This document provides the appendices of *The Narcissism Epidemic* by Jean M. Twenge and W. Keith Campbell (Free Press, 2009). To buy the book, visit: http://www.amazon.com/o/ASIN/1416575987. For more information, return to the book website at http://www.narcissismepidemic.com.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: More examples of self-admiration (notes found with Ch. 1)

Burger King, which premiered the assertive slogan "Have it your way" in the 70s, now promotes self-admiration on its food wrappers. One proclaims: "You're special, and you deserve a special sandwich." In a cross-promotion with the NFL, Burger King printed bags that said, "You are a BK champion. You eat to win. You grab life by the horns and food by the bun. Big bites, mighty wings, and eating face-first are just a few moves in your MVP playbook. We salute you, champ. And every bite you take. Go on, eat like a champion." No wonder we have an obesity epidemic when everyone who eats fast food is a "champion." At least this way there will be more of ourselves to love.

Many sports stars take self-admiration very seriously. At the 2003 ESPY Awards, Denver Nuggets basketball player Carmelo Anthony thanked himself for all the hard work he'd put in. "Melo" puts his money where his mouth is: His website announces the "official Melo merchandise now available" and advertises the release party for the shoes named after him, saying it will take place at the "Melo Center, aka the Pepsi Center" in Denver. In 2004, football player Freddie Mitchell, who caught a touchdown pass in a playoff game, was also grateful to himself, saying, "I'm a special player and I just want to thank my hands for being so great."

Popular "attitude" t-shirts trumpet the wearer's self-admiration, often in a way that expresses arrogance passed off as humor. "Too Cool 4 You," reads one. "It's not a beer belly – it's a fuel tank for a sex machine," protests another. "I'm too good looking to be this old," announces a t-shirt likely to be found in the same closet as "My grandkids are cuter than yours." Some seemingly attempt to make other people run the other way. "People like you are the reason people like me need medication," accuses one, or you can wear "Multitalented: I can talk and piss you off at the same time." You can also announce your self-admiration on the clothing of your children. Old Navy sells baby clothes that say "Mommy's marvelous and so am I" and "Daddy's dreamy and so am I."

What passes for inspiration in modern life is often no more than blatant self-admiration. *Good Morning America* recently featured a segment asking people to film short videos with the theme "Your week in three words." They received some truly touching sentiments ("It's not cancer," "Miss my solider," "I'm still here"), but one person sent a video of his hand with "I love me" written in thick black marker. On *America's Got Talent*, a small, strange-looking man cross-dressed as Britney Spears and enthusiastically lip-synched "Baby One More Time." Exhilarated after his performance as what he called "Boy Britney," he gasped, "It's a big step in *my* life. And it means a lot in *my* heart. From the bottom of my heart, guys, it's me. It's me. This moment is me." Except it looked a lot more like Britney. The performance was featured on VH1's *Best Week Ever* and prompted a usually sarcastic comedian to praise, "Boy Britney, today you

have become Man Britney." It's not particularly inspirational or praise-worthy to gush about how your performance was the height of self-expression, but as a culture we have apparently come to believe that if something displays the "authentic self" – even while dressed as a troubled pop star – it is laudatory.

Self-admiration can be used as a reason to do something, or as a reason not to do the same thing. "High School Musical" star Ashley Tisdale, who drew fire for a different-looking nose after what she said was surgery for a deviated septum, "I don't believe in plastic surgery. This was not about changing me. I am comfortable with myself." Ashlee Simpson, who also had a nose job, said that plastic surgery "should be for yourself." Hilary Duff echoed this sentiment, saying of plastic surgery, "If it's going to boost their self-esteem and make them feel better about themselves, then I don't see a problem with it."

Self-admiration is also promoted as the cure for all that ails us. Jennifer Wilbanks, the "runaway bride" who left family and friends fearing the worst when she disappeared three days before her wedding in 2005, later explained how she planned to make amends by loving herself enough. "I hope that people will allow me to learn who I truly am," she said. "I hope that as I go through this healing process, start to learn more about myself, accept myself, love myself, for who I am that everybody else will too."

More grounded celebrities have different worries. America Ferrera, the star of TV's *Ugly Betty*, is one of several recent celebrities who represents a more normal body image. But, Ferrera says, "If I wanted to get in better shape, there might be a backlash of, 'Why isn't she comfortable with herself anymore?'" Self-admiration is the new conformity, where you can't do something because people might think you didn't love yourself. And in our culture, not loving yourself enough is shameful.

Wayne Dyer, the same guy who opined that all mothers should think their sons are Jesus, collaborated with two co-authors in 2005 to bring his message to children in the book *Incredible You! 10 Ways to Let Your Greatness Shine Through*. "I've been writing books designed to help people realize their own magnificence, while overcoming any and all self-imposed limitations, for the past 33 years," Dyer writes. "It is my desire to have these tiny, precious souls – so many of whom have brought so much joy into my life as they listened to my stories – close this book and feel so good about themselves that they feel in their hearts that nothing is impossible for them." Although some of the messages are nice, like "#1: Share the good," others are paradoxical self-admiration tenets like #9,"Everyone is Special, especially you."

The emphasis on self-esteem continues as children grow older. The "Dove Self-Esteem Fund," sponsored by the soap company, aims to build self-esteem by reaching 5 million young women, partially by partnering with the Girl Scouts' "Uniquely ME!" program. "Too many girls develop low self-esteem from hang-ups about looks," explains the Dove website. "Consequently, many fail to reach their full potential later in life." They forgot to mention that young women, even with lower self-esteem than young men, still are far more successful academically. As of 2005, 57% of college degrees went to women. There goes the argument.

In a children's song called "It's True!" a man sings in a tone reminiscent of a church hymn: "It's true/There's no one in this world more special than you." Another song for children, sung to the tune of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," declares, "Special special special me/How I wonder what I'll be/ … I can be/Anything I want to be." A

popular Sunday school program for 2- and 3-year-olds is called “God Made Me Special.” Although this is meant to convey the Christian idea of grace, young preschoolers are unlikely to understand this theological subltety; instead, they think, “Not only am I special, but God made me that way. Give me my cookie NOW!” As Keith asked his daughter’s teacher, “Do you *really* think these kids have low self-esteem?” Three-year-olds are often delightful, but as anyone who’s spent time with preschoolers knows, they’re pretty self-centered already.

Appendix B:
More on the definition of narcissism (notes found with Ch. 2)

The Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) does a good job of predicting narcissistic behavior. Some people have asked us, “Aren’t you confusing confident ambition with narcissism?” No. Even if we re-labeled the NPI a “confident ambition” scale and kept the same items, it would still predict materialism, lowered empathy, aggression following threat, and relationship problems. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet (or, in this case, like the nauseating amounts of cologne favored by some male narcissists). We suspect that many of these questions come from people who agree with the narcissism items – it’s the “But what’s wrong with that?” argument. In our view, such questions demonstrate just how pervasive narcissism actually is these days – many people don’t even see anything wrong with the items anymore. As we will detail in Section 3, however, there’s a lot wrong with narcissism.

The definition of narcissism we’ve presented is that used by research psychologists, and it differs from some other definitions. For example, author Michael Maccoby praises business leaders he calls “productive narcissists.” However, Maccoby’s term includes self-control traits like perseverance that are not usually included in the definition of narcissism. In fact, many researchers have argued just the opposite, that narcissists lack self-control and perseverance. Many of Maccoby’s examples center around creative free thinkers and mavericks, personality traits only weakly related to narcissism as it is usually defined. While some maverick thinkers are narcissistic, others are not. It is possible to be a maverick but not be full of yourself. And although narcissists may seem like mavericks, the two types of people differ in an important way. Narcissists depend heavily on others to boost their self-esteem, admire them, and sing their praises. In contrast, a true maverick does not spend his or her time looking for praise and attention. When John McCain – admired by many as a maverick – was a prisoner of war in Vietnam, he refused early release (offered because his father had become the commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam) unless all of the men captured before him were also released. That is not the act of someone seeking attention or status – it is maverick thinking, but the opposite of narcissistic thinking.

Other people have contrasted “healthy” narcissism with “malignant” narcissism. As measured by the NPI, this is largely a false dichotomy. The question is “Healthy (or malignant) for whom, and when?” Although narcissism often leads to positive outcomes for the self in the short term, the effects on others and the society are almost always negative. In the long run, narcissism frequently harms the individual as well through ruined relationships. This interplay of short-term payoffs and long-term costs makes narcissism seductive to many people, a theme we revisit throughout the book.

Appendix C:
How individuals affect culture, and culture affects individuals

In Chapter 2, we described how we know that younger generations are more narcissistic – that is, how growing up in a certain culture affects individuals and their personalities. To understand this process in detail, it is first necessary to understand how culture and the individual psyche work together and how they change. The best place to find such a model is in cultural psychology, which usually studies differences among cultures at similar time periods. Much of cultural psychology, for example, compares present-day Americans with present-day Japanese. These two cultures are fundamentally different in the way they conceptualize social life, the self, and family relations. Metaphorically, a culture is like the air that we breathe. We have no idea that air is there until we try breathing something else (like water). The same sense of "breathing water" is evident when we are immersed in a different culture. Cross-cultural experiences are filled with these challenges, whether it involves getting scolded for presenting the bottom of one's feet to a fire in Mongolia, walking around a religious site in a counter-clockwise direction in Tibet, or eating on an underground train in Britain (all mistakes Keith has made). We don't feel the force that culture exerts on our lives until we try to act against it.

Our approach in trying to understand the narcissism epidemic, of course, is a bit different from that in cultural psychology. We are certainly interested in differences between the U.S. and other cultures – we discuss the narcissism epidemic globally in Chapter 16. Much of our discussion, however, involves comparing culture not across continents, but across time. A child growing up in America in the 1950s experienced a very different culture than a child growing up in the 70s or the 2000s, just as a child in Japan today experiences a different culture than an American child.

The *Mutual Constitution of Culture and the Psyche*, which we will simply call the mutual constitution model, explains how individuals and cultures create and reinforce each other. This model was originally developed by Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama to understand differences between Western and Eastern cultures. We've simplified it and adapted it to fit the narcissism epidemic and change over time.

The model lays out five levels of processes. These begin with collective reality -- the core ideas of the culture. Culture is built on a foundation of ideas and values, including what is considered good and moral and the role of the individual in the society. In the West, for example, the self is seen as an autonomous "free agent," but in Asia individual people are viewed as interdependent parts of a larger system. Collective reality also includes current politics, economics, and ecology. The concept of the "core cultural ideas" is important for understanding the narcissism epidemic because we will argue (as Markus and colleagues have argued in their cross-cultural work) that the core cultural ideas of the United States have evolved to include the idea that feeling good about oneself is of central importance to life. We term this core idea "the importance of self-admiration."

The next two elements in the model include "sociopsychological processes" and "individual reality." These include all the elements of culture that promote or dispense the core cultural ideas: The educational system, parenting practices, the media, and the

legal system. As just one example, the American core cultural belief in an independent, autonomous self is built and maintained when parents give very young children lots of choices so that they can develop independence ("What do you want for dinner?" "Do you want apple juice or milk?" "Do you want to go to the park?"). In many other parts of the world, asking children what they want is uncommon.

The final steps in the model focus on the individual psyche and actions. This can include personality or other individual differences and specific acts that individuals make because of these personality traits. For example, individuals in the United States who are allowed to make lots of choices when they are raised will develop a view of themselves as independent individuals; they will then act in ways that express their individuality ("I want the grande half-caf cappuccino with soy milk and lots of foam.")

Putting together all of these steps illustrates the relationship between core cultural ideas on the one hand, and individual personality and action on the other. A core idea, like the value of individualism, can appear in a legal system that emphasizes individual responsibility (the U.S. does not punish the family or community for the crime of an individual) or educational practices that focus on individual performance and individual ability to choose a major or field of study even at a late age (many, if not most, other countries track students at a relatively early age). The social practices – as experienced by members of society over time – result in a certain psychology. Americans, for example, see independence as central to their own psychology. The result is a range of actions that establish independence and individuality, from having "don't tread on me" as a motto to, more recently, customizing everything from iPod playlists to bathroom fixtures.

It is not purely a one-way street from cultural ideas to individual action. Cultural ideas are manifested through customs, practices and everyday interactions between individuals. Thus, cultural change is not simple cause and effect, but a system. Although cultural ideas shape individuals as they develop, individuals can change cultural ideas through their actions. If they couldn't, cultures would stay the same from decade to decade – and as we know, they don't.

"Feedback loops" occur when an outcome cycles back to change the initial state – where culture shapes individual action, and individual action loops back to change the culture. As the narcissism epidemic builds, these feedback loops are engaged. When a few people started to have self-promoting websites, they got the attention they wanted, so now it's normal to have a self-promoting website and even some non-narcissistic people have them. Now people's websites have to be even more self-promoting than everyone else's to get attention. Eventually, people's websites are going to become really annoying.

These feedback loops mean that culture really changes itself. Because a cultural system is mutually constitutive – a large mass of the individuals shape the cultural ideas and the cultural ideas shape the individuals – it is very difficult to change a culture in a dramatic way. Full-scale transformations of cultures usually happen only under the threat of force. When the communist revolution came to Russia in the early 20th century, the Soviet people behaved in line with the core ideas of communism as long as the secret police were active. When these constraints started to slip, culture started to revert to its earlier shape, with a greater emphasis on religion and materialism. In Iran today, a group of mullahs push strict Islamic practices on what is largely an unhappy population. When

the mullahs loosen their grip, the culture will revert -- women will pull their scarves back and drive with a man who is not a relative.

The classic solution to permanent cultural change, then, is not to challenge core cultural ideas straight on but to co-opt them to fit a new vision. A classic example is the migration of religions across cultures. When Christianity entered Europe, for example, it co-opted the features of many existing pagan religions, from the Mithraic cults favored by the Roman legionnaires to the Solstice festivals of the British Isles. Jesus became a good-looking white guy with blue eyes and blond hair, Christmas involved a tree with lights during the winter solstice, and Easter was celebrated by an egg-carrying bunny in the spring. Similarly, when Buddhism traveled from India across Europe and Asia, Buddha (historically an Indian-looking figure), began to be represented in the form of local ethnicities, from Greek to East Asian. Wherever Buddhism went, it co-opted ideas from the existing religions. In Tibet the often frightening local deities were pacified and turned into protectors of the truth. In China, Buddhism ran into Taoism and turned into Zen. To provide a more negative example, Hitler rose to power by wielding Teutonic myths, stories of Aryan history, ancient symbols like the Swastika, the writings of Nietzsche and art of Wagner, and the long-standing prejudice against Jews in Europe. Hitler turned German culture into something very ugly and twisted, but he did it using core ideas from the existing culture.

This is exactly what happened to build the narcissism epidemic. We went from an independent but community-oriented culture to one that can accept, without irony, the idea that admiring oneself is all-important, and believes that self-promotion is necessary for success in life. These changes were not imposed by a dictator, imperial fiat, or religious decree. Instead, the changes built of themselves slowly, so that they seem a natural part of who we are – like self-admiration has always been a part of our culture.

Appendix D:
More on narcissism and competition (notes found with Ch. 3)

In sports and business, teams that work well together often triumph over groups more focused on individual success. Despite paying its superstars (Alex Rodriguez) ungodly amounts of money ($275 million), the New York Yankees haven’t done much lately. Many recent World Series champions have been teams that worked well together rather than relying on a few stars. Jean’s husband Craig requires her to mention the 2002 World Champion Anaheim Angels as a good example of this. Their catcher could barely run, their shortstop was 5’6”, and only 2 players made the All-Star team, but, boy, could they rally when they needed to.

This strategy works in basketball, as well – take, for example, the Princeton Tigers, a team devoid of any huge superstars that developed a highly disciplined, complex, and fast-moving team-centered offense that allowed them to beat teams with higher levels of individual talent. Slate.com columnist Richard Just notes that the Princeton offense has a sense of virtue to it: “Specifically, the virtues of selflessness and intellect. Players don’t do much dribbling in the Princeton offense; shots come almost exclusively off assists, and there is little room for the individual to shine.” In short, the Princeton offense, when conducted well, is an example of how the individual can benefit

when he or she puts is effort toward the success of the team. This is the essence of teamwork: The whole is more than the sum of the parts.

At the other end of the spectrum was the U.S. men's basketball "Dream Team" at the 2004 Summer Olympics. The original 1992 Dream Team, formed when the Olympic rules changed to allow professional athletes, was a roster of all-stars, including Magic Johnson, Larry Bird, and Michael Jordan. The Dream Team had no problem dominating the competition and winning the gold. The approach to building the Dream Team — bringing in a collection of talented players and watch them crush the opposition — worked for the next several Olympics, where the U.S. won gold at each. By 2004, however, the other teams had improved and the U.S. failed to change its strategy of piecing together a team of superstars. At the 2004 Athens Olympics, the Dream Team concept failed. The superstar team, which included Tim Duncan and Allen Iverson, lost to Puerto Rico. They next lost to Lithuania. Thanks to a victory over Spain, the Dream Team ended up with a bronze medal, following the well-known basketball powerhouses of Argentina and Italy (yes, we're being sarcastic). In 2008, they recovered and won gold, in part because they fielded a team that worked together instead of a piecemeal group of superstars. This team took the far more humble moniker of the "Redeem Team."

In short, a *group* of superstars is not always as good as a *team* comprised of less capable individuals. Take, for example, chickens. Yes, chickens. If you're in the poultry business, you want your chickens to lay as many eggs as possible. Researchers have studied how to make this happen. They first tried a Dream Team approach, taking the best-performing chickens from each henhouse room and putting them together. This technique backfired – the chickens started laying fewer eggs. It turns out that these superstar chickens owed much of their success to taking resources from the less dominant chickens in their original groups (who knew there were narcissistic chickens?). In the new group, these successful chickens wasted their time and energy fighting for individual dominance and resources and ended up laying fewer eggs. In some henhouses, farmers even had to remove the superstar chickens' beaks to prevent them from injuring each other as they tried to establish a "pecking order." Choosing chickens that got along, however, worked well – they produced more eggs than the Dream Team chickens and were cooperative enough to keep their beaks. If you've ever worked in a group with more than one narcissist, you've probably wished for the human version of beak removal.

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The "look out for Number One" approach is only beneficial when "Number Two" is an enemy trying to harm you. An unscrupulous business competitor should probably get the Number Two treatment. If Number Two is your child, your spouse, your parents, or a close friend, though, it doesn't always make sense to put yourself first. If you look out for yourself at the expense of your close friends, pretty soon you won't have any close friends. How about your colleagues and co-workers? Even here, looking out for Number One is not always ideal – people usually need to work together for the best performance, and no one likes a selfish jerk. Finally, if you run a business and your motto is "Looking out for Number One," your business will probably fail. Most businesses instead hold to the motto "the customer is Number One" or "the customer comes first."

Unrestrained selfishness has major costs across all types of relationships. This is obviously true in close relationships, in which people don't keep strict tabs on what they're giving and taking. You don't keep tabs on every meal, toy, or ice cream cone that you give your child, expecting that she will pay it back to you in senior care and Depends later on. There is also relatively little tab-keeping with a spouse. In fact, one of the signals that a romantic relationship is in trouble is when there is a shift to record keeping: "You spent the money I earn on clothes for yourself and I didn't get to take the weekend trip that I wanted." Selfishness can do obvious harm in close relationships if one person expects payback for everything or, worse, doesn't do his or her share at all.

In business transactions, there *is* an explicit focus on exchange — I do X for you and you do Y for me. Despite this relatively crass description, these relationships can be very positive. For example, if you go to your local coffee shop every morning and order a tall double latte and hand the nice person behind the counter three bucks, he will hand you a tall double latte. This is a classic win/win situation, as you would rather have a tall latte than your three dollars, and the coffee shop would rather have your three dollars. If the coffee shop management gets greedy and starts charging 4 dollars for the latte, you are likely to seek another coffee shop; likewise, if you are unwilling to pay the 4 bucks for a latte, you will need to find a different, less expensive coffee shop. Relationship over. This isn't necessarily bad for society. In general, part of the job of being a consumer is to look out for Number One, and the job of consumer businesses to become more efficient and consumer focused -- at least in theory. The reality is more complex. For example, if you go to a mega-homestore for your tools and building supplies, next thing you know the friendly and knowledgeable (but less efficient) local hardware store is out of business. You save some money, but the society as a whole loses a little bit.

The bottom line is that selfish, narcissistic behavior damages relationships. Thus, the only time narcissism makes sense for the individual is when the relationship is worth damaging. So looking out for Number One might make sense when choosing a cell phone provider. Similarly, in one-time interactions with strangers, looking out for Number One can work (as long as those strangers are not going to become part of your broader community and spread rumors about your nastiness). In intense competition of a win/lose, zero-sum nature, narcissism might be useful. The world is certainly full of cocky boxers, sprinters, and tennis players (although thankfully there are many more who are not.) Even in these situations the "competitive edge" can be taken too far. Recently, Barry Bonds broke Hank Aaron's home run record. This would be great for Barry Bonds (and for baseball) except that Bonds allegedly used steroids in his quest to beat the record. Plus, not a lot of people think Barry Bonds is a nice guy. In contrast, Hank Aaron videotaped a congratulatory statement to be shown when Barry beat the record. Hank Aaron thus lost the direct competition, but came across to the public as a class act. In fact, Aaron's reputation and standing might actually have been helped by having his record broken. Tough, even fierce competition is a necessary part of society and can dramatically increase the average level of performance in both the winners and losers. When a healthy competitive drive crosses over into single-minded self-interest, however, the outcome is not always ideal.

Appendix E:

A brief history of self-admiration

Even if self-admiration isn't central to the uniquely American belief system, it is possible that it has always been seen as valuable. Many people take it for granted that self-admiration is a good thing. Some even argue that the Golden Rule is about self-love: If you are to love others as yourself, and you do not love yourself, then you would not love others. Thus, the Golden Rule is really about the importance of self-love. Although neither of us is a Biblical scholar, we think this is a bit of a stretch. Jesus did not talk very much about self-love or self-admiration; instead, he emphasized self-sacrifice, not an attribute popular among narcissists.

Historically, most cultures have had mixed feelings about both narcissism and self-esteem. Narcissism has not always been seen as a purely negative trait, and self-esteem has often been seen as having dubious value.

The concept of narcissism (at least by that name) began in Ancient Greece with the story of Narcissus. There are several variants of the Narcissus myth. Most begin with the beautiful youth Narcissus scorning the love of various suitors, often the Nymph Echo, who echoes everything Narcissus says. The myth usually ends with Narcissus staring at his reflection in the water and then dying. In the version reported by the Roman poet Ovid in roughly the same year Christ was born, Narcissus is truly heartbroken when he gazes at himself in a fountain of silver water, moaning, "I am burning with love for myself. I move and bear the flames/ … I wish that him I love might live on, but now we shall die united, two in one spirit." After his death, Narcissus turns into a flower, the Narcissus, a type of daffodil.

The Ancient Greeks also had a special name for the form of pride and conceit that often accompanies narcissism: hubris. Hubris appears in the actions of individuals who, as a result of their pride, often take things one step too far. Achilles, the great warrior, dishonors the body of his opponent, Hector, by dragging it in the dirt, and cannot conquer Troy until Hector is given an honorable burial. Icarus and his father Daedulus created wax wings for themselves to escape the island of Crete. The plan worked beautifully until Icarus' pride got the better of him and he flew too close to the sun, melting his wax wings and sending him plummeting to his death.

There is something oddly admirable in hubris, like someone flipping the bird at fate. The men and women who displayed hubris were in some sense admired, and thus remembered, but their hubris was, ultimately, destructive.

The image of Narcissus has shown up repeatedly in artistic works since the time of the ancient Greeks, but it didn't really enter the psychological lexicon until Sigmund Freud started using the term. (Freud got the idea from Havelock Ellis, a British sexologist, but Freud popularized it.) Freud, of course, had a penchant for Greek myth – he named his famous complex after Oedipus and the female variant after Electra.

Freud's take on narcissism was not completely negative, but was not completely positive either. Freud didn't call narcissism a disorder. Instead, he saw narcissism as a natural state of development and part of the psyche. In the positive sense, narcissism is linked to the instinct for self-preservation and the ability to inspire confidence in others, especially when the narcissistic person is in a leadership role. Ultimately, however, Freud thought that narcissism, and the difficulty in loving others that goes with it, would lead to illness. As he wrote, "A strong egoism is a protection against falling ill, but in the last

resort we must begin to love in order not to fall ill, and we are bound to fall ill if…we are unable to love."

The final major historical movement in the history of narcissism was the psychodynamic work of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Two figures stand out in this area. The first is Heinz Kohut, the psychiatrist who first labeled narcissism as a personality disorder. Like most psychodynamically-oriented thinkers, Kohut saw narcissism as part of the normal course of human development. Infants need to have their innate narcissism sustained for a period of development, but then the infantile narcissism needs to be gradually replaced with reality. The processes of bolstering a child's narcissism was described as mirroring (admiring) and idealization (allowing the child to idealize the parent).

The second figure is Otto Kernberg, whose views on narcissism were very different from Kohut's. Kernberg argued that narcissism resulted from cold, hostile parenting. In this type of family, a child would develop a weak, empty and "enraged" sense of self that was covered by a mask of narcissistic grandiosity. The differences between Kohut and Kernberg are complex, involving issues like motives versus the structure of the self, but they both saw that narcissism, at the extremes, could be a psychological disorder.

Most people assume that self-esteem, unlike narcissism, has always been viewed as positive. The reality, again, is more complex. There are two real surprises in the history of self-esteem. First, the concept of self-esteem appeared in popular discourse relatively recently. Although self-esteem popped up in the rarified air of spiritual and psychological discourse a few times before the 1960s, it did not become prominent until then, and the masses did not really discuss self-esteem until the 70s-1980s. Even today, self-esteem is not a relevant trait in many parts of Asia (Mandarin Chinese, for example, does not have a character for self-esteem.) Second, self-esteem has historically had a mixed reputation, with some viewing it as a useful trait, and others viewing it with skepticism and suspicion.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the term self-esteem (actually, *selfe*-esteem) was a relatively late arrival into the language, first used by the Benedictine monk Augustine Baker in his *Sancta Sophia* in1657. This self-referential linguistic construction was part of a larger cultural trend where "selfe-" was added as a prefix to words, in this case "esteem" (which itself appeared roughly two hundred years earlier.) These reflexive terms are somewhat odd. What does it mean to "esteem" the self? To do so, you have to see the self as an object, and then, with the self, think of that objectified self as a positive object. "I like myself" is a strange psychological statement. Unlike the statement "I like my Mom", with "I like myself" I am both the liker and likee.

The Enlightenment witnessed a burst of interest in reason, science, and the individual. As interest in theology started to dwindle, there was radically heightened interest in economics, political philosophy, and the philosophy of the mind. The search for sin in the soul was set aside as thinkers began to take a more positive view of humankind.

The result was a complex view of self-esteem. On the one hand, the church warned that self-esteem could lead to pride and its negative consequences. On the other hand, it was believed that a high self-opinion – rather than being a sin in the eyes of God -- was actually a blessing in the marketplace of goods and services. For example, Adam

Smith argued that when many people are selling wares, the person who stands out in being more confident in himself and his products will gather more buyers. He was probably right. An infomercial led by a saleswoman with obviously low self-esteem would do a terrible job, but one brimming with confidence and excitement, especially with a winning Australian accent, would be much more successful. The 1851 novel St. *Giles and St. James* describes a man who "had a high, and therefore marketable, opinion of himself; for the larger the man's self-esteem the surer is he of putting it off in the world's mart."

While this view of self-esteem as an aid to salesmanship is compelling, it is also somewhat unfulfilling. "I want self-esteem so that I can look successful and therefore become successful in the marketplace" does not fulfill any deep spiritual or psychological hunger. There was, however, a more nuanced argument that self-esteem could be both worldly *and* Godly. This view had a lot in common with the arguments that we still hear today that self-esteem is good if it is "grounded" in a solid moral basis and tempered by reality. John Milton makes mention of this image of "grounded" self-esteem – perhaps for the first time in history – in *Paradise Lost*: "Then self esteem, grounded on just and right/ Well manag'd;"

Milton also went on to present a complex argument about the benefits of self-esteem. Essentially, he argued that people with high self-esteem will refrain from sin and be admirable in the eyes of God, because they won't want to tarnish their shiny self-image by doing or thinking bad things:

> "But he that holds himself in reverence and due esteem, both for the dignity of Gods image upon him, and for the price of his redemption, which he thinks is visibly markt upon his forehead, accounts himselfe both a fit person to do the noblest and godliest deeds, and much better worth then to deject and defile, with such a debasement and such a pollution as sin is, himselfe so highly ransom'd and enobl'd to a new friendship and filiall relation with God. Nor can he fear so much the offence and reproach of others, as he dreads and would blush at the reflection of his own severe and modest eye upon himselfe, if it should see him doing or imagining that which is sinfull though in the deepest secrecy."

Who knew that New Agers had a soulmate in John Milton? No matter what the source, however, there's little proof that this argument is correct. It's just as likely to be the opposite, as someone who thinks highly of himself might not see the need to follow someone else's rules. Those low in self-esteem, in contrast, might be more willing to submit to the comforting notion that they could just do what a higher authority wanted. Plus, the direction of causation seems suspect: Why wouldn't Milton argue that if one lives in sin, he or she would lose esteem in his or her own eyes? Regardless, Milton's arguments capture many of the views of self-esteem that people hold today, almost 400 years later.

This early thinking about self-esteem, although interesting intellectually, did not enter popular discourse, and self-esteem faded from the scene for over 100 years. In the late 19th century, the new science of psychology re-discovered self-esteem. The first psychologist to study self-esteem was William James, after whom the Harvard Psychology Building is named. (He was also the brother of novelist Henry James, now the better known of the two probably because, as a rule, people are more interested in emotionally complex novels like *The Portrait of a Lady* and *The Bostonians* than they are in philosophical and psychological texts.)

Perhaps because of his pragmatic nature, James wanted to understand the link between self-esteem and actual performance in life. He defined self-esteem with a simple, and now classic, formula:

Self-esteem = success/pretensions

In other words, your self-esteem is a ratio of what you actually accomplish in life divided by what you expect to accomplish. If you accomplish a lot, but only expect to accomplish a little, you will have high self-esteem; if you accomplish a little, but expect to accomplish a lot, you will have low self-esteem. This ratio thus suggests that you can raise self-esteem in two ways: you can increase your success or lower your expectations. For example, if your self-esteem is low because you are failing in your job selling shoes, you can either work hard and sell more Manolo Blaniks or decide that selling only one pair of shoes a week is enough. Either way, your self-esteem will go up.

Thinking about self-esteem as a ratio also has another interesting result: a psychological tension often emerges when you focus on self-esteem. If you want to experience high self-esteem, you need to consistently be more successful than you expected. This pursuit of self-esteem, William James noticed, can become a trap in and of itself. (Psychologist Jennifer Crocker at the University of Michigan has recently done some fascinating experimental work on the costs of self-esteem). It takes constant energy and monitoring to keep the formula spitting out a positive number, and this often takes the individual away from experiencing life. James wrote, “Everything added to the Self is a burden as well as a pride. A certain man who lost every penny during our civil war went and actually rolled in the dust, saying he had not felt so free and happy since he was born.” Maybe it was his background in mysticism and religion, or maybe his pragmatic view of the world, but James viewed the whole effort to focus on the self and self-esteem as a dicey endeavor. Even with the interest of the great William James, however, self-esteem again failed to catch on in society.

In the mid-20th century, two other figures play prominent roles in the story of self-esteem. The first is the great humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow. Maslow is known primarily for his “hierarchy of needs” which he published in the 1950’s. These needs were arranged as a pyramid, with basic needs like shelter and food on the bottom and higher-order concepts like self-actualization on the top. Each individual had to reach the basic needs before reaching the higher needs. Maslow described self-actualization as living fully to one’s potential. Maslow's famous dictum was: “What a man can be, he must be.” He considered self-actualization an extremely difficult goal to reach, listing only a few people who had met it, like Mahatma Ghandi and Albert Einstein. Maslow included self-esteem, but in the middle of the pyramid (after needs for belonging, but before self-actualization). Nevertheless, many who drew inspiration from Maslow concentrated more on self-esteem than on true self-actualization – perhaps because it is easier to simply like yourself than to do the hard work of becoming truly self-actualized.

Morris Rosenberg was the final major figure in the development of self-esteem. Rosenberg was a sociologist who was interested in how race and class lead to self-esteem. In 1965, he published what has remained the most popular measure of general self-esteem, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, an easy-to-administer, 10-question, self-report measure of self-esteem. The existence of this measure allowed academic work of self-esteem to flourish. Since 1965, his scale has been used or cited in thousands of studies by many different researchers and students. Rosenberg, and most researchers

since, have considered self-esteem to be a largely positive trait. However, both Rosenberg and a recent team of scholars lead by Roy Baumeister have concluded that the benefits of general self-esteem largely lie in feeling good rather than performing well. Today, researchers are developing more nuanced views of self-esteem that predict more specific psychological and behavioral outcomes. These variants of self-esteem include: implicit self-esteem, implicit egotism, unstable vs. stable self-esteem, contingent self-esteem, and self-liking vs. self-competence. A search of the database PsycInfo for these terms will yield many articles – including one finding that people are drawn to places and professions that resemble their names (Men named George are more likely to move to Georgia, and women named Denise are more likely to become dentists). Apparently, it is difficult to escape from the endless quest for self-admiration.

Notes for sources (some notes found in main notes file, also downloadable at www.narcissismepidemic.com)

Appendix C: How individuals affect culture, and culture affects individuals

The mutual constitution model: Fiske, A., Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., & Nisbett, R. E. (1998). The cultural matrix of social psychology. In D. Gilbert, S. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (4th ed., pp. 915-981). San Francisco: McGraw-Hill; Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., Matsumoto, H., Norasakkunkit, V. (1997). Individual and collective processes in the construction of the self: Self-enhancement in the United States and self-criticism in Japan. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72,* 1245-1267; Markus H. R., & Kitayama S. (1994). A collective fear for the collective: Implications for selves and theories of selves, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 20*, 568–579.

Appendix E: A brief history of self-admiration

"I am burning with love for myself. I move and bear the flames: For reading Ovid online, see http://etext.virginia.edu/latin/ovid/trans/Metamorph3.htm (viewed online 6/8/2008).

"A strong egoism is a protection against falling ill, but in the last resort we must begin to love in order not to fall ill, and we are bound to fall ill if…we are unable to love.": See Freud, S. (1986). On narcissism: An introduction. In A. P. Morrison (Ed.), Essential Papers on Narcissism (pp. 17–43). *New York and London*: New York University Press. (page 28).

The final major historical movement in the history of narcissism was the psychodynamic work done in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s: Bosson, J. K., Lakey, C. E., Campbell, W. K., Zeigler-Hill, V., Jordan, C. H., & Kernis, M. H. (in press). Untangling the Links Between Narcissism and Self esteem: A Theoretical and Empirical Review. *Social and Personality*

Psychology Compass; Miller, J. D. & Campbell, W. K. (2008). Comparing clinical and social-personality conceptualizations of narcissism. *Journal of Personality, 76*, 449-476.

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Self-esteem in Asia: Heine, S. J., Lehman, D. R., Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1999). Is there a universal need for positive self-regard? *Psychological Review, 106*, 766-794.

The 1851 novel St. Giles and St. James describes a man who "had a high, and therefore marketable, opinion of himself. . .." Jerold, D. W. (1851). *St. Giles and St. James*. London: Bradbury and Evans. (p.121)

Milton quotes were taken from the Milton reading room online: Milton. The Reason of Church Government. Luxon, Thomas H., ed. *The Milton Reading Room*, http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton, September, 2007.

"Everything added to the Self is a burden as well as a pride. . . ": James, W. (1890). *The principles of psychology*: Henry Holt & Co.: New York. (p. 311)

Morris Rosenberg: The Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale can be found at http://www.bsos.umd.edu/socy/Research/rosenberg.htm (viewed online 6/8/2008)

. . . have concluded that the benefits of self-esteem largely lie in feeling good rather than performing well: Baumeister, R. F., Campbell, J. D., Krueger, J. I., & Vohs, K. D. (2003). Does high self-esteem cause better performance, interpersonal success, happiness, or healthier lifestyles? *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 4*, 1-44.

people are drawn to places and professions that resemble their names (Men named George are more likely to move to Georgia): Pelham, B. W., Mirenberg, M. C., & Jones, J. T. (2002). Why Susie sells seashells by the seashore: Implicit egotism and major life decisions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*, 469-487.