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## Micro and macro justice in the context of truth and reconciliation commissions.

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**MICRO AND MACRO JUSTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF  
TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSIONS**

A Thesis Presented  
by  
CHRISTINE LILLIE

Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

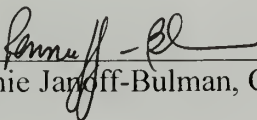
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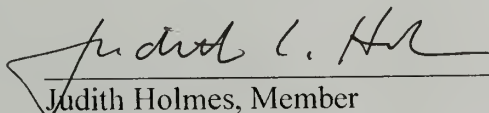
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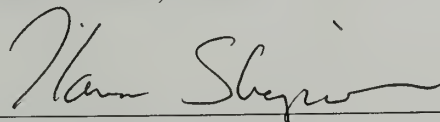
A Thesis Presented  
by  
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## DEDICATION

This thesis, and all my work, is dedicated to the survivors  
who have shared their stories with me.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply in debt to my advisor Ronnie Janoff-Bulman for all her support, advice, shared wisdom, and patience. She has turned what could have been a less than hoped for experience into something intensely rewarding and meaningful to me. I will miss her humor and moral outrage tremendously next year, and am so thankful for the time I had to work with her.

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As always, I am grateful to my family and friends for their unwavering love and support. Specifically, I would like to thank Rezarta and Johanna who are not only my colleagues, but also my best friends.

## **ABSTRACT**

### **MICRO AND MACRO JUSTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSIONS**

**MAY 2006**

**CHRISTINE LILLIE, B.A., REED COLLEGE**

**M.S., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST**

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The present studies examined how micro (individual-based) and macro (societal-based) perspectives on justice influenced views of fairness. These constructs were examined within the specific framework of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. In both studies, participants were given a description of the TRC and asked to judge the fairness of the process. In the first study, participants were given a writing task that primed micro-versus macro-level processing and were then asked to make judgments about the fairness of the TRC. In the second study, participants were asked specific questions about the fairness of the TRC that were framed at either a micro or macro level. In both studies significant effects were found for the manipulations, such that the micro-level groups perceived the TRC as less fair and the macro-level groups perceived the TRC as more fair. The paper includes a brief review of a field study that inspired the present research and explored perceptions and experiences with justice in Rwanda. Implications of micro versus macro perspectives for studying justice and fairness in post- and current-conflict societies are discussed.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

*Fiat Justitia ne pereat mundus*  
[Let Justice be done so the world may not perish]  
-Georg W.F. Hegel, 1821

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa was devised to secure a new society and culture, freed from the memories of oppression, humiliation and suffering endured under the reign of apartheid. The TRC was established in 1995 as a compromise between the outgoing government and the African National Congress. The TRC spent five years documenting atrocities committed during apartheid. Some perpetrators were granted amnesty in exchange for testimony of their transgressions, and victims were given a space to tell their own horror stories, which could finally be heard and respected by the nation and the world. It was a massive effort to create a new collective consciousness that could move the society forward and reintegrate a previously segregated populace. Given the granting of amnesty, it was recognized that individual victims would not receive justice in the typical retributive sense. Abdullah Omar, a founder of the TRC, stated:

“If we are unable to provide complete justice on an individual basis- and we need to try and achieve maximum justice within the framework of reconciliation- it is possible for us...to ensure that there is historical and collective justice for the people of our country. If we achieve that, if we achieve social justice and move in that direction, then those who today feel aggrieved that individual justice has not been done will at least be able to say that our society has achieved what victims fought for during their lifetimes. And therefore, at that level, one will be able to say that justice has been done” (Van der Merwe, 2001, p. 199).

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, most South Africans agreed, at least in part, with Omar's statement: the majority approved of the TRC and believed it would contribute to and help maintain the new democracy (Gibson, 1994). However, on a personal level, the majority of South Africans found the TRC unfair, and in some cases painful and disempowering (Gibson, 1994, Byrne, 2004). One woman who struggled with the TRC's decision to grant amnesty to the killers of her son said, "Why is it that these perpetrators were given amnesty...The TRC was not fair because these children were not the children of the TRC commissioners, they are our children, we are the parents. When they ask for forgiveness they should have asked from us- the parents- to see if we would accept that or not" (Byrne, 2004). Clearly there is a discrepancy that may be attributed to the dual nature of the justice process itself. While societal justice may ultimately be achieved, personal justice may not be possible.

### **Macro versus Micro Justice**

These incongruent yet coincident opinions can be interpreted as alternate ways of perceiving justice, as first developed by Brickman and his colleagues (Brickman, Folger, Goode & Schul, 1981). They distinguished between macro-level justice, which focuses on the needs of the society as a whole and concerns the structure and development of the social order, and micro-level justice, which focuses on the needs of the individual victim and concerns the relationships among individuals. An example of this in American society is the debate over affirmative action. A common micro-level argument against affirmative action is that the non-minority individual who was not accepted or promoted is more deserving based on individual merits than other job or university minority



candidates. A pro-affirmative action and macro-level argument stresses that society would benefit from policies that serve to compensate and equalize members who have been previously marginalized. Regarding, international policies, such as the development of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, Brickman and colleagues (Brickman et al., 1981) hypothesized that “a macro-justice orientation [may] lead to an entirely different form of responding to political events than a micro-justice orientation” (p. 197).

There have only been a handful of studies that have examined micro and macro-levels of justice. Micro justice appeals were found to be stronger for anti-environmental stances, and macro appeals stronger for pro-environmental positions (Clayton, 1994). Participants who naturally took a societal view were less punitive in sentencing, while those who were concerned with the needs of the victim were more punitive. (Oswald et al, 2002). In another study, affect was found to influence the use of macro or micro principles of justice; elated subjects showed more endorsement of macro justice values, while depressed subjects were more likely to use micro-justice values (Sinclair & Mark, 1991).

Previous justice researchers have focused on at least five different types of justice, each of which can be considered from a micro or macro perspective. Researchers generally distinguish between two main types of justice, namely distributive versus procedural justice, which have been shown to be distinct constructs (for a review see Lind & Tyler, 1988; Greenburg, 1990). Early on, the majority of justice research concerned distributive justice, or how the dispersing of goods, honors, and obligations affects views of fairness. Distributive justice is advanced when the outcomes are consistent with norms of equity or equality (Adams, 1965; Deutsch, 1975; Homans,

1961; Leventhal, 1976). Yet over time, researchers noted that outcomes alone do not account for people's ratings of fairness, and they shifted towards studying procedural justice, or the justness of the methods and processes—such as consistency, lack of bias and ethicality—used in determining outcomes. (Leventhal, 1980; Leventhal, Karzuda & Fry, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Also included in procedural justice is the way in which people are active and engaged in the process; opportunity for voice is cited as one of the most important aspects of procedural justice (Tyler, 1994 & Miller, 2001; Tyler, Rasinski & Spodick, 1985).

A third type of justice discussed in the literature is interactional, which is generally regarded as a subset of procedural justice (e.g. Moorman, 1991; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993; Tyler & Bies, 1990), although some researchers do consider it as distinct (e.g. Aquino, 1995; Barling & Phillips, 1993). Interactional justice refers specifically to the interpersonal treatment people receive during the justice process and is fostered when people are treated respectfully and sensitively (Bies & Moag, 1986). Restorative justice, a fourth category, is used in the peace and conflict literature, especially when analyzing justice in post-conflict societies. Similar in definition to interactional justice, it is generally regarded as returning dignity to the victim. This can be achieved through a perpetrator's expression of remorse, acceptance of responsibility and blame for the event or demonstration of unhappiness about the harm that was done (Miller, 2001). Using a classroom setting as an example presents a way to conceptualize these types of justice. Distributive justice references the fairness of the grades the students receive, procedural justice references the fairness of the processes used by the

professors to determine the grades, and interactional or restorative justice references the professor's interpersonal interactions with the students (Colquitt, 2001).

A fifth and final type of justice commonly used by researchers is retributive, which pertains to vindication and punishment of the perpetrator. The primary motivation for desiring retribution and punishment of an offender is the moral outrage felt in response to being intentionally, as opposed to accidentally, harmed (Darley, 2003).

Macro or micro perspectives can be associated with all five types of justice; that is, all five types described above have different criteria for measuring the fairness of outcomes, yet those evaluations can be made on either a personal or a societal level. Nevertheless, macro versus micro justice may be more strongly associated with some types of justice over others. Macro-level justice seems clearly linked to procedural justice and equality models of distributive justice. It is reasonable to assume that if people find the procedures reasonable and feel respected and validated, they will judge the society overall to be fairer. The equity model of distributive justice lends itself to a micro level analysis. People are concerned that they get what they believe they deserve and that their own personal needs are met. Retributive justice may typically be a micro level matter, as it involves personal vengeance.

There are surface parallels between macro and micro perspectives of justice and the constructs of individualism and collectivism, as described in the cross cultural literature (see Oyserman, Coon & Kemmelmeier, 2002 for a review). Several studies have looked at the relationship between individualism/ collectivism and conflict resolution style. Two reward allocation studies with Chinese, Japanese, Korean and US undergraduates demonstrated a positive relationship between collectivism and a

preference for equality over equity norms (Hui et. al, 1991; Leung & Twawaki, 1988). When using group membership rather than directly measuring individualism and collectivism, it was shown that European Americans were less likely to use equality norms when interacting with in-group members than Chinese (Leung & Bond, 1982, 1984). Further, Japanese students were found to support more equality-based solutions to gender discrimination than Americans (Ozawa, Crosby & Crosby, 1996). An examination of negotiation style revealed that US negotiators were more likely to endorse self-interested negotiation than Japanese negotiators (Brett & Okumura, 1998). One could argue that viewing justice on a macro level is simply an artifact of a collectivist preference for equality. However, it is theorized that collectivism/ individualism is a stable personality trait as well as a cultural construct; even as a cultural measure, it is really used largely to define the "personality" of a culture (Triandis, 1995). In contrast, macro and micro perceptions of justice are malleable and can be considered more situational; the same people may use micro justice in some instances and macro justice in others.

The current studies investigated how the salience of macro or micro levels of judgment altered perceptions of justice and fairness of the TRC. While this aspect of justice has not previously been explored in this context, Hugo Van der Merwe (2001) has examined reconciliation and justice in South Africa from the perspective of top-down versus bottom up restorative justice. He philosophized that the South African government and the victims of apartheid had very different notions of restorative justice, a key dimension in the tension surrounding the TRC. The government perspective was top-down, focusing on structural relationships, public and symbolic acts, and formality. The



victims, on the other hand, envisioned a bottom-up model, centered on personal bonds between individual and community members, personal apology and reparations. The current studies explored related dimensions that may have affected perceptions of fairness in South Africa, namely micro-and macro-level perspectives of justice.

### **Exploratory Field Research in Rwanda**

The current studies were inspired by exploratory field research conducted in Rwanda by the author and members of the international NGO Human Rights Watch. The original mission of the Human Rights Watch project was an effort to seek accountability for sexual violence crimes committed during the 1994 Rwandan genocide<sup>1</sup>. Perpetrators of the genocide employed sexual violence against women and girls as a brutally effective tool to humiliate and subjugate Tutsi and politically moderate Hutu. Suffering physical and psychological consequences of the violence, women and girls who were victims of rape are among the most devastated of genocide survivors. Few have been able to seek adequate legal redress or medical and psychiatric treatment and are still faced with long-lasting psychological scars that impede their ability to live daily life. For example, women reported the following sentiments: “I wanted to be killed as well. Sometimes I still wish that I had been killed with him”; “Since the end of the genocide, I never wanted to think about what happened to me, so much of it was so strong, I thought that if I said it I would go insane, it makes me feel un-human”; and “I am overcome by eternal sadness, I do not feel that I am alive.”

Thirty semi-standardized interviews of rape victims were content analyzed to explore the relationship between experiences with the justice system and trauma. One of

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<sup>1</sup> The full report is “Struggling to Survive: Barriers to Justice for Rape Victims in Rwanda,” 2004



the unexpected findings was the victims' tendency to think about justice on two different levels, both global and individual. Specifically, they discussed personal experiences with the justice system as well as global perceptions of the justice system (i.e. whether or not they thought the current system was helping or worsening the situation in Rwanda).

Surprisingly, these assessments did not always correspond with one another in terms of positive or negative judgment. For example, a victim could have had an abysmal personal experience with the courts, but still have a positive view of the system itself, as evident in the following statements by one of the survivors:

I talked with the prosecutor. I told him that I have been raped. I identified the rapists, and showed that they are not imprisoned. The adviser did not do anything...I spoke about it before, but nobody did anything about it right after the genocide. I have testified...The judge did not punish the rape.

Before I did not dare give the statement that I had been raped. I now have the courage to say it because I heard that in the law they now take account of the crime of rape... There is the hope that people will say the truth, so that the culprits are punished... Before, the women were afraid to speak about it. We still want justice to continue, this crime of rape must be punished. There is hope that justice will be returned for rape victims...We think that justice is very important.

Conversely, a rape victim could have had a positive personal outcome, but still have a negative global perspective:

The men are in prison in Gitarama. I reported them and it is written in their dossier... I gave the names of the three men to the OPJ and told him about the rape...I also spoke in gacaca and said what had happened...

I think that that the gacaca will ruin everything this time. It will traumatize everyone, drive us mad. The gacaca will not be able to help us. I will not have any words to say that will make a difference...The people who made the system prefer silence... I don't think it will achieve much of anything.

Clearly this was preliminary, exploratory research, but it suggested the potential importance of differentiating between macro- and micro-level perceptions in studying judgments of fairness. In post-conflict settings, positive macro-level perceptions of justice and fairness may be paramount for the reestablishment of normalcy in people's lives and the restoration of faith in a country emerging from horror. This field study encouraged further investigation into these two levels of thought and their association with perceptions of justice and fairness. The current studies were conducted to begin to address these questions.

### **Current Studies**

The first experimental study primed either an individual or group level analysis by asking participants to write short paragraphs about themselves or society at large. This method of priming was developed by Brewer and Gardner (1996) and has been used successfully by Stapel & Koomen (2001), who examined the impact of self versus societal activation on the occurrence and direction of social comparisons effects. Following the priming task, the participants rated the fairness of the TRC on a variety of dimensions. It was hypothesized that when given a macro-level prime, participants would view the TRC as more fair, given its focus on promoting societal growth. It was expected that participants given the micro prime would view the TRC as less fair, given its lack of justice for the individual.

The second experimental study examined how framing questions, such that they focused on either micro or macro levels of justice, influenced perceptions of fairness. In a previous survey, Gibson (2004) gave South African participants a series of vignettes describing various outcomes of a TRC trial. He found that even the most positive outcome was judged to be unfair by the majority of participants. However, he asked only about micro-level justice, framing his questions in terms of the fairness of the outcome to the families of the victims. The second study framed questions at both the micro level, like Gibson, and also at the macro level. It was hypothesized that participants who were given questions framed on a macro level would find the outcomes of the trials to be fairer overall than those given questions framed on a micro level.

## CHAPTER II

### STUDY 1

The first study examined the effects of priming micro or macro perspectives on perceptions of fairness of the South African TRC. It was hypothesized that participants who were in the macro-level condition would view the TRC as more fair compared to participants who were in the micro-level condition. These results should persist even after controlling for collectivism.

#### Method

##### Participants and Design

The participants were 105 [male (n=15) and female (n=90)] undergraduate students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, who received partial course credit for their participation. They were randomly assigned to micro-level, macro-level or control conditions. Ten participants were eliminated from the sample because of inattention to stimulus materials, as described below.

##### Procedure

First, the students were asked to write a short paragraph, developed by Stapel & Koonman, (2001) and based on Brewer and Gardner (1996), as the priming manipulation (see appendix B). Participants were told that the experimenters were helping the writing program at UMass by collecting anonymous writing samples. They wrote six to eight sentences on a particular topic. In the micro-level condition, participants wrote a paragraph about themselves, using neutral, evaluative terms. They were instructed that every sentence should include one of the following words: *I*, *me*, *myself*, or *mine*. In the

macro-level condition, participants wrote a paragraph about “who we are” as a collective people or society, using one of the following words in each sentence: *we*, *our*, *ourselves*, *ours*. In the control condition students wrote a paragraph about the architecture on UMass campus, using the words: *buildings*, *parking*, *classrooms*, and *pond*.

Following, all participants were given a description of the South African TRC<sup>2</sup> (see appendix A), which was read aloud to them on audiotape as they followed along on their page. After, they were asked to complete the TRC Fairness Questionnaire (see appendix C) regarding the fairness of the TRC, including the fairness of the process and of amnesty. Finally, the materials were collected from the participants and they were given a 7-item true/false quiz which asked about factual details of the TRC (see appendix F). This was done to check that they were attending to and understood the information given about the TRC. Ten participants were eliminated for answering more than two questions wrong.

## Materials

TRC Fairness Questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 26 items that addressed various aspects of the TRC, and participants responded to all questions on 7-point scales. The first five questions addressed the general fairness of the TRC (based on Tyler, 1988). The individual items were: (1) How fair is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)? (2) How fair are the procedures used by the TRC? (3) How just and impartial are the TRC’s policies? (4) How satisfied would you be with the TRC? and (5)

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<sup>2</sup> The description used was previously analyzed by the author in a pilot study with 26 participants to ensure that the description was balanced for mood and justice concerns



How much would you trust the TRC? Participants responded on 7-point scales with endpoints 1 = “not fair at all” (qst.1), “not fair at all” (qst.2), “not just at all” (qst.3), “not satisfied at all” (qst. 4) or “not at all” (qst.5) and 7 = “very fair,” “very fair,” “very just,” “very satisfied,” or “very much.” The five questions were highly intercorrelated and were combined into the main study variable renamed “General Fairness” ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

The remainder of the questionnaire was self-developed. Following the first five questions, the participants were asked to indicate their reactions to the TRC by rating a series of bipolar adjectives scales. The adjectives were (1) unfair-fair, (2) bad-good, (3) harmful-helpful, (4) unjust-just, (5) untrustworthy-trustworthy, (6) meaningless-meaningful, and (7) hurting-healing. The seven adjective ratings were combined into one variable renamed “Evaluative Adjectives” ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

The next six questions asked about the fairness of specific aspects of the TRC and were analyzed independently of each other (i.e., they did not form a reliable single scale). The aspects were: (1) amnesty, (2) media coverage of the hearings, (3) truth-telling by victims, (4) truth telling by perpetrators, (5) that apologies were not required, and (6) that monetary reparations were not required.

The next section of the questionnaire asked about the extent to which the participants believed the TRC would contribute to various outcomes for South Africa. Two questions asked about potential negative contributions: (1) increased violence and (2) increased desire for revenge. Three questions asked about positive contributions: (1) group harmony and reconciliation, (2) forgiveness between perpetrators and victims, and (3) growing common identity among South Africans. The negative contribution

questions were reverse scored and the five contribution questions were combined into a new variable renamed “Social Contributions” ( $\alpha = .70$ ).

The final three questions asked about the overall fairness of the TRC with regard to victims, perpetrators, and society, and were analyzed separately, again because they did not form a single reliable scale. The questions were: (1) Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to the victims? (2) Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to the perpetrators? and (3) Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to South African society?

Individualism/ Collectivism Scale. Given the previously un-researched and potential association of micro and macro-level justice with collectivism, the 32 scaled items of Triandis’ (1995) measure of individualism/collectivism was included in the prescreening questionnaire completed by participants at the beginning of the semester (see appendix G). Sample questions, which asked participants’ extent of agreement, are (1) when I succeed it is usually because of my abilities (*individualism*) and (2) I feel good when I cooperate with others (*collectivism*).

## **Results and Discussion**

The correlations among all study variables can be seen in Table 1. The three major multi-item variables in the study—General Fairness, Evaluative Adjectives, and Social Contributions—were entered into a MANOVA, which found a main significant effect for group,  $F(6,180) = 2.56, p < .05$ , Wilks Lambda = .85. A series of univariate ANOVA’s indicated that there were significant differences across the three groups on General Fairness,  $F(2,92) = 4.16, p < .05$  and Social Contributions,  $F(2,92) = 3.93, p < .05$  (see Table 2 for means and  $F$  values for all study variables). No significant differences were found for the Evaluative Adjectives.

ANOVAS conducted for the individual items in the study (i.e., six aspects of the TRC and three overall fairness questions) found significant differences on three variables: Perceived Fairness of the Amnesty Policy,  $F(2,92) = 4.35, p < .05$ , Monetary Contributions,  $F(2,92) = 3.49, p < .05$ , and Overall Fairness to South African Society,  $F(2,92) = 3.22, p < .05$ .

Post hoc analyses were conducted to further explore differences among the groups for the significant variables (see Figure 1). On four of the five variables—General Fairness, Fairness of the Amnesty Policy, Social Contributions, and Overall Fairness to South African Society--the macro level group consistently viewed the TRC as fairer and more beneficial to society than the micro level group. Regarding perceptions of the lack of required reparations, the macro group did not differ from the micro group, but did view the policy as more fair than the control group. In all cases, the micro level and the control group did not differ. Additionally, for the Social Contribution and Overall Fairness to South African Society variables, the macro and micro group did not differ from the control. Finally, there were no gender differences on any of the study variables, although this finding must be regarded with caution given the considerable gender imbalance of the sample.

After the initial series of ANOVA's, Collectivism scores were included as a covariate in a second set of analyses, to assess the role of collectivism and to determine whether the results were in fact driven by the manipulations. Unfortunately, relatively few participants, only 33 of 95, completed the individualism/ collectivism scale, even though instructions for the study specifically noted that to be eligible to participate, students had to have completed the prescreening questionnaire distributed at the

beginning of the semester. Hence, there was little power to detect any effects. Nevertheless, all analyses were rerun (without the collectivism covariate) using only the 33 participants who had completed the collectivism scale. Only one variable, Overall Fairness of the TRC to South African Society, remained significant,  $F(2,30) = 5.17$ ,  $p < .05$ . This analysis was then rerun using collectivism as a covariate. The significance of the results remained,  $F(3,29) = 5.51$ ,  $p < .01$ , and collectivism did not have a significant effect on the Overall Fairness variable,  $F(3,29) = 2.07$ , n.s., suggesting that the priming manipulation influenced the results over and above collective disposition.

Regarding the fairness differences found in the study, the pattern of results suggests that most of the shift occurred in the macro-level group, which differed from the micro group on four of the significant study variables (including the main study variable, General Fairness) and also from the control group on most of the variables. The micro-level group, in contrast, did not differ from the control group on any of the significant variables. This was likely due to the nature of the priming exercise. The micro level prime asked participants to write about themselves using the following words, *I, me, myself, or mine*. Some sample responses were: "I am a sophomore attending the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. I think of myself as an outgoing, friendly person who is fun to be around." "I am currently a junior here at UMass Amherst. I live in Pufton Village with three friends of mine." and "I am a student at UMass and my grades are very important to me. I hope to attain high enough grades both semesters of my freshman year so that I can get into the upper division."

The control prime asked participants to write about architecture at UMass using the words *building, parking, classrooms, and pond*. Unfortunately, this may have also



primed a micro-level mode of thought, as the participants typically wrote in the first person about UMass and their experiences as students. Some sample answers included: “When **I** walk around campus, **I** see many beautiful buildings with a great view.” “**I** like the location of the building in the center of the campus.” “Upon **my** first visit to UMass, **I** was astonished by the size of the buildings. Almost overwhelmingly, it took time to get used to **my** architectural surroundings.” Given the liberal use of “I,” “my” and other personal pronouns in the micro-level and control conditions, the priming techniques may have been very similar. Perhaps, then, it is not surprising that there were no differences between these groups.

Participants in the macro condition, however, wrote very different essays from the other two groups. Some responses to the essay topic “who we are as a society” included “We as a society are a group of people who are morally responsible to respect everyone and others. Our backgrounds and cultures should only benefit society, instead of create controversy.” “Our identity is who we are, ourselves. We sometimes hurt other people, but deep within our hearts we are a society, a community, a family” and “We are a group of people living under the same rules and regulations. Though our beliefs may differ, we share a common goal: to achieve equality in our country and live happily.” This macro-level prime clearly produced written responses quite different from the other two conditions. These responses focused on the group or collective, as intended. Some people also spontaneously brought up issues such as morality or respect which may have strengthened the effect.



Additionally, Americans are generally regarded as individualistic; hence, asking American students to write an essay focusing on the micro level may not have altered their natural frame of mind. Asking them to write on a collective topic, however, may have induced a shift from the default, individualist, perspective.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **STUDY 2**

The second study examined the effects of framing micro or macro perspectives on perceptions of fairness. The participants in the micro- and macro-level conditions were expected to differ on fairness perceptions, with macro-level participants rating the TRC as more fair than the micro- level participants. Collectivism was not expected to affect the results.

### **Method**

#### Participants and Design

The participants were 105 [male (n=22) and female (n=83)] undergraduate students at the University of Massachusetts who received partial credit for their participation. They were randomly assigned to micro-level, macro-level or control conditions. Eleven participants were dropped from the sample because of lack of attention to the stimulus materials, as described below.

#### Procedure

Participants were told that they would be contributing to a survey study interested in assessing opinions on international political and social affairs. They were given the same description of the TRC used in Study 1, which was read aloud to them on audiotape as they followed along on their page. Next, the students were asked to respond to a series of questions concerning the fairness of the TRC. The questions were framed differently, but constructed to be parallel for the macro-level, micro-level, and control groups. In the micro-level condition, the questions focused on the fairness of the outcome relative to the

families of the victims. In the macro-level condition, the questions focused on the fairness of the outcome relative to South African society as a whole. The control group was asked questions about the TRC without any specific framing (see appendix D). Following, all groups were given questions concerning the fairness of the TRC identical to those in Study 1 (see appendix E). Finally, the materials were collected from the participants and they were given the same 7-item true/false quiz used in Study 1 to check for comprehension of the TRC description. Eleven participants were eliminated for answering more than two questions wrong on the quiz.

### Materials

TRC Fairness Questionnaire. The first five questions, which addressed the general fairness of the TRC, were framed in micro-level, macro-level or neutral terms. In the micro-level condition, each question referred to the families of the victims. The individual questions were: (1) From the perspective of the families of the victims, how fair is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)? (2) From the viewpoint of the families of the victims, how fair are the procedures used by the TRC? (3) From the perspective of the families of the victims, how just and impartial are the TRC's policies? (4) Considering the needs of the families of the victims, how satisfied would you be with the TRC? and (5) Given the needs of the families of the victims, how much would you trust the TRC?

In the macro-level condition, each question referred to South African Society. The individual questions were: (1) From the perspective of members of South African society, how fair is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)? (2) From the viewpoint of

members of South African society, how fair are the procedures used by the TRC? (3) From the perspective of members of South African society, how just and impartial are the TRC's policies? (4) Considering the needs of South African society, how satisfied would you be with the TRC? and (5) Given the needs of South African society, how much would you trust the TRC? In the control condition the items were the same, but did not include the framing phrase about victims' families or South African Society. For example, (1) How fair is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)? These control questions were identical to the first five questions used in Study 1. For each condition, these five questions were combined into the main study variable renamed "General Fairness" ( $\alpha = .85$ ).

The remainder of the questionnaire was identical to Study 1. The seven bipolar adjective ratings were combined into one variable renamed "Evaluative Adjectives" ( $\alpha = .91$ ). The six questions that asked about various specific aspects of the TRC (e.g., amnesty, media coverage, and lack of reparations, etc.) were again kept separate. The section of the questionnaire that asked about the potential contributions of the TRC to South African society was again collapsed into a new variable: "Social Contributions" ( $\alpha = .64$ ). The final three questions, which concerned the overall fairness of the TRC, were treated independently, as they individually asked about victims, perpetrators, or society.

Individualism/ Collectivism Scale. As in Study 1, collectivism was assessed using the 32 scaled items of Triandis' individualism/ collectivism questionnaire (Triandis, 1995). The scale was included in the prescreening completed by students at the beginning of the semester.

## Results and Discussion

The correlations among all study variables can be seen in Table 3. The three major multi-item variables in the study—General Fairness, Evaluative Adjectives, and Social Contributions—were entered into a MANOVA, which found a significant main effect for group,  $F(6,178) = 2.49$ ,  $p < .05$ , Wilks Lambda = .85. A series of univariate ANOVA's indicated that there were significant differences across the three groups on General Fairness,  $F(2,91) = 7.29$ ,  $p < .01$  and Evaluative Adjectives,  $F(2,91) = 4.05$ ,  $p < .05$ ; a marginally significant difference was found for Social Contributions,  $F(2,91) = 2.38$ ,  $p < .10$  (see Table 2 for means and  $F$  values for all study variables). A series of ANOVAS found no significant differences on the individual aspect and overall fairness items.

Post hoc analyses were conducted to further explore the significant group differences (see Figure 2). As hypothesized, on all of these variables, the micro-level group consistently viewed the TRC as less fair than both the macro-level group and the control group. The macro-level group and the control group did not differ significantly from each other on any of the variables. In other words, participants who were given micro- level framed questions, that is, who were asked questions concerning how fair the TRC was to “the families of the victims,” viewed the TRC as less fair on a variety of fairness measures (i.e., General Fairness, Evaluative Adjectives, and Social Contributions).

Regarding collectivism, relatively few participants, only 44 of 94, completed the individualism/ collectivism scale on the prescreening survey (again, despite study instructions), so there was little power to detect any effects. Analyses were rerun with these 46 participants and no variables emerged as significantly different across groups.



The micro-level group perceived the TRC as less fair than the macro-level and control groups on several variables, including the major multi-item study variables, General Fairness and Evaluative Adjectives. This difference may have been due to the relative strength of the micro-level frame. In the micro-level condition, participants were asked to take the “perspective of the families of the victims,” a visceral and personal viewpoint. As people may have been victims of crimes themselves, or know people who have been victimized, it might have been easier to take this perspective, thereby eliciting a stronger reaction. The macro-level frame, which asked participants to take the “perspective of South African Society,” may have been overly abstract and abstruse for college students to fully comprehend, given their likely lack of experience living in an intense post-conflict society. Therefore, this frame may not have had the desired effect, rendering responses based on this frame similar to those using no framing manipulation at all (i.e., the control condition).

## CHAPTER IV

### GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present studies examined how micro- and macro-level perceptions of justice influenced views of fairness within the specific framework of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. In both studies, support was found for the tested hypothesis. The micro-level groups perceived the TRC as less fair than the macro-level groups, or conversely, the macro-level groups perceived the TRC as more fair. This finding was especially evident in the two studies' main variable, "General Fairness," a five-item variable that assessed participants' overall views of the TRC, including perceived fairness to victims, perpetrators, and South African society, as well as trust and satisfaction ratings.

The two types of manipulations used in the two studies-- priming and framing-- appeared to produce shifts in different directions. The priming manipulation in Study 1 induced a shift in the macro-level condition, but the prime did not have an effect on the micro-level condition. In contrast, the framing manipulation in Study 2 stimulated a shift in the micro-, but not macro-level condition. This was no doubt due to the nature of the manipulations. In the first study, the micro-level priming task and the control task had similar effects in that the primes, in the end, were probably indistinct. Hence the macro prime, which was distinct, showed the greatest contrast. The opposite shift occurred in Study 2. The macro frame--"from the perspective of members of South African society"--did not have a strong influence on ratings of fairness, but the micro prime--"from the perspective of the families of the victims"-- was persuasive. This was likely due to the

more visceral nature of the micro prime, and perhaps to the lack of personal connection to or understanding of the subject matter of the macro prime (i.e. South African society).

It is interesting to note that in the first study, where the macro condition differed significantly from the control and micro conditions, participants in the macro condition viewed two aspects of the TRC, the amnesty policy and lack of monetary reparations, as more fair. These are generally regarded as two of the more controversial aspects of Truth Commissions, and these policies are typically viewed as unjust (although in most commissions reduced sentencing is used in lieu of complete amnesty). It is encouraging that the views of these two facets in particular could be positively influenced via endorsement of a more macro-level perspective. The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) has special research groups established to deal specifically with these issues: with the social ramifications of how countries have dealt with perpetrators of past human rights abuses and the relationship (from the standpoint of beneficiaries) between material compensation and other symbolic measures of reparations. Attention is paid to these issues in particular, as they have a great impact on the ability of a society to achieve a holistic sense of justice for all citizens, establish or renew civic trust, reconcile people and communities, and prevent future abuses.

Additionally, the macro-level group in Study 1 indicated that the TRC would contribute more positively to society. Explicitly, they believed the TRC would contribute to group harmony and reconciliation, forgiveness between perpetrators and victims, growing common identity among South Africans, and less to increased violence, and increased desire for revenge. In Study 2, there was a trend for the micro-level group to perceive the TRC as contributing less positively to society. These findings are important,

not only because such beliefs can contribute to a self-fulfilling prophecy involving optimistic outcomes for the society, but also because international actors are more likely to give monetary support to a system that they believe will have constructive outcomes. TRCs, like most transitional justice systems, rely heavily on international aid to train and pay court workers (including judges, lawyers, and counselors), compensate victims, provide protection and counseling for witnesses, and conduct investigations. A lack of funding would severely hamper the courts' ability to function. International support also lends legitimacy and authority to transitional governments.

### Limitations

There are several limitations to the present studies. Although the intent was to control for collectivism, this variable was only assessed in a small number of participants, rendering it less meaningful for analyses. This occurred despite explicit study instructions that completing the prescreening was required for participation. Even for those who completed the scale, it may be reasonable to raise questions about the validity of the measure. It was part of a larger online prescreening questionnaire, which was given to undergraduates as part of a class requirement at the beginning of the semester. The total questionnaire consisted of hundreds of questions, took about two hours to complete, and could be completed at home. Of the almost 1,900 students who participated in the prescreening, over 250 participants did not fully complete the collectivism scale, which raises questions about the conscientiousness and focus of the respondents. Furthermore, while Triandis (1995) found a negative correlation between collectivism and individualism, there was a significantly *positive* correlation between individualism and

collectivism in both the study samples and the overall sample of all the students who participated in the prescreening. These problems encountered in the study could be remedied by sending out the collectivism scale singly to participants who sign up, using a different scale, and double checking that the participants have, in fact, completed the collectivism/ individualism questionnaire before participation in the experiment.

It is also important to consider that this study was run in a predominantly individualistic culture. The salience of micro and macro principles will presumably differ across cultures, although some version of micro- and macro-justice principles is apt to be present in every culture and group. Therefore, the shifts that occur between the micro- and macro-primed groups in an individualistic culture might look different in a highly collectivist culture. It is possible that the change in justice perceptions would be greater or, conversely, imperceptible in collectivist countries like Japan or Latin America. In other words, the difference is in how important one set of principles is relative to the other set. Future work should more thoroughly address collectivism as a potential mediator and explore the extent to which cultural norms regarding collectivism and individualism affect the degree and magnitude of shifts in micro-level and macro-level justice perceptions and fairness judgments. It would also be worthwhile to explore the potential influence of other cultural dimensions such as masculinity and femininity, as constructed by Hofstede (1980).

In line with cultural considerations, one must also seriously consider the larger question of overall generalizability. The current sample was predominantly comprised of women and social science majors, two groups that might be expected to show greater sensitivity to collective interests and macro-level concerns (Brickman et al, 1981). More



important, this was not a sample of actual victims of violent conflict living in a post-conflict situation. Several factors come into play when considering actual victim groups. First, superficial versus deep knowledge about the point at issue is relevant. In the current study, students were given an overall summary of the TRC, which touched on the major points, but was by no means a comprehensive thesis. Someone who has grown up with apartheid and has first-hand experiences with the TRC and its effects will, no doubt, have a much fuller understanding of the history, processes, and outcomes, which would likely affect the malleability of their perceptions of the justice system.

Second, for people involved in the conflict, as opposed to distanced outsiders, there is much greater social identification and emotional involvement and commitment. In the case of the TRC, the outcomes of the trials were extremely emotionally loaded and much more emotionally relevant for those directly involved as opposed to outsiders. Almost all who participated in the TRC knew victims or perpetrators or both, and the outcomes of those people's trials had direct emotional consequences. Third, members of post-conflict societies likely have had personal experiences that a student population could scarcely imagine. These individual experiences will undoubtedly affect the salience and personal importance of micro-justice concerns. Someone who has been personally victimized would be expected to be more likely to desire retribution than those simply learning about the victimization from a comfortable distance.

Using only lab techniques with a student sample may lack important external validity, given the artificial nature of the materials and the fact that most students have had little or no experience with intense group conflict situations and transitional justice. It is therefore of paramount importance to continue this work in the field to determine how

actual victims and combatants view justice systems and if and how these views can be influenced and changed. That being said, this study provides an important first step, acting as an analogue for what can be done in the real world to produce shifts in justice perceptions from victim-based to societal-based judgments. It also highlights the importance of macro-level dimensions in policy implementation within transitional justice systems and approaches to reconciliation.

### Future Directions and Implications

Support was found for Brickman et al.'s (1981) theory that people use different criteria to assess micro and macro justice. It seems clear that, at least in the lab, one can manipulate a shift in how, or from what perspective, people think about justice. It appears that people can think about justice, at least to some extent, from either perspective.

The exploratory research done on Rwanda, discussed in the introduction of this paper, illustrates this capacity to consider two different levels of justice. What is especially interesting in the Rwanda data is the paradoxical perspectives that people can take: some are able to have positive personal experiences with the justice system (micro level) but have negative views of the overall system (macro level), and vice versa. Future research should explore the combinations of micro and macro justice that are most psychologically compatible, especially when one view is more dominant than the other and the evaluations of fairness on these dimensions are not consistent. Additionally, future research should examine what aspects of society and individual personality factors contribute to the salience of macro versus the micro perspectives. Finally, one must

consider the psychological consequences of making one perspective salient over the other, given the initial drive or preference. For instance, views of micro- and macro-level justice may be very different for groups in power versus those who are powerless.

Although micro-level justice may inevitably be unfair for the powerless, making macro-level perceptions all the more significant, this distinction may be less relevant for those who are in power. Such views may also differ considerably for victims versus perpetrators or bystanders.

In South Africa, a macro-level emphasis on a common identity was actively encouraged by Mandela and Tutu, who nevertheless also acknowledged the significance of individuals' suffering and recognized the meaningfulness of individual or micro-level reconciliation (Gibson, 2004; Van der Merwe, 2001). The emphasis on macro justice, without denying the importance of micro-justice concerns, may have played a large role in the success of the TRC and reconciliation processes in South Africa. In the early 90's it was widely feared that the country would become engulfed in civil war and political violence. At the very least, white flight and destabilization was expected. However, this did not occur. Something changed the course of South Africa's transition, and we would argue that the change occurred partly due to the leaders' (i.e., Desmond, Tutu) overt focus on the importance of macro-level social identification in combination with the recognition of victim truth telling as a meaningful micro-level element. Mandela emphasized that Reconciliation was a national project and all were meant to be involved (Van Der Merwe, 2001). The TRC did contribute to developing tolerance, through recognition of shared interest and identity, and a common understanding of the country's past. This macro-level endorsement of common identity, coupled with the recognition of

individual suffering, likely led to the development of multiple identities in South Africans: that of an Afrikaner, white or colored, but also, and most significantly, a member of South African society (i.e., a new South African).

This supposition is supported by social psychological work on Common In-group Identity Theory, which recognizes the role of social categorization (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) in reducing inter-group bias (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman & Rust, 1993). This involves changing the basis of group categorization from a “they” to a “we,” thereby developing a super-ordinate identity. In other words, members of different groups come to think of themselves as members of a single overarching group, and opinions towards the former out-groups become less negative through positive (common) in-group biases. This process does not, however, demand that previous group identities be totally forgone. In fact, people can develop multiple identities, regarding themselves as belonging to both the larger macro-level group and the original micro-level group. This model has been shown to reduce prejudice, enhance inter-racial trust, contribute to social readjustment and psychological adaptation, and facilitate development of positive attitudes towards members of other groups (for a review see Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000).

Given the importance of macro perspectives in transitional systems, it is of paramount importance to actively endorse these viewpoints from a top-down position. In other words, people and entities in positions of power and influence should use terms like “collective consciousness” or “collective memory” to facilitate the individual drive for restorative rather than retributive justice. This could be done through media campaigns focusing on the suffering *and* wrongdoings of members of both sides, creating awareness of common experiences and history. For example, dialogue groups with out-group



members focusing on their commonalities could be held through out the country and successful examples shown on television or broadcast on the radio. Civic organizations could train facilitators to focus on these aspects of the transitional process, increasing the likelihood of positive inter-group contact. Teachers could be trained to hold discussions in schools with children of all ages to encourage re-identification with broader society and out-group members. Counselors and support groups should also emphasize macro-perspective when dealing with victims of traumatic experiences. South Africa was fortunate to have the remarkable leadership of Mandela and Tutu, who in public speeches used macro-societal level terms, while also recognizing unique suffering. Other leaders should follow this example, instead of focusing solely on victims' rights.

The potential power of education was recently demonstrated in an exploratory classroom study at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Pre- and post-measures were taken in a legal studies class before and after a three-week section of the course devoted to the TRC. Students received the same stimulus materials and completed the same questionnaire used for the control group in Study 2 (i.e., framing study). Findings suggested strong positive effects of education on fairness perceptions of the TRC (e.g., General Fairness changed 3.5 to 4.5,  $F(1,22) = 5.45$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As this was not a controlled experiment (i.e., self-selected students, no control group), these findings are only suggestive, but point to the possible role of education in shifting perceptions of fairness.



Ultimately, it is imperative to study justice systems as an element of the social and cultural contexts in which people and societies recover from violence and conflict. Communities recovering from war are increasingly faced with unresolved problems caused by the absence of justice, and survivors of conflict cannot enjoy a perspective on the future that is not colored by the perceived wrongs of the past. This means rebuilding or reinventing the social structures through which people's lives find meaning, which for almost all people involves notions of justice. The goals of peace and reconciliation cannot be achieved only through interventions or counseling aimed at individual victims or perpetrators, but must also be promoted through more macro-level efforts that foster new social identifications and positive perspectives on justice.

**Table 1: Correlations among Variables in Study 1**

	General Fairness	Adjectives	Social Contributions	Amnesty	Media	Truth telling-victims
General Fairness	1	.78**	.59**	.48**	.07	-.01
Adjectives	.78**	1	.67**	.44**	.10	.06
Social Contributions	.59**	.67**	1	.47**	.12	.03
Amnesty	.48**	.44*	.47**	1	-.16	-.27**
Media	.07	.10	.12	-.16	1	-.27**
Truth telling-victims	-.10	.06	.03	-.27**	.41**	1
Truth telling-perpetrators	-.02	.05	.21*	-.14	.20*	.36**
Apologies	.22*	.22*	.28**	.24*	.09	-.05
Reparations	.36**	.35**	.38**	.42**	.07	-.17
Overall fair-victims	.63**	.58**	.48**	.40**	.09	-.09
Overall fair-perpetrators	.14	.11	.18	.06	.19	.04
Overall fair-society	.58**	.64**	.65**	.48**	.08	-.02

	Truth-telling perpetrators	Apologies	Reparations	Overall Fair- victims	Overall fair-perpetrators	Overall fair society
General Fairness	-.02	.22*	.36**	.63**	.14	.58**
Adjectives	.05	.22*	.35**	.58**	.11	.64**
Social Contributions	.21*	.28**	.38**	.48**	.18	.65**
Amnesty	-.14	.24*	.42**	.40**	.06	.48**
Media	.20*	.09	.07	.09	.19	.08
Truth telling-victims	.36**	-.05	-.17	-.09	.04	-.02
Truth telling-perpetrators	1	.05	-.09	-.06	-.03	.04
Apologies	.05	1	.56**	.31**	-.01	.20
Reparations	-.09	.56**	1	.38**	.02	.36**
Overall fair-victims	-.06	.31**	.38**	1	.24	.61**
Overall fair-perpetrators	-.03	-.01	.02	.24*	1	.28**
Overall fair-society	.04	.20	.36**	.61**	.28**	1

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

Table 2. Means of Fairness Ratings for Study 1.

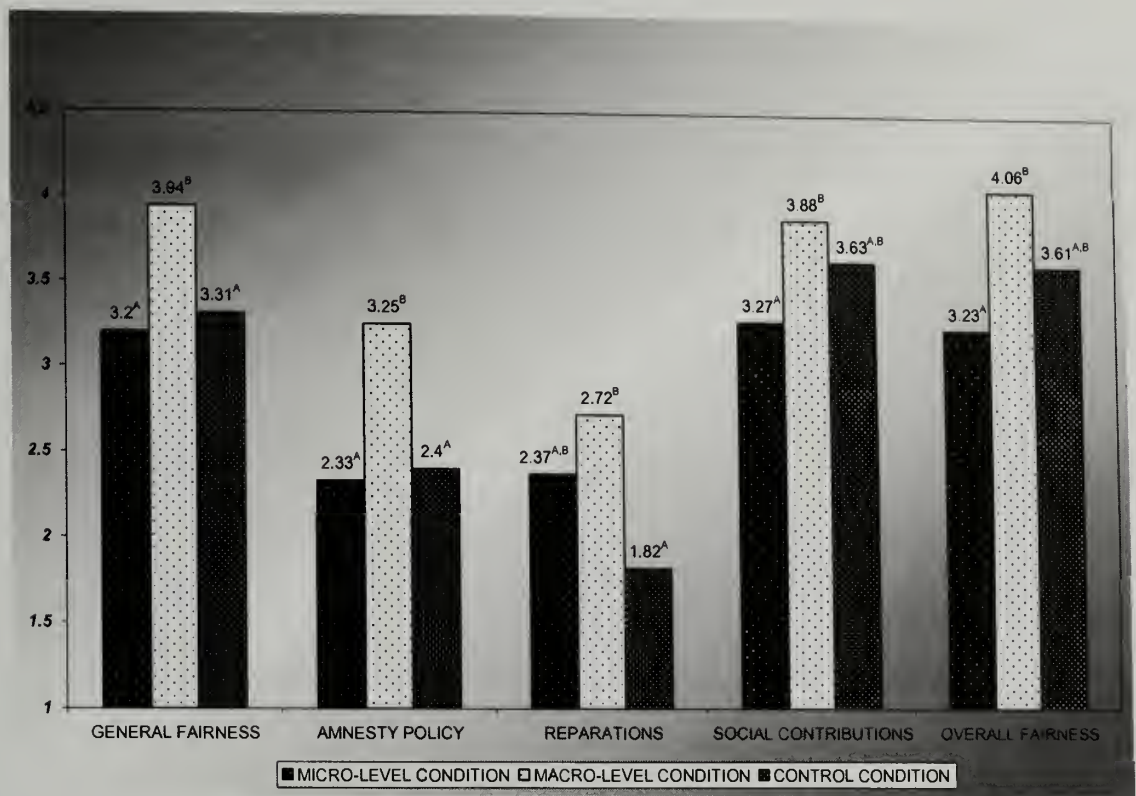
	Micro-level condition (n=30)	Macro-level condition (n=32)	Control condition (n=33)	F- value
General Fairness (5-items)	3.20	3.94	3.32	4.16*
Evaluative Adjectives (7-items)	3.88	4.33	4.15	1.44
Aspects of TRC (single-items)				
Amnesty policy	2.33	3.25	2.39	4.35*
Media coverage	4.53	4.44	4.88	.71
Truth telling by victims	5.70	5.84	5.82	.13
Truth telling by perpetrators	4.57	4.50	5.15	1.24
Apologies not required	2.07	2.63	2.21	1.04
Reparations not required	2.37	2.72	1.82	3.42*
Social Contributions (5-items)	3.27	3.87	3.63	3.49*
Overall fairness (single-items)				
Fairness to victims	2.97	3.62	3.33	1.56
Fairness to perpetrators	4.23	4.38	4.18	.09
Fairness to South African society	3.23	4.06	3.61	3.22*

\*  $p \leq .05$

\*\*  $p \leq .01$

\*\*\*  $p \leq .001$

Figure 1: Results of Post Hoc Analyses for Study 1



*Note.* Means that do not share the same superscript differ at  $p < .05$

**Table 3: Correlations among Variables in Study 2**

	General Fairness	Adjectives	Social Contributions	Amnesty	Media	Truth telling-victims
General Fairness	1	.80**	.45**	.46**	.27**	.19
Adjectives	.80**	1	.55**	.41**	.34**	.18
Social Contributions	.45**	.55**	1	.35**	.19	-.01
Amnesty	.46**	.41**	.35**	1	-.01	-.03
Media	.27**	.34**	.19	-.01	1	.39**
Truth telling-victims	.19	.18	-.01	-.03	.39**	1
Truth telling-perpetrators	.30**	.34**	.14	-.04	.47**	.51*
Apologies	.25**	.26*	.14	.38**	.22*	.05
Reparations	.30**	.26*	.23*	.39**	.05	.03
Overall fair-victims	.65**	.67**	.45**	.42**	.25*	.24*
Overall fair-perpetrators	.23*	.17	.08	.02	.09	.18
Overall fair-society	.69**	.67**	.62**	.52**	.27**	-.01

	Truth-telling perpetrators	Apologies	Reparations	Overall fair victims	Overall fair-perpetrators	Overall fair society
General Fairness	.30**	.25**	.30**	.65**	.23*	.69**
Adjectives	.34**	.26*	.26*	.67**	.17	.67**
Social Contributions	.14	.14	.23*	.45**	.08	.62**
Amnesty	-.04	.38**	.39**	.42**	.02	.52**
Media	.47**	.22*	.05	.25*	.09	.27**
Truth telling-victims	.51*	.05	.03	.24*	.18	-.01
Truth telling-perpetrators	1	.14	-.05	.22*	.22*	.18
Apologies	.14	1	.43**	.19	.04	.03**
Reparations	-.05	.43**	1	.35**	-.08	.70**
Overall fair-victims	.22*	.19	.35**	1	.05	.70**
Overall fair-perpetrators	.22*	.04	-.08	.05	1	.07
Overall fair-society	.18	.03**	.70**	.70**	.07	1

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$



Table 4. Means of Fairness Ratings for Study 2.

	Micro-level condition (n=31)	Macro-level condition (n=32)	Control condition (n=31)	F- value
General Fairness (5-items)	2.72	3.63	3.57	7.30***
Evaluative Adjectives (7-items)	3.51	4.21	4.18	4.05*
Aspects of TRC (single-items)				
Amnesty policy	2.26	2.78	2.77	1.18
Media coverage	4.52	5.13	4.71	1.33
Truth telling by victims	5.68	5.78	5.61	.11
Truth telling by perpetrators	4.48	4.47	4.61	.05
Apologies not required	2.16	1.97	2.60	2.52
Reparations not required	2.09	2.37	2.52	1.02
Social Contributions (5-items)	3.41	3.73	3.87	2.39+
Overall fairness (single-items)				
Fairness to victims	2.97	3.56	3.26	1.62
Fairness to perpetrators	4.39	4.28	4.71	.48
Fairness to South African society	3.45	4.00	3.77	1.35

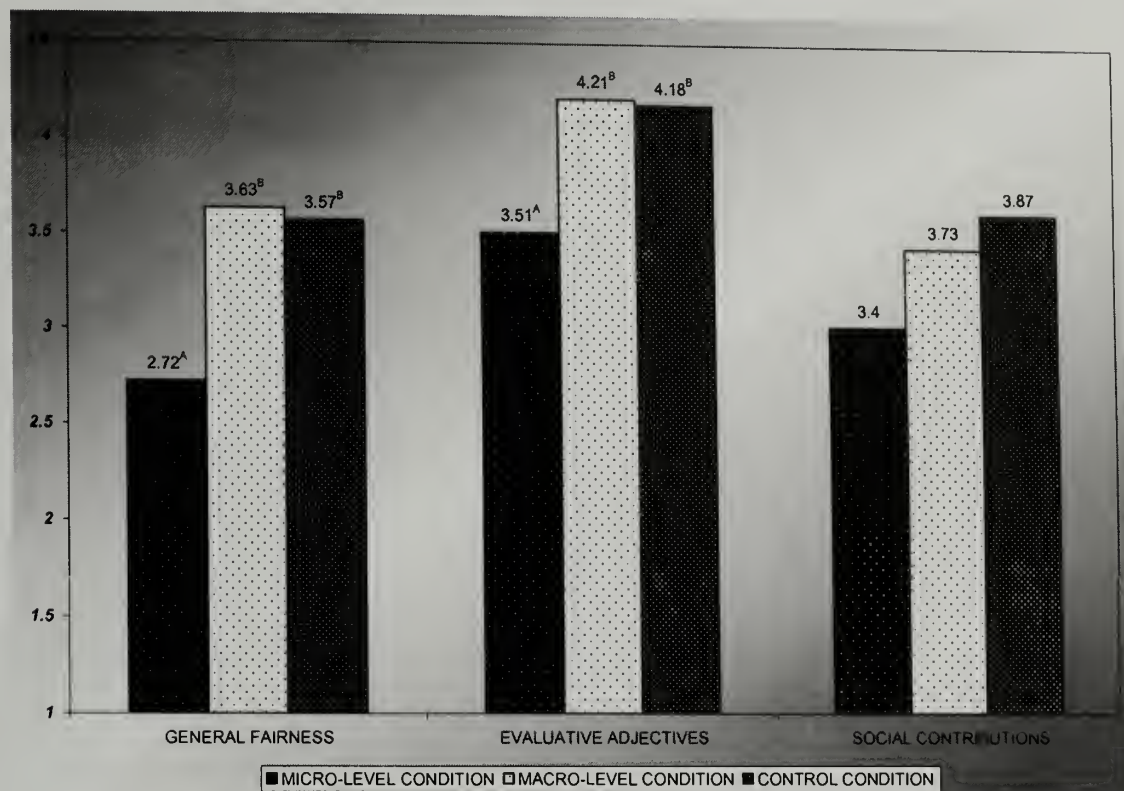
\*  $p \leq .05$

\*\*  $p \leq .01$

\*\*\*  $p \leq .001$

+  $p < .10$

Figure 2: Results of Post Hoc Analyses for Study 2



*Note.* Means that do not share the same superscript differ at  $p < .05$ .

## APPENDIX A

### STUDY 1 AND STUDY 2: TRC DESCRIPTION

*Please read along to yourself as the following description of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa is read aloud. Then answer the questions that follow. There are no right or wrong answers; we are interested in your personal opinions and reactions.*

The story of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission usually begins with the country's first democratic elections in April, 1994, when Nelson Mandela was elected President. South Africa had been a country defined by the system of apartheid, in which a small, privileged White minority ruled, often violently, over a poor and disadvantaged Black majority (about 90%). It was a society characterized by great injustice, oppression, and gross violations of human rights. The question for the new government was how it was going to deal with past injustices and deep divisions and create a new, fair and equal society for South Africa. The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was one means to these ends.

The main objective of the TRC was "to promote national unity and reconciliation in a spirit of understanding which transcends the conflicts and divisions of the past." This was to be done through a process of uncovering the truth and establishing as complete a record as possible of the causes, nature and extent of the gross violations of human rights that had been committed. For example, men, women and children were brutally beaten and killed, some were detained in prison without just cause where they were tortured with electrical devices and acid burns, and many women were victims of rape. Additionally, many of the people who were tortured were killed afterwards and their bodies hidden, without any explanation or notice given to their families.

The TRC wanted to restore the dignity of victims and their families. This was accomplished by involving communities in a process of collecting statements from local victims and then holding community hearings. The hearings were public meetings during which victims could tell their stories to a panel of commissioners and community members, local leaders, and international leaders. The hearings were held all over the country, in small rural towns as well as in major cities. Victims had the opportunity to unburden their grief publicly and to receive recognition that they had been wronged. The hearings gave a voice to those who had previously been silenced; victims had the opportunity to give their personal accounts, which were added to the nation's historical memory. Unfortunately, relatively few people were able to testify and tell their stories, given time constraints and other factors.

The TRC granted amnesty to the perpetrators, or the people responsible for, the crimes and human rights violations. This means that the perpetrators were freed and could not be imprisoned or punished for their past acts. During South Africa's transition to democracy, there was political tension between the demands of the outgoing (White) government who wanted to protect their members from jail and legal prosecution and the (Black) liberation movements who wanted to hold them responsible for past crimes. The final compromise required the commission to give amnesty to human rights abusers, although the details of the process were left to the new government. Not all perpetrators were granted amnesty. Those whose crimes were politically motivated and who made a full confession including all relevant details qualified to appeal for amnesty. Those who appealed were given a second trial to determine whether their confessions were truthful. If the confessions were deemed honest and truthful, amnesty was granted. Perpetrators did not have to apologize, but they had to confess their atrocities. Reparations, or monetary payments, were also promised by the government. However, very few people actually received any money.

Applications for amnesty that concerned human rights abuses were also heard in public. These too contributed to a clearer representation of the truth and often provided answers to victims' questions about what happened to their loved ones. The public testimony of victims and perpetrators of gross human rights violations painted a vivid and unforgettable record of violence of the past. The fact that people were murdered, maimed, and brutalized for their political ties or skin color was recognized. The TRC hearings were accompanied by complete media coverage, and powerful media images were seen across the country and world. The nation was able to confront its past and it was now impossible to deny earlier horrors and suffering.

Thousands of accounts by victims and perpetrators were heard as a result of the TRC. For many victims, the right to be heard and acknowledged, with respect and compassion, has contributed to a process of healing. At the same time, many victims are horrified that perpetrators were given amnesty. They have a deep sense of being deprived of their rights and feel the perpetrators should have been punished. The TRC did not expect to dissolve years of conflict and power struggles overnight, but it has tried.

## APPENDIX B

### STUDY 1: PRIMING ESSAY

We have agreed to help the writing program on campus by collecting anonymous writing samples from psychology students. The program is interested in investigating how different students structure and compose descriptive paragraphs. Please write a six to seven sentence essay about...

#### Micro Condition

Yourself, using descriptive and neutral terms. In each of your sentences please use one of the following words: *I, me, myself, or mine.*

#### Macro Condition

"Who we are," as a collective people or society, using neutral and descriptive terms. In each of your sentences please use one of the following words: *we, our, ourselves, ours.*

#### Control Condition

Architecture at UMass, using descriptive and neutral terms. In your paragraph please use the following words: *buildings, parking, classrooms, pond.*



## APPENDIX C

### STUDY 1: TRC FAIRNESS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How fair is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

2. How fair are the procedures used by the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

3. How just and impartial are the TRC's policies?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not just at all			somewhat just			very just

4. How satisfied would you be with the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not satisfied at all			somewhat satisfied			very satisfied

5. How much would you trust the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

Please indicate your reactions to the TRC by placing an “X” mark closer to the adjective that better describes your opinion. Put an “X” in the middle section if neither adjective describes the TRC better than the other.

7.           UNFAIR : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : FAIR
8.           BAD : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : GOOD
9.           HARMFUL : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : HELPFUL
10.          UNJUST : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : JUST
11. UNTRUSTWORTHY : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : TRUSTWORTHY
12.          MEANINGLESS : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : MEANINGFUL
13.          HURTING : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : HEALING

How fair is each of the following aspects of the TRC?

14. amnesty
- (1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)
- not fair at all

somewhat fair

very fair

15. media coverage of the hearings
- (1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)
- not fair at all

somewhat fair

very fair

16. truth-telling by victims
- (1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)
- not fair at all

somewhat fair

very fair

17. truth-telling by perpetrators
- (1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)
- not fair at all

somewhat fair

very fair

18. that apologies are not required

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

19. that monetary compensation from the government to the victims is not required

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

To what extent do you think the TRC will contribute to each of the following in South Africa:

20. Increased violence

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

21. Group harmony and reconciliation

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

22. Forgiveness between perpetrators and victims

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

23. Increased desire for revenge

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

24. Growing common identity among South Africans

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

25. Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to the victims?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

26. Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to the perpetrators?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

27. Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to South African society?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

## APPENDIX D

### STUDY 2: FRAMING QUESTIONS

#### Micro Condition

1. From the perspective of the families of the victims, how fair is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

2. From the viewpoint of the families of the victims, how fair are the procedures used by the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

3. From the perspective of the families of the victims, how just and impartial are the TRC's policies?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not just at all			somewhat just			very just

4. Considering the needs of the families of the victims, how satisfied would you be with the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not satisfied at all			somewhat satisfied			very satisfied

5. Given the needs of the families of the victims, how much would you trust the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much



## Macro Condition

1. From the perspective of members of South African society, how fair is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

2. From the viewpoint of members of South African society, how fair are the procedures used by the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

3. From the perspective of members of South African society, how just and impartial are the TRC's policies?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not just at all			somewhat just			very just

4. Considering the needs of South African society, how satisfied you be with the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not satisfied at all			somewhat satisfied			very satisfied

5. Given the needs of South African society, how much would you trust the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

### Control Condition

1. How fair is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

2. How fair are the procedures used by the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

3. How just and impartial are the TRC's policies?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not just at all			somewhat just			very just

4. How satisfied would you be with the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not satisfied at all			somewhat satisfied			very satisfied

5. How much would you trust the TRC?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

## APPENDIX E

### STUDY 2: TRC FAIRNESS QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate your reactions to the TRC by placing an “X” mark closer to the adjective that better describes your opinion. Put an “X” in the middle section if neither adjective describes the TRC better than the other.

7. UNFAIR : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : FAIR
8. BAD : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : GOOD
9. HARMFUL : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : HELPFUL
10. UNJUST : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : JUST
11. UNTRUSTWORTHY : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : TRUSTWORTHY
12. MEANINGLESS : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : MEANINGFUL
13. HURTING : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ : HEALING

How fair is each of the following aspects of the TRC?

14. amnesty

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

15. media coverage of the hearings

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

16. truth-telling by victims

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

17. truth-telling by perpetrators

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

18. that apologies are not required

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

19. that monetary compensation from the government to the victims is not required

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

To what extent do you think the TRC will contribute to each of the following in South Africa:

20. Increased violence

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

21. Group harmony and reconciliation

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

22. Forgiveness between perpetrators and victims

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

23. Increased desire for revenge

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

24. Growing common identity among South Africans

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not at all			somewhat			very much

20. Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to the victims?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

21. Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to the perpetrators?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair

22. Overall, how fair do you think the TRC is to South African society?

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
not fair at all			somewhat fair			very fair



## **APPENDIX F**

### **STUDY 1 AND STUDY 2: TRUE/FALSE QUIZ**

We are interested in your understanding of the TRC. Please answer the following questions by circling TRUE or FALSE

28. Apartheid was a system where the large white majority ruled over a small black minority

**TRUE/ FALSE**

29. Apologies were not required by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

**TRUE/ FALSE**

30. The policy of amnesty meant that criminals who were found guilty were not punished or imprisoned

**TRUE/ FALSE**

31. There was extensive media coverage of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

**TRUE/ FALSE**

32. Hearings were not open to the public

**TRUE/ FALSE**

33. All perpetrators who applied for amnesty were automatically granted it.

**TRUE/ FALSE**

34. All of the victims received monetary payment or compensation from the government

**TRUE/ FALSE**

## APPENDIX G

### COLLECTIVISM/ INDIVIDUALISM SCALE

1. I prefer to be direct and forthright when I talk with people.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

2. My happiness depends very much on the happiness of those around me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

3. I would do what would please my family, even if I detested that activity.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

4. Winning is everything.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

5. One should live one's life independently of others.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

6. What happens to me is my own doing.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

7. I usually sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

8. It annoys me when other people perform better than I do.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

9. It is important for me to maintain harmony in my group.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

10. It is important to me that I do my job better than others.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

11. I like sharing little things with my neighbors.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

12. I enjoy working in situations involving competition with others.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

13. We should keep our aging parents with us at home.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

14. The wellbeing of my co-workers is important to me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

15. I enjoy being unique and different from others in many ways.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

16. If a relative were in financial difficulty, I would help within my means.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

17. Children should feel honored if parents receive a distinguished award.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

18. I often do 'my own thing'.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

19. Competition is the law of nature.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

20. If a co-worker gets a prize I would feel proud.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

21. I am a unique individual.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

22. To me, pleasure is spending time with others.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

23. When a better person does better than I do, I get tense and aroused.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

24. I would sacrifice an activity that I enjoy very much if my family did not approve of it.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

25. I like my privacy.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

26. Without competition it is not possible to have a good society.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

27. Children should be taught to place duty before pleasure.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	



28. I feel good when I cooperate with others.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

29. I hate to disagree with others in my group.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

30. Some people emphasize winning; I am not one of them.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

31. Before taking a major trip, I consult with most members of my family and many friends.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

32. When I succeed, it is usually because of my abilities.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
strongly disagree		disagree			agree		strongly agree	

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