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management : behavior as a self-  
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SELF-EVALUATION MAINTENANCE AND IMPRESSION  
MANAGEMENT: DECEPTIVE BEHAVIOR AS A SELF-  
ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY TO BOLSTER SELF-ESTEEM

A Thesis Presented

by

JAMES M. TYLER

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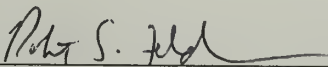
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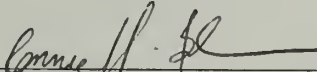
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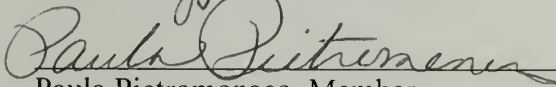
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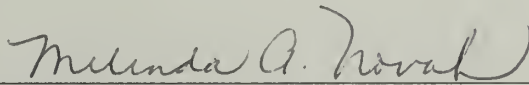
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## DEDICATION

To my loving wife and children Jen, Naomi and Kristin.

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I would like to thank my advisor, Robert S. Feldman, for his insightful suggestions, thoughtful criticisms and guiding support and friendship. His contributions to my professional development have been invaluable and will forever be appreciated. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the members of my committee, Ronnie Janoff-Bulman and Paula Pietromonaco, for their helpful comments and suggestions.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

People do not create positive self-images in an isolated environment, but develop and maintain them in part by seeking favorable judgments from others. Thus, their perception of how they are viewed can significantly impact their self-evaluation (Darley & Goethals, 1980). In addition, not only do people desire others' praise, but because social comparisons also influence self-evaluation, people are motivated to assess their performance and achievements relative to others in order to determine the level of their own skill and ability (Festinger, 1954; Smith & Insko, 1987; Suls & Miller, 1977; Suls & Wills, 1991; for reviews, see Collins, 1996; Wood, 1989). As a consequence, if people receive negative feedback from others, or if social comparisons indicate they have been outperformed, their self-esteem decreases (Gilbert, Giesler, & Morris, 1995; Johnson, Vincent, & Ross, 1997; Leary, Haupt, Strausser, & Chokel, 1998; Leary, Tambor, Terdal, & Downs, 1995; Morse & Gergen, 1970). Furthermore, the negative inference of upward social comparisons can compete and conflict with the positive self-perceptions that people are generally motivated to maintain (Taylor & Brown, 1988).

In order to diffuse the negative implications that unfavorable social comparisons pose to the self, people engage in various self-protective strategies (Wood, 1989; Wood & Taylor, 1991, as cited in Suls & Wills, 1991, 23-49). For example, they can ignore the superior performance of others, devalue the importance of the domain to the self, highlight factors that allow the comparison other to be perceived as dissimilar, or simply denigrate the other's behavior (Brown, Novick, Lord, & Richards, 1992;

Schwartz & Smith, 1976; Tesser, 1988; Wills, 1981). Research further suggests that these strategies are partially driven by self-enhancement motivation and wield a consequential effect on self-esteem, with the desire to preserve a positive outward image being particularly high following self-evaluation threat (Brown & Dutton, 1995; Sedikides, 1993; Sedikides & Strube, 1997). Specifically, after receiving negative appraisal people increase self-enhancement efforts to maintain a favorable self-image (Brown, Collins, & Schmidt, 1988; Kashy & Depaulo, 1996; Lewicki, 1984; Wills, 1981).

In the service of their self-enhancement goals, people may fabricate, embellish, and exaggerate personal information—in other words, they may use untruthful statements as a self-enhancing means to protect and mend a deflated self-image. The purpose of the present investigation was to examine whether people, in their efforts to deflect threats to self-esteem, use untruthful statements regarding their attributes, behaviors, and accomplishments as a self-enhancement strategy to bolster their damaged self-image.

### Research Background

Various lines of research, including work on self-serving biases, constructive social comparison, and self-presentation, add support to the notion that the employment of untruthful statements may be a self-enhancement technique that people use to bolster damaged self-esteem. These areas will be examined next, followed by a review of the self-evaluation maintenance model (SEM: Tesser, 1988), social comparison situations, and the relationship between self-esteem and self-enhancement strategies.

## Self-Serving Biases

Research examining self-serving biases indicates a tendency for people to attempt to create an image that they are superior to others, either by biasing the construction of beliefs about others or about the self, or sometimes about both. Distorting the assessment of others' attributes has received considerable research attention and shows that while people employ biased evaluations of others, they do not automatically reconstruct their beliefs about others' abilities as a default response (for review see Wood & Taylor, 1991). For example, even if only a minimal effort is required, people do not necessarily construct biased accounts of others' abilities, and furthermore, if the situation calls for too much effort, people's tendency to distort others' evaluations substantively decreases (Peterson & Klein, 2001, as cited in Klein, 2001). Klein (2001) also found that people tend to exhibit greater self-serving biases when constructing estimates of their own performance rather than when constructing the performance of others. In other words, people may prefer to allege superiority over others by reconstructing, in a self-serving manner, the shape and frequency of their own attributes and behaviors rather than those of others.

In addition, increased accessibility to self-knowledge better allows people to attribute negative feedback to external factors and to perceive themselves at either end of a personality trait, depending on which appears more self-favorable (Jones & Nisbett, 1971; Klein, 2001; Sanitioso, Kunda, & Fong, 1990). Because people simply possess greater and more accessible amounts of self-knowledge than other-knowledge, it may be easier for them to favorably alter the reported nature of their own performance history and attributes, rather than construct a biased account of others' performance. It

may also be less effortful for people to bias self-views, rather than other-views because self-knowledge tends to be malleable and open to favorable adjustment.

Furthermore, people's motivation to create a favorable outward image often leads them to positively reconstruct their own attributes (rather than others), including the quality and frequency of past performances and behaviors (e.g., Conway & Ross, 1984; Ross, McFarland, & Fletcher, 1981), and their overall attitudes, feelings, and personality traits (Kunda & Sanitioso, 1989; Markus & Kunda, 1986; for review, see Cooper & Fazio, 1984 and Ross, 1989). In short, it seems plausible that self-serving biases may be viewed as indicating that people employ untruthful statements about their attributes, behaviors, and accomplishments in order to portray themselves in a positive light, thus boosting their evaluation of themselves, and consequently raising their self-esteem.

### **Constructive Social Comparison**

Wood (1989) suggests that social comparisons may often be a matter of construction, with the implicit meaning that comparison data can be falsely manufactured. Research on constructive social comparison, which is defined as self-appraisal built on rationalization of social reality, finds that when esteem-threatening situations occur, constructive comparisons are used to devise biased, esteem-maintaining views of social circumstances. A common strategy in constructing biased comparisons to satisfy self-enhancement goals is to fabricate personal information (Goethals, Messick & Allison, 1991).

It seems reasonable that constructive social comparisons may be inherently self-biased. For example, to portray themselves in a positive light, people distort prior

beliefs and amend initial assessments of how frequently they perform a behavior. Furthermore, people tend to favorably estimate their positive attributes as unique and their negative attributes as common (Campbell, 1986; Klein & Kunda, 1993; Taylor & Brown, 1988). Consequently, the flexibility and potential bias of the construction process may lead to social comparisons that are more favorable for the self than the truth would otherwise allow (Goethals et al., 1991). In line with the present study's purpose, falsely reconstructing information that people share with others may indicate that deceptive statements are used as a self-enhancement strategy.

### **Self-Presentation**

Both research and theory regarding self-presentation suggests that using deceptive statements about the self may serve as a self-enhancement tactic with which to stave off potential threats to self-esteem. Goffman (1959) defined the process of creating a positive outward appearance as self-presentation, in which people are motivated to strategically control the inferences that others draw about them. These controlling tactics include manipulating their behavior and selectively presenting information to influence others to view them in a positive and favorable light (Godfrey, Jones, & Lord, 1986; Jones & Pittman, 1982).

Self-presentations are frequently influenced by role requirements, audience expectations, and situational demands, and often include exaggerations, distortions, and omissions (Jones & Pittman, 1982; Schlenker, 1980; Schlenker, Britt, & Pennington, 1996; Tedeschi & Norman, 1985). Presenting untruthful information may be a key component of self-presentation because people do not always use a veridical representation of personal information to enhance their appearance. For example,

people increase the use of deceptive statements as their motivation to present a positive and favorable self-image intensifies (Baumeister, 1982; Feldman, Forrest, & Happ, 2002). Therefore, it is plausible that untruthful statements regarding achievements and behaviors may provide people with a regulating mechanism to manufacture a positive outward appearance, and thus deceptive statements may be viewed as a self-enhancement strategy.

### **Summary**

Failing a task, receiving negative feedback, or perceiving threat to the ego provide conditions under which self-enhancement considerations are given higher priority than concerns for veridical self-evaluation (e.g., Steele, 1988; Tesser, 1988). Research on self-serving biases, constructive social comparisons, and self-presentation may be interpreted as indicating that people use untruthful statements as a self-enhancement technique to present a positive outward image. In other words, in their efforts to deal with self-esteem threat, people may increase the use of untruthful personal information as a self-enhancement strategy to bolster their damaged self-image.

## CHAPTER 2

### SELF-EVALUATION MAINTENANCE

A theoretical model that helps unify the previously discussed lines of research is Tesser's self-evaluation maintenance model (SEM; Tesser, 1988). The SEM proposes that people are highly motivated to maintain positive self-views and that others can significantly impact their self-evaluation. The SEM posits two processes affecting self-evaluation, reflection and comparison processes. During the *reflection process*, self-evaluation can increase if a close other performs very well, whereas during the *comparison process*, self-evaluation can decrease by comparing one's performance to the superior performance of a close other. However, if psychological closeness to the other is low or the other's performance is poor, the self-evaluation effects of both processes are attenuated.

Although both processes depend on the psychological closeness of the other and the quality of the other's performance, these variables affect self-evaluation in opposite ways. The factor that determines if a close other's superior performance raises self-evaluation (reflection process) or lowers self-evaluation (comparison process) is whether the performance is in a domain relevant to one's self-identity. If a close other's superior performance is in a domain that is minimally relevant to one's self-identity, then the reflection process is activated, thereby enhancing self-evaluation. In contrast, if the close other's superior performance is in a domain that is highly relevant to one's self-identity, then the comparison process is activated and self-evaluation decreases.

It is particularly during this latter upward social comparison situation (i.e., self-esteem has been threatened) that the SEM model would suggest that the impetus to



employ self-enhancement strategies to bolster a damaged self-image would occur. In such cases, it seems likely that untruthful statements may be used as a vehicle for self-enhancement.

Overall, substantial evidence indicates that social comparisons impact self-esteem, increase anxiety about comparative standing, and amplify attention to comparison information (Gastorf & Suls, 1978; Molleman, Pruyn & Knippenberg, 1986). Specifically, according to the SEM model, upward or downward comparisons result in pleasant or unpleasant reactions depending on an other's psychological closeness and the relevance of the domain to self-identity. However, in general, downward comparisons may permit people to construct a favorable self-image, thus positively influencing their self-esteem, whereas the implicit negative feedback projected from upward comparisons can often diminish people's self-esteem (Brickman & Bulman, 1977; Wayment & Taylor, 1995; Wills, 1981).

Although threatening upward comparisons can frequently occur, the risk to self-esteem can often be mitigated by the attendant opportunity to use downward comparisons as a self-enhancement strategy to maintain a positive self-image (Friend & Gilbert, 1973; Hakmiller, 1966). Thus, when encountering threatening events, people can choose to contrast their poor performance with people who are worse off, instead of comparing to superior-performing others. However the opportunity to freely choose the comparison other may not always be available (Pyszczynski, Greenberg & LaPrelle, 1985). Even though evidence suggests that people may freely seek contrasting comparison information, the social arena is not always cooperative and frequently yields unsolicited, yet nevertheless, inescapable upward social comparisons (Taylor,

Buunk, & Aspinwall, 1990; Wood, 1989). For instance, if people discover that their performance is worse than all others in a situation, changing comparison groups as a self-enhancement strategy may be difficult.

Though people frequently confront forced upward social comparisons in a myriad of situations (i.e., in a locker room, business office, or classroom), their available self-enhancement strategies may be limited or impractical. For example, ignoring others' superior performance is often constrained, reassigning less importance to the comparison domain is not always realistic, and derogating others can be tenuous and may, in fact, deliver further negative consequences (Johanson, Gips, & Rich, 1993). However, in line with the reasoning of the present study, another self-enhancement strategy may be to use untruthful personal information to reduce the threat that upward comparisons pose to the self. In other words, untruthful and exaggerated claims about one's behaviors, attributes, and accomplishments may serve as a self-enhancement strategy to bolster one's deflated self-esteem.

An additional factor that may relate to how social comparison situations differentially affect people's use of self-enhancement strategies is their level of self-esteem. People with high versus low trait self-esteem possess different self-enhancement goals, and when confronted with threatening feedback, they respond with different self-protective approaches (Baumeister, Tice & Hutton, 1989; Mussweiler, Gabriel, & Bodenhausen, 2000). For instance, those with high self-esteem desire self-enhancement and attempt to attract interest to their strong points. In contrast, those with low self-esteem invest attention not on their positive assets but on diverting attention from their weaker skills (Schlenker, Weigold, & Hallam, 1990). In other words, people

with high self-esteem tend to engage in behavior to feel good about themselves (self-enhancement) and those with low self-esteem behave in ways that permits them to avoid feeling bad about themselves (self-protection), (Heimpel, Wood, Marshall, & Brown, 2002).

It seems plausible that using deceptive statements may enable both high and low self-esteem people to maximize their respective self-enhancement and self-protection goals. Specifically, after experiencing a threatening comparison, people with high self-esteem may use untruthful statements in an effort to feel good about themselves, while those with low self-esteem may use untruthful statements to prevent unpleasant moods from reoccurring.

Research also indicates that people's self-esteem can be viewed as possessing state-like fluctuations, which can also be negatively influenced by esteem-threatening feedback (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). It is possible that how people respond to esteem threat may be influenced not necessarily by their trait self-esteem but more by their temporary level of state self-esteem. Therefore, trait and state self-esteem may differentially affect people's self-enhancement behaviors.

In short, people facing esteem-threat may suffer decreased self-esteem, and those with low trait self-esteem may experience a greater blow to state self-esteem than those with high trait self-esteem. However, it may be people's deflated state self-esteem, and not necessarily their trait self-esteem, that predicts whether they use untruthful statements as a self-enhancing strategy to bolster their damaged self-image.

## CHAPTER 3

### OVERVIEW

What self-esteem repairing strategies can people employ when threatened by the superior performance of others? The present research attempts to answer this question by examining the extent to which people untruthfully represent past behaviors, attributes, and achievements as a self-enhancing tactic to deflect the impact of negative feedback.

Social comparison and self-presentation theory suggest that upward comparisons can decrease self-esteem and that after experiencing esteem threat, people alter the veracity of personal information as a self-enhancing technique to maintain a positive self-image (Kashy & Depaulo, 1996; Wills, 1981). Specifically, people engage in various strategies to manipulate social comparisons, including biasing self-evaluations, exaggerating superiority over others, and altering information to produce favorable self-outcomes (Darley & Goethals, 1980; Pyzczynski, Greenberg & LaPrelle, 1985; Taylor & Brown, 1988). These tactics may indicate that people use untruthful statements about their attributes and achievements as a self-enhancement strategy.

No research has directly examined the use of deceptive statements as an esteem-repairing strategy. However, the nature of self-enhancement techniques, self-serving biases, constructive social comparison, and self-presentation suggest that untruthful statements may be a viable self-esteem repairing behavior.

The present study examines whether people facing threatening social environments increase the use of untruthful statements in an effort to bolster their damaged self-esteem. It was hypothesized that the level of performance of another

individual in comparison to a participant, the relevance of the domain in question, and the psychological closeness/similarity of the other person would influence state self-esteem and consequently, the frequency of untruthful statements used as a self-enhancement strategy.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHOD

#### Participants

One hundred-thirty two undergraduate psychology students at a large university participated in the present study. These participants had previously completed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory (Rosenberg, 1965) as part of a large packet of questionnaires given to all psychology students during an early semester pre-screening session. All participants received extra-credit in a psychology course.

#### Design

The design of the experiment was a 2 x 2 x 2 factorial. The experimenter randomly assigned participants to one level of each condition: comparison group (threat-upward comparison or no threat-downward comparison); domain relevance (high or low); and closeness/similarity of partner (similar or dissimilar).

#### Materials

Participants' trait self-esteem was measured using Rosenberg's 10-item self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), with ratings anchored at agree very much (0) to disagree very much (4). State self-esteem scores were determined using the 20-item state self-esteem scale (Heatherton & Polovy, 1991), with ratings made on a 5-point scale ranging from not at all (1) to extremely (5), and participant's mood values were determined using a 12-item scale measuring participant's state of mood (Isbell, 1999), with ratings made on a 7-point scale ranging from not at all (1) to very often (7). Participants' degree of self-monitoring was determined using Snyder's self-monitoring scale (1974).

The Evaluative Information Questionnaire (EIQ) was comprised of 55 personal information questions that consisted of four modes of required answers. Fourteen questions required numerically-based answers (e.g., “What was your high school GPA?”). Seven open-ended questions required more detailed answers, such as, “What personal actions or behaviors are you most proud of?” Thirteen additional questions, such as, “How often do you drink alcohol on a weekly basis,” required answers using a rating scale, anchored at 1, (not at all) to 7 (very often). The final 21 questions consisted of a trait adjective list that required participants to rate themselves using a rating scale anchored at 1, (not at all) to 7, (very much). The structure of the EIQ reflected three primary areas of interest, including academics, social-behavior, and personality trait items.

The Cognitive Integration Test (CIT) was comprised of 6 questions drawn from previous analytical sub-tests of the Graduate Records Examination, which was adapted from a previous study that indicated no ceiling or floor effects (Brown, Charnsangavej, Keough, Newman, & Rentfrow, 2000).

The context of academic performance was employed because it is familiar to participants and relevant to their self-evaluations (Byrne, 1984; Wylie, 1979).

### Procedure

A male graduate student conducted each experimental session. All participants were led to believe that the study was conducted in collaboration with a large corporation. Participants were also told that two experimenters would conduct the study; one would work with them, while the other would work with their partner. In fact, there was only one experimenter, and there was no actual partner.

Participants were further instructed that the corporation funding the present study was concerned with determining the most useful evaluative information to collect during job interviews. The experimenter explained that the exact purpose of the study was to ascertain the specific type of questions that would provide a company with the best information with which to evaluate a prospective job applicant's skills, abilities, and aptitude. It was further explained that understanding which questions provide an interviewer with the most evaluative information about an applicant's abilities and skills enables the interviewer to better assess whether the applicant can competently perform a particular job.

Participants were informed that they and a partner would exchange detailed information about themselves by completing the EIQ. It was made clear that since the participant and the partner were evaluating each other, they would not meet one another. The experimenter outlined the supposed nature and purpose of the EIQ. Specifically, the experimenter informed the participants that their partner would appraise their EIQ in order to evaluate and determine if the participant possessed the skills, abilities, and aptitude to perform numerous kinds of jobs and tasks. Examples of these jobs included sales manager, doctor, social worker, teacher, lawyer or tasks such as supervising, educating, analyzing or selling. It was underscored that the participants and their partners would assess and judge each other's responses on the EIQ.

The CIT was then presented to the participant as the first section of the EIQ. Participants in the *high domain relevance* condition were informed in writing and verbally that the CIT strongly related to academic achievement and abilities and that people who scored high on the test tended to do better academically and ultimately were



more successful than those who scored low on the test. Participants in the *low domain relevance* condition were told that the CIT had no relationship with academic achievement or abilities, and that it simply allowed the experimenter to assess the strategies that people use during problem-solving tasks.

Following these instructions, the participant was given fifteen minutes to complete the CIT. The experimenter left the room while the participant completed the test.

After the participant completed the test, the experimenter took the CIT to another room, under the guise of scoring it. During this time the participant was given Snyder's Self-monitoring scale to complete. After a few minutes passed, the experimenter returned with the second section of the EIQ, which included the 55 personal information questions.

Participants were reminded that they and their partner would each complete an EIQ. They were also reminded that the second part of the study involved the evaluative phase, during which they and their partner would exchange respective EIQ's in order to evaluate whether one another possessed the skills, abilities, and aptitude to perform the previously listed kinds of jobs and tasks.

Along with the 55 questions, the EIQ prominently listed both the participant's and the partner's bogus CIT score. The participant was informed that when they completed the EIQ, the experimenter would then take it to their partner and bring their partner's EIQ back to them, in order to complete the evaluative phase of the study.

The closeness/similarity condition was then manipulated. Participants were told in writing and verbally, that in order to investigate individual differences, they were

matched to be very *similar* or *dissimilar* with their partner. Participants were informed that they and their partner were the same (or different) age and gender, that they had the same (or different) major, and were basically taking the same (or different) courses. The experimenter further told the participant that personality profiles taken from the early semester pre-screening session indicated that they and their partner were very similar (or dissimilar). In short, participants were led to believe that they were very similar or dissimilar to their partner.

The participant then completed the EIQ. In order to manipulate threat, participants in the *threat* group were told that they had received a relatively low CIT score of 67, compared to their partner, who received a relatively high score of 89. In the *no-threat* group condition, participants were told that they received a relatively high score of 89, compared to their partner, who received a relatively low CIT score of 67.

After the participant completed the EIQ, the experimenter indicated that there were two final questionnaires to complete. The experimenter accentuated that these two questionnaires would not be shared with the participants' partner, and that they were only to be seen by the researcher. The experimenter then gave the participant two scales, the state self-esteem scale and a scale to measure the participant's state mood.

At this point, the experimenter took the participant's EIQ to another room under the pretense of giving it to the partner. Before leaving the room, the experimenter also reminded the participant that when he returned with the partner's EIQ, the participant would then complete the evaluative portion of the study. After a few minutes, the experimenter returned to collect the state self-esteem scale and the mood scale.

The participants then completed a manipulation check in order to assess if they could accurately identify the purported purpose of the CIT, whether they had a higher or lower CIT score than their partner, and whether they were similar or dissimilar to their partner.

After participants completed the manipulation check, the experimenter partially debriefed them as to the actual purpose of the study, explaining that the study was investigating the process that underlies people's use of exaggerations, fabrications and general re-spinning of facts.

The participant was then given the EIQ that they had previously filled out and a tracking form on which to indicate if any of their answers had been untruthful. The tracking form's instructions directed participants to indicate the veracity of their answer to each of the 55 questions on the EIQ. They were assured that their responses would remain completely confidential, and were asked to give their honest and forthright appraisal of the truthfulness of their answers on the EIQ.

After assessing the truthfulness of their EIQ, the participant was debriefed about all details of the study. It was particularly emphasized that the participant's score on the CIT did not reflect a real or true score and that all participants, depending on condition, received the same bogus feedback regarding the CIT score. The experimenter further emphasized that the CIT actually had no evaluative meaning. Participants were also informed that there was no partner, and as such there was no evaluative aspect to the study. Consent was obtained to use the questionnaires for further research.

## Dependent Measures

Participants assessed whether their answers on the EIQ were truthful or not truthful. The measure of deceptive behavior was calculated as the aggregated number of untruthful statements that participants reported. The total number of untruthful statements was further classified into sub-categories as the total number of untruthful academic statements, the total number of untruthful social-behavior statements, and the total number of untruthful trait statements. Reliability measures indicated high internal consistency for all sub-categories of untruthful statements, respectively, academic  $\alpha = .73$ , social  $\alpha = .71$  and trait  $\alpha = .79$ .

Participants' trait and state self-esteem were derived, respectively, from Rosenberg's self-esteem scale, and the State self-esteem scale. Participant's mood values were determined using a 12-item scale measuring their temporary state of mood. Participants' degree of self-monitoring was determined using Snyder's self-monitoring scale. All scales indicated a high internal consistency, respectively, trait  $\alpha = .87$ , state  $\alpha = .89$ , mood  $\alpha = .87$ , and self-monitoring  $\alpha = .63$ .

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS

#### Manipulation Check

All participants were able to correctly indicate (for their particular condition) the purpose of the CIT, their score on the CIT relative to their partner's score, and whether they were considered as similar or dissimilar to their partner. In addition, during the verbal debriefing session no participant expressed suspicion regarding the purpose of the study, nor were any participants able to correctly identify the true purpose of the study when answering written questions on the manipulation check.

#### Overall Frequency of Untruthful Statements

##### **Total untruthful statements**

Of the 132 participants, 131 admitted that at least one of their reported answers on the EIQ was not true. The total number of untruthful statements ranged from 0 to 41 out of 55 questions. The mean number of untruthful statements reported across conditions was 12.86 ( $SD = 7.57$ ). Therefore, 23.4% of the 55 questions on the EIQ were untruthfully answered by the participants, with the percentage of total untruthful statements made ranging from 0 to 75 %.

##### **Subcategory: untruthful academic statements**

At least one of the 20 questions on the EIQ pertaining to academics was answered untruthfully by 128 out of 132 participants. The total number of untruthful academic statements ranged from 0 to 16. The mean number of untruthful academic statements was 5.59 ( $SD = 3.17$ ), or 28%, with a range of 0 to 80%. Of those

participants who reported answering questions with untruthful statements, the mean number of untruthful academic statements was 5.77, or 29%.

#### **Subcategory: untruthful social-behavior statements**

Of the 14 social-behavior questions on the EIQ, at least one question was answered untruthfully by 109 out of 132 participants, with a range of 0 to 13. The mean number of untruthful social-behavior statements was 3.17 ( $SD = 2.59$ ), or 23% with a range from 0 to 93%. The mean number of untruthful social-behavior statements for participants who reported answering questions untruthfully was 3.84, or 27 %.

#### **Subcategory: untruthful trait statements**

Ninety-nine out of 132 participants answered at least one of the 21 (EIQ) trait questions untruthfully. Untruthful trait statements ranged from 0 to 16, with a mean of 4.10 ( $SD = 3.66$ ), or 19.5%, ranging from 0 to 76%. Participants who answered questions untruthfully reported an average of 5.46 untruthful trait statements, or 26 %.

Further analysis indicated that the number of untruthful academic statements was significantly positively correlated with both untruthful social-behavior statements and untruthful trait statements,  $r = .46$ ;  $r = .38$ ,  $p$ 's  $< .001$ . In addition, the number of untruthful social-behavior statements was significantly positively correlated with untruthful trait statements,  $r = .58$ ,  $p < .001$ .

### Primary Analyses

#### **Total number of untruthful statements**

The primary dependent variable, the total overall number of untruthful statements that participants reported, was examined using a 2 (comparison group)  $\times$  2

(domain relevance) x 2 (closeness/similarity of partner) between-subjects analysis of variance. The resulting analysis indicated a significant main effect for comparison manipulation,  $F(1, 124) = 7.42, p < .01$ . In accordance with the hypothesis, participants exposed to a threatening comparison with a better-performing partner reported making a greater number of untruthful statements ( $M = 14.57$ ) than those participants in the no-threat comparison group who did not experience a threatening comparison to their partner ( $M = 11.13$ ). There was also a significant main effect for the domain relevance condition,  $F(1, 124) = 3.99, p < .05$ . Also congruent with the hypothesis, participants who believed that the CIT was strongly related to academic achievement and ability (high domain relevance), reported making significantly more untruthful statements ( $M = 14.11$ ) than the participants who were led to believe that the CIT only assessed problem-solving strategies (low domain relevance) ( $M = 11.59$ ). The analysis revealed no significant effect for closeness/similarity of partner.

These main effects were modified by a significant interaction between comparison group and domain relevance,  $F(1, 124) = 5.13, p < .03$ . Planned comparisons computed on the total number of untruthful statements that participants made under the threat, high domain relevance condition ( $M = 17.26$ ) versus the total number of untruthful statements made under the no-threat, high domain relevance condition ( $M = 10.96$ ) indicated a significant difference between the two groups  $F(1, 124) = 13.09, p < .001$  (see Figure 1). Additional planned comparisons also found that the total number of untruthful statements made by participants during the threat, high domain relevance condition ( $M = 17.26$ ) was significantly greater than the total number of untruthful statements made during the threat, low domain relevance condition ( $M =$

11.88),  $F(1, 124) = 9.44, p < .01$ .

The comparison group x domain relevance interaction effect supports the hypothesis that participants who encountered a threatening upward comparison increase their frequency of untruthful statements. However, an increase in deceptive statements only manifested if the threatening event occurred within a domain perceived as highly relevant to the participant, and did not occur if the domain was perceived as being of low relevance to the participant.

### **Total number of untruthful subcategory statements**

In order to examine the three sub-categories on the EIQ (academic, social-behavior and trait), a mixed design analysis of variance was performed with a 2 (comparison group) x 2 (domain relevance) x 2 (closeness/similarity of partner) x 3 (subcategory of untruthful statements) factorial design. The subcategory of untruthful statements served as the within-subjects factor.

The results indicated a significant main effect of subcategory of untruthful statements,  $F(2, 248) = 36.44, p < .001$ . Planned comparisons showed that participants reported significantly more untruthful statements in the academic subcategory ( $M = 5.57$ ) than in the social-behavior subcategory ( $M = 3.18$ ),  $p < .001$  or in the trait subcategory ( $M = 4.10$ ),  $p < .001$ . Additionally, results of the comparisons indicated that participants reported significantly more untruthful answers in the trait subcategory compared to the social-behavior subcategory,  $p < .001$ .

In addition, the repeated measure analysis revealed two significant interactions, comparison group x subcategory,  $F(2, 248) = 3.75, p < .03$ , and closeness/similarity of partner x subcategory,  $F(2, 248) = 6.35, p < .01$ . Planned comparisons were performed



on participants' answers to the academic, social, and trait portions of the EIQ. The results supported the hypotheses, indicating that participants told more academically-oriented lies in the threat condition ( $M = 6.53$ ) than they told in the no-threat condition ( $M = 4.60$ ),  $F(2, 248) = 14.78, p < .001$  and participants also told more untruthful trait statements in the threat condition ( $M = 4.66$ ) than they told in the no-threat condition ( $M = 3.54$ ),  $F(2, 248) = 3.22, p < .05$  (see figure 2). The means for the social-behavior subcategory of untruthful statements did not differ between threat condition ( $M = 3.38$ ) and no-threat condition ( $M = 2.99$ ).

Planned comparisons were also performed on the means involved in the closeness/similarity of partner x subcategory two-way interaction. The results indicated a significant difference between the number of untruthful trait statements made in the dissimilar partner condition ( $M = 4.86$ ) compared to the similar partner condition ( $M = 3.34$ ),  $F(2, 248) = 5.99, p < .01$ . Further comparisons on the number of untruthful academic and social-behavior statements did not produce significant differences between the similar and dissimilar partner conditions.

### **Participants who lied averaged over each subcategory**

To further explicate the nature of untruthful statements, a between subjects ANOVA was performed with subcategories of untruthful statements as the independent variables and the total number of participants who lied per question averaged over each category as the dependent variable. Analysis indicated a significant main effect,  $F(2, 52) = 3.41, p < .05$ . Planned comparisons revealed that the average number of participants reporting untruthful academic statements ( $M = 37.40$ ) was significantly greater than the average number of participants indicating untruthful trait statements ( $M$

= 25.86),  $p = .01$ , but not significantly greater than the average number of participants reporting untruthful social-behavior statements ( $M = 29.93$ ). Additional comparisons did not reveal any further significant differences between the sub-categories of untruthful statements.

## Self-esteem

### **State self-esteem**

Participants' scores on the state self-esteem scale ranged from 41 to 100, with a mean of 75.71 ( $SD = 10.55$ ), with lower values indicating lower self-esteem. To directly assess the influence of the independent variables on participant's self-esteem, a 2 (comparison group) x 2 (domain relevance) x 2 (closeness/similarity of partner) analysis of variance was performed, with participants' state self-esteem scale score serving as the dependent variable. In line with the hypothesized prediction, the results indicated significant main effects for comparison group condition,  $F(1, 124) = 4.67, p < .04$  and domain relevance condition,  $F(1, 124) = 5.68, p < .02$ . Those participants in the threat condition indicated lower state self-esteem scores ( $M = 73.94$ ) than participants in the no-threat condition ( $M = 77.73$ ). Furthermore, state self-esteem scores for participants in the high domain relevance group were significantly lower ( $M = 73.74$ ) than self-esteem values in the low domain relevance group ( $M = 77.92$ ).

The analysis also produced a significant interaction between comparison group x domain relevance  $F(1, 124) = 4.21, p < .05$ . The state self-esteem means were in the hypothesized direction, with planned comparisons indicating that participants in the threat, high domain relevance condition reported on average lower state self-esteem values ( $M = 70.05$ ) than participants in the threat, low domain relevance, condition ( $M =$

77.82),  $F(1, 124) = 10.23, p < .01$ ; than participants in the no threat, high domain relevance, condition ( $M = 77.44$ ),  $F(1, 124) = 9.34, p < .01$  and than participants in the no-threat, low domain relevance, condition ( $M = 78.01$ ),  $F(1, 124) = 9.83, p < .01$  (see figure 3).

To examine the relationship between state self-esteem and the number of untruthful statements, participants' state self-esteem scores were divided using a median split into low and high self-esteem groups. A between subjects analysis of variance was performed with the high and low state self-esteem as the independent variables and the total number of untruthful statements as the dependent variable. In line with the hypothesized prediction, significant effects were found for state self-esteem,  $F(1, 130) = 9.74, p < .01$ , with low state self-esteem participants reporting a greater frequency of untruthful statements ( $M = 14.79$ ) than high state self-esteem participants ( $M = 10.81$ ) (see figure 4).

In addition, the subcategories of untruthful statements were examined by performing a between subjects multivariate analysis of variance with high and low state self-esteem as the independent variables. The dependent measurements included the total number of untruthful academic statements, the total number of untruthful social-behavior statements, and the total number of untruthful trait statements. Significant effects were found for the total number of untruthful academic statements,  $F(1, 130) = 7.41, p < .01$ , the total number of untruthful social behavior statements,  $F(1, 130) = 4.21, p < .05$ , and the total number of untruthful trait statements,  $F(1, 130) = 6.70, p < .01$ . The means for each category of untruthful statements as a function of high and low self-esteem are displayed in Figure 5. In all categories of untruthful statements, those

participants reporting lower state self-esteem scores indicated a higher frequency of untruthful statements.

### **Trait self-esteem**

Participants' trait self-esteem scores ranged from a low of 6 to a high of 40, with a mean value of 31.27 ( $SD = 6.45$ ). Overall correlations between participants' trait self-esteem score and their state self-esteem score was significant,  $r = .57, p < .001$ . Further analysis indicated significant correlation between participant's trait and state self-esteem in both the *no threat*, high and low domain relevance condition,  $r = .80, r = .73, p's < .001$ , and in the *threat*, high and low domain relevance condition,  $r = .47, r = .42, p's < .05$ . However, more importantly, the sharp decrease in correlations between the *no threat*, high or low domain relevance and the *threat*, high or low domain relevance conditions was significant,  $p's < .05$  (see figure 6).

To determine if participant's trait self-esteem level varied systematically as a function of the independent variables, a 2 (comparison group) x 2 (domain relevance) x 2 (closeness/similarity of partner) analysis of variance was conducted. Participants' trait self-esteem score served as the dependent variable and the results, as expected, reflected no significant effects within any of the conditions, all  $p's > .35$ .

Analyses were further computed to evaluate the influence that participants' trait self-esteem had on both their state self-esteem and the number of untruthful statements they made. Separate 2 (comparison group) x 2 (domain relevance) x 2 (closeness/similarity of partner) x 2 (trait self-esteem) ANOVA's were computed with participants' state self-esteem score and the number of untruthful statements reported serving as the dependent variables. Results indicated a main effect for trait self-esteem

score on participants' state self-esteem,  $F(1, 116) = 45.22, p < .01$ , with participants high in trait self-esteem reporting higher levels of state self esteem, ( $M = 80.87$ ) than those participants low in trait self esteem ( $M = 70.58$ ). However, as expected, the number of untruthful statements as a function of participants' trait self-esteem was not significant (low trait self-esteem  $M = 13.67$ , high trait self-esteem  $M = 12.04$ ),  $p > .20$ .

In addition, a marginally significant comparison group x trait self-esteem interaction was detected,  $F(1, 116) = 3.54, p = .06$ . Planned comparisons on the main items of interest indicated a significant difference between low trait self-esteem people's state self-esteem after experiencing a threatening event ( $M = 70.55$ ) and high trait self-esteem people's state self-esteem after experiencing a threatening event ( $M = 77.96$ ),  $F(1, 116) = 12.34, p < .001$ . However, as expected, no interactions involving trait self-esteem with the number of untruthful statements as the dependent variable reached significant levels,  $p's > .35$ .

A between subject analysis of variance was also computed to test the number of untruthful statements as a function of participants' trait and state self-esteem values (using median splits for trait and state self-esteem). Results indicated a main effect for state self esteem,  $F(1, 128) = 6.77, p < .01$ , with low state self-esteem participants reporting a greater number of untruthful statements than participants with high state self-esteem values, ( $M = 15.40$ ;  $M = 11.20$ ). However, the number of untruthful statements did not significantly differ between participants with high trait self-esteem ( $M = 13.50$ ) and participants with low trait self-esteem ( $M = 13.10$ ),  $p > .80$ . Furthermore, the between subject trait x state self-esteem interaction was not significant,  $F(1, 128) = 1.06, p > .30$ .

## Mood Analysis

Mood scale results indicated that participants' mood levels averaged 57.40 ( $SD = 11.1$ ) and ranged from 27 to 79, with lower values indicating less happiness.

A 2 (comparison group) x 2 (domain relevance) x 2 (closeness/similarity of partner) analysis of variance was computed to examine participant's mood as a function of the independent variables. The results showed a significant main effect of closeness/similarity of partner,  $F(1, 124) = 4.32, p < .05$ , with participants in the dissimilar condition reporting a less happy mood ( $M = 55.29$ ) than participants in the similar condition ( $M = 59.27$ ). In addition, a marginal effect of comparison group was also detected,  $F(1, 124) = 2.83, p = .09$ , showing that participants in the threat condition reported being in less happy moods ( $M = 55.67$ ) than participants in the no-threat condition ( $M = 58.89$ ).

Of more theoretical consequence, there was a significant effect for comparison group x domain relevance interaction,  $F(1, 124) = 5.67, p < .02$ . Examination of the means shows a pattern that supports the hypothesis that participants in the threat, high domain relevance condition reported being significantly less happy ( $M = 53.22$ ) than those participants in the no-threat, high domain relevance condition ( $M = 61.00$ ),  $F(1, 124) = 8.68, p < .01$ .

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

The present study confirmed that close to 25% of the responses that participants provided were later reported to be untruthful, with nearly all participants acknowledging that at least one of their questionnaire answers was, in fact, untrue. Finding that people do indeed regularly use untruthful statements is consistent with prior research suggesting that the use of deceptive behavior may be a common and pervasive fact of life (Depaulo, Kashy, Kirkendal, Wyer, & Epstein, 1996; Feldman et al., 2002).

Overall, the pattern of results support the study's hypothesis that receiving threatening negative feedback influences people's state self-esteem, and as a consequence they may employ false and untruthful statements as a strategic self-enhancement attempt to bolster their deflated self-image. Specifically, individuals outperformed by their partners suffered decreased state self-esteem, and provided more untruthful statements than individuals who did not experience comparable threats to their esteem. In addition to experiencing lower state self-esteem, participants who received negative, threatening feedback also reported being less happy than participants who did not receive negative feedback. These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that people's state self-esteem decreases as a result of encountering esteem-threatening social comparisons (Leary, et al, 1998).

Moreover, the results suggest that when confronted with an esteem-threat relating to a particular, self-relevant domain (i.e., academics), people provide more untruthful statements specifically regarding that threatened area, compared with less directly threatened areas. Furthermore, not only was there a higher average number of

untruthful academic statements, but more people overall reported untruthful academic statements compared with untruthful statements in other domain areas.

The findings are also consistent with previous research that shows people are prone to engage in self-serving biases to create a positive outward image (see Kunda, 1990, for a review). For instance, people favorably adjust the reported frequency with which they engage in behaviors, positively reconstrue attitude beliefs and personality traits and even reconstruct situational facts, not only to benefit their self-image but also to appear superior to others (Godfrey, et al., 1986; Kashy & Depaulo, 1996). Some argue that when confronted with an esteem-threatening situation, people not only ignore social reality, they contrive fabricated versions of it, holding that self-enhancement motives lead people to construct their own comparison facts and distort real, but esteem-threatening, information (Goethal, et al., 1991). The present results suggest an additional strategy that people may use to meet their self-enhancement goals: specifically, when faced with esteem threat, they may simply choose not to tell the truth regarding their previous behaviors and achievements.

In addition, consistent with previous research, the hypothesis that trait self-esteem positively relates to state self-esteem was supported and, as would be expected, people with high and low trait self-esteem reported respectively, high and low state self-esteem (see Wood, 1989, for a review). More interestingly, exposure to esteem-threat resulted in different patterns of state self-esteem for high and low trait self-esteem individuals, with those low in trait self-esteem more negatively affected by threatening feedback than those high in trait self-esteem. Although evidence suggests that high rather than low trait self-esteem people actively engage in more self-protective



strategies following esteem-threatening feedback, prior research is inconsistent regarding how they affectively respond. Specifically, some report that people with low rather than high trait self-esteem experience greater emotional duress after encountering failure (Baumeister & Tice, 1985; Kernis, Brockner, & Frankel, 1989), whereas, others have failed to detect any response differences (Swann, Griffin, Predmore, & Gaines, 1987; Swann, Wenzlaff, Krull, & Pelham, 1992). The present results, however, lend support to the view that people with low compared to high self-esteem may suffer more emotional stress following the receipt of esteem threatening feedback, as partially evidenced by the decrement in their state self esteem and mood. However, as will be discussed later, trait self-esteem failed to predict the number of untruthful statements that participants reported.

Furthermore, as predicted, the number of untruthful statements varied as a function of state self-esteem, with the results showing that people with low state self-esteem employed more untruthful statements than people with high state self-esteem. In contrast, the findings shed a different light on the relationship between the number of untruthful statements reported and trait self-esteem. Though threatening negative feedback resulted in people with high and low trait self-esteem reporting, respectively, higher and lower state self-esteem, this effect did not further translate into different frequencies of untruthful statements for high and low trait self-esteem individuals. That is, people with high and low trait self-esteem displayed similar patterns of deceptive statements after receiving threatening feedback.

It seems that although trait self-esteem may influence the effect that negative feedback has on people's affective reactions (i.e. state self-esteem), it is, nevertheless,

the resulting decrease in state self-esteem that appears to motivate people to employ untruthful statements. The sharp decrease in correlation between trait and state self-esteem under the no-threat, compared to the threat condition suggests that state, and not trait, self-esteem may be the factor that most influences whether people employ untruthful statements as a means to satisfy their self-enhancement goals.

### Limitations and future direction

This is the first study that has directly examined the notion that people may knowingly use untruthful statements as a self-enhancement strategy to bolster their damaged self-esteem, and as such these findings represent the central contribution of the present research.

Based on the self-evaluation maintenance model, it was expected that a partner's relative performance, the relevance of the performance domain, and the closeness/similarity of their partner would influence both the frequency with which participant's use untruthful statements and their state self-esteem. Though domain relevance and partner's performance (comparison group) both interacted to influence state self-esteem and the frequency of untruthful statements, closeness of partner failed to reach significance.

Failure to detect closeness as a contributing factor may indicate greater difficulty with the sample population than a problem with the self-evaluation maintenance model. The closeness/similarity condition was manipulated by informing participants that they and their partner were matched or not matched on age, gender, college major, coursework and personality profiles. It seems plausible that this information did not provide a strong enough impetus to persuade college students that

they were actually dissimilar from one another, and as a result participants may have viewed their partners as being generally similar to them. Examination of means across conditions indicated few substantive differences in participants' responses when they perceived their partner as either being similar or dissimilar to them. Future investigations may find it more productive to employ naturally occurring similar/dissimilar groups such as friends compared to strangers in order to examine this aspect of the model.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the present study's design involved a forced social comparison situation. As such, participants were not allowed the opportunity to choose an upward or downward comparison other as a reference point for self-evaluation, as occurs in many social comparison situations (Wills & Suls, 1991). Instead, they were provided with information regarding a pre-selected comparison other, with the focus on the consequence of the social comparison experience.

Although there are times in which people have a restricted menu of social comparison options to choose from, there are also numerous instances in which people's social comparison opportunities are far wider. It will be of interest to examine people's use of untruthful statements as a self-enhancement strategy in situations that allow them a wider, less bounded range of comparison others. In the same vein, future research may also find it profitable to investigate whether people provide untruthful information regarding their behaviors and attributes if it is the least effortful approach to self-enhance or maintain their self-esteem.

Though not the intent of the present study, it nevertheless raises questions concerning the process that allows people to use untruthful statements, both as a self-

presenting strategy to create a favorable image, and as a self-enhancing technique to maintain and bolster their self-esteem. Knowingly presenting an exaggerated and false portrayal of oneself seems to be incongruent with the goal of maintaining a positive self-evaluation. However, it remains an empirical question to reconcile people's use of untruthful personal statements as a strategy to satisfy seemingly divergent motivational goals – that is, to self-present a favorable outward image and to maintain a positive self-evaluation at the same time.

One final aspect for future research involves how people address the fear of being detected when they use untruthful statements as a self-enhancing strategy. Do people only employ false representations of personal information when they have little fear of detection? For example, we need to consider what situations allow people to publicly communicate false information, yet harbor minimal fear of being caught, or, likewise, privately exhibit untruthful information and be consumed with worry over being detected.

## CHAPTER 7

### SUMMARY

When social comparisons produce negative feedback, people's self-esteem decreases, which motivates them to engage in various self-enhancement strategies, including fabricating past achievements, accomplishments and behaviors (see Wood, 1989, for a review). The present study's results add further support to the notion that people's use of untruthful personal information may be interpreted as a self-enhancement strategy to create a favorable outward image to bolster their damaged self-esteem.

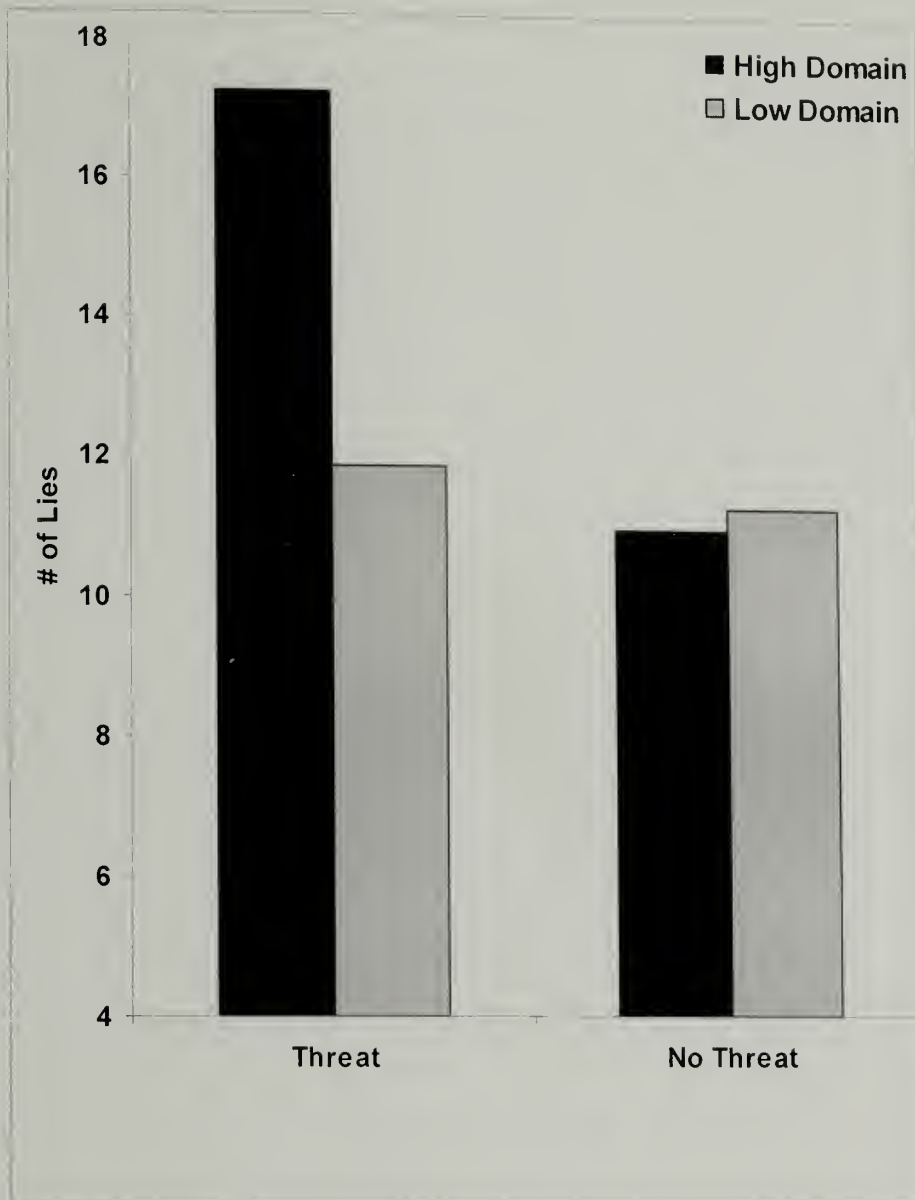


Figure 1. Comparison feedback and domain relevance

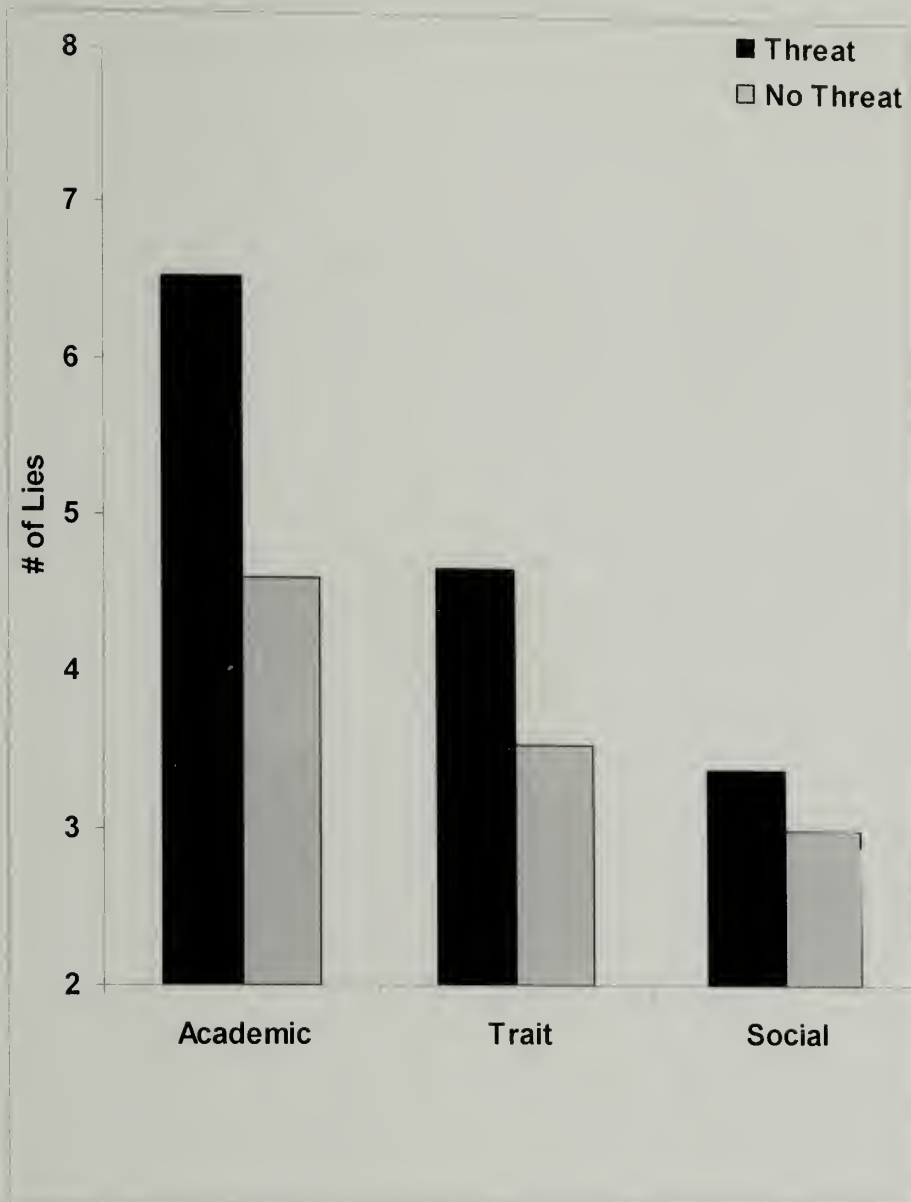


Figure 2. Subcategory of lie by comparison feedback.

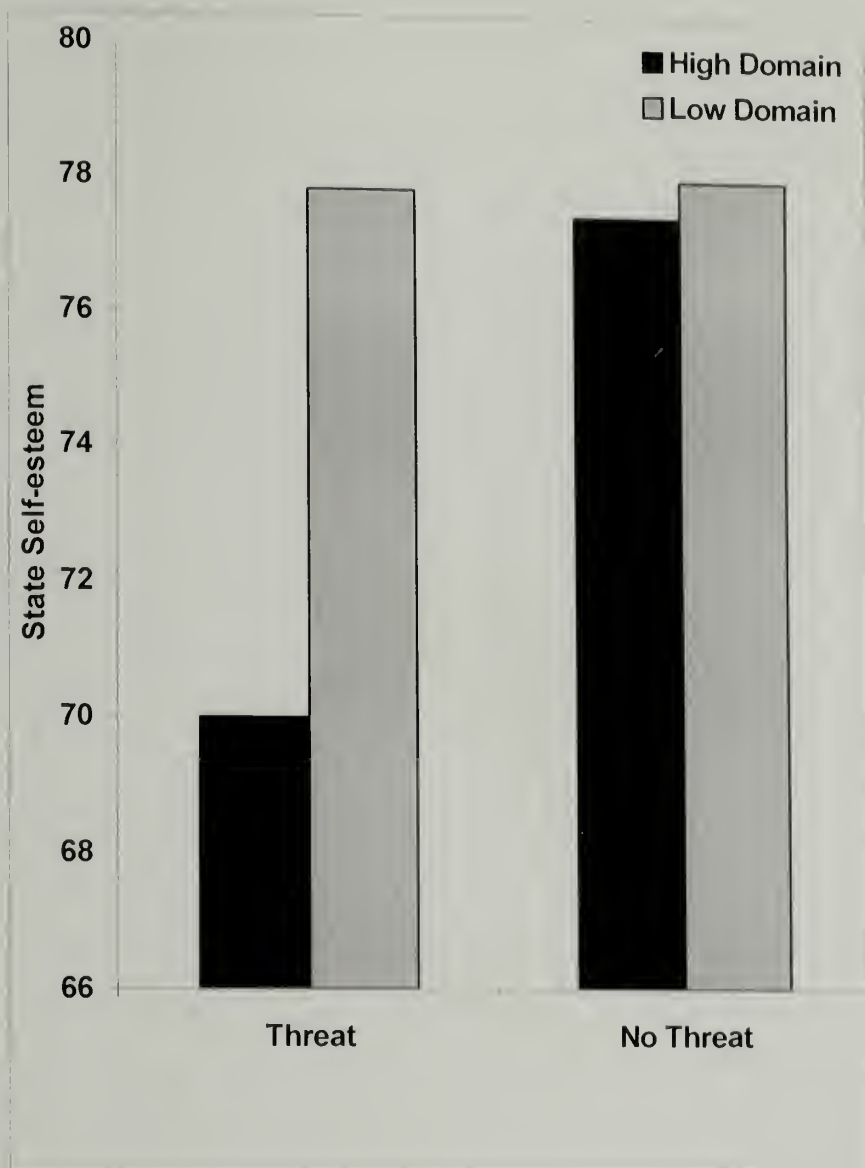


Figure 3. State self-esteem by comparison feedback.



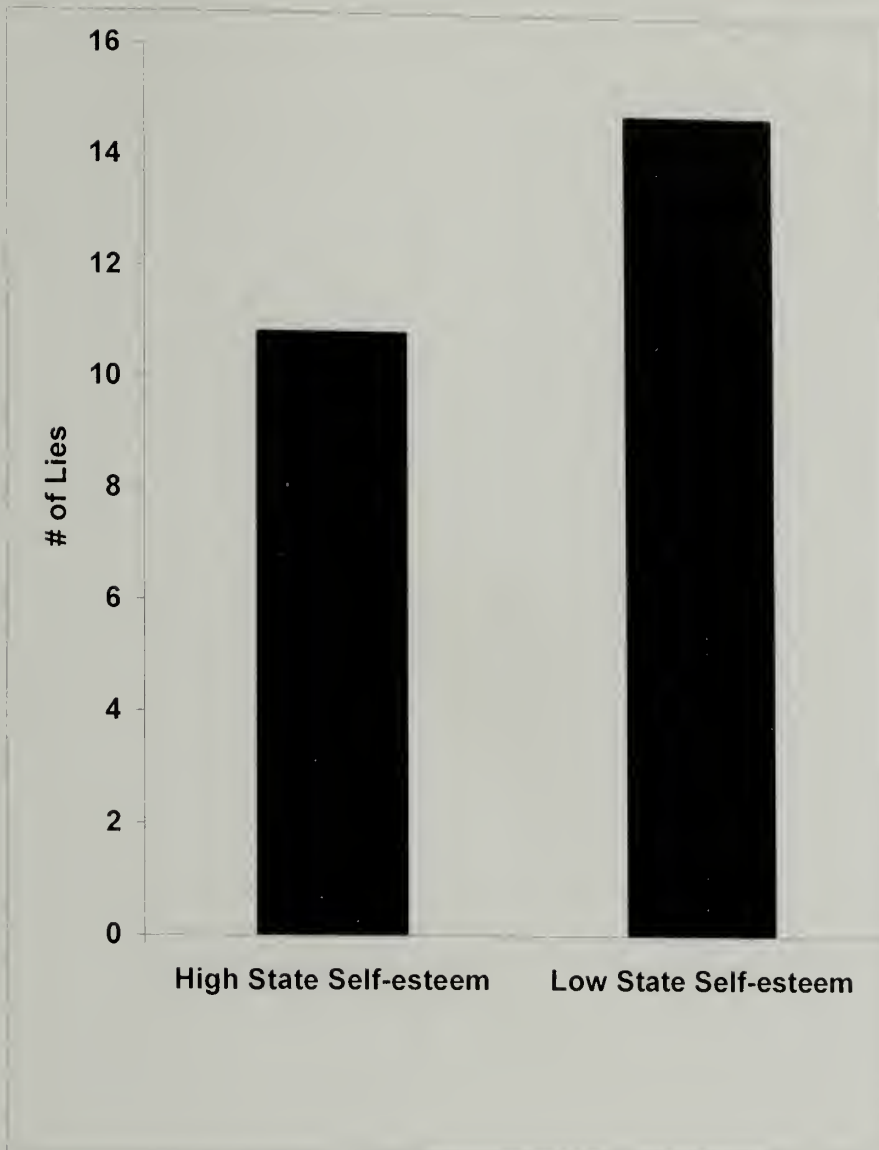


Figure 4. State Self-esteem and # of Lies.

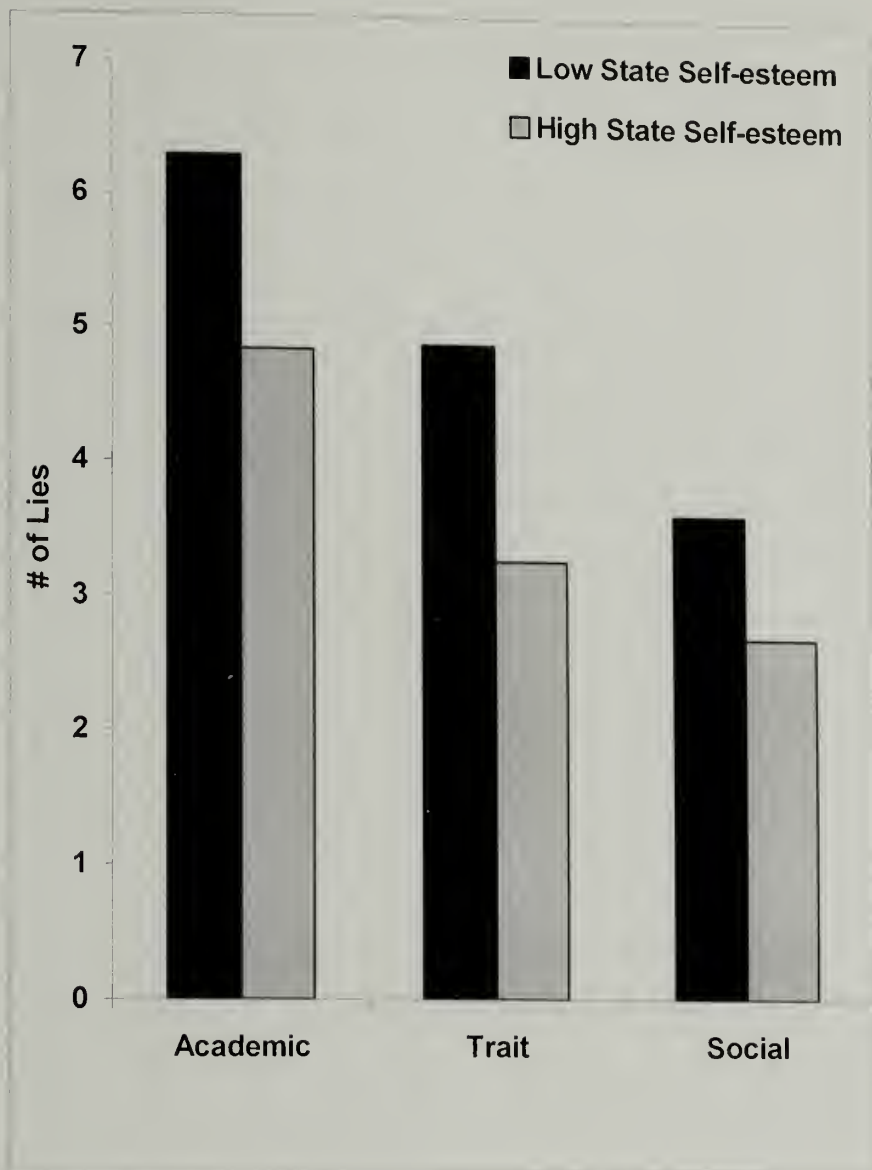


Figure 5. Subcategory of lie by state self-esteem.

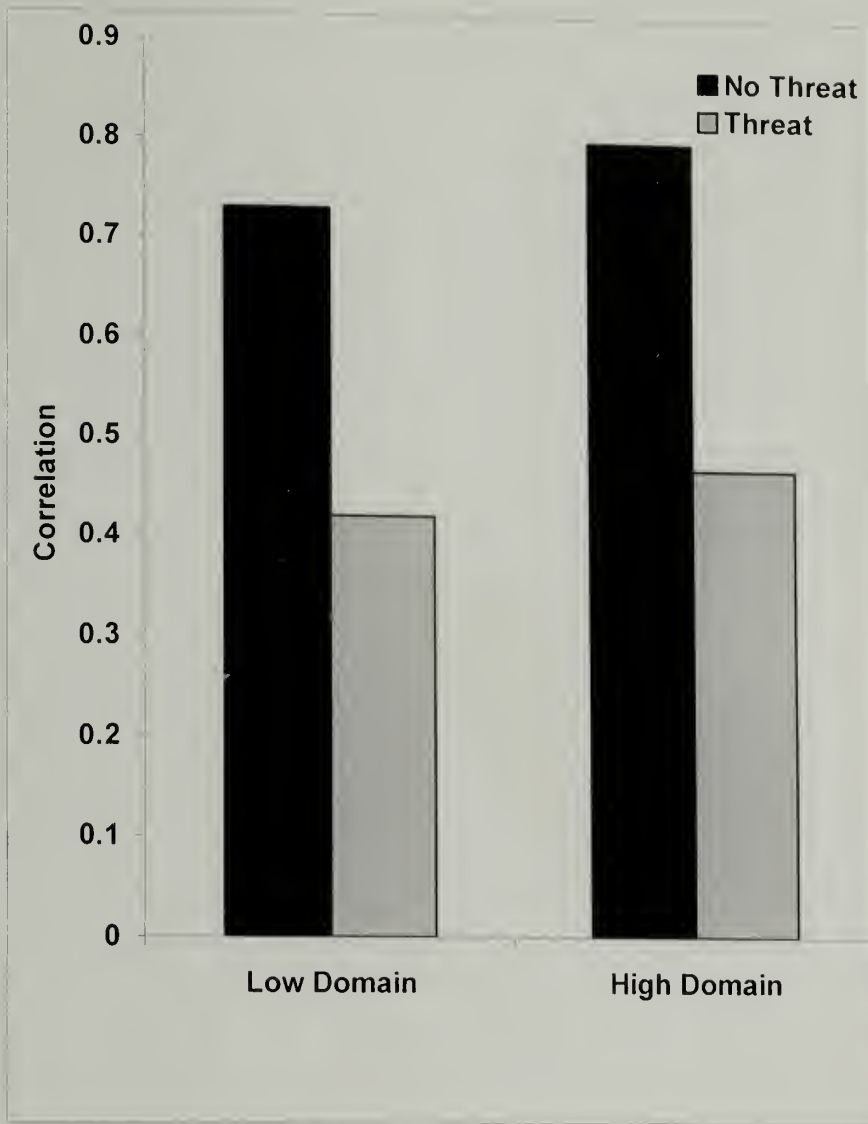


Figure 6. Correlation between Trait and State Self-esteem.

## APPENDIX A

### PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS: HIGH RELEVANCE

This study is being conducted in collaboration with a large local corporation. There will be two experimenters running the study, I will be working with you and the other experimenter will be working with your partner.

We are interested in the type of information that is most useful to collect during job interviews. The specific purpose of the study is to determine what type of questions provide the best information with which to evaluate a job applicant's skills, abilities and aptitude. As today's companies increase their workforce, they require the initial interview process to match a prospective employee, as close as possible, with the correct job. Understanding which questions provide the interviewer with the most evaluative information about an applicant's abilities enables the interviewer to better assess whether the applicant can adequately perform the job, saving the company and the potential employee both time and money.

You and your paired partner, who you will not meet, will exchange information about yourselves by completing an Evaluative Information Questionnaire (EIQ). You and your partner will use each other's EIQ to evaluate if the other possesses the skills, abilities and aptitude to perform numerous kinds of jobs and tasks, including, for example: sales manager, doctor, social worker, teacher, lawyer or tasks such as supervising, educating, analyzing or selling.

The Cognitive Integration Test (CIT) is the first part of the EIQ. The CIT assesses academic achievement and abilities and generally people who score higher on the test tend to do better academically and ultimately are more successful than those who score lower on the test.

You will have 15 minutes to complete the test.

## APPENDIX B

### PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS: LOW RELEVANCE

This study is being conducted in collaboration with a large local corporation. There will be two experimenters running the study, I will be working with you and the other experimenter will be working with your partner.

We are interested in the type of information that is most useful to collect during job interviews. The specific purpose of the study is to determine what type of questions provide the best information with which to evaluate a job applicant's skills, abilities and aptitude. As today's companies increase their workforce, they require the initial interview process to match a prospective employee, as close as possible, with the correct job. Understanding which questions provide the interviewer with the most evaluative information about an applicant's abilities enables the interviewer to better assess whether the applicant can adequately perform the job, saving the company and the potential employee both time and money.

You and your paired partner, who you will not meet, will exchange information about yourselves by completing an Evaluative Information Questionnaire (EIQ). You and your partner will use each other's EIQ to evaluate if the other possesses the skills, abilities and aptitude to perform numerous kinds of jobs and tasks, including, for example: sales manager, doctor, social worker, teacher, lawyer or tasks such as supervising, educating, analyzing or selling.

The Cognitive Integration Test (CIT) is the first part of the EIQ. The CIT is not a test of academic abilities, it just assesses the strategies that people use during problem-solving tasks.

You will have 15 minutes to complete the test.

## APPENDIX C

### PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS: SIMILAR

This is the Evaluative Information Questionnaire (EIQ) that you and your partner will each complete. The EIQ includes various questions regarding personal, social and academic issues. Your partner will use your responses on the EIQ to evaluate whether you possess the skills, abilities and aptitude to perform numerous kinds of jobs and tasks, including sales manager, doctor, social worker, teacher, lawyer or tasks such as supervising, educating, analyzing or selling, and you will use your partner's EIQ to do the same. Both you and your partner's CIT scores are indicated in question #1 and #2.

In order to investigate any individual differences that may affect the evaluation process, you have been matched to be very similar with your partner. You and your partner are the same age and sex and you have the same major and are basically taking the same courses. Your personality profiles, which we took from the pre-screening forms, shows that you and your partner are also very similar. In short, you are very comparable to your partner.

Please complete the Evaluative Information Questionnaire and when you are done, I'll give it to your partner for evaluation and I'll bring your partner's questionnaire for you to evaluate.

## APPENDIX D

### PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS: DISSIMILAR

This is the Evaluative Information Questionnaire that you and your partner will each complete. The EIQ includes various questions regarding personal, social and academic issues. Your partner will use your responses on the EIQ to evaluate whether you possess the skills, abilities and aptitude to perform numerous kinds of jobs and tasks, including sales manager, doctor, social worker, teacher, lawyer or tasks such as supervising, educating, analyzing or selling, and you will use your partner's EIQ to do the same. Both you and your partner's CIT scores are indicated in question #1 and #2.

In order to investigate any individual differences that may affect the evaluation process, you have been matched to be very dissimilar with your partner. You and your partner are not the same age or sex and you have different majors and are basically taking different courses. Your personality profiles, which we took from the pre-screening forms, shows that you and your partner are also very dissimilar. In short, you are not very comparable to your partner.

## APPENDIX E

### COGNITIVE INTEGRATION TEST

**Question 1-3.** In a display of products available from a paper manufacturer, exactly eight folders are to be displayed on eight stands that are lined up in a straight line and numbered consecutively 1 through 8 from left to right. There are three gray folders, two purple folders, two yellow folders, and one orange folder. The folders must be displayed according to the following conditions:

- At least one of the purple folders must be next to a yellow folder.
  - The orange folder cannot be next to a yellow folder.
  - The three gray folders cannot be placed on three consecutive stands.
  - Stand 5 must hold a gray folder.
  - Either stand 1 or stand 8 or both must hold a yellow folder.
1. If a gray folder is placed on stand 4, another gray folder could be placed on any of the following stands **EXCEPT**
    - A. 1
    - B. 3
    - C. 5
    - D. 7
    - E. 8
  2. If purple folders are on stands 1 and 2, which of the following must be true?
    - A. A gray folder is on stand 3.
    - B. The orange folder is on stand 4.
    - C. A gray folder is on stand 4.
    - D. A yellow folder is on stand 6.
    - E. The orange folder is on stand 8.
  3. If stand 2 holds an orange folder, which of the following must be true?
    - A. Stand 1 holds a gray folder.
    - B. Stand 3 holds a purple folder.
    - C. Stand 6 holds a purple folder.
    - D. Stand 7 holds a yellow folder.
    - E. Stand 8 holds a yellow folder.
  4. Private ownership of services traditionally considered to be the responsibility of the government will typically improve those services. The turnpike system in the United States of the nineteenth century demonstrates the truth of this principle; the system, which had previously been controlled by the government, became a more reliable system when take over by private organizations. Which of the following describes a significant flaw in the author's argument above?
    - A. The author defends the conclusion by appealing to a person of authority.
    - B. The author distorts an opposing view in trying to show its weaknesses.
    - C. The author defends what the author perceives as a wrong action by pointing out another perceived wrong action.
    - D. The author generalizes from a sample not representative enough to establish the conclusion.
    - E. The author attributes two very different meanings to the same word.



5. Studies of workplace safety in construction and manufacturing firms have found that the rate of injuries tends to rise when work loads increase. Since inexperienced workers are often hired by these firms when work loads increase, the higher rate of injuries is undoubtedly due to a higher accident rate for inexperienced workers. Which of the following statements, if true, would most weaken the conclusion drawn above?
- Many of the inexperienced workers hired when the firms' work loads increase are hired only for temporary positions.
  - The studies of workplace safety were focused only on injuries that resulted in lost workdays.
  - There is a much higher rate of injury in construction firms than in manufacturing firms.
  - The accident rate for experienced workers tends to increase whenever firm's work loads increase.
  - Firms that hire inexperienced workers for potentially dangerous jobs are required to provide them with training.
6. Because the process of freezing food consumes energy, many people keep their electric freezers half-empty, using them only to store commercially frozen foods. Yet freezers that are half-empty often consume more energy than they would if they were kept fully stocked. Which of the following, if true, contributes most to an explanation of the apparent discrepancy described above?
- A given volume of air in a freezer requires much more energy to be maintained at a temperature below freezing than does an identical volume of frozen food.
  - The more often a freezer's door is opened, the more energy is required to maintain that freezer's normal temperature.
  - When unfrozen foods are placed in a freezer, the average temperature of a given volume of air inside that freezer rises temporarily.
  - A person who normally maintains a half-empty freezer can cut energy costs considerably by using a freezer that is 50 percent smaller.
  - An electric freezer can operate efficiently only if chilled air is free to circulate within the freezing compartment.

**Questions 7-8.** The manager of a commercial printing firm is scheduling exactly six jobs – **P**, **Q**, **S**, **T**, **W**, and **X** – for a particular week, Monday through Saturday. Each job can be completed in one full day, and exactly one job will be scheduled for each day. The jobs must be scheduled according to:

*P must be printed sometime before S is printed.*

*T must be printed on the day immediately before or the day immediately after the day on which X is printed.*

*W must be printed on Thursday.*

7. If **T** is printed in Tuesday, any of the following could be true EXCEPT:
- P** is printed on Monday.
  - Q** is printed on Saturday.
  - S** is printed on Wednesday.
  - S** is printed on Friday.
  - X** is printed on Wednesday.

8. If **Q** is printed on Friday, which of the following must be true?
- A. **P** is printed on Monday.
  - B. **P** is printed on Wednesday.
  - C. **S** is printed on Saturday.
  - D. **T** is printed on Monday.
  - E. **X** is printed on Tuesday.

## APPENDIX F

### SELF-MONITORING SCALE

Circle the number that indicates whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

1. Thus far, I have enjoyed my time here at UMASS.  
1) agree    2) disagree
2. Right now, I am in a good mood.  
1) agree    2) disagree
3. Right now, I believe I am no more nervous than most other people.  
1) agree    2) disagree
4. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.  
1) agree    2) disagree
5. I dislike the sensations one gets when flying.  
1) agree    2) disagree
6. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things.  
1) agree    2) disagree
7. I commonly make conversation with strangers.  
1) agree    2) disagree
8. I can only argue for ideas, which I already believe.  
1) agree    2) disagree
9. I am not a very insistent person.  
1) agree    2) disagree
10. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.  
1) agree    2) disagree
11. I am troubled by attacks of nausea.  
1) agree    2) disagree
12. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain others.  
1) agree    2) disagree
13. I work under a great deal of tension.  
1) agree    2) disagree
14. I would probably make a good actor/actress.  
1) agree    2) disagree
15. In an argument, I can usually win others over to my side.  
1) agree    2) disagree
16. In a group of people I am rarely the center of attention.  
1) agree    2) disagree
17. Sometimes I get so excited that I find it hard to get to sleep.  
1) agree    2) disagree
18. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different people.  
1) agree    2) disagree
19. Before voting, I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates.  
1) agree    2) disagree
20. I am not particularly good at making other people like me.  
1) agree    2) disagree

21. I enjoy many of the rides in amusement parks.  
1) agree    2) disagree
22. I'm not always the person I appear to be.  
1) agree    2) disagree
23. I dislike people who do or say things just to shock or upset others.  
1) agree    2) disagree
24. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone or win their favor.  
1) agree    2) disagree
25. When you can predict almost everything a person will do and say he or she must be a bore.  
1) agree    2) disagree
26. I have considered being an entertainer.  
1) agree    2) disagree
27. I like wild uninhibited parties.  
1) agree    2) disagree
28. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting.  
1) agree    2) disagree
29. I would like to try parachute jumping.  
1) agree    2) disagree
30. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.  
1) agree    2) disagree
31. I have more close friends now than I did in high school.  
1) agree    2) disagree
32. At a party I let others keep the jokes and stories going.  
1) agree    2) disagree
33. I feel a bit awkward in public and do not show up quite as well as I should.  
1) agree    2) disagree
34. My friends would generally consider me a happy person.  
1) agree    2) disagree
35. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end).  
1) agree    2) disagree
36. I have an easy time meeting and talking to new people.  
1) agree    2) disagree
37. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them.  
1) agree    2) disagree
38. I enjoy meeting and talking to new people.  
1) agree    2) disagree

## APPENDIX G

### EVALUATIVE INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE (EIQ)

Complete the EIQ and when you are done, I'll give it to your partner for evaluation and I'll bring your partner's questionnaire for you to evaluate.

1. Your CIT Test Score: 89 or 67 (depending on condition)
2. Your partner's CIT Test Score: 89 or 67 (depending on condition)
3. Please indicate your SAT or ACT scores: Verbal \_\_\_\_\_ Math: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Please indicate your college GPA. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Please indicate your high school GPA. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Academic honors, awards or scholarships you have received? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many academic associations have you belonged to? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Your lowest grade on a college test (high school test if a freshman)? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Your highest grade on a college test (high school test if a freshman)? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How many classes have you failed? \_\_\_\_\_
11. On average, how many hours per week do you study? \_\_\_\_\_
12. On average, how many classes do you skip per month? \_\_\_\_\_
13. In how many classes have you received a final grade of A? \_\_\_\_\_
14. In how many classes have you received a final grade of B? \_\_\_\_\_
15. In how many classes have you received a final grade below a B? \_\_\_\_\_
16. On average, how many hours per week do you spend in the library? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Please describe a few of your strongest academic points.
18. Please describe a few of your weakest academic points.
19. Please describe a few of your strongest social abilities.
20. Please describe a few of your weakest social points.
21. What personal actions or behaviors are you the most proud of?
22. What personal actions or behaviors are you the most ashamed of?
23. What personal actions or behaviors are you the most embarrassed by?
24. How likely is it that you will attend graduate school?  

<b>will</b>	1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5	----	6	----	7	<b>won't</b>
-------------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	--------------
25. How would you rate your mathematical ability?  

<b>strong</b>	1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5	----	6	----	7	<b>weak</b>
---------------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	-------------
26. How would you rate your writing skills?  

<b>strong</b>	1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5	----	6	----	7	<b>weak</b>
---------------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	-------------
27. How would you rate your analytical skills?  

<b>strong</b>	1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5	----	6	----	7	<b>weak</b>
---------------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	-------------
28. Do you enjoy drinking alcohol?  

<b>not at all</b>	1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5	----	6	----	7	<b>very much</b>
-------------------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------------------
29. On average, how much time do you spend on the internet per week?  

<b>not at all</b>	1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5	----	6	----	7	<b>very often</b>
-------------------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	-------------------
30. How often do you participate in physical exercise per week?  

<b>not at all</b>	1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5	----	6	----	7	<b>very often</b>
-------------------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	-------------------
31. How often do you watch sporting events per week?  

<b>not at all</b>	1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5	----	6	----	7	<b>very often</b>
-------------------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	------	---	-------------------

32. How often do you participate in sports events per week?  
**not at all** 1----2----3----4----5----6----7 **very often**
33. How many romantic relationships have you been in during the past 12 months?  
**none** 1----2----3----4----5----6----7 **many**
34. During the past 3 years how many romantic relationships have you been involved in?  
**none** 1----2----3----4----5----6----7 **many**
35. How often do you drink alcohol on a weekly basis?  
**not at all** 1----2----3----4----5----6----7 **very often**
36. During the past 12 months how often have you been high or drunk on drugs, pot, alcohol or any combination of the three?  
**not at all** 1----2----3----4----5----6----7 **very often**

**Use the following scale to rate yourself on the listed characteristics. Place the number in the blank following each adjective.**

**not at all** 1----2----3----4----5----6----7 **very much**

37. competitive \_\_\_\_\_
38. studious \_\_\_\_\_
39. ambitious \_\_\_\_\_
40. intelligent \_\_\_\_\_
41. competent \_\_\_\_\_
42. helpful \_\_\_\_\_
43. flexible \_\_\_\_\_
44. organized \_\_\_\_\_
45. efficient \_\_\_\_\_
46. hard-working \_\_\_\_\_
47. optimistic \_\_\_\_\_
48. pessimistic \_\_\_\_\_
49. stubborn \_\_\_\_\_
50. selfish \_\_\_\_\_
51. kind \_\_\_\_\_
52. materialistic \_\_\_\_\_
53. open-minded \_\_\_\_\_
54. compassionate \_\_\_\_\_
55. warm \_\_\_\_\_
56. powerful \_\_\_\_\_
57. cooperative \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX H

### ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

For each of the statements below, write down your level of agreement using the following scale:

0 = Agree very much

1 = Agree

2 = Neither agree nor disagree

3 = Disagree

4 = Disagree very much

1. At times I think I am no good at all. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I take a positive view of myself. \_\_\_\_\_
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I wish I could have more respect for myself. \_\_\_\_\_
5. I am able to do things as well as most other people. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. \_\_\_\_\_
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. \_\_\_\_\_
8. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I certainly feel useless at times. \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX I

### STATE SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

This is a questionnaire designed to measure what you are thinking at this moment. There is, of course, no right answer for any statement. The best answer is what you feel is true of yourself at this moment. Be sure to answer all of the items, even if you are not certain of the best answer. Again, answer these questions, as they are true for you right now. For each of the statements below, write down your level of agreement using the following scale:

**1 = not at all; 2 = a little bit; 3 = somewhat; 4 = very much; 5 = extremely**

1. I feel confident about my abilities. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success or failure. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I feel frustrated or rattled about my performance. \_\_\_\_\_
5. I feel that I am having trouble understanding things that I read. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I feel that others respect and admire me. \_\_\_\_\_
7. I am dissatisfied with my weight. \_\_\_\_\_
8. I feel self-conscious. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I feel as smart as others. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I feel displeased with myself. \_\_\_\_\_
11. I feel good about myself. \_\_\_\_\_
12. I am pleased with my appearance right now. \_\_\_\_\_
13. I am worried about what other people might think of me. \_\_\_\_\_
14. I feel confident that I understand things. \_\_\_\_\_
15. I feel inferior to others at this moment. \_\_\_\_\_
16. I feel unattractive. \_\_\_\_\_
17. I feel concerned about the impression I am making. \_\_\_\_\_
18. I feel that I have less scholastic ability right now than others. \_\_\_\_\_
19. I feel like I'm not doing well. \_\_\_\_\_
20. I am worried about looking foolish. \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX J

### MOOD SCALE

Use the following scale to rate how you feel at the moment. Place the number in the blank following each adjective.

**not at all 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7 very often**

1. Happy? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sad? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Lively? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Good mood? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Gloomy? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Content? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Calm? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Tired? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Peppy? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Drowsy? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Active? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Bad Mood? \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX K

### EIQ: TRACKING FORM

Please indicate the accuracy of each answer that you gave to the questions on the Evaluative Information Questionnaire that you completed earlier by selecting a number from the scale below and placing it in the blank in front of each question. For example, an answer that is *slightly exaggerated* would be rated as 2 or 3. An answer that is *very exaggerated* would be rated as 5 or 6. Please answer these questions as honestly as possible. Remember, all information will be kept anonymous and confidential.

**Completely accurate** 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7 **Completely inaccurate**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ your Verbal and Math SAT or ACT scores
2. \_\_\_\_\_ your college GPA
3. \_\_\_\_\_ your high school GPA
4. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of academic honors, awards or scholarships you have received
5. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of academic associations that you have belonged to
6. \_\_\_\_\_ your lowest grade on a college test (or high school test if a freshman)
7. \_\_\_\_\_ your highest grade on a college test (or high school test if a freshman)
8. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of classes you have failed
9. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of hours per week you study
10. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of classes you skip per month
11. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of classes you received a final grade of A
12. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of classes you received a final grade of B
13. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of classes you received a final grade below a B
14. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of hours per week you spend in the library
15. \_\_\_\_\_ your strongest academic points
16. \_\_\_\_\_ your weakest academic points
17. \_\_\_\_\_ your strongest social abilities
18. \_\_\_\_\_ your weakest social points
19. \_\_\_\_\_ personal actions or behaviors you are most proud of
20. \_\_\_\_\_ personal actions or behaviors you are most ashamed of
21. \_\_\_\_\_ personal actions or behaviors you are most embarrassed by
22. \_\_\_\_\_ the likelihood that you will attend graduate school
23. \_\_\_\_\_ your mathematical ability
24. \_\_\_\_\_ your writing skills
25. \_\_\_\_\_ your analytical skills
26. \_\_\_\_\_ your enjoyment of drinking alcohol
27. \_\_\_\_\_ the time you spend on the internet per week
28. \_\_\_\_\_ the amount of time you participate in physical exercise per week
29. \_\_\_\_\_ the amount of time you watch sporting events per week
30. \_\_\_\_\_ the amount of time you participate in sporting events per week
31. \_\_\_\_\_ number of romantic relations you have been involved in over past 12 months
32. \_\_\_\_\_ number of romantic relations you have been involved in over the past 3 years
33. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of times you drink alcohol on a weekly basis
34. \_\_\_\_\_ number of times, in past 12 months, you have been high or drunk on either drugs, pot, alcohol or any combination of the three
35. \_\_\_\_\_ competitive
36. \_\_\_\_\_ studious

37. \_\_\_\_\_ ambitious
38. \_\_\_\_\_ intelligent
39. \_\_\_\_\_ competent
40. \_\_\_\_\_ helpful
41. \_\_\_\_\_ flexible
42. \_\_\_\_\_ organized
43. \_\_\_\_\_ efficient
44. \_\_\_\_\_ hard-working
45. \_\_\_\_\_ optimistic
46. \_\_\_\_\_ pessimistic
47. \_\_\_\_\_ stubborn
48. \_\_\_\_\_ selfish
49. \_\_\_\_\_ kind
50. \_\_\_\_\_ materialistic
51. \_\_\_\_\_ open-minded
52. \_\_\_\_\_ compassionate
53. \_\_\_\_\_ warm
54. \_\_\_\_\_ powerful
55. \_\_\_\_\_ cooperative

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