
Preface

This journey began with a seemingly innocuous question asked by an undergraduate student during a lecture on the progression from strangers to friends or lovers in Weber's seminar entitled *Individual and Society*. In response to the statement that trust allowed for this progression, the student queried: "What is trust?" Weber responded that she would get back to her later after she had reviewed the literature and consulted with colleagues, one of whom was Carter. Ten years later, we believe we have a viable response.

Trust is an orientation between self and other whose object is the relationship. Trust's premise is the belief that the other will take one's perspective into account when decision-making and will not act in ways to violate the moral standards of the relationship. Trust is a social product as it only emerges from real or imagined relationships with others. As such, the study of interpersonal trust loans itself to an interactional focus that heretofore has not been attempted. We present the interactional basis of trust construction, trust violation, and forgiveness and reconciliation. At the heart of these three processes is self.

The book proceeds in the following manner. Chapter 1 presents the theoretical and methodological foundation for this study. The stages of the interactional construction of the orientation of trust formulate the basis for Chapter 2. An investigation of the form and content of trust violation is the focus of Chapter 3. Chapter 4 provides an in-depth analysis of forgiveness-based reconciliation that premises trust reconstruction. Inductively based insights into the relationship between trust and self comprise Chapter 5. And finally, Chapter 6 approaches the practice of trust in interpersonal relationships.

In any endeavor of this sort, many people must be thanked. First and foremost our appreciation is given to all those who agreed to be interviewed for their heart-felt responses. Delving into intimate aspects of their lives was not an easy task. For financial and academic support given to this project, we thank Michael Spitzer, former Dean of Arts and Sciences at SUNY Institute of Technology (SUNYIT); Shirley Van Maarter, former Vice-President for Academic Affairs at SUNYIT; Ron Sarner, current Vice President for Academic Affairs at SUNYIT, and Judy Owens-Manley, Research Coordinator, Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center at Hamilton College. We thank Walter Johnston, Mary Perrone, and

Maarten Heyboer for their reviews of various parts of this manuscript. We also thank Sue Kimak for her technical assistance. Finally, Linda Weber thanks Timothy Pierson, her husband, and Jasmine and Royce Weber-Pierson, her children, for reminding her of the importance of balancing professional accomplishment with family obligations in the production of trust.



<http://www.springer.com/978-0-306-47370-8>

The Social Construction of Trust

Weber, L.; Carter, A.I.

2003, X, 180 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-0-306-47370-8