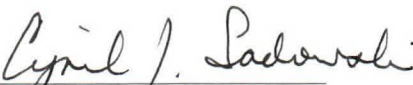
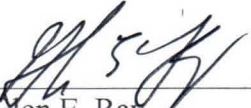



Resultant Mood As a Function of  
Social Power Variation

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Social Power Variation

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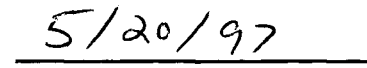
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## Vita

Steven Michael Elias, son of Allen Joe and Caryn Phyllis (Bongar) Elias, was born December 22, 1973, in New Brunswick, New Jersey. He attended the University of South Florida (USF) in Tampa, Florida and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology in May, 1995. After working on the staff of the Hillsborough County Crisis Center in Tampa, Florida for two years, he became a Research Assistant to several doctors at USF. After gaining research experience for one year, he entered Graduate School, Auburn University Montgomery, in September, 1995.

THESIS ABSTRACT  
RESULTANT MOOD AS A FUNCTION OF  
SOCIAL POWER VARIATION

Steven Michael Elias

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An attempt was made to determine what moods are likely to be experienced by targets after complying to powerholders manipulating different forms of social power. Furthermore, it was examined whether or not the target's level of self-esteem would influence the resultant mood. With regards to self-esteem, support was expected to be obtained for either the cognitive consistency, self-concept clarity, or self-esteem acting as a buffer theories of self-esteem.

The data for both Study 1 ( $n = 136$ ) and Study 2 ( $n = 128$ ) were obtained from undergraduate students at Auburn University Montgomery. After participant's self-esteem was measured, they read and were asked to place themselves into scenarios in which social power was being manipulated. Participants then reported the moods that they had experienced as a result.

Both Study 1 and Study 2 showed that individuals who complied to coercive power experienced the least amount of positive affect and the greatest negative affect. Furthermore, participants with high self-esteem reported experiencing more positive affect after complying to coercive power than those with low self-esteem. The results of Study 1 showed that individuals with low self-esteem experienced greater negative affect after complying to any form of social power when compared to individuals with high self-esteem. These findings lend support to the theory of self-esteem acting as a buffer.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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No acknowledgment is as important as the one which is made to the author's family and friends. Allen Elias is, and will always be, an inspiring force who will never be out of the author's mind. There is no conceivable way to express the thanks which must be offered to Caryn Elias. She is a woman of great courage and strength for whom immense love and respect is felt. No matter how difficult a test life has presented her, never once has she failed. Furthermore, Jonathan Elias, as well as the Elias and Bongar families, can not go without mention. All of these individuals are responsible for this work because without them it could not have been done. It goes without saying that this thesis is for them.

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## Resultant Mood As a Function of Social Power Variation

Through the years, classifications of types of social power have been developed, the most common of which is that of French and Raven (1959). Podsakoff and Schriesheim (1985) have written that, “Among the most popular and widely accepted conceptualizations of social power is the five-fold typology developed by French and Raven, and numerous field studies have used this conceptualization over the past few decades” (p. 387). At its core, the utilization of social power consists of a powerholder who is trying to achieve compliance from another individual, the target. The most common example would be that of an organizational setting in which a supervisor tries to have a subordinate comply with a request. According to French and Raven’s (1959) classification, if compliance occurred, it would be due to the powerholder using one or more of five types of power: reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert.

### Description of Power Types

Reward power is established when an individual has the ability to “administer positive valences” (French & Raven, 1959, p. 263). For reward power to be utilized, an influencing agent must be able to administer rewards or benefits for the target being influenced, and it must be clear that the agent will only reward the target if he complies with the request (Raven & Rubin, 1976). An example of reward power would be seen

when subordinates comply with a request because their supervisor may compensate them for doing so.

Coercive power is similar to reward power because it also involves a powerholder's ability to manipulate outcomes. Coercive power is used when the influencing agent has the ability to punish the targets, and when it is understood that the targets will be punished if they do not comply (Raven & Rubin, 1976). It is believed that coercive power gives an influencing agent more control than reward power because coercive power makes a demand which will result in negative consequences for non-compliance while a target's failure to respond to reward power results in no negative consequences, only the loss of a reward. Thus, failure to comply to coercive power will result in negative consequences and punishment for the target, increasing the likelihood of compliance when compared to reward power (Tedeschi & Lindskold, 1976).

Referent power is established when the target identifies with the powerholder. Identification refers to a target's having identified with the influencing agent, or having a desire to have such an identity (French & Raven, 1959). This is seen when, for example, an individual complies because of his or her admiration for the requester.

Legitimate power is being used when a target accepts the influencing agent's right to make certain requests, and as a result feels obligated to comply with the requests. Legitimate power can be used in several manners. For example, legitimate power can be used in a formal structure (workers accepting the legitimate power of their supervisor), with a formal obligation (the expectation of an individual who has contributed a favor to

expect reciprocation), or by individuals in need who ordinarily would not expect help from individuals in power (Raven & Rubin, 1976).

Expert power is used when the target attributes superior knowledge or ability to the powerholder (Raven & Rubin, 1976). It is believed targets evaluate the powerholder's expertise in relation to their own knowledge as well as to an absolute knowledge (French & Raven, 1959). For example, many people comply with doctors' requests simply because they believe the doctor knows best.

### Research Findings

When it comes to using one of the five types of social power it is questionable as to why one type of power as opposed to another is used. It has been suggested that powerholders will contemplate the effectiveness of each type of power they possess, and would avoid using the ones considered ineffective (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970). If this is the case, the use of social power would be premeditated and not spontaneous.

It should also be mentioned that powerholders commonly may incorporate certain techniques for the purpose of enhancing the power type they are using. For instance, powerholders may use intimidation in order to make themselves appear dangerous or forceful (Jones & Pittman, 1982). This could enhance the ability to use coercive power in order to achieve compliance. However, one must use caution when using such techniques because of the risk of reactance or a boomerang effect, which occurs when a target does the opposite of what has been asked (Hovland, Janis, & Kelly, 1953).

Findings related to organizational settings.

Much of the research generated on social power has used organizational scenarios. Such is the case with research by Shaw and Condelli (1986) on the effects of compliance outcome and basis of power on the powerholder-target relationship. In this study, scenarios were presented which were consistent with that of an organizational setting. Subjects were asked to read and respond to scenarios which resembled work situations at an automobile factory. Data showed that participants viewed the use of coercive power as the least favorable and the least attractive. Furthermore, when a positive outcome was attached to the target's compliance, the powerholder-target relationship was rated as being a more positive one. Shaw and Condelli (1986) concluded that a powerholder must not only be concerned with the power type used, but also must be concerned with the outcome the target is likely to experience as a result of compliance.

Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980) examined influence tactics used in the work place in order to persuade subordinates, co-workers, and superiors to comply with requests. Information was gathered by having respondents write an essay which described themselves influencing another person successfully in the workplace. Results suggest that as a target's status increases, the powerholder is more likely to use more rational tactics such as offering explanations, compromising, and using logic for gaining compliance. Similarly, Hinkin and Schriesheim (1990), through the use of survey questionnaires, investigated subordinates' perceptions of relationships between

supervisor influence and power. Findings of confirmatory factor analysis suggest that when powerholders use rationality to gain compliance they are perceived by the target as having more expertise and legitimacy. The types of social power which are positively associated with rationality (legitimate, expert, and referent power) consistently and positively correlated with subordinate's global satisfaction and preference. Hinkin and Schriesheim (1990) also found that "strong-arm" tactics, in both personal and interpersonal settings, will achieve short-term compliance, but the long-term effects may be negative.

The prevalence and effectiveness of types of power used by influencers on subordinates during crisis and non-crisis circumstances was studied by Mulder, de Jong, Koppelaar, and Verhage (1986) via the use of the Influence Analysis Questionnaire which was designed for their study. This study can be classified as one of the organizational type study because participants reported crisis situations which were observed in their respective departments. Correlational results show that different types of power are used in different types of situations. For example, subordinates perceived significantly more expert power being used by powerholders during crisis situations when compared to non-crisis situations where leaders were perceived as being more inclined to open consultation.

In general, from this small sample of articles pertaining to social power and influence techniques, it can be seen that the majority of research has focused on organizational settings. Furthermore, the research shows that use of social power does

have an effect on the target after compliance has occurred. Such effects can be seen for example in ratings of target satisfaction after compliance and the effect that compliance to the specific social power types has on the powerholder-target relationship in the future.

Findings related to interpersonal relations.

Social power investigation has branched out to study relationships in a broader framework than the organizational context. Imai (1989) studied the relationship between perceived social power and the perception of being influenced, when interacting with such individuals as students, parents, friends, co-workers, spouses, and teachers. By using such people, Imai was able to study the effects of using the different power types within an interpersonal relationship. Questionnaire results showed that “legitimate power was significantly related to the perception of being influenced in every interpersonal relationship” (p. 103). Therefore, it would be necessary for a powerholder in an interpersonal relationship to be perceived as having legitimate power if she is to exert an influence on the target. In a later study of social power by Imai (1993), subjects answered questions related to influencers who were, but were not limited to, parents and friends. Correlational findings suggested that the more targets believe themselves to possess the ability to influence, the more they perceive others as being able to influence. This suggests that there is an assumed similarity amongst powerholders that if they have power, everyone else has power also.



Findings related to power usage outcome.

Bachman, Smith, and Slesinger (1966) conducted correlational research via the use of questionnaires partly to determine levels of target satisfaction relative to the five bases of power. Results showed that reward power in certain instances may be perceived more as the ability to bribe, payoff, or play favoritism. It should also be noted that the participants in this study, 656 salesman, rated complying to the referent and expert power types as being the most satisfying. This finding has been supported by research using social power scenarios from Fontaine and Beerman (1977), who also found that compliance due to referent and expert power led to the most mutual liking, desire for future interactions, judged competence, and perceived control.

The use of coercive power by an influencing agent commonly results in the powerholder being disliked by the person affected, which in turn may result in a negative “halo effect” (Raven & Rubin, 1976, p. 230). If this occurs, the influencing agent may be perceived as less expert, and less legitimate, which reduces his ability to be persuasive. Robberson and Rogers (1988) have found that the more frightened people are, the more likely they are to respond to requests. Using coercive power may easily instill fear which, according to Robberson and Rogers findings, would increase the target’s probability of compliance.

Kipnis (1984) has found that having power can result in significant psychological changes in individuals. First, when a powerholder succeeds in an attempt to influence, they may conclude that they control the target. If this occurs over a period of time, the

idea may become reinforced and strengthened. However, Kipnis (1976) discovered that when a type of social power is used, but the desired outcome is not achieved, the powerholder may lose faith in their own effectiveness and resort to coercion. Second, the powerholder who resorts to coercion may begin to devalue the individual they perceive themselves as controlling, likely resulting in negative affect for the target. These changes may occur regardless as to whether the powerholder is a male or a female who dominates a spouse, executives who manage businesses, or political leaders who govern nations. With this in mind, one can see the importance of research which examines the affective outcomes which are attached to the complying with the different types of social power.

The majority of the research cited above revolves around French and Raven's (1959) bases of social power. Such research has discovered, for example, which power types will result in target satisfaction and dissatisfaction, who is most likely to use which power type, and possible gender differences when it comes to the private internal acceptance of a powerholder's attitudes. Furthermore, it has been found that after compliance the outcome which the target experiences will effect the powerholder-target relationship in either a positive or negative way (Shaw & Condelli, 1986). Because of this it can be said that a powerholder should be concerned with the possible outcome which may result from their using a specific type of social power. As a result, research needs to be done in order to determine what types of outcomes are likely to occur as a result of complying to each of the five social power types specifically.

### Critique of Social Power Research

Previous studies have been criticized for using single item and ipsative scales which may produce erroneous results (Schriesheim, Hinkin, & Podsakoff, 1991). When considering French and Raven's (1959) power types to be broad classifications, one can see how single item scales could possess poor content validity.

As described by Kerlinger (1992), content validity is present when the items of the measuring device are representative of the content, or the universe of content, pertaining to the property being measured. Clearly, when a concept has a broad range, several representative items should be included to ensure that all aspects are covered, which will increase content validity. Previous research in the area of social power types has been criticized for being unrepresentative of the content domain.

Results of previous research have also been criticized because of the use of ipsative scales which may distort empirical relationships among the five power bases. When ipsative scales are used, the examinee chooses one attribute over another in each test item. The result is a rank ordering of all attributes, but the strength of each attribute is impossible to determine. This, along with scales not being independent, results in ipsative scales having limited use in research (Murphy & Davidshofer, 1991). Other problems with ipsative scales are that usual statistical manipulations are not applicable because such statistics rely upon assumptions which ipsative procedures systematically violate. Also, the ipsative procedure itself produces spurious negative correlations among the test items (Kerlinger, 1992). As a result of ipsative scales being used in social

power research, it has been suggested that empirical relationships among the different types of social power are distorted (Schriesheim, Hinkin, & Podsakoff, 1991).

These criticisms of previous research and French and Raven's (1959) theory should not be taken lightly. Several theorists indicate that there is no existing support for the original five power types. Yukl (1989) has suggested that, "The methodological limitations of the [French and Raven] power studies raises serious doubt about the accuracy of the[ir] findings" (p. 35). Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989) devised their own method of evaluating social power because of their belief that most previous studies of social power used psychometrically unsound measures. Similarly, Podsakoff and Schriesheim (1985) agree that, "The existing research does not support drawing confident conclusions about such things as relationships between the five power bases and subordinate variable outcomes" (p. 409). When discussing criticism of the measures Raven (1993) stated that, "Clearly, this is an area where development in research on the bases of power model is sorely needed" (p. 246).

After reading such criticisms the question may be asked, "why base a study around the French and Raven theory?" Along with the criticism, it is important to note that the French and Raven theory has had a strong research following for over 30 years. Within that time period their theory has been the most often cited in research pertaining to social power and continues to be among the most popular categorizations of social power types to date. Because of the problems cited above, experimental studies manipulating power bases are needed.

### Mood And Social Influence

A great deal of research has been conducted in the areas of mood and mood states. According to Chaplin (1985), a mood is a “mild, usually transitory emotion” (p. 286). That is, moods are temporary and can change easily. From this the question which arises is, “what can change a person’s mood?” According to Skinner (1953), only an eliciting stimulus which is either conditioned or unconditioned can change emotion. For example, a powerholder may make threats of punishment to a target if the target does not comply with requests. In this scenario the eliciting stimuli would be the threats, which in turn would probably elicit such moods as fear and resentment.

Summarizing the impact of power types on mood, it is questionable as to whether or not all individuals would respond the same emotionally to such stimuli. In the above example, a powerholder has elicited feelings of fear and resentment from a target. Work in social psychological research in the areas of attraction, behavioral confirmation, hidden values, loneliness, and motivation all shows that there could be differences of mood elicited from people with differing levels of self-esteem (Myers, 1993). One possible method of examining this suggestion would be to separate individuals of high and low self-esteem, expose them to the same mood inducing stimuli, and then measure the resultant moods to determine if there is a difference of mood between the high and low self-esteem groups.

It is important to note that theories pertaining to mood variation as related to self-esteem make different predictions. In order to gain a better understanding of this topic it is necessary to examine the prevalent theories in this area.

### Discrepancy Models

The theory which best addresses consistencies between an individual's cognitions is Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (1957). According to Festinger, individuals strive towards consistency among opinions, attitudes, beliefs, actions, and other aspects of their life. However, inconsistencies produce dissonance, which is psychological discomfort.

Perhaps Festinger's best known example of dissonance can be seen in the individual who although knowing it is unhealthy, continues to smoke. In this situation, the individual knows that smoking is an unhealthy habit, but yet his or her behaviors include smoking. If this individual does not explain away or rationalize this discrepancy to themselves, there would be dissonance between this person's knowledge and this person's actions. According to Festinger, the presence of such an inconsistency would result in psychological discomfort.

Festinger's theory as a whole revolves around two main hypotheses. First, when dissonance occurs the individual will try to reduce it to a state of consonance (consistency) because such dissonance is psychologically uncomfortable. Second, when individuals are in a state of dissonance they will both actively try to reduce the state, and at the same time will avoid information that would increase the state. Therefore, because

the individual tries to specifically reduce the dissonance, the dissonance itself is a motivating factor.

According to Festinger's (1957) theory there are four types of situations in which cognitive dissonance can arise: logical inconsistencies, inconsistency with cultural mores, inconsistency between one cognition and a more general cognition, and inconsistencies because of past experiences. Logical inconsistencies can be seen, for example, in a woman who believes that all humans will die, but at the same time believes that she will live forever. An example of cognitive dissonance as a result of an inconsistency between cultural mores can be seen in the father who strikes his child excessively as a result of being made angry. Dissonance will occur because the parent will be aware that what he is doing is unacceptable behavior of a parent towards his child in our culture.

Dissonance due to an inconsistency between an individual's cognition and a more encompassing cognition can be seen in the woman who strongly considers voting Republican, even though she considers herself to be a life long Democrat. In this example, the encompassing cognition of being a Democrat is inconsistent with voting Republican. Past experiences will also cause dissonance. For example, if a man touches a hot stove and does not feel any pain, he would experience dissonance because experience tells him that touching a hot stove should cause pain.

Relevant to this research is Festinger's writings, within his theory of cognitive dissonance (1957), pertaining to the effects of forced compliance. When examining the effects of forcing an individual to comply, several outcomes are possible. Sometimes the

influence exerted will have no effect and compliance will not occur on the part of the target. However, sometimes targets will behaviorally comply as well as change their opinions and beliefs about the situation, and sometimes targets will comply behaviorally without changing their opinions and beliefs.

According to Festinger, a target's compliance without the changing of personal beliefs or opinions will occur when either of two conditions exist. First, this can result from a powerholder's exerting a threat of punishment for noncompliance, as is the case when coercive power is manipulated. Here the target is confronted with either complying to the request, or suffering the consequences, which would be the threatened punishment. If the threat is strong enough, targets will comply behaviorally, but their private opinions will not be effected.

The second condition which will result in a target's behavioral compliance without the changing of the target's personal beliefs or opinions revolves around compliance being brought about through the use of rewards, as is the case when reward power is manipulated. In this situation, if the reward is attractive to the target, the individual will behaviorally comply in order to acquire it. However, in this situation and, as is the case with the use of coercion, personal beliefs and opinions will not change.

Whichever of the above cited methods is used to gain compliance, be it by way of rewards or coercion, the overall outcome remains the same. In both situations there would be an inconsistency between the individual's personal beliefs and the individual's overt behavior, which in turn would result in the occurrence of dissonance. "One may



assert, then, that dissonance is to some degree an inevitable consequence of forced compliance” (Festinger, 1957, p. 89).

With this in mind, the overall premise of Festinger’s theory in the area of forced compliance is that, be it via reward or coercion, forced compliance is inevitably followed by psychological discomfort. However, Aronson (1969) writes that the experiencing of negative feelings associated with dissonance theory revolves around the specific individual’s self-esteem and expectations. Therefore, theories which place emphasis on dissonance, according to Aronson, are actually dealing with the individual’s self-esteem and cognitions about some behavior. “If dissonance exists it is because the individual’s behavior is inconsistent with his self-concept” (Aronson, 1969, p. 27).

Aronson (1969) continues to demonstrate how self-esteem and expectancies play a role in the experiencing of negative moods by examining individuals with both low self-esteem and high self-esteem. The individual who considers himself to be a “schnook,” will expect himself to behave like a “schnook.” Consequently, any behaviors this individual commits which are wise, reasonable, successful, or “un-schnooky” should arouse dissonance. However, dissonance theory predicts that for people with a low self-esteem the positive consequences of success will be reduced by the discomfort resulting from dissonance. With regard to individuals with a high self-esteem, when failure occurs they will experience dissonance as well as other negative feelings merely because failure is unpleasant.

Similarly, several theorists believe that individual reactions to events can be linked to that individual's expectations (Koestner & McClelland, 1990). For example, an individual with a high self-esteem will have an expectation of achievement, whereas an individual with low self-esteem will have the opposite expectation. It is the expectations held that will influence an individual's affect either after meeting that expectation, or not meeting the expectation. From a cognitive dissonance point of view, affect would be the result of either consistency or discrepancy between the individual's expectations (which are related to the individual's self-esteem) and actual outcomes.

Aronson and Mettee (1968) found that individuals with high self-esteem will be affected much more than individuals with low self-esteem after their personal expectations were disconfirmed. This is because individuals with high self-esteem are forced to behave in a manner that is incompatible with the views they hold of themselves, and negative feelings are found to occur when individuals with high self-esteem behaves in a way which is conflicting with their expectations. "There is a conflict between the person's belief in his or her own worth and the fact that he or she has done something that damages this belief" (Carlson, 1993, p. 583). Conversely, people with low self-esteem will be less affected because there is little inconsistency between the esteem-threatening event and their opinions of themselves.

For example, targets with high self-esteem expect to be successful, but because of compliance to a powerholder using coercive power, they are forced to behave in a way which they consider to be unsuccessful. Such persons are likely to experience aversive

feelings when they do comply because they have behaved in a way which disconfirms their expectations. However, persons with low self-esteem would be less likely to hold such expectations, and would therefore not likely experience aversive feelings after complying to the powerholder manipulating coercive power.

In the case of reward power, individuals with high self-esteem will experience little mood change because their expectations are positive and, by being rewarded, these expectations are being met. However, whatever mood change there is will be towards positive moods simply because being rewarded brings pleasant consequences. An individual with a low self-esteem will likely experience an increase in both positive and negative mood. The positive mood will result simply from being rewarded, which has already been established as bringing positive aftereffects. However, negative mood will result because reward is inconsistent with the individual's self-concept of nonsuccess, as Aronson (1969) so noted, and therefore reward may not seem any more credible than failure (Baumeister, 1993).

Developments by Higgins (1987) pertaining to self-discrepancy theory are specifically related to the issue of affect. According to Higgins, discrepancies involving the relations between the "actual" self, the "ideal" self, and the "ought" self are related to differing types of affect. The actual self refers to one's representations of oneself: the belief about the attributes one actually possesses. The ideal self is a representation of who an individual hopes, wishes, or desires to be. The ought self is one's representation of who one feels he or she should be, or feels obligated to be. Higgins (1987) proposes

that large discrepancies between the actual self and the ideal self will induce feelings of disappointment, dissatisfaction, and depressed affect. Furthermore, a large discrepancy between the actual self and the ought self will induce feelings of guilt, self-contempt, and anxiety.

Take for example an individual who desires to be successful. However, in actuality, this individual often complies to requests which result in nonsuccess whenever there may be negative outcomes for noncompliance. According to Higgins (1987) there would be a discrepancy between this person's ideal self and their actual self, thus resulting in feelings of disappointment, dissatisfaction, and depression.

Similarly, take for example an individual who feels that they are obligated not to base their decisions on the possible rewards which can be attached to those decisions. However, in actuality, there has been occasions where this person has decided to comply to requests made of him in the work place, which he originally did not want to comply to, simply because there was a large bonus attached to the decision. In this situation, there would be a discrepancy between the individual's ought self and their actual self, thus resulting in feelings of guilt, self-contempt, and anxiety.

In summary, the cognitive consistency theory has its roots in Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance. This theory proposes that individuals strive for consistency within themselves, and when there is an inconsistency or dissonance, psychological discomfort is the result. Festinger's (1957) writings on forced compliance are directly related to this research, in that attention is paid to the effects of using rewards

and coercion as a means to gain compliance. When either situation occurs the result will be compliance without the changing of the target's personal beliefs or opinions.

Furthermore, either situation inevitably leads up to psychological discomfort.

Aronson (1969), in later writings, states that negative affect associated with cognitive dissonance is the result of discrepancies between an individual's self-esteem and that individual's expectations. Overall, individuals with high levels of self-esteem will possess more positive expectations than individuals with low levels of self-esteem. Therefore, an individual with a high self-esteem who expects success will experience negative feelings if those expectations are not met. However, if an individual with a low level of self-esteem expects failure, and failure occurs, they are not likely to experience negative feelings because their expectancies have been met.

In summarizing the discrepancy models above, it is important to note that each of the theories contends that discrepancy produces a change in mood. Therefore, if an individual does comply with a powerholder's request that they do not want to, there will be a discrepancy and thus a change in mood.

### Self-Concept Clarity

The self-concept, according to Campbell and Lavellee (1993), refers to the knowledge aspects of the self-schema. More specifically, it is a set of beliefs which individuals hold about their own personal attributes. Furthermore, the evaluative aspects of the self-schema, which are produced by observing the self as an object of evaluation, is termed the self-esteem. As a result, the question of "Who am I?" is answered by

examining the self-concept, where as the question of “How do I feel about who I am?” is answered by examining the self-esteem.

Self-concept clarity as a whole is concerned with “the clarity of the knowledge structure - the extent to which the contents or self-beliefs are clearly and confidently defined, temporally stable, and internally consistent” (Campbell & Lavalley, 1993, pp. 5). The self-concept can be examined as either a state or a trait, but for the purposes of this research special attention will be given to the trait aspect. A second aspect of importance is the suggestion that individuals who are low in self-esteem commonly hold a poorly defined self-concept.

According to Campbell and Lavalley (1993), because of this poorly defined self-concept, people with low self-esteem behave differently than those with high self-esteem. The major difference between the two types of individuals is that people with low self-esteem are more reactive to external cues in the social environment about themselves. They are more dependent on self-relevant external cues than are people of high self-esteem. And furthermore, besides being more dependent on these cues, low self-esteem individuals are also more susceptible to the feedback and information received from them.

Theories pertaining to affective reactions to feedback revolve around low self-esteem people having negative self-concepts, and also being unsure of their own self-worth (Baumeister, Tice, & Hutton, 1989). Baumgardner (1990) suggests that when people possess a strong sense of certainty pertaining to their personal attributes, the result

is the promotion of a sense of control over future outcomes, which in turn will produce positive affect and confidence. Simply put, “certainty in self promotes and maintains positive affect about the self” (Baumgardner, 1990, p. 1062). Baumgardner’s (1990) research is evidence for this suggestion in that when participant’s certainty was increased, positive self-affect was also increased. However, because people low in self-esteem possess more negative self-concepts, they show a greater need for “self-enhancement” which in turn results in more defined differences in affective responses to positive and negative feedback (Campbell & Lavalley, 1993).

Campbell and Lavalley (1993) make use of the example pertaining to pain and pleasure reactions to both positive and negative feedback. Within this example, when there are differences of self-esteem, the differences show that people with low self-esteem exhibit more pronounced affective reactions. Therefore, it is stated that people with low self-esteem are more threatened by negative feedback and are more gratified by positive feedback.

When looking at the example of reward power being manipulated, the results according to the self-concept clarity theory would be similar to those found with the cognitive consistency theory. Both theories propose that individuals with high self-esteem would exhibit little change of mood after complying to the use of reward power. However, there is a difference in the predictions which each theory would make for individuals with low self-esteem. Reward power, according to cognitive consistency theory, would result in an increase in both positive and negative mood. This is because

there is an inconsistency with the individual's self-concept of nonsuccess resulting in negative affect, but positive affect would also be experienced simply because of the reward. However, according to the theory of self-concept clarity, only positive affect would be experienced after compliance to reward power occurs. This is because of the findings that people with low self-esteem are more gratified by positive feedback, which one could consider being rewarded.

Differences between the self-concept clarity theory and the cognitive consistency theory can also be seen when examining a situation in which coercive power is manipulated. According to self-concept clarity theory, an individual with a high level of self-esteem would not exhibit much change in mood when complying to a coercive power because of their strong sense of identity making them less reactive to their social environment. However, according to cognitive consistency theory, an individual with a high level of self-esteem would exhibit a change in mood when complying to a coercive power because they have behaved in a way which disconfirms their expectations. Furthermore, differences between the two theories pertaining to compliance to a coercive power extend to individuals with low self-esteem as well.

According to self-concept clarity theory, an individual with a low self-esteem would experience negative feelings after complying to a coercive power because of increased sensitivity to threats as a result of holding more negative self-views, having a greater need for self-enhancement, and being more threatened by negative feedback. To the contrary, according to cognitive consistency theory, an individual with a low self-



esteem would not experience negative feelings after complying to a coercive power. This is because such a person would hold low expectations which would not be disconfirmed after compliance.

### Self-Esteem As a Buffer

Several theorists believe that our self-esteem acts as a shield or buffer which protects people from the negative events with which they deal in their everyday lives (Epstein, 1980). Therefore, individuals with a high level of self-esteem will be able to cope with, and will be protected from, these negative events. Individuals who possess a low self-esteem will have the equivalent of what can be considered a thin shield or a weak buffer. As a result, this individual will be more attuned to threats than is necessary, and when the threats become reality, he will be more reactive and hypersensitive to them (Mruk, 1995).

Take for example an individual with a high level of self-esteem who complies to a powerholder manipulating coercive power. This individual will not experience any aversive affect because their self-esteem will act as the buffer which protects them from such negative events. However, an individual with a low level of self-esteem will respond to coercive power in a much different manner. In this scenario there is no buffer or shield to protect the person from the negative event. Furthermore, because of the lack of such a buffer, the individual will likely overreact to the event resulting in aversive affect.

In the case of reward power being manipulated, little mood change will occur for either high or low self-esteem people because the event is not negative, and hence a buffer is not necessary. However, it is interesting to note that an individual with a low level of self-esteem is not likely to experience an increase in positive affect after being rewarded. This is because of the research findings suggesting that low self-esteemed people are so attuned to negative information about themselves that they commonly dismiss positive information (Epstein, 1979).

From the above examples regarding compliance to a powerholder manipulating coercive and reward power, differences in the predictions of resulting affect which would likely occur between the cognitive consistency, self-concept clarity, and self-esteem acting as a buffer theories of self-esteem can be seen. However, it is believed that the results of this study will be consistent with only one of the three theories. Therefore, it is expected that this study will substantiate, and provide further evidence, in support of one of the theories over the others.

### Hypotheses

It is the purpose of this study to examine the resulting mood of targets as a function of their level of self-esteem and their complying to a request from a powerholder using one of the specified social power types. In addition, support is expected to be found for either the cognitive consistency theory, the self-concept clarity theory, or the self-esteem as a buffer theory of self-esteem.

To summarize, the specific hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

1. Significant differences will be observed when examining the resultant moods which occur between individuals with differing levels of self-esteem as a function of compliance to the specific social power types. Specifically, it is hypothesized that complying to a powerholder manipulating coercive power, in comparison to the other positive social power types, will result in a less positive and more negative mood being experienced by the target.

2. The discrepancy models hypothesize that there will be a change in mood as a result of discrepancies between an individual's cognitions. Therefore, individuals with a high self-esteem, when compared to people with low self-esteem, will experience less positive affect and more negative affect after complying to a powerholder using coercive power. Conversely, individuals with high self-esteem will experience more positive affect after complying to a powerholder using positive forms of power, when compared to individuals with low self-esteem.

3. The theory of self-concept clarity hypothesizes that individuals with low self-esteem are more reactive to external cues in the social environment than are individuals with high-self esteem. Therefore, individuals with low self-esteem should exhibit a more negative mood after complying to coercive or expert power than would individuals with high self-esteem. Low self-esteem individuals will also exhibit more positive affect after complying to a positive form of power.

4. The theory of self-esteem acting as a buffer hypothesizes that self-esteem acts as a shield which protects people from everyday negative events. Therefore, individuals

with high self-esteem will be able to cope with negative events better than individuals with low self-esteem. This suggests individuals with low self-esteem will experience more negative and less positive affect in response to coercive power. However, self-esteem would not be related to differences in affect when positive forms of power are exercised.

## Method

### Study 1

The data collected for Study 1 includes a confound pertaining to the gender of the powerholder manipulating social power in the scenarios. Each scenario was assigned a specific gender powerholder in such a manner that the genders did not vary randomly between the different types of social powers. As a result, all of the reward, legitimate, and expert power scenarios involved a female employer, whereas all of the coercive and referent power scenarios involved a male employer. However, the data were analyzed with and without the confound to examine if the gender of the powerholders influenced the study's results. Furthermore, data were re-collected (Study 2) without the confound to ensure the accuracy of the results.

## Method

### Participants and Design

The independent variables of social power type (reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert) and level of self-esteem (high or low) were used to investigate their effects on the moods which are likely to occur as a result of complying to the requests of a specific social power type.

The data for this study were collected from 136 participants. All participants were obtained from undergraduate introductory psychology courses at Auburn University Montgomery.

The instrument used to measure each participant's level of self-esteem was administered in a group setting. Random assignment of participants to one of the five specific social power type conditions via a random number table included a double-blind technique. Neither the participants nor the experimenter were aware of the condition into which the participant was placed. The social power type scenarios and the mood measurement device were concealed in an envelope labeled by each participant's birth date. A coding system was used on the outside of the envelopes to ensure an equal number of participants being assigned to each condition.

The participants' safety had been assured by having an institutional review board, as well as a departmental review board, examine all of the experimental procedures and measurement devices. All participants were required to read, sign, and return an informed consent form before being able to participate in the study (see Appendix A).

#### Variables and Procedure

For the first phase of the two-part study, participants' level of self-esteem was measured via the Rosenberg (1965) Self Esteem Scale (see Appendix B). This scale utilizes 10 items in order to gain a standard measure of self-esteem pertaining to the participant completing the scale. The scale is designed so that participants rate themselves on a scale of one to four according to the extent to which they believe each

statement refers to them. A measure of global self-esteem is achieved by adding all of the participants negative and positive ratings together, resulting in one score. A higher score indicates higher self-esteem.

Rosenberg's (1965) scale was chosen for two reasons. First is the ease of administration. The participant completes the scale by simply placing a check next to answers for each of the ten items. Secondly, because of this, the entire scale can be completed in less than five minutes.

The Rosenberg scale has a reported test-retest correlation of .85 after a two week interval (Silber & Tippet, 1965) and a reported test-retest correlation of .82 after a one week interval (Fleming & Courtney, 1984). As for convergent validity, the Rosenberg scale has a .72 correlation with the Lerner Self-Esteem Scale, a .24 correlation with "beeper" self-reports of self esteem, and a .27 correlation with peer rating scales from an adolescent sample (Savin-Williams & Jaquish, 1981).

For the second phase of the study, five distinct scenarios were utilized in order to display the reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert social power types to the participants (see Appendix C). The scenarios portray a boss requesting compliance and describe the specific type of social power they hold. Participants were asked to assume the role of the employee while reading the scenario. The scenarios for all of the social power types have the same theme, that of asking the employee to assist the boss with a research project, but did differ as to the type of social power being manipulated. All participants were exposed to one of the five scenarios.

The dependent variable, the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (see Appendix D), was administered to measure the participants mood after they had placed themselves into the role of the employee for the assigned scenario. The PANAS is comprised of 20 adjectives describing feelings and emotions, 10 of which are positive and 10 of which are negative. Participants rated the extent to which they experienced each one after reading their social power scenario. The rating scale extends from one (very slightly or not at all) to five (extremely). Two scores are obtained by adding up the ratings for the positive and negative emotions separately. This gave the ability to determine how much positive and how much negative affect was experienced after compliance to one of the power types had occurred.

The PANAS was chosen because of its ability to provide a “reliable, precise, and largely independent measures of Positive Affect and Negative Affect, regardless of the subject population studied or the time frame and response format used” (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988, p. 1067). Watson et al. (1988) report that the PANAS is internally consistent and has “excellent convergent and discriminant correlations with lengthier measures of the underlying mood factors” (p. 1069). The test-retest reliability of the PANAS (8 week retest interval) being administered with general instructions was found to be .68 for the Positive Affect scale and .71 for the Negative Affect scale. Correlations between the PANAS and the Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Mock, & Erbaugh, 1961) and the State Trait Anxiety Inventory (A-State) (Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1970) range from .51 to .58 on the Negative Affect scale and from -.35 to



-.36 on the Positive Affect scale. Furthermore, the basic psychometric data collected for the PANAS were obtained from undergraduate students, which is consistent with the population used for this study. As a result of the participants placing themselves into the role of the employee for their scenario, it is believed that the mood which would likely occur as a result of complying to that specific power type was experienced. Therefore, the PANAS will be able to measure the mood which results from complying to the specific type of social power.

All of the data were collected from participants in their classrooms. Participants worked at individual desks in order to prevent any distractions.

Participants completed the study during their class time period. They were informed in advance that a two phase research project was going to be conducted in their class and that their participation was strictly voluntary. Those who decided to participate in the two part study were asked to complete the informed consent form at the beginning of the project.

When all of the consent forms were read and signed, the experimenter distributed to each participant a copy of Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale. Before the participants had been asked to fill out the scale the experimenter stated:

Please read the instructions on the front page of the handout and then answer the questions appropriately. Write your birth date (month, date, and year) in the top right corner of the form for identification purposes. This study is anonymous so please do not place any other identifying marks on the form. When you have

completed the questionnaire, place the form on your desk face down. You may begin.

By using the birth dates, the experimenter was able to be aware of the participants' level of self-esteem without knowing their identification. When all of the scales had been completed the experimenter collected them and informed the participants that he would be coming back to the class to collect more data in the near future.

The Rosenberg scales were scored so as to determine each participant's level of self-esteem. When all of the scales had been scored, a median split was performed in order to place the higher scoring participants in a high self-esteem category and the lower scoring participants in a low self-esteem category. This provided for a homogeneous distribution of self-esteem levels across power conditions.

When the median split was accomplished, all participants were randomly assigned via a random number table to one of the five experimental conditions. The participant's birth date was placed on the outside of an envelope which contained both the social power scenario and the PANAS. Information such as the participant's level of self-esteem and the social power specific scenario was also coded on the outside of the envelope.

At a later date, the experimenter re-entered the psychology classes in order to have the original participants complete the second component of this study. The participants were given both the PANAS and the social power type scenarios in the coded envelopes (see Appendix E) so both the experimenter and the participants were unaware of which condition the participants would be in.

The envelopes were placed at the front of the classroom in stacks according to the birth dates on the outside of them. Participants were instructed by the experimenter to approach the front of the classroom and to retrieve the envelope with their own corresponding birth date on it. Participants were then asked to return to their seats and to wait for further instruction.

When this had been done, the participants were asked to open their packets and to remove the two forms from their envelope labeled “Scenario” and “PANAS.” When all of the participants had removed their forms, the experimenter stated the following:

Please read the scenario carefully which you have just removed from the envelope. It describes a situation in which a boss is trying to get an employee to assist them with a research project. While you read the scenario, imagine that it is you who is being asked to do the research. In other words, put yourself into the place of the employee. When you finish reading the scenario carefully, please read the instructions at the top of the form labeled “PANAS,” and answer the questions accordingly. When all of the questions have been answered please place both forms back into the envelope and place it on top of your desk. Thank you. You may begin.

After the participants signaled that they were done by placing their envelopes on their desks, the experimenter collected the packets from each participant. Before the experimenter left the classroom, a thorough debriefing was conducted. The purpose of the study had been described and participants were allowed to ask questions of the

experimenter. When all of the participants questions were answered, they were asked by the experimenter not to discuss the study with any other students at the university.

### Data Analysis

The data were analyzed with multiple regression. Self-esteem was entered as a continuous variable. The positive forms of power (reward, legitimate, expert, and referent) were combined to form a vector of positive power types to contrast with coercive power as a negative form of power. The experimenter evaluated the main effect for the independent variables of power type and self-esteem. Correlations between self-esteem and affect with the positive and negative power conditions were compared to provide information to examine the predictions from the three theoretical models.

### Results

For the purpose of testing the hypotheses, reward, legitimate, expert, and referent power were combined to make up the variable of positive power and coercive power makes up the variable of negative power. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

Descriptive data are presented in Table 1. For the positive power condition ( $n = 110$ ) the mean Rosenberg Scale score was 33.52 with a standard deviation of 4.59 and a range of 20 to 40. The mean score for the PANAS positive scale was 24.93 with a standard deviation of 7.51 and a range of 10 to 45. The mean score for the PANAS negative scale was 23.04 with a standard deviation of 7.35 and a range of 10 to 43.

For the negative power condition ( $n = 26$ ) the mean Rosenberg Scale score was 31 with a standard deviation of 5.52 and a range of 20 to 40. The mean score for the PANAS positive scale was 21.88 with a standard deviation of 6.51 and a range of 11 to 38. The mean score for the PANAS negative scale was 25.15 with a standard deviation of 5.91 and a range of 12 to 35. It is important to note the difference in sample size between the positive power condition ( $n = 110$ ) and the negative power condition ( $n = 26$ ). This is because the positive power condition is comprised of four power types (expert, reward, legitimate, and referent), whereas the negative power condition is comprised of only one power type (coercive).

Table 1

Study 1 Descriptive Statistics for Measured Variables by Power Condition

Variable	Power Condition			
	Negative ( $n = 26$ )		Positive ( $n = 110$ )	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Self-esteem	31.00	5.52	33.52	4.59
Positive Affect	21.88	6.51	24.93	7.51
Negative Affect	25.15	5.91	23.04	7.35

The Rosenberg scale has a possible range of 10 to 40 and a theoretical midpoint of 25.5. This means that theoretically, individuals who score above 25.5 would be considered to possess a high level of self-esteem and individuals who score below 25.5

would be considered to have low self-esteem. The midpoint or median for the Rosenberg scale scores in Study 1 is 34 with an inter-quartile range of 7. This means that individuals who scored above 34 were in the high self-esteem classification and those who scored below 34 were in the low self-esteem classification. As a result, some of the individuals in the low self-esteem category fit the theoretical classification of high self-esteem.

Both the positive and negative scales of the PANAS have a possible range of 10 to 50 with a theoretical midpoint of 30.5. The midpoint or median for the PANAS positive scale in Study 1 is 23 with an inter-quartile range of 9.5. The median for the PANAS negative scale is 24 with an inter-quartile range of 12. The Cronbach coefficient alpha was computed to determine the internal consistency for all the Rosenberg Scale items,  $\alpha = 0.86$ . For the PANAS positive items,  $\alpha = 0.85$ , and the PANAS negative items,  $\alpha = 0.80$ .

Positive affect was regressed on self-esteem and the positive-negative power type variables (1 = negative and 0 = positive power). There was a significant direct effect for power type ( $t = -1.752$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This indicates that when negative power is employed, individuals will experience significantly less positive affect than when positive power is employed. No direct relation between self-esteem and positive affect was evidenced ( $t = 0.514$ ,  $p = .30$ ).

When examining the effects of self-esteem and power type on negative affect, there was a significant direct effect for self-esteem ( $t = -3.482$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This finding

indicates that after complying to any type of power manipulation, the lower an individual's self-esteem, the more negative affect they experience. However, there was no significant direct effect for power type ( $t = 0.68, p = .25$ ).

Correlations between self-esteem and affect were examined to investigate if any of the models regarding the effect of self-esteem on affect were supported. When negative power is employed, correlational analysis (see Table 2) shows a positive correlation between self-esteem and positive affect,  $r(24) = .39, p < .05$ . That is, when negative power is used, individual's with higher self-esteem experience more positive affect than those with lower self-esteem. However, when positive power is employed, there was no significant correlation between positive affect and self-esteem,  $r(108) = -.04$ .

Table 2

Study 1 Correlations Between Self-Esteem and Affect Under Negative and Positive Power

	Power Condition	
	Negative (n = 26)	Positive (n = 110)
<u>Positive Affect</u>		
Self-Esteem	.39	-.04
<u>Negative Affect</u>		
Self-Esteem	-.36	-.28

When negative power is used, there is no significant correlation between self-esteem and negative affect,  $r(24) = -.36$ . However, there is a negative correlation between self-esteem and negative affect present when positive power is employed,  $r(108) = -.28$ ,  $p < .05$ . This indicates that when self-esteem is low, the amount of negative affect experienced is greater.

In order to check for the validity of the results discussed above, the data collected for the coercive and referent power conditions should be analyzed separately from the other data collected. These two social power types were chosen because the gender of the powerholder in the coercive and referent power conditions was constant (male), and therefore would not be subject to any confound.

Descriptive data are presented in Table 3. For the positive power condition ( $n = 26$ ) the mean Rosenberg Scale score was 34.31 with a standard deviation of 4.22 and a range of 26 to 40. The mean score for the PANAS positive scale was 25.54 with a standard deviation of 7.75 and a range of 10 to 44. The mean score for the PANAS negative scale was 22.96 with a standard deviation of 8.40 and a range of 10 to 42.

For the negative power condition ( $n = 26$ ) the mean Rosenberg Scale score was 31 with a standard deviation of 5.52 and a range of 20 to 40. The mean score for the PANAS positive scale was 21.88 with a standard deviation of 6.51 and a range of 11 to 38. The mean score for the PANAS negative scale was 25.15 with a standard deviation of 5.91 and a range of 12 to 35. The Cronbach coefficient alpha was again computed for



all the Rosenberg Scale items,  $\alpha = 0.87$ , the PANAS positive items,  $\alpha = 0.85$ , and the PANAS negative items  $\alpha = 0.80$ .

Table 3

Study 1 Descriptive Statistics for Coercive and Referent Power

	Power Condition			
	Negative (n = 26)		Positive (n = 26)	
Variable	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Self-esteem	31.00	5.52	34.31	4.22
Positive Affect	21.88	6.51	25.54	7.75
Negative Affect	25.15	5.91	22.96	8.40

Positive affect was regressed on self-esteem and power type. There was no significant direct effect for either self-esteem ( $t = 1.123$ ,  $p = .13$ ) or power type ( $t = -1.38$ ,  $p = .09$ ).

When examining the effects of self-esteem and power type on negative affect, there is no significant direct effect for either self-esteem ( $t = -1.30$ ,  $p = .10$ ) or power type ( $t = 0.62$ ,  $p = .27$ ). When negative power is used, correlational analysis does not show a significant correlation between self-esteem and negative affect,  $r(24) = -.36$ .

When negative power is manipulated, correlational analysis (see Table 4) shows a positive correlation between self-esteem and positive affect,  $r(24) = .39$ ,  $p < .05$ .

However, when positive power is employed, there was no correlation between positive

affect and self-esteem,  $r(24) = -.09$ . Furthermore, this finding is consistent with the findings obtained from the data analysis which included the gender confound suggesting that gender did not effect the impact of the negative power scenario.

Table 4

Study 1 Correlations Between Self-Esteem and Affect Under Negative and Positive

Power

	Power Condition	
	Negative (n = 26)	Positive (n = 26)
<u>Positive Affect</u>		
Self-Esteem	.39	-.09
<u>Negative Affect</u>		
Self-Esteem	-.36	-.03

There is one inconsistency between the data that includes the gender confound and the data that does not include the confound. The data that included the confound shows a negative correlation between self-esteem and negative affect when positive power is manipulated. However, the data that does not include the confound does not show such a significant correlation between negative affect and either level of self-esteem,  $r(24) = -.03$ .

## Discussion

Support was found for the main hypothesis that individuals would experience the least amount of positive affect after complying to a powerholder manipulating coercive (negative) power. Furthermore, the results of this study are moderately consistent with the theory of self-esteem acting as a buffer. When individuals comply to coercive power they experience less positive affect when compared to the other forms of social power. Furthermore, after complying to coercive power individuals with a high self-esteem report experiencing more positive affect than those participants with low self-esteem. However, individuals who are low in self-esteem will experience an increase in negative affect after complying to any form of social power.

When examining the data for coercive and referent power only, the study's results are inconsistent with the results obtained from examining all of the power types in one way. The first set of data shows a negative correlation between self-esteem and negative affect when positive power is manipulated. This finding is absent when examining the coercive and referent power conditions by themselves. Furthermore, when negative power is manipulated individual's with high self-esteem report more positive affect than individuals with low self-esteem.

The study's main hypothesis is still supported and the findings are more consistent with the theory of self-esteem acting as a buffer than the other models regarding the relationship between self-esteem and affect.

Although the data pertaining to coercive and referent power were examined individually to ensure that gender did not have an effect on the results of Study 1, additional data were collected to eliminate the confound completely. Specifically, the social power scenarios were edited such that the description of the employer did not include any mention of gender. However, every other aspect of the scenarios and the directions read to the participants regarding them remained the same.

## Study 2

### Method

#### Participants and Design

For Study 2, data were collected from 128 participants in the exact same manner as in Study 1. All participants were obtained from undergraduate introductory psychology courses at the same southeastern university.

The PANAS positive and negative affect scales were regressed on the independent variables of social power type and level of self-esteem to determine their effects on resultant moods.

All instruments were administered in a group setting. Participants were randomly assigned via a random number table to one of the five conditions. The coding system was again used on the outside of the envelopes containing the social power type scenario and the mood measurement device so that an equal number of participants were assigned to each condition.

### Instruments

For the first phase of the two part research project, the participants level of self-esteem was measured by the Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale. For the second phase of the study, the five social power type scenarios were again utilized, but in an edited form which did not include the gender confound. This was achieved by not referring to the gender of the boss manipulating the social power. The PANAS was then administered after the participants had read their scenarios. This was done in order to record the moods they had experienced after having placed themselves into the role of the employee for the assigned scenario. The scoring of all instruments was consistent with that done in Study 1.

### Procedure

Participants completed the study during their introduction to psychology classes. They were informed in advance that they would have the opportunity to take part in a two phase research project which was strictly voluntary. Students who decided to participate completed the informed consent form as well as the Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale on the experimenters first visit to their courses. All directions were read verbatim from the method section for Study 1.

After the Rosenberg scales were scored, and a median split was done, all of the participants were randomly assigned to the five social power conditions. The specific social power type scenario and the PANAS were again concealed in coded envelopes so that neither the experimenter or the participant was aware of which condition each

participant was in. Upon entering the classes for the second phase of the research project the experimenter placed the envelopes at the front of the room and instructed the participants to retrieve the envelope with their corresponding birth date. After returning to their seats, the participants were asked to remove the forms from their envelopes and were then read the same directions that were recited to the participants in Study 1.

After all of the participants had finished working, the experimenter collected the envelopes from each participant. Before leaving the room the experimenter provided a thorough debriefing and answered any questions.

### Results

As with Study 1, for the purpose of testing the hypotheses, reward, legitimate, expert, and referent power were combined to make up the variable of positive power. Coercive power made up the category of negative power. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

Descriptive data are presented in Table 5. For the positive power condition ( $n = 102$ ) the mean Rosenberg Scale score was 32.28 with a standard deviation of 4.85 and a range of 19 to 40. The mean score for the PANAS positive scale was 23.37 with a standard deviation of 8.40 and a range of 10 to 48. The mean score for the PANAS negative scale was 23.43 with a standard deviation of 6.94 and a range of 10 to 43.

For the negative power condition ( $n = 26$ ) the mean Rosenberg Scale score was 34.32 with a standard deviation of 4.06 and a range of 27 to 40. The mean score for the PANAS positive scale was 20.68 with a standard deviation of 6.29 and a range of 11 to

33. The mean score for the PANAS negative scale was 25.68 with a standard deviation of 6.43 and a range of 13 to 39. As with study 1, there is a difference in sample size between the positive power condition ( $n = 102$ ) and the negative power condition ( $n = 26$ ). This is again the result of the positive power condition being comprised of four power types, where as the negative power condition is comprised of one power type.

Table 5

Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Measured Variables by Power Condition

Variable	Power Condition			
	Negative ( $n = 26$ )		Positive ( $n = 102$ )	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Self-esteem	34.32	4.06	32.28	4.85
Positive Affect	20.68	6.29	23.37	8.40
Negative Affect	25.68	6.43	23.43	6.94

The Rosenberg scale has a possible range of 10 to 40 and a theoretical midpoint of 25.5. This means that theoretically, individuals who score above 25.5 would be considered to possess a high self-esteem and individuals who score below 25.5 would be considered to have a low self-esteem. The midpoint or median for the Rosenberg scale scores in Study 2 is 33 with an inter-quartile range of 7. This means that individuals who scored above 33 were in the high self-esteem classification and those who scored below

33 were in the low self-esteem classification. As a result, some of the individuals in the study's low self-esteem category fit the theoretical classification of high self-esteem.

Both the positive and negative scales of the PANAS have a possible range of 10 to 50 with a theoretical midpoint of 30.5. The midpoint or median for the PANAS positive scale in Study 2 is 23 with an inter-quartile range of 11. The median for the PANAS negative scale is 23 with an inter-quartile range of 8. The Cronbach coefficient alpha was computed for all the Rosenberg Scale items,  $\alpha = 0.86$ . For the PANAS positive items  $\alpha = 0.87$ , and the PANAS negative items  $\alpha = 0.77$ .

Positive affect was regressed on self-esteem and power type. There was a direct effect of power type on positive affect which approaches statistical significance ( $t = -1.59$ ,  $p = .056$ ). This direct effect indicates that when negative power is used, individuals will experience significantly less positive affect than when positive power is employed. No direct relation between self-esteem and positive affect was found ( $t = 0.717$ ,  $p = .24$ ). These results are consistent with those of Study 1.

Regarding negative affect, there was a direct effect for power type which approached statistical significance ( $t = 1.604$ ,  $p = .06$ ). This indicates that individuals experience greater negative affect when complying to a negative power. Furthermore, self-esteem was not related to negative mood.

To examine the viability of the models regarding the effects of self-esteem on affect, correlations were calculated (see Table 6).



Table 6

Study 2 Correlations Between Self-Esteem and Affect Under Negative and PositivePower

	Power Condition	
	Negative (n = 26)	Positive (n = 102)
<u>Positive Affect</u>		
Self-Esteem	-.15	.09
<u>Negative Affect</u>		
Self-Esteem	-.28	-.05

For participants in the positive power conditions, no significant correlations were found between self-esteem and positive affect. This indicates that when individuals comply to a positive form of social power, level of self-esteem did not influence the level of positive affect they may have experienced. This finding is again consistent with the findings from Study 1.

When negative power is used, there was no significant correlation found between self-esteem and negative affect,  $r(24) = -.28$ . Furthermore, participants in the positive power condition showed no significant correlation between self-esteem and negative affect. This indicates that when individuals comply to a positive form of social power,

their level of self-esteem did not influence the level of negative affect they experienced as a result.

### Discussion

Support again was found for the main hypothesis that individuals would experience less positive affect and more negative affect after complying to a powerholder using coercive power. When complying to coercive power, individuals with low self-esteem showed greater negative affect than did those higher in self-esteem. While this is consistent with the results of Study 1, the effect was not significant. Moreover, the correlation between self-esteem and positive affect, while only approaching significance, was negative.

When positive power is employed, an individual's level of self-esteem has little effect on the amount of positive or negative affect experienced afterwards. This finding is slightly different from the findings of Study 1. In that study individuals with low self-esteem experience greater negative affect when complying to any form of social power.

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the different types of moods individuals with differing levels of self-esteem would experience as a result of complying to either positive power (reward, expert, referent, and legitimate) or negative power (coercive). The major hypothesis tested was that complying to a coercive power manipulation would result in the least amount of positive affect. Differences in the types of affect experienced after complying to the social power types were also expected to be seen between individuals of high and low self-esteem. Furthermore, support was expected to be found for either the cognitive consistency theory of self-esteem, the self-concept clarity theory of self-esteem, or the theory of self-esteem acting as a buffer.

Support was found for the main hypothesis. Individuals who complied to a coercive power reported experiencing less positive affect and more negative affect than those complying with positive power. This was found in both studies.

Furthermore, after complying to a coercive power, those individuals with low self-esteem reported experiencing more negative affect than those with high self-esteem. Also, Study 1 showed that individuals who possess low self-esteem will experience greater negative affect after complying to any form of social power. This lends support to the theory of self-esteem acting as a buffer which asserts that self-esteem acts as a shield which protects us from everyday negative events. When a person has a low self-esteem

they possess a thin shield which makes them more susceptible to experiencing negative emotional states. However, the findings for positive affect, with regards to self-esteem acting as a buffer, were not consistent between Study 1 and Study 2.

The results from this study contribute several findings. Insight has been gained into the emotional reactions that can occur within a target after a powerholder manipulates social power. Information has been provided regarding how the target's self-esteem may influence what they experience as a result of compliance. And, overall knowledge pertaining to how self-esteem can act as a buffer, making a person more or less prone to negative affect, has been obtained.

It should be noted that the correlations reported in this study may have been influenced by the differences in sample sizes between the negative and positive power conditions for both Studies 1 and 2. In both studies the sample of participants in the negative power condition was significantly smaller than that of the participants in the positive power condition. As a result, correlations between the positive and negative power conditions may have been weakened or even nullified. Therefore, further research is warranted in this area where each power condition has an equal number of participants in it. However, it is believed that such research will only strengthen the results presented here.

Another issue which should be addressed is that of the Rosenberg scale's range restriction for both Study 1 and Study 2. The scale has a possible range of 10 to 40, but the range of scores from Studies 1 and 2 were 20 to 40 and 19 to 40 respectively. As a

result, both study's midpoints for distinguishing between high and low self-esteem varied from the scale's theoretical midpoint. This problem is easily remedied by collecting data from a larger sample which would likely result in scores which cover the entire Rosenberg scale's possible range.

In addition, all of the data for this study was obtained from undergraduate students enrolled in introductory psychology courses. Future research might broaden the population from which its sample is chosen in order to make its results more generalizable. Also, future research may prove to be fruitful if the independent variable of social power type is presented to the participants in a more powerful way. For example, participants might watch a videotaped scenario of the powerholder-target interaction or might themselves engage in some form of role playing involving the manipulation of social power.

In summary, this study found that individuals experience the least amount of positive affect after complying to a powerholder employing coercive power. The amount of negative affect experienced when complying to coercive power is greater among those with lower self-esteem. Finally, the results of this study offer inconsistent and weak support for the theory of self-esteem acting as a buffer. Further research and theoretical developments are needed to more fully understand the workings of power and its effect on target individuals. More complete theorizing also may illuminate the mediating effects of self-esteem in complying with powerful others.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

You have been asked to participate in a two phase research investigation. The procedures will involve filling out some questionnaires. The amount of time necessary to complete this should be no more than 15 minutes per phase. Your participation is voluntary, and you may terminate your involvement in the project at any time. The information you provide will be kept confidential, and will be combined with information from others. You are not required to sign your name to any of the questionnaires so that you may remain anonymous. After the session is completed, you will be informed of the nature and purpose of this investigation.

Please sign and date below if you decide to participate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

### Rosenberg Scale

Please read the following questions and answer them by placing a X in the space provided next to the response which you feel describes you the best.

I feel that I am an equal person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Agree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Agree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Agree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

I am able to do things as well as most other people.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

I take a positive attitude towards myself.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

I wish I could have more respect for myself.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

I certainly feel useless at times.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree

At times I think I am no good at all.

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree



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Appendix C  
Scenario

Please read the following scenario carefully, placing yourself into the role of the employee.

Reward Power

You are just about to leave work when your boss approaches you and says, “I need to have a research proposal completed by the end of the week, but I have been really busy and have not even started on it. I know this is short notice, but here is what I need for you to do. Go over to the library and photocopy all 30 articles on this list. After that, you will need to read through them and decide which ones seem to be worth while. When you are done doing that write me a short 8 - 10 page summary of the literature that I will be able to turn into my proposal. Again, I hate to ask on such short notice, but I have been really behind lately and if you help me with this I will give you this Friday off with pay.” You respond, “I would like to help, but I have already made plans that I must attend to. Besides, this stuff will take me hours to do and I am on my way home.” However, after a few seconds of thinking about it, you decide to do the work anyway because you realize that you have just been offered a day off from work with pay.

### Coercive Power

You are just about to leave work when your boss approaches you and says, “I need to have a research proposal completed by the end of the week, but I have been really busy and have not even started on it. I know this is short notice, but here is what I need for you to do. Go over to the library and photocopy all 30 articles on this list. After that, you will need to read through them and decide which ones seem to be worth while. When you are done doing that write me a short 8 - 10 page summary of the literature that I will be able to turn into my proposal. Again, I hate to ask on such short notice, but I have been really behind lately. And by the way, if you do not help me with this I will deduct a whole days pay from your next paycheck.” You respond, “I would like to help, but I have already made plans that I must attend to. Besides, this stuff will take me hours to do and I am on my way home.” However, after a few seconds of thinking about it, you decide to do the work anyway because you do not want to lose a days pay.

Legitimate Power

You are just about to leave work when your boss approaches you and says, “I need to have a research proposal completed by the end of the week, but I have been really busy and have not even started on it. I know this is short notice, but here is what I need for you to do. Go over to the library and photocopy all 30 articles on this list. After that, you will need to read through them and decide which ones seem to be worth while. When you are done doing that write me a short 8 - 10 page summary of the literature that I will be able to turn into my proposal. Again, I hate to ask on such short notice, but I have been really behind lately.” You respond, “I would like to help, but I have already made plans that I must attend to. Besides, this stuff will take me hours to do and I am on my way home.” However, after a few seconds of thinking about it, you decide to do the work anyway because you realize that your boss has the right to ask you to do these types of things.

Referent Power

You are just about to leave work when your boss approaches you and says, “I need to have a research proposal completed by the end of the week, but I have been really busy and have not even started on it. I know this is short notice, but here is what I need for you to do. Go over to the library and photocopy all 30 articles on this list. After that, you will need to read through them and decide which ones seem to be worth while. When you are done doing that write me a short 8 - 10 page summary of the literature that I will be able to turn into my proposal. Again, I hate to ask on such short notice, but I have been really behind lately.” You respond, “I would like to help, but I have already made plans that I must attend to. Besides, this stuff will take me hours to do and I am on my way home.” However, after a few seconds of thinking about it, you decide to do the work anyway because deep down you truly like and respect your boss, like being associated with your boss, and overall would not mind being like your boss in the future.

Expert Power

You are just about to leave work when your boss approaches you and says, “I need to have a research proposal completed by the end of the week, but I have been really busy and have not even started on it. I know this is short notice, but here is what I need for you to do. Go over to the library and photocopy all 30 articles on this list. After that, you will need to read through them and decide which ones seem to be worth while. When you are done doing that write me a short 8 - 10 page summary of the literature that I will be able to turn into my proposal. Again, I hate to ask on such short notice, but I have been really behind lately.” You respond, “I would like to help, but I have already made plans that I must attend to. Besides, this stuff will take me hours to do and I am on my way home.” However after a few seconds of thinking about it, you decide to do the work anyway because you know that in these types of situations your boss is the best. Therefore, you know you will get a lot out of working on this project.

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Appendix D

PANAS

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space provided next to that word. Indicate to what extent you would feel this way at the time of going along with the request from the boss described in the scenario. Use the following scale to record your answers.

1	2	3	4	5
very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely

\_\_\_\_\_ interested

\_\_\_\_\_ distressed

\_\_\_\_\_ excited

\_\_\_\_\_ upset

\_\_\_\_\_ strong

\_\_\_\_\_ guilty

\_\_\_\_\_ scared

\_\_\_\_\_ hostile

\_\_\_\_\_ enthusiastic

\_\_\_\_\_ proud

\_\_\_\_\_ irritable

\_\_\_\_\_ alert

\_\_\_\_\_ ashamed

\_\_\_\_\_ inspired

\_\_\_\_\_ nervous

\_\_\_\_\_ determined

\_\_\_\_\_ attentive

\_\_\_\_\_ jittery

\_\_\_\_\_ active

\_\_\_\_\_ afraid

Appendix E

Envelope Coding System

H - high self-esteem

L - low self-esteem

1 - reward power

2 - coercive power

3 - legitimate power

4 - expert power

5 - referent power