Grandiose and Vulnerable Narcissists in Relationships:
A Perceived Control Perspective

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This research demonstrates the key role of perceived control in distinguishing grandiose and vulnerable narcissism. I conducted three studies to examine this question through cross-sectional, mediational, longitudinal, and dyadic approaches. Across the three studies, grandiose narcissism predicted higher perceived self-efficacy and relationship-specific control, whereas vulnerable narcissism predicted lower perceived self-efficacy and general perceived control. Grandiose narcissism was consistently associated with perceptions of power and victimization of the partner in romantic relationships, with longitudinal analyses in Study 2 demonstrating the increased negative impact of grandiose narcissism on relationships over time and dyadic analyses in Study 3 demonstrating that partners of grandiose narcissists are negatively affected by their control-driven behaviors. Vulnerable narcissism was consistently associated with having a victim mentality and victimizing the partner, with mediation analyses in Study 2 supporting the mediating role of low perceived control in predicting vulnerable narcissists’ victim mentality and mistreatment of the partner, although causality of the model could not be definitively established. These results provide new evidence answering the question of what distinguishes grandiose and vulnerable narcissism and how they each impact social relationships.
Dedicated to Robert M. Arkin
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Self-centeredness and entitlement are increasingly becoming pressing societal problems. Trait narcissism levels have been rising over the past decades, with average scores on the most commonly used measure of trait narcissism increasing by 0.33 standard deviations from 1982 to 2006 (Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Bushman, 2008). We know a great deal about the negative interpersonal effects of narcissism, including that it contributes to aggression (e.g., Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), bullying (e.g., Ang, Ong, Lim, & Lim, 2010), corruption and counterproductive work behaviors (e.g., Harvey & Martinko, 2009), and poor social relationships (e.g., Campbell & Foster, 2002). Recently, however, researchers have proposed that there are two types of narcissists: grandiose and vulnerable (e.g., Wink, 1991). Most research has focused on grandiose narcissism, with relatively little work focusing on vulnerable narcissists and on what distinguishes them from grandiose narcissists.

In this dissertation, I propose a control theory of narcissism, which argues that although grandiose and vulnerable narcissists share some traits in common, they can be distinguished by their perceptions of control. In three studies, I provide evidence for the key role of perceived control in grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, using cross-sectional, mediational, longitudinal, and dyadic analyses. This work provides greater clarity into the differential impact of grandiose and vulnerable narcissists in social relationships, shedding light on greater nuance in the often destructive impact of this increasingly common personality trait.
Trait Narcissism

Though the idea that some people are selfish and self-absorbed has existed for much of human history, the psychological concept of narcissism originated in clinical psychology with psychoanalysts like Sigmund Freud, Otto Kernberg, and Heinz Kohut (Sacksteder, 1990), who described narcissism as a personality disorder. Social and personality psychologists, on the other hand, take a trait approach to studying narcissism. Trait narcissism can be conceptualized as a continuum on which the general population is distributed (Foster & Campbell, 2007). According to this view, some people have higher trait narcissism (i.e., “narcissists”), whereas others have lower trait narcissism.

Researchers have recently proposed that two distinct subtypes exist: grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (e.g., Hendin & Cheek, 1997; Wink, 1991). Though they share key narcissistic features such as entitlement and self-absorption, grandiose and vulnerable narcissists differ in important ways, which impact their intrapsychic experiences and social relationships differently.

Grandiose narcissists are confident, outgoing, and charming, but are also vain, manipulative, and aggressive (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Emmons, 1984; Wink, 1991). These narcissists have an inflated sense of self, viewing themselves as superior to others (Krizan & Bushman, 2011), overestimating their intelligence and cognitive ability (Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002) and preferring the company of powerful and popular people (Campbell & Foster, 2002). Grandiose narcissists greatly value the admiration of others, and often gain it by being socially charming (Rose, 2002) and making positive first impressions (Paulhus, 1998). However, their appeal typically deteriorates over time (Paulhus, 1998), likely because they are insensitive to the needs of
others (Gabbard, 1989) and engage in game-playing in close relationships (Foster, Shira, & Campbell, 2006).

In contrast, vulnerable narcissists are socially inhibited, insecure, defensive, and vindictive (Hendin & Cheek, 1997; Wink, 1991). These narcissists experience heightened negative emotional reactivity, including envy, shame, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem (Besser & Priel, 2010; Freis, Brown, Carroll, & Arkin, 2015; Krizan & Johar, 2012; Rose, 2002; Wink, 1991). Whereas grandiose narcissists view others merely as a source of admiration and an opportunity to enhance their own social status (Campbell, 1999), vulnerable narcissists are simultaneously dependent on and suspicious of others (Wink, 1991). They are highly sensitive to others’ feedback and opinions (Hendin & Cheek, 1997) and view themselves as interdependent and reliant on others’ feedback and approval (Besser & Priel, 2010; Rohmann, Neumann, Hener, & Bierhoff, 2012).

However, their behavior is often unlikely to elicit positive feedback from others, as vulnerable narcissists lack poise and self-confidence in social settings and are prone to behave vindictively, typically because they interpret others’ actions as malevolent (Wink, 1991) or feel that others have not adequately recognized their own underlying sense of importance (Given-Wilson, McIlwain, & Warburton, 2011).

The question of why grandiose and vulnerable narcissists differ is still unresolved in the trait narcissism literature. This has given rise to much conceptual confusion when attempting to define and explain narcissism, let alone examining its interpersonal and societal impacts. Most research delineating the subtypes arose not from social psychological theory, but from a combination of two sources: psychoanalytic theory from clinical psychology and empirical evidence from factor analysis. The field lacks a strong
theoretical foundation, as few theories explaining trait narcissism exist and even fewer attempt to explain both subtypes.

The idea that narcissism takes two different forms began with clinical psychologists like Freud, Kernberg, and Kohut, who described differing forms of narcissism observed in their therapy clients. For example, Freud (1931) described a kind of narcissism that entails high-functioning social dominance, whereas Kernberg (1975) described a kind of narcissism that reflects internalized shame and dependence on the validation of others. Rather than necessarily being in opposition or representing subtypes, these two kinds of narcissism were thought to represent a unitary construct; in other words, narcissists were thought to simultaneously be socially dominant and have internalized shame. These perspectives were theoretical rather than empirical, but led to the creation of scales and inventories based on these differing views of narcissism.

Decades later, Wink (1991) identified these discrepancies in how different psychologists operationalized and measured narcissism, and conducted a factor analysis of many narcissism scales. A two-factor solution fit the data best, with one factor representing what Wink called Grandiosity-Exhibitionism and another representing Vulnerability-Sensitivity. Wink argued that although these two factors shared common narcissistic characteristics like self-indulgence, conceitedness, and disregard for others, their otherwise strong differences necessitated treating the two as distinct forms of narcissism. This inspired more empirical research on the narcissistic subtypes, which has since expanded greatly. However, Wink offered only empirical observations of what the two subtypes were like; he did not offer a theory to explain why they diverge from a common narcissistic core.
Some researchers have offered theories to explain trait narcissism, but few are comprehensive. For example, Morf and Rhodewalt’s (2001) dynamic self-regulatory processing model explains narcissism as a set of processes employed as motivated self-construction. However, this theory conceptualizes narcissism as both grandiose and vulnerable (e.g., the “mask model” wherein narcissists present a self-confident face to the world but have a hidden vulnerable core); in light of the wealth of evidence illustrating that narcissistic grandiosity and vulnerability are separate rather than intertwined, this view of narcissism is outdated. Another theory proposed by Campbell, Brunell, and Finkel (2006) posits that narcissists focus on agentic concerns to fuel their “narcissistic esteem,” but although the agency model is a good theory of grandiose narcissism, it does not encompass vulnerable narcissism. Similarly, Campbell and colleagues’ contextual reinforcement model (Campbell & Campbell, 2009) and chocolate cake model (Campbell, Hoffman, Campbell, & Marchisio, 2011) further explain aspects of grandiose but not vulnerable narcissists.

Importantly, two new models currently in press do strive to explain both subtypes. One new model posited by Miller and colleagues (Miller, Lynam, Hyatt, & Campbell, 2017) argues that the narcissistic subtypes can be explained via the Big Five. Miller and colleagues (2017) posit that the core of narcissism is low agreeableness; adding extraversion to the core creates grandiose narcissism, whereas adding neuroticism to the core creates vulnerable narcissism. Another new model by Krizan and Herlache (2017) proposes that narcissism is characterized by a core of entitled self-importance, but grandiose narcissists are bold whereas vulnerable narcissists are reactive. According to this model, grandiose narcissists seek primarily to satisfy self-aggrandizing goals,
regardless of the social costs of their boastful and exhibitionistic behavior, whereas vulnerable narcissists are primarily concerned with identifying and combating threats to their self-image.

Though both of these new models are useful and interesting, they each fall short of fully explaining the differences between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism. Miller’s trait-based model, for example, primarily describes what the narcissistic subtypes look like, not what they are or why they differ. In other words, it certainly seems true that both subtypes are disagreeable and they differ in terms of extraversion and neuroticism, but this theory offers no explanation of why this is the case. Krizan’s spectrum model goes farther to characterize what the narcissistic subtypes are (bold vs. reactive), but does not offer an account of why they differ. Thus, I am proposing a new theory to fill this hole in the trait narcissism literature by explaining why grandiose and vulnerable narcissism diverge.

**Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism**

My theory seeks to parsimoniously answer this question, which has long puzzled researchers who study grandiose and vulnerable narcissism: What separates the narcissistic subtypes? Though both subtypes share a common core of narcissistic features such as entitlement, self-centeredness, lack of empathy, and callousness, they differ in many other important characteristics, such as their views about themselves and about other people (e.g., Dickinson & Pincus, 2003; Krizan & Johar, 2012; Miller, Hoffman, Gaughan, Gentile, Maples, & Campbell, 2011; Wink, 1991). How, then, does their shared narcissistic core manifest so differently in the two subtypes? I propose that the answer to this question is perceived control.
Past research on social motivation has shown that people are motivated to view the world around them as predictable and controllable, and this motivation produces biases in favor of maintaining control. For example, Langer (1975) demonstrated that people are biased toward believing they have more control over events than they truly do. In a series of studies, Langer demonstrated that people do not treat chance- and skill-determined events as separately as they logically should, instead overestimating their influence over chance-determined events such as card-drawing and lottery tickets. Langer connected this illusion of control with past theorizing about people’s motivation to control their environment (e.g., Hendrick, 1943; deCharms, 1968) and to avoid negative consequences associated with perceiving a lack of control (e.g., Lefcourt, 1973).

Indeed, perceiving that one has high control tends to be beneficial, whereas perceiving that one has low control tends to be detrimental. For example, research demonstrates that inducing a perception of control over an aversive impending event reduces how aversive people think the event is, and reducing the perception of control over such an event creates higher anxiety and physiological distress (Bowers, 1968; Geer, Davidson, & Gatchel, 1970; Glass & Singer, 1972; Kanfer & Seidner, 1973; Pervin, 1963). Similarly, nursing home residents in a field experiment who were encouraged to choose their own activities and take responsibility for their own health experienced significant improvement in mental alertness, social activity, and well-being, in contrast to other nursing home residents who were told that the staff were responsible for their health and would choose their activities for them (Langer & Rodin, 1976). The negative implications of low perceived control are also evidenced by the phenomenon of learned helplessness, where learning that outcomes are uncontrollable results in various
motivational, cognitive, and emotional deficits (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Maier & Seligman, 1976).

My Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism\(^1\) brings control motivation to the trait narcissism literature, predicting that although both grandiose and vulnerable narcissists share a core set of narcissistic features, their diverging characteristics and behaviors stem from a difference in perceived control. Specifically, I propose that grandiose narcissists believe they have high levels of personal control over their own outcomes, the behavior of others, and the world around them. These narcissists pursue what they want in life and exert influence over others, including exploiting others for personal gain and maintaining power in relationships. On the other hand, vulnerable narcissists feel they have little to no control over the events in their lives and are highly reactive without clear intentionality. They perceive that the world is happening to them, rather than perceiving themselves as causal agents in their lives, and expend their energy trying to protect themselves from negative outcomes without pursuing positive outcomes. Thus, the differences between the two subtypes can be explained through perception of control.

I examined a variant of this idea in previous work, where I predicted that differences in perceived agency explain the association between the narcissistic subtypes and self-esteem. Perceived agency refers to traits of action and competence, which stem from the desire to distinguish the self from others and which allow people to bring about desired outcomes (Bakan, 1966; Bosson, Lakey, Campbell, Zeigler-Hill, Jordan, & Kernis, 2008). My work demonstrated that grandiose narcissists have high perceived agency, whereas vulnerable narcissists have low perceived agency. Furthermore, their perceptions of agency mediated the link between each type of narcissism and self-esteem,

\(^1\) Special thanks to Amy Brunell for helping name this theory.
with grandiose narcissists’ high agency statistically accounting for their high self-esteem and vulnerable narcissists’ low agency statistically accounting for their low self-esteem (Brown, Freis, Carroll, & Arkin, 2016). Though agency is not a perfect indicator of control, the two concepts are closely related. Perceived control can be conceptualized as control over one’s social world, including over one’s own outcomes and over the behavior of others, whereas perceived agency can be conceptualized as control over one’s own outcomes; thus, agency can be seen as a specific kind of control. This agency work, then, supports the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism.

Other research, while not directly supporting the theory, can be interpreted in light of it. For example, though both types of narcissist are known to be aggressive, they aggress for different reasons. Grandiose narcissists expect others to admire them and fall into a subservient role under them (Arkin & Lakin, 2001; Brunell, Gentry, Campbell, Hoffman, Kuhnert, & DeMarree, 2008), and they become angry and punitive if this does not happen (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Stucke & Sporer, 2002; Twenge & Campbell, 2003). Importantly, grandiose narcissists’ aggression seems to be focused on remedying what they perceive as the other person’s transgression; specifically, they aggress against the person who wronged them, rather than indiscriminately (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Bushman, Bonacci, Van Dijk, & Baumeister, 2003; Krizan & Johar, 2015). In contrast, vulnerable narcissists are distrustful and suspicious of others’ intentions and behaviors, and are predisposed to hostile envy and angry rumination (Krizan & Johar, 2015; Miller & Campbell, 2008; Miller et al., 2011). Their heightened anger and suspicion leads vulnerable narcissists to reactively aggress, even onto uninolved third parties and bystanders (Fossati, Borroni, Eisenberg, & Maffei, 2010; Krizan & Johar, 2015).
These differences in aggression tendencies can be explained through perceived control: grandiose narcissists generally feel that they are in charge and others should fall in line, and they punish those who do not; on the other hand, vulnerable narcissists feel that they cannot control the actions of others and react to any kind of provocation strongly and indiscriminately.

Additional research on the different bases of entitlement experienced by grandiose and vulnerable narcissists can also be explained by the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. In this currently unpublished work, my colleagues and I proposed that although both narcissistic subtypes are highly entitled, they arrive at the conclusion that they deserve special treatment and favorable outcomes through different routes: specifically, grandiose narcissists are entitled because of their inherent merit and superiority, whereas vulnerable narcissists are entitled because of their perception of being unfairly disadvantaged compared to others (Freis, Brown, & Carroll, unpublished). When asked to justify why they were entitled to certain outcomes and domains, grandiose narcissists chose statements like “I am naturally deserving” whereas vulnerable narcissists chose statements like “I have been disadvantaged in the past” and “Others have this and I do not”. Mediation analyses also showed that vulnerable narcissists’ high entitlement was statistically explained by their general victim mentality, whereas grandiose narcissists’ high entitlement was statistically explained by their perceived superiority over others. Altogether, this work suggests that grandiose narcissists’ entitlement stems from an internally-controlled source: their own merit and deservingness. On the other hand, vulnerable narcissists’ entitlement stems from a reaction to their seeming lack of control: their belief that other people are receiving
opportunities and special treatment that they are being denied. In particular, vulnerable narcissists’ victim mentality suggests that these narcissists believe others are being unfairly advantaged in a way that the narcissist has no power over, leading to strong feelings of resentment and anger without any accompanying attempt to rectify those perceived inequalities.

The Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism can also encompass many other models of narcissism. For example, this theory clearly aligns well with Campbell and colleagues’ agency model (Campbell et al., 2006). The two theories agree that grandiose narcissists use agentic strategies in their daily lives; my theory goes a step further to relate this tendency toward agency back to the broader motivation of personal control, and brings vulnerable narcissism into the mix as well. My theory can also encompass Miller and colleagues’ (2017) trait-based model of narcissism, relating both extraversion and neuroticism back to perceived control. It is plausible that grandiose narcissists are highly extraverted because they are confident in their ability to control the attention of others and manipulate others in ways that benefit themselves. Vulnerable narcissists are likely high in neuroticism and negative emotionality because they feel like their lives are not under their own control; anxiety, then, would be a direct response to this lack of perceived control, and negative emotionality the result of their lack of agency (as shown in Brown et al., 2016). Last but not least, my theory can also encompass Krizan and Herlache’s (2017) spectrum model. The assertion that grandiose narcissists are bold certainly matches with the idea that they feel in control and thus able to be bold; similarly, the characterization of vulnerable narcissists as reactive also matches with the
idea that they feel little control over their lives and thus only react to events and people rather than proactively pursuing desired outcomes.

However, this begs the question of how such differences in perceived control arise in the first place. Research investigating the roots of both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (e.g., Cramer, 2011; Horton, Bleau, & Drwecki, 2006; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001; Tracy & Robins, 2003) might explain why the two types develop differential perceptions of control. For example, grandiose narcissism may develop due to parental overvaluation, including provision of inflated feedback and permissive parenting (Brummelman, Thomaes, Nelemans, de Castro, Overbeek, & Bushman, 2015; Horton et al., 2006). Perhaps children who experience overvaluation and inflated feedback learn from their family members that they are special and deserve the best, and that their own efforts produce the outcomes they desire. This leads them to develop high self-centeredness, entitlement, and perceived control, producing grandiose narcissism. On the other hand, vulnerable narcissism may develop through authoritarian parenting, including cold parental interactions and inconsistent feedback, which lead to the development of a kind of “defensive grandiosity” (Kernberg, 1975; Miller, Dir, Gentile, Wilson, Pryor, & Campbell, 2010; Otway & Vignoles, 2006). These children experience devaluation and coldness from their family members, sometimes receiving feedback contingent on their own efforts but often feeling that their parents’ responses and feedback are unpredictable and inconsistent. This leads the child to develop self-centeredness and entitlement as they strive to compensate for inadequate mirroring and idealization from their parents (Kohut, 1977), but in conjunction with the perception of low control, producing vulnerable narcissism. Thus, early life experiences may create these differences in perceived control.
Regardless of the exact origins of control, the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism has broad implications for narcissists’ subjective experiences and social interactions. This theory predicts, for example, that the perception of control plays a key role in grandiose and vulnerable narcissists’ perceptions of themselves, of other people, and of their social worlds as a whole. Perceiving high or low control should influence the decisions narcissists make, the way they interact with others in their day-to-day lives, and their behavior in social settings like school and the workplace. Narcissists’ responses to questionnaires and behavioral manipulations, then, should reflect a pattern of high control for grandiose narcissists and low control for vulnerable narcissists. For example, grandiose narcissists should view their actions in social settings as purposeful and likely to elicit the outcomes they desire, whereas vulnerable narcissists should view their actions as unfocused or unintentional and less likely to elicit desired outcomes.

More specifically, this theory makes clear, testable predictions about the role of perceived control for the narcissistic subtypes. For example, if perceived control is restored to vulnerable narcissists, they should at least temporarily resemble grandiose narcissists, and vice versa if perceived control is taken away from grandiose narcissists. Given my assumption that perceived control represents a fork in the road between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, without necessarily affecting the “narcissistic core” of self-centeredness and entitlement, taking away or restoring control should not affect overall narcissism levels but should push people more toward the other subtype. Grandiose narcissists who experience reductions in perceived control would still be self-centered and entitled, but would now perceive low control rather than high; thus, they
would be pushed in the direction of vulnerable narcissism, and vice versa for vulnerable narcissists.

These fluctuations in perceived control may occur naturalistically in narcissists’ lives. For example, when grandiose narcissists enter novel situations where they do not know how best to act to achieve their goals and meet their needs, they may experience a temporary loss of control and thus behave more like vulnerable narcissists (e.g., passive, resentful, high in negative emotionality, hostile, defensive). In contrast, when vulnerable narcissists are led to feel that they are indeed efficacious and in control of getting the outcomes to which they feel entitled, they may experience a temporary boost in control and thus behave more like grandiose narcissists (e.g., agentic, exploitative, self-enhancing, openly seeking admiration).

Most of the predictions made by this theory suggest new lines of research to assess the utility and validity of perceived control as the key variable separating the narcissistic subtypes. However, that is not the primary focus of the current work. Instead, this work aims to establish basic evidence for the plausibility of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, and to examine the consequences of perceiving high or low control within social contexts. My dissertation focuses specifically on the impact of narcissism on romantic relationships. Because I expect perceived control to play such a significant role in grandiose and vulnerable narcissists’ day-to-day lives, this construct should greatly influence their close relationships, including their romantic relationships. Thus, relationships are an excellent domain in which to explore basic predictions of the theory and examine the potential ramifications of differences in perceived control with regard to relationship outcomes.
Narcissism and Control in Social Relationships

Much research has shown that mutually supportive and responsive relationships are crucial for mental and physical health (see Loving & Sbarra, 2015 for a review). Given the importance of good relationships for health, understanding why some people have difficulty establishing long-lasting and healthy relationships is imperative. Given the interpersonal interaction styles of both grandiose and vulnerable narcissists, it seems likely that narcissism is an individual difference variable which may greatly impact relationships; understanding the source of this dysfunction is an integral first step to helping these people build and maintain healthier relationships.

Some previous research has examined how grandiose narcissists initiate and behave in close relationships. For example, grandiose narcissists are primarily attracted to relationship partners who can fuel their own esteem and confer higher social status upon them; in other words, grandiose narcissists seek out partners who are ideal but who also admire them (Campbell, 1999; Campbell et al., 2006). In fact, grandiose narcissists initially seem attractive as relationship partners, and are described at the early stages of a relationship as confident, charming, extraverted, and outgoing (Brunell & Campbell, 2011; Holtzman & Strube, 2010).

However, that initial positive impression wears off over time (Paulhus, 1998), likely due to their behavior in relationships once the initial charm and excitement dissipates. Grandiose narcissists are known to take a game-playing approach to love, which seems to serve their own amusement regardless of the cost to others. For example, they enjoy keeping their partner uncertain about their commitment to the relationship (Rohmann et al., 2012). Doing so allows them to continue to retain power in the
relationship as per the principle of least interest, which asserts that the person who appears least interested in the relationship has the most power (Campbell, Foster, & Finkel, 2002). In a more general sense, grandiose narcissism is associated with poor-quality relationships, characterized by low commitment and by infidelity (Campbell & Foster, 2002). Grandiose narcissists also engage in more aggressive behavior toward their partner and are described by partners as obnoxious and frustrating (Keller, Blincoe, Gilbert, DeWall, Haak, & Widiger, 2014; Rohmann et al., 2012). These effects hold for long-term relationships such as marriages; one study found that spouses of grandiose narcissists described them as cruel, intolerant, immodest, bossy, argumentative, and arrogant (Wink, 1991).

All in all, these findings can be interpreted in light of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. Grandiose narcissists believe that they are in control of the relationship (e.g., game-playing, the principle of least interest) and feel at liberty to treat their partner in whatever way most benefits the narcissist (e.g., low commitment, infidelity, aggressive behavior). This tendency should be reflected in their general approach to the relationship, where grandiose narcissists should perceive that they have control over their relationship and use strategies of interacting with the partner and dealing with conflicts that reflect that control. For example, grandiose narcissists should view their relationships as arenas in which to gain admiration from their partner and to exercise power over their partner, rather than integral sources of esteem and meaning in their lives. In turn, grandiose narcissists are likely to view themselves as powerful and controlling and to actively exercise that power and control over the partner (e.g., by dominating and intimidating the partner, by treating the partner poorly).
Interestingly, little parallel work examines vulnerable narcissists in relationships. For instance, some research does link vulnerable narcissism with attachment anxiety, suggesting that these narcissists simultaneously want to be very close with their partner and are afraid of being rejected (e.g., Dickinson & Pincus, 2003; Smolewska & Dion, 2005). Other research shows that their relationships are also characterized by interpersonal difficulties; Wink (1991) found that spouses of vulnerable narcissists describe them as defensive, anxious, emotional, moody, bitter, and discontented.

Although little is known about vulnerable narcissists in relationships, the existing work can be interpreted in light of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. Anxious attachment, for example, may reflect a reaction to low perceived control; rather than secure attachment to the partner or even avoidant attachment, both of which may reflect at least some level of self-sufficiency and self-assurance, anxious attachment reflects a sense of unpredictability about whether the partner will fulfill one’s desire for closeness or whether the partner wants to end the relationship. The descriptions of vulnerable narcissists by their spouses (e.g., emotional, moody, bitter, discontented) likely also fit with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. Though these characterizations may not seem to fit with low perceived control at first glance, the implications of vulnerable narcissists perceiving that they have low control in their relationships may diverge somewhat from past work on low control. As discussed previously, past work has demonstrated that the negative effects of low control include consequences like increased mortality among nursing home patients (Langer & Rodin, 1976) and learned helplessness (Abramson et al., 1978). However, vulnerable narcissists present an interesting case due
to their high entitlement. What does it mean for a highly entitled person to perceive that they are not in control?

I propose that as a result of feeling out of control in their lives generally and their relationships specifically, vulnerable narcissists will attempt to restore control in some way. Past work has already demonstrated that vulnerable narcissists are particularly high in entitlement rage, as they are prone to feel upset and angry when their entitled expectations are not met by others (Pincus, Ansell, Pimentel, Cain, Wright, & Levy, 2009). Past work has also shown that vulnerable narcissists tend to feel victimized by others in their daily lives, and furthermore, that this perception of victimization leads to anger and rumination (Freis et al., unpublished). If vulnerable narcissists perceive that their partner is in control and they are not, this will likely conflict with their entitled expectations of how they should be treated and what they deserve. I predict that this conflict will lead the vulnerable narcissist to lash out against the partner in an attempt to regain some level of control. For example, vulnerable narcissists may utilize passive aggressive strategies against their partners, such as “the silent treatment” or subtly undermining their partners’ attempts at reconciliation after arguments. Because the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism predicts that vulnerable narcissists perceive low control rather than high control, I predict that they will not engage in agentic strategies within the relationship, such as instrumental aggression toward their partners; rather, I predict that their behavior in relationships will be mostly reactive and driven by their perceptions of low control.
The Current Research

The primary goal of this research is to examine the role of perceived control in the narcissistic subtypes. I assess control first by proxy of perceived agency, then more specifically in both a general and a relationship-specific sense. I also include several measures of perceptions of the self as either a victim or a victimizer, both generally and in the relationship specifically. Based on the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, I predict that grandiose narcissism will be associated with high perceived agency and high perceived control, and will be associated with perceptions of being a victimizer but not a victim. Because these narcissists believe they are in control of their social worlds and the behaviors of others, they should not view themselves as victims either generally or in the relationship, but should instead view themselves as a master manipulator of others and should report behaving in victimizing ways (i.e., reflecting high control) over their relationship partner. Conversely, I predict that vulnerable narcissism will be associated with low perceived agency and low control. Consistent with past work, I predict that these narcissists will perceive themselves as victims both generally and in their relationship. I also predict that vulnerable narcissists will use passively-aggressive victimizing strategies as a result of perceiving low control, although they may not explicitly identify themselves as victimizers in their relationships.

Each study in this dissertation takes a different methodological approach to gather different kinds of information. Study 1 takes a basic correlational approach to establish initial findings related to relationship variables, victimizing behavior, and perceived agency as a proxy for perceived control. In Study 2, I include mediational analyses as well as longitudinal analyses to examine the impact of change over time on variables of
interest. Study 3 takes a dyadic approach to examine potential discrepancies between the responses of narcissists and their relationship partners, including examining the role of perceived control.
Chapter 2: Study 1

Study 1 examines how grandiose and vulnerable narcissists perceive and behave in their romantic relationships, guided by the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. This study employs a simple cross-sectional design with a battery of scales and measures.

With regard to perceived control, I included measures of self-efficacy to replicate past work on agency, measured in this study both generally and specific to the romantic relationship. I also measured victim mentality both generally and specific to the relationship, expecting to see divergence between grandiose and vulnerable narcissists. I included a self-created measure of victimizing behaviors within the relationship to tease apart specific ways grandiose and vulnerable narcissists may differ in how they treat their partners.

I predicted that grandiose narcissism would be associated with high perceived agency and vulnerable narcissism with low perceived agency both generally and within the relationship specifically, consistent with past work and supporting the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. I also predicted that grandiose narcissism would be associated with perceiving themselves as victimizers within their relationships and behaving in victimizing ways, whereas I predicted vulnerable narcissism would be associated with perceiving themselves as victims and behaving both in ways reflective of being the victim in the relationship and victimizing the partner.
Method

Participants. Participants were 199 undergraduate students (70% female, $M_{age} = 19.34$) at the Ohio State University who completed the study in exchange for course credit. No participants’ data were excluded.

Procedure and Materials. This study was posted as an online survey, limited to participants who were currently in a romantic relationship or had previously been in a romantic relationship. Participants were sent a link to the online survey at the session time for which they signed up, and were instructed to complete the study in one sitting without distractions. As part of a larger study and after completing a consent form, participants completed a series of scales and questionnaires, including measures of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism and relationship variables. At the end of the study, participants reported how seriously they took the study, provided their demographic information, and were debriefed about the study’s purpose.

Narcissistic Personality Inventory. The Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin & Terry, 1988) was used to assess grandiose narcissism. Participants responded to 40 forced-choice items by indicating which of two statements they identified with most. Each pair of statements contains one more narcissistic response and one less narcissistic response. Sample forced choice pairs include: “I am an extraordinary person” vs. “I am much like everybody else,” “I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so” vs. “When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed,” and “I am more capable than other people” vs. “There is a lot that I can learn from other people;” in each of these three examples, the more narcissistic response is the first statement. The number
of more narcissistic responses given by the participant were averaged to create a total score of grandiose narcissism ($\alpha = .86$).

**Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale.** The Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS; Hendin & Cheek, 1997) was used to measure vulnerable narcissism. Participants responded to ten statements by indicating how well each statement described them, on a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Sample items include: “I dislike sharing the credit of an achievement with others,” “My feelings are easily hurt by ridicule or by the slighting remarks of others,” and “I can become entirely absorbed in thinking about my personal affairs, my health, my cares, or my relations to others.” Participants’ responses to all ten items were averaged to create a total score of vulnerable narcissism ($\alpha = .75$).

**Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding.** The Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR; Paulhus, 2002) assesses the extent to which participants respond in socially desirable ways to survey questions, which I measured to control for socially desirable responding in the analyses. This measure contains 40 items rated on a scale from 1 (“not true”) to 7 (“very true”). Sample items include: “I don’t care to know what other people really think of me,” “I never regret my decisions,” and “It would be hard for me to break my bad habits” (reverse-scored). All 40 items were averaged to create a total score of socially desirable responding ($\alpha = .77$).

**General Self-Efficacy Scale.** The General Self-Efficacy Scale (Jerusalem & Schwarzer, 1995) measures people’s perceptions of how capable they are of achieving goals and dealing with setbacks in life. This measure contains 10 items rated on a scale from 1 (“not at all true”) to 4 (“exactly true”). Sample items include: “It is easy for me to
stick to my aims and accomplish my goals” and “When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.” All 10 items were averaged to create a total score of general self-efficacy (α = .90).

**Justice Sensitivity Inventory Victim Subscale.** The Victim subscale of the Justice Sensitivity Inventory (JSI-V; Schmitt, Baumert, Gollwitzer, & Maes, 2010) measures the degree to which people feel upset after being unfairly disadvantaged by others or in comparison to others. This measure contains 10 items rated on a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 6 (“strongly agree”). Sample items include: “It makes me angry when others are undeservingly better off than me” and “It bothers me when others receive something that ought to be mine.” All 10 items were averaged to create a total score of general victim mentality (α = .88).

**General Relationship Questions.** Participants were then reminded that the following questionnaires involved romantic relationships, and were asked to indicate their relationship status (52% were currently in a romantic relationship, 39% were not currently in a romantic relationship but had previously been in a romantic relationship, and 9% had never been in a romantic relationship). Participants who indicated that they had never been in a romantic relationship were automatically taken to the end of the survey. All remaining participants completed a few general questions about their relationship, including length of the relationship ($M = 22.88$ months, $SD = 38.71$ months for current relationship; $M = 12.96$ months, $SD = 12.57$ months for past relationship), satisfaction with the relationship on a scale from 1 (“very unsatisfied”) to 7 (“very satisfied;” $M = 5.77$, $SD = 1.31$ for current relationship; $M = 4.96$, $SD = 1.43$ for past relationship), and level of involvement with relationship partner (for current relationship:...
17% reported casual dating, 65% reported exclusive dating, 14% reported nearly engaged, <1% reported engaged, 4% reported married; for previous relationship: 30% reported casual dating, 62% reported exclusive dating, 5% reported nearly engaged, <1% reported engaged, <1% reported married). Participants responding about a past relationship were also asked who ended the relationship (53% reported they ended the relationship, 36.5% reported their partner ended the relationship, and 10.5% reported someone else ended the relationship, with most stating that the breakup was mutual). Participants then completed a large battery of relationship-relevant questionnaires, with the wording altered to reflect whether participants were currently in a relationship (e.g., “In your current relationship…”) or were not currently romantically involved but previously had been (e.g., “In your most recent past relationship…”).

**Self-Efficacy in Romantic Relationships Scale.** The Self-Efficacy in Romantic Relationships Scale (SERR; Riggio, Weiser, Valenzuela, Lui, Montes, & Heuer, 2011) measures participants’ perceptions of their capability to meet task demands within romantic relationships. The SERR contains 12 items rated on a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 9 (“strongly agree”). Sample items include: “When I make plans in my romantic relationships, I am certain I can make them work” and “I feel insecure about my ability to be a good romantic partner” (reverse-scored). Participants’ responses on all 12 items were averaged to create a total self-efficacy in romantic relationships score ($\alpha = .93$ for current relationship, $\alpha = .91$ for past relationship).

**Victim/Victimizer Items.** I created a new scale measuring whether participants view themselves as victims or victimizers in their relationship and how often they behave like victims and victimizers in their relationship. In the first part of the scale, participants
were told: “In relationships, people are both victims (people who are taken advantage of by their partners) and victimizers (people who take advantage of their partners). In your current [most recent past] relationship, please indicate whether you are more often a victim or a victimizer using the scale provided.” The scale ranged from 1 (“always the victim”) to 9 (“always the victimizer”), with the midpoint of 5 labeled “equally victim and victimizer”. This question was set up as a continuum with opposing endpoints of “always the victim” and “always the victimizer” rather than two separate questions about how often participants are the victim and how often they are the victimizer to avoid floor effects, where participants would likely all indicate that they were never the victim and never the victimizer; the midpoint of the scale was set to “equally victim and victimizer” rather than “neither victim nor victimizer” for the same reason. Participants then indicated how often they felt or behaved certain ways in their relationship related to victimizing the partner or being victimized by the partner on a scale from 1 (“not at all”) to 5 (“all the time”): unappreciated, respected, used, powerful, authoritative, admired, humiliated, controlling, put down, in charge, hurt, feared, domineering, slighted, manipulated, manipulative, scornful, and jealous.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary Analyses. Because the items in the victim/victimizer scale assessing how often participants felt or behaved in certain ways in their relationship were self-created, I conducted a factor analysis to determine whether the items loaded on separate factors. Due to the larger sample size and thus higher power for participants reporting about their current relationship compared to participants reporting about their past relationship, I used the responses from participants reporting about their current
relationship in the factor analysis and then checked that the subscales I computed based on this factor analysis were also highly reliable in the sample of participants reporting about their past relationship. I used principal axis as the extraction method, eigenvalues greater than 1, and the promax rotation method.

After excluding items with high cross-loadings and re-running the factor analysis, a three-factor solution emerged (see Table 1) which accounted for 58.28% of the variance. The first factor contained the items “authoritative” and “powerful,” reflecting perceived power. The second factor contained the items “unappreciated,” “used,” “respected,” and “admired,” reflecting perceived mistreatment. The third factor contained the items “scornful,” “feared,” “manipulative,” “manipulated,” and “domineering,” reflecting relationship destructiveness.

The items from each factor were averaged to create total scores of perceived power (α = .82 for participants reporting about their current relationship, α = .88 for participants reporting about their past relationship), perceived mistreatment (α = .80 for participants reporting about their current relationship, α = .78 for participants reporting about their past relationship), and relationship destructiveness (α = .86 for participants reporting about their current relationship, α = .86 for participants reporting about their past relationship). Each subscale was at least acceptably reliable for both the sample of participants responding about their current relationship and the sample of participants responding about their past relationship.
Table 1

*Pattern Matrix for Factor Analysis of Study 1 Victim-Victimizer Items*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unappreciated</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>-.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respected</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.61</td>
<td>-.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admired</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.59</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scornful</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feared</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulated</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domineering</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Main Analyses.** Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations of all variables used in the study. All continuous variables were averaged for analyses. Table 3 presents the bivariate correlations between all variables used in the current study, with correlations for participants reporting about their current relationship presented below the diagonal and correlations for participants reporting about their most recent past relationship presented above the diagonal. Controlling for socially desirable responding does change the significance levels of some reported bivariate correlations, as described in a footnote.
### Table 2

**Means and Standard Deviations of Study 1 Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPI</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>JSI Victim Mentality</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSNS</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>General Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERR (current)</td>
<td>6.63</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>SERR (past)</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V/V single item (current)</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>V/V single item (past)</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V/V Power (current)</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>V/V Power (past)</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V/V Mistreatment (current)</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>V/V Mistreatment (past)</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V/V Destructiveness (current)</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>V/V Destructiveness (past)</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Regression Analyses.** The goal of the current study was to examine initial evidence for the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. Beyond assessing bivariate correlations, I aimed to examine whether grandiose and vulnerable narcissism predicted unique variance in the measured variables. Thus, I ran linear regressions with both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism in the same model predicting the measured variables. All models also included the BIDR to control for socially desirable responding. I computed partial correlations for each analysis as a measure of effect size, as described in Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991).

With regard to general self-efficacy, the current study is mostly consistent with past work. As expected, grandiose narcissism independently predicted higher general self-efficacy both for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t$(97) = 3.58,
and participants reporting about their past relationship \((t(70) = 4.36, pr = .46, p < .001)\). Also as expected, vulnerable narcissism independently predicted lower general self-efficacy for participants reporting about their past relationship \((t(70) = -2.66, pr = -.30, p = .01)\), but this did not reach significance for participants reporting about their current relationship \((t(97) = -1.25, pr = -.13, p = .21)\). These effects extended to relationship-specific self-efficacy for vulnerable narcissists reporting about their past relationship \((t(70) = -3.22, pr = -.36, p = .02)\) but did not reach significance for those reporting about their current relationship \((t(97) = -1.19, pr = -.12, p = .24)\). Nor were these effects significant for grandiose narcissism and relationship-specific self-efficacy either for participants reporting about their past relationship \((t(70) = 1.50, pr = .18, p = .14)\) or current relationship \((t(97) = .43, pr = .04, p = .67)\). Thus, conducting regression models with both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism as predictors demonstrated that the unique effects on some of these self-efficacy measures were not as strong as the bivariate correlations, though even the effects that did not reach significance were trending in the expected directions. These findings generally support the predictions of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism in the domain of perceived agency.

I also examined victim mentality in general and perceptions of being a victim or victimizer in the relationship specifically. Grandiose narcissism did not significantly predict general victim mentality for either participants reporting about their current relationship \((t(97) = .56, pr = .10, p = .58)\) or participants reporting about their past

\(^2\) Note that the bivariate correlation between vulnerable narcissism and general self-efficacy in the current relationship is significant \((r = -.21, p = .03)\).

\(^3\) Note that the bivariate correlation between vulnerable narcissism and relationship self-efficacy in the current relationship is significant \((r = -.22, p = .03)\).
Table 3

Correlations between all Study 1 Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NPI</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.20+</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.19+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. HSNS</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.36**</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>.65*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.20+</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. General Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>-.29*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Relationship Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.36**</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. JSI Victim Mentality</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td></td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. V/V single item</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td>.20+</td>
<td>-.28*</td>
<td>-.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. V/V Power</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.19+</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.20+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. V/V Mistreatment</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>-.19+</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.58**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. V/V Destructiveness</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.36**</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td></td>
<td>.29**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Correlations for participants in a current relationship are presented below the diagonal; correlations for participants who reported on a past relationship are presented above the diagonal. NPI: Narcissistic Personality Inventory. HSNS: Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale. JSI: Justice Sensitivity Inventory. V/V: Victim/Victimizer. **p < .01; *p < .05; +p < .10

* For participants reporting about a current relationship: When controlling for socially desirable responding (the BIDR), the correlation between HSNS and SERR is non-significant but directionally consistent (r = -.12, p = .24), and the correlation between HSNS and V/V Mistreatment is non-significant (r = .08, p = .41). For participants reporting about a past relationship: When controlling for socially desirable responding (the BIDR), the correlation between HSNS and General Self-Efficacy for participants reporting about a past relationship is non-significant but directionally consistent (r = -.12, p = .25), the correlation between HSNS and V/V Destructiveness is non-significant (r = .13, p = .29), and the correlation between NPI and SERR is non-significant (r = .16, p = .19).
relationship ($t(70) = 1.61, pr = .19, p = .11$), which replicates past work. Unexpectedly, grandiose narcissism also did not predict responses to the single victim-victimizer question for either participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = .56, pr = .06, p = .58$) or past relationship ($t(70) = .01, pr = .001, p = .99$). This contradicts the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, as I expected grandiose narcissists to identify themselves as victimizers (reflective of high control) within their relationships. Despite this, the pattern of associations between grandiose narcissism and the victim/victimizer subscales is in fact consistent with the perception of high control, as grandiose narcissism predicted power both for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = 3.63, pr = .35, p < .001$) and past relationship ($t(70) = 4.26, pr = .45, p < .001$). Grandiose narcissism also predicted destructiveness both for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = 2.32, pr = .23, p = .02$) and past relationship ($t(70) = 2.96, pr = .33, p = .004$). Interestingly, grandiose narcissism also marginally predicted perceived mistreatment for participants reporting about their past relationship ($t(70) = 1.90, pr = .22, p = .06$), but this effect did not reach significance for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = 1.00, pr = .10, p = .32$).

Taken together, these endorsements seem to reflect grandiose narcissists’ general sense of being in control of their own lives and the behavior of others (specifically, their partner). These narcissists did not explicitly identify as victimizers, but their reported behavior toward their partners (i.e., positive associations with power and destructiveness) are consistent with perceiving high control in the relationship. In other words, grandiose narcissists feel powerful and authoritative within the relationship, and behave accordingly toward their partner.
In contrast, vulnerable narcissism independently predicted general victim mentality both for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = 5.23, pr = .47, p < .001$) and past relationship ($t(70) = 6.02, pr = .58, p < .001$), consistent with past work. Interestingly, although it did not predict the single victim-victimizer item for participants reporting about their past relationship ($t(70) = 1.09, pr = .13, p = .28$), vulnerable narcissism did predict greater self-identifying as a victimizer for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = 2.06, pr = .20, p = .04$). However, this perception of being a victimizer did not necessarily map onto perceptions of high control in the relationship, as vulnerable narcissism did not predict power either for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = .76, pr = .08, p = .45$) or past relationship ($t(70) = .23, pr = .03, p = .82$). In fact, vulnerable narcissism also did not independently predict destructiveness for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = .84, pr = .09, p = .40$) or past relationship ($t(70) = 1.04, pr = .12, p = .30$), nor did it predict perceived mistreatment either for participants reporting about their current relationship ($t(97) = -.29, pr = -.03, p = .77$) or past relationship ($t(70) = -.83, pr = -.10, p = .41$).

This pattern of findings seems somewhat contradictory at first glance. Vulnerable narcissists report feeling disadvantaged and victimized in a general sense, but report identifying as a victimizer in their relationship. Yet, they do not report perceiving that they have power in their relationship. Does this suggest that vulnerable narcissists feel high control in their relationships, or low control? I speculate that the perception of the self as the victimizer in the relationship and the endorsement of those destructive

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Note that the bivariate correlation between vulnerable narcissism and relationship destructiveness is significant in the current relationship ($r = .20, p = .05$) and marginally significant in the past relationship ($r = .20, p = .09$).
behaviors stem from a sense of low control rather than high. Vulnerable narcissists’ tendency toward low agency may lead them to feel out of control, but their propensity for self-protection may lead them to lash out preemptively at their partners (“If I hurt you first, you can’t hurt me”). Thus, their perceived lack of control over their lives, combined with suspicion about their relationship partner’s motives, causes vulnerable narcissists to victimize their partner in an effort to protect themselves and regain some level of control in the relationship. I aimed to test this hypothesis more fully in Studies 2 and 3.

All in all, Study 1 provided initial support for the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. With some exceptions, my predictions regarding the associations between the narcissistic subtypes and perceived agency, victim mentality, and victimizing behavior toward the partner were supported. Study 1 demonstrates that although grandiose narcissists may not explicitly identify themselves as victimizers in their relationships, their tendency to feel efficacious in general, to feel that they call the shots in their relationship, and to behave in negative ways toward their partners are consistent with the theory that these narcissists feel in control of their lives. In contrast, vulnerable narcissists feel out of control, as evidenced by their low self-efficacy and general victim mentality. Studies 2 and 3 were designed to provide greater clarity to these initial findings.
Chapter 3: Study 2

In Study 2, I aimed to extend these findings in several important ways. First, I more precisely measured perceived control in a general sense and specific to the relationship, allowing me to assess the predictions of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism more definitively. I also included additional scales about the relationship more generally and about victimizing behaviors specifically to better follow up my findings from Study 1; these additional measures assess several more specific and clear victimizing behaviors, which should provide greater clarity into exactly how grandiose and vulnerable narcissists may victimize their partners. Because I measured perceived control more precisely in Study 2, I also tested whether differences in perceived control account for relationship outcomes for grandiose and vulnerable narcissists using mediation models.

Additionally, whereas Study 1 takes a cross-sectional approach, Study 2 takes a longitudinal approach. This allows me to examine the effects of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism on relationships over time, in addition to replicating the regressions in Study 1 at the first time point in the longitudinal study design. A longitudinal design like this can determine whether grandiose and vulnerable narcissists experience downward spirals in their relationships, where perceiving higher or lower control over time worsens their relationship outcomes (e.g., victimizing behavior, relationship quality). With a longitudinal design, I can also use lagged analyses to establish a temporal sequence of events, illustrating the order in which processes occur (e.g., perceived control in week 1
affecting other relationship variables in week 2). Thus, although a longitudinal study design like the one employed here is still technically correlational in nature because no variables are being manipulated, I should be able to establish a temporal order of events that support the plausibility of causal associations.

**Method**

**Participants.** Participants were 171 undergraduate students (68% female, $M_{age} = 19.18$) at the Ohio State University who completed the study in exchange for course credit. No participants’ data were excluded, although some attrition occurred over the course of this five-session study (171 participants completed session 1, 150 participants completed session 2, 137 participants completed session 3, 123 participants completed session 4, and 104 participants completed session 5).\(^6\)

**Procedure and Materials.** This study was described as an online longitudinal study consisting of five weekly sessions, with participation limited only to people who were currently in a romantic relationship. On each of the weekly session dates, participants were sent a link to the online survey and instructed to complete the study in one sitting without distractions. In the first session, participants completed a consent form, demographic items, questions about their romantic relationship, and measures of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism. In all five sessions, participants completed a series of scales and questionnaires, including measures of perceived control and relationship

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\(^6\) These sample sizes do not include 4 breakups from session 1 to session 2, 8 breakups from session 2 to session 3, 4 breakups from session 3 to session 4, and 6 breakups from session 4 to session 5. Beyond these breakups, I also experienced a higher level of attrition than expected in this study due to issues with Buckeyemail, which impacted whether participants received the study links. I conducted an attrition analysis on the data, including attrition due to participants not completing sessions of the study as well as attrition from reported breakups. Independent samples t-tests showed that there were no significant differences between participants who completed the study compared to participants who did not complete the study on measures of grandiose narcissism ($t(169) = .35, p = .73$), vulnerable narcissism ($t(169) = 1.06, p = .29$), general perceived control ($t(169) = 1.51, p = .13$), or relationship control ($t(169) = .10, p = .92$).
variables (see Table 4 for a listing of which questionnaires were included in each session). The instructions for all questionnaires completed in the first session were phrased generally (e.g., “In general…”), whereas the instructions for all questionnaires completed in sessions 2, 3, 4, and 5 were phrased in terms of the past week (e.g., “In the last 7 days…”). At the end of each session, participants reported how seriously they took the study. Participants were not fully debriefed until the end of the final session.

**General Relationship Questions.** In the first session, participants completed a few general questions about their relationship, including length of the relationship ($M = 16.35$ months, $SD = 21.41$ months), satisfaction with the relationship on a scale from 1 (“very unsatisfied”) to 7 (“very satisfied”; $M = 5.80$, $SD = 1.36$), level of current involvement with relationship partner (17% reported casual dating, 74% reported exclusive dating, 5% reported nearly engaged, 0% reported engaged, 4% reported married), and who initiated the relationship (40% reported they initiated the relationship, 60% reported their partner initiated the relationship).

**Questionnaires from Study 1.** Grandiose narcissism was measured using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; session 1 $\alpha = .83$). Vulnerable narcissism was measured using the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS; session 1 $\alpha = .68$). Victim mentality was measured with the Justice Sensitivity Inventory Victim subscale (JSI-V; session 1 $\alpha = .81$). Perceptions of being a victim or victimizer in the relationship was measured with the self-created Victim/Victimizer items (Perceived Power session 1 $\alpha = .82$, Relationship Destructiveness session 1 $\alpha = .89$, Perceived Mistreatment session 1 $\alpha = .79$).
**Measure of Social Desirability.** The Measure of Social Desirability (MSD; Shultz & Chavez, 1994) was used to assess and control for socially desirable responding in this study, as opposed to the BIDR from Study 1. This measure contains 11 items rated on a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Sample items include: “I never jaywalk,” “Nothing embarrasses me,” and “I’ve never made up an excuse for anything.” All 11 items were averaged to create a total score of socially desirable responding ($\alpha = .72$).

**Perceived Control Scale.** The Perceived Control Scale is a self-created measure adapted from items contained in other control scales (Mirowsky & Ross, 1991; Pearlin, Menaghan, Lieberman, & Mullan, 1981; Perry, Hladkyj, Pekrun, & Pelletier, 2001). This scale assesses the degree to which participants feel they are in control of their lives, including their own outcomes and the behavior of others. The measure contains 14 items rated on a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Sample items include: “I am responsible for my own successes” and “There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have” (reverse-scored). Because this was a self-created scale, I conducted reliability analyses before computing a total score (see Preliminary Analyses).

**Relationship Control Scale.** The Relationship Control Scale is a self-created item designed to assess the perception of whether the self or the partner has more control in the relationship. The instructions for this item read: “In relationships, one person often has more control than the other (e.g., over finances, over activities both people do separately and together, in general). Please indicate using the scale below whether you or your partner has more control in your relationship.” The scale ranged from 1 (“my partner has far more control than I do”) to 6 (“I have far more control than my partner...
does”). The scale did not contain a neutral midpoint so that participants had to endorse that either they or their partner had at least slightly more control in the relationship.

**Transgression Occurrence Measure.** The Transgression Occurrence Measure (TOM; McCullough, Emmons, Kilpatrick, & Mooney, 2003) assesses perceptions of how frequently one encounters a variety of interpersonal transgressions (e.g., being insulted, being lied to, being teased, being degraded in public). This measure contains 20 items rated on a scale from 1 (“not at all”) to 7 (“constantly”). All 20 items were averaged to create a total score of transgressions (session 1 $\alpha = .94$).

**Relationship Quality Scale.** The Relationship Quality Scale (Poerio, Totterdell, Emerson, & Miles, 2015) is a brief, general measure of relationship quality. This measure contains three items (“How close do you feel to your relationship partner?”, “How much do you like your relationship partner?”, and “How much do you trust your relationship partner?”) measured on a scale from 1 (“not at all”) to 7 (“extremely”). All three items were averaged to create a total score of relationship quality (session 1 $\alpha = .86$).

**Anxious and Avoidant Attachment Scale.** The Anxious and Avoidant Attachment Scale (AAA; Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998) measures attachment style to the current relationship partner. This measure contains 18 items measured on a scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The Anxious Attachment subscale measures the desire for closeness and simultaneous fear of being rejected by the partner (9 items, sample item: “I worry about being abandoned by my partner”). The Avoidant Attachment subscale measures discomfort with closeness and withdrawal from the partner (9 items, sample item: “I get uncomfortable when my partner wants to be very close”). Each
subscale was averaged to create total scores of anxious attachment (session 1 $\alpha = .89$) and avoidant attachment (session 1 $\alpha = .90$).

**Anxious Jealousy Scale.** The Anxious Jealousy Scale (Buunk, 1997) measures how much people worry about their partner being unfaithful. This measure contains five items rated on a scale from 1 (“never”) to 5 (“frequently”). Sample items include: “I am concerned about my partner finding someone else more attractive than me” and “I worry that my partner might leave me for someone else”. All five items were averaged to create a total score of anxious jealousy (session 1 $\alpha = .93$).

**Multidimensional Emotional Abuse Scale.** The Multidimensional Emotional Abuse Scale (MEAS; Murphy, Hoover, & Taft, 1999) measures psychological abuse in the relationship. I used this scale as an additional measure of victimizing behaviors. This measure contains 28 items rated on a scale from 1 (“never”) to 6 (“frequently”). The Hostile Withdrawal subscale measures avoidance-based tendencies to victimize the partner (7 items; sample item: “Acted cold or distant when angry”). The Dominance/Intimidation subscale measures actively aggressive tendencies to victimize the partner (7 items; sample item: “Threatened to throw something at my partner”). The Denigration subscale measures insult-based tendencies to victimize the partner (7 items; sample item: “Criticized my partner’s appearance”). The Restrictive Engulfment subscale measures passive-aggressive tendencies to victimize the partner (7 items; sample item: “Secretly searched through my partner’s belongings”). Each subscale was averaged to create total scores of hostile withdrawal (session 1 $\alpha = .86$), dominance/intimidation (session 1 $\alpha = .88$), denigration (session 1 $\alpha = .89$), and restrictive engulfment (session 1 $\alpha = .84$).
Table 4

Variables Included at Each Time Point in Study 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th>Session 3</th>
<th>Session 4</th>
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<td>PCS</td>
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<td>Rel. Control</td>
<td>Rel. Control</td>
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<td>TOM</td>
<td>TOM</td>
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<td>Rel. Quality</td>
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<td>MEAS</td>
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Results and Discussion

Preliminary Analyses. Because the perceived control scale was self-created, I conducted reliability analyses to assess whether the items hung well together. With all 14 items together, Cronbach’s alpha was very poor (α = .43), but removing 10 items...
improved Cronbach’s alpha to an acceptable level. The final perceived control scale consisted of four items ultimately reflecting a lack of perceived control: “There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have,” “Sometimes I feel that I’m being pushed around in life,” “I have little control over the things that happen to me,” and “I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life” (session 1 $\alpha = .75$).

**Baseline Analyses at Session 1.** Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations of all variables at the first time point in the longitudinal study. All continuous variables were averaged for analyses. Table 6 presents the bivariate correlations between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism and variables related to perceived control, both generally and in the romantic relationship specifically, at session 1. Controlling for socially desirable responding does change the significance levels of some reported bivariate correlations, as described in a footnote.

**Regression Models.** I ran regression models including both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism in a single model to predict session 1 measured variables. I first examined whether grandiose and/or vulnerable narcissism independently predicted responses to the measures of perceived control both generally and in the relationship specifically, followed by perceptions of being a victim or victimizer within the relationship as well as the general relationship variables included in Study 2. All regression models also included the MSD to control for socially desirable responding. I again computed partial correlations as a measure of effect size for all analyses.

As expected, vulnerable narcissism independently predicted perceived lack of control ($t(167) = 4.74, pr = .34, p < .001$), but unexpectedly, grandiose narcissism did not ($t(165) = -1.26, pr = -.10, p = .21$). Even assessing the bivariate correlations between
grandiose narcissism and each of the 14 original perceived control items, some of which do reflect perceiving high control rather than lack of control, produces no significant correlations ($ps > .19$). Within the relationship specifically, grandiose narcissism did in fact marginally predict perceived control ($t(166) = 1.81, pr = .14, p = .07$), whereas

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7 The only exception was a marginally significant negative correlation between grandiose narcissism and the item “I am responsible for my failures” ($r = -.14, p = .06$). However, this item likely maps more onto self-serving attributional bias than perceived control per se, and a large body of literature already links grandiose narcissism with self-serving attributions (e.g., Campbell, Reeder, Sedikides, & Elliot, 2000; Stucke, 2003).
vulnerable narcissism did not predict this variable \((t(166) = -.38, pr = -.03, p = .71)\).

Taken together, these findings present an interesting pattern.

Grandiose narcissists do not seem to perceive their general control any differently than do people low in grandiose narcissism, suggesting that perhaps those items don’t tap into perceived control quite how I anticipated they would. However, the correlation between vulnerable narcissism and these items does match my predictions, suggesting that this explanation is not valid. Alternately, this finding may instead suggest that the default for most people is to perceive high control (as indicated in past work; e.g., Langer, 1975); grandiose narcissists, then, do not perceive themselves any differently in this domain. This is perhaps plausible, but does contradict past work showing that grandiose narcissists do actually perceive themselves to be significantly higher in perceived agency than people lower in grandiose narcissism (e.g., Brown et al., 2016; Campbell et al., 2002; see also Study 1 results here). Yet, the marginal association between grandiose narcissism and relationship-specific perceived control does match my prediction. Thus, evidence for whether grandiose narcissists perceive that they are in control of their social environments broadly and their relationship specifically is somewhat mixed, based on this study’s results.

The association between vulnerable narcissism and perceived control is also somewhat mixed. As predicted, vulnerable narcissists do feel low control in a broad sense; they perceive their social environment to be determined by the actions of others rather than their own actions. This maps onto vulnerable narcissists’ low perceived agency and supports the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. However, the null
Table 6

*Correlations with Perceived Control-Related Variables*

<table>
<thead>
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<td>.07</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td>.19*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<td>.55**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
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*8 When controlling for socially desirable responding (the MSD), the correlation between NPI and MEAS DI is marginally significant (r = .14, p = .07) and the correlation between NPI and MEAS Den is non-significant (r = .12, p = .13).
correlation between vulnerable narcissism and relationship-specific perceived control does not support the theory. Although these narcissists do feel low control broadly, this does not necessarily extend into the domain of their romantic relationship.

Beyond these targeted measures of perceived control, I also assessed several measures that may reflect patterns of high or low control more indirectly. As expected, grandiose narcissism did not independently predict responses on the Transgression Occurrences Measure \((t(165) = 1.07, pr = .08, p = .29)\), whereas vulnerable narcissism did \((t(165) = 2.59, pr = .12, p = .01)\). This indicates that vulnerable narcissists perceive themselves to be the victims of others’ transgressions in daily life, whereas grandiose narcissists do not. Similarly, replicating Study 1 and past findings, vulnerable narcissism independently predicted having a general victim mentality \((t(167) = 5.31, pr = .38, p < .001)\). Unexpectedly, grandiose narcissism also independently predicted having a general victim mentality \((t(167) = 3.39, pr = .25, p = .001)\). However, this does not replicate Study 1 or past work, which generally finds a null association between these variables.

With regard to the victim-victimizer items, some findings from Study 1 were replicated here and some were not. As in Study 1, grandiose narcissism did not predict the single victim/victimizer item \((t(166) = -.44, pr = -.03, p = .66)\). In contrast with Study 1, vulnerable narcissism marginally predicted the single victim/victimizer item in the opposite direction \((t(166) = -1.67, pr = -.13, p = .10)\), indicating greater endorsement of being a victim in the relationship. Replicating Study 1, grandiose narcissism predicted perceived power \((t(164) = 3.70, pr = .28, p < .001)\) and vulnerable narcissism did not \((t(164) = -.17, pr = -.01, p = .87)\). Both grandiose narcissism \((t(165) = 2.72, pr = .21, p = .007)\) and vulnerable narcissism \((t(165) = 3.70, pr = .28, p < .001)\) independently
predicted relationship destructiveness in this study. Vulnerable narcissism also predicted perceived mistreatment ($t(165) = 2.72, pr = .21, p = .007$), though grandiose narcissism did not ($t(165) = 1.08, pr = .08, p = .28$). Altogether, these findings suggest that grandiose narcissists feel that they have power in the relationship but vulnerable narcissists do not, that both grandiose and vulnerable narcissists treat their partner poorly, and that vulnerable narcissists also perceive that their partner treats them poorly. These findings are generally in line with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism.

I also included a measure of emotional abuse to assess in what specific ways grandiose and vulnerable narcissists treat their partners poorly and whether their responses to these items are consistent with my explanations of high or low control. Grandiose narcissism only marginally predicted MEAS dominance/intimidation ($t(163) = 1.80, pr = .14, p = .07$), consistent with my conceptualization of grandiose narcissists as perceiving that they have high control in the relationship, and thus being more likely to use strategies reflecting high control and power to assert their dominance over their partner.

The only significant association that emerged for vulnerable narcissism was predicting MEAS restrictive engulfment ($t(164) = 3.26, pr = .25, p = .001$). This subscale of the emotional abuse scale centers around strategies that may be characterized as passive aggressive (e.g., checking their partner’s belongings when they are away, attempting to guilt the partner into not going out with friends and instead spending more time with them). Thus, vulnerable narcissists may be resorting to these more passive strategies to try to control their partner, rather than more active strategies like grandiose narcissists. This finding is again consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of
Narcissism, which predicts that in response to perceiving low control in their lives generally and their relationships specifically, vulnerable narcissists are likely to react by lashing out at their partners in an attempt to gain back some sense of control.

Specifically, the tendency for vulnerable narcissists to endorse the passive aggressive strategies contained within the Restrictive Engulfment subscale, but not the more active strategies contained in the other three subscales of the MEAS, supports this hypothesis.

Consistent with Study 1, these findings suggest that vulnerable narcissists may be treating their partners poorly as a reaction to their perception that they are not in control in the relationship.

In Study 2, I also included additional relationship measures to further assess grandiose and vulnerable narcissists’ perceptions of their relationships and assess the impact of perceived control on these variables. Table 7 presents the bivariate correlations between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism and general relationship variables at session 1. When controlling for socially desirable responding, the significance levels of the reported bivariate correlations do not change. I again ran regression analyses at session 1, including both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism as simultaneous predictors in each model as well as socially desirable responding as a control variable.

The predictive associations between grandiose narcissism and these relationship variables generally support my predictions. Grandiose narcissism independently predicted lower relationship quality overall ($t(167) = -2.41, pr = -.18, p = .02$), consistent with my prediction that narcissism negatively impacts relationships in general. Grandiose narcissism did not independently predict attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, or anxious jealousy, consistent with previous research. These regressions are in line with the
Table 7

Correlations with General Relationship Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<th>3</th>
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<td>1. NPI</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. HSNS</td>
<td>-.01</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relationship Quality</td>
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<td>-.17*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.25*</td>
<td>-.59**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Anxious Jealousy</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: NPI: Narcissistic Personality Inventory. HSNS: Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale. 
**p < .01; *p < .05; +p < .10

Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, indicating that grandiose narcissists do not experience the kind of anxiety within their relationship that would suggest low control.

For vulnerable narcissists, my predictions were also supported by the data in this study. Like grandiose narcissism, vulnerable narcissism independently predicted lower relationship quality \((t(167) = -2.45, pr = - .19, p = .02)\), supporting my hypothesis that both types of narcissism are related to poor-quality relationships. Vulnerable narcissism also independently predicted both attachment anxiety \((t(164) = 4.60, pr = .34, p < .001)\) and attachment avoidance \((t(165) = 3.46, pr = .26, p = .001)\), reflecting their general insecurity and defensiveness in relationships. Consistent with my prediction that vulnerable narcissists would behave poorly toward their relationship partners, vulnerable narcissism also independently predicted anxious jealousy \((t(166) = 2.51, pr = .19, p = .01)\). As expected, these regressions reflect a much higher sense of anxiety and
hypersensitivity in the relationship for vulnerable narcissists compared to the patterns for grandiose narcissists. These findings support my conceptualization of vulnerable narcissists as wanting to be close to their partners and simultaneous worrying about being rejected by them; high anxiety within the relationship is thus consistent with my account of low perceived control.

Taken together, these cross-sectional analyses at session 1 of the study generally support my predictions. Although the patterns for the general and specific control measures were not completely consistent, I did find evidence that grandiose narcissists may perceive higher control within their relationships, and that vulnerable narcissists perceive lower control in their daily lives. These findings also show that grandiose narcissists behave poorly toward their relationship partners, reflecting their perception that they have high control and power. In contrast, I found that although vulnerable narcissists also behave poorly toward their relationship partners, their self-reports are more consistent with my explanation of perceiving low control and lashing out against the partner reactively. Thus, these findings are generally consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism.

**Mediation Analyses.** To more directly test my hypothesis that differences in perceived control account for effects of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism in romantic relationships, I conducted mediation analyses with session 1 variables. Because grandiose narcissism was unrelated to general perceived control and only marginally associated with relationship-specific control, I did not run mediation analyses for this type of narcissism in this study. However, because vulnerable narcissism was associated as expected with general perceived control, I was able to run analyses using vulnerable
narcissism as a predictor, general lack of perceived control as a mediator, and victim mentality and relationship variables as outcomes.

I first tested whether perceived lack of control mediates the link between vulnerable narcissism and victim mentality. Mediation analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2012) and bootstrapping methods with 5,000 resamples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) showed that perceived lack of control mediated the effect of vulnerable narcissism on general victim mentality (indirect effect $b = .09$, BootSE = .06, 95% BootCI [.0088, .2309]; see Figure 1). The same mediation pattern was found when substituting reported transgressions by others in daily life as the dependent variable in the model (indirect effect $b = .46$, BootSE = .14, 95% BootCI [.2393, .8110]). Thus, the tendency for people higher in vulnerable narcissism to report having more of a victim mentality was statistically accounted for by their greater perceived lack of control.

I next tested whether perceived lack of control mediates the link between vulnerable narcissism and relationship outcomes. Although the models were not significant for relationship quality or attachment avoidance, mediation analyses showed that perceived lack of control mediated the effects of vulnerable narcissism on relationship destructiveness (indirect effect $b = .04$, BootSE = .02, 95% BootCI [.0103, .0870]), perceived mistreatment (indirect effect $b = .04$, BootSE = .02, 95% BootCI [.0079, .0879]), restrictive engulfment (indirect effect $b = .07$, BootSE = .03, 95% BootCI [.0244, .1313]), attachment anxiety (indirect effect $b = .13$, BootSE = .05, 95% BootCI [.0504, .2402]), and anxious jealousy (indirect effect $b = .08$, BootSE = .04, 95% BootCI [.0280, .1625]). Thus, perceived lack of control statistically accounted for the tendency for people higher in vulnerable narcissism to report being more destructive in their
Figure 1. The mediating effect of perceived lack of control on the association between vulnerable narcissism and general victim mentality.

relationship, being mistreated by their partner, using passive-aggressive abuse tactics, and experiencing anxiety and anxious jealousy in their relationship.

These mediational models should be interpreted with some caution; when reversing perceived lack of control with each dependent variable, the models for general victim mentality, relationship destructiveness, perceived mistreatment, restrictive engulfment, attachment anxiety, and anxious jealousy remain significant (though the model for transgression occurrences is no longer significant when reversing the mediator and outcome). Based on these data, I cannot rule out the possibility that perceived lack of control is an outcome and not a mediating variable. However, theoretically speaking, I believe perceived control is the more plausible mediator. It seems more likely that a vulnerable narcissist’s belief that their world is out of their control leads them to take out
their frustration on their partner and experience negative relationship outcomes, consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, rather than negative relationship outcomes leading to lower control. Additional research using an experimental methodology is needed to establish a causal sequence of events to verify that perceived control truly does produce relationship outcomes and not vice versa.

**Longitudinal Analyses.** Beyond testing new measures of perceived control and assessing the effects of control on relationship outcomes, I also intended to use the longitudinal nature of Study 2 to assess changes over time in relationship outcomes for grandiose and vulnerable narcissists and to assess whether such changes can be explained by perceived control. Unfortunately, I was unable to run lagged analyses to examine the change in relationship and control-related variables from week to week as a function of narcissism. No mixed models for these variables converged appropriately, and thus, I will not report their results here.

Instead, I ran regression models with both grandiose narcissism and vulnerable narcissism predicting session 2 relationship variables, controlling for session 1 variables. All models included the MSD to control for socially desirable responding. I opted to use session 2 measures as dependent variables instead of session 5 measures due to attrition issues; from session 1 to session 5, the sample size dropped from 171 participants to 104 participants, whereas from session 1 to session 2, the sample size only dropped from 171 participants to 150 participants. Note that general victim mentality, attachment anxiety, and attachment avoidance were only measured at session 1, and thus no regression models predicting change over time are presented for these variables.
With regard to perceived control measures, neither grandiose nor vulnerable narcissism predicted change in general perceived control or relationship-specific control from session 1 to session 2. This indicates that associations between narcissism and perceived control are likely stable over time. This is not inconsistent with my theory, as I posit that differences in perceived control likely arise due to learned experiences beginning as far back as early childhood. Thus, I would not expect to see much variation in associations between narcissism and perceived control over the course of seven days.

With regard to the other variables, grandiose narcissism independently predicted increases in perceived power ($t(143) = 2.91, pr = .24, p = .004$), relationship destructiveness ($t(142) = 3.07, pr = .25, p = .003$), and dominance/intimidation ($t(141) = 4.59, pr = .36, p < .001$) from session 1 to session 2, and marginally predicted increases in denigration ($t(142) = 1.83, pr = .15, p = .07$) and restrictive engulfment ($t(142) = 1.93, pr = .16, p = .06$), but did not predict change in perceived transgressions, the single-item victim/victimizer spectrum, perceived mistreatment, hostile withdrawal, relationship quality, or anxious jealousy. These findings are consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, in that grandiose narcissism predicts increased perception of power in the relationship and generally bad behavior toward the relationship partner as captured in multiple measures. It is perhaps surprising that grandiose narcissism does not also predict worse relationship quality, but this study only captures the narcissist’s perspective and not their partner’s; thus, it is plausible that although grandiose narcissists do not perceive their relationship as declining over the course of a week despite their increased bad behavior, their partners might perceive the state of the relationship differently.
In contrast, vulnerable narcissism only significantly predicted an increase in perceived transgressions by others from session 1 to session 2 ($t(141) = 2.05, pr = .17, p = .04$). This finding is consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, in that these narcissists may view others as increasingly transgressing against them over time and experience upticks in victim mentality as time progresses. However, vulnerable narcissism did not independently predict change in any of the other measured variables from session 1 to session 2. This contradicts my original hypothesis, as I would have expected vulnerable narcissism to contribute to worse relationship quality, greater victimization of the partner, and greater reports of mistreatment from the partner over time. Instead, it is possible that vulnerable narcissists’ perceptions of themselves in their relationship and of their relationship as a whole remain more stable on a week-to-week basis (though perhaps a longer time scale, e.g., month-to-month, would capture changes over time as a function of vulnerable narcissism).

As it is, these analyses show that grandiose narcissism contributes more strongly than vulnerable narcissism to change over a one-week period. These longitudinal analyses are consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, as are the cross-sectional regressions and mediational analyses presented here. Thus, Study 2 provides additional support for the role of perceived control for grandiose and vulnerable narcissists, as well as the impact differential perceptions of control have on their relationships. Study 3 aimed to provide further support for the theory, as well as to examine these questions from a new dyadic perspective.
Chapter 4: Study 3

One limitation of Studies 1 and 2 is their sole focus on the narcissist’s perspective. Indeed, in the narcissism literature at large, few studies incorporate a dyadic context to learn more about how others perceive narcissists. Gathering more information about what narcissists perceive and how they behave is indeed important, but leaves out a vital perspective in better understanding narcissists in relationships: that of the relationship partner.

Given grandiose narcissists’ tendency to gratuitously self-enhance and vulnerable narcissists’ tendency to be suspicious and vindictive, narcissists’ perceptions of their relationship and of their partner are likely to be skewed. Indeed, trait narcissists may be too self-absorbed to evaluate their own behavior accurately within relationships, and thus it is possible, if not likely, that narcissists’ perspectives do not match those of their partners. In examining both the perspectives of the narcissist and of their partner, interesting discrepancies between the two may emerge. For example, although Studies 1 and 2 have shown that grandiose narcissists do not explicitly identify themselves as being a victimizer in their relationship, their partners may indeed locate them there on the single-item spectrum.

Study 3 takes a dyadic approach to explore these questions. I recruited romantically involved couples to complete a battery of questionnaires about themselves, their partner, and their relationship. As in Studies 1 and 2, Study 3 includes variables related to perceived control both generally and in the relationship specifically, as well as
a selection of general relationship variables of interest. Because I have data from both members of the romantic dyad, I can assess whether actor’s and partner’s grandiose and vulnerable narcissism independently predict my variables of interest, allowing me to test predictions about trait narcissists and their partners in greater depth, extending the findings from Studies 1 and 2.

**Method**

**Participants.** Participants were 87 romantically involved couples (174 individuals, 88 female participants, $M_{age} = 20.47$) who were recruited via the Ohio State University introductory psychology participant pool, a paid participant pool, and advertisements placed around the university campus. Participants who were enrolled in introductory psychology received course credit for their participation, and all other participants received $15 for completing the hour-long study. No participants’ data were excluded.

**Procedure and Materials.** Participants signed up for a session time via an online scheduling service and arrived at the time of their session with their romantic partner. Each dyad member was instructed to turn off their cell phone, reminded not to communicate with their partner at any time during the study, and seated in a small cubicle to complete the study on a computer, separate from their partner. As part of a larger study and after completing a consent form, participants completed a series of scales and questionnaires, including measures of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism and relationship variables. Participants were informed that they would answer a series of questionnaires about their own personality, their relationship, and their perceptions of

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9 This study was funded by an OSU Alumni Grant for Graduate Research and Scholarship.
their partner. At the end of the study, participants reported how seriously they took the study, provided their demographic information, and were debriefed about the study’s purpose.

**General Relationship Questions.** Participants began by completing general questions about their relationship, including length of the relationship ($M = 22.15$ months, $SD = 24.62$ months), satisfaction with the relationship on a scale from 1 (“very unsatisfied”) to 7 (“very satisfied”; $M = 6.11$, $SD = 1.05$), level of current involvement (3.4% casual dating, 81.6% exclusive dating, 10.3% nearly engaged, 2.3% engaged, 2.3% married), and who initiated the relationship (51.7% reported they initiated the relationship, 48.3% reported their partner initiated the relationship).

**Questionnaires from Studies 1 and 2.** Grandiose narcissism was measured using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; $\alpha = .81$). Vulnerable narcissism was measured using the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS; $\alpha = .68$). Socially desirable responding was measured with the Measure of Social Desirability (MSD; $\alpha = .60$). General victim mentality was measured with the Justice Sensitivity Inventory Victim subscale (JSI-V; $\alpha = .85$). General perceived control was measured using the Perceived Control Scale ($\alpha = .75$). Relationship-specific perceived control was measured using the self-created single-item Relationship Control Scale. Relationship quality was measured using the Relationship Quality Scale ($\alpha = .78$). Anxious jealousy in the relationship was measured with the Anxious Jealousy Scale ($\alpha = .91$). Perceptions of being a victim or victimizer in the relationship was measured with the self-created Victim/Victimizer items (Perceived Power $\alpha = .83$, Relationship Destructiveness $\alpha = .79$, Perceived Mistreatment $\alpha = .65$). Endorsement of victimizing behaviors in the relationship was measured with the
Multidimensional Emotional Abuse Scale (MEAS; Hostile Withdrawal $\alpha = .85$, Dominance/Intimidation $\alpha = .68$, Denigration $\alpha = .79$, Restrictive Engulfment $\alpha = .76$).

**Anxious and Avoidant Attachment Scale.** Anxious and avoidant attachment styles were measured with a shortened version of the Anxious and Avoidant Attachment Scale (AAA) used in Study 2. Three items measured attachment anxiety (e.g., “I often worry that my partner doesn’t care about me as much as I care about him/her;” $\alpha = .68$) and three items measured attachment avoidance (e.g., “I prefer not to show my partner how I feel deep down;” $\alpha = .68$).

**Results and Discussion**

**Main Analyses.** Table 8 presents the means and standard deviations of all variables in the study. All continuous variables were averaged for analyses. Table 9 presents the bivariate correlations between narcissism and control-related variables, with actor correlations appearing below the diagonal and partner correlations appearing on and above the diagonal. When controlling for actor’s and partner’s socially desirable responding, the significance levels of the reported bivariate correlations do not change.

**Dyadic Analyses.** Because Study 3 involved romantic couples, I ran multiple regression models testing whether both partner narcissism and actor narcissism influenced actor variables of interest. I used the MIXED command in SPSS to control for nonindependence of the individuals in dyads (e.g., Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). This analysis allowed me to go a step beyond the findings reported in Studies 1 and 2 to assess whether partner narcissism uniquely affected variables like actor’s perceived control, actor’s victim mentality, and actor’s relationship outcomes. All models controlled for
Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
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<td>0.81</td>
<td>MEAS RE</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


both actor’s and partner’s socially desirable responding. I again computed partial correlations as a measure of effect size for all analyses.

I began by testing whether actor and partner narcissism variables predict actor’s perceived control using the actor-partner interdependence model (Kashy & Kenny, 1999). In these regression analyses, each dependent variable is predicted simultaneously by actor’s grandiose narcissism, actor’s vulnerable narcissism, actor’s socially desirable responding, partner’s grandiose narcissism, partner’s vulnerable narcissism, and
Table 9

Within-Person and Within-Couple Correlations – Control-Related Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<td>-.07</td>
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<td>.08</td>
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<td>.10</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
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<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.01</td>
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<td>-.03</td>
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<td>-.26**</td>
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<td>.25**</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.15+</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
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<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.03</td>
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<td>.40**</td>
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<td>10. MEAS HW</td>
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<td>.15+</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
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<td>12. MEAS Den</td>
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<td>.33**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.13+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Correlations below the diagonal are within-person; correlations on and above the diagonal are within-couple. NPI: Narcissistic Personality Inventory. HSNS: Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale. PCS: Perceived Control Scale. JSI: Justice Sensitivity Inventory. V/V: Victim/Victimizer. MEAS: Multidimensional Emotional Abuse Scale. HW: Hostile Withdrawal. DI: Dominance/Intimidation. Den: Denigration. RE: Restrictive Engulfment. **p < .01; *p < .05; +p < .10
partner’s socially desirable responding. Replicating Study 2, actor’s vulnerable narcissism independently predicted general perceived lack of control ($t(163.68) = 3.70, pr = .28, p < .001$), but actor’s grandiose narcissism did not ($t(164.55) = -1.53, pr = -.12, p = .13$), although this association is trending in the expected direction. Neither partner’s grandiose narcissism ($t(162.27) = -.04, pr = -.003, p = .97$) nor partner’s vulnerable narcissism ($t(162.16) = -.88, pr = -.07, p = .38$) predicted actor’s general perceived lack of control. Within the relationship specifically, actor’s grandiose narcissism ($t(127.99) = 3.74, pr = .31, p < .001$) independently predicted actor’s relationship control, replicating Study 2. In contrast to Study 2, actor’s vulnerable narcissism ($t(137.69) = 1.91, pr = .16, p = .06$) also marginally predicted actor’s perceived control. Interestingly, although partner’s vulnerable narcissism did not independently predict actor’s relationship control ($t(134.97) = .36, pr = .03, p = .72$), partner’s grandiose narcissism did marginally predict actor’s lower relationship control ($t(123.44) = -1.90, pr = -.17, p = .06$).

These results are relatively consistent with my hypotheses. Actor’s grandiose narcissism was unrelated to general perceived control, yet positively related to greater perceived control in their relationship, similar to the patterns in Study 2. This suggests that perhaps control is more relevant to grandiose narcissists’ behavior in relationships than in general contexts. Indeed, partner’s grandiose narcissism did not predict actor’s general perceived control, suggesting that general perceived control is more of an individual phenomenon than a dyadic phenomenon. However, higher grandiose narcissism in the partner did predict actor’s lower perceived control in the relationship. This is completely consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism; grandiose narcissists exercise their perceived power and control over their partner as shown in
Studies 1 and 2 (e.g., through domination, intimidation, general relationship destructiveness), which leads the partner to feel as though the narcissist has more control in the relationship.

The results for vulnerable narcissism are also generally in line with my hypotheses. As expected, actor’s vulnerable narcissism is associated with a general perceived lack of control – this is consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. However, in contrast to Study 2 results and contradicting the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, vulnerable narcissists also reported greater control in their relationship. This finding contradicts the general control results as well as the predictions of the theory. Why do vulnerable narcissists report feeling like they have little control over their lives generally, but more control in their relationship than their partner? Perhaps this finding also reflects the idea of secondary control discussed earlier – vulnerable narcissists feel out of control in their everyday lives, so they take it out on their partners and behave in victimizing ways, leading them to report in this study that they have more control over the relationship than their partner. If vulnerable narcissists truly were in control of the relationship, then their partners should report that, as the partners of grandiose narcissists did in this study. However, the fact that higher vulnerable narcissism in the partner does not predict actors perceiving that they have less control in the relationship (though this pattern holds for partner grandiose narcissism), or less control in general, supports my conceptualization of secondary control rather than primary control.

As in Study 2, I also assessed several measures of victim and victimizer perceptions which may reflect patterns of high or low control more indirectly beyond the
perceived control measures. Replicating Studies 1 and 2, actor’s vulnerable narcissism independently predicted actor’s general victim mentality ($t(160.56) = 5.54, pr = .40, p < .001$). Actor’s grandiose narcissism did not independently predict actor’s general victim mentality ($t(162.99) = 1.43, pr = .11, p = .15$), replicating Study 1 but not Study 2. Neither partner’s grandiose narcissism nor partner’s vulnerable narcissism independently predicted actors’ victim mentality, suggesting that general victim mentality may also be more of an individual phenomenon than a dyadic one, much like general perceived control. Indeed, the items on the general victim mentality scale reflect perceptions of being disadvantaged by other people in a broad sense, not perceptions specific to the relationship, which likely explains the lack of partner narcissism effects.

Regarding the victim-victimizer items, my findings were generally consistent with Studies 1 and 2. Actor’s grandiose narcissism did not significantly predict the single victim-victimizer item ($t(158.66) = 1.61, pr = .13, p = .11$), as in Studies 1 and 2. However, partner’s grandiose narcissism independently predicted actor’s endorsement of being a victim in the relationship on the single victim-victimizer item ($t(158.87) = -3.19, pr = -.25, p = .002$). Thus, although grandiose narcissists do not seem to locate themselves as victimizers on the single-item spectrum, their partners report feeling like victims in the relationship. This again supports the predictions of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism.

Replicating Study 1 but not Study 2, actor’s vulnerable narcissism independently predicted the single victim-victimizer item ($t(161.37) = 2.05, pr = .16, p = .04$), indicating that they perceive themselves as the victimizer in their relationship. However, partner’s vulnerable narcissism did not predict actor’s endorsement of the single victim-victimizer
item \(t(161.76) = .46, \text{pr} = .04, p = .65\), suggesting that partners of vulnerable narcissists do not necessarily feel victimized in the relationship. This is again consistent with an explanation of secondary control; though vulnerable narcissists may lash out against their partners by using passive aggressive strategies, this is not reflective of truly high perceived control and is not mirrored in the partner’s perceptions of the relationship.

Also replicating Studies 1 and 2, actor’s grandiose narcissism independently predicted actor’s perceived power \(t(162.14) = 5.57, \text{pr} = .40, p < .001\) but actor’s vulnerable narcissism did not \(t(162.16) = 1.43, \text{pr} = .11, p = .16\). Neither partner’s grandiose narcissism nor partner’s vulnerable narcissism predicted actor’s perceived power. The actor effects on perceived power are again consistent with the theory, although it is perhaps surprising that partner’s grandiose narcissism does not predict actor’s decreased perceived power as it predicts actor’s decreased relationship control. This discrepancy may have arisen because the relationship control question forces respondents to endorse either themselves or their partner as having more control, whereas the perceived power measure does not induce a comparison between actor and partner.

Regarding the other two subscales of victim-victimizer perceptions, both actor’s grandiose narcissism \(t(147.37) = 4.07, \text{pr} = .32, p < .001\) and actor’s vulnerable narcissism \(t(139.45) = 3.28, \text{pr} = .26, p = .002\) again independently predicted actor’s relationship destructiveness. Actor’s vulnerable narcissism predicted actor’s perceived mistreatment \(t(130.78) = 2.15, \text{pr} = .18, p = .03\), but actor’s grandiose narcissism did not \(t(140.25) = -.23, \text{pr} = -.02, p = .82\). Thus, both grandiose and vulnerable narcissists report treating their partners poorly, and vulnerable narcissists also report being treated poorly by their partners, likely as an extension of their general victim mentality. Neither
partner’s grandiose narcissism nor partner’s vulnerable narcissism independently predicted either actor’s relationship destructiveness or actor’s perceived mistreatment. The latter is somewhat inconsistent with the theory, as I would have expected partners of grandiose narcissists to report greater mistreatment in the relationship, which would have been consistent with their responses to the single victim-victimizer item. However, perhaps this inconsistency also arose due to the nature of the questions asked. The single victim-victimizer item, like the single relationship control item, is a spectrum inducing comparison between the self and the partner, whereas the perceived mistreatment items are not. Perhaps partners of grandiose narcissists are habituated enough to their partner’s mistreatment of them that they do not endorse being mistreated on those non-comparison items, but when forced to identify either the self or the partner as a victimizer, they do acknowledge that they are the victim to their partner’s victimizer.

The last measure related to perceived control was the Multidimensional Emotional Abuse Scale. In this study, actor’s grandiose narcissism did not significantly predict any of the emotional abuse subscales. Neither partner’s grandiose narcissism nor partner’s vulnerable narcissism predicted actor’s responses on any of the emotional abuse subscales; this is consistent with my predictions, as I would not necessarily expect that having a more narcissistic partner would lead the actor to behave in emotionally abusive ways. However, actor’s vulnerable narcissism significantly predicted actor’s restrictive engulfment ($t(152.97) = 3.91, pr = .30, p < .001$), actor’s denigration ($t(114.35) = 3.37, pr = .30, p = .001$), and actor’s hostile withdrawal ($t(150.29) = 2.03, pr = .16, p = .04$), but did not predict actor’s dominance/intimidation. These findings suggest that vulnerable

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10 Note that the bivariate correlations between actor’s grandiose narcissism and actor’s dominance/intimidation ($r = .12, p = .13$) is at least directionally consistent with Study 2.
narcissists engage in more passive victimization strategies within their relationship (e.g., checking their partner’s belongings while they are away, lashing out at their partner by belittling them, and giving their partner “the silent treatment” when they are upset), rather than overt strategies like intimidating the partner or dominating the partner. This is consistent with the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism, in that these narcissists may be reacting to perceptions of low control in their everyday lives by passively-aggressively victimizing their partners.

In Study 3, I also included the same general relationship measures as in Study 2 to check for replication of actor effects and to assess whether partner narcissism influences these variables for actors. Table 10 presents the bivariate within-person correlations

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<th>Variable</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. NPI</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.01</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
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<td>2. HSNS</td>
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<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.07</td>
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<td>.03</td>
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<td>3. Relationship Quality</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Attachment Anxiety</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Attachment Avoidance</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.56**</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Anxious Jealousy</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.14+</td>
<td>.23**</td>
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Note. Correlations below the diagonal are within-person; correlations on and above the diagonal are within-couple. NPI: Narcissistic Personality Inventory. HSNS: Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale. **p < .01; *p < .05; +p < .10
between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism and these general relationship variables below the diagonal, and presents the within-couple correlations on and above the diagonal. When controlling for actor’s and partner’s socially desirable responding, the significance levels of the reported bivariate correlations do not change.

Surprisingly, actor’s relationship quality was not independently predicted by either actor’s grandiose narcissism, actor’s vulnerable narcissism, partner’s grandiose narcissism, or partner’s vulnerable narcissism. This contradicts Study 2, where actor’s grandiose and vulnerable narcissism both independently predicted poorer relationship quality. Perhaps this supports the idea that partners of narcissists become habituated to the relationship and do not view it as particularly bad. This effect may also be due to methodological differences between the two studies, as Study 3 required both relationship partners to attend the same lab session to complete the questionnaires, whereas only one relationship partner completed these measures in Study 2. Although average levels of narcissism were virtually identical in the two studies, perhaps some individual differences in relationship quality affected the participant sample from Study 2 to Study 3; in other words, the dyadic nature of this study may have led to greater participation from couples in which narcissists are happier in their relationships, compared to the non-dyadic nature of Study 2 which may not have imposed the same self-selection differences.

Actor’s grandiose narcissism again did not predict attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, or anxious jealousy, supporting my hypothesis that these narcissists do not experience anxiety within their relationships. Replicating Study 2, actor’s vulnerable narcissism predicted greater attachment anxiety ($t(160.14) = 3.05, pr = .23, p = .003$) and anxious jealousy ($t(148.03) = 3.54, pr = .28, p = .001$), although a parallel prediction of
attachment avoidance did not emerge in this study. These associations between vulnerable narcissism and relationship anxiety again underscore my account of secondary control, in that vulnerable narcissists’ uncertainty and anxiety within the relationship may in part spur them to lash out against their partner in a self-protective fashion.

Additionally, partner’s grandiose and vulnerable narcissism did not predict actor’s attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, or anxious jealousy, suggesting that higher levels of narcissism in the partner do not independently affect actor’s attachment style or anxiety in the relationship.

Overall, the results of Study 3 provide additional support for the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. Using a dyadic perspective in this study provided greater insight into whether and how the findings from Studies 1 and 2 were reflected by both partners in romantic relationships. Thus, this study established greater support for the key role of perceived control in grandiose and vulnerable narcissists’ daily lives and in their relationships specifically.
Chapter 5: General Discussion

This work aimed to shed light on the role of perceived control for the narcissistic subtypes, including how differences in perceived control contribute to poor relationship outcomes for both grandiose and vulnerable narcissists. Across three studies, I found evidence supporting the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. Although some inconsistencies arose between studies, overall this work demonstrates the key role perceived control plays in grandiose and vulnerable narcissists’ lives.

In all three studies, there was a clear and consistent association between vulnerable narcissism and general perceived lack of control. This was reflected in vulnerable narcissists’ lower general self-efficacy in Study 1 and their greater perceived lack of control in Studies 2 and 3. Furthermore, lack of control mediated the effects of vulnerable narcissism on a variety of outcomes, including general victim mentality, perceptions of being mistreated by the partner, anxiety within the relationship, and victimizing behaviors toward the partner. Altogether, these results support my hypothesis that vulnerable narcissists feel out of control in their daily lives and take it out on their partners, perhaps in an attempt to restore some modicum of control or perhaps simply as a way of venting their frustration with feeling out of control. Thus, perceived control does play an important role for vulnerable narcissists, as predicted by the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism.

Despite the strong and consistent associations between vulnerable narcissism and low general control, parallel associations with relationship-specific control did not arise
in Studies 2 or 3. The dyadic analyses in Study 3 also established that although vulnerable narcissists believe they are victimizers in their relationship and report treating their partner poorly, the partners of vulnerable narcissists do not necessarily agree that they are being victimized. This may indicate that the relevance of perceived control for vulnerable narcissists lies in its general nature rather than extending to relationship-specific control. In other words, the key role perceived control plays for vulnerable narcissists may be that these narcissists experience a seeming lack of control in their lives broadly speaking, which in turn leads them to feel anxious about their relationship and to treat their partner poorly in a self-protective fashion. It is also possible that because vulnerable narcissists victimize their partners in passive aggressive ways, their partners simply do not consistently notice these victimizing behaviors and thus do not report that they are being victimized. Future work can continue to examine these possibilities (see below).

The link between grandiose narcissism and perceived control is slightly less clear, based on the results from these three studies. Although grandiose narcissism strongly predicted general self-efficacy in Study 1, it did not predict general perceived control in Studies 2 or 3. Yet, the associations between grandiose narcissism and general control in Studies 2 and 3 were directionally consistent with my theory that grandiose narcissists perceive that they have high control. Perhaps such directional consistency but failure to reach significance indicates that my self-constructed general control scale does not adequately reflect grandiose narcissists’ perceptions. Indeed, the final scale only includes items reflecting a lack of control; it is possible that grandiose narcissists do not respond negatively enough to these lack-of-control items for associations between grandiose
narcissism and general perceived control to reach significance, but that they would respond affirmatively to other items more clearly asserting the presence, rather than absence, of control. If so, this would be consistent with the findings in Studies 2 and 3 that grandiose narcissism predicts higher relationship-specific control.

On the other hand, perhaps the discrepancy between general and relationship-specific perceived control for grandiose narcissists indicates that control is only relevant for these narcissists in relationship contexts, but not more generally. This interpretation is also supported by the tendency for partners of grandiose narcissists to report that they have less control in the relationship than the narcissist, as shown in Study 3, suggesting that control is indeed an important variable in this domain for grandiose narcissists and their partners. Similarly, dyadic analyses in Study 3 established that although grandiose narcissists do not necessarily explicitly identify themselves as victimizers in their relationships, their partners report feeling like victims. In conjunction with grandiose narcissists’ high perceived power and destructive behaviors within the relationship, this finding provides even greater support for the relevance and impact of grandiose narcissists’ high perceived control in relationships. Thus, although general perceived control explains vulnerable narcissism, the explanatory power of perceived control for grandiose narcissists may be limited to interpersonal contexts rather than general contexts. Future research can help establish whether this is the case.

Future research can also employ experimental methods to further support the tenets of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism. Importantly, although the three studies presented here take different methodological approaches, they are all technically correlational in nature. For example, the mediation models in Study 2 showed that
general perceived lack of control mediated the effects of vulnerable narcissism on a variety of relationship behaviors and outcomes, but I was not able to definitively determine a causal sequence of events. One clear future direction involves establishing that causal sequence through an experimental study, particularly for vulnerable narcissists. Such a study might involve recruiting romantic couples for a lab session, inducing an experience of low control, and observing whether vulnerable narcissists subsequently treat their partner especially poorly as compared to other vulnerable narcissists who were not induced to experience particularly low perceived control. This kind of experimental study would provide further support for the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism by isolating perceived control as the causal agent in narcissists’ outcomes.

Additional work may move outside of the relationship context to establish the role of perceived control in grandiose and vulnerable narcissists’ lives more broadly. For example, future experimental studies might adopt Langer’s (1975) tasks involving estimating control over chance and skill events to test whether grandiose narcissists endorse having especially high control over these events and vulnerable narcissists endorse having especially low control over chance and perhaps even skill events. As discussed above, experimental studies outside of the relationship domain may show that perceived control explains vulnerable narcissists’ behaviors and outcomes in a general sense, but that the explanatory power of perceived control for grandiose narcissists is limited to interpersonal contexts; if so, such findings would provide greater refinement of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism to explain grandiose and vulnerable narcissism with increased accuracy.
Importantly, some of the unexpected findings in the current research may suggest that a re-conceptualization of the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism is needed. For example, although I expected to find in all three studies that vulnerable narcissists identified as victims, this was only consistent for the more general measure of victim mentality; for the relationship-specific measures of victim mentality, vulnerable narcissists seemed to be more likely to identify as victimizers. Indeed, their responses to these victim/victimizer items tended to resemble grandiose narcissists (e.g., on relationship destructiveness), although I had originally predicted differential results.

However, one consistent differential finding was that of the MEAS restrictive engulfment scale, where vulnerable narcissists consistently reported that they engaged in these passively-aggressive victimization behaviors whereas grandiose narcissists did not. Throughout this document, I have speculated that vulnerable narcissists are exhibiting a kind of secondary control in their relationships, where they feel out of control in their daily lives and take it out on their partners.

If future research supports this explanation, the Perceived Control Theory of Narcissism would likely benefit from a slight revision. Rather than my original prediction that grandiose narcissists feel a blanket sense of control and vulnerable narcissists feel no control, a more accurate version of the theory might predict that grandiose narcissists perceive that they are high in primary or direct control, whereby they are causal agents in their lives, actively pursuing what they want and manipulating their social worlds to produce desired outcomes. Vulnerable narcissists, on the other hand, perceive that they are low in primary control but high in secondary or indirect control. These narcissists do not feel like causal agents in their lives, but their high entitlement and self-centeredness
prevents them from simply wallowing in learned helplessness; instead, they attempt to exert control in whatever social contexts they can through passive-aggressive strategies like restrictive engulfment and relationship destructiveness, thus exhibiting an indirect kind of control. Future studies can investigate whether this is indeed the case.

Overall, the three studies presented here provide new insight into the inner workings of grandiose and vulnerable narcissists. I established that low perceived control, in conjunction with high self-centeredness and entitlement, produces negative relationship outcomes for vulnerable narcissists; based on the current work, the role of perceived control may primarily come into play in interpersonal contexts rather than general contexts for grandiose narcissists. Though future work can help resolve lingering discrepancies from these studies as outlined above, the current research provides greater insight into the question that sparked this research: What explains the differences between grandiose and vulnerable narcissists? Consistent with my theory, the answer seems to be perceived control.
References


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Appendix A: Narcissistic Personality Inventory

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each pair of statements and choose the one that comes closest to describing your feelings and beliefs about yourself. You may feel that neither statement describes you well, but pick the one that comes closest.

1. A. I have a natural talent for influencing people.  
   B. I am not good at influencing people.

2. A. Modesty doesn't become me.  
   B. I am essentially a modest person.

3. A. I would do almost anything on a dare.  
   B. I tend to be a fairly cautious person.

4. A. When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed.  
   B. I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so.

5. A. The thought of ruling the world frightens the hell out of me.  
   B. If I ruled the world it would be a better place.

6. A. I can usually talk my way out of anything.  
   B. I try to accept the consequences of my behavior.

7. A. I prefer to blend in with the crowd.  
   B. I like to be the center of attention.

8. A. I will be a success.  
   B. I am not too concerned about success.

9. A. I am no better or worse than most people.  
   B. I think I am a special person.

10. A. I am not sure if I would make a good leader.  
    B. I see myself as a good leader.

11. A. I am assertive.  
    B. I wish I were more assertive.

12. A. I like to have authority over other people.  
    B. I don't mind following orders.
13. A. I find it easy to manipulate people.
   B. I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people.

14. A. I insist upon getting the respect that is due me.
   B. I usually get the respect that I deserve.

15. A. I don't particularly like to show off my body.
   B. I like to show off my body.

16. A. I can read people like a book.
   B. People are sometimes hard to understand.

17. A. If I feel competent I am willing to take responsibility for making decisions.
   B. I like to take responsibility for making decisions.

18. A. I just want to be reasonably happy.
   B. I want to amount to something in the eyes of the world.

19. A. My body is nothing special.
   B. I like to look at my body.

20. A. I try not to be a show off.
   B. I will usually show off if I get the chance.

21. A. I always know what I am doing.
   B. Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing.

22. A. I sometimes depend on people to get things done.
   B. I rarely depend on anyone else to get things done.

23. A. Sometimes I tell good stories.
   B. Everybody likes to hear my stories.

24. A. I expect a great deal from other people.
   B. I like to do things for other people.

25. A. I will never be satisfied until I get all that I deserve.
   B. I take my satisfactions as they come.

26. A. Compliments embarrass me.
   B. I like to be complimented.

27. A. I have a strong will to power.
   B. Power for its own sake doesn't interest me.
28. A. I don't care about new fads and fashions.  
   B. I like to start new fads and fashions.

29. A. I like to look at myself in the mirror.  
   B. I am not particularly interested in looking at myself in the mirror.

30. A. I really like to be the center of attention.  
   B. It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention.

31. A. I can live my life in any way I want to.  
   B. People can't always live their lives in terms of what they want.

32. A. Being an authority doesn't mean that much to me.  
   B. People always seem to recognize my authority.

33. A. I would prefer to be a leader.  
   B. It makes little difference to me whether I am a leader or not.

34. A. I am going to be a great person.  
   B. I hope I am going to be successful.

35. A. People sometimes believe what I tell them.  
   B. I can make anybody believe anything I want them to.

36. A. I am a born leader.  
   B. Leadership is a quality that takes a long time to develop.

37. A. I wish somebody would someday write my biography.  
   B. I don't like people to pry into my life for any reason.

38. A. I get upset when people don't notice how I look when I go out in public.  
   B. I don't mind blending into the crowd when I go out in public.

39. A. I am more capable than other people.  
   B. There is a lot that I can learn from other people.

40. A. I am much like everybody else.  
   B. I am an extraordinary person.
Appendix B: Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions by deciding to what extent each item is characteristic of your feelings and behavior.

1. I can become entirely absorbed in thinking about my personal affairs, my health, my cares or my relations to others.
2. My feelings are easily hurt by ridicule or by the slighting remarks of others.
3. When I enter a room I often become self-conscious and feel that the eyes of others are upon me.
4. I dislike sharing the credit of an achievement with others.
5. I dislike being with a group unless I know that I am appreciated by at least one of those present.
6. I feel that I am temperamentally different from most people.
7. I often interpret the remarks of others in a personal way.
8. I easily become wrapped up in my own interests and forget the existence of others.
9. I feel that I have enough on my hands without worrying about other people’s troubles.
10. I am secretly “put out” when other people come to me with their troubles, asking me for my time and sympathy.
INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions by deciding to what extent each item is true of your feelings and behavior.

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.
Appendix D: Perceived Control Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following items.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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1. There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have.
2. Sometimes I feel that I’m being pushed around in life.
3. I have little control over the things that happen to me.
4. I can do just about anything I really set my mind to.
5. I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life.
6. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me.
7. There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life.
8. There’s no sense in planning a lot – if something good is going to happen, it will.
9. I am responsible for my own successes.
10. Most of my problems are due to bad breaks.
11. My misfortunes are the result of mistakes I have made.
12. I am responsible for my failures.
13. I have a great deal of control over what happens in my life.
14. My life is basically determined by things beyond my control.

Note: All 14 original items are included here. Items 1, 2, 3, and 5 were retained in the final version of the scale after reliability analyses.
Appendix E: Relationship Control Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: In relationships, one person often has more control than the other (e.g., over finances, over activities both people do separately and together, in general). Please indicate using the scale below whether you or your partner has more control in your relationship.

1. My partner has far more control than I do
2. My partner has moderately more control than I do
3. My partner has slightly more control than I do
4. I have slightly more control than my partner does
5. I have moderately more control than my partner does
6. I have far more control than my partner does
Appendix F: Self-Efficacy in Romantic Relationships Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Neither agree nor disagree 3. Strongly agree

1. I am just one of those people who is not good at being a romantic relationship partner. (reverse-scored)
2. Failure in my romantic relationships only makes me want to try harder.
3. When I make plans in my romantic relationships, I am certain I can make them work.
4. I have difficulty focusing on important issues in my romantic relationships. (reverse-scored)
5. If I can’t do something successfully in a romantic relationship the first time, I keep trying until I can.
6. I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that may come up in romantic relationships. (reverse-scored)
7. Sometimes I avoid getting involved romantically because it seems like too much work. (reverse-scored)
8. Romantic relationships are very difficult for me to deal with. (reverse-scored)
9. I find it difficult to put effort into maintaining a successful romantic relationship. (reverse-scored)
10. I feel insecure about my ability to be a good romantic partner. (reverse-scored)
11. One of my problems is that I cannot come up with the energy to make my romantic relationships more successful. (reverse-scored)
12. Having a successful romantic relationship is very difficult for me. (reverse-scored)
Appendix G: Justice Sensitivity Inventory - Victim Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate the extent to which the following statements are characteristic of you.

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<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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<td>Slightly disagree</td>
<td>Slightly agree</td>
<td>Moderately agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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1. It bothers me when others receive something that ought to be mine.
2. It makes me angry when others receive an award which I have earned.
3. I can’t easily bear it when others profit unilaterally from me.
4. I can’t forget for a long time when I have to fix others’ carelessness.
5. It gets me down when I get fewer opportunities than others to develop my skills.
6. It makes me angry when others are undeservingly better off than me.
7. It worries me when I have to work hard for things that come easily to others.
8. I ruminate for a long time when other people are being treated better than me.
9. It burdens me to be criticized for things that are being overlooked with others.
10. It makes me angry when I am treated worse than others.
Appendix H: Transgression Occurrence Measure

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the scale below to indicate how frequently it occurs that someone you know behaves in the following ways.

1. Insults you
2. Takes advantage of you
3. Betrays you
4. Lies to you
5. Is unfaithful to you
6. Hurts you physically
7. Spreads rumors or gossips about you
8. Damages something that belongs to you
9. Steals from you
10. Fails to appreciate you adequately
11. Tells a secret that they promised not to tell
12. Gets even with you for something that happened previously
13. Benefits from your misfortune
14. Teases you
15. Degrades you in public
16. Is violent toward you
17. Is “two-faced” or insincere
18. Gets you in trouble
19. Tells you something that hurts you
20. Fails to protect you or stick up for your rights

1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Not at all  Very rarely  Occasionally  Sometimes  Rather often  Quite often  Constantly
Appendix I: Victim/Victimizer Items

INSTRUCTIONS: In relationships, people are both victims (people who are taken advantage of by their partners) and victimizers (people who take advantage of their partners). In your relationship, please indicate whether you were more often a victim or a victimizer using the scale provided.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Always the victim Equally victim and victimizer Always the victimizer

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate how often you feel the following ways in your relationship.

1 2 3 4 5
Not at all Rarely Sometimes Often All the time

1. Unappreciated
2. Respected
3. Used
4. Powerful
5. Authoritative
6. Admired
7. Humiliated
8. Controlling
9. Put down
10. In charge
11. Hurt
12. Feared
13. Domineering
14. Slighted
15. Manipulated
16. Manipulative
17. Scornful
18. Jealous

Perceived Power subscale: 4, 5
Perceived Mistreatment subscale: 1, 2 (reverse-scored), 3, 6 (reverse-scored)
Relationship Destructiveness subscale: 12, 13, 15, 16, 17
Appendix J: Multidimensional Emotional Abuse Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: No matter how well a couple gets along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed with each other, want different things, or have fights just because they are in a bad mood or are tired. The items below represent ways that you may behave toward your relationship partner in these scenarios. Please indicate how frequently you behave in these ways.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I ask my partner where s/he had been or who s/he was with in a suspicious manner.
2. I secretly search through my partner’s belongings.
3. I try to stop my partner from seeing certain friends or family members.
4. I complain that my partner spends too much time with friends.
5. I get angry because my partner went somewhere without telling me.
6. I try to make my partner feel guilty for not spending enough time with me.
7. I check up on my partner by asking friends where s/he was or who s/he was with.
8. I say or imply that my partner is stupid.
9. I call my partner worthless.
10. I call my partner ugly.
11. I criticize my partner’s appearance.
12. I call my partner a loser or a failure.
13. I belittle my partner in front of other people.
14. I say that someone else would be a better girlfriend or boyfriend.
15. I become so angry that I am unable or unwilling to talk.
16. I act cold or distant when angry.
17. I refuse to have any discussion of a problem.
18. I change the subject on purpose when my partner is trying to discuss a problem.
19. I refuse to acknowledge a problem that my partner feels is important.
20. I sulk or refuse to talk about an issue.
21. I intentionally avoid my partner during a conflict or disagreement.
22. I become angry enough to frighten my partner.
23. I put my face right in front of my partner’s face to make a point more forcefully.
24. I threaten to hit my partner.
25. I threaten to throw something at my partner.
26. I throw, smash, or kick things in front of my partner.
27. I drive recklessly to frighten my partner.
28. I stand or hover over my partner during a conflict or disagreement.
Restrictive Engulfment: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Denigration: 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
Hostile Withdrawal: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
Dominance/Intimidation: 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28
Appendix K: Relationship Quality Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Please rate the extent to which you generally feel the following ways in the context of your relationship.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Not at all  Extremely

1. How close do you feel to your relationship partner?
2. How much do you think your relationship partner?
3. How much do you trust your relationship partner?
Appendix L: Anxious and Avoidant Attachment Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements in the context of your relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 Neutral</th>
<th>4 Agree</th>
<th>5 Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. I prefer not to show my partner how I feel deep down.
2. I worry about being abandoned by my partner.
3. I am very comfortable being close to my partner. (reverse-scored)
4. I worry a lot about my relationship with my partner.
5. Just when my partner starts to get close to me I find myself pulling away.
6. I worry that my partner won’t care about me as much as I care about him/her.
7. I get uncomfortable when my partner wants to be very close.
8. I worry a fair amount about losing my partner.
9. I don’t feel comfortable opening up to my partner.
10. I often wish that my partner’s feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him/her.
11. I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.
12. I worry about being alone.
13. I am nervous when my partner gets too close to me.
14. My desire to be very close to my partner sometimes scares my partner away.
15. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner. (reverse-scored)
16. I need a lot of reassurance that my partner cares about me.
17. I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.
18. I do not often worry about being abandoned by my partner. (reverse-scored)

Anxious attachment: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18
Avoidant attachment: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17
Appendix M: Anxious Jealousy Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Rate how frequently you feel the following ways in your relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
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</table>

1. I am concerned about my partner finding someone else more attractive than me.
2. I worry about the idea that my partner could have a sexual relationship with someone else.
3. I am afraid that my partner is sexually interested in someone else.
4. I am concerned about all the things that could happen if my partner meets members of the opposite sex.
5. I worry that my partner might leave me for someone else.
Appendix N: Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding

INSTRUCTIONS: Below you will see a list of statements. Please indicate how true each statement is of you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not true</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. My first impressions of people usually turn out to be right.
2. It would be hard for me to break any of my bad habits. (reverse-scored)
3. I don’t care to know what other people really think of me.
4. I have not always been honest with myself. (reverse-scored)
5. I always know why I like things.
6. When my emotions are aroused, it biases my thinking. (reverse-scored)
7. Once I’ve made up my mind, other people can seldom change my opinion.
8. I am not a safe driver when I exceed the speed limit. (reverse-scored)
9. I am fully in control of my own fate.
10. It’s hard for me to shut off a disturbing thought. (reverse-scored)
11. I never regret my decisions.
12. I sometimes lose out on things because I can’t make up my mind soon enough. (reverse-scored)
13. The reason I vote is because my vote can make a difference.
14. My parents were not always fair when they punished me. (reverse-scored)
15. I am a completely rational person.
16. I rarely appreciate criticism. (reverse-scored)
17. I am very confident of my judgments.
18. I have sometimes doubted my ability as a lover. (reverse-scored)
19. It’s all right with me if some people happen to dislike me.
20. I don’t always know the reasons why I do the things I do. (reverse-scored)
21. I sometimes tell lies if I have to. (reverse-scored)
22. I never cover up my mistakes.
23. There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone. (reverse-scored)
24. I never swear.
25. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget. (reverse-scored)
26. I always obey laws, even if I’m unlikely to get caught.
27. I have said something about a friend behind his or her back. (reverse-scored)
28. When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening.
29. I have received too much change from a salesperson without telling him or her. (reverse-scored)
30. I always declare everything at customs.
31. When I was young I sometimes stole things. (reverse-scored)
32. I have never dropped litter in the street.
33. I sometimes drive faster than the speed limit. (reverse-scored)
34. I never read sexy books or magazines.
35. I have done things that I don’t tell other people about. (reverse-scored)
36. I never take things that don’t belong to me.
37. I have taken sick-leave from work or school even though I wasn’t really sick. (reverse-scored)
38. I have never damaged a library book or store merchandise without reporting it.
39. I have some pretty awful habits. (reverse-scored)
40. I don’t gossip about other people’s business.
Appendix O: Measure of Social Desirability

INSTRUCTIONS: Below you will see a list of statements. Please indicate how much you agree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I never jaywalk.
2. I’ve never envied anyone.
3. Nothing embarrasses me.
4. I’ve never hated anyone.
5. I never daydream.
6. I’ve never made up an excuse for anything.
7. I sometimes drive above the speed limit. (reverse-scored)
8. I like everyone I meet.
9. I always return money when I find it.
10. I always cross at the crosswalk.
11. Some days I would rather stay in bed. (reverse-scored)