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Personality and the derogation of others: Descriptions based on self- and peer report

Susan C. South, Thomas F. Oltmanns,* and Eric Turkheimer

Department of Psychology, University of Virginia, 102 Gilmer Hall, P.O. Box 400400, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4400 USA

Abstract

We examined the tendency to react to failure by derogating others. A situation was constructed to test this reaction among those posited to exhibit this behavior most often—narcissistically inclined individuals. The participants ($N = 64$) consisted of college students screened for pathological personality traits using self-report and peer report measures. Participants completed a two-part lab task and received false feedback indicating that they had been outperformed by fellow participants. Among self-report items, the best predictor of other-derogation was narcissism; among peer-report items, the best predictor items described cold, aloof, and avoidant personality tendencies. Findings are discussed with regard to identifying personality trait–situation–behavior patterns through multiple assessment methods.

1. Introduction

Most research on personality relies primarily on self-report inventories as a source of information and places less emphasis on reports from informants or behavioral observations. In particular, information is seldom obtained from friends or peers, who may provide a somewhat different perspective on a person's characteristic tendencies. Research has shown that judgments by laypersons possess high reliability and can often predict future behaviors (Funder, 1999). The methodologically expe-

* Corresponding author. Fax: 1-434-982-4766.
E-mail address: tfo@virginia.edu (T.F. Oltmanns).

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dient reliance on self-report extends to the examination of more pathological personalities as well, including the DSM-IV personality disorders.

Indeed, self-report instruments may be particularly problematic for use with participants who exhibit pathological personality traits or dispositions. Studies in nonclinical samples have shown that people are only moderately good at accurately describing their personalities along normal trait dimensions. As a group, informants are often more accurate when describing a person's personality or predicting a person's behavior than the individual of interest (Kenny, 1994). People with personality disorder syndromes characteristically lack insight into the maladaptive nature of their behavior, and will regularly structure their social world in a manner that perpetuates their dysfunctional belief systems. For these individuals, informant reports may predict behavior more accurately than self-report.

To counteract the implicit biases found in self-report questionnaires and interviews, some researchers have investigated the use of informant ratings of personality. A more accurate description of personality problems may be obtained by including information from associates, friends or family members. Agreement between self- and informant report of personality disorders has been relatively modest, with a correlation between .2 and .3 (Oltmanns, Turkheimer, & Thomas, 2000). There is also evidence that informants tend to agree with each other regarding the personality of the target, and that target persons may report less personality pathology than informants (Klonsky, Oltmanns, & Turkheimer, 2002).

How best, then, to reconcile the potentially useful information gained from self-report and informant ratings given the limitations inherent in both methods? We suggest a third method of comparison, whereby a person's behavior in a controlled situation is measured against and compared to both self- and informant ratings of personality. In this way, it is possible to discover the connections between specific behaviors and situations among individuals with personality disorders and which method of assessment most accurately identifies the personality-situation-behavior pattern.

Using a behavioral challenge paradigm developed by Morf and Rhodewalt (1993), we chose to examine participants who, when placed in a negatively self-evaluative situation, might react with hostility toward others. Baumeister and Boden (1998) argue that high self-esteem, or favorable self-concept, plus the addition of an ego threat, leads to other-derogation and aggression. This ego threat commonly takes the form of an external, unfavorable evaluation. The authors note that "individuals with overly inflated, uncertain, or unstable self-appraisals might be at highest risk for experiencing the discrepancy between a favorable self-appraisal and an unfavorable external appraisal." Although Baumeister and Boden do not explicitly connect this concept to the pathological personality trait of narcissism, such derogatory processes are frequently hypothesized to be core features of narcissism (Kohut, 1973).

Narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), defined as a pervasive pattern of grandiosity, need for admiration, and lack of empathy (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), includes symptoms such as a grandiose sense of self-importance, belief in one's own superiority, a need for excessive admiration, and arrogant, haughty behaviors

or attitudes. Narcissistic individuals possess a grandiose self-experience, or "an unrealistic overvaluation of their own talents, invulnerability, uniqueness, and superiority" (Gunderson & Ronningstam, 1991, p. 117). Some researchers believe that narcissism involves an unhealthy method of self-esteem regulation that develops as a result of the narcissist's striving to maintain an unrealistically positive vision of the self (John & Robins, 1994; Morf & Rhodewalt, 1993). While the connection between low self-esteem and narcissism has not yet been empirically validated, it is thought likely that the narcissist thinks and perceives the world in a manner designed to eliminate helplessness and low self-esteem, and establish control over their own experiences. The narcissistic person forces attention on him or herself in order to undo feelings of inadequacy, but then projects his or her feelings of inferiority on those he or she strives to impress (Reich, 1960).

The narcissist's need to maintain a stable, positive self-image can turn aggressive when threatened by an outside source. Narcissists tend to react more strongly than others when confronted with negative feedback. They may dismiss the threat and, at the same time, disparage both the message and the messenger. In addition, they may turn on those they see as competitors, people who have outperformed them on the task in question. In an examination of the effects of threat to the self on narcissists, Morf and Rhodewalt (1993) found that, in comparison to a control group, narcissists rated participants who outperformed them more negatively. Morf and Rhodewalt concluded that narcissistic persons possess a heightened sensitivity to threat. Raskin and Terry (1988) have also found positive relationships between narcissism and hostility. These findings suggest that the narcissist, whether exhibiting grandiose feelings of superiority because of true self-worth or to protect a damaged self-esteem, reacts with anger when those feelings of self-worth are threatened by others.

Bushman and Baumeister (1998), in a study of controlled success/failure and measured aggression, found that narcissistic participants presented the highest levels of aggression regardless of whether the evaluation was negative or positive. Narcissistic participants also displayed the highest levels of aggression among those who received negative (ergo, threatening) evaluations. But the authors noted that those with narcissistic traits were not aggressive toward a neutral third person, hinting that narcissistic individuals are specific in regards toward whom they direct their aggression. They merely wish to strike back at direct threats to their self-esteem. Bushman and Baumeister conclude that narcissistic rage is a direct response to a specific instance of threatened ego.

Rhodewalt and Morf (1998) proposed that the emotional responses of narcissists to success and failure are more complex than a one to one correspondence between narcissism and aggression toward an ego-threatening individual. In a study of self-esteem, threat, and aggression, they found that narcissists were most likely to respond to failure with extreme fluctuations in mood. Individuals scoring high on the Narcissistic Personality Inventory who initially succeeded at a task reacted with the most anxiety, anger, and changes in self-esteem after subsequently failing the task. Narcissists tended to self-aggrandize by attributing success to their own ability, while externalizing failure by displaying hostility and placing blame on others. In fact, they showed the greatest response, and a great degree of happiness, when they

succeeded at a task after initially failing it. Responses to success were not nearly as great as when success preceded failure. Rhodewalt and Morf concluded that narcissists attribute their entire sense of self-worth to feedback from others. Narcissists react to feedback, whether negative or positive, in a manner that safeguards and maintains their self-regard (Kernis & Sun, 1994).

We posit that narcissistically inclined people, attempting to hide a vulnerable self-concept behind an aura of self-assurance and grandiosity, are likely to demean those people or situations that threaten their self-image. We examined the reactions of narcissistic individuals to a criticism of their ability, postulating that direct negative feedback would damage the narcissistic individual's inherently unstable self-esteem. Narcissistic participants were placed in a controlled competitive situation, and presented with negative feedback about their performance on a laboratory task.

Previous experiments that have studied other-derogation have specifically examined only one personality trait—narcissism. The current study also considers how other personality traits may come into play when considering this particular type of behavior. For instance, Colby (1981) proposed a theory of paranoia in which a paranoid person is viewed as preoccupied with feelings of shame, distress and humiliation. The paranoid individual, hypervigilant to criticism from any source, uses a strategy of striking out at others in order to reduce inner feelings of inadequacy. According to Colby, paranoia is another element of the personality of someone who derogates others; yet, to our knowledge, no one has studied the relationship between paranoid personality traits and other-derogation in a laboratory setting. One must consider the possibility that other-derogation is a type of maladaptive defense process used by individuals with a different constellation of maldaptive personality traits or dispositions.

Participants in the current study had previously been screened for pathological personality traits related to the 10 DSM-IV personality disorders (Oltmanns & Turkheimer, 1998; Oltmanns, Turkheimer, & Strauss, 1998). These participants were identified for pathological traits using a self-report measure and a peer report method of collecting informant information. The self-report instrument, the Schedule for Nonadaptive and Adaptive Personality (Clark, 1993) gives a broad portrait of personality traits, including but not limited to narcissism. We also employed an assessment tool developed by Oltmanns and Turkheimer (1998). This procedure allows a group of the participant's peers to evaluate them across the spectrum of personality disorders. By utilizing these participants, we were able to examine how the two methods of assessment combined to predict other-derogation.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The participants were 64 sophomores and juniors at the University of Virginia who had been screened with personality measures during their freshman year. In order to collect multiple informant reports of each participant, they were studied as

members of groups—specifically residents of individual floors in freshman dormitories.

Pathological personality traits were measured in two ways, both administered through a computerized battery. First, the participants completed the Schedule for Nonadaptive and Adaptive Personality (SNAP), a factor-analytically derived self-report index composed of 375 true/false items. The SNAP was designed to investigate dimensional aspects of personality; as such, it includes six validity scales, 15 trait/temperament scales and 10 scales corresponding to the DSM-III-R personality disorders. The SNAP scales have demonstrated good internal consistency, with median values for the 10 diagnostic scales ranging from .72 to .83, as well as good validity (Clark, 1993; Clark, McEwen, Collard, & Hickok, 1993). For this study, both the diagnostic scales and the trait temperament scales were utilized.

Second, the participants completed the Peer Inventory for Personality Disorders (PIPD), an assessment tool developed for this project. It consists of 105 items, 81 based on the features of the 10 personality disorders listed in DSM-IV and translated into lay language and an additional 24 items based on other, mostly positive, characteristics, such as "trustworthy and reliable" or "agreeable and cooperative." To construct the PIPD personality disorder items, DSM-IV criterion sets for the personality disorders were translated into lay language; resulting items were then reviewed and revised by expert consultants. Participants were presented with the items in a quasi-random order via a computer program, and asked to select members of their dorm hall who exhibited the characteristic in question. Each of the participants acted as both a nominator and a target in this process. For each item, the participant was asked to nominate members of his or her dorm hall who exhibit the characteristic in question. Participants were required to nominate at least one member of the dorm hall before moving on to the next item. For each nomination, the participant assigned the nominee a score (1, 2, or 3), indicating that the nominee "sometimes," "often," or "always" displays this characteristic. Participants were instructed that if they felt that it was particularly difficult to nominate someone for a given item, they should nominate the person they felt best fit the criterion and check a box at the bottom of the screen labeled "This item was difficult." The participants for our study were selected from a total of 534 participants who had been screened during two previous years of the larger study.

Participants were selected in order to maximize the variability of scores on the self- and peer narcissism scales. Self- and peer narcissism ratings were converted to *z*-scores. A single score was then obtained by multiplying these two z-scores together. A high positive score indicated high agreement between peer and self-report on the presence or absence of narcissistic traits, while a high negative score indicated a high level of disagreement. Participants were then selected from both high and low scores on the resulting cross-product. Therefore, each participant was maximized for either high agreement or high disagreement as to the presence of narcissistic personality traits. Selecting participants in this manner was done to ensure a widely spaced distribution, but our data analysis treated peer and self-report scores as continuous variables. Participants were contacted by phone or e-mail and either paid for their time or given course credit. Of the 64 participants, 18 were male and 46 were female.

2.2. Materials

We created two testing situations in order to manipulate feedback regarding participants' scores. Both tasks were modeled closely after procedures used by Morf and Rhodewalt (1993).

Nonverbal task. The first task required participants to view 20 slides, determine which of two possible actions (e.g., expressing jealous anger vs. nagging a child) the woman in the slide was completing, and record their answer on a score sheet. Each slide depicted either a body position or a facial expression and was meant to be ambiguous with regard to the answer. Participants were also asked to complete a Personality Profile of the woman in the slides. This profile consisted of 24 adjectives: 12 negative attributes (e.g., critical, impatient, and depressed) and 12 positive attributes (e.g., enthusiastic, agreeable, and cheerful). Participants were asked to rate how well each adjective fit the woman in the slide on a scale from one to five.

Verbal task. Participants listened to 20 sentences recorded on tape by the confederate and judged which of five possible moods, feelings, or emotions the "sender" was trying to convey. The tape consisted of five sentences (e.g., "It has stopped raining, so I am going out now and will be back in a few hours when the meeting is over.") each recorded four times in a mixed order. The five possible answer choices were the same for each sentence: Frustrated, Friendly, Calm, Alert and Nervous. When recording the tape, the confederate was given a template from which he recorded the sentences with an intended emotional state. Participants were given an answer sheet and instructed to circle which of the moods the sender was attempting to convey. Following the completion of this task and the return of their scored answer sheets, participants completed a Personality Profile of the sender (confederate) who recorded the sentences. This Profile was identical to the one used in the verbal task.

Self-report scale. A nine-question self-report measure was administered at the end of the experiment to determine the feelings and opinions of the participants. Ratings for the first six questions were given on a 9-point scale (1 = very poor, 5 = average, and 9 = excellent). Participants indicated on these scales how well they felt they did, how they felt their fellow participant did, and how the "sender" participant (confederate) performed on both tasks. In addition, Question 7 asked them to rank their level of satisfaction with their performance on a 9-point scale (1 = not satisfied at all, 5 = fairly satisfied and 9 = extremely satisfied). Questions 9 and 10 were manipulation check items, asking for the participant's score on both tasks.

MMPI narcissism scale. An additional measure of narcissism was completed by every participant at the time of the study. We chose the 39-item narcissism measure developed by Wink and Gough from items on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (1990). This measure has been shown to correlate highly with other measures of narcissism, including Raskin and Hall's Narcissitic Personality Inventory and the MMPI narcissism scale of Morey, Waugh, and Blashfield (Wink & Gough, 1990). All three scales were developed based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (3rd edition) criteria for Narcissistic Personality Disorder; the Wink and Gough scaled was developed using rational and internal consistency methods in a nonclinical sample.

2.3. Procedure

Participants were run two at a time along with a third person (all of the same gender) whom they believed to be another participant, but who was actually a confederate. The experimenter was blind to the participant's level of narcissistic traits. On arrival in the testing room, all three participants were seated at desks separated by cardboard dividers that kept participants from viewing each other's answers on the tasks and their scores.

Cover story. The participants were told that they would be taking part in a test of personality assessment and social sensitivity. In order to instill a feeling of competitiveness between the participants, the experimenter informed them that they were randomly selected from the original study and grouped together according to similar scores. Participants were told the experiment involved studying the relationship between a person's personality and his or her social sensitivity. The experimenter informed them that the study involved two tasks where the participants would be required to decode either verbal or nonverbal communications and then make inferences about the personality of the communicator. Participants were instructed not to discuss the study among themselves while the experimenter was out of the testing room.

Baseline measure. All three participants completed the nonverbal task simultaneously. For each slide, participants chose one of two possible actions (indicated on the answer sheet) that they believed the woman was performing. Each slide appeared on the screen directly in front of the participants for approximately 15 s. Following completion of the exercise, participants filled out a Personality Profile of the woman in the slide while the experimenter computed their grades on the task. Since the participants had not yet received feedback regarding their performance on the first task, the ratings that they made on the Personality Profile should have been affectively neutral (i.e. they had not been "threatened" by the woman who appeared in the slides).

Negative feedback. At this point, the experimenter instilled in the participants both a sense of being criticized and a need to compare their performance with others. Negative feedback was given to each participant so that both believed they had performed more poorly on the task than their two fellow participants. The experimenter returned the score sheets, which were both marked 12 correct out of 20, and explained that for the next part of the experiment she would need a "sender." She further explained that the sender would be the person who got the middle score. Turning to the confederate, the experimenter said, with some hesitation, "Let's see, now. You're _____, right? Okay, you got 16 of the items right. That's good, that's 80%. Since your score falls in-between the other two, you'll be the sender on the next task, if you're willing. This will allow us to see how someone who is not very good at social sensitivity does compared with someone who is very good at social sensitivity in judging another person's personality." From this information, both participants were induced to believe that they had scored the lowest on the first task, leading to an unfavorable comparison with both the other participant and the confederate.

At this point, the confederate left the room, supposedly to prepare his or her part of the second task. In actuality, the confederate left the experiment at this time, and a prerecorded tape was used in the second part of the experiment.

Additional manipulation and dependent measures. While the participants waited for what they believed was the creation of the emotion tape, they were asked to read a magazine. After allotting time for the creation of the tape, the participants next completed the verbal social sensitivity task. They were informed that the participant who had left the room (the confederate) would be the sender for this task, and that the sender had recorded 20 sentences (five sentences each read four times in a mixed order) onto a tape while attempting to communicate different emotions through inflection and tone of voice. They would have to decide which of five possible emotions, moods, or feelings the sender was trying to convey and circle their answer on the score sheet. The participants listened to the tape and noted their answers for each sentence. Immediately after finishing, the experimenter pretended to grade the task, and all participants were given a score of 13 correct out of 20 (65%). They were then asked to make inferences about the sender's personality by completing a Personality Profile of the participant who acted as the sender. Finally, participants were asked to complete the Self-report scale and the MMPI narcissism scale.

3. Results

3.1. Effectiveness of experimental manipulation

Information collected at the end of the experiment in the Self-report scale provides evidence for the effectiveness of the threat manipulation. All of the participants correctly identified how many items they were told they answered correctly on the slide task (12/20). Additionally, a majority of participants (89%) correctly recalled how many items they answered right on the verbal task.

We also examined whether there was a correlation between the participants' personality traits and whether they were relatively positive or negative in their ratings of the woman in the slides. These ratings did not significantly correlate with self-reported or peer-reported narcissism, indicating that individuals with narcissistic traits do not have a baseline level of negativity greater than the average person. A multiple regression analysis predicting ratings of the woman in the slides from self-reported (both MMPI and SNAP) and peer-reported narcissism revealed no significant effects ($R^2 = .01$, $F(3, 63) = .24$, n.s.). Taken together, these results suggest that any other-derogation directed toward the confederate was a reflection of a response toward a threatening event, and not of a general tendency toward criticism of others.

3.2. Correlational analyses: Laboratory measures

Our main measure of "other-derogation" focused on the participant's rating of the confederate's personality. If the participant felt threatened after receiving negative feedback, s/he might derogate the confederate by rating his or her personality

more negatively. A score for the participant's rating of the woman in the slides was produced by summing the 12 positive adjectives in the Personality Profile and then subtracting the total from the total score of the negative adjectives. A score for the confederate was calculated in the same manner. To control for the negativity ratings of the neutral stimulus (the woman in the slides), the relationship between other-derogation and the various personality traits was analyzed using the partial correlation between peer or self-report and ratings of the confederate, controlling for the ratings of the woman in the slides.

As predicted, a significant partial correlation was found between other-derogation and self-reported narcissism identified using the SNAP during prescreening ($r = .25$, $p < .05$). Partial correlations between all SNAP diagnostic scale scores and other-derogation are presented in Table 1. In addition to the narcissism diagnostic scale, the SNAP obsessive–compulsive ($r = .27$, $p < .05$) personality disorder scores also exhibited positive correlations with other-derogation. The SNAP paranoid PD scale also approached significance ($r = .22$, $p < .10$).

We further examined partial correlations between other-derogation and the 18 SNAP personality trait scales (as opposed to DSM diagnostic categories). Other-derogation correlated significantly with the traits of manipulativeness ($r = .29$, $p < .05$) and aggression ($r = .27$, $p < .05$). The correlations between other-derogation and the SNAP entitlement ($r = .24$, $p < .06$) and impulsivity ($r = -.22$, $p < .10$) scales also approached significance. Table 2 gives the partial correlations between other-derogation and the 18 SNAP trait/temperament scale scores.

The best predictor of other-derogation was the MMPI Narcissism scale, our second measure of narcissism given to participants at the time of the laboratory procedure. The partial correlation between other-derogation and the MMPI Narcissism scale was .34 ($p < .01$). Additonally, this scale correlated highly with the SNAP narcissism scale ($r = .62$, $p < .0001$) and fairly well with the peer measure of narcissism ($r = .40$, $p < .01$). Intercorrelations among all three narcissism measures and other-derogation are presented in Table 3.

Partial correlations were computed between other-derogation and scores on the 10 PIPD diagnostic categories. These results are also presented in Table 1. A signif-

Table 1
Correlations between other-derogation and SNAP and PIPD scores for DSM-IV personality disorder categories

Personality disorder	Self-report	p	Peer-report	p
Paranoid	.22	.08	.09	.47
Schizoid	.13	.30	.29	.02
Schizotypal	.17	.19	.23	.07
Antisocial	.16	.20	.04	.76
Borderline	.10	.45	.02	.91
Histrionic	.02	.85	.05	.69
Narcissistic	.25	.05	.05	.67
Avoidant	.13	.31	.23	.07
Dependent	−.02	.86	.02	.88
Obsessive–compulsive	.27	.03	.20	.12

Table 2
Correlations between other-derogation and SNAP trait scales

SNAP trait	*r*	*p*
Negative temperament	.06	.62
Mistrust	.19	.13
Manipulativeness	.29	.02
Aggression	.27	.03
Self-harm	−.07	.57
Eccentric perceptions	.11	.39
Dependency	−.04	.77
Positive temperament	−.09	.50
Exhibitionism	.06	.62
Entitlement	.24	.06
Detachment	.17	.17
Disinhibition	.12	.35
Impulsivity	−.22	.09
Propriety	.00	.99
Workaholism	.13	.32
Pure disinhibition	.13	.30
Low self-esteem	−.05	.68
Suicide proneness	−.08	.53

Table 3
Intercorrelations between self-report and informant-report narcissism scales and other-derogation

Scale	1	2	3	4
1. SNAP narcissism scale	—	.35	.62	.25
2. Peer narcissism scale		—	.40	.05
3. MMPI narcissism scale			—	.34
4. Other-derogation				—

Note. All $p < .05$.

icant partial correlation was not found between other-derogation and PIPD-based narcissism scores. However, the partial correlation between other-derogation and schizoid PD ($r = .29$, $p < .05$) was found to be significant. The PIPD schizotypal and avoidant personality disorder scores also exhibited positive correlations with other-derogation.

Participant ratings of their performance, their experiment partner's performance and the confederate's performance on the task collected on the Self-report scale were also examined for possible correlations with MMPI, SNAP, and PIPD narcissism. These were more obvious measures of feelings related to other-derogation collected at the end of the experiment. We expected they might give the participants further opportunity to display other-derogation, in that they allowed for a direct comparison between the participant's performance and the performance of their partner and the confederate. A self-evaluation measure was obtained by summing the two Self-report scale questions asking about personal performance. A partner evaluation score was created by summing two questions that asked about the performance of the participant's experiment partner who remained for both of the tasks. Finally,

an evaluation score of the confederate was also created, again summing two questions regarding the confederate's performance on both the slide task and as a sentence recorder for the second task. By subtracting the partner evaluation from the self-evaluation, we created a measure of how much better the participant felt he or she did than their experiment partner. Similarly, a measure of how much better the participant felt they did compared to the confederate was produced by subtracting the confederate evaluation score from the self-evaluation score. Partial correlations were computed between these self-report scores and the MMPI narcissism scale, the SNAP diagnostic scales, SNAP trait scales, and PIPD diagnostic scales, again statistically controlling for ratings of negativity against the woman in the slides on the first Personality Profile.

MMPI narcissism scores correlated significantly with better than confederate evaluation scores ($r = .27$, $p < .05$) and better than partner evaluation scores ($r = .30$, $p < .05$). SNAP scores of narcissism also correlated significantly with better than confederate evaluation scores ($r = .30$, $p < .02$) and better than partner evaluation scores ($r = .30$, $p < .02$). The correlations between MMPI narcissism scale, SNAP diagnostic category scores and selected personality trait scores, and self, confederate, and partner ratings are shown in Table 4. Both peer and self-reported schizotypal and schizoid personality disorder scores were negatively correlated with other-participant evaluation. The SNAP trait scales of manipulativeness and entitlement also correlated significantly with better than confederate evaluation and better than partner evaluation scores. Higher peer-nominated narcissism scores were not

Table 4
Correlations between MMPI narcissism scale/SNAP PD diagnostic scales and selected trait scales and self, confederate, and other-participant ratings

PD	Self-evaluation	Confederate evaluation	Partner evaluation	Better than confederate	Better than partner
Paranoid	.04	−.20	−.20	.16	.14
Schizotypal	−.06	−.25*	−.24*	.10	.09
Schizoid	−.09	−.26*	−.29*	.09	.08
Antisocial	.25*	−.08	−.02	.27*	.21
Avoidant	−.10	−.34*	−.21	.12	.03
Dependent	.00	.04	.06	−.03	−.03
OCD	.01	−.22	−.36*	.15	.21
Histrionic	.16	.06	−.06	.10	.16
Borderline	.13	−.06	−.13	.15	.18
Snap narcissism	.24	−.14	−.21	.30*	.30*
MMPI narcissism	.24	−.10	−.22	.27*	.30*
Manipulativeness	.33*	−.11	−.11	.36*	.32*
Eccentric perception	.00	−.20	−.25*	.12	.13
Positive temperament	.11	.26*	.07	−.06	.05
Entitlement	.35*	−.02	−.18	.32*	.37*
Detachment	−.09	−.30*	−.26*	.11	.07
Disinhibition	.35*	.05	.03	.28*	.26*
Pure disinhibition	.31*	.00	−.02	.27*	.25*

* $p < .05$.

significantly correlated with self-evaluation, partner evaluation, confederate evaluation, better than partner evaluation, or better than confederate evaluation. Table 5 presents the correlations of all peer-nominated personality disorder scores with self, partner, and confederate rating scores.

3.3. Regression analyses: Laboratory measures

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the independent contributions of self- and peer-reported personality traits to the prediction of other-derogation. Negative ratings of the confederate were predicted from negative ratings of the woman in the slides (to control for overall negativity, as in the partial correlations), self-reported narcissism (both SNAP and MMPI), and peer-reported narcissism. The full model was significant ($R^2 = .15$, $F(4, 63) = 2.54$). MMPI-reported narcissism, but not SNAP-reported or peer-reported narcissism contributed unique variance to the regression (semi-partial $R^2 = .06, .004$, and .009, respectively). A model including both self-reported narcissism (MMPI only) and peer-reported schizoid traits was significant ($R^2 = .20$, $F(3, 63) = 4.84$, $p < .01$) with narcissistic traits contributing 9.0% of the unique variance and schizoid contributing 6.0%.

3.4. Correlational analyses: Assessment measures and other-derogation

To create a more detailed picture of individuals who tend toward other-derogation, a further analysis was run to determine which specific MMPI and SNAP items correlated significantly with other-derogation, again measured as a partial correlation controlling for ratings of the woman in the slides. Tables 6 and 7 present the 10 MMPI and SNAP items, respectively, most highly correlated with other-derogation. The MMPI items reflect grandiose, high self-esteem, narcissistic admissions. None of the SNAP items are specific markers for narcissism, and none of the 10 items specifically loads on the SNAP narcissism diagnostic scale. In fact, three of

Table 5
Correlations between peer-nominated personality disorders and self, confederate, and other-participant ratings

	Self-evaluation	Confederate evaluation	Partner evaluation	Better than confederate	Better than partner
Paranoid	.03	.10	.09	−.04	−.02
Schizoid	.17	−.19	−.34*	.26*	.31*
Schizotypal	.05	−.09	−.27*	.10	.18
Antisocial	.07	.08	.05	.01	.03
Narcissistic	.11	.21	.11	−.04	.03
Avoidant	−.13	−.05	.07	−.08	−.14
Dependent	−.06	.02	.12	−.06	−.11
Obsessive–compulsive	.00	.14	.11	−.09	−.06
Histrionic	.04	.08	.08	−.01	−.01
Borderline	.09	−.01	−.04	.08	.09

* $p < .05$.

Table 6
Correlations between other-derogation and MMPI narcissism scale items

	MMPI item	*r*
1.	I would certainly enjoy beating a crook at his own game	.33*
2.	At times I have been so entertained by the cleverness of a crook that I have hoped he would get by with it	.30*
3.	I have never done anything dangerous for the thrill of it	−.30*
4.	I used to like hopscotch	−.29*
5.	I do not blame a person for taking advantage of someone who lays himself open to it	.28*
6.	Most people will use somewhat unfair means to gain profit or an advantage rather than to lose it	.27*
7.	I like to poke fun at people	.26*
8.	I am an important person	.26*
9.	I have often met people who were supposed to be experts who were no better than I	.25*
10.	I have often found people jealous of my good ideas, just because they had not thought of them first	.24

* $p < .05$.

Table 7
Correlations between other-derogation and specific SNAP items

	SNAP item[1]	SNAP trait/PD	*r*
1.	When I'm having a good time, I don't worry about the consequences	Disinhibition	.37
2.	I sometimes have a hard time finishing things because I want them to be perfect	Workaholism/ Obsessive–compulsive	.35
3.	It's safer to keep things to yourself	Mistrust/Paranoid	.35
4.	When someone hurts me, I try to get even	Aggression/Paranoid	.35
5.	I sometimes just don't go to work	Manipulativeness/ Antisocial	.34
6.	I become angry more easily than most people	Aggression trait scale	.33
7.	I rarely feel strong emotions such as anger or joy	Detachment/Schizoid	.31
8.	I sometimes have to use force to show people who's boss	Sadistic	.31
9.	When someone insults me, I can forgive and forget (FALSE)	Aggression/Paranoid	.30
10.	I tend to value and follow a rational, sensible approach to things	Impulsivity/ Obsessive–compulsive	.30

Note. All $p < .02$.
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the items load on the SNAP paranoia scale, supporting Colby's (1981) theory of paranoia functioning as a catalyst for blaming others. These 10 items seem to be tapping into a cold, suspicious and obsessive individual.

A similar analysis was conducted with regard to PIPD items and other-derogation (see Table 8). Again, none of the 10 PIPD items most highly correlated with other-derogation code to narcissism. These 10 items tend to load mostly on the schizoid and schizotypal scales. These results suggest a person who is seen by his peers as withdrawn, cold, and peculiar. However, a scale formed by the 10 highest MMPI items correlated highly with a scale formed by the 10 highest SNAP items ($r = .66$, $p < .01$). This suggests a coherence in the self-concept of someone who

Table 8
Correlations between other-derogation and specific PIPD items

	PIPD item	PD	Correlation
1.	Works so much that he/she never has fun and has no friends	Obsessive–compulsive	.42
2.	Seems to be quite understanding	Filler item	−.37
3.	Talks in a vague way that lacks detail and is hard to understand	Histrionic	.34
4.	Is very controlled or inhibited with close friends because he/she is afraid people will make fun of him/her	Avoidant	.32
5.	Has an odd way of thinking, and his/her speech sometimes does not make sense	Schizotypal	.30
6.	Is not interested in close relationships	Schizoid	.30
7.	Has no close friends (other than family members)	Schizoid	.30
8.	Uses physical appearance to draw attention to him/herself	Histrionic	−.27
9.	Is odd or peculiar in behavior or appearance	Schizotypal	.26
10.	Thinks that people are taking advantage of, lying to, or harming him/her.	Paranoid	.25

Note. All $p < .05$.

other derogates when placed in a negatively evaluative situation. This subscale of SNAP items also correlated with peer reports of narcissism ($r = .27$, $p < .05$). When the 10 highest SNAP items were then correlated with the 10 highest PIPD items, a significant correlation was found ($r = .43$, $p < .001$), further evidence that all three assessment measures were apparently tapping a similar personality construct.

4. Discussion

The current study replicated the findings of Morf and Rhodewalt (1993), who examined whether narcissistic persons will derogate others when faced with a threat to the self. On the basis of their results, we expected that participants with narcissistic traits would react to negative feedback by acting in a derogatory manner toward their fellow participants. While Morf and Rhodewalt's study included only male participants, our study included both men and women. Moreover, our participants were identified for narcissistic traits according to both self-ratings and peer nominations. The results of this study partly supported our expectations; they also provide us with an opportunity to describe people who display other-derogation behaviors in a richer and more complex manner. Our findings present a variegated picture of the personality traits associated with other-derogation.

Our first hypothesis was that people with narcissistic traits identified through self-report would actively derogate the confederate, a person who was in their eyes responsible for their failure. We expected this effect to be evident in the use of negative personality descriptors and in negative rankings of the confederate's performance. The results demonstrate that people who describe themselves as being narcissistic do tend to derogate the confederate. Further, those identified by self-report as having narcissistic traits rated themselves as doing much better than the confederate. This

provides an interesting second measure of other-derogation. These findings directly contradict those of Farwell and Wohlwend-Lloyd (1998), who suggested that narcissistic individuals are primarily self-aggrandizing and not other-derogating. In that study, narcissism was positively related to predictions of performance on a laboratory task, but unrelated to the success attributed to a partner's performance on the same task. Our study challenges these findings with evidence that people with narcissistic traits still believe their performance and abilities are superior to others after receiving feedback to the contrary.

The findings of this study with respect to self-report support what is commonly believed about narcissism. The highest correlations between SNAP trait scores and other-derogation were manipulativeness, aggression, entitlement, and low impulsivity. Aggression and entitlement coincide with the tendency to disparage others, and are linked to the narcissistic need to strike out against and refute the position of anyone who threatens self-esteem. Those persons with narcissistic traits detected by SNAP show symptoms of Gunderson and Ronningstam's (1991) devaluation/contempt factor, Emmons's (1987) superiority/arrogance factor, and Bleiberg's (1994) refusal to concede shortcomings. People who admit to narcissistic traits attempt to maintain a positive self-image and high self-esteem in the face of threats to the self, in this case coming specifically in the form of poor ratings on a task described as demonstrating social sensitivity.

The results of our study did not support our hypothesis that peer report of narcissism would also predict other-derogation. Note that the individual who engages in other-derogation is not seen by his or her peers as a narcissist. Instead, the "other-derogator" was described by his/her peers as cold, aloof and avoidant. On the Peer Inventory of Personality Disorders, schizoid correlated most highly with other-derogation and with Self-report scale ratings of doing better than both the confederate and fellow participant. Specific items on the PIPD most highly related to other-derogation were a mixture of obsessive–compulsive, avoidant, schizotypal, paranoid, and schizoid traits.

The differences in self- and peer reports of personality as they relate to other-derogation suggest a rethinking of how best to describe the person who other-derogates. People who other-derogate admit to narcissistic traits of grandiosity and egocentric self-involvement. They also describe themselves in terms of obsessive–compulsive and paranoid traits. Informant reports of those who display other-derogation depict people whose peers think they are cold, aloof, and even unusual. There was a strong relationship between the MMPI narcissism items most highly correlated with other-derogation and the SNAP items most highly correlated with other derogation. In other words, those who described themselves in a grandiose, haughty and egotistical (i.e. narcissistic) manner not only admitted to cold, aloof and unusual behaviors, but were seen this way by others. It seems that in our study, the person who other derogates is much like the narcissist described by Millon (1996). Haughty in tone, but withdrawn almost to the point of peculiarity, they hover just beyond the fray of their peers. Yet s/he is projecting not a sense of grandiose self-importance, but rather a desire to be above their peers because of innate oddity.

It seems that various kinds of individuals, beyond simply narcissists, employ other-derogation in their life. Morf and Rhodewalt (2001) proposed a dynamic self-regulatory process model of narcissism, whereby the main goal of affirming self-worth is accomplished through intra- and interpersonal cognitive, affective and social behavior strategies. The significant relationships between self-reported narcissism and other-derogation found here would seem to support the latter as a type of interpersonal defensive strategy, an attempt to reorder the social world to bring it in line with the narcissists' need to maintain a stable (and very high) self-concept. Perhaps, though, other-derogation is a type of emotional regulation used by people with a constellation of personality traits beyond narcissistic PD. When the criteria for Narcissitic Personality Disorder were revised for DSM-IV, the only criterion that was discarded was "reacts to criticism with feelings of rage, shame, or humiliation" (Gunderson, Ronningstam, & Smith, 1995). This diagnostic feature, eliminated for difficulties with assessment and lack of specificity, closely resembles what we have called other-derogation. The authors further noted that this criteria is discernible in other personality disorders, including paranoid and borderline.

Our results provide support for a theory of other-derogation as a type of maladaptive interpersonal behavior utilized by an individual with a variety of pathological personality traits. Other-derogators are people who possess many traits that fall under the rubric of a narcissistic behavioral syndrome. They admit to narcissitic insecurities and egocentricities, as assessed by the SNAP and MMPI narcissism scales in this study. However, the person who derogates others is not seen by their peers as narcissistic. This type of person is aggressive to the point of appearing odd, aloof, and unusual. At the global level, peer and self-assessment methods capture two different sides of the other-derogation picture; it is only when we examined specific items from both inventories that the picture came into focus. The fact that the 10 PIPD items and 10 SNAP items most highly correlated with other-derogation were also significantly correlated with each other indicates a cohesion to the other-derogation construct.

We see this study as both a sequel to the work of Morf and Rhodewalt (1993), and as a prequel to further investigations in what we call "behavioral challenges." This study bodes well for further lab task research, and with a few refinements in method, lab tasks could resurface as a major method of personality disorder investigation. All of our participants were screened on the SNAP and PIPD a full year before the present study was conducted. In Morf and Rhodewalt's (1993) study, participants completed a self-report measure to assess narcissism during the same school quarter in which they took part in the lab task. With that in mind, it is notable that personality information on any of our participants, brought to the lab for a single, 2 h session at least 12 months following the initial prescreening, correlated with behavior elicited by one subtle measure of other-derogation.

A few limitations of the present investigation should be mentioned. Keeping in mind the instability of behavior at any one given point in time, any lab investigation into personality disorders would do well to integrate the aggregation methods first proposed by Epstein (1979), and refined by Epstein and O'Brien (1985). Multiple unspecific and unusual events can account for a person's behavior in one situation. The

more often a person is viewed in that situation, the more general and reliable their behavior becomes. In other words, personality is a valid and measurable concept, but it can be situation specific. A study such as the present one could be improved upon by collecting laboratory data over several times and/or situations.

By replicating the findings of Morf and Rhodewalt (1993), we have provided further evidence to support that individuals who self-report to narcissistic traits have a tendency to strike out at a person who threatens their self-concept. However, our results also suggest that other-derogation is not simply a defense or self-regulation strategy used by narcissists. In our study, the individual who exhibits derogating behavior is seen by their peers as cold, aloof and unusual. We belive that other-derogation is a type of self-regulatory process, and we can now distinguish differences in how persons with pathological defenses, like other-derogation, view themselves as opposed to how they are viewed by their friends. It is time to go beyond the debate between self-report methods and informant-report methods. The answer is clear—both methods can be used to obtain the most complete portrait of the individual. As this study has shown, both peer- and self-assessment measures will magnify the personality construct under examination; but only when we compare these two methods to a person's actions in a situation of interest will we know how he or she will react.

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