

# Negotiators Who Give Too Much: Unmitigated Communion, Relational Anxieties, and Economic Costs in Distributive and Integrative Bargaining

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A series of studies found that the personality dimension of unmitigated communion (H. L. Fritz & V. S. Helgeson, 1998) leads negotiators to make concessions to avoid straining relationships. Results indicate that even within the population of successful business executives, this dimension of relational anxiety can be identified distinctly from more general relational orientations, such as agreeableness, and that it distinctly predicts accommodating tendencies in everyday conflicts. In economic games, unmitigated communion predicts giving in contexts in which the relational norm of reciprocity applies, but not in contexts tapping instrumental or altruistic motives for cooperation. In distributive negotiations, the effect of unmitigated communion in lowering a negotiator's outcome is mediated by prenegotiation anxieties about relational strain and plans to make large concessions if needed to avoid impasse (lower reservation points). In integrative negotiations, high unmitigated communion on both sides of the negotiation dyad results in relational accommodation, evidenced by decreased success in maximizing economic joint gain but increased subjective satisfaction with the relationship.

*Keywords:* personality, negotiation, distributive, integrative, relational accommodating

Why do some negotiators make concessions and accommodate counterparts' requests, whereas others in the same position stand firm and get what they want? In business, as in life, accommodating is often a suboptimal approach to resolving conflict because it leaves needs unmet and begets resentment. A perennial intuition about the causes of accommodating is that personality matters. In the popular literature, this behavior is attributed to being a push-over, unassertive, or codependent. In the research literature, it is most frequently linked to an interpersonal orientation (Rubin & Brown, 1975) such as agreeableness (Barry & Friedman, 1998). However, there is surprisingly little evidence for its association with personality (Bazerman, Curhan, Moore, & Valley, 2000; Neale & Northcraft, 1991; Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993; Thompson, 1990). An influential review by Lewicki and Litterer (1985) concluded that "it does not appear that there is any single personality type or characteristic that is directly and clearly linked to success in negotiation" (p. 276). Although recent research has linked some aspects of negotiation outcomes and processes to personality constructs such as prosocial value orientations (Van Lange, 1999) and

relational orientations (Gelfand, Major, Raver, Nishii, & O'Brien, 2006), there is little evidence that personality affects accommodating in negotiations.

The current research seeks a better understanding of accommodating, and other aspects of negotiation, by introducing to the conflict literature a new personality construct: *unmitigated communion* (UC), an orientation involving high concern for and anxiety about one's relationships coupled with low self-concern (Fritz & Helgeson, 1998). UC is a unique and important construct with potential to elucidate a dynamic in which negotiators' relational concerns lead them to give away too much at the bargaining table. Past research on this dimension has primarily focused on medically ill populations, for whom UC is a risk factor for morbidity and mortality (e.g., Helgeson, 2003; Ouellette & DiPlacido, 2001; Smith & Gallo, 2001). Our research examines whether UC is not only hazardous to health but also hazardous to wealth—that is, whether it worsens outcomes in economic negotiations. UC differs from other-focused orientations such as agreeableness or prosocial values in that it pertains specifically to others with whom one interacts. Also, it focuses on concerns about straining these relationships. This extreme concern for relationships eclipses self-concern and results in negative economic consequences.

Our studies first explore whether this personality construct is valid for the population of business managers, who conduct consequential economic negotiations. Next, we examine its association with accommodating in the negotiation of primarily distributive conflicts. Finally, we examine whether this accommodating tendency on both sides of the bargaining table results in lower joint gains in primarily integrative conflicts.

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We thank Bruce Barry and E. Layne Paddock for comments.

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## Personality and Negotiations

After dismissing personality for some years, negotiation researchers in the past decade have renewed their investigation of personality and, in particular, agreeableness. Although several studies have linked high agreeableness to less assertive tactics (e.g. Cable & Judge, 2003; Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, & Hair, 1996), scant evidence has been found linking agreeableness to actual economic negotiation outcomes. The strongest evidence is the finding of a small negative effect on outcomes in single-issue conflicts and no significant effect on outcomes in multi-issue conflicts (Barry & Friedman, 1998). How can we account for the discrepancy between the persistent intuition that accommodating is strongly driven by personality, on one hand, and the lack of evidence for strong outcome effects of agreeableness, on the other hand?

One possibility is that the intuitions of negotiators are mistaken. In a study of single-issue negotiations, Morris, Larrick, and Su (1999) identified the same weak effect of agreeableness on a negotiator's behavior and outcomes, along with much stronger effects of the negotiator's economic situation. This study also measured how these negotiators were judged by their counterparts and found that counterparts attributed the negotiators' behavior to their agreeableness traits, not to their economic situations. Hence, the intuition that agreeableness matters may simply be a mirage, an illusion that comes from the effects of bargaining positions being misread as effects of personality.

Another possibility is that personality does matter, but agreeableness is too broad a construct to isolate the effect. Agreeableness encompasses a range of affective, cognitive, and motivational characteristics related to interpersonal warmth and flexibility (John, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1989). Hence, it encompasses aspects of personality that may have different, even opposite, effects on bargaining behavior. Whereas the motivational tendency of altruism might hinder one's success, the cognitive habit of perspective taking might help. For instance, high perspective taking is associated with less anchoring bias (Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001) and better distributive outcomes (Neale & Bazerman, 1983). Hence, different aspects of agreeableness may have offsetting effects on bargaining outcomes. If so, then weak effects of this broad measure may mask stronger effects of its subcomponents. Thus, research with more specific, focused constructs may help to elucidate the effects of personality on negotiation.

One candidate comes from research on social value orientations, which specifically taps preferences about resource allocations (De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995; Olekalns & Smith, 1999; Van Lange, 1999; Van Lange, Otten, De Bruin, & Joireman, 1997). This instrument primarily contrasts egoistic (maximizing self-gain) versus prosocial (maximizing joint gain) orientations, although the competitive (maximizing self-gain minus other-gain) orientation is also sometimes distinguished. It has been used to investigate determinants of joint gain in mixed-motive conflicts. A review by De Dreu, Weingart, and Kwon (2000) concluded that prosocial orientations predict high joint outcomes but only when resistance to yielding is high (which means that accommodating is not an option) rather than low. These authors call for a search beyond these constructs to find predictors of accommodating, as it leads to poor negotiation outcomes, and the social value constructs do not address it. To this end, we turn to a construct that has been used primarily in a more remote field, that of health psychology. We

explore UC, which contrasts with the work on prosocial orientations because it incorporates relational anxieties and ego-defensive motives underlying concern for others.

The concept of UC derives from Bakan's (1966) personality framework. *Communion* refers to engagement with others, in relationships and group memberships; in contrast, *agency* refers to a focus on achieving one's personal goals (Helgeson, 1994). Whereas agentic and communal orientations are both components of a healthy, balanced personality, extreme or unmitigated orientations of either type can be maladaptive (Bakan, 1966; Helgeson & Fritz, 1999). From this framework, the construct of UC—high relational concern without balancing self-concern—has been adopted by health psychology. UC involves an anxiety about relationships that eclipses concern for one's own personal well-being (Helgeson, 1993). Studies of various medical populations have isolated damaging consequences—physical and psychological—of this personality orientation (Helgeson, 1993; Ouellette & DiPlacido, 2001; Smith & Gallo, 2001). High UC predicts delay in treatment seeking among those suffering cardiac symptoms (Helgeson, 1990), less success in regulating metabolic processes among those with diabetes (Helgeson & Fritz, 1996), poor mental and physical adjustment among those with breast cancer (Helgeson, 2003), and so forth. The common thread is self-neglect as a result of neurotic concern about the others in one's life. Patients high in UC are anxious about how their illness and treatment might strain their relationships. They are so preoccupied with what others think and do that self-neglect results (Helgeson & Fritz, 2000).

It is important to note that this is not just an altruistic concern for others. Individuals high in UC have a desire to be personally giving toward their significant others, and they actually feel distressed at the thought of those others receiving help from someone else (Helgeson & Fritz, 1997). High-UC individuals actually base their self-esteem on their relationships with others and how they are perceived by others. This, coupled with the anxiety that others may view them negatively and the tendency to take on others' distress as their own, contributes to greater depression and lower self-esteem among these individuals (Fritz & Helgeson, 1998). Thus, overinvolvement in their relationships and the excessive drive to provide help to others may be an attempt to enhance their worth in the eyes of others and subsequently their own self-image. So, UC is not simply describing high other-concern along the lines of prosocial orientation or the dual-concern model, but rather that the need to give and to maintain relationships is vital to the individual's self-concept. In the health psychology literature, the focus is usually the patient's interaction with spouses or other caregivers; however, in nonmedical populations the effects of this dimension likely extend to other interaction partners, including negotiation counterparts. Indeed, Fritz and Helgeson (1998) found that high-UC individuals ruminated and had intrusive thoughts about others' problems even when the other was a stranger.

On the basis of this conception of UC, we propose that it may lead to accommodating in economic negotiations, in which the tension between self-concern and relationships is very real. This proposal becomes interesting to the extent that this personality applies in the population of businesspeople, who routinely conduct consequential negotiations. Some might argue that success as a manager requires high agency, so personalities characterized by communion unmitigated by agency would not be present in this population. We beg to differ. There are many roles in business that

require subjugating the self and attending obsessively to relationships; indeed, *relationship manager* is a common job title in banks, ad agencies, public relations firms, and so forth for the person who interacts with a key customer, partner, or investor. Hence, the managerial ranks include many who have gotten ahead precisely by being extremely vigilant about not straining relationships. We test this presupposition about construct validity in Study 1, checking that UC exists as a distinct dimension in manager populations and that it predicts accommodating tendencies more directly than do measures of normal or mitigated communion orientations, such as relationalism or agreeableness.

### Consequences of UC for Negotiation Outcomes

Let us now elaborate our argument about the consequences of UC in negotiations. For this purpose, it is worth distinguishing conflict situations with regard to whether they are primarily distributive or integrative (Raiffa, 1982). Distributive conflicts are ones with issues that are simple and few, such as haggling over a pot of money to be shared or a price to be paid (Barry & Friedman, 1998). Distributive bargaining tactics aim for a large slice of a fixed pie of value, increasing one's own payoff at the cost of the counterpart's payoff. Integrative conflicts typically arise in more complex business relationships, where an ongoing relationship or the presence of multiple issues means that the pie of overall value is not fixed—there are pie-expanding win-win outcomes and pie-shrinking lose-lose outcomes. Integrative bargaining techniques aim to expand the pie, to find agreements that are higher in terms of the joint payoff to the two sides. Given that many conflicts involve elements of both kinds of bargaining, the distinction is one of degree rather than kind. Nonetheless, it is important for analyzing effects of UC.

In primarily distributive conflicts, the consequences of UC are straightforward. In these conflicts, the other side's outcome is inversely correlated with one's own outcome. Hence, a predisposition to high concern about one's relationship to the other and low self-concerns would result in relational accommodating, giving away value to avoid straining the relationship. Note that UC, in its quality of anxiety about straining relations, is not the same as a personality high in other-concern or agreeableness. Hence, its effects on accommodating should go beyond what is accounted for by these more general constructs.

We hypothesized that high-UC individuals would make concessions when doing so helps them avoid possible damage to relationships, yet they should not be more giving in other kinds of contexts. This can be examined by comparing effects on different economic games that distinguish different motives for giving, such as avoiding relational violations as opposed to instrumental expectations of return or simple altruism. These motives are confounded in classic games such as the Prisoner's Dilemma (cooperating might reflect any of these motives). However, different motives are isolated in the Dictator Game and the two levels of the Trust Game (Camerer, 1997). We hypothesized that UC would predict giving in contexts in which relational norms are at stake (Level 2 of the Trust Game) but not in contexts in which giving reflects an instrumental motive (Level 1 of the Trust Game) or an altruistic motive (the Dictator Game). This hypothesis was tested in Study 2.

The link between UC and concessions can also be explored in more complex simulations of negotiations. In this context, if UC is

associated with lower economic outcomes, it could reflect several different intervening mechanisms. It could be that high-UC individuals bring a more accommodating stance to the negotiation, or it could be that their counterparts peg them as pushovers and escalate their demands. Signs of these two respective mechanisms would be apparent in prenegotiation plans, the former in that the focal individuals would be willing to make larger concessions if needed to get an agreement, the latter in that their counterparts would plan more aggressive opening offers. The health psychology evidence for self-neglect (i.e., Helgeson, 2003) leads us to hypothesize the former mechanism. In negotiation parlance, one's *reservation point* refers to the greatest concession that one plans to make if needed to get an agreement, a point that negotiators plan in advance (Pinkley, Neale, & Bennett, 1994; White & Neale, 1994). We predict that high-UC individuals will plan more accommodating reservation points and that this behavior should statistically mediate the personality effect on negotiation outcomes.

Yet this begs the question of what goes on in minds of high-UC individuals as they anticipate negotiations. What engenders their willingness to make more concessions? What expectancies figure into these plans to be accommodating? Past research has suggested that relational expectations are one determinant of people's willingness to be soft or firm in bargaining (Clark & Chrisman, 1994). We propose specifically that high-UC individuals will have stronger anxieties about straining relationships through assertive bargaining. Hence, we predict that greater anxieties about the relational costs of negotiating carry the effect of UC on planned accommodation (lower reservation points). Yet this is not the only possible mechanism. A skeptic might argue that the planned softness of high-UC individuals reflects their lack of confidence as distributive bargainers. However, we postulate the first mechanism—that the planned softness of high UC stems from their concerns about what the other person will think of them, not from the way they think about their own abilities. Our predictions about the causal chain in negotiations from UC to lower distributive negotiation outcomes, via relational anxieties and planned reservation points, are tested in Study 3.

Thus far, our discussion of the effects of UC has been limited to one half of the negotiating dyad. We can also theorize about what happens when two individuals high in UC meet each other in a negotiation. Somewhat ironically, the meeting of two unselfish negotiators high in UC may result in outcomes that create less value than the meeting of two more selfish negotiators low in UC. A classic negotiation study by Fry, Firestone, and Williams (1983) found that, compared with strangers, dating couples were less able to reach high joint outcomes because their concern for preserving harmony discouraged their use of tactics (such as pushing for their key priorities) that facilitate integrative bargaining success. Likewise, Curhan, Neale, Ross, and Rosencranz-Engelmann (in press) found that when dyads role-played a negotiation within an egalitarian cultural context (as opposed to a hierarchical context), they were less likely to achieve integrative bargaining success. On the bright side, they were more likely to report feelings of trust and liking for their counterparts. Curhan et al. (in press; also see Gelfand et al., 2006) termed this phenomenon *relational accommodation*, a dynamic of mutual yielding that hinders joint economic outcomes (e.g., dollars) but helps the mutual relational outcome (e.g., trust

and liking).<sup>1</sup> On this same basis, we hypothesize that high UC on both sides of the table will engender lower joint outcomes albeit higher relationship satisfaction. In our final, fourth study, we assign participants to dyads on the basis of their personalities (contrasting high–high UC dyads vs. low–low UC dyads) to test this prediction about relational accommodation in integrative negotiations.

### Study 1: Validating the Construct of UC in the Manager Population

Before testing the consequences of UC for business negotiations, it is worthwhile to investigate whether the construct is valid in the population who conducts such negotiations, a different population from those in which it has been studied before (Essink-Bot, Krabbe, Bonsel, & Aaronson, 1997). A battery of individual difference measures was given to a large sample of managers. We predicted that the UC scale would cohere and that it would show convergent and discriminant validity in relation to other measures established in the negotiation and conflict literature. Specifically, we tested the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1:* UC will be positively correlated with agreeableness.

*Hypothesis 2:* Agreeableness but not UC will be correlated with (a) self-esteem, (b) affect, or (c) Machiavellianism.

We argue that UC should be positively but moderately correlated with general agreeableness. Agreeableness measures warmth and flexibility toward others in general, whereas UC measures anxious concern about giving to the people with whom one has relationships. As such, the two constructs should be related but not identical. To further demonstrate agreeableness as overly broad and UC as specific, we argue that agreeableness will correlate with other subcomponents related to interpersonal orientations, whereas UC will not.

Additionally, measures of conflict resolution style (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974) allow an initial test that UC is associated with accommodating tactics in the negotiation of everyday disagreements with family and coworkers. Although we do not believe UC is related to self-confidence in negotiation skills or recognition of opportunities to negotiate, we believe it will influence an individual's habitual style of negotiating. Because it involves a desire to be the more giving one in the interaction, UC should correlate positively with the accommodating style. By the same logic, it should correlate negatively with the competing style. We argue that UC should relate to these conflict-handling styles but not to confidence as a negotiator or recognition of negotiation opportunities. This is because high-UC individuals are distinguished by their motives, not by their capacities. In sum, we predict the following:

*Hypothesis 3:* UC will be unassociated with (a) negotiating self-efficacy or (b) recognition of negotiation opportunities.

*Hypothesis 4:* UC will be (a) associated positively with an accommodating conflict resolution style, (b) associated negatively with a competing conflict resolution style, and unassociated with (c) compromising, (d) collaborating, and (e) avoiding conflict resolution styles.

## Method

### Participants

Data were collected from students enrolled in a course on power and negotiation. All 357 participants were full-time master's of business administration (MBA) students at a major university. The sample consisted of 118 (33%) women and 239 (67%) men. As a gauge of the experience level of these business students, they were asked to indicate on a scale ranging from 1 (*no experience*) to 7 (*I'm an expert*) their amount of formal negotiating experience. The mean level of experience was 2.78 ( $SD = 1.41$ ). The classes from which students were drawn averaged 29.2 years of age ( $SD = 2.79$ ) and 5.4 years of work experience ( $SD = 2.26$ ).

### Procedure

Individual difference measures were collected via a Web survey that students were required to complete in partial fulfillment of a course requirement. Participants were instructed to visit the Web site and complete the questionnaires at their convenience before the 2nd week of class. All students returned usable data from these surveys, although for some only partial data were available and some scale measures were missing.

### Personality Measures

Participants were administered standard inventories for UC and for additional personality variables used to test convergent and discriminant validity.

*UC.* We measured UC with the revised version of Helgeson's (1993) scale. This instrument was originally developed for use specifically with cardiac patients; it was later expanded and revised to increase generalizability to a wider array of populations (Fritz & Helgeson, 1998). UC taps extreme levels of relational concern, unmitigated by self-concern. Sample items from this nine-item scale include "I always place the needs of others above my own" and "For me to be happy, I need others to be happy." Previous research has demonstrated that this scale, in both its original and revised forms, has acceptable internal consistency, ranging from .7 to .8, and high test–retest reliability (Fritz & Helgeson, 1998; Helgeson, 1993, 1994; Helgeson & Fritz, 1996). An alpha coefficient of .73 from the present sample of MBA students demonstrates suitable reliability for use with this new population.

*Other personality measures.* We used the Revised NEO Five Factor Inventory (short form; NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992) to measure the general interpersonal dimension of agreeableness, with which UC was expected to converge. We examined the distinctness of UC from agreeableness by comparing their respective correlations to other individual differences, such as self-esteem (measured with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale; Rosenberg, 1965),

<sup>1</sup> Gelfand et al. (2006, p. 439) referred to this dynamic as "relational satisficing." However, the term *satisficing* (as coined by Simon, 1957) would mean that negotiators are applying a conscious decision rule to search for better joint outcomes only until they reach a level of aspiration deemed "good enough." An alternative possibility is that the negotiators are optimizing a weighted utility function that incorporates both the economic outcome and a desire for a good relationship.

positive and negative affect (measured with the Positive and Negative Affect Scales; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), and Machiavellianism (measured with the Mach IV Scale; Christie & Geiss, 1970).

### *Negotiation-Related Measures*

Measures of individual differences in negotiation-related tendencies were included for an initial exploration of our assumption that UC is associated with an accommodating style in everyday conflicts in which relational concerns are present, yet it is not associated with a more general inability or unwillingness to negotiate.

*Styles of handling conflicts.* The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Inventory (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974) surveys habitual tactics for handling everyday conflicts, such as with family and coworkers. It is a 30-item scale with each item representing a forced-choice decision between two potential behavioral responses to everyday conflict situations. Respondents are instructed to choose which of the two options best describes how they actually behave in conflict situations. This instrument measures five dimensions: competing, accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, and compromising. Each of the five dimensions is paired with the other four dimensions three times, yielding a possible score for each dimension that ranges from 0 to 12.<sup>2</sup> We predicted that the high relational concern and low self-concern of UC individuals would engender an accommodating style in handling everyday conflicts.

*Negotiation confidence and willingness.* Confidence in negotiation ability was assessed with scales for integrative and distributive negotiation self-efficacy (Sullivan, O'Conner, & Burris, 2003). Respondents indicated on a 7-point scale their level of confidence in successfully using different tactics in a negotiation. Examples of tactics used to measure integrative self-efficacy are establishing rapport and identifying tradeoffs. Examples used to measure distributive self-efficacy are using high opening offers and persuading the other party to make concessions.

The Appropriateness of Negotiation Scale (Curhan, 2005) assesses whether respondents believe that it is appropriate to negotiate over price in different consumer transactions (e.g., apparel stores, automotive dealerships, and hotels). Respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale how appropriate they thought it would be to negotiate over the price of products in the context of 13 types of consumer transactions. These scores were averaged into an aggregate measure of perceived negotiation appropriateness. Our expectation was that UC would not be associated with these measures of general negotiation capacity, as UC-related anxieties would not arise in nonrelational contexts of negotiation.

## *Results*

### *Personality Measures*

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among personality variables are presented in Table 1, with coefficient alphas on the diagonal. The convergent validity of UC was demonstrated in its modest correlations with overlapping constructs such as agreeableness ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ) and neuroticism ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ). This is consistent with the premise that it taps an interpersonal orien-

tation characterized by anxiety. Also, as in past research, UC was higher among women than among men ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ).

The discriminant validity of UC is best seen by contrasting it with agreeableness in relation to other individual difference variables relevant to conflict. Self-esteem was positively correlated with agreeableness ( $r = .18, p < .01$ ) but was negatively correlated with UC ( $r = -.11, p < .05$ ). Similarly, whereas agreeableness correlated negatively with negative affect ( $r = -.25, p < .01$ ), UC correlated positively with negative affect ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ). Finally, Machiavellianism correlated negatively with agreeableness ( $r = -.40, p < .01$ ) but was not significantly related to UC ( $r = -.10, ns$ ). Whereas agreeableness is a general trait that relates to positive self-views, mood, and behavior toward others, UC captures the negative extreme of excessive other concern, correlating with a negative self-view and affect.

### *Negotiation Measures*

In support of our assumption that UC is not a matter of negotiators' capacity to negotiate assertively, as seen in Table 1, UC did not correspond to diminished self-perceived negotiation capabilities. Correlations were nonsignificant with both distributive and integrative self-efficacy ( $r_s = -.03$  and  $.03$ , respectively,  $ns$ ). Also, as predicted UC was not related to recognition of appropriate opportunities to negotiate as a consumer ( $r = -.02, ns$ ). High-UC individuals did not lack confidence that they could negotiate or understanding of when one can do so.

However, UC did correlate with variables related to participants' willingness to negotiate assertively in everyday conflicts. UC was associated with less competing ( $r = -.18, p < .01$ ) and more accommodating ( $r = .14, p < .01$ ) modes of handling conflicts. Although this behavioral profile was similarly represented in the correlations between agreeableness and competing ( $r = -.28, p < .01$ ) and accommodating behavior ( $r = .13, p < .01$ ), we used hierarchical regression to better explore the predictive validity of UC while controlling for the effect of agreeableness. The dependent variable in the regression was accommodating behavior. In the first step, sex, self-esteem, and agreeableness were entered as independent variables ( $R^2 = .02$ ),  $F(310) = 2.49, p < .10$ , and UC was entered in the second step ( $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ),  $F(309) = 3.35, p < .05$ . We included self-esteem in the analyses as a control because of the positive correlation between self-esteem and assertiveness (e.g., Lorr & More, 1980). UC had a significant positive effect on accommodating behavior above and beyond effects of the other variables ( $\beta = 0.13, p < .05$ ). An additional regression analysis was run, including all personality variables measured in the battery to predict accommodating behavior. Although relationships between the independent variables increase the multicollinearity of the results, UC regardless remained the only significant independent predictor of accommodating ( $R^2 = .09$ ),  $F(277) =$

<sup>2</sup> Because of the nature of the response format of the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Inventory, both as a forced-choice and an ipsative measure (meaning scores for each individual sum to a constant, 30), typical reliability statistics, specifically Cronbach's alphas, do not accurately measure scale reliability (Hicks, 1970). Test-retest reliability is a more accurate estimate, which past empirical testing has shown to be sufficient for this measure (Kilmann & Thomas, 1977).

Table 1  
Study 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Personality-related variables																			
1. Unmitigated communion	(.73)																		
2. Agreeableness	.21	(.76)																	
3. Neuroticism	.09	.15	(.67)																
4. Extraversion	.18	-.02	.10	(.77)															
5. Openness	.04	.23	-.22	.13	(.70)														
6. Conscientiousness	-.11	.18	-.63	.38	.01	(.83)													
7. Self-esteem	.05	.10	-.42	.54	.15	.36	(.76)												
8. Positive affect	.12	-.25	.53	-.22	.06	-.24	.57	(.83)											
9. Negative affect	-.10	-.40	.16	-.19	-.06	-.24	-.49	-.29	(.82)										
10. Machiavellian							-.26	-.30	.25	(.74)									
Negotiation-related variables																			
11. Distributed self-efficacy	-.03	-.22	-.20	.22	.04	.05	.25	.30	-.10	-.05	(.97)								
12. Integrative self-efficacy	.03	.15	-.17	.29	.07	.18	.28	.30	-.24	-.17	.49	(.98)							
13. Appropriateness	-.02	-.07	.02	.13	.10	.05	-.02	.11	.03	.09	.19	.11	(.86)						
14. Accommodating	.14	.13	-.07	.16	.16	.06	.07	.16	-.07	-.08	.01	.13	.01						
15. Collaborating	.01	.03	.03	.06	.08	.04	.02	.02	-.06	-.17	.03	-.01	.01	-.15					
16. Avoiding	.05	.04	.10	-.24	-.15	-.03	-.05	-.18	.00	.09	-.14	-.18	-.06	-.23	-.28				
17. Compromising	.02	.12	.01	.09	-.08	.09	-.05	.04	.00	.04	.01	.19	.08	-.13	-.37	-.29			
18. Competing	-.18	-.28	-.06	.00	.01	-.15	.06	.02	.06	.07	.12	-.10	-.04	-.37	-.02	-.28	-.33		
19. Sex <sup>a</sup>	.22	.19	.33	.00	-.03	.13	-.13	-.07	.01	-.02	-.31	-.05	-.13	.07	-.00	.04	.13	-.22	
M	3.20	3.64	2.00	3.62	3.52	3.79	3.35	3.66	1.77	2.69	0.00	0.00	2.54	5.46	5.08	5.50	7.52	5.83	
SD	0.61	0.50	0.76	0.56	0.53	0.54	0.46	0.53	0.52	0.39	1.00	1.00	0.64	1.81	1.73	2.20	2.12	2.06	

Note. Coefficient alphas appear on the diagonal.  $R > .11$  significant at  $p < .05$ ;  $R > .14$  significant at  $p < .01$ .  
<sup>a</sup>Sex was coded 0 for males and 1 for females.

2.57,  $p < .01$ ,  $\beta = 0.11$ ,  $p < .10$ . This provides empirical support for our prediction that UC gives rise to yielding in negotiations.

### Discussion

The results from Study 1 provide evidence for the validity of UC in a population of managers by demonstrating both the convergent validity of UC in relation to agreeableness and the discriminant validity of UC as distinct from prior measures of personality in this sample of management students.<sup>3</sup>

### Study 2: Relational Accommodating in Economic Games

Study 2 looks at how UC influences decisions in economic games to isolate the psychological mechanism for the accommodating tendencies found in Study 1. The first level of the Trust Game (Camerer, 1997) models a dilemma of instrumental giving. The sender must decide how much of a pot of money to send to a receiver, knowing that this amount will be tripled and the receiver will then decide what portion of the expanded sum to give back to the sender. By giving a lot, the sender potentially gets more money later. The second level of the game presents a dilemma of relational giving: how much money to give back to the other side to reciprocate for their gift in the early stage of the game. The Dictator Game consists simply of a sender's choosing how much money to share with another player, in which the only reason for giving is pure altruism (Bolton, Katok, & Zwick, 1998; Camerer, 2003; Henrich et al., 2004). We predict that high-UC individuals will be concerned primarily with relationships and as such will give more money when relational concerns are activated (i.e., the reciprocity motivations of the second stage of the Trust Game) rather than for instrumental (first stage of the Trust Game) or altruistic reasons (Dictator Game). Study 2 tests the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 5:* UC (a) will be correlated with giving more money in the second stage of the two-level Trust Game but will not be correlated with (b) money sent in the first stage of the Trust Game or (c) the Dictator Game.

### Method

#### Participants

Data for this study were collected from 219 MBA students in a course on managerial negotiations, 157 (72%) men and 62 (28%) women. Slightly more than half (54%) of these students were enrolled in an executive program whose class profile generally has a median age of 36 with a median of 12 years of work experience. The other half (46%) of the students were enrolled in a typical full-time MBA program that generally admits students with an average age of 28 years and 5 years of work experience.

#### Procedure

Participants in this study were instructed to complete a battery of online surveys as part of their course requirements. The questionnaires included the scale for UC used in Study 1. Another set of questions included the two-level Trust Game and the Dictator Game. Scales were administered in a fixed order with the UC scale preceding the economic games and a number of additional scales

in between. Potential biases of a fixed order, such as a systematic positive or negative bias in responses, are minimal in this battery because the response format of the independent variable (Likert-type scale) was not identical to the response format of the dependent variable (dollar amount). All but 11 students returned usable data for all measures.

#### Measures

UC was measured with the same scale administered in Study 1. The mean score on UC in this sample was 3.17 with a standard deviation of 0.63 and a reliability coefficient of .77. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974) used in Study 1 was used again in this study to measure scores on accommodating ( $M = 5.04$ ,  $SD = 2.38$ ). Agreeableness was also included in this study and was measured using the same scale as in Study 1 ( $M = 3.49$ ,  $SD = 0.46$ ).

*Two-level Trust Game.* In the first stage of the game, respondents are told they have \$200 and the option to send any or all of this money to another in-group member whom they do not know. They are further instructed that whatever amount they send will be tripled and the receiver will be given the opportunity to keep or send back any portion of that tripled money. Each respondent is then asked to indicate how much he or she chooses to send. This level of the Trust Game captures an instrumental motive for cooperation because, provided they trust their generosity will be returned, sending more money creates a larger share of wealth to be returned back. The mean amount of money sent in this stage was \$115.47 ( $SD = \$82.53$ ).

The second stage of the Trust Game assumes the same situation as the first, but now the respondents are in the position of the receiver. They have just received the entire \$200 from an in-group member whom they do not know, and this amount has been tripled to \$600. They are now given the opportunity to send money back to the giver and are asked to indicate how much they choose to send. This level of the Trust Game captures a relational motive for cooperation because sending more money demonstrates a desire to fulfill the relational norm of reciprocity. The mean amount of money sent back in this stage was \$254.63 ( $SD = \$104.75$ ).

*Dictator Game.* The Dictator Game is a one-sided allocation task. In this game, respondents are told they have \$200 and can give any, all, or none of it to another person with whom they are randomly paired and never interact. The other person makes no

<sup>3</sup> We collected auxiliary data assessing the validity of UC. It was not related to social motive orientations (Kuhlman & Marshello, 1975): egoistic (maximize self-gain;  $r = .12$ , *ns*), prosocial (maximize collective gain;  $r = -.18$ , *ns*), competitive (maximize positive differential gain;  $r = .12$ , *ns*;  $N = 48$  MBAs). We tested the overlap of UC with four subdimensions of relational orientations ( $N = 46$  MBAs; Gelfand et al., 2006). UC correlated strongly with relational motivation ( $r = .54$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and social indifference ( $r = -.36$ ,  $p < .05$ ), moderately with relational cognition ( $r = .29$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and nonsignificantly with relational emotion ( $r = .23$ , *ns*). We compared UC, relational motivation, and agreeableness as predictors of conflict styles involving other concern ( $N = 58$  executive MBAs). Agreeableness did not predict either accommodating ( $r = .25$ , *ns*) or collaborating ( $r = .10$ , *ns*). Relational motivation predicted both, not discriminating between accommodating ( $r = .32$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and collaborating ( $r = .28$ ,  $p < .05$ ). UC distinctly predicted accommodating ( $r = .30$ ,  $p < .05$ ) but not collaborating ( $r = .09$ , *ns*).

decision at all. This game captures a purely altruistic motive in that respondents have neither a past nor a future connection to the other person, so neither forward-looking instrumental motives nor backward-looking reciprocating motives would apply. The mean amount of money sent in this game was \$14.26 ( $SD = \$35.51$ ).<sup>4</sup>

### Results

Correlations between the economic games and UC scores support our prediction that the conceding behavior shown by high-UC individuals is related to underlying relational motives as opposed to instrumental or altruistic motives. Higher UC was associated with greater giving in the second stage of the Trust Game ( $r = .20$ ,  $p < .01$ ), when it is obligated by relational norms, but not in the first stage ( $r = .06$ , *ns*), when it reflects instrumental motives, or in the Dictator Game ( $r = .03$ , *ns*), in which it reflects altruistic motives.

Consistent with the findings in Study 1, agreeableness correlated moderately with UC in this sample ( $r = .29$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, agreeableness did not correlate with the tendency to give money in any of the three economic games (Trust Game, Stage 1:  $r = .05$ , *ns*; Trust Game, Stage 2:  $r = -.01$ , *ns*; and Dictator Game:  $r = .05$ , *ns*). Similarly, UC was correlated with the tendency to use accommodating negotiation styles ( $r = .23$ ,  $p < .01$ ), but accommodating did not correlate with giving in the economic games (Trust Game, Stage 1:  $r = .04$ , *ns*; Trust Game, Stage 2:  $r = .02$ , *ns*; and Dictator Game:  $r = .03$ , *ns*). These results not only provide support for our prediction that UC is related to relational motives rather than to instrumental or altruistic motives, but also further demonstrate the unique importance of this construct as a predictor of behavior beyond related measures of interpersonal orientation.

### Discussion

The results of Study 2 suggest that concerns about relational norms underlie the cooperative behavior of high-UC individuals. Higher UC was predictive of giving in a game in which these norms appeared but not in other games tapping different motives. In our next study, we took a different approach to testing the mechanism—that of measuring participants' concerns about negotiation.

#### Study 3: Relational Accommodating in Distributive Bargaining

In this study, we looked for effects of UC on negotiators' distributive negotiation outcomes. Furthermore, we included measures of negotiator plans and negotiators' expectations and concerns about negotiations. We predicted that high-UC individuals would end up with lower outcomes because they are willing to make more concessions to not break a deal and that this softness should be visible in their prenegotiation plans before they have heard a word from their counterparts.

*Hypothesis 6:* High-UC individuals will agree to monetarily worse outcomes.

We predict that this softness will be reflected in lower reservation points rather than lower target points because the motive is one of avoiding relational strain. High-UC individuals may start the ne-

gotiation with an ambitious target, but they are willing to concede a lot if this is required to prevent an impasse and the relational damage that they fear would follow. Thus, although a target point represents an individual's ambition to achieve a monetarily high outcome, the reservation point represents the limit as to how far they will allow themselves to be pushed and how many concessions they will be willing to give up at the bargaining table. High-UC individuals will not strive to obtain less, but because of concern for others will be more willing and actually anticipate their likelihood to give up value and make concessions during the negotiation, which will be reflected in their prenegotiation reservation point.

*Hypothesis 7:* UC will be related to lower reservation points but not to lower target points.

*Hypothesis 8:* The effect of UC on outcomes will be mediated by planned softness (i.e., lower reservation points).

In addition, we further predict that the antecedent of this planned softness is anxiety about straining relationships in negotiations. We do not believe UC is related to inaccurate perceptions of the instrumental benefits of negotiating but rather that it is related to heightened perceptions of the relational costs of negotiating.

*Hypothesis 9:* UC will be related to a heightened perception of the relational costs of negotiating but will not be related to perceptions of the instrumental benefits of negotiating.

*Hypothesis 10:* The effect of UC on prenegotiation reservation point will be mediated by perceived relational costs of negotiating.

In sum, we expected higher UC to give rise to greater anxiety about relational strain in negotiations, which in turn leads to plans for a more lenient reservation point in a given negotiation, which ultimately engenders a lower monetary outcome.

### Method

#### Participants

Data for this study were collected from 77 full-time MBA students enrolled in a class on managerial negotiations in a business school that admits students with an average age of 28 years and work experience of 5 years. This sample consisted of 45 (58%) men and 32 (42%) women.

#### Procedure

As in the previous studies, individual difference measures were collected via a Web survey that students were required to complete at the start of the term. Participants were instructed to visit the Web site and complete the questionnaires at their convenience before the 2nd week of class. All but 7 students returned complete data from these surveys.

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that these games all start with the giver in possession of \$200. The possible payoffs differ, of course, by the nature of the game. However, the equalized starting levels should eliminate alternative explanations for differential effects of UC on giving in the different games, such as the stakes being trivial in one game but substantial in another.

A simulated negotiation exercise was used to collect data on negotiation behavior and outcomes. The exercise, El-Tek, models bargaining over the transfer of a product from one corporate division (Audio Components) to another (Magnetic Division) with increased manufacturing potential (Bazerman & Brett, 1988). The respective division heads meet to settle the transfer price and the sales restrictions. Although the negotiation is primarily distributive (i.e., Audio would like the transfer price to be higher, and Magnetic would like it to be lower), it also has an integrative dimension (i.e., both sides benefit from finding the type of restrictions that protect Audio's interests without cutting too deeply into Magnetic's sales). During the second class session, students were randomly assigned to the two roles and to negotiation dyads. They were instructed to read over their confidential role information, prepare for the negotiation, coordinate with their counterpart, and engage in the negotiation via instant messaging at their convenience before the following class session.

### Personality Measures

*UC.* As in the previous studies, UC was measured with the nine-item revised UC scale (Fritz & Helgeson, 1998). The Cronbach's alpha of the scale with this sample was .64. Because of this smaller sample size, the reliability seems low; however, in Study 1, with a much larger sample size, we saw that the scale is sufficiently reliable ( $\alpha = .73$ ).

To capture how individuals high in UC differentially perceive instrumental benefits of negotiation versus relational costs, we developed two scales to tap each of these unique perceptions, both of which were adapted from items used in prior negotiation research (Babcock, Gelfand, & Small, 2006). Perceived relational cost of negotiation was measured by averaging the items from the Apprehension and Social Consequences subscales of the Propensity to Initiate Negotiations Scale, and perceived instrumental benefits of negotiation was measured by averaging the items from the Recognition and Entitlement subscales.

*Perceived relational cost of negotiation.* This scale taps concerns about relational discomfort and social costs of assertive negotiation. It is composed of 11 items ( $\alpha = .93$ ) that measure anxiety about negotiating and concern for the social consequences of negotiating. Sample items include "If I ask for what I want from someone, it will put stress on our relationship" and "Asking someone for what I want creates harmful conflict." Responses to each item were rated on a standard scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

*Perceived instrumental benefit of negotiation.* This scale measures the perceived instrumental benefits to engaging in negotiations. The items measure individuals' recognition that negotiation could improve their situation and feelings of entitlement that they deserve to have their needs met in negotiations. Both recognition and entitlement describe the perceived instrumental benefits one can garner from engaging in negotiations. The scale consists of nine items ( $\alpha = .70$ ), such as "It is possible to make things better for myself by simply asking for what I want" and "I think situations should be changed to fit my desires," rated on the same response scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

### Negotiation Measures

*Reservation point.* After reading their role, but before meeting their counterpart, participants were asked to fill out a short pre-negotiation preparation document, which asked them to report their reservation point. A reservation point represents the worst outcome one is willing to accept before walking away from the negotiation at an impasse and opting for one's alternative to negotiation. Although both parties have a clear best alternative to a negotiated agreement as delineated in the role materials (Audio will produce the magnet itself and earn a projected \$5 million in profit, and Magnetic will earn no profit), there is still a great deal of variation in the reservation points set by individual negotiators. Other factors such as reputation, risk, and considerations about competitive advantage affect the level at which individual negotiators choose to set their reservation point.

*Outcome.* As mentioned above, there are two negotiable issues on the table in the El-Tek exercise, transfer price and level of restrictions. The exercise materials detail the net profit to each party of all possible settlements. We used these payoff matrixes to calculate the seller's net profit and the buyer's net profit and used these values to create summary measures of distributive value claimed (self-profit less other-profit), and integrative value creation (self-profit plus other-profit). Although we did not make specific predictions about the one-sided effect of UC on value creation, we included this variable to provide a more comprehensive analysis of how UC influences monetary negotiation outcomes. In Study 4, we explore this relationship more directly by matching the UC levels of both members of the negotiation dyad. Outcomes from this study are reported in millions of dollars.

### Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlations between study variables are presented in Table 2, with coefficient alphas on the diagonal. We performed linear regression analyses to test the effects of individual differences on outcomes from the seller's perspective.<sup>5</sup> As expected, high-UC individuals claimed less distributive value ( $R^2 = .25$ ),  $F(26) = 8.45$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\beta = -.50$ ,  $p < .01$ . Substantively, these numbers indicate that in this negotiation exercise, a one-unit increase in UC resulted in claiming \$3.10 million less of the overall pie of distributive value. There was no significant effect of UC on value creation ( $R^2 = .03$ ),  $F(26) = 0.84$ , *ns*,  $\beta = 0.18$ , *ns*. This null finding is not surprising given that it was not a primarily integrative conflict and we did not create dyads in which parties were both high or both low in UC. To follow up on the potential damaging effects of UC to value creation, in Study 4 we manipulated dyad pairings to maximize the difference in joint UC across data points.

To test the prediction that the monetarily worse outcomes agreed to by high-UC individuals are a function of behavioral

<sup>5</sup> When analyses were conducted with the individual difference scores of both negotiators entered simultaneously in the regression, only the personality of the seller had a significant effect on outcome. Past research has found that negotiation outcomes tend to be affected more by individual characteristics of the person in the high-power versus low-power role (e.g. Allred, Mallozzi, Matsui, & Raia, 1997; Anderson & Thompson, 2004) and the seller was the high-power role by virtue of a better best alternative to a negotiated agreement.

Table 2  
*Study 3: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study Variables*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Unmitigated communion	(.64)					
2. Relational costs	.43***	(.93)				
3. Instrumental benefits	.15	.12	(.70)			
4. Reservation point	-.25*	-.35**	.15	—		
5. Value claimed	-.31*	-.12	.00	.19	—	
6. Value created	.22	.10	-.11	-.19	-.37**	—
<i>M</i>	3.31	3.77	4.74	4.18	14.03	-0.66
<i>SD</i>	0.52	1.25	0.67	2.43	2.46	3.68

Note.  $N = 70$ . Coefficient alphas appear on the diagonal. Reservation point, value claimed, and value created are measured in millions of dollars.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (two-tailed).

differences, we assessed how UC related to reservation point. As predicted, UC was significantly correlated with reservation point ( $r = -.25, p < .05$ ). When reservation point was regressed on UC, the coefficient was both statistically and substantively significant ( $R^2 = .06$ ),  $F(61) = 4.13, p < .05, \beta = -.25, p < .05$ , with a one-unit increase in UC predicting a \$1.1 million lower reservation point. We then regressed value claimed on reservation point to test whether the effect of UC in lowering outcomes is a function of this planned softness. When reservation point was entered into the model predicting outcome ( $R^2 = .56$ ),  $F(24) = 13.91, p < .001$ , the effect and significance of UC was reduced ( $\beta = -0.22, ns$ ), and the coefficient for reservation point remained significant ( $\beta = 0.64, p < .001$ ), indicating partial mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Given the small sample size, and to avoid making distributional assumptions, bootstrapping was used to test the effect size and significance of the indirect effect in this mediation model (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The mean effect from this bootstrapping was  $-1.48$ , which falls within a 95% confidence interval from  $-4.26$  to  $-0.002$ , indicating a significant indirect effect of UC on value claiming as mediated by reservation point.

Although these analyses help elucidate that the effect of UC on negotiation outcomes is driven at least partially by individual behavior—specifically, planned softness before the start of the negotiation—the question remains as to what psychological mechanism is driving high-UC individuals to set lower reservation points. It is our hypothesis that individuals high in UC do not have a depressed perception of the instrumental advantages they can reap from negotiating; rather, they have a heightened perception of the relational costs associated with negotiating. The correlation data in Table 2 support this prediction. UC correlated significantly with perceived relational costs of negotiation ( $r = .43, p < .001$ ) but had no significant relationship to perceived instrumental benefits of negotiation ( $r = .15, ns$ ). To test whether this heightened perception of relational costs leads high-UC negotiators to set less ambitious reservation points, we conducted mediation tests using linear regression. When perceived relational costs was entered into the model predicting reservation point ( $R^2 = .13$ ),  $F(61) = 4.45, p < .05$ , its coefficient was significant ( $\beta = -0.29, p < .05$ ), and effect and significance of UC on reservation point was reduced ( $\beta = -0.11, ns$ ), indicating partial mediation, whereas perceived instrumental benefits had no such mediating effect, model:  $R^2 = .10, F(61) = 3.35, p < .05$ ; perceived instrumental benefits coefficient:  $\beta = 0.20, ns$ ; UC coefficient:  $\beta = -0.29, p < .05$ . A Sobel

test of the mediation model revealed a nearly significant indirect effect of UC on reservation point through perceived relational costs ( $-0.61, p < .10$ ).

Figure 1 depicts a path diagram of the above mediation analyses. As predicted in our hypotheses, high-UC individuals claimed less value during the negotiation, partly because they set lower reservation points. In turn, this less ambitious, more cautious approach before the actual negotiation was proximally determined by their heightened fears of the relational costs to negotiating assertively. It did not reflect a blindness to the benefits of negotiating in terms of the economic outcome.

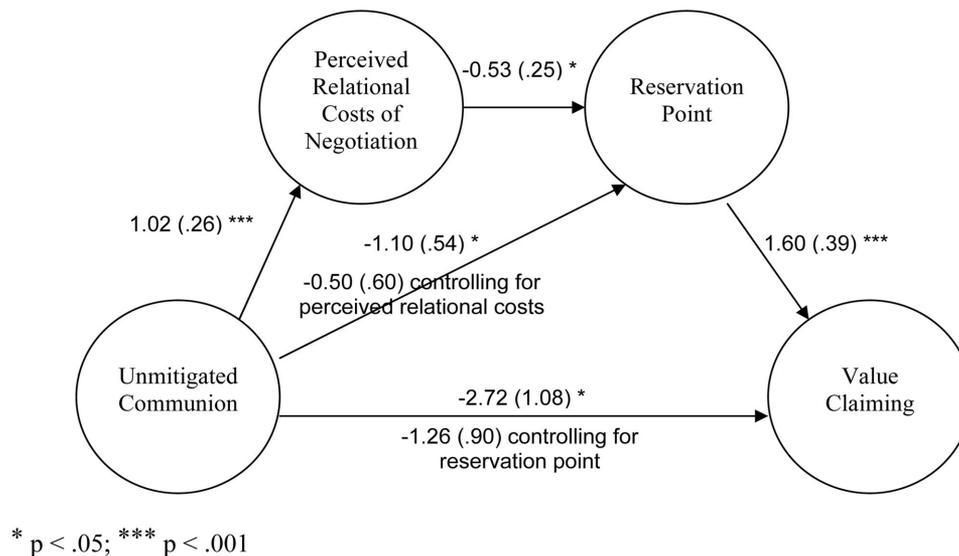
### Discussion

The results from Study 3 tell a consistent story describing the effect of UC in negotiations. Using a simulated dyadic negotiation exercise, results demonstrated a strong negative effect of UC on the amount of value claimed in the negotiation. Although this main effect itself is noteworthy in the negotiation literature, in which personality effects have been so rare, the mediation analyses provide a substantial contribution to the understanding of the psychological process driving the main effects. The first set of mediation analyses showed that the effect of UC on outcomes was mediated through high-UC individuals' prenegotiation tendencies to plan a lower reservation point. Furthermore, the second set of mediation analyses showed that this tendency to set a lower reservation point was driven by their heightened fears of relational damage and not by muted appreciation of the instrumental benefits of negotiating.

### Study 4: Relational Accommodation in Integrative Bargaining

In our final study, we investigated our hypothesis that relationship concerns of UC impede the ability of negotiators to maximize joint gains in an integrative negotiation while simultaneously fostering relational satisfaction—a phenomenon known as *relational accommodation* (Curhan et al., in press; Gelfand et al., 2006; see footnote 1). Previous studies have examined this phenomenon by bringing dating couples into the lab (Fry et al., 1983) or by manipulating cultural norms (Curhan et al., in press). A review of this literature by Gelfand et al. (2006) proposed, based on theory of relational self-construal, that joint gains in integrative

Path Diagram of Mediation Results

Figure 1. Path diagram of mediation results. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

negotiations are impeded only when relational motives are very high on both sides of the dyad, whereas moderate levels of relational motives should be associated with improved joint gains (pp. 439–441). Hence, to test that this phenomenon can ensue from UC, we assigned negotiators to their partners on the basis of similar UC scores, resulting in high–high pairs and low–low pairs. We predicted that high–high pairs would be so concerned with fostering a positive relationship that they would neglect to maximize integrative potential in their negotiations. This phenomenon may help in further distinguishing UC from other interpersonal constructs. Whereas high UC on both sides of the table should hinder integrative success, high levels of more moderate relational orientations may help it. As such, we expected that dyadic agreeableness scores would aid value creation and that dyadic UC scores would reduce value creation.

*Hypothesis 11:* High-UC dyads will create less integrative value in their negotiations.

*Hypothesis 12:* High-UC dyads will be more relationally satisfied than will low-UC dyads.

### Method

#### Participants

Data were collected from students enrolled in a course on power and negotiation who participated in the study as part of a negotiation class assignment. All 234 participants were full-time MBA students at a major university. This sample consisted of 68 women (29%) and 166 men (71%). The classes from which students were drawn had an average age of 29.4 years ( $SD = 2.78$ ) and an average of 5.4 years ( $SD = 2.22$ ) of work experience.

#### Procedure

UC and other personality measures were administered via a Web survey that students completed in partial fulfillment of a course

requirement. All but 17 students returned usable data from these surveys.

Several weeks into the course, participants engaged in a two-party labor-management negotiation simulation called “Adam Baxter,” a case that has been used in previous research (Bayazit & Mannix, 2003; Kurtzberg, 2005; case developed by Valley & Medvec, 1996). Unbeknownst to the students, they were paired for this negotiation exercise according to their individual UC scores (i.e., the individual with the highest UC score was paired with the individual with the second highest, the third highest was paired with the fourth highest, etc.). Within each pair, individuals were randomly assigned to represent either the union or the management and received a set of confidential instructions consistent with their assigned role. The simulation included multiple issues that afforded integrative potential (i.e., creative options could be brainstormed that would increase the utility for both parties; Pruitt, 1983). However, unlike the simulation used in Study 3, parties’ interests were described in qualitative terms (i.e., potential outcomes were not scored). Participants were allowed several days in which to complete the negotiation and submit their outcomes online by means of a postnegotiation questionnaire.

#### Personality Measures

*UC.* UC was measured with the same scale as in all previous studies. In this sample, the Cronbach’s alpha was .72. The unit of analysis in this study was the negotiation dyad, so UC scores of both parties were aggregated.

*Other personality measures.* Self-esteem was measured (Rosenberg, 1965) as a control variable given its association with nonassertive communication styles (e.g. Lorr & More, 1980). Agreeableness was measured with the short form of the Revised NEO-FFI.

#### Negotiation-Related Measures

*Relational satisfaction.* Following the negotiation, participants completed a questionnaire that included the Relationship subscale

of the Subjective Value Inventory (Curhan, Elfenbein, & Xu, 2006). The four items included “What kind of ‘overall’ impression did your counterpart make on you?” (1 = *extremely negative*, 4 = *neither negative nor positive*, 7 = *extremely positive*), “How satisfied are you with your relationship with your counterpart as a result of this negotiation?” (1 = *not at all*, 4 = *moderately*, 7 = *perfectly*), “Did the negotiation make you trust your counterpart?” (1 = *not at all*, 4 = *moderately*, 7 = *perfectly*), and “Did the negotiation build a good foundation for a future relationship with your counterpart?” (1 = *not at all*, 4 = *moderately*, 7 = *perfectly*;  $\alpha = .96$ ,  $M = 5.74$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ). Again, because the unit of analysis was the negotiation dyad, relational satisfaction scores of both parties were aggregated.

**Economic value.** Final outcomes of the negotiation were recorded in the form of a memorandum of understanding between the parties. Two trained coders who were unaware of participants’ UC scores but who had studied the relevant confidential instructions evaluated the quality of each agreement on scales ranging from 1 (*terrible*) to 7 (*excellent*) from the management perspective and from the union perspective. Raters took into consideration the outcome reached on each issue and the relative prioritization of the issues by each of the parties. Each agreement was coded by a single coder, except for a subset of 15 agreements coded in common to establish interrater reliability. The interrater reliability was  $r = .91$ . (For the 15 agreements used to establish interrater reliability, the originally assigned coder’s ratings were retained.) The resulting values were used to represent the economic value of the outcome to each of the parties. Finally, a joint outcome score was created by summing these individual values within each dyad ( $M = 9.43$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ ).

### Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables are presented in Table 3. Given the correlation between UC and agreeableness ( $r = .27$ ,  $p < .001$ ), we included both measures of other-directedness in the subsequent analyses to isolate the effect of one above and beyond the other. Additionally, we included self-esteem of both negotiators as a control. Regression analyses were used to test the effect of dyadic UC scores on joint relationship satisfaction and joint economic outcomes, with self-esteem and agreeableness of both dyad members controlled for. Results from both regression equations are presented in Table 4. Dyadic UC scores significantly predicted self-reported relationship satisfaction (Equation 1:  $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $t(80) = 2.47$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This is

consistent with our prediction that high–high UC pairs make a concerted effort to create and maintain a positive relationship during the negotiation. Equation 2 regresses joint economic outcomes on the predictor variables to show that the extreme relationship concerns of high-UC dyads is detrimental to the realization of integrative economic gains. Both agreeableness and UC had marginally significant effects on the negotiated outcome. Specifically, higher dyadic UC scores resulted in economically worse negotiated outcomes ( $\beta = -0.23$ ,  $t(71) = -1.89$ ,  $p < .10$ ), whereas higher dyadic agreeableness scores resulted in better negotiated outcomes ( $\beta = 0.25$ ,  $t(71) = 2.00$ ,  $p < .10$ ). This is consistent with our predictions and earlier findings that UC hurts economic outcomes, whereas agreeableness does not.

### Discussion

Results from Study 4 support our hypothesis that joint gain in an integrative negotiation is reduced when individuals on both sides of the bargaining table score high on UC. However, consistent with our relational accommodation prediction, and the results of Curhan et al. (in press), those same dyads high on UC reported higher relational satisfaction. This finding supports the prediction that individuals scoring high on UC are trading off monetary value in deference to relational concerns, and it appears that doing so pays off relationally.

### General Discussion

Data from four studies demonstrate the importance of a personality construct, UC, in predicting negotiation behaviors and outcomes. Previous research on the influence of individual differences in negotiations has demonstrated weak and often inconsistent results. However, this article has sought to demonstrate that reliance on overly broad and multifaceted personality dimensions may be partly to blame for the paltry success of past research in this domain. Instead, this article focused on a personality dimension with specific and important implications in the negotiation domain. Given the inherently relational context of negotiation interactions, it seems intuitive that individual differences in relational orientation should have a real impact on behaviors and outcomes in negotiation. However, other-concern alone does not explain accommodating behavior and the poor economic outcomes that result. Instead, other-concern coupled with relational anxieties and ego-defensive motives, as captured in the UC personality construct, was shown to impede negotiators from claiming and creating

Table 3  
Study 4: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Unmitigated communion (individual)	—				
2. Self-esteem (individual)	-.11	—			
3. Agreeableness (individual)	.27***	.14*	—		
4. Economic outcome (dyadic)	-.12	.11	.07	—	
5. Relationship satisfaction (dyadic)	.22**	.04	.02	.11	—
<i>M</i>	3.18	3.31	3.63	9.43	11.54
<i>SD</i>	0.62	0.48	0.49	1.50	2.01

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (two-tailed).

Table 4  
 Study 4: Negotiation Outcomes Regressed on Individual Difference Variables

Independent variable	Joint relationship satisfaction				Joint economic outcome			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>
Dyadic self-esteem	0.20	0.33	0.07	0.61	0.17	0.24	0.08	0.69
Dyadic agreeableness	-0.03	0.35	-0.01	-0.08	0.52	0.26	0.25	2.00 <sup>†</sup>
Dyadic unmitigated communion	0.48	0.20	0.29	2.47 <sup>*</sup>	-0.27	0.15	-0.23	-1.89 <sup>†</sup>

<sup>†</sup>  $p < .10$ . <sup>\*</sup>  $p < .05$ .

economic value. We isolated and measured the deleterious effects of this dispositional tendency on negotiating tactics (accommodating), negotiation preferences (relational costs vs. instrumental benefits), behaviors (adherence to reservation points), and monetary outcomes (negotiated agreements) in both distributive and integrative contexts.

#### Contributions and Directions for Future Research

We have demonstrated that UC is an important construct to study in the domain of negotiations because it consistently affected how individuals negotiated and the outcomes they agreed to across a number of empirical studies over and above the effects of extant measures of other-concern and interpersonal orientation, such as agreeableness. However, we acknowledge that UC may be better compared not with the broader construct of agreeableness but rather with one of its many subscales. Because the short form of the Revised NEO-FFI, which was used in our studies, does not have very reliable subscales, future research should address this issue, possibly by comparing UC to the long-form NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1985) agreeableness subscales of nonantagonistic and prosocial orientation to further establish UC as a unique construct.

Although our studies were focused on distinguishing UC from agreeableness, it should be noted that the negotiation outcome results obtained for the latter were consistent with the predictions of Barry and Friedman (1998). Specifically, they predicted that agreeableness would be positively associated with negotiator effectiveness in achieving integrative potential. Consistent with this prediction, in Study 4, which measured value creation in negotiation outcomes, the aggregate agreeableness score of both members of the dyad had a nearly significant, positive effect on joint negotiation outcome ( $\beta = 0.24$ ,  $t = 1.86$ ,  $p < .10$ ). Although the results from Barry and Friedman's (1998) study failed to support their prediction, these authors argued that their limited sample size may have been at fault. As such, the results obtained in Study 4 provide important empirical evidence supportive of their initial predictions.

An important moderator of individual differences that should be addressed in future research is situation strength (Mischel, 1977). In the negotiation context, strong situations may be single-issue negotiations or negotiations with a small zone of possible agreement, whereas weak situations may be negotiations with a wider zone of possible agreement, such as the ones presented in this article. Results from a comprehensive investigation of individual attributes in negotiation have suggested that individual differences matter more in integrative bargaining situations than in distributive

bargaining situations (Elfenbein, Curhan, Eisenkraft, Shirako, & Baccaro, 2007). Thus, future studies should compare the effects of UC across different negotiation contexts, including both simulated and real-life negotiations, to more fully understand how UC affects negotiation behavior and outcomes.

Future research should also explore whether the heightened perception of the relational costs of negotiation felt by high-UC negotiators is merely felt or whether it is a real reaction to their social environment. Research related to gender has shown that women's less assertive negotiation styles (Amanatullah, 2007) and lack of propensity to initiate negotiations (Bowles, Babcock, & Lai, 2007) are socially reinforced perceptions of the true environment, as evaluators do punish women more severely than men when they behave assertively, initiate negotiations, or both (Rudman & Glick, 2001). The same phenomenon may be imparted to high-UC individuals. Given their extreme concern for others, the standards of what they can and cannot ask for before the threshold of relational damage is crossed may be substantively different.

Given that high-UC individuals derive their self-esteem from their relationships with others and their ability to fulfill the needs of others, an interesting direction for future research linking UC with negotiations would be to explore the tendency of high-UC individuals to build coalitions in multiparty negotiations. It seems plausible that high-UC individuals would be less likely to build coalitions that exclude others and simultaneously more likely to erode their own value in favor of having the needs of all other parties met and avoiding factions even when coalition building would prove more financially rewarding. Along these same lines, the desire to fulfill the needs of others would likely also drive high-UC individuals to agree to unfavorable outcomes simply to avoid an impasse. Thus, in situations in which there is a negative bargaining zone (i.e., there exists no zone of possible agreements), high-UC individuals would be more likely to agree to a deal, especially one that is worse than their best alternative to a negotiated agreement.

Additionally, UC might influence perceptions of fairness. It is likely that high-UC individuals are satisfied with claiming less value not only because doing so helps avoid potential relational damage but also because they perceive such an inequity to be a fair distribution of resources. Because high-UC individuals desire to fulfill the needs of others, they may actually perceive equal distributions as unfair. Instead, they may perceive that fair outcomes are only ones in which they receive less relative to their counterpart. This imbalance creates the dependency from which high-UC individuals derive their self-esteem. As such, future research might explore whether high-UC individuals perceive their inequitable

outcomes as fair and subjectively satisfying. It would also be interesting to compare these judgments to their evaluations as an outside observer of the same outcome distributions between two independent parties.

UC may also be a useful measure for exploring sex differences in distributive negotiation outcomes. Because Study 3 focused on distributive value claiming and a recent meta-analysis of the research on gender and negotiations claims that women agree to monetarily worse outcomes in distributive contexts (Stuhlmacher & Walters, 1999), we conducted supplemental analyses on the data to explore the role of UC as a potential mediator of gender effects in distributive negotiation. Although not directly predicted in our hypotheses, these supplementary analyses yielded interesting results. A linear regression with the dyad as the unit of analysis revealed a nearly significant effect of focal negotiator sex on value claimed in the negotiation. Female negotiators claimed less value than male negotiators ( $\beta = -0.36, p < .10$ ) to the magnitude of \$2.66 million dollars in profit. Although this finding is not novel in replication of past research (for a meta-analysis, see Stuhlmacher & Walters, 1999), more unique is the mediating role of UC. Negotiator sex (coded 0 for male and 1 for female) significantly predicted UC score ( $\beta = 0.36, p < .05$ ), and when sex and UC were simultaneously entered into a regression equation predicting value claiming, the effect size and significance of sex dropped considerably ( $\beta = -0.21, p = .27$ ), whereas UC remained a significant predictor ( $\beta = -0.43, p < .05$ ). These results suggest a heightened importance of UC in explaining, at least partially, the effect of gender on negotiation. Future research should analyze the effect of UC on negotiation outcomes above and beyond sex in an effort to possibly explain many of the inconsistencies in the research on women in negotiations.

### Limitations

A potential limitation of our studies is in the amount of variance explained. Although the results from all four studies provided evidence consistent with our predictions, the strength of those relationships and the amount of variance explained was modest. However, we do not assert that personality explains all behavioral differences in negotiating behavior, nor that it completely dictates subsequent outcomes, simply that it matters. Past empirical research has had a difficult time consistently documenting the effects of personality across studies. By focusing on UC, we have been able to show consistently across a number of distinct samples how this personality variable can be used to confidently predict accommodating behavior and subsequently poor economic outcomes, both distributive and integrative.

Another important limitation is the particular population used in these studies. In all samples, participants were managers pursuing advanced business administration degrees. Future research should examine how predictive this dimension is among other populations of professionals who negotiate, such as diplomats and lawyers.

### Conclusion

When the effect of personality is assessed in any situation, not just conflict situations, it is important, to be precise and interpretable, that the variables chosen for study are not overly broad. Broad constructs with high bandwidth across multiple facets of

personality do not allow for sufficient fidelity to particular components of personality that may be more useful for predicting consistent results. As such, in exploration of the determinants of claiming less and giving away more value in negotiations, we focused on a specific construct characterized as an extreme personality orientation involving the excessive concern for others to the point of self-neglect. Focusing on this one facet of the multifaceted construct of interpersonal orientation allowed us to narrow in on the effect of UC in negotiations. Four studies effectively established the construct validity of this measure, demonstrated and further replicated the effect on negotiation outcomes, isolated the social motives driving behavior, and revealed through mediation the underlying psychological mechanisms contributing to the outcome effects.

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Received July 13, 2007

Revision received April 23, 2008

Accepted April 23, 2008 ■