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# What Other's Disappointment May Do to Selfish People: Emotion and Social Value Orientation in a Negotiation Context

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*The authors examined whether individual differences in social value orientation moderate responses to other's expressions of disappointment in negotiation. The literature suggested competing hypotheses: First, prosocials are more responsive to other's disappointment because they have a greater concern for other; second, proselves are more responsive because they see other's disappointment as a threat to their own outcomes. Results of a computer-mediated negotiation in which a simulated opponent expressed disappointment, no emotion, or anger supported the second prediction: Proselfs conceded more to a disappointed opponent than to a neutral or angry one, whereas prosocials were unaffected by the other's emotion. This effect was mediated by participants' motivation to satisfy the other's needs, which disappointment triggered more strongly in proselves than in prosocials. Implications for theorizing on emotion, social value orientation, and negotiation are discussed.*

**Keywords:** *emotion; disappointment; social value orientation; negotiation*

Conflict is an inherently emotional event. Personal and business conflicts alike have strong potential to elicit emotions, which may in turn influence conflict development (Barry, 1999). One of the most common and constructive ways of resolving conflict is by means of negotiation, which may be defined as a discussion between two or more parties aimed at resolving a divergence of interest (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993). Given that conflict is an emotional occurrence, emotions may influence attempts at conflict resolution in general and negotiation in particular. So far, most empirical research on

emotion in conflict and negotiation has focused on the effects of anger and/or happiness (Friedman et al., 2004; Kopelman, Rosette, & Thompson, 2006; Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004a, 2004b). Other relevant emotions, such as disappointment, have received relatively little attention.

Disappointment is a highly relevant emotion in conflict situations. It arises when progress toward a goal is below expectations (Carver & Scheier, 1990) and/or when a desired outcome is not achieved (Bell, 1985; Frijda, 1986; Van Dijk & Van der Pligt, 1997); as such, it is germane to conflict and negotiation, which are all about distributing social and economic resources with the aim of achieving outcomes. In this light, it is surprising—if not disappointing—that little is known about the role of disappointment in this context. This study aims to increase understanding of the interpersonal effects of disappointment in negotiation. Specifically, we set out to investigate how one's responses to another's disappointment are moderated by individual differences in social value orientation—that is, dispositional preferences for distributions of outcomes between self and others (Messick & McClintock, 1968; Van Lange, Otten, De Bruin, & Joireman, 1997). By examining the moderating influence

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of social value orientation, we aim to shed more light on the role of disappointment in negotiation. Before elaborating on the interplay of these factors, let us first consider prior work on the social effects of disappointment.

### A SOCIAL-FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON DISAPPOINTMENT IN NEGOTIATION

According to a social-functional perspective (Frijda & Mesquita, 1994; Keltner & Haidt, 1999; Morris & Keltner, 2000; Parkinson, 1996; Van Kleef et al., 2004a), emotions are not merely an individual state of the mind; rather, emotions function as social communications, conveying information about one's feeling about things, one's social intentions, and one's orientation toward others (Keltner & Haidt, 1999). As such, emotions influence not only the behavior of those who experience emotions but also the behavior of those who perceive emotions. From this perspective, expressions of disappointment in negotiation should be especially revealing because disappointment signals that one has received less than what one has anticipated (Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2006). In social-functional terms, the expression of disappointment may be thus conceived as a distress call. Much like expressions of distress, expressions of disappointment may elicit prosocial behavior from observers by signaling that one is not doing well (Barnett, King, & Howard, 1979; Batson, 1987; Eisenberg et al., 1989; Fabes, Eisenberg, Karbon, Troyer, & Switzer, 1994; Morris & Keltner, 2000; Van Kleef et al., 2006).

Consistent with this social-functional analysis, a number of studies indicate that expressions of disappointment can exert a significant influence on negotiation processes and outcomes: In the first such study that we are aware of, Thompson, Valley, and Kramer (1995) examined how an opponent's emotions affect a focal negotiator's judgments regarding negotiation success. Independent of objective negotiation performance, the authors found that negotiators felt more successful when the opponent was disappointed rather than happy. This finding suggests that negotiators interpret the other's disappointment as a signal that the other was hoping for more and that they did a good job in extracting concessions from said other.

People may also deliberately express disappointment to change the behavior of a target person in desired ways (Timmers, Fischer, & Manstead, 1998). Recent evidence indicates that such a strategy can be effective. In the context of a computer-mediated negotiation, Van Kleef et al. (2006) found that negotiators who were confronted with expressions of disappointment from their simulated opponent inferred that the other had

received too little; accordingly, they made smaller demands in the course of the negotiation than did negotiators who were confronted with a non-emotional, guilty, or regretful opponent. In line with the social-functional perspective, these findings indicate that expressing disappointment may form the basis of an effective negotiation strategy: Disappointment signals that one's outcomes are below expectations, which may lead others to give in.

Two explanations explaining why negotiators tend to concede to other's expressions of disappointment seem plausible, and both relate to individual differences in social value orientation. The first explanation is based on concern for other. Van Kleef et al. (2006) demonstrated that disappointment produces interpersonal effects similar to those of other distress-related emotions (e.g., worry), which have generally been shown in other contexts to facilitate prosocial behavior aimed at easing the other's pain (Barnett et al., 1979; Batson, 1987; Eisenberg et al., 1989; Fabes et al., 1994; Morris & Keltner, 2000). Furthermore, Lanzetta and Englis (1989) demonstrated that one shows more empathic responses to others' distress when one expects a cooperative rather than a competitive interaction, thereby suggesting that a cooperative mind-set, which generally involves higher concern for others, facilitates prosocial responses to others' distress. These studies suggest that a negotiator's concern for others may play an important role in determining the impact of an opponent's disappointment; that is, one with a high concern for others may possibly be more susceptible to expressions of disappointment than one with a low concern for other.

A second explanation is based on concern for self and strategic information processing. Van Kleef et al. (2006) reported data suggesting that the interpersonal effects of disappointment on demands and concessions are moderated by the focal negotiator's tendency to consider the other's emotion versus discarding it. They found that negotiators with low levels of trust are less likely to incorporate their counterpart's emotional state in their decision-making process and adapt their demands accordingly. This finding shows parallels with research on the interpersonal effects of anger and happiness in negotiations, which has documented that these effects are moderated by the focal negotiators' motivation to consider the implications of the other's emotion for their own goal attainment (Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b). If this motivation is reduced, for example, because the focal negotiator is not dependent on the other for his or her outcomes, then the emotion effect is eliminated (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef et al., 2004b). In other words, it appears as though selfish motivations may also play a role in determining the interpersonal effects of disappointment on negotiation

behavior; that is, negotiators may act on their counterpart's emotion only when they infer that failing to do so might negatively affect their own outcomes.

In sum, two explanations can be advanced toward the question of why negotiators concede more to disappointed counterparts than to nondisappointed ones. The first explanation assumes that the interpersonal effects of disappointment on concession making are driven by prosocial considerations and a concern for the other. The second explanation assumes that the effects are driven by more strategic, self-oriented considerations. The question of what leads individuals to give in to disappointed others thus represents a problem that is as yet unresolved. In the present article, we seek to address this puzzle by directly examining the role of concern for self versus concern for other in the form of social value orientation. From a theoretical standpoint, social value orientation is particularly interesting in relation to disappointment (as opposed to other emotions) because both are related, albeit in different ways, to the distribution of outcomes.

### SOCIAL VALUE ORIENTATION

Past research and theory regarding cooperation and competition have underscored the importance of individual differences in social value orientation. This concept is defined in terms of preferences for distributions of outcomes for self and others, and it centers on differences among prosocial, individualistic, and competitive orientations (Messick & McClintock, 1968; Van Lange, Otten, et al., 1997). Specifically, prosocial orientation is defined in terms of enhancing one's own outcomes and the other's outcomes (i.e., maximizing joint outcomes) as well as equality in outcomes (i.e., minimizing absolute differences in outcomes for self and another person); individualistic orientation is defined in terms of enhancing outcomes for self and being largely indifferent to outcomes for another person (i.e., maximizing individual outcomes); and competitive orientation is defined in terms of enhancing the difference between outcomes for self and other in favor of the self (i.e., maximizing relative outcomes; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978).

The concept of social value orientation is rooted in research on experimental games focusing on cooperation and competition, which are contexts in which differences among all three social value orientations are potentially important. However, in many situations, two of these three most commonly identified orientations, namely, the individualistic orientation and the competitive orientation, are functionally equivalent—for instance, in situations of mixed-motive interdependence, where the competitive tendency to maximize

one's outcomes relative to the other functionally converges with the individualistic tendency to maximize one's outcomes without regard for the other's outcomes. That is, individualists and competitors should—and do indeed—behave similarly in situations where these orientations prescribe the same behavior. In research focusing on conflicts between self-interest and collective interest, it is therefore common practice to combine individualists and competitors into a single category called *proselfs* when the focus is on a situation in which no differences between both personality types are expected (see, e.g., De Cremer, 2002; De Cremer & Van Lange, 2001; De Cremer & Van Vugt, 1999; Joireman & Duell, 2005; Olekalns & Smith, 1999; Steinel & De Dreu, 2004; Stouten, De Cremer, & Van Dijk, 2005; Van Dijk & De Cremer, 2006; Van Kleef & De Dreu, 2002; Van Lange & Semin-Goossens, 1998).

There is increasing evidence that differences between prosocials and proselfs (i.e., individualists and competitors) are key to understanding two broad motivational phenomena: First, relative to proselfs, prosocials tend to be more strongly concerned about other's outcomes. Perhaps the strongest case in point is that prosocials allocate more points, money, and resources to others in a variety of tasks, such as decomposed games, public-good dilemmas, and dictator games (McClintock & Liebrand, 1988; Parks, 1994; Van Lange, De Cremer, Van Dijk, & Van Vugt, 2007). Also, prosocials tend to report greater levels of attachment to others, which may in turn illuminate why they approach others more cooperatively than do proselfs (Van Lange, Otten, et al., 1997). And relative to proselfs, prosocials engage in a greater number of donations—in particular, donations aimed at helping the poor and the ill (Van Lange, Bekkers, Schuyt, & Van Vugt, 2007). Such findings suggest the notion that prosocials are more strongly concerned with the well-being of others, in part through mechanisms such as the activation of feelings of attachment and empathy. Indeed, activation of empathy may account for the relatively greater tendency among prosocials to donate to organizations that help the poor and the ill. Thus, concern for other represents an important difference between prosocials and proselfs.

Second, prosocials tend to enhance not only outcomes for self but also outcomes for others and equality in outcomes, whereas proselfs are concerned with their own outcomes, whether in an absolute or a relative sense. Hence, an important difference is that proselfs more exclusively focus on outcomes for the self. The strong concern with the self is manifested in low levels of cooperation—for example, in single-trial social dilemmas in which a cooperative choice cannot be reciprocated, that is, when a cooperative choice cannot be made out of consideration for long-term self-interest.



However, in other contexts, proselves (especially, individualists) can sometimes come to behave quite cooperatively when it is in their interest (self-interest) to do so. A persuasive example is provided by classic research revealing that individualists rapidly turn to cooperative behavior when paired with those who consistently reward cooperation and punish noncooperation (i.e., so-called tit-for-tat partners; Kuhlman & Marshello, 1975; see also McClintock & Liebrand, 1988; Sattler & Kerr, 1991; Van Lange & Visser, 1999), although the opposite pattern has also been demonstrated (i.e., prosocials become more selfish when paired with a selfish partner; Kelley & Stahelski, 1970). In addition, there is research suggesting that individualists are prepared to make sacrifices in an ongoing relationship only when they feel strongly dependent on (and thus committed to) their partners, whereas prosocials do so even when they do not feel dependent on their partners (Van Lange, Agnew, Harinck, & Steemers, 1997). Other research suggests that competitors are more sensitive to changes in the cooperative/competitive nature of a situation than prosocials are (Carnevale & Probst, 1998). Finally, recent work has revealed that prosocials exhibit the same level of cooperation irrespective of whether they anticipate a single interaction or a future repeated interaction. In contrast, individualists and competitors exhibit considerably more cooperation when they anticipate future interaction (Klapwijk & Van Lange, 2008).

All together, there is good evidence to suggest that proselves (individualists in particular) tend to approach interdependence situations with a strategic mind-set when they anticipate repeated interaction, such that they behave cooperatively in an attempt to enhance their personal outcomes in the long term; that is, they are likely to exhibit noncooperative behavior when such actions promote their own outcomes. However, when they feel that such behavior might harm their outcomes now or in the future—for instance, because it would reduce the likelihood of getting to an agreement—they switch to a more cooperative approach; that is, they use cooperation as means toward the goal of enhancing good outcomes for self in the short or long run. Therefore, relative to prosocials, proselves are more likely to behave cooperatively out of self-interest rather than a concern for other.

## PRESENT STUDY

The present study examines how individual differences in social value orientation moderate the interpersonal effects of disappointment in negotiation. A focus on the combined effects of these variables is of theoretical interest for several reasons. First, in a conflict setting,

disappointment and social value orientation relate to distributions of outcomes: Disappointment signals dissatisfaction with how outcomes are distributed, and social value orientation relates to dispositional preferences with regard to how such distributions are made. In addition, because differences in social value orientation reflect differences in concern for self versus other, examining social value orientation in relation to disappointment has the potential to shed light on the process underlying the interpersonal effects of disappointment in negotiation (i.e., whether expressions of disappointment exert interpersonal influence by appealing to individuals' concern for other or concern for self). Finally, because disappointment and social value orientation share a focus on outcomes, moderating influences of social value orientation should be more likely to emerge in relation to disappointment than in relation to emotions that do not pertain to outcomes.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, we advance two competing hypotheses regarding the interactive effects of disappointment and social value orientation. On one hand, if we assume that the interpersonal effects of disappointment are driven by a concern for other, we can hypothesize that prosocials are more strongly affected by the other's emotion than proselves are because the former tend to be more concerned than the latter with others' outcomes (e.g., McClintock & Liebrand, 1988). Thus, if this is true, we should find that prosocials are more motivated to satisfy the other when he or she expresses disappointment rather than no emotion, which should lead them to concede more to a disappointed opponent than to a neutral one; in contrast, proselves should be less motivated to satisfy the other and therefore less likely to adapt their demands to the other's emotional state.

On the other hand, if we assume that the interpersonal effects of disappointment are driven by a concern for self, we can hypothesize that proselves are more strongly affected by the other's emotion than prosocials are; that is, proselves may be more attuned to the strategic aspects of the situation and more likely to modify their behavior in response to information that becomes available during the interaction (McClintock & Liebrand, 1988; Van Lange & Visser, 1999), such as the opponent's disappointment (Van Kleef et al., 2006). If this reasoning holds, then we should find that proselves are more motivated to satisfy the other when he or she expresses disappointment rather than no emotion, which should in turn lead them to concede more to a disappointed opponent than to a neutral one. In contrast, according to this logic, prosocials should be relatively unaffected by the other's emotion because they are less attuned to the strategic information provided by the other's disappointment.

These two competing sets of hypotheses were tested in a controlled computer-mediated negotiation experiment in which participants received verbal expressions of emotion from a simulated opponent (cf. Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b, 2006). To examine whether any moderating influence of social value orientation is unique to disappointment or generalizes to other expressions of negative affect, we included a condition in which the opponent expressed anger. Conceptually, concern for self and concern for other more closely relate to disappointment (which is about outcomes in relation to expectations; Frijda, 1986; Van Dijk & Van der Pligt, 1997) than to anger (which is about blame and aggression; Smith, Haynes, Lazarus, & Pope, 1993); as such, we did not expect to find differential effects of anger as a function of social value orientation. In addition to testing these hypotheses regarding the effects on behavior based on the other's emotion and one's own social value orientation, we explored the possible mediating role of the motivation to satisfy the other.

## METHOD

### *Participants and Experimental Design*

A total of 115 undergraduate students (80 females and 35 males) at the University of Amsterdam participated in the study for course credit. The experimental design included, as the independent variables, the opponent's emotion (disappointment versus no emotion versus anger) and the participant's social value orientation (prosocial versus proself) and, as the dependent variable, the demands. Participants were randomly assigned to the experimental conditions using a double-blind procedure.

### *Procedure*

For each session, four to eight participants were invited to the laboratory. On arrival, participants were welcomed to the experiment and seated in separate cubicles in front of a computer. From that point onward, all instructions, questionnaires, and experimental tasks were presented on the computer screen.

*Assessment of social value orientation.* Social value orientation was assessed with the triple-dominance measure of social values—a measure that has been demonstrated to have good internal consistency (Liebrand & Van Run, 1985), test-retest reliability (Kuhlman, Camac, & Cunha, 1986; Van Lange & Semin-Goossens, 1998), and construct validity (De Dreu & Boles, 1998; Parks, 1994).

The introduction to the task emphasizes that “the other” is somebody that the participant has never met

(i.e., a hypothetical other) and that “the points” represent a resource that is valuable to the participant and to the other person. Participants were asked to make decisions in nine decomposed games. In each game, they could choose among three distributions of points between themselves and a hypothetical other person (for more information about the instructions and validity of this instrument, see Van Lange, Otten, et al., 1997).

Table 1 provides examples of the decomposed games used in the current study. In Example 1, Option A represents a competitive choice because it provides a greater advantage over the other's outcomes ( $480 - 80 = 400$ ) than does Option B ( $540 - 280 = 260$ ) or Option C ( $480 - 480 = 0$ ). Option B represents an individualistic choice because one's own outcomes are larger (540) than those in Option A (480) and Option C (480). Finally, Option C is a cooperative choice because it provides equality and a larger joint outcome ( $480 + 480 = 960$ ) than does Option A ( $480 + 80 = 560$ ) or Option B ( $540 + 280 = 820$ ). Using the criterion of at least six consistent choices, 59 participants were classified as prosocial (51.3%) and 51 as selfish (44.3%; i.e., individualists and competitors were combined in this category).<sup>1</sup> Five participants (4.3%) did not make at least six consistent choices (i.e., they were unclassifiable) and were thus dropped from the analyses.

After the decomposed games, participants completed a 10-min filler task and were given instructions about the upcoming negotiation task, which was presented as an unrelated study. To facilitate the manipulation of the opponent's emotion (see below), participants were led to believe that the purpose of the study was to find out how knowledge about an opponent's intentions affects negotiation processes in a situation where the negotiating parties cannot see each other. Participants were then told that they would engage in a computer-mediated negotiation with another participant (whose behavior was in fact simulated by the computer).

*Negotiation task.* The negotiation task was one used by Van Kleef et al. (2004a, 2004b; see also, De Dreu & Van Kleef, 2004; De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995; Hilty & Carnevale, 1993). The task captures the characteristics of real-life negotiation—that is, multiple issues differing in utility to the negotiator, information about one's own payoffs, and the typical offer-counteroffer sequence. In the current version, participants learned that they would be assigned the role of buyer or seller of a consignment of mobile phones and that their objective was to negotiate the price, the warranty period, and the duration of the service contract of the phones. They were then presented with a payoff chart (see Table 2) that showed which outcomes were most favorable to them, and they learned that their objective was to earn

**TABLE 1:** Three Examples of Decomposed Games

Game	Example 1		Example 2		Example 3	
	Self	Other	Self	Other	Self	Other
Option A	480	80	560	300	520	520
Option B	540	280	500	500	520	120
Option C	480	480	500	100	580	320

**TABLE 2:** Participants' Payoff Chart

Level	Price of Phones		Warranty Period		Service Contract	
	Price	Payoff	Warranty	Payoff	Service	Payoff
1	\$150	400	1 month	120	1 month	240
2	\$145	350	2 months	105	2 months	210
3	\$140	300	3 months	90	3 months	180
4	\$135	250	4 months	75	4 months	150
5	\$130	200	5 months	60	5 months	120
6	\$125	150	6 months	45	6 months	90
7	\$120	100	7 months	30	7 months	60
8	\$115	50	8 months	15	8 months	30
9	\$110	0	9 months	0	9 months	0

NOTE: Prices in euros were converted to U.S. dollars and rounded to the nearest US\$5.

as many points as possible: For price, Level 9 yielded zero points and Level 1, 400 points (i.e., increments of 50 points per level); for warranty period, Level 9 yielded zero points and Level 1, 120 points (i.e., increments of 15 points per level); finally, for duration of service contract, Level 9 yielded zero points, and Level 1 yielded 240 points (i.e., increments of 30 points per level). Participants were told, “You can see that the best deal for you is 1–1–1, for a total outcome of 760 points (400 + 120 + 240).” The corresponding payoff table for the other party was not displayed, and participants were told only that it differed from their own.

To enhance involvement in the negotiation task, they were informed that points would be converted to lottery tickets at the end of the experiment and that the more points they earned, the more lottery tickets they would obtain and the greater their chance of winning a 50-euro prize. To emphasize the mixed-motive nature of the negotiation, participants were told that only those who reached an agreement would participate in the lottery. Thus, there were incentives to earn as many points as possible and to reach an agreement.

After a short break, during which the computer supposedly assigned buyer and seller roles to the participants, all participants were assigned the role of seller. They were told that the buyer (i.e., the opponent) would make the first offer and that the negotiation would continue until an agreement was reached or time ran out. Just before the negotiation started, participants learned

that an additional goal of the study was to examine the effects of having versus not having information about the opposing negotiator’s intentions. They read that the computer had randomly determined that they would receive information about the intentions of the opponent and that the opponent would not receive information about their intentions.

After these instructions, the negotiation started, and the buyer (i.e., the computer) made a first offer. Over the negotiation rounds, the buyer proposed the following levels of agreement (for price–warranty–service): 8–7–8 (Round 1), 8–7–7 (Round 2), 8–6–7 (Round 3), 7–6–7 (Round 4), 7–6–6 (Round 5), and 6–6–6 (Round 6). Past research has shown that this preprogrammed strategy has face validity and is seen as intermediate in cooperativeness and competitiveness (De Dreu & Van Lange, 1995). A demand by the participant was accepted if it equaled or exceeded the offer that the computer was about to make in the next round. If no agreement was reached by the sixth round, the negotiation was interrupted (see Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b).

*Manipulation of the opponent’s emotion.* After the first, third, and fifth negotiation rounds, participants received information about the intentions of the buyer, which contained the manipulation of the buyer’s emotion. Participants had to wait about a minute and a half while the buyer was supposedly asked to reveal what he or she intended to offer in the next round and why. After



this short wait, participants received the buyer's answer, presented in a separate box, in a different font, and with some minor typing errors to enhance experimental realism. The buyer's intentions held constant across the conditions and contained the buyer's intended offer for the next round. That is, after Round 1, the buyer wrote, "I think I will offer 8-7-7," which would indeed be the buyer's next offer. Information regarding the buyer's intention also contained an emotional statement that constituted the experimental manipulation.

After the first negotiation round, participants in the disappointment condition received a message from their opponent, "I am pretty disappointed about this" (translated from Dutch), followed by an intention statement, "I think I will offer 8-7-7," which was the same for all conditions. In the control condition, participants received only the intention statement. In the anger condition, the opponent wrote, "This offer makes me really angry," followed by the intention statement. After the third round, participants in the disappointment condition received another statement, "This is going wrong. I am very disappointed," followed by an intention statement, "I am going to offer 7-6-7." Participants in the control condition received only the intention statement. Participants in the anger condition read, "This is really getting on my nerves," followed by the intention statement. Finally, after the fifth round, all participants read the intention statement "I am going to offer 6-6-6," which in the disappointment condition was followed by "Because I am really disappointed"; in the anger condition, the statement was followed by "Because this negotiation pisses me off." The Dutch versions of these emotional statements have been successfully pretested and used in previous research and have been found to be perceived as credible (see Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b, 2006).

*Dependent measures.* The offers made by participants in each round were transformed into an index revealing the negotiator's total level of demand for each round (i.e., the number of points demanded in that round, summed across the three negotiation issues of price, warranty, and service; see Table 2). Levels of demand in the six rounds were then combined into an index of the negotiator's average demands (see De Dreu, Carnevale, Emans, & Van De Vliert, 1994; Van Kleef, Steinel, van Knippenberg, Hogg, & Svensson, 2007).

In addition, participants completed a postnegotiation questionnaire that contained manipulation checks and a number of items designed to measure participants' motivation to satisfy the opponent. Participants indicated their agreement with a number of statements on 7-point Likert-type scales (1 = *totally disagree*, 7 = *totally agree*). To check the adequacy of the emotional

manipulation, perceptions of the opponent's disappointment were measured by three items (e.g., "The buyer appeared to be disappointed during the negotiation"), which were combined into a single index of perceived disappointment ( $\alpha = .78$ ). Perceptions of the opponent's anger were assessed with two items (e.g., "The buyer appeared to be angry during the negotiation"), which were averaged into a single index of perceived anger ( $r = .78$ ). Motivation to satisfy the opponent was measured by four items (e.g., "During the negotiation I tried to satisfy the buyer," "During the negotiation I wanted to make the buyer feel good"), which were also averaged into a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .84$ ).

## RESULTS

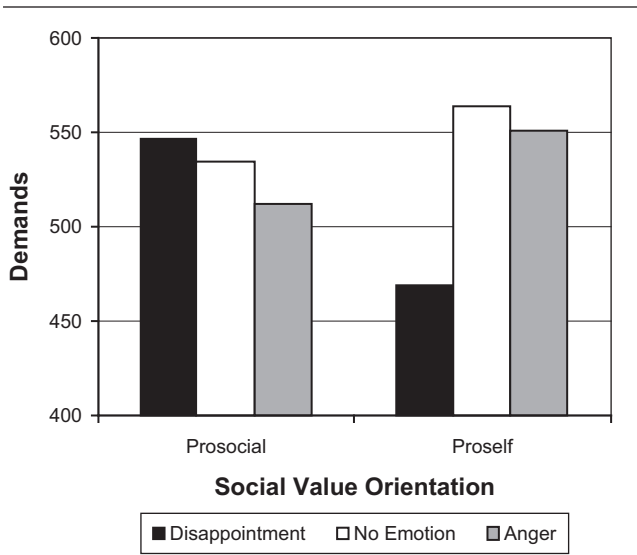
All analyses reported below are based on the full  $3 \times 2$  design: Opponent's Emotion (disappointment versus no emotion versus anger)  $\times$  Social Value Orientation (prosocial versus prosself).

### *Manipulation Check*

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed a significant main effect of the opponent's emotion on the perceived disappointment scale,  $F(2, 104) = 40.23, p < .001$  (partial  $\eta^2 = .44$ ), indicating that participants in the disappointed-opponent condition indeed perceived the opponent as being more disappointed ( $M = 5.99, SD = 0.91$ ) than did participants in the non-emotional-opponent condition ( $M = 4.07, SD = 0.99$ ) and the angry-opponent condition ( $M = 4.32, SD = 0.86$ ). Participants in the anger condition also perceived the opponent as being angrier ( $M = 5.71, SD = 1.64$ ) than did those in the disappointment condition ( $M = 3.74, SD = 1.65$ ) and the non-emotional condition ( $M = 2.88, SD = 1.04$ ),  $F(2, 104) = 33.76, p < .001$  (partial  $\eta^2 = .39$ ). There were no main or interaction effects of social value orientation (both  $F_s < 1, ns$ ). These data indicate that the manipulation of the opponent's emotion was successful.

### *Demands*

ANOVA revealed a significant interaction between emotion and social value orientation,  $F(2, 104) = 4.97, p < .01$  (partial  $\eta^2 = .09$ ). The interaction is depicted in Figure 1. Simple effects analysis revealed a significant effect of the opponent's emotion for participants with a prosself orientation,  $F(2, 104) = 6.35, p < .005$  (partial  $\eta^2 = .26$ ). Proselves made lower demands to a disappointed other ( $M = 469, SD = 91$ ) than to a non-emotional ( $M = 564, SD = 76$ ) or angry ( $M = 551, SD = 50$ ) other, with the latter two conditions not differing significantly according to a Tukey test. By contrast, participants with a prosocial orientation were unaffected



**Figure 1** Demands as a function of the opponent's emotion and the participant's social value orientation.

by the opponent's emotion (disappointment:  $M = 546$ ,  $SD = 88$ ; no emotion:  $M = 534$ ,  $SD = 127$ ; anger:  $M = 512$ ,  $SD = 82$ ),  $F(2, 104) < 1$ , *ns*. This pattern of results indicates that proselfs are more susceptible than prosocials to other's expressions of disappointment but not anger.

#### Motivation to Satisfy the Other

ANOVA revealed a significant Emotion  $\times$  Social Value Orientation interaction on the motivation to satisfy the other,  $F(2, 104) = 5.09$ ,  $p < .01$  (partial  $\eta^2 = .09$ ). Simple effects analysis revealed that proself negotiators were more strongly motivated than prosocial negotiators to satisfy a disappointed opponent ( $M = 3.17$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ;  $M = 2.49$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ , respectively),  $F(2, 104) = 6.11$ ,  $p < .02$  (partial  $\eta^2 = .16$ ). Nonsignificant reversed patterns were observed in the control condition (prosocials:  $M = 3.28$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ; proselfs:  $M = 2.90$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ),  $F(2, 104) = 1.50$ ,  $p = .22$ , and in the anger condition (prosocials:  $M = 2.70$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ; proselfs:  $M = 2.19$ ,  $SD = 0.97$ ),  $F(2, 104) = 2.57$ ,  $p = .11$ . This pattern of results shows that expressions of disappointment (but not anger) trigger a stronger motivation in proselfs than in prosocials to satisfy the opponent.

#### Mediation Analysis

To test whether proself negotiators' stronger responses to another person's disappointment can be explained in terms of their strategic motivation to satisfy the other person's needs, we conducted mediated regression analyses using the procedure described by Kenny,

Kashy, and Bolger (1998). In Step 1, we entered, as the independent variables, the other's emotion, the participant's social value orientation, and their interaction, and as the dependent variable, the demands. In line with the ANOVA effects, this analysis revealed a significant interaction between emotion and social value orientation,  $\beta = .27$ ,  $t = 2.41$ ,  $p < .02$ . In Step 2, we used the same independent variables to predict the participant's motivation to satisfy the other. This, too, yielded a significant interaction,  $\beta = .28$ ,  $t = 2.54$ ,  $p < .02$ , consistent with the ANOVA results. Finally, in Step 3 we simultaneously entered the independent variables (emotion, social value orientation, and their interaction) and the mediator (motivation to satisfy other) to predict the demands, which yielded a significant effect of motivation to satisfy other on the demands,  $\beta = .36$ ,  $t = 3.28$ ,  $p < .005$ , and reduced the formerly significant Emotion  $\times$  Social Value Orientation interaction to nonsignificance,  $\beta = .16$ ,  $t = 1.52$ ,  $p = .13$ . A Sobel test indicated that the reduction of the direct path from the Emotion  $\times$  Social Value Orientation interaction to the demands was significant,  $Z = 2.07$ ,  $p < .04$ . These results reveal that the interactive effect of the other's emotion and the participant's social value orientation on the demands is fully mediated by the participant's motivation to satisfy the opponent's needs—a motivation that disappointment triggered more strongly in proselfs than in prosocials.

## DISCUSSION

The present study investigated the moderating influence of social value orientation on the interpersonal effects of disappointment in negotiation. The literature suggests two competing predictions regarding the nature of this moderation: On one hand, because of their greater concern for others, prosocials were expected to be more sensitive than proselfs to other's expressions of disappointment. On the other, because of their stronger tendency to strategically exhibit cooperation in an attempt to promote their personal outcomes in the future, proselfs were expected to be more responsive than prosocials to expressions of disappointment because it signals a potential threat to agreement. The findings provide support for the second hypothesis: Proselfs made smaller demands in the course of a negotiation when the other expressed disappointment as compared to when the other expressed no emotion. In contrast, prosocials were unaffected by their opponent's emotional state. This effect was fully mediated by participants' motivation to satisfy the opponent's needs, a motivation that disappointment triggered more strongly in proselfs than in prosocials. In support of the theoretical notion that social value orientation is conceptually more

closely related to disappointment than it is to other emotions, such as anger, we found no evidence that social value orientation moderates responses to expressions of anger.

### *Implications and Contributions*

In exploring how social value orientation moderates the interpersonal effects of disappointment in negotiation, the present work brings together two lines of research. Their synthesis extends our knowledge about the negotiation process, the social effects of emotions, and the role of social value orientation in social interaction. We now consider some of the implications of our findings.

Most research on the interpersonal effects of emotion in negotiation has focused on anger and happiness (Friedman et al., 2004; Kopelman et al., 2006; Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006; Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b). So far, little research has focused on the interpersonal effects of other emotions relevant to negotiation, such as disappointment. A rare exception is a study by Van Kleef et al. (2006), who demonstrated that negotiators concede more value to disappointed counterparts than to non-emotional or guilty ones. The present study extends this work by demonstrating for the first time that the interpersonal effects of disappointment are moderated by the focal negotiator's social value orientation.

Perhaps contrary to lay intuition, our results indicate that proselves are more responsive than prosocials to other's expressions of disappointment. This finding has implications for our understanding of the mechanisms underlying the interpersonal effects of disappointment. Van Kleef et al. (2006) showed that disappointment has interpersonal effects similar to other distress-related emotions, such as worry, which have been shown to facilitate prosocial behavior (Barnett et al., 1979; Batson, 1987; Eisenberg et al., 1989; Fabes et al., 1994; Morris & Keltner, 2000). In this previous work, the implicit or explicit assumption has been that distress-related emotions trigger helping behavior by eliciting empathy in observers. Although the present results do not undermine this reasoning, they do suggest that in buyer-seller interactions involving relative strangers who share no history or future of interdependence, other considerations may be quite important as well. Also, most research on empathy focused on more serious life events independent of the task at hand (such as relationship dissolution or contracting a disease), whereas the present research focused on a brief written statement expressing disappointment after some negotiations. The fact that proselves were more responsive to other's disappointment suggests that considerations of self-interest may play an important role in determining the interpersonal effects of disappointment in negotiations.

Strategic considerations are likely to play an especially important role in mixed-motive settings, such as the present negotiation task, where there are incentives to both cooperate and compete. To emphasize the mixed-motive nature of the negotiation task, participants were told that only those who reached an agreement would participate in a lottery and that chances of winning a prize depended on the outcome of the negotiation. Thus, on one hand, they had an incentive to earn as many points as possible (a competitive incentive), whereas on the other, they had an incentive to reach an agreement (a cooperative incentive). In such a situation, expressions of disappointment on the part of the opponent assume strategic importance. Learning that one's opponent is disappointed indicates that she or he had expected or hoped for more, which forms a potential danger to agreement if one does not concede (Van Kleef et al., 2006). The question then becomes, how do negotiators use this information? The present findings indicate that proselves are more sensitive to the strategic implications of an opponent's expressing disappointment, to such an extent that they even become motivated to satisfy the other party's wishes—a rather “prosocial” motivation. This finding suggests that other's expressions of disappointment may transform selfish intentions into more prosocial-like intentions and produce concomitant prosocial behavior, even though the underlying motivation may still be rather selfish (e.g., to secure a favorable agreement).<sup>2</sup>

Interestingly, previous work has found that social value orientation also moderates the intrapersonal effects of emotions on behavior in mixed-motive situations. Ketelaar and Au (2003) examined the effects of feelings of guilt on subsequent cooperation in a repeated Prisoner's Dilemma game. Their results indicated that proselves were more strongly affected by their own feelings of guilt (which had been experimentally induced) than prosocials were: Proselfs made more cooperative choices than did prosocials after they had been made to feel guilty. This finding, too, suggests that proselves may not be uniformly egocentric. Rather, it appears that proselves can be flexible in their behavior, acting selfishly when given the opportunity but switching to more accommodating behavior when their own or their partner's emotions call for cooperation.

### *Limitations and Avenues for Future Research*

We close by noting some limitations and avenues for further research. First, there was no face-to-face interaction. The primary purpose of this research was to enhance our understanding of the interpersonal effects of disappointment in negotiation by generating and testing new

hypotheses about the interactive effects of disappointment and social value orientation. In doing so, we made an explicit decision to maintain as much experimental control as possible, and we chose to employ a computer-mediated negotiation paradigm to permit a carefully controlled manipulation of the opponent's emotion. As a result, some caution is needed when generalizing the results to negotiation contexts outside the laboratory. At the very least, our findings pertain to computer-mediated negotiations. Given the pervasiveness of negotiation as a form of social interaction and the increasing popularity of modern information technologies in communication, the question of how individuals react to each other's emotions in computer-mediated communication is itself of great theoretical and practical importance (McGrath & Hollingshead, 1994; McKersie & Fonstad, 1997; Moore, Kurtzberg, Thompson, & Morris, 1999). However, considering that this paradigm has yielded results that have been replicated in face-to-face settings (see Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006), we have no reason to suspect that our findings are restricted to the domain of computer-mediated interaction. Future research could shed more light on this issue by investigating the extent to which the interpersonal effects of disappointment generalize across settings.

Another issue concerns the cognitive nature of the emotion manipulation that was used in the present experiment. The fact that we used verbal manipulations of emotion raises the question of whether our findings generalize to settings in which emotions are communicated in a different manner (e.g., nonverbally). One could argue that the effects would be different if people were presented with behavioral rather than cognitive emotional cues. This possibility cannot be ruled out on the basis of the present data. However, previous research on anger and happiness in negotiations has documented similar effects regardless of whether a verbal (Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b) or nonverbal (Sinaceur & Tiedens, 2006) manipulation was used. We therefore have no reason to doubt the generalizability of our findings. However, future research is needed to explore this issue in greater depth.

The present research examined how a proself orientation, as an individual difference variable, influences reactions to other's disappointment. However, we suggest that the present findings may also be relevant to situations that trigger a proself orientation—for example, in business where making money is the norm and obligation. Clearly, people experience disappointment when the quality of a product or service is lower than expected. How do companies deal with such matters? Although they may sometimes be rude, more often than not, companies seek to comfort the client in a variety of ways—for example, by noting that one should not expect heaven on Earth or by providing excellent (and

costly) service. As such, it is not uncommon for self-oriented individuals to go far to comfort the client, thereby seeking to reduce the other's disappointment so that they can continue to do business in the future. In terms of future research, it would be interesting to compare situations that differ regarding norms of self-interest to see whether the present findings are different in situations that prescribe prosocial behavior. In light of previous research indicating that prosocials contribute more to help the poor (a cooperative situation), we suspect that disappointment may actually have a stronger impact on prosocials than on proselfs in more cooperatively structured settings.

### Concluding Remarks

Our results show that the same emotion (disappointment) can acquire a different meaning and in turn have different consequences, depending on the perceiver's social value orientation. We found that disappointment triggered a stronger desire to satisfy the other's needs and that it elicited more cooperative behavior in proselfs than in prosocials. To fully understand the social consequences of emotion, researchers should therefore incorporate factors such as social value orientation in their theorizing. It is important to acknowledge that individual and situational characteristics may alter the way in which individuals interpret other's emotions. Exploring factors that change the meaning of others' emotions and thereby affect subsequent behavior could greatly enhance our understanding of emotions and in particular, the ways in which emotions regulate social interaction.

### NOTES

1. We combined individualists and competitors into a single category ( $n = 51$ ) following previous research (e.g., De Cremer & Van Lange, 2001; Joireman & Duell, 2005; Olekalns & Smith, 1999; Van Dijk & De Cremer, 2006) and because competitive and individualistic tendencies are functionally equivalent in the present task; that is in a distributive negotiation such as the present one, maximizing one's own outcomes requires the same behavior as maximizing the positive difference between one's own outcomes and the other's. Separate analyses involving individualists ( $n = 42$ ) yielded identical results: Emotion  $\times$  Social Value Orientation interaction,  $F(2, 95) = 4.22, p < .02$ ; simple effect of emotion for individualists,  $F(2, 95) = 4.99, p < .01$ . Separate analyses involving competitors were not possible owing to insufficient observations ( $n = 9$ ).

2. Alternatively, one might argue that proselfs' greater sensitivity to other's disappointment stems from their own negotiation behavior. Proselfs may have been less cooperative than prosocials in previous rounds of the negotiation, which would lend more credence to the other's disappointment. To test this alternative explanation, we adopted the following strategy: Because the opponent's first emotion expression took place after the first negotiation round, the first round can be seen as a baseline where the opponent's emotion can logically have no effect; indeed, analysis of variance revealed no effect of emotion on demands in Round 1,  $F(2, 104) < 1, ns$ . The first round thus



allows for an unconfounded test of possible differences in cooperation between prosocials and proselfs. Analysis of variance also revealed, however, no significant effect of social value orientation in Round 1,  $F(2, 104) < 1$ , *ns*, indicating that prosocials and proselfs did not differ in terms of their degrees of cooperation. Accordingly, controlling for demands in Round 1 did not alter the results. These results thus argue against an alternative explanation in terms of differential cooperation in previous rounds.

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