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# Social Perception and Performance

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Social Perception and Performance

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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## Social Perception and Performance

Danyel Hancock

### ABSTRACT

When stigmatized or oppressed groups are able to protect their self-esteem by attributing a negative outcome to prejudice and/or discrimination, this has been titled “attributional ambiguity”. Whereas it has been proven in many studies that attributional ambiguity does exist among the stigmatized and oppressed groups the methodological approach of these studies were bias. In these studies the evaluator(s) has always been white and/or physically able. The goal of this study was to investigate whether attributional ambiguity is utilized by any individual (stigmatized/oppressed or non-stigmatized/non-oppressed) who feels that their outcome as the result of prejudice and/or discrimination. Our methodological approach allowed participants to be evaluated by same-race, or cross-race evaluators of the same sex. It is believed that this did address the issue of stigmatized/oppressed being evaluators themselves. However. The lack of reported prejudice made it difficult to test the construct validity of attributional ambiguity. In addition this study yielded results that revealed that subtle differences such as skin color is not enough to imply prejudice even when paired with negative feedback.

## INTRODUCTION

Attributional ambiguity has been defined as the ability to protect one's self-esteem by attributing negative feedback to prejudice and discrimination (Abramson, Metalsky, & Alloy, 1989; Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Weiner, 1985, 1986). In recent literature, attributional ambiguity has been used to explain the preservation of self-esteem among those in stigmatized or oppressed social groups. Within the attributional ambiguity framework, members of some stigmatized groups may suffer from negative affect and low self-esteem.

These members generally do not recognize the negative consequences their stigmatized conditions have on their functioning because they do not attribute their functioning to prejudice and discrimination on the part of others. It is suggested that by using attributional ambiguity, some stigmatized/oppressed individuals have been able to discount the negative feedback from others. Thus, they have developed the ability to buffer the effects of negative feedback on their self-esteem, which allows their self-esteem to be left virtually intact. A better understanding of how individuals utilize attributional ambiguity can be obtained by further analyses of the following related concepts: self-esteem, collective self-esteem, and stigmatized/oppressed groups.

### **The Elements of Attributional Ambiguity**

#### Self-esteem

Self-esteem is related to attributional ambiguity in that self-esteem is precisely the element that an individual attempts to protect. However, one may ask "is this self-esteem worth protecting?" and "what exactly is self-esteem?" According to Rosenberg (1965), *self-esteem* is a positive or negative attitude toward self. *Self-esteem*, however, has two

quite different connotations. Rosenberg suggests that one connotation of high self-esteem is that the person thinks he or she is “very good”; a very different connotation is that he or she thinks he or she is “good enough.” The latter makes it possible for a person to consider himself or herself superior to most people while still feeling inadequate in terms of certain personal standards. These connotations also allow for a person’s self-esteem to be high in one domain but low in another.

High self-esteem, as reflected in Rosenberg’s (1965) scale items, reflects the feeling that one is “good enough.” The individual feels that he or she is a person of worth. Individuals respect themselves for what they are, but they do not consider themselves superior to others. Individuals with high self-esteem do not consider themselves worse than others; however, they recognize their limitations and expect to grow and improve.

Low self-esteem, on the other hand, implies self-rejection, self-dissatisfaction, or self-contempt. Individuals with this quality lack respect for themselves, and their self-picture is discordant with their “ideal self.” The ideal self is the representation of attributes that ideally we would like to possess; it is the attribute that important others hold for us and that we hold for ourselves. (Higgins, 1987, 1989).

Around 1965, researchers showed increased interest regarding the nature of self-esteem. Clinical and experimental studies had provided valuable insights into the nature of self-esteem. Researchers knew very little, however, about the nature and distribution of self-esteem, self-values, and self-perceptions in the broader society (Rosenberg, 1965). Self-esteem was thought to be an element of self-image that could be measured separately from the others. Rosenberg measured this single element of self-image and developed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE). Rosenberg’s intent in developing the scale was to measure how different social experiences, stemming from membership in groups

characterized by different values, perspectives, or conditions of existence, would bear upon levels of self-esteem.

Since 1965, there have been more than 200 definitions of self-esteem, but there appears to be no professional consensus on the construct of self-esteem. In 1989, Mecca and Smelser formed a task force to study and define self-esteem. The formal definition of the self-esteem construct seems to have several parts. There is first a cognitive element that provokes a person to think about asking “what kind of person one is.” In order to answer, self-esteem must be characterized in descriptive terms: power and confidence, for example. Second, there is an affective element; a valence or degree of positivity or negativity attached to the identified facets. Third, and related to the second, is an evaluative element, an attribution of some level of worthiness according to some ideal standard. That standard is another feature of self-esteem. Sometimes the standard reflects an absolute sense of self-regard, measured against an ideal that one holds out for oneself; sometimes it may be a relative standard, measuring one’s sense of self-worth in relation to an internal aspiration or desired level of attainment. Sometimes the standard or point of reference is mainly internal or psychological; sometimes it involves measuring one’s self-worth in relation to another person or group. In short, people’s self-definition and self-esteem are based on daily successes and failures, social comparisons with others, and comparison with their own internal standards.

Self-esteem has both trait and state components. Because of these components, the stability of self-esteem has been called into question. Popular intuitions about self-esteem suggest that it frequently changes, and this intuition has concerned researchers, since a characteristic that fluctuates cannot be a trait. It seems, however, that self-esteem is actually quite stable. In one study (Baumeister, 1991), a large sample of students

completed Rosenberg's self-esteem measure on two occasions separated by two weeks. The correlation (test-retest reliability) of their scores was .90, suggesting extreme consistency. Fluctuations in self-esteem also do occur, as noted by Heatherton and Polivy (1991). In their study, they developed a state measure of self-esteem (SSES) that can be used to measure how an individual's momentary self-evaluations fluctuate in response to short-term events. They showed that the state measure correlates strongly with the Rosenberg and Janis-Field trait measures of self-esteem ( $r=.72$  and  $r=.76$ , respectively). The implication is that self-esteem may change after a flattering or degrading event but it will then return to a stable baseline.

Kernis and his colleagues have done a number of studies in the area of state fluctuations of self-esteem. They found that attending to the stability of self-esteem adds significant information over simply measuring the current level of esteem. For instance, Kernis, Granneman, and Mathis (1991) showed that the correlation between self-esteem and depression applies only to those people who show stable levels of self-esteem. This finding must be coupled with the results that those individuals with unstable low self-esteem do not show elevated levels of depression. Kernis, Granneman, and Barclay (1989) found that the highest levels of hostility and anger are found among people with high, but unstable, self-esteem. People who have high opinions of themselves may feel in danger of being deflated and may lash out at other individuals if events threaten to lower their self-esteem. In contrast, individuals who have stable high self-esteem tend not to become aggressive, because they are not as threatened by these events.

In regards to attributional ambiguity, self-esteem's levels must be examined to assess how these levels may affect the stigmatized/oppressed individuals' ability to buffer self-esteem when given negative feedback. This buffering may possibly be the result of

individuals' having flexible "state" measures of self-esteem or stable "trait" measures of self-esteem.

### Collective Self-Esteem

Our self-esteem is not dependent just on our concept of ourselves; it is also related to the groups with which we identify or with which we associate. Given this view, we must take into account the second element of attributional ambiguity: *collective self-esteem* (CSE). Because CSE is used interchangeably with other terms in the literature, it is important to explain the linkages. Tajfel and Turner (1979) term "social identity" as the self-concept that is based on membership in groups or categories. Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) refer to social identity as *collective identity*. According to Luhtanen and Crocker, collective identity is used by individuals to develop their own collective self-esteem. Thus by definition it appears that CSE, social identity, and collective identity all refer to the same construct. Hence, CSE will be used to denote those facets of identity that have to do with one's membership in a particular social group and the value placed on one's social group.

Tajfel and Turner's (1979, 1986) theory of social identity suggests that the self-concept has two distinct aspects. One aspect includes specific attributes of the individual, such as competence, talent, and sociability, which are labeled *personal identity*. The other, *social identity*, is described as "that part of an individual's self concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 255). The key difference between self- or personal-identity/esteem and collective-identity/esteem is the focus on the characteristics of one's groups, which may or may not also characterize oneself. Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell (1987) believe that "social self-

perception tends to vary along a continuum from the perception of self as a unique person. . . to the perception of the self as an in group category.”

With these differences in mind, Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) developed a scale that was designed to assess individual differences in collective, rather than personal, self-esteem. The scale is divided into four subscales of collective self-esteem. When combined, these subscales yield a score that assesses an individual’s overall collective self-esteem. This score may be use to assess how an individual’s self-esteem is related to the group he or she is a member of.

Membership is related to attributional ambiguity in the concept of collective self-esteem, whereas the potential to buffer your self-esteem may not be as possible for an individual. This buffer may exist as the result of being a proud member of a specific group or of the group’s having a positive collective self-esteem. As noted, self-esteem and collective self-esteem do correlate; however, there is a difference in the perception of the self as a unique person and the perception of the self as a member of a group. As elements of attributional ambiguity, both must be taken into account.

### Stigmatized/Oppressed Groups

The third element of attributional ambiguity is the notion of “stigmatized/oppresed groups”. According to Crocker and Major (1989), a stigmatized/oppresed group is an “out-group” relative to the dominant group in a culture or society. They further state that “out-groups are defined by non-membership in other societal groups, regardless of which group holds the majority position in the society; and are seen as homogenous.” “In-groups” hold negative attitudes, stereotypes, and beliefs about these out-groups. On average, these stigmatized or oppresed social groups experience disproportionately poor interpersonal or economic outcomes relative to

members of the society at large because their membership in the out-group elicits discrimination. It is this prejudice and discrimination that has been theorized to have influenced these individuals' self-esteem.

Is it possible that the ability to not allow negative feedback to affect self-esteem "buffering" occurs within individuals with certain self-esteem features? As noted earlier in the review of the literature, features of self-esteem may contribute to an individual's ability to maintain his or her own high regard for self. Specifically, those who have very high self-esteem may present the feature of arrogance and discount any feedback that is not congruent with self-perception. Also those who have high self-esteem and see themselves as "good enough" may be able to again discount negative feedback by taking the stand that "oh well, no one is perfect."

Finally the ability of an individual to maintain a certain level of self-esteem could be influenced by his or her setting or "state." For instance, if people who feel that they are effective communicators find themselves among only Spanish-speaking individuals when they themselves do not speak Spanish, their self-esteem as it relates to being an effective communicator might be affected by this setting or state of events.

Self-esteem, as an element of attributional ambiguity, has been found to be influenced by both trait and state features (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). To get an accurate assessment of an individual's buffering ability, an experimenter must assess the trait or state features of self-esteem. An independent assessment of someone's "state or trait" can be accomplished by administering state or trait measures (Profile of Mood States or State-Trait Personality Inventory, respectively). This type of assessment would be helpful for understanding the buffering that occurs in relation to these features in individuals in stigmatized or oppressed social categories. In addition, reviewing studies

that examine how stigmatized or socially oppressed individuals buffer their self-esteem will promote further understanding of the concept of attributional ambiguity.

Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, Cornwell, and Major (1991) conducted two experiments to investigate the hypothesis that stigmatized individuals can protect their self-esteem by attributing negative feedback to prejudice. Self-esteem was measured by the Rosenberg scale (RSE) and the Janis & Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (JFS). In the first experiment, 59 women received feedback regarding their work performance from an evaluator. This evaluator was identified as either prejudiced or not prejudiced by a survey that was supposedly completed earlier by the evaluator. The evaluator's completed survey was given to participants in the study and they were allowed to read the evaluator's assessment of women. The survey included five items assessing positive or negative attitudes toward women. These items were face valid and the participants were able to assess the evaluator's view of women (for example, "Women benefit more from divorce than men do because they receive child support." "Women who are less serious about their jobs take jobs away from men with families to support.")

Participants who received negative feedback from a supposedly prejudiced evaluator attributed the feedback to his prejudice and reported a less depressed affect than women who received negative feedback from a supposedly non-prejudiced evaluator. Participants who received positive feedback experienced the same level of depressive affect regardless of whether the evaluator was supposedly prejudiced or non-prejudiced.

The participants' self-esteem level prior to receiving the evaluator's feedback did not predict how participants would respond to the evaluator. Self-esteem of the participants (measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) did not change from pre- to post-test. The authors assumed that these were non-significant results and were due to the

fact that the pre-test was taken far in advance (2–10 weeks) of the post-test and the testing context was different (large group pre-testing vs. individual post-testing). The authors also acknowledged that perhaps the self-esteem of women is not as vulnerable to feedback from male evaluators as they had hypothesized. Women may not see their gender as a stigmatized characteristic or, as related to the hypothesis, they may attribute the negative feedback to the prejudice of others and discount others' feedback in order to protect their self-esteem.

Crocker, Cornwell, and Major (1993), investigated connections between the stigma of being overweight and the consequences of attributional ambiguity. In their experiment, 27 overweight and 31 normal-weight college women received either positive or negative social feedback from a male evaluator. Compared to the normal weight groups and overweight groups who received positive feedback, the overweight women who received negative feedback were more likely to attribute the feedback to their weight, but they did not blame the evaluator for his reaction. This attributional pattern resulted in a more negative mood for the overweight women in comparison with other groups. In this study, the negative outcomes were attributed to the stigmatized characteristics (being overweight) and not to the prejudiced and discriminatory beliefs of the evaluator. In this case, the stigma would not be self-protective, and the stigmatized individuals would experience a more negative mood and perhaps lower self-esteem.

Blaine, Crocker, and Major (1995) used three studies to investigate the hypothesis that positive outcome for stigmatized individuals who are motivated by sympathy may have unintended negative consequences for self-esteem, affect, and motivation. In Study 2, participants (35 female students and 28 male students) were asked to imagine themselves in two scenarios. The scenarios described the hiring of a stigmatized group

member (a wheelchair-bound, physically handicapped person) by an employer. In one condition “sympathy for mobility” (having compassion and understanding for an individual confined to a wheelchair) was expressed by the employer, and in the other condition “sympathy for prejudice” (having compassion and understanding for an individual belonging to a minority) was expressed by the employer.

The results showed that being hired on the basis of one’s qualifications resulted in higher self-esteem, less depression, less hostility and more work motivation than being hired on the basis of sympathy, whether the basis for the sympathy was prejudice and discrimination or mobility problems. Participants reported significantly lower state self-esteem in the sympathy due to the prejudice condition than they did in the sympathy due to the mobility problems condition ( $\underline{M}$ =14.65 and  $\underline{M}$ =18.28, respectively). This finding would be expected according to Taylor and Dube (1986). They argued that any outcome that is based on one’s social identity rather than one’s personal identity leads to more anger and less satisfaction.

In Study 3, undergraduate students (72 females and 61 males) were given scenarios. Students were asked to imagine they were female job applicants who were offered a job by an employer. The employer expressed either sympathy related to individual characteristics (person losing a love one, having a tough time finding a job) or sympathy related to prejudice and discrimination (being a member of a minority group). The results showed that sympathy had negative effects on depression, hostility, anxiety, and self-esteem when the sympathy was based on either individual or group-based problems imposed by the stigmatizing condition.

When stigmatized individuals are given help or sympathy, it may be unclear to them if the help is motivated by feelings of care or by pity. If the stigmatized individual

perceives that the sympathy is derived from concern or caring, then assistance is welcomed. If sympathy is perceived to be due to pity, however, the recipient feels inferior to the sympathy-giver and may become angry.

This study links its findings about feelings to affirmative-action programs. It suggests that such preferential treatment/sympathy may have a negative consequence for its recipients, when positive outcomes such as being admitted to school or hired for a job are attributed to one's membership in a group rather than to one's deservedness. A major limitation of these findings is the limited generalizability based on the use of forced-choice scenarios. These scenarios require the participant to attribute the employment to sympathy, rather than relying on the participant's own attribution.

Crocker, Voelkl, Cornwell, Testa, and Major (1991), studied 38 Black and 45 White students who received interpersonal feedback from a White evaluator. Half of the students could be seen by the evaluator through a glass window in an adjacent room, and half could not be seen by the evaluator because of a drawn curtain. Compared with Whites, Blacks were more likely to attribute negative feedback to prejudice. Blacks were also more likely to attribute both negative and positive feedback to prejudice when they could be visually seen by the evaluator. Being seen by the evaluator buffered the self-esteem (as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) of Blacks from negative feedback but hurt the self-esteem of Blacks who received positive feedback.

The authors suggested that those who were seen and received positive feedback might have been particularly sensitive to the motives underlying the positive feedback they received. In this experiment, it must be noted that someone of a different race always evaluated the Black students, whereas someone of the same race always evaluated the White students. This approach could have biased the results by reporting data (Black

students' responses to being evaluated by someone of a different race) without comparing these data to comparable results (White students' responses to being evaluated by someone of a different race).

In a study by Blaine, Crocker, and Major (1995), participants (111 European-American, 12 African-American, and 7 Asian college students) were asked to imagine themselves in the position of a stigmatized person (African-American or female) who received a job either because he or she was qualified or out of sympathy for a stigmatizing condition. They were then asked to give ratings on self-esteem, motivation for work, anxiety, hostility, and depression. Results indicated that all participants reported lower self-esteem, more negative affect, and lowered work motivation when the job was offered out of sympathy rather than on the basis of qualifications. The author also noted that negative effects of being hired due to a history of discrimination against one's group hold regardless of whether the recipient of the positive outcome is African-American or female. According to the author, these effects generalize across some stigmatized groups.

A limitation of this study is that the effects that are being reported are based on role-playing methodology (i.e., the participants imagined they were African-American or female). These results assume that actual members of these stigmatized groups would respond in a similar way. Perhaps a better methodology would have been to select participants who matched the demographics of the stigmatized groups (African-American or female), thus producing actual, rather than role-playing, results.

The methodological approach in which all these studies have been carried out has led these experimenters to the suggestion that attributional ambiguity occurs only within these particular groups or with these particular members of these groups. In each of these studies, when the stigmatized or oppressed social groups are given positive or negative

feedback, they are also being evaluated by only White evaluators. At no time are the stigmatized or oppressed members evaluated by members of their own group or are evaluators themselves. Accordingly, the evaluators of these studies, Whites, are not considered for the utilization of attributional ambiguity.

The current study attempts to address whether attributional ambiguity reflects a skill that is used by all individuals to preserve self-esteem when given biased feedback. This goal will be accomplished by using procedures from the literature on attributional ambiguity and expanding these procedures to evaluate dyads of African-Americans/White evaluators and participants. Specifically, this study uses the following conditions to investigate attributional ambiguity: (1) participant is African-American and the confederate is African-American, participant receives negative feedback; (2) participant is African-American and the confederate is White, participant receives negative feedback; (3) participant is White and the confederate is White, participant receives negative feedback; (4) participant is White and the confederate is African-American, participant receives negative feedback.

The hypotheses that follow are based on the research literature:

### **Hypothesis 1**

When negative feedback is given, it is expected that Whites who are evaluated by Whites will show a decrease in self-esteem. African-Americans who are evaluated by African-Americans are expected to show a decrease in self-esteem but to a lesser degree than that of the Whites-evaluated-by-Whites group. Whites being evaluated by African-Americans and African-Americans being evaluated by Whites will show a lesser decrease in self-esteem than both of the other mentioned groups (Whites evaluated by Whites and African-Americans evaluated by African-Americans). Support for these hypotheses will

demonstrate that Whites as well as African-Americans use attributional ambiguity to protect self-esteem. In addition, these findings will extend the notion of attributional ambiguity beyond oppressed or stigmatized groups.

## **Hypothesis 2**

In support of the theory that attributional ambiguity exists in the presence of prejudice, it is expected that individuals' self-esteem will show a decrease when given negative feedback by different-race evaluators who are seen as non-prejudiced. The decrease in self-esteem of the participants who receive negative feedback and do not perceive the evaluator as prejudiced should be greater than that of the other condition (i.e., the case in which the evaluator is seen as prejudiced and negative feedback is given).

## **METHODS**

***Participants:*** Participants were 80 male and female undergraduate students at the University of South Florida. Forty of the students were African-American (describing themselves as Americans-African and having others perceive them as African-American) and 40 of the students were White (non-Hispanic/Latino/Latina). Participants were selected from psychology courses. All participants received extra credit points toward their courses for their participation. A total of 80 (20 per condition) were needed to have sufficient power of .80 for a "large effect" in a 2x2 between Participant ANOVA design with alpha set at .05.

### ***Measures:***

#### **State Self-Esteem Measure** (see APPENDIX A)

The State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES) is a twenty (20) item 5-point Likert scale that asks respondents to answer items using the following key:

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

The scale consists of 20 items modified from the widely used Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (Janis & Field, 1959). The Janis-Field is widely regarded as one of the best measures of self-esteem (Briggs & Cheek, 1986; Crandall, 1973; Rodinson & Shaver, 1973; however, its ability to measure “state” self-esteem as a result of laboratory manipulations has not been successful (Baumeister, 1974; Nisbett & Gordon, 1967 ). Thus the SSES fills a need for a measure of self-esteem that could detect those brief instances when self-esteem fluctuates.

The theoretical concept of development of the SSES focuses on five areas: academic, performance, social, appearance, and general self-esteem. Four items for each of these five areas were chosen. However, through item loading and examination, three factors (performance, social, and appearance) remained as the primary factors for this scale. Performance is related to that portion of self-esteem that is dependent on how well an individual completes a task. Social is related to that portion of self-esteem that is dependent on the view of self by others. And appearance is related to that portion of self-esteem that is dependent on physical characteristics such as height, weight, and body image.

**Validity.** Heatherton & Polivy (1991) used five studies to examine the construct validity of the SSES. Studies 1 and 2 were conducted for psychometric reasons—to test the factor structure of content validity of the scale. The findings of these studies were that all of the items were positively intercorrelated, ranging from .09 to .69 (mean inter-item correlation = .36; Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity,  $X^2(209, N= 428) = 4,287.7, p < .001$ . The

scale also yields a high degree of internal consistency (coefficient alpha = .92). Study 3 examined naturally occurring changes in self-esteem in a classroom setting. This study was conducted in order to analyze the changes in self-esteem as a result of performance requirements at certain periods of time, to provide support for the discriminant validity of the SSES. Whereas it is expected that performance state self-esteem would be affected, social and appearance self-esteem should remain about the same. The results yielded a significant drop in performance state self-esteem— $M$  difference = 1.28,  $t(121) = 4.17$ ,  $p < .0001$ —whereas there were no changes in social self-esteem— $M$  difference = 0.42,  $t(121) = 1.29$ ,  $p > .10$ —or appearance self-esteem— $M$  difference = 0.0. Study 4 demonstrated that the SSES was sensitive to laboratory manipulations of self-esteem. The study used “task failure” to manipulate participants self-esteem and measured self-esteem after task. Participants were given a task that was easily completed in one minute if the solution was known however, if the solution wasn’t known it could take well over ten minutes. If the participants took over ten minutes they would be told that they failed the task and the puzzle would be taken away. Participants were randomly assigned to three groups. 1) Video condition- where subject were told that they were being video taped so that, their solution to the puzzle could help others. 2) Bighorn condition-where participants were ask to view a video about bighorn sheep and rate if the movie was enjoyable after they attempted to complete the puzzle. 3) Control condition- where the participants were ask to play with various puzzles for 10 minutes and state their preference. Result form this study yielded that subject in the video conditions had significantly reduced state self-esteem compared with the control condition,  $F(3,75) = 3.17$ ,  $p < .05$ . The Bighorn condition did not differ from the control condition. However an examination of the subscales of the SSES revealed significant treatment effects for

performance,  $F(3,75) = 4.28$   $p < .008$  and social,  $F(3,75) = 3.96$ ,  $p < .02$ , self esteem but not for physical appearance self-esteem. This showed that the SSES was sensitive to momentary changes in self-esteem in laboratory manipulations.

### **Luhmanen and Crocker Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES)**

The Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES) (see APPENDIX B) is a 16 item, 7-point Likert-type measure in which responses range from 1=strongly disagree, to 7=strongly agree (Luhmanen & Crocker, 1992). This scale was used to measure the collective self-esteem of the participants during the pre-test and post-test phases of this study.

As stated before, this scale includes four subscales to arrive at a measure of collective self-esteem. Membership esteem assesses the most individualistic aspect of collective self-esteem and involve individuals' judgments of how good or worthy they are as members of their social groups. Private collective self-esteem measures individuals' beliefs about their groups and how good they feel about being part of those groups. Public collective self-esteem refers to one's judgments of how other people evaluate one's social groups. This type of self-esteem has been referred to as "out sight" since it is the way the individuals in a group believe others view their group. The final subscale was termed identity esteem and assesses the importance of one's social group membership to one's self-concept. This subscale reflects how important individuals feel they are by belonging to these groups.

Initially, ten items were developed to assess each of these four domains, and three additional items were included to assess the importance of being a good group member, the importance of how one feels about one's social groups, and the importance of how others feel about one's social groups. To shorten the total scale, four items were selected

for each of the subscales (membership, private, public and identity), resulting in a final 16-item total Collective Self-Esteem Scale. The items for the four subscales were selected on the basis of their highest loading on the appropriate factor (except for two items with factor loadings of .58 and .62, all the selected items had loadings greater than .70), the item total correlations (all the selected items correlated with the appropriate subscale score at  $r = .55$  or higher), and the criterion that two of the four items for each subscale were to be worded in a negative direction (such items were reverse-scored). The final four-item subscales correlated with the initial subscales at .90 or above.

The final 16 items were then submitted to a principal component analysis using varimax rotation, which showed that 72.3% of the total variance was accounted for by four factors. All the items loaded on the appropriate factors, ranging from .58 to .88.

**Reliability.** Reliability analyses indicated that Cronbach's (1955) alpha coefficients and item-total correlations for the CSES were substantial for the subscales as well as the total scale. The subscales ranged from .73 for the Membership subscale to .80 for the Public subscale. The total scale alpha was .85. The item-total correlations ranged from .45 to .66 for the subscales and from .37 to .59 for the total scale.

Regarding reliability, a 6-week test-retest was conducted on the CSES and the correlations were as follows: total scale  $r = .68$ ; private subscale  $r = .62$ ; identity subscale  $r = .68$ ; membership subscale  $r = .58$ ; and public subscale  $r = .66$ . These correlations do indicate that adequate test-retest reliability exists; however, there may be some shifting in individuals' levels of collective self-esteem over a 6-week period of time.

**Validity.** The Collective Self-Esteem Scale was moderately correlated ( $r = .36$ ) with the Rosenberg measure of self-esteem. However, the Membership subscale of the CSES correlated higher with the Rosenberg measure than other subscales ( $r = .42$ ). The

Membership subscale measures one's evaluation of the self in one's social group. This higher correlation may be the result of membership being related to trait features (i.e., race) and therefore correlating higher with a trait measure of self-esteem (RSE).

Collective self-esteem was also shown to correlate moderately ( $r = .34$ ) with group-oriented measures such as Hui's (1988) Individualism-Collectivism Scale. Validity of the CSES was obtained in a study investigating the ability of the CSES to predict behavior in an intergroup context (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990).

Participants high in private collective self-esteem reacted to collective threats (negative group feedback) in an in-group-enhancing fashion, and participants low in private collective self-esteem did not. These findings were parallel to those in an earlier study by Crocker, Thompson, McGraw, and Ingerman (1987), which showed that participants who were high in personal self-esteem reacted to average and below-average scores in a self-enhancing manner.

### **College Level Academic Skills Test (Essay Rating)**

The College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) (see APPENDIX C) is part of Florida's system of educational accountability and is mandated by Section 229.551(3)(k), FS. The CLAST is an achievement test measuring students' attainment of college-level communication and mathematics skills identified by faculties of community colleges and state universities through the College-Level Academic Skills Project (CLASP).

The CLAST consists of four subtests: Essay, English Language Skills, Reading, and Mathematics. For the purposes of this project we were focusing only on the Essay portion of the CLAST.

The College Level Academic Skills Test Essay Rating contains 11 items and is

rated on a six-point adjective rating scales. This measure was used to obtain a self-report rating of the participant's perceived ability to construct/write an essay. This measure will assist in comparing data that relate to competency and self-esteem.

The essay portion of the CLAST was developed using holistic scoring. Holistic scoring focuses on the overall impression that the essay has on the reader rather than on the essay's specific features. Holistic scoring assumes that the skills that make up the ability to write are closely interrelated and that one skill cannot be separated from the others. Thus, the essay is viewed as a total work in which the whole is something more than the sum of the parts. The readers of the essay form an impression of the overall quality of the essay and assign it a numerical rating based on their judgment of how well the paper meets a particular set of established criteria. A six-point scale reflecting the following performance levels is used to score CLAST essays.

Score of 6. The paper presents or implies a thesis that is developed with noticeable coherence. The writer's ideas are usually substantive, sophisticated, and carefully elaborated. The writer's choice of language and structure is precise and purposeful, often to the point of being polished. Control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics, despite an occasional flaw, contributes to the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.

Score of 5. The paper presents or implies a thesis and provides convincing, specific support. The writer's ideas are usually fresh, mature, and extensively developed. The writer demonstrates a command of language and uses a variety of structures. Control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics, despite an occasional flaw, contributes to the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.

Score of 4. The paper presents or implies a thesis and often suggests a plan of development, which is usually carried out. The writer provides enough support detail to accomplish the purpose of the paper. The writer makes competent use of language and sometimes varies sentence structure. Occasional errors in sentence structure, usage and mechanics do not interfere with the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.

Score of 3. The paper presents a thesis and often suggests a plan of development, which is usually carried out. The writer provides support that tends toward generalized statements or a listing. In general, the support is neither sufficient nor clear enough to be convincing. Sentence structure tends to be pedestrian and often repetitious. Errors in sentence structure, usage and mechanics sometimes interfere with the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.

Score of 2. The paper usually presents a thesis. The writer provides support that tends to be sketchy and/or illogical. Sentence structure may be simplistic and disjointed. Errors in sentence structure, usage and mechanics frequently interfere with the writer's ability to communicate the purpose.

Score of 1. The paper generally presents a thesis that is vaguely worded or weakly asserted. Support, if any, tends to be rambling and/or superficial. The writer uses language that often becomes tangled, incoherent and thus confusing. Errors in sentence structure, usage, and mechanics frequently occur.

**Reliability.** A study by the Department of Education (CLAST Technical Report 1992–1993) indicates that the test-r test correlation for the essay portion of the CLAST was .86 over a period of four months.

### **Profile of Mood States (POMS)**

The Profile of Mood State (POMS) in its present form is a 65 5-point adjective rating scale. This measure was used to assess the mood of the participants during the pre-test and post-test phases of this study. It is essential that the participant's mood be measured to ensure that findings are a result of experimental manipulations and not just a product of the participant's general state prior to manipulation.

The POMS was originally a set of 55 scales assembled by Nowlis and Green (1957) and Sells et al. (1956). Scales have been added and deleted from the original set on the basis of a series of six factor-analytic studies. The Thorndike-Lorge (1944) word lists were consulted to restrict the adjectives in the POMS to those that an average individual can easily understand. Typically, persons with at least a 7th-grade education have little or no difficulty in understanding the POMS.

The POMS was designed to depict an individual's typical and persistent mood reactions to his or her current life situation, and it is sufficiently short to assess acute treatment effects. Generally, individuals are asked to assess their feelings during the past

week; however, other time frames have been used with the POMS. Shorter rating periods such as “today,” “right now,” and even “the past three minutes” have been used successfully. For the purpose of this study, the “right now” version was used.

Six independent factor-analytic studies have been conducted in the development and validation of the POMS. These studies indicate that the same six mood factors can be identified, measured reliably, and replicated in the respective population. According to McNair, D. et al (1971), the six clearly defined POMS factors are Tension-Anxiety (T), Depression-Dejection (D), Anger-Hostility (A), Vigor-Activity (V), Fatigue-Inertia (F), and Confusion-Bewilderment (C). **Factor T** is defined by heightened musculoskeletal tension, reports of somatic tension, as well as observable psychomotor manifestations. **Factor D** represents a mood of depression accompanied by a sense of personal inadequacy. **Factor A** represents a mood of anger and antipathy towards others. **Factor V** is defined by using adjectives that reflect a mood of vigor, ebullience, and high energy. **Factor F** represents a mood of weariness, inertia, and low energy level. **Factor C** is characterized by bewilderment and muddle-headedness.

**Reliability.** Internal consistency for all scales is highly satisfactory, yielding near .90 or above for all six mood scales. Test–retest analyses were conducted on a normative group of patients who were accepted for treatment at a university medical center psychiatry clinic (Haskell & McNair, 1969). Those who entered treatment were assessed once immediately prior to their first therapy session and again after six weeks of treatment. A subset of patients were tested 20 days after intake to provide a rough estimate of stability without the intervention of treatment. The reliability estimates range from .65 for Vigor to .74 for Depression. The overall test–retest correlations ranged from .47 to .74 for Depression and .43 to .65 for Vigor. It is unlikely to find the high levels of

.80 to .90 in test–retest of mood states. These levels would be expected when measuring personality traits but not measures of mood. In another study by McNair and Lorr (1964), the test–retest reliability for the six factors on the POMS ranged from .61 to .69. The results were remarkably congruent for the different patient and control samples, for the different rating time periods, and for the 4-point and 5-point scales.

**Validity.** Concurrent validity was established by correlating the POMS with similar types of instruments. The Hopkins Symptom Distress Scale was used to assess Factor D, and it was found that the distress scores of Anxiety and Depression correlated .72 and .86 respectively with the POMS Factor D. Factor T had a correlation of .80 when compared with the Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS). When correlated with the MMPI-2, it was noted that the Hypochondriasis scale (Hs) of the MMPI-2 correlated with Tension, Anger, Fatigue, and Confusion as expected. With the Depression Scale, the POMS has the highest correlations for Depression ( $r = .65$ ) and Confusion ( $r = .67$ ). Vigor correlated negatively with Hysteria (Hy)  $-.51$  and Psychasthenia (Pt)  $-.44$ . The Paranoia (Pa) scale correlated .59 with Depression and .51 with Anger of the POMS. Finally, the Schizophrenia (Sc) scale correlated .69 with Depression and .66 with Confusion. Overall, the POMS has shown evidence of good validity.

### **State-Trait Personality Inventory (STPI)**

The STPI consists of six 10-item scales that reflect acute and dispositional curiosity, anxiety, and anger (Spielberger, 1979). This measure was used to assess the mood of the participants during the pre-test and post-test phases of this study. If attributional ambiguity is to exist among any individual regardless of situation, then it is essential that the participant's mood be measured to insure that findings are the result of experimental manipulation and not just a product of the participant's general state.

The four state subscales of the STPI are referred to as S-Anxiety, S-Curiosity, S-Anger and S-Depression. The four trait subscales are referred to as T-Anxiety, T-Curiosity, T-Anger and T-Depression. For the purposes of this research, only the state subscales were used as a measure of mood.

Participants respond to the STPI state items in terms of how they feel at that moment by rating themselves on the following four-point scale: (1) not at all; (2) somewhat; (3) moderately so; and (4) very much so.

**Reliability and Validity.** Psychometric properties of the STPI are included in the Preliminary Test Manual (Spielberger et al., 1999) and other sources (Westberry, 1980; Crane, 1981; Russell, 1981). Coefficient alphas for the STPI range from .80 to .87. The test–retest correlations for the trait scales range from .61 to .81 and the test–retest stability coefficients for the individual STPI state scales range from .21 to .44. Populations were generally consistent with expectations.

### **Design**

This study used a 2 x 2 design, with race of participant (African-American or White) as one factor and race of evaluator (same as participant or different from participant) as the other factor. Participants took part in only one condition of the study; hence this was a between-subject design. The dependent variables were the residual scores of the self-esteem and the collective self-esteem scales. Residualizing pre- and post-test scores removed from the post-test scores the portion that could have been predicted linearly from pre-test status. The residualized score was used to identify individuals who changed more than expected. This type of change is related to growth or training. The grouping variable was the race of the participant, either African-American or White. The independent variable was the race of the evaluator compared to the race of

the participant (same or different). Also two “state-like” measures were used: the POMS and “state” scales of the STPI.

**PROCEDURE**

The participants were randomly assigned to each independent variable. That is, regardless of whether the participant was African-American or White, he or she had an equal chance of being assigned to either race combination. As each pair of same-race participants were recruited for the study, a coin was tossed. The coin toss determined whether the first participant was assigned to the “same” group (heads) or the “different” group (tails). The second participant was always assigned to the opposite group from the first participant.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the study used the following cells: (1) participant was African-American and the confederate was African-American; (2) participant was African-American and the confederate was White; (3) participant was White and the confederate was White; and (4) participant was White and the confederate was African-American. The confederate was always the same gender as the participant and all participants received negative feedback.

**FIGURE 1**

**Race**

<i>Participant</i>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Differen t</b>
Afri-Amer.	pre-post self-esteem residual	pre-post self-esteem residual
White	pre-post self-esteem residual	pre-post self-esteem residual

There was some concern regarding random sampling. By using college students, one may be limiting the generalizability of the study. The use of college students, however, is standard practice in this field. It is recognized that this is an issue, but not one that decreases internal validity within experiments.

Another question concerned the possibility that results could be affected by which confederates were used in the various trials. Even though confederates were trained the same and were similar in appearance, analyses were conducted to test if there was a difference between confederates on any of the dependent variables. There were a total of 10 confederates utilized in the study (2 African-American males, 2 White males, 2 African-American females, and 4 White females). Initially only two White female confederates were recruited to participate; however, when they became unavailable an additional two White female confederates were recruited as replacements. Each confederate was given a number code to indicate his or her involvement with participant.

Another concern was the sensitivity to short-term, state-like variation of the Luhtanen and Crocker's Collective Self-Esteem Scale. It has been reported that the test-retest reliability of this measure for a six-week period is .80 or greater. This level of reliability was cause for concern because the scales solicit responses reflecting behavior traits. The issue was addressed by modifying the instructions such that participants' responses reflect their current assessment of esteem (e.g., "At this moment, I feel am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to") and avoid responses based on cumulative experience (e.g., "I feel am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to"). It was possible that this technique might have altered the psychometric properties of these scales in an unpredictable fashion. However, this technique was employed in all conditions, so any effects of this modification were present in all conditions.

The order of the administration of the scales remained the same for all conditions. The order of the measures was as follows: Essay Competency rating, pre-test-SSES, pre-test-CSES, POMS, STPI, post-test-SSES, and post-test-CSES. The study was conducted in two phases. In the initial phase, the experimenter recruited participants from psychology classes. This study was presented to potential participants as an experiment assessing how college students select their friends. During initial contact, the experimenter asked the potential participants to provide demographic information and fill out the Essay Competency Rating Scale (see Appendix D). Then the experimenter contacted participants who were appropriate for the second phase of the study (African-American and White students). The data of participants who were not African-American or White were not used.

The second phase took place approximately two weeks later in a lab setting. The participants were met by the experimenter/confederate and were reminded that the study involved determining how college students select their friends. The same-sex experimenter/confederate introduced himself or herself as a graduate student studying Psychology and English. Stating that the confederate was majoring in English established a presumption that the confederate was competent to evaluate the participant's essay. Participants were informed that the confederate was evaluating their ability to write an essay regarding the topic of choosing friends. They also were informed that those essays that are evaluated as excellent might be quoted and published along with the results of the study. Participants were led into individual experimental rooms separate from the confederate.

The participants were asked to complete the State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES), the Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES), the Profile of Mood States (POMS), and the

“state” portion of the State-Trait Personality Inventory (STPI). After these scales were completed, the participants were instructed to use the intercom system in the room to inform the experimenter/confederate that they had completed the scales. Once the participants informed the experimenter/confederate that they had completed the scales, they were asked to take 10 minutes and write a brief essay titled "What characteristics are important in choosing a friend?" The participants were informed that the experimenter was timing them and would use the intercom system to let them know when their time had elapsed.

After 10 minutes had elapsed, the experimenter/confederate used the intercom to notify the participants. When the experimenter/confederate notified the participants that their time is up he or she “mistakenly” locked the intercom system on audible, ostensibly allowing the participant to overhear the experimenter/confederate comments. The experimenter/confederate then returned to the experimental room to collect the participant’s materials. The participant was given an essay rating form and told these were the areas that the experimenter/confederate was assessing. The experimenter/confederate informed the participant that he or she would return in five minutes with the results of the essay. The experimenter/confederate allowed five minutes to elapse. During this time the participant was exposed to pre-scripted negative feedback via the intercom system.

Next the experimenter/confederate returned to the experimental room to collect the essay rating scale from the participant and returned the evaluation of the participant’s essay. The feedback on the essay evaluation mimicked the “pre-scripted conversation.” The feedback included specific area ratings, from 1 to 6, an overall essay rating, and a brief statement. The participant rating averaged 2.5 (which falls between 2 [poor] and 3

[fair]), the overall essay rating was 2, and the brief statement stated “Your word choice and sentence structure is poor. This made it difficult to determine what the main idea of the essay was.”

The experimenter asked the participant to redo the self-evaluation forms (State Self-Esteem Scale, Luhtanen & Crocker’s Collective Self-Esteem, the Profile of Mood States and the State-Trait Personality Inventory), supposedly because proper procedures had not been followed the first time the self-evaluations had been administered. After participants complete the second administration, they were given questions that allowed them to rate how they perceived themselves and how they felt others might perceive them. Specifically, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt the other student's response to them was due to their race, the other student's racism, the other student's discrimination and the competence level of the evaluator. The first three items are conceptually similar and form an index of attributions to racism with acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha=.76$ ). Consequently, the first three items were combined into a single measure, with a possible range from 3 to 15, with higher numbers indicating more attribution to prejudice (Dovidio & Gardner 1986). The last item is a face valid item in which participant’s response is recorded accordingly.

A manipulation check was done to assess the degree to which participants believed the deception. Participants were told that the Ethics Committee of the Department of Psychology is very concerned that subjects be treated fairly. They were asked to respond to a survey that asks if they were deceived in any way by participating in this study. Participants could reply either “yes” or “no.” Participants were also told that the experimenter would not see their responses and their responses would not affect any benefits they were entitled to by participating in the study. If the deception was not

successful (i.e., participants reported that they realized that they had been deceived) and participants indicated that they did not believe that the confederate did, in fact, evaluate them, then these data were omitted from the study. There were eleven cases in this study in which participants felt the confederate's rating was a deception. Data from these participants were excluded from all analyses.

Participants were debriefed and all deceptions of the study were revealed to them. They were informed that the experimenter was not really an English major and that in no way were the responses they received from the experimenter/confederate an accurate assessment of their writing skills. In addition, an educational debriefing form was given to them that described previous research in this area. Participants were also provided contact numbers that would enable them to obtain counseling services if they experienced any post-experiment mood discomfort. Finally participants were given extra-credit slips for participation and dismissed.

## **Results**

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS/WIN 9.0: 1998) was used for all analyses. A 2 x 2 between-subject analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used, followed by planned comparisons as needed. This test was an appropriate test because the data were measured on an interval/ratio scale, the scores were expected to be normally distributed, and the populations that the different samples came from were expected to have equal variances. The experimenter validated these assumptions before the analyses.

### **Preliminary Data Analysis**

One-way analyses of variance were conducted on the "confederate evaluating the participant" and the dependent variables "pre- and post-test residual scores" of the SSES ( $F(9, 79) = .387, p > .05$ ) and the CSES ( $F(9, 79) = 1.56, p > .05$ ). None were significant. Additional one-way analysis of variances were conducted on the "confederate evaluating

the participant” and the mood scale scores both pre- and post-test of the POMS ( $F(9, 79) = 3.391, p > .05$  and  $F(9, 79) = 2.81, p > .05$ , respectively) and the STPI ( $F(9, 79) = .716, p > .05$  and  $F(9, 79) = 1.01, p > .05$ , respectively). Again none were significant.

Residual scores were obtained for esteem scores (state and collective).

Computations of residual scores were derived by expressing the post-test scores of the esteem measures as a deviation from the post-test-on-pre-test regression line (“true differences”). This method allows the part of the post-test information that is linearly predictable from the pre-test to be partialled out. According to Lord and McNemar (1958), this measurement of differences is more representative of change than that of pre-test minus post-test differences (“raw differences”). Justification for this method is given by addressing retention and transfer of responses when a measure is given twice in one sitting. Hence a person’s true score within the same operation is kept distinct.

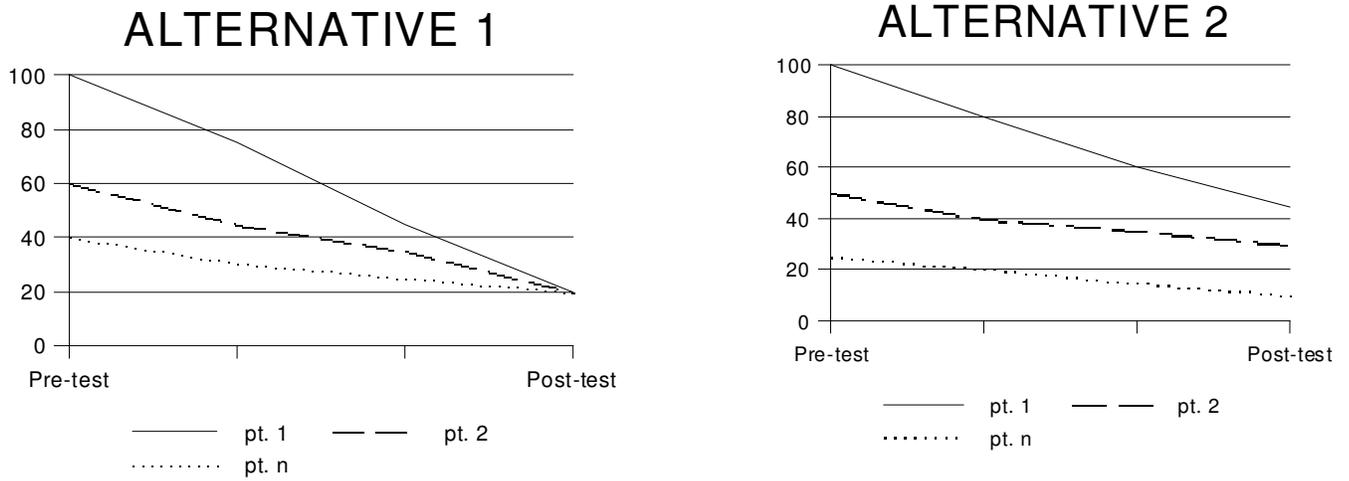
The residualized score is primarily a way of singling out those individuals who change more or less than expected. The State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES) and the Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES) both had overall and subscales scores. Residuals were computed for all pre-test and post-test scores and recorded in the appropriate condition. These computed residuals scores represent the dependent variable in this study.

Group means were compared in order to investigate whether mood diminished differentially from pre-test to post-test. No significant between-group differences were found for the self-reported mood measure’s residuals, POMS ( $F(3, 79) = .504, p > .05$ ) or STPI ( $F(3, 79) = 2.161, p > .05$ ). It was suggested that participants’ moods might diminish in a way that all participants end up at a similar, low mood level (Figure 2, Alternative 1). All participants obtaining the same or similar post-test score regardless of pre-test score or group would evidence this effect.

As indicated by Table 1, means scores of the mood measure pre-test were not significantly different between groups. Also each group mood measure had different, but not significantly different, post-test means. This result fails to support the notion of Alternative 1, namely that mood may have diminished in a way that all participants' post-test scores would be the same or similar regardless of pre-test score or group (see Table 1).

Another alternative (Figure 2, Alternative 2) suggested that mood may diminish in a way that reflects participants' "feeling worse" at post-test than pre-test, but with those at higher mood pre-test still being elevated over those at post-test. As indicated by the comparative means results, a numerical difference exists between the pre-test, post-test, and group results. In most cases those whose pre-test mood was high maintained a higher mood pattern during post-test compared to those who reported lower pre-test mood. However, the group's pattern in which African-American participants (Afri-Amer.-Pt) were evaluated by White evaluators (White-Conf) indicated "feeling worst" in comparison to all other groups' patterns, regardless of whether pre-test mood was greater or less than the other groups. Again these are being reported only as patterns of numerical difference and cannot be interpreted as a statistically significant difference, likely because of the numerical value because of large standard deviations (see Table 1).

Figure 2. Pre- and Post-test Patterns



*Table 1.* Means and Standard Deviations for Mood Scales

Group	POMS Pre-test Total Scores	POMS Post-test Total Scores	SPTI Pre-test Total Scores	SPTI Post-test Total Scores
Black Ss – Black Conf	44.4000	44.8000	74.4000	78.5000
Mean	20	20	20	20
N	38.4563	39.9955	13.9412	18.7743
Std. D				
Black Ss – White Conf	39.7500	49.7000	75.3500	88.5000
Mean	20	20	20	20
N	38.0247	54.5417	17.7238	23.5785
Std. D				

White Ss – White Conf Mean	19.1500 20 30.2207	27.9500 20 43.2416	71.9000 20 11.2245	80.1500 20 16.9528
N				
Std. D				
White Ss – Black Conf Mean	19.8000 20 25.7674	21.4500 20 35.4660	71.2500 20 11.0018	73.6000 20 15.8791
N				
Std. D				
Total Mean	30.7750 80 34.8548	35.9750 80 44.5836	73.2250 80 13.5879	80.1875 80 19.4280
N				
Std. D				

\* Higher scores indicate greater mood disturbance.

Correlational analysis was conducted to determine if there was a significant relationship between residual esteem scores and post-test mood state. Many researchers (Brockner & Elkind, 1985; Baumeisiter & Tice, 1985; McFarland & Ross, 1982; Sorman, 1977) have reported changes in participants' mood following manipulation of esteem. This analysis may provide support that the data obtained are a direct result of the manipulation of the independent variable (race) and not one of the participants' overall traits. If this notion is true, there must be a significant correlation between the residualized esteem scores and the post-test mood scores.

According to Spielberger et al. (1999), traits moods are somatic characteristic pattern of behavior or a predisposition to feel and act in a particular way. State moods are those behaviors or feelings that are greatly influenced by a particular event or

situation. Given this distinction, if participants' esteem was influenced by their situation and not their overall characteristic pattern, a strong correlation should exist between the residual esteem score and the post-test mood score. Alternatively, if participants' esteem was an overall characteristic pattern, then a strong correlation should have existed between the residual esteem score and the pre-test mood score.

The results yielded significant correlations between collective self-esteem residual (CSES), state self-esteem residual (SSES), Profile of Mood Scale post-test (POMS) and State-Trait Personality Inventory post-test (STPI) (see Table 2). Only a summation of the four state subscales of STPI (anxiety, curiosity, anger and depression) was used in these analyses. This same summation procedure is utilized by the POMS, which is a "state only" measure of mood. These results indicate that the manipulation of the independent variable (race) has a directional influence with "state" post-test mood scores. This significant relationship is shown to exist only in the post-test mood scores – esteem residual and not the pre-test mood score – esteem residual (Table 3). If results were linked to the participants' overall traits, it would be expected that a significant relationship would be found in both pre-test and post-test mood score – esteem residual. Hence the results seem to reflect the manipulation of the independent variable and not the participants' overall traits.

*Table2* Esteem Residual and Mood Post-Test Correlations

	CSES pre-post total residual	SSES total pre-post residual	POMS post-test total scores	STPI post-test total score
CSES pre-post total residual	1.000	.321**	-.346**	-.275*
SSES total pre-post residual	.321**	1.000	-.511**	-.472*
POMS post-test total scores	-.346**	-.511**	1.000	.780**
STPI post-test total score	-.275*	-.472**	.780**	1.000

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

N= 80 for all groups

*Table3* Esteem Residual and Mood Pre-Test Correlations

	CSES pre-post total residual	SSES total pre-post residual	POMS pre-test total scores	SSES pre-test total score
CSES pre-post total residual	1.000	.321**	-.075	.099
SSES total pre-post residual	.321**	1.000	-.040	.000
POMS pre-test total scores	-.075	-.040	1.000	-.531**
SSES pre-test total score	.099	.000	-.531**	1.000

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Participants' esteem may be affected by their perceptions of an evaluator's

competence to judge. If participants felt that evaluators were not trained or skilled in the area that they were evaluating, then their evaluation of the participant may not have had any merit. This perception may create a confound that effects the participants' esteem in the same manner as attributional ambiguity. Evaluators' perceived competence was measured by the participants. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to investigate if the competency ratings varied as a function of the four principal conditions. No significant differences were found on the perceived evaluator competency ( $F(3, 79) = .313, p = > .05$ ). The means were as presented in Table 4.

*Table 4. Competence rating of evaluator by participants*

GROUP	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Black Ss – Black Conf	3.5000	20	.7609
Black Ss – White Conf	3.3500	20	.8127
White Ss – White Conf	3.4500	20	.5104
White Ss – Black Conf	3.5500	20	.6048
Total	3.4625	80	.6740

*Primary Data Analyses*

The first hypothesis posited that Whites who are evaluated negatively by Whites would show a decrease in self-esteem. African-Americans who are evaluated negatively by African-Americans would also show a decrease in self-esteem but to a lesser degree than that of the Whites-evaluated-by-Whites group. Whites evaluated negatively by African-Americans and African-Americans evaluated negatively by Whites would show a lesser decrease in self-esteem than either of the previously mentioned groups. The

majority of individuals, both African-Americans and Whites, would use attributional ambiguity to preserve self-esteem. This hypothesis was not supported. There were no significant between-group differences found for participants' collective self-esteem residuals ( $F(3, 76) = .586, p > .05$ ) or state self-esteem residuals ( $F(3, 76) = 1.628, p > .05$ ).

The second hypothesis posited that if attributional ambiguity existed, it would be expected that individuals' self-esteem would have shown a decrease when given negative feedback by different-race evaluators who were seen as non-prejudiced. The decrease in self-esteem of the participants who received negative feedback and did not perceive the evaluator as prejudiced should have been greater than that of the other condition (the evaluator is seen as prejudiced and negative feedback is given).

This second hypothesis could not be investigated due to the equality of the independent variable "participant's discrimination rating of the evaluator." The mean rating of the perceived discrimination rating of the evaluator as a function of group is depicted in Table 5. As noted, all groups had similar mean ratings of evaluator's prejudice. The score averaged 3.0, indicating that participants felt that evaluators were non-prejudiced. Because this perception was present in all groups, there is no prejudice to compare the effects of self-esteem and negative feedback.

Additional analyses were conducted to investigate if there were differences in self-esteem among participants who rated evaluators as "low" non-prejudiced and those who rated evaluators as "medium" non-prejudiced. A univariate analysis of variance yielded no significant differences between African-Americans and Whites with regard to self-esteem residuals CSEC ( $F(3, 64) = .462, p > .05$ ) and SSES ( $F(3, 64) = 1.292, p > .05$ ) when the participants rated the evaluator "low" non-prejudiced. The results of African-American and White participants who

rated the evaluators as “medium” non-prejudiced also indicated that self-esteem did not differ significantly between the groups on either measure CSEC ( $F(3, 14) = .823, p > .05$ ) and SSES ( $F(3, 14) = .998, p > .05$ ).

*Table 5. Total Score for Prejudice Rating*

GROUP	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Black Ss - Black Conf	3.1500	20	.3663
Black Ss - White Conf	3.0500	20	.2236
White Ss - White Conf	3.1500	20	.3663
White Ss - Black Conf	3.2500	20	.4443
Total	3.1500	80	.3593

### *Discussions*

The attributional ambiguity theory concerns the protection of self-esteem by members of some stigmatized groups when negative feedback from non-stigmatized groups is attributed to prejudice or discrimination. Based on this premise, it was expected that those individuals who were evaluated by members of a different race (African-American participant–White confederate or White participant–African-American confederate) would have shown a lesser effect on self-esteem when given negative feedback than those evaluated by those of the same race (African-American participant–African-American confederate or White participant–White confederate). According to the literature (Festinger, 1954; Goethals & Darley, 1977), individuals evaluated by others who are similar or have certain relevant attributes tend to assume that the evaluator is more informed and accurate in personal appraisal. It was expected that Whites evaluated

by Whites and African-Americans evaluated by African-Americans would show a greater negative effect on self-esteem when given negative feedback than Whites evaluated by African-Americans and African-Americans evaluated by Whites.

As reported earlier there were no significant differences between these groups. However it must be noted that empirical research is generally consistent with attributional ambiguity theory. For example, Crocker et al. (1991) found in one experiment that women who received negative feedback from a prejudiced evaluator attributed the feedback to his prejudice and reported less depressed affect than women who received negative feedback from a non-prejudiced evaluator. In the second experiment Crocker also found that compared to Whites, African-Americans were more likely to attribute negative feedback to prejudice than positive feedback. Dion (1986) showed that women who attribute negative evaluations to the prejudice of a male evaluator tended to be higher in self-esteem. Since it is empirically evidenced that attributional ambiguity exists, one must question the non-significant results of the present study.

The function of power was examined to ensure that the non-significant results were not a product of lack of power. A “large” effect was expected based on similar experiments conducted in regards to attributional ambiguity (i.e. Crocker et al. 1991). The sample size needed to find a “large” effect according to typical psychology research journals is  $n = 17$  for a power of .80 when  $\alpha = .05$ . In the present study  $n = 20$  and the power = .85 when  $\alpha = .05$ . An alternative to “large” effect expectancy is a “small” effect; to obtain reasonable amounts of power .80 you must assign 271 subjects to each of the four conditions, which would yield 1084 subjects. Given the complexity of this design the collecting of 1084 subjects seemed impractical as an alternative.

The large standard deviation between the mood measures pretest –posttest as a

function of group (see Table 1) was also a concern. However after analyzing controlling for confederate used, day of experiment, and rating of essay writing ability it seems that these large variability between pretest and posttests mood measure are accurate. The correlation of between the two measures also justified the large standard deviation. Meaning that when one group's standard deviation was large on one mood measure the same group standard deviation was large on the other mood measure.

#### *Limitation of Study*

According to the attributional ambiguity framework, members of a stigmatized group would not suffer from negative affect and low-self esteem when given negative feedback from an evaluator whom they perceive as prejudiced. The perception of prejudice is a key factor is the utilization of attributional ambiguity. It is this perception that allows the individual to justify or explain negative actions or comments of the evaluator. Prejudice is defined as an adverse judgment or opinion formed beforehand about a particular group, race, or religion without knowledge or examination of the facts. When an individual perceives someone as "prejudiced," it is usually the result of another's behavior or statements toward that individual.

In this study we used statements (negative feedback) and visual cues (different-race confederate African-American/White) in an attempt to elicit, but not force, the presumption of prejudice. This method had been used in another study that produced significant results (Crocker, Voekkl, Cornwell, Testa, and Major, 1991). Therefore, there was a reasonable expectation that the method of visual differences would promote a sense of prejudice. However, as noted in Table 5, all groups, regardless of participant's or confederate's race, felt that the confederate was non-prejudiced. These neutral scores of prejudice suggest that there was a need for a more overt way of indicating the presence of

the rater's prejudice when attempting to investigate attributional ambiguity within this study. The neutrality of the prejudice rating is further evidenced by the lack of standard deviations for the different groups. The lack of variability between these groups may be explained by the confederates being "friendly, likeable and not aloof" as described by participants when asked to rate confederates. In short, the generalization of attributional ambiguity may have been affected by the artificial manipulation presented in this study.

### *Conclusions*

Questions remain regarding the utilization of attributional ambiguity by all members of society. It remains to be seen whether attributional ambiguity is only effective when utilized by members of stigmatized/oppressed groups or whether it can be equally effective when utilized by non-stigmatized/non-oppressed groups, with the only required variable being perceived prejudice. The investigative strategy must include a manipulation variable that ensures that individuals will assume prejudice. Subtle visual cues, such as differences in race, are not guaranteed to elicit a presumption of prejudice. This absence of the presumption of prejudice could be a positive indication that times have changed and that individuals need more information about each other, other than visual differences, before prejudging one another.

There is still the concern that the majority of the studies on attributional ambiguity use Whites as evaluators. This methodology neglects the possibility that members of stigmatized groups may feel that members of their own group may be prejudiced. What effects, if any, would this have on their self-esteem? How would non-stigmatized groups respond to being evaluated by members of stigmatized groups and would this affect their self-esteem? We do know that an individual's self-esteem has both "state" and "trait" features, and that in certain negative states an individual's self-esteem will decrease.

What we have failed to determine is how and if internal interpretation or perception protects self-esteem. Moreover, is this buffering of self-esteem an attribute that is displayed only by stigmatized or oppressed individuals? This empirical question needs to be addressed in future studies.

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APPENDIX C

**ESSAY RATING**

**Case#**

This is a scale that is use to rate how well you write an essay. Below are specific features that are contained in an essay. Please rate how skillful you are at performing the following tasks. Use the following scale:

- 1=I do not have this skill
- 2= Poor
- 3= Fair
- 4= Good
- 5= Very Good
- 6= Excellent

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Formulating a Thesis or Main Idea statement which focuses the essay.						
Writing about a subject within a required amount of time for a particular audience.						
Arranging ideas and supporting details in an organizational pattern.						
Demonstrating effective word choice (Avoiding inappropriate use of slang, jargon, and pretentious expressions).						
Developing effective sentence structure.						
Maintaining a consistent point of view.						
Using standard practice for spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.						
Revising, editing, and proofreading.						
Writing such that all supporting material is relevant to the thesis or main idea.						
Using transitional phrases clearly to reflect the organizational pattern.						
Overall rating of Essay Writing Ability.						

Comments:

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APPENDIX B

**CSES**

**Case#** \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate which category best describes how you feel at this moment. Check one space after each question.

- 1= *Strongly Disagree*    3= *Disagree somewhat*    5= *Agree Somewhat*  
 2= *Disagree*    4= *Neutral*    6= *Agree*  
 7= *Strongly Agree*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
At this moment I feel am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to.							
At this moment I regret that I belong to some of the social groups I do.							
I feel my social groups are considered good by others.							
At this moment my group memberships have very little to do with how I feel about myself.							
I feel I don't have much to offer to the social groups I belong to.							
At this moment, I'm glad to be a member of the social groups I belong to.							
Most people consider my social groups, on the average, to be more ineffective than other social groups.							
The social groups I belong to are an important reflection of who I am.							
I am a cooperative participant in the social groups I belong to.							
I often feel that the social groups of which I am a member are not worthwhile.							
Others respect the social groups that I am a member of.							
The social groups I belong to are unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.							
At this moment I feel I'm a useless member of my social groups.							
I feel good about the social groups I belong to.							
Others think that the social groups I am a member of are unworthy.							
Belonging to social groups is an important part of my self-image.							

APPENDIX A

**SSES**

**CASE#** \_\_\_\_\_

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**. Check one space after each question.

1= *Not at all*   3= *Somewhat*   5= *Extremely*  
 2= *A little bit*   4= *Very much*

	1	2	3	4	5
I feel confident about my abilities.					
I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success or failure.					
I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now.					
I feel frustrated or rattled about my performance.					
I feel that I am having trouble understanding things that I read.					
I feel that others respect and admire me.					
I am dissatisfied with my weight.					
I feel self-conscious.					
I feel as smart as others.					
I feel displeased with myself.					
I feel good about myself.					
I am pleased with my appearance right now.					
I am worried about what other people think of me.					
I feel confident that I understand things.					
I feel inferior to others at this moment.					
I feel unattractive.					
I feel concerned about the impression I am making.					
I feel that I have less scholastic ability right now than others.					

I feel that I am not doing well.					
I am worried about looking foolish.					

**DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Please provide the following background information.**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SS#: \_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Height** \_\_\_\_\_ **Weight** \_\_\_\_\_ **Gender :** \_\_\_Male \_\_\_  
Female

**Race:** \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian  
\_\_\_\_\_ African-American  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic  
\_\_\_\_\_ Native-American  
\_\_\_\_\_ Asian-American  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pacific Islander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)

**When others see me they think my Race is:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian  
\_\_\_\_\_ African-American  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic  
\_\_\_\_\_ Native-American  
\_\_\_\_\_ Asian-American  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pacific Islander  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)

**Marital Status** (circle one): Single Engaged Married Separated  
Divorced Widowed

I am a: (circle one): freshman sophomore junior senior

I am hearing impaired: Yes No  
I wear glasses/contacts: Yes No

What was the income level for a year of your family of origin (home that you were raised in).

**Circle one :**

Less than \$10,000.00

\$10,000.00 - \$24,999.00

\$25,000.00 - \$39,999.00

\$40,000.00 - \$79,999.00

Over \$80,000.00

I do not know my family of origin's household yearly income.

APPENDIX D

**Please use these definitions to answers the following questions.**

**Prejudice-** an adverse judgment or opinion formed beforehand about a particular group, race, or religion without knowledge or examination of the facts.

**Discriminate-** to make distinctions on the basis of class or category without regard to individual merit; show preference.

**Racism-** the belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others.

- 1= Strongly disagree
- 2= Disagree
- 3= Neither disagree or agree
- 4= Agree
- 5= Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
1.The rating I received from the graduate student was because of my race					
2.The rating I received from the graduate student was because of my physical appearance (height, weight, etc.)					
3. Physical disabilities caused the graduate student to evaluate me differently.					
4.The rating I received was due to the evaluator’s racial prejudice.					
5.Discrimination contributed to the rating I received.					
6.The other student was competent to rate my essay.					

answer 7 only if #6 is “Disagree or Strongly disagree”

7. What features diminished the evaluator’s ability to rate you accurately:

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**ESSAY Evaluation**

This is a scale that is used to evaluate how well an essay is written. Below are specific features that should be contained in an essay. Please evaluate the essay you were given using the following scale:

- 1= Do not have this skill                      2= Poor
- 3= Fair    4= Good
- 5= Very Good                                    6= Excellent

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Formulating a Thesis or Main Idea statement which focuses the essay.						
Writing about a subject within a required amount of time for a particular audience.						
Arranging ideas and supporting details in an organizational pattern.						
Demonstrating effective word choice (Avoiding inappropriate use of slang, jargon, and pretentious expressions).						
Developing effective sentence structure.						
Maintaining a consistent point of view.						
Using standard practice for spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.						
Revising, editing, and proofreading.						
Writing such that all supporting material is relevant to the thesis or main idea.						
Using transitional phrases clearly to reflect the organizational pattern.						
Overall rating of Essay Writing Ability.						

Comments:

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