

TRUST AND DISTRUST: NEW RELATIONSHIPS AND REALITIES

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We propose a new theoretical framework for understanding simultaneous trust and distrust within relationships, grounded in assumptions of multidimensionality and the inherent tensions of relationships, and we separate this research from prior work grounded in assumptions of unidimensionality and balance. Drawing foundational support for this new framework from recent research on simultaneous positive and negative sentiments and ambivalence, we explore the theoretical and practical significance of the framework for future work on trust and distrust relationships within organizations.

The view of trust as a foundation for social order spans many intellectual disciplines and levels of analysis. Understanding why people trust, as well as how that trust shapes social relations, has been a central focus for psychologists (Deutsch, 1962; Worchel, 1979), sociologists (Gambetta, 1988), political scientists (Barber, 1983), economists (Axelrod, 1984), anthropologists (Ekeh, 1974), and students of organizational behavior (Kramer & Tyler, 1996). Scholars have seen trust as an essential ingredient in the healthy personality (Erikson, 1963; Shaver & Hazan, 1994), as a foundation for interpersonal relationships (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985), as a foundation for cooperation (Barnard, 1938; Blau, 1964), and as the basis for stability in social institutions and markets (Arrow, 1974; Williamson, 1974; Zucker, 1986).

Recently, researchers of trust within organizations have focused on understanding the efficiencies of trust and explaining its emergence (Hosmer, 1995; Kramer & Tyler, 1996; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Sitkin & Roth, 1993). We are increasingly recognizing

the uncertainty, complexity, and change that punctuate today's fast-paced global business environment (D'Aveni, 1994; Hamel & Prahalad, 1994) and the resulting strategic impact of trust and distrust relationships on competitiveness. Given the competitive requirements of speed (Eisenhardt & Tabrizi, 1995) and quality (Schneider & Bowen, 1995), coordinated action in strategic initiatives (such as quality improvement, customer service, and new product development) has become essential. Also, given the competitive challenges of organizational growth, globalization, and expansion through strategic alliances, the ability to effectively develop and maintain strategic partnerships and alliances among competitors (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994) and multicultural/multilingual relations (Cox & Tung, 1997) has become a critical competence. In all of these arenas, the trusting qualities of the relations between parties—through cross-functional teams, temporary groups, strategic alliances, and socially embedded partnerships—are critical for successful collaboration (Sheppard, 1995).

The key role played by trust as a foundation for effective collaboration emphasizes, in no small way, our recognition of the multiple and mixed motives that shape collaborative behavior. Yet, while incentives to collaborate and trust certainly exist, there are simultaneous reasons to distrust relationship partners (Brandenburger

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& Nalebuff, 1996). The challenges of speed, quality, and global reach, which require trust, also have precipitated distrust, through corporate restructuring, downsizing, and fundamental violations of the psychological contracts connecting individuals with organizations (Heckscher, 1995; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1995). Bringing these conditions together, we see that *the challenges of the modern global marketplace center on the simultaneous management of trust and distrust in a hostile environment in which individuals may be just as inclined to distrust as they are to trust.*

In this article we bring the opportunities for—and challenges of—managing trust and distrust into focus, introducing a new theoretical framework for understanding simultaneous trust and distrust relations within organizations. We ground this framework in assumptions of multidimensionality and the inherent tensions of complex relationships, supplanting older assumptions of relationship unidimensionality and balance. We construct this new framework on a foundation of current research, arguing for the existence of simultaneous positive and negative sentiments and ambivalence, and we explore the theoretical and practical significance of this framework for future work on trust and distrust relationships within organizations.

DEFINING TRUST AND DISTRUST

Systematic research on trust in organizations now spans more than 40 years. In early research scholars associated trust and distrust with individuals' expressions of confidence in others' intentions and motives (Deutsch, 1958, 1960; Mellinger, 1956; Read, 1962). Mellinger (1956), for instance, defined trust as an individual's confidence in another person's intentions and motives, and the sincerity of that person's word. Read (1962) built on Mellinger's understanding of trust, arguing that trusting individuals expect their interests to be protected and promoted by those they trust, feel confident about disclosing negative personal information, feel assured of full and frank information sharing, and are prepared to overlook apparent breaches of the trust relationship. Deutsch (1960) saw trust as an individual's confidence in the intentions and capabilities of a relationship partner and the belief that a relationship partner would behave as one hoped. Likewise, Deutsch viewed suspicion

or distrust as confidence about a relationship partner's undesirable behavior, stemming from knowledge of the individual's capabilities and intentions.

In contrast to the emphasis on intentions and motives of early research, the focus of researchers more recently is on behavior (Hosmer, 1995; Mayer et al., 1995), where trust is defined as one party's optimistic expectation of the behavior of another, when the party must make a decision about how to act (under conditions of vulnerability and dependence; Hosmer, 1995), and as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other party will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Mayer et al., 1995: 712). In reciprocal terms, scholars understand distrust to be the expectation that others will not act in one's best interests, even engaging in potentially injurious behavior (Govier, 1994), and the expectation that capable and responsible behavior from specific individuals will not be forthcoming (Barber, 1983). Thus, distrust is viewed as the opposite of trust, and both trust and distrust are understood in behavioral terms, with little attention given to the confidences, intentions, and motives that promote trusting/distrusting and trustworthy/untrustworthy behavior.

In our analysis we define trust in terms of *confident positive expectations regarding another's conduct*, and distrust in terms of *confident negative expectations regarding another's conduct*. We use the term "another's conduct" in a very specific, but encompassing, sense, addressing another's words, actions, and decisions (what another says and does and how he or she makes decisions). By "confident positive expectations," we mean a belief in, a propensity to attribute virtuous intentions to, and a willingness to act on the basis of another's conduct. Conversely, by "confident negative expectations," we mean a fear of, a propensity to attribute sinister intentions to, and a desire to buffer oneself from the effects of another's conduct. We assert that both trust and distrust involve movements toward certainty: trust concerning expectations of things hoped for and distrust concerning expectations of things feared.

We argue that trust and distrust are separate but linked dimensions. Moreover, we propose

that trust and distrust are not opposite ends of a single continuum. There are elements that contribute to the growth and decline of trust, and there are elements that contribute to the growth and decline of distrust. These elements grow and develop through an individual's experiences with another in the various facet-specific transactions of multiplex relations. Although broad, generalized inferences across the links may occur (i.e., strong levels of trust in some elements may generalize to create lower levels of distrust in others, and vice versa), it is possible for parties to both trust and distrust one another, given different experiences within the various facets of complex interpersonal relationships.

Two-factor models are not unheard of in the organization sciences (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1967). We draw the intellectual foundations for our work from Luhmann's (1979) articulation of trust and distrust as distinct but potentially coexistent mechanisms for managing complexity. The empirical foundations for our work are drawn from recent social psychological research on the separability of positive-valent and negative-valent attitudes (Cacioppo & Berntson, 1994) and research on conditions of ambivalence under which positive-valent and negative-valent attitudes can coexist. Inasmuch as expectations of benefit and harm (Nacci, Stapleton, & Tedeschi, 1973), pro-Black and anti-Black sentiments (Katz & Hass, 1988), and love and hate sentiments have been shown to coexist (Coser, 1956; Freud, 1918), simultaneous trust and distrust appear possible (Priester & Petty, 1996).

Within the scope of trust research, our conceptualization corresponds better with earlier foundational work on trust (Deutsch, 1958; Mellinger, 1956; Read, 1962) than with more recent perspectives (Hosmer, 1995; Mayer et al., 1995). Our understanding of the relationship between trust and distrust represents a clear break with much of the management literature on trust in organizations, for in management scholarship, the understanding of relationships has driven the understanding of the dynamics of trust and distrust. We argue that old views of relationships are untenable and that a contemporary perspective on social relationships must allow for simultaneous trust and distrust.

TRUST-DISTRUST DYNAMICS AND RELATIONSHIP REALITIES

Old View of Trust, Distrust, and Relationships

Upon reviewing the spectrum of research on trust in the organizational sciences, we marvel at the breadth of theoretical and empirical approaches informing current theory and practice. Personality theory, behavioral decision theory, social psychology, and sociological theory—each of these traditions has been drawn upon to some extent. Although reviewers of this literature have emphasized the important distinctions among these approaches (Ross & LaCroix, 1996; Sitkin & Roth, 1993), we recognize converging themes: the characterization of trust and distrust as separate and opposite constructs, the normative view of trust as "good" and distrust as "bad," and limited emphasis on social context. Furthermore, this existing research has proceeded from a perspective on relationships that emphasizes relationship unidimensionality and governing norms of balance and consistency.

Trust and distrust as one bipolar construct. Across intellectual traditions, scholars consider trust and distrust separate and opposite. For personality researchers who view trust as an individual difference, trust and distrust exist at opposite ends of a single trust-distrust continuum (Rotter, 1971), and they generally view low trust expectations as indicative of high distrust (Stack, 1988; Tardy, 1988). Behavioral decision theorists, examining trust and distrust from a rational choice perspective, define trust as cooperative conduct and distrust as noncooperative conduct in mixed-motive game situations (Arrow, 1974; Axelrod, 1984; Coleman, 1990; Miller, 1992). For social psychologists, conflicting psychological states characterized by simultaneous trust and distrust are unstable and transitory in nature (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995; Lewis & Weigert, 1985). Sociologists, while recognizing the importance of trust and distrust as mechanisms for reducing social complexity and uncertainty (Lewis & Weigert, 1985), view them as functional equivalents or substitutes. Up to this point, no systematic effort has been made to address the potential for simultaneous trust and distrust within organizational settings.

Normative view of trust and distrust. Across intellectual traditions, scholars view trust as "good" and distrust as "bad." The focus of attention for personality researchers has been on un-

derstanding distrust as a psychological disorder to be corrected (Erikson, 1963). Research from the behavioral decision theory perspective has been sparked by researchers' desire to solve intractable conflict situations and to promote effective collaboration characterized by trust (Axelrod, 1984). Similarly, within social-psychological and sociological traditions, trust has been seen as a necessary ingredient for social order and the research focus has been on understanding its emergence and development (Barber, 1983; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Luhmann, 1979; Shapiro, 1987). Organizational scientists have yet to give systematic attention to the limits of trust and the functions of distrust.

Limited attention to social context and relationship dynamics. Finally, across intellectual traditions, scholars have given limited attention to the role of social context. Personality researchers assume the foundational nature of trust transcends context (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; Rotter, 1971; Stack, 1988). Within behavioral decision theory, the "game environment" is devoid of real context information, and the incentive structure in place predetermines behavior (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Pearce, 1974; Tardy, 1988). Within the social-psychological tradition, researchers acknowledge contextual differences but view the "organizational" context as an overarching condition that limits the relevance of the social/emotional/relational element of trust relationships (Gabarro, 1990; McAllister, 1995). And within the sociological tradition, scholars place emphasis on those social institutions that transcend and/or precede conscious awareness and predispose people to behave in characteristic ways (Garfinkel, 1973; Zucker, 1986). We need further recognition of the role of social context.

Relationships as unidimensional constructs. For the most part, researchers have considered interpersonal relationships within organizations unidimensional, with a single component or dimension of the relationship (such as task-related interaction) determining the quality of the entire relationship. For example, assume that two academic colleagues, A and B, work together on a research article. A agrees to do the data analysis, and B agrees to write the first draft; thus, to do the job well, B is dependent on A's performance. Most theories of trust assume that if A is not always reliable in his or her task

performance (e.g., he or she is overcommitted and cannot find the time to complete the analyses or does a careless job), B will come to *completely* distrust A. This assumption—in our view, usually unstated but pervasive in the literature (e.g., Gabarro, 1990)—is based on the logic that B's "overall" trust level for A is *wholly* determined by their interdependence around this writing task. If B determines that A cannot be trusted with the writing task, B also cannot trust A in any other context or relational interdependency.

We can attribute pervasiveness of this assumption of unidimensionality in trust research, especially as it concerns the field of organizational behavior, to the fact that our understanding of relationships is still in its infancy (Greenhalgh, 1995; Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1994; McAllister, 1995; Sheppard, 1995; Valley, Neale, & Mannix, 1995). With only a limited "language of relationships" and a limited framework for describing the key parameters of relationships across contexts, it is not surprising that in many research streams, relationship variables are often selected for research emphasis without much attention to the broader framework in which they operate and interact (Greenhalgh, 1995; Greenhalgh & Chapman, 1994).

Relationship homeostasis driven by balance and consistency. We also note that the traditional view of relationships, which has shaped our understanding of the simplistic social context of trust relationships, is one that emphasizes the emergence and maintenance of balance and consistency. The principles of balance and consistency in interpersonal behavior are among the oldest in social psychology and are grounded, first and foremost, in a Lewinian perspective on human behavior (Deutsch, 1968). Within this tradition, psychological imbalance is an aversive condition that social actors seek to resolve or minimize (Barker, Dembo, & Lewin, 1941; Deutsch, 1968; Festinger, 1957). In interpersonal relations, norms governing exchange and reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1950) predict that imbalanced relationships of liking or disliking evolve over time toward either mutual liking or mutual disliking. For larger networks of social relations (triads and beyond), general theories of balance (Heider, 1958) highlight the inherent instability of imbalance: it is hard to remain friendly with two people who hate each other (Wallace & Wolf, 1986).

If one follows balance theories through to their logical conclusions, social relationships simplify to a single point along a continuum ranging from reciprocated positive to reciprocated negative sentiment.

Summary. Three interrelated assumptions provide the foundation for much of the research on trust relationships in organizations. Traditionally, scholars see trust and distrust as mutually exclusive and opposite conditions, they see trust as "good" and distrust as "bad," and they have given the social context of trust relationships limited attention. To the extent that we can bring social context into the equation, we note that the foundational assumptions concerning relationships emphasize relationship unidimensionality, balance, and consistency. We now propose new relationship realities that ground our more complex view of trust.

New Relationship Realities

We specify two core tenets to replace the central assumptions of the old view of relationships. First, relationships are multifaceted or multiplex, therefore enabling parties to hold simultaneously different views of each other—views that may be accurate but, nonetheless, inconsistent among them. Second, balance and consistency in one's cognitions and perceptions are more likely to be temporary and transitional states. Parties are more dominantly in states of imbalance and inconsistency, and the tensions created by these states do not necessarily promote quick and simple resolution. We elaborate below.

Relationships are multifaceted and multiplex. In all but the most primitive and simplistic relationships, we relate to each other in multiple ways. Within the same relationship we have different encounters in different contexts with different intentions that lead to different outcomes. These encounters accumulate and interact to create a rich texture of experience. Parties may have different experiences in working together on tasks and activities, may learn to function together in the same office environment, and may share conversations about different topics on which they agree and disagree. For instance, I may get to know a professional colleague in my academic department fairly well. Over time, I may learn that this colleague is excellent as a theoretician, adequate but not

exceptional as a methodologist, highly limited in skills as a classroom teacher, completely at odds with me in his political beliefs, outstanding as a golfer, tediously boring in committee meetings but periodically quite insightful, and terrible at keeping appointments on time. My disposition toward my colleague will be a function of all of these different encounters with him, and I may have to learn to live with all of them if he becomes my department chair. With an appreciation of the richness of our relationship and the varied facets of my colleague's "presentations of self," I can come to understand and appreciate those domains where it is appropriate for me to trust him (and in what respects) and those domains where trusting him is inappropriate (Baier, 1985; Govier, 1994).

The concept of *link multiplexity* within network relations provides an essential mechanism for depicting the richness of interpersonal relationships (Katzenstein, 1996). Linkages connect actors within social networks and can represent any substantive connectivity or interaction. Multiplex relations exist where more than one linkage is present (Farrace, Monger, & Russell, 1977; Monge & Eisenberg, 1987).¹ In organizations scholars have examined multiplexity in network relations, including exchanges of information, goods, and services; expressions of affection (liking or animosity); and attempts to influence and control (Monge & Eisenberg 1987; Tichy, Tushman, & Fombrun, 1979).

There has been a tendency among social network scholars to assume that multiplex relations are simply (and unidimensionally) trusting in nature (Husted, 1994; Ibarra, 1995). Given the emerging and evolving nature of social relationships, we challenge this view and argue that both trust and distrust can exist within multiplex relations. This view is grounded in our appreciation of the potential breadth of the *bandwidth* and *richness* of ongoing relationships. By bandwidth, we mean the scope of the domains of interpersonal relating and competency that are relevant to a single interpersonal relationship. We see relationships as composed of *facets*: basic components of experience that an individual has with another. These facets

¹ The dictionary defines multiplexity as more than one channel. By abstraction, a uniplex relationship would entail only a single form of linkage.

aggregate into *bands*, which are groupings of facets across personal qualities that come to define our experience with a single individual in a single context. The broader the experience across multiple contexts, the broader the bandwidth. In interpersonal relationships of trust and distrust, we see potential for enlargement in relationship bandwidth as partners accumulate knowledge of each other's strengths and/or weaknesses in new interaction domains (Blau, 1964).

In addition to breadth, we recognize the potential for richness in the texturing of relationships. That is, although some relationships may be understood provisionally in general terms, mature relationships tend to be characterized by greater specification and detail across the bandwidth (Gabarro, 1978; Holmes & Rempel, 1989; Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996). Gabarro (1978) observes that, as trust relationships evolve from orientation through exploration and testing to stabilization, trust evolves from impressionistic and highly undifferentiated to more finely grained and differentiated along specific bases. He shows that, as emphases shift from "How much do I trust?" to "In what areas and in what ways do I trust?" the limits of trust and the domains where trust is inappropriate become specified more clearly.

The effects of increased bandwidth and richness in texturing serve to create the conditions for relationship multiplexity. Relationships mature with interaction frequency, duration, and the diversity of challenges that relationship partners encounter and face together. Each of these components is essential. If the parties interact frequently and over a long period of time but only superficially, or if they have an issue-rich and frequent exchange but do so only around a limited and bounded problem, or if they interact around many issues but do so infrequently, these conditions limit the potential for the relationship to mature. Alternatively, as these components combine, the knowledge of each relationship partner is enhanced.

Balance and consistency are temporary states. The other traditional assumption we challenge is that models of interpersonal behavior have been—and should continue to be—strongly grounded in notions of balance and consistency. The tenet is that parties who experience *any* tension, inconsistency, and dissonance in relationships will find such a state

discomforting and will be motivated to resolve the inconsistency. These assumptions are grounded in the long-standing theories noted earlier.

Although it is bold to deviate from an assumption that has dominated the physical and social sciences for so long, we nevertheless need to challenge that assumption when it comes to our understanding of relationships. We believe that the premise has been demonstrated and "proved" over time because researchers have tended to oversimplify the nature of relationships and to focus only on specific uniplex linkages. There is an overwhelming body of literature in which scholars have examined the dynamics of dissonance reduction and tension reduction, but resolution and tension reduction are not the only mechanisms for dealing with tension induced by inconsistent information and cognitions.²

Not all of one party's experiences with another are consistent. Parties often have inadequate or incomplete information to achieve balance or resolve inconsistency; more commonly, parties are interdependent (often not by choice) and *must* effectively interact and coordinate action, whether they like it or not. For example, let us return to the relationship with the professional colleague we described in the previous section. How I relate to this colleague depends upon whether we are going to write a theory paper together, design a new course that we will teach jointly, collaborate on a committee report, or take the afternoon off to play golf together. My disposition toward my colleague is affected by all of these different encounters that I may have with him. I might combine all of these different experiences and facets into one overall judgment of trust, but to do so would be overly simplistic, moot, and highly detrimental to my ability to work with him around specific and compartmentalized interdependencies. So, I effectively function with this individual by "partitioning" my trust of my colleague as we talk

² It is important to note that scholars may not always view dissonance as aversive. Zajonc (1960) argues that people work toward an optimum level of incongruity—psychological inconsistencies in beliefs, thoughts, perceptions, and behaviors—that can be identified as a point between little consistency and too much consistency. From this standpoint, tension may be a condition that individuals choose to manage rather than eliminate (Pinder, 1984).

research, work on the committee report, or discuss club choice on the third tee. This type of compartmentalized, segmented relationship is the rule, rather than the exception, in much of our professional and personal lives.

Foundational support for this view of balance and consistency follows from Lewinian field theory (Deutsch, 1968). From this perspective, consistent with basic principles from engineering and physics, the current "status" of any dynamic phenomenon is not a body at rest but, rather, a body in "quasi-stationary equilibrium." Equilibrium, as distinct from rest, is the combined result of those forces pressuring to increase the current level of the phenomenon and those forces pressuring to decrease the current level of the phenomenon. In relationships, links of interdependency serve as force elements; while each force element may have a positive or negative valence, contributing to pressures that can move the equilibrium of the relationship in a positive or negative direction, the coexistence of these positive and negative links is completely acceptable in a complex view of the relationship.

Our argument, then, is that although parties may pursue consistency and the resolution of inconsistent views, the more common state is not one of balance but, rather, of imbalance, inconsistency, and "uncertainty" (Holmes & Lvinger, 1994). Balance is a transitional state we pass through as we process information; the continually arriving wealth of new information, the salience and prominence of that information, and the multiple perspectives we have of this information continually push us toward *inconsistency* and *incongruence*. Balance and consistency depictions may be more accurately represented as single-frame snapshots of a dynamic time-series process, as relationships are transformed through new information that becomes available and is processed and interpreted.

In summary, a contemporary view of relationships and the dynamics within them suggests that we need to stop viewing relationships as unidimensional and uniplex and, instead, see them as complex, multidimensional constructs. The building blocks of these relationships are facet elements in which we encounter the other within a given context, at a given point in time, and around a given interdependency. Within each facet element, trust or distrust can develop, and these facet elements aggregate into bands of experience and across bands to produce rela-

tionships with differing degrees of bandwidth. This aggregation process leads us to the second critical element of this new view of relationships: it is possible (and likely) that as facets aggregate, they are not necessarily consistent with each other, and individuals can accommodate facets and hold views of the other that do not need to achieve this consistency. Based on these critical, revised assumptions, we now elaborate on our new view of trust.

A NEW VIEW: TRUST AND DISTRUST ARE SEPARATE DIMENSIONS

Having defined trust as confident positive expectations regarding another's conduct, and distrust as confident negative expectations regarding another's conduct, we now examine the relationship between them and the possibilities for their coexistence.

Although we define trust and distrust in reciprocal terms, we view them as separate and distinct constructs. Low distrust is not the same thing as high trust, and high distrust is not the same thing as low trust. We draw our intellectual foundations for this distinction from Luhmann's (1979) articulation of trust and distrust as functional equivalents. Luhmann (1979) argues that both trust and distrust function to allow rational actors to contain and manage social uncertainty and complexity, but they do so by different means. From the scheme of possible conduct, trust reduces social complexity and uncertainty by allowing specific undesirable conduct to be removed from consideration (simplification of the decision tree) and by allowing desirable conduct to be viewed as certain. Similarly, distrust functions to reduce complexity by allowing undesirable conduct to be seen as likely—even certain. Luhmann refers to this distrust as the "positive expectation of injurious action" (1979: 72). Distrust simplifies the social world, allowing an individual to move rationally to take protective action based on these expectations. Trust and distrust both entail certain expectations, but whereas trust expectations anticipate beneficial conduct from others, distrust expectations anticipate injurious conduct.³

³ For the remainder of the article, we use the term "conduct" as a summary term to address the words, actions, and decisions of an actor.

TABLE 1
Integrating Trust and Distrust: Alternative Social Realities

High Trust Characterized by Hope Faith Confidence Assurance Initiative	 High-value congruence Interdependence promoted Opportunities pursued New initiatives	 Trust but verify Relationships highly segmented and bounded Opportunities pursued and down-side risks/vulnerabilities continually monitored				
	<table><tr><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	2	4	1	3	
2	4					
1	3					
Low Trust Characterized by No hope No faith No confidence Passivity Hesitance	 Casual acquaintances Limited interdependence Bounded, arms-length transactions Professional courtesy	 Undesirable eventualities expected and feared Harmful motives assumed Interdependence managed Preemption; best offense is a good defense Paranoia				
	Low Distrust Characterized by No fear Absence of skepticism Absence of cynicism Low monitoring No vigilance	High Distrust Characterized by Fear Skepticism Cynicism Wariness and watchfulness Vigilance				

The distinctness of trust and distrust as separate constructs is made clearer when we contrast low trust and high distrust. On the one hand, situations where certain expectations of beneficial actions from others are absent (beneficial action is seen as uncertain or as certainly not forthcoming) are best understood by the *lack of hope involved* (e.g., *hopeless*). On the other hand, situations where certain expectations of harmful action are absent (harmful action is seen as unlikely or as certainly not forthcoming) are best understood by the *absence of reasoned fear* (e.g., *benign*). Importantly, the conditions of low trust and high distrust do not converge—they are characterized as conceptually distinct conditions.

Our adaptation of Luhmann's formulation is straightforward. Trust and distrust exist as two separate dimensions, as we depict in Table 1.

For each dimension a quasi-stationary equilibrium of forces, composed of facets and bands within the bandwidth, sustains trust or distrust at a specific level. As specific facets in the relationship change (through dialogue, interaction, joint decision making, common experience, and so on), these changes will tend to move the operational level of trust or distrust upward or downward.

Within this framework, we present trust on the vertical dimension and characterize it as either high or low.⁴ Consistent with our definition and understanding of trust, we see high-trust rela-

⁴In this table we represent the trust and distrust dimensions as orthogonal to each other. Although we postulate here that trust and distrust are separate dimensions, the question of the relationship between the two dimensions remains open, both theoretically and empirically.

tionships characterized by faith, confidence, assurance, initiative, and industry. Trust is the mechanism by which the risks associated with social complexity are transcended—risks that might otherwise stifle initiative.

We present distrust on the horizontal dimension and similarly characterize it as either high or low. Consistent with our definition and understanding of distrust, we see distrust expressed by wariness, skepticism, and such behaviors as observed defensiveness, watchfulness, and vigilance. Finally, we see distrust—an actor's assured expectation of intended harm from the other—manifested in those social constraints (e.g., monitoring mechanisms or bureaucratic and regulatory controls) that represent practical responses by wary and vigilant dependent parties to perceived threats. Although expressed distrust may become less visible with controls in place, its manifest presence remains (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994).

Within our two-dimensional framework, we identify four prototypical relationship conditions: low trust/low distrust (cell 1), high trust/low distrust (cell 2), low trust/high distrust (cell 3), and high trust/high distrust (cell 4). Each condition is characterized by a distinct relationship orientation and distinct relationship challenges.

Low Trust/Low Distrust (Cell 1)

Under conditions of low trust and low distrust, an individual or actor has neither reason to be confident nor reason to be wary and watchful. The relationship likely is characterized by a limited number of facets, few bands, and low bandwidth. Over time and with increased interdependence, awareness of the other will develop quickly, giving rise to the establishment of beliefs about the other's trustworthiness and untrustworthiness. Parties are not likely to engage in any relationship dynamics requiring complex interdependency or in complex assessments of risk or vulnerability. Conversation most likely is simple and casual, not violating the privacy of either party or suggesting the existence of any closeness or intimacy.

High Trust/Low Distrust (Cell 2)

Under conditions of high trust and low distrust, one actor has reason to be confident in another and no reason to suspect the other. The

relationship likely is characterized by pooled interdependence, where interested parties are assured that partners are pursuing common objectives. The facet elements, bands, and bandwidth of the relationship reflect a large number of positive experiences, in which the aggregate experience has been trust reinforcing. This experience creates social capital that enables the trusting party to exercise initiative, assured of the support of the trusted party. Parties are likely to seek ways to continually develop and enrich this relationship and to expand their mutually beneficial interdependencies. Conversation likely is complex and rich, reflecting each party's awareness of the other.

In addition, the trusting party is likely to identify with the trusted's values, feel strong positive affect toward the trusted, and express these feelings through various verbalizations of appreciation, support, and encouragement (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995; McAllister, 1995). Parties will interact frequently, periodically invent new opportunities for interaction, and also monitor and "repair" the trust as tensions surface and are resolved (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). These conditions reflect "promotive interdependence" and cooperation (Deutsch, 1962). Evidence that contradicts trustworthiness beliefs likely is viewed as suspect and is denied or considered unimportant by trusting parties. Further, we might expect contradictory evidence to invoke defense mechanisms that serve to further consolidate and strengthen trusting beliefs (Holmes & Levinger, 1994; McAllister, 1997; Murray & Holmes, 1994).

Low Trust/High Distrust (Cell 3)

Under conditions of high distrust and low trust, one actor has no reason for confidence in another and ample reason for wariness and watchfulness. Conditions such as these make it extremely difficult (if not impossible) to maintain effective interdependent relations over time. The facet elements, bands, and bandwidth of the relationship reflect a large number of negative experiences, in which the aggregate experience has been distrust reinforcing. If they must interact, distrusting parties may devote significant resources to monitoring the other's behavior, preparing for the other's distrusting actions, and attending to potential vulnerabilities that might be exploited. For distrusting parties, con-

versation is likely to be cautious, guarded, and often laced with sarcasm, cynicism, and sinister attributions of the other's intentions and motives. In sustained relationships we expect attempts at preemption, as well as control mechanisms to be institutionalized in the form of supervisory or monitoring roles, bureaucratic checks and procedures, and the like (Luhmann, 1979; Shapiro, 1990; Zucker, 1986). In Deutsch's terms the conditions exist for "constricting interdependence" (Deutsch, 1962) or suspicion (Deutsch, 1958, 1960).

Ultimately, we see cell 3 as an uncomfortable condition for sustained working relationships. When the parties have low trust and high distrust but are interdependent nevertheless, they must find some way to manage their distrust. One effective way is to compartmentalize dependence relationships, constraining the facets and bands within which parties must be trusted and separating them from "contamination" by distrusting facets and bands. A practical example of the transformation of a distrust relationship into a trust relationship is Leon Panetta's change in his relationship with Dick Morris (Ogden, 1997). At the outset of their working relationship at the White House, Panetta (White House Chief of Staff) distrusted Morris (political adviser to President Clinton). Panetta's method of handling this relationship was to approach the President and request that Morris be commanded to work within the rules set out by Panetta. Within clearly specified parameters outlined by Panetta, Morris was trusted and could be drawn upon as an invaluable resource. Ultimately, we argue that distrust relations are most effectively managed when they allow for the emergence of constrained trust relations that permit functional interaction within the constraints.

High Trust/High Distrust (Cell 4)

Under conditions of high trust and high distrust, one party has reason to be highly confident in another in certain respects, but also has reason to be strongly wary and suspicious in other respects. The relationship likely is characterized by multifaceted reciprocal interdependence, where relationship partners have separate as well as shared objectives. The facet elements, bands, and bandwidth of the relationship reflect many positive experiences, in which

the aggregate experience has been trust reinforcing, and many negative experiences, in which the aggregate experience has been distrust reinforcing. In order to sustain and benefit from this form of relationship, parties can take steps to limit their interdependence to those facet linkages that reinforce the trust and strongly bound those facet linkages engendering the distrust.

An example of this bounded trust is the joint venture between Boeing and the Japanese in building the Boeing 777. In this joint venture engineers worked together by sharing significant amounts of technical and proprietary information. However, Boeing consciously protected itself from vulnerability against Japanese spying by limiting the access of Japanese engineers to "secure" areas within Boeing (Sabbagh, 1996).

Of the four conditions, we believe this condition of sustained trust and distrust is the most prevalent for multiplex working relationships in modern organizations. At their inception, interpersonal relationships may be characterized in terms of any one of these four prototypical relationship conditions (represented in cells 1 through 4). The factors that might influence the initial relationship configurations can include trust or distrust accumulated in prior relationships (Larson, 1992), reputation information (Stinchcombe & Heimer, 1985), personality factors (Rotter, 1971; Stack, 1988), social similarities and differences (Zucker, 1986), and contextual factors (Shapiro, 1990; Zucker, 1986). The realities of organizing in the twenty-first century lead us to recognize that distrust is much more prevalent than students of trust in organizations have been willing to admit and, consequently, that the percentage of high-trust/low-distrust relationships (cell 2) has been overstated. Our expectation is that practical trust and distrust (cell 4) emerges and is the most prevalent form as business relationships mature and interdependencies are expanded and elaborated between executives in teams, partnerships, and alliances.

NEW RELATIONSHIP FOUNDATIONS— SUPPORT FOR THE NEW VIEW

We believe that our approach to the study of trust and distrust represents a bold break with traditional scholarly approaches. Nevertheless, empirical foundations for the tenets of our re-

search are already in place. In this section we present evidence that positive and negative attitudes frequently do not exist along a single continuum; that ambivalent attitudes, characterized by simultaneous positive and negative sentiments, are commonplace; and that the empirical study of trust and distrust shows the separability of these constructs and the possibility of their coexistence.

The Opposite of Trust Is Not Distrust

Our thesis rests on the contention that *trust and distrust are not opposite ends of a single trust-distrust continuum—the opposite of trust is not distrust*. More broadly, psychologists are increasingly calling for re-examination of the assumption that positive-valent and negative-valent attitudes are opposite ends of a single continuum (Cacioppo & Berntson, 1994; Petty, Wegener, & Fabrigar, 1997). Research findings regarding positive and negative affectivity suggest that these are not opposite ends of the same continuum but exist, rather, as distinct bipolar constructs (Burke, Brief, George, Robertson, & Webster, 1989; Watson & Tellegen, 1985).

Watson and Tellegen (1985) found that high positive affectivity (e.g., active, strong, excited, enthusiastic, peppy, and elated) was not synonymous with low negative affectivity (e.g., calm, relaxed, at rest, and placid). Similarly, low positive affectivity (e.g., sleepy, dull, drowsy, and sluggish) was not synonymous with high negative affectivity (e.g., distressed, scornful, hostile, fearful, nervous, and jittery). Others have similar findings demonstrating the separability of positive-valent and negative-valent constructs for optimism/pessimism (Stallings, Dunham, Gatz, & Bengtson, 1997), interracial attitudes (Katz & Hass, 1988; Katz, Wackenhut, & Hass, 1986; Patchen, Hofman, & Davidson, 1976), and attitudes toward blood and organ donation (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1993).

The consequences of separate positive-valent and negative-valent constructs are far reaching. Whereas positive-valent and negative-valent constructs may be systematically negatively correlated, their antecedents and consequences usually are separate and distinct (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1993). The factors related to positive affect are distinct from those surrounding negative affect (Watson & Tellegen, 1985).

To the extent that trust and distrust are separable and distinct constructs, it is imperative that we systematically explore and understand the nature, antecedents, and consequences of each. For instance, it would be extremely misleading to assume either that the positive predictors of trust would necessarily be negative predictors of distrust or that the positive consequences of trust would necessarily be influenced negatively by increased distrust. Moreover, our assertion is that there is no unitary midpoint between the "positive" condition of trust and the "aversive" condition of distrust. As positive expectations of another's conduct become less certain (i.e., the accumulation of "negative" facet elements and bands increases), feelings of uncertainty and unpredictability increase. As negative expectations of another's conduct become less certain, an individual may sense that this portion of the social world is more benign. Importantly, although benign and uncertain conditions can occur simultaneously, they do not represent overlapping or intersecting conditions on the singular trust-distrust continuum.

Ambivalence Is Commonplace

Our thesis rests on the possibility of ambivalence with respect to trust and distrust: the possibility of coexistent trust and distrust. Our contention is that it would be misleading to reduce expressed trust and distrust to some intermediary or average sentiment.

Individuals experience ambivalence when positive and negative attitudes toward a single target coexist (Otnes, Lowrey, & Shrum, 1997; Priester & Petty, 1996; Thompson, Zanna, & Griffin, 1995). The existence of separate and distinct antecedents of positive-valent and negative-valent attitudes provides for the possibility that both attitude forms will be primed. Possibly the earliest recognition of ambivalence can be found in Freud's systematic reflections on the coexistence of apparently opposing intimate sentiments, such as love and hate and affection and hostility (Freud, 1918). Freud's contention is consistent with research findings showing that individuals in abusive relationships may simultaneously harbor strong feelings of love, as well as hate, for each other (Petty & Cacioppo, 1996).

The evidence of ambivalence as a psychological condition of consequence is considerable.

For instance, researchers studying racial attitudes among White Americans have shown that it is possible for individuals to simultaneously maintain pro-Black and anti-Black sentiments (Katz & Hass, 1988; Katz et al., 1986). Researchers studying interpersonal attachments have found that ambivalence (characterized by simultaneous desires for closeness and distance) is a distinguishing feature of the attachment orientations for approximately 10 percent of the U.S. adult population (Mickelson, Kessler, & Shaver, 1997). Also, researchers studying characteristic attitudes of individuals attempting to quit smoking have discovered frequent evidence of strong positive and strong negative beliefs and feelings about smoking (Petty & Cacioppo, 1996). Yet another example of ambivalence is provided by researchers examining individual expectations of benefit and harm from confederates in experimental game situations, who have shown these expectations to be independent and that subjects can expect both benefit and harm from others (Nacci et al., 1973). Finally, we have noted that the classical "two-factor" theory of worker motivation argues that individuals can be both satisfied and dissatisfied with aspects of a job (Herzberg et al., 1967; King, 1970).

Just as it is possible to experience attraction and disattraction, to like and dislike, and to love and hate, it may be possible to both trust and distrust others. Importantly, researchers have shown that as interpersonal relationships become closer (Coser, 1956; Simmel, 1955), and as the social context of relationships becomes more complex and characterized by information overload, role conflicts, and change (Mancini, 1993; Otnes et al., 1997), the likelihood of ambivalence in beliefs, attitudes, and expectations increases. Of course, in organizational settings where complexity, uncertainty, and role conflict are commonplace, and where ongoing interpersonal relationships mature over time and are multiplex in nature, the potential for simultaneous trust and distrust to emerge is considerable.

Trust and Distrust Are Separable

Above and beyond the *potential* for trust and distrust to exist as separate and distinct constructs, and the *potential* for positive-valent and negative-valent attitudes such as trust and distrust to coexist, research evidence clearly indi-

cates that trust and distrust can be operationalized as separate and distinct constructs.

First, empirical evidence supports the assertion that assessments of the trustworthiness of others cannot be accounted for on a single continuum. Using the Philosophies of Human Nature (PHN) scale (a survey instrument addressing the beliefs of individuals about the ways in which other people generally behave), Robinson, Shaver, and Wrightsman (1991) show that trust beliefs are separate and distinct from distrust beliefs (cynicism) and that the trust and distrust beliefs cannot be reduced to opposite ends of a single continuum. Constantinople (1969), measuring basic trust and basic distrust among college students, demonstrates that it is possible to measure trust and distrust as separate constructs and that these constructs have separate and distinct patterns of variation across gender, year of college, and time span. More recent empirical support comes from a study of coal mineworkers' trust in their managers. Clark and Payne (1997) show that workers' *characteristically certain negative assertions* about the behavior of managers and about how they, as workers, intend to behave in their interactions with management (trust-relevant statements) are clearly separable from *characteristically certain positive assertions* about management's behavior and about workers' behavioral intentions (distrust-relevant statements).

Second, evidence supports the assertion that trust and distrust can coexist. In ethnographic fieldwork Mancini (1993) explores the practical challenges of managing ambivalence within relationships involving confidences and privacy. Mancini's exploration of the relationship between politicians and journalists in modern Italy demonstrates the practical importance of building and maintaining trust relationships with sources of information, while treating with suspicion much of the information received from those sources. Ambivalence (of journalists toward politicians, and vice versa) that encompasses both trust and distrust is reality for politicians and journalists alike.

Besides findings from field research, findings from quasi-experimental research on ambivalence show that trust and distrust attitudes may coexist. Priester and Petty's (1996) operationalization of ambivalence in their research has particular relevance for our arguments. These

researchers provided subjects with a set of words that might describe traits of a person, asking the subjects to form an impression of the person described. Subjects received combinations of both positive-trait descriptors (dependable, honest, kind, loyal, reliable, trustworthy, trusting, and understanding) and negative-trait descriptors (untrustworthy, dishonest, lying, malicious, mean, and untrusting). Importantly, the terms included "trust" and "distrust," as well as other words typically associated with them. The researchers found that subjects had little difficulty forming impressions of people possessing both positive and negative traits, signifying the existence of ambivalence with respect to trust and distrust as a natural condition that people intuitively understand and are comfortable with.

Summary

Our review of available research points to the possibilities of separating trust from distrust and for trust and distrust's coexistence. Findings from the broader scope of social science research show that positive-valent and negative-valent attitudes frequently are separable and distinct, and they can coexist. Impressively, recent evidence indicates that this might be the case of interpersonal trust sentiments in particular. This research is still in its infancy, but we can outline critical implications of what we already know for our understanding of interpersonal relationships in organizations.

IMPLICATIONS OF THIS NEW VIEW: CORE ISSUES AND A RESEARCH AGENDA

Our analysis of social relationships within organizations proceeds from the assumption that trust and distrust sentiments vary independently and can coexist. Within multiplex social relationships, selected facets of a relationship can be characterized by varying degrees of trust, whereas others can be characterized by varying degrees of distrust. This perspective fits well with the understanding that networks of social relations are penetrated by elements of trust and distrust (Granovetter, 1985: 491). In this section we address the substantive and far-reaching implications of this view of trust and distrust for our understanding of individual relationships as well as broader social and organizational relationships.

Precarious Confidences: Trust and Distrust Decoupled and Reconnected

Distrust and trust are elements of social relationships present within *all* social systems. Scholars generally understand trust and distrust as functional equivalents (Luhmann, 1979), but social structures appear most stable where there is a healthy dose of both trust and distrust—a productive tension of confidences exists. As Luhmann argues, "For contemporary circumstances, trust cannot exist apart from distrust, and trust cannot increase apart from increases in distrust. Increases in trust or distrust—apart from increases in the other—may do more harm than good!" (1979: 89). We contend that the potential for dysfunction in confidence relationships increases when either trust beliefs are maintained to the exclusion of distrust or distrust beliefs are maintained to the exclusion of trust. We view this dynamic tension of trust and distrust beliefs as productive, in the best interests of confiding parties, and as a source of stability for relationships.

To an extent, we find it surprising that simultaneous trust and distrust have not been explored in some detail. It is rarely the case that a single summary motive or interest can be identified that accounts for the variety of behaviors of a given relationship partner. Rather, the motives of relationship partners usually can be characterized as partially convergent, partially divergent, and partially unrelated (Sheppard, 1995). Although convergent interests provide reasonable foundations for trust in the form of confident positive expectations for desired behavior, divergent interests provide foundations for distrust, characterized by confident expectations of undesired behavior. Furthermore, relationships are frequently multifaceted (Sheppard, 1995) and, in some cases, compartmentalized (Sabbagh, 1995), yielding the possibility that relationship partners might trust each other in certain respects, not trust each other in other respects, and even distrust each other at times. Accordingly, foundations for both trust and distrust abound, and the manner in which social relations are managed represents a chosen strategy for both containing expected undesired conduct and capitalizing on the opportunities made possible because of expected desired conduct.

A deeper understanding of the importance of simultaneous trust and distrust emerges when we consider the dynamics of (1) *trust relationships where distrust is consciously suppressed* and (2) *distrust relationships where evidence of possible trustworthiness is summarily dismissed*. In the first case, although trust expressed by individuals in relationship partners typically is rational and grounded in experience, it can be misattributed at times, and existing foundations for distrust can be discounted or ignored. The rich sociological tradition of research on white-collar crime points to the role of "overgeneralized" trust as a necessary precondition for the undermonitoring of trusted employees that leads to possible deception, fraud, and embezzlement (Cressy, 1953; Granovetter, 1985; Shapiro, 1987, 1990). As Shakespeare observed,

And oftentimes to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence (*Macbeth*, Act I, Scene III,
line 123).

While would-be betrayers can strategically build trust relationships that create the blindness needed for subsequent exploitation, individuals who are the anticipated targets of deception can unwittingly participate as coconspirators, invoking justification processes and sense-making tactics to deny, discount, and reinterpret evidence of untrustworthiness that would otherwise provide foundations for distrust (McAllister, 1997). For instance, Holmes and Rempel (1989) found that highly trusting individuals within close relationships evaluated partner behavior and motives more positively after being asked to recall negative information about the partner than when asked to recall positive information. Murray and Holmes (1994) postulate that positive representations (beliefs and illusions, rather than true perceptions) of the other arise *because of* perceived faults in the partner—not in spite of them. To the extent that the other's suspicious conduct is denied or reinterpreted in a positive light, or serves to invoke justifications for investments in trust relationships, the potential for systematic abuses of trust relationships will be greatly enhanced. Apart from a genuine openness to the possible necessity of distrust, benign and unconditional trust appears to be an extremely dangerous strategy for managing social relations.

In the second case, although distrust expressed by individuals in relationship partners usually has some empirical foundation and usually is justifiable, it can give rise to paranoid cognitions (Bies & Tripp, 1996; Bies, Tripp, & Kramer, 1997) and to the summary dismissal or reinterpretation of evidence of actual trustworthiness. Perceptions of hurt and betrayal are not uncommon in organizations (Hansson, Jones, & Fletcher, 1990; Harris, 1994) and can be associated with instances where true harm, injury, or hardship has taken place (Bies & Tripp, 1996). Perceptions of betrayal provide foundations for distrust and for subsequent negative framing of social information concerning the perpetrator (Bies et al., 1997). Paranoid cognitions can emerge, centered on the strategic matters of revenge (Bies et al., 1997), as well as on continual monitoring of the distrusted perpetrator. From this vantage point, benevolent or altruistic conduct by the target of distrust may be viewed as further evidence of manipulateness, an attempt to "rub it in," an attempt at impression management, and so forth. Importantly, objective evidence of trustworthiness along facets of the relationship can be misattributed and summarily dismissed, and, ultimately, the potential efficiencies and savings associated with trust relations can be lost.

Our analysis points to difficulties encountered where broad trust or distrust emerges and where countervailing facets that support the contrary view are suppressed. In a more positive light, Luhmann argues that increases in distrust can serve the purposes of enabling the emergence of greater trust in social systems. "Trust depends on the inclination towards risk being kept under control and on the quota of disappointments not becoming too large. If this is correct, then . . . a system of higher complexity, which needs more trust, also needs at the same time more distrust" (1979: 89). Given the inherent limitations of exclusive trust or distrust (cells 2 and 3) and the practical possibilities for simultaneous trust and distrust, we propose that future research systematically address simultaneous trust/distrust conditions.

Distrust Redeemed: New Theoretical Foundations

Understanding that distrust and trust relations are embedded and entrenched within systems of social relations, we argue that future

research must systematically address the functionality of distrust beliefs and sentiments. Although the espoused view has been that more trust is better, and that distrust is an unfortunate reality when trust fails (Arrow, 1974), we believe that the potential for productive distrust to contribute to, rather than detract from, economic order and efficiency merits consideration. Given the reality of distrust within social systems, and adopting the mindset of the economist who argues that "what is efficient, persists," we feel the emergent research question must be one that addresses the efficiencies, functionality, and utilities of distrust. Here, we explore the implications of distrust for management theory.

We contend that the theoretical significance of distrust in our understanding of organizational behavior and organization theory is profound. Indeed, dynamics of distrust may be fundamental to our understanding of the theory of the firm and the fundamental principles underlying the emergence of complex organizations (Simon, 1957; Thompson, 1967; Williamson, 1974). More specifically, distrust emerges as a central component in the promotion of rationality within organizations. Simon (1957) argues that organizations are able to achieve a level of rationality that transcends the rationality of their members by instituting structures and systems that leverage distrust to constrain and bind individual rationality. He identifies human limitations that impede organizational rationality of three sorts—(1) limitations in skills, (2) limitations in knowledge and information, and (3) limitations in values and purposes that diverge from organizational goals—and argues that organizations enable individuals to behave rationally (from the perspective of the organization) by creating work environments where

1. there is a match between individual skills and job requirements,
2. information provided to individuals corresponds to job requirements,
3. jobs are designed keeping in mind human limitations in information-processing capabilities, and
4. steps are taken to bring individual values into conformity with organizationally espoused values.

Ultimately, Simon argues that "rationality does not determine behavior. Within the area of rationality behavior is perfectly flexible and adaptable to abilities, goals, and knowledge.

Instead, behavior is determined by the irrational and nonrational elements that bound the area of rationality" (1957: 241). Organizational rationality is achieved by restricting those domains of conduct within which individuals' abilities, knowledge, and goals do not conform with those of the organization: domains within which individuals are, *a priori*, distrusted. Organizational practices that bound rationality (eliminate nonrational components) serve to manage the dynamics of distrust, creating domains of action—zones of acceptance—within which employees can be expected to cooperate with authorities.

Interestingly enough, the notion of bounded rationality effectively serves the purpose of containing elements of distrust, and it does little to promote trust. We can sharply separate employee acceptance of and/or indifference to authority from wholesale endorsement of the goals and values of those in authority. Correspondingly, from the perspective of our framework (Table 1), removal of foundations of distrust (characterized by fear, skepticism, and vigilance) through acceptance of authority does not necessarily facilitate the emergence of trust (characterized by faith, hope, and initiative), which might follow from positive identification with and endorsement of the values of those in authority.

Our analysis points to the centrality of distrust as a foundational requirement for effective organization. Although by no means denying the importance of trust and the efficiencies attributed thereto, we suspect that the dynamics of distrust may be even more pivotal as we attempt to improve our understanding of organizations and the behavior of the people in them.

Managing Trust and Distrust: New Directions for Practice and Research

Despite the critical importance of distrust as well as trust, and the prevalence of conditions promoting ambivalence, we know very little about how ambivalence is managed. At the individual level, we note that research by Schulz (1984) shows that the inability to handle ambivalent conditions and the consistent adoption of "all-or-nothing" positions may indicate abnormal psychological development. Within organizational settings, we contend that the capacity to cope with ambivalence-promoting conditions is a critical competence that some may possess

to a greater degree than others. The capacity for coping with ambivalence may have foundations that are both dispositional—associated with an individual's capacity to handle incongruity (Zajonc, 1960), risk preferences (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984), and propensity to differentiate (Morse & Gordon, 1974; Wilson & Malik, 1995)—and developmental (associated with an individual's prior experience with ambivalence and training).

At the interpersonal level, we see critical opportunities for managing ambivalence in peer relations and leader-member interaction. Organization members must know not only when to trust others, and in what respects, but also when to monitor others closely. Furthermore, organization members must develop the capacity to manage the ways in which they are trusted and distrusted by others. For instance, much of the current research on managerial effectiveness follows Thompson (1967), emphasizing the role of the "confidence of coordinate others" or reputation and trustworthiness (Tsui, 1994) as the foundation for effectiveness assessments. Interestingly enough, research findings indicate that the individuals most successful at managing their reputations for effectiveness are distinguished by their efforts to seek negative as well as positive feedback on their performance, suggesting that effective self-regulation is the product of efforts to manage distrust as well as trust relations simultaneously (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Organization members can direct efforts at minimizing distrust in some relationships and enhancing trust within other relationships.

Also, at the interpersonal level, we believe the dynamics of ambivalence within collaborative relations and teamwork merit systematic consideration. We contend that functional coexistence of trust and distrust may be a central component in high-performance teams. Janis's (1972) foundational work on the dynamics of groupthink demonstrates the impact of excessive solidarity and cohesiveness within groups on team performance. Insofar as trust is a necessary precondition for team cohesion, excessive trust and active suppression of distrust (rather than excessive cohesiveness) may be at the root of groupthink dynamics. Understandably, distrust that gives rise to questioning and differences in perspective may be essential for effective group functioning. By the same token, distrust that gives rise to questioning is of little

value if team participants have insufficient trust in their peers to voice reservations and alternative perspectives. Ultimately, the functional coexistence of trust and distrust may be a necessary precondition for the emergence of "hot groups" (Leavitt & Lipman-Blumen, 1995) and "good fights" (Eisenhardt, Kahwajy, & Bourgeois, 1997).

In the broader scope of interpersonal relating, we see a dynamic tension between trust and distrust, reflected in the pressures toward heterogeneity that enhance the foundations for effective decision making and problem solving, as well as the pressures toward homogeneity that facilitate harmonious interaction and coordinated implementation. For instance, in Granovetter's influential argument concerning the "strength of weak ties," we see the benefits of distant acquaintances rather than close associates for managing crises (getting a job, thwarting opposition, and the like). Granovetter's argument centers on the fact that "those to whom we are weakly tied are more likely to move in circles different from us and will thus have access to information different from that which we receive" (1973: 1371). By the same token, those to whom we are weakly tied are more inclined to have values and preferences different from our own, providing a partial foundation for distrust within the relationship. Indeed, Granovetter notes that as the strength of the ties between individuals weakens, so does the potential for trust development. Ultimately, a party's effectiveness in organizing for concerted action depends on his or her ability to leverage the benefits of diversity while managing the inherent dynamics of trust and distrust within the relationship.

Trust and distrust have been central themes in negotiation and conflict management research (Deutsch, 1973; Lewicki & Stevenson, *in press*). Although in his early formulation Deutsch (1958) explicitly discussed trust and suspicion, contemporary authors have tended to emphasize the former and neglect the latter, not to mention the coexistence dynamics of the two. Sheppard (1995) has challenged us to rethink negotiation theory and principles within and across organizational relationships. For example, one domain rich for future study is the negotiation of partnerships and alliances. Yoshino and Rangan address trust as central to the cre-

ation and management of alliances. They quote one alliance manager:

Let's face it, every alliance is plagued by strong suspicions right from the start. Senior managers in both firms wonder what the true motives of the other firm are. . . . It is our job to make sure that suspicions do not get so out of hand as to impede the alliance and to develop working relationships to ensure to the extent possible that the people in each firm trust those in the other. Believe me, it's not easy" (1995: 124).

The explicit manner in which this manager talks about *both* managing suspicions and developing relationships to assure that people trust each other affirms our arguments.

At more macro levels of analysis, we see considerable potential for concerted attention on the institutional dynamics of distrust. Luhmann (1979), who argues that if we hope to increase levels of trust in society, we must be prepared to increase aggregate levels of distrust as well, suggests that distrust can be institutionalized in formal organizational roles and that this process may be essential for the expansion of trust. Distrust may be institutionalized in specialized roles (e.g., quality control inspectors or auditors), positions (e.g., first-line supervisors), and sanctions (applicable punishments for specific infractions). Zucker (1986) argues that the drastic increase in the size of the managerial workforce between 1870 and 1930 signified the emergence of a new *institutionalized* mode of trust production. Interestingly enough, Zucker's argument for the role of managers in the production of trust hinges on the fact that distrust was institutionalized in specific roles; ultimately, increases in trust were made possible by increases in institutionalized distrust.

At present, we know little about the mechanisms by which the institutional arrangement of distrust serves the purpose of promoting trust. Luhmann (1979) argues that institutionalized distrust allows for the depersonalization of distrust activities: quality control people do their work because it's their job—not necessarily because they personally distrust others. Furthermore, formalized procedures for sanctioning infractions may be useful because they specify limits on the extent of retribution possible and specifically provide for restitution.

CONCLUSION

In the rural areas around Ithaca it is common for farmers to put some fresh produce on a table by the road. There is a cash box on the table, and customers are expected to put money in the box in return for the vegetables they take. The box has just a small slit, so money can only be put in, not taken out. Also, the box is attached to the table, so no one can (easily) make off with the money (Dawes & Thaler, 1988: 195).

Dawes and Thaler's depiction of simultaneous trust and distrust in operation is revealing. Rather than representing some average expectation or understanding of human nature, the example suggests a rich understanding of human nature that gives rise to both distrust (acted on by making the slit in the cash box small and affixing the box to the table) and trust (acted on by leaving the vegetables and the table unmanned). We contend that organizations are rife with mixed- and multiple-motive conditions that challenge people's ability to manage the complexities of simultaneous trust and distrust. We call for a richer understanding of the dynamics of trust and distrust relations—one which makes specific provision for conditions of ambivalence. This article represents an initial step in that direction.

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