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## The Influence of Ideal Similarity on the Relation between Self-Discrepancy and Attraction

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

THE INFLUENCE OF IDEAL SIMILARITY ON THE RELATION BETWEEN  
SELF-DISCREPANCY AND ATTRACTION

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
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MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM IN APPLIED SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY

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## ABSTRACT

Some research indicates that individuals with high self-discrepancy (distance between the actual self and the ideal self) are more prone to interpersonal attraction than those with low self-discrepancy and that perceived ideal similarity (how closely a target individual resembles your own ideal self) strongly influences attraction. To test the hypothesis that ideal similarity moderates the relationship between self-discrepancy and attraction, manufactured Facebook profiles were used to manipulate perceived ideal similarity of target before having participants rate the target on measures of liking and respect. This study surveyed 232 college students; 111 from a mid-sized, private Midwestern university and 121 from other US universities recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (M-Turk). The experimental manipulation of ideal similarity was marginally significant for the private university sample, but was not significant for the M-Turk sample. Despite controlling for sample source, the main regression analysis of the effect of ideal similarity on the influence of self-discrepancy on ratings of liking and respect was not significant either. However, post-hoc regression analyses revealed that though self-discrepancy did not appear to directly influence liking or respect, ideal similarity did have a significant, positive influence on both liking and respect.

## THESIS

### THE INFLUENCE OF IDEAL SIMILARITY ON THE RELATION BETWEEN SELF-DISCREPANCY AND ATTRACTION

Human beings easily and readily create relational ties to each other in almost every conceivable circumstance (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). There seems to be an endless string of factors that draw us together, yet research has identified self-discrepancy (Derrick, Gabriel, & Tippin, 2008; Lubbers, Kuyper, & van der Werf, 2009) and ideal-similarity attraction as influences on the formation of relationships (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Herbst, Gaertner, & Insko, 2003; Klohnen & Luo, 2003; Klohnen & Mendelsohn, 1998). As investigators examine the linkages between self-discrepancy and attraction, more subtle influences emerge that sometimes moderate the expected effects. In this study, I plan to investigate ideal similarity – proximity of target to the perceiver's ideal self – as a possible influence on the association between self-discrepancy – proximity of perceiver to her own ideal self – and attraction.

#### **Attraction Formation**

Interpersonal impression formation is the general process of evaluating another person, which some of the research literature has defined as a bi-dimensional construct. Investigators across various areas of social psychology – impression formation, interpersonal attraction, and intergroup relations – have



used conceptually congruent label pairings to define the basis of interpersonal judgments; such as liking and respect (Lydon, Jamieson, & Zanna, 1988; Wojciszke, Abele, & Baryla, 2009), warmth and competence (Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick, 2008; Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashima, 2005), affective attraction and cognitive attraction (Herbst, Gaertner, & Insko, 2003), communion and agency (Eagly & Mladinic, 1994), or social attraction and intellectual attraction (Singh & Teoh, 2000). In each of the aforementioned pairs, the first construct represents social desirability and the second represents perceived capabilities, respectively (Singh, Ho, Tan, & Bell, 2007).

Focusing on interpersonal attraction, *liking* and *respect* can be viewed as the perceiver's attitudinal response to a target's perceived traits (Wojciszke, Abele, & Baryla, 2009). *Respect* – regard, esteem, and status – would not be a trait of the target, but rather a description of the perceiver's cognitive response to the target's traits. Similarly, *liking* – positive, intimate feelings – is an affective response the perceiver can experience toward the target's traits. Following this logic, liking and respect are the most relevant dimensions of impression formation when investigating interpersonal attraction.

Currently, there is no research literature forwarding predictions that align observed levels of liking and respect to a simple, continuous measure of attraction. However, a team known for their work on intergroup prejudice and stereotypes provides a framework that this study will borrow from. The competence/warmth (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002) dichotomy was originally

proposed to address intergroup relations issues, but is now thought to have more general applications and has even gained some traction as the proposed foundation of social perception and judgment (Wojciszke, Bazinska, & Jaworski, 1998). However, this pairing can be best viewed as a trait ascription that the perceiver assigns to the target. Competence refers to levels of capability, skillfulness, intelligence, and confidence that the perceiver believes the target possesses while warmth corresponds to levels of good-naturedness, trustworthiness, tolerance, friendliness, and sincerity that the perceiver believes the target possesses (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008). In the current study, we focus on the *perceiver's attitudinal response* to the target's perceived traits, rather than measuring *traits attributed to the target*. Specifically, the subject of interest is the perceiver, rather than the target. In practice, competence is a trait that the perceiver attributes to a target, whereas respect is the perceiver's response accorded to a target that displays high competence. (Wojciszke, Abele, & Baryla, 2009). Thus, Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu's predictions for attitudinal responses to perceived target traits will be used here, but the competence and warmth constructs will not.

### **Self-Discrepancy and Attraction**

Self-discrepancy Theory states that discomfort is produced when an individual's *perceived actual self* does not match that individual's *ideal self* (Higgins, 1987). The greater the discrepancy, the greater the discomfort, therefore, we have a strong, intrinsic motivation to reduce self-discrepancy in

order to be free of the discomfort it produces. As such, individuals with high self-discrepancy have a ready-made intrinsic desire for changing the self while those with low self-discrepancy may be more complacent or satisfied with their *actual self* and have little or no motivation to change.

Self-discrepancy can also be understood as an extension of Cognitive Dissonance Theory within the context of the self where the discomfort produced by discrepancies between beliefs (*ideal self*) and behaviors (*actual self*) should encourage the perceiver to initiate change in one of those dimensions (Festinger, 1957). Social Cognitive Theory similarly proposes that self-dissatisfaction is a strong motivator for change-oriented behavior due to the perceiver's strong desire to obtain self-satisfaction and avoid negative self-evaluations (Bandura, 2001). The ideal self encapsulates the individual's desired state, thus, high self-discrepancy must produce self-dissatisfaction and some negative self-evaluations. These three theories provide justification for the assertion that the discomfort and negative self-concept created by high self-discrepancy function as motivations for change.

Relationships have been shown to improve self-liking (Gabriel, Carvallo, Jaremka, & Tippin, 2008) and happiness (Demir & Weitekamp, 2007), so individuals with high self-discrepancy may have greater motivation to seek out and develop interpersonal relationships which may lead to a higher propensity for attraction. Additionally, improvement-motivated individuals have been shown to seek out associations with high performing others to function as targets for

upward social comparisons, which then boost the seeker's performance levels and self-evaluations (Lubbers, Kuyper, & van der Werf, 2009). Individuals with low self-esteem are also more likely to seek out, be involved in, and benefit from parasocial relationships – “connections” to celebrities – than those with high self-esteem (Derrick, Gabriel, & Tippin, 2008) which may mean that low self-esteem, and subsequently high self-discrepancy, is related to a greater predilection for attraction to others. Conversely, people with low self-discrepancy experience greater self-satisfaction, have higher self-esteem, and a positive sense of self-worth (Klohn & Mendelsohn, 1998), so their motivation to seek out new friends and relationships may not be as pronounced and the tendency toward interpersonal attraction in general could be lower. Thus, it appears that self-discrepancy has a positive relation to attraction.

### **Ideal Similarity and Attraction**

Previous research on the initial stages of platonic attraction, and attraction in general, focused on either global similarity or personality similarity of perceiver and target based on the Similarity Attraction Theory, which proposes that individuals are attracted to others based on perceived similarities of observable or implied traits (Byrne, 1997). More recently, research suggests that it is *ideal similarity* (i.e., similarity to our ideal self) that predicts who we are attracted to and more likely to form relationships with (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Herbst, Gaertner, & Insko, 2003; Klohn & Luo, 2003; Klohn & Mendelsohn, 1998).

Expanding upon Higgins' (1987) original description of the *ideal self* – distinct from the *ought self* or the *socially desired self* – we define *ideal self* as a preferred or desired identity that can be constructed from any set of traits an individual aspires to acquire, improve, or express. Therefore, *ideal similarity* is the extent to which a target's perceived attributes match traits associated with the perceiver's ideal self. Ideal similarity has already been shown to influence liking and, reciprocally, liking influences perceptions of ideal similarity (LaPrelle, Hoyle, Insko, & Bernthal, 1990). In fact, good friends are perceived as possessing traits matching those of the ideal self (Gabriel, Carvallo, Jaremka, & Tippin, 2008), though the causal direction of the relation is unclear.

The Ideal Similarity Attraction Theory proposes that individuals are most attracted to targets that resemble the perceiver's *ideal self*. Studies providing evidence for this theory also show that the presence of ideal similarity attraction (also called *ideal self fulfillment*) supersedes any effects of similarity on attraction with respect to general evaluations (Herbst, Gaertner, & Insko, 2003; LaPrelle, Hoyle, Insko, & Bernthal, 1990; LaPrelle, Insko, Cooksey, & Graetz, 1991) or personality traits (Klohn & Luo, 2003). One explanation for this observation is that an individual's *ideal self* most likely contains some aspects of the *perceived actual self* – the set of traits the individual believes s/he currently possesses – and vice-versa. While the target's traits match some of the perceiver's ideal traits, there is also overlap with some of the perceiver's actual traits. The perceiver's actual self shares some traits in common with the perceiver's ideal self. If these

traits are also shared by the target, then it may appear that the attraction is due to the similarities between the perceiver's actual self and the target, however, the effect of ideal self mediates the effect of similarity on attraction.

The extent to which *perceived actual self similarity* influences attraction is determined by the extent to which the perceived actual self resembles the ideal self (LaPrelle, Hoyle, Insko, & Bernthal, 1990). Additionally, matched *disliked* characteristics – between the perceived actual self and the target – produce less attraction (or none at all) when compared to the attraction generated by matched *liked* characteristics, demonstrating that the magnitude of the similarity-attraction effect is moderated by trait evaluations (Klohn & Luo, 2003). Research has even demonstrated that attraction increases as the target approaches the perceiver's ideal self, peaks, and then decreases as the ideal self is surpassed, meaning that attraction ratings are sensitive to differing levels of ideal traits and that there is a preferred level of each trait sandwiched between two undesired points (Herbst, Gaertner, & Insko, 2003; LaPrelle, Insko, Cooksey, & Graetz, 1991).

In general, ideal similarity is expected to positively influence attraction, therefore, the proposed determinants of attraction, liking and respect, would normally be equally affected by level of ideal similarity. Targets low on perceived ideal similarity would produce lower ratings of both liking and respect than targets high on perceived ideal similarity. Considering the importance of ideal similarity

to attraction, it is likely to influence the effect of the perceiver's own *self-discrepancy* on interpersonal attraction.

### **Self-Discrepancy and Ideal Similarity Attraction**

As described above, research suggests that self-discrepancy is positively related to attraction, however, ideal similarity of the target may moderate this relationship. There is some evidence that individuals with low self-esteem, which is correlated with high self-discrepancy (Higgins, 1987; Klohnen & Mendelsohn, 1998), are more likely to experience ideal similarity attraction (Derrick, Gabriel, & Tippin, 2008; Mathes & Moore, 1985) so there may be an influence of ideal similarity on self-discrepancy and attraction.

*Liking:* When ideal similarity is understood as a profile that contains positively evaluated attributes and behaviors that the perceiver does not entirely possess, an ideal similar target can be viewed as superior, particularly to individuals with high self-discrepancy. Focusing on differences, rather than similarities, between the perceiver and the superior target tends to result in upward social comparisons and negative self-evaluations (Mussweiler, Ruter, & Epstude, 2004). Individuals with low self-esteem – particularly likely to be highly self-discrepant – tend to view themselves as undeserving of desirable outcomes (Wood, Heimpel, Manwell, & Whittington, 2009) and may end up intentionally focusing on differences between themselves and superior others, resulting in feelings of negative self-evaluation and negative affect. The discomfort produced by this self-dissatisfaction becomes associated with the superior, ideal similar

targets, and is sometimes reduced by distancing the self from the target (Locke, 2011) which may result in lower liking ratings. Similarly, targets viewed as competitors are seen as less warm/likeable (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). For those with low self-discrepancy, ideal similar targets are not seen as distinctly superior nor as particularly threatening competition and therefore, do not trigger an upward social comparison. Consequently, there may be a negative association between self-discrepancy and liking in high ideal similarity conditions.

In low ideal similarity conditions, the targets are not seen as superior and therefore, do not trigger upward social comparisons in any of the perceivers. Low ideal similar targets may even be seen as inferior, eliciting a pity response characterized by attributions of high warmth/likability and low competence/respect (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). Therefore, the relation between self-discrepancy and liking is expected to remain positive in low ideal similarity conditions.

*Respect.* The extent to which a target is superior to the self determines whether an upward social comparison – comparing the self to a superior other – enhances or deflates self-evaluations (Collins, 1996; Mussweiler, Ruter, & Epstude, 2004; Locke, 2011). In the genius paradigm, when an individual has been unambiguously outperformed by another, the inferior perceiver will exaggerate the competence ratings of the overachieving target in order to maintain the self's sense of competence (Alicke, LoSchiavo, Zerbst, & Zhang, 1997). In particular, perceivers with high self-discrepancy should experience the



'genius effect' more intensely since there is greater distance – and thus a greater perception of inferiority – between their true self and the ideal traits they believe the target possesses. Similarly, targets viewed as having high status are perceived as also possessing high competence while low status targets are associated with low competence (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). Targets with high ideal similarity are likely to be seen as high status because they possess traits desired by the perceiver and, as described previously, perceivers with high self-discrepancy view targets with high ideal similarity as superior. We can then conclude that high self-discrepancy perceivers categorize high ideal similar targets as superior, high status, geniuses. Since competence and respect are congruent constructs (Singh, Ho, Tan, & Bell, 2007), perceivers with high self-discrepancy are expected to report elevated ratings of respect in high ideal similarity conditions. However, perceivers with low self-discrepancy have no cause to accord higher than average respect to high ideal similar targets. These perceivers do not view the targets as geniuses or superior, though a moderate amount of status may be assigned. Subsequently, there would be relatively lower ratings of respect for these perceivers, so the relation between self-discrepancy and respect is expected to be positive in high ideal similarity conditions.

When targets are determined to have low ideal similarity, there would be no 'genius effect' or status accorded due to the lack of justification for any upward social comparison or attribution of superiority. Regardless of the perceiver's level of self-discrepancy, targets with low ideal similarity should elicit

low respect ratings, producing no discernible relation between self-discrepancy and respect in low ideal similarity conditions.

An important item to note is the intentional use of *perceived* ideal similarity rather than *actual* ideal similarity of targets. According to several studies (Klohn & Mendelsohn, 1998; Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996), an individual can only respond to or evaluate stimuli that s/he actually perceives, therefore, *actual* ideal similarity effects are necessarily weaker and less relevant than *perceived* ideal similarity effects. The current study only addresses perceived ideal similarity and self-discrepancy is assumed to be the congruence between the observer's ideal self and *perceived* actual self.

### **Current Study**

The purpose of the current study is to examine the effects of target ideal similarity on perceiver self-discrepancy and attraction, where attraction is a bi-dimensional construct consisting of liking and respect. A secondary goal is to further confirm the positive linear relationship between ideal similarity and interpersonal attraction.

### **Hypothesis 1**

I predict that there will be a negative relationship between self-discrepancy and liking ratings in the High Ideal Similarity condition, but a positive relationship between the two in the Low Ideal Similarity condition.

## **Hypothesis 2**

I also predict that there will be a positive relationship between self-discrepancy and respect ratings in the High Ideal Similarity condition, but that there will be no observable relationship between self-discrepancy and respect in the Low Ideal Similarity condition.

## **Methods**

### **Participants**

I recruited 232 participants that were currently enrolled as undergraduate students in the United States. The sample consisted of 138 females and 93 males with an average age of 22 years ( $M = 21.84$ ). Despite the atypical average age, 38% were first year students, 28% were second years, 17% were third years, and the remaining 17% were in their fourth year of college or beyond. Of the 220 participants who provided an answer, 91% were born in the U.S. while 9% were born abroad. In response to an inquiry of ethnic/continental descent or identification, 59% identified as European or white, 16% identified as Asian, 9% identified as African or black, 9% identified as South American or hispanic, 7% identified as multi-ethnic/continental, and no one reported indigenous American descent.

All of the participants found the study through one of two sources; 111 students enrolled in an introductory psychology course at a private, mid-sized Midwestern university received course credit for their participation while 121 students recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk, a website that allows

people to submit work or surveys for monetary compensation, received \$0.25 for their participation.

### **Procedure**

Students interested in participating were emailed a link to the online survey - randomly assigning them to either the high or low ideal similarity condition. Participants provided some basic demographic information, then completed several items measuring the level of self-discrepancy between their actual self and ideal self. Next, they were exposed to the manipulation procedure for the high ideal similarity condition or the low ideal similarity condition. Participants then completed a survey measuring their attraction to the Facebook profile they viewed in each of the above conditions before filling out two additional measures that served as a manipulation check. Finally, participants were debriefed on the study and allowed to exit the survey program.

### **Measures**

**Self-discrepancy.** Participants' self-discrepancy was measured using two scales. The first was a visual self-discrepancy scale consisting of 7 pairs of progressively overlapping ovals representing how close each individual believed their actual self was to their ideal self. The numbers under each pair of ovals (from 1-7) get higher as the ovals increasingly overlap and participants were instructed to mark the number under the pair of ovals that indicated how close they believed they were to achieving their ideal self (Gabriel, Carvallo, Jaremka, & Tippin, 2008). The second scale was an adapted portion of the Self-Attributes

Questionnaire (Green, Campbell, & Davis, 2007; Pelham & Swann, 1989) that specifically measured self-discrepancy for 10 traits such as intellectual ability, physical attractiveness, and discipline. Participants indicated their perception of their proximity to their ideal self by circling the appropriate number along a 7-point Likert-type scale (1=*not at all like my ideal self*; 7 = *completely like my ideal self*). Participants' final self-discrepancy scores were obtained by averaging the 11 items from the two scales and averaging them so that higher numbers represented low self-discrepancy and lower numbers represented high self-discrepancy ( $\alpha = .85$ ).

**Ideal similarity manipulation.** To manipulate ideal similarity, participants were shown a faux Facebook profile with key information about the user (e.g. relationship status, education, current city, languages spoken, etc.). The profile used for the two conditions was identical with the exception of the user's highest completed education and occupation. Prior research has shown that sex-congruence of target does not affect measures of liking or ideal similarity (LaPrelle, Insko, Cooksey, & Graetz, 1991), but that men and women are more likely to be attracted to and initiate friendships with women (Wang, Moon, Kwon, Evans, & Stefanone, 2009), so both conditions used a female target's profile. With the expectation that a majority of the participants would be of European descent due to widely known population characteristics of the university and of the United States, the target's profile image was of a European American woman.

All participants were instructed to look at and read the entire profile and try to form an impression of the individual pictured. Participants in the High Ideal Similarity condition saw the profile with “Regional Manager” listed as the occupation while participants in the Low Ideal Similarity condition saw the profile with “Drive Thru Cashier” listed as the occupation. All other profile fields and features (e.g. education, profile image, number of friends, pages “liked”, and friends’ images) were identical for the two groups and participants were randomly assigned to conditions.

**Attraction.** To measure liking and respect as indicators of attraction, participants completed the Liking and Respect Attraction Scale. This scale is composed of a combination of items from the Interpersonal Attraction Scale (McCroskey & McCain, 1974) and from Wojciszke, Abele, and Baryla’s (2009) measure of liking and respect. Agreement with these statements was assessed using a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 7 = *strongly agree*) and include items such as “It would be difficult to meet and talk with this person”, “I respect this person”, and “I would be interested in becoming friends with this person.” Participants’ liking score was obtained by reverse-scoring the necessary items, then averaging all items relating to liking so that higher numbers represented greater liking and lower numbers represented less liking ( $\alpha = .66$ ). The same procedure was used to compute the respect scores using the items relating to respect ( $\alpha = .80$ ).

**Manipulation check.** In order to confirm that the Ideal Similarity

Manipulation triggered the appropriate comparisons, all participants completed two measures of ideal similarity after completion of the self-discrepancy and attraction measures. The first ideal similarity scale was similar to the visual self-discrepancy scale described above. The visual ideal similarity scale consisted of 7 pairs of progressively overlapping ovals representing how closely the participant believes the individual pictured and described in the Facebook profile resembles the participant's ideal self. The numbers under each pair of ovals (from 1-7) get higher as the ovals increasingly overlap and participants were instructed to circle the pair of ovals that indicates how closely the individual in the Facebook profile resembled the participant's ideal self.

The second scale was another adapted portion of the Self-Attributes Questionnaire that specifically measured ideal similarity for the same 10 traits assessed using the adapted self-discrepancy measure described above. Participants indicated their view of the Facebook profile holder's resemblance to the participant's own ideal self by circling the appropriate number along a 7-point Likert-type scale (1=*not at all like my ideal self*, 7 = *completely like my ideal self*).

Participants' final ideal similarity score was obtained by averaging the 11 items from both scales so that higher numbers represented high ideal similarity and lower numbers represented low ideal similarity ( $\alpha = .92$ ).

## Results

### Random Assignment Check

Before running the main analyses, I ran several preliminary tests to make sure that participants were randomly distributed across the two manipulation conditions. I used independent samples t-tests across the high ideal similarity condition and the low ideal similarity condition to compare group means in years lived in the USA,  $t(229) = .43$ ,  $p = .67$ ; stress,  $t(221) = .13$ ,  $p = .90$ ; age,  $t(230) = .92$ ,  $p = .36$ ; explicit self-esteem,  $t(191) = .19$ ,  $p = .85$ ; perceived SES based on occupation,  $t(223) = .43$ ,  $p = .67$ ; and perceived SES based on community standing,  $t(222) = 1.18$ ,  $p = .24$ , but found no significant differences. Using chi-square tests, I also compared groups on gender,  $\chi^2(1) = .45$ ,  $p = .50$ ,  $\Phi = -.04$ ; recruitment source,  $\chi^2(1) = .01$ ,  $p = .90$ ,  $\Phi = .01$ ; ethnicity,  $\chi^2(4) = 1.39$ ,  $p = .85$ ,  $\Phi = .08$ ; year in school,  $\chi^2(5) = 4.06$ ,  $p = .54$ ,  $\Phi = .13$ ; and parent education,  $\chi^2(7) = 6.61$ ,  $p = .47$ ,  $\Phi = .17$ , along with whether they were born in the USA,  $\chi^2(1) = .002$ ,  $p = .97$ ,  $\Phi = .003$ , and whether they used student loans to pay for college,  $\chi^2(1) = .25$ ,  $p = .62$ ,  $\Phi = -.03$ . None of these background variables differed significantly across ideal similarity conditions, which indicates that the manipulation condition assignment procedures adequately randomized participant placement into the two ideal similarity conditions.

### Manipulation Check

To determine whether the manipulation was effective, I compared participants' ratings of perceived ideal similarity of the target across the high ideal



similarity versus low ideal similarity conditions. Initially, the ideal similarity ratings did not differ across manipulation condition,  $t(200) = -.66, p = .51$ . I then considered the possibility that using two different recruitment sources to obtain participants may have influenced the effectiveness of the manipulation. To test this, I conducted a regression predicting ideal similarity of target from manipulation condition (-1 = low ideal similarity condition, 1 = high ideal similarity condition) and recruitment source (-1 = Loyola, 1 = Mturk) plus the Ideal Similarity Condition x Sample Source interaction. As summarized in Table 1, the main effect of condition was not significant and neither was the main effect of source. However, there was a marginally significant Ideal Similarity Condition x Sample Source interaction.

To determine the nature of the marginally significant Ideal Similarity Condition x Sample Source interaction, I used the procedures outlined by Aiken and West (1991) for testing interactions in multiple regression. I examined the simple effect of manipulation condition predicting ideal similarity ratings separately for the Loyola and MTurk samples (see Figure 1). For the Loyola sample, participants in the high ideal similarity condition reported higher ideal similarity compared with participants in the low ideal similarity condition,  $B = .21, \beta = .17, t(102) = 1.70, p = .09$ . However, the effect was not significant for the MTurk sample,  $B = -.10, \beta = -.08, t(96) = -.83, p = .41$ .

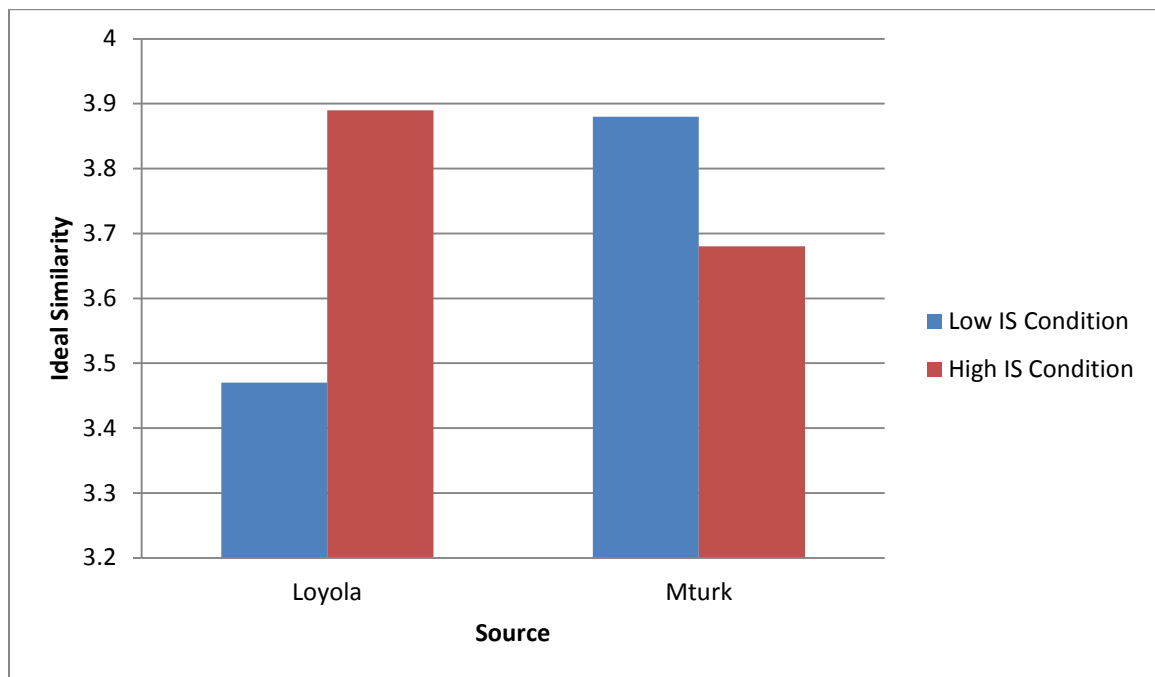
Essentially, the two samples demonstrated different influences on the relation between manipulation condition and ideal similarity ratings. The Loyola

sample's positive association is expected, but I did not attain the desired effect of the manipulation on the Mturk sample. Since the manipulation was only successful for the Loyola sample, I will include Sample Source as a third independent variable and moderator predicting liking and respect ratings in the main analyses.

Table 1. Predicting perceived ideal similarity of target from participant recruitment source and the ideal similarity manipulation

	<i><b>B</b></i>	<i><b>β</b></i>	<i><b>t</b></i>	<i><b>p</b></i>
Ideal Similarity Condition	.05	.04	.60	.55
Sample Source	.05	.04	.58	.57
Ideal Similarity Condition x Sample Source	-.16	-.13	-1.79	.08

Figure 1. Bar graph of ideal similarity condition and recruitment source predicting ideal similarity rating



### Sample Source

T-tests and a chi-square analysis were used to determine if any substantial demographic differences existed between participants in the two sample sources, which would help explain the different impact of the manipulation on these two sources. These tests revealed significant differences between the Loyola and MTurk participants on measures of age,  $t(132.64) = -7.22$ ,  $p = .001$ , explicit self-esteem,  $t(191) = 2.90$ ,  $p = .004$ , and whether they were born in the US or not,  $\chi^2(1) = 4.02$ ,  $p = .05$ ,  $\Phi = .14$ . Based on these results, age, explicit self-esteem, and US born status were used as covariates in the primary analyses.

### **Analysis of Effects of Sample Source, Ideal Similarity Condition, and Self-Discrepancy on Liking and Respect Ratings**

I examined the joint effects of sample source (categorical variable), self-discrepancy (continuous variable) and ideal self similarity condition (categorical variable) on ratings of liking for a target individual. To do so, I followed the procedures outlined by Aiken and West (1991) for testing interactions in multiple regression. First, I centered the continuous predictor, self-discrepancy (by subtracting the appropriate sample mean). I then coded the two categorical predictors; Source (-1 = Loyola, 1 = MTurk) and Ideal Similarity Condition (-1 = low ideal similarity manipulation, 1 = high ideal similarity manipulation). Finally, I used the product of the three variables for the 3-way (and all 2-way interactions) Sample Source x Self-discrepancy x Ideal Similarity Condition interaction term. As discussed in the previous section, participant age, explicit self-esteem, and US born status were included as covariates in the tested model.

This analysis revealed that there was no statistical significance found for the main effect of sample source, ideal similarity condition, or self-discrepancy on liking of target. The originally predicted Ideal Similarity Condition x Self-discrepancy 2-way interaction was not significant and neither was the newer 3-way interaction term, Sample Source x Ideal Similarity Condition x Self-

discrepancy (see Table 2). <sup>1</sup>Sample source, ideal similarity condition, and self-discrepancy did not predict liking for the target.

Table 2. Predicting liking of target from sample source, self-discrepancy and the ideal similarity manipulation

	<b>B</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
Born in the U.S.	-.39	-.17	-2.12	.04
Age	.05	.14	1.58	.12
Explicit Self-esteem	-.19	-.18	-2.06	.04
Ideal Similarity Condition	-.11	-.08	-1.05	.29
Sample Source	.10	.07	.84	.40
Self-discrepancy	.14	.11	1.20	.23
Ideal Similarity Condition x Sample Source	-.10	-.07	-.93	.35
Ideal Similarity Condition x Self-discrepancy	.10	.08	.94	.35
Sample Source x Self-discrepancy	.02	.02	.22	.82
Ideal Similarity Condition x Sample Source x Self-discrepancy	.02	.01	.17	.87

Next, I examined the joint effects of sample source, self-discrepancy, and ideal self similarity condition on ratings of respect for a target individual. I

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<sup>1</sup> The target individual's gender was also considered as a potential main effect-producing factor within the liking ratings and was included in the model as a 4-way regression interaction, however, that analysis did not uncover any significant effects and so was not reported here.

followed the procedures for multiple regression described above using respect ratings as the dependent variable. The main effect of ideal similarity condition was marginally significant, but the main effects of sample source and self-discrepancy on ratings of respect for target were not significant. The Sample Source x Ideal Similarity Condition x Self-discrepancy interaction was not significant either. While ideal similarity condition was marginally predictive of respect ratings, sample source and self-discrepancy did not predict respect for the target. Participants in the low ideal similarity condition reported lower respect ratings for the target while participants in the high ideal similarity condition reported higher respect ratings for the target.

Table 3. Predicting respect of target from sample source, self-discrepancy and the ideal similarity manipulation

	<b>B</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
Born in the U.S.	-.27	-.12	-1.44	.15
Age	.03	.09	1.08	.28
Explicit Self-esteem	.06	.06	.68	.50
Ideal Similarity Condition	.17	.13	1.64	.10
Sample Source	.12	.09	1.04	.30
Self-discrepancy	.15	.12	1.30	.19
Ideal Similarity Condition x Sample Source	.03	.03	.32	.75
Ideal Similarity Condition x Self-discrepancy	.08	.06	.78	.44
Sample Source x Self-discrepancy	-.01	-.004	-.05	.96
Ideal Similarity Condition x Sample Source x Self-discrepancy	.02	.02	.21	.83

### Supplemental Analyses

Although the ideal similarity manipulation was only successful for the Loyola sample, an examination of the correlations revealed that there was still a significant correlation between ratings of perceived ideal similarity (assessed after the manipulation) and ratings of both liking,  $r(196) = .40$ ,  $p < .0001$ , and

respect,  $r(191) = .51, p < .0001$ . Apart from the inability of the manipulation to influence perceptions of ideal similarity, there was some relationship between ideal similarity rating (regardless of ideal similarity manipulation condition) and ratings of liking and respect. Therefore, I ran a post-hoc analysis to examine the effects of perceived ideal self similarity ratings (continuous variable) and self-discrepancy (continuous variable) on ratings of liking for a target individual. The main effect of perceived ideal similarity rating on liking ratings was significant, but the main effect of self-discrepancy and the Ideal Similarity Rating x Self-discrepancy interaction term were not significant. Perceived ideal similarity ratings predicted liking for the target (regardless of ideal similarity manipulation condition), but contrary to my prediction, this effect was not moderated by self-discrepancy.



Table 4. Predicting liking of target from self-discrepancy and ideal similarity ratings

	<b>B</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
Condition	-.11	-.08	-1.18	.24
Sample Source	.04	.03	.37	.72
Years in US	-.03	-.11	-1.08	.28
Age	.07	.19	1.83	.07
Explicit Self-esteem	-.16	-.15	-1.88	.06
Ideal Similarity Ratings	.47	.45	5.83	.000
Self-discrepancy	.08	.06	.75	.45
Ideal Similarity Ratings x Self-discrepancy	-.08	-.08	-.99	.33

Next, I ran the same model as above on respect ratings. Again, the main effect of Ideal Similarity Rating was significant, but the main effect of Self-discrepancy and the Ideal Similarity Rating x Self-discrepancy interaction were not significant. As with liking, perceived ideal similarity ratings predicted respect for the target (regardless of ideal similarity manipulation condition), but this effect was not moderated by self-discrepancy. In fact, perceived ideal similarity strongly predicted ratings of both liking and respect, but self-discrepancy, as measured here, was not related to either liking or respect.

Table 5. Predicting respect of target from self-discrepancy and ideal similarity ratings

	<b>B</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
Condition	.15	.12	1.70	.09
Sample Source	.06	.05	.59	.55
Years in US	-.03	-.12	-1.20	.23
Age	.04	.12	1.25	.21
Explicit self-esteem	.06	.06	.74	.46
Ideal Similarity Ratings	.56	.56	7.67	.000
Self-discrepancy	.06	.05	.59	.56
Ideal Similarity Ratings x Self-discrepancy	-.09	-.10	-1.29	.20

### Discussion

The goal of this study was to determine whether ideal similarity condition moderates the tendency of that perceiver's self-discrepancy to predict respect and liking. Unfortunately, the results did not bear out the expected associations between manipulation condition, self-discrepancy, and ratings of liking and respect. There was no relation observed between ideal similarity condition or self-discrepancy on ratings of liking, even when sample source is included as a main effect (and moderator) in the model. Contrary to my predictions, ratings of liking did not differ for participants in the high, versus low, similarity condition nor

did they differ for individuals who reported having low, versus high, self-discrepancy. On the other hand, ratings of respect were marginally different across ideal similarity condition where participants in the high ideal similarity condition respected the target more than participants in the low ideal similarity condition, but respect ratings were similar across sample source and levels of self-discrepancy.

According to Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu (2002), targets viewed as having high status are perceived as also possessing high competence while low status targets are associated with incompetence. Perceivers are likely to view targets with high ideal similarity as high status/competent because the targets are seen to possess admired traits. Conversely, low ideal similarity targets do not possess admired traits and will be viewed as low status/incompetent. In terms of respect, this explains why targets that highly resemble the perceiver's ideal self could be seen as commanding greater respect than targets that do not resemble the perceiver's ideal self.

The post-hoc finding that ideal similarity ratings (assessed after the manipulation) predicted both liking and respect is worth noting. Despite the failure to manipulate the participants' perception of target ideal similarity, the relation of their actual ratings of ideal similarity (how similar the participant believes the target is to the participant's own ideal self) to liking and respect conformed to my predictions based on previous literature. If the target was determined to be similar to the participants' ideal self, then she was also

considered to be likable and deserving of respect. Conversely, if that target was determined to be dissimilar to the participants' ideal self, then she was rated as less likable and less deserving of respect. The participants' self-discrepancy, on the other hand, exhibited no significant effect on their ratings of the target's likability and respectability. In further contrast to the original predictions, self-discrepancy did not moderate the effect of perceived ideal similarity on ratings of the targets likability or respectability. Therefore, it appears that the extent to which one's perceived current self is similar or dissimilar to one's own ideal self (self-discrepancy) may have little or no bearing on the amount of liking or respect accorded to others.

I originally proposed the existence of a positive relationship between self-discrepancy and attraction (measured using ratings of liking and respect) based on previous research linking low self-esteem –correlated with high self-discrepancy (Higgins, 1987; Klohnen & Mendelsohn, 1998) – to undesirable intrapersonal outcomes (Wood, Heimpel, Manwell, & Whittington, 2009) along with theories predicting the propensity for such negative outcomes to motivate an individual to seek out interpersonal relationships with others who exhibit more desirable attributes in order to alleviate the uncomfortable situation (Derrick, Gabriel, & Tippin, 2008; Lubbers, Kuyper, & van der Werf, 2009). However, none of the research I came across provided evidence for a direct influence of self-discrepancy on attraction, so any of the transitive associations I believed existed between the aforementioned theories and research findings may be erroneous.

Perhaps the influence of self-esteem on relationship-seeking is not similar enough to the effects of self-discrepancy for extended conclusions to be drawn.

One of my interpretations included the possibility that high self-discrepancy created an internal preference for relationship-seeking. Even if those with high self-discrepancy were more likely to seek out interpersonal relationships, they may not necessarily like or respect the relationship partner pursued. Perhaps the connection need only be tenuous in nature. For example, it may be that visually detecting others or being in their physical presence satisfies the desire for human contact. Positive evaluations of the target individual's attributes could have little to do with any possible benefits derived from the interaction. In the end, it appears that self-discrepancy is not related to interpersonal attraction and may not be a part of any processes that affect the ideal similarity-attraction relationship.

### **Limitations**

One limitation of the current study was the partial failure of the ideal similarity manipulation. The attempt to manipulate the participants' perceived ideal similarity of the target failed to effectively influence their ideal similarity ratings in the desired direction. Although participants were instructed to read through the target's Facebook profile so they could answer questions about it later, there was no verification that they did so. It is possible that participants simply skimmed over the profile content, unsure of which pieces of information would be referenced in the questions to follow, thereby reducing the opportunity

for any manipulation cues to be observed and processed. Potential fixes for this issue might entail including survey questions that indicate whether the participant attended to the manipulation-relevant aspects of the target's profile (such as post-effect questions specifically referring to the manipulated profile content) or identifying profile attributes that more readily influence ideal similarity judgments in the population of interest.

A second, related limitation was the use of different sources for participant recruitment. Preliminary tests, discussed in the sample source section above, reveal that the effectiveness of the ideal similarity manipulation was moderated by sample source. The MTurk sample was older, had lower explicit self-esteem, and contained fewer non-US born participants than the Loyola sample. While 41% of the entire sample identified as part of an ethnic/continental origin dissimilar from that of the individual in the target profile, this proportion remained the same across recruitment source, so this demographic trait does not appear to be related to the observed sample source differences. While sample source demonstrated marginally significant effects on the ideal similarity manipulation, sample source was not found to influence ratings of liking or respect in post-hoc analyses.

A third limitation was that the sample obtained was comprised of English-speaking college students in the USA willing to complete a lengthy internet survey about their feelings and attitudes in exchange for course credit or minimal compensation, \$0.25, and therefore the interpretations can only be generalized

to similar populations. The manipulation condition was created specifically with USA-dwelling college students in mind. The target's occupation was altered across conditions to create perceptions of high versus low ideal similarity based on typical college student career aspirations. Additionally, the gender, apparent ethnicity, social desirability, and entertainment preferences of the target were developed using profile attributes shown to represent the average college student's Facebook disclosures (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). By design, this study's manipulation is only targeted to the population used.

### **Future Directions**

Initially, I set out to identify the moderating effects of ideal similarity on the relationship between self-discrepancy and liking and respect. The results of this study indicate that liking and respect are not influenced by an individual's self-discrepancy and though perceived ideal similarity holds a strong association with liking and respect, it clearly cannot moderate a nonexistent relationship. Having established this relation, it appears that the influence of ideal similarity on markers of attraction should instead be considered a main effect and subsequently investigated for moderators of that association. For example, explicit self-esteem, which is moderately correlated with self-discrepancy in a negative direction here, demonstrated a marginally significant effect on liking, but not on respect, despite evidence in the literature that those with low self-esteem are prone to ideal similarity attraction (Derrick, Gabriel, & Tippin, 2008; Mathes & Moore, 1985). In this study, the previously demonstrated correlation between

self-discrepancy and self-esteem (Klohnen & Mendelsohn, 1998) was used to create predictions of self-discrepancy's relationship with attraction, but perhaps the two are not as structurally congruent as expected. In both the main analyses and the post hoc analyses, self-discrepancy was unrelated to liking and respect ratings while explicit self-esteem was significantly associated with liking ratings. Participants with low explicit self-esteem reported higher ratings of liking for the target and those with high self-esteem reported lower liking of the target. If low self-esteem leads to high liking and high ideal similarity leads to high liking, but there is no direct correlation between self-esteem and ideal similarity, then perhaps the more pertinent moderation to investigate in the future is the possible interaction of self-esteem on the relationship between ideal similarity and liking.

Although the association between ideal similarity and liking and respect found here is consistent with the literature on ideal similarity attraction, it is not clear if ideal similarity leads to globally positive evaluations of associated objects or just to specific types of attributes. Are liking and respect components of a distinct type of judgment or would any attribute or object associated with the ideal similar target be seen through the same rose-colored glasses? For example, does ideal similarity only influence appraisal of personal traits or can the effect be extended to extrapersonal objects such as products, locations, or ideas? The "spreading effect" – a phenomenon where a favorably or unfavorably evaluated stimulus object will influence the evaluation of events or objects that co-occur with the original stimulus along with any other stimuli that are merely associated



with it (Walther & Langer, 2008) – suggests that ideal similarity's effect on appraisals of personal traits can be extended to extrapersonal objects (e.g. products, locations, or ideas). Some marketing agencies already use classical conditioning techniques to encourage consumers to associate positive traits with their products by pairing them with other desirable objects, though this effect only works under very specific conditions (De Houwer, 2008). However, Fazio has already found that evaluations of an object can automatically activate similar evaluations of associated objects (Fazio, 2001). Perhaps an ideal similarity-influenced spreading effect is at work when ads feature celebrities using or endorsing particular products or ideologies. At least, that may be what the agencies hope is occurring. If positive evaluations spread to related objects and then those judgments contribute to an associated behavior (Ferguson & Bargh, 2004), it would be interesting to uncover whether ideal similarity represented some component of basic behavioral motivations.

APPENDIX A  
LIST OF SURVEY MEASURES ADMINISTERED

### **Demographic Information**

1. *What is your LUC email address? (used only to assign participation credit)*
2. *What is your date of birth?*
  - a. *Drop down for month, day, and year*
3. *Were you born in the US?*
  - a. *Yes/No dropdown*
4. *How long have you been living in the US?*
  - a. *Drop down for years and months*
5. *What is your gender?*
  - a. *Male/female dropdown*
6. *Select the group you most closely identify with:*
  - a. *Dropdown of ethnicities/nationalities*
    - i. *African American, Black, African, Caribbean*
    - ii. *Asian American, Asian, Pacific Islander*
    - iii. *European American, White, Anglo, Caucasian*
    - iv. *Multi-racial, Bi-racial*
    - v. *Native American, American Indian*
    - vi. *South American, Hispanic, Latino, Chicano*

### **Implicit State Self-esteem**

Please use the following scale to report how much you like each letter that appears in the set below. Simply trust your intuitions, work quickly, and report your gut impressions. Please rate each item on the scale below.

9-point scale from Dislike very much to like very much

All 26 letters in random order

### **Mood**

How much do the following words describe your mood TODAY? Please click on the appropriate rating.

9-point scale from not at all to extremely

1. Distressed
2. Excited
3. Angry
4. Interested
5. Dejected
6. Cheerful
7. Ashamed
8. Alert

- 9. Nervous
- 10. Happy
- 11. Sad
- 12. Proud

### **Explicit State Self-esteem**

The next measure is a global measure of your feelings about yourself. Please answer the next ten items using the scale below.

7-point scale from Disagree very much to Agree very much

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

### **Daily Stress Overall**

Please rate TODAY's overall stressfulness. Click on the appropriate rating.

7-point scale from not at all stressful to very stressful

### **Demographic Information (cont'd)**

#### **1. Subjective SES**

- a. *If 10 represents the people who are the best off – those who have the most money, the most education, and the most respected jobs – and 1 represents the people who are the worst off – who have the least money, the least education, and the least respected jobs or no job – then where would you place yourself on that continuum? Please select the number that represents where you think you stand at this time in your life, relative to other people in the United States.*

- i. 10-point scale from worst off to best off*

#### **2. Community Standing**

- a. *People define community in different ways; please define it in whatever way is most meaningful to you. If 10 represents the people who have the highest standing in their community and 1 represents people who have the lowest standing in their community, then where would you place yourself on that continuum? Please select the number that represents where you think you stand at this time in your life, relative to other people in your community.*

i. 10-point scale from lowest standing to highest standing

3. What is your parents' highest level of education attained?
  - a. Elementary School
  - b. Some high school
  - c. High school diploma or G.E.D.
  - d. Some college or some vocational training
  - e. 2-year college degree or certificate
  - f. 4-year college degree
  - g. Some graduate school or professional training
  - h. Graduate degree (includes MA, MD, DDS, JD, PhD, PsyD, or similar degrees)
4. What is your year in school?
  - a. Dropdown of years (1-6)
5. Are you employed?
  - a. Yes/no dropdown
6. Are you using student loans to help pay for your education?
  - a. Yes/No dropdown
7. Please report your FIRST INITIAL and LAST INITIAL below:
  - a. Dropdown of alphabet for first initial
  - b. Dropdown of alphabet for last initial

### **Positive And Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)**

Below are a number of different mood states. Please read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way in general, that is, on the average. Use the following scale to record your answers.

5-point scale from very slightly or not at all to extremely

1. Irritable
2. Determined
3. Jittery
4. Ashamed
5. Proud
6. Guilty
7. Inspired
8. Hostile
9. Alert
10. Strong
11. Afraid

12. Enthusiastic
13. Scared
14. Excited
15. Attentive
16. Upset
17. Interested
18. Nervous
19. Active
20. Distressed

### Visual Self-discrepancy Scale

Your "ideal self" is the way you would be if you were *exactly* the way you **would like to be**. Your "current self" is the person you are **right now**. Please look at the images below and choose the one that best describes how close you think your "current self" is to your "ideal self."

7-point scale corresponding to circle images

### Self Attributes Questionnaire (Self-discrepancy)

The questions below have to do with some of your activities and abilities. For these ten items, please indicate how much you think you are like your "ideal self" - the person you would be if you were exactly the way you **would like to be**.

7-point scale from not at all like my ideal self to completely like my ideal self

1. Intellectual ability
2. Social skills/social competence
3. Artistic and/or musical ability
4. Athletic ability
5. Physical attractiveness
6. Leadership ability
7. Common sense
8. Emotional stability
9. Sense of humor
10. Discipline

### Competence And Warmth Scale (self)

For each trait listed below, choose the number that indicates how much you think that trait describes you.

7-point scale from Not at all to Very much

1. Trustworthy
2. Efficient
3. Warm
4. Capable
5. Friendly
6. Intelligent

7. Sincere
8. Competent

### **Resilience**

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement below by using the following scale.

5-point scale from Strongly Disagree to strongly agree

1. I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times
2. I have a hard time making it through stressful events
3. It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event
4. It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens
5. I usually come through difficult times with little trouble
6. I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life

### **Forgiveness**

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement below by using the following scale.

5-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree

1. People close to me probably think I hold a grudge too long.
2. I can forgive a friend for almost anything.
3. If someone treats me badly, I treat him or her the same.
4. I try to forgive others even when they don't feel guilty for what they did.
5. I can usually forgive and forget an insult.
6. I feel bitter about many of my relationships.
7. Even after I forgive someone, things often come back to me that I resent.
8. There are some things for which I could never forgive even a loved one.
9. I have always forgiven those who have hurt me
10. I am a forgiving person.

### **Meaning In Life**

Please take a moment to think about what makes your life feel important to you. Please respond to the following statements as truthfully and accurately as you can, and also please remember that these are very subjective questions and that there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer according to the scale below.

7-point scale from absolutely untrue to absolutely true

1. I understand my life's meaning.
2. I am looking for something that makes my life feel meaningful.
3. I am always looking to find my life's purpose.
4. My life has a clear sense of purpose.
5. I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful.
6. I have discovered a satisfying life purpose.
7. I am always searching for something that makes my life feel significant.

8. I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life.
9. My life has no clear purpose.
10. I am searching for meaning in my life.

### **Ethnic Identity-Centrality**

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements on the scale provided.

5-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree

1. Overall, being my ethnicity has very little to do with how I feel about myself.
2. In general, my ethnicity is an important part of my self-image.
3. My destiny is tied to the destiny of other people in my ethnic group.
4. My ethnicity is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.
5. I have a strong sense of belonging to my ethnic group.
6. I have a strong attachment to other people in my ethnic group.
7. My ethnicity is an important reflection of who I am.
8. My ethnicity is not a major factor in my social relationships.

### **Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)**

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by checking the appropriate box. Please be open and honest in your responses.

7-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

### **Life Orientation Test – Revised LOT-R**

Please be as honest and accurate as you can throughout. Try not to let your response to one statement influence your responses to other statements. There are no "correct" or "incorrect" answers. Answer according to your own feelings, rather than how you think "most people" would answer.

7-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree

1. In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.
2. It's easy for me to relax.
3. If something can go wrong for me, it will.
4. I'm always optimistic about my future.
5. I enjoy my friends a lot.
6. It's important for me to keep busy.
7. I hardly ever expect things to go my way.
8. I don't get upset too easily.



9. I rarely count on good things happening to me.
10. Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.

### **Trust Subscale**

Describe yourself as you generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you honestly see yourself, in relation to other people you know of the same sex as you are, and roughly your same age. So that you can describe yourself in an honest manner, your responses will be kept in absolute confidence. Indicate for each statement how accurate it is as a description of you. 7-point scale from very inaccurate to very accurate

1. Trust others.
2. Believe that others have good intentions.
3. Trust what people say.
4. Believe that people are basically moral.
5. Believe in human goodness.
6. Think that all will be well.
7. Distrust people.
8. Suspect hidden motives in others.
9. Am wary of others.
10. Believe that people are essentially evil.

### **Big 5 Personality**

Here are a number of personality traits. Please choose a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

7-point scale from “*to a small extent*” to “*to a large extent*”

1. Extraverted, enthusiastic
2. Critical, quarrelsome
3. Dependable, self disciplined
4. Anxious, easily upset
5. Open to new experiences, complex
6. Reserved, quiet
7. Sympathetic, warm
8. Disorganized, careless
9. Calm, emotionally stable
10. Conventional, uncreative

### Neuroticism

Describe yourself as you honestly see yourself in relation to other people you know who are the **same sex as you** and roughly **your same age**. Please read each statement carefully, and rate how accurately it describes you.

7-point scale from very inaccurate to very accurate

1. Get stressed out easily.
2. Am relaxed most of the time.
3. Worry about things.
4. Seldom feel blue.
5. Am easily disturbed.
6. Get upset easily.
7. Change my mood a lot.
8. Have frequent mood swings.
9. Get irritated easily.
10. Often feel blue.

### Personal Narcissism

This inventory consists of a number of pairs of statements with which you may or may not identify.

Consider this example:

- A. I like having authority over people
- B. I don't mind following orders

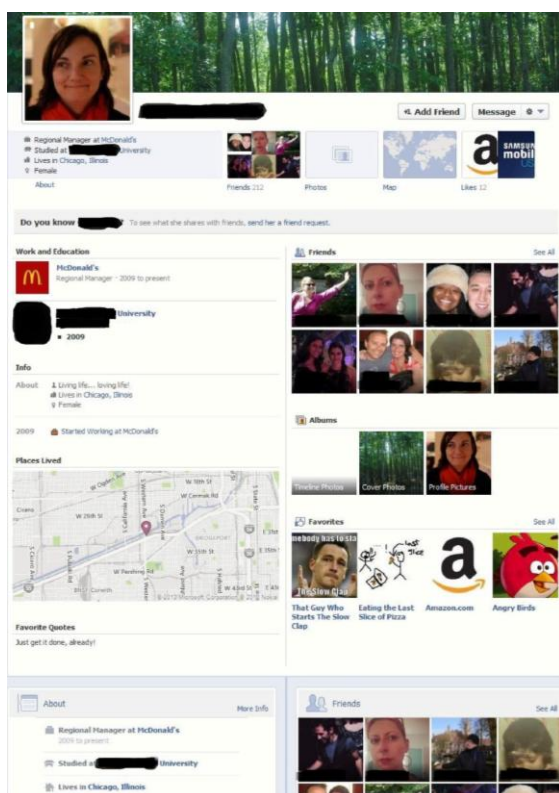
Which of these two statements is closer to your own feelings about yourself? If you identify more with "liking to have authority over people" than with "not minding following orders", then you would choose option A.

You may identify with both A and B. In this case you should choose the statement which seems closer to yourself. Or, if you do not identify with either statement, select the one which is least objectionable or remote. In other words, read each pair of statements and then choose the one that is closer to your own feelings. Indicate your answer by choosing the letter (A or B) in the space provided to the right of each item. Please do not skip any items.

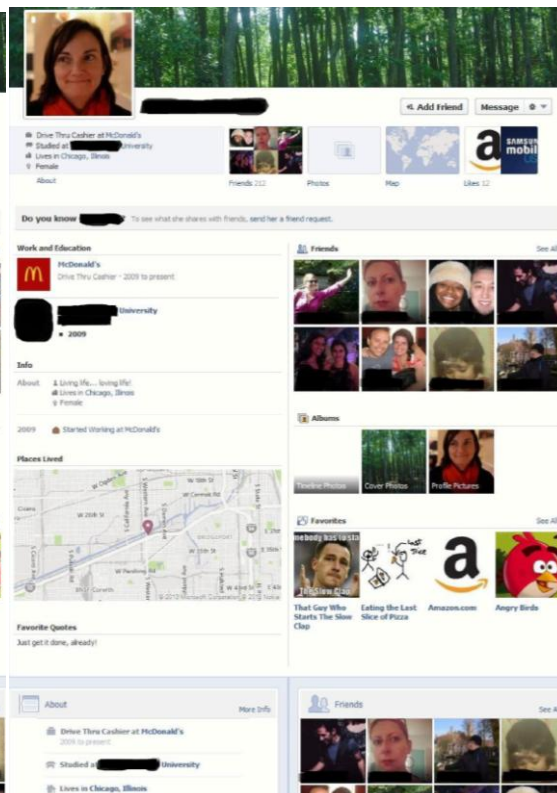
1.     A. I have a natural talent for influencing people.  
       B. I am not good at influencing people.
2.     A. Modesty doesn't become me.  
       B. I am essentially a modest person.
3.     A. I would do almost anything on a dare.  
       B. I tend to be a fairly cautious person.
4.     A. When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed.  
       B. I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so.
5.     A. The thought of ruling the world frightens the hell out of me.

- B. If I ruled the world it would be a better place.
6. A. I can usually talk my way out of anything.  
B. I try to accept the consequences of my behavior.
7. A. I prefer to blend in with the crowd.  
B. I like to be the center of attention.
8. A. I will be a success.  
B. I am not too concerned about success.
9. A. I am no better or worse than most people.  
B. I think I am a special person.
10. A. I am not sure if I would make a good leader.  
B. I see myself as a good leader.
11. A. I am assertive.  
B. I wish I were more assertive.
12. A. I like to have authority over other people.  
B. I don't mind following orders.
13. A. I find it easy to manipulate people.  
B. I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people.
14. A. I insist upon getting the respect that is due me.  
B. I usually get the respect that I deserve.
15. A. I don't particularly like to show off my body.  
B. I like to show off my body.
16. A. I can read people like a book.  
B. People are sometimes hard to understand.
17. A. If I feel competent I am willing to take responsibility for making decisions.  
B. I like to take responsibility for making decisions.
18. A. I just want to be reasonably happy.  
B. I want to amount to something in the eyes of the world.
19. A. My body is nothing special.  
B. I like to look at my body.
20. A. I try not to be a show off.  
B. I will usually show off if I get the chance.
21. A. I always know what I am doing.  
B. Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing.
22. A. I sometimes depend on people to get things done.  
B. I rarely depend on anyone else to get things done.
23. A. Sometimes I tell good stories.  
B. Everybody likes to hear my stories.
24. A. I expect a great deal from other people.  
B. I like to do things for other people.
25. A. I will never be satisfied until I get all that I deserve.  
B. I take my satisfactions as they come.
26. A. Compliments embarrass me.

- B. I like to be complimented.
27. A. I have a strong will to power.  
B. Power for its own sake doesn't interest me.
28. A. I don't care about new fads and fashions.  
B. I like to start new fads and fashions.
29. A. I like to look at myself in the mirror.  
B. I am not particularly interested in looking at myself in the mirror.
30. A. I really like to be the center of attention.  
B. It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention.
31. A. I can live my life in any way I want to.  
B. People can't always live their lives in terms of what they want.
32. A. Being an authority doesn't mean that much to me.  
B. People always seem to recognize my authority.
33. A. I would prefer to be a leader.  
B. It makes little difference to me whether I am a leader or not.
34. A. I am going to be a great person.  
B. I hope I am going to be successful.
35. A. People sometimes believe what I tell them.  
B. I can make anybody believe anything I want them to.
36. A. I am a born leader.  
B. Leadership is a quality that takes a long time to develop.
37. A. I wish somebody would someday write my biography.  
B. I don't like people to pry into my life for any reason.
38. A. I get upset when people don't notice how I look when I go out in public.  
B. I don't mind blending into the crowd when I go out in public.
39. A. I am more capable than other people.  
B. There is a lot that I can learn from other people.
40. A. I am much like everybody else.  
B. I am an extraordinary person.



Condition 1 Image



Condition 2 Image

### Visual Ideal Similarity Scale (references FB profile image)

Your **ideal self** is the person you would be if you were *exactly* the way you **would like to be**. Please look at the images below and choose the one that best describes how close you think **the woman in the Facebook profile** is to being like **your ideal self**.

7-point scale corresponding to circle images

### Self Attributes Questionnaire (references FB profile image)

Your **ideal self** is the person you would be if you were *exactly* the way **you would like to be**. For these ten items, please think of the **woman in the Facebook profile** and indicate how close you think she is to **your ideal self**.

7-point scale from not at all like my ideal self to completely like my ideal self

1. Intellectual ability
2. Social skills/social competence
3. Artistic and/or musical ability
4. Athletic ability
5. Physical attractiveness
6. Leadership ability
7. Common sense

8. Emotional stability
9. Sense of humor
10. Discipline

**Liking & Respect Attraction Scale** (*references FB profile image*)

The statements below refer to some possible reactions to the **woman in the Facebook profile**. Read each one and choose the number that best describes how much you agree with that statement.

7-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree

1. I think this person could be a friend of mine.
2. It would be difficult to meet and talk with this person.
3. This person just wouldn't fit into my circle of friends.
4. We could never establish a personal friendship with each other.
5. I would like to have a friendly chat with this person.
6. I have warm feelings about this person.
7. I respect this person.
8. This person could serve as an example to others.
9. I do not like this person.
10. This person deserves admiration.
11. I feel close to this person.

**Interest And Intention To Befriend** (*references FB profile image*)

The statements below refer to some possible reactions to the **woman in the Facebook profile**. Read each one and choose the number that best describes how much you agree with that statement.

7-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree

1. If I had the chance, I would like to meet this person.
2. I am interested in making new friends.
3. I think this person would like me.
4. I would be interested in becoming friends with this person.
5. It is easy for me to make new friends.
6. I would be interested in dating this person.

**Competence And Warmth Scale** (*references FB profile image*)

For each trait listed below, choose the number that indicates how much you think that trait describes **the woman in the Facebook profile**.

7-point scale from Not at all to Very much

1. Trustworthy

2. Efficient
3. Warm
4. Capable
5. Friendly
6. Intelligent
7. Sincere
8. Competent

**Physical Attraction Scale** (*references FB profile image*)

The statements below refer to some possible reactions to the **woman in the Facebook profile**. Read each one and choose the number that best describes how much you agree with that statement.

7-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree

1. I think she is quite pretty.
2. She is somewhat ugly.
3. She is very sexy looking
4. I find her very attractive physically.
5. I don't like the way she looks.
6. She is not very good looking.

**Task Attraction Scale** (*references FB profile image*)

The statements below refer to some possible reactions to the **woman in the Facebook profile**. Read each one and choose the number that best describes how much you agree with that statement.

7-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree

1. She is a typical goof off when assigned a job to do. **R**
2. You could count on her getting the job done.
3. I have confidence in her ability to get the job done.
4. If I wanted to get things done I could probably depend on her.
5. I couldn't get anything accomplished with her. **R**
6. She would not be good to work with. **R**

**Relational Interdependence**

The following statements concern how you perceive yourself in relationships in general. We are interested how you generally experience romantic relationships, not just what is happening in your current romantic relationship. Respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with it, using the following scale:

7-point scale from Disagree strongly to agree strongly

1. My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am.

2. When I feel very close to someone, it often feels to me like that person is an important part of who I am.
3. I usually feel strong sense of pride when someone close to me has an important accomplishment.
4. I think one of the most important parts of who I am can be captured by looking at my close relationships and understand who they are.
5. When I think of myself, I often think of my close relationships also.
6. If a person hurts someone close, I feel personally hurt as well.
7. In general, my close relationships are an important part of my self-image.
8. Overall, my close relationships have very little to do with how I feel about myself.
9. My close relationships are unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.
10. My sense of pride comes from knowing who I have as close relationships.
11. When I establish a close relationship with someone, I usually develop a strong sense of identification with that person.



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## VITA

Natalie J. Hall was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. Before attending Loyola University Chicago, she attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology in 2003. From 2005 to 2008, she also attended the Roosevelt University, where she worked toward a Master of Arts in Clinical Professional Psychology before being accepted into Loyola University Chicago's program.

At Roosevelt University, Hall was inducted into the Psi Chi National Honor Society in Psychology (now Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology) and served as the group's president from 2006 to 2008. Hall was awarded a Student Journalist Award and press credentials by the United Nations NGO Committee on Mental Health in order to attend and document the United Nations Conference on Human Rights at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France in September 2008.

While at Loyola, Hall actively participated in the Graduate Students of Color Association (GSCA) from 2009 to 2010. She headed the Advocacy Committee within the Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC) from 2012 to 2014. Hall was also awarded a DFI Fellowship from 2009 to 2012 and has been an active member of the Associates Board for the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center since 2010.

Hall still lives in Chicago and is currently continuing her studies at Loyola in pursuit of a doctoral degree in Applied Social Psychology.

