

EMOTIONALITY OF ITEM WORDING
AS A VARIABLE IN A
PERSONALITY SCALE

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ABSTRACT

EMOTIONALITY OF ITEM WORDING AS A VARIABLE IN A PERSONALITY SCALE

by Wallace G. Berger

It has long been recognized that the form in which an item's message or content is stated, the wording that happens to be used, is one source of variance in personality inventory scores. Probably the main difficulty in dealing with this source of variance in any practical way is that the message contained in a particular item can be conveyed through the use of such a multitude of word combinations.

Under the circumstances, not surprisingly, few wording variables have been systematically explored. A reason for this neglect has no doubt been the recognition that wording variables were too specific to particular items or scales. Research was not seen as leading to general conclusions that could serve as guides to inventory constructors. One class of wording variable that does, however, occur across many commonly used personality scales and may therefore serve as a general guide is the judged emotionality or affect associated with various ways of stating items.

In the present study E posed the following questions:

1. To what extent does varying the emotionality of the wording of a personality item affect its strength of endorsement?
2. How can the endorsement-by-emotionality relationship be characterized, i.e., linear or otherwise?

3. To what extent are individual differences in susceptibility to the emotionality of item wording related to the "trait" purportedly measured by the particular personality scale?

The method selected to explore these questions was to take a particular scale, the Short Form Dogmatism Scale (SFDS) and construct two alternate items for each of the original items, with each of these alternate items differing from the original in emotionality of wording.

The analysis of the data indicated that:

1. a. For 12 of the 20 triplets (one triplet = an original SFDS item and 2 alternate items with a message similar to that of the original but differing in emotionality of wording) an inverse relationship existed between endorsement to the item and emotionality of wording.

b. Three "parallel" forms of the SFDS were constructed from the triplets such that they varied in their general level of emotionality of wording (low, medium, and high). Of the three possible paired comparisons among these forms, two were found to be significantly different in mean endorsement (low-high, low-medium), with the higher emotional form being endorsed to a lesser extent.
2. The shape of the endorsement by emotionality relationship appeared to be best characterized as linear.
3. No significant relationship was found between the "trait" designed to be measured by the inventory and individual differences in responding to emotionality of wording.

It was also noted that neither the variance nor the internal consistency nor the "validity" (the correlation of the low, medium, and high forms with the actual SFDS) of the "parallel" forms were significantly modified by their general level of emotionality of wording.

The implication of these findings for personality "test" constructors is that in general, emotionality of wording is not an important factor to take into account under the rather narrow range of conditions which the phenomena were explored in this study.

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By

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To my wife, Maureen

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF APPENDICES	vii
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION.	1
Review of the Literature.	2
Questions Posed	7
II METHOD.	9
Instrument Development Study.	10
Phase 1: Item Selection	10
Subjects.	10
Procedure	10
Phase 2: Instrument Tryout and Item Selection	12
Subjects.	12
Procedure	12
Phase 3: Employment of the Developed Instrument.	14
Subjects.	14
Procedure	15
III RESULTS	16
Some Characteristics of the Instrument.	16
The Relationship of Endorsement and Emotionality Within Similar Messages (Question 1).	20
"Parallel" Forms.	22
The Endorsement by Emotionality Relation- ship Across Messages.	24

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

CHAPTER		Page
III	(Continued)	
	The Shape of the Endorsement by Emotionality Relationship (Question 2)	25
	The Relationship Between <u>Ss</u> ' Response to Emotionality and Total Scale Score (Question 3)	27
IV	DISCUSSION.	28
	Some Comments on Message Similarity	28
	The Relationship of Endorsement and Emotionality Within Similar Messages (Question 1)	29
	"Parallel" Forms.	31
	The Endorsement by Emotionality Relationship Across Message	32
	The Shape of the Endorsement by Emo- tionality Relationship (Question 2)	32
	The Relationship Between <u>Ss</u> ' Response to Emotionality and Total Scale Score (Question 3)	33
	Some Practical Considerations	33
	Suggested Research.	34
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	35
	APPENDICES	38

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Likert and successive category values for the emotionality ratings	17
2	Intercorrelations of the forms	19
3	Paired comparisons within triplets	21
4	Frequency distributions of the mean emotionality ratings of the items in the three "parallel" forms	23
5	Means, standard deviations and significant differences of the three "parallel" forms.	24
6	Representation of endorsement by emotionality relationship within triplets	26

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix		Page
A	Oral instructions given prior to the administration of the instrument	38
B	Pilot instrument	40
C	Final instrument	52
D	Table A -- Mean endorsement and mean emotionality ratings and endorsement intercorrelations within triplets arranged by emotionality level	65
	Table B -- The distribution of SFDS total scores and corresponding correlations between degree of endorsement and emo- tionality rating for each subject.	67
E	Message triplets	68

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the possible sources of variance in personality measures is the manner in which an item's content (or message)* is worded. A reason for the concern with item wording stems from the fact that the message contained in a particular item can be conveyed through the use of a multitude of word combinations. The wealth of different phrasings that are possible in English allows for the introduction of subtle "contaminants." These contaminants could make for selective responding to irrelevant, non-message variables on the part of subjects.

Most of these wording variables have been relatively unexplored. Perhaps a reason for this neglect has been the recognition that many of these wording variables were too specific to particular items or scales. Research on such specifics would not lead to useful general principles.

*The term "message" rather than "content" will be generally used in this report. "Message" as a term is more precise and less ambiguous in the context of this research.

A class of wording variables that does, however, occur across many commonly used personality scales is the emotionality or affect associated with various ways of stating items. The emotionality of the item wording could, as well as the item message, play a significant role in determining the response given to the item.

Emotionality of item wording as a variable in personality scores should be viewed in the context of the current research on response bias. Rundquist (1966) lists five classes of variables which can be influential in determining the responses given to a personality item or scale.

"Among the many sources of variance in personality scores, there appear to be five which have particular relevance to response bias: content, item scale-values on such continuums as social desirability, form in which the content is stated, sets to create a definite impression, and the nature of the response scale." (p. 166)

In the above classification, emotionality of item wording falls within the category of "item scale-values on such continuums as social desirability."*

Of particular relevance to the present study are experiments demonstrating the feasibility of separating

*In Rundquist's schema "The term form of statement (the category in which emotionality of wording would logically seem to fall) refers to the fact that an item is so stated that its. . .scale value (on some variable) is on one or the other side of the neutral point." (p. 168) The category of "form in which the content is stated" is therefore restricted to item reversals on such variables as social desirability, etc. The only possible other category for emotionality of wording to fall into is the one indicated.

affect and message in verbal communications. Starkweather (1956) through mechanical means reduced voices to a "low mumble" so that the message was lost. The subjects were then asked to identify the affect associated with each of the ninety tapes. The results were congruent with the hypothesis that some affect information remains in speech filtered content free.

Davitz and Davitz (1959) came to the same conclusion when they asked speakers to recite the alphabet and at the same time to vary their emotional expression. Obviously, the alphabet represented a constant (message). Subjects exposed to the recordings of these alphabetic recitations were able to a significant degree to identify the various emotions expressed.

These two studies, then, showed that in the case of verbal communications subjects were able to identify emotional expression independently of message.

Propaganda research reports some effects on subjects of using messages with varying degrees of planned emotional content. Two widely referenced articles are relevant. Hartmann (1936), preceding an election, circulated two leaflets (one a so-called "emotional" appeal, and the other a so-called "rational" appeal) in non-overlapping sections of the same city. The results indicated that the "emotional" appeal was more effective, i.e., elicited a higher proportion of favorable votes.

Janis and Feshbach (1953) administered three levels of emotional appeals (via recorded lectures) to a group of high school students. The results indicated that the minimal emotional (the emotion in this case was fear) appeal was the most effective form of communication in producing reported conformity to dental hygiene practices advocated by the message.

Within both the Hartmann and Janis and Feshbach studies not only did the emotionality of the presentation vary, but the message itself was modified in the various appeals. Hartmann presented messages that varied along an "emotional-rational" dimension and at the same time along some potentially salient social issues (economic policy, war involvement, etc.). Similarly, Janis and Feshbach did not keep message content as constant as they might have. They not only varied the degree of fear reflected in the appeals, but also the vividness of the slides shown, the personalization of the threat reference, and the stress placed on bodily harm. Many propaganda studies, then, like those of Hartmann and Janis and Feshbach, did not do a sufficiently precise job of keeping separate the affects of the message and the effects of emotionality of wording.

Allman and Rokeach (1967) devised a very simple, direct, systematic way of trying to assess the relative effects of emotional (affective) as compared with cognitive orientations of item wording on responses to several different personality measuring instruments. In effect, they

compared responses to affectively oriented phrases such as "I feel. . ." with cognitively oriented phrases such as "I believe. . ." or "I think. . ." Using a test-retest paradigm these investigators found that the responses to Likert-type items did not vary as a result of manipulating the cognitive and affective orientation in the above mentioned manner. Evidently stronger, more varied ways of getting emotionality into the wording of items was called for.

As part of their study, Weiss and Lieberman (1959) attempted to vary the emotionality of a set of written personal descriptions while holding the message of these descriptions constant. The Ss were presented with both a favorable and unfavorable set of personal descriptions which had "equivalent" messages, but varied in emotionality of statement ("emotional" or "non-emotional"). The Ss were then asked to indicate, through a multiple-choice format, their attitude toward the person described. An example of two positive favorable personal descriptions given in the article is: "he was loved and cherished by all for the fairness and decency of his actions" ("emotional") versus "he was held in high esteem and with devoted attachment by all for the upright impartiality and correctness of his actions" ("non-emotional").

Weiss and Lieberman found that when an unfavorable description (regardless of its emotionality level) was followed by a favorable non-emotional description, a greater

change in attitude toward the person described ($p = .02$) occurred than when an emotional set of statements followed the initial unfavorable description.

This study as presented appears to have several methodological deficiencies, the most important of which (in terms of the present study) is that the personal descriptions were not equated for similarity of message or rated for degree of emotionality of wording.

The present study attempted experimentally to isolate from each other the effects of two variables, emotionality of item wording and item message, on responses Ss make to the items on one commonly used personality scale. The four other possible sources of variance mentioned by Rundquist as playing a role in influencing responses to personality-scale items were, as far as possible, held constant.

The items employed in this study were assumed to vary along two dimensions. One of these dimensions was the message carried by the item. These messages were givens, i.e., they were the messages found in the original items on the personality scale which was used in this study. The second dimension, the emotionality of item wording, was the one manipulated by the experimenter.

The following statement from Weiss and Lieberman applies to the procedure employed in the present study:

"The basic assumption underlying the procedure is that affect may be provoked by the kinds of words

used to describe an object (or situation)*. That is, besides their cognitive significations (message)*, words carry an affective loading given by their association with value judgments, ideals, morals, etc., as a consequence of the social and personal experiences of the communicatees. . . . A further assumption is that the affect is associated with certain words or phrases rather than with cognitively equivalent ones (same message)* . . ." (p. 129)

For each of the original item messages, in the SFDS, then, several alternate items were constructed. Each of these alternate items contained a message similar to the original item from which it was constructed, but differed in its emotionality of wording (independent variable). The dependent measure in this study was the extent to which subjects agreed with or endorsed the items. The subjects' degree of endorsement was measured by their responses (from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree") on a Likert scale. The degree of endorsement to particular items on a personality scale could, within the framework of this study, be attributed to the item's message and/or the emotionality of item wording.

This study posed three specific questions, the answers to which should clarify the extent to which emotionality of wording was a special factor in influencing responses to items that make up a particular personality scale. The questions were:

1. To what extent does varying the emotionality of the wording of an attitude item, while holding

*The present author's own insertion.

message constant, affect its endorsement?

2. How can the endorsement by emotionality relationship be characterized, i.e., what shape does this relationship take, linear or otherwise?
3. To what extent are individual differences in susceptibility to the emotionality of item wording related to the personality characteristic purportedly measured by the particular personality scale?

CHAPTER II

METHOD

The method here employed to separate item message from item wording entailed constructing items containing similar messages but varying in emotionality of wording. Three "parallel forms" of a scale were so constructed that message was held relatively constant, but emotionality of item wording was expressed in one of three degrees - low, medium, high - for each of the three forms.

The personality scale used in this study was the Rokeach Short Form Dogmatism Scale (SFDS). The advantages of this scale were: (1) its constructor, Dr. Milton Rokeach, was available for consultation, (2) it was found to be a reliable measure (Troidahl and Powell, 1956), (3) it was of manageable length, (4) most importantly, the scale's original items happened to span a wide range of emotionality of wording.

The procedure used in this study can be divided into three phases. The first two phases (Phase 1 and Phase 2) were concerned with developing the instrument and at the same time served as pilot studies. The pilot studies were necessary in order to present evidence that

emotionality of wording could be manipulated independently of message. In the third phase the instrument developed in Phases 1 and 2 was administered for definitively testing the basic hypothesis of the study.

INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT STUDY

Phase 1

Subjects

Five (5) graduate students (males) and 2 faculty members (males) in the Department of Psychology at Michigan State University served as judges for the first phase of the instrument development study.

Procedure

The E had previously constructed a minimum of four (4) new items for each of the original twenty (20) items on the SFDS. The original and newly constructed items were typed on 3 x 5 cards and submitted to the judges. They independently were asked to assign to each item a value ranging from 1 to 5 to indicate the item's strength of emotional wording. The assignment of numbers was accomplished through the use of a card-sorting procedure. The values (1-5) assigned by the judges to the items were recorded. The E then instructed the judges to compare each of the four or more new items with the original SFDS item (or standard). The judges also indicated whether a constructed item differed in message as well as degree of

emotionality, from the standard, through verbal report to the E.

Three "parallel forms" differing in emotionality of wording were constructed. The choice of three rather than some other number of forms was based on the following considerations: (1) with fewer than three forms of a particular message, it is not possible to ascertain whether the relationship between emotionality of wording and degree of endorsement to that message is linear or non-linear, and (2) if more than three forms were used, the task for the subjects would in all likelihood be too lengthy and tedious.

The item selections began by discarding all those items judged by two or more of the judges to differ in message from the standard SFDS item. Next, the mean emotionality values of the original SFDS item and the means of the newly constructed revisions of the SFDS items were computed from the data generated by the card-sort procedure. Two new items for each original were selected and retained for inclusion in the first questionnaire if their mean emotionality ratings differed from both the original item and each other by at least 1 point (except in Triplet #10 and 20, where it was found practically impossible to vary the item's emotionality of wording without changing its message). (See Appendix E).

An instrument consisting of 20 original items plus 2 constructed items for each of these 20 original items (making a total of 60 items) was then constructed. The

questionnaire was constructed such that the 60 items were randomized (through the use of a table of random numbers) with the constraint that each member of a triplet was a distance of 20 items apart. (See Appendix B).

Phase 2

Subjects

The subjects were a volunteer group of 57 Michigan State University students (22 males, 35 females) enrolled in a Junior-level Psychology course, during the Spring Quarter of 1966.

Procedure

The intent of Phase 2 was: (1) to more precisely arrive at the emotionality ratings of the items (as judged by the 57 subjects), (2) to use these ratings as a basis for the construction of the final instrument, and (3) to try out the instructions and the format of the instrument on a student sample.

Oral instructions were given by the E immediately prior to the administration of the instrument in order to emphasize the importance of responding independently to each item. (See Appendix A). Before a subject could begin work on the instrument, he read to himself approximately the same instructions presented to him in verbal form by the E (see Appendix B). Since a variation of each original item appeared twice more on the instrument, the subjects

were instructed not to strive for consistency on the three items but simply to evaluate each item on its own merits, regardless of his responses to similar items.

The instrument consisted of three sections. In Section 1 the subjects were instructed to rate each of the 60 items on a five-point Likert scale, 1 to 5, indicating degree of endorsement with the item, (from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). The sole use made of these ratings was to test the format of the final instrument, i.e., to see the extent to which the instructions were accurately followed and to gauge the time required for the task. In the final instrument these ratings would be used to determine the degree of endorsement with the items.

In Section 2 the subjects were again presented with the same 60 items. This time, however, they were instructed to rate each item in terms of how emotionally worded they thought the item to be. These data were then used to assign scale values to the items relative to their emotionality of wording.

Section 3 consisted of twelve (12) biographical information items to help describe the subjects.

After the above data were gathered, the means characterizing the items were calculated. Items were then grouped into message triplets, i.e., each triplet consisted of the original (SFDS) item and the two items constructed from the original; thus there were 20 such triplets. Each

of the three items in the triplet was then designated as either a high, medium, or low emotionality rated item by comparing their mean ratings. Those items in each triplet which did not significantly ($p < .05$) differ from at least one other item in that triplet were excluded from the final instrument. Also an attempt was made to arrive at three emotionality levels (low, medium, high) in which the ranges were non-overlapping with respect to their emotionality ratings. For example, if an item were designated as high (emotionality rating) in a particular triplet and at the same time its emotionality rating fell within the range of emotionality ratings of the medium or low 20 items, it was excluded from the final instrument.

The above criteria necessitated the elimination of 17 of the 40 items. The E constructed a minimum of two new items for each of the items eliminated and submitted these new items to the same panel of judges employed in Phase 1. The procedure used for selection of the 17 new items was identical to that used in Phase 1.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE DEVELOPED INSTRUMENT

Phase 3

Subjects

The revised instrument (see Appendix C) was administered to a volunteer group of 77 Michigan State University students (28 males, 49 females) enrolled in several

introductory psychology classes, during the Fall Quarter of 1967.

Procedure

The format of the instrument and the instructions given were the same as those used in the phases of developing the instrument (Phases 1 and 2).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Some Characteristics of the Instrument

Before the data were analyzed, it was necessary to test an important assumption that underlay the use of the parametric analyses (or "tests" in the statistical sense) that were to be used in the analysis. An equal-interval scale is assumed when using parametric statistics. A problem that can arise when using ratings on Likert-type scales is that when subjects are asked to scale items on certain dimensions, the resulting intervals between the categories may not be equal. Therefore, before the statistical analysis of results was undertaken, the emotionality ratings of the items were scaled by the method of successive categories to test for linearity between the assumed equal-interval Likert Scale (as used in the questionnaire) and the empirically derived scale (as calculated by the successive category method). Guilford (1954) pointed out an inherent problem in attitude scales: "The scaling problem is to estimate the values of the categories or of their limits, along the psychological

continuum, and from these reference values to derive interval-scale measurements of stimuli." (p. 223)

The values computed by means of the successive category method were compared with those assumed when using a Likert Scale. The relation between these two scales is displayed in Table 1.

TABLE 1.--Likert and successive category values for the emotionality ratings

Likert Values	1	2	3	4	5
Scaled Values	1.09	2.12	3.00	3.85	4.99

The correlation between the Likert and scaled values was .96. This high a correlation indicated an essentially linear relation between these two sets of values. The strength of this correlation indicates that the use of the raw Likert values or the scaled values would lead to essentially the same results. Therefore, in all of the further analyses in which emotionality ratings were used, these ratings were based on the raw Likert Scale values assigned by the subjects.

By the way it was constructed, the instrument could be divided into various parts or components. Each of the components (listed in Table 2) represented a segment of the instrument which was of relevance to this study. These intercorrelations could be interpreted in two ways: (1) as measures of the components' reliabilities ("parallel"

forms) since the intercorrelations are those among scales which have similar messages, and (2) as predictor-criterion correlations, if we view the SFDS score as the criterion and the scores on the other constructed scales as the predictors.

Using the first interpretation it is not surprising to find that many of the intercorrelations are larger than the scales' internal consistencies. Internal consistency can serve as an estimate of the scale's reliability only so far as the scale is homogeneous (one factor). Rokeach and Fruchter (1956) have in fact found, upon factor analysis, that the Dogmatism Scale was indeed multidimensional. Because of the manner in which the SFDS was constructed (see Troldahl and Powell) it is most likely that it (SFDS) is also multidimensional. In the case of a multidimensional scale, measures of the scale's internal consistency will considerably underestimate the scale's reliability.

If the correlations between the new scales and the SFDS are viewed as validities, then their size makes it plausible to assume that the components are to a large extent tapping the same dimension(s) as the original SFDS. This finding lends some indirect support to the proposition that item wording, in the form of emotionality of item construction, can be manipulated without seriously changing the item message or content.

It should be noted that there is no statistically significant difference in the scales' internal consistencies: .63 (LOW), .65 (MEDIUM), .70 (HIGH), and .69 (SFDS). In addition, the "validities" (correlations of LOW, MEDIUM, and HIGH with the SFDS) were computed. Those items that the LOW, MEDIUM, and HIGH scales had in common with the SFDS were omitted in the computations of these validity coefficients. Then the validities were recomputed correcting the LOW, MEDIUM, and HIGH scales to the same number of items (20). It is interesting to note that the validities were as follows: .80 (LOW-SFDS), .80 (MEDIUM-SFDS), .82 (HIGH-SFDS). None of these validity coefficients was significantly different from each other.

TABLE 2.--Intercorrelations of the forms.

Forms					
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	SFDS ¹	
Forms	LOW	(.63) ²	.68 ³	.70	.66
	MEDIUM		(.65)	.82	.70
	HIGH			(.70)	.79
	SFDS				(.69)

1. This column represents the correlations between the SFDS and the other forms. Any items that the SFDS had in common with another form was removed from the other form before the correlation was computed.
2. The parenthesized values down the diagonal are the internal consistencies of the scales (Cronbach's alpha).
3. All correlation coefficients are significant beyond .01 level.

The Relationship of Endorsement and Emotionality
within Similar Messages (Question 1)

In order to determine the degree to which varying the emotionality of wording of an item would affect endorsement to the item, Scheffé's method of pairwise comparisons was performed within item triplets. The Scheffé approach has the optimum property that Type 1 error is at most for all of the possible comparisons. Thus if three or fewer within-triplet comparisons were significant at some level α , then the over-all probability of falsely rejecting the null hypothesis for any and all of these comparisons will at most be the pre-determined level α .

Table 3 presents the results of the paired comparisons. The results of the analysis of the emotionality ratings indicated all 20 triplets but two (Triplet #8 and #10) had at least one significant difference in the item's emotionality ratings. Out of the sixty possible comparisons, 41 were significant, 34 at the .01 level, and 7 at the .05 level.

The results of the analysis of the endorsements indicated that of the 20 triplets, 12 were found to have at least one significant difference in the endorsement; the remaining eight (Triplets #2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14) showed no significant differences. Eighteen (18) of the possible 60 comparisons were significant, 9 at the .01 level, and 9 at the .05 level.

TABLE 3.--Paired comparisons within triplets.

Significance tests				Significance tests			
TRIP.#	LOW-MED	MED-HIGH	LOW-HIGH	TRIP.#	LOW-MED	MED-HIGH	LOW-HIGH
1.	*		**	11.		**	**
2.		*	**	12.	**	**	**
3.	**	**	**	13.	**		**
4.	*	**	**	14.		**	**
5.	*	**	**	15.	*	**	**
6.	*	**	**	16.	**		**
7.	*	**	**	17.		*	*
8.				18.	*	*	**
9.	**	**	**	19.		*	**
10.				20.	**	*	**

*Significant at .05 level. Obtained by the Scheffé Method.
 **Significant at .01 level. (see Winer (1962) p.88)

Note: In each triplet the first row is endorsement and the second row is emotionality ratings.

Of these 18 significant differences all suggested the existence of a negative relation between endorsement to the item and the item's rated emotionality (i.e. the higher the item's emotionality, the less the endorsement of the item).

In 11 of the 20 triplets (#'s 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20) a significant difference in endorsement was found between one of the triplet items and the original (SFDS) item in that triplet.

"Parallel" Forms

Another way in which we can evaluate the endorsement-emotionality data is by using the 60 items to construct 3 scales (each containing 20 items), the items of each scale having similar messages but the scales themselves differing in their emotionality ratings.

The procedure used for the construction of these three "parallel" forms was described in the methods section (see page 13 and Table 4). Scheffé's paired comparisons test was performed on both the mean endorsement and mean emotionality ratings of the three forms (see Table 5).

A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between the mean endorsement to the Low vs. Medium and Low vs. High emotionality levels. These differences were in the same direction as the majority of differences found in the within-triplet comparisons.

All of the paired comparisons among emotionality ratings were significant ($p < .01$) as was expected because of the manner in which the "parallel" forms were constructed.

TABLE 4.--Frequency distributions of the mean emotionality ratings of the items in the three "parallel" forms

Mean item emotionality rating	Forms		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
4.4-4.3			3
4.2-4.1			2
4.0-3.9			4
3.8-3.7			4
3.6-3.5			4
3.4-3.3		3	
3.2-3.1		4	2
3.0-2.9	2	4	
2.8-2.7	5	3	
2.6-2.5	2	3	
2.4-2.3	5	3	1
2.2-2.1	4		
2.0-1.9	1		
1.8-1.7	1		

The variance of the endorsement scores on each of the three forms (reference is made to parenthesized values in the upper half of Table 5, which are in the form of the standard deviations) were compared through the use of a 't' test for variances computed from correlated scores (with 58 df.). The three comparisons (LOW-MEDIUM, MEDIUM-HIGH and LOW-HIGH) all yielded non-significant 't' ratios.

The results of these comparisons indicated that the forms did not significantly differ in variance.

TABLE 5.--Means, standard deviations and significant differences of the three "parallel" forms

Endorsement Component			
	Forms		Significance tests
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
	58.4	51.7	50.7
	(8.3) ¹	(8.2)	(9.2)
			LOW-MEDIUM**
			MEDIUM-HIGH
			LOW-HIGH**

Emotionality Ratings			
	Forms		Significance tests
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
	48.8	57.7	74.7
	(10.2)	(10.3)	(10.6)
			LOW-MEDIUM**
			MEDIUM-HIGH**
			LOW-HIGH**

¹ Parenthesized values are the standard deviations.
 **Significant at .01 level (Scheffé).

The Endorsement by Emotionality Relationship Across Messages

To ascertain the extent to which a general, across-message, relationship existed between an item's endorsement and its emotionality of wording (regardless of the item's message), the following test was performed.

The mean endorsement and the mean emotionality ratings for each of the 60 items were computed. A correlation was

then computed between the item's mean endorsement and mean emotionality. The correlation obtained was $r = -.21$ ($p < .10$).

The Shape of the Endorsement by Emotionality Relationship (Question 2)

Two questions concerning the shape of the endorsement by emotionality relationship can be asked:

1. To what extent is the shape of the endorsement by emotionality relationship consistent from message to message? If there is a predominant shape, what form does it take?
2. What shape best characterizes the relationship between endorsement by emotionality across messages?

One method of attacking #1 above is to note the possible shapes (of the line connecting the three pairs of means in a triplet) that could occur and the number of occurrences.* If we assume that there is a main effect, i.e., the high emotional item is endorsed to a lesser degree than the low emotional item, then the maximum number of shapes is 3 (if no 2 points in a triplet are identical).

*Since the mean emotionality ratings of the items in each triplet differed widely from triplet to triplet and the correlations between forms were not equivalent, it was not meaningful to characterize the shapes of endorsement by emotionality relationship using an AoV design.

We can assign either a 1, 2 or 3 to each item in a triplet to indicate the position of that item's endorsement - emotionality mean relative to the endorsement - emotionality means of the other 2 items in the triplet. If we then arrange these numbers by low, medium, and high emotionality, the shapes can be represented by the following sequences; (3,2,1), (3,1,2), (2,3,1).

TABLE 6.--Representation of endorsement by emotionality relationship within triplets¹

Emotionality Levels				
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	#	Triplet #
3	2	1	5	9,10,13,19,20
3	1	2	7	1,3,6,7,11,12,16
2	3	1	4	2,15,17,18

¹Triplets 4, 5, 8, 14 were omitted from this Table since they did not demonstrate a main effect as defined in the text above.

Table 6 does not expose any characteristic shape for the endorsement by emotionality relationship. The shape of the relationship appears to depend more upon the individual messages (and the peculiarities of the items with similar messages) than any general endorsement by emotionality effect.

A method of characterizing the relationship between endorsement and emotionality across messages (Question 2 above) is to compare the r and η (eta) calculated on the endorsement-emotionality means of the 60 items. The

obtained $r = -.21$ ($p < .10$) and $\eta = .54$ (N.S. with 15 and 44 df.). A comparison of these two values yielded no significant difference. Thus, since no significant departure from linearity was found, the endorsement by emotionality relationship can most parsimoniously be expressed as linear (although this r only accounts for 4.82 per cent of the total variance).

The Relationship between Ss' Response to
Emotionality and Total Scale Score
(Question 3)

To determine whether individual differences in susceptibility to the emotionality of item wording were related to the personality characteristic purportedly measured by the particular personality scale, the following test was performed: a correlation was computed for each subject as follows. (See Table B in Appendix D). This correlation was obtained by using a particular subject's endorsement of a particular item as one variable (X) and the total group's mean emotionality rating of that particular item as the second variable (Y). This procedure was followed for each subject across all of the 60 variables. A single correlation was then calculated between the above mentioned individual's correlation and the individual's total endorsement score on the scale (thus this was an across-subjects-correlation). The correlation coefficient arrived at through this procedure was .14 (N.S.).

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Some Comments on Message Similarity

Before discussing the findings of this study relative to the three questions posed in the Introduction, there is one pervasive problem that the method employed in this study to explore the effects of emotionality of item wording led to. The problem was: "To what extent do the alternate items represent the same content as the original items?" Of the methods that were suggested for arriving at an index of similarity, none was felt to be appropriate. Therefore, although no statistical index of similarity was computed, every attempt was made by the investigator to equate for content.

The correlations among the constructed items and the SFDS (see Table 2) lend some indirect support to the assumption of content similarity. The items are also presented in "content" triplets in Appendix E for inspection.

In the present study the items were judged for similarity of message. In retrospect, however, it appeared to the E on inspection that several items (Triplets #1, 11,

14 and 20) within a triplet varied somewhat in message instead of remaining constant. The variation in message can be attributed to the difficulty of constructing items with a particular message while simultaneously manipulating the emotionality variable. In other words, the messages of certain items did not lend themselves to changes in emotionality without concomitant changes in item meaning. Despite the cooperation of a number of colleagues in the wording of items and the help of the judges, this problem was not completely overcome.

If the reader will go along with this admitted methodological weakness and assume that its effects were minimal, the three main findings may next be discussed. These three main findings answer the three questions raised in the Introduction: (1) degree of relationship between measured endorsement of item and emotionality ratings; (2) the mathematical form of this relationship and (3) relationship between emotionality of wording and score on the scale used in this study, the SFDS.

The Relationship of Endorsement and Emotionality within Similar Messages (Question 1)

Eight of the 20 triplets (#2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 14) showed no significant differences in endorsement (within triplets differences). Some post hoc explanations for these 8 non-significant triplets are given below. In Triplet #2 the Low-Medium item comparison just fell short

of significance ($p < .05$) with the difference being in the same direction as the significant differences. In Triplets #4, 5, and 11 the original SFDS item in that triplet was rated low in emotionality and, at the same time, these three messages were of such a nature as to elicit little or no endorsement in this sample (see Appendix E). Therefore, by making the wording on the new items more emotional, a "basement" effect on endorsement could have been encountered. In Triplets #8 and 10 the range of the item's emotionality rating was small. In both triplets no significant difference in emotionality ratings was found between the items within the triplets. Therefore a significant difference between endorsement to the items in these triplets should not be expected.

Triplet #13, like 4, 5 and 11, had a general low level of endorsement. While the items in Triplet #13 did not differ significantly in endorsement, the mean differences were in the same direction as the significant differences that were found.

In Triplet #14 both of the new items used the word "uncomfortable" as a substitute for the more emotional phrase "blood boils." Perhaps a substitution of the word "annoyed" or some similar term for "uncomfortable" would have been more in keeping with the meaning of the original SFDS item. Some such change might have resulted in a pattern of endorsements similar to those of the statistically significant triplets.

The majority of the triplets did, however, suggest the existence of a negative relation between an item's emotionality of wording and endorsement of the item. Thus, where items had similar messages (within triplets) an increase in emotionality of item wording, when endorsement was affected at all, was followed by a decrease in mean endorsement.

If the inverse relationship between endorsement and emotionality is indicative of some stable socio-cultural response bias, then test administrators and personality theorists should exercise some caution in interpreting item endorsements. For example, items with low endorsement may not necessarily indicate that the population disagrees with the item's message, but may be related to the item's high level of emotionality. In opinion type research where obtaining population base levels for certain items is the goal for the research, the introduction of emotionality as an extraneous variable may cause a distortion of these base rates or levels of responding.

"Parallel" Forms

The analysis of the "parallel" forms (see Table 5) suggested that the degree of emotionality of wording could influence mean endorsement (to the scale) to a statistically significant degree. The direction of the relationship between endorsement and emotionality was the same as that found in the within triplet analysis, i.e., inverse.

The effect of emotionality of wording should be kept in mind when comparing scores from "parallel" forms.

The Endorsement by Emotionality Relationship Across Message

Although the 60 items spanned a large range of emotionality of wording, the across-message endorsement by emotionality relationship only accounted for approximately 5% of the total variance. The small size of the across-message correlation can be attributed to two factors (1) the endorsement to each message differed, even though the emotionality rating might have been the same and (2) the effects of emotionality within a message were not consistent. Both the above factors contributed to the within variance and consequently decreased the correlation.

The Shape of the Endorsement by Emotionality Relationship (Question 2)

The analysis within triplets did not expose any characteristic shape for the endorsement by emotionality relationship. The analysis across message indicated a linear trend ($r = -.21$, $p < .10$) between endorsement and emotionality. Although the shape of the across message relationship did not significantly depart from linearity, the scatter plot did display a marked "V" shape (endorsement by emotionality), i.e., there tended to be a greater degree of endorsement to the low and high emotional items than to the medium emotional items.

The Relationship Between Ss' Response to
Emotionality and Total Scale Score
(Question 3)

Although it was not found in this study, there is a possibility that a relationship could exist between the "trait" of interest to the scale constructor and the effect of emotionality of wording on the Ss responses to items. The restricted range of total scores on the SFDS* in this study may have attenuated any such relation that might have existed. It is suggested therefore that the possibility of a relationship should not be overlooked. The existence of such an association might in fact aid the test constructor or personality theorist in discriminating among or more accurately describing various populations in reference to certain traits or characteristics.

Some Practical Considerations

Several incidental findings of practical importance, not a part of the answers to the three main questions of this thesis, deserve special mention:

1. The variance of the scales was not significantly affected by the general level of emotionality of wording of the "parallel" forms.
2. For the scale used in this study (SFDS) internal-consistency was not significantly affected by the general level of emotionality of wording of the "parallel" forms that were constructed.

*It is not unusual to find that college samples obtain mean scores below the neutral point on such personality measures of authoritarianism, dogmatism, etc., (see Christie et.al. (1958)).

3. For the scale used in this study (SFDS) the validity, as assessed by the correlation between the "parallel" forms and the SFDS, was not significantly affected by the general level of emotionality of wording of the "parallel" forms.

The above three points, if generalizable to other scales, should take a considerable burden off the test constructor. In the present study if the "parallel" forms of the SFDS were corrected for differences in mean scores (which were associated with varying levels of emotionality of wording), then it appears that emotionality of item wording was a variable that could be safely ignored.

Suggested Research

Several possible extensions of the present research emerge.

First, the factors associated with the tendency for college Ss to prefer less emotional statements over highly emotional statements (with similar messages) should be explored.

Second, the implications of individual differences in responding to emotionality of wording on personality scales should be further explored. Such individual differences and their possible relationship with other variables might lead to a better understanding of a particular personality variable.

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A P P E N D I X A

Oral instructions given prior to the administration
of the instrument

A

Oral Instructions Given Prior to the Administration
of the Questionnaire

My name is Wallace Berger. I am a graduate student in the department of Psychology.

I am currently engaged in exploring the relation between item wording and your personal opinions toward items. I hope that with your cooperation and by means of this questionnaire I will be in a better position to understand this relationship.

Because I wish to observe the effects of item wording many of the items will appear quite similar. Therefore it is very important that each item be answered on it's own merits alone. You should not let previous responses influence your present response to any item.

Are there any questions?

Now carefully read the instructions on your questionnaire and begin work.

Please answer each item - don't leave any blanks.

Thank you.

A P P E N D I X C

Final instrument.

Instructions

Appearing below are some statements about which people have different opinions or beliefs. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by marking the appropriate response on the answer sheet.

For each item mark:

- 1 if you strongly disagree
- 2 if you mildly disagree
- 3 if you neither agree nor disagree
- 4 if you mildly agree
- 5 if you strongly agree

Remember there are no "correct" answers for any of the statements. We are interested only in your personal opinions and beliefs about each of them.

Remember - respond independently to each item.

- 1. Man is too small and stupid to understand this world without extensive reliance on leaders and experts.
- 2. Freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, but you can't let certain political groups go around shooting off their mouths whenever they want to.
- 3. Most people just don't know what's good for them.
- 4. There are a lot of different philosophies which exist in this world and all but maybe one of them is dead wrong.
- 5. To compromise with our political opponents is dangerous because it usually leads to the betrayal of our own side.
- 6. A vast majority of people are totally unconcerned about anybody but themselves.
- 7. I'd like it if I could find someone who would tell me how to solve my personal problems.
- 8. The surest way to have a useless and empty life is to refuse to devote yourself to an ideal or cause.

- 1 strongly disagree
- 2 mildly disagree
- 3 neither agree nor disagree
- 4 mildly agree
- 5 strongly agree

2.

- 8. The surest way to have a totally useless and empty life is by refusing to devote yourself to an ideal or cause.
- 9. Most of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't worth the paper they are printed on.
- 10. To become a world famous man like Beethoven, Shakespeare, or Einstein; whose name, ideas and deeds remain immortal, is my secret ambition.
- 11. The U. S. and Russia have just about nothing in common.
- 12. Keeping the idiots out of office will allow democracy, the highest form of government, to fulfill its utmost potential.
- 13. The world can be divided into those individuals who uphold the truth and those individuals who do not.
- 14. I experience an uncomfortable feeling around those people who are unwilling to admit it when they are wrong.
- 15. Frequently you can save yourself from acting like a fool if, before a decision or judgment is to be made you would just take the time to listen to those you respect.
- 16. Puny man when left on his own is a miserably unhappy and totally helpless animal.
- 17. During a discussion I often must say the same thing repeatedly, in order that my remarks are not hopelessly distorted by others.
- 18. The desire to wholeheartedly dedicate your life to the accomplishment of something important is the most essential thing in life.
- 19. The present is all too often full of unhappiness. It is only the future that counts.
- 20. It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward.
- 21. In this complicated world of ours, the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders or experts who can be trusted.
- 22. Unfortunately certain political groups have to be muzzled even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal.
- 23. What is good for each individual is often not known by that individual.
- 24. Of all the different philosophies which exist in this world, there is probably only one which is correct.

- 1 strongly disagree
- 2 mildly disagree
- 3 neither agree nor disagree
- 4 mildly agree
- 5 strongly agree

3.

- 25. To settle for less than one's ideals by compromising with political antagonists is suicidal because it usually leads to ultimate betrayal.
- 26. Most people just don't give a damn about others.
- 27. I would be pleased if the solutions to problems which I personally encounter were dictated to me by someone else.
- 28. The only way in which life is made meaningful is through the devotion to an ideal or cause.
- 29. Almost all of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't even worthy of being printed on cheap toilet paper.
- 30. While I don't like to admit this even to myself, my secret ambition is to become a great man, like Einstein or Beethoven, or Shakespeare.
- 31. It is idiotically stupid to think Russia and the U.S. have much in common.
- 32. For democracy, which is the highest form of government, to be at its best those who govern must be capable.
- 33. There are two kinds of people in the world: those who are for the truth and those who are against the truth.
- 34. My blood boils whenever a person stubbornly refuses to admit he's wrong.
- 35. It is often desirable to reserve judgment about what's going on until one has had a chance to hear the opinions of those one respects.
- 36. Man on his own is a helpless and miserable creature.
- 37. In a discussion, I often find it necessary to repeat myself several times to make sure that I am being understood.
- 38. The main thing in life is for a person to want to do something important.
- 39. Chronologically speaking, contemporaneous events are often displeasing, while those things that are of any consequence are yet to come.
- 40. One should be willing to make personal sacrifices for his ideals.
- 41. This world is too complicated and man too ignorant to understand what's going on without a pretty extensive reliance on leaders or experts who can be trusted.

- 1 strongly disagree
- 2 mildly disagree
- 3 neither agree nor disagree
- 4 mildly agree
- 5 strongly agree

4.

- 42. Even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, it is unfortunately necessary to restrict the freedom of certain political groups.
- 43. There are a great number of people who are too stupid to realize what is really good for them.
- 44. Most of the many different philosophies which exist in this world are perverted; in fact, there is probably only one which is the truth.
- 45. It is not advisable to compromise with those individuals whose political beliefs are at odds with ours, since the results are usually detrimental to those who believe as we do.
- 46. Most people are unconcerned about the welfare of others.
- 47. Hell, I can't even solve my own damn personal problems. I'd welcome help from somebody else in solving them.
- 48. It is only when a person devotes himself to an ideal or cause that life becomes meaningful.
- 49. Most of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't really too valuable.
- 50. Although it is difficult to confess this even to myself, secretly I desire to be like Shakespeare, Beethoven or Einstein; that is a great man.
- 51. There is little similarity between Russia and the U.S.
- 52. The highest form of government is a democracy, and the highest form of democracy is a government run by those who are most intelligent.
- 53. In this world you are either for the truth or against it.
- 54. I feel uncomfortable around people who refuse to admit they are wrong.
- 55. Many ridiculous decisions often leading to undesirable consequences are made because those we respect are not consulted.
- 56. Man on his own is less than a self-sufficient and happy being.
- 57. When I am in a discussion, I often have to say the same "damn thing" over again to be sure I am not misunderstood by some thick-headed ignoramus.

- 1 strongly disagree
- 2 mildly disagree
- 3 neither agree nor disagree
- 4 mildly agree
- 5 strongly agree

5.

- 58. The crux of life is to persistently strive to accomplish something monumental.
- 59. The future contains all that is worthwhile, the present all that is worthless and miserable.
- 60. It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward any day of the week.

Please continue to Part II

PART II Items 61 - 120

The items which you have just finished rating will now be presented again. This time, however, the task is different. We now want you to look at each item in a new way. Whether you agree or disagree with the item is no longer the focus of attention. Instead we would like you to look at another facet of the items. We all realize the same thing (content) can be expressed in different ways. A statement can be worded quite mildly or very strongly. Consider, for example, the same story written for the New York Times and for a national scandal magazine. The scandal magazine would undoubtedly write the story in much stronger, more emotional terms. What we would like you to do now is rate each item on its strength of wording. If you feel the item is worded very mildly, mark 1 on your answer sheet. If you feel it is worded mildly, mark 2, somewhat strongly, mark 3, strongly, mark 4, and finally, very strongly, mark 5.

- 1 very mildly
- 2 mildly
- 3 somewhat strongly
- 4 strongly
- 5 very strongly

Remember these items are to be rated only on the strength of wording not on whether you agree or disagree with the item. Be sure and answer each item.

- 61. Man is too small and stupid to understand this world without extensive reliance on leaders and experts.
- 62. Freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, but it's ridiculous to suppose that you can allow certain political groups to go around shooting off their mouths whenever they want to.
- 63. Most people just don't know what's good for them.
- 64. There are a lot of different philosophies which exist in this world and all but maybe one of them are dead wrong.

- 1 very mildly
- 2 mildly
- 3 somewhat strongly
- 4 strongly
- 5 very strongly

- 65. To compromise with our political opponents is dangerous because it usually leads to the betrayal of our own side.
- 66. A vast majority of people are totally unconcerned about anybody but themselves.
- 67. I'd like it if I could find someone who would tell me how to solve my personal problems.
- 68. The surest way to have a totally useless and empty life is by refusing to devote yourself to an ideal or cause.
- 69. Most of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't worth the paper they are printed on.
- 70. To become a world famous man like Beethoven, Shakespeare, or Einstein; whose name, ideas and deeds remain immortal, is my secret ambition.
- 71. The U. S. and Russia have just about nothing in common.
- 72. Keeping the idiots out of office will allow democracy, the highest form of government, to fulfill its utmost potential.
- 73. The world can be divided into those individuals who uphold the truth and those individuals who do not.
- 74. I experience an uncomfortable feeling around those people who are unwilling to admit it when they are wrong.
- 75. Frequently you can save yourself from acting like a fool if, before a decision of judgment is to be made you would just take the time to listen to those you respect.
- 76. Puny man when left on his own is a miserably unhappy and totally helpless animal.
- 77. During a discussion I often must say the same thing repeatedly, in order that my remarks are not hopelessly distorted by others.
- 78. The desire to wholeheartedly dedicate your life to the accomplishment of something important is the most essential thing in life.
- 79. The present is all too often full of unhappiness. It is only the future that counts.
- 80. It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward.
- 81. In this complicated world of ours, the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders or experts who can be trusted.

- 1 very mildly
- 2 mildly
- 3 somewhat strongly
- 4 strongly
- 5 very strongly

8.

82. Unfortunately certain political groups have to be muzzled even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal.
83. What is good for each individual is often not known by that individual.
84. Of all the different philosophies which exist in this world, there is probably only one which is correct.
85. To settle for less than one's ideals by compromising with political antagonists is suicidal because it usually leads to ultimate betrayal.
86. Most people just don't give a damn about others.
87. I would be pleased if the solutions to problems which I personally encounter were dictated to me by someone else.
88. The only way in which life is made meaningful is through the devotion to an ideal or cause.
89. Almost all of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't even worthy of being printed on cheap toilet paper.
90. While I don't like to admit this even to myself, my secret ambition is to become a great man, like Einstein, or Beethoven, or Shakespeare.
91. It is idiotically stupid to think Russia and the U.S. have much in common.
92. For democracy, which is the highest form of government, to be at its best, those who govern must be capable.
93. There are two kinds of people in the world: those who are for the truth and those who are against the truth.
94. My blood boils whenever a person stubbornly refuses to admit he's wrong.
95. It is often desirable to reserve judgment about what's going on until one has had a chance to hear the opinions of those one respects.
96. Man on his own is a helpless and miserable creature.
97. In a discussion, I often find it necessary to repeat myself several times to make sure that I am being understood.
98. The main thing in life is for a person to want to do something important.

- 1 very mildly
- 2 mildly
- 3 somewhat strongly
- 4 strongly
- 5 very strongly

- 97. In a discussion, I often find it necessary to repeat myself several times to make sure that I am being understood.
- 98. The main thing in life is for a person to want to do something important.
- 99. The future is more important than the troubled present.
- 100. One should be willing to make significant personal sacrifices for his ideals.
- 101. This world is too complicated and man too ignorant to understand what's going on without a pretty extensive reliance on leaders or experts who can be trusted.
- 102. Even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, it is unfortunately necessary to restrict the freedom of certain political groups.
- 103. There are a great number of people who are too stupid to realize what is really good for them.
- 104. Most of the many different philosophies which exist in this world are wrong; in fact, there is probably only one which comes close to being the truth.
- 105. You may be causing unknown harm to your own side if you compromise with your political opponents.
- 106. Most people are unconcerned about the welfare of others.
- 107. Hell, I can't even solve my own "damn" personal problems. I'd welcome help from somebody else in solving them.
- 108. It is only when a person devotes himself to an ideal or cause that life becomes meaningful.
- 109. Most of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't really too valuable.
- 110. It's a difficult confession to make, even difficult to admit to myself, but my secret ambition is to become a giant of a man, like Einstein, Beethoven, or Shakespeare.
- 111. There is little similarity between Russia and the U. S.
- 112. The highest form of government is a democracy, and the highest form of democracy is a government run by those who are most intelligent.

- 1 very mildly
- 2 mildly
- 3 somewhat strongly
- 4 strongly
- 5 very strongly

10.

- 113. In this world you are either for the truth or against it.
- 114. I feel uncomfortable around people who refuse to admit they are wrong.
- 115. Many ridiculous decisions often leading to undesirable consequences are made because those we respect are not consulted.
- 116. Man on his own is less than a self-sufficient and happy being.
- 117. When I am in a discussion, I often have to say the same "damn thing" over again to be sure I am not misunderstood by some thick-headed ignoramous.
- 118. The crux of life is for a person to persistently strive to do something outstanding.
- 119. The future contains all that is worthwhile, the present all that is worthless and miserable.
- 120. It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward any day of the week.

Please continue to Part III

Part III Items 121 - 132

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please respond to each item, and mark the appropriate answer on your answer sheet.

121. Age 1. 18 or under 2. 19 3. 20 4. 21 5. 22 or over
122. Sex 1. Male 2. Female
123. Class 1. Freshman 2. Soph. 3. Jr. 4. Sr. 5. Grad.
124. G.P.A. 1. 2.00 or below 2. 2.1-2.4 3. 2.5-2.9 4. 3.0-3.4
5. 3.5-4.0
125. Religious preference 1. Protestant 2. Catholic 3. Jewish
4. Other 5. None
126. Marital status 1. Single 2. Married 3. Other
127. Approximate population of the community in which you grew up.
1. 1,000 or less 2. 10,000 3. 20,000 4. 50,000
5. 100,000 or more
128. Political party preference 1. Liberal Democrat 2. Conservative Democrat
3. Liberal Republican 4. Conservative Republican
5. Other
129. Father's highest educational level 1. Grade School
2. High School 3. Entered, but did not complete College
4. College Graduate 5. Graduate School
130. Approximate family income 1. \$4,000 or less 2. \$4,000-\$7,500
3. \$7,500-\$10,000 4. \$10,000-\$15,000 5. \$15,000 - up
131. Major academic interest 1. Physical science or biological sci.
2. Humanities and the Arts 3. Social Science 4. Business
5. Other
132. Number of brothers and sisters (siblings) 1. none 2. one
3. two 4. three 5. four or more

- 1 very mildly
- 2 mildly
- 3 somewhat strongly
- 4 strongly
- 5 very strongly

9.

- 99. Chronologically speaking, contemporaneous events are often displeasing, while those things that are of any consequence are yet to come.
- 100. One should be willing to make personal sacrifices for his ideals.
- 101. This world is too complicated and man too ignorant to understand what's going on without a pretty extensive reliance on leaders or experts who can be trusted.
- 102. Even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, it is unfortunately necessary to restrict the freedom of certain political groups.
- 103. There are a great number of people who are too stupid to realize what is really good for them.
- 104. Most of the many different philosophies which exist in this world are perverted; in fact, there is probably only one which is the truth.
- 105. It is not advisable to compromise with those individuals whose political beliefs are at odds with ours, since the results are usually detrimental to those who believe as we do.
- 106. Most people are unconcerned about the welfare of others.
- 107. Hell, I can't even solve my own damn personal problems. I'd welcome help from somebody else in solving them.
- 108. It is only when a person devotes himself to an ideal or cause that life becomes meaningful.
- 109. Most of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't really too valuable.
- 110. Although it is difficult to confess this even to myself, secretly I desire to be like Shakespeare, Beethoven or Einstein; that is a great man.
- 111. There is little similarity between Russia and the U. S.
- 112. The highest form of government is a democracy, and the highest form of democracy is a government run by those who are most intelligent.
- 113. In this world you are either for the truth or against it.
- 114. I feel uncomfortable around people who refuse to admit they are wrong.

- 1 very mildly
- 2 mildly
- 3 somewhat strongly
- 4 strongly
- 5 very strongly

10.

- 115. Many ridiculous decisions often leading to undesirable consequences are made because those we respect are not consulted.
- 116. Man on his own is less than a self-sufficient and happy being.
- 117. When I am in a discussion, I often have to say the same "damn thing" over again to be sure I am not misunderstood by some thick-headed ignoramous.
- 118. The crux of life is to persistently strive to accomplish something monumental.
- 119. The future contains all that is worthwhile, the present all that is worthless and miserable.
- 120. It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward any day of the week.

Please continue to Part III

Please respond to each item, and mark the appropriate answer on your answer sheet.

121. Age 1. 18 or under 2. 19 3. 20 4. 21 5. 22 or over
122. Sex 1. Male 2. Female
123. Class 1. Freshman 2. Soph. 3. Jr. 4. Sr. 5. Grad.
124. G.P.A. 1. 2.00 or below 2. 2.1-2.4 3. 2.5-2.9 4. 3.0-3.4
5. 3.5-4.0
125. Religious preference 1. Protestant 2. Catholic 3. Jewish
4. Other 5. None
126. Marital status 1. Single 2. Married 3. Other
127. Approximate population of the community in which you grew up.
1. 5,000 or less 2. 5,001-20,000 3. 20,001-100,000
4. 100,001-1,000,000 5. 1,000,000 or more
128. Political party preference 1. Liberal Democrat 2. Conservative Democrat
3. Liberal Republican 4. Conservative Republican
5. Other
129. Father's highest educational level 1. Grade School
2. High School 3. Entered, but did not complete College
4. College Graduate 5. Graduate School
130. Approximate family income 1. \$4,000 or less 2. \$4,001-\$9,500
3. \$9,501-\$15,000 4. \$15,001-\$25,000 5. \$25,001 - up
131. Major academic interest 1. Physical or biological science
2. Humanities and/or the Arts 3. Social Science 4. Business
5. Other
132. Number of brothers and sisters (siblings) 1. none 2. one
3. two 4. three 5. four or more

A P P E N D I X D

TABLE A.--Mean endorsement and mean emotionality ratings and endorsement intercorrelations within triplets arranged by emotionality level.

TABLE B.--The distribution of SFDS total scores and corresponding correlations between degree of endorsement and emotionality rating for each subject.

TABLE A.--Mean endorsement and mean emotionality ratings and endorsement intercorrelations within triplets arranged by emotionality level.

Trip.#		Low			Medium			High	
1	A	2.62	.32	B	1.99	.47	C	2.43	.44
		2.83			3.27			3.69	
2	A	3.05	.68	B	3.12	.26	C	2.60	.54
		2.87			3.00			3.49	
3	C	3.57	.07	A	2.55	.37	B	3.05	.20
		2.27			2.58			3.88	
4	A	1.52	.42	C	1.38	.30	B	1.58	.33
		2.42			2.99			3.84	
5	A	2.18	.38	C	2.01	.26	B	2.48	.18
		2.40			2.99			3.61	
6	B	3.60	.47	C	2.97	.45	A	3.00	.40
		2.68			2.77			4.26	
7	A	2.77	.52	C	2.08	.36	B	2.51	.40
		1.78			2.51			4.31	
8	B	3.34	.62	A	3.40	.42	C	3.35	.56
		2.75			3.06			3.19	
9	A	2.27	.52	C	2.05	.64	B	1.90	.61
		2.36			3.21			4.14	
10	C	2.56	.39	B	2.34	.58	A	2.27	.53
		2.16			2.35			2.43	
11	C	2.00	.47	A	1.60	.47	B	1.64	.55
		2.19			2.55			4.18	

NOTE: The first row of each triplet consists of the mean item endorsements followed by inter-item correlations (on endorsement). The second row consists of the mean emotionality ratings of the items.

The letters "A," "B" and "C" correspond to the items as they appear in each triplet in Appendix E.

TABLE A.--(Continued)

Trip.#	Low	Medium	High
12	B 4.29 .28 2.86	A 3.09 .42 3.17	C 3.16 .28 3.77
13	B 2.44 .60 2.66	C 2.38 .62 3.23	A 2.25 .52 3.56
14	C 3.75 .11 1.99	B 3.47 .30 2.36	A 3.82 .32 4.00
15	A 3.78 .40 2.17	C 4.18 .24 2.69	B 3.31 .39 3.13
16	C 2.61 .34 2.73	A 1.86 .46 3.44	B 2.16 .20 3.83
17	A 2.69 .65 2.13	C 2.77 .64 2.44	B 2.30 .61 4.34
18	A 3.14 .30 2.48	B 3.66 .23 2.99	C 2.48 .53 3.48
19	B 2.16 .33 2.36	A 1.92 .59 2.75	C 1.39 .42 3.86
20	C 4.19 .25 2.56	A 2.86 .57 3.31	B 2.45 .12 3.90

TABLE B.--The distribution of SFDS total scores and corresponding correlations between degree of endorsement and emotionality rating for each subject.

S#	SFDS	r^1	S#	SFDS	r	S#	SFDS	r
1	72	-.03	27	55	-.15	53	49	-.13
2	70	.10	28	55	-.13	54	49	-.12
3	69	.01	29	55	.02	55	49	-.04
4	68	-.07	30	55	-.17	56	48	-.06
5	68	-.30*	31	55	-.26*	57	48	-.32*
6	67	-.18	32	55	-.23	58	48	-.14
7	67	-.19	33	55	-.12	59	47	-.13
8	67	.21	34	54	-.11	60	46	.15
9	65	.06	35	54	-.17	61	46	-.29*
10	65	-.09	36	54	.01	62	45	-.16
11	63	-.07	37	53	-.07	63	45	-.22
12	62	-.21	38	53	-.15	64	44	-.06
13	62	-.03	39	53	-.11	65	44	-.12
14	61	.06	40	52	-.17	66	44	-.13
15	60	.04	41	52	-.25*	67	43	-.24
16	60	-.00	42	52	-.17	68	43	-.02
17	60	-.15	43	51	-.14	69	42	-.24
18	60	-.19	44	51	-.15	70	42	-.18
19	60	-.35**	45	51	-.22	71	38	.14
20	59	-.03	46	51	-.22	72	37	-.11
21	58	-.10	47	51	-.03	73	36	-.35**
22	58	-.09	48	51	-.21	74	36	-.13
23	58	.03	49	50	-.20	75	35	-.10
24	56	-.38**	50	50	-.16	76	34	-.03
25	56	-.13	51	50	.04	77	31	-.05
26	56	-.13	52	49	-.16			

*Significant at .05

**Significant at .01

¹Using the group's mean emotionality rating of each item.

NOTE: The correlation between the Ss' SFDS total scores and the Ss' correlation (between degree of endorsement and emotionality ratings) was $r = .16$.

A P P E N D I X E

Message triplets

MESSAGE TRIPLETS
(with original SFDS item appearing first)

1. A In this complicated world of ours, the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders or experts who can be trusted.
B Man is too small and stupid to understand this world without extensive reliance on leaders and experts.
C This world is too complicated and man too ignorant to understand what's going on without a pretty extensive reliance on leaders or experts who can be trusted.
2. A Even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, it is unfortunately necessary to restrict the freedom of certain political groups.
B Unfortunately certain political groups have to be muzzled even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal.
C Freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, but it's ridiculous to suppose that you can allow certain political groups to go around shooting off their mouths whenever they want to.
3. A Most people just don't know what's good for them.
B There are a great number of people who are too stupid to realize what is really good for them.
C What is good for each individual is often not known by that individual.
4. A Of all the different philosophies which exist in this world, there is probably only one which is correct.
B Most of the many different philosophies which exist in this world are perverted; in fact, there is probably only one which is the truth.
C There are a lot of different philosophies which exist in this world and all but maybe one of them are dead wrong.

5. A To compromise with our political opponents is dangerous because it usually leads to the betrayal of our own side.
- B To settle for less than one's ideals by compromising with political antagonists is suicidal because it usually leads to ultimate betrayal.
- C It is not advisable to compromise with those individuals whose political beliefs are at odds with ours, since the results are usually detrimental to those who believe as we do.
6. A Most people just don't give a damn about others.
- B A vast majority of people are totally unconcerned about anybody but themselves.
- C Most people are unconcerned about the welfare of others.
7. A I'd like it if I could find someone who would tell me how to solve my personal problems.
- B Hell, I can't even solve my own damn personal problems. I'd welcome help from somebody else in solving them.
- C I would be pleased if the solutions to problems which I personally encounter were dictated to me by someone else.
8. A It is only when a person devotes himself to an ideal or cause that life becomes meaningful.
- B The only way in which life is made meaningful is through the devotion to an ideal or cause.
- C The surest way to have a totally useless and empty life is by refusing to devote yourself to an ideal or cause.
9. A Most of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't too valuable.
- B Almost all of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't even worthy of being printed on cheap toilet paper.
- C Most of the ideas which get printed nowadays aren't worth the paper they are printed on.

10. A While I don't like to admit this even to myself, my secret ambition is to become a great man, like Einstein or Beethoven, or Shakespeare.
- B Although it is difficult to confess this even to myself, secretly I desire to be like Shakespeare, Beethoven or Einstein; that is a great man.
- C To become a world famous man like Beethoven, Shakespeare, or Einstein; whose name, ideas and deeds remain immortal, is my secret ambition.
11. A The U.S. and Russia have just about nothing in common.
- B It is idiotically stupid to think Russia and the U.S. have much in common.
- C There is little similarity between Russia and the U.S.
12. A The highest form of government is a democracy, and the highest form of democracy is a government run by those who are most intelligent.
- B For democracy, which is the highest form of government, to be at its best those who govern must be capable.
- C Keeping the idiots out of office will allow democracy, the highest form of government, to fulfill its utmost potential.
13. A There are two kinds of people in the world: those who are for the truth and those who are against the truth.
- B The world can be divided into those individuals who uphold the truth and those individuals who do not.
- C In this world you are either for the truth or against it.
14. A My blood boils whenever a person stubbornly refuses to admit he's wrong.
- B I feel uncomfortable around people who refuse to admit they are wrong.
- C I experience an uncomfortable feeling around those people who are unwilling to admit it when they are wrong.

15. A It is often desirable to reserve judgment about what's going on until one has had a chance to hear the opinions of those one respects.
- B Many ridiculous decisions often leading to undesirable consequences are made because those we respect are not consulted.
- C Frequently you can save yourself from acting like a fool if, before a decision or judgment is to be made you would just take the time to listen to those you respect.
16. A Man on his own is a helpless and miserable creature.
- B Puny man when left on his own is a miserably unhappy and totally helpless animal.
- C Man on his own is less than a self sufficient and happy being.
17. A In a discussion, I often find it necessary to repeat myself several times to make sure that I am being understood.
- B When I am in a discussion, I often have to say the same "damn thing" over again to be sure I am not misunderstood by some thick-headed ignoramous.
- C During a discussion I often must say the same thing repeatedly in order that my remarks are not hopelessly distorted by others.
18. A The main thing in life is for a person to want to do something important.
- B The desire to wholeheartedly dedicate your life to the accomplishment of something important is the most essential in life.
- C The crux of life is to persistently strive to accomplish something monumental.
19. A The present is all too often full of unhappiness. It is only the future that counts.
- B Chronologically speaking contemporaneous events are often displeasing, while those things that are of any consequence are yet to come.

19. C The future contains all that is worthwhile, the present all that is worthless and miserable.
20. A It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward.
- B It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward any day of the week.
- C One should be willing to make personal sacrifices for his ideals.

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