JUDGMENT PATTERNS WITHIN THE LATITUDE OF REJECTION AS A FUNCTION OF LEVEL OF EGO-INVOLVEMENT AND EXTREMITY OF ATTITUDE POSITION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The primary focus of this study is centered upon the highly involved, extreme attitude person. Political or racial extremists are not exclusive representatives of the highly involved, extreme attitude person. Any subject who is personally committed to an attitude position which is extreme, relative to those around him, may be considered a highly involved, extreme attitude person. Additionally, a given person may be highly committed to an extreme attitude position along one dimension, yet non-involved with regard to a different attitude dimension. For example, on a particular attitude dimension, such as chastity-promiscuity, a father may be highly committed to an extreme attitude position, relative to the attitude position of his daughter and her peer group. Depending upon the attitude domain, most people may be described as a highly involved, extreme attitude person.

It is the purpose of this study to investigate how the judgment of a highly involved, extreme attitude person differs from the judgment of a less involved, moderate attitude person, when both are responding to the same attitude dimension. Of special interest is how well each type of subject is able to make distinctions among personally rejected attitude positions. A second interest is whether there is a difference between the two kinds of subjects in the level of objection attributed to rejected attitude positions.

The assimilation-contrast model of social judgment (Sherif & Sherif, 1969) provided the framework within which these issues were studied.

Review of the Literature

Transposition of the Assimilation-Contrast Hypothesis from Psychophysical to Psychosocial Research

The following literature review attempts to focus on the development of major concepts comprising the assimilation-contrast model of social judgment and the operational syntax relating these concepts together.

Early experimentation (Wever & Zener, 1929; Volkman, 1936; Tresselt, 1947, 1948) developed some of the fundamental outlines of assimilation-contrast phenomena as it pertained to psychophysical judgments of weight, color, etc.

In Volkman's (1951) psychophysical studies at Mt. Holyoke College, he stressed that assimilation-contrast effects were a function of stimulus discrepancy from an "anchor" point. Through practice and experience with a stimulus domain, subjects tended to adopt a standard or anchor stimulus that served as a reference point about which relative comparisons of other stimuli in the same domain could be made. The occurrence of either assimilation or contrast effects was shown to be a function of stimulus discrepancy from the adopted standard or anchor stimulus (Hinckly & Rethlingshafer, 1951).

The assimilation-contrast hypothesis generally proposed that all judgments were made with respect to a frame of reference. When a subject has adopted a standard, or anchor category, other stimuli within

the same dimension are assumed to acquire meaning and value relative to the adopted anchor position. Given a continuum of stimulus events, assimilation effects are said to occur when a subject locates a stimulus event in a category somewhere between his adopted anchor category and the category into which the stimulus event would have been located by observers not affected by the adopted standard. Contrast effects are said to occur when a subject locates a target stimulus within a category further away from his adopted anchor category than would be indicated by observers or measurements not affected by the adopted standard (Peak, 1958).

The transposition of psychophysical research findings into hypotheses pertaining to social judgment was a logical step. The analogy was simple. The adopted anchor stimuli (Volkman, 1951) was equated with one's own attitude position on a social issue. The psychophysical scale of stimuli (weights) was simulated by a psychosocial scale of attitude statements reliably ranked by a pool of judges to represent a more or less continuous stimulus dimension.

As it were, the initial studies applying the assimilation-contrast hypotheses to social judgment dealt primarily with the extent of discrepancy between a subject's adopted anchor and the social stimuli to be judged.

It would seem that one of the first efforts to utilize the assimilation-contrast hypothesis to interpret data obtained in a social judgment study was that of Sherif & Hovland (1953).

At the time of Sherif & Hovland's 1953 study, Thurstone's (1929) procedure for deriving equal-appearing interval scale excluded judges who held extreme attitudes toward the stimulus domain, since their

judgments could not be considered as contributing to an objective scale. Contrary to this practice, Sherif & Hovland (1953) investigated the scaling of statements by using "highly involved" subjects advocating extreme attitude positions relative to a given stimulus domain, as well as using "moderately involved" subjects subscribing to moderate attitude positions.

Two different methods of scaling were applied to the same set of 114 statements which ranged from very pro-Negro to very anti-Negro. The 114 statements were categorized by the standard Thurstone procedure which used 11 imposed categories; then two weeks later the same statements were categorized by allowing subjects to place statements into piles which "go together." In this latter procedure, judges need not distribute statements into 11 categories, but may use any number of "piles" or categories that arrange the continuum of stimuli into personally meaningful groups that seem to "go together." The order in which statements were categorized by the above two procedures was counter-balanced to avoid order effects.

The results of this comparison indicated that the less involved, moderate pro-Negro subjects categorized the 114 statements into about five self-selected categories; and the number of statements placed in each of the five categories was as evenly distributed as in the Thurstone scale of 11 imposed categories.

Highly involved, pro-Negro judges (the first Negro students to attend a previously all-white university) employed four or fewer categories in order to subdivide the 114 statements into "piles that go together." On the average, highly involved, pro-Negro judges placed 65 of the 114 statements into "piles" later determined to be "objection-

able," while only 27 statements were placed into "piles" later determined to be "acceptable." This was quite a different pattern of judgment compared to less ego-involved, "moderate" attitude subjects (an unselected group of white students) who placed 38 and 43 statements into "piles" later indicated to be "objectionable" and "acceptable," respectively.

A general conclusion drawn from this study was that persons who differ in both degree of personal involvement and extremity of attitude position, seemed to use different reference scales to categorize a given social stimulus domain. Compared to judges adopting a "moderate" anchor category, pro-Negro subjects adopting an extreme anchor category judged a disproportionately greater number of statements to be objectionable. This phenomenon was interpreted as contrast effects exhibited by pro-Negro judges. This interpretation was offered since pro-Negro subjects placed intermediate statements into piles further away from the extreme pro-Negro position than judges not adopting the extreme standard, in this case "moderate" attitude judges.

Shortly after the above study was completed, Sherif, Harvey & Hovland (1957) conducted a landmark study that more clearly demonstrated the transposition of assimilation-contrast principles from psychophysical to psychosocial problems.

Around the middle 1950's, laboratory studies investigating opinion change tended to support the hypothesis that the greater the amount of opinion change advocated by a communication, the greater the average amount of opinion change produced in a subject (Goldberg, 1954; French, 1956; Fisher & Lieben, 1958). These findings, according to Sherif, Harvey & Hovland, (1957), were not in line with their hunches as to what

would happen in a naturalistic field study dealing with important social issues. Their dissatisfaction with laboratory studies rested on the frequent observation that experimental subjects were captive audiences left without their usual methods of selective exposure (Klapper, 1949), and that laboratory subjects were being persuaded to change opinions on issues of little personal importance to them.

In contrast to laboratory studies, and their claimed artificiality, Hovland, Harvey & Sherif (1957) chose the prohibition issue, which at the time was a hotly debated topic in Oklahoma and Texas. Religious groups following a Fundamentalist orientation declaring total abstinence (dry) vehemently countered the arguments propounded by groups of businessmen, politicians, and lawyers receiving financial support from distillers (wet). The authors of this study were interested in how subjects sampled from these antagonistic factions would interpret three communications, one strongly wet, one strongly dry, and one moderately wet.

Results demonstrated that "dry" subjects judged the "moderately wet" statement as "very wet" (contrast). "Very wet" subjects judged the "moderately wet" statement as "dry" (contrast). Subjects upholding positions near, but not identical to that represented by the "moderately wet" statement judged it to be more like their own position than was the case (assimilation).

The general findings suggest that a subject whose attitude position was relatively close to a communication tended to judge that communication position to be more like his own attitude position than was the case (assimilation effect). Subjects with more discrepant positions relative to a given communication judged the communication to be more

extreme and further away from their own attitude position than was the case (contrast effect).

At this stage of development, assimilation-contrast effects were being studied as a function of discrepancy or distance between communication and subject attitude positions. This focus closely paralleled earlier psychophysical experiments which found assimilation-contrast effects to be a function of the difference between the adopted anchor stimuli and the target stimulus to be judged, e.g., the judgment of weights (Tresselt, 1947, 1948).

A second influence in Sherif, Harvey & Hovland's work can be seen emanating from an early Gestalt proposition (Koffka, 1935) that the judgment of any object is always made with reference to other objects in the stimulus field, and that within a given field, separate stimuli bear a membership character to the configural gestalt.

The more complex study of social judgment conducted by Hovland, Harvey & Sherif (1957) seemed to contain and extend concepts germinating from both psychophysical research and gestalt theory. The explicit meaning of assimilation-contrast effects in the area of social judgment was, in principle, analogous to that demonstrated by earlier psychophysical studies. The judgment of a "moderately wet" statement as "extremely wet" by a subject whose own attitude position was "dry," was analogous to the judgment of a 50-gram weight as weighing 70 grams by a subject adopting a 30-gram anchor or standard. In this respect, Sherif, Harvey & Hovland's (1957) study seemed to represent a rather direct and successful transposition of psychophysical conclusions into a social judgment framework.

Latitude Patterns as a Function of Attitude Position and/ or Level of Ego-Involvement

In the early 1960's a number of studies provided considerable syntactic and conceptual elaboration to the developing assimilation-contrast model as applied to social judgment. Focus on major developments is found in the 1960 United States Presidential election study reported by Sherif, Sherif & Nebergall (1965).

Data for this study were obtained from more than 1,500 persons just before the election, which enhanced the prospect of high personal involvement in the election issue. Nine political statements that were reliably ranked on a bipolar continuum from extremely Republican (Position A) to extremely Democratic (Position I) served as the psychosocial scale. A subject was simply asked to indicate which statement was "most acceptable" to him; this particular statement operationally defined a subject's "own attitude position" or anchor category. Next, subjects were asked to mark any other "acceptable" statements. The combination of "most acceptable" and other "acceptable" statements operationally defined a subject's "latitude of acceptance." Next, the subject was asked to indicate that statement considered to be "most objectionable" and then to identify any other "objectionable" statements. The combination of "most objectionable" and other "objectionable" statements defined a subject's "latitude of rejection." Those statements not indicated by a subject as acceptable nor objectionable, operationally defined a subject's "latitude of noncommitment."

Rationale for this measurement procedure grew out of the authors' dissatisfaction with the then current practice of assigning a single numerical value to summarize a subject's attitude toward a continuum of

social events. Latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection were employed to get at the comparative evaluations of a register of stimulus events belonging to an attitude dimension. This was asserted to be more informative and less artificial than a single point score.

The core findings demonstrated that as the "own position" became increasingly extreme, the latitude of acceptance narrowed slightly, the latitude of noncommitment approached a zero value, and the latitude of rejection became disproportionately large.

This was the pattern regardless of whether the "own position" was in a Democrat or Republican direction. A symmetrical, mirror image existed between "own positions" equally extreme from the midpoint of the political scale.

Current thought supported by research reviews (Cantril, 1946; Allport, 1943) suggested that persons upholding extreme positions were more ego-involved with, or committed to their attitude position than persons subscribing to more moderate attitude positions, relative to a given attitude dimension. Given this assumption, certain equivalencies were argued, tested and confirmed. If it could be argued that "extreme" Republicans or Democrats were more ego-involved in their position than subjects subscribing to more moderate political positions, then high-ego-involvement was associated with a disproportionately large latitude of rejection relative to the latitude of acceptance, and a latitude of noncommitment that approached a zero value. Correspondingly, subjects espousing a moderate attitude position and therefore argued to be less ego-involved exhibited latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection of approximately equal size. These were the main characteristics of groups of subjects as a function of extremity

of attitude position.

However, tests of variability indicated that groups of subjects representing all positions except E, the mid-position, exhibited similar variability. Greater individual differences in latitude patterns were exhibited by the group of subjects indicating position E as their "most acceptable" choice of political statements. A detailed inspection of this group revealed that some subjects holding a "moderate" attitude position exhibited latitude patterns ascribed to high-ego-involved subjects. This argument followed that some subjects subscribing to a "moderate" attitude position did so with a high degree of personal commitment. Conversely, a comparatively few number of subjects holding "extreme" attitude positions exhibited latitude patterns associated with low-ego-involvement. The interpretation of these data finally resulted in the conclusion, or hypothesis, that level of ego-involvement was better defined by latitude characteristics, than by "extremity" of attitude position. It encompassed the comparatively rare case of subjects highly committed to a "moderate" attitude position, and, it encompassed the even rarer event of a subject "moderately committed" to an "extreme" attitude position, while simultaneously taking cognizance of that literature indicating a reliable correspondence between high-ego-involvement and extreme attitude position.

Considerable support has been gathered for this interpretation. In a study by Tittler (1967), the size of the latitude of noncommitment was successfully used as an index of ego-involvement. Briefly, student subjects ranked a series of issues according to personal importance. It was found that the latitude of noncommitment was smallest for the most important issues and largest for the least important issues. Further-

more, attempts to change student attitudes were significantly more successful when the student's latitude of noncommitment was large, than when it was comparatively small. Larimer (1966) also found that a significantly greater attitude change could be effected in subjects exhibiting large latitudes of acceptance and noncommitment compared with subjects defined as having small latitudes of acceptance and noncommitment.

The general findings of those studies relating level of ego-involvement and latitude patterns consistently indicate that the relative sizes of the latitudes of noncommitment and rejection served as reliable indices of ego-involvement level, regardless of the extremity of the "own position" (Elbing, 1962; Beck & Nebergall, 1967; Miller, 1965; Diab, 1967). High ego-involvement was found to be reliably related to a disproportionately large latitude of rejection and a latitude of noncommitment which approached a zero value.

Assimilation-Contrast Effects as a Joint Function of Degree of Ego-Involvement, Latitude Patterns, and Extent of Discrepancy

There was one other relationship coming out of the 1960 presidential election study which claims a focal position within the developing assimilation-contrast model. Sherif, Sherif & Nebergall attempted to relate the latitude of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection to the phenomenon of assimilation-contrast effects. This attempt refined the variable, "extent of discrepancy," and its relationship to the occurrence of assimilation-contrast effects. On a bipolar attitude scale, the difference between a subject's own position and the position of a given attitude statement was redefined in terms of a subject's own lati-

tudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection.

Subjects were presented a taped recording of two communications, a mildly pro-Democrat communication representing position F and a mildly pro-Republican communication representing position D. These two statements were presented by themselves, out of the total context of the nine-statement political scale. Subjects were asked to identify the political position represented by each of the two communications. Subjects indicated their judgments on a nine-centimeter scale designated as extremely Republican and extremely Democrat at either end.

After this task was completed, subjects were administered the entire nine-statement political scale. The "own position," as well as the latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection were obtained for each subject. That statement designated as "most acceptable" by a subject indexed the extremity of his attitude position. Level of involvement with the "own position" was singularly defined by the size of a subject's latitude of rejection. With these two indices, extremity of attitude position and level of involvement could be separately indexed for each subject.

A priori, it was hypothesized that any communication falling within a person's own latitude of acceptance would be assimilated toward the "most acceptable" position; and any communication outside of a subject's latitude of acceptance would be contrasted away from the "most acceptable" position. A qualification of this hypothesis was also predicted. The magnitude of the predicted assimilation-contrast effects were expected to be greater for high-ego-involved, extreme attitude position subjects.

The results of this phase of study confirmed the above hypotheses.

Extreme Democrats who were highly ego-involved judged the mildly Republican communication as representing a more extreme Republican view than did the subjects who were themselves Republicans. To the contrary, the highly ego-involved, extreme Republican subjects significantly displaced the moderate Republican statement away from their own position and in a more Democratic direction. The same, identical pattern was found for the judgment of the mildly Democratic communication, but appropriately reversed. Extreme Democrats and extreme Republicans who were highly involved exhibited marked contrast effects on both communications, since neither moderate communication was acceptable to their own extreme and highly invested position.

For less involved subjects the sharp assimilation-contrast effects were not demonstrated. However, there was a non-significant trend for all low-involved subjects to assimilate the "moderate" communications.

An important generalization developed out of this phase of the 1960 presidential election study. Assimilation-contrast effects were a joint function of "extent of discrepancy" between a subject's own position and the position represented by a social stimulus, and the degree of ego-involvement with the person's own position. Essentially, the occurrence of assimilation-contrast effects could be better predicted by describing "extent of discrepancy" in terms of the latitude of acceptance, and by stipulating level of involvement in terms of the latitude of rejection. Pointedly, if the extent of discrepancy is contained within a subject's latitude of acceptance, then assimilation effects are clearly predictable for both high and low-involved subjects. If the extent of discrepancy locates the stimulus event outside of the latitude of acceptance, then for highly ego-involved subjects (comparatively

large latitude of rejection) contrast effects are clearly predicted. However, for less ego-involved subjects (comparatively small latitudes of rejection) a nonsignificant tendency to assimilate stimulus events just outside of the latitude of acceptance was found.

Toward the latter half of the 1960's an increasing number of studies appeared that manipulated the above subsystem of relationships in different ways by applying them to different problems, thus stimulating further development and articulation of the assimilation-contrast model of social judgment.

Number of Categories as an Index of Ego-Involvement

The question is posed as to whether subjects than can be defined as highly ego-involved, relative to a given stimulus domain, would continue to use a characteristic number of self-selected categories to categorize a scale of stimuli that was not important to them.

A study by Glixman (1965) partially satisfies this query. Procedurally, Glixman had one sample of college subjects sort three different sets of materials assumed to be associated with different levels of personal importance. Each subject sorted a pile of familiar objects (chalk, paper clips, etc.), a set of statements on nuclear war, and a set of descriptive statements referring to themselves.

The Null hypothesis stated that the number of categories used to categorize a stimulus domain is not associated with the importance of the content being categorized.

Results showed a significant difference between the number of categories used to sort the low-important domain of material objects and the number of categories used to sort statements about nuclear

war, and, self-descriptions. The difference between number of categories used to categorize nuclear war and self-description statements did not reach significance, which may have been due to both issues commanding nearly equal levels of personal involvement. However, the distribution of self-descriptions was highly skewed.

It was concluded that the findings could not be accounted for by characteristic "response style" without regard for the personal importance of the content, and attitudes toward the content.

Using a somewhat different format, Reich & Sherif (1963) compared the way mature women (age 35 to 50) categorized 60 statements dealing with legislative reapportionment. Fifteen of the 60 statements were extremely pro and fifteen were extremely anti-reapportionment. The remaining 30 statements were pre-tested for high variability in terms of pro or con support of reapportionment.

As opposed to Glixman's study, rather than three stimulus domains of varying assumed importance presented to a single unselected population, Reich & Sherif's study used only one stimulus domain presented to two groups, each operationally defined as representing different levels of ego-involvement, relative to the test domain. One group consisted of active members of the League of Women Voters which had dedicated itself that year to the study of legislative reapportionment. The explicit assumption was that this group should be highly ego-involved along this attitude dimension compared to a matched sample of female school teachers favorable toward reapportionment but relatively uninvolved and inactive in the issue.

Presumably, League members should have acquired a broader awareness of reapportionment problems and have a more differentiated appre-

ciation of them which would exhibit itself through a finely differentiated process of categorization. However, 74 percent of the highly involved group used four or fewer categories for the 60 statements while only 26 percent of the teachers used such a small number of categories ($p \leq .01$).

Vaughan (1961) conducted a study in which a group of "anti-Latin" Texans and a group of "uninvolved" Texans categorized a large pool of attitude statements dealing with a Mexican-American racial issue. 85 percent of the anti-Latin group used three or less categories, while 92 percent of the uninvolved group used four or more categories to organize the statements.

LaFave & Sherif (1968) hypothesized that high-ego-involved subjects would use fewer categories than moderately ego-involved subjects, who in turn would use fewer categories than low-ego-involved subjects to organize a scale of attitude statements.

Twenty-five slips of paper with written statements reliably ranked from "Very Segregationist" to "Very Integrationist" were categorized by three groups of subjects.

One group consisted of Negro college students attending an all-Negro, completely segregated public school system (highly involved, pro-integration). A fraternity located in the South and known for its moderate adherence to Southern traditions defined a "moderately involved, pro-segregation" group of subjects. Group three was an unselected, heterogeneous sample of white students considered, as a group, to be least ego-involved, pro-segregation in their attitudes.

Based on prior research (Sherif & Hovland, 1953), subjects were dichotomized according to whether or not they used five or more cate-

gories. Results indicated that 36 percent of the unselected subjects used five or more categories. 23 percent of the Southern fraternity subjects and 7 percent of the Negro subjects used five or more categories. A significant Chi Square value ($p \leq .025$) for the comparison of unselected subjects and fraternity subjects was found, which seems reputable in view of the heterogeneity of the unselected group with respect to their attitudinal stand. All other Chi Square comparisons among groups were significant at the .005 level of confidence.

These few studies tend to support the hypothesis that as ego-involvement increases, relative to a given social stimulus domain, the number of categories used to subdivide that stimulus domain decreases.

Width of Acceptable and Objectionable Categories as an Index of Ego-Involvement

The width of an acceptable or an objectionable category is defined by the number of statements placed in it. It is suggested by the following research that the number of statements placed within acceptable or objectionable categories is a function of ego-involvement with the stimulus domain.

The highly ego-involved pro-Negro subjects in Sherif & Hovland's (1953) study placed only 27 of the 114 statements into "acceptable" categories, and placed 65 statements into "objectionable" categories. The low-ego-involved group in this same study placed 43 and 38 statements into "acceptable" and "objectionable" categories, respectively.

The highly involved League of Women Voters in Reich & Sherif's (1963) study placed over half of the 60 statements into "objectionable" categories, while the low-ego-involved teachers placed about the same

number of statements into all self-selected categories or groups of statements.

Koslin, Waring & Pargament (1965) had Peace Corps volunteers rank five social issues according to how much time they spent talking about them. The amount of time spent talking about an issue operationally served as an index of ego-involvement. Next, the Peace Corps subjects were asked to sort five corresponding sets of statements into categories. The number of statements placed into acceptable and objectionable categories on each of the five sets of statements was examined.

Findings indicated that from the least involving issue to the most involving issue, the number of statements placed into acceptable categories decreased while the number placed into objectionable categories increased.

A second hypothesis in LaFave & Sherif's (1968) study stated that the number of statements placed within acceptable and objectionable categories varied as a function of ego-involvement.

Three groups, described above as defining three relative levels of ego-involvement, sorted 25 segregation-integration statements into "groups that go together." Subjects were dichotomized according to whether the number of statements placed within the categories labeled as acceptable was greater or lesser than the number placed within the categories labeled as objectionable.

Results demonstrated that the unselected sample (low-ego-involvement) more frequently placed a greater number of statements into acceptable categories, than into categories labeled as objectionable. Over 59 percent of the fraternity subjects (moderate level of ego-involvement) and 87 percent of the Negro subjects (high level of ego-involvement)

placed less statements into acceptable categories than into objectionable ones. All comparisons between pairs of subject groupings were significant at the .001 level of confidence.

The above two areas dealing with "number of categories" and "width of acceptable and objectionable categories" have been interpreted by Sherif & Sherif (1969) as representing assimilation-contrast phenomena.

Briefly, high-ego-involved subjects contrast intermediate items away from their own anchor category, i.e., that category of statements designated as "most acceptable." For this reason a disproportionately large number of attitude statements are placed into objectionable categories. Hence, the width of objectionable categories becomes enlarged, relative to the width of acceptable categories. For low-ego-involved subjects, the tendency to use a comparatively larger number of categories containing a nearly equal number of statements in each one, suggests the absence of sharp assimilation-contrast effects. LaFave & Sherif (1968) found a slight tendency for low-ego-involved subjects to assimilate intermediate statements toward their anchor category. In this respect the width of acceptable categories was somewhat larger than that of objectionable categories. Although this tendency toward assimilation by low-ego-involved subjects was mild, it has been observed by Hovland & Sherif (1953), Sherif & Nebergall, (1965), Reich & Sherif (1963), and Vaughan (1961).

Summary of Basic Concepts

The above cited research collectively supports the following hypotheses regarding highly ego-involved subjects judging a bipolar dimen-

sion of social stimulus events.

High-Ego-Involvement

Highly ego-involved subjects are very selective and limiting in what is acceptable to them as demonstrated by a comparatively small latitude of acceptance, a latitude of noncommitment that approaches a zero value, and a disproportionately large latitude of rejection.

There has been some variability of results regarding the size of the latitude of acceptance associated with high-ego-involvement. When subject groups have at once been extreme in their attitude position, homogeneous, and highly involved with the issue under study, then the latitude of acceptance has been constrictively small. However, a more conservative generalization that holds across studies when some of these conditions are not fully met is that high-ego-involved subjects exhibit a restricted latitude of noncommitment and disproportionately large latitude of rejection. This generalization holds regardless of the extremity of the "own position." Therefore, if a subject group is not altogether homogeneous with regard to attitude position, the latitude of noncommitment and rejection may, nevertheless, serve as reliable indices of ego-involvement.

The highly involved subject tends to subdivide a psychosocial scale of attitude statements into a comparatively few "groups that go together." The placement of stimulus events into self-selected categories approximates a bimodal distribution, with a comparatively small number of statements being placed into acceptable categories and a disproportionately large number of intermediate items being contrasted into objectionable categories.

For high-ego-involved subjects, contrast effects are predictable for a given stimulus event when it lies just "outside" of the latitude of acceptance, while assimilation occurs if the event lies just "within" the latitude of acceptance. This statement relates assimilation-contrast effects to level of ego-involvement and to "extent of discrepancy."

Assimilation-contrast effects are heightened, with a marked accentuation of the contrast phenomenon in highly involved subjects.

Low-Ego-Involvement

For low-ego-involved subjects, the latitude of acceptance is equal to, or sometimes larger than the latitude of rejection; and the latitude of noncommitment is, generally, as large as either of the other two latitudes. On the average, the stimulus domain is divided into approximately three equal size latitudes.

Presented with a social stimulus domain that is defined as less ego-involving, subjects employ a comparatively greater number of self-selected categories to organize the domain of events into "groups that go together."

The comparatively larger number of categories employed contain a nearly equal distribution, or number of events in each category.

For low-ego-involved subject, the exhibition of assimilation-contrast effects is diminutive. A stimulus event falling within the latitude of acceptance is assimilated toward the "own position." A stimulus event falling within the latitude of noncommitment fails to elicit systematic assimilation or contrast effects. However, there is a mild trend toward assimilation in this case.

The above two sections may be further condensed by summarizing the judgment pattern of highly involved, extreme attitude subjects as bimodal. Social stimulus events falling within the latitude of acceptance are assimilated and judged as acceptable. However, social stimulus events lying just outside the latitude of acceptance are contrasted away, and judged to be objectionable. The range of social stimulus events which elicit noncommital or neutral judgments is restrictively narrow.

The judgment pattern of low-involved, moderate attitude subjects may be summarized as rectangular. The bipolar continuum of social stimulus events is distributed into nearly equal size areas of acceptable, neutral, and objectionable events.

What seems to have occurred in the above collection of studies, is that a number of independent researchers (cited above) have turned to different problems, using different subject populations, and employing somewhat different methodological procedures and statistical designs but essentially using the same set of basic concepts. Although specific results are not, precisely speaking, equivalent, they do seem theoretically consistent and mutually supportive to a reasonable degree.

Extrapolating from the above literature, it would appear that high-ego-involved subjects subscribing to an extreme attitude position tend to dichotomize a psychosocial scale, i.e., intermediate scale items are contrasted into the latitude of rejection, thus reducing the range of noncommital attitude positions. According to Tittler's (1967) research, amenability to attitude change is limited when the latitude of noncommitment is so narrowed. These findings suggest a tendency toward "black or white" or dogmatic judgment patterns. The following section

elaborates on this possibility.

"Black or White" Judgment Patterns

An area of study dealing quite directly with "black or white" judgment patterns is that centered on dogmatism. Certain comparisons between Rokeach's (1954) cognitive model of dogmatism and the assimilation-contrast model can be made. Rokeach advanced the dynamics of a "disbelief gradient" which predicted certain outcomes for beliefs near or far from the particular belief position held by a dogmatic subject.

> The greater the dogmatism the more will two or more disbelief subsystems represented as positions relatively far away from the belief system along the disbelief gradient be perceived as the same . . . . the greater the dogmatism the greater the assimilation of facts or events at variance with either the belief or disbelief system by altering or reinterpreting them such that they will no longer be perceived as contradictory. (Rokeach, 1954).

These two propositions appear to parallel assimilation-contrast effects. The first proposition, that two or more disbeliefs relatively far away from the belief system are "perceived as the same," appears to correspond with contrast effects occurring within the latitude of rejection. The second proposition, that events at variance with the belief system may be reinterpreted "such that they will no longer be perceived as contradictory," appears to correspond with assimilation effects occurring within the latitude of acceptance.

According to Rokeach (1954), the dogmatic subject is noted by cognitive patterns which tend to dichotomize or polarize events lying on a belief-disbelief dimension. It has also been noted that high-ego-involved subjects maintaining relatively extreme "own positions" tend to dichotomize a psychosocial scale into latitudes of acceptance and rejection (Sherif & Sherif, 1969).

Powell (1966) conducted a series of three studies. The primary aim of each study was a correlational comparison between Rokeach's (1954) "belief-disbelief dimension" and the latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection as formulated in the assimilation-contrast model.

Four hypotheses were tested in each study. The greater the dogmatism or close-mindedness of an individual: 1) the narrower is his latitude of acceptance; 2) the narrower is his latitude of noncommitment; 3) the broader is his latitude of rejection; and 4) the more extreme is his own attitude position along a bipolar attitude dimension.

In all three studies Powell (1966) found that as dogmatism increased, the latitude of noncommitment decreased, and the latitude of rejection increased. In all three studies it was found that as dogmatism increased, the "own position" moved to a more extreme position on a bipolar attitude scale. However, high dogmatism scores were not found to be associated with narrower latitudes of acceptance in any of the three studies.

Powell concluded his investigation by suggesting that:

> Sherif and Hovland's description of latitudes of acceptance and rejection, and Rokeach in his conceptualization of the belief and disbelief system-dimension are essentially concerned with similar, if not the same, cognitive phenomena.

The significant correspondence between narrowed latitudes of noncommitment, enlarged latitudes of rejection, extreme "own positions" and high dogmatism scores suggest that the latitude of rejection may be a reasonable representation of the disbelief system as formulated in Rokeach's cognitive model of dogmatism. Following the joint outlines of both the assimilation-contrast model and Rokeach's formulation of the belief-disbelief gradient, the latitude of rejection is taken to be the

clearest empirical representation of that area of judgment where conceptual dedifferentiation is most likely to occur.

The descriptive phrase, "black or white judgment," generally refers to a dedifferentiation process. Social stimulus events sharing some degree of categorical similarity are perceived as equivalent events, while relevant dissimilarities are selectively ignored (Allport, 1958). The resulting pattern of judgment appears to be dedifferentiated and is accordingly described as "black or white." With humans, the ability to function at the conceptual level suggests that dedifferentiation may be due, in part, to categorizing two or more stimulus events as conceptually equivalent. A simple example is given. If A = B, and B = C, then A = C. Although these three stimulus events do not look alike, at the conceptual level, they may be responded to identically.

Applying this syllogism to lettered designations of a psychosocial scale, conceptual dedifferentiation would be indicated by a latitude of rejection containing the following equivalencies: E = F = G = H = I. In a sense this has been demonstrated in the manner where each of several attitude positions has been equated with the label, "objectionable."

However, in the framework of Leonard Berkowitz (1960), the label, "objectionable," may be viewed as a "supracategory" within which "smaller categories are placed," i.e., crime may serve as the supracategory under which petty theft and homicide may be classified as smaller categories. It may be an oversight to assume that the conceptual meaning of the two infractions are equivalent, except at a very general level where both may be categorized as (objectionable) crimes. From this perspective, the equivalency, E = F = G = H = I = objectionable, may have

reference to the "supracategory level" of conceptualization, i.e., all illegal acts are, generically, crime and therefore objectionable. However, it would seem that the descriptive phrase, "black or white" refers to the condition symbolized here as E = F = G = H = I = equally objectionable, i.e., all illegal acts are equally objectionable. Translated into assimilation-contrast model terms, a "black or white" judgment pattern should be demonstrated by a latitude of rejection containing a series of social stimulus events judged to be equally objectionable, not just generically objectionable.

Our courts of law provide an excellent illustration of conceptual differentiation occurring within latitudes of rejection, which is indexed by the empirical response of punishment. If we could consider homicide to represent an extreme event along a dimension of "physical response to others" and simultaneously suppose that homicide probably falls toward the extreme end of the latitude of rejection, then we have a noteworthy example of conceptual differentiation occurring within a latitude of rejection. To wit, the presence of conceptual differentiation between first, second, and third degree murder may be indexed by the degree of punishment allocated to each.

It is quite likely that any form of homicide would fall into the latitude of rejection, and yet it can be seen that fine conceptual discriminations are retained. However, the process of jurisprudence includes a rigorous system of debate usually by two opposing side, a district attorney and a defendent. Probably for this reason, the process of making conceptual differentiations within a latitude of rejection is safeguarded, even to the extent that appeal to higher courts of law provide additional opportunity to alter the conceptual meaning of an

act.

Given a lay subject, unopposed in his private judgments, what degree of conceptual differentiation within a latitude of rejection could we expect? Would the degree of conceptual differentiation differ according to level of ego-involvement?

Statement of Problem

The overall purpose of this study was to investigate judgment patterns within the latitude of rejection.

A principle interest was to determine whether conceptual dedifferentiation occurs within the latitude of rejection. This statement does not refer to what has been labeled the "supracategory level" (where all crimes are objectionable), but to the "category level" (where all crimes are equally objectionable). It is important to retain this distinction.

The term, conceptual dedifferentiation, is itself a rather broad one. To delineate its meaning and application within this study, it will be defined by the event where graduated attitude positions falling within the latitude of rejection are judged as equally objectionable.

With this definition in mind, the specific problems addressed in this study may be phrased. Does conceptual dedifferentiation occur within the latitude of rejection? Is there a difference in the degree of conceptual dedifferentiation between high-ego-involved subjects adhering to a relatively extreme attitude position and low-ego-involved subjects subscribing to a moderate attitude position? Compared with low-ego-involved subjects, do high-ego-involved subjects give more extreme, negatively weighted judgments to statements within their respective latitudes of rejection?

To answer these questions, two groups of subjects were administered a psychosocial scale of 12 statements ranging from extremely pro-religious to extremely anti-religious. One group consisted of high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects; the second group consisted of low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, hereafter referred to as Group I and Group II, respectively. Latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection were obtained in the customary manner from each group.

Those attitude positions designated by a subject as objectionable (latitude of rejection) were in turn presented to the subject for further evaluation. Subjects were requested to indicate the degree of objection attributed to these statements on a nine-point graded rating scale labeled "slightly objectionable" and "extremely objectionable" at either end.

Hypothesis One

Compared with low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, high-ego-involved pro-religious attitude subjects exhibited disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment; $\alpha \leq .05$.

A confirmation of Hypothesis One would suggest that high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects tended to dichotomize the psychosocial scale, i.e., intermediate scale items were contrasted into the latitude of rejection thus reducing the range of neutral events.

Hypothesis One also served as a secondary check on methodological design. The proposed relationships in Hypothesis One have been previously confirmed (Powell, 1966; LaFave & Sherif, 1968). Therefore if

the procedures for establishing two qualitatively different subject groups and for constructing a bipolar attitude scale were both adequate, then the relationships in Hypothesis One should be again confirmed.

Hypothesis Two

Compared with low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects exhibited greater conceptual dedifferentiation within their individual latitudes of rejection; $\alpha \leq .05$.

The empirical index for measuring degree of conceptual dedifferentiation is somewhat lengthy and detailed to include at this point (see page 47). However, if Group I subjects tended to judge statements within their latitude of rejection as equally objectionable, while Group II subjects maintained distinction among such statements, then Hypothesis Two should be confirmed.

Hypothesis Three

The relative frequency with which Group I and Group II used rating scale category "i" to evaluate statements within the latitude of rejection was significantly different; $\alpha \leq .05$.

Under Hypothesis Three, a between groups comparison on each of the nine rating scale categories was conducted. These comparisons would identify which rating scale categories were characteristically used more frequently by one group, compared to the other. Results from these tests should indicate whether or not high-ego-involved subjects could be differentially characterized as using the more extreme, negatively weighted categories of the rating scale.

If the above hypotheses are confirmed in the expected direction, then high-ego-involved, extreme attitude subjects may be described by a tendency to dichotomize the psychosocial scale, to dedifferentiate those attitude positions falling within their disproportionately large latitude of rejection, and, to ascribe a greater degree of objection to such events.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

This chapter is organized into three parts: 1) definitions of major variables and measurement techniques, each followed by supporting rationale; 2) test procedures for obtaining data required to test each of the three hypotheses; 3) a series of three phases of study, each extracting and organizing data necessary to explicitly test a separate hypothesis.

Psychosocial Scale of Religious Attitudes

Sherif & Sherif (1969; pp. 395) recommended the following procedure for constructing a bipolar psychosocial attitude scale. From a pool of attitude statements, extract out about eleven statements which can be reliably rank-ordered from one polar extreme to the other. No assumption of equal intervals between statements comprising the final scale need be made.

Thurstone & Chave's (1929) scale of 45 attitude statements toward the church served as the pool of statements from which final scale items were selected. Items making up this pool of 45 statements have been scaled, weighted and organized by Thurstone & Chave into 12 class intervals ranging from one polar extreme to the other.

Below is the final scale of attitude statements and their corresponding weights indicated in parentheses. They have been arranged in

descending order from extremely pro-religious to extremely anti-religious.

(.02) I believe the church is the greatest institution in America.

(1.0) I believe the church has grown up with the primary purpose of perpetuating the spirit and teachings of Jesus and deserves loyal support.

(2.2) I like to go to church for I get something worthwhile to think about and it keeps my mind filled with right thoughts.

(3.1) I do not understand the dogmas or creeds of the church but I find that the church helps me to be more honest and creditable.

(4.0) I believe in the church and its teachings because I have been accustomed to them since I was a child.

(5.1) I like the ceremonies of my church but do not miss them much when I stay away.

(6.1) I feel the need for religion but do not find what I want in any one church.

(7.2) I believe the churches are too much divided by factions and denominations to be a strong force for righteousness.

(8.3) I think the teachings of the church are altogether too superficial to have much social significance.

(9.2) I think the church seeks to impose a lot of worn-out dogmas and medieval superstitions.

(10.4) The church represents shallowness, hypocrisy, and prejudice.

(11.0) I think the church is a parasite on society.

The above procedure for constructing a psychosocial scale generally conformed to Sherif & Sherif's (1969) recommendations while providing a clearer measure of the psychological spacing between items as defined by the Thurstone's (1929) equal appearing interval technique.

Subjects

Group I. High-Ego-Involved, Pro-Religious Attitude Subjects

This group consisted of 36 Oklahoma State University freshmen and/or sophmores who satisfied all three criteria operationally defining high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects: the subject indicated an 80 to 100 percent church attendance for the past year; the subject indicated that he is currently an active member of an university student religious group; from a list of five social issues (politics, drugs, religion, education, and ecology) the subject ranked the topic of religion as first in terms of personal importance.

Group II. Low-Ego-Involved, Mildly Pro-Religious Attitude Subjects

This group consisted of 36 Oklahoma State University freshmen and/or sophmores who satisfied all three criteria operationally defining low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects: the subject

indicated a 5 to 25 percent church attendance for the past year; the subject was not a current member of a student religious group; from a list of five social issues (politics, drugs, religion, education, and ecology) the subject ranked the topic of religion as fourth in terms of personal importance.

Rationale for Defining Subject Groups

The criteria of "percent church attendance" was used primarily to estimate a relatively long-term behavioral pattern. The criteria of "membership to an university religious group" attempted to identify a relevant reference group with which a subject may identify. Even though a subject may have a relatively long-established behavioral pattern of frequently attending church (80% minimum) and indicates that he is a member of a student religious group, it cannot be clearly assumed that these affiliations indicate important reference groups. For this reason, the criteria of "ranking five social issues" in terms of personal importance was applied (Koslin, Waring, & Pargament, 1965; Tittler, 1967). If the subject attends church for social reasons which do not include a personal belief in religion itself, then it would be expected that the topic of religion would not be ranked as personally most important.

The classification, "low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects" was intended to designate persons who exhibit a comparatively low level of involvement and who subscribe to attitude positions that mildly favor religion.

To obtain such subjects, it seemed necessary to continue to use the same criteria dimensions used for selecting high-ego-involved, pro-

religious attitude subjects. To retain the same criteria-dimensions provided greater assurance that the two groups in this study differed from each other relative to the same selection criteria.

For example. If high involvement was indexed by 80 to 100 percent church attendance over the past year, then subjects who attend church services between 5 and 25 percent may be defined, relative to highly involved subjects, as manifesting low involvement.

Defining one group, relative to another group along the same criteria-dimensions seemed to provide for greater internal consistency within the selection procedure.

For each of the three criteria-dimensions, low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects were defined by relative criteria suggesting low involvement and mildly pro-religious attitude positions.

Students who indicate a zero percent church attendance, non-membership to a student religious group, and rank the topic of religion as least important may subscribe to a set of values which exclude religious beliefs associated with a church, e.g., agnostics, naturalists, mystics, etc. To control for such heterogeneity, the criteria of 5 to 25 percent church attendance and of ranking the importance of religion as fourth was chosen. These criteria specifically designate a subject's relative position on these dimensions. Given that a subject attended 5 to 25 percent of his church services for the last year and ranked the topic of religion as fourth in terms of personal importance, then non-membership to a student religious group further supports the assumptions of low-involvement with organized religious groups.

As an independent check on the validity of selection procedures, a hypothesis was included which predicted certain latitude patterns for

each group (see Hypothesis One). The predicted latitude patterns for subjects defined as high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects were those found to be associated with high-ego-involved, extremely pro-attitude subjects (Sherif, et.al., 1965; Powell, 1966). The predicted latitude patterns for subjects defined as low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects were those found to be associated with low-ego-involved, mildly pro-attitude subjects (Sherif, et.al., 1965; Powell, 1966).

The choice of subject groups represented above needs comment. The variable along which subjects were classified was actually a composite variable made up of two related components, level of ego-involvement and attitude position. Several research reviews (Cantril, 1946; Allport, 1943; O'Donovan, 1965) collectively support the hypothesis that extremity of attitude position is positively associated with high involvement with the attitude domain.

Within Sherif, Sherif & Nebergall's (1965) work where the relationship between extremity of attitude and level of involvement was qualified, the major findings supported the hypothesis of a positive association between the two components. Groups of subjects equally extreme from the mid-position of a psychosocial scale exhibited mirror image profiles of judgment. Latitude patterns and assimilation-contrast effects were found to be juxtapositioned. At the nomothetic level of data analysis, as the attitude position became more extreme, the level of involvement increased. However, Sherif, et.al., (1965) pointed out that there were exceptions to this generalization that could be identified by the relative sizes of the latitudes of noncommitment and rejection, e.g., high-ego-involved subjects, regardless of the extremity of

their attitude position, exhibit comparatively large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment. To emphasize the idiographic character of this qualification, Powell (1966) found, in a triad of three studies, significant correlations between "extremity of the own position" and heightened involvement as defined by small latitudes of noncommitment and large latitudes of rejection.

The literature which supports the hypothesis of a positive relationship between extremity of attitude position and level of involvement was based on nomothetic data. There were individual subjects within these studies who violated this generalization, however these represented statistically rare events.

It is felt that the significant relationship found between extremity of attitude position and level of ego-involvement indicates that the two components of the composite variable are reliably correlated. Empirically, it seemed meaningful to retain this correlation when selecting subject groups.

Following this line of thought, there are other possible levels of the composite variable, "level of involvement and attitude position," that could be studied. Theoretically, if the psychosocial scale contained 12 attitude positions, then there are approximately 12 levels of pro-religious attitude available for study. However, meaningful differences between any two subjects subscribing to adjacent attitude positions with nearly equal levels of involvement have not yet been defined. The above cited assimilation-contrast studies have dealt with subject groups which were easily differentiated through widely contrasting behavioral criteria. It was felt that selection criteria attempting to differentiate several closely related groups along the composite vari-

able would likely be unreliable, thus making an interpretation of non-significant differences between groups a questionable enterprise.

A group of highly involved subjects advocating extreme anti-religious attitudes would provide a desirable contrast to the other two groups. But unlike political or racial issues the informal or formal institutionalization of anti-religious groups in our culture is non-existent. Therefore, procuring such individuals would require screening an unknown and probably vast number of subjects.

The primary intent of this study was to compare the degree of judgmental differentiation made within the latitude of rejection. It was of central importance to use groups which clearly differ on level of ego-involvement and attitude position. It was felt that the above selection criteria for each group was sufficiently dissimilar to provide two groups which reliably differ on the composite variable.

Latitudes of Acceptance, Noncommitment, and Rejection

Given the above psychosocial scale of attitude statements, a subject is requested to designate one statement that is "most acceptable" and then to designate any other "acceptable" statements. The union of "most acceptable" and "acceptable" statements operationally defined a subject's latitude of acceptance. The subject is then requested to designate one statement which is "most objectionable" and then asked to indicate any other "objectionable" statements. These statements operationally defined a subject's latitude of rejection. Statements judged neither acceptable nor objectionable operationally defined a subject's latitude of noncommitment.

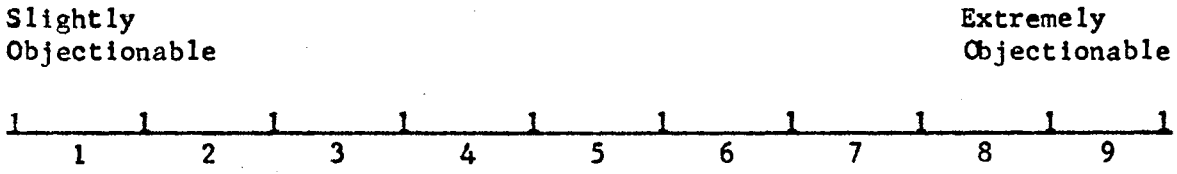
The above procedures for operationally defining the three latitudes replicate those procedures cited in the above collection of assimilation-contrast studies.

Rating Scale

The degree of objection ascribed to an attitude statement within the latitude of rejection was operationally defined by a numerical score obtained from a nine-point graded rating scale attached beneath each attitude statement.

The rating scale was labeled at one end with the phrase, "Slightly Objectionable," and labeled at the opposite end with the phrase, "Extremely Objectionable." An example follows.

(10.4) The church represents shallowness, hypocrisy, and prejudice.



The above example was taken from the actual scale of statements used in this study. A subject was simply requested to designate a category on the rating scale corresponding to his opinion of the statements. Buffer illustrations were given to subjects to clarify the meaning, range and use of the rating scale.

The scale of measurement for the nine-point rating scale was ordinal. The meaning of a distribution of scores obtained from the nine-point rating scale is relative to the distribution of scores obtained from other individuals using the same rating scale under similar

conditions.

The four basic components of this research have been operationally defined: a psychosocial scale of attitude statements, subject groups, latitude of acceptance, noncommitment and rejection, and degree of objection as measured by a nine-point rating scale. The following test procedures describe how these components were empirically manipulated to generate a pool of data.

Procedure and Instructions

In order to increase interest in the task itself and to control for an unknown variety of personal hypotheses toward the purpose of the task, an introductory statement was given:

> Within the area of economics and product marketing, expensive surveys are taken to estimate public reaction. With this feedback, products can be improved to meet the needs of the public. The church has no established methods for estimating public opinion regarding its function in today's rapidly changing society. You have been carefully and individually selected to be a part of the first comprehensive survey to give honest opinions toward religion as it is today.

The above preface seemed sufficiently ambiguous to avoid giving implicit sanctions, either favorable or unfavorable, toward religion.

The 12 attitude statements were placed on individual cards, which included the nine category graded rating scale beneath each statement. Individual sets of the 12 cards were given to each subject. Each set had been thoroughly shuffled to randomize possible order effects.

Instructions

> Please select one statement which you personally consider to be most acceptable and separate it from the other statements (pause). Now select any other statements which you personally consider to be acceptable and place them into a single

pile along with your most acceptable statement. (Latitude of acceptance).

Now choose one statement that you consider to be most objectionable and separate it from the other statements by starting a new pile (pause). Now select any other statements which are objectionable to you, and group them into a second pile long with your most objectionable statement. (Latitude of rejection).

Please write a question mark (?) on the upper right hand corner of any remaining statements which you have not placed in either the acceptable or objectionable piles of statements (latitude of noncommitment). Then place the letter "O", on the upper right hand corner of each statement in the objectionable pile. (Pause).

Now thoroughly shuffle all ofthe statements together into one mixed pile. (This step was taken to randomize the order of statement presentation for the following test procedire).

Please go through the shuffled pile and rate each objectionable statement marked with the letter "O" according to the rating scale beneath it. Do not rate any statement which you have not designated by the letter "O". Before you begin let me illustrate a few examples to explain the rating scale.

The following three statements served as the buffer examples. "Churchgoers all want to be spoon-fed instead of thinking for themselves." "The church is a part of a capitalistic scheme to keep people down." "I regard the church as a static, crystallized institution and as such it is unwholesome and detrimental to society and the individual." (Thurstone & Chave, 1929, pp. 88). As a group, these statements cluster toward the extreme, anti-religion end of Thurstone's scale. Accordingly, they should focus the interest of most subjects on the problem of how to use the rating scale to express a personal reaction to an antagonistic statement.

Any questions regarding the use of the rating scale were answered in descriptive, rather than interpretive terms, e.g., "Notice that the rating scale is labeled slightly objectionable at one end and extreme-

ly objectionable at the other end. A rating scale value of one represents slight objection and a value of nine represents extreme objection. Simply place a mark on the rating scale that represents your opinion toward the statement."

Buffer examples were also expected to help reduce the possibility of artificial "piling-up effects," i.e., the possibility of a subject ascribing a rating scale value of 8 to the first objectionable statement and then being "forced" to ascribe a score of 9 to all subsequent statements more objectionable than the initial one. A post-test inquiry was conducted to determine whether subjects felt that the range of rating scale values confined them to an unavoidable repetition of certain rating scale categories (piling-up effects). At the conclusion of the rating of objectionable statements the following instructions were delivered.

> If you felt that the range of values on the rating scale was too small, and that this forced you to use some of the rating scale values more frequently than you wanted to, please write a "yes" on the back of the statement which was "most acceptable" to you. If you do not feel that the range of rating scale values was too small, please write a "no" on the back of this statement. (This instruction was given twice, slowly, to insure its meaning).

The above testing procedures provided all the necessary data for testing each of the three hypotheses. The remainder of this chapter was divided into three phases of study; each phase extracted and organized data necessary to test a separate hypothesis.

Phase One Data Analysis

Compared to low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, the high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects exhibited disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of

noncommitment. The purpose of this hypothesis was to determine whether high-ego-involved extreme attitude subjects tend to dichotomize the psychosocial scale. The secondary purpose was a check on methodological design. If the criteria for defining Group I and Group II subjects were adequate, and if the procedure for scale construction actually satisfied the recommendations of Sherif & Sherif (1969; pp. 385), then assimilation-contrast effects should be present and Hypothesis One subsequently confirmed (Sherif & Sherif, 1969; pp. 402).

This phase of study did not incorporate the variable, size of the latitude of acceptance because of its' equivocal relationship to level of ego-involvement and extremity of attitude position. (See Summary of Basic Concepts, page 19). Since the size of the latitude of acceptance has not been reliably associated with level of ego-involvement or extremity of attitude position, it was not used to substantiate the differential presence of these conditions. The latitudes of noncommitment and rejection serve this function with greater reliability. (See page 11).

Variable One. Relative Size of the Latitude of Rejection to the Latitude of Noncommitment

For a given subject, the relative size of the latitude of rejection to the latitude of noncommitment was defined by the proportion, number of objectionable statements divided by the number of objectionable and neutral statements summed together, i.e., $\frac{n}{n+m}$.

The proportion, $\frac{n}{n+m}$, represents a configural measurement; it measures the relationship between two classes of response, n and m. For example, as n increases, and m decreases or remains constant, the pro-

portion $\frac{n}{n+m}$ approaches a value of one or unity. Values of $\frac{n}{n+m}$ near unity represent disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment. This relationship has been found associated with high-ego-involved, pro-attitude subjects exhibiting marked assimilation-contrast effects (Sherif, et.al., 1965; Powell, 1966).

Each subject has a total of n + m number of statements designated as objectionable and neutral, respectively. The denominator, n + m, defines all statements not included within a subject's latitude of acceptance. The index, $\frac{n}{n+m}$, represents the percent or proportion of all statements not falling within the latitude of acceptance, which are labeled as objectionable. A familiar analogy is offered to further clarify the meaning of the index, $\frac{n}{n+m}$.

Let n + m represent 100 items of an objective, midterm exam. Let n represent the number of test items passed, and m the number of test items failed. The index, $\frac{n}{n+m}$, may be recognized as the familiar calculation for determining percent of items passed. Furthermore, if 80 percent of a student's responses are correct, then necessarily 20 percent must be incorrect. Strictly speaking, the index $\frac{n}{n+m}$ describes only the percent of class n responses obtained. However, in a two-class population of responses, the index $\frac{n}{n+m}$ also describes the percent of class m responses obtained, e.g., in this example, the proportion of correct test responses is 80 percent to 20 percent. Thus in a two-class population the index $\frac{n}{n+m}$ allows one to describe the proportion of class n to class m responses. Accordingly, the index $\frac{n}{n+m}$ was used to describe the proportion of objectionable to neutral statements.

If high-ego-involved subjects exhibit disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment, then the

proportion of objectionable to neutral statements should be high. If Hypothesis One is supported, i.e., compared to the low-ego-involved subject group, the high-ego-involved subject group exhibits disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment, then the $\frac{n}{n+m}$ scores of the high-ego-involved subjects should be greater than the $\frac{n}{n+m}$ scores of the low-ego-involved subjects.

Accordingly, the variable, $\frac{n}{n+m}$, was divided into two mutually exclusive and exhaustive classes of events by dichotomizing scores above and below the median value of $\frac{n}{n+m}$. Scores were categorized under one of two headings, "Proportion of Objectionable to Neutral Statements Greater than the Median Value of $\frac{n}{n+m}$," and, "Proportion of Objectionable to Neutral Statements Equal to, or Less than the Median Value of $\frac{n}{n+m}$."

Variable Two. Levels of Ego-Involvement, Pro-Religious Attitude

The two levels of this variable have been defined by Group I and Group II, i.e., high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude and low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects (see page 33).

Procedure

The procedure for obtaining latitudes of noncommitment and rejection from Group I and Group II has been described above (see page 38).

Statistical Design

A 2 by 2 Chi Square design was employed. Subjects were dichotomized along the variable, level of ego-involvement, pro-religious atti-

tude, according to their defined membership to either Group I or Group II. Subjects were also dichotomized along the variable $\frac{n}{n+m}$. Two mutually exclusive and exhaustive classes of $\frac{n}{n+m}$ events were defined. "Proportion of Objectionable to Neutral Statements Greater than the Median Value of $\frac{n}{n+m}$." And, "Proportion of Objectionable to Neutral Statements Equal to, or Less than the Median Value of $\frac{n}{n+m}$." The expected frequency per cell was 17, which should provide a good approximation to the Chi Square distribution. The level of significance was set at the .05 level.

Although the two variables may be associated with each other, this does not tell us to what extent they covary, or to what degree they are associated. A test for the magnitude of association was conducted to determine whether this was a small but significant association or whether it was a large association. The Goodman-Kruskal index of predictive association (Hayes, 1963; pp. 608) was used for this purpose. The index of predictive association defines the reduction in the probability of error for predicting levels of variable one, given information on variable two. Specifically, given information on whether a subject belongs to Group I or to Group II, how well can it be predicted that a subject will exhibit one or the other latitude pattern.

Phase Two Data Analysis

Phase two specifically organized a test of Hypothesis Two, i.e., compared with low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects exhibited greater conceptual dedifferentiation within their individual latitudes of rejection.

Individual latitudes of rejection were free to vary in size and location along the bipolar attitude scale. Amount of conceptual dedifferentiation was measured within each subject's self-chosen range of objectionable statements. Scores representing amount of conceptual dedifferentiation were arranged into two columns, corresponding to Group I and Group II. A statistical comparison between the two groups followed.

Independent Variable. Individual Latitudes of Rejection

An individual latitude of rejection was operationally defined by those statements designated as objectionable by a given subject.

Dependent Variable. Conceptual Dedifferentiation Within an Individual Latitude of Rejection

The amount of dedifferentiation within an individual latitude of rejection was operationally defined by the value, $\frac{DR}{N^2}$. The term, D, symbolized the number of different rating scale values used by a subject to evaluate those statements defining his individual latitude of rejection. The term, R, symbolized the range of rating scale values employed to evaluate statements within the latitude of rejection. The term, N, represented the number of statements defining a subject's latitude of rejection.

Rationale for Dependent Variable

Since the rating scale values follow ordinal scale principles, measures of variability or differentiation among these values that depend on adding and dividing could not be employed.

The formula for measuring dedifferentiation does not actually use

rating scale values, only the number of different rating scale categories, the range of rating scale categories, and the number of statements being evaluated. Essentially, the above formula reflects how a particular subject distributes statements defining his own latitude of rejection over the nine-point rating scale. The following illustration is offered.

	RATING SCALE CATEGORIES								
	1... 5	6	7	8	9	N	D	R	$\frac{DR}{N^2}$
S_1	1	0	1	0	1	3	3	5	1.66
S_2			1	1	1	3	3	3	1.00
S_3		1	1	1	1	4	4	4	1.00
S_4			2	1	1	4	3	3	.56
S_5			2	2	2	6	3	3	.25
S_6	2	1	1	1	1	6	5	5	.70

Figure 1. An Illustration of the Use of the Formula DR/N^2 to Measure Differentiation Within Individual Latitudes of Rejection

Although S_1 and S_2 have the same number of statements within their respective latitudes of rejection and both have used the same number of

different rating categories, S_1 has used a wider range of rating categories and thereby indicated a greater distinction among statements within his latitude of rejection.

S_2 and S_3 exhibited the same pattern of differentiation even though the number of statements included within their respective latitudes of rejection was different.

S_3 and S_4 included the same number of statements within their respective latitudes of rejection, but S_4 did not make as many distinctions within his latitude of rejection. S_4 is inferred to have exhibited less differentiation and has accordingly received the lesser score.

S_5 has clearly exhibited less differentiation than S_4.

S_6 has the same size latitude of rejection as S_5, but the distribution of S_6 shows greater differentiation. Note that the score of S_6 reflects greater differentiation than that of S_4, but less than that of S_3.

The above equation is capable of measuring the degree of differentiation for different size latitudes of rejection. It is sensitive to the distribution of statements across rating scale categories. There is one restriction on this equation that is imposed by the range of rating scale values. Specifically, this equation will not be appropriate for latitudes of rejection containing ten or more statements.

To illustrate the reason for this particular restriction, suppose a subject's latitude of rejection contained ten statements. With a rating scale having only nine values the subject would be forced to use one rating scale value at least twice. The equation would detect a lack of differentiation that was an artifact of a limited range of rating scale

values.

Since it was highly improbable that any subject would exhibit a latitude of rejection containing ten or more statements, it seemed reasonable to limit the rating scale range to nine values. It seemed desirable to limit the range of rating scale values to no more than nine in order to render the rating scale easier to apply. A greater number of rating scale values would seem cumbersome for the subject to utilize.

Procedure

Both Group I and Group II subjects were requested to evaluate statements comprising their individual latitudes of rejection according to the nine-point rating scale. Detailed procedures have been described above.

Statistical Design

The degree of dedifferentiation within each subject's individual latitude of rejection was calculated. These scores were grouped into two columns corresponding to Group I and Group II. The Wilcoxin Rank-Sum Test for identical populations, sensitive to unequal locations, was employed for the statistical comparison. (This test statistic is a linear transformation of the Mann-Whitney U Test and shares the same average relative efficiency of .955. The Wilcoxin Test was used for purposes of convenience.) A one-tailed test at the .05 level of confidence was conducted.

Hypothesis Two inferred that high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects exhibited greater conceptual dedifferentiation among graduated attitude statements within their individual latitudes of rejection

than low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects.

Since a low-ego-involved subject may exhibit a rather small latitude of rejection, say three statements, the number of statements which he evaluates with the nine-point rating scale may be quite limited.

There was some question of whether or not a large enough sample of a subject's rating behavior was obtained. This problem arose because each subject self-selected the number of statements comprising his latitude of rejection. Within a subject's own frame of reference, this may be a rather small number.

A much larger pool of attitude statements was considered as one possible way to enhance the reliability of a subject's rating pattern. However, the intention to replicate the procedures used and recommended by Sherif & Sherif (1969) for obtaining latitudes of rejection would be violated, and it is of primary interest to replicate the conditions of previous assimilation-contrast studies and then further analyze the latitude of rejection. Another possibility was available, without violating suggested procedures.

Assuming that each group is homogeneous with respect to judgment patterns, it then follows that subjects from the same group should exhibit similar differentiation scores, i.e., the variance among differentiation scores should be relatively small within each group if each group is homogeneous with respect to judgment patterns. However, the within-group variance should increase when rating procedures are unreliable. If the number of statements were too few to yield reliable rating patterns from low-ego-involved subjects, then their within-group variance should be relatively large. A test for homogeneity of variance between the two groups would tend to support or refute the reliability

of rating procedures. The Wilcoxin Rank-Sum Test of Variability served as the statistical method for conducting this check. The level of confidence was set at .05.

Phase Three Data Analysis

The purpose of phase three was to identify which, if any, of the nine rating scale categories were used more often by one group, compared to the other.

The specific outcome of phase three depends upon the extent to which high-ego-involved subjects display contrast effects relative to low-ego-involved subjects. For example. If high-ego-involved subjects display extreme contrast effects while low-ego-involved subjects display none, then high-ego-involved subjects should displace attitude statements within their latitudes of rejection toward the most negatively weighted rating category and low-ego-involved subjects should distribute their objectionable statements more evenly over the nine rating categories. In the most extreme case, there would be a hiatus in the judgment of high-ego-involved subjects, i.e., there would be a gap in the rating of statements <u>not</u> located within the latitude of rejection and those statements placed within the latitude of rejection. Described in empirical terms, if high-ego-involved subjects did not use rating scale categories one through six, but used only categories seven through nine, while low-ego-involved subjects used all nine rating categories with nearly equal frequency, then a relative gap or hiatus in the judgment of high-ego-involved subjects would be inferred.

The above described "hiatus pattern" represents a somewhat extreme, but possible outcome. Whether such a pattern is found depends upon the

extent to which contrast effects are differentially displayed, within the latitude of rejection. The presence of contrast effects within the latitude of rejection should be empirically displayed by a distribution of statements that is skewed, with an increasing proportion of statements displaced toward the more objectionable end of the rating scale. In general, this would be the expected pattern for a subject, or group of subjects displaying contrast effects.

To clarify the methods used in this phase, hypothetical data are illustrated. The percentage of statements placed in each rating scale category may be calculated for each group as follows.

Rating Scale Categories	Group I Percentage of Statements	Group II Percentage of Statements
9	55	10
8	20	12
7	15	10
6	10	11
5	0	17
4	0	14
3	0	10
2	0	9
1	0	7
	100 %	100 %

Figure 2. Hypothetical Distributions. Percentage of Statements Placed in Each of the Nine Rating Scale Categories for Group I and Group II

The two groups may be compared graphically to describe the differences in the percentage of statements placed in each rating scale cate-

gory, as follows.

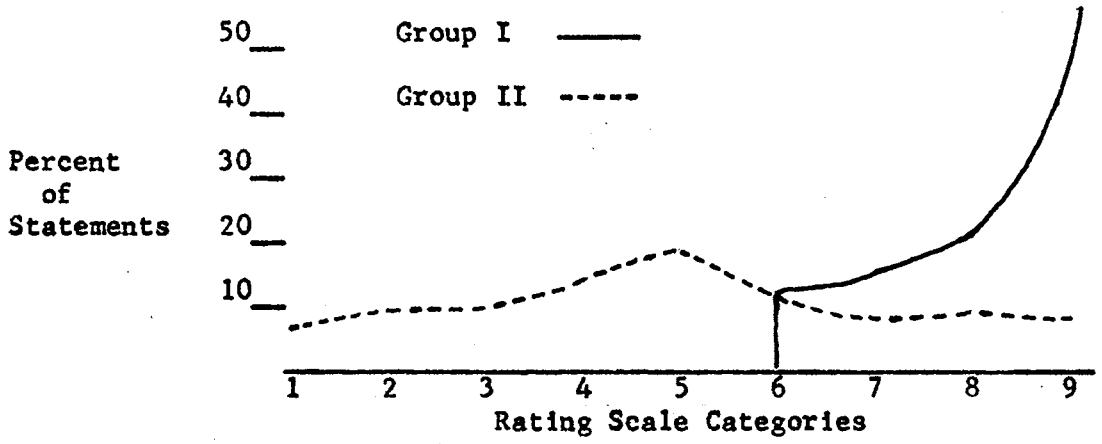


Figure 3. Group I and Group II Distributions. Percent of Objectionable Statements Placed in Each of the Nine Rating Scale Categories (Hypothetical Data)

The above comments integrate the empirical and theoretical line of thought underlying phase three. The theoretical aspects pertain to the concept of contrast effects and their expected influence upon the empirical outcome in general. However, specific predictions on the differential influence of contrast effects operating exclusively within the latitude of rejection, could not be confidently worked out at this point. Therefore, a descriptive, exploratory approach was taken in phase three.

The overall aim of this phase was to describe the frequency with which each group, as a whole, used the nine rating scale categories, and to estimate any significant differences in the relative frequency with which certain rating categories were used by each group of subjects.

The two groups may be compared on each rating scale category to determine whether one group differed from the other in the proportion of statements placed in each category.

Independent Variable. Rating Scale Category

The independent variable was defined with nine levels, each level corresponding to one of the nine rating categories.

Dependent Variable. Proportion of Statements

The proportion of statements which a subject placed within a rating scale category was defined by the number of statements he placed within category "i", divided by the total number of statements within that subject's individual latitude of rejection.

If a subject had a latitude of rejection with six statements and placed two of those statements in category nine, then for that subject the proportion of statements in category nine is 2/6.

Rationale for Dependent Variable

The proportion of objectionable statements that a subject placed in category "i", say category nine, reflects the relative frequency with which that category was used by this subject to evaluate his individual latitude of rejection. Any two subjects, regardless of the size of their individual latitudes of rejection, may be compared on the relative frequency with which they used a particular rating scale category in the evaluations of their separate latitudes of rejection.

Each rating scale category may be examined to determine whether one group of subjects characteristically placed a greater proportion of

statements in it than the other group.

Procedure

Testing procedures for collecting data necessary to make the above comparisons have been described on pages 40-42.

Statistical Design

For each individual latitude of rejection, the proportion of objectionable statements placed in the i^{th} rating category was calculated. For the i^{th} category, a comparison between Group I and Group II on the relative frequency with which each subject used that rating scale category was conducted. The Wilcoxin Rank-Sum Test was used for each comparison, with the level of confidence set at $\alpha = .05$.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Hypothesis One

Compared to low-ego-involved subjects, high-ego-involved subjects exhibited disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment; $p = .05$.

The proportion of objectionable to neutral statements was indexed by the term $\frac{n}{n+m}$. All subjects were dichotomized about the median value, $\frac{n}{n+m} = .46$. All subjects were dichotomized according to their defined membership to either Group I or Group II. A 2 by 2 Chi Square Test of Association was conducted.

TABLE I

A TEST OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HYPOTHESIS ONE USING A 2 BY 2 CHI SQUARE TEST

Subjects	$\frac{n}{n+m} > .46$	$\frac{n}{n+m} \leq .46$	Observed χ^2	P Value
Group I	28	8	19.84	$P \leq .01$
Group II	9	27		

Hypothesis One may be accepted at the .01 level of confidence. Compared with low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, the high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects exhibited disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment.

Visual inspection of Table I above suggests a mirror image with approximately 75 percent of each group falling into predicted categories and 25 percent of each group falling into unpredicted categories.

Although the Chi Square Test applied to Hypothesis One indicated a significant association between variables one and two, it did not assess the extent or magnitude of association between the two variables. The Goodman-Kruskel index of predictive association was calculated for this purpose. The index of predictive association defines the reduction of error in predicting levels of variable B, given information on variable A. Specifically, given information regarding a subject's attitude and level of involvement, with what degree of predictive accuracy can that subject's pattern of latitudes be forecasted, i.e., the relative size of the latitude of rejection to the latitude of noncommitment. The index of predictive association estimates this predictive relationship. The possible values of the index of predictive association range from zero to unity. It generally gives a conservative estimate of the magnitude of association. The calculated index of predictive association for the body of data in Table I was .53.

The precise meaning of this index value requires further clarification. Given no information regarding the relationship between the two variables, the probability of correctly categorizing a randomly drawn subject was .50, since half of all subjects fell into one or the other

latitude category. Conversely, the probability of predictive error was .50. The observed index of predictive association indicates that Hypothesis One reduced the probability of error by 53 percent, i.e., the probability of error was reduced to .23. Therefore, predictions based on Hypothesis One have a 77 percent probability of being correct. Magnitude of association has been specifically defined by a probability statement referring to predictive accuracy.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis Two compared Group I with Group II on the amount of differentiation occuring within individual latitudes of rejection. It was hypothesized that high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects would exhibit less differentiation among graduated attitude statements within their individual latitudes of rejection than low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects.

The degree of differentiation within each subject's latitude of rejection was measured by the formula, $\frac{DR}{N^2}$. Differentiation scores were then grouped into two columns corresponding to Group I and Group II subjects. The Wilcoxin Rank-Sum Test for identical populations, sensitive to unequal locations, was employed to make a directional, one-tailed statistical comparison.

Hypothesis Two may be accepted at the .005 level of confidence. Compared with subjects defined as low-ego-involed, mildly pro-religious, the high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects demonstrated less differentiation among graduated attitude statements within their individual latitudes of rejection.

TABLE II

A TEST OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HYPOTHESIS TWO USING THE WILCOXIN RANK-SUM TEST

Subjects	Rank Sum	n	Observed Wy Value	Probability for Observed Wy Value	Mean Value $\frac{DR}{N^2}$
Group I	1855	36	1855	$p \leq .005$	.5007
Group II	773	36			1.4577

Regarding the data used in testing Hypothesis Two, there was some question of whether or not a large enough, and therefore reliable sample of a subject's rating behavior was obtained. If each group was homogeneous in its composition of subjects, and if the rating of attitude statements was reliable, then it would be that subjects within the same group would exhibit similar differentiation scores. If this were the case, the variance within both groups should be relatively small. A test for the homogeneity of variance between the two groups would serve as a check on the homogeneity of each group and the reliability of their rating behavior. The Wilcoxin Rank-Sum Test of Variability was used to to test for homogeneity of variance between the two groups. A two-tailed test at the .05 level was applied.

For $\alpha \leq .05$, and n = 36, m = 36, the observed sum-of-rank values must fall within the critical limits of 1139 - 1489. It may be seen from Table III, below, that the observed sum-of-rank values were within these limits. Therefore, it may be concluded that there was no signifi-

cant difference between the variances of Group I and Group II. This finding lends support to the supposition that subject groups were homogeneous in their subject composition and that rating procedures provided reliable measurements.

TABLE III

A TEST FOR HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCE BETWEEN GROUP I AND GROUP II DIFFERENTIATION SCORES USING THE WILCOXIN RANK-SUM TEST OF VARIABILITY

Subjects	Rank Sum	n	Observed Wy Value	Observed Wx Value	Probability for Observed Wy and Wx Values
Group I	1386	36	1386		$p > .05$
Group II	1242	36		1242	

Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis Three predicted that Group I and Group II would differ on the relative frequency with which each used rating scale category "i" to evaluate statements within their individual latitudes of rejection; $\alpha = .05$.

The aim of Hypothesis Three was to identify which, if any of the nine rating scale categories were used more often by one group, compared to the other.

The relative frequency with which a subject used category "i" was indexed by the number of statements he placed in category "i", divided by the total number of statements within his own latitude of rejection.

The relative frequency with which each subject used rating scale category one was tabulated. These scores were grouped into two columns corresponding to Group I and Group II. A between-group comparison followed. This procedure was conducted on each of the nine rating scale categories. Altogether, these steps were equivalent to conducting tests of simple effects in a 2 by 9 design with repeated measures on subjects (Bradley, 1968). Table IV, below, summarizes a between-group comparison on each rating scale category.

Table IV indicates a confirmation of Hypothesis Three on category nine. The between-group differences on the remaining eight rating categories did not reach significance under the two-tailed test conditions of Hypothesis Three. It may be concluded that the relative frequency with which Group I and Group II subjects used rating scale category nine (extremely objectionable) to evaluate statements within their individual latitudes of rejection was significantly different; $p \leq .005$.

Referring to the bottom row of Table IV, it may be seen that the Group I sum-of-rank value is less than the Group II sum-of-rank value. Due to ranking procedures there is an inverse relationship between sum-of-rank values and relative frequency. Specifically, the relative frequency with which Group I subjects used category nine was <u>greater</u> than that of Group II.

TABLE IV

A TEST OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HYPOTHESIS THREE USING A TWO-TAILED WILCOXIN RANK-SUM TEST

Category	Group I	Group II	*Observed Wx Value	**Observed Wy Value	Two-Tailed Test Probabilty for Observed Wx and Wy Values
1	1301	1327	1301	1327	
2	1326.5	1301.5	1301.5	1326.5	
3	1442	1206	1206	1442	
4	1418	1210	1210	1418	
5	1443.5	1184.5	1184.5	1443.5	
6	1461	1167	1167	1461	$p \leq .10$
7	1203.5	1424.5	1203.5	1424.5	
8	1331.5	1296.5	1296.5	1331.5	
9	829	1799	829	1799	$p \leq .005$

* Wx = Smaller Sum of Ranks
** Wy = Larger Sum of Ranks

Post Hoc Comparisons

Inspection of Table IV suggested the following post hoc, directional hypothesis. The relative frequency with which low-ego-involved sub-

jects used category six was greater than that of high-ego-involved subjects; $\alpha \leq .05$. A one-tailed Wilcoxin Rank-Sum Test was used to test this hypothesis.

TABLE V

THE WILCOXIN RANK-SUM TEST OF THE HYPOTHESIS THAT GROUP II USED RATING CATEGORY SIX WITH GREATER RELATIVE FREQUENCY THAN GROUP I

Subjects	Rank-Sum Critical Value	n	Observed Wx Value	Observed Wy Value	One-Tail Test Probability for Observed Wx Value
Group I	1461	36		1461	
Group II	1167	36	1167		$p \leq .05$

Results supported the hypothesis that low-ego-involved subjects used rating category six with greater relative frequency than high-ego-involved subjects, at the .05 level of confidence.

Compared to low-ego-involved subjects, high-ego-involved subjects used rating category nine with greater relative frequency and used category six with less relative frequency. These findings suggested the possibility of an interaction between groups and rating scale categories.

To test the hypothesis of a significant interaction between groups and categories, a multivariate extension of Friedman's one-way analysis

using repeated measures was employed (Bradley, 1968, p. 138). This design is analogous to a 2 by 9 factorial with repeated measues on one factor. Table VI below summarizes only the test of the hypothesis that there was a significant interaction between groups and rating scale categories. The level of significance was set at the .05 level.

TABLE VI

A MULTIVARIATE EXTENSION OF FRIEDMAN'S ONE-WAY ANALYSIS TO TEST THE HYPOTHESIS OF A SIGNIFICANT INTERACTION BETWEEN GROUPS AND RATING SCALE CATEGORIES

	d.f.	S Value	X^2	P Value
Groups	1			
Categories	8			
Groups X Categories	8	12745.25	59.00	$p \leq .005$

The post hoc test for a significant interaction between groups and rating scale categories was supported at the .005 level of confidence. It may be concluded that the profile, or response surface over the nine rating categories was significantly different for the two groups.

These post hoc results suggested the presence of a significant interaction between groups and rating scale categories which may be partly described by intersecting profiles.

The following figure summarizes the relative frequency with which each group used the nine rating scale categories.

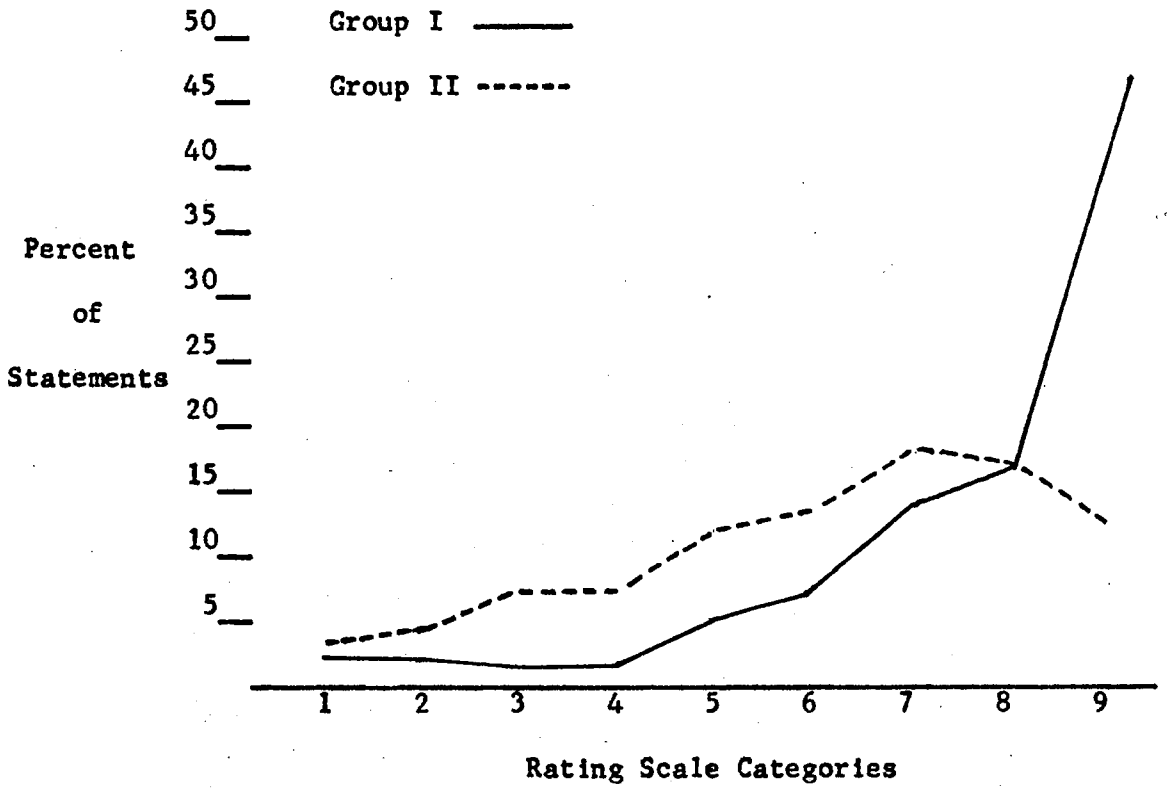


Figure 4. Percent of Objectionable Statements Placed in Each of the Nine Rating Scale Categories by Group I and Group II

It may be observed in Figure 4 that Group I subjects placed 46 percent of all objectionable statements falling within their latitudes of rejection into category nine, while Group II subjects placed only 14 percent of such statements into category nine. This represented the most outstanding difference between the two groups of subjects in this phase of study.

Regarding the possibility for "piling-up effects," the post-test inquiry found only one subject who indicated that the number of available categories was too few, and consequently confined him to an unavoidable repetition of certain rating categories. In fact, this subject was a member of Group II. In view of this general outcome, the results of this study may not be attributed to the artifact of "piling-up effects."

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

There were two features of the psychosocial scale that potentially worked against the presence of assimilation-contrast effects in this study. The 12 attitude statements defining the psychosocial scale were chosen to represent equal interval attitude positions, ranging from one polar extreme to its opposite. Previous studies remain open to the criticism that assimilation or contrast effects might be artifacts of spacing some statements closer together than others.

Perhaps a more poignant feature, which differs from earlier studies (Reich & Sherif, 1963; Powell, 1966), was that mid-scale attitude statements were not selected for their ambiguity. Sherif & Sherif (1969) described assimilation-contrast effects as a systematic displacement of mid-scale, ambiguous stimuli either toward or away from the "own position." Ambiguity of a mid-scale item lends itself to a more subjective restructuring of its meaning; thus assimilation-contrast effects become heightened. Powell (1966) legitimately used statements from Thurstone and Chave's (1929) research that had been deleted from the final attitude scale because of their ambiguity.

The findings throughout this study, particularly those in Phase Two, should be taken as results generated from a psychosocial scale consisting of non-ambiguous and equal-appearing interval statements, as defined by Thurstone's equal-appearing interval technique. The presence

of assimilation-contrast effects under these conditions suggest the applicability of this model to relatively well-structured social judgment problems.

Since a gestalt framework underlies the assimilation-contrast model a subject's response to a specific stimulus was given meaning in context with a larger set, or family of stimuli. In general, this led to the use of proportions which specified a pattern or combination of responses to be measured.

Hypothesis One incorporated the proportion $\frac{n}{n+m}$, which indexed a combination of responses to be jointly measured. Specifically, a given subject defined as high-ego-involved should display a combination of responses such that his individual latitude of rejection would be larger than his individual latitude of noncommitment. Conversely, a subject defined as low-ego-involved should display a configuration of responses representing an individual latitude of noncommitment that was equal to, or somewhat larger than his own latitude of rejection. Support of Hypothesis One at the .01 level of confidence indicates that the predicted pattern of responses, per individual group member, was obtained.

The strength of association between level of ego-involvement and latitude pattern was estimated, using Kruskal & Goodman's index of predictive association. This statistic defines magnitude of association in terms of the probability with which Hypothesis One yields correct predictions. This probability was .77, which may be read as follows. On the average, predictions based on Hypothesis One should be accurate 77 percent of the time. This statistical approach provided a specific statement on predictive accuracy which has been absent in prior study of these variables.

Two points were drawn from the above approach. A close alliance with the gestalt principles of idiographic, configural data was obtained. Second, support for the association between levels of ego-involvement and latitude size using a different measurement technique, subject population and stimulus domain approximated what Lyken (1969) referred to as a constructive replication, i.e., the reliable association between variables does not depend on a strict methodological replication.

Phase Two of this study investigated the amount of differentiation occurring within the latitude of rejection, as a function of attitude position and ego-involvement with the stimulus domain. Measuring the amount of differentiation made among graduated attitude statements within the latitude of rejection was kept at an idiographic and configural level, i.e., the number of statements that a subject included within his self-selected latitude of rejection was related to the number of rating scale categories he chose to evaluate these statements, as well as the range of rating scale categories he employed. Combinations of these three variables were jointly measured by the ratio $\frac{DR}{N^2}$. This ratio indexed the amount of differentiation displayed, per subject.

The confirmation of Hypothesis Two ($p \leq .005$) indicated that high-ego-involved subjects exhibited a marked display of dedifferentiation among those graduated attitude statements defining their individual latitudes of rejection. Low-ego-involved subjects retained a high degree of distinctiveness among graduated attitude statements defining their self-selected latitudes of rejection.

An inspection of the data clearly indicated that high-ego-involved subjects judged "intermediate" statements to be as objectionable as the more extreme statements of the psychosocial scale. Clusters of state-

ments were placed into a few end categories. It was concluded from these findings that subjects highly ego-involved with the stimulus domain and who subscribed to a comparatively extreme attitude position generally failed to distinguish among attitude positions included within their latitude of rejection.

Phase three of this study attempted to identify which of the nine rating scale categories were used more frequently by one group, compared to the other group, to evaluate statements within their individual latitudes of rejection. A between-group comparison on each of the nine rating scale categories was conducted.

It was found that the two groups differed significantly on the relative frequency with which each used rating category nine; $p \leq .005$. Category nine represented the most objectionable rating category and was denoted by the evaluative label, "Extremely Objectionable." Virtually 100 percent of the high-ego-involved subjects used rating category nine; and this group placed approximately half (47 percent) of all objectionable statements into this one, extreme category. By contrast, 41 percent of the low-ego-involved group used category nine; and this group placed only 14 percent of all objectionable statements into this category.

No other differences, per rating category, reached significance under the two-tailed test conditions specified under Hypothesis Three.

An inspection of the data suggested a post hoc, one-tailed test of the following hypothesis. The relative frequency with which low-ego-involved subjects used category six was greater than that of high-ego-involved subjects. This prediction was supported at the .05 level of confidence.

Subsequent to the finding that high-ego-involved subjects used category nine with greater frequency and category six with less frequency than low-ego-involved subjects, a post hoc test for interaction effects was conducted.

The hypothesis of a significant interaction between groups and rating scale categories was supported at the .005 level of confidence.

It was concluded on the basis of these findings that a significant interaction consisting of intersecting response profiles was present. This conclusion offers theoretical information regarding the display of contrast effects by each group. It was observed in Figure 4 that the distribution of statements over the nine rating categories by high-ego-involved subjects was notably skewed, with an increasing percentage of statements placed toward the more objectionable rating categories of the scale. Marked contrast effects were inferred from this highly skewed response profile. Low-ego-involved subjects displayed a more limited and restrained tendency toward a skewed profile.

The significant interaction between groups and categories contraindicates the interpretation that contrast effects exhibited by low-ego-involved subjects were a milder version of contrast effects exhibited by high-ego-involved subjects. The significant interaction indicates that the shape of the distribution of statements over the nine rating categories was significantly different for the two groups ($p \leq .005$). The simplest interpretation would seem to be that low-ego-involved subjects displayed mild contrast effects which did not parallel the display of contrast effects exhibited by high-ego-involved subjects. In this respect, it might be speculated that the above difference was qualitative as well as quantitative. A more specific interpretation of this point

was not suggested by the data.

The significance of this study rests upon its general application to a variety of social judgment situations that include people who differ in terms of attitude position and level of ego-involvement. For example, in the area of industrial psychology a positive relationship between production level and employee morale has been found. In part, employee morale depends upon a supervisor's willingness to acknowledge the possible value of ideas which differ from accepted practice (Maier, 1955). Let it be hypothesized for a given stimulus domain, that a supervisor's receptivity is limited by the relative size of his latitude of rejection and latitude of noncommitment. This hypothesis seems reasonable in view of Tittler's (1967) study wherin subjects exhibiting comparatively narrow latitudes of noncommitment were least amenable to attitude change.

Given the above, a method for defining the autocratic supervisor may be suggested. A supervisor exhibiting disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment on job-relevant stimulus domains provides a measurable definition of the autocratic group leader. An autocratic supervisor defined in this way should exhibit black or white judgment patterns, since statements outside his latitude of acceptance are dedifferentiated and contrasted into extremely objectionable categories. To the extent that job security depends upon being acceptable to such a supervisor, a suppression of statements outside the supervisor's latitude of acceptance should follow. The resulting effect would be the absence of employee contribution, involvement, and morale.

This method for defining the autocratic group leader is actually a

method for defining autocratic judgment on a specific attitude dimension. As such, this method is regarded as more specific and differentiated than a stereotyped characterization based on descriptive adjectives.

From this perspective, let the democratic leader be operationally defined as a low-ego-involved, mildly pro-attitude subject who exhibits a latitude of noncommitment that is equal to, or somewhat larger than his latitude of rejection, for a given attitude dimension. Correspondingly, let it be assumed that such a subject is receptive to a broader range of attitude statements that lie outside his latitude of acceptance because of his comparatively broad latitude of noncommitment and narrow latitude of rejection. In addition, dedifferentiation and marked contrast effects do not occur in response to objectionable attitude statements made by others.

Some comment regarding the laisse faire leader is in order. It is assumed here that the laisse faire leader should not be classified as a group leader in a psychosocial sense, but only in terms of a delegated label. This view is taken sinse the laisse faire leader does not seem to initiate goal-oriented interaction or decision-making; nor does he seem to apply positive or negative social sanctions in cases of non-participation and non-compliance. He does not seem to accept or initiate reciprocal role expectations implying that he somehow regulate group processes. Granted, this is a biased viewpoint, but in the absence of these rudimentary conditions it seems unnecessary to consider him a group leader in a psychosocial sense. Notwithstanding, it would be expected that such a person would be low-ego-involved, and exhibit an unusually broad latitude of noncommitment and narrow latitude of re-

jection. For example, subject eight of the low-ego-involved group (see Appendix A) exhibited a latitude of noncommitment containing eight of the twelve attitude positions. His latitude of rejection contained only two attitude positions, one at each polar extreme. It would seem reasonable to assume that such a subject found in a leadership role would tolerate an inordinant range of different attitude positions. In terms of applying positive and negative sanctions that mold and define group norms, this subject would seem indefinite.

From this approach, certain conclusions follow. A given supervisor may exhibit autocratic judgment on some stimulus dimensions, but not others. This does not exclude the possibility that a supervisor may be autocratic, in the sense used here, on all relevant stimulus dimensions. Conversely, this approach provides for the realistic possibility that a democratic leader may sometimes exhibit autocratic judgment, or at least express strong objection to statements that fall toward the outer limits of his own latitude of rejection. This latter behavior may occur on attitude dimensions for which he is characteristically described as democratic.

In a manner of speaking, this application introduces a note of common sense regarding leader "types." It challenges the implication of categorical types without regard for the attitude dimensions involved. A measurable continuum that allows for extreme cases is suggested, rather than a model of discreet, discontinuous leader types.

Perhaps a more immediate question that remains unanswered and which underlies the above speculation is whether or not a subject's latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection are correlated with reward and punishment behavior. It would be expected that a subject

rewards others for statements that fall within his latitude of acceptance, expresses neither behavior toward statements falling within his latitude of noncommitment, and punishes others for statements that fall within his latitude of rejection.

If these expectations were confirmed, and then combined with the findings of this study a number of useful applications emerge. Consider the clinical problems of counselling two people who are about to be married. Take the attitude dimension of cleanliness, which would seem particularly easy to scale. If the prospective husband may be defined as a low-ego-involved, mildly pro-cleanliness attitude person while the prospective wife is defined as a high-ego-involved, pro-cleanliness person, then certain predictions become immediately apparent. For example, the wife will behave punitively toward her spouse for behavior that the husband judges to be either acceptable or of no consequence. By the husband's reference scale, his wife's punishment, probably verbal criticism, will seem unduly frequent (broad latitude of rejection and narrow latitude of noncommitment), and extreme (contrast effects); ad infinitum. In contrast to projective tests, this approach easily delineates a specific area of marital conflict.

There is one other application of this study that seems quite speculative, yet amenable to empirical study. It pertains to the psychoanalytic model of neurosis and the construct of the superego.

Freud (1936) had subdivided the superego into two agencies, the censor and the ego-ideal. The censor was described as prohibitive and punitive, while the ego-ideal represented behavior, feelings, and beliefs that were acceptable. The analogy seems straightforward. The latitude of acceptance measures the limits of the ego-ideal and the

latitude of rejection measures the province of the censor, for a given attitude domain.

From this perspective, neurotic areas of functioning may be defined by attitude dimensions on which a person may be described as a high-ego-involved, extreme attitude position subject. An unrealistic ego-ideal may refer to an extreme "own attitude position," around which the latitude of acceptance is located. A prohibitive and punitive censor may refer to a disproportionately large latitude of rejection in which de-differentiation and marked contrast effects occur.

For example, on a psychosocial attitude scale of aggression, it would be predicted that a "neurotically inhibited" subject would locate his "own attitude position" near the extreme, anti-aggression pole, and exhibit a disproportionately large latitude of rejection relative to the size of his latitude of noncommitment. Psychoanalytically, such a response profile would represent the manifestation of an unrealistic ego-ideal and prohibitive censor.

On the basis of this study, this subject should fail to differentiate among various pro-aggression attitude positions and judge many of those positions to be extremely objectionable to him. Very few items on the aggression scale would fall into his narrow latitude of noncommitment. Relative to others, this subject might be described as inhibited and unable to accept what other judge to be appropriate attitudes regarding aggression. Psychoanalytically, this subject might be said to display a hyper-cathected superego manifested by the inhibition of normal aggression. This kind of diagnostic synopsis often underlies the label, neurotic.

For those psychologists who prefer to use such constructs as the

superego, censor and ego-ideal, but wish they were amenable to empirical study, this scheme offers such a method by operationally defining the ego-ideal by the latitude of acceptance and the censor by the latitude of rejection. The prohibitive and punitive character of the neurotic superego, specifically, the censor, may be partly understood in terms of a disproportionately large latitude of rejection, dedifferentiation, and marked contrast effects.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The assimilation-contrast model of social judgment provided the theoretical and empirical background for this study. Specific focus was upon judgment patterns exhibited within the latitude of rejection.

One group defined as high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects, and a second group defined as low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects were administered a bipolar scale of 12 religious attitude statements.

Hypothesis One predicted that high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects would exhibit disproportionately large latitudes of rejection and small latitudes of noncommitment, compared to low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects. Using a different measurement procedure from earlier studies, this relationship was supported at the .01 level of confidence.

Hypothesis Two stipulated the following. Compared to low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects would exhibit greater conceptual dedifferentiation within their individual latitudes of rejection.

To test this hypothesis, statements defining an individual's latitude of rejection were presented to the subject for further evaluation. Each of these objectionable statements were further judged on a nine-point rating scale labeled, "Slightly Objectionable" and "Extremely

Objectionable" at either end. These rating scale evaluations were then organized into three related variables: number of different rating categories used, denoted by the symbol, D; range of rating scale categories employed, R; and number of statements evaluated, N. The index, $\frac{DR}{N^2}$, placed these characteristics of a subject's judgment pattern into relationship with each other. The index, $\frac{DR}{N^2}$, operationally defined the degree of differentiation made among graduated attitude positions within a subject's self-selected latitude of rejection regardless of its size or location. Compared to the low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects did exhibit a significantly greater degree of conceptual dedifferentiation among graduated attitude statements within their individual latitudes of rejection; $p \leq .005$.

Hypothesis Three stipulated a between-group comparison on each rating scale category, i.e., the relative frequency with which Group I and Group II used rating scale category "i" to evaluate statements within their respective latitudes of rejection was significantly different.

Under the two-tailed test conditions of Hypothesis Three, the only rating category in which the two groups differed significantly was category nine. The relative frequency with which the high-ego-involved group used category nine was significantly greater than that of the low-ego-involved group; $p \leq .005$. Category nine was denoted by the evaluative label "Extremely Objectionable" and represented the most negatively weighted category of the rating scale. Low-ego-involved subjects placed only 14 percent of all objectionable statements into category nine, while high-ego-involved subjects placed almost half (47 percent) of all objectionable statements into category nine. 100 percent of

the high-ego-involved group used category nine to judge statements within their latitude of rejection, while only 41 percent of the low-ego-involved group applied this extreme category to statements within their latitude of rejection.

Since the distribution of objectionable statements over the nine categories for the high-ego-involved group was highly skewed, with an increasing percentage of statements being placed toward the more negatively weighted end of the rating scale, the presence of marked contrast effects operating within the latitude of rejection was inferred. Post hoc tests indicated a significant interaction between groups and rating scale categories; $p \leq .005$. This suggested that within the latitude of rejection the pattern of contrast effects displayed by each group was not parallel.

The results of this study support the following conclusions. Compared to low-ego-involved, mildly pro-religious attitude subjects, high-ego-involved, pro-religious attitude subjects may be described by a tendency to dichotomize the psychosocial scale, to dedifferentiate those attitude positions falling within their disproportionately large latitude of rejection, and to ascribe a greater degree of objection to such events.

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APPENDIX A

Own Attitude Position, and the Size of the Latitude of Noncommitment and Rejection, Per Subject

Group I			Group II		
Most Accept. Statement	Lat. of Noncom.	Lat. of Reject.	Most Accept. Statement	Lat. of Noncom.	Lat. of Reject.
1	2	6	6	7	3
1	0	9	7	6	3
1	4	5	7	4	3
2	3	5	7	3	2
2	4	4	6	5	3
2	2	7	7	4	4
1	3	6	7	3	6
2	0	8	7	8	2
1	1	9	7	5	2
1	3	5	7	5	3
2	1	6	5	5	4
2	5	5	6	2	4
2	3	6	6	6	3
2	4	4	6	2	5
2	5	4	6	5	4
2	7	3	7	4	4
2	1	7	7	4	2
2	6	4	6	5	3
1	3	4	7	4	2
2	3	4	7	7	2
3	4	5	7	5	2
2	1	6	8	5	3
1	5	5	6	3	4
2	4	4	5	4	4
1	3	5	6	5	3
2	4	3	5	5	5
1	5	4	6	4	3
2	4	4	7	5	4
2	3	4	6	5	3

APPENDIX A (continued)

2	0	8	7	7	3
1	5	4	7	7	2
1	3	5	5	7	4
1	0	8	7	5	3
2	2	7	5	6	3
2	0	9	7	6	3
2	5	4	7	5	5
Totals	108	198	Totals	178	118

APPENDIX B

Differentiation Scores per Subject

Group I				Group II			
N	D	R	$\frac{DR}{N^2}$	N	D	R	$\frac{DR}{N^2}$
4	4	6	1.5000	2	2	7	3.5000
7	7	9	1.4897	3	3	7	2.3333
3	3	4	1.3333	3	3	7	2.3333
6	6	7	1.1667	4	4	8	2.0000
9	9	9	1.0000	2	2	4	2.0000
4	4	4	1.0000	4	4	8	2.0000
7	6	8	.9795	3	3	6	2.0000
4	3	5	.9375	4	4	8	2.0000
4	3	5	.9375	4	4	7	1.7500
8	6	8	.7500	3	3	5	1.6666
5	2	9	.7200	3	3	5	1.6666
5	3	5	.6000	3	3	5	1.6666
4	2	4	.5000	3	3	5	1.6666
6	3	6	.5000	2	2	3	1.5000
5	3	4	.4800	2	2	3	1.5000
5	3	4	.4800	3	3	4	1.3333
3	2	2	.4444	3	3	4	1.3333
8	4	7	.4375	3	3	4	1.3333
4	2	3	.3750	3	3	4	1.3333
5	3	3	.3600	3	3	4	1.3333
5	3	3	.3600	3	3	4	1.3333
5	3	3	.3600	4	4	5	1.2500
9	3	9	.3333	4	4	5	1.2500
7	2	7	.2857	4	4	5	1.2500
6	3	3	.2500	4	4	5	1.2500
4	2	2	.2500	6	5	8	1.1111
6	3	3	.2500	5	3	9	1.0800
4	2	2	.2500	2	2	2	1.0000
4	2	2	.2500	3	3	3	1.0000
4	2	2	.2500	2	2	2	1.0000
9	4	4	.1999	3	3	3	1.0000
5	2	2	.1600	2	2	2	1.0000
8	2	3	.0937	5	4	6	.9600
4	1	1	.0625	5	4	6	.9600

APPENDIX B (Continued)

4	1	1	.0625	4	3	3	.5625
4	1	1	.0625	2	1	1	.2500

APPENDIX C

Number of Statements and Percent of Statements Placed in Each of the Nine Rating Scale Categories by Group I and Group II

Categories	Group I		Group II	
	Number of Statements	Percent of Statements	Number of Statements	Percent of Statements
1	5	2.5	4	3.3
2	5	2.5	5	4.2
3	4	2.0	9	7.6
4	4	2.0	9	7.6
5	11	5.5	15	12.7
6	14	7.4	16	13.8
7	29	14.6	22	18.6
8	34	17.1	21	17.8
9	92	46.4	17	14.4
Totals	198	100.0	118	100.0

VITA

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Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: JUDGMENT PATTERNS WITHIN THE LATITUDE OF REJECTION AS A FUNCTION OF LEVEL OF EGO-INVOLVEMENT AND EXTREMITY OF ATTITUDE POSITION

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