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OF EXPOSURE TO SELF EVALUATIONS OF OTHERS.

University of North Carolina at Greensboro,  
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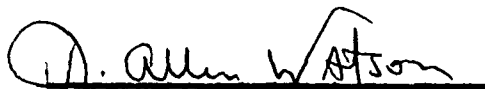
by

Cynthia Leonard Bishop

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Approved by

  
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APPROVAL PAGE

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect upon the self evaluations of adolescents of their exposure to the positive self evaluations of other persons. Three hypotheses were explored by the study. The experimenter hypothesized first that changes in adolescents' self evaluations would follow the adolescents' exposure to positive self evaluations of others. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that both the age (position in the life span) and sex of the persons to whose self evaluations the adolescents were exposed would affect the amount of change recorded in the adolescents' self evaluations.

The experimental subjects, 45 girls and 45 boys, were randomly selected from the seventh grade population of Asheboro Junior High School, Asheboro, North Carolina, and were assigned at random to one of six experimental groups: adolescent-same sex, adolescent-opposite sex, adult-same sex, adult-opposite sex, old person-same sex, old person-opposite sex.

Due to the unavailability of a sufficient number of seventh grade students at Asheboro Junior High School to serve as a control group, 45 girls and 45 boys were selected for this purpose from North Asheboro Junior High School, a similar junior high school located in the same community. Rubin's Self Esteem Scale, the self evaluation measure used in this study, was administered to the control group on two occasions, which were separated by a two-week interval. No treatment was received by control group subjects during the period between the two administrations of the test.

Two weeks prior to the experimental session, all members of the experimental population completed Rubin's Self Esteem Scale. In the experimental condition, each subject was exposed to a paragraph and Self Esteem Scale which described a person representative of the group to which the subject had been assigned. All descriptions were uniformly positive and scores on the Self Esteem Scales which subjects were given were the highest positive scores possible. The subjects were then asked to write paragraphs and complete Self Esteem Scales describing themselves.

A t test was applied to the means of the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental subjects. The t value was significant,  $p < .01$ . The same statistical test applied to the pretest and posttest means of the control group subjects did not yield a significant t value. These test results provided support for the hypothesis that changes in the self evaluations of adolescents, as measured by their scores on Rubin's Self Esteem Scale, would follow the adolescents' exposure to the positive self evaluations of others. The other two hypotheses were rejected. A 3 x 2 factorial design revealed no significant differences in the amount of change in pretest and posttest self esteem scores attributable to the age and sex of the persons to whose self evaluations the subjects were exposed.

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## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The present study was designed to explore whether or not adolescents' self evaluations are affected by their exposure to the self evaluations of persons of both sexes who are in different phases of the life span. That the individual's concept of self is influenced by the way others respond to him has been supported by research findings and is an idea widely accepted by social scientists. Recent investigations have begun to suggest further that not only is the individual's evaluation of himself affected by others' evaluations of him, but it is also affected by his exposure to evaluations others make of themselves.

In a study by Morse and Gergen (1970), applicants for a well-paying summer job, casually encountered a stimulus person whose characteristics were either desirable or undesirable. Half of the subjects in each of these conditions found the other competing with them for the position and half did not. Each subject was seated alone in a room and given a battery of tests to complete. As he worked, a stooge posing as another job applicant entered. In half of the cases the stooge was "Mr. Clean," dressed in a well-tailored business suit, meticulously groomed and carrying a smart attaché case from which he took a dozen sharpened pencils and a book of Plato. In the other cases, "Mr. Dirty" arrived with a day's growth of beard, dressed in a torn sweat shirt and jeans cut off at the knee. He carried only a battered copy of The Carpet Baggers. Neither stooge spoke to the real applicants. When the researchers compared the

results, they found that "Mr. Clean" produced a sharp drop in self esteem while "Mr. Dirty" left the applicants feeling more handsome, confident, and optimistic.

In another study, Gergen and Wishnov (1965) asked 54 female college students to write descriptions of themselves, telling them that the description from one member of each pair would be given to the other member. Instead, each was given an evaluation prepared in advance by the researchers. Each member of one group of students was given a description of a "braggart" who described herself as being cheerful, intelligent, and beautiful, who had had a marvelous childhood and was optimistic about the future. Each subject in the second group was given the description of a "whiner" who was unhappy, ugly, and intellectually dull. She had a miserable childhood and feared the future. Each student was then asked to reply to this supposed partner by describing herself as honestly as possible in direct response to her. Self evaluations rose markedly over those done a month before among students who read positive self evaluations of their peers. On the other hand, subjects who had read the negative self evaluations responded by calling out shortcomings of their own that they had not previously acknowledged.

The two studies cited above focused on different influencing agents (appearance and self evaluations), but their findings appear to be contradictory. Subjects in the Morse and Gergen study (1970) showed higher self esteem after exposure to a negative stimulus person ("Mr. Dirty") and lower self esteem after exposure to a positive stimulus person ("Mr. Clean"). On the other hand, subjects in the

Gergen and Wishnov study (1965) displayed higher self esteem in response to positive self evaluations supposedly written by their partners and lower self esteem in response to negative self evaluations.

The apparent contradiction of the two studies suggests the need for further exploration into the area of self attitudes. This study, therefore, was designed to investigate whether or not changes occurred in a selected group of young adolescents' self evaluations as a result of exposure to self evaluations of persons of different ages and of both sexes.

Traditionally, social scientists have considered that the individual's conception of himself crystallizes during childhood. By the time he reaches adolescence, he is, according to Erikson (1950), ready to "install lasting idols and ideals as guardians of a final identity." Research findings support Erikson's contention that by the time a child becomes an adolescent, he has developed a generally consistent and relatively stable self concept (Carlson, 1965; Engel, 1959; Rosenberg, 1965). Therefore, boys and girls entering adolescence seemed a fitting choice for a study of changes in self attitudes and variables which affect such changes.

Research findings have suggested that individual's self evaluation may be affected when he is exposed to the self evaluation of a peer of the same sex. Two other questions which needed examination at the outset of the present study were: Will the self evaluation of a person of the opposite sex result in greater or less change in an individual's self evaluation than that of a person of the same sex?

How might a person's position in the life span affect the influence of his self evaluation upon that of another?

The human life span has been separated into three major divisions: development, maturity, and senescence (Birren, 1964). Birren (1964) has further differentiated these categories into: Infancy (age 2); Preschool (ages 2-5); Childhood (ages 5-12); Adolescence (ages 12-17); Early maturity (ages 17-25); Maturity (ages 25-50); Later maturity (ages 50-75); Old age (age 75). He pointed out that expectations of society and others vary according to a person's position in the life span. What is acceptable behavior in one phase is not acceptable in another. Likewise the attitudes of others toward persons are dependent in some degree upon the person's position in the life span. The varying influence upon the adolescent of exposure to the self evaluations of persons in different positions in the life span can be examined by testing such an influence of representatives of each of the major divisions of the life span: a peer, an adult in the maturity phase, and an adult who has reached old age.

The strong influence of the peer group upon the adolescent has been the subject of much speculation and study. Boyd McCandless considered that the peer group is second only to the family in socializing the adolescent (Goslin, 1969). Results of a study by Bowerman and Kinch (1959) of 686 students in the fourth through the tenth grades indicated that as children become increasingly involved in activities with peers, they become increasingly oriented toward the peer group. Although the degree of peer orientation is related to the level of adjustment to

peers, in most cases it is high for adolescents regardless of adjustment to peers. The importance of the peer group's reaction to the individual was pointed up by a study of early adolescents by Connell and Johnson (1970). Their findings suggested that the peer group's reaction to one's sex role identification is an important determinant of early adolescent adequacy. Eisenstadt (1961), Elkin (1960), Clausen (1968) and others presented findings documenting the importance of the peer group to the adolescent. This is not to suggest, however, that the peer group influence supplants that of the adolescent's parents and other adults. Bowerman and Kinch (1959) noted that increased orientation toward the peer group results in lowered orientation toward the family only when there is poor adjustment to members of one's family.

Although adolescence has been touted as a time of rebellion against adults, particularly adult authority, adults continue to have considerable influence upon the adolescent. Vincent and Martin (1961) noted that in early childhood the individual's concept of himself is largely molded by his experiences in his home, while during later childhood and puberty, school and peer experiences and experiences with a greater variety of adults either confirm or cancel out his ideas about himself.

The adult phase is the longest of the life span (Birren, 1966; Bischof, 1969). It is the goal of every growing child (Kagan and Moss, 1962). The adult years are powerful ones (Bischof, 1969). The peak earning capacity according to the United States Department of Labor lies somewhere between the ages of 45 and 65 (Vincent and Martin,

1961). It is adults who possess the economic power in our society. And, despite suggestions to the contrary, parents are still the controllers of their children's environment (Bischof, 1969). It seems then that adults may be expected to exert considerable influence upon adolescents. Davidson and Lang (1960) attempted to relate the perceptions of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade children of their teachers' feelings toward them to their self perception, academic achievement, and classroom behavior. The investigators found that the children's perceptions of teachers' feelings toward them correlated positively and significantly with their self perceptions, and the more positive the child's perception of the teacher's feelings, the better his academic achievement and classroom behavior.

By the time children approach adolescence, they are able to perceive age-related differences between adult age groups and have developed different attitudes toward adults in the various phases of the life span (Hickey and Kalish, 1968). A questionnaire designed to measure attitudes toward old people was given to elementary and high school students and college undergraduates by Hickey and Kalish (1968). Responses revealed that the children and young people not only perceived age-related differences in adults, but also the older the adult, the less pleasant the image held of him by the child or youth.

Kastenbaum and Durkee (1964) also found that adolescents and young people had a predominantly negative appraisal of old people and that these youth tended to omit any consideration of the later years of their own lives. To them old age appeared risky, unpleasant

and without significant positive values. Lane (1964) found the attitudes of high school and college students toward old people to be mostly neutral but with some negative ones. He considered this apparent neutralism of youth toward the elderly to suggest that older people in associations with youth may be existing in a climate of tolerance rather than in one of acceptance and responsiveness. Such findings suggested that the influence of older people upon adolescents may be of less consequence than that of younger adults or peers.

Recognizing the importance of a better understanding of the influence which old people, adults and peers can exert upon adolescents, this study attempted to examine the relationship between an adolescent's self evaluation and his or her exposure to the self evaluations of an old person, an adult and another adolescent as these categories were defined by Birren (1966). Seventh graders were selected as subjects for this study because they are representative of young adolescents.

While an experimental design could address itself to various parameters, this study was limited to a consideration only of the effects of positive self evaluations of persons of both sexes in different stages of the life span.

The purpose of the study was to explore the two questions which follow:

1. What is the effect on the self evaluations of adolescents of exposure to the positive self evaluations of other persons?
2. Will the amount of change in the self evaluations of adolescents who are exposed to the self evaluations of others vary according to the age and/or sex of the persons to whose self evaluations the adolescents are exposed?



### Hypotheses

1. Exposure to the positive self evaluations of other persons will positively affect the self evaluations of seventh graders.
2. The age of the person to whose self evaluation the seventh grader is exposed will significantly affect the amount of change which occurs in the seventh grader's own self evaluation.
3. The sex of the person to whose self evaluation the seventh grader is exposed will significantly affect the amount of change which occurs in the seventh grader's own self evaluation.

### Operational Definitions

1. Self Evaluation - Self evaluations were measured by the subjects' scores on Rubin's Self Esteem Scale. The positive self evaluations to which the subjects were exposed consisted of descriptive paragraphs telling in glowing terms of scholastic, athletic, family, and business achievements, popularity, and optimism. Each paragraph was accompanied by a Self Esteem Scale with a total score of 190, the highest or most positive self concept score possible on this scale.
2. Age - Each subject was exposed to a positive self evaluation describing a person in one of three different stages of the life span: adolescence, adulthood, and old age. The age given in the adolescent self evaluation was 13 years, the approximate age of the subjects, in order to explore the effect of exposure to the self evaluation of a peer upon the subjects. Age 40 was selected for the self evaluation of the adult. This age was arbitrarily selected as being representative of the middle years of maturity. It is an age at which many adults have reached the height of their responsibility and power. For the self evaluation description of an old person, age 75 was selected since, according to Birren (1964), 75 years of age represents the division between the life stages of later maturity and old age.
3. Sex - Half of the subjects were exposed to the self evaluation of an adolescent, an adult or an old person of the same sex and the other half of the subjects were exposed to the self evaluation of an adolescent, an adult, or an old person of the opposite sex.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The individual's evaluation of himself is an intrinsic part of his concept of self. The self concept and its development have been of concern to social and behavioral scientists. Attempts at understanding the self concept have been difficult, for it is by its very nature inaccessible to investigation as is evident in Boyd McCandless' definition of the term. McCandless (1961) described the self concept as a "psychological construct which connotes an area of essentially private experience and self evaluation--essentially private even though it is in part translated into action by most of the things we say and do, our attitudes and our beliefs."

Observation and study of the self concept have been undertaken, however, and traditionally the self concept has been considered to be a stable, rather highly structured configuration of an individual's thoughts and feelings about himself which distinguish him from others. Recently, behavioral scientists have begun to question whether the self concept is in reality as stable and as highly integrated as has been thought, or if indeed a completely unified self concept is desirable. Recent research results have suggested that perhaps the individual can function more successfully and more happily with a more flexible self concept of several dimensions. The literature reviewed here includes definitions of the self concept, theoretical background of its study, and research relating to the self concept, its nature and changes.

### Definitions of Self Concept

Most definitions of self concept found in the literature are similar to that of Ausubel (1970) who considered self concept as "an abstraction of the essential and distinguishing characteristics of the self that differentiate an individual's 'selfhood' from the environment and from other selves."

Brownfain (1952) defined self concept as "a system of central meanings one has about himself and his relations to the world around him," while Perkins (1958) described it as "those perceptions, beliefs, feelings, attitudes and values which the individual views as describing himself."

Videbeck (1960) considered self concept to be "a person's organization of his self attitudes."

All of these definitions imply a self concept which is structured and congruent, and none of them suggest any need for flexibility and continuous change of the self concept. The following definition, in fact, includes the word "stable" as a central part of the definition of self concept as "those parts of the phenomenal field which the individual had differentiated as definite and fairly stable characteristics of himself." (Southwell and Merbaum, 1971).

### Self Concept - Theoretical Background

Understanding the self concept and its relationship to the total personality has been of concern to social scientists for many years. William James, Charles Horton Cooley, George Herbert Mead,

and James Mark Baldwin were late nineteenth and early twentieth century architects of the position that the self is formed in the course of interaction with others (Kemper, 1966).

Cooley (1902) spoke of the "looking glass self," contending that one's "self-idea" has three principal elements: the imagination of his appearance to the other person, the imagination of the person's judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling like pride or mortification. It is not, then, the actual appearance one has to another person which helps to form his self concept, but rather what he imagines the other's perception of his appearance to be.

Cooley recognized that the self concept must show some variance for he noted that the child learns early to be different things to different people.

According to Cooley, the sentiments of self do not develop by regular stages but by imperceptible gradations out of the crude appropriate instinct of infancy, and the rate of development varies among different individuals. As the child approaches adulthood, a controlling force in all normal minds is how one appears to others.

Baldwin (1906) suggested that the child, while still an infant, begins to respond to the personality of his mother and others around him. According to Baldwin, the infant responds first to the voice, next to the touch, and finally to sight. All of these, Baldwin said, serve as elements in the growth of the consciousness of self and of external reality. Like Cooley, he believed that the self concept evolves through social interaction with others. He did not consider

that the personality of a child could be expressed in any but social terms, or, on the other hand, that social terms could get any content of value without understanding the developing individual.

One of the leaders in the development of a theory of the self is George Herbert Mead. Mead (1934) believed that through a social process the biologic individual gets a mind and a self. The self can develop, according to Mead, only through a social process for the individual does not experience his self directly, but indirectly from the particular standpoints of other individual members of the same social group or from the generalized standpoint of his social group as a whole. The individual becomes an object to himself only by taking the attitudes of others toward him within the social environment or context of experience and behavior in which both he and they are involved. The structure of the individual's self, Mead said, expresses or reflects the general behavior pattern of the social group to which he belongs. Such a statement suggests that unless the social group to which the individual belongs exists within a stagnant society, its general behavior pattern will shift from time to time, necessitating changes in the selves of the individual members of the group.

Although the works of George Herbert Mead have been widely acclaimed for their fundamental importance to social-psychological and sociological theory, Mead's followers have encountered considerable difficulty in developing research problems within the framework set forth by Mead (Miyamoto and Dornbusch, 1956). Recently, however, attempts have been made to formulate empirical tests of Mead's theory by such researchers as Miyamoto and Dornbusch (1956), Crouch (1958), Reeder,

Donahue, and Biblarz (1960), and Quarantelli and Cooper (1966).

Miyamoto and Dornbusch (1956) empirically investigated certain basic assumptions in Mead's interactionist view of the self and self-conception.

Using 195 subjects in ten somewhat miscellaneous semi-groupings from fraternities, sororities, and college sociology classes, these researchers asked subjects to give self ratings and also to rate every other group member on four specific personal characteristics. Their findings suggested that it is possible to study self conception within Mead's symbolic interactionist framework, and also reported three general propositions which supported Mead's theory of the self and self conception: (1) the response of others is related to self conceptions; (2) the subject's perception of that response is more closely related to his self conception than to the actual response of the other; and (3) an individual's self conception is more closely related to his estimate of the generalized attitude toward him than to the perceived response of members of a particular group.

In another study with 98 subjects, Crouch (1958) investigated the relationships between self-attitudes and the degree to which an individual agrees with his estimate of an immediate other's evaluation when he evaluates his own performance in a small-group situation. Crouch found a tendency for individuals who identified themselves in terms of group membership to rely less on estimated evaluation of immediate others than did those who did not identify themselves in terms of group membership. He also found that females relied more

than males on their estimate of an immediate other's evaluation.

Reeder, Donahue, and Biblarz (1960) were interested in the relationship between self conception and both the actual and the perceived ratings by members of given groups. These researchers studied 54 enlisted men in nine work crews at a small military base. Each subject was asked to rank himself and all other members of his crew on two criteria: best worker and best leader. Each subject was also asked how he thought most of the men in his group would rank him on these criteria. In essence the findings paralleled those of Miyamoto and Dornbusch (1956). The results suggested that the responses of others have "an influence in shaping one's self-definition" and that his self definition is "derived chiefly from the perception of the generalized other."

While both Miyamoto and Dornbusch (1956) and Reeder, Donahue, and Biblarz (1960) considered that their research findings supported key notions implicit in Mead's theory of the self, they acknowledged the limited conclusions of the studies and indicated that future research should go beyond replication of their studies. Quarantelli and Cooper (1966) attempted to expand the earlier findings by developing three lines of new research suggested by the previous studies. First, these researchers sought a better indicator for self conception, an index for which a case for saliency in the life of the individual could be made. Second, they attempted to include the time dimension in the emergence and maintenance of the self, which was omitted in previous research, by having the subjects report their projections of future self-conceptions. Third, Quarantelli and Cooper operationalized the

definition of the "generalized other" as the individual's perception of the responses of others as he sees them with regard to some salient aspect of himself. They considered that the perceiving individual and the others, whose responses he organizes, need not be members of any particular group, but they should stand in some role relationship to one another.

Data for this study were drawn from a broader investigation of the factors which influence the professionalization of dental students. Data on 594 freshman and 432 sophomore dental students were used to test seven hypotheses based on Mead's theory of the self and self conception. The results reinforced the suggestion of earlier researchers that it is possible, through testing, to find some empirical support for Mead's notions of the self and self conception. Like Miyamoto and Dornbusch (1956), Quarantelli and Cooper found that it was the perceived rather than the actual responses of others that were more important in the formation of self conception. They found it to be the same whether a general comparison was made or whether the subjects were divided into high and low self-raters.

In addition to his consideration of the nature of the self and its development, Mead was concerned with the relationship of the self concept to the personality and the optimum amount of flexibility which might exist in both.

In the book, Mind, Self and Society (1934), Mead suggested that both the personality and self concept may be multi-faceted structures. He considered that a multiple personality is, in a certain sense, normal. He explained:



There is usually an organization of the whole self with reference to the community to which we belong, and the situation in which we find ourselves. What the society is, whether we are living with people of the present, people of our own imaginations, people of the past, varies, of course, with different individuals. Normally, within the sort of community as a whole to which we belong there is a unified self, but that may be broken up (Mead, 1934).

This tendency for the unified self to break up may become unhealthy, however, according to Mead, in a person who is somewhat nervously unstable. In such a person, there may be a line of cleavage, that is, certain activities become impossible, and that set of activities may separate and evolve another self. Mead explained that there can be different selves and the particular self one is going to be at a given moment depends upon the social situation. Such divisions of the self become pathological, according to Mead, when the other aspects of the self, or the other selves, are forgotten and left out.

Mead believed that the unity and structure of the complete self reflect the unity and structure of the social process as a whole, and each of the "elementary selves" of which it is composed reflects the unity and structure of one of the various aspects of that process in which the individual is implicated. If this is indeed the case, one might expect the individual to have difficulty achieving and maintaining unity and structure of the complete self while surrounded by social processes which are in a continual state of flux.

Dissociation of the personality is caused, according to Mead, by the breaking up of the complete unitary self into the component selves of which it is composed. These component selves respectively correspond to different aspects of the social process in which the person

is involved, and within which his complete or unitary self has arisen; these aspects being the different social groups to which he belongs within that process.

One of the most comprehensive and highly developed theories of personality is the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud. While Freud seldom referred to the self concept as such, he did refer to the ego's "attitude toward self" (Erikson, 1959). In fact, the portion of the personality which Freud labelled as the ego has been considered to be closely related to the self systems of other social scientists (Sullivan, 1953; Allport, 1943). The ego, according to Freud's theory of personality development, gradually differentiates out of the global personality of the infant (Baldwin, 1967). The ego is the portion of the personality which deals with the external world and is roughly synonymous with the "self" or at least those aspects of the self of which the individual is more or less aware (Eaton and Peterson, 1967).

At birth, the infant possesses no mechanisms for relating to the world about him. The infant's personality is one-dimensional, having only one of the three parts which compose the personality of an adult. Freud (1962) called this personality portion the Id and described it as being composed of basic instinctual drives. The Id operates on the pleasure principle, that is, the organism tends to seek the greatest pleasure and avoid pain. The pleasure principle is eventually modified by experience. As the ego is gradually differentiated out of the Id, the child learns to defer small immediate pleasures in order to attain

greater pleasure later, and to accept some pain in order to avoid greater pain, or to accept discomfort in the hope of subsequent satisfaction. This modification of the pleasure principle is called the reality principle and is characteristic of the operation of the ego. The last major portion of the personality to develop is the super-ego which is roughly synonymous with what other writers have called the conscience. The super-ego is acquired through the child's identification with his parents and is assimilated into the personality so as to function automatically.

Flugel (1945) expanded upon Freud's explanations of the super-ego, giving particular attention to the ego ideal which he considered to be the first factor operative in the super-ego. Flugel explained that in the process of development, the libido undergoes differentiation. A part of this drive is directed to the "real self," that is the self as it really is or at least as the individual conceives his self to be. However, this "real self" does not permanently satisfy the individual's narcissism. As he develops, the individual becomes painfully aware of his real self's physical, mental, and moral defects and limitations and compensates by building up in his imagination a sort of ideal self which represents the state he would like to attain. This is the ego ideal and to it, another portion of the libido is directed. Flugel explained:

It is as though we refuse to stay contented with our real self as a love object, once its difficulties become apparent, and set out to construct a better and more worthy object, but one that still has some recognizable resemblance to the self. This process of direction of the narcissistic libido to the ego ideal is the first source from which the super-ego is derived.

The ego ideal sets standards for the individual which the ego must meet, and if the ego falls too far below these standards, the individual experiences discomfort.

Freud maintained that ego function is influenced by impulses from the Id, the super-ego, and the social environment. The demands of the social environment are likely to differ from the super-ego values when the individual lives in a rapidly changing society (Eaton and Peterson, 1967). The effect of multiple forces impinging upon the ego is conflict. Instinctual impulses may be in conflict with one another or with super-ego values, and super-ego values may be in conflict with themselves. In addition, there are conflicts between environmental demands and the Id, ego, and super-ego (Eaton and Peterson, 1967).

Such conflicts would seem likely to influence the concept an individual has of himself. Allport (1943) has suggested that the ego, as conceived by Freud, is a "passive percipient, devoid of dynamic power, a coherent organization of mental processes, that is aware of the warring forces of the Id, super-ego, and external environment."

Allport said the ego, as defined by Freud, lacks dynamic power and tries as well as it can to conciliate, but when it fails as often happens, anxiety is produced. The ego is born of restraint of the instinctual impulses and continually needs strengthening. Even when strengthened, however, it is still essentially nothing more than a "passive victim-spectator" of the drama of conflict.

Karen Horney (1942) had a similar opinion of the ego as described by Freud. She declared that the ego lives on borrowed forces

and its essential characteristic is weakness. Horney saw the ego as being the result of an alienation from the self and, as such, serving as the root of neurotic development. Later psychoanalysts, also dissatisfied with Freud's denial of dynamic power to the ego, have ascribed more momentum to it, defining the ego as the agent that plans, that strives to master as well as to conciliate conflicts (Allport, 1943).

Allport (1943) reported the following as the chief ways in which the ego has been conceived: as knower, as object of knowledge, as primordial selfishness, as dominator, as a passive organizer and rationalizer, as a fighter for ends, as one segregated behavioral system among others, and as a subjective patterning of cultural values. He noted that it was not yet possible to say whether the eight conceptions named above reflect irreconcilable theories, whether they shade imperceptibly into one another, or whether they will all ultimately be subordinated under one inclusive theory of the ego. Allport did, however, find some support for the last possibility in research findings which supported several of the above conceptions simultaneously. The common findings suggested that ego involvement or its absence makes a critical difference in human behavior. In a neutral, impersonal, routine atmosphere in which an individual's ego is not engaged, his behavior is quite different from that situation in which there is ego involvement, and the individual is behaving personally, excitedly, with commitment.

In considering the relationship of the ego to the total personality, Allport observed that all eight of the conceptions of the ego which he discussed are less embracing than "personality."

He pointed to the agreement among all writers that the ego is only one portion, one region, or one institution of the personality. Many skills, habits, and memories are components of the personality but seldom if ever become ego involved. Allport also found general agreement with Freud's position that the ego is not present in early childhood, but evolves gradually as the child begins to mark himself off from his environment and other persons. He found widespread agreement with Freud's idea that the ego is the portion of the personality that is in proximate relation to the external world--that part of the personality which senses the threats, the opportunities, and the survival significance of both outer and inner events. Allport described the ego as being both the contact and conflict region of the personality, yet coextensive with neither consciousness nor unconsciousness. He also reported agreement among writers that the subjective sense of the ego varies from time to time, at one point contracting to include less than the body, at another expanding to include more. While the content of the ego keeps changing, there is, Allport said, a stable and recurring ego structure within each individual.

One Neo-Freudian, Erik Erickson, contended that a stable ego structure is capable of integrating an individual's multiple identifications into a unified identity.

Erickson defined identity as the individual's link with the unique values fostered by a unique history of his people and relating also to the cornerstone of this individual's unique development. Identity formation, he said, is dependent upon the process by which a society (often through sub-societies) identifies the young individual, recognizing

him as someone who had to become the way he is and who, being the way he is, is taken for granted.

Identity formation is, Erikson stated, a lifelong development which begins with the infant's first self-recognition and is largely unconscious to the individual and to his society. Tentative crystallizations take place all through childhood which make the child feel and believe he knows who he is, only to fall prey to the discontinuities of psychosocial development which come with adolescence.

According to Erikson, "a child, in the multiplicity of successive and tentative identifications, thus begins early to build up expectations of what it will be like to be older and what it will feel like to have been younger--expectations which become part of an identity as they are, step by step, verified in decisive experiences of psychosocial fittedness!" This process in adolescence is complete, according to Erikson, when the individual has subordinated his childhood identifications to a new kind of identification, achieved in absorbing sociability and in competitive apprenticeship with and among his age mates. These new identifications, he said, force the young individuals into choices and decisions which will lead to final self-definition, to irreversible role pattern and commitments for life.

Erikson's belief that the self concept becomes stable and continuous through the development process can be seen in his discussion of his fifth Age of Man: Identity vs. Role Confusion (Erikson, 1950). By the end of adolescence, Erikson saw individuals as being ready to "install lasting idols and ideals as guardians of a final identity." The integration which takes place at this point

is, he said, the accrued experience of the ego's ability to integrate all identifications with the vicissitudes of the libido, with the aptitudes developed out of endowment, and with the opportunities offered in social roles. "The sense of ego identity then is the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others."

The self-system or personification of the self as described by Harry Stack Sullivan (1953) is probably closely related to what is termed the ego in psychoanalytic theory. However, Sullivan preferred that parallels not be drawn between the two concepts.

Sullivan conceived of the self system as a product of educative experience. He said the system is "of stupendous importance to the personality," describing it as a secondary dynamism produced entirely by interpersonal experience, arising from the anxiety which develops as the individual seeks to satisfy general and zonal needs. Sullivan considered the self system a secondary dynamism because it has no particular zones of interaction or physiological apparatus behind it. Instead, the self system uses all zones of interaction and all physiological apparatus which is integrative and meaningful from the interpersonal standpoint. Ramifications of the self-system extend, according to Sullivan, throughout interpersonal relations in every area where there is any chance that anxiety may be encountered.

The self-system then, as defined by Sullivan, is an organization of educative experience which develops out of the need to avoid or minimize incidents of anxiety.



Sullivan stated that the self-system develops in late infancy and, since it stems entirely from interpersonal relations, is based largely on the child's relations with his mother. It begins in the organizing of experience with the mothering one's forbidding gestures and grows as the mother attempts to educate the child, for this educative process produces anxiety in the infant. To reduce this anxiety, the child organizes his experiences into a self-system.

According to Merbaum and Southwell (1971), Sullivan's self-system is formulated as an internal organization of controls which evolves from the individual's constant and inescapable contact with cultural and interpersonal sources of anxiety. The self-system functions solely to avoid anxiety and, as a result, it eventually develops into a stable, self-perpetuating and independent aspect of the personality (Merbaum and Southwell, 1971). Therefore, the self-system is highly resistant to change. Sullivan (1953) pointed out that while the self-system is the principal obstacle to favorable changes in personality, it is also the principal influence that stands in the way of unfavorable changes in personality.

The origin of the self-system rests, according to Sullivan, on the irrational character of culture or society:

If it were not for the fact that a great many prescribed ways of doing things have to be lived up to, in order that one shall maintain workable, profitable, satisfactory relations with his fellows, or were the prescriptions for the types of behavior in carrying on relations with one's fellows perfectly rational--then for all I know, there would not be evolved in the course of becoming a person, anything like the sort of self system that we always encounter. If the cultural prescriptions which characterize any particular society were better adapted to human life, the notions that have grown up about incorporating or introjecting a punitive, critical person would not have arisen.

Horney (1937) shared Sullivan's belief that the societal situation has important implications for the self feelings of the individual. She pointed out that there are certain typical difficulties inherent in our culture which mirror themselves in every individual's life. The principle of individual competition, on which modern culture is economically based, requires that isolated individuals fight with other individuals of the same group, with the advantage of one frequently being the disadvantage of the other. Horney indicated that competitiveness--and the potential hostility that accompanies it--pervades all social relationships. She further stated that the potential hostile tension between individuals results in a constant generation of fear--fear of the potential hostility of others, fear of retaliation for hostilities of one's own, and fear of failure which entails a realistic frustration of needs if it occurs in a competitive society.

Horney suggested that success is a fascinating phantom because of its effects on the individual's self esteem. It is, she said, not only by others that we are valued according to the degree of our success, but our own self evaluation follows the same pattern. Horney noted that, although in reality, success is dependent upon a number of factors independent of the individual's control, under the pressure of the existing ideology, even the most normal person is constrained to feel he amounts to something when successful, and otherwise is worthless. This, Horney believed, presents a shaky basis for self esteem.

The combination of cultural factors--competitiveness and its potential hostilities between fellow-beings, fears, diminished self esteem--result psychologically in the individual feeling that he is isolated. Emotional isolation, Horney pointed out, is hard for anyone to endure, but becomes a calamity if it coincides with apprehensions and uncertainties about one's self.

Horney suggested that it is this situation which provokes in the normal individual, an intensified need for affection because obtaining affection makes him feel less isolated, less threatened by hostility and less uncertain of himself. Therefore, the individual is in the dilemma of needing much affection but finding difficulty in obtaining it--a cultural situation which proves conducive to the development of neuroses.

#### Research Findings

There is general agreement among theorists that the self concept has an important social component. In order for a person's self concept to develop, he must interact with other people. It is his perceptions of the others' reactions to him which help to form his self concept.

Several studies have been designed to test the importance of the influence of other people upon the development of an individual's self concept. Kinch (1968) sought to find out under what conditions the perceptions of others' responses affect the self concept. He determined that other factors being equal, the effect of perceived responses on the self is a function of the following aspects of

inter-personal contacts: frequency of responses, perceived importance of the contacts, the temporal proximity of the contacts, and the consistency of responses resulting from the contact. He further stated that self conceptions which develop in early childhood are likely to persist throughout life because once the individual develops a conception of his self, he will interact as much as possible with others who will reinforce it.

Videbeck (1960), like Kinch, found that the extent to which another person can effectively reinforce an individual's self rating on a specific scale will depend on the number of times the other approves or disapproves, how appropriate or qualified the other is, and the intensity with which approval or disapproval is expressed.

Rosenberg (1965), Engel (1950), and Carlson (1965) agreed that by the time an individual reaches adolescence, his self concept is generally consistent and relatively stable. In a longitudinal study of 172 public high school students from lower middle and middle class backgrounds, Engel found a relative stability of self concept between the tenth and the twelfth grades of high school. He noted, however, that the subjects whose self concepts were negative at the first testing were significantly less stable in self concept than subjects whose self concepts were positive.

Findings of Carlson's longitudinal study (1965) of changes in the structure of the self image of 49 students studied in the sixth grade and as high school seniors were consistent with Engel's earlier data. These findings suggested that self esteem is a relatively stable dimension of the self and one which is independent of sex role. They

found that the children's perceptions of teachers' feelings toward them correlated positively and significantly with their self perceptions and the more positive the child's perception of the teacher's feelings, the better his academic achievement and classroom behavior.

Jersild (1952) suggested that along with the process of establishing a self concept, the child or adult makes the effort to maintain it. Maintenance of the self concept can create problems for the individual because the self tends to be a continuously growing and changing phenomenon, while also, paradoxically, tending to inhibit growth and change. The person develops many defenses and seeks to preserve selfhood even when it is based on false premises (Jersild, 1952).

Such a struggle can be fraught with frustration according to Cameron who said: "The basis of much frustration and many conflicts in this universal circumstance is that no man ever fuses all of his self-reactions together into a single, unambiguous whole." (Brown-fain, 1952).

In an attempt to better understand such frustration, Brown-fain (1952) studied 62 male college students. He hypothesized that subjects with the most stable self concepts (high integrative function) were better adjusted than subjects with the least stable self concepts. His hypothesis was confirmed and he learned that subjects with more stable self concepts had a higher level of self esteem, were freer from inferiority feelings and nervousness, were better liked and considered more popular by the group, saw themselves more as they believed other people saw them, knew more people in the group and were better known by the group, indicating more active social participation.

Despite the individual's constant struggle to maintain his self concept, changes in self attitudes must accompany the process of maturing (McCandless, 1961).

Perkins (1958) studied 251 children in an attempt to pinpoint factors which influence changes in a child's developing self concept. He found that the self concepts and ideal selves of children become increasingly and significantly congruent through time, and that the congruencies of girls generally are significantly higher than those of boys. Sixth grade children and children whose teachers had completed child study showed significantly greater self - ideal self congruence than both fourth grade children and children whose teachers had not ever participated in a child study program.

Hans and Maehr (1965) initiated two experiments to determine the durability of experimentally induced changes in self ratings and the effects of dosage (greater or smaller amounts of approval or disapproval). Self ratings on a physical development test were obtained from the subjects (male eighth grade students), who were then asked to perform simple physical tasks before a physical development expert who responded to the subjects with either approval or disapproval. A second set of self ratings was then obtained from each subject. These ratings varied according to the nature of the evaluation each subject received from the expert. After six weeks, the subjects still exhibited the effects of experimental treatment, leading the researchers to conclude that experimentally induced changes are durable over time. In the second study, they concluded that changes in self concept do show effects of dosage (two treatments brought about greater and longer lasting changes in self ratings than one treatment did).

Many studies dealing with changes in self concept have been concerned with the problems and frustrations which may accompany such changes. Several researchers have attempted to determine whether or not a discrepancy between an individual's self concept and his behavior will result in an uncomfortable condition known as cognitive dissonance (Nel, Helmreich, and Aronson, 1969; Aronson and Carlsmith, 1962; and Peterson and Hergenhahn, 1968).

Nel, Helmreich and Aronson (1969) studied 42 female college students, enticing them to make a video recording of a statement strongly counter to their own attitudes. The researchers found that dissonance was aroused as a function of discrepancy between self concept and the consequences of behavior.

Contradictory findings were reported by Peterson and Hergenhahn (1968) in a study of elementary school students. Their hypothesis, that students performing at variance with their self appraisals would experience more dissonance and consequently make a greater effort to reduce dissonance than the group performing consistently with their self appraisals, was not confirmed.

Dissonance may also be caused when one perceives dissimilarity in the values of significant others, according to the results of a study by Edwards (1968). He found that when 572 female teaching and nursing students perceived such dissimilarity, that dissimulation of their self concepts occurred. Dissimulation was characterized by an avoidance of commitment, self-doubt, disillusionment, and constriction of thought and action.

In a society which is committed to change and continually in a state of flux, the frequent occurrence of cognitive dissonance appears likely if the self concept is as resistant to change as has been traditionally thought. Situations cited as those in which changes in self concept are likely to occur have often been negative ones.

Stotland and Zander (1958) found that a person who has failed is more sensitive to the feelings of others, and as a result, his opinion of himself is more likely to be affected by the evaluation of his performance which he attributes to others. This reaction will be mediated by the amount of validity which the individual attributes to others' judgments about him. DeCharms and Rosenbaum (1960) found that revoking a person's high status may call forth changes in behavior which suggest changes in self concept.

Investigating reactions to unfavorable evaluations of the self made by other persons, Harvey, Kelley and Shapiro (1957) found that the more informed the source and the more negative his evaluations, the more discomfort and tension the subject felt. Most often, subjects attempted to keep intact their self concepts by devaluing the source of the negative evaluations, distorting the evaluations to make them seem more favorable than they really were or dissociating the source from the evaluations.

Hewitt and Rule (1968) have published research results which suggested that an individual's conceptual structure and conditions of deprivation may result in varying changes in self concept. They studied 800 college undergraduates varying in their conceptual structure from abstract to concrete. The subjects were exposed to a



communication designed to enhance self concept followed by a period of sensory deprivation for half of the subjects and of nonconfinement for the other half. Results supported the hypothesis that sensory deprivation increased change in self concept as indicated by greater change in real self and acceptance of self measures. Discrepancy between real and ideal self ratings decreased significantly more for concrete than for abstract subjects under conditions of sensory deprivation. Hewitt and Rule commented that changes in self concept are often desirable, but left the impression that such changes must be consciously sought and executed.

#### The Multi-Dimensional Self Concept

The ideal for the self concept as identified by psychologists both in the past and in the present is stability and coherence. The sense of self once established remains a stable feature of the personality. Inconsistency of self has been cited as the basis for neurosis and other ills (Lecky, 1961). Recently, however, social scientists are being forced to recognize that rapid social and technological upheaval in contemporary society has created a crisis of identity. It is no longer possible for the individual to develop and maintain a strong, integrated sense of personal identity (Edwards, 1968; Gergen, 1972).

Goffman (1959) pointed out that when an individual appears before others, he knowingly and unwittingly projects a definition of the situation of which a conception of himself is an important part. When an event occurs which is not compatible with this impression, significant consequences are simultaneously felt in three levels of

social reality: at the personality level, the person's self conception may be shaken; at the interaction level, the social interaction may come to an embarrassed and confused halt, and at the social structure level, the person's reputation may be weakened.

Yet in a complex, change-oriented society such as ours, every individual is bound to encounter numerous situations not in keeping with his self image. For one thing, the categories the individual applies to himself are in a constant state of flux (Gergen, 1970). Studies cited previously indicate that a person's self concept is dependent upon the views others have of him in a situation. Therefore, both the content and the quality of one's interactions with others seem likely to change as the significant others in his environment change.

In fact, whether a person normally develops a coherent sense of identity is now being questioned (Gergen, 1972). Aheret (1959) said: "The individual's self concept does not seem to be a unified gestalt but rather consists of characteristics or dimensions which he values differentially."

Gergen believed that the individual wears shifting masks of identity, and he and his associates developed a series of studies to attempt to document these shifts and the factors which influence them.

Social theorists have long acknowledged some discrepancies in self concept. William James believed "a man has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares." (Gergen, 1972).

Charles Horton Cooley (1902) noted that the child early learns to be different things to different people. Jourard (1958) pointed to the human tendency to misrepresent the self, to market the personality. In his book, The Transparent Self, Jourard (1964) stated that man, perhaps alone of all living things, is capable of being one thing and seeming from his actions and talk to be something else.

Gergen (1972) and his associates found support for all of these contentions. They discovered that a person's identity will change considerably not only in the presence of friends, family and acquaintances, but even in the presence of strangers. In one experiment, Gergen (1972) had a woman co-worker interview eighteen female college students, asking each of them a series of questions about her background, followed by a number of questions about how she saw herself. All positive responses were reinforced with such subtle signs of approval as a nod or smile while negative self evaluations elicited a frown or other signal of disapproval. In the course of the interview, the student realized that the interviewer had a positive opinion of her and her evaluation of herself became increasingly positive. The increase was significantly greater than the minimal amount which occurred in the control situation where students received no feedback.

In an attempt to determine whether such changes were merely superficial or if they revealed underlying feelings of the subjects, Gergen, after the interview, asked the students to undertake honest self-ratings which would not be seen by the interviewer. Significant increases in self esteem were seen among students who received positive reinforcement while none were found among the control group.

In a somewhat similar study by Maer, Mensing and Nafgger (1962), thirty-one male subjects aged 14 to 16 years were tested to document changes which occur in an individual's self concept as a result of evaluations by others. The subjects rated themselves on a thirty item physical development test. Following this rating, they were asked individually by a physical development "expert" to perform several simple physical tasks. Half of the subjects received approval for their performance and the other half, disapproval. The self rating scale was then re-administered and the approval group increased significantly in their self-ratings on the items specifically involved in the performance in the experimental procedure while the disapproval groups showed a decrease.

Changes in the way one views himself are not only inspired and mediated by the evaluations of others, but also by the type of situation within which interaction with others occurs (Gergen, 1972). In a study of 55 candidates in a college naval training program, Gergen and Taylor (1969) told the subjects that they would be working in two-man teams on a task. Their partners would be in an adjoining room. Half of the subjects were told that their task was to complete an assignment as efficiently as possible while the other half were instructed that their primary aim was to get along well together. The subjects were then asked to describe themselves as accurately as possible to their partners in writing. Results indicated that subjects in the work condition described themselves as more logical, well-organized and efficient than they had in descriptions written a month earlier, while the subjects in the social solidarity condition

described themselves as more free and easy in disposition, more friendly, and more illogical than they had before. Thus, according to Gergen, each group had adopted the proper face for the occasion and when asked after the experiment how they had felt about their self descriptions, more than three-fourths felt they had been completely accurate and honest. In this same study, Gergen and Taylor also considered effects of status differences on changes in self concept. They found that under conditions emphasizing productivity that both junior and senior members of a hierarchy described themselves more positively than under conditions stressing social solidarity. Under the productivity condition, low status members exceeded high status ones in positiveness of self description. Under the social solidarity condition, high status subjects exceeded the lows in self abasement.

A study by Jones, Gergen, and Jones (1963) was also designed to delineate the effect of status differences upon one's self description under conditions where mutual attraction or accuracy were stressed. Half of the pairs of low and high status personnel in a Naval ROTC program were placed in each condition and asked to exchange written communications about themselves. The researchers concluded that low status subjects conformed more than highs as an increasing function of the relevance of the issue to the basis of the hierarchy, that high status subjects became more modest when under pressure to make themselves more attractive, while low status subjects showed the same tendency on important items, but became more self enhancing on less important ones; also that low status subjects were more positive in their public appraisal of the high status subjects than vice versa.

In still another study, Gergen (1972) attempted to find out what changes in self concept occur when individuals want to gain the approval of others. Eighteen undergraduate college women were asked before the experiment began to try to gain the approval of the interviewer. The researchers observed that all of the subjects identified themselves to the researcher in glowing terms, indicating that they were accepting of others, socially popular, perceptive, and industrious in their work. Students in the control group who had been given no special instructions, showed no change. Furthermore, when the researchers asked the students to make a private self-appraisal after the interview and compared these to self-appraisals done a month earlier under other circumstances, they found that in trying to convince the interviewer of their assets, the students had convinced themselves. There was no such change in self-esteem in the control group.

Recent studies such as those by Gergen and others which are presented above presented evidence that the self concept is not completely coherent and unvarying, but that persons present different self attitudes to meet the functional demands of various social settings. On the other hand, these researchers acknowledged that persons are concerned with self consistency and are continually faced with the dilemma of remaining "true to self" (Gergen, 1965) and yet responding adaptively to varying social demands.

Although the literature reviewed here has tended to treat the self concept as a discrete dimension of the personality, in reality an individual's entire personality is molded by his self concept. Lowe (1961) suggested that the self concept is not a fact

with an objective existence in nature which can be observed and measured, but that it is an artifact invented to explain experience. According to Lowe, the self concept combines the self of ego involvement with the self of feeling--the self which is essential not to experience itself, but to mediate encounters between the organism and what is beyond.

Good self concepts are associated with such desirable characteristics as low anxiety and generally good adjustment, popularity, and effectiveness in group relations, but relative independence from the group. Those with good self concepts seem to be more honest with themselves and less defensive than do individuals with poor self concepts (McCandless, 1961).

Lecky (1961) stated that a person's behavior expresses an effort to maintain the integrity, unity and inner consistency of the personality system which has as its nucleus the individual's evaluation of himself.

The findings outlined above suggest the need for further explorations to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the ways in which changes in self concept occur and of the variables which affect such changes. In the interest of such exploration, the present study examined the extent to which adolescents' self concepts were changed by their exposure to the self evaluations of a peer, an adult, and an old person, using evaluations for both sexes in each category.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

#### Subjects

Forty-five boys and 45 girls were randomly selected from the seventh grade population of Asheboro Junior High School. Asheboro Junior High was one of two junior high schools in Asheboro, North Carolina, an industrial community of 10,797 persons located in the center of North Carolina. The majority of the students who attended this school were middle class whites. The 90 subjects selected were then assigned at random to one of six experimental groups.

Due to the unavailability of a sufficient number of seventh grade students at Asheboro Junior High School to serve as a control group, the researcher randomly selected 45 girls and 45 boys from North Asheboro Junior High School, the second junior high school in Asheboro, North Carolina. The racial and socio-economic composition of students attending North Asheboro Junior High was similar to that of students of Asheboro Junior High.

Approximately one month after the experiment, all members of the control population completed Rubin's Self Esteem Scale which was administered by their teachers. They received instructions identical to those received by experimental subjects on the pretest. After a two-week interval, the 90 subjects who were randomly selected for the control group completed Rubin's Self Esteem Scale for a second time. They were given the same instructions they had received on the pretest.



When the subjects had completed this task, the purpose of the experiment was briefly explained to them and gratitude expressed for their co-operation.

### Instrument

Rubin's Self Esteem Scale, a questionnaire used by Roger Rubin of the Pennsylvania State University in a Master's study with fifth and sixth graders in North Philadelphia, was used in an attempt to tap self attitudes by asking subjects how they felt about stated characteristics. Rubin's questionnaire was divided into four parts, each adapted by the author from other instruments designed to measure self concept (Rubin, 1966). Part I, which obtained background information on number of siblings, presence or absence of adults in the household, and family interaction, was eliminated from the questionnaire which was used in this study since such information was not directly relevant to the purposes of the present study. Therefore Rubin's Parts II, III and IV were parts I, II, and III for this study.

Part I. Self Concept Questions: Part I of the questionnaire was composed of questions taken from "Age and Other correlates of Self-Concept in Children" by Ellen Piers and David Harris (1964). This instrument was developed from an original pool of items from Jersild's collection of children's statements about what they liked and disliked about themselves. The instrument was standardized for use by children over a wide age range. Items were arranged by Rubin into six categories containing five questions and ordered as follows: behavior, general and academic status, physical appearance, anxiety, popularity,

happiness, and satisfaction. Some negative items were used in order to reduce the effects of acquiescence.

Test-retest coefficients of reliability for the Piers and Harris instrument are in the 70's. Although not outstandingly high, coefficients in the 70's are considered satisfactory for this type of scale (Piers and Harris, 1964). The authors noted that validation of self-report scales is always difficult since the appropriateness of behavioral and other criteria outside the self can be questioned. In an attempt at validation they administered the scale to a group of 88 institutionalized adolescent retarded females. It might be expected that the self concept of those considered mentally retarded would fall below that of normal adolescents and be significantly more negative. Scores on the sample studied confirmed expectations and indicated that the scale did reflect the hypothesized lower self concept or at least the level of self report (Piers and Harris, 1964).

Part II Self Esteem Scale: Part II of the questionnaire was composed of a self esteem scale obtained from Morris Rosenberg's Society and the Adolescent Self Image (1965). This section of the instrument was designed to measure whether the subject has a positive or negative attitude toward the self. This measure of self esteem was a ten-item Guttman scale which has satisfactory reproducibility (93 per cent) and scalability (scalability, items: 73 per cent; scalability, individuals: 72 per cent, Rosenberg, 1965). To insure face validity, the author attempted to select items which openly and directly dealt with the dimension under consideration since the Guttman model can usually insure that the items on a scale belong to the same dimension,

but cannot define that dimension (Rosenberg, 1965). Rosenberg admitted that such "logical validation" or "fact validity" while important, is not sufficient to establish the adequacy of the scale. He noted, however, that there were no "known groups" or "criterion groups" which could be used to validate the scale and it thus had to be defended on the grounds that if this scale actually did measure self esteem, one would expect the scores on the scale to be associated with other data in a theoretically meaningful way. Rosenberg found such associations between low self esteem as measured by this scale and the appearance of depression to outside observers. He also found a relationship between low self esteem and neurosis and low sociometric status in a group (Rosenberg, 1965).

Part III Self Concept Rating: Part III of the questionnaire consisted of a self concept rating taken from Lipsitt's "A Self-Concept Scale for Children and its Relationship to the Children's Form of the Manifest Anxiety Scale" (1958). This scale was based on the theory that a person who acknowledges his inadequacy and inferiority has a low self-concept. The two-week test-retest reliability coefficients for Lipsitt's self concept measure were all significant,  $p < .001$  (Lipsitt, 1958).

According to Rubin (1966), test-retest reliability of the scale was tested by his using 37 subjects. The percentage of agreement was .88. Rubin found support for construct validity based on the previous use of the questions in seeking self-referential information.

### Procedure

In order to determine whether or not changes would occur in the self evaluations of selected adolescents when exposed to the self evaluations of others, all members of the experimental population completed Rubin's Self Esteem Scale under non-experimental conditions. Those members of the experimental population randomly selected as subjects were, under the experimental condition, exposed to one of six handwritten descriptive paragraphs and Rubin's Self Esteem Scale which they were told had been provided by their partners in the experiment. These descriptions, written by the experimenter, represented that of a person in three different stages of the life span: adolescence, adulthood, and old age. All self esteem scales which accompanied the descriptive paragraphs had scores of 190, the highest positive score possible on the scale.

After examining the descriptive paragraph and self esteem scale which he had been given, each subject was asked to respond to it by writing a one-paragraph description of himself and by filling out a self esteem scale. The self esteem scales completed by the subjects during the experiment were analyzed through comparison to one another and to the self esteem scales completed by the subjects prior to the experiment in an attempt to determine the varying effects of the age and sex of a person to whose self evaluation a subject was exposed upon changes in the subject's self evaluation.

A detailed description of the procedure used in the study is as follows:

Rubin's Self Esteem Scale described earlier was administered to all seventh grade students in the experimental population by their teachers. Instructions for the completion of the questionnaire were written at the beginning of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) and were also read to the students by the teacher.

After a two-week interval, each of the 90 experimental subjects was randomly assigned to one of six experimental groups. In the first group, the subject was given a description of a peer of the same sex, in the second group, the description received was of a peer of the opposite sex. Each subject assigned to group three received a description of an adult of the same sex and descriptions for subjects in group four were of an adult of the opposite sex. Subjects in group five were exposed to a description of an old person of the same sex and subjects in group six to a description of an old person of the opposite sex. All descriptive paragraphs were hand written. The partner to whom each subject believed he was responding did not, however, actually exist. Instead the descriptive paragraphs and self esteem scales for every subject in each of the six experimental groups were identical.

The subjects met with the researcher in groups of 30 for the experimental sessions, which were held in a large lecture room at Asheboro Junior High School. In an effort to prevent the subjects from discussing the experiment with one another, they were asked to occupy alternate seats.

At the beginning of the experiment, each subject was given a handwritten descriptive paragraph,<sup>1</sup> a self esteem scale supposedly

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<sup>1</sup>See descriptive paragraph in Appendix B.

completed by his partner, a blank sheet of paper on which the subject was instructed to write a paragraph describing himself, and a self esteem scale which he was asked to complete.

The subjects were asked to suppose that the new director of the North Carolina Zoo, which was to be located in Asheboro, was sending each of them--and another person who would be the subject's partner--on an information gathering trip to the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. In preparation for this imaginary trip, the subjects were told that they and their partners should get to know one another. This was accomplished by having the subjects read a paragraph and look over a self esteem scale which they were told had been completed by their partners. After the subjects examined the paragraph and self esteem scale carefully, the researcher asked them to write a paragraph and complete a self esteem scale about themselves which they were told their partners would see. In an effort to assure that the subjects did not extend the imaginary portion of the experiment to their self descriptions, the experimenter emphasized that the paragraph and self esteem scale were to be honest descriptions of the subjects.

The above instructions were written and handed out to each subject with the paragraph and self esteem scale supposedly completed by their partners. These instructions were also given verbally by the experimenter.<sup>1</sup> Subjects were assured that there were no right or wrong answers.

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<sup>1</sup>For exact wording of instructions, see Appendix B.

When the subjects had completed the assigned task, the experimenter told them that they were then ready to take the imaginary trip and suggested that they write and illustrate paragraphs telling about their trips to the National Zoo.<sup>1</sup> They used the school library and completed booklets about this imaginary experience. Portions were selected from some of the best of these booklets for publication in the school newspaper.

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<sup>1</sup>For exact wording of instructions, see Appendix B.

## CHAPTER IV

## RESULTS

Items on Rubin's Self Esteem Scale, the instrument used in this study, were scored according to Guttman Scale analysis<sup>1</sup> and the scores were used to measure changes in the subjects' self evaluations which occurred following their exposure to the positive self evaluations of others. Scores on the pretest (Rubin's Self Esteem Scale administered under non experimental conditions) for subjects in the experimental group ranged from 107 to 178. Scores for the same subjects on the posttest (Rubin's Self Esteem Scale administered under the experimental condition) ranged from 127 to 189. Pretest scores for the subjects in the control group ranged from 98 to 166. Posttest scores for the control group ranged from 101 to 165.

Data gathered in this study were analyzed in two parts. First, a t test was used to compare the mean of the experimental subjects' scores on the pretest with the mean of these subjects' scores on the posttest in order to determine whether or not a significant difference existed between the two sets of scores. The t value obtained was significant,  $p < .01$ , indicating that there were significant differences between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental subjects. The mean of the scores for these subjects on the posttest was 169.60, representing an increase over the mean of the pretest scores. (See Table 1).

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<sup>1</sup>For detailed information regarding the scoring of the instrument refer to Appendix A.



The same statistical analysis was performed on the pretest and posttest scores of the subjects in the control group. The  $t$  value obtained was not significant ( $p < .01$ ) suggesting that the self evaluations of subjects in this group did not change significantly between the two administrations of Rubin's Self Esteem Scale. The mean pretest score for subjects in the control group was 131.57, and the mean posttest score was 132.64. The posttest scores of 51 control subjects were higher than these subjects' pretest scores, while the posttest scores of 34 control subjects were lower than their pretest scores. The scores of five control subjects remained the same.

TABLE 1

Means of Subjects' Scores on Pretest and Posttest

Test	Experimental Group Mean Score	Control Group Mean Score
Pretest	148.79	131.57
Posttest	169.60	132.64
Difference	20.81	1.07

Since there was no significant change in the mean score of subjects in the control group from pretest to posttest, the increase in the mean of the experimental subjects' scores from the pretest to the posttest suggested that these subjects' exposure to the positive self evaluations of others did result in more positive self esteem for

the subjects as measured by their scores on Rubin's Self Esteem Scale. The scores of 86 of the 90 subjects were higher on the posttest than on the pretest. Three subjects, two males and one female, scored lower on the posttest than on the pretest, and the scores of one male subject were exactly the same on both the pretest and the posttest.

In the second phase of analysis, a 3 x 2 factorial design was used to determine whether or not the experimental subjects' scores on the posttest varied significantly according to the age and sex of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed. (See Table 2).

The variable age had three levels: adolescent, adult, and old person. The variable sex was composed of two levels: same sex and opposite sex. Each of the six cells contained fifteen scores.

TABLE 2  
Analysis of Variance of Posttest Scores

Source	df	MS	F	p
Age	2	326.44	1.46	NS
Sex	1	1054.04	4.72	.05
Interaction	2	250.48	1.12	NS
Error	84	223.23		

The F value obtained for the main effect of age was not significant, suggesting that the scores of experimental subjects on the posttest did not vary significantly according to the age of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed.

Although there were no statistically significant differences in the experimental subjects' scores according to the age of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed, some differences were observed among the mean scores of the three age groups. (See Table 3).

TABLE 3

Mean Scores on Pretest and Posttest According to Age of Person to Whose Self Evaluation Subject was Exposed

Test	Adolescent	Adult	Old Person
Pretest	152.26	146.10	148.00
Posttest	173.06	166.50	167.23
Difference	20.80	20.40	21.23

The scores of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of other adolescents were higher than the scores of those exposed to self evaluations of adults or older persons. The mean of the posttest scores of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of older persons was slightly higher than that of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of adults. Although the difference was slight, this finding suggested a need for further investigation of the varying impact upon an adolescent's self esteem of exposure to the self evaluations of persons in different stages of adulthood.

The  $F$  value for the main effect of the variable sex was significant,  $p < .05$ . This finding suggested that the sex of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed did significantly affect the subject's score on the posttest. The mean of the pretest scores of those subjects exposed to the self evaluations of persons of the same sex was 146.53. The mean of the posttest scores of those subjects exposed to the self evaluations of persons of the same sex was 166.18. The subjects who were exposed to self evaluations of persons of the opposite sex had a mean score of 151.04 on the pretest and a mean score of 173.04 of the posttest. (See Table 4).

TABLE 4

Mean Scores on Pretest and Posttest According to Whether Subject was Exposed to SelfEvaluation or Same Sex of Opposite Sex Other

Test	Same Sex	Opposite Sex
Pretest	146.53	151.04
Posttest	166.18	173.02
Difference	19.65	21.98

The mean score of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of persons of the opposite sex increased slightly more and was significantly higher than the mean score of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of persons of the same sex. This finding suggested that the positive self

evaluations of persons of the opposite sex caused a greater increase in the self esteem of the subjects than did the positive self evaluations of persons of the same sex.

The F value for the interaction between age and sex was not significant, suggesting that the effect of sex upon the self esteem scores was not dependent upon the age of the persons to whose self evaluations the subjects were exposed. (See Figure 1). An examination of the mean posttest scores for each of the six experimental groups revealed that although there was no statistically significant interaction between the variables age and sex, the mean posttest score of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of adolescents of the opposite sex was higher than those of subjects in the other five experimental groups. The second highest mean score on the posttest was recorded for subjects exposed to the self evaluations of adults of the opposite sex. Only about one point lower was the mean posttest score of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of older persons of the opposite sex. Mean posttest scores for the three experimental groups which required exposure of subjects to the self evaluations of persons of the same sex were consistently lower than the mean posttest scores for the groups of subjects exposed to self evaluations of opposite sex persons. The highest mean posttest score among the three same-sex groups occurred among subjects exposed to the self evaluations of older persons. The lowest mean posttest score was that of subjects exposed to self evaluations of adults of the same sex. (See Table 5).

TABLE 5

Means of Pretest and Posttest Scores According to Experimental Group

Experimental Group	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
Adolescent - Same Sex	150.40	167.20	16.80
Adolescent - Opposite Sex	154.13	178.93	24.80
Adult - Same Sex	143.73	162.33	18.60
Adult - Opposite Sex	148.46	170.66	22.20
Old Person - Same Sex	145.46	169.00	23.54
Old Person - Opposite Sex	150.53	169.46	18.93

In an attempt to determine whether or not the amount of change which occurred in the subjects' posttest scores was related to the age and sex of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed, analysis of variance was applied to the gain scores (gain scores represented the number of points of increase between each subject's pretest and posttest scores). (See Table 6).

TABLE 6

Analysis of Variance of Gain Scores

Source	df	MS	F	p
Age	2	1.11	.01	NS
Sex	1	144.40	.72	NS
Interaction	2	290.80	1.44	NS
Error	84	201.38		

None of the F values for the main effects of age and sex of the interaction effect was significant. It may not be assumed, therefore, that the amount of change in the subjects' scores on the self esteem scale--which followed the subjects' exposure to positive self evaluations of others--was affected by the age or the sex of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed.

Although not statistically significant, some differences were observed in the amount of change which occurred in the self evaluations of subjects in the different experimental groups. (See Table 5). The greatest difference between pretest and posttest scores occurred between the group of subjects who were exposed to the self evaluations of adolescents of the opposite sex and those exposed to the self evaluations of adolescents of the same sex. The scores of those subjects exposed to the self evaluations of adolescents of the opposite sex increased an average of 24.80 points. This was the largest increase recorded for any of the six groups. The smallest increase among the experimental groups was that of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of an adolescent of the same sex. This increase averaged 16.80 points.

The scores of both subjects exposed to adults of the opposite sex and to self evaluations of old persons of the same sex averaged an increase of about 23 points. Smaller average increases (about 19 points) were recorded for groups of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of adults of the same sex and those exposed to the self evaluations of old persons of the opposite sex.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Personality and the Self Concept

If the results of the study reported here are to have meaning for the expansion of knowledge relating to the self concept, these results must be examined in terms of the theories which underlie this field of study. Although the presentation of the present study has examined the self concept as a unit, the self concept is, in reality, an inextricable part of the personality. Therefore, some attention must be given to personality theory.

The psychoanalytic theory of personality expounded by Freud and his followers does not refer to the self concept as such, but references are made to the ego's attitudes toward self. The ego, according to this theory, is that portion of the personality of which the individual is aware--the part which deals with the external world as well as with the Id and the super-ego, which compose the other portions of the personality. Thus, psychoanalytic theory depicts the ego as a mediator between the impulses or restraints of the other parts of the personality and environmental influences.

Although the literature offers no clear support for equating the psychoanalytic ego with the self, the data gathered in the study reported here suggested that the subjects experienced ego-involvement in the course of completing the study's posttest. Evidence of the ego as a mediator was seen in the descriptive paragraphs completed by the subjects. For instance, several of the subjects began their paragraphs



with a glowing, entirely positive description of themselves, which matched the tone of the descriptive paragraphs of the subjects' "partners." Then, in the last sentence, a number of subjects added such statements as "I guess I better tell you I don't make good grades," or "If you came here, I guess you would find out that the boys don't like me very much." Statements of this sort offered evidence of a struggle between the influence of the social environment (the positive self description of a peer or older person), which seemed to encourage the subject to describe himself in very positive terms, and his super-ego, which insisted upon honesty in description.

The importance of the social environment as an influence on the individual's self feelings was underscored by Karen Horney. She suggested that the combination of cultural factors which exists in modern society--competitiveness and its potential hostilities between fellow-beings, fear, diminished self esteem--results in emotional isolation and in apprehensions and uncertainties about one's self. As a result, the individual feels an intensified need for affection to make him feel less isolated, threatened, and uncertain, yet finds it difficult to obtain the affection he needs. In Horney's view, then, when an individual is presenting himself to another person, he would be expected to do so in such a way as to encourage a feeling of affection--but without lowering his competitive guard.

Support for Horney's view was found in the self-descriptive paragraphs written by the subjects in the present study. There was evidence, in these paragraphs, of an attempt on the part of many of the subjects to compete successfully by matching or excelling the

achievements of the persons described in the paragraphs they read. At the same time, the subjects generally included friendly greetings and complimentary remarks to their "partners" in an apparent effort to gain affection.

### Stability and the Self Concept

Cooley, Mead and Erikson all addressed themselves to the issue of the self concept's stability, and their views have obvious implications for the present study.

Cooley and Mead held that the individual presents different selves in different social situations--a suggestion which implies that the individual's self concept maintains a degree of flexibility. The findings of the study reported here, which indicated that self evaluations can be altered, were compatible with this view.

Erikson believed that identity formation is a lifelong process, but that tentative crystallizations of identity occur all through childhood. These budding clues to identity lead the child to believe that he is beginning to know who he is just as he enters adolescence, with its confusing discontinuities of psychosocial development.

Adolescence comprises Erikson's fifth Age of Man, which he labeled "Identity vs. Role Confusion." It is a period which the subjects of the present study, at age 12 or 13, were just entering. Therefore, if one accepts Erikson's theory of identity development, one might expect the subjects studied here to be experiencing the confusion and role discontinuities which accompany adolescence. As a result, their self-attitudes might be expected to be more easily

altered than those of young persons nearing the end of adolescence--a period when, according to Erikson, the individual's ego is ready to integrate his identity.

The findings of the present study, that the self-evaluations of the adolescent subjects were altered by exposure to positive self evaluations of others, were in keeping with Erikson's suggestion that at the beginning of adolescence, individuals may be entering a period of upheaval in regard to their identities.

The present study's findings were also in accord with the results of a study by Hans and Maehr (1965). In the Hans-Maehr study, male eighth grade students were exposed to either positive or negative evaluations of themselves by others. The subjects were tested, then retested after a six week period. The researchers found changes in the subjects' self evaluations which varied according to the nature of the evaluation to which they had been exposed. These changes continued to exist after a six week period. Furthermore, Hans and Maehr concluded that changes in self evaluation show the effects of dosage. Two treatments brought about greater and longer lasting changes in self ratings than one treatment.

The results of the present study were generally not in keeping with Harry Stack Sullivan's theory of the self-system. If one accepts Sullivan's theory that the self-system functions to reduce anxiety and is consequently resistant to change, one might also reasonably expect the self concept to be similarly resistant to change. Although the significant differences which occurred between the pretest and post-test scores of the experimental subjects of this study implied a lack

of resistance to shifts in self attitudes, such resistance was observed in individual instances. The researcher was aware of varying amounts of anxiety manifested by individual subjects. An examination of the posttest scores of these subjects revealed much smaller shifts in self evaluation scores than those of subjects who did not manifest symptoms of anxiety. This evidence of the anxious subjects' resistance to changes in self evaluation might be interpreted in terms of Sullivan's suggestion that the individual's self-system resists change as a part of its attempt to reduce anxiety, since no such resistance to change was evident among subjects who did not appear anxious.

The results of the present study were also somewhat contradictory to the findings of studies by Rosenberg (1965), Carlson (1965), and Engel (1950). The latter studies reported that by the time an individual reaches adolescence, his or her self concept has reached a relatively high level of congruence and is likely to remain fairly stable over a period of years. One important difference between the studies mentioned above and the present study was that in the former studies adolescents were tested over a period of time without any insertion of treatment which might alter the self concept. The present study did introduce treatment effects which presumably led to shifts in the self evaluations of the subjects.

#### Variables Affecting Self Attitudes

It was the intention of the present study to determine not only whether or not shifts in the self evaluations of adolescents occur, but also to specify variables which affect such shifts.

Videbeck (1960), Maehr, Mensing, and Nafgger (1962), Harvey, Kelly, and Shapiro (1957), Hans and Maehr (1965) and Davidson and Lang (1960) all found that an individual's self attitudes were significantly affected by the evaluations others made of him. The findings of the present study suggested that another variable which should be considered in relation to self attitudes was the self evaluations of persons to whom the individual is exposed.

The findings of the present study corresponded to those of the study done by Gergen and Wishnov (1965) in which female college students, after exposure to the positive and negative self evaluations of same sex peers, scored either higher or lower on a self esteem scale than they had some weeks before, depending upon the complexion of the self evaluations to which they had been exposed. While the present study examined only the exposure of subjects to the positive self evaluations of others, it expanded the findings of the Gergen and Wishnov study by selecting as subjects a younger group than that used in the earlier study.

The findings of the present study were contradictory to those of a study by Morse and Gergen (1970) in which job applicants were exposed to either a positive stimulus person or a negative stimulus person. The subjects in that study reacted to exposure to the positive stimulus person by rating themselves lower and to the negative stimulus person by rating themselves higher.

The present study investigated the influence of the age and sex of the persons to whose self evaluations the subjects were exposed upon shifts in the subjects' own self evaluations. Its findings

suggested that the sex of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed did affect the subject's self evaluation. The posttest scores of subjects exposed to the positive self evaluations of persons of the opposite sex were significantly higher than the posttest scores of subjects exposed to the self evaluations of persons of the same sex.

Theoretical support for such a result is found in the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud. Freud considered that as a child develops, he passes through stages of psychosexual development in which the primary source of libidinal gratification shifts from the mouth to the anus to the genitals. By the time a child reaches adolescence, Freud believed that the Oedipus complex should have been resolved and the basic structure of the personality established. He viewed adolescence as a reactivation of the sexual drives which have been quiescent during the latency period which precedes adolescence. Adolescence is a time when the boy or girl outgrows the same sex identification which emerged during the latency period and seeks acceptable, socially approved heterosexual relationships outside the home (A. L. Baldwin, 1967). Therefore, the researcher might expect the self evaluations of adolescent subjects to be affected more by contact with the self evaluations of persons of the opposite sex than by those of persons of the same sex.

The findings of a research study by Manford E. Kuhn (1960), "Self Attitudes by Age, Sex, and Professional Training," also lend credence to the suggestion of the present findings that sex was a variable of significance to self attitudes. Kuhn's research was

designed to carry further the logical validation of the Twenty Statements Test of Self-Attitudes. The research examined the responses made by members of twenty-five groups to this test in order to determine whether the responses were logically related to the self as it is described in the theory of the self proposed by Cooley, Dewey, Mead, and others.

The Twenty Statements Test consisted of asking subjects to make twenty different statements in response to the question, "Who am I?" The subjects' statements became items and, from a content classification of these items, a Guttman scale emerged. The researcher found agreement in the statements which the subjects gave first. These statements referred to groups and categories with which the subjects felt associated and by which they were identified.

Kuhn found that the salience of sex mention increased with age from the early grades through high school. Among subjects in the grade school years, Kuhn found no significant difference between the sexes either in the proportion mentioning sex among their self definitions or in the salience of sex reference. Beginning with the high school years, the proportion of females to males who gave sex saliency as one of the twenty statements increased. Kuhn hypothesized that the disproportionately salient mention of sex by females is greatest during the years of dating and courtship, since it is during this period that females are staking their lifetime status chances on their sexual attractiveness.

Kuhn's finding regarding the salience of age for self attitudes of adolescents was somewhat contradictory to the results of the present

study. In the study reported here, the age of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed did not appear to influence shifts in the subject's evaluation of himself, suggesting that identification by age may not have been as important to the adolescents studied here as it appeared to be to Kuhn's subjects. Kuhn found identification by age to become more important to his subjects with increasing age. Only slightly more than one-fourth of his nine-year-old subjects identified themselves by age. The percentage of subjects who did identify themselves by age increased steadily and rapidly until nearly three-fourths of the thirteen-year-old subjects mentioned age in response to the question, "Who am I?" Kuhn attributed this change to the fact that thirteen is an especially significant age in our society because it marks the beginning of one of our major age-grades--the teen age--with its culturally discontinuous role-playing and curiously detached status.

#### Evaluation of Study's Design

In the study cited above, Kuhn (1960) found that the mention of age--at all ages studied--appeared to be a fairly significant self referent. The failure of the variable age to have any significant impact upon the posttest scores of subjects in the present study may possibly be attributed to the fact that the subjects lacked personal contact with the persons to whose self evaluations they were exposed.

Although Thibaut and Kelley (1961) stated that dyads may form at a distance by written communication, indicating that individuals can be influenced by other persons without personal contact, it seems likely that age differences would have had greater impact in a face-to-face



situation. Therefore, the lack of personal contact between the subjects and the persons to whose self evaluations the subjects were exposed must be considered a weakness of the design of the present study.

Another possible source of weakness in the study was in the instructions given to the subjects in the experimental condition. To avoid deceiving the subjects, and in an effort to make the instructions more explicit, the subjects were asked to suppose that each of them, along with a partner, was going on a trip to the National Zoo in Washington, D. C., to gather ideas for the new North Carolina State Zoo which would be located in their home town. The subjects were given paragraphs and self esteem scales which supposedly described their partners and were asked to describe themselves in similar fashion under the guise of helping them to know the partners and helping the partners to become acquainted with them prior to the imaginary trip. In an effort to counteract any imaginary mind set which the preceding instructions may have precipitated in the subjects, the experimenter cautioned them that the paragraphs they were to write and the self esteem scales which they were to complete were not to be imaginary but were to be honest descriptions of themselves as they really were. A careful examination of the subjects' descriptive paragraphs by the experimenter and by the teacher of each subject did not reveal any instances in which the subject described an imaginary person or appeared to be less than honest in his description of himself. Generally, the paragraphs included information about the composition of the subjects' family, his or her feelings about school, church and other activities, sports or hobbies which the subject enjoyed, and some remarks about friends of

both sexes. Both the content of the paragraphs and the subjects' comments at the time they were tested suggested that the subjects accepted their "partners" as real people. A number of the subjects whose "partners" were peers expressed a desire to meet the partner. Several subjects who read paragraphs describing adults or older persons made such comments as "I enjoyed your letter" or "I enjoyed reading about you," "I know you are proud of your family," or "you sound like my father."

Further cause for concern about the design of this study is the time interval between the two administrations of the self esteem scale. One must question whether or not an aspect of the self concept such as self evaluation can be expected to change over the period of two weeks.

An important strength of this study was the random selection of subjects and their random assignment to the six experimental groups, providing a sample which was representative of the population of the junior high school from which the sample was drawn. Members of the control group were also randomly selected.

#### Methodological Difficulties

Many serious obstacles are encountered when the researcher attempts to measure self concept. The researcher must question, first of all, whether the self has the ability to perceive itself correctly, particularly in regard to areas of great value to the self. Therefore, construct validity poses a major problem in measurement of the self concept (Strong and Feder, 1961). Rubin (1966) and

the researchers who developed the scales on which Rubin's Self Esteem Scale was based recognized that the problem of construct validity exists and attempted to design scales which would overcome this problem to the greatest extent possible. (See discussion of validity of the instrument, Chapter III, page 40).

Wylie, in The Self Concept (1961), observed that a person's attitudes are often private and unobservable, yet measuring the self concept requires that such feelings be placed against some sort of yardstick. Therefore, the researcher must rely on verbal or written self-report responses such as the descriptive paragraphs and self esteem scale used in the present study.

The researcher cannot automatically assume that self-reports provide true indications of the individual's self concept. In fact, Combs, Soper, and Courson (1963) questioned whether or not self-reports can logically be used as a direct measure of the self concept. These researchers noted that the self-report is a description of self reported to an outsider, representing what the individual says he is, a description which they said is rarely, if ever, identical with the self concept. Combs, Soper, and Courson did admit, however, that what an individual says of himself will be affected by his self concept.

The researcher must, therefore, be aware of the several important factors which may affect the degree to which a self-report is indicative of an individual's self concept. The subject may reveal only what he wishes, he may claim attitudes which he does not have, or his own awareness may be limited. The subject's general response

habits must also be taken into account. In addition, when a forced choice technique, such as the self esteem scale employed in the present study, is used, the researcher cannot be certain to what extent the subject was prevented from accurately describing his feelings (Rubin, 1966).

Smith (1960) reported findings of Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum which suggested that a meaningful concept such as the self is composed of many factors and not a specific dimension. The instrument used in the present study purported to tap self-attitudes directly by asking the subjects how they felt about their standings on stated characteristics. These measures generated scores which were treated as positive and negative points on a value continuum.

The study reported here can claim to have measured self concept and changes which occurred therein only to the extent to which the reader can accept the statements of validity and reliability of the instrument used in this study. The development of more effective instruments for studying the self concept is greatly needed by the social sciences, for all instruments presently employed in such research have serious shortcomings.

As in other studies concerned with the empirical investigation of the self concept, many problems were encountered in the design and execution of the present study. While its findings cannot be considered conclusive, the results of this study do point to variables which seem to have implications for further study of the self concept. Such variables are the age and sex of the individual to whose self evaluation the subjects are exposed, and the positive or negative nature of those self evaluations.

## CHAPTER VI

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect upon their own self-evaluations of the exposure of adolescents to the positive self evaluations of others. The present study also sought to determine whether or not any changes which occurred in the self evaluations of the adolescents varied according to the age and sex of the person to whose self evaluation the adolescent was exposed.

Ninety subjects, 45 girls and 45 boys, were randomly selected from the seventh grade population of Asheboro Junior High School, Asheboro, North Carolina, for participation in six experimental groups. At a later date, an additional 45 boys and 45 girls were randomly selected from the seventh grade population of North Asheboro Junior High School, a similar school located in the same town, to serve as a control group. In two sessions, Rubin's Self Esteem Scale, a three-part scale designed to measure self attitudes, was administered to both experimental and control populations as a pretest. After a two-week interval, the 90 experimental subjects were randomly assigned to one of six experimental groups: adolescent-same sex, adolescent-opposite sex, adult-same sex, adult-opposite sex, old person-same sex, and old person-opposite sex. Each subject was exposed to the positive self evaluation of a person representative of the group to which he had been assigned. The subjects were then asked to respond to these self evaluations by describing themselves in a paragraph and by completing Rubin's Self Esteem Scale. The posttest for the control group,

which was given after a two-week interval, consisted of Rubin's Self Esteem Scale administered exactly as it had been on the pretest. Control group subjects received no treatment between the two administrations of the Self Esteem Scale.

The means of the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental subjects were compared by using a t test to determine if a significant difference existed between them. A 3 x 2 factorial design was used to determine whether or not differences in the scores of subjects in the experimental groups were related to the age and/or the sex of the person to whose self evaluation the subject was exposed.

The first of the three hypotheses set forth in this study was confirmed. The other two were rejected. The first hypothesis stated that exposure to the positive self evaluations of other persons would positively affect the self evaluations of seventh graders. This hypothesis was confirmed,  $p < .01$ , suggesting that exposure to the positive self evaluations of other persons did significantly affect the experimental subjects' self evaluations as measured by their scores on Rubin's Self Esteem Scale. There was no significant difference between the means of pretest and posttest self esteem scale scores of members of the control group, suggesting that the changes which occurred in the posttest scores of the experimental subjects were not due simply to the re-administration of Rubin's Self Esteem Score.

Hypothesis two stated that the age of the person to whose self evaluation the seventh grader is exposed would significantly affect the amount of change which occurs in the seventh grader's own self evaluation. This hypothesis was rejected. There were no significant

differences in the amount of change which occurred in the self evaluation scores of the subjects exposed to the positive self evaluation of an adolescent, an adult, or an old person.

Hypothesis three was also rejected. This hypothesis stated that the sex of the person to whose self evaluation the seventh grader is exposed would significantly affect the amount of change which occurs in the seventh grader's own self evaluation. There were no significant differences in the amount of change which occurred in the self evaluation scores of the subjects exposed to the self evaluation of a person of the same sex or of the opposite sex. There were, however, differences in the posttest scores of these two groups which were significant,  $p < .05$ .

Although the subjects who participated in this study were randomly selected, the population from which they were drawn consisted largely of middle class whites, therefore limiting the generalizability of the results of this study to similar populations. A need exists for similar studies using subjects of different races and social class memberships.

These findings also suggest a need for further exploration of the variables which affect changes in the self concepts of adolescents. A similar study might be designed to test the impact of both positive and negative self evaluations of representatives of different age groups upon adolescents' self evaluations.

Another consideration of interest to such a study is the type of situation within which an adolescent is exposed to the self evaluation of another person. How would a face-to-face meeting with the

person to whose self evaluation the adolescent is exposed affect his self evaluation? Would the anticipation of future contact with the other person alter any changes in the adolescent's description of himself?

Also useful in such a study would be the addition of follow-up procedures. Were the changes which occurred in the self evaluations of the adolescents studied in an experiment such as the one reported here only temporary or were there lasting changes?

While it seems unlikely that a contact as brief as that which the subjects in the present study experienced would produce lasting changes in self attitudes, the shifts in self evaluation which occurred suggested the need for expanded studies which could investigate changes in the self concept over longer periods of time. Such a longitudinal study might address itself to determining at what point or points in the life cycle self attitudes are most susceptible to change.

Finally, a consideration which is basic to the outcome of this study--and to all others related to self concept--is the need for improved instruments to measure self concept. In addition, studies are also needed to determine whether or not the instruments now being used actually measure self concept. The difficulties in measuring and studying self concept and the lack of adequate tools for such a task should not, however, deter social scientists from making continuing attempts to learn more about this basic facet of the personality--studies attempted, however imperfectly, may provide clues to further explorations leading to a breakthrough in the understanding of the self concept.



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## APPENDIX A

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## RUBIN'S SELF ESTEEM SCALE

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This is a test with three parts. There are instructions for each part. Please read the instructions for each part carefully before you begin to answer the questions. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions. Mark the answer which you think best describes you.

## PART I

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read each sentence carefully. If you feel that the sentence describes you, circle the yes. If you feel that the sentence does not describe you, circle the no.

1. I do many bad things.

yes  
no

7. I am smart.

yes  
no

2. I am disobedient at home.

yes  
no

8. I am dumb about most things.

yes  
no

3. I am often in trouble.

yes  
no

9. I am a good reader.

yes  
no

4. I think bad thoughts.

yes  
no

10. I forget what I learn.

yes  
no

5. I can be trusted.

yes  
no

11. I am good looking.

yes  
no

6. I am good in my schoolwork.

yes  
no

12. I have a pleasant face.

yes  
no



13. I have a bad figure (physique).  
yes  
no
14. I am strong.  
yes  
no
15. I am a leader in games and sports.  
yes  
no
16. I cry easily.  
yes  
no
17. I worry a lot.  
yes  
no
18. I am often afraid.  
yes  
no
19. I get nervous when the teacher calls on me.  
yes  
no
20. I get nervous.  
yes  
no
21. People choose me for games.  
yes  
no
22. I am the last to be chosen for games.  
yes  
no
23. It is hard for me to make friends.  
yes  
no
24. I have many friends.  
yes  
no
25. I feel left out of things.  
yes  
no
26. I am a happy person.  
yes  
no
27. I am unhappy.  
yes  
no
28. I like being the way I am.  
yes  
no
29. I wish I were different.  
yes  
no
30. I am cheerful.  
yes  
no

## PART II

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read each sentence carefully. Below each sentence are four statements: a. strongly agree; b. agree; c. disagree; and d. strongly disagree. Circle the letter (a, b, c, or d) which appears before the statement which best describes the way you feel about the sentence.

31. I am as worthwhile as others.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

32. I have many good qualities.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

33. Generally, I feel I am a failure.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

34. I can do things as well as most others.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

35. I have little to be proud of.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

36. I think well of myself.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

37. Generally, I am satisfied with myself.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

38. I wish I could respect myself more.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

39. At times I feel useless.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

40. Sometimes I think I am no good at all.

- a. strongly agree.
- b. agree
- c. disagree
- d. strongly disagree

## PART III

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each sentence carefully. Below each sentence are five statements: 1. not at all; 2. Not very often; 3. some of the time; 4. most of the time; 5. all of the time. Circle the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) which appears before the statement which best describes how often the sentence describes you.

41. I am friendly.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
42. I am happy.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
43. I am kind.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
44. I am brave.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
45. I am honest.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
46. I am likeable.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
47. I am trusted.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
48. I am good.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
49. I am proud.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
50. I am lazy.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time
51. I am loyal.
1. not at all
  2. not very often
  3. some of the time
  4. most of the time
  5. all of the time

52. I am cooperative.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

53. I am cheerful.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

54. I am thoughtful.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

55. I am popular.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

56. I am courteous.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

57. I am jealous.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

58. I am obedient

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

59. I am polite.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

60. I am bashful.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

61. I am clean.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

62. I am helpful.

1. not at all
2. not very often
3. some of the time
4. most of the time
5. all of the time

Name \_\_\_\_\_

SCORE SHEET  
RUBIN'S SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

Part I  
SELF CONCEPT

Item	yes	no
1	(1) _____	_____ (2)
2	(1) _____	_____ (2)
3	(1) _____	_____ (2)
4	(1) _____	_____ (2)
5	(2) _____	_____ (1)
6	(2) _____	_____ (1)
7	(2) _____	_____ (1)
8	(1) _____	_____ (2)
9	(2) _____	_____ (1)
10	(1) _____	_____ (2)
11	(2) _____	_____ (1)
12	(2) _____	_____ (1)
13	(1) _____	_____ (2)
14	(2) _____	_____ (1)
15	(2) _____	_____ (1)
16	(1) _____	_____ (2)
17	(1) _____	_____ (2)
18	(1) _____	_____ (2)
19	(1) _____	_____ (2)
20	(1) _____	_____ (2)
21	(2) _____	_____ (1)
22	(1) _____	_____ (2)
23	(1) _____	_____ (2)
24	(2) _____	_____ (1)
25	(1) _____	_____ (2)
26	(2) _____	_____ (1)
27	(1) _____	_____ (2)
28	(2) _____	_____ (1)
29	(1) _____	_____ (2)
30	(2) _____	_____ (1)

Part II  
SELF ESTEEM SCALE

SA = strongly agree      A = agree  
SD = strongly disagree    D = disagree

Item	SA	A	D	SD
31	(2) _____	_____	_____	_____ (1)
32	(2) _____	_____	_____	_____ (1)
33	(1) _____	_____	_____	_____ (2)
34	(2) _____	_____	_____	_____ (1)
35	(1) _____	_____	_____	_____ (2)
36	(2) _____	_____	_____	_____ (1)
37	(2) _____	_____	_____	_____ (1)
38	(1) _____	_____	_____	_____ (2)
39	(1) _____	_____	_____	_____ (2)
40	(1) _____	_____	_____	_____ (2)

Part III  
SELF CONCEPT RATING

1 = not at all                      3 = some of the time  
2 = not very often                4 = most of the time  
5 = all of the time

Item	1	2	3	4	5
41	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
42	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
43	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
44	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
45	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
46	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
47	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
48	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
49	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
50	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
51	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
52	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
53	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
54	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
55	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
56	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
57	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
58	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
59	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
60	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
61	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
62	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX A  
SCORING OF THE INSTRUMENT

Items on Rubin's Self Esteem Scale were scored according to Guttman scale analysis. That is, each item was scored so that persons who answered a given question favorably all had higher ranks on the scale than persons who answered the same question unfavorably (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954).

In Part I, each "yes" response to items 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 21, 24, 26, 28, and 30, received a score of two because "yes" represents a favorable response and each "no" response, an unfavorable response, received a score of one. Likewise, since items 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 27, and 29, are negatively stated items, each "no" response received a score of two, while each "yes" response, the unfavorable response, received a score of one.

Part II contains four choices for each of the ten items. They are "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." For purposes of analysis, the four choices were dichotomized into two: positive ("strongly agree," "agree") and negative ("disagree," "strongly disagree"). In items 31, 32, 34, 36, and 37, the positive responses are the favorable ones and were scored two, while responses "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were scored one. On the other hand, the favorable response to items 33, 35, 38, 39, and 40 is a negative one ("disagree," "strongly disagree") and these were scored two, while each positive

response ("strongly agree," "agree") to these items was scored one.

Each question in Part III is followed by a five-point rating scale. Nineteen items are considered socially desirable or favorable attributes while three are considered negative ("lazy," "jealous," and "bashful"). The rating categories are "(1) not at all," "(2) not very often," "(3) some of the time," "(4) most of the time," and "(5) all of the time." A score of one was obtained by checking the first category (the least favorable response) and a score of five was obtained by checking the last category (the most favorable response) in items 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 61, 62. The three negative items, 50, 57, and 60, were scored in inverse fashion.

A summated score was then obtained for the three parts of the questionnaire. The highest possible score is 190, representing the most positive self concept as measured by this scale.

APPENDIX B  
INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBJECTS

All of you know that the state zoo will soon be built in Asheboro. The new zoo director and his family are moving to Asheboro this month and he is going to be busy getting everything ready for the zoo to open. Let's suppose that the director of the zoo wants some ideas about what the zoo should be like and some of the kinds of animals which should be included in the zoo. Let's suppose to get some ideas, he has arranged to send you -- along with another person who will be your partner -- on a trip to the National Zoo in Washington, D. C. so that you can get lots of ideas to pass along to him for our new state zoo.

The first thing to do in preparation for the imaginary trip is to get to know the person who will be your partner. For this purpose, I am giving you two things: one is a Self Esteem Scale about your partner and the other is a paragraph written especially for you by your partner. After you have carefully read the paragraph and looked over the Self Esteem Scale which describe your partner, I want you to tell your partner about yourself by writing a paragraph and filling out a self Esteem Scale about yourself. You completed the Self Esteem Scale recently to get familiar with the questions. Now I want you to complete it again for your partner to give him or her some idea about the kind of person you are.



Now -- this part is not imaginary. You are to describe yourself as you really are in this paragraph and on the Self Esteem Scale. The paragraph and Self Esteem Scale should not describe the person you hope to be some day or would like to be now, but should be a careful description of the person you are right now.

Please follow these instructions carefully:

1. Put your name in the upper right hand corner of the blank Self Esteem Scale and the blank sheet of paper.
2. Read carefully the paragraph and Self Esteem Scale which your partner has completed for you.
3. Write a paragraph about yourself and complete the Self Esteem Scale in answer to your partner. Help him or her to get to know you by describing yourself as you really are.

## APPENDIX B

## DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPHS

Adolescent Female: I am a 13-year-old girl in the seventh grade. This is my first year in junior high school and I just love it! I am making very good grades but most important I have lots of friends and I'm always getting elected to special things like cheerleader. My friends tell me that I'm pretty and I know that lots of boys like me. I can hardly wait to get to high school and college for I know I'm going to have even more fun and hopefully win more honors.

Adolescent Male: I am a 13-year-old boy. This is my first year in junior high. It's really groovy! I'm making good grades but it's the sports I really like. I am captain of the seventh grade's basketball team and I'm good at volley ball, too. I always get chosen first. I just wish we had a football team here at my school. That's one reason I'll be glad when I get to high school and college -- football. Other reasons, too. Maybe I'll do a few girls a favor and take them on a date. They're all after me now.

Adult Female: I am the mother of two dear, handsome children, a boy and a girl. I am 40 years of age and still happily married to the man I walked down the aisle with 15 years ago. For the most part, I enjoyed school from the first grade through college -- maybe because I never had any trouble making good grades. Over the years, I have enjoyed a successful career but now I seem to find more pleasure in pursuing my numerous hobbies, spending more time with my family and enjoying various activities with my friends. With all these many

activities, I look forward to each day. All in all, I believe I lead a full and happy life.

Adult Male: If there's any truth to that old adage about life beginning at 40, I'm really looking forward to the years ahead. I recently celebrated that "magic" birthday -- and couldn't help looking back on the solid accomplishments of my first 40 years. I've worked my way through school -- with some help from an athletic scholarship -- and I've built up a successful business from the struggling little one-man operation I bought soon after finishing college. There have been some rough spots along the way, but we've managed to "hang in there" and make a go of it. Meanwhile, I have a lovely wife and two children; I am active in several civic and professional organizations; and I enjoy a number of hobbies. With this much going for me now, maybe my next 30 or 40 years will be my best yet.

Old Person Male: I am a 75-year-old man and busier and happier than I have ever been before. I retired from an enjoyable and successful profession ten years ago and at last I have time to devote to my exceptional wife, my very special children and grandchildren, and the many hobbies which I enjoy. I have been an outstanding athlete since I was in elementary school and I continue to keep my self in excellent physical condition. I have always had an insatiable intellectual curiosity which keeps me reading all types of books -- something I have done since my school days when I was an honor student. Just now my wife and I are planning an extended vacation for the summer to visit some of our friends all over the country. Life seems to get better with each passing year.

Old Person Female: I am 75 years old, though I'm told that's hard to believe -- a wife, mother, and grandmother, but still very much my own woman. My life has been filled with happiness and success and I look into the future with great hope. I have always been busy from the time I was a child -- First as a student, making good grades and participating in activities with my many friends, later successfully pursuing a career, and finally achieving great happiness as a wife and the mother of two very special children. Now I enjoy my grandchildren, themselves very special, as well as traveling with my husband and engaging in many civic and social activities.

APPENDIX B  
FOLLOW-UP INSTRUCTIONS

Now that you know a few characteristics of your partner and you have told your partner something about yourself, you are ready to go on the imaginary trip. Decide how you and your partner will travel to Washington to the National Zoo. Do you want to fly or take a bus? Next I want you to tell something about the zoo in Washington. What did you see there that interested you? What did you learn about the different animals -- the food they eat and the way they live? Which of the animals would you like to see in the zoo here in Asheboro? You can find books in the library that will help you to learn something about different animals. To complete your imaginary trip, give some of the ideas you have for the layout of our new zoo and the animals to be included there. Pictures cut from magazines or your own drawings will help to illustrate your paragraphs. Some of these paragraphs will be published in the next issue of your school newspaper and will be sent to the new zoo director.