1994

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Recommended Citation

Vuksanovic, Vuk, "The Construction Of Target Similarity In Social Identification" (1994). *Digitized Theses*. 2466.
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THE CONSTRUCTION OF TARGET SIMILARITY

IN

SOCIAL IDENTIFICATION

BY

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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Two investigations were carried out to examine self-perceptions and the role of motivation in individual-based social identification. It was hypothesized that states of threatened self-esteem would lead individuals to self-ascribe traits belonging to a valued social target. In experiment 1, subjects performed a task, following which they received one of two performance feedback treatments (success; failure). They were then assigned a famous historical figure, Napoleon Bonaparte, and half were led to believe that they shared his day of birth. Ratings made of both the target and the self revealed that conditions of failure feedback (regardless of the birthday manipulation) led to more elevated self-ascriptions of Napoleon-specific negative (socially undesirable) traits, but not of negative traits in general. For positive (socially desirable) traits, the opposite influence of failure feedback was found (i.e., lower self-ascription of Napoleon-specific items), though only for those in the matched-birthday condition. In experiment 2, an identical manipulation of performance feedback was employed, whereafter subjects selected a famous figure whom they "most respected and admired," as well as one whom they "least respected and admired," from a list of individuals generated by their peers. Self-evaluations on traits with either of three referents (most valued target; least valued target; no target) indicated a pattern consistent with the findings of the initial experiment, though, unfortunately, the least valued target condition had to be dropped from analyses due to the violation of a statistical assumption. For negative traits, those experiencing ostensible failure gave

higher self-ratings specifically on those items believed to characterize their most valued target. No effects were obtained on self-reports involving positive traits. The overall trend suggested that an interplay of self-consistency and self-enhancement motives may have guided subjects' responses. It is speculated that the endorsement of target-specific traits invoked by failure may have represented attempts to generate a more favourable self-image by identification with the target, and that this association-building may have been restricted to the realm of negative traits by the countervailing need to present a self-image that was consistent with the feedback as well.

Acknowledgements

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Appendices

-Chapter 1-
INTRODUCTION

The concept of *identification* is a common one in the vernacular of social psychology, yet has been researched on its own in a very limited way. It may generally be defined as the perceptual linkage, based on similarity, that individuals make between themselves and others. In addition, there can be an emulatory quality about the process, whereby persons attempt to model their target of identification. The most direct theoretical examination of the concept is found in intergroup research of the European tradition, where it is a foundational tenet; more specifically, in investigations and theoretical writings centring around social identity theory (for overviews, see Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Taylor & Moghaddam, 1988; Abrams & Hogg, 1990). Identification in these instances, however, refers only to perceived associations with an ingroup (termed *social identification*), whereas, in the broadest sense, the term should encompass psychological linkages with *individual* others as well. Similarly, initial research on *basking in reflected glory* (Burger, 1985; Cialdini Borden, Thorne, Walker, Freeman, & Sloane, 1976; Cialdini & Richardson, 1980; Snyder, Lassegard & Ford, 1986) focussed on what may be best described as group identification, although later efforts related to this topic (most notably Brown et al., 1992; along with Finch & Cialdini, 1989) have addressed the issue of associations with another individual.

The principal goal of the present dissertation is to investigate the changes in self-perception that may ensue from the process of identification. To address this question, the nature of the motivation behind identification will first be examined. The assumption shared by both social identity theory and basking in reflected glory is that identification primarily serves as a self-enhancement tactic and that perceived similarities to an admired group or individual are employed in order to elevate self-esteem. Accordingly, one would expect positive changes in the valence of self-evaluation to follow: associations with valued others should result in more favourable views of the self. Moreover, as will be hypothesized here, such changes may also involve a mechanism of trait *appropriation*, whereby characteristics belonging to the target of identification are ascribed to the self as part of the self-enhancement process. For example, while watching an action-adventure film, a spectator may experience an exaggerated sense of his/her own bravery or physical prowess by identifying with a character who readily displays these properties.

The affective context for the occurrence of such behaviour is another issue to be addressed, and here again the motivational underpinnings of identification are pivotal in predicting its self-evaluative outcomes. From the self-enhancement perspective (e.g., Cialdini et al., 1976; Hogg & Abrams, 1990) states of depressed self-image, such as low self-esteem or the emotions resulting from task failure, should induce compensatory identification with a valued individual or group, from which flattering generalizations to the self can be made. On the other hand, a consistency-based approach (e.g., Swann, 1983) would argue that such persons should choose

instead to reaffirm their low standing, and perhaps even seek to associate themselves with individuals or groups of correspondingly unfavourable status. To help resolve these issues, two investigations were carried out that tested the role of both performance feedback and potential targets of identification on individuals' self-descriptions.

CONCEPTUALIZING IDENTIFICATION

From the perspective to be advanced here, identification can encompass virtually any experience of categorization involving the self and another, or the self and a number of others (an ingroup). In fact, clinical investigations of parental identification commonly measure the construct in terms of the degree of similarity that the subject perceives between him/herself and the target parent (e.g., Brannigan & Horn, 1985; Levant & Bass, 1991; Williams, 1980). The broadness of this definition, however, can allow for some very inconsequential perceptions of similarity to be classified as instances of identification. Noticing that a another person was wearing the same brand of shoes would satisfy the criterion, but would probably not produce an interesting level of emotional or cognitive impact. Our more pragmatic and intuitive understanding of the term would suggest that identification best applies only to those cases in which a psychologically meaningful relation is perceived by the individual to the target or ingroup. Translated into an empirical model, the phenomenon may be circumscribed to situations in which the perceived ties to others produce demonstrable changes in self-relevant affect and judgment.

The most conventional and instructive example of the phenomenon being described is the identification experienced when reading a novel or watching a film. In fact, "identifying" with a fictional character is a psychological process that seems to be already well understood by the average person. The idea of immersing oneself in the situation of a protagonist and feeling it as if were actually happening to oneself is one with which we are all familiar. It is also common knowledge that the type of characters one identifies with tend to be at least in some way socially desirable and that one always hopes pleasant things will come their way: an outcome that is almost guaranteed by the Hollywood film industry (Miller, 1990). Although it is possible to perceive ties of similarity to others that reflect poorly on the self, it is assumed here that individuals will tend to avoid such relations and be motivated instead to identify with socially valued targets. In this manner, identification can be construed as a self-enhancing strategy by which another's positive characteristics (or at least their value) can be experienced and perhaps even internalized. Another aspect of identification, as understood by the layman, is that it occurs more easily when the target is similar to you in some respect. Hence, the frequent calls in North-American society to publicize accomplished female and minority "role-models" that young people of these groups can identify with. Sharing one trait with a target, such as sex or ethnicity, will presumably facilitate imagining oneself possessing others. In this case, characteristics that are equated with success.

The model in Figure 1 attempts to illustrate in a more systematic manner the processes that are hypothesized to constitute identification as it has been described

Figure 1. Theoretical Model of Identification

above. In it, we have the depiction of a cognitive process rooted in self-perception that can lead to perceptual strategies or biases that seek out instances of similarity which allow one to categorize the self together with a valued target. The two large circles are meant to represent an individual's self-image and that which he/she holds of a target-other, whereas the spheres within each circle are the particular traits that these perceptions embody. Traits that fall within the area of overlap (shaded area) are those common to both the perceiver and the target, and they serve as the initial tie of similarity that allows for identification to occur. In the case of group identification, the most obvious tie to others is the dimension of categorization (for example, gender or nationality). For individual identification, it can be almost any bond that appears meaningful to the perceiver. As stated above, it is this linkage of the self to the target that forms the basis for identification and sets the stage for potential transformations in self-perception. By establishing a connection to the other individual by way of perceived common attributes, one is consequently enabled to take on positive non-common attributes in an effort to maintain or bolster one's self-image. This process is illustrated by the intention to transfer an unshared target trait (framed by a square in the diagram) into the area of common possession: the mechanism (arrow) labelled trait appropriation.

It is also possible within this framework for an' individuals to "construct" similarity so that they may then engage in the self-ascription of target characteristics. For example, adopting the dress style of a rock star can create st 'ficient linkage to allow a person to imagine themselves also sharing in the celebrity's glamour, or some

other valued trait. In this manner, the process can also satisfy potential drives toward self-enhancement by securing a desirable social connection (to the target-other) for the self-concept; a connection that has the effect of altering people's self-perceptions. According to the model, the gain in self-in a e or self-esteem that is achieved by identification must proceed through the self-ascription of traits belonging to the target. If an individual is to view him/herself more positively following identification, it seems logical that a change in self-perceptions that results from an exaggeration of the self-descriptiveness of desirable target traits must occur (as will later be discussed, it is this assertion that most clearly sets apart the model from other accounts of social identification).

In the classical psychological literature, the preceding conceptualization was anticipated remarkably well in the pioneering writings of Sigmund Freud (Freud, 1964; Freud, 1959, Freud, 1984). He conceived of identification as an introjection of another individual, or a characteristic of that individual, into the ego. The process can be motivated by a desire to possess qualities of the person, to replace the loss of the person, or by the need to compensate for an unattainable object of the sexual instinct (Freud also spoke of identification with an aggressor, whereby the target's rules are internalized as a means of avoiding punishment). Of particular importance was his idea of identification as a tool for the "vicarious satisfaction" of "frustrated wishes" (summarized in Hall, 1954). Consider the following passage, drawn from Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego:

> Supposing, for instance, that one of the girls in a boarding school has had
> a letter from someone with whom she is secretly in love which arouses her

jealousy, and that she reacts to it with a fit of hysterics; then some of her friends who know about it will catch the fit, as we say, by mental infection. The mechanism is that of identification based upon the possibility or desire of putting oneself in the same situation (Freud, 1959: p. 39).

The conception being put forth by the present author portrays both a similar purpose and basis of identification (without the overtones of sexual conflict). It is believed that individuals are compelled to establish psychological connections of perceived similarity to another in order to see in themselves qualities of that person, or to derive some sort of positive affect from him/her. Employing this more contemporary terminology, it may be said that the "infected" girls of Freud's example are establishing a perceived linkage or resemblance to their friend by sharing in her distress so that they may reap the affective benefits of pretending to share in the experience of a secret lover as well.

In the more recent psychological writings on identification, the field of social psychology has produced the most pertinent insights into the phenomenon, primarily through research on the topics of social identity and basking in reflected glory. Although identification *per se* is not the central issue of scrutiny in these lines of investigation, important features of the phenomenon are nevertheless covered. Of special relevance is that both perspectives address the key concern of what motivates identification. According to social identity theory, the most basic motive in the intergroup context is the preservation of positive personal identity, achieved by association with favourable ingroups or the creation (through discrimination) of favourable ingroup identities (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Comparably, in the basking in reflected glory investigations, it is speculated that people will seize upon even the

remotest of connections to a valued target or group just so that they may portray (or attain) a more positive self-image (Cialdini et al., 1976) In the two sections that follow, the research from each of these areas is reviewed in detail.

SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY AND IDENTIFICATION

Social Identity and the Self-Concept

The two principal contentions of the definition of identification being offered here are that (1) association with others can influence our perceptions of ourselves and that (2) perceptions of such associations are driven by a need to self-enhance. Both are well served by the abundant research that is part of the realm of social identity theory. According to its originators, Tajfel and Turner (1979), part of each individual's *personal identity* (what is here being referred to as self-concept) is made up in part of their *social identity*. Social identity, in turn, comprises the knowledge of self derived from the sum of group memberships one endorses. In other words, aspects of the groups one belongs to will to a certain extent feed into or mould self-perceptions (a comparable picture of *ethnic identity* is painted by Aboud, 1981). Moreover, since we are postulated to have a need to view the self favourably, it is hypothesized that connections to socially valued groups are especially desirable.

The early experiments behind Tajfel's formulation of social identity theory centred around the most fundamental way to achieve a positive ingroup identity: intergroup discrimination. In the famous initial investigation, carried out by Tajfel and

his colleagues (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament , 1971), mere categorization of individuals was found to be sufficient to produce the effect. British schoolboys, ostensibly classified as "overestimators" or "underestimators" following guesses at the number of dots projected onto a screen, were asked to allocate pennies to anonymous ingroup and outgroup members. They were given no further descriptions of overestimators and underestimators other than the necessary disclaimer (to avoid confounds of group value) that neither group was more accurate in their judgment of the dots. By having subjects distribute rewards under these "minimal" group conditions, the researcher hoped to isolate categorization as the critical determinant of group bias.

Contrary to prevailing notions, however, patterns of discrimination were found that went beyond simple ingroup enhancement. It appeared, instead, that subjects were more motivated to differentiate positively the ingroup from the outgroup rather than just favour the ingroup. The evidence from a series of monetary allocation tasks indicated that achieving positive status relative to the outgroup was preferred by the schoolboys at the expense of maximizing "absolute" ingroup rewards. In more concrete terms, the subjects would pass over distributions in which an anonymous ingroup member would gain the highest possible sum of money if an outgroup member was to receive the same amount. Instead, they would choose outcomes that resulted in the ingroup member receiving a lower absolute amount if it also meant that the outgroup member would get even less.

The subtleties of this process, which has since been replicated many times and

with a variety of measures (Allen & Wilder, 1975; Billig & Tajfel, 1973; Locksley, Oritz, & Hepburn, 1980; Moghaddam & Stringer, 1986; Turner, 1978, among others), suggested to Tajfel that more than a group favouritism norm was at work. According to him, such a norm would manifest itself in the form of group reward maximization and not necessarily the intergroup distancing described above. To account for why ingroup gain is apparently sacrificed for between-group distance, it is useful to describe the discriminatory behaviour in terms of the self-enhancing aspects of social identity. Best characterised as social competition (Turner, 1975), the behavioural strategy observed ensures that the value of group membership contributes positively to personal identity. Since ingroup favourability is only meaningful in the context of a comparison with the outgroup, biased intergroup distancing allows the individual to actively construct positive self-esteem. By placing and perceiving one's own group ahead of a rival, one gains in self-worth from its *relative* superiority.

What is most relevant to our purposes about the Tajfel et al. (1971) experiment, however, is the fact that such self-enhancement can result entirely from the perceived association with those sharing a valued characteristic, and not the common possession of it by all group members. Subjects in the Tajfel et al. (1971) experiment were explicitly told that the allocations of money they made to the anonymous ingroup and outgroup members were in no way related to any rewards that they might receive. Assuming the social identity hypothesis to be correct, the ingroup value that the individual's personal identity would benefit from in this case would not result from one's own accumulation of money, but rather from gains made by a fellow-member.

It suggests that ingroup ties may allow us to appropriate positive characteristics that describe some of its members but not necessarily ourselves. The critical strategy leading to such perceptions would have to involve reliance on a relatively abstract form of association of the self to the attribute of value. More specifically, the individual would have to generalize from a shared trait on the dimension of group categorization (by definition, all group members share the property by which they have been categorized) to common possession of some other trait of value that is typical of *other* ingroup members and not the self. For instance, a person may not be the slightest bit courageous, yet still perceive him/herse:' ...o be so, or enjoy the value associated with the trait, because he/she is part of a national group known for its historical exploits in war. Thus, nationality is shared, but courageousness, or the glory attached to it, is appropriated.

A series of experiments on group polarization headed by Mackie (Mackie & Cooper, 1984; Mackie, 1986) lend some support to the idea that identification can lead to the appropriation of secondary ingroup characteristics (traits other than the dimension of categorization). Subjects in these investigations would listen to a taped discussion involving a few confederates and then be told either that they would be replacing one of the persons in a future discussion or that they would be part of a totally different group (in both cases, the topic of discussion was to be entirely different from the one on the tape). Before the fictitious second part would take place, they were asked to provide various estimates, including how they would have responded at the end of this exchange, had they taken part, and how they would rate

where the group stood on the issue. For those who believed that they would be joining the group (and particularly when competition was present; Mackie, 1986, experiment 2), the results consistently revealed exaggerated estimates of the extremity of the group position and the adoption of stands that reflected a shift from initial views (as assessed in a pre-tests). For those who expected to be ostensibly assigned altogether different team members, and for whom the taped individuals represented an outgroup, virtually no comparable effects were present. Although not interpreted as such, the endorsement of an extreme version of the ingroup opinion may be said to reflect the changes in self-perception that are induced by perceived associations to others. In this case, however, rather than a physical or personality trait being adopted, it is an attitude that was being altered. It is unclear though to what extent such change merely reflected the operation of conformity pressures as opposed to an actual re-evaluation of personal beliefs, influenced by ingroup identification. Mackie's own explanation centres on the mediational influence of the perceived group norm and implies that conformity is in fact responsible for the shifts, but it does not rule out a genuine change in attitude. The presence of attitude changes two days later in one of the studies (Mackie, 1986) makes a solid case for the contention that a "real" and enduring revision of opinion took place.

Group Status and Self-Esteem

Unfortunately, other comparable examinations of the relationship between self- and ingroup perceptions surprisingly are lacking in the vast social identity literature.

The same is almost true for the connection between social identification and self-enhancement. Although it is central to the discrimination interpretation outlined in the preceding section, the influence of group status on self-esteem has hardly stimulated any direct empirical tests. Nonetheless, the two relevant investigations that have been conducted do provide support, in spite of certain limitations. In one of these, Wagner, Lampen and Syllwassychy (1986) found low self-esteem to be related to membership in groups of low status. Subjects in the experiment, all of whom were law students, were told that they would be judging others in videotaped recordings on the dimension of "discussion ability." In the control condition, no mention was made of groups, whereas in the two experimental ones, participants expected to rate both law (ingroup) and ecr omics (outgroup) students. For one of these experimental conditions, the additional information that law students were worse on the skill of interest was given in order to "devalue" the ingroup. As expected, subjects receiving this last treatment registered significantly lower self-esteem scores, but only on an achievement-related self-esteem measure and not on a general one. Furthermore, deflation of personal identity occurred only for those who filled out the self-esteem scales before rating the videotapes and not for those who did so afterwards. The authors explained that gains in self-esteem resulting from the self-enhancing outgroup discrimination allowed by the rating task would account for this last finding. In support of their interpretation, negative correlations were found between self-esteem (for both types of measurement this time) and estimates of outgroup discussion ability.

In the second investigation examining group status and self-esteem, Brown and

Lohr (1987) studied "peer-group affiliation" in high school students. Of primary interest here, these researchers observed that more elevated self-esteem scores were related to membership in groups that were superior in the high school "crowd" hierarchy. Their interpretation, however, does not draw upon the social identity description of the process. Instead, the authors rely upon an "integration" of ego-identity (Erikson, 1968), symbolic-interactionism (Gergen, 1971) and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) to account for their results. A parallel description can, however, easily be produced using a Tajfelian account. Adopting this latter perspective, one could argue that the contribution made to social identity by membership in valued "crowds" helped bolster one's personal identity (or self-esteem). Nevertheless, in view of the correlational design employed, it may simply be that individuals high in self-esteem in the first place are more likely to be part of high status groups.

These interpretational ambiguities of Brown and Lohr (1987) can be resolved if their findings are taken in conjunction with the evidence provided by Wagner et al. (1986), who make the more convincing causal link between group status and self-esteem. The sum of the two does, however, remain a very circumscribed source of evidence for the connection between perceptions of group value and self-worth which is being advanced. To strengthen the case, we may consider a recent experiment conducted by Sachdev and Bourhis (1991) in which subjects were experimentally assigned to one of two groups (high or low status), allegedly on the basis of their performance on an test of creativity. Among other findings, these authors noted a

greater degree of ingroup "identification" in those who had been categorized in a high

status group, relative to those in the low status condition. More specifically,

individuals of the superior ingroup showed greater comfort, happiness and satisfaction

with regard to their membership. Although, in the strictest sense, this result must be

viewed as an indirect test of the group-status/self-esteem relation, it does not require

a great leap of logic to equate happiness regarding membership with happiness about

the self.

Group Discrimination and Self-Esteem

A far more replete source of indirect tests relating to the idea of self-

enhancement through ingroup associations comes from the social identity research vein

dealing with group discrimination. Given that discriminatory intergroup differentiation

constitutes the principal behavioural manifestation of social identity theory conjectures,

investigations in this domain have been abundant. Those which have specifically

addressed issues of self-esteem are reviewed in a perspicacious article by Hogg and

Abrams (1990). In their analysis of what they call "the self-esteem hypothesis," these

authors consider if gains in self-esteem can be achieved through discrimination

("corollary 1") and, in congruence with this idea, whether decreased self-esteem will

prompt one to discriminate in an effort of repair ("corollary 2").

In a test of the first corollary, an early experiment by Oakes and Turner (1980)

categorized subjects into minimal groups on the basis of painting preference and

subsequently manipulated whether or not they engaged in a (discriminatory) point-

allocation task. Factor scores from two of three self-esteem measures indicated that those who had been given the opportunity to discriminate (positively differentiate ingroup from outgroup) experienced an elevated self-view. Unfortunately, as Hogg and Abrams (1990) point out, a series of experiments, in which the first author was involved, has failed to uphold the effect.

Matters do not improve much with studies of corollary 2. In one line of evidence, reviewed by Hogg and Abrams (1990), low group status (equated by these authors with low self-esteem) actually resulted in *less* discrimination (Sachdev & Bourhis, 1985; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1987). Consistent with this apparently damning evidence is a research effort headed by Crocker which pretested subjects on self-esteem. On one occasion, no differences in discrimination were found (Crocker & Schwartz, 1985), while on another, it was those high in self-esteem who discriminated more, though only under conditions of threat (Crocker et al.,1987). Similarly, positive correlations between pre-test measures of self-esteem and subsequent discriminatory behaviour add to the bleak evidence (Abrams, 1982; Abrams, 1983: both cited in Hogg & Abrams, 1990).

On a more positive note, two experimental investigations involving manipulations of self-esteem provide mixed support for corollary 2. In the first of these (an unpublished report by Hogg & Morkans, 1989: cited in Hogg and Abrams, 1990), no effect of self-esteem was found for both categorized and control (uncategorized) subjects. However, in the second (Hogg & Sunderland, 1991), which employed a similar design, categorized subjects in the low self-esteem condition

displayed greater discrimination than all others, although a post-test measure failed to register any increase in self-esteem.

To account for the apparent failures at confirmation of a such a critical hypothesis, Hogg and Abrams (1990) point to possible methodological weaknesses. One of the two specific problems discussed is the measurement of self-esteem, which they feel may be too broad and "largely insensitive to transitory self-images" (Hogg & Abrams, 1990: p.38). The other reason speculated to be responsible for the absence of support involves potential competing motives behind discriminatory behaviour (or lack thereof). The suggestion that social norms of fairness may be one of these can apply well to the findings of Sachdev and Bourhis (Sachdev & Bourhis, 1985; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1987), where low status groups are found to discriminate less. What may have occurred was that the experimentally manipulated status feedback served to establish norms of equity that the subject would feel compelled to obey when making choices in the payoff matrices. As such, in light of the implicit pressure toward making "just" distributions, rewards could simply reflect the imposed group hierarchy, especially if we take into account the scrutiny of an authority figure (the experimenter). A parallel interpretation can also apply at the personal level of "status" for the studies that looked at the role of individuals' self-esteem in discriminatory behaviour (i.e., those low in self-esteem felt that they, or their group, deserved less). As will later be discussed, such behaviour may be taken as evidence for a consistency model of self-perception (Shrauger, 1975), which will be shown to argue against the traditional self-enhancement assumptions of social identity theory.

Group Identification and Discrimination

The final area of relevant social identity research, the relationship between group identification and discrimination, also addresses the self-enhancing function of identification. According to the assumptions of social identity theory presented earlier (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), one would expect stronger ingroup identification to be associated with more severe ingroup bias. The logic behind this contention builds on two central premises: (1) that positive self-esteem can be derived from ingroup favourability and (2) that groups with which an individual identifies more strongly bear greater weight in their self-conception. If we accept these to be true, it follows that concerns with personal identity should be especially potent when one's connection (or belongingness) to an ingroup is strong, and that it should lead to heightened bias aimed at elevating its social value. In other words, since social identity wields considerably more psychological impact when identif.cation is high, the importance of managing the contribution the ingroup makes to one's view of the self should manifest itself in a more determined discrimination effort.

Support for this argument comes from a series of fourteen investigations that correlated group identification and ingroup bias (summarized by Hinkle & Brown, 1990). The totality of the findings appears to confirm the theorized positive relationship between these variables. Hinkle and Brown are not as optimistic. They feel that the large range of correlations found, together with the consistently negative (or absent) relationships observed in a few studies are cause for concern. The authors do not imply, however, that the social identity formulation is incorrect, but rather that

this particular relationship may be mediated by unexplored variables. They speculate that it is perhaps with groups valuing collectivism over individualism ("collectivist orientation") and those motivated to make between-group comparisons ("comparative ideology") that a positive correlation is most likely to result.

Another interesting question that should perhaps be added is whether, having discriminated against a relevant outgroup, a person will be more motivated to identify with the ingroup. In line with Tajfel's (1972) argument that individuals should seek association with positively valued groups, one would expect that those who had just made an effort to positively differentiate their group would want to strengthen their perceived membership in it as well. The same outcome would, however, also be expected using a cognitive dissonance or consistency analysis: hindsight forcing the person to conclude that their discriminatory behaviour must have been motivated by strong ingroup attachment.

Summary

On the whole, the social identity model of intergroup relations provides important insights into the process of identification with others. Although restricted to the context of ingroup identification, it offers a coherent motivational account of what is to be gained through associations with others and how such ties can influence our behaviour. In brief, it suggests that self-enhancement or self-esteem motives lead us to covet membership in groups of positive value. Research on minimal groups has shown that we will attempt to obtain such value for our ingroup by positively

distancing it from the outgroup through discriminatory behaviour. Some direct evidence also exists for the connection between self-esteem and group value, although attempts to demonstrate the self-enhancing effects of discrimination have been very problematic. Tests of the relationship between ingroup identification and discrimination, however, are for the most part fairly congruent with a self-enhancement interpretation of social identification.

BASKING IN REFLECTED GLORY

Basking in Group Glory

A second major source of evidence for the idea that perceived connections to others can be used for self-enhancing purposes comes from the research carried out on basking in reflected glory (BIRGing). The original investigation on this topic, conducted by Cialdini and his associates, was specifically devised to test the assumption that "people appear to feel that they can share in the glory of a successful other with whom they are in some way associated" (Cialdini et al., 1976: p. 366). These authors believed that individuals would attempt to publicly display such associations in quest of positive evaluations from others. They reasoned that, not only are Heider's (1958) balance principles correct, but that people were somehow aware that observers make use of them in their judgments. Hence, those motivated to exhibit a positive self-image could establish a self-serving *unit relationship* in the mind of the perceiver by making visible their connection to a valued other. According to Heider, the perceiver, owing to his/her motivation to maintain balance between associated

elements (those in a unit relation) would have to ascribe positive value to someone who has shown him/herself to be linked to a positive target.

What Cialdini et al. (1976) found supported their thesis remarkably well. In the first of three investigations. unobtrusive measures of the clothes people wore on Mondays following their college football team's weekend games revealed that significantly more school apparel was donned after victories as compared to defeats. In the second test, a telephone inquiry conducted in the middle of the football season, subjects were asked to participate in an ostensible "information survey" following which they received contrived performance feedback (success or failure). Following this manipulation, subjects were made to recall either a team victory or defeat, and their use of the pronoun "we" was recorded. As expected, the researchers found increased use of "we" when a victory was recalled which was even greater in the failure condition. Unlike the some of the problematic social identity tests of the self-esteem hypothesis discussed earlier, this last effect clearly illustrates an attempt to elevate a depressed self-image by way of association to a valued i .group (the college). The third and final test employed a design similar to the second. It revealed that, when asked to describe both a school victory *and* a defeat, participants' use of "we" in recounting the victory was greater when the losing effort was described first (essentially, a contrast effect).

Subsequent examinations of basking in reflected glory have provided additional backing to Cialdini's conceptions. In two such investigations (Cialdini & Richardson, 1980; Snyder, Lassegard, & Ford, 1986), the self-enhancement underpinnings of the

process are elaborated through a more complete examination of perceived associations to others. The first study to do so (Cialdini and Richardson, 1980) studied both "basking" and "blasting," two mechanisms constituting what the authors labelled as "indirect tactics of image management." Drawing once more on balance principles, Cialdini argued that, while favourable evaluations should be made of objects one is "positively" connected to (ie., objects of basking), unfavourable characterizations (blasting) should be reserved for objects with which one has a "negative" association. To test this idea, subjects were given false feedback on a fictitious measure of "latent creativity" and then provided ratings of their home University or a rival. In line with the hypothesized pattern, positive ratings of the home school and negative ratings of the rival both increased under conditions of failure.

The most interesting fact about this investigation is how closely it resembles those examining the relationship between self-esteem and group discrimination, especially the experiment by Hogg and Sunderland (1991). As alluded to earlier (regarding Cialdini et al., 1976), it is quite possible to interpret the basking in reflected glory findings entirely from the social identity intergroup perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), an account that is strangely lacking in all of Cialdini's analyses. A far more parsimonious view of his findings can be achieved if we relabel the home and rival universities as ingroup and outgroup. To complete the conceptual assimilation, we need only translate basking into identification with a positive ingroup (or ingroup favouritism in the case of Cialdini & Richardson, 1980) and blasting into outgroup disparagement. Moreover, by doing so, the social identity theory case for the

influence of self-esteem on group bias is significantly strengthened; in the basking-in-reflected-glory investigations we have clear evidence of a motive to affirm self-enhancing ingroup ties under conditions of threatened personal identity.

A similar interpretation can also be applied to the Snyder et al. experiment (1986), in which teams of subjects were given performance feedback following a task and led to believe that they would be giving a presentation before a group of judges. Individual subjects were then assessed with regard to their desire to attend the presentation and their willingness to wear a team badge. In concordance with social identity assumptions that were presented earlier, these authors found that subjects who were part of an unsuccessful team showed less desire to associate themselves with it. They reported less desire to be with the group at the presentation and fewer of them chose to take, and wear, the team badge. To emphasize the parallel to *basking-in-reflected-glory*, the authors label this behaviour *cutting-off-reflected-failure*. Another way to describe it, however, is to say that less identification was observed in members of low status groups, most likely in an attempt to avoid a drop in self-esteem.

This interpretation receives empirical backing from a rare basking study which does not overlook the connection to principles of social identity theory. In an investigation by Hirt, Zillman, Erickson & Kennedy (1992), the authors make use of the concept of social identification (though in a limited manner) in dealing with findings that demonstrated the influence of team performance on fans' self-evaluations. In a set of two experiments, they observed that fans of university basketball (an athletic arena that is taken very seriously in the United States) who were shown a loss

by "their" team reported lower expectancies regarding their own future performance

(on various tasks) compared to those shown a victory. The same effect was observed

on a measure of temporal self-esteem and it was argued that this second variable may

have played a mediating role in the process. In the authors' words, "[the] results

support the notion that challenges to an important identity for an individual are treated

as threats to the self" (Hirt et al., 1992: p. 736). Their results also support the self-

esteem inferences made with regard to the results of Snyder et al. (1986), and confirm

the social identity findings reported earlier of the link between group status and self-

esteem (ie., Wagner et al., 1986; Brown & Lohr, 1987; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1987).

In addition, they show very directly how perceptions of the ingroup can be reflected

in judgments of the self. In this case, the outcomes of a group that one is linked to

only by abstract categorical association (the fans do not actually contribute to the

ingroup's performance) appear to be vicariously experienced by the individual and

translated into a (temporarily) revised conception of the self.

Basking in an Individual's Glory

Subjected to such "reanalysis" which stresses group identification, the preceding

studies of basking in reflected glory tie in very elegantly with the social identity

model. In combination, they provide a more solid basis for the claims being made

here about the self-enhancing aspects of group membership and identity. Furthermore,

two recent investigations help bring us toward a broader definition of identification by

examining how people can bask in the reflected glory of *individuals*.

In the earlier of the two experiments (Finch & Cialdini, 1989), subjects read a profile depicting the misdeeds of the notorious Rasputin and then provided ratings of this negative target. Consistent with previous group-based findings, those who were led to believe that they shared Rasputin's birthday gave him significantly less critical ratings compared to controls. To employ the language of the researchers, subjects who were connected to the target "boosted" him (analogous to ingroup favouritism). Finch and Cialdini also stressed the importance of the fact that one's link to the target in this case was "trivial and accidental," and that the "image management" which occurred was directed at an "inner audience." This last point is a significant one, yet also very slippery, as are theoretical attempts to dissociate inner and outer audiences (as attempted by Breckler & Greenwald, 1986). The problem stems from the difficulty of removing the influence of others' evaluations (implicit or explicit) from our self-views, and the impossibility of erasing the role others play in defining the traits on which we directly evaluate ourselves. Aside from this concern is the more basic query of whether or not the self-enhancing bids of association to another, be they overtly presented to the public or not, simply elevate positive affect or actually alter people's perceptions of themselves as well. As the basketball fan investigation by Hirt et al (1992) has shown in the context of group identification, the more complex account involving self-perceptual change may be the more accurate one as well.

A cleverly conceived series of experiments by Brown, Novick, Lord and Richards (1992) provides further evidence. Female subjects were presented with a photograph of either an attractive or unattractive woman after which they would

provide attractiveness judgments of themselves. In one experiment (study 2), similarity to the target photos was manipulated by leading the participants to believe that they shared common values, while in two others (studies 3 and 4) the shared birthday tactic of Finch and Cialdini (1989) was employed. Both manipulations yielded a pattern of findings whereby "assimilation" toward an attractive or unattractive other (on self-ratings of attractiveness) occurred when the target was similar, while the opposite tendency ("contrasting") emerged when the target was dissimilar. To use the terminology being advanced by the present author, appropriation of target properties (in this case, only attractiveness was measured) was obtained by the induction of identification through target similarity. Interestingly, in this instance, some subjects were in a sense forced to appropriate a negative quality by being linked to the unattractive target. One would assume that, if given the opportunity, they would not chose to seek out association-building similarities to unfavourable others. By the same token, one may expect them, if in fact they were motivated by self-enhancement, to try to establish such connections to the attractive target. The inclusion of self-esteem as an independent variable in the fourth experiment conducted by Brown and his colleagues provides some support for this assumption, although the correlational design severely limits the motivational inferences that can be made. When classified according to self-esteem assessed earlier in the school-year, it appears that only those chronically low on the trait showed the assimilation or appropriation pattern in the attractive target condition. It suggests that a need for self-enhancement in these individuals led them to be particularly motivated

to acquire the positivity of the attractive other. Why people with high self-esteem would behave in an opposite manner is possibly explained by the fact that a more positive conception of the self allows one the luxury of being modest, a socially desirable behaviour that has its own rewards. As Wicklund and Gollwitzer (1982) have suggested in their work on symbolic self-completion, it is those who are least secure about the self who will boast the loudest.

ENHANCEMENT AND CONSISTENCY IN SELF-PERCEPTION

Self-Enhancement and Perceptual Distortion

From what has so far been discussed regarding the self-serving aspect of social identification, it emerges that a fair degree of perceptual contortion is required for the type of positive self-views that are being constructed by individuals. In the social identity literature surveyed, people seem quite ready to evaluate groups they know nothing about in a way that favours the ingroup. The research on basking in reflected glory shows us that they also appear to be quick to share in positive evaluations that they are only remotely connected to. Social psychological research in the areas of impression management (Arkin & Sheppard, 1989), self-presentation (Baumgardner, Kaufman, & Levy, 1989) and self-evaluation maintenance (Tesser, 1988), among others, confirms the existence of a self-enhancement motive, yet, it does not address the orchestrated information processing involved in convincing the self of the often illusory conceptions that have been outlined above.

The features of such bias are documented very well, however, in the cognitive-motivational research on the self-enhancing strategies of self-perception. In a comprehensive survey of the findings, Taylor and Brown (1988) reported that individuals tend to be rather quixotic regarding evaluations of the self, as well as those of their future and personal control. The first of these illusory perceptual tactics, excessively positive appraisals of the self, makes for a process aptly suited to benefit from, and possibly encourage, the formation of self-enhancing psychological associations with others. Guided by what may be labelled "hot" cognitive mechanisms, individuals are probably more likely to perceive dimensions of similarity that connect them to valued others, while strategically failing to notice those that link them to unfavourable targets. Such a view would no doubt be seconded by Srull and Wyer (1986), who describe how category accessibility, as determined by current personal concerns, may dominate one's focus, understanding and orientation with respect to a particular situation. It is also compatible with the thinking of Johnson and Sherman (1990), who maintain that motivational influences, such as self-enhancement, in conjunction with accommodating, heuristic-based cognitive mechanisms, can lead to biased information processing. In sum, we clearly appear to have the motive, tools and opportunities to commit crimes of self-enhancement.

Self-Enhancement versus Self-Consistency

Self-enhancement, however, is not the sole compulsion governing self-perception. The need to encode information about the self in a more objective manner

provides us with a second, and potentially conflicting, motive. Rooted in the tradition of Heider's balance theory (1958) and Festinger's cognitive dissonance (1957), this perspective informs us of the importance of coherently integrating our thoughts, and the uneasiness we may experience by failing to do so. The potential antagonism between such processing and the inherent bias of cognitions driven by self-esteem needs is obvious and it presents a challenge to the perceptual distortions of identification that are being stressed. Situations in which the individual is faced with any sort of negative outcome are particular instances in which this type of motivational conflict can arise. On the one hand, there is a pressure to deny or distort the information, while on the other is the need to realistically encode it.

The debate is in fact an old one, and the clash between the two motives had already been well documented two decades ago in extensive reviews by both Jones (1973) and Shrauger (1975). Although the majority of studies surveyed were found to support self-enhancement, the existence of a drive toward self-consistency could not be ruled out. Unfortunately, the primary technique has been to assess how we approach self-relevant information rather than how it alters our self-image. In the typical study supporting consistency, the desire to maintain a congruous image of the self is measured as the preference or liking for an evaluator whose view of you is consistent with your own self-image (e.g., Dutton & Arrowood; 1971). Similarly, most of the old evidence reported in favour of enhancement also relies on subjects' attitudes towards an evaluator: commonly dislike, under conditions of low self-esteem, when his/her evaluations of them are poor (e.g. Harvey, 1962).

More recently, Swann has developed and extensively tested the concept of *self-verification* (Swann, 1983; 1990), which is best described as an extremely subtle variant of self-consistency. According to the model, individuals are motivated to confirm or "verify" their impressions of self in order to achieve future control and predictability of their environment. At the empirical level, however, it is very difficult to distinguish self-verification from self-consistency. In both cases, the congruence of an individual's behaviour with initial feedback is what is being measured; all that really differs is Swann's implicit theoretical contention that this feedback represents an accurate self-portrayal in the eyes of the subject--information which he/she is motivated to incorporate into his/her understanding of the self. The self-verification research is also virtually identical in the measures of "congruence" that are employed. Once more, self-perceptual change is overlooked and the preference is to assess such things as the desire to view self-confirming information (e.g., Swann, Pelham, & Krull, 1989) or willingness to interact with a self-confirming evaluator (e.g., Swann, Stein-Seroussi & Giesler, 1992).

Studies in the literature that have examined what occurs to the self-image following the manipulation of self-relevant feedback fail to provide a definitive account of the processes involved. An early experiment by Shrauger and Rosenberg (1970) suggests that consistent information, regardless of its valence, will not just be sought out, but also incorporated into one's self-conception. In comparison to pre-treatment ratings of the self, it was found that subjects' self-evaluations increased following manipulated feedback of success, and that they tended (to an even greater

degree) to decline when failure feedback was provided. Similar outcomes are reported by Shrauger and Lund (1975), as well as Stake (1982); both investigations registering self-perceptual shifts in the direction of feedback valence. On the other hand, two experiments conducted by Eagly indicate a pattern that strongly implies the operation of enhancement motives as well. The first of these (Eagly, 1967) revealed stronger resistance to change (in self-perception) in the face of negative information, relative to positive feedback. Subjects were willing to accommodate a more favourable self-image much more readily than an unfavourable one. Similarly, in the second experiment (Eagly & Whitehead, 1972), virtually no change at all occurred in subjects' self-images when negative evaluations were given, in contrast to the self-perceptual enhancement that was shown when positive evaluations were provided.

Although these mixed findings make it impossible to single out one motive over another, they perhaps quite clearly indicate that neither enhancement nor consistency can be ignored when predicting how individuals will respond to self-relevant information.

Enhancement and Consistency in Social Identification

The presence of a drive toward consistency in perceptions of the self may account for some of the problematic tests of the "self-esteem hypothesis" (Hogg & Abrams, 1990) in the context of social identification. Efforts at identity repair such as discrimination, and even increased affiliation with a positive ingroup, can be hindered by the cross-current of consistency. Individuals in a state of depressed social

identity may feel pressure to validate their negative self-view and, thus, be prevented from engaging in these self-enhancing strategies of group perception. In the standard minimal groups paradigm that has been employed in social identity research (see Tajfel et al., 1971), the aim is to *minimize* and control all information pertaining to the contrived intergroup situation. By presenting group status feedback in such a context, however, one may inadvertently corner subjects into maintaining consistency. If the only substantial knowledge one has of the ingroup is its favourability relative to the outgroup, subsequent group evaluations or reward allocations may be disproportionately influenced by a desire to reflect equitably the status difference, even though self-enhancement would dictate an opposite strategy when social identity is negative.

This sort of dilemma is more singularly emphasized in situations where the potential dimension of self-enhancement is perceived to be related to the characteristic which defines one's inadequacy. Having been informed that you are clumsy makes it rather difficult to then self-aggrandize on the trait of agility. The process of image-enhancement through identification, however, can circumvent such difficulties by allowing for the appropriation of positive qualities unrelated to the one(s) causing deflated self-esteem. As Steele (1988) has suggested in his model of self-affirmation, individuals can assert a favourable impression of the self, in defense of negative information, by switching to orthogonal indices of self-worth. To illustrate, consider the increased identification with a victorious home team under conditions of task failure found by Cialdini et al. (1976). Compensating for an ostensibly poor

performance on a quiz of campus issues by linking oneself to an ingroup successful in the domain of athleticism is easily achieved without the impasse of consistency drives: by shifting the dimension of self-evaluation, the self-enhancement can occur without interference from the negative feedback. Whether these subjects actually came to see themselves as somehow more athletic, however, remains an open question. Baumgardner et al. (1989) have suggested that individuals with chronically low self-esteem are more concerned with *public* rather than *private* image bolstering. Accordingly, it could be argued that it was sufficient for participants in the Cialdini et al. (1976) experiment who received failure feedback simply to display their connection to the winning team, and that changes in self-perception are not required to satisfy a self-enhancement motive. However, chronic and immediate self-esteem are probably very different in this respect. It is doubtful that esteem-driven regulation of the average person's day-to-day self-image depends solely on self-presentation devoid of any changes in beliefs about the self. The two experiments described below attempted to demonstrate that the need to self-enhance can induce a process of identification whereby traits belonging to a valued target-other are appropriated.

-Chapter 2-
EXPERIMENT 1

The design of the initial experiment allowed for the examination of both the self-perceptual and motivational facets of identification, as they have been presented in this thesis. To satisfy the first objective, a direct test of the influence of ties to others on perceptions of the self was constructed. Past theorizing and research in the areas of social identity (Hinkle & Brown, 1989; Hogg & Abrams, 1990; Tajfel et al., 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and basking in reflected glory (Burger, 1985; Cialdini et al., 1976; Cialdini & Richardson, 1980; Snyder, Lassegard & Ford, 1986) have addressed the affective benefits of association with others but have not specified the actual mechanism of self-perception that allows individuals to make use of them. It was hypothesized here that the mechanism involves seeing or exaggerating in oneself some of the traits that give the target of identification his/her social value. The motivation governing this sort of behaviour was the other important issue covered. As a viable alternative to the self-enhancement prediction being made here, the motive to maintain consistency in perceptions of the self (Jones, 1973; Shrauger, 1976; Swann, 1983) would appear to be an obstacle to the idealistic self-ascription of valued traits (particularly under conditions of failure, where the inconsistency should be most obvious). The experimental paradigm that was constructed permitted for a test of these two alternatives.

Under the guise of a fictitious test called the California Great Individuals Scale,

subjects were given false performance feedback (success; failure) on a test of historical

knowledge, as part of a self-esteem manipulation, and then paired with a famous target

(Napoleon Bonaparte) whom they rated in a subsequent task. These ratings served to

isolate, for each subject, traits that they perceived to be descriptive of the target from

those that they judged to be non-descriptive[1]. A pattern of selective endorsement

(appropriation) of the *descriptive* items on subsequent self-evaluations was used to

operationalize identification. Self-ascribing the descriptive items was seen as

analogous to perceiving similarity to the target and thereby approximated the

traditional clinical measures of identification referred to earlier. In addition to

providing a measure of the impact of identification on self-perception, this technique

had the further advantage of avoiding some of the demand characteristics that would

have been caused by asking subjects directly for similarity estimates. The effect of

similarity as an independent variable on these perceptions was tested by way of two

dimensions of comparison: sex and date of birth. In accordance with the model

presented earlier (see Figure 1), as well as the findings of Finch and Cialdini (1989)

and Brown et al. (1992), the sharing of common attributes was hypothesized to

facilitate identification. Hence, it was expected that males, by virtue of being of the

same sex, and those who had been led to believe that they were born on the same day

as Napoleon would show the highest levels of identification, as measured by the self-

ascription of target-descriptive traits.

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[1]These items are in fact only *less* descriptive (as will become clear in the description of the methodology), yet the label "non-descriptive," which represents an exaggeration, will be employed throughout for purposes of clarity.

To differentiate between the conflicting motives of self-enhancement and self-consistency, the self-descriptions that subjects had to present were measured on both desirable and undesirable characteristics. The contrasting of these two theoretical perspectives was also the objective of the performance feedback manipulation. A finding of greater trait appropriation in conditions of failure would favour a self-enhancement interpretation of identification. In addition, if the goal of association with the target was to elevate the self-view, one would also expect individuals receiving negative feedback to appropriate more positive than negative characteristics. A self-consistency approach, however, would argue the opposite: individuals receiving an unfavourable evaluation of the self, if motivated to maintain a consistent image, should select more negative traits to describe themselves. A divergent effect of target descriptiveness (of the traits) could also be expected from this perspective. Assuming that both positive and negative traits may possibly increase in their value by being associated to a favourable target, their suitability in confirming a deflated self-view would necessarily decrease. This would make target-descriptive traits less likely to be chosen in self-evaluations made by those experiencing failure.

METHOD

Subjects and Design

Subjects were 120 (60 male, 60 female) undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory psychology course at the University of Western Ontario. Their participation in the experiment contributed to the fulfilment of a requirement for that

class. The design of the experiment was a 2 (subject sex) × 2 (birthday match) × 2 (performance feedback) × 2 (trait descriptiveness) factorial, in which subject sex, birthday match and performance feedback were between-subject factors, and trait descriptiveness was a within-subject factor.

Materials and Procedure

All subjects were tested by means of a computer programme uniquely developed, by the experimenter, for this investigation (see Appendix A for complete instructions). Eight separate computers (each in its own room) were used, such that up to eight people were tested during any given session. Upon arrival, having been greeted by the experimenter, and following the completion a consent form, subjects were given a password that enabled them to start the computer programme when they felt ready to begin.

The principal aim of this programme was to present subjects with a famous individual, who would be a potential target of identification, and to measure the degree of similarity that they perceived to that person. In addition, it had to conduct a test for which false performance feedback would be provided. In order to achieve all of this in a covert, credible and well-integrated manner, the whole enterprise was presented under the guise of *The California Great Individuals Scale* (see Appendix A-1). The description of the scale that was displayed read as follows:

> The California Great Individuals Scale (CGIS) is a unique measure of personality
> that examines people's perceptions of famous individuals. It has been developed
> by a team of leading psychologists at California's top academic institutions.
> The researchers have shown that our cultural systems and values are moulded

to a substantial degree by men and women whom society has considered to be *great*. For this reason, it is believed that studying how each of us perceives such famous and admired persons can tell us a lot about ourselves.

The inventory that you will be answering today is a short version of the complete CGIS package. More information will be given to you at the end of the session regarding the exact nature of the measures being used. However, if you encounter difficulties with the procedure at any stage, please feel free to contact the experimenter.

It is important to note that great care was taken in the visual presentation of the instrument so that it would appear as a "professional" looking computer-based personality inventory. Stylistic elements used to achieve this end included presenting a fictitious company logo, maintaining colour coordination and consistency from display to display, and using delayed screen onset for smoother transitions between displays.

Performance feedback. The initial task performed by subjects consisted of a brief multiple choice quiz testing knowledge of twelve famous twentieth century individuals (quiz items are contained in Appendix A-2). It was alleged that this task was necessary to assist the creators of the CGIS in selecting new great individuals for their data-banks. In addition, each participant was informed that the quiz would also provide him/her with some information about his/her historical knowledge. Once the test was initiated, each stimulus name would flash onto the screen for two seconds and then be replaced by three response options. The subject had ten seconds to decide which of the three options best characterized the individual's profession (for example, George Orwell would be followed by the choices: (a)-writer (b)-painter (c)-historian). They were informed at the start that their performance would be evaluated in terms of response latency and item difficulty, yet, upon completion of the test, every subject

was given the ambiguous score of 429. The meaning of this number was conveyed in an accompanying description used to manipulate their self-esteem. The description for those in the success condition stated that they had achieved a "Class A score", which was "above the norm for college freshmen," and that their "knowledge of history [was] quite good." In contrast, a "Class D" score was assigned to those in the failure condition, who were told that they were "below the norm for college freshmen" and that "we recommend that [they] try to improve their knowledge of history." Through pilot testing, a relatively difficult set of stimulus names was selected in order to avoid a high *actual* mean performance and the associated problem of giving failure feedback to individuals who were confident of having done extremely well. The parallel problem of giving success feedback to those who felt they had performed especially poorly was not considered to be as serious, since potential attributions of "good luck" could be made by subjects to interpret the discrepancy and result in comparable positive affect relative to those who did believe the success.

Matching to a target of identification. In the subsequent stage of the experiment, a potential target of identification was provided to the subjects (see appendix A-3). They were told that the rest of the test would involve making some judgments of a great individual, and, that in order to make it all more interesting for them, the computer would attempt to assign them a famous historical figure who shared their birthday (at this point subjects were required to key in their day and month of birth). For half of the subjects the computer would successfully find a match, while the other half would be informed that no match was found and that a

target would be assigned to them at random. Regardless of this birthday match manipulation, the programme was contrived such that all subjects were assigned Napoleon Bonaparte. Those who were led to believe that they were born on the same day as Napoleon were shown their date of birth (day and month) alongside the correct year of the emperor's birth, 1769. For those who were told that the target was randomly chosen, a date that was five months and thirteen days removed from their own was listed instead. All subjects were shown a brief description portraying the emperor's career and were free to look at it indefinitely before going on to the next stage of the experiment.

Evaluations of target and self. Once the target had been assigned, subjects were asked to evaluate him by selecting the most descriptive of two traits in each of ten forced-choice pairs. In order to examine possible differential self-ascription of target traits as a function of their value, half of the pairs presented were high in likability and half were low on this dimension (as assessed by Anderson, 1968). Thus, subjects were required to select five positive items and five negative ones to describe Napoleon (all items are listed in Appendix A). In order to promote cognitive differentiation of the chosen and non-chosen item, the paired adjectives were always orthogonal in meaning (following the classification of traits presented by Peabody, 1987). Once one item from each of the ten pairs was selected, subjects were then asked to make ratings of the self on *all* twenty traits (which were now presented one a time and in a different order) using 1-[not at all] to 9-[very much] scales of endorsement. Hence, in the end, subjects rated the self on both positive and negative

traits which they had earlier judged to be descriptive or non-descriptive with reference

to Napoleon.

Affective Measures. As the last task of the computer session, subjects r ted (on

9 point scales) how they felt at the moment and how much they had enjoyed the

session. The aim of these questions was to gauge any effects of identification or the

experimental manipulations on subjects' resultant affective state.

Debriefing. Following the affective rating task, individuals were thanked for

participation and thoroughly debriefed. It was explained that the California Great

Individuals Scale did not really exist and that the quiz was entirely contrived. The

fictitious score everyone had received was written out on the blackboard to help undo

the deceit and great care was taken to explain the potential lingering attributions of

inadequacy to those who had received failure feedback.

RESULTS

To investigate changes in self-evaluations that may have occurred as a function

of association with the potential target of identification, separate 2 (subject sex) × 2

(birthday match) × 2 (performance feedback) × 2 (trait descriptiveness) analyses of

variance (ANOVAs) were performed on aggregates of the socially desirable (positive)

and the socially undesirable (negative) trait adjectives[2] (tables of mean scores for the

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[2]Although it was possible to conduct only one ANOVA, in which the addition of a "trait valence" variable would have unified the two measures, this was not done in order to avoid inevitably large (and uninteresting) effects of the extra factor that would have unnecessarily complicated the findings. The acutely distinct nature of positive and negative traits also argued in favour of trea ..g them as separate measures.

complete design and for significant interactions are presented in Appendix C).

Because of the idiographic selection of descriptive traits, it was impractical to analyze

particular items since the ones chosen were not consistent across all subjects. For this

same reason, it was also not possible to conduct an analysis of internal consistency for

the aggregate scale.

Positive Traits. On the basis of the trait-appropriation model that has been

presented, the influence of the within-subjects variable of trait descriptiveness on

adjective self-ratings served as the critical indicator of identification. For the positive

traits, it was expected that identification motivated by enhancement needs would result

in the increased self-ascription of target-descriptive items under conditions of failure,

and that the effect would be enhanced by gender similarity and birthday matching.

Analysis of the measure produced a main effect of trait descriptiveness, $F(1, 112) =$

6.01 $p < .025$, which was also part of a significant three-way interaction with the

birthday match and performance feedback manipulations, $F(1, 112) = 5.55, p < .025$.

Contrary to the self-enhancement model of identification, however, the main effect

indicated that subjects' self-ratings were higher on the non-descriptive traits ($M =$

6.72) relative to the descriptive ones ($M = 6.46$). Rather than appropriate valued target

traits, subjects appeared instead to avoid them. The three-way interaction (illustrated

in Figure 2) also argues against a self-enhancement interpretation of identification:

the pattern suggests that those receiving failure feedback (in the matched birthday

condition) favoured non-descriptive, rather than descriptive, traits in their self-

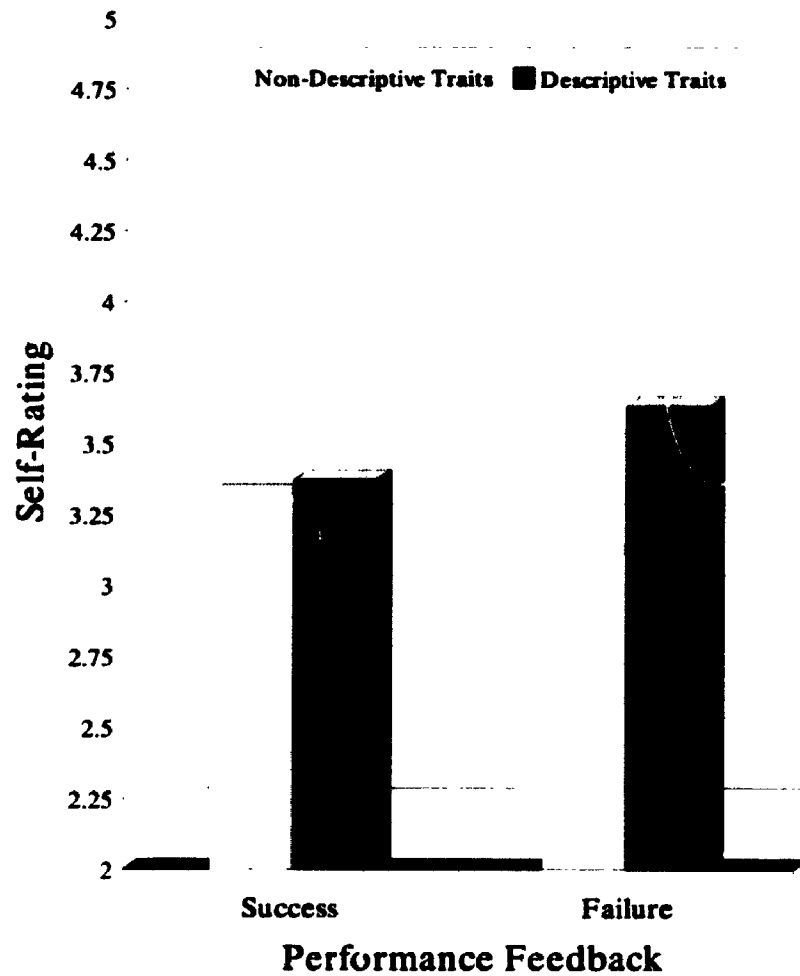evaluations. Although the positive traits appeared to be endorsed more highly

Figure 2. Self Ratings on Positive Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback, Birthday Matching and Trait Descriptiveness.

following failure, preference for the non-descriptive items would suggest that the attempted self-enhancement did not occur by way of identification. *Post hoc* tests revealed, however, that none of the cell means of this interaction differed reliably, Tukey's *HSD*(8, 112) = .85, $p < .05$. The only other finding for the positive trait ratings was a marginally significant effect of the birthday match manipulation, $F(1, 112)$, $p = .054$), whereby those led to believe that they were born on the same day as Napoleon gave higher evaluations of themselves. Unfortunately, this induction of a more favourable self-view by association was not specific to characteristics belonging the target, and thereby also not the product of identification in the manner expected. Nevertheless, it remains that linkage generated by the birthday match did somehow contribute to a beneficial increase in self-evaluation--a result supporting the hypothesized impact of perceived target similarity on self-esteem.

Negative Traits. Self-ratings that were provided on the negative traits yielded somewhat parallel effects involving the trait descriptiveness variable. Consistent with the lower endorsement of target descriptive positive traits, self-ascription of negative adjectives was found to be significantly greater, $F(1, 112) = 4.18$, $p < .05$, when these were perceived to belong to Napoleon (*M* = 3.50) than when they were not (*M* = 3.22). In addition, a two-way interaction between trait descriptiveness and performance feedback, $F(1, 112) = 6.35$, $p < .025$) appeared to indicate that receiving failure information was especially likely to produce the difference (see Figure 3). No main effect was found, however, for the performance feedback manipulation which suggested that a rudimentary consistency interpretation was inadequate. It was not

Figure 3. Self Ratings on Negative Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback and Trait Descriptiveness.

simply the case that those faced with negative information about the self chose to

endorse more negative evaluative traits. Although *post hoc* tests failed to reveal any

significant differences for the two-way interaction, Tukey's $HSD(4, 112) = .99$, $p <$

.05, the pattern would seem to imply that subjects who received the failure treatment

made use of the self-ratings task to present themselves as more similar to the target

(relative to those receiving success feedback) rather than to maintain a coherent self-

image. In sum, the self-enhancing target trait appropriation that was expected to occur

with ratings on positive traits appeared to emerge instead on the negative items. No

other significant effects were found for this measure.

Measures of Affect. A 2 (subject sex) × 2 (birthday match) × 2 (performance

feedback) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was carried out on the two

measures intended to assess resultant affective state (since aggregation did not seem

appropriate, this analysis was used to control for Type I error). It revealed only a

main effect of performance feedback, $F(2, 111) = 16.16$, $p < .001$, that was significant

at the univariate level for subjects' ratings of both how they felt at the moment, $F(1,$

$112) = 15.87$, $p < .001$, and how much they had enjoyed the session, $F(1, 112) =$

30.88, $p < .001$). These findings indicated, at best, that the manipulation appeared to

be successful: people receiving failure feedback reported less positive feelings ($M =$

5.40, failure; $M = 6.63$, success), as well as lower enjoyment of the task ($M = 5.92$,

failure; $M = 7.48$, success), relative to those subjected to the success treatment.

DISCUSSION

On the surface, the results of the first experiment appear to contradict the hypothesized self-enhancement model of identification. It was reasoned that identification should provide an opportunity for individuals to elevate their self-image by constructing similarity to an esteemed other. The main effects of target descriptiveness on self-ratings for both positive and negative traits suggest, however, that subjects were reluctant to self-ascribe favourable target attributes, and that they in fact preferred the appropriation of negative characteristics. For positive items, greater levels of endorsement were obtained with non-descriptive traits, while for negative ones the descriptive traits were favoured. The self-enhancement model is even further challenged by the two interactions involving the trait descriptiveness variable and performance feedback. The pattern of these results suggests that the tendency to avoid positive and adopt negative target descriptors in self-evaluations (as revealed in the preceding main effects) is most evident following failure feedback--the very condition that was expected to amplify the exact opposite.

The preceding findings are not, however, altogether consistent with the alternative self-consistency formulation either. If the sole motive behind subjects' self-evaluations was to maintain or present a consonant view of the self, one would have anticipated exclusively to find opposing main effects of performance feedback on the positive and negative trait ratings. Subjects informed of success should have shown greater levels of endorsement on positive traits and lower levels on negative ones in

their self-evaluations, regardless of trait descriptiveness. Those informed of failure should have shown the reverse pattern of endorsement, again uninfluenced by trait descriptiveness. Such findings were not obtained. Instead, the effects of feedback on trait ascriptions were meditated by trait descriptiveness in such a way that implies the operation of a more elaborate process, possibly involving both consistency and enhancement. By appropriating negative target descriptive characteristics, it is conceivable that subjects in the experiment who received failure feedback were attempting to restore their deflated self-image while remaining within the parameters of consistency. Stated most simply, the recognition of an unfavourable view of the self can be rendered far less damaging if characteristics that comprise it are shared with someone of social value. If a realistic portrayal of oneself must involve the ascription of negative traits, choosing those belonging to Napoleon could serve to compensate for self-esteem needs that would otherwise be neglected. Hence, the endorsement of *negative* characteristics satisfies pressures to be consistent, while the fact that they are *descriptive* of Napoleon allows an identity-enhancing link to be forged to a valued target.

Viewed in this manner, the trait appropriation that seems to have taken place would not have benefitted the individual directly. It is very unlikely that the endorsement of items so undesirable (though they may have changed somewhat in meaning by virtue of their association with Napoleon) could have effectively elevated one's self-view. Instead, this type of appropriation would have functioned merely to establish similarity to the target--from which perhaps other, more advantageous, target

properties could have been assimilated into the self-concept. Such a process would

be virtually equivalent to the "indirect" route to self-esteem that is described in the

basking-in-reflected glory research. In essence, the descriptive, negative traits may

have been as instrumental here to identification with Napoleon as the wearing of

school colours was to identification with a winning team in Cialdini's first study

(Cialdini et al., 1976).

To account for the fact that positive target descriptive traits were endorsed less

under the same circumstances (following failure feedback; though only in the matched

birthday condition) is a little more problematic. It is not exactly clear what went on,

although one speculation would be that some type of "conservation of appropriation"

was occurring. Given that the construction of similarity took place on the negative

traits, distancing from the target on positive descriptive items may have been required

to maintain equilibrium or consistency. The perception may have been that only so

much could reasonably be appropriated. If this were the case, one is then faced with

the argument that no self-enhancement was ultimately derived by subjects, in that any

gains made by the appropriation of negative traits would have been cancelled out by

the decreased self-ascription of positive ones. This line of reasoning is effectively

undermined, however, by the fact that scores on the two types of descriptive traits

correlate positively, at a level approaching significance ($r(59) = .18, p = .087$), under

conditions of failure--a relationship that remains unaltered, $r(29) = .19, p = .158$, even

when we examine only those who experienced failure feedback *and* the birthday match

(the additional factor was examined in order to take into account the positive trait

three-way interaction). As such, the pattern of self-ascription for positive traits persists as somewhat of a mystery.

Aside from this concern, the argument that identification was in fact responsible for any of the changes in self-perception that were observed would have been more complete had significant effects of target similarity been found. However, neither subject sex or birthday matching produced significant increases in the self-ascription of target-descriptive traits. The birthday match condition was part of a three-way interaction with performance feedback and trait descriptiveness on the positive trait measure, yet, as described earlier, the opposite influence on trait appropriation was found. Those experiencing failure who thought that Napoleon shared their birthday endorsed lower levels of favourable traits belonging to the target. Although the pattern of influence on descriptive items was not consistent with expectations, the main effect of birthday match on positive traits in general did provide some support for the value of similarity. Individuals who were given this link of similarity to Napoleon showed significantly higher self-appraisals relative to those who were not. Despite the fact that the self-perceptual benefits were not exclusively garnered by way of trait appropriation, this finding nevertheless suggests that the self-enhancing outcomes of identification, or at least association, may have been operating (again by way of the "indirect" route).
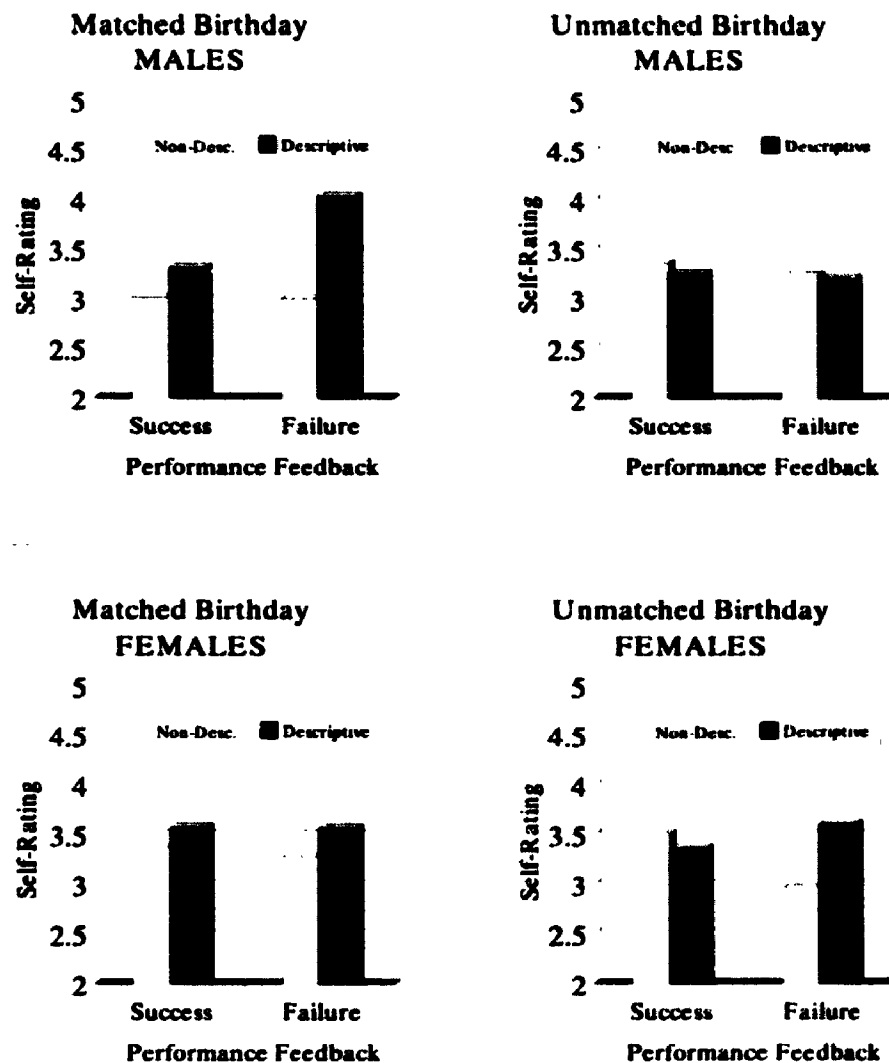
For negative traits, no reliable effects in any direction were generated by the two similarity variables. Nonetheless, inspection of 4-way interaction pattern, which did not reach conventional levels of significance, $F(1, 116) = 2.11, p = 0.15$, suggested

that the successful trait descriptiveness × performance feedback effect was strongest for males with the matched birthday (see Figure 4). Although this trend must be viewed with great caution, it suggests that conditions of similarity may have facilitated the target identification necessary for the type of trait appropriation that was found.

Methodological limitations of the initial experiment also pose difficulties in the interpretation of the principal findings. The most serious of these involves the use of Napoleon as the potential target of identification. It may well be that the effects obtained are in some way circumscribed to that particular stimulus and can not be generalized to others. It also remains uncertain whether or not the target was in fact a desirable social figure with whom participants would spontaneously wish to identify: a concern made especially salient by the failure to obtain effects of the two similarity variables. If the target was actually undesirable, it could be argued that the appropriation of negative characteristics from such a person under conditions of failure is diagnostic of a very strong consistency drive. Such a perspective could not, however, account for the complete interaction pattern involving negative trait self-descriptions. To suggest that consistency was the principal drive, one would have expected non-descriptive negative items to be among the most favoured traits following failure; certainly not the least endorsed, as actually occurred. The fact that these items were self-ascribed to a lesser degree that any of the others, especially the positive descriptors, is in strong contradiction of what would be expected of individuals striving to present an image congruent with the feedback.

Another problem of experiment 1 centres around the method used to

Figure 4. Self Ratings on Negative Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback, Birthday Matching, Subject Sex and Trait Descriptiveness.

differentiate between target descriptive and non-descriptive traits. The reliance on

subjects' recall of their differentiation between target descriptive and non-descriptive

adjectives may have excessively contributed to error variance and thereby hampered

the power of effects involving the trait descriptiveness variable. More importantly, the

idiographic method of initially separating the two sets of traits had the further problem

of not constituting a true manipulation. While the technique was advantageous in that

it allowed for more personally realistic definitions of the stimulus, it nevertheless

sacrificed full control of the independent variable. As such, the possible confounding

effects of "secondary" factors that may be related to the selection of one item over

another (for example word frequency or post-decision cognitive dissonance) can not

be completely ruled out. We can also not dismiss the possibility that subjects may

have shown some preference in ascribing to Napoleon the trait of each pair that was

more descriptive of themselves, rather than of the emperor. As such, the direction of

the construction of similarity that is believed to have occurred would remain

ambiguous--higher endorsement of target-specific items may merely have reflected the

fact that self-descriptive ones were thus designated by subjects in the first place.

-Chapter 3-
EXPERIMENT 2

The main objective of the second experiment was to replicate the somewhat unexpected findings of the first investigation by way of a revised paradigm in which the critical independent variable of target descriptiveness would be manipulated using an alternate technique. It was also designed in a manner that would get around the methodological concerns that had been observed in the initial experiment.

As in experiment 1, participants were presented with the fictitious California Great Individuals Scale, which once again served as the guise. This time, however, after receiving false performance feedback (success; failure) on the short quiz, subjects were asked to select from among 20 famous targets the individual whom they *most* admired and respected, as well as the one whom they admired and respected the *least*. Self-perceptions were then measured on fourteen trait adjectives (half desirable; half undesirable) that were said to belong either to the most or the least valued target, or were presented as such with no particular designate. In this manner, subjects in the most-valued-target condition were provided with an opportunity to exhibit the effects of identification with a freely chosen individual other. In addition, the between-subject nature of the trait referent variable (most valued target; least valued target; no target) allowed for a clearer delineation of the various levels relative to the method employed in experiment 1.

The pattern of findings produced in the initial investigation by the trait

descriptiveness variable was expected to be paralleled with the trait referent variable

in this alternate design. It was reasoned that traits presented as belonging to the most

valued target would be conceptually equivalent to the target descriptive traits selected

by subjects themselves in the first experiment, while those presented without any

referent would correspond to the non-descriptive items in experiment 1. Accordingly,

the new trait referent variable was expected to replicate the target descriptiveness main

effects and its interaction with performance feedback. If the findings of the initial

investigation were reliable, increased self-ascription of negative traits and decreased

self-ascription of positive ones would be found on items allegedly belonging to the

most valued target (when compared to traits that would be presented with no referent).

Furthermore, a mediating effect of performance feedback on these differences would

also be anticipated, such that they would manifest themselves, as in experiment 1, only

under conditions of failure.

The inclusion of the least-valued-target trait referent condition represented an

attempt to reverse effects that may be produced by an admired figure of identification.

If the purpose of endorsing negative traits following failure is to elevate one's self-

image, one would expect it to work only if those characteristics belong to a valued

other. Undesirable traits belonging to an unfavourable target, since they have no

redeeming properties, should thereby result in decreased endorsement (relative to the

no target condition) when self-esteem concerns are generated. Predictions regarding

positive traits are more difficult. A straightforward reversal of the expected valued-

target identification pattern would imply increased self-ascription following failure, yet

it is quite conceivable that p:.. sures to avoid association with an unpleasant individual would result in no change or even a decrease in trait endorsement.

METHOD

Subjects and Design

Subjects in experiment 2 were 90 (48 male, 42 female) undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory psychology course at the University of Western Ontario. As with experiment 1, their participation in the exepriment contributed to the partial fulfilment of a requirement for that class. The design of the second experiment was a 2 (performance feedback) × 3 (trait referent) between-subject factorial.

Materials and Procedure

Experiment 2 was similar to experiment 1 in that it also employed the guise of the *California Great Individuals Scale*. As in the first investigation, subjects read a description of the fictitious personality inventory (Appendix B-1), and then took the quiz intended to manipulate self-esteem. The performance feedback given was identical to that in experiment 1: half were told that they were above the norm and half were informed that they were below it (see Appendix B-2 for quiz and feedback).

Target selection. Where the second experiment diverged was in its manipulation of the referent of traits that were used by subjects in their subsequent self-ratings. To accomplish this, subjects were first provided with a list of contemporary popular figures who ostensibly shared their month of birth (see

Appendix B-3) and had to select the person whom they most admired and respected, as well as the one whom they least admired and respected. The list of famous people was principally drawn from a survey (conducted in the previous year) of the same student body who were asked to list ten popular individuals whom they held in high esteem. Certain notorious figures (specifically, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Bob Guccione, Tammy Baker and Richard Nixon) were, however, added to the list to help ensure that selection of a least admired target would correspond to someone truly disliked and not simply the least admired of a set of likable people (note: no survey measure of their popularity was taken beforehand). The deception regarding the shared month of birth was used in order to justify the small size of the pool of great individuals that selections were to be made from, and potentially to help facilitate identification (although evidence of this was meagre in experiment 1).

Self-evaluation. Once target choices had been completed, subjects were presented with a series of fourteen traits (Appendix B-4) for self-evaluation which they were led to believe belonged to either the individual they most admired (positive target referent), the individual they least admired (negative target referent) or to no one in particular (no target referent). The specific instructions for those receiving target-referent traits (belonging to a most/least admired individual) stated that:

> This next phase of the session involves making ratings of yourself on a set of traits. You will be shown a list of fourteen adjectives (one at a time) that have been shown to characterize the target individual you have just selected as the person you *most/least* admire and respect. For each of these traits, you are to type in a scale value that best corresponds to how well the characteristic describes you.

Those in the no target condition were simply told:

This next phase of the session involves making ratings of yourself on a set of traits. You will be shown a list of fourteen adjectives (one at a time), and for each one, you are to type in a scale value that best corresponds to how well the characteristic describes you.

Self-ratings in all three conditions were provided on scales that ranged from 1-strongly disagree to 9-strongly agree.

Affective and Exploratory Measures. As in experiment 1, resultant affect was measured by having subjects rate (on 9 point scales) how they felt at the moment and how much they had enjoyed the session. Four additional exploratory questions that measured satisfaction with the list of target individuals and perceptions of similarity to admired figures in general were also included (9 point scales were used as well). All items are listed in Appendix B-4.

RESULTS

The statistical design that was initially planned for the second experiment was a 2 (performance feedback) × 3 (trait referent) ANOVA model. When such an analysis yielded disproportionately high standard deviations for negative trait self-evaluations in the least-valued-target condition of the trait referent variable, however, a test of homogeneity of variance was carried out. As suspected, a computation Cochran's C, $C(3, 29) = .61$, $p < .001$, confirmed that a violation of one of the assumptions underlying ANOVA had occurred. Given that the measure in question constituted one of the two principal dependent variables, it was judged best to remove the problematic least-valued-target condition from all subsequent analyses (mean scores and standard deviations from the original analysis are presented in Table 1).

Table 1. Self-Ratings on *Positive* and *Negative* Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback and Trait Referent for the Initial Analyses.

Performance Feedback		Trait Referent		
		None	Least valued target	Most valued target
Success	p o s i t i v e	6.68 sd=0.876 (6.32)	6.46 sd=1.076 (6.12)	6.71 sd=1.207 (6.41)
Failure		6.59 sd=0.802 (6.25)	6.33 sd=1.161 (6.15)	6.49 sd =0.802 (6.13)
Success	n e g a t i v e	3.17 sd=0.876 (3.28)	3.37 sd=1.665 (3.52)	3.59 sd=0.281 (3.40)
Failure		3.17 sd=0.694 (2.80)	3.18 sd=1.344 (3.21)	4.10 sd=0.780 (4.20)

Note: The numbers displayed in brackets represent mean scores obtained using the aggregation procedure adopted in the final analysis, following tests of internal consistency.

Hence, the resultant design consisted of only two levels of the trait referent variable (valued target; no target) in addition to the performance feedback manipulation (success; failure). Tests were initially performed using the additional variable of sex (male; female), yet they revealed no significant main or interactive effects of the factor, which, as a consequence, was removed altogether from the final analyses (tables of complete mean scores are presented in Appendix D).

Positive Traits. Before conducting analyses on the positive trait self-evaluations, a test of internal consistency was conducted in order to justify aggregation (such an analysis was impossible in experiment 1 by virtue of the idiographic design). The initial reliability was found to be modest, Cronbach's α = .60, and could only be raised to .64 by dropping two of the original seven items (self-reliant; sensitive). These considerations proved to be futile, however, in that no significant effects were obtained on an ANOVA performed on the new five-item aggregate. Unlike experiment 1, traits associated with a valued target were not differentially endorsed and, consequently, no mediation of performance feedback was observed as well.

Negative Traits. The internal consistency of the original seven negative traits that served for self-evaluation, Cronbach's α = .47, was even poorer than that of the positive traits. Fortunately, the elimination of two items (snobbish; immodest) in this case helped raise the coefficient to a more respectable .57. In contrast to the positive traits, the ANOVA conduced on the negative five-item aggregate did reveal findings that replicated those of the first experiment. A main effect of trait referent, $F(1, 56)$ = 9.362, p < .05, revealed that higher self-ratings were given on adjectives that

ostensibly belonged to the most valued target (M = 3.80), relative to adjectives

presented without a referent (M = 3.04). In addition, a significant two-way interaction,

$F(1, 56) = 6.639$, $p < .025$, between this variable and performance feedback

substantiated the anticipated mediating effect of self-esteem motivation on this

discrepancy. As shown in Figure 5, the increased endorsement of negative traits that

were said to describe a valued target seemed only to occur following alleged task

failure. In support of this interpretation, post hoc tests[3] conducted on these mean

scores confirmed that the difference between valued target and no target traits was

reliable only when failure feedback was received (LSD = .710, $p < .05$). They also

revealed that type of feedback generated no significant difference in trait endorsement

in the no target condition, but that self-ascription was significantly greater for those

experiencing failure (vs. success) in the valued target treatment.

Affective and Exploratory Measures. As in experiment ₁, a 2 (trait referent)

× 2 (performance feedback) MANOVA performed on the affective measures revealed

a significant multivariate effect of performance feedback, $F(2, 55) = 4.91$, $p < .025$,

indicating that more negative emotions were experienced after failure. At the

univariate level, the effect was fully replicated, $F(2, 55) = 7.45$, $p < .005$) on the

question that asked subjects to report how they felt at the moment (M = 5.93, failure;

M = 6.97, success), though only marginal significance, $F(2, 55) = 3.81$, $p = .056$), was

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[3]Due to the fact that the hypothesized interaction was found, and that it replicated the findings of experiment 1, it was deemed appropriate to employ the more liberal LSD test rather than Tukey's HSD. When the HSD is used, only the failure feedback simple main effect of trait referent attains statistical significance (HSD = .941, p < .05).

Figure 5. Self Ratings on Negative Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback and Trait Referent.

attained on the item assessing enjoyment of the experimental session (M = 6.57, failure; M = 7.23, success). No other significant effects were obtained on these two measures, and an identical MANOVA carried out on the four exploratory questions failed altogether to produce any significant effects.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the second experiment was to replicate, using an alternate design, the findings of experiment 1, particularly the effects that had shown appropriation of negative target-descriptive traits. In this respect, experiment 2 was very successful. Although no effects emerged on positive trait self-evaluations, more powerful replications of the two important effects found for negative adjective endorsement were achieved. Once again, whether or not an undesirable trait was believed to describe a valued target determined the degree to which it would be self-ascribed. A main effect of trait referent demonstrated for a second time that individuals are more likely to endorse negative descriptors if they are associated with a favourable other. It war also again witnessed that the tendency to appropriate such target-descriptive traits is particularly likely to occur under conditions of failure. Moreover, evidence from *post hoc* analyses indicated, this time, that the principal source of the effect came from individuals subjected to the threatening feedback who may have been attempting to reestablish self-esteem by constructing similarity to a valued other on "negative" dimensions.

The failure to replicate effects that had been found for positive traits suggests

that they may not be as stable as those exhibited on the negative trait measure. The

null results do not, however, represent a setback. It should be recalled that a

performance feedback × trait referent interaction on the positive trait variable was not

actually found in experiment 1 but was instead only part of a three-way interaction,

and that the effects obtained in the first investigation posed serious interpretational

ambiguities. In contrast, the revised methodology employed in the second experiment

not only replicated the original negative trait findings, but produced even stronger

effects ($\eta^2 = .092$ for the two-way interaction vs. $\eta^2 = .037$ in experiment 1). The fact

that this aggregate was the one on which identification was exhibited in the initial

experiment also makes it the more critical of the two main dependent variables.

Possible reasons for the stronger effect are twofold. First, the use of

contemporary popular targets, who were selected by subjects from a pool initially

chosen by their peers, in all likelihood produced identification targets that were more

valued than was Napoleon. If this was so, then the resultant desire to associate

oneself to the individual would also have been heightened, leading to greater

endorsement of descriptive traits. Second, the nature of the between-subject

manipulation of trait-referent certainly reduced the potential for misinterpretation on

this dimension that was present in experiment 1 (which relied upon subjects' recall of

descriptive vs. non-descriptive items). Such cleaner delineation of the levels of the

independent variable (trait type) would have reduced error variance and thus

contributed to a more pronounced interaction.

In spite of this outcome, the necessity of removing the least-valued-target

condition from the statistical analyses constituted a serious drawback in experiment 2. The apparent failure of the manipulation was costly in that it may have helped establish more clearly that target value was critical to identification. If association with an esteemed individual was indeed being sought following failure feedback, the self-ascription of negative traits belonging to an disliked target would have been even lower than that of traits without a referent. This effect would have resulted in a further exaggeration of the interaction pattern and not the suppression of it that actually occurred.

The fact that disproportionately high variability of responding occurred in the enigmatic treatment suggests that the value of the "undesirable" target may have been relatively unstable across subjects. Although some precautions were taken to ensure that a truly disliked target would be selected, they were probably insufficient. If we assume that, for some individuals, even the least valued of the set of figures was still appealing, the divergence in their pattern of descriptive trait endorsement (from those who really did dislike their target) would easily explain the wide fluctuation of responses. Violation of the homogeneity of variance assumption underlying ANOVA confirms this interpretation and reaffirms the need for a less ambiguous treatment in future investigations.

-Chapter 4-
GENERAL DISCUSSION

The principal goal of the preceding investigation was to demonstrate some of the mechanisms that govern social identification. More specifically, on the basis of a theoretical formulation stressing the importance of "self-relevant affect and judgment," both the motivational antecedents and self-perceptual consequences of identification were examined. The main finding to emerge from the two experiments suggests that a person's need to self-enhance can prompt that individual to self-ascribe traits belonging to a valued target other. It was also observed that the motive toward consistency may moderate this tendency by limiting the possibilities of self-enhancement. In both experiments, failure feedback produced more elevated endorsement of target-descriptive (vs. non-descriptive) traits, yet only when negative characteristics were being considered. In experiment 1, subjects informed of an ostensibly poor performance chose to exaggerate their similarity to Napoleon on socially undesirable items. In experiment 2, those receiving the same performance treatment gave higher self-ratings on undesirable items ostensibly belonging to a famous, valued target. Thus, while disparaging feedback may have generated a need to associate the self with an admired other, pressures toward maintaining or presenting a consistent self-image may have constricted such associations to the realm of dimensions that were in line with the temporarily induced negative self-image. In other words, the enhancement motive that was generated by failure information would

compel the individual to seek a link to the valued target, while the pressure to maintain or present a self-image that correlated with failure information would limit the association building to negative characteristics.

SELF-ESTEEM HYPOTHESIS

These results, however, did not conform entirely to initial expectations, which were heavily based on social identity theory, and thus favoured an account in which self-enhancement would be the primary, if not exclusive, motivational determinant of identification. Nevertheless, they may help clarify part of what has plagued tests of the social identity "self-esteem-hypothesis," particularly in cases where threats to identity are expected to generate an ingroup enhancing response. As Hogg and Abrams (1990) have speculated in their pessimistic review of the research, attempts to provoke self-enhancing discrimination through the manipulation of ingroup status may simultaneously and inadvertently induce the opposing norm of fairness. While low status can increase the need for identity-repair (as achieved by ingroup discrimination), it may also dictate to the subject that his/her ingroup is less deserving. The antagonism between enhancement and consistency that is believed to have occurred in the present investigation supports such a view. Individuals appeared to want to bolster a damaged identity through association with a valued target, but had to limit their identification to negative traits in order to maintain a congruent self-image. The fact that they appeared able to salvage some sort of identity-enhancing link further implies that the motivational mechanism specified by social identity theory

is correct, but that it may only be revealed when countervailing tendencies are satisfied as well. Efforts to elevate one's self-image can not entirely ignore the conditions which prompted them in the first place (ie., the unfavourable self-image itself).

This dilemma, together with the history of mixed support for the "self-esteem-hypothesis" of social identity, highlights a serious empirical paradox in the testing of such effects. Treatments that are required to motivate the elevation of personal or social identity will, by their very nature, always create a context in which the goals of consistency are in direct opposition. Although the experiments conduced here appeared successful in that they permitted subjects to arrive at a compromise that satisfied both drives, the ideal investigation would allow consistency needs to be circumvented altogether. The feasibility of a such an attempt is debatable, though it may be possible, instead, to manipulate variables known to promote this competing motive in order to estimate (and perhaps isolate) its impact.

IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

The precise makeup of the consistency pressures that may have been generated in the two experiments is an additional concern, with both methodological and interpretational implications. It is quite possible that the presence of the experimenter as an audience may have exaggerated the need to appear consistent. As Schlenker and Weigold (1992) have observed, the impression of the self that individuals attempt to convey must be "believable" in order to be successful. Thus, to ensure that a credible self-image was being presented, subjects may have settled for target similarity on

negative traits in order to appear credible in light of the failure feedback Consequently, it remains unclear whether or not subjects vould have preferred the more rewarding strategy of positive trait appropriation if placed beyond such experimental constraints.

Postulating the role of a "public observer" (the experimenter) to account for consistency in self-description also raises questions regarding the *overall* impact of self-presentation on the effects that have been reported. Although the perspective adopted here has stressed the direct self-perceptual goals and outcomes of identification, the possibility that elevated self-ascription of target traits occurred in an effort to alter the experimenter's image of the subject can not be ruled out. Yet, given the lack of direct communication of responses to an overt audience (subjects had little contact with the experimenter and were isolated in separate, closed rooms), these conjectures must be viewed with a great deal of scepticism.

TRAIT REDEFINITION

So far, we have discussed the possible mechanisms that may have led subjects to endorse negative target-descriptive traits. but have failed to consider fully subjects' conceptions or even re-conceptualizations of these characteristics. In the model of identification presented at the outset, the process was hypothesized to elevate self-esteem by allowing individuals to appropriate valued traits. The appropriation of negative characteristics that occurred following failure would seem to represent the exact opposite, unless we entertain the possibility that the negative items, by virtue of

belonging to a valued target, somehow came to be viewed as positive. Recall that

Finch and Cialdini (1987) were able to alter subjects' evaluations of an unfavourable

target to whom they were linked by birthday. Rather than re-evaluate the target,

subjects here may have redefined his/her traits. In a less extreme version of this

speculation, it is also conceivable that the undesirable target-descriptive items were

merely reinterpreted as the less negative of the entire set, and could thereby satisfy the

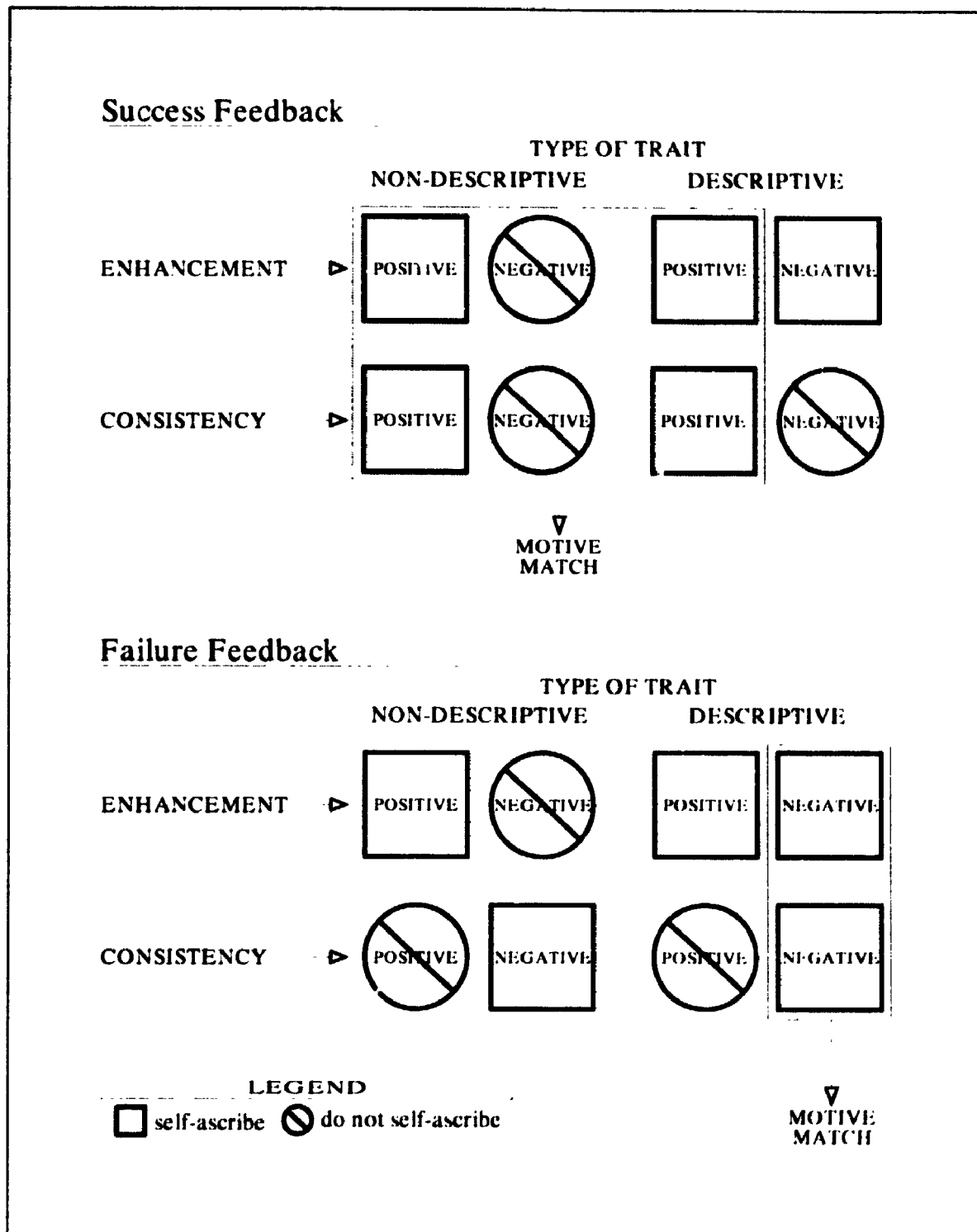consistency needs outlined above at a lower cost to self-esteem.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF SIMILARITY

The final important consideration also derives from an initial theoretical

postulate, as well as the research on basking-in-reflected-glory (particularly, Cialdini

et al., 1976 and Cialdini & Richardson, 1980), and may help provide the most

coherent account of the findings. If what is essential to experiencing the positive

benefits of identification (or BIRGing) is a perceived link to the target, an individual

may be able to self-enhance by constructing target similarity on almost any set of

dimensions. Consequently, the strategy of endorsing negative descriptive items that

was observed in the present investigation may simply have represented an attempt to

link oneself with the target rather than an appropriation of his/her undesirable traits.

If we emphasize this construction of similarity (to the target) rather than trait

appropriation, it is far easier to interpret the pattern of self-evaluation that was

obtained.

It has been stated throughout this discussion that the findings appear to reveal

the interplay of two competing motives, and how these have may have guided

subjects' self-descriptions. The influence of consistency is relatively unambiguous.

Following success, individuals should be directed toward the endorsement of positive

traits, and away from the self-ascription of negative characteristics. Following failure,

the exact opposite tendency should emerge: the ascription of negative traits and the

avoidance of positive ones. When examining identity-driven enhancement, however,

the fact that particular traits (both positive and negative) belong to valued target adds

a complicating dimension to their functionality. At the simple level of trait valence,

endorsing positive items and rejecting negative ones can satisfy the need to construct

a more favourable self image (this holds true following both success and failure,

although the motive is much stronger in the second case). In contrast, at the level of

target-descriptiveness, endorsing either positive or negative traits belonging to a valued

target can boost self-esteem. What is crucial here is the construction of target

similarity. Self-esteem is not raised by the traits *per se*, but rather by the association

they have allowed one establish with the target.

The diagram in Figure 6 attempts to represent graphically the preceding

description of the divergent pressures of the two motives and how they may have

operated across the various conditions of the present experimental paradigm. The

most salient aspect of the illustration is the contrast in motive compatibility between

success and failure feedback conditions. In the success condition, the self-ascription

of positive items and the avoidance of negative ones is the general rule for both

motives. The sole exception is the enhancement drive toward endorsement of

Figure 6. Speculative Model of Self-Evaluation Constraints in the Context of Performance Feedback, Target Reference (Descriptiveness), Trait Valence and Motivation

negative, descriptive items, predicated on the fact that such self-ascription would result in valuable target linkage. A strikingly different pattern emerges when we move to failure. While the enhancement drive changes "only" in strength, the consistency motive undergoes a full reversal with regard to prescribed behaviour--*negative* traits should now be sought, *positive* ones avoided. As a consequence, the negative descriptive items become the only ones where the two motives dictate the same course of action (self-ascription). These are, of course, the very traits on which the highest levels of endorsement were found. To restate what has been described already, self-ascribing negative target traits appeared to be the most pragmatic and realistic way to satisfy both enhancement and consistency needs under the circumstances.

Two additional points regarding this analysis need to be addressed. First, although the expected behavioural tendencies derived from enhancement motivation were outlined under both performance conditions, drives of any real consequence were probably only present following failure feedback. a treatment explicitly devised to elicit them. As such, it is justifiable to focus on that condition in seeking to describe identification and its conflict with consistency. Second, to highlight successfully the motivational contrast between enhancement and consistency in the failure feedback treatment, it was necessary to omit the possibility that negative traits belonging to a valued target could function as positive self-descriptors in the context of consistency drives, just as they do in the context of identification-based enhancement. This is probably not the case, but it is reasonable to assume that the negative valence of the traits is enough for them to sufficiently alleviate consistency pressures and allow self-

esteem needs to be addressed as well. To turn the tables, it can be argued that enhancement drives experience similar compromise (it would be most beneficial to endorse positive target descriptors) in an effort to accommodate consistency. Though not the ideal choice from the standpoint of either motive, the endorsement of negative target traits may have been the optimal one.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

If it is to be inferred that the experiments performed were successful in producing identification, the nature of the process observed was far more intricate and ambiguous than anticipated. The most straightforward characterization of the principal finding would be that states of temporarily deflated self-esteem may lead to a defensive strategy of target-association that is guided by both enhancement and consistency drives. Rather than boldly self-aggrandize by appropriating positive target characteristics, subjects receiving failure feedback chose instead to exaggerate their possession of unfavourable target traits. One interpretation of this pattern is that the "necessity" of describing oneself unfavourably (induced by the failure manipulation) can be made more palatable if the traits one adopts are held in common with a desirable other. The identification one achieves by doing so is speculated to contribute to the buttressing of one's self-perceptions, although the precise mechanism by which the value of the target is transformed into a more favourable image of the self is still largely elusive and in need of further tests.

The investigation may also have been moderately successful in broadening the

scope of what is known as social identification. Evidence obtained seems to indicate that personal identity can be influenced by links to other individuals and not just ingroup ties. Moreover, association with a valued target may operate to enhance the self-image in a manner perfectly analogous to the process by which membership in valued groups accomplishes the same end. In the case of ingroup identification, membership is defined by the possession of a common trait of categorization, and this bond allows a person to benefit from the status of the group. What has been found here suggests that one can also profit from the status of another individual by establishing a comparable link of similarity. By constructing a resemblance to the target of identification, the person is essentially forming an ingroup of two, and it is perfectly within reason to expect this type of "membership" to function equivalently to all others.

The ambiguities and unanswered questions that have surfaced as the result of the present investigation leave room for several interesting research venues to be explored in the future. Of these, the influence of identification on self-perception is the most critical issue in need of further tests. Primarily, the aim should be to induce more spontaneous manifestations of self-perceptual change that are not confounded with self-presentational association building. To achieve this, the researcher must elicit self-evaluations that reflect the appropriation of target traits while disguising any explicit connections to the target that such self-evaluations may involve. In essence, subjects must be allowed to express similarity to a target without actually knowing that they are doing so. The task of capturing identification-based changes in the self-

image can also benefit from the use of pre-test self-evaluations; within-subject contrasts representing self-perceptual change would be more accurate, as well as more convincing. Disentangling consistency pressures from the key motivation that drives identification should be another important goal of future investigations. Although the removal of such forces may not be feasible, more detailed study of its influence can help isolate it in an experimental design. For example, in the case of a performance feedback manipulation, self-evaluations can be measured on target-specific traits that are related to the dimension of performance and on ones that are not. Presumably, unrelated dimensions should provoke less need to be consistent with favourable or unfavourable outcomes. Finally, it would be useful to ascertain the stability of self-perceptual change that results from identification. It is necessary to know whether the experience is simply of transient affective benefit or if, instead, it represents a significant environmental force in the shaping of the self-image.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
Instructions and Measures for Experiment 1

Introductory Description

The California Great Individuals Scale (CGIS) is a unique measure of personality that examines people's perceptions of famous individuals. It has been developed by a team of leading psychologists at California's top academic institutions. These researchers have shown that our cultural systems and values are moulded to a substantial degree by men and women whom society has considered to be **great**. For this reason, it is believed that studying how each of us perceives such famous and admired persons can tell us a lot about ourselves.

The inventory that you will be answering today is a short version of the complete CGIS package. More information will be given to you at the end of the session regarding the exact nature of the measures being used. However, if you encounter difficulties with the procedure at any stage, please feel free to consult the individual administering the test.

Thank-you!

Quiz Instructions

Before the principal testing takes place, we would like to test your knowledge of some significant figures who lived in our century. The aim of this is to update our data-banks: revise old profiles and potentially add new ones. It will also provide you with information about your historical knowledge.

Please read the instructions on the next page very carefully before you begin.

[on next page]

The goal of this test is to see how quickly and accurately you can identify certain famous people of the past one hundred years. You will be shown the name of each person for two seconds, and then asked to choose the label which best applies to them by pressing the appropriate number as quickly as you can. For example, the name 'Albert Einstein' could flash onto the screen for two seconds, and then be replaced by the following descriptors: <1> painter, <2> scientist, <3> musician. Your task would be to choose which of the three best described him. You would make your selection by pressing a number on your keyboard as quickly as you could (in this case the answer would be <2>). If you failed to respond within 5 seconds of the onset of the descriptors, the computer would register a score of zero for that trial and the next trial would begin. The score you receive at the end will reflect how quickly and accurately you responded, as well as the difficulty of the trial (more points are given for identifying less popular figures).

NOTE: It is a good idea to keep your fingers on the number-pad keys.

Quiz Items and Answer Choices

DIMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH
architect, composer, scientist

GEORGE ORWELL
politician, philosopher, writer

BERTHE MORISOT
painter, fashion maven, singer

INDIRA GANDHI
chemist, missionary, head of state

FRANCO ZEFFIRELLI
film director, opera singer, gangster

NIKOLA TESLA
inventor, doctor, admiral

VIRGINIA WOOLF
tobacco grower, writer, actress

VLADIMIR HOROWITZ
violinist, conductor, pianist

LAURENCE OLIVIER
actor, army officer, novelist

LEON TROTSKY
poet, chess grandmaster, revolutionary

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT
general, head of state, historian

HANNAH ARENDT
philosopher, feminist, diplomat

Quiz Feedback

YOUR SCORE IS:
429

Success Condition

THIS IS A CLASS A SCORE
-YOU ARE ABOVE THE NORM FOR COLLFGE FRESHMEN-
YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY IS QUITE GOOD

Failure Condition

THIS IS A CLASS D SCORE
-YOU ARE BELOW THE NORM FOR COLLEGE FRESHMEN-
WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU TRY TO IMPROVE
YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY

Matching Section

In the next section of the test, you will be asked to rate one great individual in particular. In order to make this task more interesting to people, we usually try to select a person who shares your birthday. Once you finish reading this page, the computer will prompt you to enter in your day of birth and then the month in which you were born.

The chances of obtaining a match depend on the data-bank being used. If no match is found in the data-bank employed in this session you will simply be assigned a target person at random.

It will take the computer a little while to decompress the selected file containing the profile questions. Please be patient.

[after a bit of time, during which screen is flashing]

"Matched" Target Condition

YOUR MATCHED GREAT INDIVIDUAL IS
NAPOLEON BONAPARTE
(SUBJECT'S BIRTHDAY)

*"Assigned" [No-Match] Target Condition

SORRY
NO MATCH WAS FOUND IN THIS DATABANK
YOU HAVE BEEN RANDOMLY ASSIGNED A PERSON
[on next page]
YOUR ASSIGNED GREAT INDIVIDUAL IS
NAPOLEON BONAPARTE
(BIRTHDAY DISTANCED FROM SUBJECT'S)

Profile of Napoleon [for all]

[on next page]
NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

Napoleon I, known as Napoleon Bonaparte before he became emperor, was probably the most brilliant military figure in history. Rising to command of the French Revolutionary armies, he seized political power as first consul in 1799 and proclaimed himself emperor in 1804. By repeated victories over various European coalitions, he extended his rule over much of Europe and beyond.

Instructions for Target Description Forced Choice

"Matched" Target Condition

Now that you have been matched to a great individual, we would like to measure some of your perceptions of that person. You will be shown a series of ten adjective pairs. For each pair you are to decide which one best describes the person. To answer, you will type in <1> or <2>, and then hit <ENTER>.

Please note that time is not being measured in this phase. You may answer at whatever pace is comfortable for you.

**"Assigned" [No-Match] Target Condition*

Now that you have been assigned a great individual, we would like to measure some of your perceptions of that person. You will be shown a series of ten adjective pairs. For each pair you are to decide which one best describes the person. To answer, you will type in <1> or <2>, and then hit <ENTER>.

Please note that time is not being measured in this phase. You may answer at whatever pace is comfortable for you.

Self-Evaluation Instructions

The final phase of this session involves makings ratings of yourself. You will be shown a list of twenty adjectives, one at a time, drawn from the set you have just gone through. For each one, you are to type in a scale value that best corresponds to how you view yourself.

To answer, you will select a number ranging from <1>-[not at all] to <9>-[very much] and then hit <ENTER>.

Again, please note that time is no longer being measured. You may answer at whatever pace is comfortable for you.

List of Traits

High Likability	Low Likability
creative/self-reliant	snobbish/quarrelsome
amiable/rational	disobedient/touchy
sensitive/proud	unsympathetic/foolhardy
courageous/witty	immodest/illogical
outgoing/confident	humorless/ill-mannered

Note: Traits are organized into the forced choice pairs initially presented to subjects.

Appendix B
Instructions and Measures for Experiment 2

Introductory Description

The California Great Individuals Scale (CGIS) is a unique measure of personality that examines people's perceptions of famous individuals. It has been developed by a team of leading psychologists at California's top academic institutions. These researchers have shown that our cultural systems and values are moulded to a substantial degree by men and women whom society has considered to be **great**. For this reason, it is believed that studying how each of us perceives such famous and admired persons can tell us a lot about ourselves.

The inventory that you will be answering today is a short version of the complete CGIS package. More information will be given to you at the end of the session regarding the exact nature of the measures being used. However, if you encounter difficulties with the procedure at any stage, please feel free to consult the individual administering the test.

Thank-you!

Quiz Instructions

Before the principal testing takes place, we would like to test your knowledge of some significant figures who lived in our century. The aim of this is to update our data-banks: revise old profiles and potentially add new ones. It will also provide you with information about your historical knowledge.

Please read the instructions on the next page very carefully before you begin.

[on next page]

The goal of this test is to see how quickly and accurately you can identify certain famous people of the past one hundred years. You will be shown the name of each person for two seconds, and then asked to choose the label which best applies to them by pressing the appropriate number as quickly as you can. For example, the name 'Albert Eirstein' could flash onto the screen for two seconds, and then be replaced by the following descriptors: <1> painter, <2> scientist, <3> musician. Your task would be to choose which of the three best described him. You would make your selection by pressing a number on your keyboard as quickly as you could (in this case the answer would be <2>). If you failed to respond within 5 seconds of the onset of the descriptors, the computer would register a score of zero for that tri:¹ and the next trial would begin. The score you receive at the end will reflect how quickly and accurately you responded, as well as the difficulty of the trial (more points are given for identifying less popular figures).

NOTE: It is a good idea to keep your fingers on the number-pad keys.

Quiz Items and Answer Choices

DIMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH
architect, composer, scientist

GEORGE ORWELL
politician, philosopher, writer

BERTHE MORISOT
painter, fashion maven, singer

INDIRA GANDHI
chemist, missionary, head of state

FRANCO ZEFFIRELLI
film director, opera singer, gangster

NIKOLA TESLA
inventor, doctor, admiral

VIRGINIA WOOLF
tobacco grower, writer, actress

VLADIMIR HOROWITZ
violinist, conductor, pianist

LAURENCE OLIVIER
actor, army officer, novelist

LEON TROTSKY
poet, chess grandmaster, revolutionary

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT
general, head of state, historian

HANNAH ARENDT
philosopher, feminist, diplomat

Quiz Feedback

YOUR SCORE IS:
429

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Failure Condition
THIS IS A CLASS D SCORE
-YOU ARE BELOW THE NORM FOR COLLEGE FRESHMEN-
WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU TRY TO IMPROVE
YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY

Target Assignment Instructions

For the upcoming section of the test, you will be asked to choose among a set of great individuals. In your case, these individuals will be contemporary popular figures: those who are still alive today. To make the subsequent tasks more interesting for people, we usually try to select figures who share your month of birth. Once you finish reading this page, the computer will prompt you to enter the month in which you were born and then search for a matched set of individuals, along with their 'compressed' profiles, in one of our CGIS data-banks. When the computer has completed its cross-referencing, it will randomly select a list of only twenty contemporary popular figures who were born in your month.

It will take the computer a little while to decompress the selected files containing the profile questions. Please be patient.

[after flashing screen]

"GREAT INDIVIDUALS BORN IN [subject's month of birth]"

1-Robert DeNiro	8-Pete Rose	15-Margaret Atwood
2-Princess Diana	9-Cher	16-Jack Nicholson
3-Joan Rivers	10-Nancy Reagan	17-Zsa Zsa Gabor
4-Donald Trump	11-Arnold Schwarzenegger	18-Bob Guccione
5-Katherine Hepburn	12-Gloria Steinem	19-Mick Jagger
6-Richard Nixon	13-Margaret Thatcher	20-Meryl Streep
7-Stephen King	14-Woody Allen	

To answer the two questions below, please look over these names carefully and type in the number that corresponds to the person you wish to select.
You must hit <ENTER> to input your choice for each answer.

Which of these individuals do you *most* admire and respect?   number:
Which of these individuals do you *least* admire and respect?   number:

Self-Evaluation Instructions

Most/Least Valued Target Conditions

This next phase of the session involves making ratings of yourself on a set of traits. You will be shown a list of fourteen adjectives (one at a time) that have been shown to characterize the target individual you have just selected as the person you *most/least* admire and respect. For each of these traits, you are to type in a scale value that best corresponds to how well the characteristic describes you.

To answer, you will select a number ranging from <1>-[not at all] to <9>-[very much] and then hit <ENTER>.

Please note that time is no longer being measured. You may answer" at whatever pace is comfortable for you.

...

No Target Condition

This next phase of the session involves making ratings of yourself on a set of traits. You will be shown a list of fourteen adjectives (one at a time), and for each one, you are to type in a scale value that best corresponds to how well the characteristic describes you.

To answer, you will select a number ranging from <1>-[not at all] to <9> [very much] and then hit <ENTER>.

Please note that time is no longer being measured. You may answer at whatever pace is comfortable for you.

...

[All Conditions]

The final phase of this session involves makings ratings of yourself. You will be shown a list of twenty adjectives, one at a time, drawn from the set you have just gone through. For each one, you are to type in a scale value that best corresponds to how you view yourself.

To answer, you will select a number ranging from <1>-[not at all] to <9>-[very much] and then hit <ENTER>.

Again, please note that time is no longer being measured. You may answer at whatever pace is comfortable for you.

List of Traits

High Likability	Low Likability
confident	ill-mannered
witty	foolhardy
creative	disobedient
courageous	quarellsome
outgoing	illogical
self-reliant	snobbish
sensitive	insincere

Appendix C
Mean Score and ANOVA Summary Tables for Experiment 1

Table 1. Mean Self-Ratings on *Positive* Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback, Subject Sex, Birthday Matching and Trait Descriptiveness

Performance Feedback		Matched Birthday		Unmatched Birthday	
		N-Descriptive	Descriptive	N-Descriptive	Descriptive
Success	♂	6.65 sd=1.17	6.88 sd=1.02	6.49 sd=0.93	6.33 sd=0.96
	♀	6.80 sd=0.81	6.68 sd=0.87	6.77 sd=0.72	6.40 sd=0.87
Failure	♂	7.07 sd=0.93	6.76 sd=0.70	6.59 sd=0.97	6.39 sd=1.27
	♀	7.07 sd=0.81	5.89 sd=0.94	6.29 sd=1.33	6.35 sd=0.80

Note: All cell sizes were equal (*n*=15).

Table 2. Mean Self-Ratings on *Positive* Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback, Birthday Matching and Trait Descriptiveness

Performance Feedback	Matched Birthday		Unmatched Birthday	
	Non-Descriptive	Descriptive	Non-Descriptive	Descriptive
Success	6.73	6.78	6.63	6.37
Failure	7.07	6.33	6.44	6.37

Table 3. Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Self-Evaluations on *Positive* Traits: Subject Sex, Birthday Match and Performance Feedback as Between-Subject Factors; Trait Descriptiveness as the Within-Subjects Factor

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p
Between-Subjects Effects				
Sex (A)	1	0.77	0.65	.421
Birthday (B)	1	4.48	3.79	.054
Performance (C)	1	0.35	0.30	.586
AxB	1	0.82	0.69	.408
AxC	1	2.09	1.77	.186
BxC	1	0.02	0.02	.887
AxBxC	1	0.02	0.01	.906
Error	112	1.18		
Within-Subjects Effects				
Descriptiveness (D)	1	3.95	6.01	.016
AxD	1	1.29	1.96	.164
BxD	1	0.45	0.69	.409
BxD	1	1.35	2.05	.155
AxBxD	1	1.47	2.24	.137
AxCxD	1	0.00	0.00	.949
BxCxD	1	3.65	5.55	.025
AxBxCxD	1	0.91	1.39	.241
Error	112	0.66		

Table 4. Mean Self-Ratings on *Negative* Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback, Subject Sex and Birthday Matching, Trait Descriptiveness

Performance Feedback		Matched Birthday		Unmatched Birthday	
		N-Descriptive	Descriptive	N-Descriptive	Descriptive
Success	♂	3.09 sd=1.09	3.31 sd=1.49	3.36 sd=0.97	3.57 sd=1.37
	♀	3.35 sd=1.16	3.25 sd=1.23	3.48 sd=0.77	3.36 sd=1.27
Failure	♂	3.00 sd=1.14	4.03 sd=1.59	3.27 sd=1.01	3.56 sd=1.38
	♀	3.23 sd=1.10	3.32 sd=1.10	2.96 sd=1.02	3.60 sd=1.38

Note: All cell sizes were equal ($n=15$).

Table 5. Mean Self-Ratings on *Negative* Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback and Trait Descriptiveness

Performance Feedback	Trait Descriptiveness	
	Non-Descriptive	Descriptive
Success	3.32	3.37
Failure	3.11	3.63

Table 6. Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Self-Evaluations on *Negative* Traits: Subjec* Sex, Birthday Match and Performance Feedback as Between-Subject Factors; Trait Descriptiveness as the Within-Subjects Factor

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p
Between-Subjects Effects				
Sex (A)	1	0.38	0.18	.674
Birthday (B)	1	0.32	0.15	.700
Performance (C)	1	0.03	0.02	.902
AxB	1	0.01	0.00	.958
AxC	1	0.68	0.32	.575
BxC	1	0.86	0.40	.528
AxBxC	1	0.24	0.11	.739
Error	112	2.16		
Within-Subjects Effects				
Descritptiveness (D)	1	4.82	6.35	.025
AxD	1	1.41	1.86	.176
BxD	1	0.04	0.06	.813
BxD	1	3.17	4.18	.043
AxBxD	1	1.47	1.94	.166
AxCxD	1	0.00	0.00	.953
BxCxD	1	0.02	0.03	.859
AxBxCxD	1	1.60	2.11	.149
Error	112	0.76		

Table 7. Analysis of Variance Summary Table for the Measure of Current Affective State: Subject Sex, Birthday Match and Performance Feedback as Between-Subject Factors.

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p
Sex (A)	1	0.53	0.19	.668
Birthday (B)	1	7.50	2.61	.109
Performance (C)	1	45.63	15.87	.000
AxB	1	3.33	1.16	.284
AxC	1	10.80	3.76	.055
BxC	1	5.63	1.96	.164
AxBxC	1	0.53	0.19	.668
Error	112	2.88		

Table 8. Analysis of Variance Summary Table for the Measure of Task Enjoyment: Subject Sex, Birthday Match and Performance Feedback as Between-Subject Factors.

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p
Sex (A)	1	0.03	0.01	.906
Birthday (B)	1	1.20	0.50	.480
Performance (C)	1	73.63	30.88	.000
AxB	1	0.83	0.35	.556
AxC	1	4.80	2.01	.159
BxC	1	1.63	0.68	.410
AxBxC	1	0.00	0.00	.999
Error	112	2.38		

Appendix D
Mean Scores and ANOVA Summary Tables for Experiment 2

Table 1. Self-Ratings on *Positive* Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback and Trait Referent.

Performance Feedback	Trait Referent	
	None	Valued target
Success	6.32 *sd=1.11*	6.41 *sd=1.42*
Failure	6.25 *sd=1.04*	6.13 *sd=1.01*

Note: All cell sizes were equivalent (*n*=15).

Table 2. Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Self-Evaluations on *Positive* Traits: Performance Feedback and Trait Referent as Between-Subject Factors.

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p
Performance (A)	1	0.45	0.34	.564
Trait Referent (B)	1	0.00	0.00	.965
AxB	1	0.17	0.13	.722
Error	56	1.34		

Table 3. Self-Ratings on *Negative* Traits as a Function of Performance Feedback and Trait Referent

Performance Feedback	Trait Referent	
	None	Valued target
Success	3.28[a] sd=0.93	3.40[a] sd=1.09
Failure	2.80[a] sd=0.78	4.20[b] sd=1.03

Note: Mean scores with the same superscript were found not to differ significantly (*LSD* = .710, *p* < .05). All cell sizes were equivalent (*n*=15).

Table 4. Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Self-Evaluations on *Negative* Traits: Performance Feedback and Trait Referent as Between-Subject Factors.

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p
Performance (A)	1	0.38	0.42	.522
Trait Referent (B)	1	8.66	9.36	.003
AxB	1	6.14	6.64	.013
Error	56	0.93		

Table 5. Analysis of Variance Summary Table for the Measure of Current Affective State: Performance Feedback and Trait Referent as Between-Subject Factors.

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p
Performance (A)	1	16.02	7.45	.008
Trait Referent (B)	1	0.42	0.19	.661
AxB	1	2.02	0.94	.337
Error	112	2.15		

Table 6. Analysis of Variance Summary Table for the Measure of Task Enjoyment: Performance Feedback and Trait Referent as Between-Subject Factors.

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p
Performance (A)	1	6.67	3.81	.056
Trait Referent (B)	1	1.67	0.95	.333
AxB	1	1.07	0.61	.438
Error	112			