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Date June 5, 1996

Individualism and Self-Definition in America

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Honors Senior Project

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American society places an increasing value and emphasis on individualism. Irene Thomson, in her 1989 study "The Transformation of the Social Bond: Images of Individualism in the 1920's Versus the 1970's," looks at the importance of individualism and its changing nature. In the 1920's, individuals were rebelling against societal expectations such as duty and responsibility. The strict moral codes were beginning to weaken, but society as a whole still had a strong influence over its members. Selves were "embedded in society" and completely defined by it. By the 1970's, the situation had changed. The biggest threat individualism posed was a self-absorption unhindered by institutionalized constraints. Society called individuals to create their own self identity, not allowed to accomplish this by role playing (Thomson, 1989). The attitudes originating in the 1970's have increased in their intensity since that time.

Gans (1988) argues that individualism in America is an ideology to which almost everyone ascribes. However, defining this concept of individualism is difficult because of the many forms it takes. There are two basic tenets of individualism: the self is the most important unit of society and each self is the sum total of his/her own beliefs, values, decisions, and actions, which society does not dictate, but rather stem from the individual. The idea of individualism in American society is a myth. Society allows all people to believe that they are unique; instead, individuals tend to fall into distinct groups within society. In part, these groups form based on socioeconomic status but may also involve such things as personal interests. Society holds individuals responsible for their actions because the unit of social significance is always the individual. This fact has significant implications for how selves determine whom they will become. This paper will examine ways in which our society expresses individualism and the psychological ramifications of this ideology. Next, this paper explores the relationship between individualism and development of self, followed by a discussion of the institutionalized life course. Finally, it discusses socially accepted ways in which to find worth as an individual.

Self Reliance

One of the most basic qualities associated with individualism is self reliance. Individuals learn to rely solely on the efforts and abilities they alone possess. The best example of this occurrence in American life is the phenomenon of leaving home. Childhood, seen as the period from infancy until the point of separation from parents, prepares a self to break away from dependence upon parents. First it individuates children, then prepares them for separation. As the child matures, he/she receives more responsibility and autonomy, marked by significant and conspicuous milestones such as learning how to drive. At a certain point, all children must leave home. This leaving may be conflictual or it may be a smooth transition, but it must occur. This process gives children the opportunity to choose how they will emulate their parents and how they will differentiate themselves (Bellah et al., 1985).

White (1994) found that after the age of eighteen the probability sharply decreases that a grown child will reside with his/her parents. Even half a decade ago, Parsons (cited in White) stated that "for young people not to break away from their parental families at the proper time is a failure to live up to expectations, an unwarranted expression of dependency (1994, p. 83)." In the past, children left home when they got married. Today, however, most young people expect to live independently before marriage. Although it has become accepted for college students to live at home mainly for economic reasons, this option is utilized only as a last resort as it does not usually bring satisfaction to either the parents or the child. The transition from dependency to autonomy may include a period of semi-autonomy, such as college, where the child will fall under the supervision of another agency. Thus, the phenomenon of leaving home is part of the transition to adulthood.

The occurrence of leaving home to live independently has direct ties to race, class, and family structure. Minority children, whose cultures place a strong emphasis on extended families have a higher frequency of residing with some relation past the age of eighteen. However, these differences are much more pronounced for married than for unmarried individuals. Unmarried children adhere to the influences

of the dominant culture rather than those of the minority culture. This is because they have not married young, which reinforces the minority culture's belief in strong family ties. The children that do not uphold this tradition already subscribe to the ideology of individualism. Socioeconomic status and the occurrence of unmarried children living independently have a strong, positive correlation. Increased affluence in the United States has made it possible for more single, young adults to reside apart from their families. Also, the increased number of step-families or other non-intact families encourages children to establish independence and not to return home (White, 1994).

White equates co-residence with continued dependency upon parents. This is why leaving home and establishing independence is so important in America. By taking this step, children are becoming self-reliant and severing their dependency upon their parents.

Responsibility of the Individual

In an individualistic society such as America, each individual is ultimately responsible only to his/her own self. This self absorption was first noted by Irene Thomson (1989) in her study concerning the social bond discussed earlier. Americans focus on their personal well-being and happiness which social institutions or other individuals may not infringe upon. The Declaration of Independence established this right. The question then arises, what responsibilities do individuals have towards the social institutions that they are a part of? Furthermore, do these social organizations have a responsibility to the individuals participating in their activities?

Hofstede (1980), in his study of several cultures, examined how both individualism and collectivism affected the relationships between individuals and organizations, more specifically employee/employer relationships. He found that, in collective societies, there is a great deal of emotional dependence on the part of the employees that they bestowed on the organization. In return, the organization assumes a great deal of responsibility for its members (employees). However, in individualistic societies,

this was not the case. Individuals in these societies have a "calculative" involvement, one that benefits the individual. There is a great importance placed on personal time and emotional independence from the organization. Likewise, organizations in individualistic societies do not look after their employees and only possess a moderate influence on members' well being (Hofstede, 1980).

Psychological Needs and Traits Stemming from Individualism

The individualistic style of American society has direct implications concerning the psychological needs of the people who participate in that society. The emphasis that America places on individualism and competition fosters a deep insecurity rooted in an over-dependence on oneself. Americans also report a need for a distinct sense of self, achievement, and competition. Because individualistic societies set the self as the basic unit of society, this self is autonomous, dictating its own actions and feelings and manipulating the environment around it. However, in individualistic societies, selves are more prone to feelings of loneliness, alienation, and anomie. Hui and Villareal studied 160 American undergraduates enrolled in an introductory psychology course at the University of Illinois and Urbana-Champaign. They found self-reliance and autonomy to have a positive relationship, while being inversely related to abasement, affiliation, nurturance, and needing help in times of distress. Competition related only with the desire for social recognition. Since competition aids in achievement of social approval, it follows that America's ideal of individualism does not actually lead to independence because competition is an integral part. It is merely a tool used to find approval in the eyes of society (Hui and Villareal, 1989). This duality is an interesting one. Competition teaches people to view those around them as potential threats. It is these same individuals that people are to initiate relationships with. While competition draws people together, it also pushes them apart.

The psychological needs that an individual is attempting to fulfill determine which arenas in society that person becomes involved in. Therefore, social structures serve as classifications of the individual self

that clarify the private interests of the individual for the rest of society. Society is therefore a compilation of many individuals working to fulfill their own needs. *The competition that ensues produces certain personality traits in the members of society: "shrewdness, persistence, practicality, frugality, inventive genius, and audacity (Zamoshkin, 1984)." In moderation, these traits are useful to the individual and to society as a whole. However, these traits can also lead to mistrust, suspicion, and disregard for the rights of others. This is due in part to the distinction made between winners and losers in a competitive society. The attitudes and traits that develop serve as standards by which we are to judge the worth of others (Zamoshkin, 1984).*

Development of Self and Individualism

An inquiry into the development of self will aid in understanding the effects of individualism on the self. The self is a social structure that becomes evident in social experience but does not result from this experience. Social interaction aids in defining a self, but that self exists apart from that social interaction. Because each self participates in unique social experiences, it is possible to conceptualize an individual self. Yet people are different selves in different situations. This fact proves that we are not purely individuals. The situations we are in affect the selves we portray. It is the organized community that Mead labels the generalized other which bestows upon individuals the ability to connect these different representations, allowing for the unity of self. It is this notion of self and how it is construction that is the precondition for individualism (Mead, 1956).

Society teaches children through play to uphold its norms by considering the viewpoint of the others that they play with. When participating in a group situation, children learn to take on the experiences of others in the group as well as their own in determining the course of their actions. Thus, when we as individuals make decisions, they are not completely dependent upon personal desires and needs, but also include consideration of the possible desires and needs of those around us. Therefore, selves do

not receive the necessary training to function solely as individuals. Instead, they receive instructions to incorporate society into their consciousness. If individuals do not consider the generalized other, they have not become a complete self. "Only insofar as he takes the attitudes of the organized social group to which he belongs toward the organized, co-operative social activity or set of such activities in which that group as such is engaged, does he develop a complete self or possess the sort of complete self he has developed (Mead, 1956)."

There are two stages in the development of self that Mead proposes: the organization of the attitudes of other individuals toward self and others and the organization of the attitudes of the generalized other. Upon full development of self, an individual becomes a reflection of the general society. This is because we must allow what others think about our possible actions to influence our behavior in order to become an organic member of society. To be a self, one must be a member of a community. A personality develops by internalizing the social institutions one chooses to belong to, thus becoming a mirror of society (Mead, 1956).

The Institutionalized Life Course and Individualism

The self is not static, but is constantly in flux. This is because, at certain stages of life, there are appropriate attitudes, behaviors, and actions that coincide with the person's place in society. In "The Self and The Life Course: Institutionalization and Its Effects," Meyer (1980) addresses the topic of how we possess an institutionalized view of self. Observing a person as an autonomous being throughout his or her entire life course demonstrates this viewpoint. Meyer states that these two aspects of the self, autonomy and the life course, reinforce each other rather than one resulting in the other. This theory aids in explaining occurrences such as the differences between the subjective self and the social conditions surrounding that person.

The institutionalized life course is a particularly Western phenomenon rooted in the concept of individualism. Individualism is not something that people separately incorporate into their sense of self, but is an institutionalized part of society. It has rules and guidelines that are manifest in all aspects of Western culture. In the United States, the basis for the life course is the age of an individual. There are appropriate roles, behaviors, and attitudes ascribed to each age group in society. Meyer states that because the life course has become increasingly structured, the self has detached itself from society's institutionalized life course. Thomson's finding discussed earlier supports this theory (Meyer, 1980).

The life course serves to gather individuals into collectives, or groups, such as families or professions. However, the basic unit always remains the individual. Individual selves may be a part of something larger than their own being, but in Western society, a collective is never more than a group of individuals. This organization of people fulfills the needs of both society and the individuals. The institutionalized life course roles provide legitimization for the needs each individual experiences by creating ways in which the fulfillment of those needs benefits the larger society.

Options for Finding a Personal Sense of Worth

The socially mandated options individuals have in defining who they are fall into two basic categories: private and public. Both categories concern themselves with caring for others in some way, but that is where the similarities end. The private sphere has two divisions: family life, which includes marriage, and therapy, which focuses on interpersonal relationships. The sense of community, or public sphere, consists of citizenship and religion.

The institutions of marriage and family are two of the most prevalent social organizations in society today. Romantic love as the basis for marriage, is a strong American belief and is dependent upon individualistic society. It provides a context for the personal exploration of oneself, the only requirement being that the relationship satisfies each individual's needs (Bellah et al., 1985). In individualistic societies,

psychological intimacy is consequential to predicting marital satisfaction and personal well-being. This is due in part to the fact that marriage provides an environment that allows one to accept support. It is also one of the few places in society where it is acceptable to depend on another person. There are three major components of this relationship: self-disclosure, interdependence, and emotional warmth. Certain aspects of individualism such as autonomy and the avoidance of any form of dependency undermine the development of marital intimacy. Dion and Dion (1993) found that individualism corresponds negatively to establishing caring, need, and trust in a relationship. Also, people who have strong individualistic tendencies were less likely to experience romantic love as rewarding, deep, or tender. The difficulties Americans have in experiencing and sustaining romantic love manifest themselves in high divorce. Individualistic ideology reinforces the notion that both parties require the satisfaction of their needs to warrant remaining in the relationship.

The second subcategory of private life Bellah and his associates termed "therapy." This relationship focuses on one person and is unique in its level of frankness, safety, a narrow focus, and depth. Its businesslike relationship allows the client to explore and discover his/her self. Therapy permeates many aspects of social life because all societal situations involve interpersonal communication. Stressing autonomy of self, therapy also paradoxically presumes that the goal is to conform to mainstream society. It views the expressive feature of the self as reflecting the institutionalized society. Therapy allows an individual to interpret social experiences so that they have personal significance. This significance will translate into social action. By being allowed to distance themselves from their social roles, individuals can come to realize the importance that these roles have in their lives (Bellah et al, 1985). In reality, therapy usually teaches individuals how better to adhere to the norms of society rather than helping them to discover their unique individualism.

Falling into the public category, community differs greatly from the two previous options for finding a meaningful existence. Instead of focusing primarily on the individual as do private sphere

options, community is the belief that individuals need to actively participate in society. Involvement in social institutions aids people in creating interpersonal bonds and personal fulfillment. There are many possible ways to become involved in society - from volunteering to being a political activist - but most activities fall into two major social institutions: citizenship and religion (Bellah et al, 1985).

Citizenship is the loyalty one owes for being a part of society along with the rights and privileges of belonging to members of society. American society evaluates this through the contribution one makes to society through work. The result from this venture is a meaning found in two forms: success and joy. Success in American terms is how well one survives in a competitive market. This is a purely individualistic endeavor; each individual receives awards and judgment based on his/her own merit. The problem that arises here is the assumption that a freely competitive market is false. Instead of individuals achieving success based on merit, certain groups of individuals with power gain the recognition and rewards, depending on the social institutions individuals associate themselves with. On the other hand, joy comes from serving others by the giving of oneself. This process involves individualism in that each person makes the decision to donate their time and efforts. Joy is difficult to achieve because society places limits on the amount of work acceptable when helping someone else out. For the most part, success and joy exist simultaneously and balance each other out (Bellah et al, 1985). Finally, both success and joy are often not attainable by lone individuals. They are much more easily reached when people work together to attain similar goals.

The other way to become involved in the public sector and experience community is through religion. Although religion may have deeply personal and private meaning for many individuals, it is one of the most widespread social institutions in America. People donate more time and money to religious organizations than all other volunteer associations combined. Religion provides people with a sense of community and fellowship with other similar individuals. Society holds that individuals should arrive at their religious beliefs on their own accord. However, the existence of churches and the like which inform

people about what they are to believe before they are born proves this assumption to be false. Religion also establishes the moral guidelines for society as a whole. Although these moral codes do not have universal agreement, they were the basis of the founding of this country, the effects of which are evident today (Bellah et al, 1985).

Method

Since the unit of analysis in this study is individuals and their attitudes and opinions concerning individualism, the easiest and most efficient way in which these concepts are measurable is through a survey. A survey will provide an anonymous and confidential format in which the respondents can respond to the questions concerning the subjects discussed in the literature review. The examination of possible relationships between these concepts will determine whether or not the hypotheses being tested are valid.

Subjects The respondents consisted of 215 students enrolled in an introductory sociology class at Western Washington University during spring quarter 1996. Participation in the study was completely voluntary and in no way affected the students' class standing. The mean age of the sample was 20.72 years. This survey design places limits on the interpretation of the results due to many factors such as age of the respondents, course selection, college status, and size of the sample.

The sample, by no means random, was chosen due to its ease of access and availability. This sample is very selective because it is course specific and located in a college setting. First, there is no single college in America that everyone attends. Additionally, not all students take an introductory sociology course—merely those students who have interest in the subject. Therefore, the results of the survey cannot be generalized to the larger population of the entire United States. However, this survey will provide some valuable information concerning how the ideology of individualism is manifest in American culture today.

Measures The survey consists of 88 responses, administered at separate times for each half of the class. The study utilized indicators that would accurately measure each of the concepts as discussed in the literature review. By using multiple indicators of each concept, there is assurance that the correct social concept is being studied. When possible, measures were first selected from three previous studies: C. Harry Hui's INCOL scale (1984), Morisaki (1993) as published in Cocroft and Ting-Toomey (1994), and Hui and Triandis (1986). If no prior scale existed, measures specifically developed to measure concepts involved in this study.

A brief introduction to the variables involved in the study will follow with more in-depth discussions occurring in the dependent variables and results sections of this paper. The dependent variable is each individual's placement on the individualism/collectivism scale. This study will compare the dependent variable with four independent variables: responsibility of the individual, psychological needs and traits, social roles that define self, and options for finding self worth. A discussion of each of these variables will follow in the results section.

Analysis Techniques The concepts under analysis in this study are abstract. Therefore, multiple indicators of each concept will ensure that the concepts are being accurately measured. When analyzing each concept, the first step will be to assess whether or not the multiple indicators are working together to measure a single concept. The standard tool used for this test is Cronbach's alpha, which measures the level of association among a cluster of items. The more the indicators overlap, the higher alpha. If alpha is 0.6 or higher, the general consensus is that the indicators possess "scalability." Scalability means that the indicators overlap sufficiently to combine into a single scale which measures the concept under observation.

Cronbach's alpha measures scalability when there are at least three or more indicators of a single concept. However, it is preferable to have more than three. If there are less than three indicators of a

concept, alpha becomes obsolete in determining scalability. Therefore, in situations where there are less than three indicators of a concept, the correlation coefficient must be at least 0.40.

Once a set of indicators has scalability, a scale is formed out of the mean of the responses to the group of indicators for each case in the sample. This new variable, or scale, and the dependent variable are compared to discover whether or not a relationship does indeed exist.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variable in this study is each respondent's level of individualism, measured in two ways: a self-reported level of separateness versus relationality¹ and a self-reliance scale created from a combination of measures within the survey. The self-reported measure examines where each respondent felt that he/she fell on a continuum, from completely separate to completely relational. Responses falling towards the completely separate end of the continuum equate with an individualistic ideology while responses falling towards the completely relational end of the continuum equate with a collectivistic ideology. Although this question did not have a strong correlation with gender², it is interesting to note the concentration of female respondents at the relational end of the continuum³. Eighty-eight females (55%) responded 4 or higher, indicating a more relational or collectivistic view of self. While 44% of the male respondents also responded 4 or higher, their responses to this question have a more equal distribution.

The second measurement of each respondent's level of individualism was a self-reliance scale. A basis for individualism is the belief that each person should learn to rely solely on his/her own abilities and talents. Therefore, the extent to which each person is self-reliant is also indicative of this person's level of individuality. The self-reliance scale was a combination of measures concerning three areas: unwillingness to ask for assistance, a dependence upon self, and questions concerning co-residence and leaving home after

¹ See Q36 in Appendix A.

² See Appendix I.

³ See Appendix J.

graduating from college⁴. Although the correlations are relatively weak in some instances, Cronbach's alpha, a measure of association among a cluster of items, is sufficiently high to combine these measures into a single scale⁵.

The self-reliance scale and the self-report question concerned with the separate versus relational continuum serve as two parallel dependent variables measuring the placement of each respondent along the individualism/collectivism scale. These two measures had a correlation coefficient of 0.24 ($p < 0.01$). Although this correlation is relatively weak, both measures are examining different facets of individualism; one is a self-report that may differ from the respondent's attitudes and beliefs about self-reliance.

Results

The survey measured four concepts that this paper argues relate to the concept of individualism: responsibility of the individual, psychological needs and traits associated with individualism, social roles and formations of self-concept, and the ways in which individuals seek to develop a sense of self.

Responsibility of the individual Since one facet of individualism is to become self-reliant, individuals also take on sole responsibility for the consequences of their actions and the fulfillment of their needs. Those individuals who adhere to this belief of self-responsibility feel that every person's individual efforts are what makes them who they are. Achievement does not come from the help of others. Therefore, as discussed in the literature review, individuals do not have strong ties to social organizations. In turn, these social organizations do not have much control over their respective members. This paper then proposes that those people who hold individualistic, and therefore self-reliant, beliefs will tend to place their own individual rights and desires before the rights and desires of those around them. To measure this concept of

⁴ See Questions 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, 16, 17, 21, 24, and 29 in Appendix A.

⁵ See Appendix B.

individual responsibility, the survey posed four types of questions dealing with individual and/or group responsibility: questions concerning the responsibility to social groups (are they willing to make sacrifices for other group members), questions which attempt to define instances when it is appropriate for one person's actions to infringe on the rights of others (another form of social responsibility), and questions which address whether or not it is possible to hold groups communally accountable for their actions.

Each of the aforementioned categories addresses the concept of individual responsibility in a different manner. Measuring beliefs concerning responsibility in social groups test whether or not individuals will place their own rights and desires before other members of the social group. These questions also address the willingness of each respondent to sacrifice his/her own desires to benefit the group as a whole. Disagreement with these measures indicates individualistic beliefs in that the individual focuses on preserving only his/herself interests⁶.

The second type of measure involves examining when it is appropriate for fulfillment of an individual's needs and/or desires to infringe upon another person's ability to fulfill his/her own needs and/or desires. Examples of situations such as expressing an opinion to situations of life and death were posed to allow the respondents to rate how acceptable it is for one person to interfere in the life of another in each situation⁷.

The last set of measures concerning an individual's responsibility dealt with group accountability and examined whether or not it is possible to hold a group of people accountable for their actions or if responsibility has to fall upon an individual. Three situations were posed in which the respondents were to rate individual and group responsibility for creating the problem described⁸.

The correlation coefficients for these measures were below the acceptable level of 0.40.

Cronbach's alpha further demonstrates that these measures can not be combined into a scale to measure the

⁶ See Questions 1, 13, and 27 in Appendix A.

⁷ See Question 32 in Appendix A.

⁸ See Questions 23, 30, and 31 in Appendix A.

responsibility of individuals. Alpha was less than 0.60, indicating that these questions did not work together as combined indicators of the concept⁹. Therefore, a scale measuring the responsibility of individuals to self and society could not be created. Moreover, no smaller scales could be formed from the three subset categories of questions. Since a scale concerning individual responsibility could not be constructed, there was no support for the proposed hypothesis. This means that either the indicators did not measure the concepts they were meant to, or that there is no precise pattern concerning individual responsibility among the college students that responded to the survey.

Psychological Needs and Traits As discussed in the literature review, individualism and collectivism each foster a separate set of psychological character traits and needs. This study will test the hypothesis that those who hold strong individualistic beliefs will have a high need for traits such as competition, sense of self, autonomy, practicality, frugality, audacity, creativity, shrewdness, and persistence. Measures included two sets of questions concerning competition and autonomy and a question in which respondents were to rate the importance of several different personality traits¹⁰.

Although Cronbach's alpha was not high enough to warrant combining all these measures into one scale for psychological needs and traits, there was enough correlation among measures in the competition and the "other" traits categories to create scales for each of these sections individually¹¹. The competition scale consisted of questions 15 and 26 and measures the importance that the respondents placed on both having and succeeding in competitive situations in their lives. This scale demonstrated a slight correlation with the self-reported individualism scale ($r = 0.14, p < 0.05$). Furthermore, no significant correlation between the competition scale and the self-reliance scale existed in the least, having a correlation coefficient of 0.06. These findings give very weak support to the hypothesis under evaluation.

⁹ See Appendix C.

¹⁰ See Questions 5, 7, 15, 16, 18, 20, 26, and 33 in Appendix A.

¹¹ See Appendix D.

Results from question 33 created a combination traits scale which listed several traits that appear to be common in individualistic societies such as audacity, competitiveness, cooperativeness, creativity, frugality, persistence, practicality, and shrewdness. It measures how important this cluster of individualistic character traits is to the respondents. This group of traits did not have any correlation to the self reported individualism scale ($r = 0.04$). However, the traits scale had a positive correlation with the self reliance scale with $r = 0.20$ ($p < 0.01$)¹². This finding lends some support to the hypothesis that this group of traits is important to individualistic societies.

Social Roles that Define Self Even though America has a strong individualistic ideology, the larger society does play an important role in the definition of self, as demonstrated by the literature review discussion concerning Mead. The question then arises: how important are these social roles in the formation of self-concept? For the purposes of this study, it is hypothesized that the socially obtained identity will be less important for highly individualistic people. Furthermore, a complete sense of self will be very important for people in an individualistic society. The second hypothesis, then, is that those who hold more individualistic beliefs will place more importance on having a complete sense of self. The measures to test this hypothesis will consist of questions concerning how important these social roles are, whether or not society's opinion influences behavior, and how important it is for each respondent to have a clear sense of self¹³.

Overall, the correlations for this category of social roles that define self were very weak, giving no strong indications of the existence of relationships among these measures. The alpha in this case was even lower than for previous concepts at 0.44, indicating that these factors could not become a combined measure for this concept. However, one set of correlations emerged that needed further exploration. A

¹² See Appendix G - traits.

¹³ See Questions 3, 10, 11, 12, 22, 25, and 28 in Appendix A.

non-conformity scale was created out of questions 3 and 22 ($r = 0.41, p < 0.01$)¹⁴, which measures an individual's willingness to behave in ways that society may not approve of. This scale weakly correlated with both the self-reported individualism measure and the self-reliance scale ($r = 0.19$ and $r = 0.23$ respectively, $p < 0.01$)¹⁵. The non-conformity scale provided some support for the hypothesis that the individual identity is more important than the social identity in an individualistic society.

Options for Finding Self Worth

This section addressed the ways in which the self can come to better understand itself and find success. There are two ways in which people may attempt to find success and self-definition: through individualistic endeavors where the focus is on the growth of the individual or through more collective endeavors which are processes that involve creating relationships with other people. This study proposes that people who hold individualistic beliefs will emphasize individualistic ways to find success and a sense of self. To measure determinants of success and ways in which to develop a better self-concept, the survey listed several items that embodied either the individualistic or collectivistic approach¹⁶. The survey requested that respondents rate the importance of each item. Factors for both success and developing a sense of self were created by taking the mean of the individual items and subtracting the mean of the collective items. That is, these combined scores indicate the relative reliance on individualistic versus collectivistic methods for finding success and a more developed sense of self.

The success scale had an overall mean of 0.50, signifying that the individualistic processes rated slightly more important than the collective ones (a mean of 0.00 would indicate equality between individualistic and collectivistic processes). This success scale did have a solid correlation with both the self-reported level of individualism ($r = 0.33, p < 0.01$) and the self-reliance scale ($r = 0.26, p < 0.01$)¹⁷. Similar to the success scale, the self-worth scale has an overall mean of 0.53 which also implies that the

¹⁴ See Appendix E.

¹⁵ See Appendix G - conform.

¹⁶ See Questions 34 and 35 in Appendix A.

¹⁷ See Appendix G - q34comp.

individualistic processes rated slightly higher than the collective ones. However, the self-worth scale did not have the same correlation patterns with the dependent variables. The self-worth scale showed a slight positive correlation with the self-reported level of individualism ($r = 0.19, p < 0.01$), but no significant correlation with the self-reliance scale ($r = 0.10$, no significance)¹⁸. These correlations involving the success scale solidly support the hypothesis that processes utilizing only the individual have more value in an individualistic society. However, the self-worth scale does not verify this hypothesis. The varying results can be explained in two possible manners. First, the self-worth measures may actually be tapping another concept. Also, self-worth may not be affected by individualism in the same manner as the definition of success.

Factor Analysis

Since the correlations and measures of scalability were so low in most cases, a factor analysis was performed to discover if another factor existed that could better explain the variation among the survey items. One factor emerged as statistically significant ($\alpha = 0.72$)¹⁹, concerned with acting of one's own accord---in other words "doing it yourself." This factor consisted of seven measures from several sections of the survey---self-reliance, group ties, responsibility to self, and autonomy---that indicated a tendency to do everything by and for the self, with no help from others. Of the seven indicators, three stressed the importance of not relying on others for help²⁰, three others supported making decisions benefiting the self²¹, and the last measure stated that happiness is not dependent upon the well-being of others²². Being concerned with complete dependence on self and a strong sense of separateness from those in the surrounding social environment, this factor was moderately related to the self-reported measure of

¹⁸ See Appendix G - q34comp.

¹⁹ See Appendix H.

²⁰ See Questions 4, 8, and 17 in Appendix A.

²¹ See Questions 2, 5, and 13 in Appendix A.

²² See question 23 in Appendix A.

individualism ($r = 0.31, p < 0.01$) and very strongly related to the self-reliance scale ($r = 0.65, p < 0.01$)²³. In part, this strong relationship between the “do-it-yourself” factor and the self-reliance scale can be explained by the fact that they share four of the same questions²⁴. Therefore, this factor may be merely another form of the self-reliance scale. When the factor is correlated without these factors, the alpha drops below the acceptable range and no further information concerning possible explanations for the variance in the data can be attained.

Conclusions

As discussed in the literature review, individualism is a very hard concept to measure. The results of this study were not overwhelmingly strong, but there were some correlations. Hypothesis one---those people who hold individualistic, and therefore self-reliant, beliefs will tend to place their own individual rights and desires before the rights and desires of those around them---did not find any support in the data collected. Neither the complete concept nor the smaller measures had enough compatibility to create a scale to measure the concepts. If this study measured these concepts correctly, it follows that there is not a coherent or precise definition of the responsibility of the individual associated with individualism.

Surprisingly, this study did not support Irene Thomson’s findings that there is a growing self-absorption in America which began in the 1970’s. If this is the case, it would appear from this study that a more socially responsible form of individualism is emerging. Society has been able to place some restraints on this growing self-absorption, making people aware not only of their own needs, but of the needs of those around them as well.

Hypothesis two stated that those who hold strong individualistic beliefs will have a high need for personality traits such as competitiveness, a sense of self, autonomy, practicality, frugality, audacity, creativity, shrewdness, and persistence. Although a complete scale which incorporated all these traits could

²³ See Appendix G - factor.

²⁴ Questions 2, 4, 8, and 17.

not be created, a competition and “other” traits scales were made. The competitive scale correlated slightly to the measures of individualism/collectivism. This implies that although the need for competition may be loosely linked to individualism, there is no solid relationship between the two concepts. The “other” traits scale positively correlated with the self-reliance scale, giving support to the second hypothesis. This scale may have been more successful because it examined a group of traits instead of a single trait.

Although the traits scale significantly related to individualism, it is the lack of a correlation between competition and individualism that is the most intriguing aspect of this section. If a socially aware form of individualism is arising, as discussed earlier, it might explain this lack of correlation. As mentioned in the literature review, competition teaches people to view those around them as potential threats. This view tends to isolate us from others. Therefore, if a more socially aware form of individualism which allows people to explore relationships with other individuals is emerging, competition would be a less important part of society.

The support for the overall set of character traits that ensue from a competitive society may be due to a time lag. Although competition was found not to be as important as in the past, these character traits are currently valued by society. If this trend away from competition continues, the valued set of traits may also change. Furthermore, this study only presented traits theorized to be products of competition. Therefore, it is uncertain what the results would have been had a more comprehensive list of character traits been provided to the respondents.

The third hypothesis that socially obtained identity will be less important for highly individualistic people, is associated with the second point that those with individualistic beliefs will place a higher importance on sense of self. Measures concerning the entire concept did not work well enough together to combine. However, one small scale could be created to measure nonconformity. This scale offered weak support for these hypotheses.

According to these results, the social self that Mead and Meyer discussed is therefore still very important today. Individuals have not yet been able to bestow upon themselves the unity of self that interaction in society can foster. Mead would have predicted that the self-reliance and autonomy indicators would have failed to relate to individualism because, as children, we are socialized into taking on the role of the generalized other. A more socially aware form of individualism that takes into account the people in the surrounding social environment would incorporate this voice of the generalized other, instead of attempting to ignore it.

Finally, the fourth hypothesis states that people who hold individualistic beliefs will emphasize individualistic ways to find success and a sense of self. Factors created for the success and sense of self questions indicated the respondent's reliance upon either individualistic or collectivistic means to reach these goals. The success scale correlated solidly with both the self-reported level of individualism measure and the self-reliance scale. The scale for self-worth did not significantly correlate to either dependent variable measure. It can therefore be inferred that the success scale supports the hypothesis and correlates with individualism. This finding implies that the ideology of individualism defines success. Self-worth, however, does not share this correlation to individualism. Either the self-worth measures are tapping another concept, or an emphasis on self-worth is not part of American individualism.

As discussed in the literature review, Bellah and his associates (1985) examined ways in which individuals can explore their own self and reach a level of self-worth and success. Success has long been an issue in this society, and therefore has been open to being shaped by this ideology of individualism. Although it seems reasonable to further assume that arriving at a strong sense of personal worth would also be important to those who hold individualistic beliefs, this was not the case in the results of this survey. Intense self-examination is not openly encouraged in this society. When it does occur, as Bellah et al (1985) states, it most often leads to a further internalization of societal norms, instead of leading a person to discover a unique sense of individualism.

If the results of this study were not reliable, there are many differing explanations for the survey results. Most notably, the concept measures might not have actually worked together to define the concepts that they were intended to measure. This could be avoided with a more extensive pretest. If time allowed, new measures could be constructed, pre-tested, and then the hypotheses could be tested again. Also, the theoretical basis of this paper must be re-examined, and other factors that were excluded, such as socioeconomic status and specific religious denominations, could possibly be incorporated into the study.

Other possible reasons for the lack of correlation found in the data set may also exist. The most obvious reason for these inconclusive results is that individualism in American society can not be so neatly defined as the structure that is proposed in this paper. Another consideration is that the sample was not representative of the entire population. The survey reflected the views of only one generation. Finally, a survey may not be the best way to address this issue. Society may dictate socially acceptable answers to certain questions concerning individualism. If an in-depth face-to-face study was conducted, possible inconsistencies between beliefs and actions might be caught.

Individualism is such an integral part of American culture that expressing it is affected by many possible factors. Additional study to further examine the relationship that individualism has with American culture, and the possible emergence of a form of individualism that is more socially aware, would provide a better picture of the current state of individualism in America today.

Appendices

- Appendix A - Survey**
- Appendix B - Self-Reliance**
- Appendix C - Responsibility of the Individual**
- Appendix D - Psychological Needs and Traits**
- Appendix E - Social Roles that Define Self**
- Appendix F - Options for Finding Self-Worth**
- Appendix G - Index Correlation Matrix**
- Appendix H - Factor Analysis**
- Appendix I - Correlations with Dependent Variables, Gender, Age, and Religion**
- Appendix J - Cross-Tabulation Table for Gender and Self-Reported Individualism**

Appendix A - Survey

Values Survey - Spring 1996

Participation in this survey is strictly voluntary and will in no way influence your grade in this class. All responses are strictly confidential and completely anonymous.

Please respond by circling the number that best corresponds with your personal opinion.

Please state how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- | | strongly
agree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | strongly
disagree |
|--|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------|
| 1. I try to meet the demands of my group even if it means controlling my own desires to some extent. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 2. When faced with a difficult personal problem, it is better to decide what to do yourself, rather than follow the advice of others. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 3. I will believe whatever I want, regardless of how society views this belief. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 4. I would still be where I am today, even without the help of others. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 5. You should decide your future on your own. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 6. If the group is slowing me down, it is better to leave it and work alone. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 7. What happens to me is my own doing. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 8. As much as possible we should not depend on others. Instead, we should depend on a strong and independent self, do everything on the basis of our own judgment and take responsibility for our own actions. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 9. Children should live at home with their parents until they get married. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 10. It is important for me to have a clear sense of who I am as a person. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 11. The views of those around me affect how I behave and/or what I believe. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 12. When defining who I am as a person, the most important aspect is the roles (sibling, student) I fulfill. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 13. Since satisfying my own desire is the most important thing, I try to decline any request from my group which would interfere with my desires. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 14. It is better to consult others to get their opinions before you do anything. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 15. It is important to me that I perform better than others on a task. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 16. Leaving home and living on my own after graduating from college is very important. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 17. One should live one's life independently of others as much as possible. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 18. If a student is having difficulty in class, they should work harder but not rely on help from others. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 19. My parents' opinion is not important in my choice of a spouse. | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |

	strongly agree					strongly disagree
20. In life, you are not allowed to act as you please. At work (school), too, you should abide by customs and conventions.	1	2	3	4	5	
21. If you want something done right, you've got to do it yourself.	1	2	3	4	5	
22. I will do whatever I want, regardless of how society views this action.	1	2	3	4	5	
23. My happiness is unrelated to the well-being of my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5	
24. It is very likely that I will move home with my parents when I graduate.	1	2	3	4	5	
25. I am clear about who I am as an individual.	1	2	3	4	5	
26. I enjoy working in situations involving competition with others.	1	2	3	4	5	
27. As human beings, we should not forget the debt we owe those who help us and take care of us and we should strive to pay back this debt as much as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	
28. The relationships I am a part of help me to define who I am as a person.	1	2	3	4	5	

29. How important is leaving home and living independently for each of the following?

	very important					not important at all
establishing economic independence	1	2	3	4	5	
establishing emotional independence	1	2	3	4	5	
contributing to society	1	2	3	4	5	
taking responsibility for self	1	2	3	4	5	
establishing good relationships	1	2	3	4	5	
finding a better sense of self	1	2	3	4	5	

30. In the following situations, rate the responsibility for the parties involved.

A. A group of students is working on a team project. One student forgets to cover a section of information assigned to them. The others in the group do not notice when reviewing the information. The paper is graded down because it is missing information.

	responsible					not responsible
the student who left out the information	1	2	3	4	5	
the others in the group that did not notice	1	2	3	4	5	
the group as a whole	1	2	3	4	5	

B. A soccer team is playing an important game and are down by one goal. Late in the game a player has a chance to make a goal and misses. The team is unable to tie the score and send the game into overtime and therefore loses the game.

	responsible					not responsible
the player who missed the goal	1	2	3	4	5	
the rest of the team	1	2	3	4	5	
the team as a whole	1	2	3	4	5	

C. A group of friends is planning to take a trip and has a disagreement about the route to take. Person A knows of a well known route while Person B has heard of a shortcut. The rest of the group is divided over which route to take. The friends are unable to reach a decision and therefore cancel the trip.

	responsible				not responsible
Person A	1	2	3	4	5
Person B	1	2	3	4	5
the rest of the group, not A or B	1	2	3	4	5
the group as a whole	1	2	3	4	5

31. Consider behaviors (i.e. fishing, singing) that you enjoy doing very much. Would you be likely to give up such activities to save time or money for each of the following individuals if they needed such a sacrifice to be made?

	definitely yes				definitely not
Spouse	1	2	3	4	5
Immediate Family	1	2	3	4	5
Extended Family	1	2	3	4	5
Friends / Neighbors	1	2	3	4	5
Co-worker	1	2	3	4	5
Acquaintance	1	2	3	4	5

32. How acceptable is it for a person's actions to negatively affect those around him/her when this person is

	acceptable				not acceptable
expressing an opinion	1	2	3	4	5
using private property	1	2	3	4	5
using communal property (i.e. park)	1	2	3	4	5
performing everyday activities	1	2	3	4	5
in situations of life and death	1	2	3	4	5

33. How important is it to find the following character traits in yourself and others?

	very important				not important at all
Audacity	1	2	3	4	5
Competitiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Cooperativeness	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Frugality	1	2	3	4	5
Persistence	1	2	3	4	5
Practicality	1	2	3	4	5
Shrewdness	1	2	3	4	5

34. How important are the following items in determining success?

	very important				not important at all
	1	2	3	4	5
achievement at work	1	2	3	4	5
emotional adjustment	1	2	3	4	5
family/love	1	2	3	4	5
happiness	1	2	3	4	5
having good friends	1	2	3	4	5
helping others	1	2	3	4	5
knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
material wealth	1	2	3	4	5
spiritual growth	1	2	3	4	5

35. Which of the following processes are helpful in finding a better sense of self?

	very helpful				not helpful at all
	1	2	3	4	5
financial gain	1	2	3	4	5
helping others in need	1	2	3	4	5
involvement in a church	1	2	3	4	5
involvement in a romantic relationship	1	2	3	4	5
involvement in the workplace (career)	1	2	3	4	5
meditation	1	2	3	4	5
personal therapy	1	2	3	4	5
raising a family	1	2	3	4	5
relationships with friends	1	2	3	4	5
spending time alone	1	2	3	4	5
spiritual growth	1	2	3	4	5
working to better the community	1	2	3	4	5

36. Do you define yourself more strongly as separate from others or more relational in nature?

completely separate					completely relational
1	2	3	4	5	

Person Information

Gender: _____ (M or F)

Age: _____ years

Religion:

How important is religion for giving guidance and meaning to your life?

most important					not important at all
1	2	3	4	5	

Appendix B - Self-reliance

Complete measure

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q2	Q4	Q6	Q8	Q9
Q2	1.0000				
Q4	.2859	1.0000			
Q6	.1517	.2284	1.0000		
Q8	.3128	.3446	.2552	1.0000	
Q9	-.0948	-.2556	-.1612	-.1335	1.0000
Q14	.1862	.0020	-.0085	.0353	.2162
Q16	-.0663	.0023	.1251	.0215	.1795
Q17	.1493	.1758	.2344	.4101	-.0437
Q21	.0399	.2069	.3137	.2253	-.0741
Q24	-.0551	-.0824	.0730	.0649	.1977
Q29A	.0340	-.0112	-.0046	.0380	-.0190
Q29B	-.0413	.0532	.0548	.2025	-.0678
Q29C	-.1830	.0873	.0247	.1914	.0107
Q29D	-.0951	.1809	.0227	.1760	.0660
Q29E	-.0614	.1113	.0891	.2284	-.0291
Q29F	-.1460	.0915	.0802	.1146	.0407

	Q14	Q16	Q17	Q21	Q24
Q14	1.0000				
Q16	.0368	1.0000			
Q17	.0888	.2295	1.0000		
Q21	.0041	.1360	.2781	1.0000	
Q24	.1160	.3351	.1281	-.0420	1.0000
Q29A	-.0236	.3406	.1957	.2186	.0501
Q29B	.0571	.1111	.1449	.1908	.1415
Q29C	-.1328	.1577	.1792	.0718	.1117
Q29D	-.0033	.2500	.2607	.1374	.1968
Q29E	-.0468	.1981	.2616	.1823	.0477
Q29F	.0369	.1397	.2304	.1624	.1329

	Q29A	Q29B	Q29C	Q29D	Q29E
Q29A	1.0000				
Q29B	.1193	1.0000			
Q29C	.1301	.2293	1.0000		
Q29D	.2703	.2958	.3853	1.0000	
Q29E	.2134	.2244	.6134	.5218	1.0000
Q29F	.2042	.2911	.3754	.5720	.5145

	Q29F
Q29F	1.0000

OF CASES = 211.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 16 ITEMS

ALPHA = .6915 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .6952

Appendix B - Continued

Unwillingness to ask for assistance

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q2	Q4	Q14	Q21
Q2	1.0000			
Q4	.2772	1.0000		
Q14	.1958	.0023	1.0000	
Q21	.0391	.2116	.0160	1.0000

OF CASES = 215.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS

4 ITEMS

ALPHA = .3682

STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .3608

Dependence Upon Self

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q6	Q8	Q17
Q6	1.0000		
Q8	.2581	1.0000	
Q17	.2284	.4080	1.0000

OF CASES = 213.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS

3 ITEMS

ALPHA = .5557

STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .5604

Co-residence and Leaving Home After Graduation from College

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q9	Q16	Q24	Q29A	Q29B
Q9	1.0000				
Q16	.1720	1.0000			
Q24	.1952	.3365	1.0000		
Q29A	-.0294	.3539	.0541	1.0000	
Q29B	-.0724	.1205	.1462	.1318	1.0000
Q29C	.0107	.1564	.1131	.1245	.2302
Q29D	.0568	.2622	.2020	.2877	.3084
Q29E	-.0356	.2095	.0501	.2349	.2305
Q29F	.0360	.1475	.1371	.2127	.2988

	Q29C	Q29D	Q29E	Q29F
Q29C	1.0000			
Q29D	.3825	1.0000		
Q29E	.6052	.5262	1.0000	
Q29F	.3755	.5774	.5157	1.0000

OF CASES = 213.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS

9 ITEMS

ALPHA = .7038

STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .7088

Appendix C - Responsibility of Individual

Complete Measure

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q1	Q13	Q23	Q27	Q30A1
Q1	1.0000				
Q13	.0630	1.0000			
Q23	-.0576	.2021	1.0000		
Q27	.1665	-.0439	-.0786	1.0000	
Q30A1	-.0420	-.0022	.1510	-.0130	1.0000
Q30A2	-.0068	-.1430	-.1325	.0957	.1706
Q30A3	-.1186	-.0849	-.0304	.1046	-.1381
Q30B1	.0451	-.1598	.0466	-.0502	.0527
Q30B2	.0275	-.0257	.0508	-.1114	.0566
Q30B3	-.0739	-.0162	-.0003	-.1518	-.0265
Q30C1	-.0753	-.0276	-.0146	.0413	-.0663
Q30C2	-.0428	.0358	.0132	.0469	.0279
Q30C3	-.0565	-.0482	-.0374	-.0057	.1388
Q30C4	-.1146	-.0517	-.0503	.0163	.0095
Q31A	-.0896	.2081	.0323	.0120	.0650
Q31B	-.0520	.1292	.0015	.0365	.0018
Q31C	.1097	.1284	-.0585	.1005	-.0313
Q31D	.0542	.1923	-.0071	.1127	.0460
Q31E	.0730	.0809	.0155	.0639	.1516
Q31F	.0771	.0921	-.0143	.1336	.0814
Q32A	.0717	.0000	.0748	.0850	.1034
Q32B	.0973	.0841	.0178	-.0046	.0671
Q32C	.0730	-.0863	-.0230	.0514	-.0739
Q32D	-.0272	.1105	.0114	.0342	.0102
Q32E	-.1338	-.0493	.0084	-.0099	-.0244

	Q30A2	Q30A3	Q30B1	Q30B2	Q30B3
Q30A2	1.0000				
Q30A3	.5203	1.0000			
Q30B1	.1337	.0161	1.0000		
Q30B2	.1298	.0835	.5935	1.0000	
Q30B3	.0404	.2091	.0610	.3856	1.0000
Q30C1	.1372	.1179	.1771	.1067	-.0830
Q30C2	.0764	.0862	.1525	.1087	-.0750
Q30C3	.0584	-.0347	.1241	.1568	-.0417
Q30C4	.2054	.2837	-.0736	.0185	.2856
Q31A	-.0161	.0274	-.1223	-.0758	-.0087
Q31B	-.0479	.0611	-.0820	-.0082	.0663
Q31C	-.1057	-.0661	-.0595	.0368	.0960
Q31D	-.0987	-.0886	-.1241	-.0322	.0452
Q31E	-.0745	-.1438	.0212	.0290	.0505
Q31F	-.0729	-.1906	-.0527	-.1311	-.0219
Q32A	.0793	.0605	.1670	.1027	-.0304
Q32B	.1164	.0871	.1450	.1429	.0530
Q32C	.0587	.0036	.1562	-.0028	-.1377
Q32D	.0720	-.0265	.1501	.1002	-.1293
Q32E	.0081	.1401	.0387	.0436	-.0343

Appendix C - Continued

	Q30C1	Q30C2	Q30C3	Q30C4	Q31A
Q30C1	1.0000				
Q30C2	.9143	1.0000			
Q30C3	.4088	.4040	1.0000		
Q30C4	-.0641	-.0676	.0454	1.0000	
Q31A	-.0242	.0310	.0024	-.1918	1.0000
Q31B	.0109	-.0068	.1431	-.1071	.6234
Q31C	-.0775	-.1115	.1140	-.1443	.3831
Q31D	-.1232	-.0650	.1212	-.0477	.3319
Q31E	-.1107	-.0935	-.0011	-.0511	.3046
Q31F	-.0843	-.0875	.0024	.0178	.1917
Q32A	.0016	.0609	.0125	-.0286	-.0778
Q32B	-.0034	.0152	-.0135	.0607	-.0389
Q32C	.1627	.1583	-.1127	-.0559	.0331
Q32D	.1046	.1209	-.0002	-.1083	.0535
Q32E	.1506	.1254	.0012	-.0626	-.0471

	Q31B	Q31C	Q31D	Q31E	Q31F
Q31B	1.0000				
Q31C	.6019	1.0000			
Q31D	.4423	.5419	1.0000		
Q31E	.3646	.5728	.6465	1.0000	
Q31F	.2742	.3991	.5705	.7615	1.0000
Q32A	-.0839	-.0813	-.0131	-.0654	-.1052
Q32B	.1040	.0467	.0382	.0322	.0474
Q32C	.0465	.0131	-.0597	-.0181	-.0407
Q32D	.0498	.0312	-.0010	.0814	.0200
Q32E	-.0462	-.0380	-.0478	.0288	-.0629

	Q32A	Q32B	Q32C	Q32D	Q32E
Q32A	1.0000				
Q32B	.3064	1.0000			
Q32C	.1564	.0912	1.0000		
Q32D	.3438	.2739	.5279	1.0000	
Q32E	.1899	.0577	.2145	.1642	1.0000

OF CASES = 203.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 25 ITEMS

ALPHA = .5818

STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .5895

Appendix C - Continued

Group Accountability and Willingness to Sacrifice for benefit of group

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q23	Q30A1	Q30A2	Q30A3	Q30B1	Q30B2
Q23	1.0000					
Q30A1	.1469	1.0000				
Q30A2	-.1303	.1669	1.0000			
Q30A3	-.0348	-.1407	.5212	1.0000		
Q30B1	.0499	.0529	.1329	.0138	1.0000	
Q30B2	.0494	.0592	.1273	.0805	.5930	1.0000
Q30B3	-.0096	-.0270	.0415	.2133	.0578	.3828
Q30C1	-.0272	-.0594	.1318	.1160	.1735	.1095
Q30C2	.0011	.0340	.0715	.0842	.1494	.1116
Q30C3	-.0342	.1411	.0558	-.0392	.1253	.1585
Q30C4	-.0313	.0003	.2079	.2795	-.0694	.0128
Q31A	.0378	.0652	-.0169	.0239	-.1202	-.0750
Q31B	-.0081	.0011	-.0463	.0665	-.0847	-.0092
Q31C	-.0691	-.0256	-.1086	-.0659	-.0611	.0398
Q31D	-.0141	.0453	-.0974	-.0839	-.1260	-.0329
Q31E	.0101	.1538	-.0760	-.1435	.0203	.0306
Q31F	-.0242	.0835	-.0740	-.1872	-.0548	-.1293
	Q30B3	Q30C1	Q30C2	Q30C3	Q30C4	Q31A
Q30B3	1.0000					
Q30C1	-.0767	1.0000				
Q30C2	-.0695	.9155	1.0000			
Q30C3	-.0453	.4061	.4019	1.0000		
Q30C4	.2727	-.0843	-.0870	.0428	1.0000	
Q31A	-.0131	-.0273	.0278	.0047	-.1840	1.0000
Q31B	.0733	.0164	-.0019	.1384	-.1127	.6155
Q31C	.1000	-.0630	-.0970	.1140	-.1603	.3774
Q31D	.0505	-.1179	-.0608	.1179	-.0525	.3274
Q31E	.0524	-.1033	-.0866	-.0006	-.0593	.3025
Q31F	-.0159	-.0739	-.0776	.0013	.0041	.1872
	Q31B	Q31C	Q31D	Q31E	Q31F	
Q31B	1.0000					
Q31C	.6010	1.0000				
Q31D	.4454	.5413	1.0000			
Q31E	.3649	.5742	.6459	1.0000		
Q31F	.2781	.4038	.5717	.7618	1.0000	

OF CASES = 205.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 17 ITEMS

ALPHA = .5932 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .5984

Appendix C - Continued

Responsibility of Individuals to Society

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q1	Q13	Q27
Q1	1.0000		
Q13	.0457	1.0000	
Q27	.1770	-.0783	1.0000

OF CASES = 213.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 3 ITEMS

ALPHA = .1398 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .1317

Appendix D - Psychological Needs and Traits

Complete Measure

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q5	Q7	Q15	Q18	Q19
Q5	1.0000				
Q7	.3575	1.0000			
Q15	.0240	-.0525	1.0000		
Q18	.2067	.1116	.0912	1.0000	
Q19	.2764	.2929	-.0075	.1224	1.0000
Q20	.0538	-.1032	-.1472	-.0722	-.0239
Q26	-.0133	.0581	.4227	.0917	.0132
Q33A	.0411	-.0394	.1537	.0602	-.0031
Q33B	-.0685	-.0281	.3372	.1500	-.0580
Q33C	-.0255	-.0504	.0378	-.2522	-.2725
Q33D	.0763	.0671	.0407	-.1496	-.0722
Q33E	.0846	.0960	-.1020	.0413	.0533
Q33F	.0109	.0028	.1607	.0055	-.1453
Q33G	.0526	.0112	.0211	-.0295	-.0798
Q33H	.2438	.0495	.1815	.1734	.0697
	Q20	Q26	Q33A	Q33B	Q33C
Q20	1.0000				
Q26	-.1235	1.0000			
Q33A	-.1008	.2641	1.0000		
Q33B	-.0509	.5957	.2723	1.0000	
Q33C	-.0664	.0370	-.0185	.0867	1.0000
Q33D	-.0201	-.0485	.0428	.0070	.2579
Q33E	-.0641	.0221	.1354	.1020	.1322
Q33F	-.1235	.2399	.1510	.2216	.1562
Q33G	.0166	.1137	.1768	.1973	.2020
Q33H	-.0091	.1240	.1885	.2879	-.0540
	Q33D	Q33E	Q33F	Q33G	Q33H
Q33D	1.0000				
Q33E	.1950	1.0000			
Q33F	.2254	.2385	1.0000		
Q33G	.2114	.3220	.3177	1.0000	
Q33H	.0486	.2620	.2406	.1761	1.0000

OF CASES = 199.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 15 ITEMS

ALPHA = .5589

STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .5576

Appendix D - Continued

Competition

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q15	Q18	Q26
Q15	1.0000		
Q18	.1100	1.0000	
Q26	.4007	.0986	1.0000

OF CASES = 212.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 3 ITEMS

ALPHA = .4360 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .4333

Autonomy

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q5	Q7	Q19	Q20
Q5	1.0000			
Q7	.3443	1.0000		
Q19	.2964	.2875	1.0000	
Q20	.0745	-.0961	-.0141	1.0000

OF CASES = 214.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 4 ITEMS

ALPHA = .4238 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .4114

Appendix D - Continued

Traits

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q33A	Q33B	Q33C	Q33D	Q33E
Q33A	1.0000				
Q33B	.2749	1.0000			
Q33C	-.0031	.0939	1.0000		
Q33D	.0413	.0044	.2584	1.0000	
Q33E	.1533	.1059	.1428	.1952	1.0000
Q33F	.1583	.2299	.1591	.2106	.2343
Q33G	.1847	.2056	.2088	.2044	.3233
Q33H	.1927	.2931	-.0464	.0520	.2604

	Q33F	Q33G	Q33H
Q33F	1.0000		
Q33G	.3267	1.0000	
Q33H	.2500	.1843	1.0000

OF CASES = 203.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 8 ITEMS

ALPHA = .6256 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .6292

Appendix E - Social Roles that Define Self

Complete Measure

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q3	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q22
Q3	1.0000				
Q10	.0227	1.0000			
Q11	.2082	-.0553	1.0000		
Q12	.0904	-.0465	.1844	1.0000	
Q22	.4145	.0684	.1023	.1135	1.0000
Q25	.0760	.3650	.0332	.0009	.0922
Q28	.0910	-.1507	.2546	.1488	.0685
	Q25	Q28			
Q25	1.0000				
Q28	-.1720	1.0000			

OF CASES = 214.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 7 ITEMS

ALPHA = .4366 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .4119

Influence of Society on Behavior and Attitudes

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q3	Q11	Q22
Q3	1.0000		
Q11	.2082	1.0000	
Q22	.4145	.1023	1.0000

OF CASES = 214.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 3 ITEMS

ALPHA = .4955 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .4887

Sense of Self

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q10	Q25	Q28
Q10	1.0000		
Q25	.3650	1.0000	
Q28	-.1468	-.1707	1.0000

OF CASES = 215.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 3 ITEMS

ALPHA = -.0198 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .0460

Appendix F - Options for Finding Self-Worth

Complete Measure

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q34A	Q34B	Q34C	Q34D	Q34E
Q34A	1.0000				
Q34B	.3267	1.0000			
Q34C	.1372	.4210	1.0000		
Q34D	.1593	.3753	.4572	1.0000	
Q34E	.0521	.1930	.3678	.3278	1.0000
Q34F	.0479	.4109	.4721	.2320	.3943
Q34G	.2444	.1872	.1319	.1420	.0260
Q34H	.4042	.0527	-.0165	-.1076	.0719
Q34I	-.0149	.3071	.2078	.0419	.0736
Q35A	.3800	-.0226	-.0229	-.0951	.0111
Q35B	.0399	.3290	.1687	.2061	.1774
Q35C	.0372	.0831	.1238	.0726	.0392
Q35D	.1658	.0996	.2806	.1288	.0878
Q35E	.4777	.1394	.1655	.0623	.0182
Q35F	.0038	.2141	.0074	-.0201	.1074
Q35G	.0745	.1758	.0366	.0018	.0144
Q35H	.1200	.1737	.3039	.1487	.1077
Q35I	.0117	.2184	.2391	.1347	.4486
Q35J	-.0196	.3016	.1048	.1252	.0852
Q35K	-.0729	.2462	.1397	.0965	.0886
Q35L	.0274	.2567	.0442	.1173	.1157

	Q34F	Q34G	Q34H	Q34I	Q35A
Q34F	1.0000				
Q34G	.1302	1.0000			
Q34H	-.1105	.1078	1.0000		
Q34I	.3186	.0126	-.1407	1.0000	
Q35A	-.0613	.0139	.5025	-.0428	1.0000
Q35B	.5385	.1163	-.0795	.2978	-.0447
Q35C	.3032	-.0201	-.1569	.4742	-.0355
Q35D	-.0024	-.0147	.1279	.1293	.2545
Q35E	-.0081	.1634	.3364	.0591	.3346
Q35F	.2672	.0579	-.1529	.2874	-.1345
Q35G	.2080	.0780	.0569	.1833	-.0301
Q35H	.2781	.0144	-.0314	.2533	-.0815
Q35I	.2282	.0815	-.0395	.1300	-.1022
Q35J	.2289	.0802	-.0587	.0882	-.1663
Q35K	.3533	-.0034	-.2618	.7944	-.1588
Q35L	.4124	.0306	-.1332	.2772	-.1165

	Q35B	Q35C	Q35D	Q35E	Q35F
Q35B	1.0000				
Q35C	.3127	1.0000			
Q35D	.0010	.1826	1.0000		
Q35E	.0547	.0756	.3392	1.0000	
Q35F	.2455	.1305	.0523	.1046	1.0000
Q35G	.2007	.0830	.0697	.1490	.5608
Q35H	.2632	.3665	.3045	.1858	.1876
Q35I	.3218	.0732	.1890	.1068	.1412
Q35J	.2282	.0872	-.0417	.0582	.2068
Q35K	.4046	.5900	.0834	-.0013	.4334
Q35L	.5912	.2958	-.0228	.0328	.2832

Appendix F - Continued

	Q35G	Q35H	Q35I	Q35J	Q35K
Q35G	1.0000				
Q35H	.2000	1.0000			
Q35I	.0605	.2776	1.0000		
Q35J	.2089	.0666	.3167	1.0000	
Q35K	.2215	.2526	.1933	.2292	1.0000
Q35L	.2876	.2424	.3068	.2427	.4010
	Q35L				
Q35L	1.0000				

OF CASES = 209.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 21 ITEMS

ALPHA = .7702 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .7864

Appendix G - Index Correlation Matrix

	q36	selfrel	giveself	compet	traits	conform	q34comp	q35comp	factor
q36	1.0000								
selfrel	0.2442**	1.0000							
giveself	0.1266	0.1010	1.0000						
compet	0.1366*	0.0608	-0.2470	1.0000					
traits	0.0415	0.1983**	-0.1114	0.3233**	1.0000				
conform	0.1947**	0.2321**	-0.1032	-0.0119	0.1374*	1.0000			
q34comp	0.3257**	0.2624**	0.1782**	0.3045**	0.1405*	0.0060	1.0000		
q35comp	0.1920**	0.1005	0.0785	0.0119	0.1308	0.1118	0.1772**	1.0000	
factor	0.3102**	0.6490**	0.1548*	0.1555*	0.1457*	0.2586**	0.3693**	0.1222	1.0000

* - p < 0.05 ** - p < 0.01 (2-tailed)

Appendix H - Factor Analysis

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALL)

1. Q2
2. Q4
3. Q5
4. Q8
5. Q13
6. Q17
7. Q23

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Q2	Q4	Q5	Q8	Q13	Q17	Q23
Q2	1.0000						
Q4	.2803	1.0000					
Q5	.3341	.3788	1.0000				
Q8	.3100	.3471	.4309	1.0000			
Q13	.2023	.2946	.2654	.3626	1.0000		
Q17	.1480	.1744	.2945	.4080	.3093	1.0000	
Q23	.1513	.1868	.1573	.2281	.2123	.1934	1.0000

OF CASES = 213.0

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS 7 ITEMS

ALPHA = .7241 STANDARDIZED ITEM ALPHA = .7214

**Appendix I - Correlations with Dependent Variables,
Gender Age, and Religion**

- - Correlation Coefficients - -

	Q36	Q37	Q38	Q39	SELFREL
Q1	.2426**	-.0096	-.0792	-.1230	.1188
Q2	.1685*	.0614	-.0277	-.2095**	.2285**
Q3	.1577*	.0780	-.1630*	.0556	.2254**
Q4	.1722*	.1283	-.1310	-.1607*	.3848**
Q5	.2011**	.1176	.0083	-.2716**	.4472**
Q6	.2232**	.1136	-.1289	-.1715*	.4021**
Q7	.1374*	.0575	-.0281	-.1387*	.2727**
Q8	.2264**	.1369*	-.0991	-.1701*	.5324**
Q9	-.0092	-.1609*	.0084	-.1318	.0693
Q10	.0942	-.0982	.0482	.0437	.0658
Q11	.1775**	.0113	-.0161	.0263	.1116
Q12	.0651	-.0248	-.1134	.0081	.0515
Q13	.1855**	.2318**	-.1578*	-.2572**	.3146**
Q14	.2132**	-.2263**	-.0271	-.1624*	.2201**
Q15	.1687*	.1325	-.0645	-.0893	.1065
Q16	-.0563	.0838	-.0606	.1365*	.4821**
Q17	.2934**	.1063	-.1293	-.1603*	.5809**
Q18	.1864**	.2940**	-.1545*	-.1050	.3194**
Q19	.1679*	.1963**	-.1928**	-.2897**	.2928**
Q20	.1501*	-.0234	-.0599	-.1055	-.0614
Q21	.2497**	.1120	-.1261	-.0456	.4557**
Q22	.1693*	.1081	-.1401*	-.0382	.1645*
Q23	.0727	.1294	.0050	-.0145	.2888**
Q24	-.0384	.0179	.0999	.0703	.3774**
Q25	.0644	.1110	-.0189	.0382	-.0179
Q26	.0560	.2886**	.0624	-.0452	-.0083
Q27	.0960	-.2000**	.0836	-.1656*	-.1257
Q28	.1913**	-.0228	-.0246	-.0941	.0149
Q29A	.0351	.0377	-.0353	.0204	.4038**
Q29B	.0326	-.0358	-.0475	.0381	.4253**
Q29C	-.0231	-.0615	-.1676*	.0932	.4826**
Q29D	.0622	.0178	-.0649	.0165	.5965**
Q29E	.0381	.0938	-.1233	.0619	.6023**
Q29F	.0350	-.0846	-.0468	.0833	.5501**
Q30A1	-.0175	-.0049	-.0207	.0060	.0470
Q30A2	.0300	-.2414**	-.0756	.0796	-.1269
Q30A3	-.0089	-.0953	.0546	.0323	-.1971**
Q30B1	.0396	-.0245	.0468	.0296	-.0382
Q30B2	.0626	.1134	-.0334	.0464	-.0498
Q30B3	-.0800	.1310	-.0857	-.0074	-.1310
Q30C1	-.0469	-.0228	-.0190	-.0133	-.0822
Q30C2	-.0395	.0415	.0015	-.0038	-.0349
Q30C3	.0146	.0541	-.0777	-.0335	.0801

* - Signif. LE .05

** - Signif. LE .01

(2-tailed)

Q36 - Self-reported measure of individualism-collectivism

Q37 - Gender

Q38 - Age in years

Q39 - Importance of Religion

Selfrel - Self-Reliance Scale

Appendix I - Continued

- - Correlation Coefficients - -

	Q36	Q37	Q38	Q39	SELFREL
Q30C4	.0495	.0046	.0170	-.0148	-.0010
Q31A	.0475	-.0089	-.0951	-.1281	.0904
Q31B	.0870	.1819**	-.2724**	-.0929	.0324
Q31C	.0948	.1266	-.1611*	-.1901**	.0170
Q31D	.2089**	.0874	-.2507**	-.1377*	.0892
Q31E	.0618	-.0118	-.1571*	-.1847**	.0960
Q31F	.0748	-.0522	-.1274	-.1363*	.1320
Q32A	.0638	.0209	-.0621	-.1537*	.0508
Q32B	.1356*	.0500	-.0813	-.1273	.0850
Q32C	.0885	.0985	.0004	-.0680	-.0404
Q32D	.0921	.0448	-.0562	-.1356*	.0281
Q32E	-.1050	.0011	.1012	.0483	-.0835
Q33A	.0105	.1432*	.0761	-.0729	.0289
Q33B	.0665	.2808**	-.0312	-.0222	.1331
Q33C	-.2375**	-.1056	.1032	.1538*	-.0531
Q33D	.0064	-.0859	-.0248	.0116	.0619
Q33E	.0401	.0352	.0264	.0305	.1784**
Q33F	.0033	.0521	-.0881	.0383	.1148
Q33G	-.0014	.0245	-.0188	-.0102	.1451*
Q33H	.1523*	.2142**	-.1385*	-.1385*	.2166**
Q34A	.1186	.0526	-.0343	-.0997	.2005**
Q34B	-.0072	-.1242	-.0583	.0238	.1435*
Q34C	-.1129	-.1065	.0004	.1050	.0224
Q34D	.0052	-.0608	.0644	.0611	.0725
Q34E	-.2549**	-.0516	.1239	.0008	-.0902
Q34F	-.1926**	-.2120**	.0697	.2938**	-.0292
Q34G	.1830**	-.0778	.0690	-.1054	.1185
Q34H	.0871	.1036	-.1299	-.1983**	.2582**
Q34I	-.1256	-.1407*	.0432	.5059**	.0166
Q35A	.0868	.1521*	-.1393*	-.0712	.2520**
Q35B	-.2046**	-.1241	.0143	.2921**	.1008
Q35C	-.2630**	-.0842	.0347	.8149**	-.1081
Q35D	-.0670	.2229**	.0172	.0962	.1192
Q35E	.1204	.0690	-.0011	.0168	.1907**
Q35F	-.0218	-.1199	.0556	.1001	.0260
Q35G	-.1036	-.1583*	-.0197	.0370	-.0119
Q35H	-.1295	.0120	.1853**	.2858**	-.0182
Q35I	-.1713*	-.0537	.1327	.0181	-.0004
Q35J	-.0190	-.1874**	.1408*	.0414	.0594
Q35K	-.1246	-.1902**	.0468	.5628**	-.0424
Q35L	-.1796**	-.0969	.0345	.2597**	-.0617
Q36	1.0000	.1172	-.1543*	-.2690**	.2442**
Q37	.1172	1.0000	-.0956	-.0680	.0655
Q38	-.1543*	-.0956	1.0000	.0415	-.1663*
Q39	-.2690**	-.0680	.0415	1.0000	-.1024
SELFREL	.2442**	.0655	-.1663*	-.1024	1.0000

* - Signif. LE .05

** - Signif. LE .01

(2-tailed)

Q36 - Self-reported measure of individualism-collectivism

Q37 - Gender

Q38 - Age in years

Q39 - Importance of Religion

Selfrel - Self-Reliance Scale

Appendix J - Cross-tabulation Table for Gender and Self-Reported Individualism

Count Q37 - gender	Q36 - separate vs. relational					Row Totals
	completely separate		completely relational			
	1	2	3	4	5	
1 - male	2 3.85	15 28.85	12 23.08	19 36.54	4 7.69	52 24.5
2 - female	6 3.75	21 13.13	45 28.13	76 47.50	12 7.50	160 75.5
Column Totals	8 3.8	36 17.0	57 26.9	95 44.8	16 7.5	212 100.0

Self-Reliance

Individuals learn to rely solely on the efforts and abilities they alone possess. The extent to which each person is self-reliant is also indicative of this person's level of individuality. Types of measures included unwillingness to ask for assistance when necessary, dependence upon self, and questions concerning co-residence and leaving home after graduating from college.

Responsibility of the Individual

Because of the emphasis placed on individuals in American society, each individual is ultimately responsible for the consequences of their actions and the fulfillment of their needs. Those individuals who adhere to this belief feel that every person's individual efforts are what makes them who they are. Measures for this concept included such things as the possibility of group accountability—can a group be held jointly responsible for its actions, are individuals willing to sacrifice their needs or desires for the benefit of others, and instances when it is appropriate for one person's actions to infringe on the rights of others.

Social Roles that Define Self

The self is a social structure that becomes evident in social experience but does not result from this experience. Social interaction aids in defining a self in that it allows for the possible conceptualization of an individual self. However, the situations we are in affect the selves we portray. The question is then do the relationships that we are involved in and other socially defined roles affect our definition of self? The measures for this concept included questions concerning how important these social roles are, whether or not society's opinion influences behavior, and how important it is for each person to have a clear sense of self.

Psychological Needs and Traits Stemming from Individualism

The individualistic style of American society has direct implications concerning the psychological needs of the people who participate in that society. Things such as competition, autonomy, shrewdness, persistence, practicality, frugality, inventive genius, and audacity become important to the members of individualistic societies. Each trait was evaluated in terms of its importance to the respondent.

Options for Finding Self-Worth

There are two ways in which people may attempt to find success and self-definition: through individualistic endeavors where the focus is on the growth of the individual, or through more collective endeavors which are processes that involve creating relationships with other people. These processes were measured by asking respondents to rate the importance of several types of both individualistic and collectivistic methods.

From Individualism and
Self-Definition in America

by Tina Hickcox
June 5, 1996

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