Effects of private self-consciousness on the degree of accuracy predicted for one's behavior accuracy of self-reports and the effects of success or failure feedback on accuracy ratings

Lura L. McArthur

The University of Montana

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THE EFFECTS OF PRIVATE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS ON
THE DEGREE OF ACCURACY PREDICTED FOR ONE'S BEHAVIOR,
ACCURACY OF SELF-REPORTS, AND THE EFFECTS OF
SUCCESS OR FAILURE FEEDBACK ON
ACCURACY RATINGS

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requirements for the degree of
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The present study assessed the effects of private self-consciousness (a disposition) on the degree of accuracy predicted for one's behavior, accuracy of self-reports, and the sensitivity of accuracy prediction ratings to success or failure feedback. Ninety-six subjects were classified as being high or low in private self-consciousness based on the Fenigstein Private Self-consciousness Subscale (PSCS). Subjects were asked to choose three categories of nouns which were especially difficult for them to remember from ten possible categories. They then predicted the degree of accuracy with which their predicted categories would match their actual behavior on the memory test. After completing the memory test, subjects were given bogus success or failure feedback that was ostensibly their own, that of a peer reference group, or a combination of both. Subjects then predicted their perceived degree of accuracy on a second memory test. The results indicated that higher initial accuracy prediction ratings were reported by high PSC subjects, but actual performance on the task did not differ for high and low PSC subjects. Contrary to prediction, both high and low PSC subjects responded to success and failure manipulations by conforming approximately the same amount. A four-way interaction confirmed the prediction for all subjects that peer reference group information would result in a "face-saving" pattern in the case of success feedback and a "better than average" pattern in the case of failure feedback. High PSC subjects also reported focusing inward during the course of the experiment and low PSC subjects reported focusing outward, although this result was only minimally supported statistically.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Literature Review

Self-awareness Theory

In 1972 Duval and Wicklund proposed a theory of self-awareness that purported to explain numerous behaviors falling within the domains of social psychology, personality processes, and human performance. At the core of the theory is a concept they have called objective self-awareness, a state in which a person takes oneself to be an object. Duval and Wicklund originally termed self-focus objective self-awareness and environmental focus subjective self-awareness. In recent years, however, this convention has been widely abandoned in favor of high versus low self-awareness or self-focus versus environmental focus alternatives (Carver, 1979).

Duval and Wicklund's (1972) proposed theory of self-awareness consisted of three central assumptions. First, they suggested that the objects of conscious attention could be dichotomized: Attention can be directed outward to the environment or attention can be directed inward to the self at any given instant (self-awareness). The possibility of a state of attention divided between self and environment was ruled out of the theoretical framework.
Yet Duval and Wicklund allowed that attention could oscillate, however rapidly, between the self and nonself, and this allows one to speak in terms of increased or decreased self-awareness.

An increase simply means an increment in the proportion of time spent in self-focus. The theory views the direction of conscious attention being determined by the complex of stimuli that impinge upon us, and such stimuli may be divided into two classes: Those that remind a person of one's object status (e.g., a camera or a mirror) and those serving to pull attention away from the self (e.g., a perceptual-motor task such as a pursuit rotor) (Duval & Wicklund, 1972).

The theory of self-awareness is, foremost, a principle of self-evaluation: The initial reaction to the onset of objective self-awareness is postulated to be self-evaluation. When attention is focused inward, the self becomes an object of evaluation. Since the self is largely a social construct (Mead, 1934), self-focused attention is similar to social evaluation, one of the most important processes in interpersonal relations. Duval and Wicklund's (1972) assumption, therefore, was that self-focus leads to a self-critical evaluation process such that self-attentive people compare themselves with some standard on whatever therefore, was that self-focus leads to a self-critical evaluation process such that self-attentive people
compare themselves with some standard on whatever behavioral dimension happens to be salient (see also Wicklund, 1975). Although it was noted by Duval and Wicklund that many potential standards of comparison exist at any given moment, even with respect to a single behavioral dimension, they reasoned that (a) one standard is more salient than others and (b) a person adopts that standard as a comparison value, at least temporarily.

Under the third assumption of self-awareness theory, Duval and Wicklund (1972) further argued that self-directed attention is, therefore, usually aversive because in most cases a person's actual behavior or state is worse than the standard of comparison. This aversiveness presumably leads an individual to attempt to escape the self-awareness state (Wicklund, 1975). If it is not possible to avoid self-awareness inducing stimuli (and, thus, the aversive state), a self-focused human may attempt to alter personal behavior so that it conforms more closely to the standard as a way of reducing aversiveness of self-awareness. The aversiveness of self-attention is seen as a motivator for behavioral alteration. Thus self-awareness theory, as proposed by Duval and Wicklund, is one of a larger class of drive theories in which the aversiveness of self-attention is seen as a driving force behind behavioral changes.

The original version of the Duval and Wicklund (1972) theory assumed that self-focused attention was invariably
aversive. Even though the existence of positive discrep­
ancies was recognized (as in the case in which a person's
attainments exceed the aspirations), Duval and Wicklund
reasoned that positive discrepancies are likely to dwindle
with time. This is because aspirations rise and eventually
surpass an individual's recent success, thereby recreating
negative discrepancies. Duval and Wicklund therefore assumed
discrepancies between aspirations and attainment to be
negative in general--across virtually all people and all
traits--with the consequence that self-focused attention
was postulated to be an aversive condition.

Following the initial reaction to self-awareness of
self-evaluation (that of negative effect), Duval and Wicklund
(1972) assumed two additional possible reactions would
occur: avoidance of self-focusing stimuli or discrepancy
readuction would result. Although the order of occurrence
of these two possible reactions was not stipulated clearly
in the original Duval and Wicklund theory, a reexamination
(Wicklund, 1975) revealed there was good reason for assuming
that these two reactions fell into an order of preference.
This was because negative affect was postulated as a motivat­
ing force, and whatever eliminated such affect quickly
should be preferred.

A successful averting of self-focused attention would
eliminate the negative affect, however temporarily, thus
an individual's immediate reaction to self-awareness should
be an avoidance of self-focusing stimuli and/or efforts to find distractions. If elimination of self-awareness is impossible, an alternative affect-reducing response will involve discrepancy reduction which typically entails efforts to bring a trait or behavior into line with a standard or aspiration. Discrepancy reduction involves eliminating internal discrepancies, meaning any variety of within-self contradiction or shortcoming (Wicklund, 1975).

To summarize, there are several possible reactions to self-focused attention in addition to the initial reaction of self-evaluation. If the salient discrepancy is negative, there will be an active avoidance of such stimuli, including efforts to create distractions (Duval & Wicklund, 1972). Furthermore, and only in the case of negative discrepancies, an inescapable self-awareness will result in attempted discrepancy reduction.

**Self-awareness Research**

The study of self-awareness seems largely to have been concerned with what James (1890) called the spiritual self, but which more modern theorists refer to as our cognitive faculties, emotional states, inner beings, and behavioral tendencies. Most of the studies stimulated by Duval and Wicklund's (1972) self-awareness theory depend on the idea that self-awareness manipulations such as mirrors, etc., cause subjects to attend to and think about themselves. The theory implies that a number of motivational effects
can follow when self-focused attention is induced—no matter how the state is brought about. In past research, stimuli such as mirrors, video cameras, and tape recordings of a subject's voice have been implemented to generate self-focused states (Duval & Wicklund, 1973; Ickes, Wicklund, & Ferris, 1973; Wicklund & Duval, 1971; Wicklund & Ickes, 1972).

Recent research stimulated by the self-awareness theory (Duval & Wicklund, 1972) has shown that self-focused attention influences a wide range of attitudes, attributions, and behaviors. Among the results of heightened self-awareness is a demonstration by Carver and Scheier (1978) that self-attention can lead simply to greater cognizance of the self. In an attempt to validate self-awareness manipulations, Carver and Scheier had subjects complete a self-focus sentence completion blank (Exner, 1973) developed and validated earlier as a measure of egocentrism. This instrument was completed in an empty room or in the presence of a self-awareness inducing stimulus (mirror). As was expected, proportionally more self-focus sentence completions were emitted in conditions of heightened self-awareness than under control conditions.

Duval and Wicklund (1973) demonstrated that more self-attentive subjects make greater self-attributions for hypothetically experienced outcomes than do less self-attentive subjects. As discussed, it was necessary for Duval and Wicklund to recognize the concept of a positive discrepancy
and the consequent self-aggrandizement which has been demonstrated to accompany self-focused attention (Ickes et al., 1973). When one's behavior, or real self, exceeds one's aspiration, the resulting positive discrepancy plus focused attention produces a positive affect. Accompanying a positive affect is a heightened realization of that discrepancy and, in terms of operational definitions, this means an inflated self-rating under self-awareness.

Included in the Duval and Wicklund (1973) study of attribution were two conditions (mirror and no mirror) involving hypothetical situations. For example, subjects were told to imagine a circumstance in which there was some ambiguity regarding who was responsible for an A on a term paper. The subjects were asked to assign a percentage responsibility to themselves and another person (a friend in the example). The results showed subjects taking more credit (60%) in the mirror condition than in the no mirror condition (49%).

If the receipt of an A on a term paper constitutes a positive discrepancy for subjects, it becomes easy to interpret these results as a magnification of the discrepancy. When a person feels some degree of positive affect by virtue of a successful experience, that affect apparently can be magnified by focusing attention onto the relevant dimension. This outcome has since been replicated (Buss & Scheier, 1976) although other research suggests some limitations on the effect (Hull & Levy, 1979).
The reasoning that salient self-aspects may be more fully represented in consciousness when self-focus is high than when it is low has been extended to the internal experience of emotional states (Scheier & Carver, 1977). In that research it was proposed that when one's attention is self-focused in a context in which there is affect, one may attend to that affect as being the salient component of self. In Scheier and Carver's study, subjects who had experienced positive and negative mood inductions subsequently reported feeling more elation and depression, respectively, when more self-attention than when less so. Subjects also reported experiencing greater attraction and repulsion toward pleasant and unpleasant slides, respectively, when self-attentive than when not. Others (Borkovec & O'Brien, 1977) found that directing a subject's attention to the bodily responses leads to an increase in the self-reported intensity of the emotion being experienced. These self-aspects under examination may also be a major determinant of the aspet of the environment that is salient when direction is directed outward.

Self-focus has also been demonstrated to lead to heightened awareness of the absence of anticipated internal activity (Gibbons, Carver, Scheier, & Homuth, 1979). In this study, some subjects were led to expect arousal symptoms from a pill and others were not. In all cases, the pill was a placebo. Among subjects who expected arousal, fewer symptoms subsequently were reported by self-focused subjects.
than by those with less self-focus. The Gibbons et al. finding appears to indicate that when led to expect a different internal state than is present, a self-attentive person has greater access to a veridical internal state than does a less self-attentive person.

An additional study (Scheier, Carver, & Gibbons, 1979) investigated further this heightened awareness of internal experience among self-attentive persons by assessing if it can serve to reduce other kinds of suggestibility phenomena. In the first of these studies, subjects were exposed to stimuli of moderate sexual attractiveness, which they were instructed to evaluate on the basis of their own bodily reactions. Subjects were led to anticipate highly arousing or very nonarousing stimuli. Subjects with experimentally heightened self-attention were less misled by these cues than were subjects in whom self-focus had not been increased.

The second study extended the reasoning to the experience of taste. Subjects were led to expect an increase or decrease in a flavor intensity (relative to a previous sample). Subjects then received a slightly stronger or weaker solution. The intensity judgments subsequently made by highly self-attentive subjects were less in line with manipulated anticipations and more in line with actual flavor intensities than were judgments made by less self-attentive subjects. Self-focus again minimized suggestibility, apparently by increasing awareness of an internal experience.

The research presented above regarding awareness of
effect was limited to reports of subjective emotional experiences. Yet other research has shown that heightened awareness of an effect may lead to increased behavioral responsivity to the effect. Scheier (1976) found that provoked aggression was more intense among more self-focused than among less self-focused subjects. Other research (Scheier, Carver, Schulz, Glass, & Katz, 1978) has demonstrated that feelings of sympathy were expressed to a greater degree among more self-attentive than among less self-attentive persons. Finally, the study by Scheier et al. (1979) provided evidence that strong fear leads to greater avoidance among more self-attentive than among less self-attentive persons.

In a simple test of the idea that self-focused attention will facilitate performance on an experimental task, Wicklund and Duval (1971, Experiment III) asked subjects to copy as much German prose as they could during two consecutive 5-minute intervals. One group of subjects was confronted with a mirror during the second interval and, in examining the amount of increased copying from the first to second interval, self-aware subjects were significantly more productive. A similar effect with Swedish words was obtained by Liebling and Shaver (1973) although they demonstrated that increases in self-awareness beyond a point can result in diminished performance level.

Two areas of self-awareness research are of special relevance to this paper. The increased accuracy of self-
report that occurs under high self-focus has been shown not to be limited to reports of internal perceptual experiences. Studies by Pryor, Gibbons, Wicklund, Fazio, and Hood (1977) and Wicklund and Duval (1971) indicated that self-focus enhances people's accuracy in reporting on their habitual behavioral tendencies and aids in resolving discrepancies between attitude-behavior inconsistencies.

The second relevant area of research concerns the distinction made by Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss (1975) between the state of self-awareness and the trait of self-consciousness. These two topics are discussed more fully, respectively, in the two sections that follow.

**Self-report Validity**

Numerous studies relating to the accuracy of self-reports stimulated by the Duval and Wicklund (1972) theory (Wicklund & Duval, 1971; Duval & Wicklund, 1973; Fazio & Zanna, 1976; Regan & Fazio, 1977). The inconsistency between self-reports and behavior is one of the long-standing problems in social psychology and personality research (Liska, 1975). A classic example of inaccurate reporting of past behavior is found in La Piere's (1934) study of the relationship between verbal and behavioral indices of prejudice among hotel managers. On the behavioral side, La Piere found that only one of 251 hotel-restaurant establishments refused to serve a Chinese couple; but, in contrast, on a subsequently mailed questionnaire, only
a small percentage replied that they would not refuse to serve Chinese. This example demonstrates the possible invalidity of self-report measures—at least self-report measures directed toward prior behavior.

The problem, however, seems equally acute in the attempt to gain predictive validity. For example, in an extensive series of studies on childhood morality, Hartshorne and May (1930) found no significant correlation between stated belief in the wrongness of cheating and actual resistance to an opportunity to cheat. Reviews by Mischel (1969) and Wicker (1969a) indicated that self-report forms are generally of slight validity only, and Wicker (1969a, b) emphasized the necessity of uncovering variables that would mediate the connection between self-reports and behavior.

Self-awareness has been suggested as a possible mediating variable that motivates a person to resolve cognitive inconsistencies, including attitude-behavior inconsistencies. To reiterate the self-awareness theory to the degree that a person's attention is focused upon a salient within-self discrepancy, and provided that attention cannot be directed elsewhere, there will be efforts to reduce that discrepancy. For example, disparities between one's actions and statements about those actions should be brought into alignment given that an individual is self-focused. This hypothesis was tested in a study by Carver (1975) in which subjects who were made self-aware brought their aggressive behavior increasingly into line with their values about aggression.
Another example is the self-awareness cognitive-dissonance analysis (Insko, Worcher, Songer, & Arnold, 1973; Wicklund & Duval, 1971, Experiment III) in which attitudes were brought into alignment with prior decisions.

Pryor et al. (1977) tested a hypothesis that the validity of a simple and face-valid scale would be enhanced due to subjects' self-focused attention. In the experiment there was a potential for disparities between actual behavior and self-report. Pryor et al. hypothesized that self-focused subjects would be motivated to bring these potentially disparate elements into alignment and, given that the behavioral element was relatively fixed, this consistency could be brought about most easily by altering the self-report. In an initial session, all subjects took a test of sociability written by Pryor et al. The scale consisted of 16 items such as "I have difficulty in making new friends."

During the administration of the scale, approximately half the subjects were simultaneously forced to view themselves in a large mirror. The purpose of this manipulation was to force subjects' attention onto themselves while they answered the form. After several days had lapsed, the subjects returned ostensibly to take part in another experiment. At that time, each was asked to wait in a cubicle with an experimental confederate.

During the ensuing 3-minute interval, the confederate spoke only minimally when spoken to, and at the end of the interval the confederate rated the extent of the subject's
overt sociability on a 6-point scale. An additional measure of sociability was the total number of words emitted by the subject, recorded with a hidden tape recorder. These two indices of sociable behavior were combined and an index was correlated with the initial scale score. In the control condition, where self-focus was not prompted, the correlation between test score and combined behavioral index was .16 while the analogous figure was .62 in the mirror condition. The correlations were reliably different ($p = .05$), supporting the experimenters' contention that test validity can be bolstered by a simple self-focusing device.

In a subsequent experiment, Pryor et al. (1977) provided evidence that self-awareness would increase the motivation to avoid inconsistent self-reporting—in this case, in the context of a subject's self-reporting of an earlier decision. Self-focused attention should lead subjects to express attitudes toward specific objects in a manner consistent with their earlier behavior toward the same objects. Subjects first were given an opportunity to behave preferentially toward a variety of paper-and-pencil problem types. They then were led into separate cubicles in which a mirror was or was not present. They were asked to indicate their attitudes toward each problem type by rating the problems from extremely boring to extremely interesting. It was expected that the relationship between behavior and interest ratings would be stronger in the mirror than in the no mirror condition.
For each subject, rank-order correlations between the order of the problems worked, the proportion of problems worked, and the interest ratings were computed. The within-subject average of these two correlations was taken as the most general measure of each subject's behavior-attitude consistency. As expected, there was a substantial mirror-control difference (M = .69 and .13, respectively). Additional analyses revealed that the two groups did not differ in any ways that might have led to artifactual results.

Wicklund and Duval (1971, Experiment III) also provided evidence that demonstrated the effectiveness of self-induced attention as a moderator in the resolution of attitude-behavior inconsistencies. Subjects were requested to write five counter-attitudinal essays, each one in strong opposition to subjects' beliefs on five college-relevant issues. During this session, half the subjects were confronted with a television camera which was described as operating for the purpose of testing new equipment. Opinion measures on the five topics were taken before and after the essay writing. The results showed discrepancy reduction to occur only when the camera was present: Subjects in that condition showed shifts of attitude in the direction of the essays for all five issues while virtually no attitude change was observed among the control subjects.

To summarize, to the degree that a previous behavior is reflected accurately in comments about oneself, those comments should be an accurate predictor of future behavior--
assuming that a person's typical behavior does not undergo radical changes. This reasoning was supported in a study by Fazio and Zanna (1976) in which some of the behavior was made salient while they filled out a behavior-relevant self-report form. Subsequent to the self-reports, all subjects' behavioral intentions were assessed and the results indicated that the self-report predicted these intentions accurately to the degree that prior behavior had been made salient. The aforementioned research demonstrates that induced self-focused attention will enhance predictive validity, be it intention to behave or actual behavior that is assessed.

Previous research has manipulated self-awareness as a situational variable, but there is experimental confirmation (Fenigstein et al., 1975) that there may also be a personality disposition to focus inward. The next section explores the conceptual differences between self-awareness as a state and self-consciousness as a trait, and the implications of these differences.

**Self-consciousness: Private and Public**

In the presence of others one is apt to become self-conscious, that is, aware of the self as a social object that can be observed and evaluated (Goffman, 1959). Goffman has argued that when one is attending to and involved in an ongoing interaction, that interaction can proceed smoothly and naturally; but, if one is engaged in self-focused thought
during that interaction, concern is shifted away from what is being said toward whether what one says will be received favorably or unfavorably.

Argyle (1969) also proposed that self-consciousness, conceived of as the activation of the self system, produces a decreased concern with evaluating the behavior of others and an increased concern with the personal and public assessment of one's own behavior. It follows that when the self system remains dormant, relatively less thought is given to one's own behavior or its effects on others. Similarly, Duval and Wicklund (1972) have experimentally demonstrated that a state of self-focused attention causes one to engage in self-examination and self-evaluation.

The unifying thread in the aforementioned laboratory studies is the process of self-focused attention: when a person is focusing on thoughts, feelings, behavior, or appearance, when reflecting, fantasizing, or daydreaming about oneself, or when making decisions or plans that involve oneself. Yet none of these approaches considered individual differences. Some people constantly think about themselves, scrutinize their behaviors, and mull over their thoughts— to the point of obsessiveness. At the other extreme are persons whose absence of self-consciousness is so complete that they have no understanding of their own motives or of how they appear to others (Fenigstein et al., 1975).

The consistent tendency of persons to direct attention inward or outward is the trait of self-consciousness.
Self-awareness refers to a state, the existence of self-directed attention as a result of transient situational variables, chronic dispositions, or both. Individual differences in the trait of self-consciousness may have implications for phenomena, such as meditation, which may be more easily accomplished by high self-conscious persons who have had previous experience in turning inward. Persons high in self-consciousness may readily fit into insight therapy whereas others may be refractory. There also may be differences between high and low self-consciousness persons in their susceptibility to the effects of a mirror, a camera, or an audience (Fenigstein et al., 1975).

To assess and measure individual differences in self-consciousness, a 23-item scale was devised by Fenigstein et al. (1975). The disposition to focus inward has two separate factors, public and private, which are weakly correlated (the correlations in several samples are in the 20s). In our various social relationships, each of us is continuously observed and perhaps evaluated by others. Questions asked repeatedly if not implicitly by a person high in public self-consciousness are, "How do others see me?" "Do I look all right?" "What kind of an impression am I making?"

Fenigstein (1974) confirmed his prediction that such persons who chronically focus on the social aspects of the self should be especially sensitive to rejection. In an experiment in which women were ignored and excluded by a peer group, those high in public self-consciousness
were more upset by this rejection, less willing to affiliate, and less attracted to group members than those low in public self-consciousness. Dispositional differences in private self-consciousness had no effect on subjects' attraction toward the group.

Private self-consciousness, on the other hand, involves a focus on the more personal and covert aspects of oneself. People high in private self-consciousness are more attentive to their perceptions, thoughts, moods, feelings, and behavior tendencies. In everyday parlance they are in better touch with themselves. If people are in better touch with themselves, it follows that when insulted they should be more aware of anger and, therefore, be more aggressive.

Scheier (1976) tested this prediction by angering subjects and allowing them to aggress. Subjects high in private self-consciousness aggressed more intensely than did subjects low in private self-consciousness. Individual differences in public self-consciousness had no effect on aggression. In another study, sympathy for a handicapped person was induced (Scheier, Carver, Schulz, Wishnick, Glass, & Katz, 1976). Persons high in private self-consciousness gave evidence of being more aware of their sympathies than persons low in private self-consciousness. In both experiments the effect of public self-consciousness was negligible.

These various studies have established an operational distinction between public and private self-consciousness.
In line with the self-consciousness theory (Buss & Scheier, 1976; Fenigstein et al., 1975), the two dispositions affect behavior in different ways.

In an effort to determine how influential the effects of a disposition might be, Buss and Scheier (1976) devised an experiment in which the primary aim was to examine whether or not self-consciousness (a personality disposition) affects self-attribution. The basic procedure used was essentially that employed by Duval and Wicklund (1973). An experimenter explained that eight hypothetical situations would be described to a subject. The subject was asked to imagine being in the situations, then estimate personal responsibility for the outcomes from 0-100% responsibility. Four hypothetical situations had positive outcomes and four had negative outcomes. Buss and Scheier's hypothesis was that persons high in private self-consciousness would make more self-attributions than persons low in private self-consciousness.

A secondary aim of the study was to replicate the Duval and Wicklund (1973) findings in which persons in whom self-awareness had been induced by a mirror manipulation attributed more causality to self than did persons in no mirror situations. Results indicated that the mirror/no mirror difference failed to reach the conventional level of significance. The effects of the high versus low levels of private self-consciousness were, however, significant. The disposition (private self-consciousness) had a stronger effect on self-attribution than did the mirror manipulation
(self-awareness). Subjects had also completed the Public Self-consciousness Subscale and an analysis of covariance was performed on the attribution data with public self-consciousness as the covariate. Results indicated no significant effects for public self-consciousness. The effect for private self-consciousness was still significant.

These research results bear on the interaction between situations and dispositions. Mischel, Ebbesen, and Zeiss (1973) suggested that situational manipulations eliminate dispositional effects. They argued that dispositions are important only when manipulations are weak or absent. Strong manipulations ostensibly cancel out the impact of dispositions. The Buss and Scheier (1976) results are partial opposition to the Mischel et al. hypothesis. Given negative hypothetical situations, private self-consciousness increased self-attributions more when self-awareness was manipulated (mirror condition) than when it was not (control condition). This finding implies that the Mischel et al. hypothesis may be of limited generality.

Evidence has been provided by Bem and Allen (1974) that there is, however, a middle ground between accepting dispositions without question and denying their value. Bem and Allen's position assumes that dispositions may be important for some persons but not for others. Bem and Allen established that those who report consistency in a given disposition show a reasonably high correlation between their self-reported and observed behaviors; for
those who report inconsistency, this correlation is low. These findings make a case for regarding dispositions as important—but only for part of the population.

The approach of Bem and Allen (1974) was empirical. It identified only those who were consistent or inconsistent on a particular dimension. For example, subjects who were consistent on friendliness were not necessarily consistent on conscientiousness. Thus, for each disposition one would have to identify anew the subpopulation of consistent persons.

Scheier, Buss, and Buss (1978) also identified a subpopulation whose self-reports were generally accurate, but they approached the problem from a theoretical perspective. They identified this population as persons high in private self-consciousness. In their use of private self-consciousness as a moderator variable in the relationship between self-reports and observed behavior, Scheier et al. confirmed their prediction that persons high in private self-consciousness know themselves better.

In the Scheier, Buss, et al. (1978) study the effect of dispositional self-consciousness on the accuracy of self-reports was studied in aggression research. College undergraduates were administered the Self-consciousness Scale (Fenigstein et al., 1975) during the regularly scheduled class period. The Private Self-consciousness Subscale was used to select subjects. Scores on the subscale ranged from 4-40 with a mean of 24.2. At the same time, subjects also responded to the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (Buss
& Durkee, 1957) designed to measure self-reports of aggressive behavior.

Several weeks later, the subjects' aggressive behavior was measured using an "aggression machine" (Buss, 1961, 1966). The amount of shock a subject (teacher) was willing to give to a confederate (victim) was measured as the average intensity of 25 administered shocks. Results showed a significant overall correlation between rated aggressiveness and shock intensity for all 63 subjects sampled for the experiment ($r = .34, p < .05$). More important, however, was the difference in correlations obtained for high and low private self-conscious subjects. Self-rated aggressiveness correlated significantly with shock intensity among high private self-conscious subject ($r = .66, p < .001$) but not among low private self-conscious subjects ($r = .09, p > .3$). The difference between these correlations was highly significant. The correspondence between self-report and behavior was enhanced by private self-consciousness. To determine the effect of public self-consciousness, subjects were redivided into two new groups based on a median split of the Public Self-consciousness Subscale. The correlation between rated aggressiveness and shock intensity was not very different from high public self-consciousness subjects ($r = .38, p < .01$) than for low public self-consciousness subjects ($r = .31, p < .05$), a statistically nonsignificant difference.

A study by Turner (1975) can be regarded as a conceptual
replication. Subjects were asked to report how they would behave in a three-person group that was required to make a difficult decision. They were told to write what they would do if they expressed all the dominance of which they were capable. Several weeks later each subject engaged in a discussion in the laboratory with two experimental confederates. The subject was instructed to display as much dominant behavior as possible. A median split in private self-consciousness scores was used to divide the subjects into high and low groups. Correlations were computed between the amount of dominance displayed in the report and the amount of dominance displayed behaviorally in the laboratory discussion. For subjects high in private self-consciousness, this correlation was .66; for those low in private self-consciousness, it was .33.

Turner (1976) also extrapolated from the self-consciousness theory that persons high in private self-consciousness know themselves better and that such persons have more information about themselves. Turner tested this derivation by asking students to describe themselves. Consistent with Turner's hypothesis, subjects high in private self-consciousness generated significantly more self-descriptive statements than subjects low in private self-consciousness. Thus, when compared to persons low in private self-consciousness, those high in private self-consciousness are more accurate and more detailed in their self-reports. Turner's findings and the aforementioned research provide
empirical support for the validity of the use of private self-consciousness as a moderator variable in the relationship between self-reports and observed behavior.

The next section examines several experimental investigations using self-consciousness as a moderator variable. A brief summary of studies investigating the influence of feedback on expectancies is included because this area of research is especially relevant to the purpose of the present study.

**Self-consciousness, Success/Failure Feedback, and Outcome Expectancies**

Feather (1966) and Feather and Saville (1970) were among the first researchers to study the effects of one's personal expectancies upon one's behavior. These studies typically involved performance on an ambiguous task followed by positive or negative feedback. Subjects then were asked to predict their future behavior on a similar task. Results indicated that not only did feedback affect subjects' predictions about future behavior, it also created a change in performance with subjects given positive feedback performing better than those given negative feedback. When subjects were given an opportunity to explain possible causes for behavior but did not make their expectancies about future behavior explicit, subsequent performance improved in the success and failure situations. When expectations were explicit, performance was found to parallel expectation
Another variable that influences performance is the number of expectancy judgments required of a subject and the position or spacing of those expectancies. Dweck and Gilliard (1975) have shown that if expectations are stated prior to each trial in a series of trials, as compared to expectations stated only before the last trial or the first and last trial, that expectation for future behavior affects performance differently. When trial-by-trial expectancy statements are required, there may be implicit social demands to revise expectancies downward following a negative outcome, or upward following a positive outcome (Feather, 1966; Feather, 1968).

Attributions one makes as to the cause of past behavior have also been demonstrated to affect future performance (Weiner, Russell, & Levman, 1978). Attribution to an internal locus of control may change individuals' self-concepts and influence their behaviors in a variety of situations while external attributions have been demonstrated to minimize the influence of feedback.

Early researchers, however, did not investigate the probability that an individual who enters a situation may already have expectancies that might influence that person's behavior. These early studies typically involved tasks that a subject was not familiar with and, thus, had no real expectancy as to how the subject should perform. Feedback provided by an experimenter might more easily
be accepted by subjects having no direct experience with a task. There no doubt are individual differences in how willing subjects are to accept information that is inconsistent with their self-concepts. Interest in this area was stimulated by the research of Markus (1977) and Hayden and Mischel (1976).

In the Markus (1977) study, subjects whose self-schema emphasized independence were less willing to accept contradictory evidence about themselves on the dependence/independence dimension. Subjects in the Hayden and Mischel (1976) study attributed inconsistencies between traits and behavior to situational or transient effects. Similar findings were reported by Bell, Wicklund, Manko, and Larkin (1976).

The degree to which individuals vary in the consistency of their behaviors and the importance of being consistent has been investigated by a number of researchers (Bem & Allen, 1974; Mischel, 1968). More recently via investigation the dimensions of self-consciousness have been recognized as a possible moderator variable in the effects of expectancies upon future behavior.

Carver, Blaney, and Scheier (1979) incorporated experimental manipulations of self-focus (mirror present or absent) in a study of an attentional model of fear-based behavior. Carver et al. predicted that among subjects with a moderate fear of snakes, heightened self-attention during an approach attempt would cause increased awareness
of existing anxiety followed by one of two courses of events. Subjects who believed they could do the behavior in spite of their fear (as measured by chronic dispositional expectancies) were expected to redirect their attention to the behavioral-goal comparison and exhibit no behavioral deficit. Subjects who doubted their ability to do the behavior were expected to divert their attention from the behavior-goal comparison and withdraw behaviorally from the approach attempt. The results of the study supported the predictions. Confident subjects were found to be undeterred by heightened self-awareness during the approach task, but doubtful subjects withdrew earlier in the approach sequence when self-focus was high than when it was low.

This result was conceptually replicated (Carver et al., 1979) in a test of a theoretical model of behavioral self-regulation which makes predictions about the effects of failure on a person's subsequent efforts. This model holds that degree of effort will be a product of two things: expectancy of being able to redress the failure and degree of self-attention. All subjects in the study were confronted with a failure experience on an intellectual task in order to create a large self-versus standard discrepancy. Subjects then undertook a second task ostensibly bearing on the same intellectual skill.

Rather than assessing subjects' chronic expectancies, as in the Carver et al. (1979) study, an experimental manipulation of outcome expectancy was introduced. Subjects
were led to believe that they could potentially do quite well on the second task or that they probably would do quite poorly. In reality, the second task was a measure of persistence. As predicted, subjects in whom unfavorable expectancies had been induced were less persistent when self-focus was high than when it was low. Also, as predicted, subjects with favorable expectancies were more persistent when self-focus was high than when it was low.

Dispositional self-consciousness was implicated as a moderator variable in a study by Brockner (1979) examining the effects of self-focus on persons high or low in self-esteem following success and failure experiences. Brockner measured dispositional self-consciousness using the Private Self-consciousness Subscale (Fenigstein et al., 1975). Subjects high and low in self-esteem first received success or failure feedback on a social insight test, then completed a concept formulation task in the presence or absence of a self-focusing stimulus (mirror). It was reasoned that if low self-esteem subjects were provided with success feedback from a previous task, the nature of their self-consciousness would be altered on a subsequent task (Brockner, 1979; Brockner & Hulton, 1978); specifically, low self-esteem subjects would attend more to positive and less anxiety provoking aspects of themselves than would low self-esteem subjects who received failure feedback from the previous task. Under the former condition, the low self-esteem subjects' subsequent task performance was
expected to improve. For high self-esteem individuals who typically perform well, previous success/failure feedbacks was expected to have little effect on subsequent performance.

Results indicated that high self-esteem subjects performed equally well following success or failure. Subjects low in self-esteem in the success condition performed significantly better than low self-esteem subjects in the failure condition (and just as well as high self-esteem subjects success participants). This self-esteem x prior feedback interaction was significant in the presence of a mirror but not in its absence. In the absence of a mirror, however, this interaction was observed for subjects who were high in dispositional self-consciousness (private self-consciousness) but not for those who were low. That only subjects high in dispositional self-consciousness in the no self-focus condition performed as did those in the self-focus condition further attests to the importance of considering individual differences in the chronic tendency (disposition) to focus inward.
CHAPTER II

RATIONAL AND PREDICTIONS

Rationale

Self-awareness has been construed as a process that regulates the direction and intensity of thoughts, feelings, and actions (Duval & Wicklund, 1972). Self-awareness research has demonstrated that when self-awareness is induced by any variety of manipulations (mirrors, cameras, tape recorded voice of subject) a wide range of attitudes, attributions, and behaviors are affected. Among the results of heightened self-awareness are greater cognizance of self (Carver & Scheier, 1978), more self-attributions for hypothetically experienced outcomes (Duval & Wicklund, 1973), greater attention to internal experience of emotional states (Scheier & Carver, 1977), and greater recognition of the absence of anticipated internal activity (Gibbons, Carver, Scheier, & Hormuth, 1979).

Research especially relevant to the thesis of this paper focused on the accuracy of self-reports when self-awareness was heightened. One of the long-standing problems in social psychological investigation has been the inconsistencies between self-reports and actual behavior. Both predictive and postdictive validity have been poor (La Piere, 1934; Hartshorn & May, 1930). Self-awareness was
suggested as a possible mediating variable that motivates a person to resolve cognitive inconsistencies, including attitude-behavior inconsistencies (Duval & Wicklund, 1971). Carver (1975) tested the hypothesis that disparities between one's actions and statements about those actions will be brought into alignment when an individual is self-focused. Results indicated that subjects who were made self-aware performed aggressive behaviors that were more consistent with their values about aggression than did subjects who were not self-focused. Additional evidence for this hypothesis was provided by Pryor, Gibbons, Wicklund, Fazio, and Hood (1977). In their study the validity of a simple and face-valid scale of sociability was enhanced due to subjects' self-focused attention. Additionally, Pryor et al. provided evidence that self-awareness would increase the motivation to be consistent in the self-reporting of a subject's earlier decision. Self-focused attention led subjects to express attitudes toward specific objects in a manner consistent with their earlier behavior toward the same objects.

Interest in the self-awareness research area led researchers to investigate the possibility that individual differences might exist in a person's disposition or chronic tendency to focus inward (termed private self-consciousness). Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss (1975) expected that the disposition to focus inward would influence behavior in the same manner as situationally induced self-awareness (more accurate and more consistent self-reports). They
developed a scale to measure what they termed private self-consciousness (PSC). Scheier (1976) found that persons high in PSC were more attuned to their inner thoughts, feelings, and motives, and, therefore, more aware of their anger. Results showed that angry subjects who were high on the PSC subscale were more aggressive. Persons high in PSC have also given evidence of being more aware of their sympathy toward a handicapped person than persons low in PSC (Scheier, Carver, Schulz, Glass, & Katz, 1978).

The purpose of the present study was, in part, to attempt a conceptual replication of certain findings of self-awareness research dealing with the accuracy of self-reports. Individual differences in the trait of self-consciousness were expected to influence the behavior of subjects high in private self-consciousness in a manner consistent with findings of situational self-awareness (more accurate self-reports).

An additional purpose of the study was an attempt to explore the contradictory findings of the effects of heightened self-awareness on suggestibility and conformity. Previous research has shown that heightened self-focus can lead a person to be less resistant to the influence of others and more likely to conform (Carver, 1974; Duval, 1976; Wicklund & Duval, 1971). For example, in the Wicklund and Duval study, they found that subjects who listened to their own voices on a tape recorder conformed more with the modal opinion of a positive reference group than did
control subjects who listened to the tape-recorded voice of another person. However, other research (Scheier, Carver, & Gibbons, 1979) has shown that self-focused attention can heighten a person's cognizance of his or her internal state and thereby make that person more resistant to the suggestions and influences of others. Subjects in a state of heightened self-awareness were less misled by experimental manipulations, and in a related experiment, were less misled by experimental manipulations concerning increases and decreases in flavor intensities.

The specific self-aspect toward which the influence attempt was directed may account for the difference in these sets of findings. Some self-aspects, like bodily states, may require generally less social validation, whereas attempts to influence the person's opinion about other aspects of self (attitudes or beliefs) may require extensive social validation. The former situation might be under the control of a personal standard or value that the person maintains whereas the second situation might be under the control of the possible influence of an external, salient behavioral norm. A situation has been created in a study by Diener and Srull (1979) in which an important personal value was opposed by an equally salient behavioral norm. Subjects established an internal and an external or social "standard" on a task of dot-guessing. Subjects' reactions to the information that they had performed better than either the external standard or their personal standard
were then assessed. Results indicated that self-aware subjects rewarded themselves more when they had exceeded the social standard than when they had surpassed their own standards. When subjects were told they had surpassed both standards, they rewarded themselves more highly than when they had surpassed either standard or neither standard. An examination of the self-reinforcement and satisfaction with performance data revealed that subjects in one condition or the other weighted a certain standard more heavily, but did not ignore the other standard. That is, all subjects took both standards into account, but simply shifted the relative weight placed on them.

However, Gibbons and Wright (1983) argued that the self-aware subjects in the Diener and Srull (1979) study may have responded more to the social norm simply because it was a much more powerful standard based on the supposed behavior of 250 people. To combat this problem, Gibbons and Wright employed personal and social standards that were considered to be very important to the subjects, as well as fairly comparable in terms of impact on them (subjects' sexual attitudes). Subjects terms as high-guilt or conservative were confronted by a potent external standard in the form of a bogus opinion poll that indicated that college students' sexual attitudes generally were becoming more liberal. Heightened self-awareness presumably would heighten the salience of this conflict, pitting their desire to conform against their desire to be consistent with their
attitudes. Results indicated that self-aware subjects took both sets of standards into account; that is, they did try to bring their attitudes more in line with those of their peers, but in so doing they chose not to abandon their own attitudes—they just modified them somewhat. The subjects in this study were chosen because they indicated that they maintained relatively strong personal standards on a particular topic. The social standard that was created was also quite compelling. If subjects had been chosen who were not particularly committed to a personal attitude or who had conflicting standards on the topic then subjects would have been expected to give in to the external conformity pressure when in a state of self-awareness. However, the use of two standards that were both salient and impactful prompted subjects to respond to both. To ignore either one of the standards would have meant creating a discrepancy—between behavior and one or the other standard—something people are very unlikely to do when their attention is self-focused.

In the present study, subjects reported on the degree of accuracy with which they predicted their behavior concerning their memory behavior. Presumably, predicting one's behavior is a self-aspect which would have a strong personal component yet one which also might be subject to influence from external standards (degree of accuracy reported by a bogus peer reference group). In a situation where the source of feedback was one's own (ostensibly)
high PSC subjects would be expected to conform more to the standard than subjects low in PSC. In a situation where the source of feedback (or standard) was the performance of one's peers, high PSC subjects were expected to show less conformity to the standard given than would low PSC subjects. High PSC subjects were expected to adhere more to their conceptions of their behavior and to be less influenced by the supposed performance of a peer reference group. In a situation where the subject received both feedback about his own performance and that of a peer reference group greater conformity to standard would be expected for both high and low PSC subjects due to the combined influence of both types of feedback (either both sources of feedback being successful or both sources of feedback indicating a degree of failure).

A third purpose of the present study was to test for the occurrence of two different predictions concerning the influence of success/failure feedback on expectancies for future performance. Feather (1966) demonstrated that success feedback leads to elevated expectancies for future performance and more successful future performance when the feedback was reported to be the subject's own performance score. The opposite pattern was shown to hold true for failure feedback. Weiner (1972), however, reported a different trend for expectancies when the feedback was that of a reference group. In this instance, subjects who were told that a reference group had performed very
successfully on a task lowered their own subsequent expectancies. This provided subjects with a face-saving excuse in case their behaviors failed to match those of the reference group. In the case of failure feedback describing the performance of a reference group, the tendency was for subjects to raise their own expectations, assuming themselves to be better than the average person.

The present study administered the Private Self-consciousness Subscale (Fenigstein et al., 1975) to subjects to determine their chronic degree of self-focused attention. At the beginning of each experimental session, subjects were asked to predict, from a list of 10 categories of nouns, the three categories which were thought to be most difficult for them to remember. Subjects rated themselves as to how accurately they felt their behaviors would match their predictions. Subjects then received a memory test comprised of four nouns from each of the 10 categories in semi-random order. Next, bogus success or failure feedback was given to the subjects.

In the self-feedback condition, subjects received a percentage rating which ostensibly reported the degree of accuracy to which their predicted behaviors match their memory test behaviors. Subjects in the reference group feedback condition were told that previously tested college students averaged a certain percentage of accuracy. Subjects in the combined feedback condition were given what ostensibly were their own accuracy results and the accuracy results
of previously tested college students.

The subjects were told they were to take the memory test a second time and were asked to rate their expected level of accuracy for the second performance. Subjects predicted their memory behavior on the same three categories of nouns they had predicted they would have difficulty remembering on the first test. At this point, the study was concluded with no second memory test being given.

Predictions

Initial Accuracy Prediction

Subjects classified as being high in private self-consciousness (PSC) were expected to have higher initial accuracy predictions than were subjects classified as being low in private self-consciousness. Accuracy predictions were measured on a scale from 0-100%. Subjects in the high PSC group were expected to have more information and more accurate information about themselves than subjects in the low PSC group. Subjects high in PSC should, therefore, be more confident that their reported behaviors would match their actual behaviors. It was hypothesized that their initial predictions should reflect this confidence.

Memory Test Results

Subjects in the high PSC group were expected to perform more in accordance with their predicted behaviors than were subjects in the low PSC group. The categories selected by subjects as difficult to remember were those in which
they should demonstrate more forgetfulness.

**Variation of Accuracy Predictions**

Subjects were asked to predict the degree to which their self-reports would match their actual behaviors on two separate occasions. Bogus success or failure feedback was given to the subjects between these accuracy predictions. It was predicted that people in the high PSC group would be less suggestible, that is, they would conform less to the feedback standard given, whether success or failure. Whatever degree of conformity was exhibited would be greater in the own feedback condition than in the reference group feedback condition. Since people high in PSC spent relatively more time thinking about their thoughts, feelings, and motives, self-information should be of greater interest to people high in PSC. People low in PSC, who spend relatively less time examining their thoughts, feelings, and motives, were expected to be more interested in and more influenced by reference group feedback.

In the combined feedback conditions, both high and low PSC people were expected to conform to the feedback standards to a greater degree. The combination of their own feedback and a peer reference group's feedback being in the same percentage range (both success or both failure) was expected to exert a greater influence on the subjects. The response to this influence was expected to be a greater matching to standard among all the subjects.
**Trends of Feedback Influence**

Both high and low PSC subjects were expected to elevate their expectancies for future performance after being given success feedback and to lower their expectancies for future performance after being given failure feedback. In both cases, the feedback was ostensibly their own. When the feedback was that of a reference group (success feedback) subjects were expected to raise their expectations for future performance but not to the level of the performance of the reference group. When failure feedback from a reference group was given, subjects were expected to lower their expectancies for future performance somewhat but to remain above the level of the reference group. No prediction was made concerning the behavior of the high and low PSC subjects in the combined feedback condition.

**Attentional Focus Measure**

Previous research (Fenigstein, 1979) has indicated that people categorized as high on the Private Self-consciousness Subscale reported spending more time thinking about themselves during the course of Fenigstein et al.'s study than did subjects categorized as being low. The direction of attention was measured on a 9-point scale. Subjects indicated whether they tended to pay more attention to their inner thoughts, feelings, etc., during the experiment or whether their attention was directed outward towards the experimental situation. It was predicted that high
PSC people would report spending more time focusing inward during the course of the study than low PSC people.
CHAPTER III

METHOD

Design of Study

Subjects

Subjects were 96 undergraduates from the University of Montana subject pool. Both sex subjects were used because a review by Wicklund (1975) reported that self-awareness seems to have the same effect on males and females. In general, the data show an absence of gender differences. Each subject was randomly assigned to one of six experimental conditions described more fully below.

Independent Variables

The study consisted of $2 \times 3 \times 2 \times 2$ split-plot factorial design with three between-subjects and two within-subjects dependent measures. Between-subject variables were high/low levels or private self-consciousness, success/failure feedback, and own/reference group/combined accuracy results score. The two within-subject dependent measures were two accuracy prediction ratings, one rating given before the success/failure manipulation and the other rating given after the manipulation but before a second memory test.

Subjects were administered the Private Self-consciousness Subscale (Fenigstein, et al., 1975). Subjects indicated
on a 5-point scale (0-4) how much each of the 10 private self-conscious statements was characteristic of them. The scores for each subject were summed over the 10 items with higher scores representing greater self-consciousness.

Subjects then were asked to predict their behavior on a memory test. After they had completed the test, subjects were given success or failure feedback concerning their accuracy predictions. Subjects in the own feedback condition were led to believe the feedback they received was the experimenter-scored results of their memory test. Subjects in the reference group feedback conditions were given feedback ostensibly obtained from a previously tested group of college students. Subjects in the combined feedback conditions were given what ostensibly was their own feedback and the feedback of the reference group. Subjects in all the experimental conditions were then told they were to take a second memory test and requested to make a second accuracy prediction rating. These two accuracy prediction ratings constituted the within-subjects dependent measure.

**Procedure**

Subjects were run individually by a female experimenter. Each subject was led into the experimental room and seated facing a small table. To the rear of the table was a tape recorder player assembly. The subject was told that the purpose of the equipment would be explained later in
the experiment.

The subject was asked to read a printed sheet (Appendix, p. 93) containing a short introduction to the study. The printed sheet stated that the experiment was investigating the accuracy with which people predict their behaviors. In line with this purpose, the experimenter intended to give the subject several memory tests. The sheet continued by stating that the subject would be asked to fill out a number of self-report forms during the experiment. Subjects were asked not to put their names on any of the forms.

The subject was given the Private Self-consciousness Subscale (Fenigstein et al., 1975) (Appendix, p. 91,92). The experimenter asked the subject to read the instructions carefully, complete the form, and signal the experimenter in an adjoining room when finished. The experimenter then collected the form and gave the subject a second printed sheet (Appendix, p. 94) which explained the instructions for the memory test. While the subject was reading the instruction form, the experimenter totaled the subject's score on the Private Self-consciousness Subscale. This score was used to assign the subject to a cell to ensure equal numbers of high and low PSC subjects in each cell.

The instruction sheet stated that 10 categories of nouns (relatives, names, states, colors, vegetables, professions, military titles, units of time, dates, and animals) were listed below (Battig & Montague, 1969). Subjects were instructed to select three of the categories which
were difficult for them to remember and write the names on three separate lines. The bottom of the page contained a self-report item. Subjects were asked to rate themselves (from 0-100%) as to how accurately they felt their behaviors on the memory test would match their predictions. A final sentence indicated that the experimenter would be available if the subject had any questions.

The experimenter then checked the subject's form to ensure that instructions had been followed. Next, she gave the subject an instruction sheet describing the memory test in detail. Instructions (Appendix, p. 95) stated that the tape recorder/player would be turned on by the experimenter. The experimenter then would leave the room to facilitate the subject's concentration while taking the test.

The instructions continued by stating that the subject would first hear a list of 40 words (four words from each of the 10 categories presented in random order). The subject was instructed simply to listen to this first list. Upon completion of the 40 words, the subject would hear the words "Second List," at which time the subject was to listen to the next word and determine if it was a word from the first list that had been heard before. If the subject thought the word had been heard before, the subject was to place a check in the YES column on the answer sheet. If the subject thought that the word had not been heard before, the subject was to place a check in the NO column.
Half the words on the second list had been heard by the subject on the first list and half were different words in the same category. An example was given on the instruction sheet. After the subject had finished reading the instructions, the experimenter asked if the subject understood how the memory test would proceed. If the subject had any questions, the experimenter clarified the procedures. The experimenter asked the subject to signal when the test was completed. She then started the tape recorder/player and left the room. When the subject indicated the test was completed, the experimenter reentered the testing room. The experimenter then reacted in one of three ways depending upon the source of feedback condition to which the subject had been assigned.

Own feedback condition. In the own feedback condition the experimenter said, "I can total your score by hand and get your results on the memory test for you now. The experimenter then compared the subject's answer sheet to a key. The experimenter marked an appropriate number of items wrong depending on the type of feedback the subject was to receive (success or failure). The experimenter then performed some phony calculations on a hand calculator, picked up a paper form from a stack, and wrote the subject's supposed accuracy score on the blank provided under the title "Subject's Accuracy Score on Memory Test One" (Appendix, p. 96). Feedback differed depending on whether
the subject was in the success or failure condition.
The experimenter said, "Here's your score on the memory
test," and handed the form to the subject. She then said,

"I'm going to have you take the memory test again,
but first I'd like to have you rate your accuracy
prediction for the second test. Remember, you're
predicting you'll forget words in the same three
categories as in the first test."

At the bottom of the Accuracy Score Results form was a
second accuracy prediction scale. The experimenter indicated
this rating scale to the subject, made sure the subject
understood what was expected, asked the subject to signal
when the second accuracy prediction was finished, and left
the room.

Reference group feedback. In the reference group
feedback condition, after the subject signaled that the
memory test had been completed, the experimenter entered
the testing room and said,

"I'm sorry, but I can't total your score until all
the subjects are tested. We've been testing behavioral
predictions for the last two quarters. There's a
form around here somewhere indicating the results if
you would like to see them."

The experimenter then appeared to glance around the room
until she sighted a stack of forms. She handed one to the
subject and said, "Here's one."

The form contained a paragraph indicating that people's
ability to predict their behavior on the memory test had
been partially evaluated during two previous quarters.
This paragraph also indicated that University of Montana students over the two previous quarters had averaged 92.5% accuracy (success condition) or 25.5% accuracy (failure condition). The experimenter appeared to pay little attention while the subject read the form.

After the experimenter was certain the subject had read the form, she said, "Let's get back to your second memory test" (emphasizing the word your). She then handed the subject a rating form for the subject's accuracy prediction for the second memory test (Appendix, p. 99). The experimenter said, "Remember, you're predicting about the same three categories you predicted about on the first test." Before leaving the room, the experimenter asked the subject to signal when the second accuracy prediction was finished.

Combined feedback group. In the combined feedback group the experimenter followed the procedures in the own feedback condition but, instead of giving the subject a form and writing in the subject's accuracy score, she picked up a form containing information about testing results obtained the previous quarters (Appendix, pp. 98, 99). At the bottom of this form were the words, "Present subject's score," followed by a blank space. The experimenter filled in this blank with the subject's supposed accuracy rating and handed it to the subject.
In the success feedback condition the previously tested group's accuracy score and the subject's accuracy score were almost identical: 92.5% and 91.5%, respectively. In the failure feedback condition the accuracy scores were low: 25.5% and 25.2%, respectively. After the experimenter was certain the subject had read the form, she said, "Let's get back to your second memory test" (emphasizing the word your). She then handed the subject a rating form for the accuracy prediction for the second memory test (Appendix, p. 99). Instructions were repeated as for the other experimental groups: "Remember, you're predicting about the same three categories you predicted about on the first test." Before leaving the room, the experimenter asked the subject to signal when the second accuracy prediction was completed.

In all three source of feedback conditions, the experimenter collected the second accuracy predictions after the subject signaled. She then told the subject, "I'm sorry, but we're running out of time. We won't be able to do the second memory test today. Before you go, though, would you please fill out a few short report items for me?"

The subject was given a form which asked the person to indicate the nature of the individual's attentional focus while participating in the experiment (Appendix, p. 100). Previous research (Fenigstein, 1979) has indicated that high PSC subjects spend significantly more time thinking about themselves during an experiment than do low PSC
subjects. This item was included as an additional check on the division of subjects into high and low PSC groups. Also included in these short self-report items were questions inquiring as to the subject's ideas about any possible hypotheses they might have regarding the experiment, any possible strategies they might have used during the memory test, how accurate they felt the feedback they had received was, and whether anything about the experiment or the experimenter had made them suspicious (Appendix, p. 101). After a subject had completed these items, the experimenter collected the forms and debriefed the subject (Appendix, pp. 103, 10).

Because of the potentially sensitive nature of the subject matter under study, all participants were carefully debriefed. This debriefing included the assurance that the subject's high or low accuracy prediction score had been manipulated and was not the result of subject's actual performance. Subjects then were asked not to divulge any information about the experiment to others and were given experimental credit for their participation.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Major Analyses

A 2 x 3 x 2 x 2 repeated measures ANOVA (analysis of variance) was performed analyzing change from first accuracy prediction rating to second accuracy prediction rating as a function of type of feedback (success/failure), source of feedback (own/reference group/combined), and level of private self-consciousness (high PSC/low PSC), and sex of subject (male/female). The summary of this analysis is presented in Table 1 and the relevant mean scores are presented in Table 2. The major results in a significant four-way interaction (success/failure by own/reference group/combined by high/low PSC by first/second accuracy prediction rating ($F (1, 72) = 3.229, p = .05$). When given feedback that was ostensibly their own, subjects elevated their second accuracy prediction in response to success feedback and lowered their second accuracy prediction in response to failure feedback. This pattern was also present in the combined feedback condition. The opposite pattern, however, was present in the reference group feedback condition. Subjects in the reference group success feedback condition lowered their second accuracy prediction ratings to a level significantly lower than in both the own and combined groups feedback conditions.
### TABLE 1

**SUMMARY TABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCES OF VARIANCE</th>
<th>SUM OF SQUARES</th>
<th>MEAN SQUARE</th>
<th>F</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>225.333</td>
<td>225.333</td>
<td>1.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3801.66</td>
<td>17.196</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>3801.66</td>
<td>17.196</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>12224.1</td>
<td>55.293</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>24.0832</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>326.448</td>
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<tr>
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<td>256.688</td>
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<td>0.911</td>
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<td>0.625</td>
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<tr>
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<td>850.568</td>
<td>3.847</td>
<td>0.025*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.143</td>
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<tr>
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<td>270.750</td>
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<td>0.159</td>
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<td>0.577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>ABCDJ</td>
<td>50.2550</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>0.697</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* = .05
** = .01
*** = .001
## TABLE 2

**MEAN ACCURACY PREDICTIONS AS A FUNCTION OF**

**TYPE OF FEEDBACK, SOURCE OF FEEDBACK, AND**

**LEVEL OF PRIVATE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Feedback</th>
<th>Type of Feedback</th>
<th>Own 1st</th>
<th>Own 2nd</th>
<th>Reference 1st</th>
<th>Reference 2nd</th>
<th>Combined 1st</th>
<th>Combined 2nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success Feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High PSC</td>
<td></td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>81.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low PSC</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure Feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High PSC</td>
<td></td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>61.3[a]</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>78.8[a]</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>49.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low PSC</td>
<td></td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Second accuracy prediction rating means with common subscripts do not differ at the .05 level.
In the failure feedback conditions both subjects in the own and combined feedback conditions lowered their second accuracy prediction ratings in response to failure feedback that was ostensibly their own and others, respectively. In the reference group condition subjects raised their second accuracy prediction ratings after being given failure feedback from a reference group. Both the lowered means in the reference group/success condition and the raised means in the reference/group failure condition were significantly different from the means in the other conditions with the exception of the means of the high PSC subjects in the own/failure condition and the reference group/failure condition (Newman-Keuls post-hoc test, \( p < .05 \)).

**Initial Accuracy Prediction Ratings**

A main effect for level of private self-consciousness emerged (\( f (1, 72) = 55.293, p < .001 \)). A one-tailed \( t \)-test was performed comparing the means of the high and low PSC subjects to determine if significant differences existed in the magnitude of their initial accuracy prediction ratings. The difference between the means was statistically significant (\( t = 7.28, df = 94, p < .001 \)). The mean initial accuracy prediction rating in the High PSC group (66.2) was higher than the mean accuracy prediction rating in the low PSC group (49.1). A significant difference also existed between the means of the second accuracy prediction ratings for high and low PSC subject (\( t = 6.13, df = 94, p < .001 \)).
The mean second accuracy prediction rating in the high PSC group (67.4) was higher than the mean second accuracy prediction rating in the low PSC group (52.8).

**Memory Test Results**

To test the prediction that high PSC subjects would perform more in accordance with their predicted behavior on the memory test than would low PSC subjects, a proportion was constructed for each subject composed of the number of words missed in the expected categories over the total number of words missed on the memory test. The mean proportion for high PSC subjects (.377) was almost identical to the mean proportion for low PSC subjects (.350). The determined proportions of high and low PSC subjects were also examined by dividing the total distribution of proportions into quartiles. An examination of the number of subjects in each quartile revealed approximately equal numbers of high and low subjects in each quartile. High PSC subjects were not represented more in upper quartile cells than were low PSC subjects. The number of high PSC subjects in the third and fourth quartiles (22) was identical to the number of low PSC subjects (22).

**Variation of Accuracy Predictions**

The total variation displayed by high and low PSC subjects from first to second accuracy prediction ratings was examined. The overall variance of high PSC subjects (5253.33) and low PSC subjects (5358.33) was very similar. However,
upon examination of the variation displayed by high and low PSC subjects within each source of feedback condition it was revealed that high PSC subjects (2382.22) exhibited more variation in response to their own feedback than did low PSC subjects (1503.33) \((F (15, 15) = 1.50, \text{ ns.})\). In the reference group feedback condition low PSC subjects (2250.00) exhibited more variation in response to feedback ostensibly from a reference group than did high PSC subjects (1714.70) \((F (15, 15) = 1.29, \text{ ns.})\). In the combined feedback condition, low PSC subjects (1599.97) exhibited more variation than did high PSC subjects (1128.44) \((F (15, 15) = 1.42, \text{ ns.})\) in response to feedback that was ostensibly their own and a reference groups'.

**Source of Feedback Trends**

As mentioned initially, a significant four-way interaction (success/failure by own/reference group/combined by high low PSC by first/second accuracy prediction rating) emerged. Although both the initial and the second accuracy prediction ratings were found to be significantly higher for high PSC subjects than for low PSC subjects, no essential difference was displayed among subjects within both type of feedback and source of feedback conditions for the first accuracy prediction rating, with the exception of a slight reversal of the success and failure predictions in the combined feedback condition. But upon examination of the second accuracy prediction ratings, a definite reversal pattern
was observed. The means of the groups given success feedback were higher than the means of the groups given failure feedback in both the own and combined feedback conditions, but in the reference group condition subjects given failure feedback reported means higher than the means reported by subjects given success feedback (Figures 1 and 2).

**Attentional Focus Measure**

A least squares regression analysis was performed regressing direction of attentional focus (inward or outward during the course of the experiment on a scale of -4 to 0 and 0 to 4, respectively) on level of private self-consciousness. Results indicated a significant relationship ($F(1, 94) = 5.33, p < .05$), although the percentage of variance accounted for was small (5.4%). The direction of attentional focus was constant; that is, the majority (30) of high PSC subjects reported focusing inward during the course of the experiment and the majority (30) of low PSC subjects reported focusing outward during the course of the experiment. However, within each direction of focus the magnitude of variation exhibited was large enough that the amount of variance in direction of attentional focus attributable to level of private self-consciousness is modest.
Sex Differences

A significant three-way interaction (success/failure by own/reference group/combined by female/male averaged over first and second accuracy prediction ratings) also emerged ($F (1, 72) = 3.847, p < .05$). The averaged first and second accuracy prediction ratings for females presented an almost mirror-image pattern with respect to the averaged prediction ratings for males. Females in the own and combined feedback conditions receiving success feedback had higher average predictions than males in the own and combined feedback conditions receiving success feedback, whereas, in the reference group feedback condition, females receiving success feedback had lower average predictions than did males in the same condition. Males in all three conditions receiving success feedback exhibited nearly identical averaged accuracy prediction ratings. Conversely, females in all three conditions receiving failure feedback exhibited nearly identical averaged accuracy prediction ratings, whereas males in the own and combined feedback conditions receiving failure feedback displayed a decrement in averaged prediction ratings in these two source of feedback conditions and an increase in the reference group failure feedback condition (Figure 3). Females seemed to be more inspired by their own success and their own success when reported with others' success.
Females who received information concerning others' failure, however, were less affected by this success than were males. Males did not seem to be differentially affected by reports of successful performance which was ostensibly their own, others', or their own and others'. Females, in all three feedback conditions, displayed the same degree of response, whereas, males receiving failure performance feedback were more affected by this information when the source of feedback was their own and their own and others'. When males received failure feedback information ostensibly from a reference group, their averaged accuracy prediction ratings were higher than those of females in the same condition. It could be tentatively concluded that females were more encouraged by successful feedback when it involved theselves, but not when it involved others' performance. Males seemed to be less encouraged when the failure feedback given was their own and their own and others' and more encouraged when a reference group failure performance was reported.
Figure Caption

Figure 1. Mean initial accuracy prediction ratings as a function of type of feedback, source of feedback, and level of private self-consciousness.
Figure Caption

Figure 2. Mean second accuracy prediction ratings as a function of type of feedback, source of feedback, and level of private self-consciousness.
Figure Caption

Figure 3. Averaged first and second accuracy prediction ratings as a function of type of feedback, source of feedback and sex of subject.
The image contains two graphs, one for females and one for males, comparing the averaged percentage accuracy predicted for success and failure across own, reference, and combined methods.

**Females**
- The line for success shows a peak followed by a drop, indicating higher accuracy for own predictions and then a decrease for reference and combined methods.
- The line for failure is relatively flat, suggesting consistent accuracy across own, reference, and combined methods.

**Males**
- The line for success shows a sharp peak, indicating high accuracy for own predictions, followed by a decrease for reference and combined methods.
- The line for failure shows a similar trend but with a less pronounced peak, indicating lower accuracy compared to females.

The graphs illustrate the performance differences between success and failure scenarios, highlighting the effectiveness of own predictions over reference and combined methods for both genders.
CHAPTER V

Discussion

A number of interesting effects emerged in the present study, with either partial or complete support being found for four of the five predictions put forth. Support was demonstrated for the hypothesis that high PSC subjects would report higher initial accuracy prediction ratings than low PSC subjects ($p < .001$), with accuracy prediction ratings measuring the degree of expected correspondence between categories in which forgetfulness was predicted to occur and categories in which forgetfulness actually occurred on the memory test. The initial accuracy prediction ratings of high PSC subjects were from 10 to 25 percentage points higher in every cell than were the ratings reported by low PSC subjects.

Although high PSC subjects reported a higher level of expected correspondence between their predicted memory behavior and their actual memory behavior, no support was found for the prediction that the memory test results of high PSC subjects would more closely approximate the categories in which forgetfulness was predicted to occur than would the memory test results of low PSC subjects. An examination of the mean proportion of words missed in the expected categories over the total number of words missed on the
memory test revealed almost identical proportions for high PSC subjects (.377) and low PSC subjects (.350). Additionally, no support was found for the prediction that high PSC subjects would be represented more in the upper quartiles of the distribution of these proportions than would low PSC subjects. The number of high and low PSC subjects in the third and fourth quartiles was identical (22).

The prediction that high PSC subjects would be less suggestible, that is, they would conform less to the feedback standard given, whether success or failure, was only minimally supported. Due to the existence of virtually no conformity to the success or failure feedback standard in the reference group condition, conformity by high and low PSC subjects was examined for the own and combined feedback conditions. Degree of conformity was measured by the number of percentage points raised or lowered in the direction of the feedback standard (92.3% for success feedback and 26.3% for failure feedback). Contrary to prediction, when given success feedback that was ostensibly their own, high PSC subjects (+10%) conformed less to the feedback standard (+10%) than did low PSC subjects (+27%). When given failure feedback that was ostensibly their own, both high and low PSC subjects conformed to the feedback standard by the same number of percentage points (-9%).

A greater matching to standard was predicted for both high and low PSC subjects in the combined feedback condition due to the combined knowledge that both their own performance
and the performance of a peer reference group was in the same percentage range (both success or both failure). However, high PSC subjects (+18%) in the combined feedback condition conformed more to the success feedback standard than did low PSC subjects (+9%), and when given a failure feedback standard, high PSC subjects (-19%) also conformed more than did low PSC subjects (-8%). When the degree of conformity was compared in the own and combined feedback conditions for both levels of PSC subjects it was revealed that high PSC subjects in the success/combined condition conformed more than did high PSC subjects in the success/own condition. Low PSC subjects in the success/combined condition, however, conformed less than did low PSC subjects in the success/own condition. When a failure feedback standard was given, high PSC subjects conformed more in the failure/combined condition than did high PSC subjects in the failure/own condition, whereas low PSC subjects in the failure/combined condition conformed by approximately the same number of percentage points as did low PSC subjects in the failure/own condition. Therefore, more matching to the feedback standard was exhibited by high PSC subjects in the combined feedback conditions, but not by low PSC subjects.

Upon examination of the total variation displayed by high and low PSC subjects from first to second accuracy prediction ratings, no support was found for the prediction that high PSC subjects would exhibit less variability than would low PSC subjects. The overall amount of variability
shown by high PSC subjects was very similar to the amount of variability shown by low PSC subjects. However, partial support was demonstrated for the prediction that more variation would occur among high PSC subjects when the source of their feedback was their own performance. Although the variance ratio was not significant ($p > .05$), high PSC subjects displayed more variability in response to feedback about what was ostensibly their own performance than did low PSC subjects. In the reference group feedback condition, as predicted, low PSC subjects displayed more variability in response to feedback ostensibly from a peer reference group than did high PSC subjects. Although the variance ratio ($p > .05$) is not significant here either, the magnitude of the variation is in the predicted direction. Low PSC subjects also exhibited more variation in the combined feedback condition than did high PSC subjects, although the variance ratio ($p > .05$) failed to reach the level of significance.

As indicated by the significant four-way interaction, support was demonstrated for the prediction concerning different trends in the own feedback condition and the reference group feedback condition. The means of both high and low PSC subjects given success feedback were higher than the means of both high and low PSC subjects given failure feedback in the own feedback condition, but in the reference group condition, both high and low PSC subjects given failure feedback reported means higher than the means reported by
Subjects given success feedback.

Support was also demonstrated for the prediction that high PSC subjects would report spending more time focusing inward during the course of the study than low PSC subjects ($p < .05$). Although the percentage of variance accounted for was small, the direction of attentional focus was constant.

**Implications for Previous Research**

Previous research has produced evidence that situationally-induced self-awareness motivates an individual to bring disparities between one's actions and statements about those actions into alignment (Carver, 1975), to be consistent in the self-reporting of an earlier decision (Pryor et al., 1977), and to perform aggressive behaviors that are more consistent with one's values about aggression than subjects who were not self-focused. Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss (1975) suggested that the disposition to focus inward would influence behavior in the same manner as situationally induced self-awareness. Scheier (1976) found high PSC individuals to be more aware of their anger, and, subsequently, more aggressive when angry than low PSC individuals. Additionally, Scheier et al. (1978) demonstrated that subjects high in PSC were more aware of their sympathy toward a handicapped person than subjects low in PSC. Evidence was also provided by Turner (1976) that high PSC subjects were more accurate and more detailed in their self-reports.
In the present study, individual differences in the trait of private self-consciousness were expected to influence the behavior of high PSC subjects in a manner consistent with the findings of situationally-induced self-awareness (more accurate self-reports). The memory test results of high PSC subjects were predicted to more closely approximate the predicted categories in which forgetfulness was expected to occur than would the memory test results of low PSC subjects. However, the results of the present study do not provide support for the increased accuracy of self-reports among high PSC subjects. The proportion of words missed which had been predicted did not differ depending upon whether the subject was high or low in private self-consciousness. The number of words missed on the memory test that had been predicted by the subject as being difficult to remember was small for both high and low PSC subjects.

Previous research concerned with the effects of situationally-heightened self-focus on suggestibility and conformity has produced contradictory findings. Heightened self-focus has been shown to lead a person to be less resistant to the influence of others and more likely to conform (Carver, 1974; Wicklund & Duval, 1971). Other research (Scheier, Carver, & Gibbons, 1979) has shown that situationally-heightened self-focus can increase a person's cognizance of one's internal state and make that person more resistant to the suggestions and influences of others. The self-aspect toward which the influence attempt was directed was suggested
by Scheier et al. (1979) to influence the degree of conformity exhibited. Some self-aspects, like bodily states, may require little social validation, and it may be for only those self-aspects that self-focused attention will increase resistance to suggestion. The self-aspect of memory behavior was chosen in the present study since it represented a self-aspect that is internally based, but, additionally, a self-aspect that can have socially advantageous or socially adverse consequences. The criteria for the validation of the self-aspect of memory behavior should be ambiguous in this case and should not influence conformity behavior to the extent that distinctly internal or distinctly external self-aspects have influenced conformity behavior in previous research.

In the present study, the effects of individual differences in the trait of private self-consciousness were examined to determine if the disposition to focus inward would influence conformity behavior in a manner consistent with the effects of situationally-heightened self-focus. One factor hypothesized to influence conformity behavior in the present study was the greater salience of information concerning the self for high PSC subjects than for low PSC subjects. Although previous research (Diener & Scrull, 1979) provided evidence that high PSC subjects rewarded themselves more when they had surpassed a social standard than when they had surpassed their own standard, other research (Cheek & Briggs, 1982) found that high PSC individuals rated their personal identities to be more
important than did their less self-conscious counterparts. In the present experiment, it was reasoned that individuals who report spending more time focusing inward on their thoughts, feelings, and motives would be more interested in information concerning themselves than in information concerning others. This heightened importance of self-information for high PSC subjects was predicted to have two consequences in the present study. High PSC subjects were expected to conform more to the feedback standard given when it was information about what was ostensibly their own performance (whether success or failure) and, secondly, to exhibit more variability in their accuracy prediction ratings than low PSC subjects. Although the second accuracy prediction ratings of high PSC subjects were closer to the feedback standard given in the success condition, in terms of total number of percentage points raised toward the standard high PSC subjects would be said to have conformed less than low PSC subjects when the source of the feedback was information about their own performance. In the failure feedback condition, both high and low PSC subjects conformed to the feedback standard by the same number of percentage points; however, the second accuracy prediction ratings of low PSC subjects were closer to the feedback standard than were the ratings of high PSC subjects. It appears that information concerning one's own performance did not have the predicted influence upon high PSC subjects in the present study.
The second consequence of the importance of self-information was predicted to be increased variability for high PSC subjects in the own feedback condition. Self-information, by virtue of its greater salience for high PSC subjects, was predicted to complicate the matching-to-standard process for these subjects. The result of this complication was predicted to be both greater overestimation and greater underestimation of ability to correctly predict memory behavior for high PSC subjects. Weak support was found for this prediction; although the variance ratio was not significant, the magnitude of the variances for high and low PSC subjects were in the prediction direction.

In the reference group feedback condition, information concerning others was predicted to complicate the matching-to-standard process more for low PSC subjects than for high PSC subjects. Presumably, information concerning others' performance would be of less importance for those who habitually reported focusing inward. Directional support was also found for this prediction; although, again, the variance ratio was not significant, the magnitude of the variance for high and low PSC subjects were in the predicted direction.

The present study also provides support for the existence of different trends resulting from feedback thought to be one's own and feedback thought to represent the performance of a peer reference group. Feather (1966) demonstrated that success feedback leads to elevated expectancies for
future performance and more successful future performance when the feedback was reported to be the subject's own performance score. When failure feedback was given that was ostensibly the subject's own, lowered expectancies for future performance and less successful future performance resulted. However, previous research by Weiner (1972) reported a different trend when the feedback was that of a peer reference group. When told that a reference group had performed very successfully on a task, subjects lowered their own subsequent expectancies, thus, providing themselves with a face-saving excuse in case their behaviors failed to match those of the reference group. When told that a reference group had performed at a level which the subjects would perceive as a failure experience, the tendency was for the subjects to raise their own subsequent expectations, assuming themselves to be better than the average person. Support for the occurrence of these different trends was strongly demonstrated in the present experiment. In the own and the combined feedback conditions, the means of groups given success feedback were higher than the means of the groups given failure feedback. However, in the reference group condition, subjects given failure feedback reported means higher than the means reported by subjects given success feedback.

Previous research by Fenigstein (1979) measured subjects' direction of attentional focus on a 9-point scale during the course of his research and provided
evidence that level of private self-consciousness might be a consistent determinant of direction of attentional focus. The majority of subjects designated as high in PSC in the present study also reported focusing inward during the course of the experiment. Also, the majority of subjects designated as low in PSC reported focusing outward during the course of the present study. Although the direction of attentional focus was constant for high and low PSC subjects (inward and outward, respectively), no firm conclusion can be drawn on the basis of the present evidence since the percentage of variance accounted for by level of private self-consciousness was small.

Additional Related Research Findings

Research findings, both dated and recent, which did not come to the experimenter's attention until after the initiation of the present study, offer either additional or alternative explanations for several of the results. A phenomena termed "illusion of control" emerged in a study by Langer (1975) investigating factors involved in skill situations which when introduced into chance situations caused individuals to feel inappropriately confident. Langer defined "illusion of control" as an expectancy of a personal success probability inappropriately higher than the objective probability would warrant. Several of the factors hypothesized to produce the "illusion of control" in a skill situation were evident in the present study (competition, choice,
familiarity, and involvement). Subjects were told the study was investigating how accurately people predicted their memory behavior (implicit competition), subjects chose categories of words which they had difficulty remembering and made initial accuracy prediction ratings on a scale of 0%-100% (choice), subjects knew what material would be on the memory test and were instructed as to how to proceed in taking the test (familiarity), and subjects actively chose categories, took the memory test, made accuracy predictions and answered a self-report item (involvement). Although the presence of these skill situation factors presumably would have produced higher expectancies for personal success probabilities for all subjects, only high PSC subjects reported higher initial accuracy prediction ratings. In the present study, the reasoning behind the higher initial accuracy prediction ratings for high PSC subjects was that these subjects possessed both more self-information and more accurate self-information (Turner, 1976) and would be, therefore, more confident of a correspondence between their predicted memory behavior and their actual memory behavior. However, no difference was found in the degree of correspondence between predicted behavior and actual behavior for high PSC and low PSC subjects. An alternative explanation may be offered by the "illusion of control" phenomena.

The importance of control has been widely discussed by both therapists and researchers in the social sciences.
White (1959) saw this motivation to control one's environment as a need for competence, Hendrick (1943) as an instinct to master, Adler (1930) as a striving for superiority, and deCharms (1968) as a striving for personal causation. Most social scientists agree there is a motivation to master one's environment, and a complete mastery might include the ability to "beat the odds" or to control chance events. Langer (1975) also suggested the alternative explanation that there is motivation to avoid the negative consequences that accompany the perception of having no control. Perhaps the disposition to focus inward, private self-consciousness, is intricately intertwined with the "will to master" or, alternatively, with the need for the perception of control in order to avoid the anxiety of temporary loss of control.

The "illusion of control" phenomena could offer an alternative explanation for the higher initial accuracy prediction ratings of high PSC subjects in the present study. Although high PSC subjects reported substantially higher initial accuracy prediction ratings than did low PSC subjects, the initial accuracy prediction ratings did not differ with respect to females and males. Previous research has shown that women generally have lower expectations of success than do men (Lenney, 1977). Additionally, Alagna (1982) measured expectations of success and found that masculine and androgynous persons had higher expectations of success than did feminine persons. Although no measure was made of sex-type in the present study, the finding of no sex
differences in the elevated initial accuracy prediction ratings among high PSC subjects clearly provides evidence contrary to the abovementioned research. Presumably, the area of memory prediction ability has no prominent, stereotypical gender-related expectations (as do other aspects of behavior) at least within the limits of the present design.

Females and males did differ, however, in their responses to the success and failure feedback standards in the combined feedback condition. Females displayed more overall variability in this condition than did males (p > .05). Females also conformed more to the feedback standard when given success feedback concerning their own and others' performance. Males conformed more to the feedback standard when given failure feedback concerning their own and others' performance.

The abovementioned finding can perhaps be explained by recent research findings of Franzio and Brewer (1984). This research studied dispositional self-awareness by utilizing experiential sampling methodology (EMS), which allows for the random sampling of individuals' thoughts and feelings as they go about their normal daily activities. Results indicated that low PSC subjects were more likely to attend to their private self-aspects if they were pleasant than if they were unpleasant, whereas high PSC subjects' degree of private self-awareness was unrelated to whether the content of this state was pleasant or not. Therefore, low PSC subjects were hypothesized to engage in a more selective type of self-attention when in the private self-
aware state than do high PSC subjects. It is certainly possible that this type of selective self-attention operates on a gender level also and could explain females' greater response to success and males' greater response to failure in the present study.

Additional support for the selective type of self-attention hypothesis is also demonstrated in the present study. High PSC subjects responded to the combined feedback standard (whether success or failure) more than did low PSC subjects. Attention to private self-aspects for high PSC subjects was unrelated to its positive or negative content.

**Limitations of the Present Study**

Upon consideration of the finding of no difference between high and low PSC subjects in their ability to match their predicted behavior to their actual behavior, it must be considered that the task in the present study (the memory test) did not provide an adequate vehicle for a test of the hypothesis that high PSC subjects show more correspondence between their stated behavior and their actual behavior. Validity may be lacking in the correspondence of the meaning of the question asked and the actual task to be performed. Remembering "names" per se is a different activity than attaching names to faces. "How well are you at remembering names?" is a question which will usually be interpreted in the second way, but the task is actually the first kind.
In additional limitation concerning the memory test usage in the present study may be that a task such as predicting memory behavior for categories of words one has difficulty remembering is too unrelated to actual daily or worldly experiences to show the expected increased prediction accuracy for high PSC subjects. Subjects may not "take notice" of memory behavior to the extent that they do of other, more pertinent behaviors.

Subjects in the present study might also have experienced confusion concerning the exact meaning of the accuracy prediction ratings they were asked to make. Although the instructions concerning the accuracy prediction ratings were clear, some ambiguity could exist as to whether the subject was predicting the accuracy of one's predictions of one's own performance or one's predictions of one's accuracy of recall on the test itself. A "higher" degree of accuracy would mean two different things for the two cases.

Finally, more information could have been obtained from the present study by the inclusion of an experimental condition which would present subjects with combined feedback that paired successful subject feedback with unsuccessful reference group performance and failure subject feedback paired with successful reference group performance. In this situation, subjects' conformity toward either of the sources of feedback could be examined and a more pure test of high and low PSC subjects' responses to the importance
of their own feedback and the feedback of others' could be assessed, perhaps lending or denying support to the findings of the Diener and Scrull study (1979).

**Future Research**

Individual differences in the trait of self-consciousness produced significant differences between both the initial and the second accuracy prediction ratings of high and low PSC subjects. The finding that higher accuracy prediction ratings persisted for high PSC subjects and lower accuracy prediction ratings persisted for low PSC subjects may indicate the operation of a mechanism such as "illusion of control" (Langer, 1975). A relationship may exist between the need or desire to master one's environment and level of private self-consciousness. Future research correlating either the needs for control or the need to avoid loss of temporary control with level of private self-consciousness would be productive.

Research investigating the relationship between private self-consciousness and public self-consciousness provided evidence that the two are only weakly correlated (Fenigstein et al., 1975). No measure was made of reports of subjects' degree of public self-consciousness in the present study; however, this information would be useful in explaining low PSC subjects lessened degree of conformity in the combined feedback condition.
Conclusions

The present study hypothesized that the disposition or tendency to focus inward (private self-consciousness) would influence behavior in the same manner as situationally-induced self-awareness in certain respects and disconfirm previous research in this area in other respects.

Results indicated that subjects high in PSC did differ from low PSC subjects in the magnitude of their initial accuracy prediction ratings, but were not more accurate in their predictions concerning word categories than were subjects low in PSC. Also, contrary to prediction, all subjects exhibited approximately the same amount of variability from first to second accuracy prediction rating. High PSC subjects did vary more in response to feedback that was their own and low PSC subjects did vary more in response to feedback from a peer reference group; however, the variance ratios failed to reach levels of significance. High PSC subjects did not conform more to the feedback standard given when the source of feedback was ostensibly their own than did low PSC subjects. No conformity to the feedback standard existed in the reference group conditions, therefore, no support was found for the prediction that low PSC subjects would conform more to the feedback standard when its' source was ostensibly a peer reference group than would high PSC subjects. Significant differences were found in the amount of time spent focusing inward or outward during the course of the experiment by high and low PSC subjects, respectively,
although the amount of variance accounted for by level of private self-consciousness was small.

Information obtained from the analysis of the trends of the accuracy prediction ratings also followed the predicted directions. In the own and the combined feedback condition subjects given success feedback elevated their subsequent expectations for future performance and subjects given failure feedback lowered their subsequent expectations for future performance. In the reference group feedback condition, the "face-saving" pattern and the "better than average" pattern occurred.

Individual differences in level of private self-consciousness presumably had an effect on a number of domains which were not measured in the present study. Individuals might exhibit different types of personal standards or different styles of discrepancy reduction. Even different degrees of suspicion regarding the nature of the study might have an influence on subjects' behaviors. The possibility also exists that the effects of the disposition to focus inward (private self-consciousness) might have been mitigated by interaction with the experimenter or the experimental setting, thus increasing an individual's social consciousness. If this were the case, any differences in behavior thought to originate from differences in level of private self-consciousness might have been overpowered by social evaluation apprehension or experimental demand characteristics.
REFERENCES


Weiner, B. (1972). Theories of motivation, from mechanism to cognition. Chicago: Markham.


Appendix
Subject: Please indicate on the scale below each item how much each of the ten statements printed below describes or is characteristic of you.

1. I'm always trying to figure myself out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Characteristic</td>
<td>Characteristic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Generally, I'm not very aware of myself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. I reflect about myself a lot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. I'm often the subject of my own fantasies.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. I never scrutinize myself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6. I'm generally attentive to my inner feelings.

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<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. I'm constantly examining my motives.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8. I sometimes have the feeling that I'm off somewhere watching myself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. I'm alert to changes in my mood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. I'm aware of the way my mind works when I work through a problem.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td>Chac.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

This experiment is a continuing study investigating the accuracy with which people predict their behavior. You will be asked to fill out a number of self-report forms both before and during the experiment. Please remember that there is no right answer to these questions. Your answers are as individual as yourself, so please answer each question as carefully and as honestly as you can.

During the experiment you will be asked to take several memory tests. You will be given the content of the test beforehand and will be asked to choose the material you think will be difficulty for you to remember. You will then fill out an "accuracy rating" which will be a measure of how accurately the material you chose as being difficult for you to remember will actually "match" the material you forget when you take the memory tests. If you accurately select categories which you have difficulty remembering, you could be said to have predicted your behavior accurately.

Please follow the instructions on each printed form you are given and do not put your name on any of the forms. The experimenter will answer any questions you have regarding the instructions or procedures for the experiment.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MEMORY TEST

Listed below are ten categories of nouns. Please select three of these ten categories which are categories you have difficulty remembering. On the three lines to the right of the list write the names of the three categories which are difficult for you to remember. Place the name of the category you think you will have most difficulty remembering on the first line. Write the category name you think you will have second most difficulty with on the second line. Finally, write the category name you will have third most difficulty remembering on the third line.

Example: I forget colors most often, dates next most often, and animals third most often.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories You Have Difficulty Remembering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELATIVES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLORS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VEGETABLES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILITARY TITLES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITS OF TIME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANIMALS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***Accuracy Prediction Rating

Rate yourself on the scale below as to how accurately you think your behavior on the memory test will actually match your predictions above. That is, how close a match do you think there will be between the categories you selected above and the words you actually miss on the memory test.

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MEMORY TEST

The experimenter will leave the room to facilitate your concentration while taking the memory test. You will first hear a list of 40 words spoken. These words will be words from each of the 10 categories presented earlier. They will be presented in random order. You are simply to listen to this first list carefully.

Following this list of words, there will be a short pause. You will then hear the words "second list". After you hear these words you are to listen to the next word and determine if it was a word from the first list that you had heard before. If you think the word is one that you had heard before, place a check mark in the column marked YES on the answer sheet. If you determine that the word had not been heard before, place a check mark in the column marked NO on the answer sheet. You are to follow this procedure for each one of the words you will hear on the tape recorder. Be sure to make a decision about each word, even if it is a guess. When you have completed the memory test, please signal the experimenter.
Subject Number ________

ACCURACY SCORE RESULTS

Subject's Accuracy Score
(Memory Test One)

______ %

***Second Accuracy Prediction Rating - Please rate yourself on the scale below as to how accurately you think your behavior on a second memory test will match your predicted behavior. Remember, you are predicting about the same three categories as in the first memory test.

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
***Second Accuracy Prediction Rating - Please rate yourself on the scale below as to how accurately you think your behavior on a second memory test will match your predicted behavior. Remember, you are predicting about the same three categories as in the first memory test.
Accuracy Prediction Study
Winter, Spring, Fall - 1985
Compiled Percentage Results
McArthur/Dr. Beaman

Overall percentage (accuracy) = 92.5%
over past two quarters

Subject Number

Accuracy score (Memory Test One) =

***Second Accuracy Prediction Rating*** Please rate yourself on the scale below as to how accurately you think your behavior on a second memory test will match your predicted behavior. Remember, you are predicting about the same three categories as in the first memory test.

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Accuracy Prediction Study
Winter, Spring, Fall - 1985
Compiled Percentage Results
McArthur/Dr. Beaman

Overall percentage (accuracy) = 25.5%
over past two quarters

Subject Number

Accuracy score (Memory Test One) =

***Second Accuracy Prediction Rating - Please rate yourself on the scale below as to how accurately you think your behavior on a second memory test will match your predicted behavior. Remember, you are predicting about the same three categories as in the first memory test.

0% 105 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
ATTENTIONAL FOCUS SCALE

Please indicate the nature of your attentional focus while participating in this experiment. Remember, there is no "correct" or "normal" answer here. Please rate on the 9-point scale below as to whether you tended to pay more attention to your inner thoughts, feelings, etc. during the experiment or whether your attention was directed outward towards the experimental situation. Please put an "X" on the scale below to indicate the direction of your attentional focus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focused Inward</td>
<td>Focused Outward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. What do you think the hypothesis of this study was? That is, what do you think we were trying to find out?

2. Did you make any conscious attempt to pay more attention to words from the three categories you selected?

3. When we gave you feedback about your performance on the memory test, did you feel it was accurate feedback?

4. Was there anything about this experiment that you did not believe or anything the experimenter did that made you suspicious about the proceedings?
## MEMORY TEST WORDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First List</th>
<th>Second List</th>
<th>On First List?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. aunt</td>
<td>uncle</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. blue</td>
<td>brown</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. hour</td>
<td>year</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mary</td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. horse</td>
<td>bear</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. New York</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. carrot</td>
<td>carrot</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. doctor</td>
<td>nurse</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. lieutenant</td>
<td>captain</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. 1792</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. uncle</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. red</td>
<td>green</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. minute</td>
<td>month</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Sue</td>
<td>Sally</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. cow</td>
<td>tiger</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Florida</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. pea</td>
<td>tomato</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. lawyer</td>
<td>dentist</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. general</td>
<td>lieutenant</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. 1823</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. father</td>
<td>sister</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. green</td>
<td>white</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. second</td>
<td>minute</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Anne</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. lion</td>
<td>pig</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Maryland</td>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. corn</td>
<td>bean</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. teacher</td>
<td>professor</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. sergeant</td>
<td>major</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. 1928</td>
<td>1823</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. mother</td>
<td>brother</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. yellow</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. year</td>
<td>century</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Jane</td>
<td>Judy</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. tiger</td>
<td>horse</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Maine</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. bean</td>
<td>lettuce</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. dentist</td>
<td>lawyer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. private</td>
<td>private</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. 1953</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Debriefing

"You are in a social psychology experiment. One of the topics we are interested in studying is whether or not people can predict what kinds of items they have difficulty remembering. So, we asked you to choose categories you thought you would have trouble with and then had you try to remember words from these categories so we could see if you actually did have trouble remembering categories you think are tough.

We then gave you untrue success or failure feedback (in reference group conditions the feedback about how the reference group performed was also false). We wanted to see if this feedback would change how you feel about the difficulty of remembering words. We didn't even score your performance. We decided randomly, like flipping a coin, about what feedback to give you. We are interested in how people respond to thinking they have succeeded or failed.

So, there is no reason for you to think that the feedback you received is a reliable indication of how well you can predict your behavior. Sometimes in social psychology experiments, experimenters have to use a bit of deception in order to detract people's attention away from what the experimenters are really studying so that people will respond naturally."
Past research in psychology tells us that even though subjects are told that their behaviors really do not reflect on their abilities, subjects still leave the experiment room thinking that they have performed well or poorly on the task. You need to know that this might happen to you and you should guard against such occurrences by consciously reminding yourself that this experiment does not measure or represent any real ability. Your results are predetermined and randomly assigned to you. Remember that they do not indicate anything about your abilities.

Let's look at the last set of questions you filled out about the experiment, (go over each of the questions with the subject and delicately probe for the nature of the suspiciousness, if any, and how it might have influenced the subject's performance).

Thank you very much for participating in this experiment. If you have any further interest in this study, a short explanation of the study and its' results will be available at the end of next Fall quarter.