

**WE'RE (MORE THAN) FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK: AN EXPLORATION INTO  
HOW FACEBOOK USE CAN LEAD TO ROMANTIC JEALOUSY**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study explored how possible situations on Facebook could evoke romantic jealousy. Included in this research is a proposed model of responses to romantic jealousy-evoking situations that incorporates cognitive and emotional jealousy, perceived and own commitment, focus of goals, communication, and a partner's response.

A pre-test was given to test the validity of the hypothetical scenarios and also to determine what activities on Facebook could lead to romantic jealousy. Participants for the main study ( $N = 135$ ) completed an online survey where they were given a hypothetical scenario with a possible jealousy-evoking situation that could occur on Facebook (friending, posting a message on one's wall, being tagged in a photo) along with questions pertaining to the variables of interest. Participants identified that public and private communication, photos, ex-lovers, relationships statuses, not being invited to events, and friending could elicit jealousy. Results from the main study supported most of the model, but one's communication did not predict a partner's response, nor did a partner's response predict one's own commitment.

This study aimed to extend research on romantic jealousy to include events that could transpire online. Useful results were found in this study, and future research should continue to delve into this underdeveloped topic.

## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Romantic jealousy is a worldwide phenomenon that is crucial to study because of its effects on romantic relationships. Many situations, such as witnessing a partner flirting with another or a partner commenting on another person's physical good looks, can cause one to feel jealous (White, 1981). Although some researchers associate a positive, beneficial connotation with romantic jealousy (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero, & Spitzberg, 1995), suggesting that it indicates how partners value their relationships, much research recognizes the deleterious effects romantic jealousy can have on a relationship (Bevan, 2008). Sheets, Fredendall and Claypool (1997) found that individuals were at least twice as likely to have negative reactions to jealousy-evoking situations than positive ones. Relational dissatisfaction and conflict, depression, divorce, break-up, aggression, and violence are just a few examples of the negative outcomes individuals in relationships face when jealous feelings arise (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero, & Spitzberg, 1995; Fleischmann, Spitzberg, Andersen & Roesch, 2005).

Although this study refers to romantic jealousy experienced by heterosexuals, feelings of romantic jealousy are just as relevant to homosexuals as well. Romantic jealousy is defined as a "complex of thoughts, emotions, and actions that follows loss of or threat to self-esteem and/or the existence of quality of the romantic relationship due to

a real or potential third party" (White & Mullen, 1989). Many researchers have adopted this conceptualization of multidimensional romantic jealousy (Theiss & Solomon, 2006; Knobloch, Solomon, Cruz, 2001; Dainton & Aylor, 2001), with cognitive and emotional components that make up the jealousy experience, and behavioral aspects that denote jealousy expression. The cognitive side of romantic jealousy includes "a person's worries, doubts, and suspicions about a partner's potential infidelity or external relationships" (Theiss & Solomon, 2006). A cluster of emotions that White and Mullen (1989) describe as possible anger, fear, sadness, disgust, and guilt is also seen to connect to romantic jealousy (Guerrero & Andersen, 1998). White (1984) indicates that jealousy has not been conceptualized as a primary emotion, like anger or fear, so it is suggested that a number of combination of emotions may encompass the emotional component of jealousy. The behavioral aspect of jealousy could include communication with the partner or the potential rival, or as described by Pfeiffer and Wong (1989), detective and protective measures to try to prevent intimacy between the potential rival and the partner.

Current research has explored various aspects of romantic jealousy, such as communicative responses to jealousy (Guerrero, Andersen, Jorgensen, Spitzberg, & Eloy, 1995), the effects jealousy has on relational satisfaction (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero, & Spitzberg, 1995), and how some partners intentionally evoke jealousy (Fleischmann, Spitzberg, Andersen, & Roesch, 2005). One facet of romantic jealousy that has received less attention are potential differences between romantic jealousy processes that occur through face to face interaction and those that transpire online. It is plausible to postulate

that an individual could discover suspicious behavior by a partner through online surveillance more easily than through noticing a face-to-face interaction. For example, if an individual's partner became friends with someone at the workplace it is probable that the individual will not be cognizant of this, unless the partner willingly shares this information. But, if the partner becomes friends on Facebook with the person at the workplace, it is conceivable that the individual will be aware of this new friendship by monitoring a partner's profile.

Facebook is a major online medium that provides a social connection for anyone who creates a profile. As of August 2009, Facebook was the most popular online social network for Americans aged eighteen or older, with 73% of adult social network users having a Facebook account (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). Upon becoming a member, one can set up a personal profile page to upload pictures, provide information about one's self, have a virtual wall on which friends can sign and leave messages, become friends with other members, and engage in private messaging or chat with friends. With the advent of Facebook, social exchanges have become more public (Muisse, Christofides, & Desmarais, 2009). Because of this open medium, individuals can potentially witness a partner's social activity, such as a boyfriend becoming "friends" with an unknown female. Exposure to this type of activity could induce romantic jealousy (Muisse, Christofides, & Desmarais, 2009). Because of the number of people who are members of Facebook and how many couples use Facebook in their relationships, it is imperative for Facebook to be included in accounts of romantic jealousy evocation. The current study has proposed a model that explains how viewing

public information and interactions on Facebook can lead to feelings of jealousy, as well as how one copes with those feelings and responds to them.

### Facebook as a Source of Romantic Jealousy

Facebook is a social network that can expose individuals to an abundance of information about a partner's interactions and friends. The number of friends added who are of the opposite sex, wall posts involving a member of the opposite sex, and tagged photos involving members of the opposite sex are all aspects of Facebook that could cause an individual to experience romantic jealousy. In addition, because of the ease of making connections on Facebook, individuals can maintain contact with others they normally would not. As a consequence, contact with past romantic partners is easily done. Being exposed to a partner's friends of the opposite sex, many who may be unknown, could cause an increase in suspicion and jealousy in a relationship (Muisse et al., 2009). Muise et al. (2009) found that respondents in their study reported their partners having unknown individuals as well as past romantic and sexual partners as friends on Facebook. In an environment with such circumstances, it certainly is conceivable to experience romantic jealousy.

Sheets, Fredendall, and Claypool (1997) reported four categories of jealousy-evoking situations: a partner showing interest in another, another showing interest in a partner, prior relationships, and ambiguous scenes. Each of these can be related to possible jealousy-evoking circumstances couples could experience with the use of Facebook. Another person is showing interest in a partner by adding him as a friend, or

possibly the partner is showing interest in another person if the partner added the member of the opposite sex or ex-lover as a friend. In addition, although “friending” or being friended by a member of the opposite sex does not necessarily constitute interest beyond a platonic relationship, it is an ambiguous activity that could lead to romantic jealousy.

Wall posting on a Facebook profile is another activity that could lead to feelings of jealousy. Assuming that a partner and whomever is posting on the wall do not privatize their wall settings, written wall posts between them are visible for all friends to see. Wall posts/posting on someone else’s wall is another situation that can support all of Sheets et al.’s (1997) jealousy-evoking categories. If a member of the opposite sex is posting on a partner’s wall, then that person is showing interest in the partner. If a partner is posting on a member of the opposite sex’s wall, the partner is showing interest in that person. The wall post could involve an ex-lover as well as a new acquaintance. Additionally, a wall post such as “Hey! How was your day?,” can be ambiguous because one does not know the motives of why that person is communicating with a partner.

As with friending and wall posts, the context of tagged photos of a partner can possibly lead to romantic jealousy. For example, as an individual may see a tagged photo of their partner on Facebook drinking at a bar with many members of the opposite sex, this may lead to more uncertainty and jealousy. In contrast, if the photo still contains members of the opposite sex, but is a picture of a partner participating in school activities, it is likely to cause less jealousy than one taken in a bar. But, even in the latter situation, if one of the people tagged with a partner is actually an ex-lover, then romantic

jealousy could occur. Tagged photos on Facebook are a prime example of Sheets et al.'s (1997) argument that ambiguous scenes involving a partner can cause romantic jealousy.

Situations occurring on Facebook, such as the ones described above, may engender a multi-stage response in which the individual may experience uncertainty, contemplate the third party as a possible threat to the primary relationship and have some type of reaction involving an emotion and communication. The role of perceived commitment was also explored as well as the possible outcomes one could experience after having a jealous reaction and communicating to a partner.

#### A Model of Responses to a Jealousy-Inducing Situation Generated from Facebook

Although this study focused on Facebook as a domain to elicit romantic jealousy, the proposed model describes a general response process of jealousy, which could be applied to other scenarios. Any of the situations on Facebook discussed earlier could possibly first lead the individual to experience cognitive jealousy. Pfeiffer and Wong (1989) describe cognitive jealousy as “worries and suspicions concerning his or her partner’s infidelity” (p. 183) that surface when one becomes cognizant of a potential threat to a romantic relationship (Knobloch, Solomon & Cruz, 2001). Cognitions that could arise might include suspicions that a partner is secretly attracted to another or that a third party is interested in the partner (Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989). After one experiences cognitive jealousy, it is likely that second, emotional jealousy could transpire because the perceived threat is seen as interfering with an ideal committed relationship. Lazarus (1991) states that individuals evaluate current happenings and how they can affect one’s plans and goals. Emotion results when what is occurring is judged as inconsistent with

one's goals. When one views another person as being a threat to the primary relationship, there is incongruence between the perceived threat and the goal of being in a committed relationship. Because of these inconsistencies, a negative emotion could emerge. White (1984) states that jealousy is not a primary emotion, but an emotion that is linked to a possibility of several other emotions. Guerrero and Andersen (1998) acknowledge that previous research has suggested how jealousy is linked to a group of emotions, which could include anger, fear, sadness, guilt, and disgust. Each emotion will have action tendencies that are considered "biological urges to act that distinguish one emotion from another" (Lazarus, 1991, p. 114). It may be important to recognize the difference between emotions that are directed towards the self and ones that are directed toward a partner (Owlett, 2010). For example, one could be angry at one's self or angry with a partner following a jealousy-evoking situation. These distinctions may help determine what type of communication a person uses when speaking with a partner about the jealousy-inducing situation.

During the third stage, a communicative response, also referred to as a jealous expression (Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989), can result from experiencing an emotion. Guerrero, Andersen, Jorgensen, Spitzberg and Eloy (1995) originally created a list of twelve communicative responses to jealousy that have been used in many other studies (Guerrero & Afifi, 1999; Yoshimura, 2004), but recently Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008) proposed a more succinct explanation of communicative responses to jealousy. The categories have been collapsed into the following kinds of communication: destructive, rival-focused, avoidant, and constructive, which this current study sought to



explore. Sillars (1998) describes the concept of destructive communication as “distributive,” and states that it is “explicit acknowledgement and discussion of conflict which promotes individual over mutual outcomes by seeking concessions or expressing a negative evaluation of the partner” (pp. 181-182). Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008) present destructive communication to include negative communication, violence, and counter-jealousy. Negative communication could consist of “making hurtful or mean comments to a partner” (Guerrero, Hannawa & Gallagher, 2008, p. 27). Violence refers to actual physical violence against the partner or threats of violence. Counter-jealousy could allude to flirting or talking about others to try to make the partner jealous. On Facebook, it certainly is possible for the jealous individual to begin posting on an attractive person’s wall in order to attempt to induce jealousy in the partner.

Communication deemed to be rival-focused is said to be “direct communication with the rival, such as talking with or confronting the rival” (Guerrero, Hannawa & Gallagher, 2008, p. 6) and could include surveillance, rival contacts, derogation of rivals, and signs of possession. Guerrero and Afifi (1999) suggest that individuals may become obsessed with reducing uncertainty about a threatening third party and may ponder what that potential rival looks like as well as what the third party and the partner do when they are together. Facebook may be able to provide some answers and possibly assist in rival-focused communication. It may be possible to view parts of the potential rival’s Facebook profile. If that person’s profile is private, one can still usually view profile pictures and see the physical appearance of the rival. Or, the jealous individual could communicate with the third party through the use of Facebook messaging. Surveillance

behaviors consist of spying, while derogation of rivals involves “criticizing or making negative comments about them (the rival) in front of the partner” (p. 8). The public nature of Facebook may make it easier to spy or survey a rival or threat to a relationship. Lastly, signs of possession involve making it publicly known that an individual and his or her partner is officially in an exclusive relationship. Facebook provides a “relationship status” option, where a couple could easily display to all of their Facebook friends that they are officially in a relationship together. Avoidant communication refers to indirect, nonaggressive communication that may include being in denial about having jealous feelings or being silent about the situation (Guerrero, Hannawa & Gallagher, 2008).

Constructive communication is described as an “integrative strategy” by Sillars (1980) that is an “explicit discussion of conflict which does not seek to elicit concessions and sustains a neutral or positive evaluation of the partner, promotes information exchange, neutral or positive affect, and mutual action” (p. 182). Guerrero, Hannawa & Gallagher (2008) state that constructive communication is composed of compensatory restoration and integrative communication. Compensatory restoration is behavior directed towards enhancing either one’s self or the relationship and can involve increasing one’s affection toward a partner as well as becoming more attractive. Integrative communication incorporates direct, but non-aggressive expressions of jealous feelings and could consist of having a discussion about one’s feelings.

Any of the cluster of emotions associated with the jealous complex can lead to constructive, destructive, rival-focused, or avoidant communication. Fear, sadness, guilt, anger at one’s self, and disgust at one’s self are emotions that can lead to constructive

communication, while anger at the partner and disgust at the partner could lead to destructive communication, rival-focused, or avoidant communication (Owlett, 2010). There is also reason to believe that one's focus of goals can lead to constructive, destructive, rival-focused, or avoidant communication. A relationship-focused goal is defined as an individual viewing the relationship as more important than himself, while a self-focused goal occurs when the individual views himself as being more significant (Lazarus, 1991). It is possible to think that relationship-focused goals are positively related to constructive communication and negatively related to destructive, rival-focused, and avoidant communication, whereas self-focused goals are positively related to destructive, rival-focused, or avoidant communication and negatively related to constructive communication (Owlett, 2010).

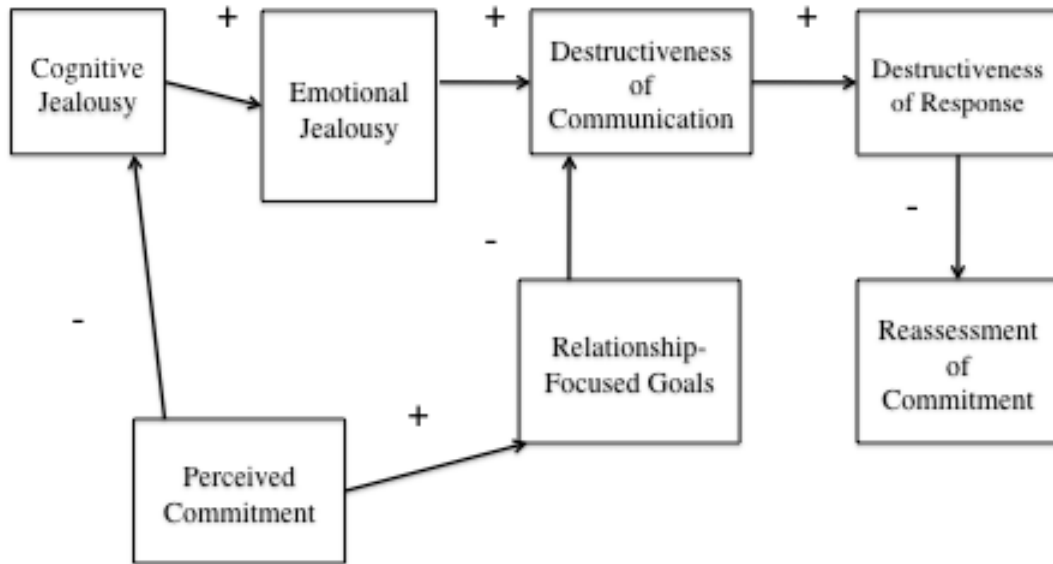
It is important to also recognize the role perceived commitment could play in this model and how it affects having relationship-focused goals or self-focused goals as well as its relationship with romantic jealousy. Commitment level is defined as "intent to persist in a relationship, including long-term orientation toward the involvement as well as feelings of psychological attachment to it" (Rusbult, Coolsen, Kirchner & Clarke, 2006, p. 618). One's conviction that a partner is committed is demonstrated in trust, which is seen to be a result of past interactions with a partner and "a willingness to put oneself at risk, be it through intimate disclosure, reliance on another's promises, sacrificing present rewards for future gains, and so on" (Rempel, Holmes & Zanna, 1985, p. 96). Conceptually, it seems possible for perceived commitment level to lead to either relationship-focused or self-focused goals. A strong perception of a partner's

commitment would lead to relationship-focused goals, where a low perception of a partner's commitment level would lead to self-focused goals. As perceived commitment level rises, it is also possible for levels of romantic jealousy to decrease. Bevan (2008) reported that when romantic relationships became increasingly committed, with partners feeling mutual dependence, romantic jealousy seemed to diminish.

The fourth step in this model is a partner's response to an individual's communication, which is based on how the jealous person originally communicated his jealousy (Yoshimura, 2004). If the jealous person communicated in a positive or integrative manner, then the partner's response will likely also be positive, whereas negative or violent communication initiated from the jealous person will likely prompt a negative response from a partner (Yoshimura, 2004).

The last step in this model is to re-assess the relationship by determining how one's own commitment level may have changed due to the jealous feelings. The jealous individual will likely question his own involvement in the current relationship after the jealous-inducing event. Possible outcomes from the experience of jealousy might be strengthening or weakening one's relationship, lowered commitment and relationship satisfaction, loss of trust in a partner, or even the termination of the relationship. One's reassessment of his own commitment and the overall relationship would likely be based on the partner's type of communicative response to the jealous person.

Figure 1. Responses to Facebook relevant romantic jealousy-evoking situations



### Hypotheses

A summary of responses to Facebook relevant jealousy-evoking situations, which was explored earlier in detail, will now be revisited before the presentation of hypotheses. The experience of romantic jealousy includes both cognitive and emotional jealousy as the first and second reaction respectively to certain Facebook situations. During the third step, a jealous individual can choose to communicate that emotion. Guilt, fear, anger at self, disgust at self, and sadness can surface as emotions that could lead to constructive communication. On the other hand, anger at the partner and disgust at the partner could materialize as emotions that result in destructive, rival-focused, or avoidant

communication. Additionally, relationship-focused goals can lead to constructive communication while self-focused goals can result in destructive, rival-focused, or avoidant communication. Perceived commitment level can also have an effect on self-focused or relationship-focused goals, with high perceived commitment level leading to relationship-focused goals, and low perceived commitment leading to self-focused goals. Moreover, perceived commitment level is also hypothesized as being negatively related to one's experience of romantic jealousy. Fourth, and following communication with the partner, is the partner's response. A partner is likely to respond in the same manner as the initial person's communication; constructive communication by a jealous person will lead to a constructive communicative response from the partner, destructive, rival-focused or avoidant communication by a jealous person will lead to a destructive or avoidant communicative response from the partner. Lastly, one will reassess one's own commitment level most likely based on how a partner communicated a response. The following hypotheses were tested in this study:

*H1: Cognitive jealousy is positively related to emotional jealousy.*

*H2: Perceived commitment is negatively related to cognitive jealousy.*

*H3: Perceived commitment is positively related to relationship-focused goals.*

*H4: Emotional jealousy is positively related to destructive communication.*

*H5: Emotional jealousy is positively related to rival-focused communication.*

*H6: Emotional jealousy is positively related to avoidant communication.*

*H7: Emotional jealousy is negative related to constructive communication.*

*H8: Relationship-focused goals are negatively related to destructive communication.*

*H9: Relationship-focused goals are negatively related to rival-focused communication.*

*H10: Relationship-focused goals are negatively related to avoidant communication.*

*H11: Relationship-focused goals are positively related to constructive communication.*

*H12: Destructive communication is positively related to a destructive response.*

*H13: Avoidant communication is positively related to an avoidant response.*

*H14: Constructive communication is positively related to a constructive response.*

*H15: A destructive response is negatively related to one's reassessment of commitment.*

*H16: An avoidant response is negatively related to one's reassessment of commitment.*

*H17: A constructive response is positively related to one's reassessment of commitment.*

Additionally, a research question was explored in the pretest because of the lack of specific examination in the area of Facebook and romantic jealousy:

*RQ1a: What types of situations on Facebook lead one to experience romantic jealousy?*

A supplement to this question asked the same inquiry, but in a way so the respondents felt they could answer in a more socially desirable manner:

*RQ1b: What types of situations on Facebook lead people like you to experience romantic jealousy?*

Oxley (2010) found a difference in responses in her research of parasocial comparison and body satisfaction when she worded the questions in a socially desirable

fashion. Participants felt as if they were responding on behalf of everyone like them. Controlling for social desirability could result in receiving more complete answers, where people do not feel embarrassed to admit something that may pertain to just themselves.

A second research question explored how different situations on Facebook can result in varying degrees of romantic jealousy:

*RQ2: Of the three different types of romantic-jealousy inducing situations on Facebook (witnessing a tagged photo of a partner, friend acceptances, and seeing a member of the opposite sex post a message on a partner's wall), which produces the most jealousy?*

Lastly, to assess how the circumstances on Facebook affect all of the variables in the model, a third research question was asked:

*RQ3: How do the three different types of romantic-jealousy inducing situations on Facebook (witnessing a tagged photo of a partner, friend acceptances, and seeing a member of the opposite sex post a message on a partner's wall) affect cognitive and emotional jealousy, perceived commitment, relationship-focused goals, communication, communicative response of a partner, and one's own commitment?*



## **Chapter 2**

### **METHOD**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Hypothetical scenarios were used in this study and have been supported from Bevan (2004) in her research as a method of choice to measure jealousy for three reasons: first, research shows that one's responses to a hypothetical situation matches one's actual behavior; second, because of the emotional nature jealousy can bring about, there are ethical issues with experimental methods of jealousy-inducing situations; third, it reduces one's efforts to recall an actual situation where one felt jealous that may contain inaccurate depictions. Scenarios were created for this study that first included a manipulation of commitment. The committed scenario describes a mutually exclusive relationship that has existed for five years, the couple is officially "in a relationship" on Facebook, and they are talking about getting engaged. The non-committed scenario describes the individuals as dating for two months, not exclusive to one another, and the individual may be seeing other people. Next, a Facebook scenario was presented. The participants chose which sex they were interested in and read that their partner or person they are interested in has either become friends, received a message on their wall, or been tagged in a photo on Facebook with an unknown, attractive member of the opposite sex who is close in age with them. Full scenarios can be found in Appendix A. The variables

of expected jealousy, commitment level, emotional response, communication, and goals were also measured following the scenario.

## Measures

### Expected Jealousy

Russell and Harton's (2005) Expected Jealousy Scale (see Appendix B) was used to assess how upset, insecure, jealous, and threatened one felt after reading a particular scenario. The feeling of threat was added to this scale in order to correlate with the definition of romantic jealousy used in this study. Participants responded to the four items by assigning a 1 (not at all) to a 4 (very) to each of the statements and received a total jealous score by combining all the numbers. The original scale had an alpha coefficient of .86 and was seen to be reliable (Russell & Harton, 2005). The revised version of the scale, which added the item of threat, was used in the pre-test.

For the main study, a more complete measure of jealousy was used to match the conceptual definition of romantic jealousy that includes both cognitive and emotional components. Certain scales that were considered did not capture the multidimensional nature of romantic jealousy nor were they relevant to the scenarios created for this study. For example, White (1984) compared several jealousy scales, one that explored chronic jealousy and another that explored relationship jealousy. Some of the items asked "How often have you experienced jealousy in your romantic relationships," "Do you think of

yourself as a person who can get jealous easily,” and “How much is your jealousy a problem in your relationship with your partner?” Those measurements consider real, not hypothetical relationships, and they also do not operationalize romantic jealousy in a manner that is consistent with this study’s conceptual definition. A revised version of Pfeiffer and Wong’s (1989) Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (see Appendix C) was chosen to measure the various aspects of romantic jealousy. The original cognitive jealousy subscale was used that contained five items measuring thoughts such as “I would suspect that my partner is secretly seeing someone else,” and “I would suspect that my partner is secretly developing an intimate relationship with someone of the opposite sex.” The scale was reported to be reliable with an alpha level of .92, and when tested in the main study yielded an alpha level of .86. Descriptions of the emotional aspect of jealousy and the behavioral, or communicative, side are described in the emotional responses and communication sections respectively.

### Commitment Level

To comprehend one’s own commitment level and one’s perceived commitment level of the partner, the Commitment Level subscale of Rusbult’s (2006) Investment Model Scale was used (see Appendix D). The seven statements used to measure one’s own commitment were made into hypothetical situations to correspond with this study by

adding the word “would” to the statements (e.g. I would want our relationship to last for a very long time). Rusbult’s (2006) Commitment Level subscale was also used to measure perceived commitment, by changing the wording around to account for the partner (e.g. I would think that he would want our relationship to last for a very long time). The Commitment Level subscale proved to be reliable ( $\alpha = .91 - .95$ ) and internally consistent (Rusbult & Agnew, 1998). A reliability check was also conducted following the data collection for the main study where the alpha level for perceived commitment was .96 and one’s own commitment was .96.

### Emotional Responses

In order to gauge one’s emotional reactions to possible jealousy-inducing situations, Guerrero, Eloy, Jorgensen, and Andersen’s (1993) modified version of Pfeiffer and Wong’s (1989) emotional subscale of the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale was used (see Appendix E) in conjunction with the Emotional Responses to Romantic Jealousy Processing Scale (Dillard & Peck, 2000; Owlett, 2010; see Appendix F). Guerrero, Eloy, Jorgensen, and Andersen (1993) modified Pfeiffer and Wong’s (1989) emotional subscale of the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale because of the inflated mean in the emotional subscale ( $M=29.3$ ) compared with the cognitive ( $M=12.1$ ) and behavioral subscales ( $M=12.9$ ). Items in the modified version had more predictive power and an

alpha level of .88. Responses to questions such as “Would you feel jealous if he or she flirted with someone else,” “Would it anger you when members of the opposite sex try to get close to your partner,” and “Would you feel fearful that your partner may be going out with someone of the opposite sex?” were measured on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (always). When assessing the emotional jealousy items for the main study, the scale proved to be internally consistent with an alpha level of .85. Many other researchers have also adopted this modified scale (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero & Spitzberg, 1995; Knobloch, Solomon & Cruz, 2001; Aylor & Dainton, 2001; Bevan, 2008).

Owlett’s (2010) version for measuring emotions was also used, which was largely based off of Dillard and Peck’s (2000) scale and includes five broad categories of emotions with Owlett’s reported alpha levels: anger ( $\alpha = .93$ ) fear ( $\alpha = .86$ ), sadness ( $\alpha = .83$ ), guilt ( $\alpha = .71$ ), and disgust ( $\alpha = .89$ ). Added to this scale for the current study was the inclusion of whether or not the following emotions were self directed or directed at the partner: irritated, angry, annoyed, aggravated, nauseated, repulsed, sickened, appalled, and disgusted. Sad, dreary, dismal, scared, and guilty were left as emotions that cannot be directed at both the self and the partner. Owlett’s (2010) research lent reason to believe that making this recognition could affect the type of communication one used after experiencing jealousy. Therefore, the current scale for this study made a distinction between having an emotion towards one’s self and having an emotion towards a partner

(e.g. being annoyed at one's self versus being annoyed at one's partner). The emotions scale as a whole was reliable with an alpha level of .97; the items containing self-directed emotions had an alpha level of .95 and the items related to partner-directed emotions had an alpha level of .96.

### Goals

Guerrero and Afifi's (1998) Goals Scale (see Appendix G) was used to determine whether an individual has self-related goals or relationship goals when they are jealous. Two scales each containing three items measured self-esteem goals and relationship goals. Items related to self-esteem maintenance ( $\alpha = .72$ , as reported by Guerrero & Afifi, 1998) included being concerned about (1) maintaining self-esteem (2) keeping my pride and (3) feeling good about myself despite the situation. Relationship maintenance items ( $\alpha = .85$ , as reported by Guerrero & Afifi, 1998) contain (1) preserving the relationship (2) holding onto my relationship and (3) keeping the relationship going. The current study found the goals scale to be reliable ( $\alpha = .85$ ) as well as the subscales of self-related goals ( $\alpha = .82$ ) and relationship goals ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

### Communication

To ascertain communicative responses to jealousy, a revised version of Guerrero, Hannawa, and Gallagher's (2008) scale was employed (see Appendix H). The original items from the Communicative Responses to Jealousy Scale devised by Guerrero, Andersen, Eloy, Spitzberg, and Jorgensen (1996) have been used in various combinations by many researchers (Guerrero & Afifi, 1998; Guerrero & Afifi, 1999). Relevant items from ten of the eleven subscales were combined to measure constructive, destructive, rival-focused, and avoidant communication in this study. Items that did not pertain to communication (e.g. I tried to determine my partner's whereabouts) were not included. The full subscales were all reliable in Guerrero, Hannawa, and Gallagher's (2008) study: negative communication ( $\alpha = .87$ ), compensatory restoration ( $\alpha = .84$ ), violence ( $\alpha = .91$ ), integrative ( $\alpha = .82$ ), rival contact ( $\alpha = .82$ ), signs of possession ( $\alpha = .88$ ), denial ( $\alpha = .78$ ), counter-jealousy ( $\alpha = .81$ ), silence ( $\alpha = .88$ ), and rival derogation ( $\alpha = .82$ ). After employing these scales for the main study, they all proved to be reliable: communication ( $\alpha = .89$ ), constructive communication ( $\alpha = .88$ ), destructive communication ( $\alpha = .87$ ), rival-focused communication ( $\alpha = .85$ ), and avoidant communication ( $\alpha = .77$ ).

To assess others' communication, Canary, Cunningham and Cody's (1988) Conflict Tactics Scale was used (see Appendix I). Tactic categories include integrative, distributive (criticism, anger, and sarcasm), and avoidant (topic shifting, semantic focus, and denial). Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alphas were determined as follows by Canary,

Cunningham and Cody: .84 for integrative, .81 for criticism, .83 for showing anger, .63 for sarcasm, .83 for topic shifting, .50 for semantic focus, and .51 for denial. The current study found partner's communication as a whole to be reliable ( $\alpha = .90$ ), as well as the subscales of constructive response ( $\alpha = .93$ ), destructive response ( $\alpha = .95$ ), and avoidant response ( $\alpha = .93$ ).

#### Pre-test

Prior to launching the main study, a pre-test was administered in order to screen the measurements' manipulations. Six scenarios were used that included a commitment manipulation and a presentation of a possible jealousy-inducing event on Facebook (see Appendix A). Online survey research was conducted for the pre-test and was distributed to undergraduate students ( $N= 103$ ) enrolled in Communication courses for extra credit. Each participant was asked an open-ended question of what activities on Facebook made him or her jealous and what made people like them feel jealous. Next, each participant was asked which sex they were interested in and then given two random scenarios based on whether they were attracted to males or females. After reading the scenario, the individual was asked to respond to thirteen questions on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Questions included how realistic the scenarios were, how jealous or threatened the individual would be (Russell & Harton's 2005 Expected Jealousy Scale; see Appendix



B), and questions about the hypothetical partner's commitment level (Rusbult's 2006 Investment Model Scale – Perceived Commitment Level; see Appendix D).

## Main Study

### Participants

The main study had a total of 135 participants (34 males and 101 females) who completed an online questionnaire to receive credit for an undergraduate Communication course. Each participant received one random scenario and answered the corresponding questions regarding each of the variables. Most participants were college sophomores ( $N=110$ ), followed by college juniors ( $N=12$ ), college seniors ( $N=11$ ), and college freshman ( $N=1$ ). Forty-five students identified themselves as currently being involved in a romantic relationship, while 90 students stated that they were not.

### Data Analysis

A t-test was conducted to assess any significant differences between perceived commitment for the manipulation in the scenarios. To determine if commitment and types of scenarios on Facebook were significant, a 2x3 analysis of variance was conducted. A one-way multivariate analysis of variance was employed to explore the effects of the type of Facebook situation on all of the variables. Commitment was used as a covariate to isolate the effects of the Facebook situations regardless of whether or not

the hypothetical relationship was committed or not. Lastly, regression was used to analyze the variables, with a multiple regression being employed to investigate communication and the two predictors of emotional jealousy and relationship-focused goals. Results of these analyses can be found in Chapter 3.

In order to determine effect sizes, power analyses were conducted using G\*Power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang & Buchner, 2007). A power of 1.00 was found for large effect size in variables that had one predictor (relationship-focused goals, cognitive jealousy, emotional jealousy, partner's response, and own commitment) and for destructiveness of communication, which had two predictors (emotional jealousy and relationship-focused goals). Power levels of .99 were found for medium effect size for all variables, regardless of whether they had one or two predictors. For small effect size, low power was found: .38 for one predictor and .29 for two predictors.

## Chapter 3

### RESULTS

The current study sought to examine a model of responses to jealousy-evoking scenarios on Facebook, including romantic jealousy, communication, partner's response, perceived commitment, own commitment, and goals. Presented throughout this chapter are the results of the analyses from the pre-test and main study.

Analysis of the pre-test data first consisted of computing the means and standard deviations for the variables given as questions following each combination of scenario (see Table 1). Likelihood and realism of the scenario was measured by asking the questions, "How likely is this to occur?" and "How realistic is this?" following each scenario. A 2 (commitment) x 2 (gender) x 3 (scenario) analysis of variance was conducted that showed commitment to have significant effects,  $F(1,176) = 5.51, p < .05$ , with the non-committed scenarios seen as more likely ( $M = 3.91, SD = 1.09$ ) than the committed scenarios ( $M = 3.51, SD = 1.30$ ). Commitment also had significant effects when analyzing the dependent variable of realism,  $F(1, 176) = 17.50, p < .001$ , with the non-committed scenarios seen as being more realistic ( $M = 4.44, SD = 0.77$ ) than the committed scenarios ( $M = 3.83, SD = 1.16$ ). For all the scenarios, it was most likely for a potential rival to post a message on a partner's wall ( $M = 3.83, SD = 1.20$ ), followed by a partner becoming friends with a member of the opposite sex ( $M = 3.66, SD = 1.25$ ),

and finally a partner being tagged in a photo with a member of the opposite sex ( $M = 3.65, SD = 1.20$ ). By analyzing all the scenarios for realism, a potential rival posting on a partner's wall was seen as being most realistic ( $M = 4.20, SD = 1.04$ ). A partner becoming friends with a member of the opposite sex ( $M = 4.10, SD = 1.04$ ) and a partner being tagged in a photo with a member of the opposite sex ( $M = 4.10, SD = 1.02$ ) were tied for second in realism. Additionally, there were significant interaction effects between commitment, scenario, and gender for the dependent variable of likeliness for the scenario to occur,  $F(2, 176) = 5.75, p > .05$ . When analyzing realism, there was almost a significant three-way interaction between commitment, scenario, and realism,  $F(2, 176) = 2.97, p = .05$ . When evaluating these interactions, it seems that for all types of scenarios, genders, and commitment, except one, that those interested in males had higher means for likeliness and realism. The anomaly was found in the committed scenario of becoming friends with a member of the opposite sex, where those interested in females had clearly higher means (see Table 2). Other than this three-way interaction, there were no other significant interaction effects, nor any significant main effects for gender or scenario when analyzing realism and likeliness.

Next, reliability tests were conducted on the expected jealousy items (jealousy, upset, insecure, and threat) that yielded an alpha coefficient of .93. A jealousy scale was then created that contained each of those four items, and the impact of the manipulations analyzed through a 2 (commitment level) x 2 (gender) x 3 (scenario) analysis of variance. Commitment was seen to have significant effects,  $F(1, 171) = 16.73, p < .001$ , with scenarios seen as creating more jealousy if they were non-committed manipulations ( $M =$

3.03,  $SD = 1.16$ ) compared to committed manipulations ( $M = 2.35$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ). Type of scenario was not quite significant,  $F(2, 171) = 3.01$ ,  $p = .05$ , but still interesting to interpret. Using the jealousy scale resulted in the tagged photo scenarios as creating the most jealousy ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ), followed by posting a message ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ), and then becoming friends on Facebook ( $M = 2.77$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ). There were no significant gender effects, nor any interaction effects.

Partner's perceived commitment (see Appendix D) was also evaluated, with two items (would he want to date others and would he not be very upset if the relationship ended) reverse scored. After reversing those two items, the alpha coefficient was .90 for the commitment items. Deleting the reverse scored questions that could be confusing to answer brings the alpha level up to .94. By not including those two reversed items in the main study, the reliability of the commitment items would improve. Additionally, the commitment items were examined using principal-axis factor analysis with a forced two-factor solution. One factor had an eigenvalue of 4.62; a second factor had an eigenvalue of 0.95. The first factor accounted for 65.95% of the variance and the second factor accounted for 13.59% of the variance. The five positively worded statements for commitment loaded highly on the first factor. On the second factor, the five positively worded statements for commitment loaded negatively, and the two reversed items for commitment loaded positively (see Table 3). The two-factor solution only further provided support that the two reversed items for commitment should be excluded from the main study. Finally, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the committed scenarios with the non-committed scenarios. A significant difference was

found between the two groups,  $t(185) = 13.18, p < .001$ , with the committed manipulation being higher on the commitment scale ( $M = 4.25, SD = 0.82$ ) than the non-committed manipulation ( $M = 2.61, SD = 0.88$ ).

Participants' open-ended responses were analyzed qualitatively to determine the general categories of what they reported to evoke romantic jealousy in them (*RQ1a*) and people like them (*RQ1b*). Qualitative analysis was based on Glaser and Strauss' (1967) grounded theory. This method "places a great emphasis upon an attention to participants' own accounts of social and psychological events" (Pidgeon, 1996, p. 76). Responses from the open-ended questions were coded according to similarities in responses and themes were generated that describe accounts of what causes romantic jealousy (see Appendix K). For example, if a participant stated that reading a status update caused jealousy, that statement would be coded into *public communication*, and if one stated that the possibility of Facebook chatting made them jealous, then that expression would be considered *private communication*. Two coders, who agreed 73% of the time for *RQ1a* and 78% of the time for *RQ1b*, coded responses independently. A chi-square test indicated that the relationship between *RQ1a* answers and *RQ1b* was significantly different,  $\chi^2(7, N = 269) = 14.94, p = .04$ . The following themes emerged from the responses: *public communication, photos, exes, uninvited, relationship status, private communication, and friending*. The first theme, *public communication*, was found 37.2% from *RQ1a* and 48.2% from *RQ1b*, and included wall posts, comments, and status updates. *Photos*, the second theme, was identified as pictures on Facebook, especially those that are tagged. This trend was identified 31.9% from the *RQ1a* responses and

33.0% from *RQ1b*. The third theme, *exes*, was recognized 12.4% from *RQ1a* replies and 6.3% from *RQ1b* responses. The category of *exes* was defined as “any activity on Facebook that is associated with a previous romantic partner.” Fourth, *uninvited*, denoted “being left out of an event that is publicly displayed on Facebook.” *Uninvited* was found in 10.6% of the *RQ1a* responses and in 6.3% of the *RQ1b* responses. The fifth theme, *relationship status*, was stated in 8.8% of the *RQ1a* responses and 9.8% of the *RQ1b* responses. This category was described as “any activity that has to do with an update of an official relationship status on Facebook.” *Private communication*, theme six, was established as “any type of private written communication between individuals on Facebook.” Responses related to *private communication* were found in 3.5% of the *RQ1a* statements and 7.1% of the *RQ1b* responses. Lastly, *friending*, was expressed in 1.8% of the *RQ1a* responses and 0.9% of the *RQ1b* responses. This theme was described as “any activity that deals with obtaining new official Facebook friends.”

**Table 1***Descriptive Statistics for Variables*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Committed</i>	<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Interested In</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Likely	Yes	Friending	Male	2.73	1.28
	Yes	Friending	Female	4.00	1.07
	Yes	Message	Male	3.71	1.40
	Yes	Message	Female	3.44	1.37
	Yes	Photo	Male	3.87	1.09
	Yes	Photo	Female	3.27	1.34
	No	Friending	Male	4.35	0.79
	No	Friending	Female	3.47	1.30
	No	Message	Male	4.20	0.78
	No	Message	Female	4.00	1.09
	No	Photo	Male	3.75	1.18
	No	Photo	Female	3.67	1.23
Realistic	Yes	Friending	Male	3.53	1.30
	Yes	Friending	Female	4.07	0.88
	Yes	Message	Male	4.06	1.03
	Yes	Message	Female	3.69	1.35



**Table 1 continued***Descriptive Statistics for Variables*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Committed</i>	<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Interested In</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Realistic	Yes	Photo	Male	3.94	1.18
	Yes	Photo	Female	3.67	1.23
	No	Friending	Male	4.71	0.59
	No	Friending	Female	4.00	1.00
	No	Message	Male	4.53	0.64
	No	Message	Female	4.56	0.81
	No	Photo	Male	4.50	0.63
	No	Photo	Female	4.27	0.79
Expected Jealousy	Yes	Friending	Male	2.05	1.06
	Yes	Friending	Female	2.02	1.08
	Yes	Message	Male	2.64	1.06
	Yes	Message	Female	2.38	1.41
	Yes	Photo	Male	2.55	1.29
	Yes	Photo	Female	2.42	1.07
	No	Friending	Male	2.57	1.26
	No	Friending	Female	3.00	1.34
	No	Message	Male	3.13	0.93

**Table 1 continued***Descriptive Statistics for Variables*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Committed</i>	<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Interested In</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Expected Jealousy	No	Message	Female	2.81	1.11
	No	Photo	Male	3.83	0.84
	No	Photo	Female	2.87	1.17
Perc. Commitment	Yes	Friending	Male	4.48	0.55
	Yes	Friending	Female	4.39	0.66
	Yes	Message	Male	4.29	0.65
	Yes	Message	Female	4.19	1.04
	Yes	Photo	Male	4.16	0.84
	Yes	Photo	Female	3.97	1.07
	No	Friending	Male	2.32	0.72
	No	Friending	Female	2.92	1.22
	No	Message	Male	2.56	0.57
	No	Message	Female	2.93	0.84
	No	Photo	Male	2.44	0.74
	No	Photo	Female	2.53	1.00

*Notes:* See Appendix J for questions used in pre-test following each scenario. Scales range from 1.00-5.00.

**Table 2***ANOVA Descriptive Statistics for Likeliness and Realism*

			<i>Likeliness</i>		<i>Realism</i>	
<i>Committed</i>	<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Interested In</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Yes	Friending	Male	2.73	1.28	3.53	1.30
		Female	4.00	1.07	4.07	0.88
	Message	Male	3.71	1.40	4.06	1.03
		Female	3.44	1.37	3.69	1.35
	Photo	Male	3.87	1.09	3.94	1.18
		Female	3.27	1.34	3.67	1.23
No	Friending	Male	4.35	0.79	4.71	0.59
		Female	3.47	1.30	4.00	1.00
	Message	Male	4.20	0.78	4.53	0.64
		Female	4.00	1.10	4.56	0.81
	Photo	Male	3.75	1.18	4.50	0.63
		Female	3.67	1.23	4.27	0.80

**Table 3***Forced Two-Factor Solution for Commitment Items*

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	<i>Factor 1</i>	<i>Factor 2</i>
I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future (reverse scored).	.43	.39
It would be likely that I would date someone other than my partner within the next year (reverse scored).	.60	.48
I would want our relationship to last for a very long time.	.85	-.10
I would be committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner.	.86	-.15
I would feel very attached to our relationship – very strongly linked to my partner.	.87	-.10

**Table 3 continued**

*Forced Two-Factor Solution for Commitment Items*

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	<i>Factor 1</i>	<i>Factor 2</i>
I would want our relationship to last forever.	.89	-.08
I would be oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I would imagine being with my partner several years from now).	.89	-.09

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For the main study, a t-test was conducted as a validity check to assess the contrasts in perceived commitment between the committed manipulations in the scenarios. Significant differences were found,  $p < .001$ , with the committed manipulation in scenarios scoring higher on the perceived commitment scale ( $M = 4.35$ ,  $SD = 0.09$ ) than the non-committed manipulations in scenarios ( $M = 2.34$ ,  $SD = 0.82$ ). Additionally, a 2 x 3 analysis of variance was carried out as a manipulation check, with perceived commitment as the dependent variable, and the independent variables being the three types of Facebook situations and two types of commitment in the scenarios. Commitment of scenario was significant,  $F(1, 120) = 218.69$ ,  $p < .001$  as well as type of Facebook situation in the scenarios  $F(2, 120) = 7.68$ ,  $p = .001$ . No significant interaction effects were found. Lastly, the scenarios were significantly different than the midpoint when assessing realism ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ ),  $t(127) = 16.95$ ,  $p < .001$ , and likeliness ( $M = 4.37$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ),  $t(127) = 10.56$ ,  $p < .001$ .

To answer *RQ2*, which asked which Facebook scenario created the most jealousy, a one-way multivariate analysis of variance was used, controlling for commitment of scenario. There was not a significant difference between the type of scenario and amount of jealousy,  $F(6, 218) = 1.09$ ,  $p = .37$ ; Wilk's Lambda = .942. Means for jealousy by scenario are listed in Table 4.

To explore *RQ3*, which asked how the three Facebook scenarios affected all the variables, a one-way multivariate analysis of variance was used, controlling for commitment of scenario. There was a statistically significant difference between the types of scenarios on Facebook and the dependent variables,  $F(16, 168) = 1.93$ ,  $p = .02$ ;

Wilk's Lambda = .71. Statistics relevant to the individual dependent variables can be found in Table 5 and Table 6. Two of these variables differed significantly by Facebook scenario: perceived commitment and own commitment,  $p < .001$ . Overall, the photo scenario created the highest amount of cognitive jealousy ( $M = 14.9, SD = 4.87$ ), emotions ( $M = 57.4, SD = 23.76$ ), destructive communication ( $M = 18.1, SD = 6.90$ ), and rival-focused communication ( $M = 13.2, SD = 6.23$ ). Additionally, following the photo scenario, there were the lowest means for perceived commitment ( $M = 14.4, SD = 6.6$ ) and own commitment ( $M = 14.2, SD = 5.80$ ).

Next, the message scenario elicited the highest amount of emotional jealousy ( $M = 22.0, SD = 6.38$ ), avoidant communication ( $M = 17.2, SD = 5.05$ ) and both a constructive ( $M = 44.7, SD = 10.97$ ) and destructive partner response ( $M = 38.9, SD = 19.07$ ). The message scenario seemed to be in between the photo and friending scenarios, with it evoking the middle amounts of perceived commitment ( $M = 17.0, SD = 6.44$ ), own commitment ( $M = 18.2, SD = 6.19$ ), cognitive jealousy ( $M = 14.2, SD = 4.19$ ), emotions ( $M = 56.9, SD = 31.97$ ), relationship-focused goals ( $M = 15.1, SD = 4.32$ ), destructive communication ( $M = 16.6, SD = 7.81$ ), rival-focused communication ( $M = 11.4, SD = 5.45$ ), and constructive communication ( $M = 33.4, SD = 8.14$ ).

Finally, after the friending scenario, there were the highest amounts of perceived commitment ( $M = 19.0, SD = 5.92$ ), own commitment ( $M = 19.7, SD = 5.70$ ), relationship-focused goals ( $M = 15.4, SD = 4.83$ ), constructive communication ( $M = 34.3, SD = 11.09$ ), and avoidant response ( $M = 28.9, SD = 14.19$ ). Also, the friending scenario elicited the lowest amounts of cognitive jealousy ( $M = 13.5, SD = 5.18$ ), emotional

jealousy ( $M= 20.6, SD= 6.31$ ), emotions ( $M= 47.4, SD= 26.98$ ), and destructive communication ( $M= 16.0, SD= 7.72$ ).

To test the hypotheses described in Chapter 1, regression was used, with multiple regression being implemented to analyze the dependent variable with two predictors. Regression coefficients are all reported as unstandardized. The results are presented according to variables:

#### Romantic Jealousy, Perceived Commitment, and Relationship Goals

*H1* predicted a positive relationship between cognitive jealousy and emotional jealousy. Additionally, *H2* suggested a negative relationship between perceived commitment and cognitive jealousy, while *H3* posited perceived commitment to have a positive relationship with relationship-focused goals.

The first hypothesis was supported with the model accounting for 54% of the variance in cognitive jealousy, adjusted  $R^2 = .536, F(1, 121) = 142.1, p < .001$ . Cognitive jealousy was seen to be a predictor of emotional jealousy,  $B = .967, t = 11.92, p < .001$ . There was also support for *H2* in the hypothesized direction,  $B = -.318, t = -5.41, p < .001$ , with perceived commitment accounting for 19% of the variance by the whole model, adjusted  $R^2 = .187, F(1, 122) = 29.2, p < .001$ . Lastly, perceived commitment was seen to predict relationship goals in a positive direction, thus supporting *H3*,  $B = .256, t = 4.19, p < .001$ . The model accounted for 13% of the variance, adjusted  $R^2 = .118, F(1, 123) = 17.6, p < .001$ . No relationship was found between the variables of perceived commitment and self-focused goals.



## Emotional Jealousy, Goals, and Communication

Multiple regression was used with emotional jealousy and relationship-focused goals as independent variables and type of communication as the dependent variable. *H4, H5, H6, and H7* explored the relationship between emotional jealousy and type of communication. *H4*, which predicted a positive relationship between emotional jealousy and destructive communication, was supported in the hypothesized direction,  $B = .519$ ,  $t = 5.04$ ,  $p < .001$ , with the model accounting for 18% of the variance, adjusted  $R^2 = .168$ ,  $F(1, 120) = 25.4$ ,  $p < .001$ . Also receiving support in the predicted direction was *H5*, which predicted a positive relationship between emotional jealousy and rival-focused communication,  $B = .454$ ,  $t = 5.47$ ,  $p < .001$ . Rival-focused communication accounted for 20% of the variance in the model, adjusted  $R^2 = .191$ ,  $F(1, 121) = 29.9$ ,  $p < .001$ . A positive relationship between emotional jealousy and avoidant communication was predicted in *H6*, and received support,  $B = .243$ ,  $t = 2.87$ ,  $p = .005$ . The model for avoidant communication accounted for 6% of the variance, adjusted  $R^2 = .056$ ,  $F(1, 121) = 8.22$ ,  $p = .005$ . Emotional jealousy as a predictor of constructive communication (*H7*) was significant, but not in the hypothesized direction  $B = .607$ ,  $t = 4.64$ ,  $p < .001$ . The total variance explained by constructive communication was 15%, adjusted  $R^2 = .147$ ,  $F(1, 118) = 21.5$ ,  $p < .001$ . The relationships between specific emotions and communication were also explored. A significant relationship was found between fear and constructive communication,  $B = 1.64$ ,  $t = 2.53$ ,  $p = .01$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .147$ ,  $F(4, 480) = 6.08$ ,  $p < .001$ , which accounted for 18% of the variance. Anger at partner,  $B = 1.66$ ,  $t =$

3.86,  $p < .010$  and disgust at partner,  $B= 1.56$ ,  $t= 2.98$ ,  $p = .004$ , predicted destructive communication and accounted for 42% of the variance, adjusted  $R^2= .409$ ,  $F(2, 1489) = 43.13$ ,  $p < .001$ . Anger at partner,  $B= 1.54$ ,  $t= 4.45$ ,  $p < .001$ , and disgust at partner,  $B= .86$ ,  $t= 2.09$ ,  $p = .04$ , also predicted rival-focused communication and accounted for 38% of the variance, adjusted  $R^2= .372$ ,  $F(2, 887) = 37.44$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Hypotheses 8, 9, 10, and 11 explored focus of goals as another predictor of type of communication. *H8*, relationship-focused goals are negatively related to destructive communication, was supported  $B= -.278$ ,  $t= -2.03$ ,  $p = .004$ . The model accounted for 20% of the variance, adjusted  $R^2= .189$ ,  $F(2, 119) = 15.1$ ,  $p < .001$ . Relationship-focused goals were also negatively related to rival-focused communication (*H9*),  $B= -.219$ ,  $t= -2.02$ ,  $p < .05$ . The model accounted for 22% of the variance, adjusted  $R^2= .211$ ,  $F(2, 120) = 17.4$ ,  $p < .001$ . No significant results were found for relationship-focused goals to be negatively related to avoidant communication (*H10*), nor for relationship-focused goals to be positively related to constructive communication (*H11*). Self-focused goals were only a predictor of constructive communication,  $B= .520$ ,  $t= 2.63$ ,  $p = .01$ , adjusted  $R^2= .046$ ,  $F(1, 609) = 6.90$ ,  $p = .01$ , and accounted for 5% of the variance.

### Communication and Response

Hypotheses 12, 13, and 14 explored the relationship between the type of communication and a partner's response. Each of the predictions posited that the response from a partner would be congruent with the type of communication the jealous individual used. Although the results show that each of the types of communication

(constructive, destructive, and avoidant) were positively related to a similar response from a partner, none of the predictions were significant. Therefore, *H12*, *H13*, and *H14* were all not supported. Additionally, a correlation matrix was conducted to explore the different types of communication and responses, with no significant results being found between any type of communication and response.

*H15*, *H16*, and *H17* were employed to explore how a partner's response is related to one's own commitment. Destructive and avoidant responses from a partner were hypothesized as having a negative relationship to one's own commitment, while a constructive response was suggested to have a positive one. No significant results were found, and thus *H15*, *H16*, and *H17* have been rejected.

**Table 4***Descriptive Statistics for RQ2*

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<i>Variable</i>	<i>Scenario</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Cognitive Jealousy	Photo	14.9	4.87
	Message	14.2	4.19
	Friending	13.5	5.18
Emotional Jealousy	Photo	21.0	6.42
	Message	22.0	6.38
	Friending	20.6	6.30
Emotions	Photo	57.4	23.77
	Message	56.9	31.97
	Friending	47.42	26.98

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**Table 5***MANOVA Descriptive statistics for variables, controlling for commitment*

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<i>Variable</i>	<i>M – Sc. 1</i>	<i>M – Sc. 2</i>	<i>M- Sc. 3</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Perceived Commitment	19.0	17.0	14.4	8.41	.000
Cognitive Jealousy	13.4	14.2	14.9	0.53	.589
Emotional Jealousy	20.6	22.0	21.0	0.38	.685
Emotions	47.4	57.0	57.4	1.15	.320
Goals	30.2	28.9	28.7	0.30	.739
Communication	78.5	78.6	80.6	0.09	.909
Partner's Response	107.0	112.3	110.6	0.29	.746
Own Commitment	19.7	18.1	14.2	11.19	.000

---

*Notes:* Scenario 1: Friending; Scenario 2: Message posted; Scenario 3: Photo

**Table 6***Descriptive Statistics for RQ3*

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<i>Variable</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Perceived Commitment	5.00	25.00	16.71	6.41
Cognitive Jealousy	5.00	24.00	14.30	4.68
Emotional Jealousy	7.00	35.00	21.26	6.14
Emotions	23.00	129.00	52.87	27.55
Self Emotions	6.00	32.00	9.98	6.28
Partner Emotions	9.00	54.00	23.06	13.01
Goals	6.00	42.00	29.61	7.56
Relationship Goals	3.00	21.00	14.98	4.75
Self Goals	3.00	21.00	14.63	4.28
Communication	26.00	133.00	79.96	20.81
Destructive Comm.	8.00	41.00	17.10	7.62
Rival-Focused Comm.	5.00	28.00	12.44	6.09
Constructive Comm.	8.00	52.00	33.49	9.62
Avoidant Comm.	5.00	30.00	16.55	5.89
Partner Response	32.00	206.00	111.62	27.14
Constructive Response	10.00	70.00	43.70	12.08
Avoidant Response	9.00	63.00	29.23	12.20

**Table 6 continued**

*Descriptive Statistics for RQ3*

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<i>Variable</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Destructive Response	13.00	91.00	38.98	18.24
Own Commitment	5.00	25.00	17.56	6.25

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## Chapter 4

### DISCUSSION

Romantic jealousy can have many negative effects on one's relationship and is certainly important to continue to study. The goal of this study was to better understand how the use of Facebook can lead to romantic jealousy and how couples communicate in these situations. There has been a lack of research in this specific area and future research has been suggested to "directly examine the effects of various triggers on the experience of jealousy," which this study explored (Muisse et al., 2009, p. 444). Muise et al. (2009) also state that "Facebook provides a superb forum for the study of relational jealousy," which is one of the reasons Facebook was chosen as the medium for this study (p. 444). Specifically, this study intended to analyze three Facebook experiences (friending, messaging, and photos) that could elicit romantic jealousy and to explore the type of communication used to respond to these scenarios. Throughout this final chapter is a discussion of the results, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

#### Analysis of Results

##### Facebook and Romantic Jealousy

Research questions one, two, and three questioned how different Facebook situations could lead to romantic jealousy and affect several other variables. *RQ1a* and *RQ1b* aimed to discover what causes people to feel jealous on Facebook. Results from



these questions showed that *public communication* caused the most jealousy and included activities such as “flirty comments,” “if I see that a guy is talking to a girl on Facebook a lot that I like,” and “constant comments on their wall.” *Photos* were seen as creating the next highest amount of jealousy, with participants stating that it caused them to feel jealous if a partner was tagged in pictures with the member of the opposite sex. *Exes* created a substantial amount of jealousy also and participants identified many activities (i.e. photos, public communication, relationship status) related to *exes* that caused jealousy. For example, “when your ex-boyfriend changes his relationship status from ‘single’ to ‘in a relationship,’” “photos of an ex with a new girlfriend,” “boyfriends talking to ex-girlfriends,” and “girls writing on my ex’s wall,” were all identified as causing jealousy. Being left out of something that was seen on Facebook also created jealousy, but it was unclear whether or not participants were referring to platonic friends or romantic friends. Ambiguous responses in this category included, “making plans I am not involved in,” “seeing activities they were not involved in,” and “seeing pictures of others doing activities I was not invited to.” Viewing an individual updating his official relationship status on Facebook was also identified as an activity on Facebook that could elicit jealousy. Next, the idea of *private communication* was also seen to create jealousy. Participants stated, “the idea of someone hiding something from you,” “Facebook chatting,” and “the possibility to send private messages,” as *private communication* that would cause them to feel jealous. Lastly, Facebook *friending* was identified as a cause of jealousy, but was stated very few times by participants. Perhaps this is congruent with results from this study that found friending to cause the least amount of jealousy

compared with photos or wall posts. By looking at the answers of what caused jealousy from *RQ1a* and *RQ1b*, it may have been useful to include a scenario regarding ex-lovers instead of Facebook friending, since friending was identified by very few people as a trigger of jealousy.

Although similar answers were given for *RQ1a* and *RQ1b*, more participants indicated that nothing made them feel jealous on Facebook in *RQ1a* than in *RQ1b*. Of those few participants who wrote that nothing made them feel jealous, most did state an answer for some type of situation on Facebook that would cause jealousy in people like them (*RQ1b*). Those participants may have wanted to answer in a socially desirable manner for themselves, but felt more comfortable answering a question about people like them. Of course, too, it is possible that truly nothing caused jealousy for those participants, or they may not have a Facebook profile. Also, more instances of *public communication* were noted to cause jealousy from *RQ1b* than from *RQ1a* responses. The categories of *exes*, *uninvited*, and *private communication* were stated more often from *RQ1a* answers than from *RQ1b* responses. *Photos*, *relationship status*, and *friending* differed only by one in responses from both of the open-ended questions.

Results from these open-ended questions also provide support for Sheets, Fredendall, and Claypool's (1997) four categories of jealousy-evoking situations: a partner showing interest in another ("If my partner replies to some other girls who I don't know with a very excited or interested attitude"), another showing interest in a partner ("Other men posting on my girlfriend's wall about hanging out or talking to her far too

casually”), prior relationships (“When your ex-boyfriend changes his relationship status”), and ambiguous scenes (“Unclear comments on my friends’ walls”).

Also in question was how much jealousy each of the three different types of scenarios on Facebook caused (*RQ2*). Each type resulted in a greater amount than the midpoint on the cognitive jealousy scale and emotional jealousy scale, although all were lower than the midpoint on the emotions scale. Although jealousy was not significant when analyzing the three different types of Facebook situations, it seems that all three scenarios were all equally able to elicit jealousy, which may be an important conclusion. Specific results from *RQ2* are interpreted in conjunction with *RQ3* that inquired into how each of the Facebook scenarios affected all of the variables in the model. Although only perceived commitment and own commitment were significant, it is still interesting to interpret all of the results.

Of the three scenarios, the photo situation seemed to cause the most negative effects. In addition to causing the most cognitive jealousy and emotions, the photo scenario also elicited the highest amount of destructive and rival-focused communication. Furthermore, the photo scenario led to the least amount of perceived commitment, own commitment, relationship-focused goals, and constructive communication. The photo scenario does seem to be the most intimate of the three possible Facebook situations, which may be why it elicited more cognitive jealousy and emotions. An individual may view the third party as more of a threat once he begins messaging or tagging photos with a partner.

The friending scenario seemed to produce contrasting results with less negative effects. Scores indicate that the friending scenario brought forth the highest amount of perceived commitment, own commitment, relationship-focused goals, and constructive communication, and also the lowest amount of cognitive jealousy, emotions, emotional jealousy, destructive communication, and destructive response. Participants may not have been as worried about the friending situation because the communication may never go beyond that, and the third party may never become a threat. Additionally, people may just accept friend requests to increase their number of friends on Facebook, and not because they actually want to communicate with that person.

Lastly, the message scenario engendered the most emotional jealousy and avoidant communication as well as the least amount of rival-focused communication. Witnessing a conversation via wall posting between a partner and a third party is likely to be the second most intimate situation on Facebook, following the photo scenario. This could be a probable reason as to why the message scenario produced the second greatest means for cognitive jealousy, emotions, destructive communication, constructive communication, relationship-focused goals, own commitment, and perceived commitment.

#### Romantic Jealousy, Perceived Commitment, and Relationship Goals

Cognitive jealousy was predicted to have a positive relationship with emotional jealousy (*H1*) and a negative relationship with perceived commitment (*H2*), which both received support. These results provide support for previous research that states that

emotional jealousy occurs as a reaction to a threat or a cognitive appraisal (Knobloch, Solomon & Cruz, 2001) and that “cognitive jealousy was negatively associated with commitment” (Bevan, 2008). Consistent with Bevan’s (2008) discussion is the notion that as perceived commitment rises, viewing third parties as a threat will decrease, and thus feelings of cognitive jealousy may subside. *H3* posited a positive relationship between perceived commitment and relationship-focused goals, which also gained support. As one increases his perceived commitment, he also will be more likely to focus on the good of the relationship, or as suggested by Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster & Agnew (1999), strong commitment will lead an individual to be more likely to “engage in pro-relationship behaviors” (p. 961).

#### Emotional Jealousy, Goals, and Communication

Previous research has found support for relationships between communication and goals, as well as communication and emotion, which this section explores (Guerrero & Afifi, 1999). The specific emotions of “anger at partner” and “disgust at partner” positively predicted destructive and rival-focused communication. Owlett (2010) found contrasting results, with anger and disgust being negatively related to destructive communication. One explanation could be that Owlett (2010) did not distinguish between self-directed and partner-directed emotions. The current study differentiated between self and partner emotions, as suggested by Owlett (2010), in hopes of receiving more accurate results. Also, four predictions were made between emotional jealousy and the type of communication: emotional jealousy is positively related to destructive (*H4*),

rival-focused (*H5*), and avoidant communication (*H6*) and negatively related to constructive communication (*H7*). Emotional jealousy positively predicted all four types of communication, even constructive. A possible interpretation could be that it depends on the situation as to which type of communication one utilizes. For example, a photo scenario may elicit many emotions and emotional jealousy, which may lead to more destructive, rival-focused or avoidant communication. A friending scenario may also evoke emotional jealousy, but at a smaller level, thus resulting in constructive communication. The results of emotional jealousy and constructive communication could be the most beneficial way to overcome possible negative effects of jealousy. According to Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero, and Spitzberg (1995), “those who react to jealousy by engaging in constructive (rather than destructive) communication are likely to maintain satisfying relationships despite experiencing jealousy” (p. 77).

Focus of goals was also hypothesized to have a relationship with the type of communication one chooses to express jealousy. Relationship-focused goals were supported to have a negative relationship with destructive communication (*H8*) and rival-focused communication (*H9*). Owlett (2010) also found a negative relationship between destructive communication and relationship-focused goals. *H10* and *H11*, which predicted a negative relationship to avoidant communication, and a positive one to constructive communication, respectively, were not significant and did not support past research which found these relationships to be significant (Owlett, 2010). Previous research has also suggested that when people “have a goal of maintaining their relationship,” they use more constructive communication, and when they are more

concerned about self goals they will employ more avoidant communication (Guerrero, Hannawa & Gallagher, 2008). This study has not found additional support for those relationships. A surprising positive relationship between self-focused goals and constructive communication was found, contrary to Owlett's (2010) finding that self-focused goals were positively related to destructive communication. These unexpected results may have occurred because, as suggested by Guerrero and Afifi (1999), "one's communicative response might become habituated" (p. 228).

#### Communication and Response

Yoshimura (2004) found that "targets of jealousy expressions most strongly respond in the style of the initial expression," and this study hypothesized the same relationship (p. 95). *H12*, *H13*, and *H14* proposed destructive communication to be positively related to a destructive response, avoidant communication to be positively related to an avoidant response, and constructive communication to be positively related to a constructive response, respectively. No significant results were found between any of the three hypotheses. One possible explanation might be that participants could not as easily identify how a partner would respond in the situation, but that they could more clearly pinpoint their own type of communication. Inquiring for both partner's reactions, not just one person's response, might alter the results, although was not conducted for this particular study. Another explanation may be that the participants not in relationships could not accurately describe how a partner would response since they do

not have a partner. Participants in relationships answering questions about a scenario with a committed manipulation could possibly be the only ones who could produce more precise results.

Consequently, results for *H15*, *H16*, and *H17* also may not have been supported because of the possible trouble participants may have had discerning their partner's communicative response. A destructive response (*H15*) as well as an avoidant response (*H16*) was hypothesized to be negatively related to one's own commitment, while a constructive response was thought to be positively related to one's own commitment (*H17*). None of the three hypotheses gained support. Perhaps if the participants were told how their partner would respond, instead of identifying it themselves, results may have been different. For example, if the participant answered all of the questions pertaining to the variables, up until "partner's response," the partner could have been asked how he would respond. Then, the original participant would know how the partner responded and perhaps make a more accurate assessment of his or her own commitment. Another interpretation may be that one's commitment may not change following a situation. An individual may have decided that her partner is who she wants to be with and therefore not alter her own commitment due to a possible jealousy-evoking situation.

### Practical Implications

Viewing Facebook activity can cause romantic jealousy in some individuals and is important to examine because of the negative consequences that could occur. Just as crucial is to explore the actions individuals can take to possibly lessen the amount of



jealousy they experience due to Facebook. Suggestions of feasible steps individuals could take to minimize their jealousy are considered in this section.

Perhaps in order to dissipate some of the jealousy caused by Facebook activities, partners could choose not to accept friend requests from certain people, not communicate back to wall posts, and un-tag themselves in photos. More extremely, individuals could choose to un-friend or block certain people, delete wall posts, and remove comments on pictures. Even more radical, one may choose to deactivate his Facebook account.

Although this option may work for some couples, it may be more helpful to cope with the jealousy instead of avoiding it by not having a Facebook account. There is always the possibility for another social networking site to cause similar negative effects for a relationship, so dealing with the jealousy may be most helpful. Also, keeping a Facebook profile could prove to have some functional aspects, which may also give reason as to why deactivating accounts may not be the answer. A couple can publicly display their affection towards each other by showing everyone on Facebook they are officially in a relationship by utilizing the relationship status option, express kind words through wall posts, and make their main profile picture one featuring the romantic partner. Another way to deal with potential jealousy may be to share passwords with a partner, so there are fewer worries for suspicious private communicative behavior. Sharing a password with a significant other may also enhance trust and conceivably decrease perceptions of threat.

Seemingly most beneficial may be the need to establish rules regarding what type of Facebook activity each individual finds to be acceptable for the good of the relationship. For instance, one couple may decide that friending others except ex-lovers

is permitted, while others may only consent to friending and communicating with mutual friends and family. Whether or not these actions will actually remove jealousy cannot be determined at this point, but should be explored in future studies.

### Limitations

As of one of the first investigating Facebook in conjunction with romantic jealousy, this study uncovered some valuable information about this topic. Nonetheless, it is not without its limitations. It is possible that the sample, parts of the method, and the wording of *RQ1a* and *RQ1b* could have served as flaws in the study. More detailed accounts of these possible limitations will be addressed in relation with the results found in the current study.

Because college students (overwhelmingly sophomores) were used, results may not be easily generalized to the population. One perk, though, in recruiting college students in a study about Facebook is the assumption that many of the participants were familiar with Facebook and likely to have an account themselves. Originally, Facebook was only available to those who had a college email address, so it is likely that a younger demographic are more familiar with Facebook. But, participants were not asked if they had a Facebook profile page, which could have served as useful information. The sample also included about 75% females, which could limit the results if sex differences were indeed present. Although the literature reports contradictory findings, some that say there are no sex differences when assessing romantic jealousy, and some that report one sex to be more jealous than the other, it would still be an important variable to include in a study

of romantic jealousy (Pines & Friedman, 1998). Unfortunately, because of the overwhelming number of participants who were female, no conclusions about sex could be made for this study. Additionally, many of the participants were not in relationships when taking the questionnaire. The latter part of the model explores how a partner would communicate, so if a participant does not have a partner, inaccurate results may have occurred. Or, those participants in relationships may have received a non-committed scenario where they are supposed to be answering about someone who is not committed to them. Similarly, this could produce erroneous results because the participants may not be able to realistically think of themselves in that situation. Additional tests were run to explore this limitation, which isolated the participants who were in relationships. The tests using only those in relationships showed constructive communication to positively predict a constructive response and destructive communication to predict a destructive response. Avoidant communication and response was not significant and partner's response still did not predict one's own commitment.

Next, one may conclude that using hypothetical scenarios may limit the external validity of the study. However, participants indicated the scenarios to be much higher than the midpoint for how realistic and how likely they were to occur. Additionally, many participants indicated from the open-ended question in the pretest (*RQ1a* and *RQ1b*) that many of the same situations caused them to feel jealous (friending, messaging, photos). Moreover, Bevan (2006) reported that Knobloch (2005) found no significant differences in results during a study about relational uncertainty whether hypothetical situations or self-reports were used.

The wording of *RQ1a* and *RQ1b* also could have caused inaccurate results. The wording used in the questionnaire was, “What activities on Facebook cause you to feel jealous?” and “What activities on Facebook do you think cause people like you to feel jealous?” Although at the beginning of the questionnaire, the purpose of the study was stated as exploring romantic jealousy and Facebook, where a definition of romantic jealousy was provided, the questions did not specifically refer to romantic jealousy, but to jealousy in general. Some of the participants’ responses included activities involving “friends” but it was unclear whether or not this was referring to non-romantic friends or friends who they were romantically involved with. Some participants clearly thought the question pertained to jealousy in general, and stated that people showing off their high grade point averages and fancy cars on Facebook caused jealousy. But, it was also the case that a majority of participants understood the question to be about romantic jealousy and answered the questions by listing activities pertaining to current romantic partners, love interests, and ex-lovers. Although most responses did identify that participants understood the study to be about romantic jealousy, a more accurate wording could have produced more precise conclusions.

A final limitation may be the use of only one partner’s perspective. If asking both the jealous individual and the target how they would communicate after the jealous experience, different results may have materialized. As mentioned earlier, this alteration may affect the outcomes of communication to response as well as partner’s response to own commitment and should be investigated in future studies.

## Future Research

A broad goal of this study was to investigate how different situations on Facebook can lead to romantic jealousy. While many findings were uncovered, there is still much room for research in this underdeveloped area. First, future studies should take a more in-depth analysis of what causes people to feel romantically jealous on Facebook. The current study explored three situations (photos, messaging, and friending), but because of the many activities one could partake in on Facebook, more detailed accounts should be explored. For example, results from asking participants what triggers them to feel jealous on Facebook showed that liking a status or photo, communicating with an ex-boyfriend or girlfriend, and the possibility for private communication through chats and private messaging also made them jealous. Exploring more types of situations on Facebook could expand our knowledge on this subject. In addition to exploring what causes romantic jealousy from Facebook, one should also explore how couples cope with these problems. For example, do couples decide to close their accounts due to jealousy, or learn to effectively communicate with their partners and explain their actions? These and other possible solutions should be investigated in future studies.

Second, it might be useful to investigate more predictors since there was unexplained variance in the model. Gender, age, attachment style, and how often one uses Facebook, may affect the outcomes of the model. Also, it may be practical to explore who is initiating the communication and if that differentiation produces different results. For example, did a partner search for someone on Facebook and request to be her friend, or did a partner simply accept a friend request from someone. An individual may

become more jealous if a partner is seeking out others and initiating the communication than if a partner is simply accepting to be someone's friend. This differentiation could possibly affect one's emotions as well. For example, if a third party is continually attempting to communicate with a partner and writing flirty messages on his wall, an individual may become angry at the rival. In this study, emotions directed at one's self (angry at one's self) and at a partner (angry at a partner) were included, but future studies might incorporate emotions directed toward a rival (angry at the third party).

Third, as mentioned earlier, expanding the participants to include older Americans should be considered. Facebook is not limited to only college students anymore, and thus people out of college should also be considered to explore if they experience jealousy on Facebook in any different manners. Perhaps by using participants older than college-aged, one could assess how long relationships differ in the amount of jealousy from shorter relationships. Although it is possible for college students to have been in a relationship for years, it is more likely that using older participants would produce more couples who have been committed for a longer amount of time. Muise et al. (2009) also suggest including non-college students because adult relationships may have been formed before Facebook, so they may be less skilled at coping with these jealous triggers that may arise from Facebook.

Lastly, this study proposed a general model of responses to jealousy evoking situations and should be applied to different contexts in addition to Facebook. Other mediated circumstances as well as face-to-face interactions should be explored. It is possible that the use of other technology, such as the option of texting on a cellular

phone, or other social networking websites could bring out jealousy. Other conditions, such as directly witnessing a partner flirting with someone, or hearing about a similar instance directly from a friend, could also elicit jealousy. These and other events should be explored to determine whether the model holds true for situations other than the ones investigated in the current study.

### Conclusion

The current study examined Facebook as a platform that could lead to feelings of romantic jealousy. Findings from this research demonstrate that witnessing situations on Facebook may elicit jealousy, with the photo scenario producing the most negative effects. Although all the predictions in the model did not produce significant results, many of the hypotheses did receive support. Future studies should continue to delve into this area of communication so we can discover more specifically what produces jealousy from Facebook and the communicative events that incur due to jealousy.

## **APPENDIX A**

### Scenarios

1. You have been in a mutually exclusive, romantic relationship for five years with a person who always tells you she/he loves you. You both publicly display that your relationship is official and exclusive by posting your relationship status as “in a relationship” on Facebook. Lately, you two have been talking about getting engaged because you are very happy with one another. Then you notice that your partner has become friends on Facebook with an unknown member of the opposite who is attractive and close in age to you.

2. You have been in a mutually exclusive, romantic relationship for five years with a person who always tells you she/he loves you. You both publicly display that your relationship is official and exclusive by posting your relationship status as “in a relationship” on Facebook. Lately, you two have been talking about getting engaged because you are very happy with one another. Then you notice that an unknown member of the opposite sex, who is attractive and close in age to you, has posted a message on your partner’s Facebook page.

3. You have been in a mutually exclusive, romantic relationship for five years with a person who always tells you she/he loves you. You both publicly display that your relationship is official and exclusive by posting your relationship status as “in a



relationship” on Facebook. Lately, you two have been talking about getting engaged because you are very happy with one another. Then you notice that your partner has been tagged in a photo on Facebook with an unknown member of the opposite sex who is attractive and close in age to you.

4. You have been seeing an individual for two months who you are romantically attracted to. The other person seems to be interested in you too but the relationship is not official or exclusive, although you want it to be. You also think the other person is seeing other people. Then you notice the person you are seeing becomes friends on Facebook with an unknown member of the opposite sex who is attractive and close in age to you.

5. You have been seeing an individual for two months who you are romantically attracted to. The other person seems to be interested in you too but the relationship is not official or exclusive, although you want it to be. You also think the other person is seeing other people. Then you notice that an unknown member of the opposite sex who is attractive and close in age to you posts a message on your date’s Facebook wall.

6. You have been seeing an individual for two months who you are romantically attracted to. The other person seems to be interested in you too but the relationship is not official or exclusive, although you want it to be. You also think the other person is seeing other people. Then you notice the individual you like has been tagged in a photo on Facebook with an unknown member of the opposite sex who is attractive and close in age to you.

## APPENDIX B

### Russell and Harton's (2005) Expected Jealousy Scale

Instructions: Please rate how upset, insecure, jealous and envious you would be after being involved in the above scenario.

How upset would you be?

1   2   3   4

Not at all                      Very

How insecure would you be?

1   2   3   4

Not at all                      Very

How jealous would you be?

1   2   3   4

Not at all                      Very

How threatened would you be?

1   2   3   4

Not at all                      Very

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Pfeiffer and Wong's (1989) Multidimensional Jealousy Scale**

After reading the scenario, please rate how much you would feel the following:

Cognitive subscale:

1. Would you suspect that he/she is secretly seeing someone else?
2. Would you suspect that he/she might be attracted to someone else?
3. Would you think that someone else might be romantically interested in him/her?
4. Would you think that he/she is secretly developing an intimate relationship with someone else?
5. Would suspect that he/she is interested in someone else?

## APPENDIX D

### The Investment Model Scale - Commitment Level (2006)

#### *Global Items*

##### *One's own commitment level*

I would want our relationship to last for a very long time.

I would be committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner.

I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future.

It would be likely that I would date someone other than my partner within the next year.  
(reverse scored)

I would feel very attached to our relationship – very strongly linked to my partner.

I would want our relationship to last forever.

I would be oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (for example, I would imagine being with my partner several years from now).

##### *Perceived Commitment Level*

I would think he/she wants our relationship to last for a very long time.

I would think he/she is committed to maintaining this relationship with me.

I would think he/she would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future.

It would be likely that he/she will date someone other than me within the next year.  
(reverse scored)

I would think he/she feels very attached to our relationship – very strongly linked to me.

He/she would want our relationship to last forever.

He/she would be oriented toward the long-term future of our relationship (for example, he/she imagines being with you several years from now).

## APPENDIX E

Guerrero, Eloy, Jorgensen, and Andersen's (1993) modified version of Pfeiffer and Wong's (1989) emotional subscale of the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale:

After reading the scenario, please rate how much you would feel the following:

1. Would you feel envious if he/she commented on how attractive someone else is?
2. Would you feel uncomfortable if he/she communicated in a very friendly manner with someone else?
3. Would you feel jealous if he/she flirted with someone else?
4. Would you feel anxious if he/she shows a great deal of attention to someone of the opposite sex?
5. Would it anger you when members of the opposite sex try to get close to him/her?
6. Would you be fearful that he/she might be going out with someone of the opposite sex?
7. Would you feel insecure when he/she talks to someone of the opposite sex?

## APPENDIX F

### Emotional Responses to Romantic Jealousy Processing (Owlett, 2010)

Instructions: Please rate the amount of each emotion you would feel after reading the above scenario.

1. Irritated at self  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
2. Angry at self  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
3. Annoyed at self  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
4. Aggravated at self  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
5. Fearful  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
6. Afraid  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
7. Scared  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
8. Sad  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
9. Dreary  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
10. Dismal  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling
11. Guilty  
None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 A great deal of this feeling

12. Ashamed									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
13. Nauseated at self									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
14. Repulsed at self									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
15. Sickened at self									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
16. Appalled at self									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
17. Disgusted at self									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
18. Angry at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
19. Disgusted at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
20. Irritated at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
21. Annoyed at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
22. Aggravated at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
23. Nauseated at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
24. Repulsed at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
25. Sickened at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	
26. Appalled at partner									
None of this feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A great deal of this feeling	

## APPENDIX G

### Guerrero and Afifi's (1998) Goal Scale

After reading the scenario, when I would be jealous, I would usually be concerned about...

1. maintaining self-esteem

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

strongly disagree                      strongly agree

2. keeping my pride

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

strongly disagree                      strongly agree

3. feeling good about myself despite the situation

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

strongly disagree                      strongly agree

4. preserving the relationship

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

strongly disagree                      strongly agree

5. holding onto my relationship

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

strongly disagree                      strongly agree



6. keeping the relationship going

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

strongly disagree

strongly agree

## APPENDIX H

Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher's (2008) The Communicative Responses to Jealousy

Scale: Revised Version

Instructions: After reading the above scenario, please indicate the extent to which you would use the following behaviors:

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Very Often</b>	<b>Always</b>

### **Destructive Communication**

Act rude to my partner

Make hurtful or mean comments to my partner

Yell or curse at my partner

Act like I am interested in someone else

Quarrel or argue with my partner

Become physically violent

Push, shove, or hit my partner

Flirt or talk about others to make my partner jealous

### **Rival Focused**

Tell the rival not to see my partner anymore

Talk to the rival

Let rival know that my partner and I are in a relationship

Make negative comments about the rival

Point out the rival's bad qualities

### **Constructive Communication**

Tell my partner how much I care for her/him

Tell my partner how much I need her/him

Try to talk to my partner and reach an understanding

Discuss the situation with my partner

Calmly question my partner

Explain my feelings to my partner

Share my jealous feelings with my partner

Increase affection toward my partner

### **Avoidant**

Become silent

Get quiet and not say much

Deny feeling jealous

Act like I don't care

Pretend nothing is wrong

## APPENDIX I

### Canary, Cunningham, & Cody's (1988) Conflict Tactics Scale

*Instructions:* Please rate the level to which your partner would apply each tactic when responding to your communication about the romantic jealousy-inducing event.

Item #/Item

Integrative tactics

(13) My partner would seek a mutually beneficial solution.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(16) My partner would reason with me in a give-and take manner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(33) My partner would try to understand me.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(21) My partner would be sympathetic to my position.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(7) My partner would show concern about my feelings and thoughts.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(19) My partner would express his or her trust in me.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(4) My partner would compromise with me.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(10) My partner would explore solutions with me.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(30) My partner would accept his or her share of responsibility for the conflict.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(35) My partner would ignore my thoughts and feelings.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Topic shifting

(9) My partner would avoid the issue.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(26) My partner would ignore the issue.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(18) My partner would change the topic of discussion.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(6) My partner would avoid me.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(15) My partner would try to postpone the issue as long as possible.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(3) My partner would try to change the subject.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(29) My partner would talk about abstract things instead of the conflict issue.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(43) My partner would keep me guessing what was really on his or her mind.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Personal criticism

(11) My partner would criticize an aspect of my personality.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(22) My partner would blame me for causing the conflict.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(31) My partner would criticize my behavior.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(36) My partner would tell me how to behave in the future.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(45) My partner would blame the conflict on an aspect of my personality.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree



(17) My partner would try to make me feel guilty.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Anger

(14) My partner would shout at me.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(28) My partner would show that he or she lost his or her temper.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(25) My partner would be hostile.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(5) My partner would calmly discuss the issue. \*

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Sarcasm

(34) My partner would try to intimidate me.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(8) My partner would use threats.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(42) My partner would be sarcastic in the use of humor.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(23) My partner would tease me.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Semantic focus

(32) My partner would focus on the meaning of the words more than the conflict issue.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree



## APPENDIX J

The following variables were given as questions for participants to answer following each scenario in the pre-test:

<b>Likely</b>	How likely is this to occur?
<b>Real</b>	How realistic is this?
<b>Expected Jealousy</b>	How threatened would you be? How jealous would you be? How upset would you be? How insecure would you be?
<b>Perceived Commitment</b>	Would you think he would want your relationship to last for a very long time? Would you think he would be committed to maintaining the relationship with you? Would you think the he would not feel very upset if your relationship were to end in the near future? Would you think it would be likely that he will date someone other than you within the next year? Would you think he feels very attached to the relationship – very strongly linked to you? Would you think he would want your relationship to last forever? Would you think he would be oriented toward the long-term future of your relationship (for example, do you think he would imagine being with you several years from now?)

## APPENDIX K

### Definitions of Themes for Qualitative Analysis

- Public Communication:** Any type of public written communication on Facebook.
- Photos:** Viewing pictures of an individual(s) on Facebook, usually due to “tagging,” or identifying that person’s identity in a picture.
- Exes:** Any activity on Facebook that is associated with a previous romantic partner.
- Uninvited:** Being left out of an event that is publicly displayed on Facebook.
- Relationship Status:** Any activity that has to do with an update of an official relationship status on Facebook.
- Private Communication:** Any type of private written communication between two individuals through Facebook.
- Friending:** Any activity that deals with obtaining new official “Facebook friends.”

## APPENDIX L

### IRB Approval Letter

DATE: January 20, 2011

TO: Rhiannon Kallis  
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [209234-1] Exploring how communication on Facebook can spark romantic jealousy in relationships

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS  
DECISION DATE: January 20, 2011

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office. Please remember to notify us if you make any substantial changes to the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Jody-Lynn Berg at (302) 831-1119 or [jlberg@udel.edu](mailto:jlberg@udel.edu). Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

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