

When Modesty Prevails: Differential Favorability of Self-Presentation to Friends and Strangers

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Although most interpersonal interactions take place between people who know each other, most self-presentation research has focused on self-presentation to strangers. Five studies showed that self-presentational favorability differed as a function of whether the interaction partner was a friend or a stranger. Studies 1 and 2 found that self-presentations to friends were consistently more modest than self-presentations to strangers. In Studies 3 and 4, self-presentations were manipulated by instructing participants to present themselves in either a self-enhancing or modest manner. Modesty with strangers and self-enhancement with friends both resulted in impaired recall for the interaction, consistent with the view that those strategies contradict familiar, overlearned patterns. Study 5 distinguished self-deprecation from modesty. Taken together, the results indicate that people habitually use different self-presentation strategies with different audiences, relying on favorable self-enhancement with strangers but shifting toward modesty when among friends.

Self-presentation is one of the fundamental and important processes by which people negotiate identities for themselves in their social worlds. In the privacy of one's own mind, perhaps, one may be relatively free to imagine oneself having any sort of identity, but serious identity claims generally require social validation by other people, and so the construction of identity requires persuading others to see one as having desired traits and qualities (e.g., Baumeister, 1982; Schlenker, 1980; Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1982).

The importance of self-presentation is reflected in how pervasive the motivations are. It appears that there is a strong and pervasive desire to make a positive impression on others (e.g., Jones & Wortman, 1973; see also Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Sedikides, 1993). However, *how* one creates a positive impression may vary depending on the audience one is trying to impress. As Tedeschi (1986) asserted, the distinction between behavior that occurs in intimate relationships and behavior that occurs in impersonal interactions has been largely neglected by self-presentation researchers. The purpose of the present studies was to demonstrate that self-presentation differs for these different audiences. Specifically, the studies attempted to demonstrate that people self-present in a much more self-promoting manner with strangers and in a more modest manner with friends and acquaintances. Moreover, we suggest that in terms of Paulhus's

(1993) model of automatic and controlled self-presentation, these patterns will be the automatic ones, and when people deviate from them (such as by being modest with strangers or boastful with friends) they must use controlled strategies that consume cognitive resources and impair their information processing during the interaction.

Past research has focused almost entirely on self-presentation to strangers (Tedeschi, 1986). Identity, on the other hand, is maintained mainly through interactions with friends and others with whom one is acquainted (e.g., Baumeister, 1986; Goffman, 1959; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Hence, one reason that self-presentations to friends may differ from self-presentations to strangers is that the continuity of identity can be realized and validated only by interacting with people who have an enduring, relatively stable concept of the individual.

How Favorable?

Given the desire to make a good impression, one might assume simply that people would always present themselves in a maximally favorable light and make extremely favorable claims about themselves. This is not the case, however, primarily because of the constraints of plausibility (Schlenker, 1975, 1980; Schlenker & Leary, 1982): Excessively favorable claims about the self will not be believed. They may even be counterproductive, because one will lose face if one's claims become discredited (Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989; Tice, 1991, 1993; Tice & Baumeister, 1990). Moreover, highly favorable statements about the self may be perceived as arrogant and conceited, which are negative traits (Schlenker & Leary, 1982).

Hence, self-presentation faces a constant trade-off between favorability and plausibility (Schlenker, 1980, 1985, 1986). One is constrained by the limits of what one's audience or interaction partner will be willing or likely to believe. It is only within those limits that one will tend to present oneself as favorably as possible.

Jones and Wortman (1973) articulated the dilemma that

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faces the would-be self-presenter in their example of someone on a first date. In their example, if a young man describes all his accomplishments and capabilities on that date, he might be perceived as conceited; but if he neglects to mention them, his date may regard him as merely mediocre.

Thus, the favorability of self-presentation involves striking a balance between opposing forces. The desire to make a good impression entails that one will want to present oneself as favorably as possible. Constraints such as plausibility, audience gullibility, reluctance to appear to be conceited, and fear of possible disconfirmation create pressures to be more modest about oneself. One may even try to ingratiate by presenting modestly (Stires & Jones, 1969). The central point of our theoretical argument is that, insofar as self-presentation reflects a balance or trade-off between opposing pressures to be favorable versus to be modest, the optimal balance will shift as a function of whether one is interacting with friends or strangers.

The term *modesty* refers to a moderate, nonboastful self-presentation and not necessarily to a self-presentation that is less favorable than the way the person really views him- or herself. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Gove, 1967) defines *modesty* as "placing a moderate estimate on one's abilities or worth; neither bold nor self-assertive." Other dictionary definitions of *modest* include "not vain or boastful, decorous, not extreme, unpretentious." (e.g., Guralnik, 1984; *Webster's New World Dictionary*) As Jones, Rhodewalt, Berglas, and Skelton (1981) pointed out, it is possible to be honest and accurate about oneself and yet still be either self-enhancing, modest, or self-derogating, because a whole range of self-descriptions falls within our "latitude of acceptance." Thus, modesty must be distinguished from both self-enhancing, boastful self-presentations and from strongly negative, self-derogating ones. The present set of studies was concerned with where, within the range of modest to self-enhancing, people present themselves to friends and to strangers.

Prior Interpersonal Knowledge: Friends and Strangers

When the senior author was an undergraduate, she and her fellow students were very impressed one semester on the first day of classes when the instructor mentioned casually that he had obtained his doctorate from Harvard. When his Harvard experience happened to come up in the second lecture as well, it had less of a positive impact. As it turned out, the professor continued to find some occasion to mention his Harvard background in each subsequent lecture. By late in the semester, this pattern had become a running joke among the students, some of whom fell to timing how much of each lecture elapsed before he said the word "Harvard" and to betting on whether he would ever complete an entire lecture without mentioning it. (He didn't.) Thus, this person's disclosure of a highly prestigious fact about himself had a favorable effect the first time, but repetitions of this disclosure, as they became redundant, gradually made him appear conceited, pompous, and ultimately absurd. It may seem ironic that such essentially identical disclosures can have either a positive or a negative effect, but once people have come to know each other, boastful reiterations of self-enhancing facts serve no informational purpose while they do carry risks

of seeming inappropriate and conveying an impression of conceited self-absorption.

More generally, we propose that the tension between the opposing forces of favorable versus modest self-presentation does not have a single optimal point that will be valid in all situations (e.g., Stires & Jones, 1969). Even for the same person, different circumstances and different audiences may prescribe different balancing points (e.g., Schlenker, 1980, 1986). One major determinant is whether the interaction involves a first-time encounter with strangers, as opposed to someone who already knows you and knows something about you.

When interacting with strangers, the balance would seemingly tilt toward emphasizing favorability. By definition, strangers do not know nearly as much about you, and so the informational power and utility of disclosing important qualities in yourself will be high. The strangers' lack of prior knowledge also eliminates one potential danger of being very favorable, because the stranger will not have any basis for disputing your positive claims about yourself. Meanwhile, the costs of modesty may be high, because the stranger (again) does not have any basis for knowing about your positive qualities or achievements that you do not mention. The stranger may therefore dismiss you as mediocre if you do not give a reason for being seen as talented, and hence there may not be further opportunities to create a positive impression (e.g., Jones & Wortman, 1973). Also, people seem generally aware of the importance of first impressions, and so they may be willing to accept and tolerate the disclosure of self-enhancing information without necessarily concluding that the discloser is conceited.

In contrast, when interacting with friends, the balance may shift toward modesty. Friends do presumably know about one's past successes and achievements, so there is less need to point these out. The danger of being seen as conceited (in the sense of holding more favorable opinions about the self than the facts would justify) is considerably greater with friends than with strangers, because they will know what claims about the self go beyond what is justified. Friends also presumably know about one's past failures or misdeeds, and so they would have a valid basis for disputing excessively positive claims of achievements or abilities.

Last, the mere repetition of flattering facts about the self, even if these are true, may quickly become tiresome and off-putting to people who are already acquainted with them, as in the anecdote about the professor. Once our positive characteristics are known to others, we may not make the best impression by repeating our accomplishments. Schlenker and Leary's (1982) findings suggest that the impact of describing one's good qualities and achievements depends heavily on whether those are already known. Across multiple conditions, Baumeister and Jones (1978) found modesty only in the one condition in which people received public, favorable evaluations, so that the audience for their self-presentations already knew good things about them. With strangers, then, it is appropriate and desirable to point out one's good traits because the information is otherwise unavailable to the audience and may figure centrally in how the audience judges the self-presenter. With friends, however, such self-promoting self-presentations are for the most part crucially redundant, in that they simply reiterate information that the friend already knows. When such self-presentation has lost its

informational utility, the audience may find its repetition irritating and conceited.

Thus, constraints and contingencies combine to make favorability the optimal way to present oneself to strangers, but when one is among friends the risks and costs of favorability are higher, while the advantages are diminished. The present set of studies was designed to test the hypothesis that people should generally tend to present themselves more favorably when interacting with strangers than with friends. Modesty, which has not been widely found in laboratory studies of self-presentation, should prevail when people interact with their friends.

On the other hand, an opposite hypothesis could also be generated: Because friends already like you, they may be perceived as "safer" targets for self-enhancing claims. People who like us may be more accepting of our boasts because they already hold a positive view of us. In addition, friends are presumably more important for identity construction, because they will continue to be present in and relevant to one's social life (e.g., Tedeschi, 1986). Thus, an alternate hypothesis would suggest that people should be more favorable when presenting themselves to friends than to strangers.

The Present Research in Context

For both methodological and conceptual reasons, it made the most sense for self-presentation researchers to start by focusing heavily on how people present themselves to strangers. However, it may be appropriate now to examine self-presentation processes among friends and other relationship partners as well as strangers (see Leary, Nezlek, Downs, Radford-Davenport, Martin, & McMullen, 1994). The majority of social interactions occur between people who already know each other, as opposed to being between strangers; Wheeler and Nezlek (1977) found that the vast majority of the average student's meaningful interactions were with the same six people. Likewise, DePaulo, Kashy, and Kinkendol (1995) found a positive correlation between degree of closeness (as measured by the Rochester Interaction Record) and frequency of social interaction, suggesting that we spend more time with those we know better and to whom we are closer than we do with strangers. The sheer volume of social life that occurs between friends makes it important to understand those interaction processes as well as stranger interactions. Moreover, although stranger interactions may be an important first step in the process of constructing identity, a person may feel that he or she has claimed an identity only when friends and other relationship partners have accepted that definition of the person and will interact with the person on that basis (e.g., Baumeister, 1982, 1986; Goffman, 1959; Mead, 1934; Tice, 1992, 1994; Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1982).

Many of the principles that have been suggested for self-presentations between strangers may hold true for interactions with friends, but it is not safe to assume that all will. Prior knowledge may at least be a boundary condition for some of those effects.

Design of the Present Studies

The present work was designed to examine how people present themselves in the presence of their friends or in the presence of people they were meeting for the first time. In the first

two studies, participants were asked to answer a series of questions designed to be sensitive to self-presentational concerns. Participants responded to these questions in the presence of either a same-sex friend or a same-sex stranger. We anticipated that participants would give more self-enhancing responses in the presence of strangers and more modest responses in the presence of their friends.

In Study 3, participants were requested to present themselves in either a self-enhancing or a modest manner to either a friend or a stranger, and their memory for the interaction was subsequently tested. Automatic self-presentation, or the style of self-presentation that comes most naturally to the participants, ought to use the fewest cognitive resources and thus leave more cognitive processing capacity available for remembering details of the interaction (e.g., Baumeister, Hutton, & Tice, 1989; Paulhus, 1993). We hypothesized that people should find it relatively natural and easy to present themselves in a very positive manner to strangers and in a modest manner to friends, and so subsequently memory for the interaction should be good when it followed either of those patterns. In contrast, people should find it relatively difficult and unnatural to be modest to strangers and to be self-enhancing toward friends, and so subsequent memory for the interaction would be impaired in those cases. Study 4 was designed to replicate the effects of Study 3 and rule out an alternative explanation based on possible informational differences (i.e., having more information about friends than about strangers) between friends and strangers.

Even if the results from Studies 1–4 obtained as predicted, one could make alternative explanations based on negativity rather than modesty. Sullivan's (1953) concept of the pseudo-exploitative attitude, for example, suggests a strategy by which one presents oneself in very negative terms in order to elicit ego-boosting responses from them (see also the social implications of the defensive pessimists' strategy, Norem & Cantor, 1986). Hence, it is important to distinguish between mere modesty and outright negativity of self-presentation, and Study 5 was designed to examine the effects of negative self-presentation by instructing participants to present themselves in a clearly unfavorable light. Our analysis featured modesty rather than negativity as the optimal way to act with friends, and so we predicted that the negativity would fail to yield the advantages found with modesty.

Study 1: Initial Structured Interview

Study 1 was designed to examine whether people presented themselves more modestly with friends than with strangers. Participants were assigned to interact in a structured interview with either a friend or a stranger, and the positivity of their responses was measured.

Method

Participants. Participants were 48 psychology undergraduates (24 pairs of friends; 13 male and 11 female pairs) who participated in the experiment for course credit. Participants were contacted by telephone and asked to bring to the experiment a friend of the same gender and similar age. Two pairs of participants arrived at the laboratory simultaneously for each experimental session and then were randomly assigned to the friends or strangers condition. In the friends condition, partici-

pants remained paired with the friends they arrived with, and in the stranger condition, participants were paired with a member of the other pair of participants. Each new dyad (in half the cases, the original friend pairs, and in half the cases, newly created stranger pairs) was run completely separately; thus, two dyads were run simultaneously with a separate experimenter for each dyad.

The experimenter had ascertained that the pairs of participants did not know one another in the telephone scheduling interview and now reaffirmed that participants in the stranger conditions were actually not acquainted. In the two cases where participants were acquainted with one another in the stranger condition, they were rescheduled for another time with a different pair of participants (two pairs rescheduled; the other two pairs chose not to reschedule).

Procedure. Each individual was led to a separate room in the laboratory, where the experimenter explained how the study would be conducted. Participants were told

This is an experiment about interaction. I'll ask you to do some simple pencil-and-paper tasks. I'm also going to ask you to sit through a structured interview with your friend (or "someone you have never met" for the stranger condition), and then I'm going to ask you to fill out a questionnaire. We would also like your permission to tape record the interview.

Participants were asked whether they had any questions and then were asked to sign the consent form.

One member of each dyad was randomly assigned to the primary respondent role, and the other participant in each dyad was assigned to be the secondary respondent. The primary respondent was assigned to answer the interview questions before the secondary respondent. Prior research has demonstrated that the second respondent to the interview questions is likely to be influenced by the first respondent's answers to the questions, thus the 2 respondents' responses are not independent of one another (Baumeister, Hutton, & Tice, 1989; Hutton, 1991; see also Gilbert & Jones, 1986). Because of the high correlation between the responses of the 2 participants in each dyad (see also Tice, 1987), the first respondent of each dyad may highly influence the response of the second respondent (although for the most part the respondents do not seem to be aware of this influence, see Gilbert & Jones, 1986). Thus, most of the analyses will emphasize the responses of the primary respondent, and the responses of the secondary respondent (whose presence is important as a member of the audience) will be analyzed only for comparison purposes.

The experimenter brought both participants in the dyad into the interview room, seated them side by side at a table, and explained how the interview would be conducted: The experimenter would ask about some topic, and each participant would respond with a numerical self-rating on a 10-point scale and then elaborate this rating with a few sentences about him- or herself. Participants were told to consider a rating of 1 to represent *not at all good* and a rating of 10 to represent *extremely good* as they rated their abilities and prospects. In conducting the interview, the experimenter worked through a series of seven topics for self-rating, beginning with "your prospects for fulfillment and success in your career" and proceeding through relationship capacities with members of the opposite sex and then with members of the same sex, personal creativity, physical coordination and dexterity, work habits, and social skills. All questions were phrased so that a higher numerical rating represented a more self-enhancing self-presentation. After asking each question, the experimenter turned to the primary respondent for his or her response, and after recording the responses turned to the secondary respondent and repeated the question.

The experimenter recorded the numerical self-ratings given by the respondents, which constituted the main dependent measure of modesty/self-enhancement of self-presentation. After completing the interview and manipulation checks, the participants were debriefed, re-

united with their friends if they had been separated from them in the stranger conditions, thanked for their participation, and dismissed.

Results

Manipulation check. All participants correctly identified whether they were participating in the interview with a friend or with a stranger. Participants were asked whether they believed that their responses were influenced by their partners' responses. On a 5-point scale with points labeled 1 = not at all influenced, 2 = slightly influenced, 3 = moderately influenced, 4 = definitely influenced, and 5 = highly influenced, no participant selected a label higher than the midpoint (moderately influenced). The average rating was 1.2. There were no differences between conditions in belief that responses were influenced by partner, $F(1, 47) < 1$, *ns*. Preliminary analyses revealed no effects of gender (no main effects, no interactions with gender), so male and female participants were combined for the main analyses.

Modesty versus favorable self-presentation: Primary respondents. The numerical self-ratings that the primary respondent gave to the various questions were summed to create a measure of overall favorability of self-presentation. All questions were phrased so that a higher numerical rating represented a more self-enhancing self-presentation; thus, a higher total score represented a more favorable self-presentation. The score on this measure of favorability of self-presentation was the main dependent measure.

Consistent with the hypothesis, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that respondents who answered the questions in the presence of strangers were significantly more favorable about themselves ($M = 55.08$) than were respondents who answered the same questions in the presence of their friends ($M = 52.08$), $F(1, 23) = 4.76$, $p < .05$ (see Table 1). For the summed self-ratings, Cronbach's $\alpha = .49$.

Secondary respondents. The correlation between primary respondents' total self-presentational score and the total self-presentational score of secondary respondents was significant, $r(22) = .63$, $p < .001$, replicating the findings of Baumeister, Hutton, and Tice (1989), and suggesting that the answers to the questions given by the second respondents in each dyad were highly influenced by the answers given by the primary respondents. The two respondents' responses are thus not independent of one another, so only the primary respondents' responses are valid for analytical purposes (because the secondary respon-

Table 1
Mean Level of Positivity of Self-Presentation in Studies 1 and 2

Study	<i>n</i> per cell	Condition			
		Friends		Stranger	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	12	52.1	3.7	55.1	3.0
2	15	48.0	6.2	54.5	6.2

Note. Higher mean scores represent more self-enhancing self-presentation.

dents' answers may not represent their true self-presentational levels but instead represent the influence of the primary respondents' answers as well). However, for informational purposes only, we analyzed the responses of the secondary respondents, and a one-way ANOVA replicated the findings obtained from the primary respondents. Secondary respondents who answered the questions in the presence of strangers were significantly more self-enhancing ($M = 55.42$) than were secondary respondents who answered the same questions in the presence of their friends ($M = 50.58$), $F(1, 23) = 5.12, p < .05$.

It may also be possible to deal with the nonindependence of the data in a statistical fashion. We conducted a split-plot (between-within) ANOVA that treated the pair of participants as two levels of a within-subjects factor.¹ The ANOVA revealed a main effect for condition; overall participants were more self-enhancing with strangers ($M = 55.25$) than with friends ($M = 51.33$), $F(1, 22) = 6.34, p < .05$. No significant main effect ($F[1, 22] < 1, ns$) or interaction ($F[1, 22] = 1.04, ns$) involving the repeated measure was found, suggesting that the primary respondents and secondary respondents did not differ from one another.

Discussion

The results of Study 1 suggest that respondents were more modest when they answered the questions in the presence of one of their friends than when they answered the same questions in the presence of only strangers. This preliminary evidence suggests that at least one component of self-presentation, the favorability versus modesty of one's self-presentation, changes depending on the audience. If the audience contains at least one person who knows you well, then you are likely to present yourself more modestly than if the audience is made up entirely of strangers.

The results also replicated previous work that showed that secondary respondents' self-ratings are affected by the responses of their partners (Baumeister, Hutton, & Tice, 1989; see also Gilbert & Jones, 1986; Gilbert, Jones, & Pelham, 1987), although the respondents reported that they believed that they were not affected by their partners' ratings. The unconscious biasing of the secondary respondents' self-ratings can be thought of as an example of mental contamination (Wilson & Brekke, 1994), because the secondary respondent was unaware that his or her self-ratings were influenced by the previous respondents' self-ratings.

Study 2: Structured Interview With Friend or Stranger

One problem in interpreting the results of Study 1 was that a stranger (the experimenter) was present even in the condition that was supposed to examine self-presentation to friends. Thus, both conditions involved a stranger; the main difference was whether a friend was present. The findings suggest that even if a stranger was present, the presence of a friend was able to alter the respondent's self-presentation and make it more modest than a self-presentation to two strangers. Still, some ambiguity remains because there was no condition in which the participant presented to a friend only, so we conducted Study 2 to determine how participants would present themselves when the

audience consisted of only a friend or only a stranger. Specifically, in Study 2 the experimenter was not present in the room during the interview (the other participant served as interviewer and asked the questions). At the crucial point in the procedure, therefore, respondents were speaking to only one person, who was either a friend or a stranger.

Method

Participants were 60 psychology undergraduates (30 pairs of friends: 14 male and 16 female pairs) who participated in the experiment for course credit. The design and procedure of Study 2 were similar to the design and procedure of Study 1, except that the secondary respondent was also assigned the role of the interviewer. Instead of the experimenter asking the interview questions, the secondary respondent was instructed to ask each of the interview questions, record the primary respondents' answers, and then answer and record his or her own answers. Both respondents were told that the interviews were being collected for a researcher at another university and were asked not to identify themselves by name or give any other identifying information on the tapes. These changes were made to reduce as much as possible the tendency of the respondents to try to self-present to the experimenter or researchers and to focus the respondents' self-presentational concern on the immediate audience, which consisted of only a friend or a stranger.

Changes in procedure. Respondents were recruited as in Study 1, and the procedure was similar to Study 1, with the following changes. The participants assigned to be the secondary respondent were also asked to play the role of the interviewer (and will henceforth be referred to as the interviewer). Interviewers were asked to conduct an interview by asking their partners the seven questions listed on a sheet of paper in exactly those words and to respond with their own ratings after having recorded their partners' ratings.

The experimenter gave the interviewer a sheet containing the seven interview questions (the same questions as used in Study 1) and told the interviewer that the most important thing to remember while conducting the interview was to ask the questions "in exactly the words provided." The experimenter checked that the interviewer understood that there should be no ad-libbing or improvising in the interview and then explained that the interview would be audiotaped for record keeping purposes. After bringing the primary respondent into the interview room with the interviewer, the interviewer conducted a "practice interview" consisting of 2 additional questions while the experimenter was in the room to make sure that both the interviewer and the respondent understood the procedure. The experimenter then turned on the tape recorder and left the room while the interview was conducted. The interviewer was instructed to signal to the experimenter when the interview was finished. After completing the interview, the participants were debriefed, reunited with their friends if they had been separated from them in the stranger conditions, thanked for their participation, and dismissed.

Results

Manipulation check. All participants correctly identified whether they were participating in the interview with a friend or with a stranger. As in Study 1, no effects for gender of participant were found, and so the data were collapsed across gender.

Favorability of self-presentation. As in Study 1, we summed the numerical self-rating that the primary respondent gave to

¹ We thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting that we analyze our data in this manner.

each question to create a measure of overall favorability of self-presentation. A higher total score represented a more self-enhancing self-presentation. In the main test of the hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA indicated that respondents who answered the questions in the presence of a stranger were significantly more self-enhancing ($M = 54.47$) than were respondents who answered the same questions in the presence of a friend ($M = 48.00$), $F(1, 29) = 8.09, p < .01$ (see Table 1). For the summed self-ratings, Cronbach's $\alpha = .72$.

Self-presentation scores of interviewers. As in Study 1, the correlation between the primary respondents' total self-presentational score and the total self-presentational score of the interviewers was significant, $r(28) = .74, p < .001$, indicating that the respondents' answers and the interviewers' answers are not independent of one another. However, for informational purposes only, we analyzed the responses of the interviewers, and a one-way ANOVA replicated the findings obtained from the primary respondents. Interviewers who answered the questions in the presence of strangers were significantly more self-enhancing ($M = 55.60$) than were interviewers who answered the same questions in the presence of their friends ($M = 47.87$), $F(1, 29) = 10.10, p < .01$.

Again, it is possible to deal with the nonindependence of the data in a statistical fashion. We conducted a split-plot (between-within) ANOVA that treated the pair of participants as two levels of a within-subjects variable. A main effect was revealed for condition: Overall participants were more self-enhancing with strangers ($M = 55.03$) than with friends ($M = 47.93$), $F(1, 28) = 10.99, p < .01$. No significant main effect or interaction involving the repeated measure was found, both $F_s(1, 28) < 1, ns$, suggesting that the primary respondents and secondary respondents did not differ from one another.

Discussion

The results of Study 2 replicated the results found in Study 1. Respondents were more modest when they answered the questions in the presence of a friend than when they answered the same questions in the presence of a stranger, suggesting that at least one component of self-presentation, the modesty of one's self-presentation, changes depending on the audience. When the audience consists of only a friend (as in Study 2) or includes a friend and a stranger (as in Study 1), then one is likely to present oneself more modestly than if the audience consists only of strangers.

To be sure, it is difficult to remove all the evaluative concern that a participant has in an experiment (e.g., Tetlock & Manstead, 1985). Still, we made an effort in Study 2 to focus the respondent on self-presentational concern with the immediate audience and to remove the experimenter (a stranger) from the immediate audience. Concern over impressing an absent experimenter would presumably be the same in both conditions, and so the differences we obtained very likely reflect the effect of whether the immediate interaction partner was a friend or a stranger.

The results of Studies 1 and 2 suggest that people say more positive things about themselves in the presence of strangers than in the presence of friends. This is consistent with Schlenker's (1980, 1985, 1986) analysis suggesting that self-presenta-

tional favorability reflects a trade-off between competing pressures to be very positive and to be modest and less favorable. The results are also consistent with our analysis that the balance one strikes between these opposing concerns will differ as a function of whether the audience is composed of friends or strangers.

Study 3: Memory for Social Interaction

Studies 1 and 2 suggested that people are relatively modest in their self-presentations to their friends and more self-enhancing in their presentations to strangers. We conducted Study 3 to determine whether interfering with these self-presentational styles would create a cognitive load (e.g., Wegner, 1994) and interfere with the cognitive processing of the interaction. Gilbert and his colleagues (e.g., Gilbert, 1989; Gilbert, Krull, & Pelham, 1988; Gilbert & Osborne, 1989; Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988; Osborne & Gilbert, 1992) have demonstrated that cognitive busyness (such as conscious attention to multiple tasks during a social interaction) can interfere with the accurate processing of a social interaction. Self-presentations that are less familiar and habitual should create a greater cognitive load than self-presentations that are more automatic, resulting in less accurate processing and memory of the social interaction. Study 3 was also designed to extend our preliminary results from Studies 1 and 2 in terms of their implications for Paulhus's (1993) model of automatic self-presentation.

A model of automatic and controlled self-presentation has been developed by Paulhus and his colleagues (e.g., Paulhus, 1993; Paulhus, Graf, & Van Selst, 1989; Paulhus & Levitt, 1987) based on the distinction between automatic and controlled processes made in cognitive psychology (e.g., Bargh, 1982, 1984; Hasher & Zacks, 1979; Logan, 1988; Shiffrin & Snyder, 1977). The term *automatic* has been used in various ways, but until recently the term *automatic processes* included processes that were so well learned that they operated without any conscious attention, whereas *controlled processes* were intentional, flexible, consumed limited attentional resources, and required attention to proceed (e.g., Bargh, 1989). Recently, experts on automaticity in social processes (e.g., Bargh, 1994; Bargh & Gollwitzer, 1994) and others interested in the topic (e.g., Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1993) have recognized that the differences in automatic and controlled processes form more of a continuum than a dichotomy. Bargh (1994) proposed that we do away with the "all-or-none" approach to automaticity and has proposed that researchers be more specific about which of the particular qualities of automaticity (awareness, intention, efficiency, and control) are being demonstrated.

Paulhus (1993) defined automatic self-presentation as self-presentation that can continue to occur when an individual is under cognitive load and has few attentional resources remaining to concentrate on managing the impression he or she is making. Thus, applying Bargh's (1994) reconceptualization of the term, Paulhus's operationalization of automaticity refers to efficiency (rather than awareness, intention, or control). Paulhus has demonstrated that as attentional resources dwindle (because of affective or cognitive loads), self-presentation becomes more positive (Paulhus et al., 1989; Paulhus & Levitt, 1987), because automatic self-presentation tends to be highly

favorable. Studies 1 and 2 of the present investigation confirm Paulhus's assumption about the favorability of automatic self-presentation—but only when one is interacting with strangers, as is the case in most studies of self-presentation (and in Paulhus's procedures). Our results suggest, however, that Paulhus's model could be extended by proposing that the automatic self-presentational style shifts toward modesty when one is interacting with friends. We designed Study 3 to test this possible extension of Paulhus's model.

The procedure was modeled on and adapted from an earlier study of how deliberate self-presentation affects information processing and subsequent memory (i.e., Baumeister, Hutton, & Tice, 1989, whose procedure was in turn adapted from Gilbert & Jones, 1986; and Jones, Rhodewalt, Berglas, & Skelton, 1981; see also Gilbert & Osborne, 1989). The respondent was requested to present him- or herself in either a modest or a self-enhancing fashion, and after the interview a surprise memory test was administered that asked respondents to recall their self-ratings and the ratings made by the other respondent. The recall measure was the main focus of the study.

Participants' memories should be better for interactions in which they were requested to use a self-presentational style that is relatively automatic, because if the self-presentation is more automatic, then there should be more cognitive resources left available for processing and encoding the interaction (applying the efficiency dimension of automaticity; Bargh, 1994). If people normally or habitually present themselves more modestly to friends and more positively to strangers (as suggested by Studies 1 and 2), they should find these self-presentational patterns to be relatively automatic, and so it should not require much attention for them to act that way. As a result, people should have relatively good memories for interactions that follow those habitual patterns. In contrast, to be self-enhancing with one's friends or modest with strangers should go against habit and hence should violate automatic patterns, and the consequent need to use controlled processes should require more attention, thereby consuming resources that could otherwise be used for encoding information about the interaction.

Method

Participants. Participants were 80 psychology undergraduates (40 pairs of friends; 17 female pairs and 23 male pairs) who were recruited in a manner similar to the first two studies (2 additional pairs of participants were run, but their data were not recorded because of equipment failure, so they were replaced to equalize the cell sizes). As in Study 2, the participants assigned to be the secondary respondents were also asked to play the role of the interviewer. Interviewers were asked to conduct an interview by asking their partners the seven questions listed on a sheet of paper in exactly those words and to respond with their own ratings after having recorded their partners' ratings.

Changes in procedure. At this point, the primary respondent was assigned randomly to either the self-enhancing condition or the modest condition. The experimenter explained to the respondent that the next part of the experiment would consist of the structured interview consisting of seven questions regarding various aspects of the respondent's personal life and then explained how to answer the questions (give a numerical answer, plus a short explanation for each answer). The experimenter then told the respondent that she would like the participant to answer the questions in a particular manner. In the modest condition, the experimenter explained that she would like the participant to

answer the question in such a way so that you will appear to be modest. I don't want you to lie or make yourself out to be a bad person, but to draw upon your real experiences and slant them to appear modest.

In the self-enhancing condition, the experimenter explained

I would like you to answer the questions in such a way so that you will present yourself in a very positive, outstanding fashion. I don't want you to lie or make up stories, but to draw upon your real experiences and slant them so you will appear positive and confident.

Respondents were told that the interviewer would not know that they had been requested to answer in any particular manner and that the purpose of their responding in the requested manner was so that the researchers could examine the effects of their responses on the interviewers. All respondents were asked whether they understood and agreed to the instructions and then were told that the interview would be audiotaped for record keeping purposes. The experimenter then brought the respondent into the interview room.

After the interviewer had correctly conducted the practice interview (consisting of two additional questions), the experimenter left the room for the duration of the interview. Once the interview was concluded, the interviewer signaled the experimenter, who returned the participants to their separate rooms. After a 5-min filler task (crossing out the letter *e* on several pages of text), the memory questionnaires were administered. Participants were given a list of the interview questions and were asked to recall the ratings they and their partners had given to each question. Participants were primed with the questions asked in the interview (e.g., "How would you rate your social skills?") and were asked to provide as accurately as possible the rating they and their partner gave to each question. The questionnaire listed each interview question and asked the participant to recall and record the rating he or she and his or her partner had given to each interview question. After completing the questionnaires, the participants filled out manipulation check questionnaires, were debriefed, reunited with their friends if they had been separated from them in the stranger conditions, thanked for their participation, and dismissed.

Results

Manipulation checks and self-presentation scores. All participants correctly identified whether they were participating in the interview with a friend or with a stranger, and all respondents correctly identified the self-presentational condition they had been assigned (self-enhancing or modest).

Respondents were effective at presenting themselves in the requested manner. As in Studies 1 and 2, the numerical self-rating that the primary respondent gave to each question was summed to create a total self-presentational score. A higher total score represented a more self-enhancing self-presentation. A 2 (self-present self-enhancingly or modestly) \times 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA indicated that respondents who were requested to respond to the questions in a self-enhancing fashion were significantly more self-enhancing ($M = 58.60$) than were respondents who were requested to respond to the interview questions in a modest manner ($M = 37.15$), $F(1, 36) = 125.45$, $p < .001$, suggesting that respondents were successful at presenting themselves in the requested manner. No other main effects or interactions were found, ruling out any alternative explanations based on the reasoning that respondents were more modest with friends than with strangers. Because they

were asked to present themselves in a requested manner rather than giving their natural self-presentations as they did in Studies 1 and 2, respondents were not significantly more modest with their friends than with strangers. The lack of additional main effects and interactions suggests that respondents were successful at presenting themselves in the requested manner and that this overpowered any natural tendencies to present themselves more modestly with friends than with strangers. For the summed self-ratings, Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$.

As in Studies 1 and 2, interviewers' self-ratings were affected by the respondents' self-ratings. A 2 (respondents requested to self-present self-enhancingly or modestly) \times 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA on interviewers' self-ratings revealed a pattern identical to the pattern revealed by the primary respondents described above. If the respondent had been requested to self-present in a self-enhancing fashion, then the interviewer rated him- or herself in a more self-enhancing fashion ($M = 53.65$) than if the respondent had been requested to self-present in a modest fashion ($M = 42.40$), $F(1, 36) = 23.82$, $p < .001$, demonstrating that interviewers' self-presentations were strongly affected by the self-presentations of the respondents. In other words, reciprocity of self-disclosure (Jourard, 1971) was found for positivity of self-disclosure (see also Altman & Taylor, 1973; Chesner & Baumeister, 1985; Davis, 1976, 1977, 1978; and Jourard & Friedman, 1970, for evidence on reciprocity for intimacy of self-disclosure). No other main effects or interactions were found.

Memory effects and automatic processing: Respondents' recall. The main focus of this study was on how well participants would remember what was said in the interaction, as a function of partner type (friend vs. stranger) and of their own (manipulated) self-presentational favorability. Participants were given a list of the interview questions and were asked to recall the ratings they and their partners had given to each question. Their recall was compared with the actual ratings given during the interview, to furnish a measure of accuracy of recall. In other words, the main dependent measure was the number of ratings recalled correctly. Participants who interacted self-enhancingly with friends and modestly with strangers were predicted to have worse recall of the interaction than participants in the other conditions, because these self-presentations were predicted to consume cognitive resources and thus interfere with the cognitive processing of the interaction. A 2 (respondents requested to self-present self-enhancingly or modestly) \times 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA on respondents' recall of the ratings they and their interviewers had

given in response to the interview questions revealed a significant interaction, $F(1, 36) = 31.45$, $p < .001$. Comparison of the means suggests that, when one interacts with strangers, self-enhancing interactions are easier to recall ($M = 12.10$) than modest interactions ($M = 9.20$), $t(36) = 4.68$, $p < .001$. However, when one interacts with friends, modest interactions are easier to recall ($M = 11.30$) than self-enhancing interactions ($M = 9.30$), $t(36) = 3.23$, $p < .01$. Comparisons can also be made within self-presentational condition. In the modesty condition, participants who interacted with their friends ($M = 11.30$) had a better recall than participants who interacted with strangers ($M = 9.20$), $t(36) = 3.39$, $p < .01$. In the self-enhancement condition, however, participants who interacted with strangers ($M = 12.10$) had a better recall than participants who interacted with their friends ($M = 9.30$), $t(36) = 4.52$, $p < .001$. Thus, the main hypothesis of differential recall was supported (see Table 2).

An important second issue is whether the differential memory loss pertained to recall for the self-presenter's own behavior or for the behavior of the interaction partner. Accordingly, we conducted separate analyses after breaking the recall data down into the two categories: memory for the respondent's own ratings and memory for the interviewers' ratings. Examining just the respondents' recall of the interviewers' ratings, we found that the pattern was identical to the pattern reported in the combined recall analysis above. The same 2 \times 2 ANOVA revealed a significant interaction, $F(1, 36) = 17.31$, $p < .001$, suggesting that participants who presented themselves to strangers recalled what their partners said more often if they were self-enhancing ($M = 5.50$) than if they were modest ($M = 4.30$), whereas, when interacting with friends, participants who were modest recalled what their partners said more often ($M = 5.60$) than participants who were self-enhancing ($M = 4.10$).

Examining just the respondents' recall of their own ratings, a main effect was revealed in addition to the significant interaction. The same 2 \times 2 ANOVA revealed a significant main effect, $F(1, 36) = 5.18$, $p < .05$, suggesting that self-enhancing self-presentations are easier to recall ($M = 5.90$) than modest self-presentations ($M = 5.30$). The presence of this main effect for recall of respondents' own ratings replicates Paulhus's (1993) findings suggesting that positive self-presentation is more automatic than any other form of self-presentation. Independent of the audience effects demonstrated throughout this article, Paulhus's prediction that people will remember their own ratings better when they rated themselves positively was confirmed. This main effect was qualified, however, by a significant interac-

Table 2
Mean Number of Ratings Recalled in Study 3

	Respondents interacting with				Interviewers interacting with			
	Friends		Strangers		Friends		Strangers	
Self-present	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Modestly	11.3	1.6	9.2	1.2	11.0	2.1	9.2	1.8
Self-enhancingly	9.3	1.7	12.1	1.3	10.8	0.8	11.8	1.6

Note. $n = 10$ per cell. Higher mean scores represent better recall of both own and partners' ratings.

tion, $F(1, 36) = 17.42, p < .001$, suggesting that, when interacting with strangers, participants who presented themselves in a self-enhancing fashion recalled more of their own self-ratings ($M = 6.60$) than participants who presented themselves modestly ($M = 4.90$), whereas when interacting with friends, participants who presented themselves modestly recalled their self-ratings better ($M = 5.70$) than participants who presented themselves in a self-enhancing fashion ($M = 5.20$).

Thus, separating the participants' memory for the interaction into memory for self-ratings and memory for their partners' ratings suggests that both kinds of recall were affected in the same manner. Whether recalling their own ratings or recalling the ratings of their partners, participants who presented modestly to friends and self-enhancingly to strangers had better recall than participants who presented self-enhancingly to friends and modestly to strangers.

Memory effects and automatic processing: Interviewers' recall. We conducted the same 2×2 ANOVA on interviewers' recall of the ratings. A main effect for self-presentational condition emerged, in which interviewers whose partners had been requested to present themselves self-enhancingly correctly recalled more ratings ($M = 11.30$) than interviewers whose partners had been requested to present themselves modestly ($M = 10.10$), $F(1, 36) = 5.36, p < .05$, probably because interviewers whose partners were requested to present themselves positively responded by giving very positive ratings to themselves as well (as noted above). This significant main effect, combined with the finding that interviewers tended to respond similarly to their partners (i.e., if the respondents had been requested to present themselves modestly, then their interview partners also presented themselves modestly compared with interview partners of respondents who had been requested to present themselves positively) suggests that overall a positive bias in self-presentation may be more automatic, in that it interferes less with other cognitive processing than does modest self-presentation, as Paulhus (1993) suggested.

Still, this main effect was qualified by a significant interaction, $F(1, 36) = 7.29, p < .05$, suggesting that self-enhancing interactions with strangers are easier to recall ($M = 11.80$) than modest interactions with strangers ($M = 9.20$), $t(36) = 3.56, p < .001$, but modest interactions with friends (recall $M = 11.00$) do not differ much from self-enhancing interactions with friends ($M = 10.80$), $t(36) < 1, n.s.$ Comparisons can also be made within self-presentational condition. Among participants whose partners presented modestly to them, participants who interviewed their friends remembered significantly more of the interaction ($M = 11.00$) than participants who interviewed strangers ($M = 9.20$), $t(36) = 2.47, p < .05$, but among participants whose partners presented self-enhancingly to them, participants who interviewed strangers did not remember significantly more of the interaction ($M = 11.80$) than did participants who interviewed their friends ($M = 10.8$), $t(36) = 1.37, n.s.$ Thus, the recall results obtained for the primary respondents were replicated for the interviewers.

Discussion

Studies 1 and 2 showed that in a laboratory situation, participants will present themselves favorably to strangers but more

modestly to friends. Study 3 was concerned with the question of whether people normally, habitually, and hence automatically (using Bargh's [1994] efficiency criterion of automaticity) present themselves in those patterns. In Study 3 we instructed people to present themselves in either a modest or self-enhancing fashion to either a friend or a stranger, and we measured how well people remembered the details of the interaction. When the participants in Study 3 followed instructions that corresponded to the spontaneous patterns obtained in Studies 1 and 2—that is, self-enhancement toward strangers, and modesty with friends—they showed relatively good memory for the interaction. Memory was impaired, however, when participants had been given instructions to act differently from these patterns. These results suggest that to present oneself favorably toward a friend or modestly toward a stranger violates the habitual, normal, or automatic pattern, and such (controlled) actions consume more cognitive resources, leaving fewer available to encode the interaction and hence resulting in poorer subsequent memory.

Paulhus (1993; see also Paulhus et al., 1989; Paulhus & Levitt, 1987) has proposed that self-presentation can be either automatic or controlled. Our results suggest that Paulhus's model could be extended by proposing that what he calls *automatic egotism* (Paulhus & Levitt, 1987)—that is, the greater automaticity of more favorable self-presentation—applies primarily to interactions with strangers, whereas modesty is the dominant, most cognitively efficient, and hence most automatic style of self-presentation in interactions with friends. It is not that favorable self-presentation is always or inherently automatic but rather that the automatic response depends on the match between the interpersonal context and a certain level of favorability. Bargh (1994) described this type of automaticity as *goal-dependent automaticity*, because the automatic response depends on the goal (in this case, presenting to a friend or a stranger). Presumably, people learn that modesty is most appropriate or beneficial when interacting with friends, just as they learn that self-enhancement works best with strangers, and so these respective styles become automatic in those contexts.

To go against those styles (that is, to be modest with strangers or self-enhancing with friends) requires that one forego the benefits of automaticity, and the resulting need for controlled self-presentation appears to operate like a cognitive load (Wegner, 1994). Faced with the necessity of making conscious, deliberate decisions about how to portray oneself, people had fewer attentional resources left over to encode the details of the interaction, and so their eventual memory for the interaction was impaired.

Interviewer responses. We noted that the self-presentations of the interviewers, who had not received any instructions to be self-enhancing or modest, tended to conform to the patterns followed by their partners, consistent with what we found in Studies 1 and 2 (see also Baumeister, Hutton, & Tice, 1989). The interviewers also showed a memory deficit after the modest interaction with a stranger, which replicates the main finding based on respondent participants. Oddly, however, they did not show any memory deficit following the self-enhancing interaction with the friend (in contrast to their interaction partners, the respondents, who did show impaired memory in that condition). Although our predictions pertained mainly to the instructed participants, and there was no particular reason to

expect that the same patterns would obtain among interviewers, it is interesting to consider why the interviewers showed only one of the two deficits.

One possible explanation is that these participants did not perceive themselves as acting in a self-enhancing way with friends in that condition, whereas the modesty with strangers was more salient. It could be that the interviewer confronted with a self-enhancing friend simply followed the numerical norms set by the friend and yet assumed, on the basis of past interactions with the friend, that these norms corresponded to the level of modesty that was customary between them. The corresponding cognitive adjustment could not be made vis-à-vis the modest stranger, because one did not have prior interactions with him or her to consult.

Another possibility is that it is more troublesome to be modest with a stranger than to be self-enhancing with a friend, and so the former constitutes a greater cognitive load and is more disruptive than the latter. To be sure, one might object to this argument by saying that it should have applied to the (instructed) respondent participants equally, but this is not necessarily the case, because they were the ones who knew the instructions and had to realize that they were breaking the norm. From the interviewer's perspective, perhaps, the friend had set the norm for boasting, and there was little apparent harm in some mutual boastfulness among friends under these circumscribed conditions; one could also make certain to disown any objectionable comments later. In contrast, to be modest with a stranger is to make an impression that one may never have the opportunity to undo. Certainly there would be little reason to think that the stranger could, like the friend, share a mutual perception of the interaction as a put-on.

A third possibility is that self-enhancing behavior with friends is less a violation of habitual or automatic patterns of self-presentation than is modesty with strangers, and so it creates less of a cognitive load. In terms of Paulhus's (1993) distinction between automatic and controlled self-presentation, this would mean that favorable self-presentation is generally more automatic, and so even being self-enhancing with friends could be done in a relatively automatic fashion. Only when participants know that they are deliberately acting in an unusual, possibly inappropriate fashion (as were the respondent participants who were instructed to be self-enhancing to a friend) does self-enhancement cease to be automatic. Interviewer participants were simply going along with a situational norm that had been set by a friend, and so even though it violated their usual patterns of self-presentation, it conformed to a deeply ingrained and hence automatic style of response.

Yet another possibility is that, self-presentations aside, interactions with strangers may consume more cognitive resources than interactions with friends. People may be more vigilant when interacting with strangers than with friends, more preoccupied with what the other person thinks of him or her, and may work harder to keep the interaction smooth. Because of these cognitive processes occurring during interactions with strangers, less cognitive capacity may be available for self-presentation than when interacting with friends. Thus, participants in the two conditions may have started out with different baselines of cognitive load; interacting with a stranger may have created a greater load than interacting with a friend. Because they

were already under greater cognitive load, participants interacting with strangers may have reached a critical level of cognitive depletion, whereas those interacting with friends may have had enough cognitive resources to spare.²

Respondent recall. Again, the main analyses in Study 3 pertained to the respondents' recall of the interaction; the interviewer's responses were supplied merely for informational purposes. The respondents were instructed to present themselves either self-enhancingly or modestly to either friends or strangers. When the respondents in Study 3 were asked to present themselves modestly with friends and self-enhancingly toward strangers (the spontaneous patterns found in Studies 1 and 2), they showed relatively good memory for the interaction. Memory was impaired, however, when respondents were given instructions to act in the opposite manner. These results suggest that presenting oneself modestly toward a stranger or favorably toward a friend interrupts the normal, habitual self-presentational pattern and creates a cognitive load by forcing one to attend to and control one's self-presentation. These controlled self-presentations consume more cognitive resources, leaving fewer available to encode the interaction and hence resulting in poorer subsequent memory.

It is noteworthy that the memory impairments were found with both memory for the respondent's own statements and with memory for the partner's (interviewer's) statements. This rules out several possible alternative explanations, such as that self-deception prevented people from wanting to remember their own discrepant behavior, or self-focused attention made them ignore the partner. The finding of impairments in both memory of self and memory of partner therefore suggests a broad impairment of memory for the interaction generally, which seems most consistent with the argument that these participants were under a form of cognitive load that diminished the resources they had for encoding what was being said.

Study 4: Recall of Another's Ratings

Study 3 demonstrated that people can recall their interactions better when they have acted modestly with friends and self-enhancingly with strangers. However, Studies 1 and 2 showed that people habitually behave more modestly with friends and more self-enhancingly with strangers, so it is possible that people who are requested to interact in this habitual manner are more well practiced, and their scripts are better encoded, than people who are requested to interact in the opposite manner. In other words, the results of Study 3 could have occurred not because participants recalled what they actually said during the experimental interaction, but because they simply recalled habitual behaviors. Von Hippel, Jonides, Hilton, and Narayan (1993) suggested that schemas facilitate recall while simultaneously inhibiting perceptual encoding, because people with schemas do not have to process much of the interaction to be able to recall it (see also Buehler & Ross, 1993). Participants in Study 3 may have had better recall in the conditions that were habitual because they possessed schemas and scripts for behaving modestly

² We thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this possible interpretation.

with friends and self-enhancingly with strangers. However, the participants were asked to provide a numerical rating of themselves for each question in the interview and to follow their numerical rating with a brief description of why they rated themselves at that level. In an effort to reduce the schema- or script-based recall, we analyzed only the numerical ratings, because participants were unlikely to have a script or a schema rating themselves as a 7. Scripts or self-schemas may interfere more with recall of the descriptive statements, because participants may possess scripts describing themselves as gregarious or possess self-schemas of athleticism. The numerical ratings, however, should be less affected by self-schemas or scripts, because few people have scripts or self-schemas giving themselves numerical ratings.

Despite the fact that numerical ratings are less scripted than self-statements, it is still possible that self-schemas affected the ratings and therefore the recall measures. Participants' self-esteem may have influenced their numerical ratings, such that high-self-esteem people may habitually rate themselves higher on any given dimension than low-self-esteem people (e.g., Tice, 1993). It also is possible that people who interacted with their friends may have possessed schemas that affected their recall of their friends' ratings. Participants who were asked to interact in a manner consistent with their self-schemas (e.g., perhaps asking high-self-esteem participants to be self-enhancing) or whose friends acted in a manner consistent with the schemas they held of their friends may have had better recall than participants who were asked to act in a manner inconsistent with their self- or friend-schemas. We conducted Study 4 to control for schematic processing in the recall task. Because it was possible that self-schemas and schemas of friends may have affected the recall of numerical ratings in Study 3, we designed Study 4 so that the recall task would consist solely of the recall of the numerical ratings of a stranger.

The design of Study 4 was very similar to the design of Study 3 except that the interview was conducted over an intercom system, and participants were able to overhear the ratings of a stranger, which they were subsequently asked to recall in an incidental recall test. Because the recall measure consisted of recalling a stranger's ratings in all conditions, the alternative explanation of possible informational differences between friends and strangers (i.e., that we have different information, schemas, and scripts for our friends than for strangers) can be ruled out in Study 4.

Method

Participants. Participants were 46 female psychology undergraduates (23 pairs of friends) who were recruited in a manner similar to the previous studies (2 additional pairs of participants were run, but their data were not recorded because of equipment failure, so they were replaced). Only female participants were used because the taped confederate was a woman.

Changes in procedure. The design of Study 4 was similar to the design of Study 3, with the following exceptions. Unlike Study 3, only one pair participated at a time, and all participants were assigned to the respondent role (i.e., no participants were interviewers in Study 4; the experimenters performed the interviewer's role). However, half of the participants were told that their friend was the interviewer, and the other half of the participants were told that their interviewer was a stranger.

The interviews were conducted over an intercom system. Participants were randomly assigned to present themselves in either a self-enhancing or a modest manner, as in Study 3, and were told that the interviewer was not aware that they had been given self-presentational instructions. They were told that the interviewer would hear the self-presentations of three people (i.e., themselves and two others). Participants were told that the interviewer was the *only* person who could hear their presentation. Participants were told, however, that because of a glitch in the intercom recording system, they would be able to hear one other person's responses to the interview questions, and she had already agreed that it was okay with her if the participant heard her responses. All participants were told that when the tone sounded, the first respondent should read the interview question off the cue sheet and respond with her answer; when she was finished, the interviewer would beep the second respondent, who would read the question off the cue sheet and respond with her answer; when she was finished, the interviewer would beep the third respondent, who would do the same.

The two real participants were assigned to be the first and second respondents; the third "respondent" was actually a taped confederate. The first respondent was beeped by the interviewer (actually the experimenter) and gave her rating and self-description to the first interview question, then the second respondent was beeped and did the same, then both respondents heard the responses of the taped confederate to the first question. Neither real respondent heard her friend's responses to the questions; the only responses the respondents heard (other than their own) were the responses of the taped confederate. The first respondent was then beeped again; she read and responded to the second question, and so on for all seven questions.

Although half of the participants were led to believe that the interviewer was their friend, and the other half thought the interviewer was a stranger and a member of another friend pair, in all cases the interview was actually the experimenter (unbeknownst to the participants). Likewise, participants were led to believe that the taped confederate was a member of another friend pair.

At the conclusion of the interview, participants completed a short filler task (crossing out the letter *e* on several pages of text), and then the surprise recall task was administered. Participants were given a list of the interview questions and asked to recall the ratings the confederate had given to each question. Participants were primed with the questions used in the interview (e.g., "How would you rate your social skills?") and were asked to provide as accurately as possible the rating the confederate gave to each question. After completing the questionnaires, the participants were debriefed extensively, reunited with their friends, thanked for their participation, and dismissed.

Results

Manipulation checks and self-presentation scores. All participants correctly identified whether they were participating in the interview with a friend or with a stranger and correctly identified the self-presentational condition to which they had been assigned (self-enhancing or modest). Only 2 participants reported any substantial level of suspicion (at or above the midpoint on a 5-point scale), and 6 additional participants reported slight levels of suspicion that the taped confederate or the interviewer was not really another participant. We performed analyses with and without these participants, and results were similar whether suspicious participants were included or excluded from the analyses. All analyses reported below include them. Only 3 participants reported feeling suspicious that someone other than the interviewer could hear their self-ratings and self-descriptions. Again, we performed analyses with and without these participants, and results were similar whether

participants who thought someone else might be able to hear their self-presentations were included or excluded from the analyses. All analyses reported below include these participants.

Participants were also effective at presenting themselves in the requested manner. A 2 (self-present positively or modestly) × 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA indicated that participants who were requested to respond to the questions in a self-enhancing fashion were significantly more positive ($M = 58.95$) than were participants who were requested to respond to the interview questions in a modest manner ($M = 38.75$), $F(1, 42) = 134.50, p < .001$, suggesting that participants were successful at presenting themselves in the requested manner. No other main effects or interactions were found.

Main dependent measure: Recall of the taped confederate's ratings. The main focus of this study was on how well participants would remember what was said by the confederate in the interview, as a function of interviewer (friend vs. stranger) and of their own self-presentational favorability. Participants were given a list of the interview questions and were asked to recall the ratings the third respondent (the taped confederate) gave during the interview. Their recall was compared with the actual ratings given during the interview, to furnish a measure of accuracy of recall. In other words, the main dependent measure was the number of ratings recalled correctly. A 2 (respondents requested to self-present self-enhancingly or modestly) × 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA on participants' recall of the ratings the confederate had given in response to the interview questions revealed a significant interaction, $F(1, 42) = 4.44, p < .05$, suggesting that self-enhancing interactions with friends interfere more with the processing of a social event ($M = 4.25$) than modest interactions with friends ($M = 5.07$), but modest interactions with strangers interfere more with the processing of a social event ($M = 4.00$) than self-enhancing interactions with strangers ($M = 5.10$). Thus, the results replicate and extend the findings of Study 3, and the main hypothesis of differential recall was supported (see Table 3).

Additional measures of accuracy. We computed two additional measures of accuracy: total score accuracy and discrepancy error.³ We computed discrepancy error by summing the absolute value of the difference between the confederate's rating and the participant's recall of the confederate's rating for each item in the interview:

$$\text{Discrepancy error} = \sum |\text{confederate rating} - \text{participant's recall of confederate rating (for each item)}|.$$

In other words, if the participant recalled the first rating correctly, was off by one for the second rating, was off by 2 for the third rating, recalled the fourth and fifth ratings correctly, was off by one for the sixth rating, and recalled the last rating correctly, he or she would have a discrepancy error score of 4. The advantage of computing discrepancy error scores as opposed to the total number of ratings correctly recalled (as in the main analysis) is that a more exact measure can be computed of how accurate or inaccurate the participant's memory is for the interview, because bigger errors count more (as opposed to counting all errors equally).

Analyses of the discrepancy error scores replicated the results of the main analyses. A 2 (respondents requested to self-present

Table 3
Mean Number of Ratings Recalled in Study 4

Self-present	Interact with					
	Friends			Strangers		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Modestly	5.1	1.1	13	4.0	2.0	9
Self-enhancingly	4.3	1.5	12	5.1	1.5	10

Note. Higher mean scores represent better recall of the overheard ratings of the confederate.

self-enhancingly or modestly) × 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA on discrepancy error scores revealed a significant interaction, $F(1, 40) = 4.17, p < .05$, suggesting that self-enhancing interactions with friends interfere more with the processing of a social event ($M = 4.25$) than modest interactions with friends ($M = 3.00$), but modest interactions with strangers interfere more with the processing of a social event ($M = 4.12$) than self-enhancing interactions with strangers ($M = 2.60$). Thus, the main hypothesis of differential recall was supported for discrepancy error scores as well as for the main analysis. Participants made fewer and smaller errors in recall when they were requested to present themselves in their habitual manner (modest with friends and self-enhancing with strangers) than when their habitual patterns were interfered with (when they were asked to present themselves self-enhancingly to friends and modestly to strangers).

The second supplemental analysis consisted of calculating total-score-error measures. Total score error consisted of summing the seven ratings that the confederate gave and subtracting the sum of the ratings the participant recalled that the confederate had made (and taking the absolute value of the difference):

$$\text{Total-score error} = |\sum \text{confederate ratings} - \sum \text{participant's recall of confederate ratings}|.$$

One benefit of using total score error as opposed to the total

³ Although number of ratings accurately recalled constituted the main dependent measure in Study 3 as well as Study 4, we computed additional measures of recall accuracy in Study 4. Because the incidental-recall task in Study 3 was unexpected by the participants, some of them reported that they had no memory for one or more of the ratings given by themselves or their partners. Some of these participants left a blank (or wrote in "can't remember" or "no idea") for one or more of the ratings (no participant left more than two blanks, and most participants left none, but several participants left 1 of the 14 items blank, and 2 participants left 2 blanks). For the main measure of recall accuracy, blanks were counted identical to mistaken recall ratings (i.e., both were counted as inaccurate). However, because of the number of blanks, it was difficult to compute other measures of accuracy, such as how large an error each participant made. Thus, in Study 4, participants were instructed not to leave blanks but to try to guess to the best of their ability if they could not remember one of the ratings the confederate made, so that additional measures of accuracy could be computed. 2 participants left blanks despite this request.

number of ratings correctly recalled (as in the main analysis) is that participants who mixed up two of the ratings but otherwise had accurate memory for the interaction are not penalized by the total-score-error measure. For instance, a participant who recalled that the confederate rated herself as a 7, 5, 6, 3 on four of the questions but mistakenly thought that the 5 rating was for her creativity and the 6 rating was for her work habits instead of the other way around would be coded as missing two items in the main dependent variable but would have a perfect score (because she recalled the total of the ratings accurately) computed with the total-score-error formula.

Analyses of the total-score-error scores replicated the results of the main analyses, although the results were only marginally significant if two-tailed tests are used. A 2 (respondents requested to self-present self-enhancingly or modestly) \times 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA on total score error revealed a marginally significant interaction, $F(1, 40) = 2.87, p < .10$, suggesting that self-enhancing interactions with friends interfere more with the processing of a social event ($M = 4.25$) than modest interactions with friends ($M = 3.00$), but modest interactions with strangers interfere more with the processing of a social event ($M = 4.12$) than self-enhancing interactions with strangers ($M = 2.60$). Thus, the main hypothesis of differential recall was supported for total-score-error scores as well as for discrepancy error and the main analysis. Participants were less likely to err when recalling the confederate's ratings when they were requested to present themselves in their habitual manner (modest with friends and self-enhancing with strangers) than when their habitual patterns were interfered with (when they were asked to present themselves self-enhancingly to friends and modestly to strangers).

Discussion

Study 4 replicated the effects of Study 3 and demonstrated that the findings of Study 3 were not affected by schemas or scripts held by the participants. Participants in Study 3 may have had better recall in the conditions that were habitual because they possessed schemas and scripts for behaving modestly with friends and self-enhancingly with strangers. However, Study 4 demonstrated that even when recalling the behavior of a stranger (for whom no schemas exist), participants made fewer errors when recalling the confederate's ratings when they were requested to present themselves in their habitual manner (modest with friends and self-enhancing with strangers) than when their habitual patterns were interfered with (when they were asked to present themselves self-enhancingly to friends and modestly to strangers). In other words, when self-presentation was habitual and automatic, more cognitive resources were available for perceptual encoding of the interview, and better memory for the interview was demonstrated compared to when self-presentation was less habitual and automatic.

In addition, Study 4 demonstrated that the recall for the interview was better when self-presentation was habitual and automatic even when the criteria for recall were changed. Participants not only made fewer errors in recall when self-presentation was habitual and automatic (compared to when self-presentation was less familiar and habitual), but they also made smaller errors and

were more accurate in their total, overall memory of the confederate's ratings.

Study 5: Negative Self-Presentation and Memory for Social Interactions

The results of Experiments 1–4 are all consistent with our view that modesty is the habitual and optimal way that people present themselves to friends. We proposed this view on the basis of the notion that self-presentation is a trade-off between the benefits and costs of being highly favorable. An alternative explanation for all these findings could be advanced, however, on the basis that negativity rather than modesty becomes important with friends. Someone might argue, for example, that just as friends might disconfirm an overly boastful self-presentation, they would also disagree with an overly negative one. Having one's friends leap to contradict derogatory self-statements might be a pleasant experience, insofar as they might do so with praise: "No, you're much better than that."

In any case, it seems essential to maintain both a theoretical and empirical distinction between modesty and outright negativity. Experiments 1–4 contrasted modesty with self-enhancement, and so the results leave ambiguous whether self-derogation or mere modesty is the dominant, preferred way of presenting oneself to friends. In Experiment 5, therefore, we examined the use of outright negativity (i.e., explicit self-derogation) in self-presentation.

Our own reasoning led us to conclude that modesty rather than self-derogation would be the optimal (and therefore presumably the habitual and automatic) way to present oneself to friends, and so we did not expect that more severe negativity would have effects similar to modesty. This view is supported by previous research findings that have suggested that being negative with friends is not beneficial to relationships. For example, depressed people are not liked as well as nondepressed people by either friends or strangers (e.g., Burchill & Stiles, 1988; Feldman & Gottlieb, 1993; Strack & Coyne, 1983) because they are more negative in their self-descriptions (Coyne, 1976; Joiner, Alfano, & Metalsky, 1992). Murray, Holmes, and Griffin (in press) found that couples were happier with their relationship if partners held an artificially high view of each other (compared with each person's self-concept), suggesting that presenting oneself in a negative fashion to one's partner can undermine the relationship. Cantor and Norem (1989) suggested that people who habitually emphasize negative things about themselves so as to elicit reassurance from others may gradually alienate their social support network (see also Harlow & Cantor, 1994). Thus, the benefits that we proposed for modesty do not seem to apply to outright self-derogation.

The approach we took in Experiment 5 was to show that the benefits of modesty toward friends in terms of improved recall for the interaction (as shown in Studies 3 and 4) would not obtain with outright negativity. That is, we instructed some people to present themselves in a highly unfavorable manner, and then we assessed their subsequent memory for the interaction. We predicted that these participants would fail to show the improved memory for the interaction that modesty produced in the previous studies. Thus, our overall hypothesis was that when one presents oneself to friends, a little negativity (i.e., modesty)

may be desirable and effective, but a great deal of negativity (i.e., self-derogation) may be undesirable.

Method

The procedure of Study 5 was identical to the procedure used in Study 3, except that respondents were asked to present themselves as in either a positive, self-enhancing manner or in a negative, derogatory manner (rather than a self-enhancing vs. modest manner as in Study 3).

Participants. Participants were 80 psychology undergraduates (40 pairs of friends; 18 female pairs and 22 male pairs) who were recruited in a manner similar to the first two studies (3 additional pairs of participants were run, but their data were not recorded because of equipment failure or failure to follow instructions, so they were replaced to equalize the cell sizes). The participants assigned to the respondent role were asked to present themselves in either a positive or a negative manner, unbeknownst to their interviewers. As in Study 3, interviewers (the other participant in the dyad) were asked to conduct a structured interview and to respond with their own ratings after having recorded their partners' ratings.

Changes in procedure. Except for requesting that respondents present themselves either positively or negatively (instead of positively or modestly, as in Study 3), the procedure for Study 5 was identical to Study 3. Instructions to respondents were similar to those described by Jones et al. (1981) and Baumeister, Hutton, and Tice (1989). Respondents were either told to imagine themselves on an especially good, successful day or on an especially bad, depressing day, and to present themselves as positively and favorably (or negatively and unfavorably, in the negative condition) as they could without lying.

Results

Manipulation checks and self-presentation scores. All participants correctly identified whether they were participating in the interview with a friend or with a stranger, and all respondents correctly identified the self-presentational condition they had been assigned (positive or negative).

Self-presentation scores. Respondents were also effective at presenting themselves in the requested manner. A 2 (self-present positively or negatively) \times 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA indicated that respondents who were requested to respond to the questions in a self-enhancing fashion were significantly more positive ($M = 57.95$) than were respondents who were requested to respond to the interview questions in a negative manner ($M = 28.75$), $F(1, 36) = 144.99$, $p < .001$, suggesting that respondents were successful at presenting themselves in the requested manner. No other main effects or interactions were found.

As in the previous studies, interviewers' self-ratings were affected by the respondents' self-ratings. A 2 (respondents requested to self-present positively or negatively) \times 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA on interviewers' self-ratings revealed a pattern identical to the pattern revealed by the primary respondents described above. If the respondent had been requested to self-present in a positive fashion, then the interviewer rated him- or herself in a more self-enhancing fashion ($M = 53.25$) than if the respondent had been requested to self-present in a modest fashion ($M = 40.05$), $F(1, 36) = 26.59$, $p < .001$, demonstrating that interviewers' self-presentations were strongly affected by the self-presentations of the respondents. No other main effects or interactions were found.

Table 4
Mean Number of Ratings Recalled in Study 5

	Respondents interacting with				Interviewers interacting with			
	Friends		Strangers		Friends		Strangers	
Self-present	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Negatively	8.6	2.0	10.4	1.4	10.3	2.6	8.8	2.2
Positively	11.2	2.3	11.4	1.7	11.9	1.5	11.4	1.2

Note. $n = 10$ per cell. Higher mean scores represent better recall of both own and partners' ratings.

Memory effects and automatic processing: Respondents' recall. A 2 (self-present positively or negatively) \times 2 (interact with friend or stranger) ANOVA on respondents' recall of the ratings they and their interviewers had given in response to the interview questions revealed a significant main effect for self-presentation, $F(1, 36) = 9.06$, $p < .01$, suggesting that self-enhancing interactions with both friends and strangers are easier to recall ($M = 11.30$) than negative interactions with either friends or strangers ($M = 9.50$). No other main effect or interaction was significant (see Table 4).

These recall data can be broken down into two categories: memory for own ratings and memory for the interviewers' ratings. Examining just the respondents' recall of the interviewers' ratings, we found no significant main effects or interactions in the same 2 \times 2 analysis. Examining just the respondents' recall of their own ratings, the same 2 \times 2 ANOVA revealed a significant main effect, $F(1, 36) = 13.46$, $p < .001$, suggesting that positive, self-enhancing self-presentations are easier to recall ($M = 6.20$) than negative self-presentations ($M = 4.90$). The ANOVA also revealed a marginally significant main effect and interaction. Respondents were somewhat more likely to recall their own ratings if they had interacted with strangers than if they had interacted with friends, $F(1, 36) = 3.90$, $p = .06$, and were least likely to recall their own ratings if they had presented themselves negatively to a friend, $F(1, 36) = 3.90$, $p = .06$. Mean recall was identical in both the positive presentation conditions (friends and strangers, $M = 6.20$) but somewhat lower if participants had presented themselves negatively to a friend ($M = 4.20$) than if they had presented themselves negatively to a stranger ($M = 5.60$). Because these latter effects did not attain traditional levels of statistical significance, they should not be considered highly reliable, but it is important to note that the means are in the opposite direction to the means found in Study 3. This suggests that presenting oneself negatively is not simply equivalent to a more extreme form of presenting oneself modestly, or the means would be at least in the same general direction. Respondents had better recall if they presented themselves modestly to friends than if they presented themselves self-enhancingly to friends (Study 3), but they had somewhat worse recall if they presented themselves negatively compared with self-enhancingly to friends (Study 5).

Memory effects and automatic processing: Interviewers' recall. We conducted the same 2 \times 2 ANOVA on interviewers' recall of the ratings. A main effect for self-presentational condi-

tion emerged, in which interviewers whose partners had been requested to present themselves self-enhancingly correctly recalled more ratings ($M = 11.68$) than interviewers whose partners had been requested to present themselves negatively ($M = 9.55$), $F(1, 36) = 11.38, p < .01$. This significant main effect suggests that overall a positive bias in self-presentation may be more automatic, in that it interferes less with other cognitive processing than modest self-presentation. No other main effects or interactions were found.

Discussion

Studies 3 and 4 demonstrated that modest self-presentations to friends are easier to recall than self-enhancing self-presentations to friends. Study 5 demonstrated that negative self-presentations are not easier to recall when presenting to either friends or strangers. The effects of modesty apparently did not generalize to outright negativity. The combination of Studies 3, 4, and 5 suggest that self-presentation to friends may resemble a U-shaped curve on the dimension of positivity–negativity. Both highly positive and highly negative self-presentations to friends may be more difficult to remember and hence may interfere with other cognitive processes more than modest, intermediate self-presentations. Apparently, then, it is the intermediate level of positivity—specifically, modesty—that is the most natural way to present oneself to friends.

In self-presentation to strangers, on the other hand, the relationship between positivity and subsequent recall does not appear to be a U-shaped curve. Rather, interactions with strangers may be easiest to recall when self-presentation was quite favorable. Positive, self-enhancing self-presentations to strangers were easier to recall than either modest (Studies 3 and 4) or negative (Study 5) self-presentations to strangers. These results are consistent with the view that self-enhancement is the typical, familiar, and natural way to act with strangers (Paulhus, 1993).

Alternately, it is possible that the positivity of self-presentations to both friends and strangers may result in a U-shaped curve, but the U is shifted for strangers compared with friends. In other words, it may be possible to be too self-enhancing to both friends and strangers, but being even moderately self-enhancing may be too much for self-presentations to friends. Being extremely self-enhancing (perhaps to the point of being boastful) may inhibit recall and be unnatural when self-presenting to strangers as well as to friends, and the present study may have demonstrated only one side of the U (suggesting a linear relationship) for stranger interactions because the manipulation was not extreme enough.

General Discussion

The patterns that govern self-presentation appear to be quite different when the interaction partners are friends as opposed to strangers. The five studies presented in this article examined one major dimension along which self-presentation may differ in the two types of relationships. Self-presentations were found to be more self-enhancing in the presence of a stranger than in the presence of a friend. We began with the assumption (based on Schlenker, 1980, 1985, 1986) that self-presentation is often

a trade-off between opposing motives to be modest and to describe oneself favorably. Studies 1 and 2 found that when interacting with strangers, people apparently emphasize favorability, but when people are interacting with friends, they shift toward greater modesty.

In Study 3 we examined how well people could recall the details of an interpersonal interaction as a function of how they had been instructed to present themselves, because more familiar, habitual, and presumably automatic styles of self-presentation should free up more cognitive resources for encoding the interaction and should therefore result in better memory. Study 3 found that people recalled the interaction best when they had presented themselves either modestly to friends or very favorably to strangers, consistent with the view that these are the habitual and automatic ways of acting. In contrast, being modest with strangers or being self-enhancing with friends resulted in impaired memory for the interaction. Study 4 replicated the results of Study 3 and showed that the effects are not merely an artifact of informational differences between friends and strangers.

Although modest self-presentations increased memory for interactions with friends, Study 5 found that negative (i.e., quite self-deprecatory) self-presentations were not automatic and did not increase memory with any audiences. Thus, it is not simply that people tend to be positive about themselves with strangers and negative with friends. Rather, the optimal and presumably familiar and automatic way of presenting oneself to friends is an intermediate level of favorability (modesty).

In Tetlock and Manstead's (1985) review of the self-presentation literature, they suggested that researchers begin to focus on the cognitive consequences of self-presentation, and the present research is one attempt to answer their call by focusing on how memory for a social interaction is affected by different self-presentational goals with different audiences. Lord and Saenz (1985) suggested that people who stand out in a negative fashion show impaired memory for a social interaction (see also Gutierrez, Saenz, & Green, in press; Saenz, 1994; Saenz & Lord, 1989). The present results suggest that violating the norms for modesty with friends as well as standing out by looking bad (by being modest with strangers or self-derogating with anyone) interferes with the processing of social interactions. Future research may examine what other aspects of self-presentation besides positivity–modesty of self-presentation may differ by audience, and whether cultural differences (automatic self-presentation may differ considerably in non-Western cultures) as well as individual differences may moderate the effects we found.

Automatic and Controlled Self-Presentation

The results of Studies 3 and 4 suggest that the patterns shown by our participants in Studies 1 and 2 reflected automatic self-presentational processes (using Paulhus's [1993] operationalization of automaticity, which, according to Bargh's [1994] reformulation of the term, refers primarily to efficiency). Although we have argued that an analysis of the contingent costs, risks, and benefits would conclude that the optimal practice would be to be self-enhancing with strangers and modest with friends, we do not mean to imply that people undertake such

cost-benefit interactions during each interaction and then deliberately manage their self-presentations to conform to the optimal pattern. Instead, it seems more likely (given the results of Studies 3 and 4) that these contingencies gradually shape automatic patterns of self-presentation that are readily activated by the presence of a friend or stranger. When we instructed participants to mimic the self-presentational patterns that were observed in Studies 1 and 2 (i.e., favorable to strangers, modest to friends), participants had ample attentional resources left over to use for storing relatively accurate information about the interaction. In contrast, when we instructed them to go against those patterns, their ability to process information suffered.

According to Paulhus (1993), automatic self-presentation is likely to occur when an individual is under cognitive load and has few attentional resources remaining to concentrate on managing the impression he or she is making. As attentional resources dwindle (because of affective or cognitive loads), self-presentation becomes more automatic (Paulhus, 1993). Our results replicated and confirmed Paulhus's finding that positive, self-enhancing self-presentation is more automatic, in that it interferes less with cognitive functioning and leaves more resources available for processing and remembering the interaction in Study 3. Like most of the currently published self-presentation literature, the audience in Paulhus's studies usually consisted of strangers, and automatic self-presentation in these studies was positive, self-enhancing self-presentation (Paulhus et al., 1989; Paulhus & Levitt, 1987). Our findings also extend and elaborate Paulhus's model by suggesting that a more modest self-presentational style may be more automatic when one is interacting with friends. Meanwhile, a negative self-derogatory style interferes with the cognitive processing of an interaction between both friends and strangers. On the basis of the studies presented in this article, it seems that although automatic self-presentation may be self-enhancing when the audience consists of strangers, it may be more automatic to present oneself modestly when one is self-presenting to friends.

One of the few studies to examine self-presentation in existing relationships was conducted by Leary et al. (1994), who found that, in same-sex relationships, greater familiarity led to lower self-reported impression management. (In opposite-sex relationships, however, greater familiarity led to increases in self-reported impression management.) It is possible that their participants reported less impression management in same-sex interactions because the forms of self-presentation had become so automatic in their friendships that they no longer were consciously aware of their self-presentational motivations. If the self-presentations were more automatic in same-sex friendships and more controlled in opposite-sex friendships, the participants might have been better able to report their impression management attempts in opposite-sex interactions.

Modesty or Accuracy?

Were participants being more modest or simply being more accurate and less boastful with friends than with strangers? Although we did not attempt to distinguish between accuracy and modesty in our studies, a number of past studies may shed some light on this question. Sedikides (1993) demonstrated very convincingly that self-enhancement is a more prominent motiva-

tion than either self-verification or accuracy, and people are least concerned with accuracy. Although Sedikides's work was mainly focused on when people seek information about themselves, his findings may also apply to self-presentations.

There are many factors that make interactions with friends different from interactions with strangers. With friends, there is an expectation of future interaction, there is the friend's prior knowledge of the presenter that could possibly disconfirm the self-presentation, there is the presence of affective bonds, there is accountability, there are common interests and shared outcomes, and so forth. Future research may examine what aspect of our relationships with friends and strangers causes the differences in self-presentations: Are we more modest with friends because of the likelihood that we will interact with them in the future; or because of their knowledge about us; or for some other reason, such as accountability? Some previous studies have used interactions with strangers but have varied one or more of these factors, enabling us to examine some of the components of friendship individually to help begin to determine what factors may influence the different self-presentations. In Schlenker and Leary's (1982) studies of how audiences reacted to self-presentations, they varied whether the audience knew about the actor's past performance and the actor's description of his or her own performance. Participants who either knew or did not know how well an actor had performed on a task (the performance was described as very poor, poor, average, well, or very well to those participants who were informed about the performance) heard the actor describe that performance of his or hers as either very poor, poor, average, well, or very well. With one exception, if the audience knew about the actor's performance, they tended to like the actor better when the actor accurately described his or her performance compared to when he or she gave an inaccurate description. However, actors were liked best if they were modest in their description of their superior performance. In other words, if the audience believed that the actor had done well and was modest about it, they liked the actor more than if the actor gave an accurate description of the performance (and therefore sounded boastful). Schlenker and Leary (1982) also showed that if the audience is not informed about an actor's achievements, however, modest self-presentation may result in less favorable impressions of the actor than self-enhancing self-presentations. Thus, when presenting to strangers who, unlike friends, may not know one's performance record, self-enhancing self-presentation may be the most effective strategy. When presenting to people who know about one's past accomplishments, however, modesty may be the most effective self-presentation.

Taking a slightly different approach, Godfrey, Jones, and Lord (1986) showed that people who were instructed to try to present themselves as especially competent succeeded in being perceived as more competent but also decreased their likability (see also Schütz, 1995). Thus, the disclosure of highly favorable information about oneself does entail some loss of likability. With strangers, perhaps, the value of communicating such important information may make it worth the cost to likability. With friends, however, the informational value of such disclosures is presumably minimal (because friends already know such things), and so maintaining the friend's liking is probably the overriding goal. Preoccupation with keeping a friend's lik-

ing may be an important reason for the tendency to be modest with friends.

Thus, the methods we used in our studies did not attempt to distinguish between modesty and accuracy of self-descriptions, but past research suggests that modesty may be the overriding goal when presenting oneself to friends for both intrapsychic and interpersonal reasons. In terms of cognitive, intrapsychic reasons, Sedikides's (1993) work suggests that accuracy is only a secondary concern when people have access to information that can increase their self-knowledge. In terms of interpersonal reasons, Schlenker and Leary (1982) demonstrated that modest presentations of success result in the highest ratings of liking by the audience. Moreover, it is important to remember that all participants in all conditions in the present series of studies were instructed to be accurate in their self-descriptions, and hence one should assume that all self-presentations were within the latitude of acceptance (Jones et al., 1981). As Jones et al. (1981) pointed out, it is possible to be honest and accurate about oneself and yet still be either self-enhancing, modest, or self-derogating. The present set of studies was concerned with where, within that (accurate) range, people present themselves to friends and to strangers.

Concluding Remarks

Self-presentation researchers have long remarked on how facile people are at modifying and tailoring their self-disclosures so as to produce the optimal, desired effects on their listeners. The present results indicate what may well be one of the most important and fundamental of these changes in self-presentational style: People present themselves favorably to strangers but modestly to their friends. Apparently, the norms and goals that determine self-presentational favorability are quite different depending on whether one is interacting with friends or strangers. Future research may find other ways in which relationship contexts alter self-presentation.

We began this article by citing the importance of self-presentation for the construction of identity: Identity claims require validation by others in order to gain social reality and become legitimate (Schlenker, 1980; Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1982). Self-presentation is thus a vital means by which people get others to perceive them as having the qualities that they wish to have. The present series of studies suggests that people use self-presentation differently depending on the relationship they have with the audience, and these results seem readily interpretable in terms of the negotiation of identity. With strangers, one is just beginning the process of identity negotiation. It seems most desirable and appropriate to begin that negotiation by making strongly positive and favorable claims about oneself, because these claims will constitute all that the audience knows about the self-presenter.

Friends, however, presumably already know many of one's good points, and so the process of identity negotiation is already well underway. The conveying of information can therefore be relegated to a secondary motive, while getting along with the friend can take precedence. Past evidence suggests that continually reasserting one's successes may be seen as arrogantly harping on one's superiority, whereas being modest about these known qualities will elicit greater liking. Consistent with this

analysis, we found that people spontaneously acted in a relatively modest fashion in the presence of their friends and that they showed the best recall for the interaction when they were modest. Apparently, modesty steers an effective middle course that allows past identity claims to stand while also avoiding irritating or alienating one's friends.

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