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By

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Abstract

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People have a fundamental need to feel socially connected to others -- in other words, a need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This need is thought to operate according to a drive model, such that a threat to this need – in the form of social rejection or disconnection – motivates one to seek out means to restore the need, in the form of social acceptance or connection (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The present dissertation examines social power as a factor that may enhance social-connection seeking in the wake of rejection. Social power – defined as the ability to control the resources and outcomes of others (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003) – has several consequences that may foster social-connection seeking, including greater resilience to rejection (Kuehn, Chen, & Gordon, in press), and greater goal pursuit (Guinote, 2007). The present work tested two specific mechanisms by which higher power may drive connection-seeking after rejection: greater expectations for acceptance and lesser concern with rejection.

In the present work, Studies 1 and 2 examined whether power would enhance social-connection seeking after rejection. Study 1 manipulated power in a visualization paradigm and measured participants' tendency to seek connection after a hypothetical rejection. Study 2 measured trait power in romantic partners and observed behavioral engagement with a partner after perceiving low responsiveness from that partner. Studies 3a and 3b examined whether power predicted our hypothesized mediators. Study 3a examined relationships between trait power, trait acceptance expectations, and trait rejection concerns. Study 3b manipulated power in a visualization paradigm and measured acceptance expectations and rejection concerns from a hypothetical partner. Study 4 tested the full mediation model, assigning participants to a role of high-power or low-power for a partner task, manipulating rejection by delivering accepting or rejecting feedback from the partner, and measuring acceptance expectations, rejection concerns, and behavioral and motivational social-connection seeking tendencies with a new social target.

Studies 1 and 2 demonstrated that greater power predicted greater social-connection seeking uniquely following rejection (and not following acceptance). Studies 3a and 3b demonstrated that power was associated with greater acceptance expectations and lesser rejection concern. Study 4, however, failed to replicate these effects, and failed to provide evidence for mediation. Potential explanations, limitations, and suggestions for future directions are discussed.

Dedication

To my mother, Martha, who gave me life and taught me just about everything I know.
Thank you for sharing your passion for psychology with me, via both nature and nurture.
I love you.

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Power and the Pursuit of Connection: The Effects of Social Power on Social-Connection Seeking after Rejection

When the things we fundamentally need are taken away from us, we experience a drive to find them once more. This holds for physical needs – which when unmet, make us feel things like hunger and thirst – and for social needs alike. One prominent social need – belonging, the need for meaningful social connection – is thought to operate according to a drive model, such that social rejection momentarily makes us "socially hungry" by amplifying belonging needs (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Such heightened salience of belonging goals can spur people to employ strategies in the service of satiating these goals, including increased attunement to social information and greater interest in building bonds with others (Maner, DeWall, Baumeister, & Schaller, 2007; Pickett, Gardner, & Knowles, 2004). However, people don't always take the high road after being rejected, adaptively seeking to restore their belonging. Sometimes rejection throws individuals into a state of despondency, wherein goals seem pointless and self-regulation is diminished (Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Twenge, 2005; Twenge, Catanese, & Baumeister, 2003). In such cases, people may respond with aggression or reduced prosociality, particularly if they fear being negatively evaluated by others (Maner et al., 2007; Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke, 2001; Twenge, Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Bartels, 2007).

What factors or dynamics might moderate one's propensity to seek social reconnection after experiencing rejection? Research has begun to identify relevant social and personality factors, such as the opportunity for acceptance (Dewall & Richman, 2011) and the dispositional tendency to fear rejection (Maner et al., 2007). The present work explored **social power** as a moderator of motivation and behavior at this crucial juncture, testing the overarching hypothesis that high-power individuals will be more likely than low-power individuals to respond to rejection from an opposite-power counterpart by prioritizing and engaging in behaviors aimed at addressing their temporarily heightened belonging needs—namely, by seeking social connection. Moreover, we hypothesized that greater relative social power enhances social-connection seeking after rejection by a dual-pronged mechanism: by increasing acceptance expectations and attenuating rejection concerns.

Social Power and Rejection Responding

Social power is defined as control over others' outcomes and resources (Keltner et al., 2003). The extensive literature on power points to several reasons why power is a prime candidate for moderating social-connection seeking in response to rejection. First, power has been shown to affect rejection responses in other respects: specifically, greater power relative to a partner attenuates emotional and self-esteem responses to rejection from that partner (Kuehn et al., in press), thus buffering individuals from some highly aversive effects of rejection. If the powerful don't feel the sting of rejection in the same way as the powerless, it stands to reason that their post-rejection motivations and behaviors would also differ from those of the powerless. Perhaps being less upset by rejection allows the powerful to choose the path toward reconnection, rather than lashing out at one's rejecter and exhibiting hostility. We tested this basic notion in the present work, but diverse strands of evidence also suggest several other mechanisms underlying the hypothesized effect of power and social-connection seeking in response to rejection.

Social Power and Goal Pursuit

Another possible explanation for power promoting connection-seeking after rejection lies in the power and goal pursuit literature (e.g., Chen, Lee-Chai, & Bargh, 2001; Guinote, 2007). The approach/inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al., 2003) argues that power increases activation of the approach system and, accordingly, fosters attempts to attain salient goals. Relatedly, the social

distance theory of power (Magee & Smith, 2013) proposes that due to their greater experience of social distance, the powerful operate at a higher construal level than the powerless (Smith & Trope, 2006), which facilitates behavior consistent with one's values and the most central, pressing goals in the situation (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Because rejection heightens belonging goals and thus the desire for social connection (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995), and because power fosters goal pursuit (e.g., Guinote, 2007), high power may promote greater interest in and efforts to attain these salient social-connection goals in the face of rejection, relative to lower power. Indeed, recent research has shown that priming power leads to increased social-connection seeking after rejection by fostering an approach orientation (Narayanan, Tai, & Kinias, 2013). Along related lines, following an instance of being hurt or offended by a partner, high-power romantic partners with relationship commitment goals demonstrate reactions supporting their commitment goals: greater forgiveness and pro-relationship behaviors (Karremans & Smith, 2010).

Extending research on this well-established effect of power upon goal pursuit (e.g., Chen et al., 2001; Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee, & Galinsky, 2008; Guinote, 2007; Slabu & Guinote, 2010), the present work tested a novel, dual-pronged mechanism that may drive social-connection seeking among the powerful after rejection: expectations for acceptance and concerns about rejection. One potential strength of testing these mediators is their greater precision and stronger link to the context of social rejection, compared to a goal-pursuit account, which should operate across contexts.

Power, Acceptance Expectations, and Rejection Concerns

Specifically, my mediation hypothesis was that greater social power would increase expectations of acceptance, and attenuate concern about rejection, both of which in turn would drive greater social-connection seeking. Why should power shape social expectations in this style? The approach/inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al., 2003) argues that the powerful are more attuned to rewards than to threats. I proposed that this heightened reward focus should apply to social rewards, implying that powerful people are likely to be more attuned to social prizes such as acceptance from low-power others. On the flip side, the attenuated threat focus of the powerful should reduce their concern with and/or sensitivity to signs of social threat—such as rejection from the relatively powerless.

Related to their greater focus on positive, rewarding situational features, high power people also expect more positive outcomes; in other words, high power is associated with elevated optimism (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006). Such optimism may promote expectations of positive social outcomes, such as acceptance, and reduce concerns about negative social outcomes, such as rejection. Moreover, greater optimism is associated with reduced anxiety and neuroticism (Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994), suggesting that the relatively powerful, optimistic individual may experience less worry and fear over rejection compared to the worry and fear that the less optimistic, powerless person experiences.

My hypothesized mediation also finds support in the social distance theory of power (Magee & Smith, 2013), which proposes that high-power individuals expect affiliation from their low-power counterparts to a greater degree than low-power individuals expect affiliation from the powerful. This implies, in essence, that high power fosters the sense that one is guaranteed some degree of inclusion by low-power others. Thus, in line with my mediation hypothesis, expectations of acceptance should be higher among the powerful relative to the powerless. It stands to reason that rejection concerns should exhibit a complementary pattern: high-power individuals—whose outcomes are less dependent on the wishes and approval of the powerless—should experience less concern about rejection from their lower-power counterparts, relative to low-power individuals' concerns about rejection from the powerful.

Some preliminary evidence consistent with my hypothesized mediators exists. In particular, research indicates that when mating goals are salient, power increases perceptions and expectations of sexual interest from subordinates (Kunstman & Maner, 2010), akin to acceptance expectations. Other research focused on evaluating the unique effects of dominance and acceptance on self-esteem has shown that dominance and perceptions of acceptance are moderately correlated (Leary, Cottrell, & Phillips, 2001). Regarding rejection concerns, Anderson and Berdahl (2002) found that high-power individuals tended to underestimate threatening emotion (e.g., contempt) from a low-power partner after a dyadic interaction. Other work showing that the powerful tend to act with relatively little regard for norms (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003; Van Kleef, Homan, Finkenauer, Gündemir, & Stamkou, 2011), and in other ways likely to invite negative social evaluation—for instance, interrupting and patronizing others (DePaulo & Friedman, 1998; Vescio, Gervais, Snyder, & Hoover, 2005)—also suggests their relative lack of concern about rejection.

In short, there are both conceptual and preliminary empirical grounds for power impacting my hypothesized mediators—namely, fostering expectations of acceptance and lessening concerns about rejection. In turn, I proposed that these expectations and concerns would be instrumental in predicting social-connection seeking motivation and behavior among the powerful after rejection.

Fear of Negative Evaluation, Acceptance Expectations, and Social-Connection Seeking

Feeling assured of acceptance and unconcerned with rejection should poise the powerful to seek social connection in the wake of rejection. The literature offers support for each of these mediators independently promoting social-connection seeking. First, expectations that a social target will provide liking and acceptance may make an individual more apt to pursue connection with that target, relative to expectations that the target will not provide such social rewards. Further, the optimism of the powerful (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006) may extend beyond expectations for acceptance, also making the powerful more confident that their attempts to reconnect will be successful, thus underpinning social-connection seeking motivations and behaviors. Moreover, people tend to be drawn to others who like them (Backman & Secord, 1959), suggesting that greater expectations of acceptance may promote greater connection-seeking attempts. Thus, I proposed that acceptance expectations would increase efforts to gain acceptance, fostering social-connection seeking.

Regarding rejection concerns, Maner and colleagues (2007) investigated the boundary conditions for pursuing social connection after rejection, and demonstrated that trait concern with rejection (i.e., fear of negative evaluation, FNE; Leary, 1983) moderated the social-connection seeking effect post-rejection. That is, only individuals low in rejection concerns sought social connection after a rejection experience. This may occur because people high in rejection concerns – who are fearful of and sensitive to rejection (Leary, 1983) – expect rejection and distress from novel interactions (Heimberg, Lebowitz, Hope, & Schneier, 1995; Maddux, Norton, & Leary, 1988), and are thus likely to see a new partner as a threat, rather than an opportunity for social connection (Maner et al., 2007). In the present work, I proposed that state concerns with rejection would operate analogously to these dispositional FNE effects, such that greater momentary rejection concerns would attenuate social-connection seeking.

Thus, my mediation hypothesis predicted independent effects of rejection concerns and acceptance expectations upon social-connection seeking, although these factors may well be inversely related to one another. Moreover, these factors could compound in powerful ways, as in the case of rejection sensitivity (Downey & Feldman, 1996), essentially a blend of low expectations of acceptance and high concerns about rejection, which fosters fairly hostile responses to perceived rejection (e.g., Downey, Freitas, Michaelis, & Khouri, 1998), a response at odds with connection-seeking behavior (cf. Romero-Canyas, Downey, Reddy, Rodriguez, Cavanaugh, & Pelayo, 2010). As

I predicted the powerful would exhibit an opposite profile – with high acceptance expectations and low rejection concerns – the rejection sensitivity literature thus offers indirect but convergent support for my hypothesis that power would foster more affiliative responses to rejection.

The Present Studies

To recap, the present work tested three hypotheses, composing a mediation model: 1. Social power would foster greater social-connection seeking after rejection, 2. Social power would increase acceptance expectations and decrease rejection concerns, and 3. Acceptance expectations and rejection concerns would drive social-connection seeking after rejection. Taken together, these hypotheses predicted that power would foster greater social-connection seeking after rejection by virtue of reducing concern with rejection and increasing acceptance expectations.

Across five studies, I tested my hypotheses about power and motivational and behavioral responses to rejection. Studies 1 and 2 tested the direct link between power and social-connection seeking. In Study 1, we manipulated power and measured participants' inclination to seek social connection following a hypothetical rejection experience. In Study 2, we examined whether trait power was associated with increased behavioral engagement with a romantic partner following perceptions of low responsiveness from that partner. Studies 3a and 3b tested whether power drove our proposed mediators. In Study 3a, we examined the relationships between trait power and chronic rejection concerns and acceptance expectations. In Study 3b, we manipulated power and measured expectations of acceptance and concerns about rejection from an opposite-power partner. Finally, in Study 4, we assigned participants to a high- or low-power role, delivered rejecting or accepting feedback, and measured subsequent rejection concerns, acceptance expectations, and social-connection seeking tendencies with a new social target. Thus, Study 4 allowed me to test the full mediation model, examining whether post-rejection social-connection seeking among the powerful was driven by rejection concerns and acceptance expectations.

Importantly, this research employed multiple operationalizations of power (e.g., trait- and role-based power), examined power's effects in multiple social contexts (e.g., professional and romantic relationships), and relied on several forms of rejection (e.g., visualized and actual rejection experiences, and self-reported perceptions of rejecting behavior). Using diverse methods enhanced our confidence in the veracity and generalizability of our findings.

As a final note, given that power is a relational construct, such that the experience of high power is complementary to the experience of low power, it is possible to frame our findings in two complementary ways: as high power fostering social-connection seeking, or as low power discouraging social-connection seeking after rejection. For the sake of presenting results concisely and clearly, we have framed our findings throughout in terms of high power fostering social-connection seeking, but they could just as validly be framed with respect to low power. We also included an equal-power control condition in Study 1 to allow at least an initial glimpse at whether higher or lower power was responsible for our effects.

Study 1

Study 1 provided a test of our first hypothesis, that relative to their low-power counterparts, high-power people should be more likely to respond to rejection with a stronger inclination toward socially connecting with others. To measure this, we adapted a face-valid measure of desire for making new social connections from Maner and colleagues (2007; Study 1): interest in joining a service called netWORK that promotes friendships and social connections between coworkers. Because we were interested in the desire for social connection as a means of satisfying intensified belonging needs following rejection, we did not examine responses to acceptance in this study.

In Study 1, to confront all participants with the same rejection experience, participants were asked to visualize themselves being excluded from a happy hour by a coworker while they were in either a high- or low-power role in a workplace. Afterward, they completed measures of emotion, self-esteem, and social-connection interest. In addition to manipulating the visualized power role of the participant, Study 1 varied the power role of the rejecter: that is, the coworker doing the rejection was described as either low- or high-power in the workplace hierarchy. Thus, we used a fully-crossed design with high- and low-power role participants being rejected by either a high- or low-power coworker. The end result was that two of our conditions involved traditional power dyads (with one relatively high-power and one relatively low-power member), whereas the other two conditions were functionally equal-power (with high-power participants being rejected by equally high-power coworkers, and low-power participants being rejected by equally low-power coworkers). These equal-power control conditions let us isolate the locus of our effects by providing a point of contrast between our high- and low-power conditions.

We hypothesized that high-power participants with low-power rejecters would indicate greater interest in joining netWORK after the rejection experience compared to low-power participants with high-power rejecters. Further, to the extent that our effects are driven by both lower relative power decreasing connection-seeking and higher relative power increasing connection-seeking, we expected the equal-power control conditions to fall in between our high-low power dyads. For the equal-power control conditions, we reasoned that interactions wherein high-power people interacted with equally high-power others (or low-power people with similarly low-power others) should not create the asymmetric dependence that defines power. As such, we expected that the two control conditions (high-high and low-low) would not differ significantly from one another.

Method

Participants and procedure. One hundred and nine participants (70 female) were recruited online via Mechanical Turk for a study on personality and mental visualization, and were paid in exchange for their participation. Age ranged from 18 to 82 (M = 36.5). Sixty-eight participants were European American, 22 were Asian, 9 Latino/a, 6 African American, 3 Indian or South Asian, and 1 was of multiple ethnicities. Participants completed demographic and background measures before receiving the manipulation and completing dependent measures, described below. Following the dependent measures, participants completed suspicion probes and were fully debriefed.

Background measures. Participants first completed a state Self-Assessment Manikin, indicating which of a set of pictures ranging from *Very Unhappy* (1) to *Very Happy* (9) best corresponded to how they were feeling at that moment (Bradley & Lang, 1994). They next completed the Single Item Self-Esteem Scale (Robins, Hendin, & Trzesniewski, 2001) using a 5-point Likert style scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 5 = *Strongly agree*). Next, participants completed the 8-item Rejection Sensitivity Scale (Downey & Feldman, 1996), which assesses expectations of rejection and anxiety about rejection in a number of different life scenarios. Participants' reports on a 6-point Likert-style scale of expectations of rejection (1 = *Very Unlikely*, 6 = *Very Likely*) and anxiety regarding rejection (1 = *Very Unconcerned*, 6 = *Very Concerned*) were multiplied for each scenario and summed to create a total score (α = .71). Finally, they completed the 8-item Personal Sense of Power Scale (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012) to assess trait power: participants' responses to items about their amount of power in their relationships in general were made on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *Disagree strongly,* 7 = *Agree strongly*) and were reversed when appropriate and averaged, α =

.88. Sample items include "I can get others to do what I want" and "I think I have a great deal of power."

Power manipulation. Participants were randomly assigned to visualize themselves in either a high- or low-power version of a scenario that stated that they worked at a mid-sized company. In the high-power condition, participants read that they were a pretty high-ranking employee at this company, with a number of subordinates who answer to them and whose performance they evaluate, and that there were not many employees at this company who ranked above them. In the low-power condition, participants read that they were a pretty low-ranking employee at this company, with a direct supervisor who assigns them work and evaluates their performance, and that there were not many employees at this company who ranked below them. In short, consistent with the nature of social power, we conveyed a situation involving asymmetric dependence.

The scenario then went on to explain that people from all ranks of the company often socialize at spontaneously organized post-work happy hours, with invitations by word of mouth. Participants read that typically, when invited, they accept and have fun. Today, however, participants were told to imagine that they found out that there was a happy hour to which they did not get invited. In the high-power role/low-power rejecter condition (hereafter referred to as the "high-power" condition), the happy hour was planned by a low-power coworker, who invited most high-ranking people at the company. In the low-power role/high-power rejecter condition (hereafter referred to as the "low-power" condition), the happy hour was planned by a high-power coworker, who invited most low-ranking employees. In the remaining conditions, a coworker of equal power to the participant planned the happy hour, and most same-ranking people at the company were invited. Thus, participants were always excluded from the happy hour, and this exclusion occurred either within a power dyad or an equal-power relationship.

After reading the scenario, participants completed manipulation checks asking them to indicate their rank at the company on a 5-point Likert-style scale (1 = *Extremely low-ranking*, 3 = *Somewhere in the middle of the hierarchy,* 5 = *Extremely high-ranking*), and who did not invite them to happy hour (*a supervisor, a subordinate, someone of equal rank as you*).

Dependent measures. Participants then completed measures of self-esteem and emotion to capture the rejection-buffering effects of social power; results on these measures are reported in Kuehn et al (in press). Following these scales, participants completed a social-connection seeking measure, which is of primary interest for the present work.

Interest in social connection. To gauge participants' interest in socially connecting with others after the rejection experience, they read a description of a social-connection service called netWORK that the same workplace (from the scenario) was considering implementing. The service would organize social events with the goal of connecting employees and facilitating friendships in the workplace. There would be a small fee to join netWORK but attending social events would be free. After reading the description, participants responded to seven items assessing their interest in meeting people using netWORK (e.g., "I am interested in trying netWORK," "I have a strong interest in getting to know my coworkers better"). Participants indicated their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert style scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*), and responses were reversed when appropriate and averaged to create a composite reflecting participants' interest in joining the social connection service (α = .83).

Results and Discussion

Manipulation checks and exclusions. Ten participants were excluded for poor attention (e.g., not correctly identifying their rejecter). In our remaining sample (N = 99), our power manipulation was effective: high-power-role participants reported having a higher rank (M = 4.22,

SD = .63) than low-power-role participants (*M* = 1.62, *SD* = .77), $F(1, 95) = 318.02$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .77$. Importantly, no effect of rejecter role or interaction emerged, Fs < 1, both $\eta_p^2 = .001$.

Background measures. There were no significant differences between conditions in trait self-esteem, baseline affect, rejection sensitivity, or trait power.

Dependent measures. As reported in Kuehn et al. (in press), preliminary analyses revealed no differences on any dependent variable between high-power participants rejected by a high-power coworker and low-power participants rejected by a low-power co-worker, all Fs < 1, ps > .38. Scores in these two conditions were therefore collapsed to create a single "equal-power" condition. Linear contrasts (weighted for sample size) were then conducted to examine the significance of the trend across increasing levels of power relative to one's partner (from relatively lesser power, to equal power, to relatively greater power), coded using the following coefficients: -1 = low power; 0 = equal power; +1 = high power. Significant linear contrasts thus indicate significant differences between the low- and high-power conditions. Follow-up pairwise contrasts comparing each of the power conditions to the equal-power condition were also conducted.

Interest in social connection. As predicted, interest in joining our netWORK social connection service after visualizing being rejected increased significantly with increasing levels of participants' power relative to their rejecter: low-power *M* = 4.25, *SD* = 1.23; equal-power *M* = 4.86, *SD* = 0.94; high-power *M* = 5.16, *SD* = 1.03; $F(1, 96) = 9.47$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$; see Figure 1. Follow-up contrasts revealed that equal-power participants reported significantly more interest than low-power participants, $t(96) = 2.31$, $p = .02$, $d = .55$, but did not differ from high-power participants, $t(96) = 1.20$, $p = .23$, $d = .30$. However, the notable effect size on this latter contrast suggests that with a greater sample size, this effect would likely emerge as statistically significant, making both higher and lower power responsible for the effects observed here. Overall, these results are consistent with my first hypothesis: that increased relative power would increase social-connection seeking following rejection.

Alternative explanations. A follow-up study addressed the possibility that high power encourages social-connection seeking even in the absence of a rejection experience. In an independent sample (*N* = 38), we manipulated high- versus low-power with the role descriptions used in Study 1 and then immediately measured interest in joining netWORK with the items used in Study 1 ($\alpha = .87$). High-power participants were no more interested in joining netWORK (*M* = 4.92) than low-power participants (*M* = 4.89), $t(36) = .09$, $p = .93$, when there was no rejection. Thus, only following a rejection experience did power influence participants' inclination to pursue social connection, supporting our predictions.

In sum, Study 1 provided initial support for my first hypothesis, that greater power would promote greater social-connection seeking after rejection. Study 1 also lent insight into the locus of my effects: the effect size was larger for the contrast between the low-power condition and the equal-power condition than for the high-power vs. equal-power contrast, suggesting that low power may be somewhat more responsible for the effects observed here. Study 1 also allowed an initial test of mediation, and found that neither self-esteem nor emotional reactivity predicted connection seeking, going against a narrative whereby lesser reactivity to rejection enables greater connection-seeking afterward. Naturally, the vignette design of Study 1 is a limitation; Study 2 sought to test the effects of power on social-connection seeking in actual, ongoing relationships.

Study 2

Study 2 aimed to provide another test of my first hypothesis, that power fosters social-connection seeking post-rejection, this time investigating social-connection seeking behaviorally and in the context of a romantic relationship. Dating couples came into the lab and reported on their

feelings and experiences in their relationship so far that day before completing a problem-solving task together. The task was videotaped and the positivity of each partner's behavior was coded. As in prior studies, our focus was on participants' responses to rejection. Rejection was operationalized in terms of participants' perceptions of their partner's responsiveness that day, with lower levels signaling rejection. Perceiving one's partner as responsive and thoughtful is a core construct in close relationships (Reis, Clark, & Holmes, 2004; Reis & Shaver, 1988), and not feeling that one's partner is responsive may be akin to feeling rejected (Reis et al., 2004). We operationalized power in terms of trait power, with the hypothesis that higher trait power would predict responding to low perceived partner responsiveness that day with more positivity during the interaction, a sign of social-connection seeking with the partner.

Method

Participants and procedure. Seventy-one heterosexual couples were recruited through online advertisements, flyers, and psychology courses for a larger study on relationships. Fifty-seven participants identified as Asian/Asian American, 51 as European/European American, 13 as Hispanic, 2 as Pacific Islander, 2 as African/African American, and 17 as other ethnicities. Participants had been involved in their current relationships for just over 21 months on average (ranging from one month to seven years and three months). Each partner was compensated with $10 or psychology course credit, and each couple was entered into a lottery for a chance to win $75.

As part of the larger study, couples were directed to a secure online website where they completed demographics and a trait measure of power. No more than two days later, couples came into the laboratory. Upon arrival the members of the couple were placed at separate computers where they completed measures pertaining to their feelings and experiences in their relationships so far that day. Afterward, they took part in two video-taped conversations. The present study focused on the first conversation, which involved a teamwork task. During this task, the members of each couple sat in two chairs placed at a 90-degree angle to each other and in front of a small table on which was placed the teamwork task directions and two pens. The couple was instructed to imagine they had been stranded in a plane crash in Northern Canada in the middle of winter and had recovered seven items from the plane. They were told to work together to rank these items in order of importance for survival. This task was adapted from a low-conflict task used in prior research (Gottman, Notarius, Markman, Bank, Yoppi, & Rubin, 1976). The couples were given four minutes to rank the items and write down the reasons for their rankings. These conversations were coded by outside observers for the degree to which each partner expressed positivity in their conversational behavior.

Measures

Trait power. Trait power was measured in the background survey using the same 8-item scale (e.g., "I can get people to listen to what I say") and 7-point response format as in Study 1 (Anderson et al., 2012). In this sample, $\alpha = .81$.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem was measured in the background survey with the Single Item Self-Esteem Scale (Robins et al., 2001), using the same 5-point Likert response scale as Study 5.

Perceived responsiveness. After arriving at the lab, participants rated their agreement with the statement "Right now, my partner is responsive to my needs" on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *Completely disagree,* 7 = *Completely agree*).

Positivity of behavior. Two independent coders rated the positivity expressed in each partner's behavior during the team task conversation using a scale from 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*A great deal*); ICC = .82.

Results and Discussion

Since this study included both members of heterosexual dating couples, violating assumptions of independence, we treated the couples as distinguishable dyads and analyzed the data using multilevel modeling with PASW 18.0 mixed models (IBM SPSS, 2009). This analysis strategy assumes that data from two members of a couple are not independent and treats the dyad rather than the individual as the unit of analysis.

To examine whether power is associated with greater behavioral positivity during a teamwork task after perceiving signals of rejection (i.e., low responsiveness) from a partner, we regressed coded behavioral positivity onto trait power, perceived partner responsiveness, and their interaction term (see Table 1 for correlations between measures). Neither trait power nor perceived responsiveness predicted behavioral positivity (power $b = .07$, $t(101) = 1.04$, $p = .29$; perceived responsiveness $b = -.04$, $t < 1$).[1] However, as shown in Figure 2, the interaction between trait power and perceived responsiveness was significant, $b = -.16$, $t(95) = 2.06$, $p < .05$. In the face of a partner perceived as low in responsiveness, higher-power participants responded with greater positivity during the teamwork task relative to lower-power participants (-1 *SD*: $b = .24$, $t(96) = 2.30$, $p < .05$), suggesting that more powerful people respond to signs of rejection (i.e., low responsiveness) from a romantic partner by engaging more positively with their partner. There were no power differences in positive engagement when the partner was perceived as relatively high in responsiveness (+1 *SD*: $b = -.09$, $t < 1$), providing evidence that this effect was not simply due to more powerful people being more positive. Importantly, the interaction between power and perceived responsiveness remained marginally significant when taking into account participants' self-esteem (power x perceived responsiveness, $p < .07$; self-esteem x perceived partner responsiveness, $p > .91$).[2]

In sum, Study 2 extended Study 1's social-connection finding to the context of romantic relationships, and provided behavioral support for our social-connection seeking hypothesis. Romantic partners higher in trait power responded to rejection-signaling behavior from their partner with more positive interpersonal behavior than their low-trait-power counterparts. Thus, Studies 1 and 2 established and replicated a relationship between power and connection-seeking after rejection, supporting my first hypothesis. To test my second hypothesis, Studies 3a and 3b turned to the impact of power on rejection concerns and acceptance expectations, as a first step toward testing whether they may be underlying the effects documented in Studies 1 and 2.

Study 3a

Study 3a examined the relationships between trait power and chronic acceptance expectations and rejection concerns. Perceived acceptance (PA) describes how much individuals feel accepted, loved, valued, and supported by the people around them, and tends to predict well-being outcomes like high self-esteem and low levels of loneliness (Brock, Sarason, Sanghvi, & Gurung, 1998). While usually measured with respect to specific others (e.g., mother), we operationalized PA in broader terms, focusing on how much acceptance and support people perceive from others in their lives in general. I hypothesized that power would be positively associated with PA, conceptually replicating Leary and colleagues (Leary et al., 2001), who found a positive link between a trait measure of dominance and perceptions of acceptance. I also sought to build upon this work by testing the relationship between power and concerns about rejection, operationalized as the fear of negative evaluation.

Fear of negative evaluation (FNE) refers to how much people are concerned with and fearful of unfavorable social judgments (i.e., being rejected or disliked; Leary, 1983). FNE taps into social anxiety (Watson & Friend, 1969), and is positively associated with being vigilant to signals of rejection and highly reactive in response to rejection (i.e., rejection sensitivity, Downey & Feldman, 1996; Berenson et al., 2009). FNE predicts how likely one is to make behavioral attempts to prevent

or avoid a threatening negative evaluation (e.g., doing unpleasant or boring things to seek approval, trying harder to make good impressions), as well as how badly one feels after receiving a negative evaluation (Leary, 1980, as cited by Leary, 1983; Friend & Gilbert, 1973; Smith & Sarason, 1975; Watson & Friend, 1969). We hypothesized that power would be negatively associated with concerns about rejection, that is, fear and anxiety surrounding the potential for rejection.

Finally, people high in self-esteem enjoy stable feelings of acceptance and tend not to be threatened by momentary instances of rejection, whereas people low in self-esteem are vigilant for and highly reactive to rejection and have a sense of acceptance that is contingent upon social feedback (Campbell, Chew, & Scratchley, 1991; Nezlek, Kowalski, Leary, Blevins, & Holgate, 2007). Given evidence that self-esteem and power are positively associated (e.g., Anderson et al., 2012; Wojciszke & Struzynska–Kujalowicz, 2007), one might argue that high-power individuals perceive more acceptance and are less concerned about rejection simply due to their higher self-esteem; including a self-esteem measure in Study 3a allowed us to address this concern. Study 3a also included a mood measure to control for the potential influence of mood.

Method

Participants and procedure. Eighty-two (44 female) participants were recruited online via Mechanical Turk for a study on personality traits, and were paid for their participation. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 65 (M = 35.57). Forty-two participants were European American, 27 Asian American or East Asian, 6 Indian or South Asian, 2 Latino/a, 1 African American, 1 Native American, and 3 indicated they were of "other" ethnicities. They provided demographics and completed a series of personality measures, described below in order, before being debriefed and credited.

Measures

Mood. The single-item Self-Assessment Manikin (Bradley & Lang, 1994) was used to measure participants' current mood state, on a 9-point scale (range 1 – 9, M = 6.32, SD = 1.72).

Self-esteem. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) was used to assess trait self-esteem, on a 4-point scale (α = .85, range 2.0 – 4.0, M = 3.02, SD = 0.44).

Trait power. The Personal Sense of Power Scale (Anderson et al., 2012) was used to assess trait power, on a 7-point scale (α = .85, range 2.63 – 6.75, M = 4.76, SD = 0.92).

Fear of negative evaluation. The 12-item Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (Leary, 1983) was used to assess trait concern about rejection in the form of unfavorable social evaluation. Sample items include "I am afraid that others will not approve of me" and "I often worry that I will say or do the wrong things." Participants' responses to items on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *Not at all characteristic of me,* 5 = *Extremely characteristic of me*) were reversed when appropriate and averaged (α = .91, range 1.00 – 4.75, M = 2.91, SD = 0.85).

Perceived acceptance. Eight items from the Friends subscale of the Perceived Acceptance Scale (Brock et al., 1998) were modified to be about "other people" rather than friends to assess participants' trait tendency to perceive acceptance from people in their lives in general. Sample items include "Other people frequently show me that they care about me," and "I often feel left out of things in my relationships with others" (reverse scored). Participants' responses to these items on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *Strongly disagree,* 5 = *Strongly agree*) were reversed when appropriate and averaged (α = .76, range 2.25 – 4.63, M = 3.39, SD = 0.55).

Results and Discussion

Correlations were analyzed between all measures; mood was unrelated to any measure (rs < .09, ps > .42.) and thus dropped from subsequent analyses. Most relevant to our first set of

hypotheses, trait power was positively correlated with perceived acceptance, $r(74) = .50$, $p < .001$, and negatively correlated with fear of negative evaluation, $r(74) = -.37$, $p < .001$. Multiple regression analyses were then conducted to control for the potential influence of self-esteem upon our dependent variables; see Table 2. Power predicted greater perceived acceptance ($\beta = .31$, $t(74) = 2.57$, $p = .01$) alongside trait self-esteem ($\beta = .32$, $t(74) = 2.70$, $p < .01$), and power was associated with reduced fear of negative evaluation ($\beta = -.27$, $t(76) = -2.08$, $p = .04$), while self-esteem was marginally negatively related to FNE, ($\beta = -.22$, $t(76) = -1.71$, $p = .09$).

In sum, supporting my second hypothesis, higher trait power was associated with greater perceptions of acceptance and reduced concerns about rejection, controlling for the influence of self-esteem. Building on Study 3a's correlational findings, Study 3b tested the causal impact of power on acceptance expectations and rejection concerns.

Study 3b

Study 3b experimentally tested my second hypothesis by having participants visualize themselves as part of a dyad in which they had either a high- or low-power role relative to an interaction partner, and then complete measures of their expectations for acceptance and concerns about rejection. I predicted that high-power participants would report greater expectations of acceptance and less concerns about rejection relative to their low-power counterparts, replicating the patterns obtained in Study 3a's correlational design, and illustrating the causal role of power in this process.

Method

Participants and procedure. Fifty-nine (34 female) participants were recruited on Mechanical Turk for a study on personality, imagination, and mental visualization styles, and paid in exchange for their participation. Age ranged from 18 to 65 ($M = 36$). Thirty-five participants were European American, 13 Asian American or East Asian, 4 Indian or South Asian, 2 Latino/a, 3 African American, 1 Middle Eastern, and 1 identified his/her ethnicity as "other." Participants filled in demographics and background measures before receiving the manipulation and completing the dependent measures and suspicion probes. Afterward, they were fully debriefed.

Background measures. Background measures of state mood ($M = 6.46$, $SD = 1.72$), trait self-esteem ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 3.03$, $SD = 0.54$), and trait power ($\alpha = .90$, $M = 4.42$, $SD = 1.14$) were collected using the same measures and response formats as Study 3a.

Power manipulation. Participants were asked to read and visualize themselves in a scenario about a group project with one team leader and several team members. They were randomly assigned to imagine themselves as being either the leader (high power) or a team member (low power). The scenario explained that during each week of the project, the leader would assign tasks to team members, who would report their progress. At the end of the project, the leader was to divide up a bonus between the team members and himself or herself. Thus, participants in the high-power condition imagined having the ability to direct and evaluate the team members, and control the bonus amount they received. Participants in the low-power condition, conversely, imagined they would be directed and evaluated by the leader, and have their bonus outcome controlled by him or her. In short, the scenario set up a situation of asymmetric dependence.

The last sentence of the scenario asked participants to imagine that they were about to meet an opposite-power counterpart for the first time (i.e., high-power participants imagined meeting a team member, whereas low-power participants imagined meeting their project leader). Afterward, participants completed an item that asked them to indicate their role in the group.

Dependent measures. Participants next rated 9 items aimed at tapping expectations of acceptance. For the first three, participants reported on 7-point Likert scales how smoothly they thought the interaction would go (1 = *Extremely awkwardly*, 7 = *Extremely smoothly*), how nice they thought the other person would be to them (1 = *Not at all nice*, 7 = *Extremely nice*), and how much they thought the interaction would be similar to interacting with a friend (1 = *Not at all similar*, 7 = *Very similar*). The remaining six items were adapted from the Perceived Acceptance Scale (PAS; Brock et al., 1998). Sample items included "I would feel important in the eyes of my team member [leader]," and "My team member [leader] would show me that they like and care about me." Overall, this 9-item index (α = .87) reflected expectations for a successful interaction with the team member/leader—in essence, being accepted by him or her.

Intermixed with the above questions were items aimed at assessing concerns about rejection. Specifically, participants rated their agreement on 7-point Likert scales (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*) with 6 items based on the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE; Leary, 1983). Ratings were reversed where appropriate and averaged (α = .92). Sample items included "I would be worried that my team member [leader] would notice my shortcomings" and "I would be worried about making a bad impression on my team member [leader]."

Results and Discussion

One participant did not correctly report his/her role (leader vs. team member) and was excluded from further analyses, leaving a sample of N = 58. High- and low-power participants did not differ on any of the background measures, ts < 1.18, ps > .24.

Expectations of acceptance and concerns about rejection. Supporting our first hypothesis, participants in the high-power condition reported significantly higher acceptance expectations (M = 4.91, SD = 0.68) than their low-power counterparts (M = 4.23, SD = 0.97), $t(53) = 3.01$, $p < .01$. Also as hypothesized, high-power participants reported significantly less fear and concern about rejection from their partner (M = 3.74, SD = 1.32) relative to low-power participants (M = 4.57, SD = 1.15), $t(56) = 2.53$, $p = .01$. See Figure 3 for these patterns.

Overall, supporting my second hypothesis, participants who imagined themselves in a high-power role reported greater expectations for acceptance and reduced fear of rejection from a hypothetical partner than did participants who imagined themselves in a low-power role. Study 3b expanded upon the results of Study 3a by demonstrating causality, such that higher power led to reduced rejection concerns and greater acceptance expectations than lower power.

Study 4

Taken together, Studies 3a and 3b lend credence to my hypothesized mediators, establishing a relationship between power and both proposed mechanisms that may, in turn, drive social-connection seeking. Study 4 sought to test the complete hypothesized model, examining whether acceptance expectations and rejection concerns do indeed mediate the relationship shown in Studies 1 and 2 between power and social-connection seeking in response to rejection. In Study 4, participants were placed into a high- or low-power role relative to a partner in the lab, received either rejecting or accepting feedback from that partner, and reported on their self-esteem and emotion in response to this rejection. Participants then learned that their original partner had to depart, and that they would complete the session with a new partner. This procedural detail was implemented because people are unlikely to seek social connection with someone who just rejected them (Maner et al., 2007); thus, we sought to measure connection seeking with a fresh social prospect. Participants then reported on their rejection concerns and acceptance expectations regarding this new partner, and then worked with the new partner (a confederate) on a problem-

solving task. This problem-solving session was video-recorded, and the videos were later coded for several behavioral indicators of social-connection seeking.

Importantly, Study 4 allowed a test all of my hypotheses together. First, I hypothesized that participants placed in a higher power role would show greater social-connection seeking tendencies than low-power participants after being rejected, but not after being accepted. Second, I predicted that higher power participants would report attenuated rejection concerns and greater acceptance expectations, regardless of whether they had been accepted or rejected, compared to lower power participants. Finally, I predicted that the effect of power upon social-connection seeking following rejection would be mediated by participants' concerns about rejection and expectations of acceptance.

As an ancillary exploration of mechanism, in Study 4 I also tested whether self-esteem and emotional reactions to rejection mediated the link between social power and social-connection seeking. Given that power buffers individuals from the negative effects of rejection on emotion and self-esteem (Kuehn et al., in press), perhaps this lessened reactivity helps the powerful more readily pursue social connection after rejection. Being less upset by an instance of rejection may help the powerful focus more upon pursuing the social-connection goals activated by this experience. Measuring self-esteem and emotion post-rejection in Study 4 allowed me to test this alternative model.

Method

Participants and procedure. One hundred ninety-five participants (118 female, 77 male) were recruited from introductory psychology courses for a study on interpersonal perception, teamwork, and problem solving, and received course credit for their participation.

Background measures. Before coming to the lab, participants completed a set of background measures, including: the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (α = .90; Rosenberg, 1965); the 8-item Rejection Sensitivity Scale (Downey & Feldman, 1996) using the same response format as Study 1 (α = .74); and the Trait Sense of Power scale (α = .87; Anderson et al., 2012).

Lab session. The procedures used in Study 2 of Kuehn et al. (in press) were adapted for the present study, including the pilot testing of materials. Participants arrived for an ostensible interaction study and were told their gender-matched partner had already arrived and was seated next door (to enhance believability, when participants were extremely early, the experimenter adjusted this story so the partner supposedly arrived slightly after the participant, after the participant was seated in their own room). After signing consent forms, being made aware of the video camera recording the entire session, and receiving the cover story, participants were told that they would be doing a problem-solving task with their partner in a little while, and for this interaction they would need to play either a boss (high power) or employee (low power) role.

Power manipulation. Participants were randomly assigned to either a high- or low-power role (boss vs. employee, with their partner assigned to the other role), and were given a folder containing a description of their role and a leadership survey, identical to those used in Study 2 of Kuehn et al. (in press). In short, the high-power role description told participants they would be in charge and be making the decisions during the interaction, whereas the low-power role description told participants they would be under the boss's charge and would not be making decisions during the interaction. The leadership survey asked participants to recall an experience from their own lives that matched their current role, and to indicate the extent to which they would be making the decisions during the task, from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Importantly, participants didn't know this assignment was random; they were told that role assignment was based on the personality

measures they had completed before coming into the lab, thus lending legitimacy to our power manipulation (Lammers, Galinsky, Gordijn, & Otten, 2008).

Exchange of personal information. Participants were next told that they would exchange a couple of surveys with their partner before working with him or her, in order to gain an impression of their partner untainted by physical appearance. This BioSketch asked participants to indicate their gender, activities they are involved in on campus, what they like to do in their free time, their favorite places to eat near campus, and their favorite class at Cal. After a short delay, participants received a BioSketch profile from the partner that indicated the partner enjoys some common clubs, past-times, courses, and local restaurants (this content was piloted with undergraduate research assistants to be current and believable for this population).

Rejection/acceptance manipulation. Directly based on the methods and materials of Kuehn et al. (Study 2, in press), participants were then asked to fill out a Pre-Task Survey based on what they had learned about the task and their partner so far. This survey evaluated how much participants were looking forward to working on the task with their partner, based on the BioSketch they had read. After sending it to their partner, participants received a Pre-Task Survey back, ostensibly filled out by the partner, which was either mildly rejecting or mildly accepting in nature.

Emotion and self-esteem measures. Immediately after delivering the rejecting or accepting Pre-Task Survey, experimenters handed participants a packet of supposed "personality measures," which actually contained measures of emotion (PANAS negative emotions, Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; α = .81) and self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965; α = .89).

Partner switch. Shortly after the experimenter returned to the lab to collect the personality measure survey from participants, there was an "unexpected" knock on the door, actually pre-meditated with the confederate. Experimenters feigned confusion and stepped out in the hallway to see what was going on, keeping a foot in the doorjamb so participants could hear the conversation between the experimenter and confederate. The confederate frantically claimed they were scheduled for this current session and apologized for coming late (this being about 15 minutes into the procedure), having been stuck in office hours across campus, and asked if they could still participate. At this point the experimenter asked the participant if they could pause the procedure for a moment to troubleshoot this scheduling mix-up, and closed the door. After a couple minutes, the experimenter re-entered the lab and explained they had accidentally scheduled three people for this session time, but that it would work out to continue with the newly-arrived partner (as the original partner had time to return for the next session, but the newly-arrived partner had class). Further, the newly-arrived partner matched the former partner's role, allowing the participant to continue with their original assigned power role.

Second BioSketch and Pre-Task Survey. To bolster the cover story and to collect expectations with respect to the new partner, the experimenter then explained that the participant would exchange BioSketches with the new partner and complete the Pre-Task Survey again based on this new BioSketch, but that to save time they wouldn't exchange the Pre-Task Survey (which was our acceptance/rejection manipulation with the first partner). Participants were told their original BioSketch was being shown to their new partner, and received a second completed BioSketch in gender-matched handwriting, distinct in content and handwriting from the first, but still typical for this undergraduate population. They then completed the Pre-Task Survey again, indicating their excitement for working with the new partner (α = .85).

Social expectations survey. After exchanging BioSketches with this new partner, participants received a survey called the "Social Expectations Survey," about their upcoming interaction with the new partner. This survey contained our measures of acceptance expectations and rejection concerns.

Rejection concerns. To gauge rejection concerns, participants rated their agreement on 7-point Likert scales (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*) with seven items based on the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE; Leary, 1983). Ratings were reversed where appropriate and averaged (α = .93). Sample items included "I am worried that my boss/employee will notice my shortcomings" and "I am afraid that my boss/employee will not approve of me."

Acceptance expectations. Eight items measured expectations for social acceptance with the partner, on 7-point Likert scales. Three items assessed global expectations for how smoothly the interaction would go (1 = *Extremely awkwardly*, 7 = *Extremely smoothly*), how nice the partner would be (1 = *Not at all nice*, 7 = *Extremely nice*), and how similar the interaction would be to interacting with a friend (1 = *Not at all similar*, 7 = *Very similar*). Five additional items assessed agreement with acceptance expectations (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*), based on the Perceived Acceptance Scale (PAS; Brock et al., 1998). Sample items included "My boss/employee will show me that they like and care about me," and "My boss/employee will be sensitive to my needs." Overall, this 8-item index (α = .77) reflected expectations for a successful interaction with the new partner—in essence, being accepted by him or her.

Problem-Solving Task. Finally, the confederate was brought into the room and met the participant, and they sat down in chairs faced by a video camera to begin their problem-solving task. The boss (whether participant or confederate) was seated in a chair with arms that said "Boss" on it, and were handed a clipboard that said "Boss," as well as a pen and answer sheet for the task. The employee was seated in a second, armless chair that said "Employee" on it, and were handed a clipboard that said "Employee." All of these situational features served to reinforce our power manipulation. Confederates were trained to cohere with the role they were assigned, such that as employees, they were fairly passive and exhibited constricted body language, whereas when acting as bosses, they were fairly directive and exhibited expansive body language. In both conditions, confederates were trained to be polite but not overly friendly.

The task itself was the same as the interaction task used in Study 2, adapted from Gottman et al. (1976), wherein the partners had to imagine being stranded in a plane crash in Northern Canada and decide which items were most crucial to retrieve from the wreckage in order to survive. Partners were instructed to discuss all the items and weigh the pros and cons, before deciding on the top three items to retrieve. Partners had seven minutes to complete this task, and bosses had the job of managing the task and filling out the answer sheet to submit. Later, these videos were coded for several variables that captured social connection seeking.

Post-Task Survey. After interacting, the participant and confederate were separated, and both completed a survey about the problem-solving interaction and their impressions of the partner, answering all questions on 7-point Likert scales anchored with 1 (*not at all*) and 7 (*extremely/very much*). Specifically, both partners were asked to indicate the extent to which their partner was hardworking, cooperative, nice, hostile, friendly, competent, angry, funny, dominant, submissive, and creative. After excluding dominant and submissive (due to being so strongly determined by role), scores were reversed for negatively valenced terms (hostile, angry), and averaged within participants, creating an index of positive impression of the partner, α = .81. Both partners also answered items regarding interaction quality, indicating how much they enjoyed working together, how much they ended up liking the partner, how powerful they felt during the interaction, how accepted they felt during the interaction, how smooth the interaction was, how effectively they worked together, how similar they think they are to the partner, how close they felt to the partner, and how connected they felt to the partner. After excluding ratings of feeling powerful (determined by role) and similar to the partner (included by design as a control variable rather than an outcome variable), scores were averaged across the remaining seven items to create an index of perceived interaction success, α = .89. Finally,

partners both reported how much they would like to interact with their partner again. The boss also completed two items evaluating the employee, rating their creativity and their critical thinking skills as exhibited during the task.

Suspicion probe. The experimenter then verbally asked suspicion probe questions, asking whether participants found anything strange or unusual about today's tasks, and asking what participants thought today's study was trying to test. If anything was identified as strange or suspicious, the experimenter asked follow-up questions to explore this suspicion, without revealing the deception inherent to our procedure.

Rejection manipulation check. To measure participant perceptions and memory of the rejecting versus accepting feedback delivered from the original partner, experimenters then handed participants a single-question survey called the Retrospective Survey. This survey item asked participants to "please try to remember how much your partner was excited and looking forward to working with you in the problem-solving task," and indicate their answer on a 9-point scale, anchored with: -4 = *they were not at all excited to work with me*; 0 = *they were neutral*; +4 = *they were extremely excited to work with me*. To bolster the cover story one last time, and to make sure participants understood that we were seeking information about their perceptions of rejection from the original partner, not the new partner, the experimenter wrote in the word "original" by hand before "partner" in the question prompt.

Debrief and video release. Finally, the experimenter verbally debriefed the participant and apologized for all deception, and asked for permission to use their videotape.

Video Coding and Connection-Seeking Composites

Coding dimensions. Three coders independently coded each interaction video on several dimensions. First, using a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*; 4 = *somewhat*; 7 = *a great deal*), coders rated the participant's behavior toward the confederate in terms of *dominance* (directive, assertive, forceful), *warmth* (nice, friendly, supportive), *physical engagement* (turned toward the confederate, leaning forward, making eye contact), *responsiveness* (active listening, validation), *connection-seeking* (asking questions about their life or common interests, trying to engage them socially), and overall *engagement in the task*. To assess role fulfillment, coders also rated the extent to which the participant did what their role (boss or employee) asked of them.[3]

Coders next made ratings of the pair as a whole on the same 7-point scale, rating how much conflict arose during the interaction, and how much personal connection was achieved between the pair during the interaction. This latter code was added to account for the potential distinction between *attempted* social-connection seeking and actual *achieved* connection – some participants might try harder than others, but some participant/confederate pairs just got along better. Coders then rated the confederate for dominance toward the participant and for role fulfillment; with three confederates of different genders (2 female, 1 male), we wanted to control for the potential differences between confederates in dominance and role adherence. Finally, coders re-watched the video muted and at a faster play rate (4x speed) to code for evidence of physical mimicry. We measured mimicry to tap into an unconscious form of social-connection seeking. Mimicry is an unconscious tendency associated with social rapport and affiliation wherein one adopts the physical posture, bodily motions, and gestures of a social partner. Mimicry is more often enacted when one holds active affiliation goals (Lakin & Chartrand, 2003), and leads to greater liking between social partners (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999). Mimicry was defined for coders as instances when the participant and confederate assumed the same posture or made the same motion at close points in time (e.g., crossing and uncrossing legs, leaning in or out, touching their face). Coders rated mimicry during the interaction for each pair on a 4-point scale: 0 = *no mimicry evidence*; 1 = *a little mimicry*; 2 = *moderate mimicry*; 3 = *a good deal of mimicry*. Mimicry in our videos often would pass back and forth

between partners, making it difficult to parse whether an instance of mimicry was specifically enacted by the participant or confederate. Thus, mimicry codes described the pair, just like our codes for conflict and achieved social connection.

Coder training. Coder training and the coding scheme were developed iteratively and in tandem. Each week for approximately one month, coders worked with the coding scheme and a random subset of 5-10 videos, independently coding each video with that scheme, before meeting to discuss the videos and codes with each other and with me. I would analyze their reliability for each index and we would discuss all codes each week, to make sure each coder was using similar signals to determine codes (e.g., agreeing generally upon what responsiveness looks like during this interaction, and how it differs from warmth), rating videos in similar relative manners (e.g., checking that all coders would rate a very dominant participant more highly on dominance than a more submissive participant, even though their absolute ratings may differ), and using the full scale for each code (e.g., if one coder was only using values from 3-5 on a given dimension, but another coder was using 1-7 for that dimension, we would discuss and try to encourage the former coder to be more granular with her codes, using the full range of the scale). This process also helped us hone the coding scheme itself, for instance by creating separable codes for attempted and achieved social connection, as we agreed in discussion that these were distinct constructs that were muddling the single code for social-connection seeking. The goal for this process was not identical ratings per se, but rather to achieve reliability exceeding $\alpha = .80$ for each index (with the exception of the role fulfillment codes, which suffered from restricted range due to overall strong role coherence, which we found acceptable).

Once strong reliability had been achieved for each index, the coders began officially coding, rating every video on every dimension, at a rate of approximately 30 videos per week. All videos used for practice were eventually re-rated by coders (without making reference to their old ratings), after the coding system had been finalized and adequate reliability achieved; these re-ratings were analyzed as the final codes for each video used during training. Final codes were computed for each participant by averaging across all three coders' ratings of that participant on a given dimension. Final reliability scores and overall descriptive statistics (averaged across coders and participants) for each coded dimension are presented in Table 3.

Coding composites. Codes of these discrete psychological constructs were then combined into higher-level indices reflecting broader psychological dimensions. Exploratory factor analyses (including dominance, task engagement, physical engagement, connection seeking, personal connection, warmth, responsiveness, conflict, and mimicry) indicated that mimicry reliably loaded on its own factor, consistent with its unconscious nature (Lakin & Chartrand, 2003); mimicry was thus treated as its own outcome variable, and excluded from subsequent factor analyses.

After exploring two- and three-factor solutions that had unacceptable within-factor alphas ($< .50$), we landed upon a satisfactory single-factor solution reflecting overall propensity to seek social connection with the partner.[4] This index includes warmth, engagement in the task, engagement with the partner, connection seeking, achieved connection, and responsiveness, $\alpha = .80$ (including dominance and reversed conflict, this alpha sinks to .76 – they were thus excluded from the final composite); factor loadings are presented in Table 4. Across participants, scores on this index ranged from 2.28-5.61, $M = 3.95$, $SD = .71$. In the following analyses, this index is used as a marker of behavioral social-connection seeking by the participant during the interaction. Mimicry was examined separately as its own outcome variable.

Self-reported composites. In addition to the coded behaviors captured from the videos, we also collected several self-reports and confederate-reports reflective of social-connection seeking, providing four additional measures of social-connection seeking. First, we collected self-reported

excitement for working with the new partner on the second pre-task survey; greater excitement was taken to reflecting greater interest in connecting socially with the partner. Second, we collected impressions of the partner (e.g., how nice, competent, creative was the partner) on the post-task survey; we interpreted more positive impressions as reflecting a greater interest in connecting with the partner (Maner et al., 2007). Third, we collected impressions of how successful the interaction was (e.g., how accepted they felt, how smooth the interaction was, how close they felt to the partner); more positive construals of the interaction could be a motivated social perception consistent with social-connection seeking. Fourth, we collected interest in interacting with the partner again, which directly measured interest in social connection.

Confederate-reported composites. The confederates also completed three of these measures of connection-seeking: overall positive impressions of the partner (α = .85), perceptions of interaction success (α = .91), and interest in working together again. Theoretically, should the confederate form a more positive impression, see the interaction as more successful, or show greater interest in working together again, this could reflect more effective social-connection seeking having been enacted by the participant. We thus tested for effects of our manipulations upon confederate reports on these measures as well, to test this potentially complementary pattern of outcomes.

In sum, we had nine measures of social-connection seeking: 1. Coded behavioral connection-seeking, 2. Coded mimicry, 3. Participant excitement from the pre-task survey, 4. Participant positive partner impressions after task, 5. Participant perceptions of interaction success after task, 6. Participant interest in working with the partner again, 7. Confederate positive partner impressions after task, 8. Confederate perceptions of interaction success after task, and 9. Confederate interest in working with the partner again.

Results

Exclusions. Our procedure contained a good deal of deception, which could easily arouse suspicion in participants. To clean our data and reduce the chance of such suspicion obscuring our results, we created a suspicion-coding system that measured how much suspicion each participant expressed. The videotaped suspicion probe section of the procedure was transcribed for each participant, creating a text record of verbally expressed suspicion at the end of the procedure. Experimenters also noted expressed suspicion during verbal debriefing, tracking what participants said in response to learning the truth about that day's procedures (e.g., saying "I was wondering the whole time if the partner was fake!" in response to learning that it was a confederate). Two coders reviewed summaries of suspicion from the transcripts and experimenter notes, and assigned each participant a score of 0 (not at all suspicious, all fine), 1 (something may have seemed off with the interaction, but not full-blown suspicion), or 2 (highly suspicious about original or new partner or procedure). These coders had high reliability, α = .91, so suspicion scores were averaged across coders within participants, creating a suspicion score from 0-2 for each participant. All participants who received a suspicion score of 1.5 (N = 15) or 2 (N = 19), indicating they had been rated as highly suspicious by at least one coder, were excluded from analyses. Seven additional participants were excluded due to a slight procedural change made early on in data collection, which adjusted the behavior of the confederate slightly in the high-power condition; participants in this condition prior to this change were excluded. One additional participant was excluded for having a rejection sensitivity score in excess of 3 standard deviations above the mean, $\tilde{x}$ = 3.67. The remaining sample, N = 145, 34-38 per cell, provided a conservative test of our hypotheses, uninfluenced by suspicion or procedural issues.

Background measures. No differences emerged across conditions in background measures: trait sense of power Fs < 1, trait self-esteem Fs < 1.7, ps > .19, trait rejection sensitivity Fs < 1.

Manipulation checks.

Power manipulation. The effectiveness of our power manipulation was assessed by an item on the leadership survey that participants completed upon receiving their role. This item asked participants to indicate the extent to which they would be making the decisions in the upcoming interaction (1 = *not at all*; 5 = *very much*). High-power participants reported higher scores on this item (M = 3.83, SD = .59) than low-power participants (M = 2.28, SD = .71), $F(1, 141) = 203.96$, $p < .001$, indicating that our power manipulation was effective. An unexpected marginal main effect of rejection also emerged on this measure, $F(1, 141) = 2.77$, $p = .10$, such that participants in the acceptance condition (M = 3.12, SD = 1.03) scored higher than rejected participants (M = 2.93, SD = .99), but this emerged prior to the acceptance/rejection manipulation, and the overall difference in means was relatively small, suggesting it was just an artifact of chance. No interaction emerged between conditions, $F < 1$.

Rejection manipulation. The item on the retrospective survey, delivered in the last moments of the procedure prior to suspicion probing, measured participant perceptions of how accepting versus rejecting their original partner was, on a 9-point scale with a midpoint of zero. This assessed the effectiveness of our rejection manipulation. Rejected participants indeed recalled their original partner evaluating them less favorably (M = -.62, SD = .99) than accepted participants (M = 2.38, SD = 1.02), $F(1, 141) = 341.60$, $p < .001$, indicating that our rejection manipulation was effective. But an unexpected main effect of power also emerged on this measure, $F(1, 141) = 8.29$, $p = .005$, such that low-power participants recalled a more favorable partner evaluation (M = 1.13, SD = 1.77) than high-power participants (M = .68, SD = 1.83). However, no interaction emerged between conditions, $F(1, 141) = 1.78$, $p = .18$, indicating that the strength of our rejection manipulation was not moderated by power role. Moreover, comparing F-values, the magnitude of the rejection effect far outweighed the power effect. Lastly, we note that this measure was collected at the very end of the session, after several procedural steps and a partner change had occurred since the rejection manipulation, making it a fairly crude measure of the rejection manipulation. We were pleased to see a strong main effect of rejection condition on this measure. Thus, although power also affected our rejection manipulation check, we were confident that our rejection manipulation created the psychological experience it was intended to.

Primary analyses. Recall the three primary questions to be tested with these data, corresponding to our hypotheses: 1. Does greater power increase social-connection seeking after rejection? 2. Does power increase acceptance expectations and reduce rejection concerns? 3. Do acceptance expectations and rejection concerns mediate the hypothesized effect of power upon social-connection seeking?

Power and connection seeking. Factorial 2 (power: high vs. low) x 2 (feedback: rejection vs. acceptance) analyses of variance were conducted for each of our nine measures of social-connection seeking, testing the impact of our power manipulation, our rejection manipulation, and their interaction. We hypothesized that a significant interaction would emerge between power and rejection, such that high power would foster connection-seeking compared to low power, but only under conditions of rejection. Results for each of our 9 measures are summarized in Table 5. In short, none of our nine measures bore out our hypotheses about social-connection seeking post-rejection. Significant or trending interactions did emerge on two confederate measures, but in both cases the pattern of means formed a crossover that didn't cohere with our original hypotheses. That is, low-power rejected participants were seen more positively than high-power rejected participants, but the pattern flipped under conditions of acceptance, such that high-power accepted participants

were seen more positively than their low-power accepted counterparts. This did not support our hypothesis that power would increase social-connection seeking under rejection, as low-power/rejected participants were seen more – rather than less – positively than high-power/rejected participants.

Some other interesting main effects emerged, however. First, if anything, low-power participants displayed greater evidence of social-connection seeking than high-power participants. Low-power participants (M = .55, SD = .72) were overall more likely to engage in mimicry than high-power participants (M = .30, SD = .45), $F(1, 135) = 5.98$, $p = .016$. Low-power participants also formed more positive impressions of their partner (M = 5.86, SD = .56) than high-power participants (M = 5.57, SD = .72), $F(1, 141) = 7.63$, $p = .006$. Low-power participants were also more likely to see the interaction as successful overall (M = 5.20, SD = .84) than high-power participants (M = 4.92, SD = .91), $F(1, 141) = 3.83$, $p = .052$. Second, participants appeared to carry their experience with their first partner forward to the second partner, with respect to excitement in working together. That is, accepted participants expressed greater excitement in working with the new partner (M = 2.08, SD = .86) than rejected participants (M = 1.65, SD = 1.09), $F(1, 140) = 7.08$, $p = .009$. But taken together, this pattern of main-effect results (each collapsing across the other factor) did not offer support for our first hypothesis, that power would foster connection-seeking in the wake of social rejection.

Power and acceptance expectations and rejection concerns. Despite not directly impacting our outcome variable, it is possible that power could still indirectly drive connection seeking by means of our proposed mediators, acceptance expectations and rejection concerns (Hayes, 2009). Thus, we tested whether power affected each of these two variables. With respect to acceptance expectations, only a main effect of rejection condition emerged, $F(1, 141) = 13.24$, $p < .001$, such that rejected participants (M = 4.30, SD = .59) expected less acceptance from the new partner than accepted participants (M = 4.66, SD = .60); see Figure 4. Neither a main effect of power ($F < 1$) nor an interaction effect ($F(1, 141) = 1.05$, $p = .31$) emerged on this measure. Regarding rejection concerns, neither main effect nor interaction emerged as significant, all Fs < 1, see Figure 5. Contrary to our hypotheses, high-power/rejected participants actually reported the *highest* overall levels of rejection concerns, although these differences were nonsignificant. In sum, neither mediator behaved as expected, inconsistent with the findings of Studies 3a and 3b, and inconsistent with our hypotheses.

Mediation by acceptance expectations and rejection concerns. As power did not predict either mediator as hypothesized, and moreover did not affect social-connection seeking, testing our hypothesized mediation model is unfortunately unnecessary. However, we did examine the relationship at a correlational level between these two constructs and our measures of social-connection seeking, and found that acceptance expectations were generally more closely linked to social-connection seeking than were rejection concerns; see the first two columns of Table 6. Thus, although power did not shape acceptance expectations, the latter did appear linked more generally to social-connection seeking. Rejection concerns, on the other hand, were less strongly associated with social-connection seeking.

Secondary analysis: Mediation by reactivity. Additionally, we wanted to test an alternative mediation pathway: mediation by reactivity, such that power attenuates emotional and self-esteem reactions to rejection, which in turn encourages greater social-connection seeking. That is, self-esteem and emotional reactivity to rejection should be dampened by power (Kuehn et al., in press), and in turn, perhaps feeling less upset by a rejection could encourage the powerful to engage in more social-connection seeking. The first step to testing this mediation is to establish that power indeed attenuates reactivity to rejection in this context. We collected two measures of reactivity: state self-esteem and state negative emotion. Submitting self-esteem scores to the same 2x2 ANOVA as

our other dependent variables revealed no significant effects, all *F*s < 1. For negative emotion, a marginal effect of rejection emerged, $F(1, 138) = 2.61$, $p = .11$, such that rejected participants ($M = 1.47$, $SD = .42$) reported slightly greater negative emotion than accepted participants ($M = 1.36$, $SD = .41$). But no main effect of power ($F(1, 138) = 1.29$, $p = .26$) or interaction ($F < 1$) emerged for negative emotion.[5] Thus, Study 4 did not replicate the findings of Kuehn et al. (in press), ruling out a buffering account for social-connection seeking after rejection. But as a more pressing issue for the current work, Study 4 did not provide evidence for power fostering social-connection seeking post-rejection in the first place.

Discussion

In summary, Study 4 did not provide evidence supporting any of our hypotheses. What could have happened here, for the results of this study to diverge so sharply from Studies 1-3b? Moreover, why is Study 4 not replicating the rejection-buffering effects of power documented multiple times by Kuehn et al. (in press), despite the use of very similar procedures? The explanation may lie in the one procedural element that varied substantially between the present study and the procedures used in Kuehn et al.—the use of a video camera.

Participants in the present study were confronted with the video camera upon first arriving, were alerted to its presence and told they'd have to sign a release at the end of the session, and had it within their field of vision throughout the procedure (as they were completing measures at the desk in the lab room, the camera was about three feet above them, about two feet to their right; as they did the interaction, the camera was pointed directly at them). They knew they would be interacting with their partner on camera, and that the video would later be watched and analyzed. We speculate that this may have fostered self-consciousness among participants that may have undermined our effects. Perhaps a high-power person who suddenly finds him or herself rejected by a partner whom he or she expected support from (if we can predict that high power would foster acceptance expectations, as shown in Study 3b) would experience heightened self-conscious emotions (e.g., embarrassment) when he or she believes this experience has been captured on camera and will later be picked apart by researchers. Moreover, these participants are then faced with the prospect of a new social partner who could again provide rejecting feedback, and do so essentially on-camera, on the record. Thus, rather than our high-power participants enjoying assurance of acceptance, experiencing less reactivity to a rejection, and adaptively seeking social connection afterward, the camera could have made this situation far more loaded and high-stakes, making our procedure backfire.

Of course this is all speculation, and it's possible that our prior findings have been spurious, but those effects have been replicated several times, and the camera is the only substantive procedural factor that differed between the present study and the second study reported by Kuehn et al. (in press). Alternatively, perhaps the procedure was simply overwhelming and confusing for participants, and switching out the partner took participants out of the psychological space of high power and rejection. Or perhaps the use of four experimenters and three confederates across a year of data collection introduced too much noise into the data. Perhaps participants were also savvier than they let on, and actually saw through our manipulations and deceptions without reporting as much. In short, there are several possible explanations for the lack of findings in the present study, although we do not have the data to be definitive about any single one.

Although not relevant to testing our specific hypotheses, a few significant effects of power did emerge upon social-connection seeking, when collapsing across the rejection and acceptance conditions. Low-power participants exhibited more mimicry and reported more positive impressions of their partner and the interaction, compared to high-power participants. This could be interpreted as evidence that low-power partners are more interested in socially connecting with their partner

than vice versa, consistent with theorizing in the power literature that low-power people are generally more motivated to be affiliative than high-power people (Magee & Smith, 2013). But without any evidence of this behavior emerging among the powerful uniquely after rejection, these findings weren't supportive of our hypotheses.

General Discussion

Across five studies, the present work found mixed support for our overarching hypothesis: that social power would foster social-connection seeking in the wake of social rejection, via increasing acceptance expectations and reducing worry about rejection. Study 1 demonstrated that power increased interest in social connection after rejection, providing initial evidence for the direct link between power and social-connection seeking. Study 2 found that trait power was linked to greater behavioral social-connection seeking between romantic partners following low partner responsiveness (a proxy for rejection from the partner). Together, Studies 1 and 2 demonstrated and replicated evidence that power increases social-connection seeking uniquely under conditions of rejection. Study 1 also included an equal-power control condition that provided a point of contrast between high and low power, which let us identify a larger effect of lower power (d = .55) than of higher power (d = .30) driving interest in social connection, relative to an equal-power social partner. Although only the larger effect was significant with the sample size used in Study 1, we interpret these effect sizes as indicating that both lower and higher power may play a role in shaping social-connection seeking.

Studies 3a and 3b turned to the hypothesized mediators of this phenomenon, examining power's impact upon acceptance expectations and rejection concerns in the absence of rejection cues. Study 3a found that trait power predicted trait acceptance expectations positively and trait rejection concerns negatively, controlling for the influence of trait self-esteem. Study 3b replicated this pattern of findings with manipulated rather than measured power, showing that greater power relative to a hypothetical opposite-power counterpart increased expectations of acceptance and support from that counterpart, alongside decreasing concern with rejection from that counterpart. Thus, we obtained support for the pathway from our predictor variable (power) to our proposed mediators, which in turn have strong theoretical and empirical links to our outcome variable. That is, we proposed social-connection seeking should be fostered by optimistically expecting success in connecting, anticipating liking from a partner, and feeling little trepidation over the potential for negative evaluation (Maner et al., 2007). Although we did not run an isolated test of the link between our mediators and our outcome variable, we had strong theoretical and empirical reasons to believe they would drive social-connection seeking.

Study 4 was intended to test the full hypothetical model, simultaneously and cohesively, by including a power manipulation and a rejection experience, measuring social expectations, and observing social-connection seeking behavior. However, as discussed further below, Study 4 failed to replicate the prior studies in this manuscript, and did not yield evidence for our proposed model.

Mechanism

Turning to the question of mechanism, there are several potential candidates, only some of which were tested in the present work. That is, if social power does in fact drive social-connection seeking after rejection (as found in Studies 1 & 2 in the present work, and in Narayanan et al., 2013), this could – theoretically – be due to any of a number of factors: enhanced goal pursuit (e.g., Guinote, 2007), greater approach orientation (Narayanan et al., 2013), more optimistic and less anxious social expectations (e.g., Backman & Secord, 1959; Maner et al., 2007), and/or feeling less upset by the initial rejection (Kuehn et al., in press). We did not measure goal activation, but rejection should activate belonging goals (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Pickett et al., 2004), and power

should aid in prioritizing and pursuing those goals (Guinote, 2007), which would be evidenced by greater goal pursuit, in the form of greater social-connection seeking. Relatedly, approach orientation, a tendency to act and engage with one's surroundings (Carver & White, 1994), helps the powerful take action in general (e.g., Magee, Galinsky, & Gruenfeld, 2007), and leads them to pursue social connection specifically after rejection (Narayanan et al., 2013). Parsimony is valuable, and we find the results of Narayanan et al. (2013) compelling – perhaps the simplest explanation is in fact the best way to account for this phenomenon.

However, we did not measure approach orientation in the present work, instead focusing on what we argued were more precise and situation-relevant psychological variables: acceptance expectations and rejection concerns. Whereas we found evidence that power shapes these constructs in the absence of rejection (Studies 3a & 3b), when measured following a rejection experience in Study 4, these variables did not behave as expected. Specifically, the powerful did not demonstrate greater acceptance expectations and attenuated rejection concerns when these constructs were measured after a rejection experience, albeit with respect to a new social target. If the powerful typically expect acceptance, it could be especially upsetting to have these expectations violated on-camera, which may have undermined their general social sense of self-assurance and instead fostered self-consciousness. In this moment, it could be that anyone who manages to expect acceptance from a new social partner is more likely to pursue connection with that partner, regardless of the actor's level of social power. This is consistent with the strand of evidence we found that acceptance expectations were linked to social-connection seeking across our entire sample, collapsing across condition. But as a whole, these findings did not support our hypothesized mechanistic model.

As a final attempt at mechanism, the present work also tested whether power enhances social-connection seeking by making rejection a less upsetting experience. That is, does the rejection-buffering effect of power, such that powerful people are less affected by rejection in terms of their self-esteem and negative emotion (Kuehn et al., in press), also promote social-connection seeking in the wake of rejection? Coping better with rejection may prepare the powerful to also take adaptive steps toward social reconnection. We tested this possibility in two of our studies, but found supportive evidence in neither. In Study 1, although – as reported in Kuehn et al. (in press) – buffering evidence emerged, this outcome was unrelated to social-connection seeking. In Study 4, we failed to replicate our prior findings of power buffering reactivity to rejection, which made us a bit suspect of this data as a whole. Overall, we did not find evidence of reactivity buffering having any link to social-connection seeking.

Unpacking mechanism for effects that don't necessarily exist is perhaps an exercise in futility. But given that we did find evidence for the social-connection seeking effect in both Studies 1 and 2, crossing the contexts of the workplace and romantic relationships, and given the convergent findings of Narayanan et al. (2013), we believe the phenomenon is likely real, and wanted to explore this concept at least briefly.

Theoretical and Methodological Limitations

There are at least two potential explanations for not finding support for our hypotheses: either the hypotheses were wrong (i.e., the phenomenon doesn't operate as we'd conceptualized it), or there were methodological features (e.g., the presence of the video camera) that clouded our observations, despite the phenomenon being real. With respect to the former explanation, it could be that we were chasing the wrong mediator, or that there are confounding variables we haven't considered. For instance, power exaggerates underlying individual tendencies (e.g., Chen et al., 2001), which could lead some individuals to be especially prone to pursue connection after rejection, but could lead other individuals down a different path in response to rejection. Or perhaps for the powerful, seeking reconnection to fulfill belonging needs takes a different form – maybe asserting

dominance and/or displaying force is another way for the powerful to feel socially restored. Given that the powerful sometimes react to competence threats with aggression (Fast & Chen, 2009), reacting to belonging threats similarly doesn't seem a radical departure. Alternatively, perhaps being in a context with dual goals both to connect and to control, due respectively to heightened belonging needs and an assigned power role, creates intrapsychic conflict for the powerful following a rejection, breeding inconsistent responses. Indeed, given that affiliation and control are rooted in different social scripts and activate different self-construals (Tiedens & Jimenez, 2003), it could be difficult to experience both simultaneously.

On a related note, the powerful exist in a psychological space with another potential source of tension – possessing an independent self-construal, while simultaneously being deeply embedded in interdependent social contexts (Lee & Tiedens, 2001). This means that the powerful experience self-motives consistent with independence, readily self-enhancing but expressing little self-conscious or other-focused emotion, all while simultaneously being highly socially connected, for instance having high numbers of social ties and strong knowledge of social networks (Lee & Tiedens, 2001). Having a self-construal and social reality at such odds with each other could foster psychological conflict for the powerful, especially during experiences of rejection, which is a threat both to the self and to one's social connections. Moreover, the greater dependence of the powerless upon the powerful than vice versa – a fundamental, definitional aspect of power (e.g., Keltner et al., 2003) – implies that the powerless need the powerful more than the powerful need the powerless. Thus, counter to our hypotheses, following rejection, the powerless may be *more* motivated to ingratiate themselves to the powerholders who control their outcomes, compared to the powerful, who have little need for approval from their underlings. That is, alongside the belonging goals theoretically activated for all participants by a rejection, the powerless may have an overall higher need for approval or acceptance from the powerful than vice versa; this countervailing psychological force could have obscured the effects we expected to observe. All this is to say that power is a construct with complex social implications that could produce a range of responses to rejection, rather than the specific responses we predicted. Thus, the focal phenomenon observed in our first two studies and in Narayanan et al. (2013) could have just reflected a small sliver of the true psychology that emerges for the powerful after a rejection experience. In contrast, Study 4 may have brought up more complex aspects of rejection responding and opened the floodgates for these confounding factors.

On the other hand, if flawed theory isn't responsible for our lack of findings – that is, if power does in fact promote social-connection seeking after rejection – perhaps methodological elements in the present work prevented us from successfully obtaining supportive evidence. As far as Study 4 is concerned, as noted above, we speculate that the video camera, and the self-consciousness it may have engendered, may have undermined the phenomenon we attempted to capture with our experimental design and measures. Unfortunately, this mixed suite of results across studies is difficult to interpret. Why did it work in some cases but not others? Perhaps Type I error provided false positives in the previous studies, although the convergent findings of Narayanan et al. (2013) help rule this out. Perhaps Study 4 was underpowered – although we strove for 50 per cell, time constraints and conservative exclusions left us with just under 40 per cell – but, as far as we observed, there weren't even clear trends in the data that greater statistical power could have clarified. Alternatively, perhaps the complex procedures of Study 4 compared to the other studies is to blame: we were striving for a complex but ultimately clean and powerful procedure – with a strong power manipulation, a clear rejection manipulation, and a new opportunity for social reconnection – but it may have become bloated with procedural details, introducing too much confusion and ultimately detracting from the psychological phenomena we intended to capture.

Future Directions

The present work suggests several avenues for future research. First and foremost is understanding when and why the powerful seek social connection in the wake of rejection, exploring the boundary conditions of the effects found in Studies 1 and 2, reconciling our findings with those of Narayanan et al. (2013), investigating moderators, and exploring the predictors of other responses to rejection (e.g., aggression and reduced prosociality, Twenge et al., 2001; Twenge et al., 2007). Relatedly, future work should seek to unpack the mechanism or mechanisms responsible for power driving social-connection seeking (vs. other responses) following social rejection. Approach (e.g., Narayanan et al., 2013) is a clean and compelling explanation, but perhaps multiple forces operate in tandem to predict responses to rejection, and perhaps power moderates these forces in intriguing ways. Measuring multiple potential mediators in future work would allow a test of the relative impact of dynamics that may operate in parallel or in conjunction to one another.

Finally, broadening the scope beyond the phenomenon of interest here, future work should seek to understand the unique and sometimes conflicting social motives of the powerful. When might affiliation motives take precedence, when does control carry the day, and how are these two forces intertwined? What are the well-being implications of inhabiting a psychological space with conflicting motives and inconsistencies between the self and the social world? How might the powerful cope with this conflict, and does it adversely affect some individuals more than others? When powerful people can't achieve affiliation, do they instead turn to control as a means of self-affirmation? How might this satisficing shape social outcomes in the long term? A systematic investigation of such questions could smooth the integration of the power literature into the broader social psychological literature, in addition to bolstering our understanding of the psychology of social power.

Conclusion

Rejection should arguably motivate individuals to restore their threatened need for social connection, promoting motivations and behaviors intended to rebuild social bonds. Power may encourage individuals to follow this adaptive path after rejection, rather than resorting to aggression, hostility, or despair. But evidence is somewhat mixed for this direct effect, and the present work did not find evidence for an underlying mechanism. Regardless, it seems that power sometimes motivates social-connection seeking after rejection, and future work should seek to understand when this happens, why it happens, and for whom it happens.

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Footnotes

[1]The degrees of freedom for our fixed effects were calculated using the Satterthwaite (1946) approximation. This method of approximation is recommended by Campbell and Kashy (2002) and yields degrees of freedom for each predictor that are somewhere between the number of dyads and the number of individuals in the study. The degrees of freedom can be fractional, and have been rounded to the nearest integer (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006).

[2]Across studies, only a few gender effects emerged, but none altered interpretation of our key findings. In Study 2, only a main effect of gender emerged for positivity, such that women were seen as more positive than men, $b = -.36$, $t(57) = 3.68$, $p < .001$. No three-way interaction with gender, power, and perceived responsiveness emerged, $t < 1$. In Study 3b, men reported marginally higher levels of expected acceptance than women, $F(1, 51) = 2.57$, $p = .055$, but this did not interact with power condition, $p = .29$. In Study 4, of our nine measures of connection seeking and our hypothesized mediators, a marginal three-way interaction with gender emerged for only one index: confederate positive impressions of the participant, $F(1, 137) = 2.89$, $p = .09$. This was likely driven by a crossover interaction emerging among women (with greater liking for rejected than accepted low-power participants, but greater liking for accepted than rejected high-power participants), and no crossover appearing for men.

[3]To control for the potential influence of physical attractiveness, coders also rated the attractiveness of each participant. Coder ratings of attractiveness were averaged into a single attractiveness score for each participant ($\alpha = .79$), which correlated with the overall coded connection index at $r(138) = .35$, $p < .01$. I then regressed scores on the overall coded connection index onto this attractiveness score, and maintained the residuals. Predicting those residuals (reflecting coder impressions of social-connection seeking, stripped of the impact of attractiveness) from our two manipulations and their interaction, no significant main effects (ps > .30) or interaction ($p = .82$) emerged. Approaching it another way, including attractiveness as a covariate in the regression predicting the coded connection seeking index, resulted in similar statistics: no significant main effects (ps > .30) and no interaction ($p = .82$).

[4]A three-factor solution emerged that cumulatively accounted for 73% of variance in the data (as a point of comparison, a forced two-factor solution only accounts for 59% of variance and has more cross-loaded items). The first factor reflected assertive dominance, and included the codes for dominance, task engagement, and physical engagement, $\alpha = .68$. The second factor reflected agreeable warmth, and included the codes for warmth, connection seeking, and achieved connection, $\alpha = .80$. The third factor reflected smoothness of the interaction, and included the codes for responsiveness and reversed conflict, $\alpha = .33$. This low alpha led to explorations of other factor solutions.

[5]Measures of emotion and self-esteem were also collected prior to the social-connection measure in Study 1, allowing us to also test this alternative pathway in those data. As reported in Kuehn et al. (in press), greater power was associated with lesser negative emotion and greater self-esteem following rejection, essentially buffering power holders from the effects of rejection. We re-analyzed this data to test whether buffered emotion and self-esteem drove social-connection seeking, using a series of multiple regressions using a contrast code for power conditions (-1 = low power, +1 = high power) to test this question. When standardized and entered individually alongside this condition code, neither self-esteem ($b = .006$, $t(48) = .04$, $p = .97$) nor negative emotion ($b = .17$, $t(48) = .91$, $p = .37$) predicted interest in netWORK, ruling each out as candidates for mediation.

Table 1
Zero-Order Correlations between Measured Variables in Study 2

Measure	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*
1. Sense of Power	--			
2. Perceived Responsiveness	.19†	--		
3. Observed Positivity	.03	-.06	--	
4. Self-Esteem	.38**	.03	.07	--
5. Partner SOP	.24*	.10	-.06	.19†

Note. Due to the non-independent nature of our dyadic data, when calculating correlations we used the pairwise data entry method and calculated Pearson's *r*, adjusting the standard error to $1/\sqrt{}$(number of dyads) and treating the resulting test statistic as a Z statistic (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006), * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, $^{\dagger}p < .10$

Table 2
Summary of Study 3a Multiple Regressions

	Perceived Acceptance			Fear of Negative Evaluation		
Predictors	*β*	*t*-value[a]	*p*-value	*β*	*t*-value[b]	*p*-value
Sense of Power	.31	2.57	0.01	-.27	-2.08	0.04
Self-Esteem	.32	2.70	0.008	-.22	-1.71	0.09

Note. Predictors were entered simultaneously; displayed betas are standardized. [a]df = 74; [b]df = 76.

Table 3
Video coding reliability and descriptive statistics, Study 4

Variable	α between coders	Descriptive Statistics			
		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Ratings of Participant					
Dominance	.87	1.67	7	4.32	1.12
Warmth	.91	1.33	6.33	4.17	1.20
Physical Engagement	.88	2.67	6.67	4.88	.87
Responsiveness	.86	2.33	6.33	5.01	.88
Connection Seeking	.92	1	7	2.32	1.31
Task Engagement	.83	3	7	5.56	.70
Ratings of Pair					
Conflict	.85	1	4.33	1.21	.49
Personal Connection	.86	1	5	1.75	.95
Mimicry	.92	0	2.67	.46	.61
Role Fulfillment Ratings					
Participant	.76	4	7	6.77	.47
Confederate	.73	4.67	7	6.83	.37

Table 4
Study 4 video composite single-factor solutions

Variable	Solution 1	Solution 2
Dominance	0.372	--
Task Engagement	0.632	0.598
Physical Engagement	0.746	0.732
Warmth	0.854	0.867
Connection Seeking	0.688	0.703
Personal Connection	0.548	0.594
Responsiveness	0.739	0.747
Conflict (reversed)	0.192	--
α within solution	*.76*	*.80*

Note. Each column displays factor loadings by variable for each single-factor solution with the given variables included. The variables included in Solution 2 comprised the final measure of behavioral connection-seeking in Study 4.

Table 5
Connection Seeking Analysis summary, Study 4

Source of data	Connection-seeking Measure	Means (*SD*s)				Interaction test statistics	
		Rejected		Accepted			
		HP	LP	HP	LP	*F* –value (error df)	*p*-value
Coded videos	Behavioral connection-seeking	3.97 (.74)	4.03 (.67)	3.91 (.82)	3.87 (.63)	.16 (137)	.69
	Mimicry	.24 (.39)	.59 (.75)	.36 (.51)	.51 (.69)	.93 (135)	.34
Pre-task survey	Participant excitement	1.56 (1.19)	1.73 (1.00)	2.13 (.80)	2.03 (.92)	.60 (140)	.44
Post-task participant survey	Participant positive partner impression	5.41 (.83)	5.85 (.58)	5.73 (.56)	5.87 (.54)	2.14 (141)	.15
	Participant-rated interaction success	4.80 (1.01)	5.22 (.85)	5.03 (.81)	5.18 (.84)	.85 (141)	.36
	Participant interest in working together again	4.53 (1.37)	4.80 (1.20)	4.78 (1.22)	4.86 (1.03)	.20 (138)	.66
Post-task confederate survey	Confederate positive partner impression	5.48 (.71)	5.65 (.75)	5.66 (.62)	5.40 (.76)	3.28 (141)	.07
	Confederate-rated interaction success	4.66 (.83)	4.96 (.98)	4.87 (.97)	4.76 (1.00)	1.60 (141)	.21
	Confederate interest in working together again	4.65 (1.13)	5.11 (1.31)	5.06 (1.24)	4.68 (1.04)	4.48 (141)	.04

Table 6
Relationships between mediators and social-connection seeking measures, Study 4

Measure	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*
1. AE	--	143	139	137	142	143	143	140	143	143	143
2. RC	-.11	--	139	137	142	143	143	140	143	143	143
3. BC	.19*	-.06	--	137	138	139	139	136	139	139	139
4. M	.02	.02	.08	--	136	137	137	134	137	137	137
5. PE	.30***	.11	.12	-.04	--	142	142	139	142	142	142
6. PP	.16^{+}	-.02	.31***	.02	.18*	--	143	140	143	143	143
7. PS	.18*	.01	.14+	.10	.20*	.77***	--	140	143	143	143
8. PI	.18*	.14^{+}	.08	.03	.17*	.59***	.73***	--	140	140	140
9. CP	.20*	.06	.39***	-.04	.13	.19*	.23**	.14	--	143	143
10. CS	.20*	-.03	.25**	-.05	.14	.08	.12	.02	.84***	--	143
11. CI	.15^{+}	-.06	.36***	-.04	.07	.17*	.14+	.05	.82***	.83***	--

Note. Intercorrelations between measures are presented below the diagonal, with degrees of freedom per analysis above the diagonal. "P" denotes participant ratings, whereas "C" denotes confederate ratings. Guide to measure labels: 1. AE = Acceptance expectations; 2. RC = Rejection concerns; 3. BC = Behavioral connection-seeking; 4. M = Mimicry; 5. PE = Participant excitement in working with partner; 6. PP = Participant positive partner impressions; 7. PS = Participant-rated interaction success; 8. PI = Participant interest in working with partner again; 9. CP = Confederate positive partner impressions; 10. CS = Confederate-rated interaction success; 11. CI = Confederate interest in working together again. $^{+}p < .10$, $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$.

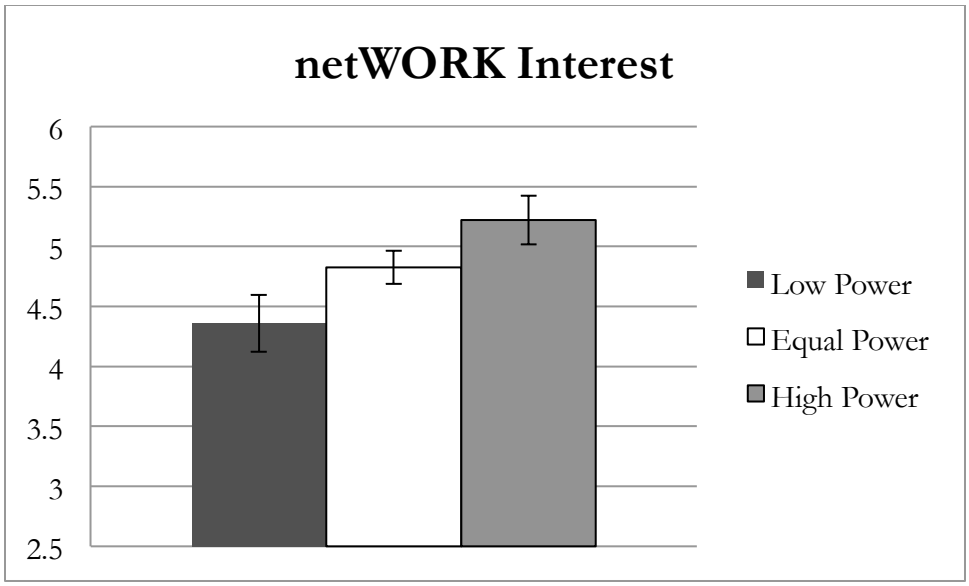

Figure 1. netWORK interest scores following rejection as a function of power role in Study 1; scores are on a 1-7 scale. Error bars indicate +/- 1 standard error.

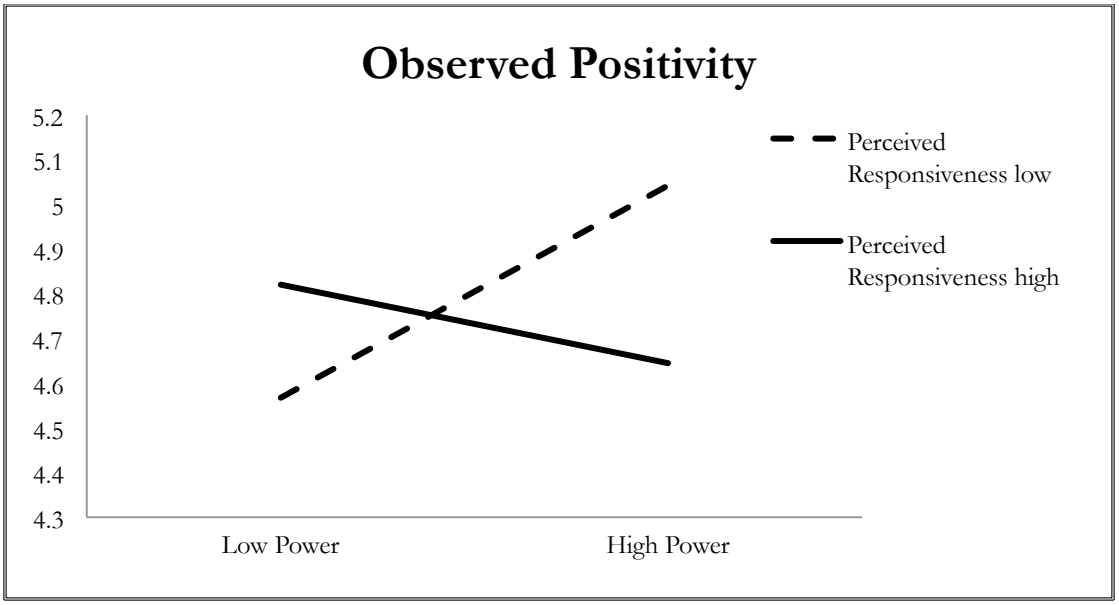

Figure 2. Observed positivity during a teamwork task as a function of perceived partner responsiveness and trait power in Study 2; scores are on a 1-7 scale.

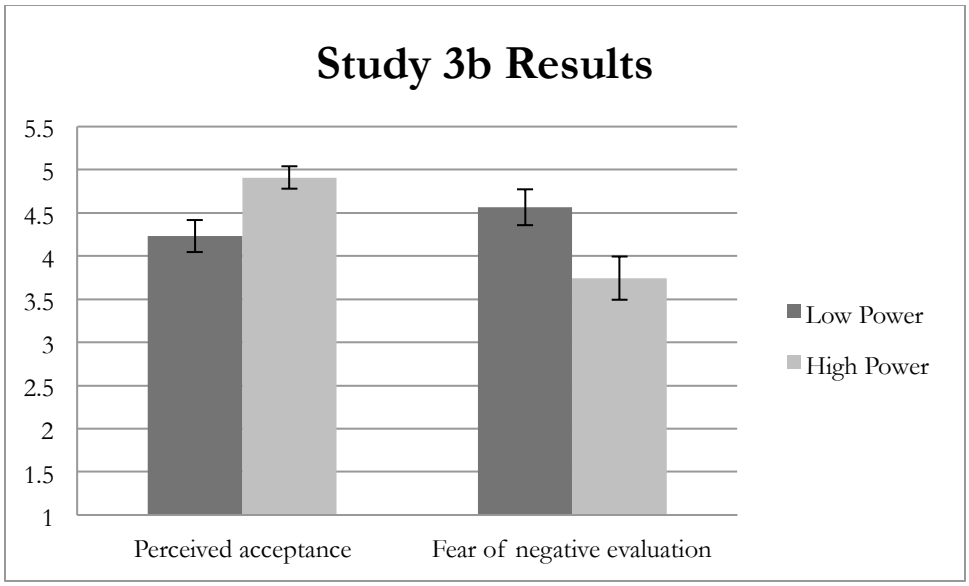

Figure 3. Perceived acceptance and fear of negative evaluation scores as a function of power condition in Study 3b, on a 1-7 scale. Error bars indicate +/- 1 standard error.

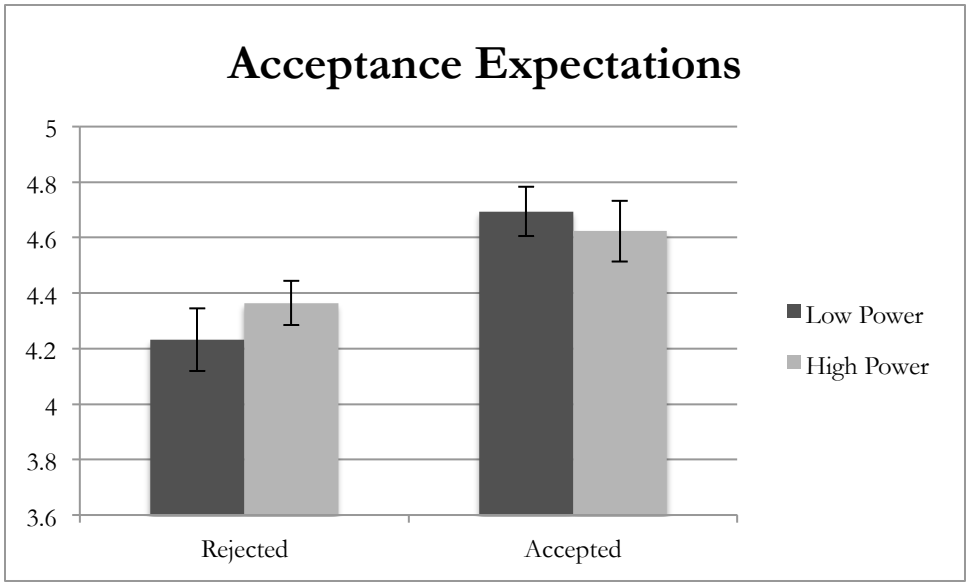

Figure 4. Acceptance expectations scores as a function of power and rejection conditions in Study 4, on a 1-7 scale. Error bars indicate +/- 1 standard error.

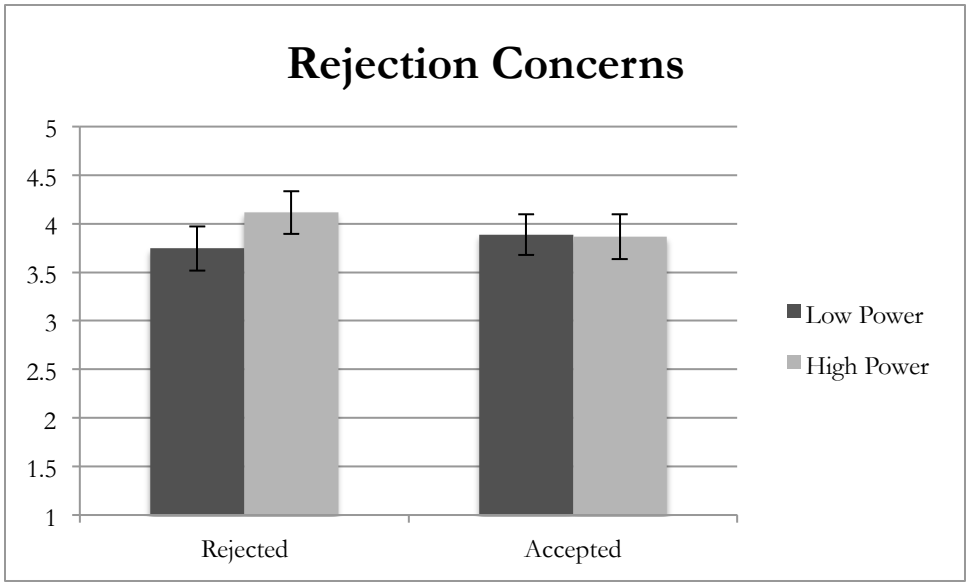

Figure 5. Rejection concern scores as a function of power and rejection conditions in Study 4, on a 1-7 scale. Error bars indicate +/- 1 standard error.