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ABSTRACT

Recent research on self-concept has focused on understanding the self in its specific dimensions or in relation to specific roles or situations. Studies on specific self-concept suggest that specific selves may show more stability than global self-concept. This study explored the situationally specific self-concept of participants in a mountaineering experience and then assessed whether recall of that self-concept was stable in a long-term followup. In 1978, 57 adolescents in a 9-week adventure camp program completed the Adjective Check List twice: as a measure of global self-concept on the program's second day and as a measure of specific self-concept as a mountaineer 1 month later after climbing Mt. Rainier. In 1991, 31 original participants, now aged 28-30, again completed global and specific self-concept measures, 30 days apart. Analysis of the standardized scales demonstrates a difference between the global and specific selves, with the specific self seeming to reflect a more selective focused self. The specific view of self collected from an adventure experience of mountain climbing remained as a primarily stable, permanent self-image, even after 13 years had passed. The positive view of self immediately after the experience was characterized as being a goal-directed, self-confident achiever who also felt inner anxiety, excitement, and cooperative attitude toward group members. Years later, the self-image maintained the core view of a goal-directed achiever but viewed some specific facets of self-image less intensely and a few with embellishments. Contains 28 references. (SV)

THE PERMANENCY OF A SPECIFIC SELF-CONCEPT

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The Adjective Check List was used to measure a global and a specific self-concept. The results indicate differentiation between the global self and a specific adventure self as mountaineer and a high degree of permanency was found in the specific self at the follow-up thirteen years later.

KEYWORDS: *Self-concept, outdoor adventure, specific self, adjective check list, global self, long-term effects*

INTRODUCTION

Conceptions of the self have an extensive research tradition and historically have emphasized the general or total self-concept. More recently, researchers in self-concept have argued for multidimensional models of self which includes both a general construct and specific dimensions (e.g., Byrne, 1984; Gergen, 1971; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Marsh, 1986, 1990). The hierarchical model of the self (Byrne 1984; Marsh, Byrne, & Shavelson, 1988; Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976) describes the global self as an overall self which is influenced by more specific domains of the self. Specific dimensions of the self have included broad domains such as the academic self, as well as more narrow selves such as a math academic self (Marsh, 1990). Research in physical self-concept has demonstrated specific physical self domains such as strength, sport ability, endurance/ fitness, appearance (Fox & Corbin, 1989; Marsh, 1994). The hierarchical self is conceptualized as a pyramid structure with progressively greater specificity at the lower levels of the pyramid. Ultimately, the base of the self-concept triangle rests on specific experiences within certain domains that create the phenomenal self in both specific and more global dimensions.

Recent research places greater emphasis on understanding the self in its specific dimensions. The assessment of self-concept must move from the global domain to focus on the specific roles of the participant (Griffin, Chassin, & Young, 1981) or the self-report from the specific experience itself (Wright, 1982). Research in outdoor education should reflect the perspectives demonstrated in other educational areas like the academic self-concept or the physical self-concept. Marsh states, "I am not arguing that researchers should completely abandon measures of general self-concept and general physical self-concept, but researchers and practitioners should place more emphasis on the specific physical self-concept domains particularly relevant to their concern" (1994, p.322). Within a recreational context, researchers could assess self-concept in specific roles, such as athlete, basketball player, kayaker, mountaineer, or from the context of a single outdoor recreation experience.

Stability of Specific Self-Concept Measures

The question of stability of a self report is essential to the purpose of this research. The hierarchical self-concept originally hypothesized that the global self would be the most stable dimension of the self (Byrne, 1984). However, studies on specific self-concept suggest that the specific selves may show more stability than global domains. Shavelson and Bolus (1982) failed to find greater stability of the general self in a study related to academic self-

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concept. Marsh, Richards, and Barnes (1986, 1987) reached a similar conclusion in their research with Australian Outward Bound, stating, "Data from this study also suggest that general-self is substantially less stable over long-term intervals than more specific facets of self" (Marsh, et al. 1987, p.490). The Youth in Transition study (Bachman, O'Malley, & Johnson, 1978) also found a higher stability in specific dimensions of self than in a general self-concept scale when assessed two years apart.

The proposition of a reasonably stable specific self is critiqued by some self-theorists from the sociological tradition who suggest that in very specific settings a person's self evaluations may be quite variable due to the influence of others in that setting (Gergen, 1982). However, Gergen's laboratory style research argues that the individual may change a specific self-report from one situation to another based on who is there and does not really address the issue of consistency in recall of a self-report. If a person accurately stores a specific self experience and it is reported accurately at a later time, it would be reasonably stable within the person. The high variability that can be seen across specific-self reports in different settings is a different issue than the issue of consistency over time or consistency in recall of a self-description.

Based on the empirical studies from the hierarchical self model, the hypothesis for this study would predict stability for the situationally specific self. The researcher does recognize that previous research on specific self measured a specific domain such as physical self (Marsh, et al., 1987), whereas the current study measures a specific self in a single situation: a mountaineering experience.

Influence of Memory on Specific Self-Concept Measures

The study focuses on the measurement of a situationally specific self-concept that was taken immediately after an outdoor experience and then measured 13 years later. The recall of a specific self concept raises the question of the role of memory in self-concept. Can one expect specific recall of a self-perception after such a long period of time has passed? Literature on autobiographical memory helps respond to the memory question. Autobiographical memory, which is defined as the capacity to recollect personal events of one's life (Rubin, 1986), has seen renewed and sometimes controversial interest. Self memories are divided into two categories: episodic and semantic. Semantic information is material that is repeatedly experienced by the person, such as relatives' names, and is considered part of the general information of one's personal past. Episodic information, on the other hand, is memory of single incidents that can be referenced to a specific time and place. The recall of a specific self-concept would be asking the person to reflect on an episodic memory.

One of the characteristics of certain episodic autobiographical memories is the clarity or vividness of the memory. Brown and Kulick (1977) used the term "flashbulb memory" as recalling personal experiences in reference to historical events such as the Kennedy assassination. Flashbulb memories were labeled as such due to their clear, vivid, almost life-like properties, in addition to meeting other established criterion. Rubin and Kosin (1984) utilized the term "vivid memories" as an extension of the work of Brown and Kulick. Vivid memories were clear like a flashbulb snapshot but they were found to be more inclusive of different types of self-memory.

The relevance of this literature discussion is that researchers (Rubin & Kosin, 1984) found that a young adult sample group showed that the number of years since the experience showed little influence on memory in terms of meeting the criteria of clear and vivid quality of the memory. Long-term specific memory can be a vivid memory. Rubin and Kosin (1984) remind us that "vividness, however, should not be confused with accuracy. In this regard, it is almost certain that most of the memories are inaccurate in some respects" (p. 84). The expectation that subjects may have vivid recall of a specific event and perceptions of themselves in that event is reasonable. If the event was considered personally important and if it had emotional impact, then vivid memory would be more

likely to occur (Rubin & Kosin, 1984; Mackavey, Malley, & Stewart, 1991).

Limitations and Purpose

This research project is based on the clear support for specific domains of the self within the self-concept literature. Furthermore, some studies suggest that the specific self will show consistency over time and may even be more stable than a global self. The related research on autobiographical memory lends support for expecting a vivid recall of the specific self-report.

The study excludes from analysis the question of stability between the global self measures as well as whether the specific self is more stable than the global self. The study is also limited by the narrow scope of the study population. The study used a single age group; adolescents. The small study size of 31 subjects also limits the conclusions. More variance in long term measures, rather than the single 13 year follow-up, would have created a stronger study, but the situation did not allow for that design opportunity.

The purpose of the study was to explore the situationally specific self-concept of participants in a mountaineering experience and then to assess whether the recall of that self-concept was stable in a long term follow-up. The hypothesis was that the specific self concept would be different from the global self-concept and that the specific self-concept would show stability when the original and follow-up measures were compared.

METHOD

Design and Subjects

The study explored a long-term follow-up of a specific self measure taken from a major mountain ascent. In the original study (Wright, 1982), adolescents from a nine week adventure camp program in 1978 were given a global self measure on day two of the program, and then a month later the group climbed Mt. Rainier (14,410 ft.), which is a snow and ice climb in Washington state. Participants engaged in a two-day climbing and training school at the base of the mountain and then spent day three climbing to the 10,000 foot base camp, with the climb to the summit and the descent on day four. The self measure was administered as part of the relaxation day following the descent (Day 34). At the end of the summer, the campers were given another global measure (Day 64).

Thirteen years later (Day 4800+/-), the adolescents who were now young adults were given the same measures as the first study (a global and a specific self), 30 days apart. The order of taking the specific measure or the global measure was determined by random assignment. The follow-up data were collected in 1991.

The original study group (N=57) consisted of 34 males and 23 females. Campers ranged in age from 14-18 years, with a mean age of 15.5. In the search for the original subjects, 44 of the 57 were able to be contacted, and 77% of that group responded to the study. Because of incomplete questionnaires, the final study group was 31 young adults, which represents 53% of the original subjects. The age range was 28-30, with a mean age of 28.7 years. Sex was fairly equally divided, with 17 males and 14 females.

Adjective Check List as a Self-Concept Measure

The Adjective Check List (ACL) developed by Gough and Heilbrun (1983) in the late '50s is one of the most widely used instruments in personality assessment. The instrument consists of 300 adjectives listed alphabetically, and the respondent checks all those adjectives that would be considered self-descriptive. The current manual provides scoring for 28 original scales related to personality and self-constructs. Nine additional scales have been developed, with five scales related to the transactional analysis paradigm and four scales assessing Welsh's origence-intellectence dimensions, for a total of 37 scales.

The ACL was developed primarily as a personality instrument to assist clinicians with assessment, although it has been more widely used in research. The normative sample upon which the ACL scores have been based is 9,402 subjects. Internal consistency for the 37 ACL scales show acceptable median values of .76 and .75 for males and females, respectively. Test-retest

correlations for all scales show a median correlation of .65, with a range of .77 to .34. The ACL has been criticized (Wylie, 1974; Fekken, 1984) and was not included in the self-concept instruments reviewed by Wylie in 1989. The chief complaint against the ACL has been the potential overlap between existing scales, raising construct validity problems. Despite the critiques, the ACL remains popular as an assessment tool because of its simplicity and diverse applicability.

The unique benefit of the ACL for use in the present study was its flexibility in application. The ACL has been successfully used for new applications. By modifying the standard directions for the instrument, the respondent can describe a variety of events or persons with a well used set of adjectives. The ACL was used by Williams and Best (1990) to assess masculine and feminine characteristics in their major work exploring cross cultural sex stereotypes. The ACL has also been used in psycho-biographical studies to describe past presidents (Simonton, 1986). The flexibility of the ACL allows it to be adapted easily to measure a specific dimension of the self, as well as to measure a global view of self. The specific view of self in the context of an adventure experience can be compared with standard scales reflective of dimensions of the self and also allow for a structure free assessment by simply noting the frequency and distribution of single adjectives selected to be self descriptive.

The capacity for the ACL to explore the picture of the specific mountaineering self in an open-ended style was a key factor in its selection for this type of exploratory research. Recently developed specific self scales (e.g. Marsh, Richards, Johnson, Lawrence & Thrombin, 1994; Fox & Corbin, 1989) are based on developing a theoretical suggestion of specific self dimensions and then creating test questions to assess that dimension. The instrument is then tested for its validity and reliability in measuring the *a priori* constructs designed by the test's authors. The ACL, on the other hand, allows for some exploration of selected standard scales that are appropriately viewed as domains of the self-concept, while at the same time allowing for a reflective analysis of potential dimensions of the specific self based on the groups of particular adjectives that were checked.

The standard directions for the ACL are listed below and were used to assess the global self.

> This booklet contains a list of adjectives. Please read them quickly and put an X in the box beside each one you would consider to be self descriptive. Do not worry about duplications, contradictions, and so forth. Work quickly and do not spend too much time on any one adjective. Try to be frank and check those adjectives which describe you as you really are, not as you would like to be. (Gough, 1952, p.1).

The ACL was administered to assess the specific self by shifting these directions to a specific context as illustrated below.

> *Think for a moment about your ascent of Mt. Rainier and how you felt about yourself. Read through the list of adjectives quickly and put an X in the boxes beside each one of those adjectives that would describe you during your experience of Mt. Rainier. Those adjectives that would not describe you as you reflect upon your experience of Mt. Rainier should be left unchecked. Be frank and honest in your answers and do not spend too much time on any one adjective.*

The standard directions were used to measure the global self pretest, posttest, and follow-up test, and the modified directions were used to measure the specific self at the initial assessment and the follow-up.

ANALYSIS

Analysis of the data included both descriptive and parametric techniques. The standard scales of the ACL were analyzed using the Minitab statistical analysis program. An analysis of variance tested for a difference between the global self and specific self measures. The analysis also included a descriptive report of frequencies of particular adjectives used to describe the specific self.

Analysis of the Standard Scales of the ACL

The standard scales of the ACL are based on the number of indicative adjectives checked for that scale minus the number of contra-indicative adjectives checked. With the standard directions, the total number of adjectives checked out of a possible 300 is a normal distribution, with a mean of 93.40 (*SD* = 36.36) for males and 97.37 (*SD* = 34.64) for females. The total number of adjectives checked is considered a free variable of the instrument indicating an expressive component of the personality, but it serves primarily as a means for standardizing the scoring on other scales relative to the number of adjectives checked. If, for example, one person checked 60 adjectives and another person checked 130 adjectives, the various scales would be affected if the scores were not adjusted for the total number of adjectives checked.

The study group raw scores for Total Adjectives Checked at each of the five test occurrences is shown in Figure 1. The means for Total Adjectives Checked follows the pattern of the letter W with the global self reflecting a normal number of adjectives checked (averaging over 100 on the global measures) with the specific self mean dropping to 76.48 at the first measure and 45.16 at the follow-up measure.

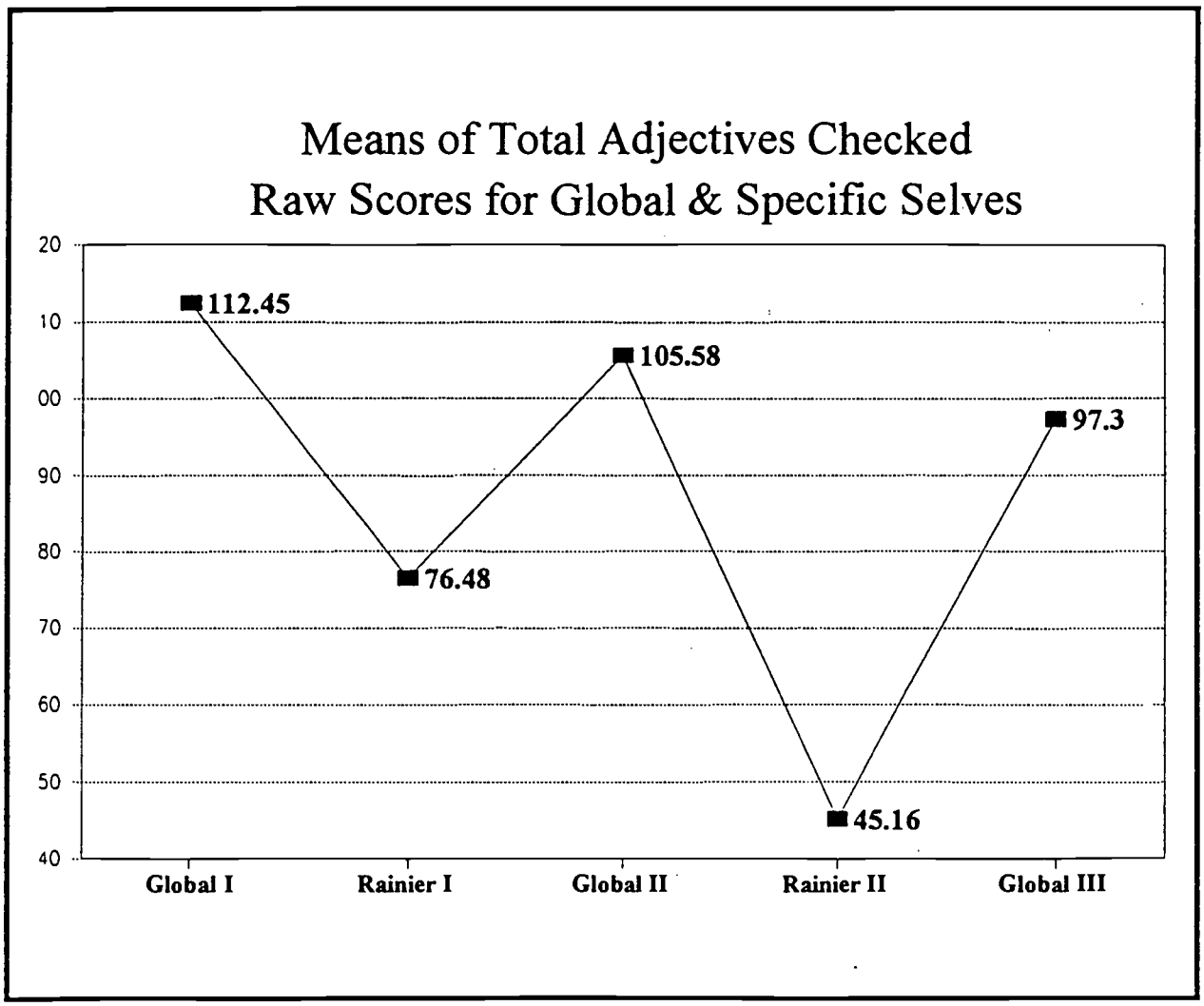

Figure 1. Means of total adjectives checked

Differentiation of Specific Self

One of the key indicators of a difference in the global view of self and the specific adventure self was this change in the total number of adjectives checked. The t-test values for the difference in total adjectives checked at the global selves and the specific selves found significance beyond the .001 level. The W shape of the total adjectives checked scale (see Figure 1) becomes the common pattern for the majority of the basic 28 scales of the ACL. Thirteen scales follow this basic W pattern, with the implication that the scales represent a negative shift between the global and specific self.

Previous work by Wright (1982) using the ACL to assess a specific adventure self found a significant positive shift in a cluster of scales related to a person being goal directed, achievement oriented, and confident in the pursuit of tasks. The positive shift between global self and specific self would be represented by the shape of a shallow M when graphed. Eight scales followed this basic shallow M pattern and suggested a clear positive differentiation between the global self and the specific selves on these salient dimensions. The difference was greater between the immediate specific self and corresponding global measures, with six of eight scales significant at the .05 level. The difference between the memory self and the follow-up global measure was less, with two of eight scales significant at the .05 level. Yet, the shallow M or flat characteristic of these scales stands in sharp contrast to the W patterns of the majority of standard scales. A review of means and t-test values can be found in Table 1. The scales with the M pattern suggest a clear positive differentiation between the global self and the specific selves on these salient dimensions.

Consistency Between the Specific Selves

One way to test for stability and permanence of the specific self is to compare standard scales of the Immediate Self directly with the Memory Self. Of the eight scales showing positive influence, only two showed a significant difference between the two specific selves ,and those differences reflected a more positive view being expressed at the follow-up test. The T2 to T4 comparison in Table 1 shows the actual t-values and confidence interval. The overall lack of significant difference between the immediate self and the memory self would suggest a stable specific self image.

Analysis of Adjective Frequency

It is helpful to look at the frequency distribution of specific adjectives checked in order to test for consistency and inconsistency between the specific selves. The list of adjectives in Table 2 shows those adjectives checked most frequently at the memory self and the immediate self. The order of adjectives in Table 2 is based on the percentage ranking reflecting the memory self. All adjectives checked by 50% or more of the participants were included in the table. The reader can note the similarity between the two specific selves. The Pearson product moment correlation technique was used to test for the strength of relationship between the two specific measures. The Pearson r was .85, based on the relationship of number of times particular adjectives were checked at the two specific selves. The strong relationship was consistent when calculated separately for males (r=.802) and females (r=.803).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Specific Self: Different and Stable

The analysis of the standardized scales demonstrates a difference between the global and specific selves. Based on the drop in overall number of adjectives checked and the distinctly different patterns in scales (the majority with the distinct W compared to the minority with shallow M), the specific self seems to reflect a more selective, focused self.

The specific self seems to demonstrate a fair degree of stability between the immediate self and the memory self. The .85 correlation indicates a strong relationship, and the M scales showed no significant negative change between the two specific selves.

Specific Self: A Definition

If the specific self appears relatively stable over time, what essential definition of this specific self emerges? A brief summary of the scales in Table 1 helps define that image. The

Table 1

ACL Scales with Positive Change Patterns Between Global and Specific Selves

	Means (and SDs) for:					t-test of Significance for Selected Pair-Wise Comparisons		
	Global I T1	Rainier I T2	Global II T3	Rainier II T4	Global III T5	T1-T2	T4-T5	T2-T4
ACL Scales								
Achievement (ACH)	50.73 (7.88)	58.53 (7.44)	54.65 (6.37)	61.62 (8.98)	56.78 (8.18)	-4.01*** (.000)	2.20* (.032)	-1.47 (.15)
Endurance (END)	49.04 (7.23)	54.44 (6.99)	52.46 (5.10)	59.18 (7.97)	55.16 (7.72)	-2.99** (.004)	2.00* (.05)	-2.49* (.016)
Leadership (MLS)	48.62 (6.99)	53.76 (8.83)	52.43 (6.46)	54.16 (6.60)	54.49 (7.33)	-2.54* (.014)	-.18 (.86)	-.20 (.84)
Order (ORD)	47.92 (7.24)	50.22 (7.19)	50.17 (5.23)	55.31 (7.61)	54.45 (8.20)	-1.26 (.21)	.40 (.69)	-2.71** (.009)
Dominance (DOM)	51.18 (7.56)	56.47 (6.52)	57.56 (6.29)	59.51 (9.33)	57.62 (7.99)	-2.95** (.005)	.85 (.40)	-1.49 (.14)
Self-Confidence (S-CFD)	52.81 (7.20)	58.60 (7.93)	57.69 (8.16)	61.47 (10.58)	59.04 (8.59)	-3.01** (.004)	.99 (.33)	-1.21 (.23)
Masculine (MAS)	50.35 (9.87)	55.99 (8.04)	53.82 (10.74)	55.10 (11.22)	55.29 (8.77)	-2.47* (.017)	.51 (.61)	.36 (.72)
Autonomy (AUT)	49.70 (9.06)	51.54 (7.14)	50.63 (6.78)	53.93 (8.61)	52.94 (9.94)	-.89 (.38)	.41 (.68)	-1.19 (.24)

Note: Test symbols are defined as T1 = Global Self I (Pretest), T2 = Specific Self I of Rainier (Immediate Self), T3 = Global Self II (Posttest), T4 = Specific Self II of Rainier (Memory Self/ 13 yr Follow-up), T5 = Global Self III (13 yr. Follow-up).

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001; p values in parenthesis

Table 2

Percentage of Persons Checking Selected Adjectives at Specific Selves

	Rainier I (Immediate Self)		Rainier II (Memory Self)		Percent of Change Between Tests
Adjectives	Number	%	Number	%	%
Adventurous	27	87.1	29	93.5	6.5*
Determined	29	93.5	28	90.3	-3.2
Alert	28	90.3	25	80.6	-9.7
Capable	28	90.3	24	77.4	-12.9
Active	29	93.5	23	74.2	-19.4
Ambitious	26	83.9	22	71.0	-12.9
Adaptable	25	80.6	22	71.0	-9.7
Persevering	10	32.3	22	71.0	38.7*
Persisent	19	61.3	21	67.7	6.5*
Energetic	22	71.0	21	67.7	-3.2
Strong	20	64.5	21	67.7	3.2*
Confident	27	87.1	20	64.5	-22.6
Anxious	27	87.1	20	64.5	-22.6
Courageous	19	61.3	20	64.5	3.2*
Cooperative	27	87.1	19	61.3	-25.8

Note: Adjectives selected based on over 60% frequency on follow-up (Memory Self) measure
* equals positive increase in frequency at follow-up measure

following definitions are taken from the ACL Manual (Gough & Heilbrun, 1983). *Achievement* (ACH), which showed the greatest amount of change, is defined as a hard-working, goal-directed individual who is determined to do well and usually does. *Endurance* (END) means to persist in any task undertaken. *Military Leadership* (MLS) is defined as one who shows self-discipline and who works hard to see that goals are attained. *Order* (ORD) means one places emphasis on neatness, organization, and planning in one's activities. *Dominance* (DOM) is to seek and maintain a role as a leader in groups, reflecting someone who is strong-willed, ambitious, and determined. *Self-confidence* (S-CFD) is reflected by someone with poise, self-assurance, confidence; an initiator, confident in her/his ability to achieve goals. Persons scoring high on *Autonomy* (AUT) are independent, autonomous, assertive, and self-willed. *Masculine* (MAS) is indicative of people who perceives themselves to be ambitious and assertive, quick to get things moving and stubbornly insistent on attaining their goals. It should be noted that when MAS scores were analyzed separately for men and women, scores were comparable, with women having slightly higher scores on the scale.

Specific Self: Changes Between the Immediate Self and the Memory Self

The memory self showed an overall drop in the number of adjectives checked at the follow-up (means ranged from 76.5 to 45.2). As people

move further away from an event, one might expect key elements of that experience to remain vivid memories, while other dimensions of the experience would not remain memorable. The drop in total number of adjectives checked at the memory self may reflect this phenomena of a more focused description at the memory self.

Of special interest are the adjectives that showed an increase in their frequency at the memory self. Table 1 lists those adjectives that showed a positive increase. One adjective, persevering, showed a large increase (38.7%) at the memory self. Attaining the summit of Mt. Rainier required a one-day approach climb to 10,000 feet, followed by a very arduous climb on day two. Day two began at 4:00 a.m. and required continuous hiking to reach the summit at mid morning. After a short rest on top, the descent climb lasted into the late afternoon. The general perception of novice climbers was that they had been through an endurance event. Other adjectives with positive increases were daring (9%), persistent and adventurous (6.5%), and courageous and strong (3.5%). All these adjectives describe successful mastery of a risk-oriented task.

In other work on the adventure self (Wright, 1982), categories were developed from specific adjectives that defined the self-image, including those listed in Table 2. Categories included goal directed and confident, as well as the category of anxiety. The anxiety-related words (e.g., anxious, alert) come as no surprise, given the perceived or actual risk of mountain climbing. It is noteworthy that the anxiety related words in Table 2 show a more significant drop at the memory self than other adjectives. Participants also experienced what could be described as personal enthusiasm (e.g., energetic, optimistic) and social interdependency (e.g., cooperative) at the immediate self report. The social dimension of the adventure and the emotional descriptions dropped somewhat in the shadow of the primary image of the goal-directed determined adventurer.

Specific Self: Influence of Involvement

One of the confounding variables that might challenge the accuracy of the specific memory self would be participation in other mountaineering experiences following the original study. To determine this influence, a questionnaire collected involvement data on mountain climbing experiences. Only three out of 31 participants (10%) remained active in climbing on snow-covered peaks. Sixty percent had never climbed again, 20% had climbed 1-3 times during the 13 year period, and 10% had climbed 4-6 times since the Mt. Rainier experience. Ninety percent of the group rated their current level of involvement in climbing as very low or not involved at all. Seventy percent of the group had been involved in hiking, and 45% had been involved in backpacking-type experiences, but the dissimilarity of those experiences with the Mt. Rainier experience is certainly stronger than the similarity. Thus, the original image from the Rainier climb did not appear to be heavily influenced by other directly related outdoor experiences. The uniqueness of the summit style expedition made it a good prospect for a long-term evaluation.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study suggests that the specific view of self collected from an adventure experience of climbing to a mountain summit remains as a primarily stable, permanent self-image, even after 13 years had passed. The positive view of self seen immediately after the experience was characterized as being a goal-directed, self-confident achiever who also felt an inner anxiety, excitement, and a cooperative attitude toward group members. Years later, the self-image maintained the core view of a goal directed achiever but viewed some specific parts of the self-image less intensely, and a few facets were embellished.

The embellishment phenomena is like the old joke about a person's memory and pride having an argument as to exactly what had happened in a past situation. The punch line is that 'Pride won the argument.' Though the participants did see themselves as persevering, daring, and adventurous immediately after the experi-

ence, they saw themselves as having been more so years later. Given our positive cultural identification with those characteristics, it is no surprise that people would slightly embellish those attributes. However, the amount of embellishment was very limited (only persevering showed an increase greater than 10%), and the more telling result is the consistency of a goal directed self-image.

The survey also collected anecdotal information about key memories by asking people to relate what they remembered most about the Rainier experience. Key memories were consistent with self-images reported on the ACL. Examples included: "The thrill and the challenge of accomplishing something so great," "Challenging myself to do something I didn't think I could do," and "Terrifying and thrilling at the same time. I faced both extreme self-doubt and tremendous confidence moments later."

When asked about the frequency of recollection of the experience, the average person thought about the experience occasionally (M = 3.3) on a 5-point Likert scale, with possible responses of never-rarely-occasionally-frequently-very frequently. The average span of time since people had thought about the Rainier experience prior to participating in the study was 4.7 months.

Assuming the accuracy of the self-report, it is intriguing to conjecture about the impact the positive specific self could have on the person's global view of self. Future research should include studies that more clearly define the relationship between the specific self and the person's global self. A clear understanding of self-concept structure and the role of a specific view of self on other more global dimensions is essential to understanding whether the permanent specific self has any lasting impact on global dimensions. Perhaps the specific self remains an aloof memory, with no clear connection to the current self-concept. Or the specific self may have become a direct and vital part of the current global self. Or, perhaps, the specific self remains a separate memory which serves as a metaphor for encouraging perseverance and goal directed behavior when facing other life experiences. In the words of one participant, "...within me lies a spot of fulfillment which never abandons my psyche. I always can find a feeling of confidence and courage from these memories."

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