PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE SELF

Volume 1

9 Toward a General Theory of Strategic Self-Presentation

Edward E. Jones
Princeton University
Thane S. Pittman
Gettysburg College

We hope that the initial word of our title diminishes its pretentiousness. The present chapter is offered as a preliminary formulation that will obviously be modified to accommodate new data. Nevertheless, we believe that the self-presentation area has been slow to develop in social psychology because of the lack of comprehensive theorizing (as well as the difficulty of doing theory-based experimental research). Self-presentational phenomena are ubiquitous in social life, and yet we have no conceptual framework to relate and understand these phenomena. The present chapter attempts to outline such a framework to facilitate the organization—and indeed the identification—of self-presentation research.

A DEFINITION AND SOME EXCLUSIONS

One problem in coming to terms with self-presentation is its very omnipresence. No one would seriously challenge the general idea that observers infer dispositions from an actor's behavior or that actors have a stake in controlling the inferences drawn about them from their actions. Goffman crystallized one viewpoint on impression management with his classic dramaturgical account in 1959, one that essentially gave us the label of *self-presentation* and provided enough descriptive variety and richness to convince us that here was an important area for social psychological analysis. Goffman's emphasis, however, was on the subtle ways in which actors project or convey a definition of the interaction situation as they see it. Attempts on the part of the actor to shape others' impressions of his personality received only secondary emphasis. Jones (1964), and Jones and

Wortman (1973), focused on our interest in getting others to like us and developed a theoretical framework that combined motivational, cognitive, and evaluative features.

A number of experiments have since addressed the determinants and social consequences of "self-disclosure" (Cozby, 1973; Jourard, 1964; and others). Solid conclusions in this area have proved hard to come by. All the while we have been occasionally edified, sometimes amused, and often appalled by a popular literature dealing with power, manipulation, and self-salesmanship (Carnegie, 1936; Korda, 1975; Ringer, 1973; Webb & Morgan, 1930).

Impression management concerns have found their way into many areas of social psychology. Tedeschi, Schlenker, and their associates (1971) have argued that such concerns can explain most of the phenomena that others have attributed to cognitive dissonance reduction. Orne (1962), Rosenthal (1966), Rosenberg (1965), and others have written at length about the concerns of experimental subjects with how they will be evaluated by an experimenter.

And yet, in spite of the volume of seemingly relevant literature and research, the topic of self-presentation suffers from an amorphous identity with insecure underpinnings in motivational and cognitive theory. Our intent is to provide such underpinnings and demarcate the area of concern more clearly than previous treatments.

To these ends we start with definitions first of the phenomenal self and then of what we mean by strategic self-presentation. The *phenomenal self* was defined by Jones and Gerard (1967) as: "a person's awareness, arising out of interactions with his environment, of his own beliefs, values, attitudes, the links between them, and their implications for his behavior [page 716]." We accept this view that each of us has a potentially available overarching cognition of his or her interrelated dispositions. The notion of a phenomenal self implies that memories of past actions and outcomes are available in integrated form to clarify current action possibilities. The evolution of this overarching phenomenal self is greatly facilitated by the fact that other people, in their attempt to render *their* social environment more predictable, endow us with stable attributes and respond to us as enduring structures. It is not surprising that we learn to take ourselves as definable social objects and become concerned with the consistency of our actions over time.

But the words "potentially available" are important in approaching the phenomenal self. The phenomenal self is not always salient; we are not always self-focused or preoccupied with self-consistency. A consequence of being socialized in a particular culture is that sequences of action become automatic, triggered off by contextual cues in line with past reinforcements. We are often, in effect, "mindless" (Langer & Newman, 1979). In many of the routine social interchanges of everyday life, therefore, the phenomenal self is not aroused, does not become salient. Conflict and novelty do, however, give rise to mindfulness and self-salience. When we do not have preprogrammed response sequences, the phenomenal self becomes a reference point for decision making as we review the

implications of our beliefs and values for action. Pressures toward self-consistency (and long-range adaptation) may then compete with pressures toward shorter-range social gains in creating the conflicts and dilemmas of social life. These dilemmas are often cast in moral terms as the individual assesses the relative virtues of integrity, consistency, and authenticity on the one hand, as against the virtues of adaptive effectiveness and personal security gained through power augmentation on the other. Jones and Wortman (1973) have argued, however, that this conflict is often avoided as adaptive social responding becomes automatic in the face of well-established recurrent cues. Thus, the contextual cue that defines our momentary social position as "dependent" may trigger off ingratiating actions or other attempts at impression management without necessarily evoking the phenomenal self.

A vital point to stress is that in spite of certain pressures toward self-stability and consistency over time, the phenomenal self: (1) shifts from moment to moment as a function of motivational state and situational cues, and (2) is constantly evolving and changing in ways that incorporate or come to terms with one's actions or one's outcomes. The impact of self presentation on the self-concept receives our recurrent attention throughout this chapter.

But, now, what exactly do we mean by strategic self-presentation? Most would agree that self-presentation involves an actor's shaping of his or her responses to create in specific others an impression that is for one reason or another desired by the actor. Most, if not all, of these reasons can be subsumed under an interest in augmenting or maintaining one's *power* in a relationship. The actor uses his behavior to convey something about him or herself, regardless of what other meaning or significance the behavior may have.[1] Formally, we define strategic self-presentation as *those features of behavior affected by power augmentation motives designed to elicit or shape others' attributions of the actor's dispositions.* "Features" of course include the most subtle aspects of style and nonverbal expressions, as well as the contents of overt verbal communications. The definition also makes clear that we are unlikely to find a given response or set of responses that are intrinsically or universally self-presentational. Rather, self-presentation is likely to be intimately intertwined in social responses that have other significances as well. It is also by no means implied that strategic self-presentational features are necessarily false, distorted, or seriously discrepant from the phenomenal self. As we subsequently argue in more detail, such features typically involve selective disclosures and omissions, matters of emphasis and toning rather than of deceit and simulation.

In view of the difficulties created by the intertwining of self-presentational and other features of behavior, about the only way to identify the presence of strategic self-presentation is to arouse particular impression-management motives experimentally, and to observe the features that distinguish ensuing responses from behavior without such implanted motivation. This is easier said than done,

---

[1] The pronouns *he, his,* and *him* are used throughout this chapter to refer to both sexes.

but at least it provides a starting point for ostensive definition and is more or less the prescription followed in the ingratiation area (Jones 1964; Jones & Wortman, 1973).

It may be helpful to continue this definitional discussion by paying some attention to those conditions likely to inhibit self-presentational concerns. In other words, let us list some examples of settings in which strategic self-presentation behaviors are absent or minimal:

1. Behavior under conditions of high task involvement. This essentially refers to those settings that arouse "subjective self-awareness" in Duval & Wicklund's (1972) terms. The individual is absorbed by physical or intellectual challenge that, to use a Freudian image, totally captures the libidinal cathexis. The demands of the task (whether it involves hem stitching, observing, reading, or involvement in an athletic contest) preclude self-consciousness. Even lecturers and actors, though addressing an audience, may be so engrossed in their material as to elude momentary concern with its response.

2. Purely expressive behavior—anger, mirth, joy—may escape self-presentational shaping at or near the moment of provocation. Some emotions apparently overwhelm the concerns of impression management, if only for a brief moment before we start to worry whether our reactions are "appropriate" to the occasion.

3. We would also set aside as *not* self presentational a large class of overlearned, ritualized social interchanges. Actors are often apt to forgo the self-presentational possibilities of divergent ways of conducting routine commercial transactions, driving through traffic, or checking out library books—though the opportunities for impression management are very much available in these instances for the person who is constantly obsessed with his public image.

4. Finally, for psychological completeness, we might include those occasions when persons are above all concerned with the integrity or authenticity of their actions. They want their actions to be self-fulfilling and self-disclosing. They reach inward for available traces of beliefs, values, and feelings, which they try to capture in self-revealing comments or nonverbal expressions. Therapy sessions, encounter groups, and intimate relationships often motivate us to portray the phenomenal self with maximum fidelity, concealing and distorting as little as possible. This is not, however, to suggest that such contexts normally preclude a concern with managing the attributions of others. What we sincerely believe is "authentic" may vary with our audience and our purpose.

We would emphasize that self-presentation is an important subcategory of social behavior, but, nevertheless, it is a *subcategory*. To summarize, our actions in the presence of others are relatively unaffected by our concern with their impressions of us to the extent that the behavior in question is task centered, spontaneously expressive, normatively ritualized, or deliberately self-matching. On the other hand, self-presentational features will be intertwined with behavior when-

ever the actor cares, for whatever reasons, about the impression others have of him. We now move on to show what some of the reasons are, and how some of them are linked to recognizably different self-presentational strategies.

A TAXONOMY OF ATTRIBUTIONS SHAPED BY SELF-PRESENTATIONAL STRATEGIES

We believe strongly that a theory of strategic self-presentation must be anchored in identifiable social motives. Self presentation involves the actor's linkage of particular motives to his or her strategic resources. In short:

1. A wants to make secure or to augment his power to derive favorable outcomes from B.

2. The desired growth or consolidation of power may or may not be directed toward these outcomes in the immediate future. A may invest his stategic outcomes in a "power bank," whose resources may be tapped in unspecified future encounters with B.

3. A's getting the kind of power he wants will be facilitated if B has a certain impression of A.

4. Creating that impression will be easy or difficult depending on A's resources, which in turn are defined by A's cognitive and behavioral capacities within the settings available for interaction with B.

5. The linkage of a particular power motive with the self presentational features of social behavior is mediated by cognitive processes in the self-presenting actor. The behavior is further shaped by evaluative or moral constraints. The complex interaction of motive, cognition, and morality determines the choice of self-presentational strategies.

Hoping that the reader keeps these assumptions in mind, we offer a taxonomy of five classes of self-presentational strategies. The defining feature of each class is the particular attribution sought by the actor. The taxonomy consists of ingratiation, intimidation, self-promotion, exemplification, and supplication. In our view these rubrics, although not entirely exhaustive, encompass most instances of strategic self-presentation.

Ingratiation

Ingratiation is undoubtedly the most ubiquitous of all self presentational phenomena. Much of our social behavior is shaped by a concern that others like us and attribute to us such characteristics as warmth, humor, reliability, charm, and physical attractiveness. The ingratiator's goals may shift back and forth among these specific attributional foci, but by definition the ingratiator seeks to achieve the *attribution of likability*. Consistent with this orientation, ingratiation has been formally defined by Jones and Wortman (1973) as: "a class of strategic behaviors illicitly designed to influence a particular other person concerning the attractiveness of one's personal qualities [p. 2]." Ingratiating actions are illicit because

they are directed toward an objective that is typically not contained in the implicit contract underlying social interaction. In fact, the very success of ingratiation usually depends on the actor's concealment of ulterior motivation or of the importance of his stake in being judged attractive. The illicit nature of ingratiation may also lead ingratiators to deceive themselves concerning either the importance of being judged attractive or the relationship between this desired goal and the strategic features invading their action decisions. A tantalizing conspiracy of cognitive avoidance is common to the actor and his target. The actor does not wish to see himself as ingratiating; the target wants also to believe that the ingratiator is sincere in following the implicit social contract.

A considerable volume of research has been conducted in the ingratiation area, much of it summarized by Jones and Wortman (1973). Such prominent subclasses as conformity, other enhancement, doing favors, and various forms of direct and indirect self description have been dealt with extensively. The general finding is that placing an actor in a position of dependence vis a vis a more powerful target person, in comparison to control conditions in which actor and target person have equal power, gives rise to greater conformity (Jones, 1965), self-enhancement (Jones, Gergen, & Davis, 1962), and other enhancement (Jones, Gergen, & Jones, 1963). Typically, however, the dependent actor's behavior is complicated to increase credibility (Jones, 1965). Bystanding observers react negatively to conformity and other ingratiating overtures, when such overtures are obvious or excessive and the power discrepancy between the actor and the target is great (Jones, Jones, & Gergen, 1963). It is also true, however, that target persons respond more positively to a highly agreeable actor dependent on them than do bystanders watching the interchange on film (Jones, Stires, Shaver, & Harris, 1968). A number of more subtle considerations qualify these findings, but the broad outlines of ingratiation research basically show that people are responsive to ingratiation "incentives"; they tend to avoid the more blatant forms of ingratiating behavior, and if an actor's overtures are blatant, he is readily identified by outside observers as responding to ulterior motives—and less readily charged with ulterior motivation by the high-power target person himself.

The theoretical treatment of ingratiation has been more fully developed than the theoretical bases of other self-presentational strategies. The particular form that ingratiation will take (conformity versus favors versus other enhancement versus self-enhancement) is no doubt determined in complex ways by the ingratiator's resources and the nature of the setting. It is easier for the applicant to be self-enhancing than conforming in an employment interview situation. It is easier to be flattering after observing a performance or meeting an offspring of the target than in an informal discussion of world affairs. High status persons with a low-status target are more likely to use flattery to gain attraction than conformity or agreement. Thus, the time, the place, and the nature of the relationship promote the likelihood of particular attraction-seeking strategies. Individual difference factors undoubtedly also play a role both in the generation of ingratiating behavior and in bystander evaluations of ingratiation (Jones &

Baumeister, 1976). Nevertheless, a general theoretical account of the ingratiation process is plausible and consistent with known data. Such an account stresses three underlying determinants of attraction-seeking overtures:

1. Incentive value—the importance of being liked by a particular target. This varies directly with the dependence of the actor on the target and inversely with the degree of his power over the target. In most nonritualized, nontransient relationships, the incentive value is greater than zero, because the actor is unlikely to be indifferent toward others' evaluations of his attractiveness as a person.

2. Subjective probability—the choice of a particular ingratiation strategy is also determined by the subjective probability of its success and the inverse probability that a boomerang effect (decreased attraction) will occur. Thus, the motivational determinant, incentive value, is qualified or constrained by the cognitive determinant, subjective probability, in its effects on behavior. The *ingratiator's dilemma* is created by the fact that as the actor's dependence on the target goes up, his motivation to ingratiate goes up, whereas the subjective probability of its success goes down. This occurs because dependence makes salient to the target as well as any bystanding observers the possibility of ulterior purposes in actions that are commonly seen as eliciting attraction. The dilemma for the ingratiator is that the more important it is for him to gain a high-power target's attraction, the less likely it is that he will be successful. Attempts to avoid or minimize the effects of this dilemma can lead to the complication of strategic overtures already noted previously. The actor must go out of his way to establish his credibility, especially in those settings where extreme dependence might make his credibility suspect. Matters of timing are also important. We have already noted that individuals may invest the profits from strategic overtures in a power bank for use on future occasions. The far-sighted ingratiator may thus avoid the greater risks of failure attendant upon maneuvers specifically linked to those times when his dependence is most apparent and his need for approval the most imperative.

3. Perceived legitimacy—in addition to the contribution of motivational and cognitive factors, ingratiation is further shaped and constrained by moral or evaluative factors. We have already noted that the forms of ingratiating behavior vary with opportunity and resources, including appropriateness within a setting. Perceived legitimacy adds another dimension of appropriateness: the extent to which one's presentations of self are consistent with the phenomenal self and with the norms governing acceptable departures (for reasons of kindness or courtesy) from candor. Each of us internalizes a set of moral standards defining the reprehensibility of dissimulation and deceit in human relations. The moral situation is complicated, however, by the inculcation of other values favoring the promotion of self-interest and the legitimacy of self-salesmanship. Thus, out of a complex mixture of moral forces pushing here for "authenticity" and there for "impression management," the individual must decide on the best strategic combination in his dealings with others.

Because of various ambiguities connected with the "business ethic," many

would-be ingratiators can find considerable freedom of movement in their strategic choices. The press to perceive ingratiation as legitimate undoubtedly increases with other features defining the relationship: Ingratiation is likely to be perceived as legitimate in settings where self-salesmanship is sanctioned by the individualistic norms of the business world, where the target is not respected by the actor, in the absence of bystanders, and where the actor feels that his dependence is unfair or inequitable. Other possibilities are discussed by Jones (1964; Jones & Wortman, 1973). Many of these reflect the importance of consensus or perceived consensus. What "everybody does" is all right for one to do. Other factors stress the readiness of actors: (1) to deny that their behavior was insincere; and (2) to insist that their intentions were benign and socially supportive.

The theory of ingratiation does not specify clearly how these three major determinants interact. Perhaps they combine multiplicatively because if any factor is zero, ingratiation will presumably not occur. Though normative factors undoubtedly shape the form as well as the occurrence of ingratiation, it may turn out that perceived legitimacy is more a dichotomous variable than either incentive value or subjective probability. Moral decisions tend to have an either-or quality about them. This would suggest that incentive value and subjective probability multiply to produce a strong or weak tendency to ingratiate. Legitimacy then plays its role as a threshold factor, providing a go or stop signal depending on the strength of incentive value and subjective probability. Thus, a person may flatter or ingratiate even though he knows this behavior is not entirely legitimate, once the importance and the likelihood of obtaining a benefit reach a certain combined value.

Intimidation

Whereas the ingratiator attempts to convince a target person that he is likeable, the intimidator tries to convince a target person that he is *dangerous*. Whereas successful ingratiation reduces or blunts the target person's power by causing him to avoid doing anything that would hurt or cost the actor, the intimidator advertises his available power to create pain, discomfort, or all kinds of psychic costs. The actor seeks to receive the attribution that he has the resources to inflict pain and stress *and* the inclination to do so if he does not get his way. Quite unlike the ingratiator, the intimidator typically disdains any real interest in being liked; he wants to be feared, to be believed.

The intimidation prototype is the sidewalk robber who extracts money from a pedestrian by brandishing a gun or a knife. The robber is successful when the pedestrian believes the threat: If I do not give him my money, he will kill or maim me. A more benign, and more psychologically interesting prototype is an older person in some position of authority within an organization. He is gruff, austere, impatient with shoddy performance. He does not suffer fools gladly. Underlings do his bidding because they fear the consequences of his response to failure or inadequate performance. In some cases he may not even make his expectations or

desires clear, thus leaving his dependent subordinates in an uncomfortable position of edgy anxiety. In any event, it is clear in these cases that the intimidator has managed to project and elicit an attribution from others that supports his continuing social control.

Though it is perhaps more common for intimidation to flow from high-power to low-power persons, than vice versa, relationships without some element of counterpower are almost inconceivable in contemporary society. And where there are elements of counterpower, there is the opportunity for intimidation. It is by no means farfetched to speak of the power of children to intimidate adults. In fact, we suggest that the occurrence of filial intimidation is indeed common. Children learn in infancy the rewards of tears and tantrums. Especially as they progress into adolescence, our offspring can blunt the exercise of parental power by having previously established that they are quite capable of making a "scene." The anticipated likelihood of such scenes can deter the most conscientious mother from asking her son to clean his room or to do the company dishes. Parents will sometimes go to great lengths to avoid the disharmony that follows in the wake of demands on their children for services that are reasonable and equitable.

The counterpower resource of making a scene is also available to otherwise impotent employees, students, servants, or prisoners. There are, of course, a number of self-abnegating variants such as hunger strikes and passive resistance. Of especial importance in the attributional context is the threat, usually created quite unwittingly, of emotional breakup or collapse. An otherwise impotent person can gather considerable power by acquiring the reputation of one who cannot stand stress or disappointment without responding with hysterical weeping, coronary distress, or suicidal depression. The costs of acquiring such a reputation may be too great for most of us, but there are milder variations on this theme of manipulation that have considerable controlling power in many organizational contexts. The employer who fails to criticize the inept performance of an emotionally unstable employee, in the interests of avoiding a breakdown on his part, may end up unable to fire him because the employer has never given him fair warning. Similarly, it is natural for one spouse to avoid actions and conversational topics that upset the other. It is just as natural for a spouse to signal through incipient distress those mannerisms or topics that he or she wishes to eliminate from the repertory of the other spouse.

When the potential intimidator has enough power to be a credible aggressive threat, incipient anger is a very common controlling device in his relations with others. A man with a short fuse can often dominate a relationship or a group, especially if his ultimately provoked overt anger is likely to be explosive or consequential. President Eisenhower had a very mobile face whose expressions ranged from the famous grin to a dark and forbidding glower. The latter often appeared when a particular line of questioning began in a press conference, and we are tempted to speculate concerning the controlling potential of such "incipient rage," especially in view of our knowledge of his blood pressure problem.

The concept of threat is obviously central to a discussion of intimidation, but we would stress the implicit nature of most interpersonal threats and note that their effectiveness depends on the manipulation of attributions to the actor by those he desires to control. We may summarize this descriptive account of intimidation variants by suggesting some of the more common alternative attributional goals:

Attribution 1. I cannot tolerate much stress, and if I am placed under stress I will develop symptoms or engage in behaviors that will cost or embarrass you.

Attribution 2. I am willing to cause myself pain or embarrassment in order to get my way with others.

Attribution 3. I have a low threshold for anger, and when angered I behave unpredictably and irrationally.

Attribution 4. I have a low threshold for anger, and when angered I have the resources to be effectively vindictive.

Attribution 5. I am not likely to be deterred in my actions by sentiment, compassion, or the wish to be liked by others.

In theoretical terms, intimidation is in many respects the obverse of ingratiation. Intimidating gestures are likely to make the intimidator less, rather than more, attractive. As such, intimidation drives people apart and creates pressures toward withdrawal and avoidance by the target person. This is why we have stressed that intimidation most commonly occurs in relationships that have nonvoluntary status: families, marriages, student-teacher relationships, employers and employees, and military service. It is important that the intimidator have a clear conception of the strength of nonvoluntary bonds. Because intimidation generates avoidance pressures, miscalculations can result in divorces, delinquency, disinheritance, job switching, and various forms of sabotage and insurgency.

A glance at the preceding list of alternative attributions also suggests that intimidation is limited in other respects. The high-power intimidator must often forego affection and a number of attributions that are highly prized in our society. The low-power intimidator must often undergo humiliation or pain in order to carry out such threats as "making a scene," getting drunk, or becoming ill, to say nothing of carrying out such ultimate threats as suicide.

But we must also remember that much of the intimidation range is rather benign and involves transitory sequences in relationships that are otherwise stable and even, on balance, affectionate. Rather than destroy a relationship, patterns of intimidation may redefine it so that certain kinds of interaction are avoided. Thus, marital adjustments may involve a considerable amount of mutual intimidation within a framework of affection and love.

To summarize this introductory view of intimidation, interpersonal power may be exerted by credible threats that create fears of negative consequences for a target person. As a class of self-presentational strategies, intimidation involves the manipulation of attributions that support the credibility of such threats of negative consequences. The threats may be exceedingly vague or implicit. The in-

timidator may or may not be aware of the strategic goals of his self-presentations. His actions may, as in the case of the ingratiator, represent an overlearned response to a particular pattern of social conditions, rather than a self-conscious strategy of manipulation. There are almost no empirical data concerning the conditions favoring intimidation as currently defined. From the preceding discussion, however, we may extract the following suggestions about the antecedent conditions under which intimidation is most likely to occur:

1. When relationships are nonvoluntary, involve commitments difficult to abrogate, or when alternative relationships are unavailable to the target person.

2. When the potential intimidator has readily available resources with which to inflict negative consequences (weapons, wage control, sexual availability).

3. When the potential target person has weak retaliatory capacities (inhibitions regarding direct aggression toward the young or less fortunate, small stature, lack of confidence in capacity to make verbal rejoinders).

4. When the potential intimidator is willing to forego affection and the attributions of compassion, generosity, and humility—either because he has "given up" on such attributions or can obtain them in alternative relationships.

Self-promotion

Although using self-descriptions to enhance one's attractiveness was originally presented (Jones, 1964) as one form of ingratiation, we would like to separate out an important class of self descriptive communications that seek the attribution of competence rather than likability. For such communications we reserve the name self-promotion. Within the overall self-presentation taxonomy, then, we speak of an actor as "self-characterizing" when he describes himself with the ulterior goal of increasing his personal attractiveness. We speak of the actor as "self promoting" when he seeks the attribution of competence, whether with reference to general ability level (intelligence, athletic ability) or to a specific skill (typing excellence, flute-playing ability).

At the outset it should be noted that self-promotion partakes of certain features of both ingratiation and intimidation. In fact, the fusion or combination of attributional goals is common in all forms of self-presentation. We may wish to be both liked for our attractive personal qualities and respected for our talents and capacities. Or we may wish to appear competent so that we gain the social privilege of being intimidating: so that, for example, we can "get away with" depriving others for inferior performance. There is a sense in which competence itself is intimidating. We defer in awe to Einsteins, Horowitzes, and Borgs. The projection of a competent image is often an important part of the intimidator's baggage. But self-promotion is not equivalent to intimidation. We can convince others of our competence without threatening them or striking fear in their hearts.

A brief digression may delineate the difference. In 1973, R. Ringer wrote a best seller called *Winning Through Intimidation*. By the current taxonomy, this book actually said very little about intimidation and a great deal about self-

promotion. Ringer describes again and again various ploys and mannerisms for convincing others that you are worthy of their time, their attention, their business. In describing his own success as a real-estate broker, he notes the importance of flying to the potential client's city in a private Lear jet and sweeping into the office with expensive portable dictating equipment and a personal secretary. But these "trappings of power" seem less designed to threaten the client than to reassure him that the broker knows what he is doing. If he were an incompetent broker, after all, he could hardly afford a Lear jet or a traveling secretary.

There are obviously many contexts in which we are eager to impress others with our competence. Some of the more obvious ones are students confronting teachers, applicants being interviewed for professional schools or jobs, actors trying out for a play, and athletes trying to make a team. But for many of us, self-promotion is almost a full-time job. The phenomenal self is typically organized in such a way that some talents, some areas of competence, are clearly more important than others. We laugh at our own ineptitude at music, bridge, or ping pong, but we are deadly serious about our ability to diagnose an ailment, or to design a house, or to raise a family. Many self-promoters parade their ineptitude in minor areas to establish the credibility of their claims of competence in crucial areas (Jones, Gergen, & Jones, 1963).

The ingratiation strategist must cope with the problems of establishing sincerity and authenticity. The intimidator must cope with the costs and potential dangers of his threatening behavior. The self-promoter must cope with the apparent ease with which many areas of competence may be objectively diagnosed. One might wonder if a person can get away with claims of competence for very long before being observed in some form of diagnostic performance. Within long-range relationships among spouses, academic colleagues, or business associates, competence claims can ordinarily be tested against the data of performance.

An experiment by Baumeister and Jones (1978) demonstrates how people cope with diagnostic information about them to which others have access. Subjects took a personality test, the (bogus) results of which were shown to them and (so they believed) to a fellow subject with whom they were later to interact. When subjects were then given the opportunity to communicate further information about themselves to the other subject in the form of self-ratings, these ratings depended crucially on the particular personality profiles allegedly in the other subjects' hands. If the profile was generally negative, subjects rated themselves negatively on traits disparaged by the profile but strongly compensated by positive self-descriptions on dimensions not specifically mentioned. If the profile was positive, on the other hand, subjects were typically modest on all their communicated self-ratings. The relevance of these data for the current discussion of self-promotion lies in the fact that these same self-description tendencies were absent when only the subjects themselves (and not the "other subject") saw their personality profile. The compensation effect noted in the negative profile case (positive self-descriptions on traits unrelated to the profile) was not present when only the subject was the recipient, and the notable modesty in the positive profile

case also disappeared when the subject thought he was describing himself to someone who knew nothing as yet about him. It is apparent, then, that people develop fairly standard ways of coming to terms with self referent information that is publicly known. They manage their self-presentations so as not to contradict directly any known information that is negative in implications. When the information others have is generally positive, however, people apparently strive for the extra social rewards that accompany modesty, without the risk of appearing incompetent.

It is relatively easy to think of instances where the data of performance or other diagnostic information are not readily available to contradict self-promoting claims. One example is the claim of an older man that he was a star athlete, or an older woman that she was a polished dancer. There are certain crucial decisions of selection or admission that are often based largely on claims alone, though some information about previous performance is typically available as well. Nevertheless, the admissions committee or the selection officer is usually aware of the fact that prior performance in one setting may be a poor predictor of good performance in the setting to which they control access. Finally, some people may claim important attributes like a high IQ without fearing that their IQ will ever by publicly assessed. Thus, there are occasions when all we can go by in judging another's competence are his claims, and many more occasions when the claims can be only indirectly tested and never totally refuted if false.

This leaves most of us with considerable freedom to maneuver, but if there is "an ingratiator's dilemma" (see earlier), there is also a "self-promoter's paradox." Most of us learn that many people exaggerate their abilities, and therefore their competence claims can often be at least partly discounted. In fact, the paradox arises because it is often the case that competence claims are *more* likely when competence is shaky than when it is high and securely so (as evident in Baumeister and Jones's modesty findings). Even if direct competence claims are credible, the attribution of competence may be achieved along with less favoring attributions of arrogance, insecurity, or at least dreanness.

However, the gifted self-promoter will not be totally inhibited by this paradox. He will seek indirect ways to enable the target person to reach the conclusion that he is competent in the desired respects. The adroit social climber is not likely to claim membership in the upper class to establish his aristocratic origins. He will do so by subtle patterns of consumption (clothing, house, cars, furniture) that convince others he is not just a pretentious or gauche nouveau arrivé. Similarly, college, job, and professional school applicants can establish the *likelihood* that they will succeed if accepted by noting factors that would normally be expected to facilitate success: middle-class family background, educated parents, previous entry to a prestigious school, diverse summer employment experiences, elections to leadership positions, etc.—and noting them in the most matter-of-fact way.

Quattrone and Jones (1978) investigated self-presentational priorities in a role-

playing experiment in which subjects either did or did not have the opportunity for a diagnostic performance. In one vignette, for example, subjects were to imagine themselves trying out for a coveted dramatic role and were told to be motivated to convince the director that they were versatile actors, suitable for roles in future plays as well. Some subjects were to assume that they impressed the director with a highly relevant performance audition. Others were to assume that no such audition took place. In the latter case, as predicted, subjects chose to disclose to the director those designated facts about themselves that were evaluatively positive and would normally facilitate the likelihood of doing well in the part (e.g., they chose to disclose readily that they had acted the same part previously). When an audition occurred and the subject's performance was applauded by the director, however, subjects chose to assign disclosure priority to facts that would normally make it *less* likely that they could perform the particular role (e.g., they had received good notices in a play where their role was the opposite kind of person from that in the role to be currently filled). Thus, when correspondent, diagnostic behavior is possible and successful, the individual will present *inhibitory* background factors to augment the significance of his general ability or his perseverance or his innate courage. When there is not an opportunity for correspondent performance, on the other than, the individual will disclose features that normally are seen to *facilitate* the likelihood that subsequent performance will be successful.

This study has several strategic implications and especially suggests that we often do not merely wish to establish that we are competent at X, Y, or Z. Beyond this, whenever possible, we want to convince the target person that our talents stem from causal conditions that enhance our attractiveness or respectworthiness. We may wish our competence as a musician to be attributed to great natural ability rather than hard work and, thus, fail to disclose the long practice hours in our past. We may for similar reasons conceal that we have taken lessons in golf. On the other hand, if we are a member of a seminar in which the appraisal of our performance is very much a matter of the instructor's subjective judgment, we may go out of our way to impress him that we have worked harder than other seminar members in preparing papers for the course. Though he may influence the instructor to give him a higher grade in this particular course, however, the seminar member who follows this strategy also runs the risk of being evaluated as a little too limited and overconscientious for consideration as a top candidate for subsequent academic positions. Following the line of reasoning developed by Quattrone and Jones, the appropriate graduate student strategy might be to marshal all the relevant facilitatory factors for presentation to the department before admission, and to emphasize the inhibitory factors once having been admitted. The applicant might, for example, stress his Yale education prior to admission but talk much more about growing up in Appalachia once in graduate school.

To summarize the subclass of self-presentation strategies that we have labeled here as self-promotion: Individuals commonly have a stake in convincing partic-

ular target persons that they are competent in one or more areas where there are no readily available, highly criterial competence tests. Their success may be an important factor in gaining access to such important goals as prestigious school admission and responsible jobs. There are strategic problems associated with straightforward competence claims, however, in that the most persistent claimants are often the most insecure about the talents being claimed. For this reason it is a superior strategy for the self-promoter to arrange for others to make claims in his behalf, but even these can range in impact because the outside claimant may be far from an objective judge. Professors often have a stake in the success of their students and are unlikely to be ruthlessly candid in their letters of reference for a mediocre protégé. On the whole, there is no substitute for diagnostic performance itself—especially if this can be managed under conditions that implicate desirable causal origins for the demonstrated competence. The individual who wants her professional success to be attributed to her natural brilliance will obviously behave in a different way than one who wants others to attribute her success to hard work and self-denial. Self-promotion thus has a property of being multitiered, with attributions underlying attributions. It is desirable to be seen as competent, but it is even more desirable to be seen as competent for the most admired causal reasons—whatever they may be in a particular culture or situational context.

Exemplification

The ingratiator wants to be liked and the intimidator wants to be feared. The self-promoter and the exemplifier both want to be respected, to be admired, but there are subtle and important differences in the attributions they seek. Whereas the self promoter wants to be seen as competent, masterful, olympian, the exemplifier seeks to project *integrity and moral worthiness*. Once again, we emphasize that there is nothing mutually exclusive about these goals. Many of us would love to be seen as simultaneously competent, likable, and morally worthy. Nevertheless, we single out exemplification because of its distinct strategic qualities and its special relationship to the behavior of emulation and the internal conditions of guilt and shame.

The exemplifier (in Western society at least) typically presents himself as honest, disciplined, charitable, and self abnegating. He is the saint who walks among us, the martyr who sacrifices for the cause. But to be successful he must not cross over the line into self-righteousness. For appropriate social effect he must exemplify morality and not merely claim it. But what *is* the appropriate social effect? Exemplary actions may be sincere and self-consistent: The actor may have so strongly internalized the ideal values of a society that his consistently virtuous behavior is unaffected by the response of others to its expression. In-so-far as this is true, we are not dealing with strategic self-presentation as we have defined it earlier. There may be such people. We suspect that totally autonomous, self consistent, and self-expressive exemplifiers—true "exemplars"—are rare.

In keeping with our interests in strategic behavior, we turn to the more common everyday self-presenter who wants others to perceive, validate, and be influenced by his selfless integrity, even though he might vigorously deny such motivation and, indeed, be unaware of it.

The prototype for the exemplifier is, of course, the religious leader who lives a life of apparent Christian (Buddhist, Moslem, etc.) virtue in return for persuasive power. In celebrated and unusual cases, the exemplifier seeks martyrdom or, at least, passively accepts incarceration, torture, institutionalized deprivation. Examples such as Ghandi, Martin Luther King, the Ayatollah Khomeini come to mind. The power that may accrue from such dramatic exemplifiers may be used for a variety of specific objectives: recruiting a following, raising funds, changing a law, fomenting a revolution.

A variant of exemplification is ideological militancy, though the relationship of militancy to self-presentation is undoubtedly complex because militancy is typically more a collective than an individual phenomenon. Nevertheless, individuals may, in the service of an ideological belief, exploit self-deprivation to influence such institutionalized power sources as employers, legislators, judges, and government executives. This self-deprivation may often be coupled with violent confrontation. This is obvious in the case of "prolife" advocates who vandalize abortion clinics, or student militants who take over administration buildings. Antinuclear and proenvironmental forces seem to have similar potential. In all such cases the exemplifier attempts to trade on the worthiness of his cause and not solely on the physical power of his coalition with like-minded colleagues. We would label him an exemplifier, because he attempts to arouse guilt in those who otherwise have the power to control the possibilities of physical confrontation. He presents himself as taking an exclusively worthy stand for which he is willing to undergo abstinence, arrest, expulsion, and so on. The target persons to whom he presents this selfless image can reduce their resulting guilt by, if not undergoing the same deprivations, at least supporting the same cause and implicitly recognizing the worthiness of the militant advocate.

Such confrontations have a less-dramatic counterpart in many instances of social influence and self-presentation. Parental socialization of children relies heavily on exemplification. Most parents attempt to put their best foot forward in front of their children. They attempt to exemplify the values of the culture in the hopes that their children will model these values and feel guilty when falling short of parental standards. We refer here not so much to the kinds of response modeling discussed by Bandura (1971) and other social-learning theorists but rather to the sequence of self-presentation, eliciting an attribution of moral worth, providing the conditions for potential guilt in a target person, who in turn is motivated to emulate or model the exemplifier. Even in the context of socialization, the sequence implies that the child has clearly acquired a sufficient "feel" for idealized cultural values, so that he can recognize and appreciate the exemplary status of his parents.

Exemplification as a self-presentational strategy is probably as ubiquitous as

the other strategies we have discussed (and is often fused with them). The fellow alumnus who calls for a contribution to the college class fund is exemplifying because he is making the kind of sacrifice he wants and expects you to make. The neighbor who bicycles to the train station arouses our guilt as we climb into our commodious gas guzzler. The housewife who eats peanut butter sandwiches for lunch and wears clothes from the 60s can have a decisive moral edge over her self-indulgent husband with his three-martini lunch. Employers and supervisors who arrive early and leave late may exert exemplifying pressure on their subordinates, even though they may take long lunches, play midday tennis, or seclude themselves for an afternoon nap. In general, to practice what you preach is to give the preaching that much more force, but exemplification may also be effective when the preaching is not explicit.

In summary, aside from wanting others to think of us as competent and likable, we usually want them to think of us as morally worthy: honest, generous, self-sacrificing. Furthermore, attributed worthiness may provide considerable strategic leverage when asking others for support or self-sacrifice. Most would agree that President Carter was more prone to use exemplification as an influence strategy than were Presidents Johnson or Nixon. It is difficult to assess the extent to which this helped to alert the nation to the virtues of physical exercise or the need for self-sacrifices in the energy sector.   The present discussion merely scratches the surface of a complex subject, but we believe that the attribution of worthiness is often sought for strategic purposes, and that "worthy" persons often find it difficult to avoid exploiting the power inherent in their own apparent virtue.

Supplication

A final self-presentational strategy may be available to those who lack the resources implied by the preceding strategies: A person may exploit his own weakness and dependence. When the wolf feels overwhelmed by superior fighting power, it displays its vulnerable throat. This appears to evoke some form of instinctive inhibition in the attacker so that the supplicant wolf is spared. We venture to suggest an analogy in interpersonal relations. By stressing his inability to fend for himself and emphasizing his dependence on others, the human supplicant makes salient a norm of obligation or social responsibility (Berkowitz & Daniels, 1963) that is more or less binding on target persons with greater resources. Supplication— the strategy of advertising one's dependence to solicit help— works best when there appears to be an arbitrary or accidental component in the power differential (Schopler & Matthews, 1965). If through an accident of birth one enjoys such resources as physical strength, intelligence, natural beauty, or money, and another is born handicapped in some physical or mental way, social responsibility norms impose an obligation on the former to care for the latter. Matters may be somewhat different when the "self-made" man confronts the "indolent" welfare applicant, but even here there are general if less-imperative norms, that those who need have some claim over those who have more than they

need. The prototype of the self-presenting supplicant is the sexist female paired with the sexist male. The classic female supplicant (against ERA to the core) is nearly helpless in coping with the physical world. She cannot change a tire, understand algebra, read a legal document, carry a suitcase, or order wine. Her classic male counterpart, of course, rushes in to fill the breach. His vanity is touched by the indispensability of his contributions to her survival in the world. Regardless of the ultimate psychological or social consequences of this symbiosis, the supplicant female influences the male to expend energy on her behalf; to do things for her that she would like to have done. She accomplishes this at the small cost of being considered totally incompetent by her vain and dedicated husband or suitor.

We hasten to reaffirm that not all females are supplicants; nor, we now add, are all supplicants females. One suspects that many children exaggerate their ineptitude at common household chores in order to influence their parents to complete the chores themselves. Similarly, husbands often avoid learning to sew, iron, or change diapers, in order to ensure that their wives will continue to perform these functions for them, or instead of them. In a typical job setting, A may entreat B for substantial help on a project for which A gets the credit. A may then pay B with an expression of gratitude, but the more important hidden payment may be A's implicit acknowledgment of B's superiority. Such exchanges of help for competence validation are undoubtedly common in group life, whether they involve students, siblings, or job colleagues. Even more common, however, are relationships sustained by mutual dependence in which A is better than B in some areas, and B is better than A in others. Complementary aid in such cases can result in a stable and satisfactory division of labor, expertise, or advice.

The exploitation of one's dependence is a risky strategy and presumably one that is normally of last resort. There may be heavy costs to one's self-esteem in acknowledging or even advertising one's helplessness and incompetence. And there is always the good possibility that the resource-laden target person is insensitive to the social responsibility norm. Even if he responds initially with a helpful or noble gesture, he may arrange to avoid getting entrapped by the supplicant in the future by breaking off the relationship ("tell him I'm not in"). It is not too difficult for an impoverished graduate student to wangle a free lunch from his professor at a campus restaurant; it is substantially more difficult to bring about such an event a second time. The professor may start bringing sandwiches to work or eat at odd hours to avoid further exploitation by the student—who may feel that the economic deprivation that goes with student status entitles him to trade on noblesse oblige from the more affluent professor.

Summary

We have introduced a taxonomy of self-presentational strategies classified in terms of the kinds of attributions sought by the presenter. In all cases we conceive of the underlying goal as the augmentation or protection of the strategist's

attributions sought		negative attributions risked	emotion to be aroused	prototypical actions
1. Ingratiation	likable	sycophant, conformist, obsequious	affection	self-characterization, opinion conformity, other enhancement, favors
2. Intimidation	dangerous (ruthless, volatile)	blusterer, wishy-washy, ineffectual	fear	threats, anger (incipient), breakdown (in-cipient)
3. Self-promotion	competent (effective, "a winner")	fraudulent, conceited, defensive	respect (awe, deference)	performance claims, performance accounts, performances
4. Exemplification	worthy (suffers, dedicated)	hypocrite, sanctimonious, exploitative	guilt (shame, emulation)	self-denial, helping, militancy for a cause
5. Supplication	helpless (handicapped, unfortunate)	stigmatized, lazy, demanding	nurturance (obligation)	self-deprecation, entreaties for help

FIG. 9.1   A taxonomy of self-presentational strategies classified primarily by attribution sought.

po·   to influence and control his social environment. The ingratiator augments his power by reducing the likelihood that the target person will deliver negative outcomes and increasing the prospects for positive ones. The intimidator more directly enhances his power by increasing the likelihood that he will use the negative part of the range of outcomes that he can deliver to the target person. The self promoter enhances his putative instrumental value as a problem solver for the target person. Because he obviously has something to offer, he may extract money or other outcomes in exchange. The exemplifier trades on the power of recognized social norms undergirded by the judged consensus about proper values and aspirations. He influences by successfully reflecting these norms. The supplicant also gains the power provided by the sheltering norm of social responsibility. By relinquishing his claims to more immediate personal power, he places himself at the mercy of more powerful others who are, he hopes, sensitive to the dictates of noblesse oblige.

We have in passing noted that these five strategies need not be mutually exclusive, though some combinations may be more plausible and therefore more likely than others. There is a certain incompatibility between ingratiation and intimidation, though self-promotion may fit nicely with either. The exemplifier may be intimidating if he can arouse guilt and fear simultaneously. Supplication is the · ·verse of self-promotion, though the supplicant can obviously be ingratiating and even, in a certain sense, intimidating. And so on. It is also undoubtedly the case that the same act can serve different functions for different audiences. The militant picketer may intimidate management, while being an exemplifier to passersby. We separate the strategies in our taxonomy not to segregate personal types or behavior episodes but rather to distinguish the particular attributional goal, the "self" presented in the strategic act. Figure 9.1 presents a summary of the taxonomy in terms of the attribution sought, negative attributions risked, the emotion aroused, and prototypical actions.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PHENOMENAL SELF FOR STRATEGIC SELF-PRESENTATION— AND VICE VERSA

We now consider the relations between self-presentation and the phenomenal self. We ultimately want to know both how strategic self-presentations are influenced by the immediately salient features of the phenomenal self, and how the phenomenal self is altered or shaped by particular self-presentational strategies. It is perhaps self-evident that socially oriented actions should in some way reflect the phenomenal self, though there is surprisingly little evidence on this point. We here deal with the issue very briefly.

The Phenomenal Self as a Determinant of Strategy Choice

We have already commented on the existence of various social norms that sup-

port and give social value to personal consistency. The concept of "integrity" is tied in with an individual's capacity to avoid being different things to different people—in effect, to avoid being overly influenced by strategic concerns. These norms coalesce in the concept of perceived legitimacy, which constrains the circumstances under which strategic self presentations take place. We have not discussed the role of perceived legitimacy in determining the most acceptable *form* of strategic behavior once it takes place, but such considerations obviously relate to the current concern with how the phenomenal self influences the presented self. It seems likely, for example, that a person who (momentarily or characteristically) sees himself as tough and competitive is more likely to be intimidating or self-promotive than supplicating or ingratiating. Someone who has just given to charity or helped a friend move, and whose worthiness is therefore phenomenally salient, is more likely than others to adopt the strategies of exemplification. Clearly, there is a wide-open field of study involved in charting the role that individual differences play in preferences for particular forms of strategic behavior. Immediate prior experiences may also affect strategic choice, however, and this avenue of experimentation should not be ignored.

Self-Enhancement, Approval, and Self-Esteem

We ultimately want to know both how strategic self-presentations are influenced by the immediately salient features of the phenomenal self, and how the phenomenal self is temporarily affected by a particular choice of self-presentational strategy. Turning to effects of self-presentation on the phenomenal self, research on this question has been largely restricted to the consequences of ingratiation for the actor's self-esteem. We review this research briefly and then speculate concerning the consequences for the phenomenal self of self-presentations involving the remaining strategies.

Let us begin by picturing an actor who is asked to characterize himself in a setting where he has a stake in gaining attraction from a target person. Typically, ingratiation research shows an actor in such a setting will be more self-enhancing than one in more neutral settings where attraction is less of an issue (Gergen, 1965; Jones, Gergen, & Davis, 1962; Jones, Gergen, & Jones, 1963). Self-enhancement will be reduced and self-characterization will be more modest to the extent that the actor's dependence on the target person is salient (Stires & Jones, 1969). If we could subsequently gain access to the undistorted phenomenal self, would it reflect in any way the preceding self-characterization? What circumstances might augment and what might lessen the impact of such self-characterization on the phenomenal self?

First of all, it is abundantly clear that if an actor is positively reinforced for characterizing himself in a very enhanced way, his phenomenal self will subsequently shift in the direction of the characterized self. Indirect evidence on this point is presented by Jones, Gergen, and Davis (1962). Subjects instructed to play the role of fellowship applicants with an interviewer were considerably

more self-enhancing than control subjects instructed to present themselves accurately to a counselor trying to help them. Half the subjects in each condition then learned that they had impressed the interviewer favorably; the other half learned that the interviewer was unfavorably impressed. Regardless of whether subjects were in the ingratiation or control (accuracy) conditions, those with positive feedback rated their behavior in the interview as "more representative" of their true selves than those with negative feedback.

More direct evidence along the same lines comes from Gergen's (1965) experiment, in which subjects in an ingratiation condition were instructed to make a positive impression on an interviewer, and those in an accuracy condition were instructed to help the interviewer get to know them. All subjects in the ingratiation condition and half the accuracy condition subjects were then reinforced by the interviewer's head nods and expressions of agreement each time they characterized themselves in a positive way on a special triads test. The remaining accuracy subjects were not reinforced at all. Finally, all subjects filled out a self-esteem scale for the experimenter to gauge the extent to which the reinforcement generalized. The results showed a considerable elevation of self-esteem scores in the reinforcement conditions. Although ingratiation subjects were significantly more self-enhancing in the interview than accuracy subjects, both groups ultimately showed approximately the same degree of self-esteem elevation. This seems to indicate that even though subjects in the ingratiation condition realized that their self-characterizations were somewhat unrealistic, as measured by the decline in self evaluation from the interview situation to the final self ratings in a more neutral setting, they nevertheless did not lower their self-esteem back to its original level. In both Gergen's experiment and the earlier one of Jones, Gergen, and Davis, positive feedback was an important factor in determining resultant self-esteem levels.

Recent studies by Jones, Rhodewalt, Berglas, and Skelton (1981) took a different approach to the question of the impact of self-presentation on the phenomenal self. If subjects can be induced to characterize themselves positively without explicit instructions to fabricate or distort their characteristics, this may be sufficient to elevate subsequent self-esteem, even in the absence of positive feedback. Why might this be so? Two possibilities suggest themselves: dissonance reduction and biased scanning. If we were to assume that actors have stable phenomenal selves and that ingratiation incentives induced them to describe their characteristics in ways that differ from this stable self-picture, dissonance would be aroused. If the dissonance could not be reduced by attributing responsibility for the discrepancy to experimental instructions, it could most conveniently be reduced by a change in the phenomenal self in the direction of the ingratiating self-characterization. This would be yet another instance of attitudes reflecting behavior in a situation where the actor has some choice and responsibility for his actions (Wicklund & Brehm, 1976).

The biased-scanning approach (Janis & Gilmore, 1965) assumes that the selves phenomenally available to the same person over time are highly variable

in many respects, including favorability; that is, situational cues and immediate past experiences elevate the salience of certain self-features more than others. It follows that inducing a subject to describe himself in a highly favorable way is not necessarily dissonant with some of the phenomenally available selves and will not motivate the subject to *change* his stable self-concept in the direction of a new phenomenal self. Instead, the biased-scanning hypothesis assumes selective attention to those aspects of the phenomenal self that are most consistent with the actor's strategic goals. A subject induced to characterize himself very favorably, for example, will typically do this without clear dissimulation or misrepresentation. He will put his best foot forward, but it is nevertheless *his* foot. Subsequently, because of the recent biased scanning of favorable instances and self-appraisals, the actor will show the kind of elevated self-esteem observed in Gergen's study.

Jones and Berglas (Experiment 1 in Jones, et al., 1981) set out to explore some of the conditions under which self presentation produces a shift in subsequent self-esteem. They invited prospective college-student subjects to participate for money as members of small teams that would be observing high-school student encounter groups. (This activity was selected as a highly desirable one for most undergraduates.) Subjects were informed, however, that selection as an observer team member was contingent on: (1) doing well on a social sensitivity test; and (2) impressing the team leader with their attractive qualities during an interview. The social sensitivity test involved looking at videotaped excerpts of three previous interviewees responding, allegedly, to the same ingratiation-promoting instructions. The subject was asked to indicate which of the three received the highest attraction ratings by the interviewer. This observation and rating task provided a means of varying the perceived legitimacy of highly favorable versus rather modest self-characterizations. Half the subjects saw tapes of highly self-enhancing behavior in all three interviewees. For the remainder, the interviewees were uniformly modest and self-deprecating. Crosscutting this variation in the direction of the consensus about how to be ingratiating, the order of events was varied. Some subjects were exposed to the taped interview segments before their own interview; others saw the tapes after the interview. The interview itself included a series of items from which a self-enhancement score could be derived.

After the two procedures, whatever their order, all subjects were asked as an incidental afterthought to fill out some questionnaires for a colleague of the experimenter at another university. Their responses would be anonymous and would be mailed directly to him. This afterthought questionnaire provided a measure of self-esteem in a totally different format than that used for the behavioral measure in the interview, and the setting was itself neutral, nonstrategic, and anonymous. Results showed a striking carry-over from self-presentation to subsequent self-esteem. Subjects who saw the consensus tapes prior to their interviews were much affected by them; those exposed to the self-enhancing consensus were themselves much more self-enhancing than those exposed to the self-deprecating consensus. These differences continued to be

reflected in highly significant differences on the supposedly unrelated self-esteem task. Subjects exposed to the tapes *after* their interview were unaffected by the apparent consensus. Thus, the self-esteem carry-over is more than a simple effect of what is perceived to be legitimate or normative in a situation. It depends crucially on whether the actor has been induced to modify his behavior.

Although powerful carry-over effects were obtained in this study, their bearing on the dissonance biased-scanning controversy is not clear. The results are very compatible with the biased scanning hypothesis, because subjects presented a selective pattern of strengths or weaknesses that could easily have made salient either an optimistic or pessimistic view of the self. Dissonance theory would have more trouble handling the results, because it is not clear why dissonance should have been aroused by the procedures—at least by those in the self enhancing conditions. Why should there be dissonance when a subject describes himself positively in the same setting in which he has seen others describing themselves positively as well? Presumably, self-enhancement should have high perceived legitimacy in such a setting. Dissonance arousal would be prevented by the presence of a consensus justifying any exaggerations or distortions in characterizing the self.

In a follow-up study (Experiment III in Jones, et al., 1981) subjects were instructed to present themselves either in a self-enhancing or a self-deprecating way in a contrived interview situation. The interviewer supposedly did not know the situation was contrived. Half the subjects were explicitly told that they could withdraw from the experiment at this point. The remaining subjects were given no such option. This intended manipulation of cognitive dissonance produced variations in self-esteem carry-over, but only in the self-deprecating conditions. Thus those who, in effect, chose to participate in an interview under self-deprecation instructions later rated their self-esteem lower than those who deprecated themselves without being told they had the option to withdraw.

Although the choice manipulation had no effect on self-esteem carry-over in the self-enhancing interviews, a biased scanning manipulation did. Half the subjects generated their own responses to the interview instructions; the remaining subjects were yoked to these so that their responses in the interview were specified for them. This variation in the degree of self reference had no effect on self-esteem carry-over in the self-deprecation conditions but clearly affected carry-over after the self-enhancing interviews. Those who had generated their own self-enhancing interview responses later showed higher self-esteem than yoked subjects constrained to make exactly the same responses.

These results are complex but comprehensible. Jones, et al. (1981) suggest that the self-concept is not inflexibly structured. Like other attitudes it has a latitude of acceptable attributes—things that the individual is willing to believe about himself—and a latitude of rejection. Subjects in the self-enhancing condition are basically operating within the latitude of acceptable attributes. Therefore, following the proposal of Fazio, Zanna, and Cooper (1977), self concept changes should be explainable in terms of self perception theory (Bem, 1972).

According to this theory, subjects' self concepts should be heavily influenced by their recent behavior, as long as that behavior is seen as self-relevant. Presumably, subjects in the yoked conditions do not see their behavior as self-relevant since the specific content is specified by someone else. Self-deprecating subjects, on the other hand, are acknowledging self attributes that fall in the latitude of rejection. Thus, again according to Fazio, Zanna, and Cooper (1977), dissonance is created to the extent that there is perceived choice to describe oneself in a self-deprecating way.

The results of this final experiment in the series reported by Jones, et al., (1981) suggest that self presentation can influence the phenomenal self both through biased scanning and dissonance reduction processes, depending importantly on the conditions and the content of the self presentation episode.

Performance Authenticity, Self-handicapping, and Social Feedback

The effects of other presentational tactics on the phenomenal self are contingent both on the social feedback they elicit and the "authenticity" of the presented self. The ingratiator wants to be liked, but it is especially rewarding if he is viewed as attractive having not misrepresented himself. Jones (1964) refers to this as the "signifying" value of feedback, noting each actor's interest in verifying or validating his self-concept by reading the social responses of others and also noting that the signification value of approval is less meaningful to the extent that the actor has gone out of his way to achieve it. As Lord Chesterfield (1774) proposed, futhermore, approval is especially valued if we are uncertain about whether we deserve it. We believe that very similar points could be made with regard to self-promotion and the desire for respect. It is nice if someone believes we are competent, it is better if the same person confirms our own beliefs in our competence, and it is even better if someone convinces us we are competent in an area where we were previously uncertain.

The fact that approval is especially valuable following an authentic or representative performance puts pressures on the actor that have consequences for the phenomenal self. On the one hand, perceived legitimacy considerations constrain his self-presentations so that they are at least loosely tethered to the phenomenal self. On the other hand, given the fact that some self-presentations occur in settings that tempt the actor to make questionable claims, we can imagine pressures on the individual to bring his phenomenal self in line with these claims. Only in this way can he maximize the signification value of any approval received.

The desire for self-validating approval may become especially strong when events conspire to threaten cherished features of the phenomenal self. Thus, the rejected suitor may try especially hard to be charming and likable around his female friends; the solid citizen arrested for speeding might decide to increase his community service work. In such cases threats to the phenomenal self lead to self-presentations designed to secure restorative feedback. To the extent that the threatened actor sustains his counteractive behavior or to the extent that the coun-

teractive behavior involves effortful and costly commitments, social confirmation will have the restorative power sought.

Such validation-oriented self-presentations involve a kind of "positioning" to optimize the value of self-presentational success. An observer's respect for a self-promoting actor is more valuable when it confirms the actor's own image of self competence. And the actor's subjective competence image may itself evolve from, or be protected by, self-handicapping strategies. Jones and Berglas (1978) used this term to denote a widespread tendency to avoid unequivocal information about one's own abilities when that information might suggest incompetence. To this end people may arrange performance circumstances that create impediments in the path of optimal performance (thus, the word *handicapping*). In this way responsibility for success may be triumphantly internalized and for failure, discounted. Berglas and Jones (1978) present the data from two experiments to show subjects will protect ill-gotten performance gains (in their experiments a "success" derived from luck or chance) by choosing a performance-inhibiting rather than a performance-facilitating drug prior to retest. The notion of self-handicapping fits into a more general framework of "egotism" in self-attribution (Snyder, Stephan, & Rosenfield, 1978). From the present point of view, self-handicapping and other egotistic maneuvers may be seen as one way to position one's self so that signs of respect from others for one's competence will not be dismissed as ill-gotten or undeserved gain. At the same time, such maneuvers reduce the impact of failure or disparaging criticism.

Other Carry-Over Effects

Intimidation. To what extent must the intimidator come to terms with his potential to hurt others and his willingness to exploit that potential? We have noted that intimidation requires a relationship that is to some extent nonvoluntary. This fact has the important consequence that the intimidator may seldom receive the attributional feedback that his actions deserve. Instead of learning that he is ruthless or dangerous or violence prone, he may receive signals of admiration and fealty. Thus, intimidation can elicit ingratiation or supplication often enough for the intimidator to be quite misled concerning the attributions he has actually elicited in those who do his bidding. This is reminiscent of the tyrant's dilemma noted by Thibaut and Riecken (1955): A tyrant may exert successful control over his subjects, but the more he applies his power the less information he receives concerning their spontaneous goodwill and affection. Thus, the intimidator may bask in the unwarranted inference that people are doing things for him because they like him or respect him, rather than because they are afraid not to.

On the other hand, there may be circumstances that shatter such illusions and leave the intimidator with the realization that his power is truly based on his willingness to apply negative sanctions. Here, perhaps, the intimidator can and does protect his phenomenal self from the negative implications of his behavior by one of a number of justifications: The world is a jungle, it's for your own good, it's my neck if we fail, war is hell.

Exemplification. It is an intriguing fact that exemplifiers often present themselves as mediators or spokesmen for external agencies. Thibaut (1964) has written of the paradoxical mixture of activism and fatalism in the lives of great exemplars: "In many cases there appears to be a strong dependence on a powerful external agency of control, which may sometimes be a form of deity, an ineluctable historical force, an institution (the army), etc. It is as though the man belonged to a coalition that gave him greater strength to strive or to resist than could be commanded by any single individual [p. 87]." Thibaut suggests a number of reasons why such an imagined coalition with a powerful agency might lead to a high level of striving and influence and accomplishment. In the present context, however, we are more interested in some of the paradoxical consequences for the phenomenal self of acting on behalf of an all powerful force. One's immediate associations might suggest that servile "humility" would be the self-image most compatible with exemplification. But there are many conflicting data that involve instances of arrogance and exploitation, even if we avoid the totally fraudulent cult leaders and evangelists who deliberately dissimulate for power or cash. There are enough cases in which initially humble, selfless exemplifiers were transformed into arrogant exploiters to pose a challenge for social psychological analysis. Perhaps because of the coalition with an omnipotent agency mentioned previously, the exemplifier may come to believe in his own moral invulnerability and lose contact with normally effective social and legal sanctions. The case of Jim Jones and his voracious sexual exploitations seems pertinent here, along with the ultimate homicidal behavior of Charles Hedrick, the founder of Synanon. There are doubtless other cases in which the exemplifier gets carried away with his own moral authority. Such transformations seem to be extreme instances of the impact of a self-presentational strategy on the phenomenal self.

Turning to the more casual everyday exemplifier, we suspect that there is considerable strain inherent in maintaining an impeccable moral posture. The exemplifier may find himself on a perpetual treadmill, for behavioral departures from worthiness claims can elicit ridicule and contempt. Here, perhaps, it might seem important to distinguish between the implicit exemplifier and the more explicit claimant to worthiness. To the extent, however, that the actor attempts to trade on his worthiness in the market of social influence, he becomes a claimant whether or not this is made explicit. Implicit or explicit worthiness claims place a greater burden on the exemplifier than competence claims do on the self-promoter. To overestimate one's competence may be seen as part of the game of life; to parade one's worthiness is at the very least to heighten one's vulnerability to charges of hypocrisy, self-righteousness, or fraudulent piety. There is something paradoxical about expressing pride in one's humility, or exerting influence through self-denial. In addition, whereas one can be competent at x but not at y or z, worthiness is a more either/or quality, a more indivisible whole.

A consequence of the constant pressure on the exemplifier may be the use of

"time-outs" or the segregation of on-stage from back-stage performances (Goffman, 1959). Thus, the exemplifier may be able to maintain a consistent moral posture in front of one audience, whereas behaving differently in private or with other audiences. The priest may be a secret heavy drinker or visit brothels in a neighboring city. The father may be profligate and self-indulgent at a convention, although emphasizing the virtues of self-denial to his children.

Supplication. The phenomenal self of the supplicant is by definition incomplete. The supplicant's self-esteem must be threatened by his cultivation of dependence and ineptitude. We speculate that this might be countered by a form of "identification with the aggressor" that may provide psychological sustenance. To take pleasure in the outcomes and achievements of those who control your fate may be an important form of vicarious gratification that gives closure to the self-concept. An emphasis of the team, the organization, the family, the ethnic group may perhaps be a saving feature of the supplicant's phenomenal self. If one is dependent on others, it may be comforting to think in terms of larger symbiotic units when reflecting on one's identity.

An alternative possibility is that the supplicant can view himself as deserving the largesse of others more fortunate than he. This may coincide with a broader ideological conviction that those who have gained more should be expected to give more. Equity, not equality is the watchword. Or the dependent supplicant may feel that the system let him down; therefore, the conviction that the system "owes him" is woven into an ideology of embittered and peevish passivity.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The strategic self-presentation rubric encompasses much, though by no means all, of interpersonal behavior. The present essay has drawn attention to five distinct strategies designed to manipulate a target person's attributions to an actor. The attributions sought are in the ultimate interest of power maintenance or augmentation. It should be emphasized that most of the time these strategies are not self-consciously pursued. We assume that because power-reducing actions are maladaptive for the person, he learns—indeed overlearns—those ways of behaving that have power-augmenting implications for the self. By and large these ways of behaving become semiautomatic reactions triggered by interpersonal threats and opportunities.

The strategy of *ingratiation* is undoubtedly the most ubiquitous as well as the most highly researched. It is hard to imagine a person who is totally indifferent to the affective reactions he induces in others; we all would rather be liked than ignored or disliked. And efforts to be liked are presumably boosted when we find ourselves in a dependent or low-power position. Research has highlighted the dilemma facing the would-be ingratiator; the greater or more obvious the dependence, the greater the target person's defensive sensitivity to ingratiating overtures. Nevertheless, target persons are often trapped by their own vanity.

Just as the ingratiator wants to believe in his own sincerity, the target person wants to believe in the sincerity of the compliments or agreements he receives. This clearly mutes the ingratiator's dilemma. Nevertheless, establishing credibility is a major task for the ingratiator—precisely in those settings where he most wants to be liked.

Intimidation is a second strategy and one quite distinct from ingratiation in emphasizing threat and the manipulation of fear rather than the more positive emotions associated with affection. Intimidation also requires credibility for its effectiveness, but even credible intimidation may be a self defeating strategy in relationships that may be easily abrogated or avoided. However, the more subtle forms of intimidation are often woven through relationships that are basically founded on affection, respect, and other positive emotions. Subtle intimidation pressures may shape the flow of behavior and lead to consistent conversational omissions or diversions. Intimidators are generally (though not necessarily) in positions of high power relative to their targets. To the extent that this is true, the intimidator is not likely to learn that the target's compliances are based on fear. In such settings of clear differential power intimidation often breeds ingratiation and thus provides the intimidator with misleading feedback concerning the attributions actually suggested by his actions.

Self-Promotion, the third strategy discussed, is a close cousin to ingratiation with the emphasis on competence and respect rather than personal attractiveness and affection. A distinctive feature is the potential availability of independent evidence concerning ability. This raises the danger of false claims with which the self-promoted may be discredited. But the lines of inference from performance to attributed ability are usually tenuous enough to permit considerable strategic maneuvering. Self-handicapping strategies are not only useful for deceiving oneself; they can be very important in arranging one's self-presentations before influential audiences. The self handicapper can always make sure that his performances are given under less than optimal circumstances, thus guaranteeing that poor performance will be attributionally ambiguous, and that good performance will yield high competence attributions. In addition, research has shown that people are well aware of the relative attractiveness of certain causal factors underlying competence, and we assume that they will arrange their self-presentations to suggest the existence of these attractive causal factors. Most of us would rather be considered as relaxed but brilliant, for example, than as plodding overachievers. There are occasions, however, when the latter attribution might be acceptable or even preferred.

Exemplification, the fourth strategy, runs the gamut from the explicit manipulations of muckrakers and religious leaders to the subtleties of serving as a modest moral model in the parent or teacher role. Attempting to exemplify virtue or culture-defined worthiness has different implications for the actor than attempting to promote one's competence image. Worthiness is a more seamless whole attribute than competence. A man who has been a model of virtue all his life, but who one day is caught with his hand in the till, is suddenly but a parody

of virtue, a fraudulent hypocrite. A performer who occasionally fails to live up to expectations is easily excused as having a bad day.

The final strategy, *supplication*, may be considered a strategy of last resort, but it may nevertheless be a highly effective way of avoiding the negative reaches of others' power when one's own power resources are limited. By throwing himself at the mercy of the high-power target person, the supplicant counts on social responsibility norms to reduce the risk of being even further exploited because he has advertised his dependence. His reading of the target person's susceptibility to such normative pressure is obviously very important.

We propose that these five strategies are interwoven in much of social behavior, though the behavior almost always serves other purposes as well as power augmentation. We do not propose that this is somehow a typology of persons, even if for expositional purposes we have written about intimidators, exemplifiers, and supplicants. Though we do not think much would be gained by a psychometric individual-difference approach to self-presentational strategies, it would not be altogether surprising to find that certain experiences and certain personal resources would make one strategy much more prominent than others in a particular actor's repertory. It is clear also that the strategies are often linked or fused so that one precedes or gives way to another. This is particularly true of the trio, ingratiation, self-promotion, and exemplification. On the other hand, ingratiation and intimidation seem to be rather incompatible strategies, as are self-promotion and supplication. Finally, one actor's strategy may trigger counterstrategies in the target person. We have noted that intimidation can lead to ingratiation, but the opposite may also be true if target persons rise to take advantage of those who appear to like them. Self-promotion might in some cases give rise to competing self-promotion in the target, or in other circumstances it could evoke supplication or ingratiation. All of which makes it extremely difficult to think of promising research strategies for pinning down determinants and conditions. We hope and suspect, however, that the provision of the present taxonomy will not only stimulate such research but provide a framework for a fair amount of existing research that was produced under different labels for different theoretical purposes. We ourselves intend to pursue these possibilities in our future work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES

Bandura, A. (Ed.), *Psychological modeling: Conflicting theories.* Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971.

Baumeister, R. F. & Jones, E. E.   When self-presentation is constrained by the target's knowledge: Consistency and Compensation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 1978, *36,* 608–618.

Bem, D.   Self-perception theory. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 6). New York: Academic Press, 1972.

Berglas, S., & Jones, E. E.   Drug choice as a self-handicapping strategy in response to noncontingent success. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 1978, *36,* 405–417.

Berkowitz, L., & Daniels, L. R.   Responsibility and dependency. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology,* 1963, *66,* 664–669.

Carnegie, D.   *How to win friends and influence people.* New York: Simon Schuster, 1936.

Chesterfield, Earl of (Philip Darmer Stanhope).   *Letters to his son.* (Walter M. Dunne, ed.) Wiley, 1901. Original Publ. 1774.

Cozby, P. C.   Self-disclosure: A literature review. *Psychological Bulletin,* 1973, *79,* 73–91.

Duval, S., & Wicklund, R. A.   *A theory of objective self awareness.* New York: Academic Press, 1972.

Fazio, R. H., Zanna, M. P., & Cooper, J.   Dissonance and self perception: An integrative view of each theory's proper domain of application. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology,* 1977, *13,* 464–479.

Gergen, K. J.   The effects of interaction goals and personalistic feedback on the presentation of self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 1965, *1,* 413–424.

Goffman, E.   *The presentation of self in everyday life.* Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday and Company, 1959.

Janis, I. L., & Gilmore, J. B.   The influence of incentive conditions on the success of role playing in modifying attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 1965, *1,* 17–27.

Jones, E. E.   *Ingratiation: A social-psychological analysis.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964; Irvington, 1975.

Jones, E. E.   Conformity as a tactic of ingratiation. *Science,* 1965, *149,* 144–150.

Jones, E. E., & Baumeister, R.   The self-monitor looks at the ingratiator. *Journal of Personality,* 1976, *44,* 654–674.

Jones, E. E., & Berglas, S.   Control of attributions about the self through self-handicapping strategies: The appeal of alcohol and the role of underachievement. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,* 1978, *4,* 200–206.

Jones, E. E., & Gerard, H. B.   *Foundations of social psychology.* New York: Wiley, 1967.

Jones, E. E., Gergen, K. J., & Davis, K. E.   Some determinants of reactions to being approved or disapproved as a person. *Psychological Monographs,* 1962, *76,* (2, Whole No. 521).

Jones, E. E., Gergen, K. J., & Jones, R. G.   Tactics of ingratiation among leaders and subordinates in a status hierarchy. *Psychological Monographs,* 1963, *77,* (3, Whole No. 566).

Jones, E. E., Jones, R. G., & Gergen, K. J.   Some conditions affecting the evaluation of a conformist. *Journal of Personality,* 1963, *31,* 270–288.

Jones, E. E., Rhodewalt, F., Berglas, S., & Skelton, J. A.   Effects of strategic self-presentation on subsequent self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 1981, *41,* 407–421.

Jones, E. E., Stires, L.K., Shaver, K. G., & Harris, V. A.   Evaluation of an ingratiator by target persons and bystanders. *Journal of Personality,* 1968, *36,* 349–385.

Jones, E. E., & Wortman, C.   *Ingratiation: An attributional approach.* Morristown, N. J.: General Learning Press, 1973.

Jourard, S. M.   *The transparent self.* Princeton, N. J.: Van Nostrand, 1964.

Korda, M.   *Power: How to get it, how to use it.* New York: Random House, 1975.

Langer, E., & Newman, H. M.   The role of mindlessness in a typical social psychology experiment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 1979, *5*, 295–298.

Orne, M. T.   On the social psychology of the psychology experiment. *American Psychologist*, 1962, *17*, 776–783.

Quattrone, G. A., & Jones, E. E.   Selective self-disclosure with and without correspondent performance. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 1978, *14*, 511–526.

Ringer, R. J. *Winning through intimidation*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Book Publishers Company, 1973.

Rosenberg, M. J.   When dissonance fails: On eliminating evaluation apprehension from attitude measurement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1965, *1*, 28–42.

Rosenthal, R.   *Experimenter effects in behavioral research*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966.

Schopler, J., & Matthews, M. W.   The influence of the perceived causal locus of partner's dependence on the use of interpersonal power. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1965, *2* 609–612.

Snyder, M. L., Stephan, W. G., & Rosenfield, D.   Attributional egotism. In J. H. Harvey, W. J. Ickes, & R. F. Kidd (Eds.), *New directions in attribution research*. (Vol. 2). Hillsdale, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1978.

Sures, L. K., & Jones, E. E.   Modesty vs. self-enhancement as alternative forms of ingratiation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 1969, *5*, 172–188.

Tedeschi, J. T., Schlenker, B. R., & Bonoma, T. V.   Cognitive dissonance: Private ratiocination or public spectacle? *American Psychologist*, 1971, *26*, 685–695.

Thibaut, J. W.   The motivational effects of social dependence on a powerful agency of control: In W. W. Cooper, H. J. Leavitt, & M. W. Shelley II (Eds.) *New perspectives in organization research*. New York: Wiley, 1964.

Thibaut, J. W., & Riecken, H. W.   Some determinants and consequences of the perception of social causality. *Journal of Personality*, 1955, *24*, 113–133.

Webb, E. T., & Morgan, J. B.   *Strategy in handling people*. Garden City, L. I.: Garden City Publishers, 1930.

Wicklund, R. A., & Brehm, J. W.   *Prespectives on cognitive dissonance* Hillsdale, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1976.