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TACTICS OF INGRATIATION AMONG LEADERS AND SUBORDINATES IN A STATUS HIERARCHY<sup>1</sup>

EDWARD E. JONES, KENNETH J. GERGEN, AND ROBERT G. JONES

*Duke University*

High and low status personnel in a Naval ROTC program were instructed to exchange written communications about themselves. Half of these pairs communicated under instructions stressing the importance of mutual attraction; half were under instructions emphasizing accuracy. From the communication messages it was possible to draw the following conclusions: (a) Conformity—low status subjects conformed more than highs as an increasing function of the relevance of the issue to the basis of the hierarchy. (b) Self-presentation—high status subjects became more modest when under pressure to make themselves attractive; low status subjects showed the same tendency on important items but became more self-enhancing on unimportant ones. (c) Other enhancement—low status subjects were more positive in their public appraisals of the high status subjects than vice versa.

THE present study explored some of the consequences of varying the importance of compatibility in pairs whose members clearly differ in status. Our hope was to shed some light on the social behavior of leaders and followers in task oriented groups. Presumably, all such groups face maintenance problems as well as problems associated with task achievement. This is clearly indicated by Homans' (1950) well-documented distinction between the internal and the external systems. If the members of a functioning group are not at least minimally attracted to each other, the strain of interacting in the achievement of group goals should in the long run impair task performance.

But how is this mutual attraction maintained when there are clear differences in role and status in a group? The research literature has thus far concentrated on affec-

tional relations (or "cohesiveness") among peers, but the development and maintenance of personal attraction between leader and follower, or between high and low status group members, has been less intensively studied. In order to gain some insights into this problem, the present study focused on communications taking place in a quasi-military hierarchical dyad. The communications were not directly concerned with task performance. Status was defined in terms of class seniority within a student ROTC group, with the experimenter capitalizing on this difference in seniority to assign consonant "commander" and "subordinate" roles in the experiment.

Generally speaking, there would seem to be a number of reasons why the lower status follower is concerned with the degree to which the higher status leader is attracted to him. A nearly universal perquisite of leadership status is the capacity to control outcomes of the follower. In most organizational hierarchies, the lower status person is dependent on his superordinates for task definition, performance evaluation, remuneration, opportunities for advancement, etc. As Thibaut and Kelley (1959) point out, one way in which the lower power person can blunt or reduce the power which the high status per-

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son actually applies is to become attractive to the latter. Cohen (1958), for example, has shown how critical comments to the leader decrease when dependency is enhanced by instructions.

It perhaps is not quite so obvious why the high status leader is concerned with his attractiveness to the followers. In the most ruthless, autocratic organizations, the followers may be motivated by fear of punishment or controlled by automatically administered rewards so that affection for the leader is dispensable. In the vast majority of organizational situations, however, the follower has considerable counter power (cf. Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). He may use this power by brandishing threats to leave the organization, or by forming coalitions with other followers to restrict output. In the typical case, then, the leader who is concerned with group effectiveness will also be concerned with the loyalty and spontaneous affection of his followers. By earning their positive regard for him as a person, the leader may effectively neutralize the followers' counter power and more successfully exert control in the direction of organizational goals.

There are, to be sure, additional reasons why leaders and followers might wish to secure each other's affection. The leader may be more favorably evaluated by *his* superiors if he can inspire the affection and loyalty of his crew. Then too, it seems likely that both the leader and the follower import general needs to be liked into the organizational situation. Thus, the ability to inspire the affection of another person may represent a gratifying conquest for both subordinate and superior.

It was not the purpose of the present study to demonstrate that both leaders and followers are concerned with their attractiveness to each other; the purpose was rather to explore a few of the major *ways* in which this attraction is sought. The focus was thus on the tactics of ingratiation rather than on its motivational basis. These tactics are conceived of as ways of presenting oneself to another person. They may or may not involve conscious, rational decisions. They comprise, in Goffman's (1959) terms, the arts of impression management. By the communica-

tions Person P addresses to O, he projects certain features of himself that he wishes O to assimilate. Although there are undoubtedly large and consistent individual differences in the characteristics which different persons attempt to present for social consumption, we can also expect self-presentations to vary markedly as a function of the situation and the individual's role. The design of the present study was developed to test the general hypothesis that in a well-defined leadership hierarchy, aroused motivation to elicit attraction gives rise to different interpersonal tactics for leader and follower.

In normal interpersonal discourse, the participants may communicate to each other with reference to each of the types of items described by Heider's (1946) P-O-X notational system. Thus P can speak to O about P's characteristics (direct self-disclosure), about O's characteristics (the appraisal of the other), or about some object or event (X) external to the relationship. In communicating about each of these item types, the individual may present crucial data about himself. Thus the motive to make oneself attractive to another (here called the motive to ingratiate) may achieve expression in various ways.

In other words, we might say that different tactics of ingratiation are involved with each referent item in the P-O-X formation. If O is the referent, P may convey the impression that he is attracted to O and that he thinks highly of him. Such a tactic capitalizes on the commonly observed "congruency" between liking someone and perceiving that he likes you (Tagiuri, Bruner, & Blake, 1958). Thus it is difficult for O to remain unaffected by information that P finds him attractive. This will tend to increase O's attraction for P. For convenience we might call this the tactic of *other enhancement*.

If X is the referent of communication, P may attempt to emphasize the fact that he and O share the same values and opinions about important things. If P is highly motivated to ingratiate himself with O, and they in fact do not share the same opinions, some amount of tactical *conformity* will be required.

A final alternative concerns P as the refer-

ent of his own communications. That is, P may directly inform O about certain attributes of himself to enhance the possibility that O will find him attractive. It is difficult to prescribe the most effective tactic here without taking many factors into consideration. P must strike a balance between boastful self-aggrandizement and the kind of self-derogation which bespeaks insecurity and a disturbing lack of confidence. Blau (1960) has commented on this dilemma, suggesting that,

creating a good first impression is a subtle form of bragging, but its success depends on its being so subtle that it does not appear to be bragging at all [p. 547].

In discussing, below, the tactics involved in selectively presenting one's own attributes to others, we shall use the term *self-presentation*.

If we now turn to the specific problem of ingratiation in a status hierarchy, there are differences between the leader's and the follower's situations which should have important implications for tactical variations in behavior. The low status follower, by virtue of his poor power position alone, is likely to be highly motivated to create an attractive impression. He is dependent in many ways on a favoring disposition of the more powerful high status superordinate. One can appreciate why this dependence normally gives rise to potent ingratiation motives. By the same token, however, the dependence is obvious enough for the more easily detected ingratiation tactics to be avoided as they provide clear evidence of manipulative intent. The low status subordinate must succeed in "managing" an attractive impression without running the risk of being called a "yes man" or a sycophant. Of the three tactics mentioned above, there are reasons why conformity might seem to be the most appropriate for the typical subordinate. Conformity to the opinions of the leader is effective because it is difficult to discriminate between conformity and genuine attitude similarity; opinion agreement bolsters the validity of the leader's views without raising obvious questions about devious intentions. The high status recipient of agreement is not likely to suspect its tactical origin because, from his perspective, it is

gratifying but hardly surprising when people believe what is "correct."

The other enhancement tactic seems less appropriate for the low status person because his evaluations are based on standards of unknown validity (he may be perceived as comparing the leader's attributes to those of low status people like himself), and because the use of direct compliments is such an obvious tactic and one which can be exercised at low emotional or intellectual cost. Nor are tactics involving modesty of self-presentation likely to play an important role for the low status person. As Blau (1960, p. 550) argues, if a person is not at all "impressive" to begin with, self-deprecation can only embarrass others and tends to make the unattractive person even less attractive. On the other hand, the dangers of publicly overevaluating the self are obvious. The low status person is probably better off avoiding the tactical use of self-enhancement or self-deprecation in his efforts to elicit attraction.

Turning to the high status or superordinate person, the strategic situation seems quite different. For one thing, while we have contended that the superordinate is normally motivated to enlist the sympathy and liking of the subordinate, he is also involved in maintaining the subordinate's respect for his task competence, his integrity, and his dedication to the organization they both represent. Many of the tactics of ingratiation described above would be incompatible with this maintenance of respect. He must win the subordinate's support, which involves certain elements at least of affectional attraction, without undermining his own respectability and power. In surveying the three available tactics of ingratiation, the tactic of conformity seems most vulnerable to these considerations. At some point in his interactions with the subordinate, the high status leader must demonstrate his capacity to form independent judgments in areas where his experience and his role render him likely to be more competent than the subordinate. While the leader may seek out opinion issues on which he can safely agree with his subordinates, he has much to lose if his conformity is indiscriminate. Also, the leader who adopts the tactic of conformity

soon finds that he cannot agree with all of his subordinates, unless they agree among themselves.

In many leadership contexts, however, the more direct tactic of other enhancement may commend itself to the high status person. To evaluate someone positively to his face implies that you are in a position to pass judgment—a consideration which is in line with the status differential involved. The tactic of distorting one's evaluations in the positive direction when they are made public may increase the subordinate's loyalty and affection without reducing the necessary social distance between leader and follower. Even if the subordinate perceives that the evaluation is overdrawn and unreasonably positive, he is likely to place a benign cast on the leader's motivation, and to see him as acting for the good of the organization (to improve morale) rather than for obvious personal gain.

The leader is likely to be especially concerned with effective self-presentation in his communications to the subordinate. Blau (1960), for example, feels that the high status person faces the problem of impressing others without losing their affection for him (though he is somewhat uncertain about the importance of this affection as long as the leader's talents are highly needed). The more impressive a person becomes, the more unapproachable he becomes (p. 547) and the more difficult it is to initiate social interchanges with him. The tendency for respect and liking to be inversely correlated—at least as respect implies high impressiveness—is sometimes handled by the sharing of leadership roles between a task leader and a social-emotional leader (cf. Bales, 1958). When this is not possible, however, the high status person must find ways to demonstrate his approachability without at the same time destroying his impressiveness or respectability. As Blau implies, he may do this by (a) emphasizing such shared characteristics as ethnic background, interest in the sports news, etc.; and/or (b) by presenting himself in a self-deprecating manner. But the self-deprecation cannot be indiscriminate. The high status person must not deprecate himself on those characteristics central to his status. This would serve

only to undermine the basis of the subordinate's respect for him. He must demonstrate his approachability by acknowledging actual or alleged defects on nonsalient, unimportant attributes. For the high status person, then, an appropriate tactic of ingratiation (or approachability demonstration) involves a pattern of self-presentation wherein important positive traits are readily acknowledged along with an emphasis on weaknesses in nonessential areas.

The preceding hunches are not the sort of stuff from which precise hypotheses can be confidently derived. They did help to shape the experimental situation described below, however, and alerted us to certain promising lines of data analysis. In planning the experiment, a situation was devised so that at various points in the procedure high and low status pair members communicated to each other about opinion issues (X), about the characteristics of the other person (O), and about the self (P). The conditions of communication were carefully controlled. In order to arouse motives to ingratiate, subjects during the first year of the study were instructed concerning the vital importance of mutual compatibility. In an attempt to provide a control comparison with subjects communicating under low ingratiation incentives, different subjects during the second year were urged to be themselves and to avoid misleading the other person about their true nature. Given such settings, it was possible to investigate whether:

1. Relative to high status subjects, low status subjects show a greater tendency to conform on opinion issues. This tendency toward differential conformity should be especially pronounced when instructions have emphasized compatibility and when the issues being discussed are relevant to the basis of the status hierarchy.

2. In presenting their self-ratings to the other person, high status subjects under instructions emphasizing compatibility show a greater tendency to deprecate themselves on nonimportant versus important attributes than low status subjects. Without the compatibility instructions the difference between high and low status subjects should be smaller.

3. When invited to transmit to another person their impressions of him, low status subjects show a greater tendency to inhibit overt flattery of high status ones than do high status subjects of low status ones. This should be especially the case given high compatibility incentives.

## METHOD

### *Subjects*

The subjects were 79 undergraduate male volunteers from the Naval ROTC unit at Duke University. As indicated above, the experiment was conducted over a 2-year period. During the first year (ingratiation condition), the low status (LS) group was composed of 21 students in the freshman class, whereas the high status (HS) group consisted of 10 seniors and 9 juniors. Four subjects (3 HS and 1 LS) were not included in the data analysis because of their suspicion during the experimental procedure. During the second year (control condition) there were 20 freshmen in the LS position, and 8 seniors and 11 juniors in the HS position. No subjects were discarded for suspicion during the second year, but on a few occasions a confederate substituted for a missing volunteer.

Subjects participated in the experiment in groups of four; each group was composed of two subjects from each status level. Prior acquaintance between HS and LS subjects was rare, and since no subject was aware of the identity of his actual partner, it is hard to see how acquaintance could play a role.

### *Instructions*

*Ingratiation Condition.* During the first year, the experimenter introduced the study as one concerned with testing naval leadership potential. More specifically, subjects were told that previous attempts to develop such tests in real-life settings had foundered because commanders and subordinates had not always been initially compatible. The purpose of this study was allegedly to find out if "compatible groups provide a better setting in which to test leadership potential than do incompatible groups." In order to answer this question, subjects were told that leadership tests would be given during drill periods later in the year:

In these tests, we are going to observe different two-person groups. Some of these will be compatible and some will be incompatible. Each test will involve one commander (in other words, an upper classman) and one subordinate (a freshman). Today we are going to make up two commander-subordinate pairs simply by putting one upper classman and one freshman together, and we are trying to make a determination of the degree to which each pair is compatible. After forming the pairs, in other words, we want to find out whether

the commander ends up thinking highly of the subordinate and whether the subordinate ends up liking and respecting the commander.

In order supposedly to control for factors associated with physical appearance, it was explained that each subject would communicate from a private booth to the other member of his pair without knowing the exact identity of this member.

In order to increase the incentive to be compatible each of the four subjects was asked to identify himself by name before being ushered to the booths, and each was then asked to write down the name of the person in the other status level he would most like to have as his partner in the experiment. Once inside the booths, each subject was told that he would be communicating with a person who had expressed a preference for working with him. He was then told:

It looks like there is a good chance that you will end up being a compatible pair if it turns out that you like him, and he does not change his mind about you. For this reason I hope that you will make a special effort to gain his liking and respect, always remembering your position as commander [subordinate].

*Control Condition.* Each of the second-year sessions was presented to the subjects as an attempt to study how leaders and followers can get to know each other. The emphasis was on the importance of obtaining valid information in forming an impression and the orienting instructions concluded with the following reminders:

We are interested in studying how well each of you can do at learning the kind of person the other is when there are differences in status. Therefore, it is especially important that each of you respond naturally and thoughtfully when it is your turn, and that you do not try to mislead the other person or to confuse him. He is going to want your frank and honest opinions in order to form an accurate impression of you. Keep in mind, then, the importance of being yourself. . . . We are not especially concerned with whether you end up liking each other or not. This is not the point of the experiment. We are interested only in how well you can do in reaching a clear impression of the other person.

The anonymity of each subject was assured.

Except for these orienting instructions, subjects in the control condition were exposed to the same subsequent procedures as subjects in the ingratiation condition. These procedures will now be described.

### *Procedures for Exchanging Information*

Once each subject was seated in his own private booth, it was possible to intercept all outgoing communications and to provide each subject with standard messages. These were allegedly from the unknown different-status partner. Thus at no time did subjects actually communicate with each other, and

HS and LS subjects were exposed to identical information from outside.

*Opinion Exchange.* The first task for each subject was to exchange with his supposed partner a series of 24 opinion items. Twelve of these items, each appearing on a separate ballot, were to be initiated by the subject and 12 different items were to be initiated on alternate trials by his partner. Each ballot consisted of two identical sections. Each section contained an opinion statement, a 12-point rating scale on which the subject was to indicate his agreement or disagreement with the statement, and a space for comments. When initiating a statement, the subject filled in the upper section, the ballot was delivered to his partner, and finally, the ballot was returned to the subject with the opinion of the partner on the same issue appearing in the lower section. For items initiated by the subjects the partner always showed close agreement with the subject's opinion, and a short, standard, supportive statement was added.

Of central concern here, however, was the subject's reply to the 12 opinions initiated by the partner. A measure of conformity was derived from the degree of expressed agreement on these items. In an attempt at greater theoretical precision, these items were of three types: those having to do with the Navy, with academic life, and those of general interest and miscellaneous content. All items were chosen from a pool of 36 items which had previously been administered to 60 Naval ROTC students in the sophomore class. The major criteria for item selection were that the mean of the sophomore distribution for the item was close to one extreme or the other, and that approximately 90% of the sophomores checked within 5 scale points of the mean. Sample items of each type are:

1. Navy: Because of their more intensive naval training, young officers coming out of Annapolis should be given positions of authority over Naval ROTC students.
2. Academic: In order to allow for each individual to develop his own interests, there should be no required courses in college.
3. Miscellaneous: Television programs have become so bad that we should seriously consider federally sponsored programming during certain hours of the day.

Three items of each type were selected as "critical" items. For these, the partner's initiated opinion was recorded on the ballot in a position which was clearly toward the other end of the distribution from the sophomore class mean for that item. For instance, whereas 90% of the sophomores had strongly disagreed with Annapolis graduates being given positions of higher authority, all subjects received a ballot on which their partner agreed with this statement. One item of each type was selected as "neutral." On these ballots, the partner endorsed items in the same way as members of the sophomore class. Means were also later obtained for all items from the remaining members of the freshman, junior, and senior classes. These means were used, as described below, in the analysis of the conformity data.

*Exchange of Self-Presentation Ratings.* The second task for each subject was to exchange with his partner a series of self-ratings. The self-rating form used consisted of scales separating 24 pairs of antonyms. These antonyms had been preselected to form six a priori clusters with four pairs in each. The "strength of character" cluster, for instance, was composed of the following dimensions: forceful-weak, indecisive-confident, wishy washy-strong character, and persevering-gives up easily. Other clusters included: attractiveness, popularity, competence, integrity, and control and adjustment. Each pair of antonyms bracketed three 12-point rating scales on the form provided, two of which were involved in the presentation of self-attributes. On the first of these scales the subjects were told to rate the items in terms of the way they actually saw themselves. On the second scale for that item a rating of the ideal self was to be made. Subjects were further instructed to check a box in the margin beside any dimensions which they felt denoted particularly important personal characteristics. Instructions to the subject emphasized that the self- and ideal ratings would be transmitted to his partner.

*Public Ratings of the Partner.* These rating forms were then delivered to the partner who was to use the third scale to indicate what he thought of the subject on the same dimensions. In turn, the subject received the partner's self- and ideal ratings. These ratings were also bogus and all subjects received a similar set. The way in which the subjects used the third scale to evaluate the partner for transmission to him constituted the measure of other enhancement. While subjects were making these ratings, bogus ratings of the subjects were being recorded on the subject's self- and ideal rating sheets. These ratings were also the same for all subjects and were uniformly toward the positive extreme of the scale. These rating forms, earlier initiated by the subjects and now containing bogus ratings of them presumably made by the partner, were then returned to the subjects for examination. It should be mentioned that 12 HS and 12 LS subjects in the control condition were instructed that these ratings of the partner would not be transmitted to him. All remaining subjects filled out their evaluations of the partner after clearly stated instructions that these evaluations would be transmitted to him. The effects of this return-no-return variation will be presented in the Results section.

*Private Ratings.* Finally each subject was asked to make a series of private evaluations of his partner. These were not to be exchanged but allegedly, in the ingratiation condition, were to be used to make the preannounced crucial judgments as to the compatibility of the pair. The private ratings did not have the same significance for subjects in the control condition. Included on the private rating form were a number of questions regarding the subject's perception of the partner's sincerity, and questions dealing with the efficacy of the experimental manipulations.

Once the third task had been completed, the subjects were brought together to discuss the purpose

of the experiment and the deceptions were revealed. Subjects were cautioned not to discuss the experiment with others.

## RESULTS

The three major sources of dependent variable data were the opinion ratings transmitted by each subject in response to the bogus opinions received, the self-ratings prepared for communication to the partner, and the impression ratings assigned by each subject to his high or low status partner. From these data sources, an attempt was made to develop indexes for measuring the three tactics of conformity, self-presentation, and other enhancement. The following presentation of results deals with the differential use of each of these tactics as a function of status and explores in addition some of their correlates.

### *Opinion Conformity*

It will be recalled that each subject received 12 bogus opinion ratings ostensibly filled out by his partner. He was to indicate his own opinion on the same ballot, to be returned to the initiator. On nine of these ballots, the bogus opinions received were highly discrepant from the nearly unanimous norms of sophomore ROTC students. In constructing an index of degree of conformity, it was assumed that the smaller the discrepancy between the bogus rating received and the subject's responding rating, the greater the degree of social influence on opinion expression. By inference from the distribution of responses in the normative data, it was judged to be extremely unlikely that subjects indicating agreement with the bogus ratings were not influenced by those ratings. A convenient index of conformity, then, is the discrepancy between bogus ratings and those given in response to them. As in Tuddenham's (1959) paradigm, a subject can conform to varying degrees without actually agreeing with his partner. It should also be noted that, unlike the typical attitude change study, the subjects had never previously expressed themselves on the specific items involved and therefore were not in anyway committed to a rating position on a "before" measure.

Figure 1 graphically illustrates, and Table 1 summarizes, the statistical analysis of the conformity data. Here each individual's score has been converted into a discrepancy from the appropriate class norm for that grouping of items. The normative data for judging the degree of conformity in the HS group were taken from those senior and junior ROTC students who did not participate in the first-year experiment, and LS norms were derived from nonparticipating freshmen in the same way. As it turned out, the freshmen and upper-class norms were very similar for each item type, so the differences between discrepancy scores of HS and LS subjects in the experimental groups can be evaluated without any complicated correction for alleged normative differences. It might also be noted that the subjects in both the ingratiation and control conditions were generally influenced to some extent by the bogus opinion ratings received. In 11 out of 12 comparisons between subject means and class norms, there was a significant amount of social influence. Only in the HS control condition with the Navy items did the mean fail to differ significantly from the class norm.

It is evident from Table 1 that each of the experimental variables contributed a significant effect. The LS subjects conformed more

TABLE 1  
OPINION CONFORMITY: SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS  
OF VARIANCE<sup>a</sup>

Source	df	MS	F
Between subjects	75		
Ingratiation versus control (B)	1	186.12	5.38*
HS versus LS (C)	1	208.44	6.02*
B × C	1	.07	
Error (b)	72	34.62	
Within subjects	152		
Relevance (A)	2	73.44	5.88*
A × B	2	32.64	2.61
A × C	2	154.21	12.35**
A × B × C	2	2.76	
Error (w)	144	12.49	

<sup>a</sup> For this analysis, cell frequencies were equalized by randomly discarding subjects in the larger cells.

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

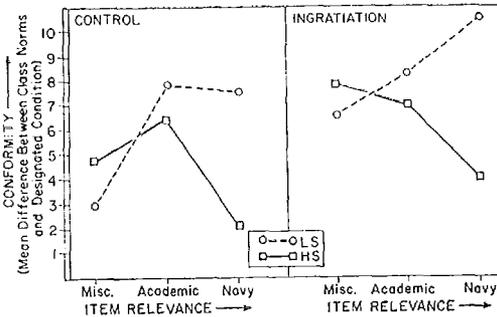


FIG. 1. Conformity as a function of issue relevance.

than the HS subjects; all subjects conformed more on the average in the ingratiation condition than in the control condition; and, there was a general tendency to conform less on academic items than on either Navy or miscellaneous items.

Interpretation of these main effects, and especially the effect of relevance, must await consideration of the highly significant interaction between status and relevance. In both the ingratiation and control conditions, LS subjects conformed more than HS subjects only on the items most relevant to the basis for the hierarchy. This tendency was especially clear (see Figure 1) in the ingratiation condition, where increasing relevance leads to more conformity in LS subjects and less conformity in HS subjects. However, when separate analyses are performed the interaction between status and relevance is highly significant in both the ingratiation condition ( $F=6.87$ ,  $df=2/144$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and the control condition ( $F=5.39$ ,  $df=2/144$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

It would appear that a rather general tendency exists for the high and low status persons to show differential conformity to the extent that the issues involved are relevant to the basis of the hierarchy, and that this tendency is not markedly affected by variations in the importance of being liked. What is affected by the arousal of ingratiation motives, however, is the overall level of conformity behavior manifested. Both HS and LS subjects conform more under pressures to be ingratiating than when specifically cautioned to express their true views. This is not particularly surprising, perhaps, but it does help

to validate the manipulation conveyed by the two sets of orienting instructions.

### Self-Presentation

A hypothesis suggested by Blau (1960) was presented in the introduction. The present version of the Blau hypothesis holds, in effect, that the high status person is more likely than the low status person to advertise his positive attributes in important areas and to deprecate himself with respect to less important traits. By implication from Blau's argument that this is the leader's way of demonstrating approachability while maintaining the followers' respect, this tendency should be especially pronounced in the ingratiation condition.

In the present experiment, the importance of an attribute was determined by each subject for himself. After the exchange of opinion items was completed, each subject was instructed to rate his actual and ideal selves on the 24-item rating scale described in the procedure section, and to check in the margin those traits which he considered "especially important personal characteristics." The average subject checked about one of every three items as important, and there were only small and clearly nonsignificant differences between the mean number of items checked in each treatment combination or cell.

In analyzing the data to test the Blau hypothesis, two separate scores were derived for each subject: the average "actual" rating assigned to important and unimportant items, respectively. Since each of the 24 scale items consisted of one highly favorable and one unfavorable antonym, this average rating was assumed to reflect the positivity of self-description on attributes at two levels of importance. These pairs of scores were placed for analysis in a mixed factorial design, with two between-subjects effects (status and condition) and a within-subjects effect (importance). The means for each cell are portrayed in Figure 2, and the results of the variance analysis are shown in Table 2.

Within the ingratiation condition, the Blau hypothesis seems nicely confirmed. There is no main effect of status or importance, but the predicted interaction is significant ( $F=4.19$ ,  $df=1/64$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Thus HS subjects in

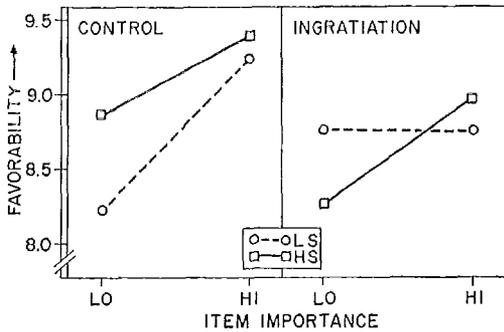


FIG. 2. Favorability of self-presentation on items varying in importance.

the ingratiation condition did describe themselves more favorably on important than on unimportant traits, and there was no such tendency for LS subjects.

When the results for the control condition are also considered, however, and when the full analysis is examined (Table 2), matters become more complicated. Here we see that there is an overall main effect of the within-subjects' variable, importance. The attributes which are designated as important by the subject tend to receive more favorable ratings. As Figure 2 shows, the one exception to this general effect occurs in LS-ingratiation cell. This exception is marked enough to produce a significant second-order interaction between status, condition, and importance. As a func-

tion of increasing the pressure to be liked, HS subjects became generally more modest in presenting themselves. In keeping with the Blau hypothesis, this tendency was somewhat greater for the unimportant than for the important items. In contrast, when ingratiation pressures were applied to LS subjects, they became slightly more modest about the important attributes and considerably more favorable in presenting their unimportant traits. As a result, when one considers only the roughly 16 items not checked as important, the highs became significantly more modest when trying harder to be liked ( $p < .02$ ) while the lows became less so ( $p < .06$ ).

Some questions may certainly be raised concerning the degree of fit between the important-unimportant dichotomy included in the analysis of self-presentation data and the conceptual distinction suggested by Blau's hypothesis. As far as HS subjects are concerned, the degree of fit depends on whether or not checking a trait as important is equivalent to saying "these traits are relevant to my claims for respect." An examination of the content of items checked as important shows some tendency for HS subjects to emphasize strength of character, dependability, and competence; while LS subjects seem more concerned with friendliness, warmth, and popularity. While the differences between HS and LS subjects in this regard were not significant, the concern of HS group with task-relevant dimensions suggests that the important-unimportant distinction does relate to Blau's discussion of the leader's self-deprecation on nonsalient characteristics.

#### Other Enhancement

One of the most obvious and ubiquitous tactics of ingratiation involves the expression of compliments or the communication of flattering appraisals. In the present experiment, this kind of enhancement of the other was possible in the final exchange of information, when each subject communicated his evaluations of his partner presumably to that partner. The notion of flattery or other enhancement seems to imply that one person overevaluates another. But the question im-

TABLE 2

SELF-PRESENTATION: SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Source	df	MS	F
Between subjects	67		
Ingratiation versus control (B)	1	2.73	
HS versus LS (C)	1	.40	
B $\times$ C	1	2.12	
Error (b)	64	2.44	
Within subjects	68		
Importance (A)	1	9.23	17.03**
A $\times$ B	1	1.44	
A $\times$ C	1	.06	
A $\times$ B $\times$ C	1	3.60	6.64*
Error (w)	64	.54	

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .001$ .

mediately becomes, overevaluation with respect to what standard or baseline?

Since there is no available way of determining what each subject really thought of his partner in the present experiment, (even the "private ratings" will undoubtedly be affected by commitment to the prior public ratings), the evidence regarding other enhancement is necessarily circumstantial. Ratings made by subjects at one status level in the ingratiation condition may be compared with ratings made by other subjects at the same status level in the control condition. It will also be recalled that some of the subjects in the control condition were informed that their ratings of their partner would be transmitted to him, while others were assured that their ratings would be seen only by the experimenter. Presumably this should have given us some further leverage in the attempt to tease out the relevant variables governing the favorability of ratings describing the partner.

As with the self-presentation data, the other ratings were converted into favorability scores, obtained by summing the scale scores for all items. Table 3 presents the results of such a summation, indicating the means and standard deviations for both status levels in the ingratiation condition, in the control condition, and in the return and no-return subconditions. Turning first to HS subjects, the pattern of means suggests that the ingratiation instructions themselves were not a crucial determinant of the favorability ratings, but that assurances made to the subjects that the ratings would not be seen by their partners

resulted in a reduction in rating favorability. The difference between the ingratiation condition and the control-no-return condition is very close to significance ( $t=2.01$ ,  $p < .06$ ).

The pattern of means for LS subjects is more complicated. Relative to HS subjects, LS subjects in the ingratiation condition were clearly more favorable in their ratings ( $t=3.06$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Turning to the two control subconditions, LS subjects were significantly less favorable in the no-return treatment ( $t=2.69$ ,  $p < .05$ ) but even less favorable in the return treatment ( $t=4.31$ ,  $p < .001$ ), when both means are compared with LS ingratiation condition mean. Since this very low mean for subjects in LS control-return cell seemed to have no ready explanation, the conformity data for all control subjects were examined. By an accident of assignment to the subconditions, LS return subjects happened to conform significantly less than LS no-return subjects ( $t=2.0572$ ,  $p < .05$ ). There was no difference in the conformity scores of HS return and HS no-return subjects. Apparently, since the procedures were identical in the two control subconditions up to the point of making the ratings of the partner, subjects in LS return subcondition happened to find themselves in greater disagreement with the incoming opinion statements than those in LS no-return subcondition. This provides at least one reason why they would subsequently show a more negative reaction to the alleged initiator of these opinions.

The fact that assignment of LS subjects to return and no-return subconditions was biased

TABLE 3  
EFFECTS OF STATUS ON FAVORABILITY RATINGS OF PARTNER IN THREE CONDITIONS  
(Means,<sup>a</sup> standard deviations, tests of HS versus LS differences)

Condition	Group						<i>t</i> <sub>HS-LS</sub>
	HS			LS			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	
Ingratiation	203.84	14.10	19	218.86	16.61	21	3.06*
Control							
Total	194.37	24.56	19	198.25	14.88	20	.60
Return	200.86	26.72	7	189.75	15.15	8	.99
No-return	190.58	22.56	12	203.92	12.19	12	1.78

<sup>a</sup> The larger the mean, the more favorable the summed ratings.

\*  $p < .01$ .

with respect to opinion conformity scores obviously complicates the interpretation of differences in indexes of other enhancement. Perhaps the most reasonable solution to the problem thus posed is to ignore the subcondition variations and to make a comparison only between the (combined) control condition and the ingratiation condition, for HS and LS subjects. An analysis of variance of the favorability means for these four basic conditions resulted in two main effects. Subjects in the ingratiation condition were significantly more favorable in rating their partners than subjects in the control condition ( $F=13.85$ ,  $df=1/75$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Also, LS subjects expressed greater admiration of HS subjects than vice versa ( $F=5.47$ ,  $df=1/75$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The interaction between status and condition was not significant ( $F=1.90$ ,  $df=1/75$ ).

In the introductory section it was reasoned that low status persons are in a poor position to use other enhancement as an ingratiation tactic. The present results provide no evidence to confirm this reasoning, but it should be stressed again that it is very difficult to derive an index which would be a reasonable measure of flattery or other enhancement in this setting. The LS subjects were more favorable in their ratings than HS subjects in both the control and the ingratiation conditions, though the difference was significant only in the latter case. Some portion of the variance, then, seems attributable to the likely fact that the stereotyped impressions which most upper classmen have of most freshmen are less favorable than the freshmen's stereotype of them. Both LS and HS subjects became more favorable under instructions to be ingratiating. Though LS subjects showed a greater increase than the highs, the difference between these differences (similar to the interaction reported above) was not significant ( $t=1.38$ ).

Finally, it might be noted in passing that to some extent the problem of interpreting rating differences between HS and LS subjects was anticipated. It will be recalled that the subjects rated their partners on the same sheet with the partners' alleged (actual and ideal) self-ratings. Bogus self-ratings were

prepared so that there were several items on which the partner indicated a large discrepancy between his actual and ideal self. Many of these items were also checked as being important to the partner. The intent was to provide cues for the elicitation of flattery in the ingratiation condition by indicating areas in which the other person was dissatisfied with himself. If the rating scale was being used in the service of ingratiation needs, then HS and LS subjects should have differed especially on these items in the ingratiation condition. Separate analysis of high and low discrepancy items revealed that, if anything, differences in the ingratiation condition were greater for the low-discrepancy items. In the control condition the average favorability assigned to high-discrepancy items was almost identical to that assigned to low-discrepancy items within each status level.

#### *Interrelationships among the Dependent Variables*

Relationships among the various potential measures of ingratiation tactics obviously deserved exploration, though there were no strong expectations about what such individual difference analyses would yield. The two experimental conditions investigated in the present study may be viewed as posing for the subjects a problem of determining the most appropriate social response under the constraints inherent in presenting information about the self. It might be said that the ingratiation instructions made salient the social implications of the subjects' behavior, while the control situation emphasized the existence of reality constraints. Presumably there are alternative ways of responding to the problem posed by the instructions in each condition. The examination of individual differences might reveal either of two general patterns of correlation among the dependent variable measures. Especially in the ingratiation condition, the different communication tasks in the experimental sequence might be viewed as alternative ways of accomplishing the goal of increasing one's attractiveness to his partner. In that case, we would expect to find inverse correlations between the dependent variables reflecting a kind of either-

or solution of the problem. While such a correlational pattern was conceivable, it was considered more likely that subjects would systematically vary in their level of response to the instructions, rather than in their preference for particular tactics to the exclusion of others. This would result in positive correlations between responses to the different communication tasks, indicating that subjects who adopt one kind of tactic are also more prone to adopt the other kinds as well.

*Relations between Conformity and the Impression Ratings.* Did the subjects who conformed more to their partner subsequently rate him more favorably? How was the relationship between these two response clusters affected by differences in instructions and in status level? Table 4 presents the product-moment correlations which are relevant for attempting to answer these questions. While only 2 of the 12 correlations are actually significant, there are interesting and consistent differences in their magnitude as a joint function of status and the relevance of the opinion to the status hierarchy. Specifically, HS subjects who conformed on the more relevant items also transmitted more favorable ratings to the partner. The pattern for LS subjects seems to be almost a mirror image of HS pattern. Here those who tended to conform more on the *less* relevant items were the ones most likely to transmit favorable ratings to their partners. It is interesting to note that the variation in instructions to be ingratiating had very little effect either on

the overall magnitude or the patterning of the correlations.

Any attempt to explain the data of Table 4 would clearly be post hoc. Nevertheless, the pattern of correlations does suggest that conformity and rating favorability are correlated only when the average amount of conformity is relatively low (see Figure 1). It does not seem too surprising that attraction and conformity are unrelated when there is fairly strong situational pressure to conform. This would be a typical instance of stimulus constraints washing out systematic individual differences. When such pressures or constraints are reduced, on the other hand, conformity and attraction tend to be more strongly related. This might simply be a function of the fact that some subjects were in closer agreement with the message initiator's expressed opinions (because of actual opinion variation in the sample) and that these "conformers" naturally liked the initiator better because his views were more similar to their own. Or, at least some part of the effect might be a function of dissonance reduction (Festinger, 1957) or balance restoration (Heider, 1958). That is, having conformed to the initiator in the absence of strong situational pressures to do so, the subject must find some justification for his compliant behavior. By expressing relative admiration or liking for the partner, regardless of whether this positive impression is to be transmitted, the subject may create a justification for conformity when other reasons are not apparent. In more technical terms, the individual thus reduces the dissonance or imbalance created by conforming when the social conditions do not require close agreement.

*Relations between Conformity and Self-Presentation.* The preceding explanation rather casually introduced the assumption that high status persons may demonstrate their approachability by conformity on irrelevant items while maintaining their true opinions on items more relevant to the respect they wish to receive as leaders. In the introduction, however, approachability was explicitly linked to the tactic of describing oneself more favorably on important than on unim-

TABLE 4

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CONFORMITY AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF RELEVANCE AND FAVORABILITY OF RATINGS OF PARTNERS

Group	Item		
	Miscellaneous	Academic	Navy
Control			
HS	.031	.373	.424
LS	.559**	-.130	.120
Ingratiation			
HS	.009	.339	.452*
LS	.383	.211	-.159

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

portant items. Differential conformity and differential self-presentation both seem to be plausible means by which the high status person can demonstrate approachability while eliciting respect. What is the relationship between these two behavior patterns?

Table 5 presents the correlations between the respective discrepancy scores. The conformity discrepancy score was determined by subtracting each individual's score for conformity on Navy items from his combined conformity score on Academic and Miscellaneous items. The self-presentation discrepancy score was obtained by subtracting each individual's mean favorability score for Unimportant items from his mean favorability on Important items. The tabled results show that there is a significant relationship between the two discrepancy scores for HS subjects in each condition. From this finding we may infer that HS subjects who are especially concerned with the balance between maintaining respect and demonstrating approachability will show this concern both in responding to others' opinions and in presenting their own characteristics to others. These individual differences in concern are apparent in both ingratiation and control conditions, so we are apparently dealing with a general style of representing oneself as a high status person, rather than a disposition to be more or less responsive to the arousal of ingratiation motives.

*Relations between Self-Presentation and Ratings of Other.* There were no clear expectations about relations between the final two

dependent variable measures. If some portion of the variance in both sets of ratings were contributed by a response set to respond favorably, then one would predict a positive correlation between self- and other ratings. On the other hand, at least the possibility existed that those who presented themselves in an unfavorable light would tend to enhance the partner by a form of contrast effect. Actually, none of the correlations between favorability of self-presentation and favorability of other ratings approached significance. Since the most interesting self-presentation results occurred in connection with the discrepancy between ratings of important and unimportant items, these discrepancy scores were also correlated with the other rating favorability scores. These correlations ranged from  $-.14$  to  $.13$  in the various treatment conditions, values which obviously are well within the limits of chance variation.

#### *Perceptions of Flattery*

It should again be emphasized that all subjects, regardless of status, received identical information about their alleged partners up to the point at which the impression ratings were to be exchanged. Beyond this point, all but the subjects in the no-return subcondition of the control treatment continued to receive identical information—i.e., each subject received his own self-ratings back presumably after these had been shown to the partner and the partner had indicated his own ratings of them. The no-return subjects were assured that their ratings of the partner would not be transmitted to them, and in line with these instructions they received no ratings from the partner. The remaining subjects were exposed to highly favorable bogus ratings of their personal attributes on the 24-item scale. It is relevant to the theoretical purposes of the experiment to inquire whether HS subjects in the ingratiation condition attributed more flattering intentions to LS subjects than vice versa. We might expect this to be the case since we have argued above that there are constraints that operate to inhibit upward flattery in a status hierarchy. When the leader receives a highly positive evaluation, therefore,

TABLE 5

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CONFORMITY DISCREPANCY<sup>a</sup> AND SELF-PRESENTATION DISCREPANCY<sup>b</sup> BY EXPERIMENTAL CONDITION

Group	Condition	
	Control	Ingratiation
HS	.595*	.421*
LS	.118	.210

<sup>a</sup> Determined by subtracting the degree of conformity on Navy items from the combined conformity scores on Academic and Miscellaneous items.

<sup>b</sup> Determined by subtracting the mean favorability on Unimportant traits from the mean favorability on Important traits.  
\*  $p < .05$ .

he is likely to suspect the intentions of the follower and to be alerted to the likelihood that deceit and flattery are involved. Such a possibility is less likely to occur to the low status recipient of a highly positive evaluation, or to subjects at either status level in the control condition.

Three scale items relating to the perception of flattery were embedded in the final post-experimental questionnaire. Ratings on these three items were combined to form a single measure of perceived flattery for each subject, and these measures were then compared across conditions. The results of this comparison are presented in Table 6. It is apparent that in the ingratiation condition HS subjects do indeed attribute more flattering intentions to LS subjects than vice versa. This difference washes out completely in the control conditions. When ratings in the control-return subcondition are compared with ratings in the ingratiation condition, the difference between the differences only approaches significance. It is important to note, however, that the means of the two control subconditions were almost identical. When subjects are operating under the control instructions, in other words, it seems to make little difference whether or not they are exposed to very favorable feedback from their partner. They do not apparently use this information to make inferences about flattering intentions. When all control subjects are compared with subjects in the ingratiation condition, the difference between the status differences does reach significance ( $p < .05$ ).

The results on the perception of flattery make very good sense, then, for they illustrate the dangers of attempts at ingratiation when the actor is in a position of low power or status, and when instructions have emphasized each person's stake in being attractive to the other. While compliments moving downward in a hierarchy tend not to raise questions about sincerity and frankness, the same comments moving upward smack of flattery and deceit. This result is quite consistent with the results of an experiment by Jones, Jones, and Gergen (1963) which was concerned with the perceptions of a conformist operating under different social conditions. In that experiment bystanders rated a persistently agreeable person much less favorably when it was clear that he had a high stake in appearing attractive to another person than when no such incentives were apparent. The two experimental conditions closely resembled the ingratiation and control conditions of the present study.

#### DISCUSSION

The results give abundant testimony to the importance of the status variable in determining the content of self-reflecting communications in a well-defined hierarchy. The major question which arises in attempting to interpret the various differences in behavior associated with status, is whether or not these differences are systematically affected by ingratiation pressures. The present experiment was conceived as an attempt to show that

TABLE 6  
PERCEPTION OF FLATTERY  
(Mean<sup>a</sup> postexperimental ratings in each condition and differences between them)

Condition <sup>b</sup>	Group						<i>p</i> diff.
	HS			LS			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	
Ingratiation	13.05	4.14	19	9.62	3.16	21	.01
Control							
Total	11.68	4.46	19	11.85	3.41	20	<i>ns</i>
Return	11.71	4.26	19	12.25	4.58	8	<i>ns</i>

<sup>a</sup> These means are based on the following items: completely sincere—on the phony side, trustworthy—unreliable, brutally frank—flatterer. The higher the mean score, the greater the perceived flattery.

<sup>b</sup> Comparisons across conditions—Ingratiation (HS-LS) versus control (HS-LS):  $t_{34}(13.05 - 9.62) - (11.68 - 11.85) = 2.101, p < .05$ . Ingratiation (HS-LS) versus control-return (HS-LS):  $t_{31}(13.05 - 9.62) - (11.71 - 12.25) = 1.690, p < .10$ .

high and low status persons adopt different tactics of presenting themselves when each is concerned with creating an attractive impression for the other's consumption. The importance of this concern was varied by exposing subjects in successive years to two quite different sets of instructions.

There is no question that the instructions had an effect on the dependent variables of the experiment. Under the ingratiation instructions, all subjects conformed more and their ratings of the partner were generally more favorable. It is not quite clear, however, that the ingratiation instructions gave rise to different interpersonal tactics as a function of status. The following discussion attempts to assess the relative contribution of aroused motives to be ingratiating to the observed differences between high and low status subjects.

#### *Conformity, Ingratiation, and Status*

The most novel and intriguing feature of the conformity data would seem to be the variations captured by the statistical interaction between status and issue relevance. Especially in the ingratiation condition, there was a clear tendency for HS subjects to conform less on relevant than on irrelevant issues. As noted above, this finding fits nicely with the notion that leaders must maintain the respect of the followers in order to be effective, but they must also find some means of demonstrating their approachability. It is perhaps not too surprising that HS subjects were able to resist influence on the Navy items, but what is rather remarkable is the extent to which they conformed on the less relevant, Miscellaneous issues. On these issues, the message initiator took a stand which was, on the average, six points removed from the class norm. In response to the influence pressure implicit in this discrepant stand, the average HS subject responded with opinions approximately midway between the class norm and the initiator's position. It would be wrong to suggest, then, that HS subjects moved to a position of complete agreement on these items, but a substantial amount of influence nevertheless took place. One might say that the average HS subject moved close

enough to the low's alleged position that he was in general, but not in complete, agreement.

It seems clear, furthermore, that the extent of social influence on the miscellaneous items was definitely a function of the ingratiation instructions. The highs showed significantly less conformity on these issues under control than under ingratiation instructions ( $F=6.69$ ,  $df=1/72$ ,  $p < .03$ ). Because of the amount of conformity in the ingratiation condition, and the significant reduction in the control condition, we may conclude that agreement on issues irrelevant to the status hierarchy serves for HS subjects as a means of increasing their attractiveness, i.e., their approachability. The fact that HS subjects also show slightly less conformity on the Navy items in the control condition ( $F=2.29$ ,  $df=1/72$ ,  $p=ns$ ) does not seriously qualify this conclusion, though it suggests that the leader's attempt to increase approachability may even involve some conformity on issues related to the hierarchy.

In marked contrast to HS subjects, LS subjects in the ingratiation condition showed greatest conformity on those issues most relevant to the hierarchy. Undoubtedly, some of this differential conformity on high relevance items may be attributed to the direct or informational effects of being exposed to an "expert's" opinions. This would assume that HS subjects, relative to the lows, were perceived to be more knowledgeable about life in the Navy than about such an issue as the contribution of comic books and crime movies to the rise in juvenile delinquency (one of the Miscellaneous items). This seems a plausible assumption. In addition to the direct effects of expertise on the differential conformity of LS subjects, however, ingratiation instructions also make a contribution. Thus LS subjects conform significantly more under ingratiation instructions on both Navy issues ( $F=4.08$ ,  $df=1/72$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and Miscellaneous issues ( $F=6.85$ ,  $df=1/72$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

In dealing with the joint effects of relevance and ingratiation pressures on conformity, it is quite pertinent to consider an important conceptual distinction which has been introduced,

and periodically reintroduced, into theoretical analyses of social influence processes. This is the distinction between normative and informational pressures (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955), or between the related concepts of direct and reflected comparison (Gerard, 1961). Direct social comparison (corresponding to informational influence) involves reliance upon another as an impersonal mediator of certain facts about reality. Reflected social comparison (corresponding to normative social influence) occurs when an individual is in a position to be rewarded for compliance or punished for noncompliance; the individual conforms in order to achieve some interpersonal goal (such as praise or acceptance) rather than solely to have his opinions coincide with what now appears to be a correct view of reality.

The ingratiation instructions in the present experiment presumably increase the amount of influence pressure based on the reflected component without changing the contribution of the direct comparison component. We may conclude that the significant main effect of the ingratiation instructions on the general level of conformity behavior reflects this increment stemming from reflected comparison. On the other hand, the pattern of interaction between issue relevance and status does not shift significantly as a function of ingratiation versus control instructions. While status-related changes as a function of relevance are monotonic only under ingratiation instructions, the most conservative conclusion is that direct comparison largely determines the greater *differential* conformity on the relevant Navy items. Thus while reflected comparison seems to have much to do with the general level of conformity behavior in both status groups, variations as a function of issue relevance are more likely determined by the subjects' judgment of the validity of the information received. Whether or not these specific conclusions are supported by additional research, the significant simple interaction between status and relevance is a provocative finding, one which is of interest both for practical and theoretical reasons.

### *Status Differences, Ingratiation Pressures, and Self-Presentation*

In response to a suggestion derived from a discussion by Blau (1960), the self-presentation data were analyzed separately for items checked as personally important attributes and those checked as unimportant. The importance dimension proved to be crucial in understanding status-related responses to ingratiation pressures. While HS subjects always presented themselves more favorably on important than on unimportant attributes, they became significantly more modest on both kinds of attributes when under instructions to be ingratiating. As the argument was developed in the introduction, the greater favorability of self-presentation on important versus unimportant traits seems quite consistent with the presumed interest of the leader in emphasizing certain strong points to gain respect and certain weaknesses to increase approachability. This tendency was slightly (and not significantly) greater after ingratiation than after control instructions. The general tendency to become more self-deprecating on both kinds of items is clearly the more striking feature of the data for HS subjects in the ingratiation condition. This is certainly compatible with the notion of a greater concern with approachability in this condition, though it is not clear why the highs show a slight tendency to deprecate themselves on important traits as well as the unimportant ones.

The general tendency to become more modest under ingratiation instructions assumes greater theoretical importance when compared, not only with LS subjects of the present experiment, but with the data on female subjects from an experiment by Jones, Gergen, and Davis (1962). In this latter experiment, some subjects were given instructions to win the affection of a graduate student interviewer by tailoring their self-descriptions along lines which they felt he would admire—even if they felt stretching the truth was required—while other subjects were instructed to be completely candid and accurate in their self-presentations. Girls in the so-called “hypocrisy” condition were significantly more positive in their descriptions

than girls in the "accuracy" condition. It is quite possible, of course, that there are important sex-related differences in responding to ingratiation instructions. However, it seems pertinent to note that the girls in the previous experiment were in an essentially lower status position vis-à-vis the graduate interviewers. Since most of them were college sophomores or juniors, they were naturally younger and less advanced educationally than their interviewers. Therefore, it is probably not stretching coincidence too much to note the parallel between the girls in the earlier experiment by Jones, Gergen, and Davis (1962) and the lower status freshmen in the present study.

The current LS subjects did not show any general tendency to become more self-enhancing as a function of the ingratiation instructions. They were similar to HS subjects in rating themselves less favorably on the important items in the ingratiation versus the control condition. However, in striking departure from the high status "modesty" effect, and in line with the girls' reactions in the previous experiment, LS subjects' ratings of unimportant attributes were significantly more positive in the ingratiation than in the control condition. A possible explanation for the ratings in this condition involves assuming that a certain amount of defensiveness characterizes the behavior of a low status person when it is important that he be liked or accepted by a high status person. We may expand on Blau's (1960) reasoning to argue that a low status person cannot advertise his weaknesses without endangering his reputation as a valuable team member, and to suggest in general that a person in a weak position who further emphasizes his personal failings arouses a certain embarrassment in others and thereby makes himself less attractive.

This might explain what happens on the unimportant items, but what of the reverse trend on the important items? Why did LS subjects become more self-effacing on these items when under pressure to make themselves more attractive? The answer may lie in the fairly subtle understanding, even by freshman undergraduates, of the dynamics of leader-follower relations. The low status person who describes himself very favorably on important

personal attributes may be viewed as a presumptive upstart, one who may annoy the leader by usurping some of the characteristics of his role. It may be, then, that LS subjects lowered their self-evaluations on important items because they wanted to avoid the appearance of claiming leadership qualities and of thereby threatening the leader's authority. The result is, in the ingratiation condition, an equalization of favorability across different sorts of items: relative to their self-presentations under control conditions, LS subjects were more modest in rating their important characteristics and more immodest in rating their less important ones.

#### *Ingratiation Pressures and Other Enhancement*

We have already indicated some of the difficulties in developing a valid index of flattery or other enhancement. However, the circumstantial evidence suggests that the high status subjects are somewhat more positive in their transmitted ratings than they really feel, less because of the significance of their favorable ratings as an ingratiation tactic than because of a wish to avoid hurting the feelings of their LS partners. This seems to be the most reasonable interpretation of the pattern of favorability means, a pattern which showed no difference between control and ingratiation instructions except for the less favorable ratings in the control-no-return subcondition.

As far as LS subjects are concerned, there was a rather striking general increase in favorability from control to ingratiation conditions. While it is difficult to know what proportion of this difference is actually a function of tactical considerations, it is quite clear that our expectations about the inhibition of overt flattery were not supported by these rating data. Apparently, many LS subjects felt that they could increase their attractiveness by expressing more favorable judgments about HS person than he had expressed about himself. We can establish some contact with the original hunch that this would not occur, by citing some evidence suggesting that it might at least have been a tactical error. It will be recalled that, when

all subjects were exposed to very favorable ratings coming from their partners, HS subjects in the ingratiation condition perceived the sender to be more flattering and deceitful than subjects in any other condition. While the actual ratings made by LS subjects were not as positive as these bogus ratings, it would appear that they were gambling rather recklessly by attempting to curry favor through other enhancement. They might have hurt their cause by this self-evident gesture. In any event, it seems worth pursuing the notion that subordinates cannot resist expressing complimentary evaluations to their leader, even though this is not an effective tactic.

### *Apologia*

As perhaps has been all too clear, the present study has attempted to find suggestive answers to a great many questions through an experimental design which had obvious weaknesses. Almost without exception, the interpretation of each finding could have been more securely established if a certain additional control group had been run. In one case, it might have clarified things to compare HS subjects' responses to those of seniors communicating with other seniors. In another case, perhaps a control group of non-ROTC volunteers would have shed valuable light.

The variable of status does not have a clear psychological meaning, and in the present experiment the status distinction involves a compound of differences in age, academic seniority, intellectual and social sophistication, specific training and experience in Navy ways, greater independence of the home environment, etc. In addition, these "natural" differences were further buttressed by the experimenter's assignment of each subject to appropriate leader-follower roles. In keeping with the exploratory nature of the present study, such a cluster of mutually supporting differences made salient to LS and HS subjects the contrast between their psychological positions. For greater precision of understanding, however, it is clear that the components of status need to be specified in terms which gear more readily into psychological analysis. We do not know at present, for example,

whether the age-correlated differences are more critical determinants of the results reported than the manipulated differences in assigned power or authority.

The conformity results would have been more compelling if a more precise and representative sampling of the relevance dimension were possible. At this point, we can only say that the relevance dimension acted pretty much as it should have, and affirm our conviction that the interaction between relevance and status is a finding of considerable importance and one which clearly deserves replication, extension, or qualification. If some way could be found to vary relevance without at the same time varying experience with the issue, this would represent an advance over the present design.

Further problems of interpretation arise because of the fact that the dependent variable measures were obtained in a standard sequence. We are not in a position to judge, for example, whether the subjects would have presented themselves in the same way if this task had not been preceded by one in which they exchanged opinions with a person who initiated rather extreme views and yet tended to agree with their own opinions. We have attempted to shed some indirect light on the problem by presenting the correlations between the various dependent variable measures, but this cannot serve as a substitute for further experimentation either involving the component tasks in isolation or in a different sequence.

One may also raise questions about the particular means chosen to induce social influence on opinion issues. What is it like to exchange views with someone who is quite idiosyncratic when initiating opinions and yet agrees quite closely with all opinions received? We may only contend that the items were deliberately chosen so as to be circumscribed and, hopefully, unrelated to broader, attraction determining attitudes. It is also true, of course, that all subjects were exposed to the same stimulus variations.

In short, the planning of the present study involved a definite decision to maximize the likelihood of discovery, rather than to assure the definite confirmation or disconfirmation

of carefully reasoned predictions. In our judgment, the issues exposed by this study are sufficiently undeveloped to make the prospect of Type II errors a tolerable risk.

#### SUMMARY

The present investigation was designed to explore some of the different ways in which high and low status persons respond to pressures to be ingratiating. The subjects were freshmen and upperclassmen in a Naval ROTC program. Each freshman subject was assigned to an upperclass partner, and vice versa; during the experiment they were asked to communicate by exchanging messages first on a variety of opinion issues, then on their own pictures of themselves, and finally, on their impressions of the partner. These messages were actually intercepted and bogus messages substituted. The investigation was conducted over a 2-year period. During the first year, all subjects were instructed prior to the interaction concerning the importance of pair compatibility and mutual attraction. During the second year the importance of candor and "not misleading" the partner were stressed.

The communication tasks were designed to parallel the three obvious areas in which ingratiation tactics can occur: opinion conformity, self-presentation, and other enhancement. The major results of the experiment, most of which were in line with pre-experimental expectations, may be expressed in terms of these dependent variables: (a) *Opinion conformity*—high and low status subjects tended to show approximately the

same degree of conformity to each other on issues not especially relevant to the status hierarchy, but the highs conformed significantly less than the lows on the more relevant issues. Ingratiation instructions raised the amount of conformity for both status groups, but did not significantly alter the relationship between status and relevance. (b) *Self-presentation*—high status subjects became more modest when under pressure to make themselves more attractive. Low status subjects showed the same tendency on items rated as "important," but became more self-enhancing on the unimportant items. (c) *Other enhancement*—there was a general tendency for low status subjects to be more flattering in their appraisals of the other than high status subjects, and for all appraisals to be more favorable under ingratiation than under control conditions.

The results were discussed in terms which considered the particular positions of the high and low status person, and the problems associated with these positions when an individual is asked to communicate various kinds of information about himself. The high status person, or the leader, is faced with the problem of maintaining the respect of the followers without thereby becoming unapproachable. The low status person, or the follower, has the problem of assuring the leader of his competence without appearing to assume attributes which lie customarily in the leader's domain. Most of the results could be rather nicely explained by considering these differences in perspective as a function of status.

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