teasing will have more aggravators while antisocial teasing that is unsuccessful will have more mitigators. Based upon this logic, I propose the following to predict the influence of type of teasing and outcome on the use of mitigators and aggravators in teasing messages:

Mitigators – Positive Nonverbal Cues

H1: Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will use fewer positive nonverbal cues when successful compared to unsuccessful.

H2: Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will use more positive nonverbal cues in successful compared to unsuccessful teasing.

H3: When successful, individuals will use more positive nonverbal cues in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.

Aggravators – Intense Language

H4: Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will use more intense language when successful than when unsuccessful.

H5: Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will use more intense language when unsuccessful than when successful.

H6: When successful, individuals will use more intense language in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing.

H7: When unsuccessful, individuals will use more intense language in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.

The proceeding analysis asserts that successful and unsuccessful enactments of prosocial and antisocial teasing will involve different verbal and nonverbal features. Prosocial teasing should employ communicative softeners to mitigate the face threat in the topic of the teasing while antisocial teasing should employ aggravators to accentuate the face loss. In addition, the successful and unsuccessful enactment of a teasing episode should also yield interpersonal

effects, most notably in the responses of the target and teaser. Therefore, I turn to responses to teasing next.

Reactions to Teasing

Target Responses to Teasing

Although teasers may construct messages intended to have prosocial or antisocial effects, their successful enactment of them depends in part on how their messages are interpreted by the target (Pawluck, 1989). In effect in response to teasing, targets ask the question, was that affection or insult? The answer to this question influences how targets respond to the teasing during the interaction (see Alberts et al., 1996). If the teaser is perceived as being playful then the target should experience greater liking for him or her and respond accordingly. This may include warmly receiving the tease with positive nonverbal and verbal statements and/or reciprocating the playful teasing. Indeed, teasing is a form of verbal play that can enhance intimacy (Baxter, 1992; Beck et al., 2007; Keltner et al., 2001). Therefore, targets who perceive affection and the absence of ill-intent in a tease are expected to respond in a positive manner that signals they perceived the teasing to be prosocial. Recall that the aim of the present study is to not only differentiate between deliberate prosocial and antisocial teasing, but to also explore the factors that characterize their outcomes as well. Hence, a target's perception of a provocation does not always align with the teaser's intentions (Kowalski, 2000; Kruger et al., 2006) and therefore, it is possible for a target to respond positively to a tease intended to be antisocial that was unsuccessful in doing so. Conversely, if a tease intended to be prosocial is unsuccessful it

fails to convey affection and a positive response from the target as well. The above logic led to the development of the following hypotheses:

Positive Target Response

H8: Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more positive target responses when successful than when unsuccessful.

H9: Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will report more positive target responses when unsuccessful than when successful.

H10: When successful, individuals will report more positive target responses to prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.

H11: When unsuccessful, individuals will report more positive target responses to prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.

On the other hand, targets of teasing interpreted as hostile (i.e., successful antisocial and unsuccessful prosocial teasing) are expected to respond negatively as opposed to positively to the provocation (Alberts et al., 1996; Kruger et al., 2006). There are many ways through which an individual can negatively respond to face-threatening acts like teasing. Most notably, individuals vary with regard to how directly they express dissatisfaction. Some engage in direct confrontation where they exhibit behaviors that signal that they are upset or in disagreement with the agent. The greater the threat to one's identity then the more likely he or she will employ aggression as a means of restoring face and a favorable identity to others (Felson, 1978). Therefore, targets may aggressively respond to the face threat in teasing they perceive to be hostile. Indeed, countering a tease is a frequent response employed by targets of teasing (Kelter

et al., 2001). Thus, in response to such face attacks targets of teasing may employ aggressive direct responses to the teaser such as counterattacks where they refute the teasing comments and/or directly express dissatisfaction with the provocation.

As opposed to direct confrontation, targets may engage in more indirect or avoidance types of behaviors in response to being upset by another's behavior, in this case, teasing behavior. Scholars have noted that targets of teasing often employ non-response as a response to teasing perceived as hostile (Shapiro et al., 1991). For example, targets of teasing perceived as hostile may respond to the face loss by distancing themselves from the teaser or by acting in a passive aggressive fashion (i.e., the use of the silent treatment). One would expect for targets to respond negatively more often to teasing that is perceived as hostile regardless of whether it was intentionally (successful antisocial teasing) or unintentionally (unsuccessful prosocial teasing) so. However, the directness in which targets negatively respond to teasing may also be influenced by type of teasing and outcome. In order to examine the influence of the interaction of type of teasing and outcome on the negative responses target exhibit in teasing episodes, I offer the following:

Negative Target Response

H12: Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will report more negative target responses when successful than when unsuccessful.

H13: Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more negative target responses when unsuccessful compared to successful.

H14: When unsuccessful, individuals will report more negative target responses to prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.

H15: When successful, individuals will report more negative target responses to antisocial compared to prosocial teasing.

Teaser Responses to Teasing

The reaction of targets to teasing does not occur in a vacuum. Just as individuals who engage in successful prosocial teasing enjoy the affection and enhanced relational bonding that occurs with the targets as a result, so too, should a target's negative response to teasing evoke an emotional response from the teaser. However, the emotional response from the teaser is not expected to always be the same as that of the target. Indeed, perceptions of and reactions to teasing are greatly influenced by the role one plays in the teasing episode (Keltner et al., 1998; Kowalski, 2000; 2007). Typically, perpetrators of teasing respond more positively and less negatively to the teasing episode (Beck et al., 2007; Kowalski et al., 2001). Although there is a discrepancy between the extent of negative affect experienced by targets compared to perpetrators of teasing, individuals who engage in teasing may still experience negative emotional responses to a target's reaction to their teasing. This negative affect could result from unintentionally hurting the target (unsuccessful prosocial) or as a result of successfully evoking a negative reaction from the target. Indeed, teasers have reported negative feelings such as guilt and embarrassment in response to teasing to another (Kowalski et al., 2001). Individuals are expected to experience such negative emotional feelings more often in teasing conditions where they intentionally and unintentionally harm a target through their teasing. Hence, type of teasing

and outcome are expected to interact to influence teaser's experiencing negative emotional response to a target's reaction to their teasing. To test this logic, I propose the following hypotheses:

Teaser Negative Emotional Response to Target Reaction

H16: Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when successful than when unsuccessful.

H17: Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when unsuccessful than when successful.

H18: When unsuccessful, individuals will report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when engaged in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.

H19: When successful, individuals will report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when engaged in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing.

Thus far, the present study has examined the influence of type of teasing and outcome on teaser motivations, the communicative construction of teasing, and target reactions to teasing. In doing so, I have addressed cognitive, behavioral, and interpersonal factors that influence the enactment of teasing episodes and their outcomes. What has, however, remained neglected are intrapersonal factors that may influence how teasers construct their teasing so as to have prosocial and antisocial outcomes. In order to address this influence, I turn to the risk in teasing practices.

Teaser Stress

Individuals may acknowledge and/or evaluate the risk(s) involved in teasing a target who may or may not correctly perceive or appreciate the jest. There is potential risk—personal and interpersonal—involved in face-threatening social practices such as teasing (Baxter, 1992; Keltner et al., 1998; Kruger et al., 2006; Lampert & Ervin-Tripp, 2006). If the sting in teasing is not appropriately buffered by off-record markers or politeness tactics, it can result in escalation involving relational tension and/or retaliation (Kowalski et al., 2001; Kruger et al., 2006). For the teaser, such provocations can adversely affect his or her reputation if the teasing is perceived as too hostile or inappropriate by the target and/or third party (Keltner et al., 2001). Hence, teasing can be face-threatening for the teaser as well the target (Kowalski et al., 2001).

Baxter (1992) found that teasing was considered the riskiest form of play in which intimate partners engaged. Therefore, it is logical to assume that teasers perceive the risk in teasing, even prosocial teasing. The foresight of this risk as well as the evidence of it that may manifest in a target's unexpected reaction to a teasing message, suggests that the risk inherent to teasing may influence teasers before, during, and/or after a teasing episode. Due to the prevalence of this risk and the seeming awareness of teasers, even prosocial teasers, of it (e.g., Baxter, 1992) may cause them to experience stress or anxiety when engaging in the delicate social practice. This stress may stem from a number of factors. One, teasers may experience anxiety while teasing due to the behavioral modifications that they are consciously employing in the hopes of enhancing the success potential of their teasing attempt. Teaser may also experience anxiety during their teasing as a result of the unforeseen and/or unintended outcomes that can

result from teasing that is misinterpreted as hostile teasing or as a more aggressive behavior like bullying.

In teasing, individuals employ a communication behavior susceptible to misinterpretation that is capable of yielding contrasting outcomes. When prosocial, teasing evokes positive emotions from target and teaser alike and can enhance relational bonding. On the other hand, when antisocial, teasing negatively affects its targets, creates relational distancing, and may cause the teaser to be unfavorably perceived by the target and/or third party witnesses to the teasing episode. Although teasing can intentionally acquire negative outcomes, it is also capable of unintentionally doing so. Hence, teasing can be a dangerous social practice of which teasers should be cognizant.

The risk inherent to teasing should impact the anxiety individuals experience while engaging in it. However, the anxiety experienced by teasers should be greater when engaging in teasing that has the potential to negatively affect the teaser as well as the target be it intentionally (successful antisocial) or unintentionally (unsuccessful prosocial). Antisocial teasing is intended to be hurtful to the target and in doing so may elicit emotional responses such as crying or even aggression toward the teaser. Although intended to get a rise from the target, these reactions may also create stress in the teaser as he or she contends with the negative emotional responses. Unsuccessful prosocial teasing, however, is misperceived as cruel teasing. As a result, the target may experience face loss, negative feelings, and/or even perceive that the teaser does not value their relationship. An awareness of unintentionally yielding these negative outcomes should cause more stress for teasers.

Prosocial teasing that is effective generates positive emotion in the target and greater affection toward the teaser. Such reactions should cause the teaser to be positively perceived by the target and audience and therefore, create less stress in the teaser. Conversely, when unsuccessful an antisocial tease may leave a target unaffected emotionally or even positively affected by a tease misinterpreted as playful. Neither outcome is expected to create much stress for the teaser because they do not result in significant face loss or the likelihood of conflict escalation. To account for the intrapersonal reactions of teasers to teasing episodes, I test several hypotheses including:

Teaser Stress

H20: Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will report more stress when successful than when unsuccessful.

H21: Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more stress when unsuccessful than when successful.

H22: When successful, individuals will report more stress when engaged in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing.

H23: When unsuccessful, individual will report more stress when engaged in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.

Chapter 3 will detail the methods of the study conducted to examine the research questions and hypotheses posited above.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

A survey experiment was conducted to test the previously outlined hypotheses.

Design

The design is a 2 (affectionate teasing; hurtful teasing) x 2 (intentional; unintentional) between-subjects experimental design. One of four possible questionnaires was randomly distributed to participants. Using a critical incidents method (Flanagan, 1954), respondents were asked to describe a personal experience occurring no earlier than high school in which they either successfully or unsuccessfully prosocially (affectionately) or antisocially (hurtfully) teased someone. The four cells are as follows:

		TEASER INTENT OF TEASING TYPE	
		Successful	Unsuccessful
TYPE OF TEASING	Prosocial	$N = 43$	$N = 44$
	Antisocial	$N = 41$	$N = 44$

The breakdown of the demographic information for teasers and targets and the teaser-target relationship for the population samples in each manipulation are included in Table 1. Here, the total population sample will be described in its entirety.

Participants

Participants for this study were recruited during the fall term through the Department of Communication Studies research pool at Northwestern University. The sample included 172 college men and women. Among the sample of participants, approximately 36 percent ($N = 62$) were male and 64 percent ($N = 110$) female. This gender ratio is characteristic of enrollment in communication courses at the university. The average age of respondents was 19.93 years ($SD = 1.3$) while the sample included individuals 18 to 25 years old. Twenty-nine participants (16.9%) were classified as freshmen, 64 (36.8%) as sophomores, 41 (23.8%) were juniors, and 37 (21.3%) were seniors. One participant did not provide information regarding his or her classification. The majority of the sample was Caucasian ($N = 125$, 72.7 %) while the remaining population was 9.9% ($N = 17$) Asian-American, 7% ($N = 12$) African-American, 4.7% ($N = 8$) Hispanic, 4.7% ($N = 8$) Bi-Racial, .6% ($N = 1$) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and .6% ($N = 1$) participants reported his or her race/ethnicity as "Other."

Procedure

Upon expressing an interest in participating in the study, participants emailed the investigator with their availability to come in to complete the questionnaire. The investigator then emailed the participant with an official appointment time for which they would participate in the study. All participants earned two credits toward their communication research requirement for their involvement in this study. However, participants could elect not to participate in these studies, or terminate their participation in this study at any time and still receive the research credit.

At their designated time, participants reported to the Communication Studies' lab. The investigator greeted them, provided them with general information about the study, and distributed an informed consent form for them to review and sign. Participants also received a copy of the consent form to keep for their personal records. Next, participants were randomly assigned to complete one of the four questionnaires in which they recalled a personal experience initiating a prosocial or antisocial teasing episode that was either successful or unsuccessful. The manipulations can be found in Appendix A.

For each manipulation, participants were asked to provide open and close-ended responses about themselves, the target, and the verbal and nonverbal elements of the teasing exchange for teaser and target, and their perceptions, intentions, and reactions to the provocation. Respondents also completed items to assess when the teasing episode occurred, verbal aggressiveness, their relationship to the target, and their interpersonal attraction.

The purpose of this study was to explore the teasing habits of college age men and women and not to solely examine teasing *between* college men and women. Therefore, the experience they chose to reflect upon was not restricted to the collegiate setting and hence, could have occurred in non-academic settings such as parent/guardian home, work, etc.

As a result of the slight variation in the total number of participants that appropriately completed the questionnaire, there are variations in the number of responses present in each statistical analysis.

Characteristics of Teasing Episodes

When the Teasing Occurred

Participants reported being between the ages of 14 and 22 years old at the time of the teasing. However the average age of participants at the time of the teasing episode was 19.42, *SD* = 1.38. Participants reported incidents that occurred as recently as less than one week before to six years before (in months, *M* = 6.9, *SD* = 12.05). The prevalence of teasing among college men and women can be noted in how recently the experiences reported had occurred. Approximately fifty-four percent (72) of respondents reported teasing episodes that had occurred within the last month. Among these, 16.8% (29) occurred less than a week before, 11.6% (20) one week before, 9.8% (*N* = 17) two weeks before, 3.5% (6) occurred three weeks ago, and 12.7% (22) occurred one month ago. Twenty percent (20%, *N* = 34) of respondents reported incidents that occurred 2-6 months ago while 87% (*N* = 151) of the total sample population reported teasing episodes that had occurred within the past year.

Although the majority of the teasing episodes reported occurred within a year, there was variance observed in the reported frequency of antisocial compared prosocial teasing episodes that is worth noting. On average, the reported prosocial teasing episodes occurred more recently (in months, *M* = 4.52, *SD* = 9.58) than did antisocial teasing episodes (in months, *M* = 9.37, *SD* = 13.77). A *t*-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean time (in months) the teasing episode occurred for prosocial teasing and antisocial teasing, $t\ (149.58) = 2.67$, $p < .008$. This supports the finding that college men and women engage in more prosocial teasing than antisocial teasing (Beck et al., 2007).

Teasing Target Information

Participants provided information regarding the target of their teasing. Specifically, they had to report the Target's age, sex, and race/ethnicity and describe their relationship with the target. Although the targets' ages ranged from seven to fifty-nine years old, approximately 82% (N = 141) were between the ages of 18 and 25 like our population sample of teasers (M = 19.72 years, SD = 4.79). Although the population sample in this study was overwhelming female, the sex of the targets reported in the teasing episodes was nearly fifty-fifty—Ninety were (52.3%) male and 82 (47.7%) female. Indeed, of the total teasing episodes, approximately 35% (N = 60) were cross-sex exchanges initiated by females, and 18.6% (N = 32) were cross-sex interactions initiated by males. However, within group comparisons revealed that both sexes initiated more cross-sex teasing than same-sex teasing episodes (Females = 46% (N = 51) same-sex, 54% (60) cross-sex; Males = 45.7% (27) same-sex, 54.2% (32) cross-sex). Interestingly, this supports recent findings that college females more often direct teasing messages towards their male rather than female peers but conflicts with the same study's observation that males overwhelmingly engage in teasing with male over female peers (Beck et al., 2007). However, it should be noted that the sex of the teaser was not significantly related to the sex of the target, $\chi^2 = .603$, $p < .438$.

The racial composition of the targets included 126 (73.3%) Caucasian, 15 (8.7%) Asian-American, 11 (6.4%) African-American, 8 (4.7%) Hispanic, 7 (4.1%) Bi-racial, 1 (.6%) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and 4 (2.3%) who identified their race/ethnicity as "Other."

Teaser-Target Relationship

The majority of teasing exchanges involved targets who were romantic partners (26.4%, *N* = 46), while of the remaining targets 18 (10.3%) acquaintances, 26 (15%) friends, 31 (17.9%) best friends, 25 (14.4%) siblings, 13 (7.5%) roommates, 6 (3.4%) individuals with romantic potential, 4 (2.3%) teammates, 2 (1.1%) a sorority/fraternity member, 2 (1.1%) family members (i.e., a mother and a cousin), 1 (.6%) co-worker and one teaser-target relationship was coded as "other." Among the total targets that were "friends," one was also reported as a roommate while another as a roommate and teammate. Among the total targets reported as a "best friend," one was also reported as a roommate, another a fellow sorority/fraternity member and another was also a teammate. The relationships were recoded into four categories: romantic partners and persons of romantic interest, friends, peers, and family. Approximately 30% (52) were romantic partners/persons of romantic interest, 33% (57) were friends, 21.5% (37) were peers, and 15.1% (26) were family members.

Measures

Research participants completed a questionnaire designed to assess their personal experiences with successful and unsuccessful antisocial and prosocial teasing. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix B. In addition to open-ended questions detailing the teasing episode, respondents also completed close-ended items to assess their verbal aggressiveness, interpersonal attraction to the target, situational communication apprehension, social appropriateness and their emotional responses to the teasing as well as their perceptions of the target's emotional response.

All multiple item scales were formed by summing the items and dividing by the total number of items.

Verbal Aggressiveness was measured on 20-items developed by Infante and Wigley (1986) using a 6-point response scale (Always True to Always False) where higher scores denote higher levels of verbal aggressiveness, (M = 63.73, SD = 12.9, α = .83).

Interpersonal Attraction between the teaser and target was measured on 6-items developed by McCroskey and McCrain (1974) using a 5-point response scale (Strongly Disagree = 1, Strongly Agree = 5). The items measure the teaser's social attraction to the target. Sample items include: (1) I would like to have a friendly chat with him/her, (2) It would be difficult to meet and talk to him/her, and (3) He/she would be pleasant to be with. Total scores ranged from 6 to 30 where higher numbers denote higher levels of interpersonal attraction (M = 25.5, SD = 5.8, α = .9).

Teaser Stress was measured on 20-items assessing the amount of stress and anxiety individuals felt while teasing the target. The measure employed, the Situational Communication Apprehension scale was developed by Richmond (1978) and uses a 7-point response scale (Extremely Inaccurate = 1, Extremely Accurate = 7), (M = 63.4, SD = 22.3, α = .85). Sample items include: (1) I was apprehensive, (2) I felt uneasy, and (3) I was peaceful.

Content Coding

All open-ended data was coded independently by trained undergraduate coders in three phases. In the first phase, one coder was assigned to read through all of the open-ended responses for each open-ended question. He or she coded the responses for themes and created a detailed

synopsis that identified approximately 6-10 themes he or she found reoccurring in the survey responses. All responses had to be accounted for by at least one themed category. For each theme, the coder included a detailed description describing the coding category and the type of responses that were coded into them. Next, the coder identified sample responses from the data by survey number to help reiterate the category theme and description. Each coding scheme synopsis was then reviewed and compared with that created by the researcher.

During the second phase, the researcher developed coding instructions from the synopses created in Phase One. These formal instructions were used for the training and subsequent coding of the data by multiple undergraduate coders among whom the respective coders in Phase One were not included. This process was conducted for each open-ended response question included in the questionnaires.

In the third phase, undergraduate coders were trained and equipped with coding instructions to govern their independent coding of the responses. Because the responses were typically no more than 3-5 sentences in length, the entire message was used as the unit of analysis instead of breaking the message into fine units (e.g., sentences or phrases). The coding was not mutually exclusive and hence, coders indicated the presence or absence of all message content characteristics. Every analyzed message contained at least one message content category.

Motivations of Teasing. Participants were asked to explain why they teased the target. The motivations associated with the teasing episodes were should have been either antisocial or prosocial depending on the condition in which a participant had been assigned. There is no known coding scheme for motivations to engage in teasing. Hence, I adapted one used for hurtful

communication. Vangelisti and Young (2000) examined the reasons targets associated with hurtful messages they perceived to be unintentional. Since anti and prosocial teasing can be hurtful, this taxonomy seems an appropriate way to understand the motivation behind teasing. The responses were coded into at least one of the following seven categories adapted from Vangelisti and Young's (2000) analysis of the attributions targets make for unintentional hurtful communication: Expressive, Strategic, Descriptive, Supportive, Justified, Self-Centered, and Trait-Oriented. Items were coded "0" if the category was not reflected in the response and coded "1" if the category was reflected in the response. The definitions for each code, exemplars, frequencies and their individual kappas are included in Table 2.

Focus of Teasing Content. Respondents were asked to describe their verbal statements during the teasing (i.e., what did you say to the target?). The verbal statements were coded into at least one of the following teasing content categories: Physical Appearance, Behavioral Traits/Habits, Personality, Competence, Participation, and the target's Relationship/Social Interactions. Teasing messages were also coded for their use of Intense Language (i.e., put downs, name-calling, and/or profanity). Items were coded "0" if the category was not reflected in the response and coded "1" if the category was reflected in the response. The definitions for each code, exemplars, frequencies and their individual kappas are included in Table 3.

Teasing Mitigators – Positive Nonverbal Cues. Respondents were asked to describe their nonverbal behaviors during the teasing. The nonverbal communication behaviors coded as positive nonverbal cues were smiling and friendly laughter. Responses in which these behaviors were present were coded "1" while those not present were coded "0." The definitions for each code, frequencies and their individual kappas are included in Table 4.

Teasing Aggravators –Intense Language. Respondents were asked to describe their verbal statements during the teasing. Responses were coded for intense language such as profanity, put downs, and/or name-calling. Responses in which these behaviors were present were coded "1" while those not present were coded "0." The definitions for each code, frequencies and their individual kappas are included in Table 4.

Target Reaction. Respondents were asked to describe in detail the reaction the target exhibited in response to the teasing that signaled that he or she was/was not hurt by the teasing. Here, the target's response is part of what the teaser interpreted to deduce whether he or she was successful or unsuccessful in the antisocial or prosocial teasing episode. The target's reactions included five responses that represented positive and negative target responses to teasing. The code, *Target Positive Response,* was comprised of responses identified as "expressed acceptance of the tease" that indicated an agreeableness with and/or validation of the teasing message. Scholars note that targets of teasing may respond negatively as well (Alberts et al., 1996; Keltner et al., 2001; Kowalski, 2000). Common negative responses to teasing vary in their directness.

Scholars have noted negative responses to teasing such as refuting the tease (Keltner et al., 2001) and not responding to the tease (Shapiro et al., 1991) as if it never occurred. The former response, refutation, is a direct method of communicating dissatisfaction while the latter, ignoring the provocation, is an indirect method of expressing dissatisfaction. To account for the contrast in aggression and directness in target responses to teasing, *Negative Target Response* included four response categories identified in the data: expressed lack of appreciation for the tease, refutation of the tease, creating physical distance, and the silent treatment. Responses were coded into at least one of the above categories. Items were coded "0" if the category was not

reflected in the response and coded "1" if the category was reflected in the response. The definitions for each code, exemplars, frequencies and their individual kappas are included in Table 5.

Teaser Negative Emotional Response to Teaser Reaction. Respondents completed open-ended responses in which they reported how the target's reaction to their teasing made them feel. Responses were coded for references to negative emotional responses such as feeling badly, guilty, and/or apologetic as a result of the target's response to the teasing. Responses reflecting such negative emotional responses to teasing were coded "1" while those not containing such responses were coded "0." The definitions for this code, exemplars, frequencies and its individual kappa are included in Table 6.

Chapter 4 will detail the results of the tests employed for the hypotheses and research questions proposed by this research study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Because of the cross-sectional design of this study, it was possible that the predictor variables were confounded with factors that need to be statistically controlled for in the analyses. Therefore preliminary correlation analyses were conducted among the independent, dependent, and control variables. These analyses were conducted using two-tailed significance tests and can be found in Table 7. In this section, I will begin by briefly discussing the significant correlations observed between the independent and dependent variables. Next, I will overview the rationale for the control variables and their correlations to the independent variables.

Teasing type was dummy coded, antisocial = 0 and prosocial = 1. Teasing type was positively related to smiles ($r = .204$, $p < .008$) and laughter ($r = .162$, $p < .035$) suggesting that these nonverbal cues may be more characteristic of prosocial compared to antisocial teasing. The type of teasing was also positively related to teaser negative feelings ($r = .187$, $p < .014$) and references to physical appearance in teasing content ($r = .176$, $p < .021$). Unexpectedly, individuals experience more negative feelings following prosocial teasing compared to antisocial teasing. Note that my hypothesis predicts an interaction between type of teasing and outcomes and is not reflected by this bivariate correlation.

Interestingly, individuals were more likely to make references to a target's physical appearance in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing. This contrasts with the prevalence of research detailing the negative connotations and outcomes associated with teasing focused on a

target's physical appearance. For example, in a study of teasing norms Aronson and colleagues (2007) found that physical appearance was among the topics considered "unacceptable" in teasing among college students. Further research identifies a target's physical appearance as a topic commonly employed in bullying (Kowalski, 2000), a not so distant cousin of (cruel) teasing (Kowalski, 2007). These factors would lead one to assume that a focus on physical appearance would characterize antisocial rather than prosocial teasing as findings indicate. Bivariate correlations revealed that the type of teasing in which individuals engaged was negatively related to teasing stress ($r = -.222$, $p < .004$). Indeed, using teasing as a means of making individuals feel good as opposed to bad should create less stress for individuals.

Teasing outcome was dummy coded, unsuccessful = 0 and successful = 1. Teasing outcome was positively related to references to competence in teasing content ($r = .165$, $p < .031$) and self-centered intentions in teasing ($r = .154$, $p < .044$). Hence, there was more success for individuals who had selfish motives and focused their teasing content on the target's competence. These factors are overwhelmingly negative and may be more characteristic of the successful elements in antisocial rather than prosocial teasing episodes. Teasing outcome was negatively related to teaser anxiety ($r = -.183$, $p < .018$), teaser negative emotional response to target reaction ($r = -.154$, $p < .044$), and descriptive motivations for teasing ($r = -.220$, $p = .004$). Though not hypothesized, individuals whose teasing was motivated by a desire to describe an actual situation were unsuccessful more often than successful. Such teasing messages may contain less exaggeration and therefore be perceived as more harsh forms of identity confrontation. This might especially be the case in prosocial teasing that is unsuccessful. The finding that individuals report more stress and negative feelings when unsuccessful compared to

successful teasing is expected. The strong negative affect individuals experience when unsuccessful also suggests that the outcomes of unsuccessful teasing episodes can significantly differ from the original intent. Hence, providing support for the predicted interaction between type of teasing and outcome in this research study.

Next, I examined the dependent variables for inter-correlation. There were twenty-two dependent variables examined in this study: the focus topic of teasing message content (physical appearance, behavior, personality, competence, participation, and relationships/social interactions), teaser motivations for teasing (expressive, strategic, descriptive, supportive, justified, self-centered, and trait-oriented), positive nonverbal cues (nonverbal mitigators), intense language (verbal aggravators), positive target response to teasing (acceptance of tease), negative target response to teasing (expressed lack of appreciation, refutation, create physical distance, and the silent treatment), teaser negative emotional response to target reaction, and teaser stress. The significance tests and correlations for the dependent variables are reported in Table 7. Although the majority of the significant correlations observed were modest, a few were of greater strength. Therefore, here I will highlight instances where noteworthy inter-correlations (approximately $r \geq \pm.30$) were observed.

Strategic motivations for teasing where one uses teasing for the purpose of achieving an interpersonal goal was negatively and significantly related to descriptive motivations for teasing ($r = -.31$, $p < .001$). Individuals seeking to achieve goals through teasing were unlikely to have their teasing stem from an honest opinion or response concerning the situation at hand. It's likely that this relationship is negative and so strong because of the stark differences in strategic and descriptive motivations for teasing. The former is likely to be premeditated while the latter may

arise at the time of teasing episode. Due to the impromptu nature of teasing that stems from descriptive motivations, it is possible that such teasing takes place in relationships of less intimacy. Assuming this logic, one's desire and ability to achieve interpersonal goals with the target of such teasing may be considerably less than when teasing someone of greater intimacy. Therefore, strategic motivations for teasing should take place more often with individuals of greater intimacy and therefore may be more likely to reflect prosocial rather than antisocial intentions.

Another significant inter-correlation observed also involved a type of teaser motivation for teasing. Self-centered motivations for teasing were positively and significantly related to focusing one's teasing message on the target's participation in organizations, hobbies, etc. (r = .376, p < .000). Self-centered motivations for teasing were identified as the use of teasing to fulfill the teaser's own wants and/or needs. Vangelisti and Young (2000) found that unintentionally hurtful messages that targets perceived to stem from self-centered motivations were considered more hurtful than others. Consequently, self-centered motivations should characterize antisocial teasing more often than prosocial teasing. Assuming this logic, one can interpret the positive correlation between self-centered motivations and a focus on target affiliations in the teasing message as a topic that characterizes antisocial teasing more often than prosocial teasing.

The final significant inter-correlation was observed between teaser stress and the use of positive nonverbal cues while teasing. Significance tests revealed that teaser stress was negatively and significantly related to the use of nonverbal mitigators while teasing (r = -.27, p < .000). Thus, individuals experiencing less stress while teasing employ more positive nonverbal

cues. This is reasonable because individuals should feel the least stress when engaged in successful prosocial teasing, particularly that which is directed at individuals of high interpersonal attraction or intimacy. Indeed, prosocial teasing is intended to be affectionate and playful and therefore, should employ mitigators to ensure that the provocation is correctly perceived by the target.

Although participants were randomly assigned to conditions, it is possible that the conditions were correlated with other variables that may confound my statistical analyses. Therefore, I examined the correlation between the independent variables (teasing type and teasing outcome) and six variables related to the social practice of teasing that of which prior research suggests may confound the analyses. These variables were: when the teasing occurred, teaser verbal aggressiveness, teaser-target interpersonal attraction, the nature of the relationship between the teaser and target, and teaser and target gender. Here, I will briefly overview the rationale for and findings of these correlations.

Research suggests that prosocial teasing occurs more often than antisocial teasing in college and adulthood (Beck et al., 2007). Hence, it is possible for the timeframe of the teasing episode to confound the analyses. Indeed, "when the teasing occurred" was significantly correlated with the type of teasing ($r = -.202$, $p < .008$, two-tailed) where antisocial teasing was dummy coded "0" and prosocial teasing coded "1." Prosocial teasing episodes ($M = 4.52$, $SD = 9.58$) were reported as occurring more recently than antisocial teasing episodes ($M = 9.36$, $SD = 13.77$). Indeed, a t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean time that the prosocial and antisocial teasing episodes reported occurred (mean time in months, $t(149.58) = 2.67$, $p < .008$).

Due to the similarities between antisocial teasing and bullying (Kowalski, 2007), I examined verbal aggressiveness for correlation to teasing type and outcome. Bullying and [antisocial] teasing are behaviors characterized by verbally and/or physically aggressive acts. The identity confrontation and face threat inherent in teasing, particularly in antisocial teasing, benefits from a degree of verbal aggressiveness. Therefore, it was possible that verbal aggressiveness characterized certain types and outcomes of teasing over others. Indeed, verbal aggressiveness was significantly related to teasing type ($r = .163$, $p < .03$, two-tailed) and teasing outcome ($r = .195$, $p < .01$, two-tailed). Here, teasing type and teasing outcome were dummy coded (prosocial = 1 and antisocial = 0; successful = 1 and unsuccessful = 0). The correlations indicate that among the sample, the individuals reporting prosocial teasing episodes ($M = 65.80$, $SD = 12.89$) were slightly more verbally aggressive than those who reported antisocial teasing episodes ($M = 61.61$, $SD = 12.59$). Similarly, the individuals who reported successful teasing episodes ($M = 66.3$, $SD = 12.63$) were higher in verbal aggressiveness than those who reported unsuccessful teasing episodes ($M = 61.28$, $SD = 12.7$).

The interpersonal attraction between the teaser and target reflects a degree of intimacy and liking between them that may vary depending on the type of teasing in which an individual engages. Using teasing to enhance intimacy should be reported by individuals who are interpersonally attracted to their targets while creating relational distance should be reported by individuals not socially attracted to their targets. Interpersonal attraction was significantly related to teasing type ($r = .322$, $p < .001$, two-tailed) indicating that individuals reported higher levels of interpersonal attraction when reporting on prosocial teasing ($M = 27.38$, $SD = 3.60$) than antisocial teasing ($M = 23.65$, $SD = 6.94$).

Just as interpersonal attraction impacts the type of teasing in which an individual is likely to engage a target, so too does the nature of the relationship between the teaser and target. Teasing permeates relational contexts and teaser motivation, behavior, and perceptions may vary depending on the nature of the teaser-target relationship. I examined four relationships within the population sample: peers, family, friends, and romantic others (i.e., romantic partners/romantic potential. The relationships were dummy coded such that family, friends, and peers were compared to romantic relationships. Specifically, this involved creating two dummy codes.

The first was for family, friends, and peers where each was coded "1" for their relationship code and "0" for the other relational contexts. The second code was for romantic partners/potential. For each of the other relationship codes, romantic partners/potential was coded "0." Hence, the three dummy codes were as follows: (1) family = 1, friends = 0, peers = 0, romantic = 0; (2) family = 0, friends = 1, peers = 0, romantic = 0; and (3) family = 0, friends = 0, peers = 1, romantic = 0. Bivariate correlations only revealed a significant relationship between Peers and teasing type (r = -.247, p < .001, two-tailed) indicating that individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing report teasing a peer less often than a romantic partner.

Research indicates that males and females may engage in and respond to teasing differently (e.g., Beck et al., 2007; Keltner et al., 1998; Keltner et al., 2001; Shapiro et al., 1991). Hence, although not hypothesized it was important to note any observed gender differences in teasers and targets across and within teasing types and outcomes. Bivariate correlations only revealed a significant relationship between target sex and teasing type (r = .152, p < .047, two-tailed) which indicated that the targets of prosocial teasing were more often female than male. Although there is no consensus in the literature that females respond more negatively to teasing

than do males, this correlation may reflect that teasers perceive this to be an accurate gender effect.

Due to their correlation with the independent variables, all of the above variables were controlled for in the analyses to test the following hypotheses and research questions.

Research Questions and Hypothesis Testing

This research project obtained both close and open-ended data therefore the hypotheses and research questions posed by this dissertation include both continuous and dichotomous dependent variables. Moderated multiple regression was employed to test hypotheses involving continuous dependent variables (e.g., teaser stress) while logistic multiple regression was employed to test the hypotheses and research questions involving dichotomous dependent variables (e.g., coded open-ended data). In the analyses, I report the unstandardized regression coefficients (*B*) for the observed interactions and their varying forms (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). A summary of results for the hypotheses put forth by this study is provided in Table 8.

In all cases, the dependent variable was predicted from regression analyses involving three steps. On step one, I entered the control variables: when the teasing occurred, teaser verbal aggressiveness, teaser-target interpersonal attraction, teaser sex, target sex, and the nature of the teaser-target relationship. Next on step two, I entered the independent variables: teasing type and teasing outcome. Teasing type was dummy coded as antisocial = 0 and prosocial = 1. Similarly, teasing outcome was dummy coded as unsuccessful = 0 and successful = 1. Finally, on step three I entered the interaction term for teasing type and teasing outcome.

My hypotheses and research questions are focused on the interaction between type of teasing and teasing outcome after controlling for potential biases. Therefore, examinations of the relationship between teasing type and outcome were employed when the variance uniquely accounted for by the interaction term was statistically significant. This was accomplished by recoding the independent variables and running a total of three additional regressions. The first regression involved entering teasing type-recoded (antisocial = 1; prosocial = 0) and outcome-recoded (unsuccessful = 1; successful = 0) on step two and their interaction term on step three. The second regression involved entering teasing type (antisocial = 0; prosocial = 1) and outcome-recoded (unsuccessful = 1; successful = 0) on step two and their interaction term on step three. And the final regression involved entering teasing type-recoded (antisocial = 1; prosocial = 0) and outcome (unsuccessful = 0; successful =1) on step two and their interaction term on step three.

Research Questions

RQ 1: Motivations of Teasing. The first research question examined whether the reasons associated with hurtful messages perceived to be unintentional are reflected in the motivations teasers report for initiating teasing episodes and whether type of teasing and outcome interacted to influence these motivations. The motivations teasers associated with their teasing were coded using a scheme adapted from Vangelisti and Young (2000). A total of seven types of motivations were identified in the responses. To examine whether the motivations associated with teasing messages differed across types of teasing and outcomes, logistic regressions were conducted for each of the seven types of intentionality identified in the data: expressive, strategic, descriptive, supportive, justified, self-centered, and trait-oriented.

Expressive motivations described teasing messages that were enacted because of "a consequence of the [teaser's] emotional or physical state" (Vangelisti & Young, 2000). Such states could be either positive or negative. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 13.68$, $\chi^2_{step} = .392$, Pseudo $R^2 = .077$, B = .836, $p < .535$. Therefore, individuals with the intent of being expressive through their teasing messages did not significantly differ across types of teasing and outcomes.

Strategic motivations for teasing reflected one's use of teasing as a means of achieving interpersonal goals (Vangelisti & Young, 2000). When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 25.59$, $\chi^2_{step} = 5.93$, Pseudo $R^2 = .138$, B = 1.79, $p < .014$. The unstandardized regression coefficient between teasing outcome and strategic motivations for teasing was negative and statistically significant when teasing was antisocial. This indicates that individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing reported strategic intentions less often when successful than when unsuccessful, B = -1.4, $p < .005$. The unstandardized regression coefficient between type of teasing and strategic motivations for teasing was negative although not statistically significant when the teasing was unsuccessful. This indicates that when unsuccessful, there is no difference in the amount of strategic intentions reported in prosocial and antisocial teasing.

Since the two-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome was significant, I examined the remaining combinations of original and recoded variables for type of teasing and outcome. Findings revealed that when successful, strategic intentions are reported less often in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing, B = -1.17, $p < .033$. When prosocial, there was no

difference in the amount of strategic intentions reported in successful and unsuccessful teasing, B = -.398, $p < .448$.

Although not hypothesized, there were main effects observed on step three involving the control variables. Target sex was significantly related to a teaser's use of strategic intentions in teasing, B = .970, $p < .006$. For this variable, males were coded as "0" and females coded as "1." Therefore, the main effect observed indicates that teasers reported strategic intentions for teasing more often with female targets than male targets. This may be due to the gender differences in perceptions and reactions to teasing. Teasing has been shown to evoke less positive responses from females compared to males (e.g., Aronson et al., 2007; Beck et al., 2007; Bollmer et al., 2003; Bond et al., 2002; Keltner et al., 2001; Keltner et al., 1998; Kowalski, 2000). Strategic motivations for teasing more often yield positive (successful prosocial teasing) or neutral outcomes (unsuccessful antisocial teasing) than negative reactions. Furthermore, teasing is often used as a means of flirting (Baxter, 1992; Beck et al., 2007), a strategic means for achieving relational goals expected to yield positive as opposed to negative outcomes. Hence, females may overwhelmingly be the target of teasing whose motivation more often results in prosocial rather than antisocial outcomes. Findings also identified a nearly significant relationship indicating that strategic intentions for teasing are less common when teasing friends compared to romantic others, B = -.824, $p < .053$.

Descriptive motivations for teasing reflected teasing that was "an accurate description of, or honest response to a situation at hand" (Vangelisti & Young, 2000). When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 20.94$, $\chi^2_{step} = 3.25$, Pseudo $R^2 = .115$, B = -1.33, $p < .074$. The

relationship did, however, approach significance. Though not hypothesized, results indicated that descriptive intentions for teasing are more common when teasing peers compared to romantic others, B = 1.17, $p < .029$. Perhaps this finding stems from the decreased relational history and intimacy likely to comprise peer compared to romantic relationships. The absence of greater levels of intimacy and personal relational history with peers compared to romantic is likely to decrease the topics upon which one can draw upon to initiate a teasing episode. Hence, the teasing of peers may rely more upon "in the moment" action(s) than that of romantic others.

Supportive motivations for teasing were the use of teasing as a means of offering support to, or expressing concern for the target (adapted from Vangelisti & Young, 2000). When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 4.6$, $\chi^2_{step} = .528$, Pseudo $R^2 = .026$, B = -1.05, $p < .468$.

Justified motivations for teasing reflected individuals who cited that the target initially provoked the teaser or threw the first punch, so to say. The teasing was merely a reaction, or response, to the target's initial behavior (adapted from Vangelisti & Young, 2000). When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 17.55$, $\chi^2_{step} = .061$, Pseudo $R^2 = .097$, B = -.225, $p < .806$. Although not hypothesized, there was a significant main effect observed. Individuals report justified intentions for teasing more often with family members compared to romantic others, B = 1.30, $p < .025$. This implies that individuals engage in more retaliatory teasing with family members. The use of teasing as a means of retaliation is expected to take place between family members of equal status (siblings, cousins) as opposed to those of unequal status (parent-child), where participants in this study would be in the role of the child. The family members identified

as targets in this study were overwhelmingly reported as being of equal status in this way (96%), among whom 93% were siblings. Indeed, scholars have noted the use of verbal aggression, including teasing, between siblings (e.g., Martin, Anderson, Burant, & Weber, 1997).

Self-centered motivations for teasing describe the use of teasing "as a means of fulfilling one's own wants or needs" (Vangelisti & Young, 2000). When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 17.03$, $\chi^2_{step} = 4.38$, Pseudo $R^2 = .094$, B = 2.7, $p < .043$. The unstandardized regression coefficient between teasing outcome and self-centered motivations for teasing was negative and not significant when teasing was antisocial. This indicates that for individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing there was no difference in the use of self-centered intentions for teasing when successful compared to unsuccessful, B = -.076, $p < .932$. The unstandardized regression coefficient between type of teasing and self-centered intentions for teasing was negative although not statistically significant when the teasing was unsuccessful, B = -.328, $p < .709$. This indicates that when unsuccessful, there is no difference in the amount of self-centered intentions reported in prosocial and antisocial teasing.

Since the two-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome was significant, I examined the remaining combinations of original and recoded variables for type of teasing and outcome. Findings revealed that when successful, self-centered intentions are reported less often in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing, B = -2.363, $p < .012$. When prosocial, self-centered intentions were reported in less often in successful compared to unsuccessful teasing, B = -2.62, $p < .005$.

Trait-oriented motivations for teasing was the use of teasing as a means of commenting upon the target's enduring traits or characteristics (adapted from Vangelisti & Young, 2000). When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 9.03$, $\chi^2_{step} = 1.90$, Pseudo $R^2 = .05$, B = 1.15, $p < .172$.

Among motivations for teasing, type of teasing and outcome interacted to influence the use of strategic and self-centered motivations.

RQ2: Focus of Teasing Content. The second research question examined whether the focus of teasing content messages differed across types of teasing and outcomes. The focus of teasing content messages were coded into categories: physical appearance, behavior, personality, competence, participation, character, and relationships/social interactions. To examine whether the focus of teasing content messages differed across types of teasing and outcomes logistic regressions were conducted for each of the message features.

Physical Appearance. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 11.96$, $\chi^2_{step} = .151$, Pseudo $R^2 = .068$, B = -.305, $p < .697$.

Behavior. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 10.00$, $\chi^2_{step} = 3.46$, Pseudo $R^2 = .057$, B = -1.32, $p < .064$.

Personality. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 9.34$, $\chi^2_{step} = .456$, Pseudo $R^2 = .053$, B = .651, $p < .502$.

Competence. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 10.91$, $\chi^2_{step} = .001$, Pseudo $R^2 = .062$, B = .021, $p < .981$.

Participation (in organizations, activities, hobbies, etc.). When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 6.41$, $\chi^2_{step} = 1.67$, Pseudo $R^2 = .037$, B = 1.80, $p < .219$.

Relationships/social interactions. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 21.12$, $\chi^2_{step} = 5.40$, Pseudo $R^2 = .116$, B = -.761, $p < .462$. Although not hypothesized there were some significant main effects observed. Teaser sex was significantly related to the focus of teasing content messages on a target's relationships/social interactions, B = 1.25, $p < .04$. For the "teaser sex" variable, males were coded as "0" and females coded as "1." Therefore, the main effect observed indicates that female teasers focus their teasing messages on a target's relationships/social interactions more than male teasers. This finding contrasts with previous findings where the perpetrators of teasing messages that focused on a target's relationships were predominantly male (e.g., Kowalski, 2000). Individuals who focus their teasing on relationships/social interactions were found to do so more when teasing friends compared to romantic others, (B = 1.53, $p < .019$).

Type of teasing and outcome did not interact to significantly influence the focus of teasing content. Thus, there is no difference in the focus of teasing content messages across teasing types and outcome.

Hypotheses

My hypotheses predicted interactions between type of teasing and teasing outcome after controlling for potential biases. Therefore, examinations of the influence of the relationship between teasing type and outcome on the dependent variable were employed when the variance uniquely accounted for by the interaction term was statistically significant. The results from the regressions testing these hypotheses can be found in Table 8.

H1 – H3: Mitigators - Positive Nonverbal Cues. The first three hypotheses predicted the influence of types of teasing and outcomes on the use of positive nonverbal cues in teasing messages. *Hypothesis 1* predicted that individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing would use fewer positive nonverbal cues in successful compared to unsuccessful teasing episodes. *Hypothesis 2* predicted that individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will use more positive nonverbal cues in successful compared to unsuccessful teasing episodes. *Hypothesis 3* stated that when successful, individuals will use more positive nonverbal cues in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing. For each of these hypotheses to be confirmed the interaction between type of teasing and teasing outcome had to be significant. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 24.65$, $\chi^2_{step} = 1.2$, Pseudo $R^2 = .135$, B = .823, $p < .274$. Therefore, none of the three hypotheses in this cluster were supported.

Although the interaction term did not account for significant additional variance, the main effect for type of teasing (prosocial = 1, antisocial = 0) was significant on step two, B = 1.15, $p < .003$. This indicates that positive nonverbal cues are employed more in prosocial teasing compared to antisocial teasing. The main effect for when the teasing occurred was also significant on step two, B = -.04, $p < .04$. The negative and significant relationship between when the teasing occurred and positive nonverbal cues indicates that the more recently the teasing episode occurred then the more positive nonverbal cues individuals reported using while teasing. Though not hypothesized there were significant main effects involving control variables that were observed on step three as well. Target sex was significantly related to a teaser's use of positive nonverbal cues while teasing, B = -.866, $p < .017$. For this variable, males were coded as "0" and females coded as "1." Therefore, the main effect observed indicates that teasers reported using positive nonverbal cues more often when the target is male as opposed to female.

H4 – H7: Aggravators - Intense Language. Hypotheses four through six predicted the influence of types of teasing and outcomes on the use of intense language (e.g., profanity, name-calling, put downs) in teasing messages. For each of these hypotheses to be confirmed the interaction between type of teasing and teasing outcome had to be significant. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome accounted for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 10.40$, $\chi^2_{step} = 4.35$, Pseudo $R^2 = .06$, B = -1.63, $p < .04$.

Hypothesis 4. The fourth hypothesis predicted that individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing would report using more intense language when successful than when unsuccessful. I coded unsuccessful as "0" and successful as "1." Although the unstandardized regression

coefficient between teasing outcome and intense language was positive the relationship was not statistically significant, B = .658, $p < .192$. Hence, the fourth hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 5. The fifth hypothesis predicted that when prosocial, individuals will use more intense language when unsuccessful than when successful. I coded successful as "0" and unsuccessful as "1." The relationship between teasing outcome and intense language was positive but not significant, B = .968, $p < .09$, indicating that there is no difference in the use of intense language in successful and unsuccessful teasing. Therefore, the fifthth hypothesis was not confirmed.

Hypothesis 6. The sixth hypothesis predicted that when successful, individuals will use more intense language when engaged in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing. I coded prosocial as "0" and antisocial as "1." The unstandardized regression coefficient between type of teasing and intense language was positive and significant, B = 1.21, $p < .04$, indicating that individuals use more intense language in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing that is successful. Hence, the sixth hypothesis was confirmed.

Hypothesis 7. The seventh hypothesis predicted that when unsuccessful, individuals will use more intense language in prosocial teasing compared to antisocial teasing. I coded antisocial as "0" and prosocial as "1." The unstandardized regression coefficient between type of teasing and intense language was positive though not significant, B = .416, $p < .430$. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis was unsupported.

Although not hypothesized, findings reveal that verbal aggression was positively related to the use of intense language when teasing, B = .037, $p < .022$. Of the hypotheses examining the

influence of type of teasing and outcome on the use of intense language, only Hypothesis 6 was confirmed.

H8 – H11: Positive Target Response. Hypotheses eight through eleven predicted the relationship between types of teasing and outcomes on targets positively responding to teasing. The response, verbal acceptance of teasing, was examined as a positive form of response targets employed in a teasing episode. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome accounted for significant additional variance, ($\chi^2_{model} = 27.53$, $\chi^2_{step} = 14.35$, Pseudo $R^2 = .152$, B = 3.36, $p < .000$).

Hypothesis 8. The eighth hypothesis predicted that individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more constructive target responses when successful than when unsuccessful. I coded successful as "1" and unsuccessful as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between teasing outcome and target constructive response of acceptance was negative and significant, B = 1.26, $p < .041$, indicating that constructive target responses occurred more often in successful compared to unsuccessful prosocial teasing. Hence, the eighth hypothesis was confirmed.

Hypothesis 9. The ninth hypothesis predicted that when antisocial, targets will respond constructively when unsuccessful than when successful. I coded unsuccessful as "1" and successful as "0." For this hypothesis to be confirmed, one would expect the unstandardized regression coefficient between teasing outcome and constructive target response to be positive. Indeed, the relationship was positive and significant, B = 2.14, $p < .003$. Hence, the ninth hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 10. The tenth hypothesis stated that when successful, targets would constructively respond to prosocial teasing more often than antisocial teasing. I coded prosocial teasing as "1" and antisocial teasing as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient between type of teasing and constructive target response was positive and significant, B = 1.92, $p < .01$. Therefore the tenth hypothesis was confirmed.

Hypothesis 11. The eleventh hypothesis stated that when unsuccessful, targets would constructively respond to antisocial teasing more often than prosocial teasing. I coded antisocial as "1" and prosocial as "0." Results revealed a negative and significant relationship, B = 1.45, $p < .014$, indicating that unsuccessful antisocial teasing results in more constructive target responses than unsuccessful prosocial teasing. Hence, the eleventh hypothesis was confirmed.

The hypothesis cluster examining the influence of type of teasing and outcome on targets positively responding to teasing (H8 – H11) was fully supported.

H12 – H15: Negative Target Response. The twelfth through fifteenth hypotheses predicted the relationship between types of teasing and outcomes on targets negatively responding to teasing. Several responses were identified and coded in the data as negative responses targets employ in a teasing episode: expressed lack of appreciation, refutation, retaliation, create physical distance, and the silent treatment. A logistic regression was conducted for each negative response. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome accounted for significant variance for the following negative target responses: expressed lack of appreciation, ($\chi^2_{model} = 38.52$, $\chi^2_{step} = 25.58$, Pseudo $R^2 = .143$, B = -4.89, $p < .000$); refutation, ($\chi^2_{model} = 25.72$, $\chi^2_{step} = 13.55$, Pseudo $R^2 = .206$, B = -4.32, $p < .001$);

and create physical distance, ($\chi^2_{model} = 15.2$, $\chi^2_{step} = 5.77$, Pseudo $R^2 = .116$, B = -2.38, $p < .021$). The interaction term for the silent treatment was not significant, ($\chi^2_{model} = 19.54$, $\chi^2_{step} = 2.96$, Pseudo $R^2 = .110$, B = -2.20, $p < .098$) and therefore Hypotheses 12 – 15 were not confirmed for the use of the silent treatment. I will discuss the results for Hypotheses 12 – 15 for the negative target responses for which the interaction of type of teasing and outcome was confirmed.

Hypothesis 12. The twelfth hypothesis predicted that individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing would report negative target responses more when successful than when unsuccessful. I coded successful as "1" and unsuccessful as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between teasing outcome and negative target response was positive and significant for *lack of appreciation*, B = 2.03, $p < .001$. The relationship was positive although not confirmed for *refutation,* B = .930, $p < .245$, and *create physical distance,* B = .893, $p < .165$. Hence, the twelfth hypothesis was only confirmed for the negative target response of lack of appreciation.

Hypothesis 13. The thirteenth hypothesis predicted that individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing would report negative target responses more when unsuccessful than when successful. I coded unsuccessful as "1" and successful as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between teasing outcome and negative target response was positive and significant for *lack of appreciation*, B = 2.27, $p < .000$, and for *refutation,* B = 3.96, $p < .001$. The relationship was positive although not significant for *create physical distance,* B = 1.49, $p < .055$. Hence, the thirteenth hypothesis was only confirmed for the negative target response of lack of appreciation and refutation.

Hypothesis 14. The fourteenth hypothesis predicted that when unsuccessful, individuals would report more negative target responses when engaged in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing. I coded prosocial as "1" and antisocial as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between type of teasing and negative target response was positive and significant for *lack of appreciation*, B = 2.34, $p < .000$, *refutation,* B = 1.58, $p < .038$ and *create physical distance,* B = 1.85, $p < .006$. Hence, the fourteenth hypothesis was confirmed for the negative target responses of lack of appreciation, refutation, and create physical distance.

Hypothesis 15. The fifteenth hypothesis predicted that when successful, individuals would report more negative target responses when engaged in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing. I coded prosocial as "0" and antisocial as "1." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between type of teasing and negative target response was positive and significant for *lack of appreciation*, B = 1.97, $p < .003$ and *refutation,* B = 3.30, $p < .008$. Although the relationship was positive for *create physical distance* it was not statistically significant, B = .533, $p < .531$. Hence, the fifteenth hypothesis was only confirmed for the negative target responses of lack of appreciation and refutation.

Of the hypotheses forming this cluster, H12 – H15 were unconfirmed for the use of the silent treatment. H12 found support for the target negative response of a lack of appreciation. There was support for H13 and H15 for the responses of a lack of appreciation and refutation. The fourteenth hypothesis was confirmed for lack of appreciation, refutation, and creating physical distance.

Though not hypothesized there were some main effects observed on step three in the analyses testing the relationship between type of teasing and outcomes and negative target responses. Target refutation was significantly related to teaser sex, verbal aggressiveness, and family and friendship relational contexts. I coded male as "0" and female as "1." The positive relationship between teaser sex and the negative target response of refutation, B = 1.91, $p < .014$, indicates that female teasers reported more target refutations in response to their teasing than did males. Findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between verbal aggressiveness and targets responding with refutation, B = .055, $p < .002$. Refutation responses to teasing also seem to characterize certain relationships over others. Results indicated that refutation responses occur less often when teasing family members, B = -1.80, $p < .049$, and friends, B = -1.65, $p < .03$, compared to romantic others. This may be due to social desirability and impression management concerns being more salient in certain relational contexts compared to other. Thus, individuals may place more importance on how they are perceived by intimate partners compared to family and friends.

H16 – H19: Teaser Negative Emotional Response to Target Reaction. Hypotheses sixteen through nineteen predicted the relationship between types of teasing and outcomes on teasers' emotional response to the target's reaction. The data for these hypotheses were open-ended and therefore logistic regression was used to test the hypotheses When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome accounted for significant additional variance, $\chi^2_{model} = 48.83$, $\chi^2_{step} = 21.96$, Pseudo $R^2 = .247$, B = -3.78, $p < .000$.

Hypothesis 16. The sixteenth hypothesis predicted that individuals engaged in antisocial teasing would report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when successful

than when unsuccessful. I coded successful as "1" and unsuccessful as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between teasing outcome and teaser negative feelings was positive and significant, B = 1.28, $p < .023$. This indicates that teasers report more negative feelings when successful in antisocial teasing than when unsuccessful. Hence, the sixteenth hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 17. The seventeenth hypothesis predicted that individuals engaged in prosocial teasing would report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when unsuccessful than when successful. I coded unsuccessful as "1" and successful as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between teasing outcome and teaser negative feelings was positive and significant, B = 2.5, $p < .000$. This indicates that teasers report more negative feelings when unsuccessful in prosocial teasing than when successful. The seventeenth hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 18. The eighteenth hypothesis predicted that when unsuccessful, individuals would report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when engaged in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing. I coded prosocial as "1" and antisocial as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between type of teasing and teaser negative feelings was positive and significant, B = 2.65, $p < .000$. This indicates that teasers report more negative feelings when unsuccessful in prosocial teasing than when successful. Hence, the eighteenth hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 19. The nineteenth hypothesis predicted that when successful, individuals would report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when engaged in antisocial

compared to prosocial teasing. I coded antisocial as "1" and prosocial as "0." The unstandardized regression coefficient for the relationship between type of teasing and teaser negative feelings was positive but not significant, B = 1.13, $p < .068$. This indicates that there is no difference in the extent of negative affect teasers experience in response to targets' reactions to their successful teasing, be it prosocial or antisocial. Therefore, the nineteenth hypothesis was not supported.

The hypotheses examining the influence of type of teasing and outcome on teasers experiencing negative emotional responses to a target's reaction were confirmed for H16 – H18.

H20 – H23: Teaser Stress. Hypotheses twenty through twenty-three predicted the relationship between types of teasing and outcomes on the stress and anxiety teasers experience while engaging in teasing. These hypotheses were tested using moderated regression because the dependent variable is continuous. When entered on the third step, the 2-way interaction between type of teasing and outcome did not account for significant additional variance, $R^2 \Delta = .017$, $F \Delta (1, 153) = 3.31$, $p = .71$; $R^2 = .19$, $F (11, 153) = 3.45$, $p < .000$. Therefore, hypotheses twenty through twenty-three were not supported. *Hypothesis 20* predicted that individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing would report feeling more stress when successful than when unsuccessful. *Hypothesis 21* predicted that individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing would report feeling more stress when unsuccessful than when successful. *Hypothesis 22* predicted that when successful, individuals would report feeling more stress when engaged in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing. *Hypothesis 23* predicted that when unsuccessful, individuals would report feeling more stress when engaged in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing. Although the hypotheses were unsupported due to the absence of the interaction term accounting for

significant additional variance, the main effects for type of teasing and outcome were significant on step two. On step two, type of teasing was negatively and significantly related to teaser stress (B = -7.86, $p < .03$). I coded antisocial teasing as "0" and prosocial teasing as "1." This indicates that individuals reported more stress when engaged in antisocial teasing compared to prosocial teasing. The main effect for teasing outcome was negatively and significantly related to teaser stress (B = -7.46, $p < .027$). As coded for the analyses, unsuccessful = 0 and successful = 1. This relationship indicates that teasers reported more stress when engaged in teasing that was unsuccessful than that which was successful.

In addition to these main effects, there were others observed among the control variables on step three. Interpersonal attraction was negatively and significantly related to teaser stress while teasing, $R^2 = .199$, B = -.673, $p < .045$. This indicates that individuals experience less stress the more socially attractive they perceive their targets. Individuals were also shown to experience less stress when teasing friends compared to romantic others, $R^2 = .199$, B = -10.35, $p < .013$.

Chapter 5 will provide a summary of these results in addition to a discussion of the implications, limitations, and future directions of this research.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter provides an in depth discussion of the results of this research study. First, I will summarize the results of this study. Next, I will examine the implications of and limitations to this research and conclude by presenting future research directions arising from the results of this study.

The goal of the present study was to examine if and how type of teasing and outcome interact to influence factors central to the social practice of teasing. Specifically, these factors concerned teaser perceptions of the motivations for, constructions of, and reactions to antisocial and prosocial teasing. Motivations for teasing (RQ1) were examined using a category scheme originally developed to assess the reasons targets associated with hurtful messages they perceived to be unintentional (see Vangelisti & Young, 2000). It was thought that the neutrality in these codes would account for the paradoxical nature inherent to teasing in that it can produce both positive and negative outcomes. The objective was to investigate the extent to which the perceived motivations for hurtful messages are reflected in the motivations that individuals have for teasing and whether type of teasing and outcome interacted to predict teaser motivations for teasing. Indeed, the use of hurtful communication research to examine the motivations individuals reported for teasing provides a unique contribution to the literature. Findings indicated that motivations associated with unintentional hurtful messages do reflect motivations associated with deliberate teasing messages. However, the interaction of teasing type and outcome was not significantly related to the following motivations for teasing: expressive,

descriptive, supportive, justified, and trait-oriented. Type of teasing and outcome only interacted to significantly influence the use of strategic and self-centered motivations for teasing.

To this end, the addition of neutral motivations for teasing to account for the paradoxical nature of teasing revealed that strategic and self-centered motivations for teasing characterized one teasing type over another. Specifically, strategic motivations were found more often in prosocial teasing while self-centered motivations were prevalent in antisocial motivations. Considering that these motivations were previously identified as representing less hurtful and more hurtful messages, respectively (Vangelisti & Young, 2000), identifies a unique relationship between hurtful communication and teasing research. Due to the importance of perception in teasing episodes and outcomes, it would be beneficial to examine target perceptions of motivations for teasing using this scheme. Indeed, teasers and targets often disagree in their perceptions of teasing intentions (Kowalski, 2000; 2003; 2007; Kowalski et al., 2001; Kruger et al., 2006).

The argument behind the framework employed to examine the construction of teasing messages was that teasers deliberately engage in behavioral modifications that are thought to enhance the probability of their teasing success. The behavioral modifications examined included the focus of teasing content, the mitigating behavior of positive nonverbal cues, and the aggravating behavior of intense language. I examined whether some topics of teasing messages were more face-threatening than others and consequently, more characteristic of one teasing type over another (RQ2). Type of teasing and outcome did not interact to uniquely influence the focus of teasing content on a target's physical appearance, behavior, personality, competence, participation, and relationships/social interactions. To successfully engage in prosocial teasing, it

was believed that individuals would include more mitigators (H1 – H3), while those who were antisocially motivated would include more aggravators (H4 – H7). In the absence of these behavioral modifications, my argument proceeds, such teasing attempts are unsuccessful as they resemble their successful counterparts. That is, prosocial teases that were unsuccessful were expected to contain fewer mitigators and more aggravators while the opposite was expected to be observed in the use of mitigators and aggravators in antisocial teasing that was unsuccessful. Hence, the confirmation of my hypotheses would conclude that teasers intentionally structure their teasing so as to achieve the intended prosocial or antisocial outcome and their failure in doing so stems, in part, to the misappropriation of the necessary behavioral modifications. Results, however, did not provide such confirmation.

In general, findings indicate that the successes and failures of teasing attempts do not result from a misappropriation of behavioral modifications by the teaser. This conclusion stems from the absence of a significant difference in the focus of teasing content, and use of nonverbal mitigators and verbal aggravators across types of teasing and outcomes in all but one teasing condition where the use of aggravators in successful antisocial teasing was greater than that in prosocial teasing (H6). In regard to positive nonverbal cues, it is possible that when teasers exhibit these cues during prosocial teasing they do so because they are enjoying the exchange and want to assure the target that the provocation stems from affectionate intentions. Conversely, the positive nonverbal cues exhibited by individuals engaged in antisocial teasing may reflect their enjoyment of the hostile exchange rather than a shared enjoyment between them and the target. Hence, although there was no significant difference in the use of positive nonverbal cues

in both types of teasing, their enactment may stem from uniquely different motivations where one reflects the emotional state of the teaser and the other, that of both the teaser and target.

The finding that type of teasing and outcome rarely interact to influence the construction of teasing messages indicates that the success and failure of teasing attempts are determined by factors other than the target's perceptions of the teaser's communicative delivery. Rather, target responses to teasing may be overwhelmingly influenced by factors such as individual difference characteristics and the nature of their relationship to the teaser and relational history. Indeed, previous scholars have examined these and other influences on teasing effectiveness (e.g., Alberts et al., 1996; Bollmer et al., 2003; Jones et al., 2005; Kowalski, 2004). Assuming that teasers do not employ behavioral modifications (focus of teasing content, nonverbal mitigators, and verbal aggravators) to uniquely signal their prosocial or antisocial intentions, one could conclude that targets of teasing rely upon factors other than such behavioral modifications to determine teasing intent out of necessity rather than preference.

The third element examined in this study was reactions to teasing. The reactions examined reflected the interpersonal reactions of the target and the intrapersonal reactions of the teaser. In their most basic forms, the investigations of the influence of type of teasing and outcome on targets responding positively and negatively to teasing are manipulation checks. Indeed, targets should respond more positively to the teasing expected to convey the least hostility (successful prosocial and unsuccessful antisocial teasing) (H8 – H11). Similarly, they should employ more negative responses to teasing perceived as hostile (successful antisocial and unsuccessful prosocial teasing) (H12 – H15). In an effort to further refine understanding of reactions to teasing this study examined four specific negative responses to teasing that varied in

their directness. Consequently, insight was gained regarding if and how type of teasing and outcome interact to predict how directly targets negatively respond to teasing.

The four negative target responses to teasing examined were refutation, an expressed lack of appreciation, the silent treatment, and creating physical distance. In few instances, there was a significant difference observed in targets employing direct and confrontational methods (refutation and an expressed lack of concern) to communicate their satisfaction across types of teasing and outcomes. Conversely, such differences were rarely observed for the more indirect and passive methods examined (the silent treatment and creating physical distance). Direct and confrontational methods of communicating dissatisfaction require energy and often result from anger (Bettencourt, Talley, Benjamin, & Valentine, 2006). Hence, factors influencing negative responses to teasing may be further influenced by the emotional response(s) provoked by the teasing. To establish evidence of this link, researchers should examine the relationship between how targets behaviorally respond to teasing perceived as antisocial and the extent to which they report feelings of anger in response to the provocation. These responses should be compared to others motivated by additional negative feelings often attributed to teasing such as hurt feelings, embarrassment, social rejection, and shame. If indeed, different emotional responses to teasing (e.g., anger, hurt feelings, embarrassment) predict the same negative behavioral responses to teasing perceived as hostile then teasers may be inaccurately assessing the success and failure of their teasing attempts.

In addition to target reactions to teasing, teaser reactions to teasing were also examined. First, this involved an investigation into the influence of type of teasing and outcome on teasers experiencing negative emotional responses to a target's reaction to their teasing (H16 –H19).

Secondly, due to the risk inherent to teasing, teasers were predicted to experience stress while engaged in teasing (H20 – H23). This was especially expected for teasing attempts most likely to result in negative outcomes whether they be intentional (i.e., successful antisocial teasing) or unintentional (i.e., unsuccessful prosocial teasing). Type of teasing and outcome do not interact to predict the anxiety that teasers experience while engaged in teasing. Therefore, the anxiety that exists in teasing is not enhanced by the type of outcome.

Limitations

Despite the findings of this study, there are some limitations that should be noted. Standards for interpreting the magnitude for effect statistics categorize the effect size of correlations ranging from .1 to .3 as small (Cohen, 1988). The magnitude of the significant effects observed in this study had absolute values ranging from .2 to .3. Hence, the effect sizes for the relationships observed in this study were relatively small and accounted for less than 3% of the variance between the respective variables. Also, a significant number of statistical tests were conducted to test the hypotheses and address the research questions put forth in this study. This inherently caused an inflation of the cumulative Type I error rate which results in an increased likelihood that significant relationships would be observed. Thus, the findings of this study may have resulted from experiment wise error rates. However, one must keep in mind that the majority of the hypotheses posited in this dissertation were unsupported. There was also significant variance in the frequency of some of the codes analyzed in this study. Specifically, the codes for expressive and supportive motivations for teasing as well as focusing a teasing message on a target's participation were quite infrequent. The proportion of responses for which they accounted was less than 10 percent.

Limitations can also be observed in the design of this study. Self-report measures were used to examine successful and unsuccessful prosocial and antisocial teasing episodes. Self-reported data is susceptible to bias. Individual responses may have suffered from recollection and social desirability biases. Due to challenges to memory, responses likely have inaccuracies to the actual events that took place during the teasing episode. Also, respondents had to recall the verbal and nonverbal behaviors exhibited by themselves and the targets. It is expected that the reports of these communication behaviors may have inaccuracies.

Impression management and social desirability concerns may have also confounded individual responses in this study. Unlike prosocial teasing, antisocial teasing has negative connotations and therefore individuals may have been less likely to fully divulge the details of these teasing episodes. Fortunately, the method for obtaining the data for individual uses of aggravators (intense language) did not contribute to such social desirability bias. Respondents were not explicitly asked to state what forms of intense language they included in their teasing. Rather, their entire responses in which they detailed what they said during the teasing were coded for intense language. Hence, respondents were not aware of my focus on verbal aggravators when completing the questionnaire.

Although the present study examined mitigators and aggravators, it only examined *nonverbal* mitigators (i.e., positive nonverbal cues) and *verbal* aggravators (i.e., intense language). Consequently, the findings of this study cannot account for the influence of type of teasing and outcome on the use of verbal mitigators and nonverbal aggravators. Hence, it is possible that type of teasing and outcome interact to predict the use of verbal mitigators and nonverbal aggravators. This weakness, in conjunction with the self-report method of

measurement, limits the extent and accuracy of the verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors examined in this study. To account for these shortcomings, a combination of self-report and behavioral observations should be employed in future teasing research. Such an approach would allow for dyadic investigations of teasing involving both teasers and targets, opposed to only teasers. However, one challenge to this approach is that manipulating teasing outcomes would require targets to serve as confederates, consequently preventing an investigation of the effects of teasing type and outcome on both teaser and target.

One of the contributions of this study is that it examines types of teasing across outcomes. Respondents were randomly assigned to report upon a prosocial or antisocial teasing episode that was either successful or unsuccessful. Unfortunately, this design only lends itself to between-subject examinations of types of teasing and outcomes. The design would be strengthened if each participant were randomly assigned to report a successful *and* unsuccessful prosocial or antisocial teasing attempt. This would allow for a within-subject comparison of the influence of types of teasing and outcomes on how teasers construct and reaction to teasing episodes. Such an examination would enhance insight into individual differences in teasing and may either identify more significant differences in types of teasing and outcomes than were identified in this study or strengthen support for the cases in which there were no significant differences observed.

In noting the limitations of this study, one must not overlook the fact that teasing research suffers from unique challenges. As discussed in Chapter 2, there are numerous definitions of teasing. This, in conjunction with the "eye of the beholder" subjectivity in teasing (Kowalski, 2007), may confound teasing research. The ability to better operationally establish teasing is vital

to the continued advancement of teasing research, particularly that which, like this study seeks to develop a framework for differentiating the characteristics of teasing types and outcomes.

Last, but certainly not least, limitations in this study can be linked to the population sample surveyed. This study gathered data from a sample of undergraduate students. While this sample is not considered to reflect adolescent or childhood teasing practices, these findings may not generalize to typical adult populations due to the narrow 18-23 age-range of the population. The present research is the author's first step in an effort to refine understanding of adulthood teasing and hence, a wider range of adults should be examined. Furthermore, the sample is overwhelmingly Caucasian and less likely to reflect the teasing behavior exhibited by individuals of different cultures, races, and/or ethnicities as a result. Part of the richness in the social practice of teasing exists in how its use differs across cultures. Therefore, the influence of types of teasing and outcomes may differ across cultural contexts as well.

Future Research Directions

Despite the limitations of this study, the findings do identify areas worthy of future research. The unique framework of examining the influence of types of teasing and outcomes on the characterization of teasing episodes should be replicated with a sample including both teasers and targets and using a methodology that incorporates self-report and behavioral observations. This design would allow further insight into the "eye of the beholder" elements that have previously limited teasing research and also supply a foundation upon which a model of teasing can be developed that accounts for the influence of role (teaser or target) on factors characterizing types of teasing and outcomes.

Examining the intrapersonal and interpersonal factors of teasing from the perspective of the teaser was of particular interest to this study. While much research has and continues to explore the experiences of targets of teasing, there is much more to learn about their perpetrators, particularly those who initiate teasing in adulthood. Future research should actively pursue the task of creating a profile that characterizes adult teasers. What are the characteristics and motivations of chronic teasers versus those of communicatively competent teasers in adulthood? How do power and relational and situational contexts influence the teasing types and outcomes of adult teasers? How do teasing motivations and constructions among adults change across relational and situational contexts? Refining our understanding of these and other elements of adulthood teasing in this way would further enhance frameworks for predicting the social practice of teasing across types and outcomes among adults.

In addition to profiling the characteristics of young adult teasers and multi-aged target reactions to teasing, the results of this study encourage the continuation of research on manifestations of antisocial and prosocial teasing. Present findings regarding the focus of teasing content, nonverbal mitigators, and verbal aggravators indicate that there are not many significant differences between the construction of teasing types and outcomes among college men and women. This may imply that the communicative forms of antisocial and prosocial teasing among adults are in fact more similar in form than they are different. It is possible that this might reflect a deliberate effort on the part of the teaser to be ambiguous and create uncertainty for the target. Part of the enjoyment that comes from initiating teasing may lie in creating such ambiguity for the target to reconcile in order to determine the intent of the tease.

Assuming that the types of teasing are blending, it is unclear whether prosocial teasing is taking on attributes that traditionally characterize antisocial teasing or whether the reverse is true. However, if antisocial and prosocial teasing forms are indeed blending in latter stages of development (beginning in early adulthood) then correctly identifying their manifestations may become increasingly more difficult for targets and researchers. In the absence of distinguishable verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors characterizing each type of teasing, what factors do we use to determine whether a tease is prosocial or antisocial? This question is two-fold. First, there is the focus on the target interpretation of teasing which is a central factor in determining the success or failure of a provocation. As previously mentioned, targets likely employ relational history, personality effects, and other individual differences to deduce teaser intent.

Second, there is the focus on a teaser's goals when teasing and the communicative elements he or she employs to enhance the potential for success. Although the findings from this study do not reveal relevant modifications in teasing focus, nonverbal mitigators, or verbal aggravators the usefulness of hurtful communication research in examining teaser motivations may provide additional insight. The neutrality in the motivations adapted from Vangelisti and Young (2000) may, in contrast to mitigators and aggravators, be better suited for accounting for the paradoxical nature in teasing. They do not lend themselves to either type of teasing and therefore warrant modification of some sort in order to enhance success potential. Therefore, further investigation into the role of these motivations on the construction, both cognitive and behavioral, as well as reactions to teasing would prove beneficial in sorting out complexities in teasing.

Although this study provides insights into the social practice of teasing, it equally identifies areas that warrant further investigation. Most notably, in the absence of significant distinguishable characteristics between the types of teasing this study indicates that there need to be efforts to identify the defining characteristics of prosocial and antisocial teasing in adulthood and potentially, a reconceptualization of what constitutes teasing among adults.

Table 1
Teaser-Target Information by Manipulation

	PROSOCIAL TEASING		
	Successful	Unsuccessful	Total
	N = 43	*N* = 44	*N* = 87
Teaser sex			
Male	30.2% (*N* = 13)	40.9% (*N* = 18)	35.6% (*N* = 31)
Female	69.8% (*N* = 30)	59.1% (*N* = 26)	64.4% (*N* = 56)
Target sex			
Male	55.8% (*N* = 24)	34.1% (*N* = 15)	44.8% (*N* = 39)
Female	44.2% (*N* = 19)	65.9% (*N* = 29)	55.2% (*N* = 48)
Teaser-Target sex			
Male same-sex	9.3% (*N* = 4)	9.1% (*N* = 4)	9.2% (*N* = 8)
Female same-sex	23.3% (*N* = 10)	34.1% (*N* = 15)	28.7% (*N* = 25)
Male cross-sex	20.9% (*N* = 9)	31.8% (*N* = 14)	26.4% (*N* = 23)
Female cross-sex	46.5% (*N* = 20)	25% (*N* = 11)	35.6% (*N* = 31)
Teaser-Target Relationship			
Peers	7% (*N* = 3)	15.9% (*N* = 7)	11.5% (*N* = 10)
Friends	39.5% (*N* = 17)	34.1% (*N* = 15)	36.8% (*N* = 32)
Family	7% (*N* = 3)	20.5% (*N* = 9)	13.8% (*N* = 12)
Romantic	46.5% (*N* = 20)	29.5% (*N* = 13)	37.9% (*N* = 33)

Table 1 continued
Teaser-Target Information by Manipulation

	ANTISOCIAL TEASING		
	Successful	Unsuccessful	Total
	N = 41	*N* = 44	*N* = 85
Teaser sex			
Male	36.6% (*N* = 15)	36.4% (*N* = 16)	36.5% (*N* = 31)
Female	63.4% (*N* = 26)	63.6% (*N* = 28)	64.5% (*N* = 54)
Target sex			
Male	53.7% (*N* = 22)	65.9% (*N* = 29)	60% (*N* = 51)
Female	46.3% (*N* = 19)	34.1% (*N* = 15)	40% (*N* = 34)
Teaser-Target sex			
Male same-sex	24.4% (*N* = 10)	27.3% (*N* = 12)	25.9% (*N* = 22)
Female same-sex	34.1% (*N* = 14)	25% (*N* = 11)	29.4% (*N* = 25)
Male cross-sex	12.2% (*N* = 5)	9.1% (*N* = 4)	10.6% (*N* = 9)
Female cross-sex	29.3% (*N* = 12)	38.6% (*N* = 17)	34.1% (*N* = 29)
Teaser-Target Relationship			
Peers	31.7% (*N* = 13)	31.8% (*N* = 14)	31.8% (*N* = 27)
Friends	29.3% (*N* = 12)	29.5% (*N* = 13)	29.4% (*N* = 25)
Family	22% (*N* = 9)	11.4% (*N* = 5)	16.5% (*N* = 14)
Romantic	17.1% (*N* = 7)	27.3% (*N* = 12)	22.4% (*N* = 19)

Table 2
Motivations Associated with Teasing Messages[1]

Codes	Definition	Exemplar	Cohen's *kappa*	Proportion
Expressive	The teasing was motivated by the teaser's emotional or physical state.	"..to show how much I cared." "I was pissed off." "I was tired and stressed."	.93	.08
Strategic	The teasing was a way to to achieve a goal(s)	"It was an easy way to start a conversation." I was hoping to encourage her to reciprocate in the gift giving." "..to get a laugh	.88	.58
Descriptive	The teasing was an accurate description or honest response to the situation at hand	"It was a comical observation I made while looking at the pictures."	.79	.58
Supportive	The teasing was an effort to express concern or provide help.	"I was concerned that she could be endangering herself and wanted to bring her promiscuity to her attention.	.86	.06
Justified	The teasing was in provoked by the target's treatment of the teaser.	"He teased me first." "She said a swear word to me first so I thought I would return the favor."	.86	.21
Self-Centered	The teasing was a means to fulfill the teaser's own wants or needs.	"I wanted his/her attention." "I wanted to hook up that night."	.74	.12
Trait-Oriented	The teasing was used to remark on the target's enduring traits	"He's always so forgetful." "I think her love-handles are cute." "He's too cocky." She's just sooo rude."	.88	.22

[1] Adapted from Vangelisti and Young (2000)

Table 3
Focus of Teasing Message Content

Codes	Definition	Exemplar	Cohen's *kappa*	Proportion
Physical Appearance	Statements that reference the physical/external characteristics of the target including body type, dress, skin color, hair style, etc.	"I made fun of her for being short." "I called the target heavy-weight and told him he should lose weight."	.94	.29
Behavior	Statements that reference the mannerisms of the target, such as his or her walk, manner of speaking, sexual activity, substance use, and hygiene, dietary, and study habits.	"I told her that she doesn't know how to keep herself together when she's drinking." "I sarcastically commented on her 'clean room.'"	.84	.39
Personality	Statements that reference a target's personality traits such as his or her sensitivity, negative attitude, sense of humor, and arrogance.	"I made fun of her for being prude" "He has a tendency to be very flirtatious so I referenced that trait."	.78	.16
Competence	Statements that reference a target's intellectual. athletic social, and/or sexual performance and/or abilities	"I called him a loser because I beat him in basketball." "We joked about how she she plays lacrosse even though she's really good."	.86	.22
Participation	Statements that reference the organizations, hobbies, etc. in which the target participated	"I teased him about being a tennis player." "I teased her about being in a stupid sorority."	.78	.08
Relationships	Statements that reference the quality or characteristics of the target's relationships or social interactions.	"You're so whipped by your girlfriend." "	.83	.16

Table 4
Teaser Verbal and Nonverbal Cues

Codes*	Definition	Exemplar	Cohen's *kappa*	Proportion
Mitigators – Teaser Positive Nonverbal Cues				.43
Smile	Smiling during tease	"I was smiling"	1.00	.29
Laughter	Laughing during tease	"I laughed to show I was kidding."	1.00	.24
Aggravators				
Intense Language	Use of profanity, name-calling, and/or put downs during teasing		.86	.27

* The above codes for Smile and Laughter were combined to comprise the code, Teaser Positive Nonverbal Cues.

Table 5
Target Response to Teasing

Codes	Definition	Exemplar	Cohen's *kappa*	Proportion
Positive Target Response				
Acceptance	Verbal statements that confirm truth or validity in the tease. Also statements that show appreciation for the tease.	"He told me thanks and expressed gratitude for my my sincere interest in his well-being (weight)." "He agreed." "She said she was sorry that I felt that way (that she didn't reciprocate my my gift giving) and she would try to do better."	.76	.25
Negative Target Response				
Lack of Appreciation	Verbal statements that communicate a lack of appreciation for the tease.	"Why would you say that?" "That's not nice" "Shut up!"	.82	.29
Refutation	Statements that express disagreement or refute the truth in a teasing message.	"That's not true!" I don't have a crush on him."	.86	.11
Create Physical Distance	The target leaves the teaser, turns his/her back on the teaser, etc.	"He walked away." "She left." "She rolled over in bed so she wasn't facing me."	.92	.28
Silent Treatment	The target stopped talking to the teaser, refused to talk to the teaser, or became really quiet.	"She ignored me." "He stopped talking ."	.88	.13

Table 6
Teaser Negative Emotional Response to Target Reaction

Codes	Definition	Exemplar	Cohen's *kappa*	Proportion
Teaser Negative Emotional Response to Target Reaction	The teaser felt badly and/or guilty about target's reaction to the teasing	"I felt bad because she was upset." "I felt like an insensitive jerk."	.94	.35

Table 7
Correlation Matrix of Independent, Dependent, and Control Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Teasing Type	-	.012	-.202**	.322**	.163*	.009	.152*	-.037	.078	-.247*	.017	.128	-.002	-.027	-.006	.141
2. Teasing Outcome		-	-.038	.028	.195*	.055	-.048	-.023	.029	-.059	.110	-.114	-.220**	-.018	-.102	.154
3. When Occur			-	-.337**	.039	-.142	-.022	-.041	-.068	.252**	.003	-.097	.127	-.071	-.142	.043
4. Interpersonal Attraction				-	-.072	.155*	.149	.068	.095	-.337**	-.004	.148	-.025	.037	.076	.054
5. Teaser Verbal Aggressiveness					-	-.275**	-.057	-.116	-.008	-.012	.085	.034	-.070	-.035	-.131	.034
6. Teaser Sex						-	-.059	.114	.040	-.078	.017	.026	-.015	-.002	-.030	-.068
7. Target Sex							-	.020	.045	.039	-.006	.196*	.067	-.059	-.033	.053
8. Family								-	-.297**	-.221**	.100	-.070	-.009	-.044	.222**	-.052
9. Friends									-	-.369**	-.043	-.104	-.012	.068	-.028	-.024
10. Peers										-	-.162*	.014	.180*	-.079	-.095	-.057
11. Expressive Motivations											-	-.114	-.118	.088	-.007	.016
12. Strategic Motivations												-	-.305**	-.115	-.230**	.198**
13. Descriptive Motivations													-	.123	.054	-.138
14. Supportive Motivations														-	-.076	-.095
15. Justified Motivations															-	-.097
16. Self-Centered Motivations																-

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$. For Tease Type: 0 = Antisocial, 1 = Prosocial; For Tease Outcome: 0 = Unsuccessful, 1 = Successful; For Teaser/Target Sex: 0 = Male, 1 = Female; For Family: 0 = Romantic Others, 1 = Family; For Friends: 0 = Romantic Others, 1 = Friend; For Peers: 0 = Romantic Others, 1 = Peers

Table 7 continued
Correlation Matrix of Independent, Dependent, and Control Variables

Variable	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
17. Trait-Oriented Motivations	-	.058	.061	.220**	-.110	.164*	-.116	-.077	-.007	.131	.012	-.100	-.097	-.037	-.037	.065
18. Physical Appearance		-	-.253**	-.180*	-.213**	-.137	-.173*	.059	.161*	-.003	.141	-.150	.256**	-.044	.120	-.169*
19. Behavior			-	.098	.015	.043	-.052	-.082	.080	-.202**	-.022	.254**	-.092	-.027	-.063	.088
20. Personality				-	-.079	.171*	-.062	.005	.124	.115	-.145	.091	-.125	-.046	-.094	.103
21. Competence					-	-.098	-.033	.010	.001	.096	-.022	-.056	.125	-.038	.120	.063
22. Participation						-	-.125	.021	-.125	.040	-.035	-.035	-.063	.049	-.070	-.018
23. Relationships							-	-.014	-.190*	.099	-.092	.105	-.125	-.036	.085	-.028
24. Positive Nonverbal Cues (Mitigaors)								-	.094	.017	.002	.075	-.224*	-.009	-.085	-.270**
25. Intense Language (Aggravators)									-	-.161*	.059	.249**	.115	.107	-.059	-.067
26. Positive Target Response										-	-.301*	-.204**	-.188*	-.146	-.072	-.235**
27. Refutation											-	.064	.174	-.214**	.250**	.154
28. Expressed Lack of Appreciation												-	-.118	-.121	-.107	.108
29. Create Physical Distance													-	.185*	.255**	.143
30. Silent Treatment														-	.083	.082
31. Teaser Negative Emotional Response to Target Reaction															-	.117
32. Teaser Stress																-

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 7
Correlation Matrix of Independent, Dependent, and Control Variables

Variable	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
1. Teasing Type	-.062	.176*	.055	-.097	.011	.022	.046	.238**	-.056	.066	.076	.017	.118	-.022	.187*	-.222**
2. Outcome	.012	-.118	.002	-.024	.165*	.070	-.073	.034	.011	-.010	-.049	-.130	-.067	.022	-.154*	-.183*
3. When Occurred	-.026	-.041	.115	-.098	.051	.047	-.093	-.205**	-.024	-.073	.059	-.087	.095	.257**	.028	.169*
4. Interpersonal Attraction	.004	.060	.025	-.021	.034	.068	.028	.073	-.029	.134	.064	.059	-.064	-.094	.114	-.238**
5. Teaser Verbal Aggressiveness	.075	.023	.019	.049	.082	-.028	-.182*	-.014	.118	.126	-.008	.022	.010	-.048	-.161*	.004
6. Teaser Sex	.050	-.112	.048	.099	-.083	.031	.189*	-.015	.011	.035	-.142	.119	-.172	.013	.067	-.104
7. Target Sex	.025	.008	.102	-.072	-.015	-.050	.007	-.150	-.047	-.004	.095	.005	-.041	-.077	.132	.023
8. Family	-.068	-.057	-.040	-.011	.094	.006	-.049	-.033	-.037	-.130	.129	-.050	.038	-.035	.202**	.158*
9. Friends	-.047	.064	.017	.022	-.040	.077	.204	.032	-.037	.157*	-.141	-.078	-.064	-.055	.055	-.235**
10. Peers	.130	-.088	.044	-.041	.034	-.044	-.033	-.106	.098	-.036	.012	-.010	.042	.202**	-.086	.089
11. Expressive	-.016	.073	.005	.142	-.012	-.090	-.078	-.015	.045	.015	.032	.085	.036	-.036	-.053	.155*
12. Strategic	.026	.046	-.004	-.044	-.076	.064	.007	.050	-.078	.125	.011	.079	-.133	-.191*	-.022	-.019
13. Descriptive	.048	.020	.044	.084	.010	.064	.007	.026	.136	.027	.076	-.121	-.011	.122	-.080	-.025
14. Supportive	.090	.093	-.015	.077	-.022	-.076	.017	-.080	.002	.129	-.115	-.095	.036	-.089	-.042	.126
15. Justified	-.067	.015	-.032	.082	.007	-.041	.012	-.007	.043	-.130	-.011	-.050	.036	.112	.043	.077
16. Self-Centered	-.106	-.074	.118	-.014	.030	.376**	-.108	-.054	-.139	.090	-.071	-.016	.007	-.002	-.075	.033

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001. For Tease Type: 0 = Antisocial, 1 = Prosocial; For Tease Outcome: 0 = Unsuccessful, 1 = Successful; For Teaser/Target Sex: 0 = Male, 1 = Female; For Family: 0 = Romantic Others, 1 = Family; For Friends: 0 = Romantic Others, 1 = Friend; For Peers: 0 = Romantic Others, 1 = Peers

Table 8
Summary of Results

Hypothesis	Supported
Mitigators – Positive Nonverbal Cues	
1. Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will use fewer positive nonverbal cues when successful compared to unsuccessful.	No
2. Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will use more positive nonverbal cues in successful compared to unsuccessful teasing.	No
3. When successful, individuals will use more positive nonverbal cues in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.	No
Aggravators – Intense Language	
4. Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will use more intense language when successful than when unsuccessful.	No
5. Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will use more intense language when unsuccessful than when successful.	No
6. When successful, individuals will use more intense language in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing.	Yes
7. When unsuccessful, individuals will use more intense language in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.	No
Positive Target Response	
8. Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more positive target responses when successful than when unsuccessful.	Yes
9. Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will report more positive target responses when unsuccessful than when successful.	Yes
10. When successful, individuals will report more positive target responses to prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.	Yes
11. When unsuccessful, individuals will report more positive target responses to prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.	Yes
Negative Target Response	
12. Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will report more negative target responses when successful than when unsuccessful.	
Lack of Appreciation	Yes
Refutation	No
Create Physical Distance	No
Silent Treatment	No
13. Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more negative target responses when unsuccessful compared to successful.	
Lack of Appreciation	Yes
Refutation	Yes
Create Physical Distance	No
Silent Treatment	No

Table 8 continued
Summary of Results

14. When unsuccessful, individuals will report more negative target responses to prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.	
Lack of Appreciation	Yes
Refutation	Yes
Create Physical Distance	Yes
Silent Treatment	No
15. When successful, individuals will report more negative target responses to antisocial compared to prosocial teasing.	
Lack of Appreciation	Yes
Refutation	Yes
Create Physical Distance	No
Silent Treatment	No
Teaser Negative Emotional Response to Target Reaction	
16. Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when successful than when unsuccessful.	Yes
17. Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when unsuccessful than when successful.	Yes
18. When unsuccessful, individuals will report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when engaged in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.	Yes
19. When successful, individuals will report more negative feelings in response to a target's reaction when engaged in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing.	No
Teaser Stress	
20. Individuals who engaged in antisocial teasing will report more stress when successful than when unsuccessful.	No
21. Individuals who engaged in prosocial teasing will report more stress when unsuccessful than when successful.	No
22. When successful, individuals will report more stress when engaged in antisocial compared to prosocial teasing.	No
23. When unsuccessful, individual will report more stress when engaged in prosocial compared to antisocial teasing.	No

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Appendix A: Manipulations

- Manipulation 1 (Successful Prosocial Teasing): “Reflect upon a time when you successfully teased someone with the intent of being affectionate (i.e. the target perceived your teasing as affectionate or playful).”

- Manipulation 2 (Successful Antisocial Teasing): “Reflect upon a time when you successfully teased someone with the intent of being hurtful (i.e. the target perceived your teasing was emotionally harmful).”

- Manipulation 3 (Unsuccessful Prosocial Teasing): “Reflect upon a time when you were unsuccessful in teasing someone with the intent of being affectionate (i.e. the target did **not** perceive your teasing as affectionate or playful).”

- Manipulation 4 (Unsuccessful Antisocial Teasing): “Reflect upon a time when you were unsuccessful in teasing someone with the intent of being hurtful (i.e. the target perceived was **not** emotionally harmed by your teasing).”

Appendix B: Questionnaire

SCENARIO

(Manipulations 1 – 4 are randomly inserted here)

How long ago did this incident occur? _____

How old were you at the time? _____

TARGET Information:

a. Target's Age _____

b. Target's Gender_____

c. Target's Race/Ethnicity_____

1. At the time of the incident, what was your relationship to the target?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Describe your verbal statements during the teasing (i.e. what did you say to the target?)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Describe **your** nonverbal behaviors during the teasing (i.e. facial expressions, stance, distance from target, hand gestures, tone, physical contact w/ target, etc.)

_____

_____

4. Explain why you teased the target. (i.e. what provoked the teasing?, what were you hoping to gain as a result of your teasing?)

5. Please describe in great detail the target's verbal statements and nonverbal behaviors that signaled that he/she WAS NOT emotionally harmed by your teasing.

A. Description of the target's verbal statements:

B. Describe the target's nonverbal behaviors during the teasing (i.e. facial expressions, stance, distance from target, hand gestures, tone, physical contact w/ target, etc.)

6. How did the target's reaction to your teasing make you feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Did the target attempt to affectionately tease you back? (circle one)

Y *(proceed to question 6a)* **N** *(proceed to question 6b)*

a. If yes, how so? (Please include details regarding your verbal statements and nonverbal behaviors where applicable)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

b. If not, what did the target do next? (Please include details regarding the verbal statements and nonverbal behaviors where applicable)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

*Please complete the following questionnaire about how you felt while **interacting with the target at the time of the incident**. Mark 7 (in the space before the statement) if the statement is extremely accurate for how you felt; 6 if moderately accurate; 5 if somewhat accurate; 4 if neither accurate nor inaccurate; 3 if somewhat accurate; 2 if moderately inaccurate; or 1 if extremely inaccurate. There are no right or wrong answers. Just respond to the items quickly to describe as accurately as you can how you felt while interacting with that person.*

1. I was apprehensive

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

2. I was disturbed

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

3. I felt peaceful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

4. I was loose

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

5. I felt uneasy

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

6. I was self-assured

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

7. I was fearful

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

8. I was ruffled

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

9. I felt jumpy

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

10. I was composed

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
extremely inaccurate *extremely accurate*

11. I was bothered

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

12. I felt satisfied

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

13. I felt safe

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

14. I was flustered

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

15. I was cheerful

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

16. I felt happy

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

17. I felt dejected

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

18. I was pleased

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

19. I felt good

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

20. I was unhappy

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely inaccurate						*extremely accurate*

The scales below are designed to indicate how attractive you find another person to be. Please indicate your perceptions of the attractiveness of **the target.** Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking whether you:

Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5

1. I think he (she) could be a friend of mine.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

2. I would like to have a friendly chat with her/him.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

3. It would be difficult to meet and talk with him (her).

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

4. He (she) just wouldn't fit into my circle of friends.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

5. We could never establish a personal friendship with each other.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

6. He/she would be pleasant to be with.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree				strongly agree

Please mark the extent to which the following statements are ALWAYS TRUE or ALWAYS FALSE.

1. I am extremely careful to avoid attacking individuals' intelligence when I attack their ideas.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

2. When individuals are very stubborn, I use insults to soften the stubbornness.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Always	Generally	Somewhat	Somewhat	Generally	Always
True	True	True	False	False	False

3. I try very hard to avoid having other people feel bad about themselves when I try to influence them.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always	Generally	Somewhat	Somewhat	Generally	Always
True	True	True	False	False	False

4. When people refuse to do a task I know is important, without good reason, I tell them they are unreasonable.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always	Generally	Somewhat	Somewhat	Generally	Always
True	True	True	False	False	False

5. When others do things I regard as stupid, I try to be extremely gentle with them.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always	Generally	Somewhat	Somewhat	Generally	Always
True	True	True	False	False	False

6. If individuals I am trying to influence really deserve it, I attack their character.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always	Generally	Somewhat	Somewhat	Generally	Always
True	True	True	False	False	False

7. When people behave in ways that are in very poor taste, I insult them in order to shock them into proper behavior.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always	Generally	Somewhat	Somewhat	Generally	Always
True	True	True	False	False	False

8 I try to make people feel good about themselves even when their ideas are stupid.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always	Generally	Somewhat	Somewhat	Generally	Always
True	True	True	False	False	False

9. When people simply will not budge on a matter of importance I lose my temper and say rather strong things to them.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always	Generally	Somewhat	Somewhat	Generally	Always
True	True	True	False	False	False

10. When people criticize my shortcomings, I take it in good humor and do not try to get back at them.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

11. When individuals insult me, I get a lot of pleasure out of really telling them off.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

12. When I dislike individuals greatly, I try to not to show it in what I say or how I say it.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

13. I like poking fun at people who do thing which are very stupid in order to stimulate their intelligence.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

14. When I attack person's ideas, I try not to damage their self-concepts.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

15. When I try to influence people I make a great effort not to offend them.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

16. When people do things which are mean or cruel, I attack their character in order to help correct their behavior.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

17. I refuse to participate in arguments when they involve personal attacks.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

18. When nothing seems to work in trying to influence other, I yell and scream in order to get some movement from them.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

19. When I am not able to refute others' positions, I try to make them feel defensive in order to weaken their position.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

20. When an argument shifts to personal attacks, I try very hard to change the subject.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Always True	Generally True	Somewhat True	Somewhat False	Generally False	Always False

---

SUBJECT INFORMATION:

Age_____ Gender: _____ Female _____ Male

Race/Ethnicity: _____ American Indian or Alaska Native
_____ Asian
_____ African-American
_____ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
_____ Caucasian/White
_____ Biracial
_____ Hispanic or Latino
_____ Not Hispanic or Latino
_____ Other

Birth Order: _____ Only child
_____ Oldest child
_____ Middle child
_____ Youngest child

Year in school: _____ First yr. undergraduate
_____ Sophomore

_____ Junior

_____ Senior

Major: _____

Athlete: _____YES _____ NO If yes, what sport? _____

Greek Affiliation: _____ YES _____ NO