

BEING AN EFFECTIVE CUSTODIAN OF COMMUNICATION THEORY:  
AN EXAMINATION OF THEORY CONSTRUCTION, METHODOLOGICAL  
STREAMLINING, AND SPECIAL POPULATION USE BETWEEN CONSTITUTIVE  
RHETORIC, ATTRIBUTION THEORY, & THE THIRD PERSON EFFECT

by

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## ABSTRACT

The area of media effects research is important to understanding how one interacts with and is affected by the different forms of media in society. Since this age is called the information age, one is almost always in constant contact with some form of media, whether receiving or transmitting information. As the area of media effects research grows, it is important to reconsider accepted theory and methodology in the hopes of improving on previous research to provide a deeper and more meaningful understanding of society through media. The Third Person Effect, as explained by Davison (1983), is a very good example of this idea.

This present study examines the metaconcepts, theoretical terms, and methodological concerns surrounding the third person effect, which have been identified through the previous 26 years of study. To do this, the theoretical terms, metaconcepts, and methodology used to test the perceptual and behavioral hypotheses outlined in the third person effect are examined, and alternatives are offered and tested. Attribution theory, coupled with the constitutive rhetorical processes of othering and interpellation, are examined as more useable theoretical underpinnings for the perceptual hypothesis, and attribution theory is examined in conjunction with the sports communication understanding of fandom and the identification of such.

Methodologically, the perceptual and behavioral hypotheses are tested first through a pilot test using a focus group to garner qualitative data for analysis and then to help create quantitative scales for a pre- and post-test experiment. With an N of 40 for the pilot test and 237 for the pre- and post-test experiment, eight research questions were assessed. The overall results show that attribution coupled with constitutive rhetoric serves as a more explanative theoretical

position for the third person effect, but methodologically the testing method provides more, better, and deeper data to examine perception. The behavioral hypothesis is benefited by the perceptual data, and consistent data is found to suggest that studying behavior through attribution will finally produce generalizable data.

The findings in this study contribute to future scholarship in the areas of media effects research in general, third person effect research, sports communication research, metatheoretical research, perceptual research, behavioral research, and rhetorical theory. From the position of a scholar, this research will hopefully help fuel investigation that will show this model working across all different populations and different theories as well.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

$\beta$	Beta: The coefficient representing the relative contribution of each independent variable in the prediction of the dependent variable in a regression analysis
<i>df</i>	Degree of freedom: The number of values free to vary after certain restrictions have been placed on the data
DV	Dependent Variable: Used to indicate variable used in a dependent fashion for certain statistical tests
<i>F</i>	Fisher's F ratio: A ratio of two values
<i>N</i>	Size of overall data set
$R^2$	Pearson product-moment correlation squared
<i>SD</i>	Standard Deviation
<i>SE</i>	Standard Error
<i>Sig</i>	Significance

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Media effects theory attempts to grasp why people react the way they do to mass media. The study of media effects is important because of the pervasiveness of mass media in society. The Third Person Effect (TPE), a media effects theory, attempts to shed light on the nature of interactions between people and mass media. Davison (1983), in a seminal work on the TPE, explained why understanding mass media's interaction with society is important. Davison described a conversation between himself and another sociologist concerning a unit of African American troops based on Iwo Jima Island who were papered with leaflets from Japanese planes explaining how World War II was not their war; it was the 'white man's' war. The next day, the all-white officers pulled out the African American unit because they *knew* the Japanese propaganda had worked and their troops would revolt. This story informs media effects research when one realizes that the decision to withdraw the African American unit was made without consulting any of the African American soldiers. The point Davison was making was that there was no indication that the troops were effected by the propaganda, but the decision made by the white officers seemed to indicate that they were effected. The issue of projecting the effect of a message on others rather than on the self is central to the TPE. It is possible that the African American troops were un-phased by the propaganda, but the white officers believed that the *obviously* propagandistic leaflets would work and that the African Americans should be pulled out. The connection between perception and behavior seen in Davison's example is a valuable

observation that TPE offers. The value of the TPE in media effects literature in society is the connection between these perceptions and the behaviors evoked.

Since 1983, a large amount of scholarship has been published examining different facets of the TPE, specifically that people believe media affects others more than themselves (Perloff, 2002). The common theme found in the accumulated body of work is that the TPE is credible but flawed (Duck, Hogg, & Terry, 1995; Gunther & Hwa, 1996; Hoorens & Ruiter, 1996; Tewksbury, Moy, & Weis, 2004; Willnat, 1996). However, previous work on the TPE does not directly address the problems present in the theory. This is not to say that the TPE is the only flawed theory; many theories habitually used in the field of mass communication are flawed. Pan and McLeod (1991) suggested that the field of communication creates *metaconcepts* without refining or operationalizing them. For instance, mass communication's agenda setting theory has been tested and refined over time through additions or modifications, but no one has adequately or explicitly defined the concepts involved in agenda setting or how each connects to the other. Researchers just accept that the theory works without this level of attention.

The lack of a refined operationalized theory becomes an issue when one considers the scope of communication theory and what it is used to explain. Most of our metaconcepts focus on a broad range of issues regarding everything from the creation of media to the effect it has on the individual. Pan and McLeod (1991) explained that "The very nature of mass communication processes compel multilevel consideration" (p. 140). In mass communication, most of our theory deals with individual assessment to find general group tendencies, which is problematic when the connection from the individual to the group is not clearly explained. Communication scholars change theory terms conceptually explaining the individual into terms explaining an aggregate of a population. When scholarship employs this technique, researchers can find

generalizable information, but without a clear explanation of how the information really works. For this reason, among others, it is important to revisit mass communication theory to possibly update, refine, or re-conceptualize parts of these theories to make them more useable, operational, and theoretically sound.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### TPE Creation

Davison suggested that the TPE “predicts that people will tend to overestimate the influence that mass communications have on the attitudes and behavior of others” (1983, p. 3). However, in this statement, Davison implicated the examples and conclusions he has made about humans over time. For instance, Davison’s example of the African American unit on Iwo Jima Island explains his belief of how one creates and uses fictitious people to assess mediated messages and situations. The white officers pulled the African American unit from Iwo Jima Island without consulting the troops’ disposition. The officers imagined the troops’ reaction in their mind and made a decision by comparing their assumptions of what decisions and perceptions the troops had to their own perceptions and decisions about the propaganda leaflets. Later, while conducting similar research in 1957, Davison found that when asking “journalists how much influence they thought newspaper editorials had on the thinking of their readers” (p. 2), they believed that they were smarter than the average person and therefore unaffected by editorials; however, average people are affected by editorials. In both examples, Davison used previous research to highlight that in deciding how others perceive a situation or message and how others view an *average person* to weigh his/her perception of the situation or message against, the person being asked the question usually views himself/herself as less affected than

an average person. The average person is an amalgamation of society that does not accurately reflect any single person or group, just one's assessment of the world. The average person is not real; the assessment is singularly based on perceptions out of one's own head. There is a group of faceless people in one's mind that, when confronted with mediated message or situations, can form into whomever one needs to assess and act on any given situation. Separating this suggestion into perception and behavior should further investigation and understanding.

### TPE Perception and Behavior

Perloff (1999) explained that there are two hypotheses in the TPE. The perceptual hypothesis suggests that “communications exert a stronger impact on others than on the self” (p. 355). The behavioral hypothesis, which is a little less straightforward, suggests that “effects are due to the actions of those who anticipate some reaction on the part of others (the third persons) and behave differently as a result” (p. 355). The TPE was intended to explain both perception and behavioral choice based on perception. Media convey messages that humans must address in some manner. By addressing messages, the individual is forced to create a perception, or how they feel about what the message conveys. Theoretically, following perception, the individual bases behavior on the perception formed. The crux of the TPE is that perception and behavior are not based on reality but instead on a group of fictitious people. Davison suggested that the TPE “predicts that people will tend to overestimate the influence that mass communications have on the attitudes and behavior of others” (1983, p. 3). However, in this statement, Davison used the examples and conclusions he has made about humans over time.

### *Perceptual Hypothesis*

When one engages in perception, according to the TPE, one takes in media and weighs that mediated reality against a combination of the characteristics, experiences, memories, and emotions that make up the people with whom one identifies. The perception is not based on what one thinks of oneself, but on what one remembers about others. Since memory becomes more flawed with the passage of time, the *other* one measures media against is the base information the mind retains of the other. The characteristics that make up the other are nothing like the group of people upon which the other is based. Thus, according to Davison (1983), the TPE suggests that one bases perception of media on a fictitious other which is composed of the leftover vestiges of reality about the other in the mind. In a meta-analysis of the perceptual hypothesis of the TPE, Paul, Salwen, and Dupagne (2000) examined 32 published and unpublished studies from 1983 to 2000. They found that the perceptual hypothesis is empirically strong. The perceptual hypothesis, in theory, is based on one's analysis of another from the leftovers one has from reality. In conceptualizing that theory, it seems that the perceptual hypothesis is robust and predictable. However, Paul et al. confirmed that the perceptual hypothesis is robust, but "research has yet to adequately explain how people perceive themselves as smarter and less resistant to media messages than others. Research has also failed to identify the contingent factor that might enhance or diminish the perception" (p. 58.). The perceptual hypothesis, as it is currently conceived, does a good job of providing a surface analysis of perception but, like most metaconcepts in our field, goes no further. Paul et al. seemed to clearly describe the problem with the perceptual hypothesis, that it is imprecise and under defined. Only through addressing these problems can current discussion come to an end and allow future investigation garner better, clearer, and more cogent results. If the goal is predictability within a

population, investigations should be undertaken to assess the clear, salient, problems outlined herein.

### *Behavioral Hypothesis*

Davison (1983) asserted that everyone, from academics to advertisers, should try to understand the behavioral hypothesis of the TPE because of its probative value. If an academic is trying to understand censorship, the TPE is important to include in the discussion; likewise, if an advertiser is trying to sell a product, the behavioral hypothesis can help her understand both the audience and how best to sell the product to that audience. Davison explained:

In times when supplies of consumer goods are irregular, there are always some people who will rush to the stores the moment they hear reports of any possible shortage. If you ask them why, the answer is likely to be that they are concerned about the effects of these reports on other people. They want to stock up before the hoarders remove all goods from the shelves. (p. 13)

Davison characterized the breadth of the behavioral hypothesis as being able to affect people's shopping habits, reaction to news, reaction to real life problems, and level of commitment to following perceptions based not on factual analysis but on simple ad hoc analysis of the aggregate other in one's mind. The usefulness of the behavioral hypothesis is limitless if one can harness it; however, there are problems with the behavioral hypothesis that make utilizing it difficult. Perloff (2002) explained that "the hypothesis is vague and terribly simplistic; it ignores the many processes that mediate the perception-behavior relationship" (p. 499). Perloff goes on to explain that the behavioral hypothesis has only been shown to occur when censorship is deemed necessary to stop the harmful effects of media on others.

Tewksbury et al. (2004) also suggested that the behavioral hypothesis can find support for the censorship of media perceived to harm others, but it can do little else. The problem

Tewksbury et al. (2004) found with the behavioral hypothesis is that when scholars conduct research on the TPE, researchers only ask “the degree to which they support the behaviors of others” (p. 149). In their work, Tewksbury et al. (2004) suggested that behavioral intent can also be influenced by asking subjects how they think those in society will act. Instead of asking how much one supports another’s action, researchers should ask what one perceives the other will do. However, this change in behavioral intent does not make the behavioral hypothesis fundamentally better; it is merely a semantic change that moves the hypothesis down the road to obscurity by focusing on the same fundamental idea set.

#### TPE Metaconceptual Considerations

Davison’s (1983) TPE theory has garnered a bit of attention in the past two and a half decades and is in need of a critical eye to refocus it for use in the future. Davison’s often quoted explanation of the TPE suggests that the effect of communication, in any form, affects a third person *other* more than the self. An advertisement will affect *them* more than it will affect *me*. The concepts outlined by Davison seem clear, but they prove to be unclear. Researchers ask questions concerning the TPEs’ concepts, including: how does this effect come about (Davison, 1996; Perloff, 1999; Tewksbury et al., 2004); does this effect come from within or from exterior forces (Duck et al., 1995; Duck & Mullin, 1995; Fields & Schuman, 1976; Hoorens & Ruiter, 1996); and how do we test such assumptions clearly (Neuwirth & Frederick, 2002; Paek, Pan, Sun, Abisaid, & Houden, 2005; Peiser & Peter, 2000; Price & Tewksbury, 1996)? Perloff (2002) suggested that the TPE is more of a hypothesis, because there is a lack of sophistication in defining the linkages between the theoretical concepts and the findings. Perloff’s concerns stemmed from the fact that the TPE’s connections between subject analysis and societal effect

are unclear. The TPE is in need of reexamination, because the metaconcepts underlying the theory have not been explained or refined, the habitual questions have not been addressed, and there is debate whether the TPE is even theoretically sound enough to be called a theory. Since the statement, “Others are more affected by media than I am,” is ubiquitous, addressing these issues is important to further media effects research through the TPE.

### TPE Methodological Considerations

The TPE has methodological flaws in testing in addition to its theoretical flaws. Price and Tewksbury (1996), in an examination of question order, found that the order and tone of the questions following a stimulus can have a subtle effect on perception. While this is an important methodological finding in regards to TPE testing, the explanation of the problem is somewhat more interesting. The common way to test for both the perceptual and behavioral hypotheses is a stimulus followed by a questionnaire. This form of testing asks people to make a behavioral choice based on a stimulus they have, presumably, just seen. This methodology seems appropriate for questions of perception; however, as far as behavior is concerned, it leaves something to be desired. The intent of this investigation of the TPE is to probe problems with and provide alternatives to the theoretical and methodological assumptions on which the first and second hypothesis of the TPE is based. After examining and expanding the perceptual and behavioral hypotheses of the TPE, the theory will become a better tool with which media effects can be methodically studied and behavior can be diagnosed.

## Re-Examination and Addition of Theory as a Method of Solving Theoretical Problems

Pan and McLeod (1991) suggested that when re-examining a theory it is important that other theories are considered. Other theories can be used to solve a problem in the theory at study. Re-examining a theory in conjunction with new information and new perspective helps fashion a new, more useable theory. For example, the TPE *theory* is based on an idea of social identification. An individual identifies himself/herself as affected or not affected by media in relation to society as a whole or some subset of society. This metaconcept seems clear on paper but is not as clear when dealing with subjects. In an attempt to clarify social identification, one might examine rhetorical theory, specifically constitutive rhetoric. Constitutive rhetoric provides an unlikely but interesting insight to social identification. Constitutive rhetoric focuses on the way one creates an understanding of the world around him. The term used for the world around oneself in rhetoric is a rhetorical situation. McGee (1975) explained that when a person enters into a rhetorical situation, or a situation that requires an examination and interpretation of expressed symbols, that person creates an other that fits into their objective reality. The other, in this case, is formulated in one's mind or psyche. Jasinski (2001) suggested that "a psychic understanding of the other begins with a central premise of postmodern thinking about the human subject – the lack of central or essential core 'self' or identity" (p. 411). The other is a psychological construct of individuals of whom one has little personal knowledge and no pre-made identity. The other takes shape through social interaction.

Similarly, the TPE is suggesting that people are confronted with new media every day. When one is confronted with new media, his/her psyche perceives that media and relates the new media to himself/herself as well as to other people in order to better perceive the world and themselves when confronted by similar mediated messages. In both constitutive rhetoric and the

TPE, the individual faces a new situation and makes decisions about perception and identity based on an evaluation. However, how does one use constitutive rhetoric to inform the TPE? It is an issue of terminology.

### *Comparisons of Terminology*

Pan and McLeod (1991) suggested that although terminology might differ between disciplines, it is the intent of the terminology that should be measured. The intent of the terminology used in constitutive rhetoric is similar to the terminology used in the TPE, which makes it useful. Both constitutive rhetoric and the TPE seek to understand change through new experience interacting with prior experience and behavior. The extent of that usefulness will be explicated later, because if one intends to comment on a theory, it is important to understand the theory itself. The usefulness of combining these theories in the current study is plausible, because by using the terms of constitutive rhetoric to formulate new terminology and better explanations of the TPE, many of the metaconceptual problems with the theory can be addressed.

### *Use of a Special Population*

Employing a special population in order to help control for external factors in this study of perception and behavioral intent is necessary. A special population, in this case, is any population that is specific in any way. For example, smokers are a special population, as are teenagers, politicians, college professors, etc. The use of a special population in this case is warranted by previous research like that done by Hatsukami (1999). Hatsukami's research looked at improving the success rates of smoking cessation treatments. She suggested that by looking at the special population of smokers, one can study specific treatments that can then be

applied to general populations. Similarly, the TPE has problems being fully effective from theory to application; therefore, a special population might help. Through the use of a special population, it is possible to find specific traits or responses that can be generalized from the special population to the average person.

The special population sampled is sports fans of a major southern university whose tradition in football is unparalleled, as its infamous fandom is unmatched. The nature of that fandom, though, is very similar to all fandom, or as Blain, Boyle, and O'Donnell (1993) characterized it, "the daily reconstitution of cultures" (p. 18). In this universal definition of what fans do on a daily basis, there is a clear connection to the TPE that can now be built upon. The purpose of using this special population is to examine perceptions created and behavioral choices made based on the overwhelming need to be considered a *fan*. Kassing et al. (2004) posited that fans are a part of a community of sport: "The community of sport is a pervasive, influential, complex, and restricted community...the community of sport represents a communicatively rich locale that warrants the attention of communication scholars" (p. 373). The fan is only a part of the community of sport, but it is arguably the most important part. Without the fans, the community of sport would be much smaller and less important to communication scholars; without the community of sport, the fan would not exist either. At this juncture, it is important to define a fan. Crawford (2004) explained that a fan "is generally viewed as an 'obsessed' individual: someone who has an intense interest in a certain team, celebrity, show, band or similar" (p. 19). This general definition of a fan suggests that anyone who is interested in a subject could be considered a fan. Jenson (1992) went on to note that while one can be a fan of music, sport, television, etc., one is not a fan of opera, literature, or art. If one enjoys high culture, one is an aficionado. Hills (2002) explained it the best in suggesting that "fandom is not

simply a ‘thing’ that can be picked over analytically. Being a fan is not just a label or category; it is also an identity and a performance” (p. xi). The definition of fan from a theoretical standpoint is difficult, but for this discussion Hills provided an adequate discussion to with which to begin creating one. In the TPE, the idea of situationality is intrinsic. The TPE suggests that one assesses other groups in an effort to decide where one is both mentally and socially in reference to that other. The use of fans as a special population in this regard seems apropos. Additionally, Hirt, Zillmann, Erickson, and Kennedy (1992) investigated the effects the fan felt from being affiliated with a particular sports team. They argued that fans of winning teams believe they are more accomplished, whereas fans of losing teams believe they are not. The TPE is specifically interested in the perception of subjects in relation to other groups. Fans make for an interesting population because they seem to operate in a world wherein the psychological positioning of perception defines not only who they are but how they see the world. So, to narrow the community of sport to a more manageable group, this study will focus on the sports communication approach to fans of American football. Football fans are a good special population because research in sports communication relies on attitudes, perception, and behavior. Cunningham and Kwon (2003) suggested in a discussion of fan intention that when attending a sporting event, “the sociability of the sport event is important in attracting people to events” (p. 140). The more social connections a sport, has the more highly it is attended. Here, the TPE can benefit through understanding a special population that relies on the idea of the group over the individual. This reliance creates a clear picture of how perceptions can be drawn from a collective by the individual, and from those connections, a more direct link to behavior can possibly be established. Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999) extended the argument when they suggested that a fan is created by the desire to be a part of a group. The group that Wann et

al. (1999) discussed comes together physically on game days and in local support networks, but for most of the year the fan's group affiliation is created and reinforced in their own minds. A fan looks at media to find the fan archetypes he/she would like to emulate. Fans enter into a kind of TPE by evaluating, adopting, and exhibiting certain traits that are reinforced by other fans. Sports fans are an apt special population that connects to TPE concepts. These connections will help isolate and examine specific issues in the TPE to create recommendations for the future implementation and research.

### TPE Literature

#### *Third Person Perception: The Perceptual Hypothesis*

There are two other integral issues to bring up when discussing TPP: the definitions of *other* and the social distance corollary. Perloff (1999) suggested that researchers believe that the ever changeable identity of a group is what defines a third person other. This multiplicity of identities is what affects the self to change one's perception of a situation as the other groups change. What Perloff suggested is that the cognitive process of ascribing attributes to others creates the identity of these others, and that identity is important in examining perception. This led to the perennial hypothesis in most TPE research, that as the third person other group becomes farther away from the self in generality, age, or distance, the larger the third person effect will become. Two issues stand out in this hypothesis: first, the identity of the other is limited to physical descriptors; and second, when researchers use the term third person effect, they truly mean third person perception. One focus of this discussion should be on the identity of the other and the way it is limited to physical descriptors.

Neuwirth and Frederick (2002) suggested that TPP research has floundered due to the use of indefinite others. They make the key points that “very few media portrayals refer to ‘the average person’ or the ‘people in the United States’” (p. 116) to describe other groups. They also suggested that “the assumption that the general ‘other’ somehow is homogeneous is, on its face, untenable, and is contradicted by assumptions that we as communication researchers commonly make when, for example, discussing limited and contingent effects” (p. 116). Researchers’ incorrect articulation of the other leads to incorrectly measuring TPE. It is time to use previous research to try an alternative perspective on the other in an effort to retool the other those in TPE research have been methodically building towards and then apply the new other to future research.

### *Third Person Behavior: The Behavioral Hypothesis*

The behavioral hypothesis is the action associated with the perception formulated in the TPE. Gunther (1991) suggested that the behavioral hypothesis is important because it shows the response to a perception. Behavior is interesting to TPE study because of the lack of information one has when creating the perceptions on which behavior is based. This assertion is intellectually interesting, but the behavioral hypothesis has found little support since it was created except in the realm of censorship. There is support for the behavioral hypothesis in censoring pornography (Gunther, 1995), gambling advertising (Youn, Faber, & Shah, 1998), violent rap lyrics (McLeod, Eveland, & Nathanson, 1997), and television violence (Hoffner et al., 1999). The stimulus material in the study supporting the behavioral hypothesis was extremely negative and against social norms.

When stimuli were decidedly positive in outcome, there were fewer cases found to support the behavioral hypothesis. The studies with positive stimuli that did support the behavioral hypothesis discussed a subject's belief that the type of news coverage, not the news itself, was distasteful. Driscoll and Salwen (1997) found a mild level of support for censorship of the coverage of the O. J. Simpson trial. Similarly, Salwen (1998) found a level of support for censorship of media coverage of elections. Censorship of the media is the only support found for the behavioral hypothesis in its current form. Gunther (1995) suggested that TPE research, specifically behavioral hypothesis research, may only find support for censorship because the current examination of behavior does not follow the TPE's concept of behavior. Originally, the behavioral hypothesis examined perception of a media and the corresponding action. It is as simple as that. Although Davison (2001) seemed to envision behavior as the simple difference between perceived influence on the self and on others, current research is striving for more and failing. Davison suggested that "not only has the third person effect proven to be a more complex phenomenon than I originally suspected; it also seems to be of greater theoretical significance" (p. 114-115). Therefore, a re-examination of the behavioral hypothesis, in conjunction with the aforementioned discussion of the perceptual hypothesis, is very important to furthering the TPE as a theory. By re-examining the perceptual hypothesis, new and better data will be available that can be used to examine the behavioral hypothesis.

Gunther and Hwa (1996) brought up an interesting point, that the work done on the behavioral hypothesis (up to that point) had been atheoretical with little-to-no connection with the perceptual hypothesis. Tewksbury et al. (2004) reinforced this assertion when they stated, "If third person effect studies address the behavioral component, they most often focus on how perceptions of media effects influence support for content regulations" (p. 139). They also

suggested that the study of the behavioral hypothesis is just a prediction of perceptual data, not an examination of behavior at all. Creating a study that examines both the perceptual and behavioral hypothesis in a systematic way should prove to be very beneficial to the field. Neuwirth and Frederick (2002) suggested that behavioral studies tend to focus on largely negative, taboo media. These studies have produced the aforementioned results for censorship. Through a systematic study of the perceptual hypothesis, one can gain information that will allow the behavioral hypothesis to be clearly, theoretically, and methodologically studied on any given mediated topic.

### *TPE Is Situational*

A larger issue to consider in understanding TPE is the fact that some consider it situational. Perloff (1993) suggested that TPE is “a function of the situation, and is more likely to show up in certain situations than in others” (p.172). The situational nature of TPE seems to manifest in several possible characteristics that researchers identify as options explaining the phenomena, like knowledge about events or the estimation of a person’s knowledge about the event at issue (Duck, Hogg, & Terry, 1993; Duck, Hogg, & Terry, 1995; Mutz, 1994), being in an elite group (Gunther, 1995; Hu & Wu, 1996; Lasorsa, 1989; McLeod & Perse, 1994; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990; Salwen & Driscoll, 1996; Tiedge, Silverblatt, Havice, & Rosenfeld, 1991), or general knowledge as it relates to issues like politics (Price & Tewksbury, 1996). The scholar or scholars involved declare the situational nature of TPE by suggesting that their perspective should be the blanket used to cover all TPE investigations, and everything outside of the scope of that blanket does not fall under TPE. Researchers in TPE research believe their individual views are the correct way to judge the perceptual hypothesis, no matter what the other TPE researchers

might suggest. However, relying on attribution theory as the basis for TPE research suggests that instead of any one perspective being a blanket, each of these theories, which have been used successfully to show TPE responses, should be considered patches on the quilt making up TPE research. Each patch covers different phenomena better than the others but does not supersede the others in theoretical importance.

### *Shifting Underpinnings of TPE*

In the course of the last 24 years, researchers have used ego involvement, the elaboration likelihood model, biased optimism, attribution theory, and others as underpinnings for the TPE. Ego involvement is an adequate theoretical base for TPE research. Perloff (1989) explained that ego involvement takes into account the fact that, in general, humans assume that statements opposing his/her position will have extreme negative effects on others. Ego involvement suggests that one's attitudes make up self-image. These attitudes are guided by one's core beliefs about the different facets of one's life (Sherif, Sherif, & Nebergall, 1965). Vallone, Ross, and Lepper (1985) conducted a TPE study in which they used ego involvement to examine pro-Israeli and pro-Arab response to media about the Beirut massacre on non-involved individuals. Both groups thought that news coverage would sway neutral viewers away from their respective causes. Vallone et al. outlined a clear connection between ego involvement and the TPE because ego involvement is based on evaluation and perception. A person evaluates media and then ascribes his/her point of view to that media. Media are no longer just presenting the information; media presents information in the way a viewer chooses to find beneficial to his/her point of view. Perloff (1989) suggested that the perception element in ego involvement is derivative of

the perceptual hypothesis, in which the individual views media as having more effect on others than on the self, because of the self's ego.

While ego involvement's connection to the TPE seems sound, some researchers offer other theories as a better conceptual fit. White (1997) conducted a TPE study that had subjects examine a written persuasive message to assess issue involvement and argument strength and to evaluate the message based on that assessment. White used Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). The ELM suggests that people exert a specific amount of effort commensurate with the message they are confronted with. If the message is something one agrees with or finds to be simple, then one does not use much effort, or *peripheral route processing*. If the message is something one does not agree with, finds complex, and/or possibly persuasive, then one uses a considerable amount of effort, referred to by the ELM as *central route processing*. When White adapted the ELM to TPE research, he suggested that the subject assesses a message's strength and then accordingly ascribes perception to it. Then, one uses that assessment to ascribe a third person's perception to the message. White suggested that humans are good assessors of message strength but bad assessors of third persons. The ELM adds the level of message assessment to the TPE, which adds a new facet for exploration in TPE research.

Some researchers believe that a subject's view of himself/herself is the leading factor in the formation of a TPE. Gunther and Mundy (1993) explained that TPE should be based on biased optimism, because, as the TPE suggests, a person's positive self-image makes them view others as more likely to succumb to media messages due to the superiority of the self. Under this theory, one believes others are more affected by media due to issues like lack of media savvy, lack of self worth, etc. Gunther and Mundy found support for biased optimism as a basis for the TPE; however, they also found it to be somewhat limiting. They found that if a message seems

to have only beneficial effects, then both the answers for the subject and the third persons are the same. Brosius and Engal (1996) conducted a study to address the problems found in Gunther and Mundy's research. In their study, they helped provide support for biased optimism as a basis for the TPE when they found that "the benefit likelihood of the media effect described was responsible for the existence of the third person effect" (p. 158). If a negative message is posed in a positive way, the TPE becomes smaller. If that same negative message is posed in a negative way, the TPE becomes larger. The similarity between self and third person response is a function of message desirability, not the message itself. Brosius and Engal found this to be a compelling reason for the use of biased optimism in conjunction with the TPE. However, they suggested that biased optimism is not a singular cause for the TPE. It seems that the impersonal impact, or the distance from the third person to the subject, might mitigate biased optimism's effectiveness in conjunction with the TPE. Biased optimism does offer insight into the TPE, but it is in no way a perfect theoretical fit.

#### Adopting Attribution Theory as the Lone Underpinning

Attribution theory has been used in the past as a basis for TPE research, and one might wonder why it is important to formally adopt the theory as an umbrella underpinning for future research. Instead of trying to find a sub-theory of attribution to define the TPE, acknowledging attribution theory as the theoretical underpinning and then using sub-theories to describe specific situations is a clearer theoretical explanation of the TPE. Adopting attribution theory confirms the situationality of the TPE but at the same time provides a positive theoretical touchstone to keep the TPE viable for research.

Through examining the theories commonly used with the TPE, one notices that the common element is that they present good touchstones but not a universal fit with the TPE. That's why Paul et al. (2000) suggested that many TPE studies rely on attribution theory. Heider (1958), one of the forefathers of attribution theory, suggested that individuals always attempt to explain the behavior of others and their interaction with the world. He calls people *naïve psychologists*. Heider outlined four guidelines for the study of attribution theory:

1. People perceive behavior as being caused and intentional.
2. People possess dispositional properties (e.g., traits, abilities, intentions).
3. People assess behavior as being caused by a combination of internal or dispositional (e.g., motivations, knowledge, attitudes, moods, needs, opinions of others) and external or situational (e.g., task difficulty, luck) factors.
4. People perceive that others have similar characteristics as themselves. (p. 59)

The first three guidelines clearly fit the TPE, but the fourth guideline is problematic. The fourth guideline suggests that people see others as *similar* to themselves, which is antithetical to the TPE. Jones and Nisbett (1972) addressed the fourth guideline in their discussion of attribution theory; they suggested that “there is a pervasive tendency for actors to attribute their actions to situational requirements, whereas observers tend to attribute the same actions to stable personal dispositions” (p. 80). Jones and Nisbett referred to the fundamental attribution error, which accounts for the inclusion of the fourth guideline when applying attribution theory to the TPE as an underpinning. Ross (1977) characterized the fundamental attribution error as “the tendency for attributers to underestimate the impact of situational factors and to overestimate the role of dispositional factors in controlling behavior” (p. 183). The fundamental attribution error can be characterized as everyone wanting to be part of a group but no one wanting to

acknowledge this fact. With respect to Heider's (1958) fourth guideline, the fundamental attribution error suggests that the fourth guideline is mistaken. Humans do not perceive others as similar to themselves when weighing one's opinion against others. Humans perceive himself/herself as better than others, but occasionally they see themselves as the same as others, when the situation calls for it. Additionally, the fundamental attribution error, coupled with the four guidelines of attribution theory, provides a connection to the TPEs' perceptual hypothesis. Attribution theory provides a frame that explains why a person may see others as less able to understand and correctly respond to media messages.

Unfortunately, attribution theory is not without flaws. Common interpretation of attribution theory limits its effectiveness because the depth/breadth/scope of the theory is not fully employed. Kelley and Michela (1980) suggested that studies using attribution theory only examine causation and that causation can be studied in several ways:

The study of perceived causation is identified by the term "attribution theory;" attribution referring to the perception or inference of cause. As we will see, there is not one but many attribution "theories" and the term refers to several different kinds of problem. (p. 458)

Kelley and Michela conceptualized attribution theory as a dynamic theory that changes systematically to fit most applicable situations. If attribution theory is used as the theoretical cornerstone of the TPE, then the study of the perceptual and behavioral hypotheses becomes situational and separate, possibly with different theories used to help identify and correctly test both. Kelley and Michela explained how this conceptualization of attribution theory functions in a discussion of the difference between *attribution* theory and *attributional* theory. Attribution theory is used to test the perceptual hypothesis: "The first (attribution theory) involves systematic assessment or manipulation of antecedents. There is no interest in consequences beyond the attributions themselves, and they are generally measured directly by verbal report"

(p. 460). Attribution theory is a systematic, methodologically sound test of the causes of attributions or perceptions. Attribution theories help explicate the antecedents of the attribution process, which leads to perceptions, and once the antecedents are understood, they inform the exploration of behavior.

Kelley and Michela (1980) stated that attribution theory should be split when they suggested the following:

As an intervening cognitive factor, attribution cannot be manipulated directly, so research on consequences always involves variation in the antecedents of attributions. Because the presumed mediating attribution usually goes unmeasured, there is often ambiguity as to the exact attribution involved or even whether attribution is the mediator at all. (p. 480)

In discussing attribution versus attributional, most researchers (Ajzen & Holmes, 1976; Cunningham, 1976; Jones & Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1967; Kelley & Michela; Newston, 1974; Vallins, 1966) examine the antecedents to attribution. Attributions are affected by the experience, beliefs, and motivations one has. Kelley and Michela suggested that in one's mind, experience is compared to the consequences of an action, as well as other possibilities, to assess an attribution. For example, a person views a billboard that suggests smoking kills ten people an hour. The billboard is providing information about the dangers of smoking. The billboard is informing a person that smoking cigarettes is dangerous. In fact, it is so dangerous that every hour of the day ten people die due to cigarette smoking. The billboard goes so far as to suggest that the danger of smoking is a constant killer that averages around 240 deaths a day. That information is processed in the mind and then weighed in a matter of milliseconds against several factors. First, one might ask what his/her immediate friends and family would do given this new information. It is possible one knows an 80-year-old smoker who has smoked a pack a day for 40 years and still runs five miles a day. It is possible one has family who died from cigarette-related problems, or that one used to or still does smoke. The information is then

weighed against beliefs. Beliefs are an examination by the perceiver of “what other actors would do in the same situation” (p. 461). One might consider what the average person on the street, other than himself, might do in viewing this advertisement. The average person might dismiss the advertisement, take it to heart, or scoff at it. The average person might or might not be a smoker. It is possible that the average person is one of the ten who will die within the hour or that the average person will be the one that beats the odds. When one examines the average person, one is weighing the core beliefs one carries about the averages. Finally, one asks what motivation he/she has toward this message. Motivation discusses the level of commitment in the perceiver to attribute a response to an action, dependent on whether or not the action has any effect on the perceiver. Should the person smoke and risk death, which appears to happen frequently, or is the message leaving something out or representing information inaccurately? One asks whether he/she smokes or not. If he/she does, then the motivation to take some action towards the message is more present than if he/she does not. On the other hand, if one has a strong set of information and belief in not smoking, the motivation to act might be present as well. Essentially, one takes in a message and that information is assessed. Next, after or conjointly, the information is assessed, one’s past experience or core beliefs are examined, and one’s level of motivation is weighed. The attribution process is a complicated set of questions the mind goes through in a matter of seconds. The antecedents to attribution provide a clear, nonlinear series of questions the mind goes through in creating a perception of any situation one might encounter. Examining antecedents links attribution to perception.

Attribution occurs cognitively, which makes it hard to examine. Attribution research relies on signifiers like experience, beliefs, and motivation. Likewise, to check the attribution deciphered from these and other signifiers, attributional theory looks at outcomes from the

perceived attribution for confirmation. When researchers wish to measure attribution, they test the subject's experience, belief, and motivation towards a stimulus material. Heider (1944) suggested that the human mind is a Rubik's cube with more colors than we could ever line up. In unraveling how causation of perception is cognitively created in an individual, researchers would engage in a never-ending list of questions and studies trying to get back to the true impetus point for a cause. In essence, the result of finding true causation concludes in creating more questions than answers. Heider went on to explain that causation is really not all that important to the study of attribution, because causation only explains the bare minimum of why a perception is created. In fact, Berscheid, Graziano, Monson, and Dermer (1976) claimed that "perceptual acts function to stabilize and make predictable the phenomenal world" (p. 979). Here, Berscheid et al. suggested, much in the same vein as Heider, that to go beyond understanding just the outcomes a perception is based on is fruitless and seemingly impossible, as well as offering little to no help in forwarding knowledge.

Understanding the antecedents through attribution theory informs the application of a separate attributional theory to investigations of behavior. Kelley and Michela (1980) explained the fundamental difference between attribution and attributional, as attributional theory focuses on what occurs after the attribution process: "It entails assessment or manipulation of perceived causes and measurement of their effects on behavior, feelings, and expectancies" (p. 460). Attributional theory links to the TPE's behavioral hypothesis through a connection of purpose. Both the behavioral hypothesis and attributional theory are interested in understanding the link between a perception and the behavior resulting from that perception. After examining the attributions of a perception, researchers can craft a separate investigation to better examine the attributional effect of the attribution. Kelley and Michela suggested that there are quite a few

theories under the umbrella of attributional theory. Much like attribution theory, the researcher can craft a better examination of phenomena by having the latitude to pick an attributional theory that corresponds to what was discovered in the examination of attribution.

It would seem that separating attribution theory into attribution and attributional theory helps TPE research because of the TPE's similar separation of perception and behavior. Attribution theory provides a plethora of sub-theoretical frames to choose from when creating a test of the perceptual hypothesis. Attributional theory does the same for an investigation of the behavioral hypothesis. For instance, if a researcher is interested in understanding the common perceptual response to an advertisement, one could pick an attribution sub-theory that corresponds with the population at study and the stimulus material. After the sample is tested and perception is understood, a researcher can choose an appropriate attributional sub-theory to mirror the attribution findings and more clearly and methodologically test the behavioral response to the perception found. Using attribution theory as a foundational umbrella for the TPE is supported by Davison (1983). Davison suggested that "from the standpoint of a propagandist or other persuasive communicator, on the other hand, the third persons are those who are in some way concerned with the attitudes and behavior of the ostensible audience" (p. 3). Davison suggested that an investigation of the TPE may be conducted on the individual, but the outcomes of that study are focused on understanding the third person other. Testing perception separate from behavior allows a researcher to find the common aggregates of a sample for the population. Using those aggregates to more clearly and methodologically test behavior as a separate study seems to directly achieve Davison's initial endeavor. Attribution/attributional theory is the correct theory to achieve a more complete, theoretical, and methodological TPE.

In studying behavior, attributional theory focuses on the linkages between perceived attributions and outcomes. Kelley and Michela (1980) explained that attributions cannot be directly manipulated, due to the fact that they reside in the brain. Instead, researchers look to the consequences of a perceived mediating attribution. In doing so, researchers usually look to five common pairs of attributions. Through this examination, researchers illuminate what attributional theory most closely mirrors the function of attributions at work in the brain in conjunction with the consequences shown by the subjects. The pairs are Person versus Environment, Intrinsic versus Extrinsic, Various Causes for Arousal, and Intentional versus Unintentional (Kelley & Michela). As was previously discussed, attributions are hard to examine because they are cognitive processes; however, attributional theory takes the findings from attribution examinations and applies a different perspective. After a subject identifies an outcome, several questions are applied. Researchers ask if the motivation for an outcome is found within a person or from an outside force, how arousal might be attributable to an action, if an action can be attributed to skill or chance, and if an action can be attributed to an intentional choice or an unintentional situation. Then the attributional theory tries to explain the behavioral intent that follows the sum of these considerations, or the perception based on attribution. In the examination of each pair, an attribution is used to inform the assessment of the outcome. The purpose of the assessment is to see if an attribution pair or pairs are found in the attributional process of a subject's behavioral intention. The attributional process is examining the perceived attribution by looking at outcomes of attribution pairs.

### *Magnitude of Attribution Theory*

In an effort to clarify attribution theory further, Cunningham and Kelley (1975) suggested that attribution is based on magnitude. They posited that, independent of a situation or message presenting a magnitude of information for examination, one attributes a simple perception of a situation. However, only when presented with information creating a great magnitude of need to change belief, behavior, etc., will one engage in action that evokes a significant behavioral change. One can view mundane media and let it pass with little effect on perception, because the media either agrees with him/her or is of no consequence. If media are challenging, one engages in critical perception and, if necessary, behavioral change. Given the plethora of researchers examining attribution and the TPE, attribution theory is not only an umbrella name for several smaller, independent theories addressing specific needs, it also separates perception and behavior into two different examinations that are independent of each other. In regards to TPE research, the perceptual hypothesis is not only best explained by attribution theory, but also should be clearly examined before crafting a separate study of behavior.

### *Attribution Theory's Connection to TPE*

In order to better understand why attribution/attributional theory should be recognized as the theoretical underpinning of the TPE, one should understand attribution theory's connection to the perceptual hypothesis and attributional theory's connection to the behavioral hypothesis. The attribution theory provides linkages from the presentation of a mediated message to perception formation and the emoting of that perception. Thus, relying on attribution theory to inform the perceptual hypothesis is important because it takes the metaconcept of the TPE's first hypothesis and further grounds it in actual theory clearly explaining perception.

The TPE's perceptual hypothesis is concerned with why a person places more influence on others than on himself/herself when viewing mediated messages. It is important to examine how the perceptual hypothesis is characterized in the literature to explicate how it is used as well as how to further solidify the linkages between TPE and attribution theory. Taylor and Brown (1988) explained that TPE suggests that humans tend to perceive themselves as better than others in most situations. TPE seems firmly rooted in the social psychological tradition and in studies supporting ego-enhancement (Alicke, 1985; Brown, 1986; Dunning, Meyerowitz, & Holzberg, 1989) and unrealistic optimism (Weinstein, 1980), all of which fall under the rubric of attribution theory. If one acknowledges that attribution theory is the study of the causes of perception, then researchers characterizing TPE "as a cognitive fallacy in social judgments under varying degrees of uncertainty defined as insufficient information for completing a judgment task" (Paek et al., 2005, p. 144) should come as no surprise. The linkage between TPE and attribution theory is sound and apparent.

Attribution theory explains the complex series of assessments one goes through in creating a perception. The link to the TPE is that attributions center around questions of experience, belief, and, motivation, and the answers to these questions center around one's examination of the other. One's experience occurs, for the most part, in reaction to situations concerning others. One's beliefs are formed in response to interaction with others, and one's motivations come from others. Attribution theory is an assessment of what occurs in the mind when a person weighs experience, belief, and motivation against media. The TPEs' perceptual hypothesis is strengthened by including this systematic exploration of attribution, because attribution directly informs perception.

As was previously discussed, the TPE is situational, and that situationality is there because experience, behavior, and motivation are all affected by certain aspects of a situation leading toward a perception. Heider (1944) suggested that to understand the perceptual basis of attribution theory, one must go back to childhood. Relying on Stern and Piaget, Heider believed that as children we create primitive connections in how the world works. One does something bad and is punished; one does something good and is rewarded. This illustrates the idea of why society generally believes if something randomly bad happens, i.e., one falls, it happens for a reason and not by chance. Heider explained that “the most common explanation refers to an inference based on analogy and is similar to those theories which contend that we understand other persons’ minds because we conceive them as analogous to our own mind” (p. 359). Heider suggested that all humans are interested in the psychology of why one does what one does. One searches for answers and in doing so perceives others’ actions as based on their own, and at the same time their actions as based on others. For example, when one sees a person on a bus, one wonders, on some level, what that person is doing. One perceives that the person must be going somewhere because when he/she gets on the bus, he/she is going somewhere. Therefore, the action of the other reinforces the action of the self. On the other hand, it is entirely possible that when one sees a person on a bus, one wonders nothing; it must be acknowledged that a single point of view cannot be blanketed across populations. The TPE is situational, but when couching the theory in attribution, that fact is not a problem.

Likewise, the TPEs’ conception of the behavioral hypothesis, that we make behavioral choices based on our perceptions, falls in line with attributional theory because the TPE examines behavior in a similar way. Only by first understanding the attribution, i.e., experience, beliefs, and motivations, can one have an educated discussion about what a person perceives.

Then, from that educated guess, one can craft an experiment that tests perception in order to investigate what perceptions are related to attributions and whether there is a large enough magnitude of perception to create a behavioral choice. Unfortunately, the difficulty of testing behavior bears on in the literature, as the discussion of attributional theory ends here. Hopefully this problem can be addressed through this research.

After perception for a given stimulus is studied, attributional theory is chosen for the creation of a tool capable of testing and hopefully predicting behavior. If a researcher does not view the behavioral hypothesis as a prediction tool, but as a hypothesis used to mine perceptual data to gain insight about behavior and behavioral intent, the TPE as a theory becomes more robust. This is what will be attempted in this study. The behavioral hypothesis has not been fully examined because in current TPE research, scholars seem to move away from the attribution versus attributional split. If one considers perception and behavior as two separate steps, then one must first examine perception by understanding the other and applying the correct theory to the inquiry of specific other groups. Once that is finished, one must select an appropriate attributional theory to create and study the possible behaviors resulting from the perceptions of specified other groups. This study will attempt to do more than theoretically separate the two hypotheses in the TPE. The perceptual hypothesis will provide a data set that must be independently analyzed to understand the perception of the subjects with regard to the other as well as social distance. Once the attributed factors are understood, a separate examination of that data will commence, using attributional theory to mine perception for data on actual behavior and behavioral intent which is then discussed and applied to future examination.

## Attribution and Knowledge Bias Versus Reporting Bias

When attribution theory is put in to practice, the results reinforce the connection to the TPE. Jones and Nisbett (1971) explained that the attribution theory accounts for self/other differences as well. Jones and Nisbett posited that perceivers tend to attribute their own experiences, beliefs, and motivations to responses proffered in situations the perceivers could find themselves in. Conversely, at the same time, one attributes situational factors to why others will make choices different from their own. Essentially, one attributes knowledge of oneself to actions and attributes situational factors to others' actions. For example, one views an anti-drug public service announcement. One believes that their experiences with the harmful effects of drugs combined with their beliefs about life and motives in action keeps him/her from taking part in any illegal substance abuse. However, others who are not like him/her have different experiences, beliefs, and motivations that will lure them into using illegal drugs. Eagly, Wood, and Chaiken (1978) suggested that Jones and Nisbett (1972) found *knowledge bias* versus *reporting bias*: "Knowledge bias refers to a recipient's belief that a communicator's knowledge about external reality is nonveridical, and reporting bias refers to the belief that a communicator's willingness to convey an accurate version of external reality is compromised" (p. 424). Frewer and Miles (2003) correctly interpreted Eagly et al. when they suggested that knowledge bias occurs when one believes that he/she knows more than any message or communicator about a certain topic or issue. Reporting bias suggests that one believes the message or communicator is not presenting all the information required to understand a topic. Knowledge bias and reporting bias are based on a self-assessment of personal experience, belief, and motivation that may or may not be realistic. Through attribution, one weighs the experience, beliefs, and motivations he/she has created by examining himself/herself in relation to others

over time against his/her assessment of others given the situation they are faced with. One does not correctly estimate personal experience or the other's experience. As functions of attribution theory, knowledge bias and reporting bias discuss the TPE concept of social distance. The link to the perceptual hypothesis lies in the assessment of self and other given the distance between the two groups.

Berscheid et al. (1976) agreed with the connectivity between attribution's reliance on the other for discussion of both the self and the other. They suggested that attribution theory requires the subject's reliance on the other's dispositional characteristics for his/her perception of himself/herself and his/her behavior. This reliance comes from attribution theory's assumption of the subject's lack of firsthand knowledge to drive their perception of themselves in relation to others and their subsequent behavior. Perloff (1999) clearly articulated this concept in the TPE's perceptual hypothesis when he explained that the subjects create a perception of themselves through examining the other's behavior in response to the same input. Perloff explained that the perceptual hypothesis is an examination of one's knowledge bias and reporting bias while creating perceptions based on the experiences, beliefs, and motivations of the perceiver.

#### Constitutive Rhetoric Discussion of Other

The use of the term *other* in the TPE refers to the imaginary groups one creates when faced with an information-impooverished situation coupled with information one already possesses. The current assessment of the other places TPE research in the realm of constitutive rhetoric. Since scholars in the field of media effects find all definitions of the other to be limiting, going outside the field is an intriguing alternative that may provide important conclusions.

Within constitutive rhetoric, there is a discussion of othering. The other is what makes up the imaginary groups one creates in an impoverished situation. Othering, as a construct, explains the steps one enters into in order to create the imaginary groups in one's mind. There are four components to the creation of an other. First, the creation of the other necessitates the self doing away with any internal inconsistencies there might be in the potential other. Pratt (1992) suggested that "the people to be othered are homogenized into a collective 'they'" (p. 139). The other is to be a mold one can make over and over again without consideration of identifying marks that might differentiate between others in a group. If the self allowed for differentiation, the other would no longer be; the other would be a person. The second component of othering, explained by Jasinski (2001), is essentialization. In the process of forming an imaginary group of others, the self makes the decision that the actions of the other are a part of the person. JanMohamed (1985) explains, in a discussion of the rambling nature of European colonialism, that a colonial writer would "transform social and historical dissimilarities into universal, metaphysical differences" (p. 87). When one encounters a group and engages in othering for future use when one is away from the other, one identifies the things that make the other different, applies that to all members of the other group, and ascribes those differences as commonalities among the other. Othering's third component argues that one engages in an act of uninterest towards while remaining watchful of the other. Kornfeld (1995) eloquently described this component by implying that "the other must seem not only terrible or inferior but also alluring. The other attracts as well as repels" (p. 289). When one formulates an other, one places them away from their group, from themselves, and in doing so is interested by the nature of the other because of the differences while at the same time remembering his/her superiority over the other. Finally, Jasinski wrote that the "persona of the author" is the fourth component

of othering (p. 413). This component of othering helps ensconce this idea in the TPE because the self creates the other and then places himself/herself in a position of closeness of distance from that other group. The self creates the other “as both an object of knowledge and a subject in need of supervision and administration” (p. 413). The idea of an imagined community of others in one’s head is created by the components of othering. When one engages in othering, a group of others is created by stripping differences from the other, making the behavior of the other essential to their existence, identifying the alluring yet differentiating substance of the other from the self, and then placing the self at some metaphysical distance from the other. Constitutive rhetoric creates a construct of the other that is applicable and directly linked to the perceptual hypothesis in the TPE.

To return to a previous discussion, the self enters into othering on a consistent basis due to the different rhetorical situations one enters into daily. McGee (1975) explained that when a person enters into a rhetorical situation, or a situation that requires an examination and interpretation of expressed symbols, that person creates an other that fits into their objective reality. The other provides one with something to weigh his/her beliefs, motivations, and experience against to form a perception. An other group helps one evaluate a rhetorical situation and make a behavioral choice based on the other. Once the evaluation is made and the rhetorical situation dissipates, the other is no longer needed and is discarded. McGee explained that the other is a shifting entity, based on the situation. For instance, a group of people who went to Oklahoma University may be considered *Sooners* during a Saturday football game, but afterwards go back to their separate lives and obligations. The situational nature of a Saturday college football environment brings out of the Oklahoma students/alumni/fans’ consciousness a group called the *Sooners*. Once that group is formed from the rhetorical situation of a college

football Saturday, it stays preeminent until the finish of either the game, the day, the weekend, or possibly the season. Then, the Sooners fade back into the corners of the Oklahoma University students/alumni/fans' minds to make room for different, more important, others until the next rhetorical situation calling for that group. This is not to say that the other cannot be in a person's mind as well. For instance, if the rhetorical situation is different, an Oklahoma University student/alumnus/fan is watching the game on television, the Sooner other is present in their mind; however, separate rhetorical situations may be pulling on their formed other as well. From a rhetorical standpoint, one rhetorical situation can call on several competing others.

Jasinski (2001) furthers this point by suggesting that in the field of rhetorical study, as it pertains to the other, the self engages in constant reformation of the other as a necessity of survival. In his explanation of Dwight Eisenhower's September 1957 address to help a nation deal with the current and pressing problems of race, his use of the term "outsiders" "absolve[d] the general public of any responsibility for America's race problem" (p. 414). This example suggests that during this time period Americans felt they themselves might be the guilty racists; their othering was drawing up images of people exactly like them but providing them with the term outsider, something Americans knew they were not. Once Americans knew they were not outsiders, the other changed. The other, those guilty of racism, was outside the norm and deviant, while normal Americans were not. The situational nature of othering expressed by Jasinski lends credence to the idea that in oneself there is a general other that is molded by any form of communication for any rhetorical situation into the other necessitated by that moment against which one can gauge one's self. In one moment, Americans were racist; in the next, they were not.

For the purpose of TPE research, this means each individual has a group of hypothetical people that changes depending on the rhetorical situation. If one is shown material conveying a body of information constructing a group living in Oklahoma which enjoys college football, the subject's other group will begin to form into a group that fits the characteristics of the rhetorical situation. Also, if one lives in 1957 and is faced with the burden of trying to come to grips with the ugly face of personal racism and the President molds an other in the term "outsider," one can assuage one's guilt by in a matter of seconds changing the situational other into something more distant from the self. In fact, it is very possible that in reading this, an other group is currently taking shape in the mind of the reader. The subject will make decisions for himself/herself and appraise this other group based on the constituted group formulated in their head. That group is based solely on information already possessed in conjunction with what is given to them in the rhetorical situation. Once the group becomes unnecessary, it disappears.

Constitutive rhetoric provides a clear explanation of the other and is directly applicable to TPE research. Gregg (1970), in a discussion of the rhetoric of protests, suggested that when one takes in discourse, in any form, there is an *ego function* which, in the person absorbing the discourse, has the purpose of "defining, and affirming one's self-hood as one engages in a rhetorical act" (p. 74). Much like the perceptual hypothesis research, supported by attribution theory, constitutive rhetoric provides a clear linkage to both attribution theory and perceptual hypothesis study through the necessary creation of another by which one can effectively examine discourse. In TPE terms, the rhetorical situation is the stimulus material. An other group is formed in reaction to the material, based on information provided and knowledge already possessed. Then one examines the rhetorical situation in relation to the other to create a perception. Once this is completed, the other dissipates. By explicating the other through

constitutive rhetoric, both TPE research and attribution theory are more clearly understood. If support is found through research, this conception can clarify the murky definition of the other relied on in TPE investigation.

McGee (1975), in a discussion of the construction of political identity, suggested there are four stages to the construction of an identity for oneself as well as *other* groups constructed by the self. First, a person uses any and all of the aphorisms, maxims, commonplaces, historical episodes, or just general knowledge about the group to be constructed. In the second stage in McGee's example, he explained that "advocates organize dissociated ideological commitments into incipient political myths" (p. 243). Much like playing the intuitive psychologist, every person ascribes characteristics to the people or situations at hand based on the information collected in stage one. Third, the individual makes a perceptual response to the characteristics ascribed to the people or situations in stage two. Fourth, after the perception is created and the situation is resolved for the individual, the situation fades. In constitutive rhetoric, there is a four-stage process that explains the creation of perception through formulating social distance. When operationalized in TPE research, these stages allow researchers to more carefully and clearly constitute the social distance of different others in order to achieve richer data. The data supplements conclusions about perception of the self as well as the other and the distance between them. Constitutive rhetoric provides possible solutions to two major concerns in TPE research. First, it provides a systematic way to think about the other, and second, it operationalizes social distance in relation to its systematization of the construction of the other through available information and past knowledge.

## Constitutive Rhetoric and Social Distance

However, social distance must also be clarified in order to achieve a clearer TPE.

Charland (1987) discussed how constitutive rhetoric functions in relation to what media effects researchers call social distance:

First, audience members must be successfully interpellated; not all constitutive rhetoric's succeed. Second, the tautological logic of constitutive rhetoric must necessitate action in the material world; constitutive rhetoric must require that its embodied subjects act freely in the social world to affirm their subject position. (p. 141)

Charland outlines two steps: an interpellative, or perception, step and an action, or behavior, step. For this discussion, though, one should focus on interpellation. Charland explained interpellation by investigating the *Quebecois*, the native French Canadians of Quebec that want a separate state. He suggested that the Quebecois, to correctly interpellate, created a rhetorical identity for people in the movement, while he simultaneously suggested that the rhetorical identity has always been there. Essentially, Charland explained that when one interpellates a rhetorical situation, one is creating an other group that exists not only in the mind but, theoretically, in reality as well. In fact, a constitutive rhetoric only works when one believes in this interpellation to the point that the imagined other group *is* the group involved. In TPE terms, interpellation is creating an other group that is socially close to the Quebecois and then creating different other groups that are not socially close to the Quebecois. The other groups, not close to the Quebecois group, could be other Canadians, other people in Quebec that do not ascribe to their position, people from the United States, or people from other countries. Much like TPE, constitutive rhetoric through interpellation is creating a perceptual process in which an individual makes perceptual choices based on their impoverished knowledge of socially distant or socially close groups. Additionally, much like in the TPE, constitutive rhetoric assumes that social judgment occurs based only on the knowledge available, or impoverished knowledge. Members

of the Quebecois group can only make decisions based on what they know of their group or what they know of competing groups.

It is important to discuss the findings in the field of constitutive rhetorical as they regard social distance and the other in conjunction with the TPE's conceptualization of the social distance corollary. As summarized by Perloff (2002), the social distance corollary is "the notion that self-other disparities grow in magnitude with increases in perceived distance between self and comparison others" (p. 497). In terms of the previous discussion, the smaller the amount of known information about the other group, the vaguer and more imprecise is the perception of that group and the appraisal of the self in comparison to it. The benefit of using constitutive rhetoric is in the simplification of social distance. The social distance corollary is used to suggest that there are first-, second-, and third person perception possibilities. In a first person perception, the individual is more affected by the stimulus information than the other. A second-person perception occurs when the other and the self are equally affected, whereas the third person perception finds the other is more affected than the self. Under the current rubric, social distance is the physically un-measurable distance between the self and the other groups targeted in a given study.

Constitutive rhetoric, however, simplifies the social distance corollary by suggesting that there are only third person effects. When one believes that there is a larger effect on the self than on the other group, one simply constitutes an other group that is different from the self in a way that makes it less affected by the stimulation information. Similarly, when one believes that there is a larger effect on the other group than on the self, one is simply constituting an other group and finding enough of difference to consider the other group more influenced by the stimulus information. When one finds similar effects on the self and the other group, one simply

constitutes an other group that is more or less equally influenced by stimulus information, or that one identifies and includes himself/herself with that other group. The idea that there is a difference between first- and third person effects seems odd. Simply, investigators examine the issue of third person effect versus first person effect in most TPE research. Employing a constitutive rhetorical approach simplifies the process of examining a positive TPE, denoting more effect on the self, and/or a negative TPE, denoting more effect on the other group. The benefits of following this conceptualization are simplicity, clarity, and a semantic approach.

Linking this constitutive rhetorical approach to media effects does have conceptual support. As Duck et al. (1995) explained, from a theory standpoint, most people see themselves as part of groups. In almost all social contexts, people like to see themselves as part of a larger group to support an opinion they hold, while thinking of themselves as largely independent. Specifically, when Duck et al. explained the fact that the concept of the other can be based on social identity theory and self-categorization theory, both ostensibly under the umbrella of attribution theory, they made an important claim:

These theories suggest that an important part of the self-concept is derived from membership in social groups. While there are situations in which people view themselves as individuals or unique persons, different from all others, there are many social contexts in which people view themselves predominantly as group members with a common or shared social identity. (p. 198)

When one conceptualizes the self, he/she do so in a situational fashion, in comparison to the other groups one likes the most and in contrast to the other groups one likes the least. At this point, Duck et al. suggested that one identifies with a larger group, on a basic level, in all his/her beliefs, motives, etc. This provides reasoning for why “people believe communications will exert their greatest impact not on ‘me’ or on ‘you,’ but on ‘them’ – the third persons” (p. 197). Each time we come in contact with communication, we constitutively create other groups and the

social distance of these groups from ourselves. Then we identify with an other group to help support the perceptions we create from attributions ascribed to the self through these other groups. One may not always want to acknowledge identity with a group, or consciously ascribe a perception to a group, but as Duck et al. aptly described, one does anyways.

#### TPE and Constitutive Rhetoric Connectivity on the Social Distance Corollary

Connecting TPE research with constitutive rhetoric to construct the social distance corollary creates a better conceptualized other and a clear social distance by acknowledging the importance of group membership to the individual. Constitutive rhetoric researchers provide a clear understanding of how one constitutes groups through affiliation. Also, in one's creation of perception, there is only an examination of difference between the self and the constituted other groups. This theory construction unifies TPE research and makes it more applicable. The application of the TPE's perceptual hypothesis is no longer relegated to the realm of narrow application to negative media but can be used more universally. Davison (1983) suggested that the communications' "greatest impact will not be on 'me' or 'you,' but on 'them' – the third person" (p. 3). He would agree that in the appraisal of message effect, there is always a difference between the self and other. TPE theory suggests that in every perception and behavior, there is only a third person or second-person perception. One is either different from or similar to the other. Once the individual ascribes a conscious or unconscious allegiance to a group, the distance from other groups becomes a formula of differences and similarities between previous experience and given information about the other and the ascribed attributions of self perception.

## Special Population

With all the issues raised above, it is appropriate to choose a beneficial and malleable population on which to conduct this research. Sports communication seems to accomplish these goals. Kassing et al. (2004) argued that exposure to sports through discussion, participation, and viewing socializes society. Socialization normalizes certain behaviors and perceptions into everyday life. It seems important then that sports communication has a good amount of the research centered on fandom. While Kassing et al. spent a great deal of time identifying and explaining the types of relationships formed through the socialization process of sport and the organizations supported by sport, the fans were the population at study. If one considers those who play sports to be fans, everyone involved in sports are fans. Gantz, Wang, Paul, and Potter (2006) suggested that “at a minimum, fanship points to an active and interested audience. In all likelihood, fanship represents an array of thought processes, affective attachments, and behaviors that separate fans from nonfans, including nonfans who watch the same programming” (p. 96). Gantz et al. implied that fanship or fandom lies in the mind and is re-enforced by the presence of a sometimes real and sometimes fictitious group. For instance, a New Orleans Saints fan can express and re-enforce fandom by attending a game, witnessing the pageantry and makeup of a true fan of the Saints, visiting the Saints’ website, watching the game on television, and/or wearing the paraphernalia of a Saints fan and creating the identity of the typical Saints fan without ever entering the stadium. While this is not an exhaustive list of all the options open to a fan, it does encompass many of the normal ways a fan achieves fandom. Crawford (2004) bolsters this assertion by suggesting that “sport is not just something that takes place at a specific location and time, but lives on in people’s imagination and conversations, through their social networks, friendships, mass media and consumer good use, and in their very identity” (p. 106).

At a basic level, the fan is created in the mind and re-enforced by behavior in any of these or other ways. The identity of the fan is created through participation in the spectacle of sport, but it is reinforced and secured through everyday interactions at almost every level of life.

Pooley (1978) characterized fans succinctly when suggesting the following:

Whereas a spectator of sport will observe a spectacle and forget it quickly, the fan continues his interest until the intensity of feeling toward the team becomes so great that parts of every day are devoted to either his team or in some instances, to the broad realm of sport itself. (p. 14)

Pooley characterized any and all possible sport fans. On one end of the fan spectrum could be a person who devotes a Saturday or Sunday to watching and supporting his/her team and then goes back to his/her life. Those people might casually discuss the game throughout the week, but it does not own their life. On the other end of the spectrum, Pooley described the person who only clothes himself/herself in his/her team's paraphernalia and discusses the team, the game, the future, and the past of the team at any time with anyone who will listen. On a basic level, a fan is a person committed to supporting his/her team through thick and thin at some varying level of involvement.

Identification in fandom shares similarities with identification in TPE. Branscombe and Wann (1992) explained identification in sports fandom as "the extent to which individuals perceive themselves as fans of the team, are involved with the team, are concerned with the team's performance, and view the team as a representation of themselves" (p. 1017). So, sports fans see themselves as a part of several groups. They identify themselves as members of the team as well as members of a fan society. Branscombe and Wann also pointed out several points of inquiry in their definition that TPE research shares. In TPE research, one of the key issues discussed is social distance; in fandom, the level of involvement is a key component of identification with a sports team. The social distance from a sports team or community would

change the level of involvement. If a person is in the same city as a sports team, the level of involvement and identification would, presumably, go up. Wann, Melnick, Russell, and Pease (2000), as explained by Jasinski (2001), extended this point by suggesting that affiliation with certain sports teams can work as social capital “allow[ing] followers of particular sports access to certain social groupings, and can help confer a level of social acceptance and even respect” (p. 107). If a fan of the University of Florida lives in the state of Ohio, their social capital as a fan of Florida is useless, but when the fan visits home, his experience is very different. People from Ohio might react in a multitude of ways, from negatively to positively to complete ignorance, but the social distance from the fan is evident and obvious in comparison to the distance when the fan returns home to Florida. Another key to TPE research is the definition of the other and its effect on one’s appraisal of effect on himself/herself in conjunction with the mediated message. In the case of sports fandom, one’s connection to an other group would have a great influence on the level of identification. If the other is easily called upon and understood, one would presumably believe the fandom of that individual would be higher, because he/she identifies more with the other. He/She is not in a situation of impoverishment about the other. Here, the similarities seem clear and easily explicated.

Denham (2004) furthered these assessments from Branscombe and Wann (1992) when he suggested that “members of the homogenous social group stand to reinforce in one another existing social norms and any moral judgments they might render individually” (p. 372). One identifies with a sports team and other members of that sports team fan base. One reinforces membership with that team by perceiving common behavior and actions and then carrying those out. Denham went on to suggest that “this reinforcement occurs, in part, because group members can predict with great accuracy the attitudes of others in the group” (p. 372). The prediction of

action in other group members suggests that members of a sport fan base go through an othering process in which they create the situational other of their sports team while at the same time creating the other of other sports teams as well. Anderson (1991) posited that sports fans create perceptions of their sports teams the way one creates perceptions of his/her nation. He described how members of a sports fan base are creating “imagined communities” to which they ascribe histories and ceremonies. Anderson provided a clear connection between the idea of creating imaginary, shifting communities in one’s head and how those communities govern behavioral choices. The link to the TPE seems clear and lends credence to the use of this group as a sample for the current research into attribution and the perceptual hypothesis.

Wann et al. (1999) outlined a test questionnaire used to uncover the perceptions involved in fan identification and motivation in the Sport Fan Motivation Scale. Wann et al. (2001) explained that the scale measures entertainment, eustress (positive stress), group affiliation, self-esteem, aesthetics, escape, family, and economic motives. From these, they posited that they could identify what a fan identifies with in sports and why. TPE research, after an examination of the perceptual hypothesis, largely concerned with identification with the other and attribution, might benefit from an examination of this scale in conjunction with the behavioral hypothesis. It is possible that Wann et al. (2001) tapped into several key characteristics which can be used or modified to fit into most of the attributional theoretical perspectives used in TPE research. In doing so, this test questionnaire will work specifically with sport inquiry, and with some modifications, with other inquiry as well.

Through understanding behavior in fans, one gets a better picture of the actions this special population takes to reinforce their fandom, and ostensibly what the general population will do as well. Although most of the scholarship seems to focus around understanding behavior

as a marketing tool to get fans to enter the stadium, Cunningham and Kwon (2003) explained that the fans' level of interest to the team is important, but a more important factor is the stadium in which the team plays.

### TPE Connectivity with Sports Communication

On the surface, this scholarship seems ancillary to the research at hand; however, Cunningham and Kwon (2003) went on to explain that a good percentage of this research has been somewhat atheoretical. Therefore, attaching a TPE behavioral analysis might prove useful in providing some theory for future studies to stand on. In the same vein, Madrigal (2001), in a study about sponsorship and fans' consumption of the products being sponsored, relied on a commonly used social identity framework to understand the effects of sponsorship. This attitudinal theory, in which one based the study of information on the idea that each person has several self identities, seems only to provide a cursory understanding of the area of sports communication. She found that the more personal identities one has, the harder it is to reach an audience with sponsorship. In studies on attendance (Howard, 1999), the demographics of fans (Graham, 1994), fans' decision-making in attending sporting events (Wall & Myers, 1989; Zhang, Pease, Hui, & Michaud, 1995), fans' attachments to player, teams, and/or sports (Mahoney & Howard, 1998), the same problem remains. Much like the TPE, the underlying theory shifts like sand. Through a study of fandom in relation to the behavioral hypothesis of the TPE, it might be possible to solidify the underlying theory and provide a basis for further research.

## Research Questions

In an attempt to guide this research, several research questions were generated from the previous research discussed in the literature review combined with the broader goals of this dissertation. The overarching objective of this research is to test the TPE under different circumstances, whereby perceptions of effect are based not just on mediated exposure but rather on personal exposure and experience. By using football fans at a major Southeastern university, the goal is to address the problems with and provide solutions for the TPE through examining the elements of perception creation and behavioral choice. In finding answers to these research questions, this study hopes to not only broaden the TPE theoretically and methodologically, making the theory more usable overall, but also to help expand the knowledge of why an individual thinks the way he/she does. How one comes to the decisions that make up his/her belief structure through measurable actions is an important area ripe for expansion through academic study. Also, this study hopes to provide a voice in the academic debate over how academicians as well as marketers, public relations professionals, organizational communication professionals, and advertisers can more effectively interact with different publics to achieve certain goals, given the new understanding of perception and behavior provided in this discussion.

Through manipulating parts of perception queues, like the presence of university memorabilia, level of implied knowledge of a topic, and message characteristics against a predominantly college-aged sample (18-23), this research will attempt to address the following questions:

RQ1: Does a manufactured state of interpellation affect subject perception of the other?

RQ2: Does a manufactured state of interpellation affect subject perception of himself/herself?

Here, RQ1 and RQ2 are traditional TPE questions, wherein the perceived effect on self is compared to the projected effect on others. Here, the focus shifts with the inclusion of interpellation. RQ1 attempts to better look at the interaction of a constructed reality of the self with the other, and RQ2 attempts to discern how perception of self changes in the presence of interpellation of a common history. How does the self see himself/herself in relation to the other, and what does the self gain/lose from interpellation?

RQ3: Do the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motive create a cohesive representation of the other by which the subject can decide on his/her perception of other?

RQ4: Do the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motive create a cohesive representation of the other by which the subject can decide on his/her perception of self?

In RQ3 and RQ4, the three attribution characteristics are tested to better examine the process of perception. Theoretically, before a perception is formed, one attributes characteristics, experiences, knowledge, and intention to that which is being examined. These attributes then form a basis by which the subject weighs the perception of the other. In RQ3, testing the attribution process will help improve understanding of the effect this process has on final perceptions of the other. Also, methodologically, by testing attribution as a separate entity from perception, researchers will have more data and findings to support their claims of perception. This new data is needed because there is a lack of understanding of perception in current TPE research. Instead, the self examines the other and a perception is formed, and then researchers

can systematically go through how the self created this perception and the level of importance the attribution characteristics have on the perception created. In RQ4, this process is followed as well, except insight into the importance of attribution in perception of the self is provided.

RQ5: Does knowledge bias and reporting bias play an integral part in perception formation?

Attempting to address the issue of knowledge bias and reporting bias, RQ5 examines the issues that surround a person's level of actual or perceived knowledge on a given subject and its part in perception formation. Is there any effect on reported perception and a person's believed level of knowledge on a given topic?

RQ6: Does the creation of the other inform a third person effect more than the self?

In an attempt to examine the faceless group of people residing in the brain, RQ6 examines the importance of self and other. Does the subject consider the self when coming to a perception and consequently a behavior, or does the subject consider the other that is created in the mind to address the situation? Understanding the importance of the self and other in the TPE helps clarify how the mind interacts with the world as well as clear up some of the more cloudy issues within the theory itself.

RQ7: Does testing behavior at a separate time after an analysis of perception garner better results?

RQ7 investigates whether assessing the sample's perceptions of a stimulus can help the investigator better tailor questions for the sample in order to understand their behavioral intentions related to the stimulus. Additionally, providing for a passage of time between testing perception and behavior is examined. The point of separating each investigation by time is to allow members of the sample time to consider their perception before deciding on what

behaviors they would ascribe to that perception. One of the current dilemmas in TPE research is the lack of time between exposure to stimulus and response in relation to behavior. In the moment, individuals act without thought, for the most part, but when asked to explain his/her actions, he/she has time to reflect. Investigating a separation of perceptual and behavioral examination will reveal whether time allows the subject an opportunity to reflect on and understand what his/her behavioral reaction might be to a similar stimulus in the future.

RQ8: Is the perception of the other or the attributions ascribed to the other more indicative of an expression of behavioral intent?

In attempting to better understand the link between perception and behavior, RQ8 endeavors to compare the information gathered about perception and the information gathered about attributions to the behavioral intentions of the sample. Through this comparison, hopefully, either perception or attribution will show a more direct correlation to what the self actually does. The information found in answering this research question will help make behavior more testable and methodologically systematic.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### Experimental Design

In an attempt to clarify and extend the TPE theoretically and methodologically, a pre-test/post-test experiment is used to test perception within a sample of a range of college-aged subjects to mature adults at a major Southeastern university. A focus group was also utilized to help draw out common behavioral themes observed by subjects in order to create behavioral and perceptual research questions as well as experimental behavioral and perceptual scales to better understand behavior. This was accomplished by pilot testing the perception stimulus material and survey on one day and, on the following day, running a focus group to investigate behavior. A series of four pilot tests were done in order to ensure that the perception material was methodologically sound as well as to provide enough focus group information to effectively construct the behavioral scales needed to examine a sample.

#### Participants

Between the pilot tests and the experiment, 266 participants were recruited and retained for the entirety of the experimental process. College age to mature adult subjects were recruited to provide a broad cross section of age groups in the investigation. The recruitment process for

the pilot tests occurred during the beginning of the summer of 2008 in available communication and mass communication classes at a major Southeastern university: 50 students were recruited, and 40 chose to participate. For the experiment, 300 students and adults were recruited, with a need for 180 to 200 students to participate in both parts of the experiment. Before commencing, each student and adult in the pilot test and experiment signed an informed consent document (Appendix A), making all participants aware of their rights and protections during and after the experimentation.

### Procedures

For the pilot tests, 10 subjects at a time, who had signed the informed consent document, were brought into a conference room and seated at a table where they were given a paper survey asking them questions pertaining to their level of knowledge about the major Southeastern university they attended in order to assess previous knowledge of the university in general and the football program specifically. Next, the group either watched a high-intensity, medium-intensity, or low-intensity 10-minute presentation of the history and traditions surrounding the major Southeastern university's football program, or watched 10 minutes of a drama. Over the course of the pilot tests, two groups were chosen at random to participate in each of these different timed presentations.

The high-intensity presentation was used to give a high level of information and excitement to the subjects and allow for an intensive rhetorical situation requiring the subjects to interpellate themselves more intently with the information. The subject was exposed to common situations they have/will found/find themselves in during a common game day experience at the

major Southeastern university to allow the rhetorical situation to create an intense reaction in the subject. The medium-intensity presentation of the major Southeastern university's football program was used in similar fashion as the high-intensity presentation, but here to create a moderate rhetorical situation, and the low-intensity presentation was used to simulate a low impact rhetorical situation that in no way resembled anything the participant might encounter at the major Southeastern university during a game day. The 10-minute drama presentation was used as a control group.

Next, each participant was given a paper survey after viewing the manipulation to test their responses to the presentation in relation to perceptions about themselves and different other groups. The intention of this survey was to see the effect of differing levels of interpellation on issues of perception, attribution, knowledge bias, and whether the self believes themselves or others are perceptually more important in coming to a final perception of the rhetorical situation.

The day following this pilot test pre-test, the same group returned to the same conference room, which was equipped with recording devices. The subjects were informed of the fact that the conversations occurring in their focus group would be taped. Then, the recording devices were turned on and the focus group commenced. During the course of an hour to an hour and a half conversation, the subjects were guided through a series of open- and close-ended questions by a researcher clothed in the major Southeastern university's paraphernalia, to assist in recall of the perceptions formed the previous day. The questions lead the subjects through issues of attribution and perception pertaining to the major Southeastern university's football program in order to garner clear and concise responses to behaviors they believed could be directly linked to their association with the football program and their subsequent fandom.

Once the responses for the perceptual pre and post test were entered into SPSS and statistical confirmation of the methodological validity and soundness was attained, the behavioral focus groups were analyzed. After the analysis of the focus groups was completed, experimental behavioral scales were created to address, in general, behavior towards a stimulus. In this case, that stimulus was the major Southeastern university's football program.

Finally, the experiment was run on September 4 and 5 and September 7, 8, and 9, as well as September 11 and 12 and September 14, 15, and 16. The dates of September 4, 5, 11, and 12 were the dates the pre-test/post-test surveys were administered to assess perception. These dates were specifically chosen to assess subject perception and behavioral intent during the beginning of the college football season. The intention was to observe subjects during this time as opposed to others because the state of interpellation should be constant and ubiquitous at the major Southeastern university attended by the subjects. Over the course of each two-day span, several groups of subjects participated in the perception experiment. Then, the dates of September 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, and 16 were the dates the experimental behavioral and perceptual scales were given to assess behavioral connection to perception or attribution. During those days, the same groups participated in the behavioral experiment.

### Stimulus

In the pilot test, the stimulus consisted of three ten-minute pieces of film from three different documentaries concerning the history, prestige, and tradition of the major Southeastern university's football program. The groups were randomly assigned to a different intensity

stimuli or the control group. In dealing with the material involved in the stimulus shown to the experimental groups, the actual information in the stimulus was the catalyst for the participant's responses. The survey tested the level of interpellation given an increasingly sophisticated rhetorical situation. With that said, the more relevant the information given, the more sophisticated the situation. The low-intensity group viewed a ten-minute clip from a documentary showing footage of a game situation involving players long departed from the major Southeastern university. While this information is about the major Southeastern university's football program and past success, it is highly uninteresting as the information provides no context for the participant's experiences or understanding. The medium-intensity group viewed a ten-minute clip concerning the history of a rivalry between the major Southeastern university and its instate competitor. The information focused on historical facts participants may find intriguing but not exciting. The medium-intensity clip may provide a rhetorical environment in which the participant identifies with the past information, creating some excitement, but it does not attach that information to current experiences at the major Southeastern university. The high-intensity group viewed a ten-minute clip from a documentary explaining all the pomp and circumstance surrounding game weekend at the major Southeastern university, the effect it has on fans and the players, and the excitement to be had in participating. The high-intensity clip showed common occurrences all participants have come into contact with at the major Southeastern university and the excitement that goes along with that contact. Therefore, the intensity serves as the delineating factor in accounting for the level of excitement provided to the subject. The more intensity, the more excitement. Although, given the nature of a pilot test, if this does not prove to be indicative of this explanation, other venues will be

explored, such as presenting a written stimulus instead of timed pieces from a documentary. Once the pilot test presented a valid stimulus, it was used to inform the actual experiment.

## Measures

### *Independent Variables*

To begin with, it is important to note that many of the variables present in this study have dual functions as independent and dependent variables. Therefore, they will be discussed where it seems most appropriate to the current study. The independent variable in the pre-test (Appendix B)/post-test (Appendix C) construction of the investigation of perception is known, but the independent variables in the test of behavior have yet to be determined. In the investigation of perception, the independent variable is the timed amount of information the subject views in between the pre-test and post-test. The timed amount of information the subject views is measured by questions involving objective examination of the rhetorical situation. These questions required yes or no answers in order to ensure that the subject felt that the information viewed correctly provided a high, medium, or low amount of information upon which to discuss the topic. The questions included items like, “Based solely on what you just viewed do you feel capable of having a detailed conversation about the subject?” This question is followed by two others, one asking if the subject feels capable of having a moderately detailed conversation about the subject and the final question asking whether the subject feels capable of having a general, uninformed conversation about the subject. These questions serve a dual purpose, first as a check on the manipulation in order to make sure the information provided in the constructed rhetorical situation achieved the desired effect, and second as an increase in the idea of interpellation. By asking these questions, the subject is forced to consider what they

viewed as something the subject would use in conversation about his/her major Southeastern university's football program. This helps force the subject to enter into an interpellative state.

### *Dependent Variables*

The dependent variables include knowledge bias and reporting bias, self ascribed attributions of experience, belief and motivation, and self/other importance in perception creation. The pre-test dealt with subject-ascribed knowledge bias and reporting bias. Frewer and Miles (2003) created a reliable scale assessing knowledge bias/reporting bias through trust. Their operational definition of trust in relation to knowledge bias was that trust is the level of security one has when assessing messages from sources other than the self. They were testing knowledge bias and reporting bias in relation to risk communication. The scale they constructed was centered around this idea. For the purposes of this investigation, the format and seven-point Likert scale were adapted and the questions were changed. First, two items were omitted for their lack of impact in a discussion of perception. Then, in each of the 17 items, the Likert scale's end point, denoted by 1, represented a negative response to the item and the other end point, denoted by a 7, represented a positive response to the item. The scale was examined in conjunction with other scales in order to determine knowledge bias or reporting bias based on significance.

The subject evaluates their knowledge bias versus reporting bias across 17 items in relation to four different sources. Four sources are tested: a fan of the major Southeastern university's football team, the official sports website of the major Southeastern university, any online blog that reports information about the major Southeastern university's football program,

and professional sports news organization (like ESPN) coverage over the major Southeastern university's football program. The reason for choosing each of these sources is that each represents a different level of investigation of the major Southeastern university's football program. The subject might rely on anecdotal information from another fan, the sanctioned website of the University, free blogs, or professional sports news reporting, or some combination of the four sources. By accounting for these four different types of investigation, knowledge bias and reporting bias can be more fully examined when looking at the relationships between these different sources as well as against the answers supplied by the subject on the post-test.

Several items tested knowledge bias. These items included the following: "To what extent do you think each of the following sources of information is expert in the area of the football program in question?"; "To what extent do you think information about the football program from each of the following sources is *accurate*?"; and "To what extent do you think information about football from each of the following hazards has been *proven wrong in the past*?" Each item tests a facet of the subject's belief in their level of knowledge in reporting the source. The less specific knowledge the subject has about the material in question, the more the subject believes he/she is more knowledgeable than the source. Different items tested reporting bias, for example: "To what extent do you think information about the football program from each of the following sources is *trustworthy*?"; "To what extent do you think each of the following sources are likely to withhold information *about the football program from the public*?"; and "To what extent do you think the following sources have the *freedom to provide information* to the public about the football program?" Similarly, each item tests a facet of the subject's belief in the intention of the source or in its ability to provide truthful information about

the topic being discussed. The less the perceived ability or intention, the more the subject believes he/she is more trustworthy than the source.

Traditional TPE questions were used as a basis for examining the other and social distance. Generally, the TPE uses affective, cognitive, and behavioral questions about the self as well as several other groups at different levels of social distance, with responses measured on a Likert scale. In this study, the groups examined included the self, typical fans of the major Southeastern university's football program, fans of the major Southeastern university's football program, the age of the subject's parents, fans of the major Southeastern university's football program that are the age of the subject, non-fans of the major Southeastern university's football program, and high school-aged fans of the major Southeastern university's football program. If the subject chose a numerical value towards the end point of zero, the answer signified a negative perception of the subject or other group in question and the segment of the documentary viewed.

In the current investigation, some aspects of these questions were modified. Instead of affective questions, which look at subjects and the perceived influence the subject sees in a message, subjects were asked experiential questions in relation to the message they viewed. For example, "The segment of the documentary I just saw sums up the feelings **I have EXPERIENCED** as an football fan." The focus of this question is on experience. The specific experiences the subject has had with the major Southeastern university's football program were delved into in the focus groups in order to better address them later in the behavioral portion of the examination. The general reaction to the subject's experiences in relation to the documentary allowed this investigation to address the first attribution of importance, the role experience plays in the creation of an attribution and its effect on perception.

The questions of belief seemed to mirror questions of cognition very well, so the basic structure of those questions remained intact; for instance, “The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **[football] fans my age** think about the requirements of being [a football] fan” or “The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **[football] fans my parents age** question what it requires to be [a football] fan.” In these two questions, the beliefs the subject ascribed to himself/herself as well as the other groups were evaluated. By asking about thought and questioning, this investigation delved into the two prominent features of beliefs. When one believes something, one considers the belief in relation to new information and one questions the belief in relation to new information. Also, through an examination of the answers to the above questions, clear set of data emerges that addresses the construction of the other and social distance. By examining the three characteristics of attribution, a discussion of the construction of the other and social distance will examine both attribution theory and constitutive rhetorical theory.

The questions of motive also shared similar characteristics to questions of behavior. However, instead of attempting to assess what a subject WILL do given a new rhetorical situation, questions of motivation are interested in assessing what a subject believes he/she could be MOTIVATED to do. To encapsulate this issue, subjects were asked questions like, “The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **non-[football] fans** fully commit to being an [football] fan.” This question looks at motivation towards doing something. Since one cannot know what will actually happen in a real world situation, questions of motivation show what attribute the subject believes they can give to himself/herself or an other group, considering the rhetorical situation.

The final independent variable is the importance of self attribution versus other attribution in the formation of perception. In order to examine this dependent variable, a series of questions were asked about the self and about the other in an attempt to make the subject weigh the two effectively. To weigh the importance of self, the subject was asked questions such as “**Your** experiences, beliefs, and motivations make you see the segment of the documentary you have just seen as a successful portrayal of what you see as football.” The subject then assessed this question on an 11-point Likert scale from “no success” to “very successful.” The subject was then asked about his/her appraisal of the stimulus as average and as unsuccessful. It was hoped that the pilot test would provide enough examination to ensure the validity of these measures as good indicators of the subject’s assessment of his/her attributions in relation to his/her perception. Similarly, the other’s importance in the formation of perception was weighed by asking three questions following the archetype of “**Other [football] fan’s** experiences, beliefs, and motivations make you see the segment of the documentary you have just seen as a successful portrayal of what you see as football.” By folding the specific other groups into a single unit, the subject is forced to group all the others into one cluster and gauge the importance of that assemblage on his/her perception given the same 11-point likert scale with the same end points.

In examining all of these variables, it is important to note that after the pilot test changes, refinements or omissions occurred to increase explanative power, validity, or any other aspect that seems to be lacking.

## Focus Group

The focus group consisted of 10 questions (Appendix D) that guided discussion towards behavior. Some of the questions came from Wann's Sport Fan Motivation scale as well as some general questions about perception and social distance. The questions about perception were used to ensure that all 10 subjects in each session had verbal queues allowing them to begin to assess the perceptions formed during the previous day's tests. Those questions included items like, "So, the first thing I wanted to ask you was what did you think about the video clip that you saw?" These questions allowed the subjects to briefly discuss their perception of the video as well as their perceptions of themselves.

The modified questions from the Sport Fan Motivation scale were used to begin the discussion about behavioral intent. Some of those items included, "Well that was an interesting discussion, but I wanted to know how you feel about football. Does it give you a way to escape the world for a while at least while you are watching it?" or "Great stuff, something else I'm interested in knowing is, I noticed in the clip how excited people get when they watch [the major Southeastern university team] play, why do you think that is?" Each of the questions modified from Wann et al.'s (2000) survey tested a different aspect of affiliation with a group as well as the interaction of the self with the other in conjunction with that *rhetorical* situation.

Other questions were designed to examine the other and social distance. The questions addressing these issues included, "Alright, so if you were to think about the average fan, what do you think they do in order to be seen as a fan?" and "Do you do those things? Why?" Each of the questions attempting to address the other and social distance was important to this examination because, in conjunction with the Wann et al.'s (2000) questions and the questions about perception, the study had a large amount of information from which to draw informational

questions that can be used to examine behavior. Some questions also came from the session itself.

In order to ensure the focus groups remained valid, the researcher made sure that all extraneous material not dealing with the major Southeastern university's football team was taken from the room, as well as any other distractors. Then questioning commenced. Since the sessions were videotaped, the tapes were analyzed at a later date for content in order to find common themes in the subjects' answers from which to construct the behavioral scales. The tool used to analyze the taped sessions for content was checked by four coders in order to ensure a high level of reliability in coding.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### Pilot Test

The pilot test utilized a video stimulus and focus groups to create the post-test survey used in the later experiment. Thirty-three participants completed the pilot test, 14 men and 19 women. After the participants completed the study, the video and audio recordings of the focus groups were reviewed using a coding sheet (Appendix F). The coding sheet was found to be reliable after two coders tested the coding sheets' validity ( $\text{Alpha}=.725$ ). Each session of the focus group was then coded by the primary investigator, and the top responses were found to be behavior of other fan, sameness perception, perception other positive, perception self positive, and self affirmation by comparison perception (Figure 1).

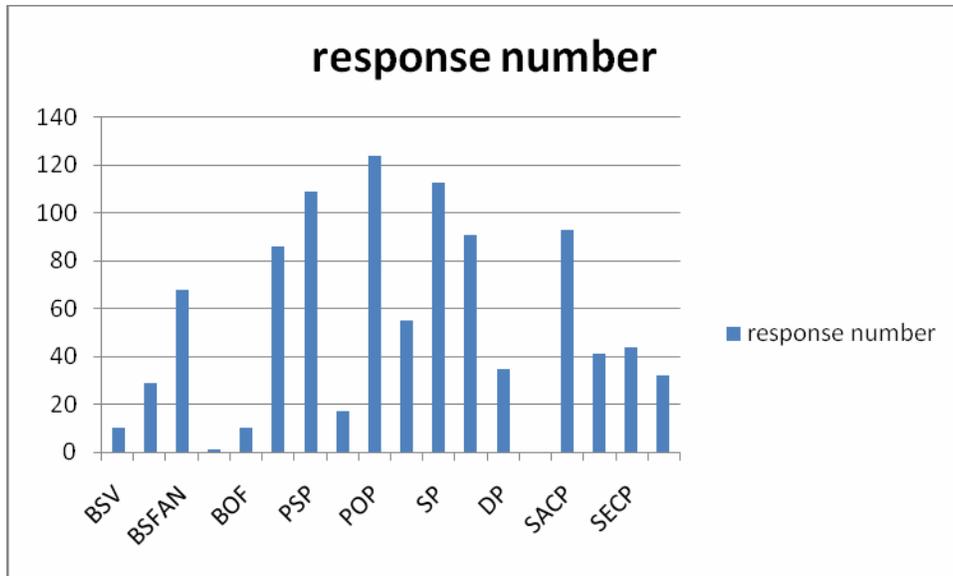


Figure 1. Category of responses represented by number of responses during focus groups.

Once this data was collected, the focus group sessions were viewed again to identify the statements made in conjunction with the most predominant responses. Once these answers were found and transcribed, a post-test for the experiment was created (Appendix G). The data gathered through coding, as well as the statements from the focus group, were used to create many of the scales as well as the questions formulated for the post-test. It is appropriate to introduce the process of creating the post-test here because only after the pilot test was conducted were the scales for the post-test created.

#### *Scales Created from Pilot Test Material*

The scale dealing with behavior as a fan was derived from discussion categorized under behavior self video, behavior self fan, and differentiation behavior coding options from the coding sheet. These questions were formulated by considering the amount of responses coded in these options, as explained in Appendix E, and adapting the descriptions of those options to

question form in conjunction with the corresponding subject responses from the focus groups. Subjects discussed behavior as a fan by proffering statements like, “After watching the video I went home and got out my (major Southeastern university) shaker, checked the schedule for next season, played the fight song, and got really excited about (major Southeastern university) football.” Statements such as the aforementioned led to the formulation of questions by considering the behaviors and attributions this and other subjects suggested they engaged in regularly when thinking about the major Southeastern university football program. In the statement, the subject suggested four distinct behaviors that can be adapted to question form.

The scale created to assess behavior and attributions of other fans utilized the descriptions of the coding options from the coding sheet: Behavior other video, behavior other football, and behavior other fan and the associated statements. When these traits were considered in conjunction with statements elicited by subjects such as, “The average fan attends all the games they can, they definitely watch every game on T.V. if it’s on the air, and they probably wear (major Southeastern university) gear (clothing) several times a week,” the scale of other behavior was created. The scale concerning other behavior focused on specific areas discussed by the subjects in the focus group as well as on general ideas from the coding options.

The scale formulated to assess the affiliation of self with the major Southeastern university football program came from sameness perception, sameness behavior, self affirmation by comparison perception, and self affirmation by comparison behavior coding options from the coding sheet and associated statements. The statements used to give the scale focus after the coding options were considered included points such as, “When I see something (major Southeastern university) related it makes me happy. I also feel at home and a sense of family.” Responses used to create this scale focused on emotional responses to the major Southeastern

university football program. The reason the subjects discussed major Southeastern university paraphernalia was because all goods created to identify oneself as associated with the major Southeastern university were primarily used to identify oneself with the football program. However, it is also likely that some purchased goods from the major Southeastern university just to identify with the university itself. Due to the pervasive nature of football, not only at the major Southeastern university but also at the state and regional level, it is more probable that people who purchased and wore paraphernalia from the major Southeastern university were identifying which university they root for during Saturday college football games. So, affiliation of the self to the school was considered tantamount to affiliation with the football program.

The scale of affiliation of the other to the major Southeastern university football program utilized sameness perception, sameness behavior, differentiation perception, and differentiation behavior coding options and statements similar to the ones found for the scale of affiliation of the self to the major Southeastern university football program. Subjects proffered statements such as:

I know some people who, a week before the season starts, bring their camper up here (to the major Southeastern university town) and park it off campus all season. They live in it all season and bring it on campus on Thursday and move it back off on Sunday, and their camper is covered in (major Southeastern university) paintings and they always have (major Southeastern university) gear on.

Other subjects discussed other issues such as “most other people who want to be seen as a fan always have (major Southeastern university) gear on and come to tail gates, or at least discuss (major Southeastern university) football. Yeah, they’ll always talk (major Southeastern university) football.” Subjects suggested that others affiliated with the major Southeastern university football program through dress, attendance, and discussion. Also, there was an active yearning expressed to engage in these actions in order to be seen as a fan.

The scale created to examine self-esteem derived from the connection to the major Southeastern university football program focused on self-esteem by comparison perception, self-esteem by comparison behavior, perception self positive, and perception self negative coding options. The subjects in the focus groups discussed the emotional connection they felt towards the major Southeastern university football program when they thought about this issue. Subjects' statements included common sentiments such as, "Sometimes I cry if (major Southeastern university) loses a game; I know people who physically get ill when they lose. I mean, you are so into it that when a game is finished you feel physically and emotionally drained." Subjects suggest that their self-esteem was directly tied to the major Southeastern university football program's success. Other than watching the major Southeastern university football team, subjects suggested that their self-esteem was tied to the presence of the major Southeastern university's paraphernalia. "When I walk through a city or in an airport and I see (major Southeastern university) stuff I feel better, like I'm connected to something or someone."

The scale to assess self-esteem derived from connection to the major Southeastern university football program was created based on a combination of subject explanations of how their self-esteem was connected to the football team itself as well as their perceived connection to the program as associated with the presence of materials related to the school and program. When one grows up as a fan of a sports team in the way most fans of Southeastern football programs do, self-esteem does become tied to the football team. In the short term, a person is happy or sad if their Southeastern football team wins or loses a game. As much research in communication suggests, over time that simple short-term boost or detracting to self-esteem comes to affect the person more. Fans of the major Southeastern university football program let the success or failure of the football team affect their mood and possibly their effectiveness

during the week. Lastly, the effect the major Southeastern university football program has on the self-esteem of the fan extended to physical illness and a feeling that if one was not wearing something affiliated with the football program, one was committing some unthinkable offense.

The coding options from the coding sheet used to index responses during the focus groups, including self-esteem by comparison perception, self-esteem by comparison behavior, perception other positive, and perception other negative, were utilized to create the scale designed to assess the self-esteem of the other derived from the connection to the major Southeastern university football program. In a similar fashion, these coding options identified similar constructs to the previous scale, except based on the other. Subjects' discussion of this topic centered around similar strong emotional and physical bonds to the major Southeastern university football program:

There is a guy who got that picture of the (famous major Southeastern university football coach) leaning against the goal post tattooed on his entire back. I mean people are so crazy about (major Southeastern university) football. There are some people who only drive (major Southeastern university color) cars or have an entire room focused on (major Southeastern university) football.

The objective of this scale was to channel these types of emotional, cognitive or behavioral actions related to fandom.

Finally, the connection of the self to the other fused the following options from the coding sheet to create the scale assessing the connection of the self to the other: perception self positive, perception self negative, perception other positive, perception other negative, sameness perception, sameness behavior, differentiation perception, differentiation behavior coding options, and relevant subject responses creating a scale addressing this issue. Subjects suggested that, "I know when I see a guy wearing a [major Southeastern university team] hat we're part of the same family. I mean if I had a flat and someone stopped to help me I would assume it was

because of the (major Southeastern university) sticker on my back window. They would also be (major Southeastern university) fans.” The connection between self and other was derived from a shared appreciation/fanaticism about their football program. If one saw any symbol of that program, there was an immediate connection: “I wouldn’t ever date someone from another university; in fact the idea of dating someone from (instate rival major Southeastern university) or (neighboring major Southeastern university) makes me want to puke.” The connection to other major Southeastern university football fans was singular, distinct, and in some cases visceral. The scale created to assess the connection of the self to the other focused on combining these subject statements as well as the coding options into a simple scale that effectively addresses the issue.

## Experiment

### *Scales*

The pre-test scales used a traditional question format to create a baseline of data to provide insight into the questions this study examined. The one manipulation in the pre-test was focusing on the examination of the data on knowledge bias and reporting bias instead of social distance. Four scales were created to assess the subject’s perception of ESPN (Alpha=.572), perception of blogs pertaining to the major Southeastern university’s football program (Alpha=.762), perception of a fan of the major Southeastern university’s football program that the subject knows (Alpha=.668), perception of the major Southeastern University’s football program website (Alpha=.691), and perception of self as a fan of the major Southeastern university’s football program (Alpha=.859). Each of the scales, evaluated by Cronbach’s alpha, was within a reasonable Alpha range and should be considered acceptable for evaluating

perception of the self and perception of target others. However, the scale assessing the subject's perception of ESPN was very close to being unacceptable, and any discussion concerning this scale should be considered carefully. Each scale was created independently of the pilot test results, suggesting that scales of perception, like in previous TPE studies, could be created and evaluated without in-depth analysis of the target population at study.

The post-test also had several scales created to identify perception and behavioral intent through combining several testable aspects of the human psyche. The difference between these scales and the scales from the pre-test was that they were derived from the content analysis of the pilot test. The created scales included a scale of personal perception (Alpha=.874); other perception (Alpha=.656); behavior as a fan (Alpha=.914); behavior of other fans (Alpha=.895); affiliation of self to the major Southeastern university football program (Alpha=.882); affiliation of other to the major Southeastern university football program (Alpha=.867); self-esteem of the self derived from the connection to the major Southeastern university football program (Alpha=.889); self-esteem of the other derived from the connection to the major Southeastern university football program (Alpha=.879) and the connection of the self to the other (Alpha=.832). Utilizing Cronbach's alpha suggested that each scale was valid as a set of questions to assess each area. In addition, with the input from the content analysis of the focus groups, the alpha levels appeared to be significantly higher, suggesting that analysis of a population before creating a survey tool might prove to be extremely useful in scale creation for future investigation.

## Research Questions

### *Research Question 1*

Research question 1 stated the following: Does a manufactured state of interpellation affect subject perception of the other? After conducting the experiment, the answer was yes. Subjects assessed others in a more uniformly positive manner over time. To test this research question, the frequencies of the pre- and post-test perceptions were compared. No deeper analysis could be completed because the pre-test perception and post-test perception questions were different. Thus, the means of the items were examined in an effort to provide some insight into this question. The pre-test used four other groups, whereas the post-test addressed perception of a general other with scales of questions based on perception derived from the pilot test. The four groups assessed the subject's consideration of a major Southeastern university football fan the subject knows, the major Southeastern university's official sports website, blogs related to the major Southeastern university's sports team, and news outlets like ESPN on an 11-point likert scale where 0 denotes the subject in no way agrees with the statement and 10 denotes complete agreement. The post-test consisted of three questions assessing the subject's perception of other major Southeastern university football fans, other major Southeastern university football fans like the subject, and other subjects' inclusion in a specific term pertinent to the major Southeastern university's football fan group. The means of each group (Table 1), when looked at in conjunction with the means from the post-test (Table 2), seem to show that the post-test data stayed consistently positive, whereas the pre-test data was more inconsistent.

Table 1

*Pre-test Perception Means of the Four Other Groups as an Examination of Manufactured Interpellation*

Perception Means of Media outlets like ESPN and ESPN.com Scale

Variables	Mean	SD	N
Trustworthy	8.80	1.44	236
Accurate	8.83	1.43	236
Factual	8.82	1.62	236
Withheld	4.79	2.86	234
Distorted	4.50	2.82	236
Truthful	8.30	1.68	235
Biased	5.01	3.07	235
Freely Given	7.44	2.34	234
Interested	6.35	3.05	236
Proven wrong	3.91	6.83	236
Knowledgeable	8.72	1.56	235
Responsible	8.45	1.74	236
Expert	8.83	1.63	236
Sensationalized	6.45	2.54	234
Consistent	8.43	1.71	236
Protective	6.89	2.96	236

The means from the other group, known as media outlets like ESPN and ESPN.com, suggested that the subject views this other group in a positive yet erratic way. Positive answers are mean answers above the midpoint of 5. The subject seemed to initially believe that media outlets like ESPN or ESPN.com are highly accurate and trustworthy, freely providing factual, knowledgeable, and true information in a responsible if slightly sensationalized way. However, in his/her perception, the level to which that statement is true varies from a mean of 5.01 to 8.83. There is an erratic nature to answers varying between these two figures. Also, the negative answers suggested that media outlets like ESPN and ESPN.com do not withhold or distort information, and very rarely are they proven wrong. In the pre-test, subjects had an erratic yet positive view of this other group.

Table 2

*Perception Means of Blogs about the Major Southeastern University Football Program Scale*

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>
Trustworthy	5.54	2.20	236
Accurate	5.52	2.15	236
Factual	5.55	2.14	236
Withheld	4.68	2.45	234
Distorted	6.47	2.00	236
Truthful	5.56	1.91	236
Biased	8.42	1.78	236
Freely Given	8.52	1.70	236
Interested	8.73	2.38	236
Proven wrong	6.02	2.38	236
Knowledgeable	6.17	1.96	236
Responsible	5.13	2.19	236
Expert	4.26	2.47	236
Sensationalized	7.29	2.29	234
Consistent	5.35	2.08	235
Protective	7.67	2.36	236

The means of the other group, described as blogs about the major Southeastern University football program, are mostly mild and slightly positive, yet still erratic. Subjects suggested that blogs about the football program freely gave any information they had and were protective of their point of view, but are only mildly truthful, accurate, or factual with the information they disseminated. In fact, subjects did not see them as that trustworthy and described them as biased, wrong, not expert, and only mildly consistent. The positive views ranged from 5.13 to 8.73, and the negative response ranged from 4.26 to 4.68. The subjects' view of blogs was very different from that of media outlets like ESPN and ESPN.com. Blogs were still seen as erratic in the pre-test assessment of perception, but also centered around the median of 5. It is possible this suggests a lack of knowledge about blogs by the average subject or a belief that blogs are just not informative.

Table 3

*Perception Mean of Average Fan of the Major Southeastern University Football Program Scale*

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>
Trustworthy	7.18	2.03	237
Accurate	7.15	2.04	237
Factual	7.17	2.09	237
Withheld	3.72	2.80	235
Distorted	5.17	2.98	236
Truthful	7.08	1.91	237
Biased	8.48	1.94	235
Freely Given	8.69	1.63	237
Interested	8.39	1.84	235
Proven wrong	4.25	2.26	237
Knowledgeable	7.46	1.82	236
Responsible	6.55	2.24	235
Expert	5.46	2.62	237
Sensationalized	7.19	2.30	233
Consistent	7.01	2.02	237
Protective	7.28	2.39	236

The scale assessing perception of the average major Southeastern university football program fan suggested a more stable view. The subject viewed the other group in a consistently positive manner with most positively worded items centering around a mean of 7 to 8 and the negatively worded items centering around a mean of 3 to 4. The subjects, being members of the Southeastern university, have a generally defined understanding of who this other group is and how they choose to view other groups.

Table 4

*Perception Means of the Official Website of the Major Southeastern University Football Program Scale*

Variables	Mean	SD	N
Trustworthy	8.96	1.33	236
Accurate	9.11	1.14	236
Factual	8.95	1.60	235
Withheld	4.73	2.95	234
Distorted	4.06	2.97	236
Truthful	8.58	1.59	235
Biased	7.53	2.87	236
Freely Given	8.24	1.94	235
Interested	8.50	2.06	234
Proven wrong	2.94	2.37	236
Knowledgeable	9.06	1.24	236
Responsible	8.78	1.39	236
Expert	8.63	1.58	236
Sensationalized	7.50	2.28	235
Consistent	8.78	1.38	236
Protective	8.23	2.22	236

Again, the other group of the official website of the Southeastern university football program resulted in a clear and consistent perception from the subjects. He/she assesses the other group as positively as possible, responding with a generally consistent mean between 7 and 9 to all positive worded questions and a mean between 2 and 4 to all negative worded questions. The official website was assessed as positive and consistent.

Tables 1-4 suggest that subjects were unsure of how to view major media outlets like ESPN and ESPN.com, as well as blogs about the football program in question, but are relatively sure about how to view the average fan of the major Southeastern university football program and the official website of the program. Level of assuredness was assessed through examining the variability of answers to all positively worded items as well as all negatively worded items. If the answers tended to surround a single mean, the subjects presented a sure perception, but if

the answers did not surround a single mean, the subjects were not sure. The post-test data presented a clear suggestion that with a manufactured state of interpellation, the means of terms assessing perception become clustered and therefore present a sure perception.

Table 5

*Post-test Means of Other Perception Scale as an Examination of Manufactured Interpellation*

Post-test Other Scale Means			
Variables	Mean	SD	N
Good Person	7.05	2.03	220
Similar Fan to Self	7.20	2.75	220
Affiliation to MSU term	8.56	1.51	220

As Table 5 suggests, each mean from the post-test was significantly positive in direction and all focused around a mean between 7 and 9. The pre-test responses were generally positive across the four other groups, whereas the post-test answers were all positive and clustered. Being forced to examine one's perception of the football program in question required the subject to engage in processes necessary for creating a cohesive and universally applicable other. This could be because of the phrasing of the questions but more likely was from the interpellative state being reinforced in the post-test questions.

*Research Question 2*

Research Question 2 stated the following: Does a manufactured state of interpellation affect subject perception of himself/herself? After reviewing the results of the experiment, the manufactured state of interpellation does not affect subject perception of himself/herself. The

presumption as to why centered around the fact that one is usually more aware of the self than of others. The pre-test examination of self consisted of a sixteen-question scale, and the post-test examination of self consisted of a four-question scale. The means from the pre-test examination of self (Table 6) were examined in conjunction with the means from the post-test examination of self (Table 7).

Table 6

*Pre-test Scale of Self Perception as an Examination of Manufactured Interpellation Perception  
Mean of the Self Scale*

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>
Trustworthy	7.02	2.42	236
Accurate	6.46	2.32	237
Factual	6.70	2.33	237
Withheld	3.96	2.85	236
Distorted	3.47	2.67	235
Truthful	7.44	2.11	235
Biased	6.80	2.88	237
Freely Given	7.16	2.66	235
Interested	6.93	2.58	236
Proven wrong	3.93	2.38	237
Knowledgeable	6.44	2.43	237
Responsible	6.94	2.27	237
Expert	4.19	2.85	237
Sensationalized	5.74	2.76	235
Consistent	6.49	2.35	237
Protective	5.90	2.87	235

The pre-test means were generally above the middle answer of 5, except for the items that asked questions concerning negative terms. In regards to the self, it seemed subjects answered in a positive way to items that were neutral or positive in tone, whereas they answered negatively to terms with a negative connotation. So, when a subject answered a question asking if he/she was

trustful, the answer was more positive than if he/she was asked if he/she would withhold information. The perception of self was generally positive throughout.

Table 7

*Post-test Mean Scale of Personal Perception as an Examination of Manufactured Interpellation*

Personal Perception Means

Variables	Mean	SD	N
Consider Self Fan	8.42	2.30	220
Seen as a Fan	7.37	2.86	220
Frustrated by Non-Fans	3.58	3.07	220
Part of MSU term	7.28	2.85	220

In the post-test scale, the means seemed to mirror the pre-test. For the items with a positive tone, the subjects answered in a positive manner. For the negative question, the mean was significantly below the middle number of 5 on the 11-point Likert scale. The answers seemed to mirror each other and suggested that at most points in time, the subjects' opinion of the self was not changed by the stimuli encountered. However, the mean scores in the post-test were generally higher than in the pre-test. This might suggest that subjects were reinforcing their perception over time instead of defining it. A manufactured state of interpellation had little command over perception of self other than to reinforce perceptions dredged up through the process of interpellation.

### *Research Question 3*

The third research question asks the following: Do the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation create a cohesive representation of the other by which the subject can decide on his/her perception of other? After a careful review of the data, subjects' perception of the other can be effectively quantified in terms of the three attribution characteristics with regards to variation explained; however, in consideration of understanding the strength and direction of the connection between specific variables, the perception cannot be quantified. Research Question 3 began to investigate the idea of perception formation through attribution. Simply put, perception in the TPE was traditionally looked at similarly as to how we view the presence of light. It is there and can be measured. Attribution theory is new in that it is like looking at light through a prism; it splits perception into experience, belief, and motivation as factors creating perception. The post-test tested perception with scales matching these three categories in relation to a general other. The characteristic of experience resembles the traditional perception questions, and therefore the pre-test scales examining different other groups could be used as such. Similarly, the post-test perception scale was created to act as a small scale examining the general other from an experiential point of view. The reasoning behind this was that when the pre-test other scales are used as the experience characteristic against the general other scale from the post-test, in conjunction with belief and motivation, there will be a linear fit and abundant betas to suggest that attribution testing can take the place of just asking experiential perception questions about other groups. The pre-test other groups represented experience, the post-test scale assessing other self-esteem represented belief, and the post-test scale assessing affiliation to other represented motivation. Four hierarchical linear regressions were run for each dependent variable in order to test each group represented in the

experience questions in the pre-test against each of the three items from the perception scale in the post-test. If the three attributions were a good linear fit, then perception of the other through attribution would be an available alternative to basic perception investigation. However, if the beta's were low or non-existent, future examination would be required to ensure the variation can be effectively examined by the scales created.

Table 8

*Hierarchical Regression Model Summary For Pre-Test Perception as Experience In Relation to Post-Test Other Perception Scale as Dependent Variables to Investigate Line Fit as a Function of Perception Investigation*

DV: Variable	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig.
Good Person		.543	1.54		
	ESPN Accurate			.350	.014
	ESPN Proven Wrong			-.136	.031
	Association with MSU history makes self feel good			.214	.040
	Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.142	.045
	Self wishes to be alone instead of with MSU fans			.233	.001
	Seeking members of the MSU fan b/c they are like self			.226	.032

Table 9

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of Media Outlets Like ESPN or ESPN.com as Experience with the Scale for Other Belief and Other Motivation in Relation to Post-Test Other Perception Scale of Three Items as Dependent Variables*

DV: Variable	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig.
Similar Fan to Self		.552	2.01		
ESPN Protective				.154	.047
Want to fit in to Class				-.304	.032
Want to fit in at MSU				.299	.018
Attend MSU b/c of athletics				-.185	.033
Attend MSU b/c of athletics and academics				.253	.005
Wearing MSU clothing Creates a connection				.317	.001
Affiliation to MSU term		.399	1.31		
ESPN interested				-.223	.020
Association between MSU term members feels good				.435	.001
Attend MSU b/c of athletics and academics				.214	.037
Wearing MSU clothing Creates a connection				.254	.019

Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients that were extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale can be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. However, using the pre-test experience scale of media outlets like ESPN or ESPN.com did not produce many usable betas; out of the 49 possible constants making up the

three scales of experience, belief, and motivation, there was only a high of six constants in any one regression with usable betas. The direction of the betas was usually positive, but the significance level was constantly in flux. So, yes the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation did explain a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception; however, the specific items found in each characteristic were not yet clear enough to provide consistent betas. Attribution can test perception and it does account for the variance, but how that variance is accounted for needs further examination in regard to this experiential group.

Table 10

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of Blogs about the Major Southeastern University Football, the Scale for Other Belief and Other Motivation in Relation to Post-test Other Perception as Dependent Variable*

DV: Variables	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig.
Good Person		.531	1.57		
	Blog about MSU Bias			.213	.004
	Others feel better when they watch organized sports			-.181	.028
	Self wishes to be alone instead of with MSU fans			.172	.010
	Seeking members of the MSU fan b/c they are like self			.299	.005
Similar Fan to Self		.551	2.05		
	Blog about MSU truth			.206	.028
	Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics			.174	.048
	Self sees MSU clothing and feels connected			.208	.018
Affiliation to MSU term		.370	1.33		
	Association between MSU term members feels good			.443	.001

Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients that were extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale can be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. However, using the pre-test experience scale of blogs about the football program did not produce many usable betas; out of the 49 possible constants making up the three scales of experience, belief, and motivation, there was only a high of four constants in any one regression with usable betas. Unlike in Table 9, there were fewer significant betas, but those

betas were almost unanimously in a positive direction. Again, yes the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation did explain a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception, but the specific items found in each characteristic were not yet clear enough to provide consistent betas. Attribution can test perception in relation to specific other groups, like blogs about the football program, and will account for a significant amount of the variance, but how that variance is accounted for needs further examination in regard to this experiential group as well.

Table 11

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of the Average Fan of the Major Southeastern University Football Program with Experience as the Scale for Other Belief and Other Motivation in Relation to Post-Test Other Perception as Dependent Variables*

DV: Variables	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig. -
Good Person		.525	1.58		
	Seeking members of the MSU fan b/c they are like self			.192	.007
	Wearing MSU clothing creates a connection			.223	.037
Similar Fan to Self		.546	2.41		
	Self Wishes to Fit w/ MSU			.254	.028
	Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics			.235	.008
	Self sees MSU clothing and feels connected			.272	.003
Affiliation to MSU term		.394	1.35		
	Ave. Fan of MSU Bias			.194	.025
	Ave. Fan of MSU Freely Given			-.164	.046
	Association between MSU term members feels good			.391	.001

Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients which are extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale can be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. However, using the pre-test experience scale of the Average fan of the major Southeastern university football program did not produce many usable betas; out of the 49 possible constants making up the three scales of experience, belief, and motivation, there were only, at most, three constants in any one regression that had usable betas. The betas that did prove to be significant suggested that, except for one case, the direction of the relationship was positive. Similar to the previous examinations, the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation did explain a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception, but the specific items found in each characteristic were not clear enough yet to provide consistent betas. Due to the lack of consistent and plentiful betas, there were significant improvements that must be made to the current scales; the fact that there was such significant line fit, means correcting the scales is vital. Attribution can test perception in relation to specific other groups, such as the average fan of the major Southeastern university football program, and once the scales are corrected, the level and depth of data provided through TPE investigation will increase and become more beneficial.

Table 12

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of the Official Website of the Major Southeastern University Football Program with Experience as the Scale for Other Belief and Other Motivation in Relation to Post-Test Other Perception as Dependent Variables*

DV: Variables	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig. -
Good Person		.536	1.55		
	MSU official Website truthful			.182	.038
	Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.144	.042
	Self wishes to be alone instead of with MSU fans			.183	.009
	Seeking members of the MSU fan b/c they are like self			.301	.005
Similar Fan to Self		.531	2.09		
	Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and Academics			.215	.017
	Self feels connected to other When see MSU clothing			.283	.002
Affiliation to MSU term		.416	1.29		
	MSU official Website Interested			.168	.044
	Other wear MSU colors to feel good about self			-.193	.046
	Other Fan Feels Good Connected to MSU term			.106	.001
	Attend MSU b/c of Athletics			-.199	.039

Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients which are extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale could be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. However, using the pre-test experience scale of the official website of the major Southeastern university football program did not produce many usable betas; out of the 49

possible constants making up the three scales of experience, belief, and motivation, there were only at most four constants in any one regression with usable betas. The betas that did prove to be significant suggested that, except for one case, the direction of the relationship is positive. Similar to the previous examinations, the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation did explain a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception; however, the specific items found in each characteristic were not clear enough yet to provide consistent betas. Due to the lack of consistent and plentiful betas, significant improvements must be made to the current scales; since there was such significant line fit, correcting the scales is vital. Attribution can test perception in relation to specific other groups, like the average fan of the football program in question, and once the scales are corrected, the level and depth of data provided through TPE investigation will increase and become more beneficial.

When one examined the significant betas for each of the items in the three scales used to create attribution in conjunction with one of the three dependent variables, there was little consistent significance or importance. The three attribution characteristics in the hierarchical regression represented scales of questions; when so few items from those scales showed significant and robust betas, it should be discussed. The simple linear regression showed that, as a whole, the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motive did create a cohesive representation of the other by which the subject could decide on perception of the other, but the individual questions did not serve as good individual predictors. The simple linear regressions suggested that using attribution theory to explain perception of the other does provide more and deeper information by which to understand the other. However, in order to perfect this method of testing, future attention must be paid to question formation to ensure consistent and high betas.

#### *Research Question 4*

Research Question 4 asked, “Do the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motive create a cohesive representation of the other by which the subject can decide on his/her perception of self?” During the experiment, the three attribution characteristics were tested through scales in the pre- and post-tests. The scale used to represent experience came from the pre-test. Each of the four scales assessing the other used in the previous research question were again examined, in addition to the scale of self in relation to the major Southeastern university football program in order to ascertain two items of importance: Did the characteristic of self experience help shape perception of self and/or did the characteristic of self shape perception of self better, the same, or worse than the characteristic of experience ascribed to the other groups? Each characteristic of experience represented experience in five simple linear regressions. The subsequent models of belief and motive were similar to the scales used in Research Question 3, but in this case the questions focused on the subject’s self belief and the subject’s self motivation. The dependent variables were the four questions making up the post-test scale of self perception, and each was tested in relation to each of the characteristics of experience.

Table 13

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of Media Outlets like ESPN or ESPN.com as Experience with the Scale for Other Belief and Other Motivation in Relation to Post-Test Self Perception as Dependent Variable*

DV: Variables	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig. -
Consider Self Fan		.623	1.58		
ESPN Factual Other Feels Better Wearing				-.227	.033
MSU Colors Other Feel Good When				-.332	.001
They Buy MSU Clothing				.321	.020
Self wants to Fit in With MSU Fans				.286	.006
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household				.231	.001
Seen as a Fan		.621	1.98		
ESPN Factual				-.283	.008
Others Feel Better Wearing MSU Colors				-.300	.001
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics				.235	.004
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household				.218	.001
Frustrated by Non-Fans		.614	2.12		
ESPN Factual				-.243	.025
ESPN Distorted				-.163	.030
ESPN Biased				.221	.004
Others Feel Good When Defending the MSU				.213	.042

Table 13 (continued)

Others Feel Better When Making New Friends			-199	.026
Self Wishes to Fit in With Class			-286	.029
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.320	.001
Self Seeks Friends with MSU Fans Because Same as Self			.244	.012
Part of MSU term	.711	1.73		
ESPN Factual			-198	.034
Others Feel Better Wearing MSU Colors			-274	.001
Others Buy MSU Products B/c Makes Him/Her Feel Good			.343	.005
Association to MSU History Makes Self Feel Good			.170	.040
Other Feel Good as Part MSU Term			.229	.005
Self Wishes to Fit in With Class			-272	.017
Self Wishes to Fit in With MSU Fans			.207	.022
Attended MSU B/c it is Family Tradition			.108	.046
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics			.207	.004
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.125	.026
Seeing MSU Clothing Makes Connection			.222	.003

Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients which are extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale could be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. Using the pre-test experience scale of news outlets like ESPN or ESPN.com produced more betas than previously seen, but considering the possible 49 constants making up the three scales of experience, belief, and motivation, there were still relatively few. The most at any one time that were significant was 11 betas. So with the available data, the use of media outlets like ESPN and ESPN.com showed a generally positive relationship. In essence, the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation did explain a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception, but the specific items found in each characteristic were not yet clear enough to provide consistent betas. Due to the lack of consistent and plentiful betas, there are significant improvements that must be made to the current scales, and the significant line fit suggests the importance of correcting the scales. Attribution can test perception in relation to self, and once the scales are corrected, the level and depth of data provided through TPE investigation will increase and become more beneficial. Additionally, the impetus for perception could be examined in trying to understand whether the TPE is correct in its assertion that others determine what and how one thinks.

Table 14

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of Blogs about the Major Southeastern University Football as the Scale for Other Belief and Other Motivation in Relation to Post-Test Self Perception as Dependent Variable*

DV: Variables	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BC $\beta$	Sig.
Consider Self Fan		.631	1.53		
MSU Blog Consistent				.159	.043
Other Feels Better Wearing					
MSU Clothing				-.292	.001
Self Wishes to Fit in With MSU Fans				.289	.004
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household				.216	.001
Seeing MSU Clothing Makes Connection				.173	.030
Self Wishes to be With other MSU Fans				.190	.010
Seen as a Fan		.585	2.06		
Other Feel Better Wearing MSU Colors				-.254	.003
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics				.183	.031
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household				.225	.001
Frustrated by Non-Fans		.548	2.28		
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household				.315	.001
Part of MSU term		.710	1.71		
MSU Blog Accurate				.219	.047
MSU Blog Proven Wrong				.103	.039

Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors	-.262	.001
Other Buys MSU Paraphernalia B/c it Makes Him/Her Feel Good	.286	.020
Self Associates with MSU History B/c Makes Self Feel Good	.211	.016
Attend MSU b/c of MSU History	.113	.042
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics	.181	.011
Seeing MSU Clothing Makes connection	.173	.015

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Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients which were extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale could be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. However, using the pre-test experience scale of blogs about the major Southeastern university football program produced betas, but considering the possible 49 constants making up the three scales of experience, belief, and motivation, there were still relatively few. The most at any one time with significance were 8 betas. So with the available data, the use of blogs about the football program showed a generally positive relationship. In essence, the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation did explain a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception; however, the specific items found in each characteristic were not clear enough yet to provide consistent betas. Due to the lack of consistent and plentiful betas, there were significant improvements that must be made to the current scales. The fact that there was such a significant line fit suggests the importance of

correcting the scales. Attribution can test perception in relation to self, and once the scales are corrected, the level and depth of data provided through TPE investigation will increase and become more beneficial. Additionally, the impetus for perception could be examined in trying to understand whether the TPE is correct in its assertion that others drive what and how one thinks.

Table 15

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of the Average Fan of the Major Southeastern University Football Program as Experience with the Scale for Other Belief and Other Motivation in Relation to Post-Test Self Perception as Dependent Variables*

DV: Variables	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig.
Consider Self Fan		.626	1.59		
Average MSU Fan Truthful				.162	.038
Average MSU Fan Protective				.126	.042
Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors				-.297	.001
Other Buys MSU Paraphernalia B/c It Makes Him/Her Feel Good				.353	.012
Self Wishes to Fit in With MSU Fans				.260	.010
Attend MSU b/c of MSU History				.169	.009
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics				.161	.046
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household				.181	.006
Seeing MSU Clothing Makes Connection				.200	.018
Self Wishes to be Alone Instead of With MSU Fan Group				.131	.037
Seen as a Fan		.606	2.00		

Average MSU Fan Knowledgeable	.172	.041
Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors	-.241	.004
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics	.183	.027
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household	.231	.001
<hr/>		
Frustrated by Non-Fans	.580	2.21
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household	.327	.001
<hr/>		
Part of MSU term	.703	1.73
Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors	-.300	.001
Other Buys MSU Paraphernalia B/c It Makes Him/Her Feel Good	.385	.002
Other Defends MSU B/c He/She Feels Good After	-.175	.050
Self Associates With MSU History B/c He/She Feels Good	.171	.034
Other Feels Good to be a Part of MSU Term	.234	.006
Self Wants to Fit with Class	-.265	.011
Self Wants to Fit With MSU Fan	.192	.031
Attend MSU b/c of History	.147	.010
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and academics	.189	.008
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household	.141	.016

Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients which were extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale could be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. However, using the pre-test experience scale of the average fan of the football program in question produced betas, but considering the possible 49 constants making up the three scales of experience, belief, and motivation, there were still relatively few. The most at any one time with significance were 11 betas. So, with the available data, the use of the average fan of the major Southeastern university football program showed a generally positive relationship. In essence, the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation did explain a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception; however, the specific items found in each characteristic were not yet clear enough to provide consistent betas. Due to the lack of consistent and plentiful betas, there were significant improvements that must be made to the current scales; the fact that there was such a significant line fit suggests the importance of correcting the scales. Attribution can test perception in relation to self, and once the scales are corrected, the level and depth of data provided through TPE investigation will increase and become more beneficial. Additionally, the impetus for perception could be examined in trying to understand whether the TPE is correct in its assertion that others do drive what and how one thinks.

Table 16

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of the Official Website of the Major Southeastern University Football Program as Experience with the Scale for Other Belief and Other Motivation in Relation to Post-Test Self Perception as Dependent Variables*

DV: Variables	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig.
Consider Self Fan		.636	1.55		
Official Website of MSU Football Program Factual				-.198	.007
Official Website of MSU Football Program Knowledgeable				-.213	.012
Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors				-.340	.001
Other Feels Better Watching Organized Sports				.155	.033
Self Wants to Fit in With MSU Fans				.255	.014
Attend MSU b/c of History				.176	.004
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and Academics				.162	.041
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household				.198	.002
Seeing MSU Clothing Creates Connection				.177	.028
Self Wishes to be with a group of MSU Fans than Alone				.184	.013
Seen as a Fan		.632	1.94		
Official Website of MSU Football Program Factual				-.206	.005
Official Website of MSU Football Program Knowledgeable				-.196	.018

Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors			-0.260	.001
Other Feels Better Watching Organized Sports			.144	.045
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and Academics			.248	.002
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.243	.001
<hr/>				
Frustrated by Non-Fans	.571	2.23		
Official Website of MSU Football Program Factual			-0.206	.005
Official Website of MSU Football Program Knowledgeable			-0.196	.018
Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors			-0.260	.001
Other Feels Better Watching Organized Sports			.144	.045
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and Academics			.248	.002
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.243	.001
<hr/>				
Part of MSU term	.721	1.69		
Official Website of MSU Football Program Factual			-0.159	.013
Official Website of MSU Football Program Knowledgeable			-0.152	.034
Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors			-0.271	.001
Other Buys MSU Paraphernalia B/c It Makes Him/Her Feel Good			.253	.032

Other Defends MSU B/c He/She Feels Good After	-.199	.022
Other Feels Good as a Part of MSU Term	.260	.001
Self Wants to Fit in With MSU Fan	.180	.046
Attend MSU b/c of History	.146	.006
Attend MSU b/c of Athletics and Academics	.190	.006
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household	.120	.029
Seeing MSU Clothing Creates connection	.243	.001

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Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients which were extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale could be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. Using the pre-test experience scale of the official website of the major Southeastern university football program produced betas, but considering the possible 49 constants making up the three scales of experience, belief, and motivation, there were still relatively few. The most at any one time that were significant were 11 betas. So with the available data, the use of the official website of the football program showed a generally positive relationship. In essence, the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation did explain a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception; however, the specific items found in each characteristic were not clear enough yet to provide consistent betas. Due to the lack of consistent and plentiful betas, there are significant improvements that must be

made to the current scales; the fact that there was such a significant line fit suggests the importance of correcting the scales. Attribution can test perception in relation to self, and once the scales are corrected, the level and depth of data provided through TPE investigation will increase and become more beneficial. Additionally, the impetus for perception could be examined in trying to understand whether the TPE is correct in its assertion that others determine what and how one thinks.

Table 17

*Hierarchical Regression Model of Perception of the Self as Experience with the Scale for Self Belief and Self Motivation in Relation to Post-Test Self Perception as Dependent Variables*

DV: Variables	Constants	R <sup>2</sup>	SE	BCβ	Sig. -
Consider Self Fan		.625	1.58		
	Self Feels Good as Part of MSU Term			.377	.019
	Self Feels Better B/c of Academic Success			.123	.050
	Self Wants to Fit in With MSU Fan			.246	.048
	Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.191	.003
	Seeing MSU Clothing Creates connection			.214	.009
Seen as a Fan		.656	1.87		
	Self Proven Wrong			.135	.026
	Self Protective			.175	.026
	Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.217	.001
	Seeing MSU Clothing Creates connection			.177	.023

Frustrated by Non-Fans	.587	2.21		
Self Protective			.200	.021
Self Feels Better as Part of an Organized Sport			-.201	.004
Attend MSU b/c of History			.143	.026
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.333	.001
Part of MSU term	.776	1.50		
Self Feels Good as Part of MSU Term			.452	.001
Self Acts Kind to Outside Fans B/c Acting as Such Gives MSU Term Fans Pride			.154	.048
Support of non-MSU team creates conflict in household			.119	.016
Seeing MSU Clothing Creates connection			.199	.002

Examining the post-test perception scale in relation to the theory of attribution garnered three R-squared coefficients which were extremely high and significant at the .001 level. This finding suggested that the post-test perception scale could be explained effectively by the three attribution variables. However, using the pre-test scale of self based experience with the football program in question produced the fewest betas in the current investigation. The most at any one time with significance were 5 betas. So with the available data, the use of the official website of the football program showed a generally positive relationship. In essence, the three attribution characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation explained a significant percentage of the possible variability of perception; however, the specific items found in each characteristic were

not yet clear enough to provide consistent betas. Due to the lack of consistent and plentiful betas, significant improvements must be made to the current scales; the fact that there was such a significant line fit suggests the importance of correcting the scales. Attribution can test perception in relation to self, and once the scales are corrected, the level and depth of data provided through TPE investigation will increase and become more beneficial. Additionally, the impetus for perception could be examined in trying to understand whether the TPE is correct in its assertion that others determine what and how one thinks. Although, the fact that the use of self as the experience variable was the single worst creator of significant betas leads one to suggest that this scale should be examined first.

After the simple linear regressions required to adequately test Research Question 4 were completed, when the three attributes were applied linearly in each of the five regression analyses to the dependent variables of self, there was a high amount of linear fit, explained by the variation of the dependent with the independent variable. Unfortunately, the R squares found for the experience characteristic of self were no higher or lower, when taken as a whole, than the experience characteristics of any of the other groups. In this case, the use of self as the attribution of experience did not create a significant change in the linear fit over any of the four other groups also used as the attribution of experience in relation to the dependent variables of self. The self was just as informed by the other as by the self in the creation of self perception as well as other perception. The three attribution characteristics created a cohesive perception of other that the subject can decide on perception of self, but the self also creates a cohesive perception that has equal hold over perception of self.

### *Research Question 5*

Research Question 5 tested whether knowledge bias and reporting bias played an integral part in perception formation. After carefully analyzing the data used to assess RQ5, knowledge bias and reporting bias did play an integral part in perception formation, especially in conjunction with attribution theory. Because this study helps forward the idea that attribution, not simple perception, is the key to understanding perception, knowledge bias and reporting bias were tested between the three attributions for self and other. To examine these three factors in perception, a paired T-test was conducted between the post-test scales for the attributions of self and the post-test scales for the attributions of the general other. The items of interest in this investigation are the mean differences between the scale of self and the paired other scales, as well as the level of significance. If a pair is significant with a positive mean difference, it should be interpreted as knowledge bias, and reporting bias was found if there were significant negative mean differences. The more positive or negative the mean difference, the greater the strength of knowledge bias or reporting bias.

Table 18

*Paired T-Test Examining the Attributions for Self With Other to Examine Knowledge Bias Versus Reporting Bias*

Paired T-Test Examining Attribution of Experience

<u>Variables: Other&amp;Self</u>	<u>Mean Difference</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Two Tailed Sig.</u>
Good Person & Consider Self Fan	-1.379	2.278	.001
Similar Fan to Self & Seen as a Fan	-0.163	2.723	.374
Part of MSU term & Affiliation to MSU term	1.286	2.638	.001

Paired T-Test Examining Attribution of Belief

Variables: Self&Other	Mean Difference	SD	Two Tailed Sig.
Association with MSU fan B/c Makes Him/Her Feel Better & Association with MSU Makes Him/Her Feel Better	-1.812	2.312	.001
Affiliation with MSU Term Makes Him/Her Feel Good& Affiliation with MSU Term Makes Other Feel Good	-0.936	2.620	.001
Affiliation with MSU Term is Liked By Him/Her & Affiliation with MSU Term is Liked By Other	-1.109	2.474	.001
Self Acts Kind to Outside Fans B/c Acting as Such Gives MSU Term Fans Pride & Other Acts Kind to Outside Fans B/c Acting as Such Gives MSU Term Fans Pride	-1.050	2.810	.001
Self Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors & Other Feels Better Wearing MSU Colors	-2.138	2.952	.001
Self Feel Good When He/She Buys MSU Clothing & Other Feel Good When He/She Buys MSU Clothing	-2.723	2.868	.001
Self Attends MSU Events B/c Makes Self Feel Good & Other Attends MSU Events B/c Makes Other Feel Good	-2.295	3.137	.001
Self Defends MSU B/c Makes Self Feel Good & Other Defends MSU B/c Makes Other Feel Good	-2.446	2.982	.001

Self Feels Better When Has Academic Success & Other Feels Better When Has Academic Success	0.995	1.255	.001
Self Feels Better When Makes New Friends & Other Feels Better When Makes New Friends	-0.087	1.547	.406
Self Feels Better When Part of Organized Sports & Other Feels Better When Part of Organized Sports	-0.871	2.361	.001
Self Feels Better When Watching Organized Sports & Other Feels Better When Watching Organized Sports	-1.351	2.351	.001

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Paired T-Test Examining Attribution of Motive

Variables: Self & Other      Mean Difference      SD      Two Tailed Sig.

The Extent the Self Surrounds Himself/Herself with MSU Goods & The Extent the Other Surrounds Himself/Herself with MSU Goods	3.859	3.262	.001
The Extent Self Believes He/She is a Part of MSU Term & The Extent Other Believes He/She Is a Part of MSU Term	1.872	3.136	.001
The Extent the Self Believes He/She is Similar to MSU Fan & The Extent the Other Believes He/She is Similar to MSU Fan	2.340	2.975	.001
The Extent the Self Buys MSU Paraphernalia to Feel Good & The Extent the Other Buys MSU Paraphernalia to Fell Good	2.513	3.298	.001

Self Attendance at MSU Events to Feel a Part of MSU Term & Other Attendance at MSU Events to Feel a Part of MSU Term	1.795	2.988	.001
Self Defense of MSU to Feel a Part of MSU Term & Other Defense of MSU to Feel a Part of MSU Term	1.877	2.960	.001
Self Feels Like MSU Fan Only Wearing MSU Clothing & Other Feels Like MSU Fan Only Wearing MSU Clothing	2.554	3.212	.001
Self Feels Like MSU Fan Only When Talking/Dressing/Painted In MSU Related Paraphernalia & Other Feels Like MSU Fan Only When Talking/Dressing/Painted In MSU Related Paraphernalia	2.577	2.939	.001
Self Feels Like MSU Fan Only When Talking About MSU & Other Feels Like MSU Fan Only When Talking About MSU	2.622	3.059	.001

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With the exception of the pair assessing whether the self or the general other likes to be seen as a fan and the pair that examined whether the self or the general other feels better when making new friends, the mean differences were significant. Of the three attributions, the mean differences suggested that reporting bias was predominantly responsible for experience and belief, while knowledge bias was predominantly responsible for motivation. Table 18 showed that in each paired T-test with a significance level of .05 or better, there was a consistent element of knowledge bias or reporting bias present. The paired T-tests suggested that if the attribution

characteristics should be taken as a whole to assess perception, reporting bias would account for two-thirds of perception in this case.

The importance of this finding was that knowledge bias and reporting bias clarified perception analysis in a different way. When one examines perception in relation to experience, belief, and motivation, it is possible to tell which of the three facets is the predominant characteristic in the perception formed, but with knowledge bias and reporting bias, one can tell whether the perception is predominantly based on knowledge or the lack thereof. Also, another examination point was found in assessing which of the two options held more sway by controlling more of the attribution characteristics. Reporting bias was found to be more important in perception formation between the self and a general other in this investigation, due to the fact that it controlled the subject responses of two attributions. Taking an attribution study and applying knowledge bias and reporting bias to it provides a more complex understanding of perception that will be more useful than current simpler perception methods of study. Further inquiry with specific other groups should be undertaken to clarify and strengthen these findings as well as to assess whether controlling a larger share of perception suggests whether knowledge or reporting bias is predominant in perception formation.

#### *Research Question 6*

Research Question 6 asks “Does the creation of the other inform the third person effect more than the self?” After examining the data used to investigate this question, the answer is no. To investigate this question, several paired T-tests were utilized to compare the means of the pre-test scale of self against the pre-test scale of the other to see which, if any, of the other groups

mirrored the answers to the scale gauging self perception. The post-test questions concerning perception were then examined in order to see whether there was a consistency of perception after time elapsed.

Table 19

*Paired T-Test between Self Perception and Blogs Associated With the MSU to Assess Creation of Other in Relation to Creation of Self*

<u>Variable: Self &amp; Other</u>	<u>Mean Difference</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>2 Tail Sig.</u>
Self Trustworthy & MSU Blog Trustworthy	1.468	3.087	.001
Self Accurate & MSU Blog Accurate	0.949	2.840	.001
Self Factual & MSU Blog Factual	1.153	2.918	.001
Self Withheld & MSU Blog Withheld	-0.742	3.725	.003
Self Distrust & MSU Blog Distrust	-2.974	3.115	.001
Self Truthful & MSU Blog Truthful	1.885	2.601	.001
Self Biased & MSU Blog Biased	-1.627	3.024	.001
Self Freely Given & MSU Blog Freely Given	-1.368	3.106	.001
Self Interested & MSU Blog Interested	-1.809	3.086	.001
Self Proven Wrong & MSU Blog Proven Wrong	-2.085	3.016	.001
Self Knowledgeable & MSU Blog Knowledgeable	0.267	3.090	.186

Self Responsible & MSU Blog Responsible	1.818	2.959	.001
Self Expert & MSU Blog Expert	-0.064	3.326	.769
Self Sensationalized & MSU Blog Sensationalized	-1.528	3.448	.001
Self Consistent & MSU Blog Consistent	1.153	2.723	.001
Self Protective & MSU Blog Protective	-1.774	3.577	.001

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The paired T-test between the scale of self and the scale of major Southeastern university blogs associated with the football program (Table 19) suggested that in a two-tailed test, all items except for two were significant. The means suggested that there was a slight negative shift in overall responses. Nine of the possible 16 pairs had negative means, but those means were not that large. So, the negative means were more pervasive than the positive means, but they hovered around 0. The scale answers to questions of self were consistent, and the scale answers to major Southeastern university blogs associated with the football program were not as consistent and significantly far away from the responses for self. Blogs associated with the football program were negatively related to the self.

Table 20

*Paired T-Test between Self Perception and the MSU Official Website of the Football Program to Assess Creation of Other in Relation to Creation of Self*

Variable: Self & Other	Mean Difference	SD	Two Tail Sig.
Self Trustworthy & MSU website Trustworthy	-1.932	2.464	.001
Self Accurate & MSU website Accurate	-2.640	2.297	.001
Self Factual & MSU website Factual	-2.230	2.410	.001
Self Withheld & MSU website Withheld	-0.768	3.320	.001
Self Distrust & MSU website Distrust	-0.585	3.219	.006
Self Truthful & MSU website Truthful	-1.129	2.203	.001
Self Biased & MSU website Biased	-0.737	3.455	.001
Self Freely Given & MSU website Freely Given	-1.069	2.916	.001
Self Interested & MSU website Interested	-1.554	3.000	.001
Self Proven Wrong & MSU website Proven Wrong	0.996	2.493	.001
Self Knowledgeable & MSU website Knowledgeable	-2.614	2.581	.001
Self Responsible & MSU website Responsible	-1.835	2.226	.001
Self Expert & MSU website Expert	-4.432	3.302	.001

Self Sensationalized & MSU website Sensationalized	-1.748	3.158	.001
Self Consistent & MSU website Consistent	-2.275	2.566	.001
Self Protective & MSU website Protective	-2.346	3.333	.001

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The paired T-test between the self and the scale of the official website of the major Southeastern university football program (Table 20) suggested that in a two-tailed test, all items indicate that the self was significantly different from the assessed other. The subject's ascription of perception to the self was different than the subject's perception of the official website of the major Southeastern university football program. Similar to the paired T-test previously discussed in reference to Table 19, the mean differences found were either almost zero or negative and suggested that there was a significant difference. However, whereas subject responses for the self were consistent and moderate, responses for the major Southeastern university official website were possibly inconsistent and extreme. The next paired T-test examined the means of the scale of self against the perception of media outlets like ESPN in their assessment of the major Southeastern university football program (Table 21).

Table 21

*Paired T-test between Self Perception and Media Outlets Like ESPN or ESPN.com to Assess Creation of Other in Relation to Creation of Self*

Variable: Self & Other	Mean Difference	SD	Two Tail Sig.
Self Trustworthy & Media Outlet Trustworthy	-1.779	2.778	.001
Self Accurate & Media Outlet Accurate	-2.356	2.679	.001
Self Factual & Media Outlet Factual	-2.136	2.649	.001
Self Withheld & Media Outlet Withheld	-0.841	3.771	.001
Self Distrust & Media Outlet Distrust	-1.047	3.297	.001
Self Truthful & Media Outlet Truthful	-0.845	2.509	.001
Self Biased & Media Outlet Biased	1.813	3.791	.001
Self Freely Given & Media Outlet Freely Given	-0.276	3.329	.208
Self Interested & Media Outlet Interested	0.591	3.871	.020
Self Proven Wrong & Media Outlet Proven Wrong	0.017	7.286	.972
Self Knowledgeable & Media Outlet Knowledgeable	-2.306	2.919	.001
Self Responsible & Media Outlet Responsible	-1.508	2.670	.001
Self Expert & Media Outlet Expert	-4.644	3.281	.001
Self Sensationalized & Media Outlet Sensationalized	-0.717	3.198	.001

Self Consistent & Media Outlet Consistent	-1.928	2.877	.001
Self Protective & Media Outlet Protective	-0.979	3.711	.001

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The results suggested the self, in most cases, was significantly different than the assessed other. The exceptions in the case of the data in Table 21 involved the two items from the self scale that examined the subject's willingness to freely give information and the amount of times the information he/she presented was proven wrong in conjunction with the corresponding other items that assessed the same thing for the subject's perception of news outlets like ESPN. There was almost a universal significance of differences from the subject's perception of media outlets like ESPN's assessment of the major Southeastern university football program and self. Also, in the same fashion as the previous two paired T-tests, the means were negative and suggested the consistency and moderation of the answers to the scale for self and the extreme and possibly inconsistent nature of the examined other. The last paired T-test investigated the differences in means between the scale of self and the scale of a major Southeastern university football fan (Table 22).

Table 22

*Paired T-Test between Self Perception and MSU Football Program Fan to Assess Creation of Other in Relation to Creation of Self*

Variable: Self & Other	Mean Difference	SD	Two Tail Sig.
Self Trustworthy & MSU Fan Trustworthy	-0.157	2.829	.395
Self Accurate & MSU Fan Accurate	-0.692	2.884	.001
Self Factual & MSU Fan Factual	-0.471	2.796	.010
Self Withheld & MSU Fan Withheld	0.214	3.097	.292
Self Distrust & MSU Fan Distrust	-1.705	3.247	.001
Self Truthful & MSU Fan Truthful	0.357	2.700	.044
Self Biased & MSU Fan Biased	-1.677	2.779	.001
Self Freely Given & MSU Fan Freely Given	-1.536	2.661	.001
Self Interested & MSU Fan Interested	-1.427	2.685	.001
Self Proven Wrong & MSU Fan Proven Wrong	-0.321	2.815	.081
Self Knowledgeable & MSU Fan Knowledgeable	-1.013	2.967	.001
Self Responsible & MSU Fan Responsible	0.409	2.717	.022
Self Expert & MSU Fan Expert	-1.270	3.403	.001

Self Sensationalized & MSU Fan Sensationalized	-1.509	2.821	.001
Self Consistent & MSU Fan Consistent	-0.519	2.823	.005
Self Protective & MSU Fan Protective	-1.370	3.334	.001

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The findings suggested that the perception of self was generally significantly different than the perception of the assessed other. The exceptions in significance dealt with the items assessing the trustworthiness of self information, withholding of information by the self, if information from self has been or could be proven wrong, and the corresponding items for the examined other. The subject's response to the scale of perception of self was significantly different than the responses to the scale of perception concerning major Southeastern university football fans. Also, the means again signified that the self ascribed a consistent and moderate perception of the self and an extreme and possibly inconsistent perception of the examined other.

Table 23

*Paired T-Test between Post-Test Scales of Self and Other Perception to Assess Creation of Other in Relation to Creation of Self*

Variable: Self & Other	Mean Difference	SD	Two Tail Sig.
Consider Self Fan & Good Person	-1.379	2.278	.001
Seen as a Fan & Similar Fan to Self	-0.163	2.723	.374
Part of MSU term & Affiliation to MSU term	1.286	2.638	.001

Table 23 shows the paired T-test examination of the post-test perception of self against a post-test general other. While the number of items used to assess perception in the post-test was significantly fewer, the results suggested a similar pattern. The response of subjects to the scale of self perception was significantly different than the responses to the scale of perception of a general other, except with regard to the pair that assessed whether the self or other needs to be seen as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by others. The difference was between two significant pairs: only one was negative, while the other was significant and positive. It is possible that a general other provided too much room for interpretation, and so subjects could choose with whom to identify; usually, subjects like to believe in a positive view of others. In future research, similar questions should be assessed in the pre- and post-test of the experiment to investigate whether the similarity seen here is a coincidence or a recurring phenomenon. In the case of this research, these findings suggest that, given time and interaction, the subject does not change his/her position on perception between the self and the other.

In all five cases, the perception of self was generally significantly different than the perception of the four other pre-test groups and general other post-test group. The questions in which there were no significant differences did not seem to hold any consistency across the four paired T-tests and suggested that the questions were valid but the subjects believed themselves to be more like the four other groups assessed in those instances. However, overall, the self seemed to centrally govern how the subjects perceived themselves in a consistent manner, whereas the self perceived the other in terms of extremities. From this investigation, it appears that the self was not influenced by the other groups tested. However, this discussion will be revisited in Research Question 9, when the examination of the attributes is discussed. It is possible that either the other groups assessed in this investigation did not encompass who the self identified with the most, or the investigation of perception in this fashion was limited and other investigations might have proven more beneficial to illuminating this issue. One must consider that most examples of perception found empirically suggested the consideration of an other is an act of reducing others to a set of extremes, but does a simple scale of questions clearly outline the perception of an other in a significant way that can clearly provide material to use in assessing behavior or where perception originates?

### *Research Question 7*

Research question 7 asked, “Does testing behavior at a separate time after an analysis of perception garner better results?” After a careful examination of the data, time did not seem to directly influence the results of the investigation. To come to this conclusion, the four pre-test other group scales, as well as the pre-test self scale, were examined in a correlation analysis with

the post-test scale for other as well as self behavior. The purpose was to see whether there were higher correlations between the pre-test perception examination and the post-test behavioral examination. In previous research, the correlations have been either non-existent or miniscule when testing perception and behavior at the same time. However, in the examination of the four pre-test other group scales in relation to the post-test scale of other behavior, the correlations found were few and far between. Almost none were found to be significant.

In the correlation between the scale measuring the other group of perception of blogs pertaining to the major Southeastern university football program and the behavior of the other, the item that concerned the perception of the trustworthiness of blogs pertaining to the major Southeastern university football program correlated significantly at the .05 level with the item in the other behavior scale concerning whether other fans of the major Southeastern university football program should have at least seen every football game played by the program in their lifetime. The Pearson correlation was only .144, which suggested that while significant, this item does not imply that the relationship was very strong. The item from this scale with the most significant correlations was the perception of blogs pertaining to the major Southeastern university football program withholding information. This item correlated at the .01 level with items testing the other's knowledge and willingness to share information about previous coaches of the major Southeastern university football team (Pearson  $R=.142$ ) and the other's desire to gain information about the major Southeastern university football program through reading (Pearson  $R=.134$ ). In each case, the Pearson correlation was relatively small again, suggesting the correlation between these two scales was miniscule and not ubiquitous. The final correlation concerned the item testing the perception of blogs concerning the major Southeastern university football program as being distrustful, from the pre-test scale, and the post-test item investigating

the power over the other in choosing whom to talk to as well as where to talk to them in private when considering what those choices did to the other being seen as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program. The correlation between these two items was found at the .01 level with a Pearson correlation coefficient of  $-.137$ . The negative correlation suggested an inverse relationship between these two items: as an other finds the blogs to be more distorted, the other also sees less of a connection between their level of fanship and whom or where they associate with people. Since the correlation was a weak one, very little credence should be given to this assumption.

The pre-test scale concerning the other as a fan of the major Southeastern University, in a correlation with the post-test scale of other behavior, showed more significant correlations than those found between the previous pre-test scale when tested against the same post-test scale (Table 24).

Table 24

*Correlation Analysis of Pre-Test Scale of MSU Fan Perception with Post-Test Scale of Behavioral Intent in a Traditional Investigation of TPE Relation between Perception and Behavior*

Measure	1	2	3
1. MSU Fan Trust	<b>-0.146</b>	<b>-0.161</b>	<b>-0.146</b>
2. MSU Fan Accurate	-0.120	<b>-0.140</b>	-0.100
3. MSU Fan Factual	-0.109	<b>-0.150</b>	-0.104

Measurements represented by numbers 1-3:

1: The item that assessed the ease with which the self could transmit information about a former major Southeastern university football coach or player from many years ago

2: The item that assessed the extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university are interested in reading pre and post-game information concerning the games played by the major Southeastern university football program because he/she enjoys being informed about the players, the team, and the statistical information of both

3: The item that assessed the extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university never missed watching a game played by the major Southeastern university football program since he/she was in high school

Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Each item was significant at the .05 level and had a modest and negative Pearson correlation coefficient. These findings suggested that the correlation was an inverse relationship between the way the other is seen as a fan and the way he/she is thought to behave. The interesting part of this finding was that usually the TPE suggests that behavior would follow perception in a positive manner. In this investigation, that was not the case, but with the relatively small grouping of significant correlations, little can truly be drawn from this single set

of findings. Because the pre-test named an other and the post-test did not, it could be that the difference in identity was the cause of the negative correlations.

In an examination of the pre-test scale of fan perception with the post-test scale of behavioral intent, there were several groupings; Table 25 depicts the second assemblage of significant correlations.

Table 25

*Correlation Analysis of Pre-Test Scale of MSU Fan Perception with Post-Test Scale of Behavioral Intent in a Traditional Investigation of TPE Relation between Perception and Behavior*

Measure	1	2	3	4	5
1. MSU Fan Withheld	<b>-0.155</b>	<b><u>-0.187</u></b>	<b>-0.168</b>	<b><u>-0.177</u></b>	<b>0.145</b>
2. MSU Fan Distrust	-0.102	<b>-0.138</b>	-0.102	-0.131	-0.100

Measurements Represented by numbers 1-5:

1: The extent to which fans of the major Southeastern university should purchase items in order to support the major Southeastern university football program whenever possible

2: The extent to which fans of the major Southeastern university would attend events in order to support the major Southeastern university football program whenever possible

3: The extent to which fans of the major Southeastern university should attend events in order to support the major Southeastern university football program whenever possible

4: The extent to which fans of the major Southeastern university should defend the major Southeastern university football program whenever possible

5: The extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university never missed watching a game played by the major Southeastern university football program since he/she attended the major Southeastern university

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Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers = significance at the .01 level

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All of the significant correlations at the .05 and .01 levels were negative except for the correlation between the other as a fan whose information is untrustworthy and the other's need to be seen as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by other fans of the football program (Table 25). Again, the significant correlations were modest and negative, except for one instance. This suggested that the other group being examined was perceived in one fashion, while the behavioral intent ascribed to them was diametrically opposed to that perceptual appraisal. This finding was interesting, as it again strays from conventional TPE findings, but with the small number of significant correlations found, little can truly be made of this observation. Also, the issue of number could have been a factor in these outcomes.

Table 26 illustrates the last grouping of items that correlated between the pre-test scale of fan perception and the post-test scale of behavioral intent.

Table 26

*Correlation Analysis of Pre-Test Scale of MSU Fan Perception with Post-Test Scale of Behavioral Intent in a Traditional Investigation of TPE Relation between Perception and Behavior*

Measure	1	2	3	4
1. MSU Fan Interested	0.025	0.036	0.063	<b>0.165</b>
2. MSU Fan Knowledgeable	-0.088	-0.098	<b>-0.158</b>	0.039
3. MSU Fan Expert	-0.093	<b>-0.151</b>	<b>-0.151</b>	-0.028
4. MSU Fan Consistent	<b>-0.167</b>	<b>-0.160</b>	<b>-0.151</b>	-0.079

Measurements Represented by numbers 1-4:

1: The level of influence on the other as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on who he/she associates with when in public

2: The ease with which the other could transmit information about a former major Southeastern university football coach or player from many years ago

3: The extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university are interested in reading pre- and post-game information concerning the games played by the major Southeastern university football program because he/she enjoys being informed about the players, the team, and the statistical information of both

4: The extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university never missed watching a game played by the major Southeastern university football program since he/she attended the major Southeastern university

**Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level**

In similar fashion, every correlation was negative except in relation to the item of the other's desire to be seen as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by other fans of the program. In general, the perception of the other as a fan showed an inverse correlation to the behavior of the other, except when discussing the outward perception the other

wished to depict to other fans of the major Southeastern university football program. In keeping with the findings of this research, the perception of the other and the behavioral intent ascribed to that other were inverse and against common TPE findings. Again, the correlations were relatively small and few as well as differing in number, which suggested that, although an interesting beginning, future research should be undertaken to investigate the nature of these surprising findings.

The pre-test scale that observed perception responses to the other as the official web site of the major Southeastern University football program correlated in clusters to the post-test scale of other behavior.

Table 27

*Correlation Analysis of Pre-Test Scale of MSU Official Website Perception with Post-Test Scale of Behavioral Intent in a Traditional Investigation of TPE Relation Between Perception and Behavior*

Measure	1	2
1. MSU Website Distrust	<b>0.156</b>	<b>0.160</b>
2. MSU Website Bias	<b>0.149</b>	<b>0.164</b>
3. MSU Website Freely Given	0.094	<b>0.140</b>
4. MSU Website Interested	0.102	<b>0.158</b>

Measurements Represented by numbers 1-2:

1: The extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university never missed watching a game played by the major Southeastern university football program since he/she was in high school

2: The extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university never missed watching a game played by the major Southeastern university football program since he/she was born

Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

The first cluster of correlations (Table 27) showed a positive and significant connection between the cluster of pre-test items concerned with the type of information put out by the official website of the major Southeastern university and attendance of games. Here, the findings and the TPE coincided. The perception ascribed to the other and the behavioral intent matched in direction; the correlations were significant but small, and also very few. Possibly, since the website is singular, like the behavioral evaluation, the results resembled traditional TPE research: positive results that were relatively significant, with small, correlative relevance, even though the positive correlations might also be due to the belief of subjects in the authority of this other. The second cluster of significant correlations between the pre-test and post-test scale being examined is depicted in Table 28.

Table 28

*Correlation Analysis of Pre-Test Scale of MSU Official Website Perception with Post-Test Scale of Behavioral Intent in a Traditional Investigation of TPE Relation between Perception and Behavior*

Measure	1	2	3
1. MSU Website Consistent	0.009	<b>-0.143</b>	-0.031
2. MSU Website Protective	<b>0.156</b>	0.099	<b>0.165</b>

Measurements Represented by numbers 1-3:

1: The extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university are interested in reading pre and post-game information concerning the games played by the major Southeastern university football program because he/she enjoys being informed about the players, the team, and the statistical information of both

2: The extent to which fans of the major Southeastern university should attend events in order to support the major Southeastern university football program whenever possible

3: The extent to which fans of the major Southeastern university should defend the major Southeastern university football program whenever possible

**Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level**

This cluster was split between a negative Pearson correlation coefficient and a positive Pearson correlation coefficient. The negative Pearson correlation coefficient suggested there was an inverse correlation between the perception of the official website of the major Southeastern university's consistency in giving good information and the other's willingness/compulsion and want/need to read information about the major Southeastern university football program. The pre-test scale concerning the official website correlates significantly in a positive manner, with one exception, with the post-test scale of other behavior in two clusters. As the only correlation with significant, consistent positive findings, it is possible that behavioral intent was based entirely on perception of the other and the number of the other. The fact that the other was being examined could color the responses one gave simply because of the subject's perception of the human race. It is possible that, due to the nature of the perception of the official website, the subject assumes no ulterior motives, whereas he/she does with all other others and in so assuming can ascribe perception and behavior that coincide positively. However, due to the lack of consistent significant correlations, this conjecture requires further investigation.

The final pre-test other scale assessed the perception of information from news outlets like ESPN on the major Southeastern university football program. In the correlation analysis, four items from the pre-test correlated significantly with five items from the post-test scale assessing other behavior (Table 29).

Table 29

*Correlation Analysis of Pre-test scale of Media Outlets like ESPN or ESPN.com with Post-test Scale of Other Behavioral Intent in a Traditional Investigation of TPE Relation between Perception and Behavior*

Measure	1	2	3	4	5
1. ESPN Accurate	0.041	-0.018	<b>-0.134</b>	0.067	0.036
2. ESPN Withheld	<b>0.136</b>	<b>0.136</b>	0.049	-0.039	0.062
3. ESPN Biased	0.019	0.038	-0.011	<b>-0.166</b>	-0.087
4. ESPN Proven Wrong	-0.013	0.066	-0.085	0.007	<b>-0.134</b>

Measurements Represented by numbers 1-5:

1: The level of influence on the other as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on the level and frequency he/she will wear paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university

2: The level of influence on the other as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on who he/she associates with when in public

3: The level of influence on the other as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on who he/she associates with when in private

4: The extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university are interested in reading pre- and post-game information concerning the games played by the major Southeastern university football program because he/she enjoys being informed about the players, the team, and the statistical information of both

5: The extent to which other fans of the major Southeastern university never missed watching a game played by the major Southeastern university football program since he/she was in high school

**Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level**

Each correlation was significant at the .05 level with modest Pearson correlation coefficient. Every correlation showed an inverse relationship between the pre-test and post-test items in Table 29, except between the pre-test item assessing the withholding of information in conjunction with the post-test other item examining whether the other is influenced by others in what/how much major Southeastern university football program paraphernalia the other wears, buys, owns, etc. The findings discussed above suggest that the more highly a subject perceived items in the pre-test scale, the lower subjects attributed behavioral choices to the other. The lone positive correlation suggested that the higher the perceptual belief about news outlets like ESPN withholding information, the more the other should wear, buy, and own football paraphernalia connected to the major Southeastern university football program. In similar fashion to the first two pre-test perceptual scales, this correlation found few significant relationships and of those found, almost all were negative and only mildly related. Also, the presence of another positive correlation created doubt as to whether the number of others was indicative of how that other could be perceived. Subjects perceived media outlets like ESPN to behave in an antithetical manner to how they wish to be seen. Although, to confirm this, more research must be conducted to discern a scale of questions that can accurately, significantly, and consistently show relationships to behavior in any direction.

Table 30

*Correlation Analysis of Pre-test Scale of Self with Post-test scale of Behavioral Intent in a Traditional Investigation of TPE Relation between Perception and Behavior*

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Self Accurate	-0.023	0.045	0.014	-0.058	-0.073	<b>0.138</b>
2. Self Distorted	-0.095	-0.018	-0.004	<b>-0.156</b>	<b><u>-0.198</u></b>	0.021
3. Self Knowledgeable	0.085	-0.003	-0.006	<b>-0.046</b>	0.060	<b>0.164</b>
4. Self Sensationalized	0.036	<b>-0.085</b>	<b><u>-0.159</u></b>	<b>-0.064</b>	-0.073	0.044
5. Self Protective	<b>0.159</b>	0.012	-0.103	-0.076	-0.071	0.186

Measurements Represented by numbers 1-6:

1: The level of influence on the self as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on where he/she eats

2: The level of influence on the self as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on the level and frequency he/she will wear paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university

3: The level of influence on the self as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on what activities he/she engages in

4: The level of influence on the self as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on who he/she associates with when in public

5: The level of influence on the self as a fan of the major Southeastern university football program by the mere status as a fan of the major Southeastern university on who he/she associates with when in private

6: The extent to which the self feels he/she should defend the major Southeastern university when anyone ever discusses the university in a negative way

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Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

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Similar to the pre-test scales of specific other groups in relation to the post-test scale of other behavior, the scale of self perception contained mostly negative correlations with the scale

of behavioral intent (Table 30). The aforementioned negative correlations suggested that the subject considered the perception of themselves as well as others to be the same in that the perception of the self generally differed from behavioral intent. The subject perceived themselves one way and yet acted another. Similar to the other findings in RQ7, the correlation was relatively small, which suggests that these findings, while significant, were not very large in effect or explanative ability. A majority of negative correlations were found in this investigation, which suggests that the few positive correlations provided little support for the idea that number was a basis for perceptions' influence on behavior. Also, time does not seem to cause behavioral intent to match perceptual responses.

#### *Research Question 8*

The final research question examined whether the perception of the other or the attributions ascribed to the other was more indicative of an expression of behavioral intent. After careful examination of the data, the attributions were more indicative of an expression of behavioral intent. More research should be done to clarify the relationship. The perception of the other was formed through the perceptual scales created for the aforementioned four other groups as well as for the self. The attributions ascribed to the other included the three attributions of experience, belief, and motivation. Since the previous research question provided an adequate response to the connectivity of simple perception scales to behavioral intent, this investigation focused on attribution connectivity. These three attributions were assessed by investigation through the scales of the post-test perception of self and the other (experience), post-test self-esteem for the self and other (belief), and post-test affiliation of the self and other

to the major Southeastern university football program (motivation), which were weighed against the post-test scales assessing behavioral intent for the self and other.

The first correlation analysis examined the three attribution scales for the other against the scale of other behavior as fans (Table 31).

Table 31

*Correlation Analysis between the Post-Test Behavioral Scale of Other and Three Post-Test Scales of Attributions of Other to Examine Effect of Other Attribution on Behavioral Intent*  
 Intercorrelations Between the Post-test Attribution of Experience and the Post-Test Scale of Other Behavior

Behavior	Attril	OtherAfg	Otherflikem	OtherpartCN
OAlabuyprod		0.117	<b><u>0.267</u></b>	0.102
OAlalookcom		0.094	<b><u>0.212</u></b>	<b><u>0.159</u></b>
OAlalistppl		0.034	<b><u>0.181</u></b>	0.095
CNacttoughld		0.111	<b><u>0.216</u></b>	0.114
OAlaflattend		0.038	0.118	0.043
OAlashdattend		0.079	<b><u>0.076</u></b>	<b><u>0.213</u></b>
OAlashddef		<b><u>0.184</u></b>	<b><u>0.142</u></b>	<b><u>0.278</u></b>
inflOeat		0.083	-0.010	0.128
inflOclothb		<b><u>0.142</u></b>	0.028	<b><u>0.236</u></b>
inflOAgear		0.095	0.006	<b><u>0.176</u></b>
inflOdo		0.126	<b><u>0.227</u></b>	<b><u>0.350</u></b>
inflOclothw		0.130	<b><u>0.173</u></b>	<b><u>0.342</u></b>
inflOpubpla		<b><u>0.177</u></b>	<b><u>0.168</u></b>	<b><u>0.348</u></b>
inflOprivpla		<b><u>0.316</u></b>	0.107	<b><u>0.264</u></b>
OinfofmrUAcoch		<b><u>0.143</u></b>	0.098	<b><u>0.344</u></b>
OrdUAFBinfo		0.107	0.132	<b><u>0.405</u></b>
OseeUAFBHS		<b><u>0.198</u></b>	<b><u>0.181</u></b>	<b><u>0.344</u></b>
OseeUAFBUA		0.026	<b><u>0.214</u></b>	<b><u>0.166</u></b>
OseeUAFBevr		0.080	<b><u>0.265</u></b>	0.102

Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

Intercorrelations Between the Post-test Attribution of Belief and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior: Part 1

	Attri	Oflbtrwe	ObuyAla	OattndAla	OdefAla	Ofeelbtr	Oflbtrnew	Oflbtrpart
Behavior								
OAlabuyprod		<b>0.179</b>	<b>0.201</b>	0.089	<b>0.232</b>	0.211	<b>0.162</b>	<b>0.141</b>
OAlalookcom		<b>0.192</b>	<b>0.209</b>	0.076	<b>0.159</b>	0.053	<b>0.147</b>	0.108
OAlalistppl		<b>0.151</b>	<b>0.181</b>	0.120	<b>0.197</b>	0.147	0.089	0.055
CNacttoughld		<b>0.149</b>	<b>0.235</b>	<b>0.155</b>	<b>0.213</b>	0.195	<b>0.150</b>	0.100
OAlaflattend		0.031	<b>0.174</b>	0.111	<b>0.151</b>	0.238	0.069	0.037
OAlashdattend		<b>0.268</b>	<b>0.240</b>	<b>0.215</b>	<b>0.274</b>	0.194	-0.005	-0.024
OAlashddef		<b>0.227</b>	<b>0.264</b>	0.274	<b>0.312</b>	0.168	0.070	0.078
inflOeat		0.078	<b>0.182</b>	<b>0.247</b>	<b>0.208</b>	0.212	0.078	0.022
inflOclothb		0.035	0.075	<b>0.146</b>	<b>0.174</b>	0.143	0.096	0.047
inflOAgear		0.029	<b>0.134</b>	<b>0.195</b>	<b>0.213</b>	0.210	0.051	0.008
inflOdo		0.067	0.097	<b>0.157</b>	0.123	-0.003	<b>0.184</b>	<b>0.150</b>
inflOclothw		0.052	<b>0.147</b>	<b>0.166</b>	0.120	0.043	<b>0.186</b>	<b>0.164</b>
inflOpubpla		0.081	0.073	<b>0.154</b>	0.092	0.062	<b>0.211</b>	<b>0.205</b>
inflOprivpla		0.127	0.081	0.157	<b>0.179</b>	0.128	<b>0.237</b>	<b>0.209</b>
OinfofmrUAcoch		<b>0.262</b>	0.131	<b>0.163</b>	<b>0.220</b>	0.135	0.115	0.081
OrdUAFBinfo		<b>0.226</b>	<b>0.160</b>	<b>0.225</b>	<b>0.181</b>	<b>0.155</b>	<b>0.163</b>	<b>0.154</b>
OseeUAFBHS		<b>0.225</b>	<b>0.161</b>	<b>0.136</b>	<b>0.260</b>	0.134	<b>0.202</b>	<b>0.203</b>
OseeUAFBUA		0.041	0.111	0.005	<b>0.136</b>	0.157	<b>0.197</b>	<b>0.151</b>
OseeUAFBevr		<b>0.139</b>	<b>0.203</b>	0.068	<b>0.155</b>	0.188	<b>0.161</b>	0.130

Belief Measurements Represented Left to Right:

1: Oflbtrwe- The extent to which wearing paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university makes the other feel better

2: ObuyAla- The extent to which purchasing paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university makes the other feel good

3: OattndAla- The extent to which attending events associated with the major Southeastern university makes the other feel good

4: OdefAla- The extent to which defending the major Southeastern university football program makes the self feel good

5: Ofeelbtr- The extent to which academic success makes the other feel good

6: Oflbtrnew- The extent to which making a new friend makes the other feel good

7: Oflbtrpart- The extent to which the other feels better when he/she participates in organized sports at the major Southeastern university like intramural sports

Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level  
 Bold & underlined numbers = significance at the .01 level

Intercorrelations between the Post-test Attribution of Belief and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior: Part 2

Behavior	Attri	Oflbtrwa	Oprtgmfn	Oprtgmhm	UfrndUA	UassUA	Ofeelg	OfanprtCN	OactCN
OAlabuyprod		<b>0.197</b>	<b>0.239</b>	<b>0.252</b>	<b>0.265</b>	<b>0.386</b>	<b>0.410</b>	<b>0.386</b>	0.06
OAlalookcom		<b>0.147</b>	<b>0.209</b>	<b>0.247</b>	<b>0.193</b>	<b>0.303</b>	<b>0.347</b>	<b>0.333</b>	0.118
OAlalistppl		0.096	<b>0.155</b>	<b>0.247</b>	<b>0.264</b>	<b>0.370</b>	<b>0.405</b>	<b>0.373</b>	0.018
CNacttoughld		<b>0.149</b>	<b>0.196</b>	<b>0.228</b>	<b>0.232</b>	<b>0.381</b>	<b>0.388</b>	<b>0.364</b>	0.056
OAlaflattend		0.029	0.089	0.120	<b>0.260</b>	<b>0.298</b>	<b>0.285</b>	<b>0.293</b>	0.003
OAlashdattend		<b>0.228</b>	<b>0.278</b>	<b>0.288</b>	<b>0.227</b>	<b>0.347</b>	<b>0.400</b>	<b>0.398</b>	0.104
OAlashddef		<b>0.270</b>	<b>0.416</b>	<b>0.385</b>	<b>0.216</b>	<b>0.361</b>	<b>0.369</b>	<b>0.386</b>	<b>0.142</b>
inflOeat		<b>0.203</b>	<b>0.219</b>	<b>0.180</b>	<b>0.289</b>	<b>0.343</b>	<b>0.294</b>	<b>0.321</b>	0.069
inflOclothb		<b>0.246</b>	<b>0.331</b>	<b>0.208</b>	<b>0.194</b>	<b>0.251</b>	<b>0.243</b>	<b>0.220</b>	0.015
inflOAgear		<b>0.164</b>	<b>0.232</b>	<b>0.251</b>	<b>0.255</b>	<b>0.328</b>	<b>0.279</b>	<b>0.302</b>	-0.018
inflOdo		<b>0.238</b>	<b>0.246</b>	<b>0.168</b>	<b>0.234</b>	<b>0.239</b>	<b>0.247</b>	<b>0.223</b>	-0.028
inflOclothw		<b>0.233</b>	<b>0.170</b>	<b>0.139</b>	<b>0.175</b>	<b>0.201</b>	<b>0.188</b>	0.115	-0.082
inflOpubpla		<b>0.213</b>	<b>0.194</b>	<b>0.206</b>	<b>0.169</b>	<b>0.217</b>	<b>0.241</b>	<b>0.207</b>	-0.027
inflOprivpla		<b>0.238</b>	<b>0.325</b>	<b>0.336</b>	<b>0.145</b>	<b>0.143</b>	<b>0.173</b>	<b>0.207</b>	<b>0.183</b>
OinfofrmrUAcoch		<b>0.209</b>	<b>0.347</b>	<b>0.366</b>	<b>0.177</b>	<b>0.249</b>	<b>0.271</b>	<b>0.257</b>	<b>0.179</b>
OrdUAFBinfo		<b>0.244</b>	<b>0.354</b>	<b>0.387</b>	<b>0.217</b>	<b>0.240</b>	<b>0.271</b>	<b>0.296</b>	0.103
OseeUAFBHS		<b>0.289</b>	<b>0.337</b>	<b>0.314</b>	<b>0.178</b>	<b>0.247</b>	<b>0.271</b>	<b>0.365</b>	0.114
OseeUAFBUA		0.066	<b>0.161</b>	<b>0.143</b>	<b>0.160</b>	<b>0.263</b>	<b>0.257</b>	<b>0.232</b>	<b>-0.037</b>

Belief Measurements Represented From Left to Right:

1: Oflbtrwa- The extent to which the other feels better when he/she watches organized sports  
 2: Oprtgmfn- The extent to which the other takes part in game day festivities because he/she considers himself/herself to be first and foremost a fan of the major Southeastern university football program

3: Oprtgmhm- The extent to which the other takes part in game day festivities because he/she considers his/her humanity to be connected to his/her fanship of the major Southeastern university football program

4: UfrndUA- The extent to which the self seeks friendship with other fans of the major Southeastern university because the other seems the same as the self in many important respects

5: UassUA- The extent to which the self associates with other members of the major Southeastern university fan base because it makes him/her feel better about themselves

6: Ofeelg- The extent the association with other members of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university football program fan base makes the other feel good

7: OfanprtCN- The extent the association with other members of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university football program fan base makes the other like himself/herself

8: OactCN- The extent to which acting as other members of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university football program fan based do makes the other have a sense of pride

Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

Intercorrelations between the Post-test Attribution of Motivation and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior Part 1

	Atri	Odgmdbcfan	Odgmbchm	ALstfOre	CNfamOa	OsimCN	Obyflapp
Behavior							
OAlabuyprod		<b><u>0.249</u></b>	<b><u>0.265</u></b>	<b><u>0.295</u></b>	<b><u>0.355</u></b>	<b><u>0.344</u></b>	<b><u>0.328</u></b>
OAlalookcom		<b><u>0.284</u></b>	<b><u>0.289</u></b>	<b><u>0.336</u></b>	<b><u>0.343</u></b>	<b><u>0.324</u></b>	<b><u>0.340</u></b>
OAlalistppl		<b><u>0.290</u></b>	<b><u>0.224</u></b>	<b><u>0.275</u></b>	<b><u>0.369</u></b>	<b><u>0.312</u></b>	<b><u>0.330</u></b>
CNacttoughld		<b><u>0.270</u></b>	<b><u>0.191</u></b>	<b><u>0.266</u></b>	<b><u>0.342</u></b>	<b><u>0.296</u></b>	<b><u>0.315</u></b>
OAlaflattend		<b><u>0.251</u></b>	<b><u>0.229</u></b>	<b><u>0.364</u></b>	<b><u>0.181</u></b>	<b><u>0.184</u></b>	<b><u>0.188</u></b>
OAlashdattend		<b><u>0.179</u></b>	0.073	<b><u>0.195</u></b>	<b><u>0.397</u></b>	<b><u>0.414</u></b>	<b><u>0.422</u></b>
OAlashddef		<b><u>0.331</u></b>	<b><u>0.392</u></b>	<b><u>0.356</u></b>	<b><u>0.478</u></b>	<b><u>0.508</u></b>	<b><u>0.529</u></b>
inflOeat		<b><u>0.398</u></b>	<b><u>0.552</u></b>	<b><u>0.509</u></b>	<b><u>0.383</u></b>	<b><u>0.363</u></b>	<b><u>0.476</u></b>
inflOclothb		<b><u>0.359</u></b>	<b><u>0.384</u></b>	<b><u>0.348</u></b>	<b><u>0.391</u></b>	<b><u>0.414</u></b>	<b><u>0.426</u></b>
inflOAgear		<b><u>0.296</u></b>	<b><u>0.388</u></b>	<b><u>0.343</u></b>	<b><u>0.423</u></b>	<b><u>0.411</u></b>	<b><u>0.431</u></b>
inflOdo		<b><u>0.250</u></b>	0.126	<b><u>0.175</u></b>	<b><u>0.305</u></b>	<b><u>0.276</u></b>	<b><u>0.303</u></b>
inflOclothw		<b><u>0.257</u></b>	<b><u>0.211</u></b>	<b><u>0.275</u></b>	<b><u>0.279</u></b>	0.139	0.154
inflOpubpla		<b><u>0.191</u></b>	<b><u>0.207</u></b>	<b><u>0.302</u></b>	<b><u>0.321</u></b>	<b><u>0.280</u></b>	<b><u>0.233</u></b>
inflOprivpla		<b><u>0.322</u></b>	<b><u>0.302</u></b>	<b><u>0.307</u></b>	<b><u>0.266</u></b>	<b><u>0.262</u></b>	<b><u>0.273</u></b>
OinfofmrUAcoch		<b><u>0.237</u></b>	<b><u>0.271</u></b>	<b><u>0.315</u></b>	<b><u>0.433</u></b>	<b><u>0.453</u></b>	<b><u>0.440</u></b>
OrdUAFBinfo		<b><u>0.406</u></b>	<b><u>0.445</u></b>	<b><u>0.406</u></b>	<b><u>0.411</u></b>	<b><u>0.421</u></b>	<b><u>0.467</u></b>
OseeUAFBHS		<b><u>0.399</u></b>	<b><u>0.455</u></b>	<b><u>0.404</u></b>	<b><u>0.370</u></b>	<b><u>0.396</u></b>	<b><u>0.572</u></b>
OseeUAFBUA		<b><u>0.365</u></b>	<b><u>0.410</u></b>	<b><u>0.348</u></b>	<b><u>0.172</u></b>	<b><u>0.215</u></b>	<b><u>0.209</u></b>
OseeUAFBevr		<b><u>0.165</u></b>	<b><u>0.182</u></b>	<b><u>0.154</u></b>	<b><u>0.308</u></b>	<b><u>0.299</u></b>	<b><u>0.271</u></b>

Motivation Measurements Represented From Left to Right:

1: Odgmdbcfan- The extent to which the other takes part in game day festivities because he/she considers himself/herself to be first and foremost a fan of the major Southeastern university football program

2: Odgmbchm- The extent to which the other takes part in game day festivities because he/she considers his/her humanity to be connected to his/her fanship of the major Southeastern university football program

3: AlstfOre- The extent to which others surround themselves with paraphernalia to remind himself/herself of a term used to describe the history and lore of the major Southeastern university football program

4: CNfamOa- The extent to which the other believes he/she is a part of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

5: OsimCN- The extent to which the other believes he/she is similar to the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

6: Obyflapp- The extent to which the other purchases paraphernalia related to the major Southeastern university to feel a part of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

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Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

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Intercorrelations between the Post-test Attribution of Motivation and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior: Part 2

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	Atri	OsupUAat	OdefUAfe	Oonlywea	Oonlypntl	Oonlywea	OonlytlkU
Behavior							
OAlabuyprod		<b><u>0.192</u></b>	<b>0.172</b>	<b><u>0.244</u></b>	<b><u>0.239</u></b>	<b><u>0.297</u></b>	<b>0.136</b>
OAlalookcom		<b>0.162</b>	0.129	<b><u>0.180</u></b>	<b><u>0.234</u></b>	<b><u>0.333</u></b>	0.087
OAlalistppl		<b><u>0.292</u></b>	<b><u>0.239</u></b>	<b><u>0.310</u></b>	<b><u>0.333</u></b>	<b><u>0.278</u></b>	0.128
CNacttoughld		<b><u>0.195</u></b>	<b>0.156</b>	<b><u>0.239</u></b>	<b><u>0.212</u></b>	<b><u>0.292</u></b>	0.124
OAlaflattend		<b><u>0.271</u></b>	<b><u>0.250</u></b>	<b><u>0.316</u></b>	<b><u>0.282</u></b>	0.121	<b><u>0.240</u></b>
OAlashdattend		<b>0.134</b>	0.122	<b>0.163</b>	<b><u>0.184</u></b>	0.112	0.113
OAlashddef		0.125	0.119	<b>0.172</b>	0.132	<b><u>0.267</u></b>	0.120
inflOeat		<b><u>0.224</u></b>	<b><u>0.197</u></b>	<b><u>0.207</u></b>	<b><u>0.176</u></b>	<b><u>0.215</u></b>	<b>0.147</b>
inflOclothb		<b><u>0.184</u></b>	<b><u>0.184</u></b>	<b><u>0.234</u></b>	<b>0.140</b>	<b><u>0.244</u></b>	0.101
inflOAgear		<b><u>0.285</u></b>	<b><u>0.240</u></b>	<b><u>0.267</u></b>	<b>0.130</b>	<b><u>0.193</u></b>	0.113
inflOdo		0.121	0.066	0.130	0.074	<b><u>0.184</u></b>	-0.056
inflOclothw		0.012	0.040	0.065	-0.016	0.124	-0.084
inflOPubpla		0.043	0.016	0.043	-0.008	0.126	0.048
inflOprivpla		<b>0.145</b>	0.059	0.086	0.039	<b>0.174</b>	0.098
OinfofmrUAcoch		<b><u>0.184</u></b>	0.128	<b>0.155</b>	<b>0.136</b>	<b><u>0.264</u></b>	0.083
OrdUAFBinfo		<b>0.158</b>	<b>0.146</b>	<b>0.147</b>	<b>0.099</b>	<b><u>0.225</u></b>	0.122
OseeUAFBHS		<b>0.164</b>	0.067	0.109	0.113	<b><u>0.276</u></b>	0.078
OseeUAFBUA		<b>0.173</b>	0.120	<b>0.146</b>	0.109	<b><u>0.216</u></b>	<b>0.166</b>
OseeUAFBevr		<b><u>0.186</u></b>	<b>0.152</b>	<b><u>0.219</u></b>	<b><u>0.204</u></b>	<b><u>0.251</u></b>	0.125

Motivation Measurements Represented From Left to Right:

1: The extent to which the other attends events sponsored by the major Southeastern university to feel a part of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

2: The extent to which the other defends the major Southeastern university to others to feel a part of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

3: The extent to which the other only feels like a fan of the major Southeastern university football program when he/she wears paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university

4: The extent to which the other only feels like a fan of the major Southeastern university football program when he/she paints the symbols representing the major Southeastern university football program on his/her body

5: The extent to which the other only feels like a fan of the major Southeastern university football program when he/she wears paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university, paints the symbols representing the major Southeastern university football program on his/her body, and discuss the major Southeastern university football program

6: The extent to which the other only feels like a fan of the major Southeastern university football program when he/she discusses the major Southeastern university football program

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Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

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Most items examined between the scale of behavior and the scales of attributions were either significant at the .05 or the .01 level and had effect sizes ranging between -.037 and .552. The examination of the other in terms of attributions found more significance than an examination of just simple perception in terms of correlation. Moreover, with the exception of the one negative correlation, every one that was significant was also positive. This suggested that the correlation of attribution characteristics against behavior was positive between perception and behavior. Unlike in traditional TPE research, the correlation between perception and behavior was clear, strong, and consistent. However, without full correlation between every

item, there was still doubt as to the total effectiveness, but attribution provided more data and more correlations to work with in understanding perception as well as behavior.

The second correlation analysis examined the three attribution scales for the self against the scale of self behavior as a fan (Table 32).

Table 32

*Correlation Analysis between the Post-Test Behavioral Scale of Other and Three Post-Test Scales of Attributions of Self to examine Effect of Self Attribution on Behavioral Intent*  
 Intercorrelations between the Post-test Attribution of Experience and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior

	Aff	considAfan	SeenAfan	frustother	partCN
Behavior					
inflUeat		0.126	<b>0.220</b>	0.094	<b>0.152</b>
influUclothb		<b>0.347</b>	<b>0.388</b>	<b>0.483</b>	<b>0.402</b>
influUAgear		<b>0.421</b>	<b>0.388</b>	<b>0.411</b>	<b>0.425</b>
influUdo		<b>0.338</b>	<b>0.356</b>	<b>0.275</b>	<b>0.332</b>
treatbcalarep		<b>0.436</b>	<b>0.480</b>	<b>0.222</b>	<b>0.458</b>
alanotwCN		<b>-0.175</b>	<b>-0.213</b>	-0.103	<b>-0.311</b>
UAlastorlook		<b>0.418</b>	<b>0.471</b>	<b>0.451</b>	<b>0.430</b>
UAlaprodlook		<b>0.427</b>	<b>0.449</b>	<b>0.501</b>	<b>0.440</b>
influUclothw		<b>0.335</b>	<b>0.384</b>	<b>0.442</b>	<b>0.402</b>
influUpubpla		<b>0.293</b>	<b>0.332</b>	<b>0.338</b>	<b>0.324</b>
influUprivpla		<b>0.190</b>	<b>0.255</b>	<b>0.356</b>	<b>0.231</b>
UinfofrmrUAcoch		<b>0.467</b>	<b>0.538</b>	<b>0.559</b>	<b>0.521</b>
UrdUAFBinfo		<b>0.578</b>	<b>0.643</b>	<b>0.572</b>	<b>0.649</b>
UseeUAFBHS		<b>0.429</b>	<b>0.488</b>	<b>0.455</b>	<b>0.448</b>
UseeUAFBUA		<b>0.573</b>	<b>0.599</b>	<b>0.517</b>	<b>0.582</b>
UseeUAFBevr		<b>0.398</b>	<b>0.454</b>	<b>0.403</b>	<b>0.433</b>
UbuyAlaalwaysassupport		<b>0.438</b>	<b>0.456</b>	<b>0.433</b>	<b>0.447</b>
UattendAlawhencan		<b>0.487</b>	<b>0.541</b>	<b>0.532</b>	<b>0.571</b>
UdefAlawhenotherneg		<b>0.509</b>	<b>0.527</b>	<b>0.452</b>	<b>0.538</b>

Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers = significance at the .01 level

Intercorrelations between the Post-test Attribution of Belief and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior: Part 1

	Aff	UassowUA	Ufeelgdas	Ulikeprto	Uactkinda	Ufeelbett	UbuyAlab
Behavior							
inflUeat		0.102	0.092	0.112	0.087	0.103	0.060
inflUclothb		<b><u>0.497</u></b>	<b><u>0.395</u></b>	<b><u>0.414</u></b>	<b><u>0.389</u></b>	<b><u>0.495</u></b>	<b><u>0.520</u></b>
inflUAgear		<b><u>0.478</u></b>	<b><u>0.421</u></b>	<b><u>0.433</u></b>	<b><u>0.446</u></b>	<b><u>0.473</u></b>	<b><u>0.521</u></b>
inflUdo		<b><u>0.445</u></b>	<b><u>0.321</u></b>	<b><u>0.369</u></b>	<b><u>0.376</u></b>	<b><u>0.450</u></b>	<b><u>0.480</u></b>
treatbcalarep		<b><u>0.248</u></b>	<b><u>0.524</u></b>	<b><u>0.506</u></b>	<b><u>0.522</u></b>	<b><u>0.166</u></b>	<b><u>0.223</u></b>
alanotwCN		-0.066	<b><u>-0.264</u></b>	<b><u>-0.252</u></b>	<b><u>-0.256</u></b>	-0.030	-0.003
UAlastorlook		<b><u>0.383</u></b>	<b><u>0.394</u></b>	<b><u>0.402</u></b>	<b><u>0.358</u></b>	<b><u>0.405</u></b>	<b><u>0.426</u></b>
UAlaprodlook		<b><u>0.324</u></b>	<b><u>0.445</u></b>	<b><u>0.436</u></b>	<b><u>0.406</u></b>	<b><u>0.354</u></b>	<b><u>0.317</u></b>
inflUclothw		<b><u>0.490</u></b>	<b><u>0.392</u></b>	<b><u>0.412</u></b>	<b><u>0.393</u></b>	<b><u>0.524</u></b>	<b><u>0.523</u></b>
inflUpubpla		<b><u>0.450</u></b>	<b><u>0.367</u></b>	<b><u>0.371</u></b>	<b><u>0.285</u></b>	<b><u>0.428</u></b>	<b><u>0.476</u></b>
inflUprivpla		<b><u>0.352</u></b>	<b><u>0.231</u></b>	<b><u>0.274</u></b>	<b><u>0.240</u></b>	<b><u>0.364</u></b>	<b><u>0.441</u></b>
UinfofrmUAcoch		<b><u>0.465</u></b>	<b><u>0.484</u></b>	<b><u>0.462</u></b>	<b><u>0.431</u></b>	<b><u>0.337</u></b>	<b><u>0.314</u></b>
UrdUAFBinfo		<b><u>0.481</u></b>	<b><u>0.603</u></b>	<b><u>0.561</u></b>	<b><u>0.570</u></b>	<b><u>0.407</u></b>	<b><u>0.359</u></b>
UseUAFBHS		<b><u>0.373</u></b>	<b><u>0.397</u></b>	<b><u>0.397</u></b>	<b><u>0.378</u></b>	<b><u>0.326</u></b>	<b><u>0.251</u></b>
UseUAFBUA		<b><u>0.384</u></b>	<b><u>0.559</u></b>	<b><u>0.544</u></b>	<b><u>0.565</u></b>	<b><u>0.340</u></b>	<b><u>0.285</u></b>
UseUAFBevr		<b><u>0.316</u></b>	<b><u>0.384</u></b>	<b><u>0.371</u></b>	<b><u>0.308</u></b>	<b><u>0.287</u></b>	<b><u>0.230</u></b>
UbuyAlaalwaysassupport		<b><u>0.551</u></b>	<b><u>0.483</u></b>	<b><u>0.468</u></b>	<b><u>0.481</u></b>	<b><u>0.535</u></b>	<b><u>0.570</u></b>
UattendAlawhencan		<b><u>0.547</u></b>	<b><u>0.595</u></b>	<b><u>0.626</u></b>	<b><u>0.647</u></b>	<b><u>0.459</u></b>	<b><u>0.459</u></b>
UdefAlawhenotherneg		<b><u>0.435</u></b>	<b><u>0.581</u></b>	<b><u>0.606</u></b>	<b><u>0.570</u></b>	<b><u>0.323</u></b>	<b><u>0.333</u></b>

Belief Measurements Represented From Left to Right:

1: UassowUA- The extent to which the self associates with other members of the major Southeastern university fan base because it makes him/her feel better about themselves

2: Ufeelgdas- The extent to which being affiliated with the term used to identify the fan base for the major Southeastern university football program makes the self feel good

3: Ulikeprto- The extent to which being affiliated with the term used to identify the fan base for the major Southeastern university football program is liked by the self

4: Uactkinda- The extent to which the self acts in a kind yet sporting manner towards other fans not affiliated with the term used to identify the fan base for the major Southeastern university because doing so gives the self a sense of pride.

5: Ufeelbett- The extent to which the self feels better about himself/herself by wearing paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university

6: UbuyAlab- The extent to which purchasing items related to the major Southeastern university makes the self feel good

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Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level  
 Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

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Intercorrelations between the Post-test Attribution of Belief and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior: Part 2

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	Aff	UattndAla	UdefAlafe	Ifeelbrtra	Oalafanac	Uflbtrnfrn	lflbtrprtor	lflbtrwatc
Behavior								
inflUeat		<b>0.169</b>	<b>0.139</b>	0.064	0.043	<b><u>0.181</u></b>	0.093	0.066
inflUclothb		<b><u>0.469</u></b>	<b><u>0.514</u></b>	-0.081	<b>0.148</b>	-0.032	<b><u>0.179</u></b>	<b><u>0.362</u></b>
inflUAgear		<b><u>0.474</u></b>	<b><u>0.491</u></b>	-0.021	<b>0.158</b>	0.033	<b><u>0.241</u></b>	<b><u>0.335</u></b>
inflUdo		<b><u>0.482</u></b>	<b><u>0.422</u></b>	0.052	0.114	0.044	<b><u>0.233</u></b>	<b><u>0.356</u></b>
treatbcalarep		<b><u>0.265</u></b>	<b><u>0.261</u></b>	<b><u>0.186</u></b>	0.048	0.079	<b><u>0.199</u></b>	<b><u>0.260</u></b>
alanotwCN		-0.086	<b><u>-0.135</u></b>	<b><u>-0.135</u></b>	0.080	-0.031	0.035	-0.074
UAlastorlook		<b><u>0.329</u></b>	<b><u>0.383</u></b>	0.011	0.030	-0.011	<b>0.151</b>	<b><u>0.269</u></b>
UAlaprodlook		<b><u>0.305</u></b>	<b><u>0.357</u></b>	0.004	0.049	0.047	<b>0.143</b>	<b><u>0.248</u></b>
inflUclothw		<b><u>0.510</u></b>	<b><u>0.483</u></b>	-0.104	0.130	-0.014	<b>0.169</b>	<b><u>0.367</u></b>
inflUpubpla		<b><u>0.482</u></b>	<b><u>0.438</u></b>	<b><u>-0.157</u></b>	0.119	-0.042	0.126	<b><u>0.338</u></b>
inflUprivpla		<b><u>0.449</u></b>	<b><u>0.399</u></b>	<b><u>-0.188</u></b>	0.102	-0.066	0.124	<b><u>0.288</u></b>
UinfofrmrUAcoch		<b><u>0.392</u></b>	<b><u>0.394</u></b>	<b><u>-0.152</u></b>	0.014	-0.110	0.086	<b><u>0.275</u></b>
UrdUAFBinfo		<b><u>0.384</u></b>	<b><u>0.460</u></b>	0.065	0.076	0.002	<b><u>0.209</u></b>	<b><u>0.432</u></b>
UseUAFBHS		<b><u>0.318</u></b>	<b><u>0.356</u></b>	-0.011	0.048	-0.003	<b>0.157</b>	<b><u>0.255</u></b>
UseUAFBUA		<b><u>0.375</u></b>	<b><u>0.411</u></b>	0.009	0.050	-0.002	<b><u>0.229</u></b>	<b><u>0.386</u></b>
UseUAFBevr		<b><u>0.249</u></b>	<b><u>0.306</u></b>	-0.087	0.020	-0.052	0.096	<b><u>0.208</u></b>
UbuyAlaalwaysassupport		<b><u>0.514</u></b>	<b><u>0.547</u></b>	0.016	<b>0.198</b>	0.049	<b><u>0.208</u></b>	<b><u>0.353</u></b>
UattendAlawhencan		<b><u>0.576</u></b>	<b><u>0.569</u></b>	-0.021	<b>0.151</b>	0.028	<b><u>0.188</u></b>	<b><u>0.413</u></b>
UdefAlawhenotherneg		<b><u>0.415</u></b>	<b><u>0.521</u></b>	0.075	0.129	<b><u>0.095</u></b>	<b>0.148</b>	<b><u>0.266</u></b>

Belief Measurements Represented From Left to Right:

1: UattndAla- The extent to which attending events related to the major Southeastern university makes the self feel good

2: UdefAlafe- The extent to which defending the major Southeastern university football program makes the self feel good

3: Ifeelbrtra- The extent to which academic success makes the self feel better

4: Oalafanac- The extent to which Other fans of the MSU football feel better from academic success

5: Uflbtrnfrn- The extent to which making new friends makes the self feel better

6: Iflbtrprtor- The extent to which the self feels better when he/she participates in organized sports at the major Southeastern university like intramural sports

7: Iflbtrwat- The extent to which the self feels better when he/she watches organized sports

Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

Intercorrelations between the Post-test Attribution of Motivation and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior: Part 1

	Aff	AlstfUrem	CNfamUap	UsimOnCN	UbuyUAfe	UsupUAat
Behavior						
inflUeat		-0.007	0.046	0.073	-0.081	0.087
inflUclothb		<b><u>0.291</u></b>	<b><u>0.346</u></b>	<b><u>0.298</u></b>	<b><u>0.540</u></b>	<b><u>0.432</u></b>
inflUAgear		<b><u>0.211</u></b>	<b><u>0.286</u></b>	<b><u>0.286</u></b>	<b><u>0.502</u></b>	<b><u>0.438</u></b>
inflUdo		<b><u>0.242</u></b>	<b><u>0.312</u></b>	<b><u>0.240</u></b>	<b><u>0.393</u></b>	<b><u>0.378</u></b>
treatbcalarep		0.090	0.066	0.060	<b><u>0.229</u></b>	<b><u>0.399</u></b>
alanotwCN		0.090	0.109	0.070	-0.111	<b><u>-0.285</u></b>
UAlastorlook		<b><u>0.242</u></b>	<b><u>0.223</u></b>	<b><u>0.152</u></b>	<b><u>0.555</u></b>	<b><u>0.374</u></b>
UAlaprodlook		<b><u>0.180</u></b>	<b><u>0.148</u></b>	0.113	<b><u>0.508</u></b>	<b><u>0.440</u></b>
inflUclothw		<b><u>0.293</u></b>	<b><u>0.353</u></b>	<b><u>0.267</u></b>	<b><u>0.573</u></b>	<b><u>0.402</u></b>
inflUupubpla		<b><u>0.314</u></b>	<b><u>0.335</u></b>	<b><u>0.273</u></b>	<b><u>0.407</u></b>	<b><u>0.372</u></b>
inflUprivpla		<b><u>0.393</u></b>	<b><u>0.388</u></b>	<b><u>0.268</u></b>	<b><u>0.367</u></b>	<b><u>0.258</u></b>
UinfofrmrUAcoch		<b><u>0.196</u></b>	0.114	<b><u>0.134</u></b>	<b><u>0.654</u></b>	<b><u>0.488</u></b>
UrdUAFBinfo		<b><u>0.153</u></b>	0.099	<b><u>0.143</u></b>	<b><u>0.598</u></b>	<b><u>0.624</u></b>
UseeUAFBHS		<b><u>0.226</u></b>	<b><u>0.166</u></b>	0.129	<b><u>0.608</u></b>	<b><u>0.434</u></b>
UseeUAFBUA		<b><u>0.166</u></b>	<b><u>0.150</u></b>	<b><u>0.137</u></b>	<b><u>0.517</u></b>	<b><u>0.591</u></b>
UseeUAFBevr		<b><u>0.207</u></b>	<b><u>0.135</u></b>	0.070	<b><u>0.581</u></b>	<b><u>0.448</u></b>
UbuyAlaalwaysassupport		<b><u>0.351</u></b>	<b><u>0.312</u></b>	<b><u>0.250</u></b>	<b><u>0.544</u></b>	<b><u>0.515</u></b>
UattendAlawhencan		<b><u>0.253</u></b>	<b><u>0.290</u></b>	<b><u>0.260</u></b>	<b><u>0.518</u></b>	<b><u>0.635</u></b>
UdefAlawhenotherneg		<b><u>0.173</u></b>	0.129	<b><u>0.141</u></b>	<b><u>0.432</u></b>	<b><u>0.607</u></b>

Motivation Measurements Represented From Left to Right:

1: AlstfUrem- The extent to which the self purchases paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university to remind himself/herself of a term used to describe the history and lore of the major Southeastern university football program

2: CNfamUap- The extent to which the self believes he/she is apart of the term used to described the major Southeastern university fan base

3: UsimonCN- The extent to which the self believes he/she is similar to the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

4: UbuyUAfe- The extent to which the self purchases paraphernalia related to the major Southeastern university to feel a part of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

5: UsupUAat- The extent to which the self attends events sponsored by the major Southeastern university to feel a part of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

Intercorrelations between the Post-test Attribution of Motivation and the Post-test Scale of Other Behavior: Part 2

	Aff	UdefUAfe	Uonlywea	UonlypntU	Uonlywea	UonlytlkU
Behavior						
inflUeat		0.089	0.085	0.093	0.093	0.051
inflUclothb		<b><u>0.423</u></b>	<b><u>0.540</u></b>	<b><u>0.491</u></b>	<b><u>0.499</u></b>	<b><u>0.317</u></b>
inflUAgear		<b><u>0.420</u></b>	<b><u>0.544</u></b>	<b><u>0.479</u></b>	<b><u>0.485</u></b>	<b><u>0.252</u></b>
inflUdo		<b><u>0.427</u></b>	<b><u>0.413</u></b>	<b><u>0.417</u></b>	<b><u>0.434</u></b>	<b><u>0.171</u></b>
treatbcalarep		<b><u>0.382</u></b>	<b><u>0.320</u></b>	<b><u>0.446</u></b>	<b><u>0.463</u></b>	0.013
alanotwCN		<b><u>-0.250</u></b>	<b><u>-0.170</u></b>	<b><u>-0.247</u></b>	<b><u>-0.234</u></b>	<b><u>0.137</u></b>
UAlastorlook		<b><u>0.355</u></b>	<b><u>0.577</u></b>	<b><u>0.438</u></b>	<b><u>0.453</u></b>	<b><u>0.163</u></b>
UAlaprodlook		<b><u>0.393</u></b>	<b><u>0.531</u></b>	<b><u>0.480</u></b>	<b><u>0.548</u></b>	<b><u>0.171</u></b>
inflUclothw		<b><u>0.391</u></b>	<b><u>0.545</u></b>	<b><u>0.494</u></b>	<b><u>0.495</u></b>	<b><u>0.279</u></b>
inflUpubpla		<b><u>0.337</u></b>	<b><u>0.455</u></b>	<b><u>0.412</u></b>	<b><u>0.432</u></b>	<b><u>0.307</u></b>
inflUprivpla		<b><u>0.241</u></b>	<b><u>0.389</u></b>	<b><u>0.316</u></b>	<b><u>0.344</u></b>	<b><u>0.370</u></b>
UinfofrmrUAcoch		<b><u>0.541</u></b>	<b><u>0.490</u></b>	<b><u>0.535</u></b>	<b><u>0.595</u></b>	<b><u>0.137</u></b>
UrdUAFBinfo		<b><u>0.573</u></b>	<b><u>0.559</u></b>	<b><u>0.600</u></b>	<b><u>0.637</u></b>	0.113
UseeUAFBHS		<b><u>0.495</u></b>	<b><u>0.424</u></b>	<b><u>0.430</u></b>	<b><u>0.470</u></b>	<b><u>0.174</u></b>
UseeUAFBUA		<b><u>0.543</u></b>	<b><u>0.482</u></b>	<b><u>0.617</u></b>	<b><u>0.616</u></b>	0.089
UseeUAFBevr		<b><u>0.507</u></b>	<b><u>0.443</u></b>	<b><u>0.454</u></b>	<b><u>0.443</u></b>	<b><u>0.154</u></b>
UbuyAlaalwaysassupport		<b><u>0.371</u></b>	<b><u>0.584</u></b>	<b><u>0.524</u></b>	<b><u>0.543</u></b>	<b><u>0.264</u></b>
UattendAlawhencan		<b><u>0.571</u></b>	<b><u>0.556</u></b>	<b><u>0.683</u></b>	<b><u>0.649</u></b>	<b><u>0.197</u></b>
UdefAlawhenotherneg		<b><u>0.489</u></b>	<b><u>0.394</u></b>	<b><u>0.523</u></b>	<b><u>0.687</u></b>	0.105

Motivation Measurements Represented From Left to Right:

1: UdefUAfe- The extent to which the self defends the major Southeastern university to others to feel a part of the term used to describe the major Southeastern university fan base

2: Uonlywea- The extent to which the self only feels like a fan of the major Southeastern university football program when he/she wears paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university

3: UonlypntU- The extent to which the self only feels like a fan of the major Southeastern university football program when he/she paints the symbols representing the major Southeastern university football program on his/her body

4: Uonlywea- The extent to which the self only feels like a fan of the major Southeastern university football program when he/she wears paraphernalia associated with the major Southeastern university, paints the symbols representing the major Southeastern university football program on his/her body, and discuss the major Southeastern university football program

5: UonlytlkU- The extent to which the self only feels like a fan of the major Southeastern university football program when he/she discusses the major Southeastern university football program

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Bold numbers = significance at the .05 level

Bold & underlined numbers= significance at the .01 level

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Most items examined between the scale of behavior and the scales of attributions were significant at either the .05 or .01 level, with an effect size ranging from -.311 to .687; this suggests the presence of some negative relationships. In this case, the effect sizes suggested that occasionally the self saw his/her perception and his/her behavior as different, but not so different as to be an issue due to the small effect size. Conversely, the subjects also suggested that when their behavior mirrors their attributions, the correlation was significant and rather large. Unlike traditional TPE research, the correlation between self perception and behavior is high, consistent, and directional.

In both cases, it seems that a study of the attributions ascribed to the other and the self were more indicative of an expression of behavioral intent. The repercussions of this suggested that the TPE in the future should turn away from a simple examination of the perception of a

person on a simple scale of more or less like “me” to an assessment of three different aspects of perception, as informed by a pilot test including focus groups. This data, while preliminary, is the first step towards opening up the TPE to truly examining behavior and understanding perception on a deeper and more complete level.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The focus of this study was to investigate the theoretical and methodological issues with the third person effect (TPE) in order to provide different solutions to those issues. The TPE has two hypotheses; one deals with perception and the other with behavior. The issues with these hypotheses are many and clear. The perceptual hypothesis has been tested effectively in the past to the standards originally set out by the TPE; however, the underlying theory supporting the hypothesis was not solidified and led to multiple different forms of investigation, differences in findings and interpretation, and no solid or clear methodology to follow in testing. This study suggested that attribution theory, broken into the three characteristics of experience, belief, and motivation in conjunction with the constitutive rhetorical structures of the othering process, and interpellation would provide a clear and concise theoretical background that would lead to a consistently useable methodology for the TPE. The methodology of this study consisted of a pilot test examining responses from subjects through focus groups. The pilot test engaged the subject in the othering process and a manufactured state of interpellation to ensure that responses during the focus group could be used to help create scales to test perception through attribution as well as behavioral scales for the pre-test/post-test experiment. The focus groups provided data used to make quantitative scales. These attribution scales tested perception in a new way that provided in depth data for analysis.

The TPE behavioral hypothesis has historically not been testable. This study set out to alter that by addressing the lack of clear theoretical underpinnings and consistent and clear methodology for testing. Utilizing attributional concepts in conjunction with knowledge bias and reporting bias, this study suggested that the behavioral hypothesis could be clearer if one could assess social distance in a more clear and measurable fashion, as well as allow for the situational nature of behavior. Simply put, the situational nature of behavior is embraced and theoretically accounted for in this study's envisioning of future TPE investigation. The methodology of this study employed the use of the aforementioned pilot test focus groups to create the attribution characteristic scales and to test the pre-test/post-test experimental scales for self against the scales for the other to assess social distance. Questions from sports communication were adapted from previous scales to create behavioral scales that examined a sample of this specific population in a meaningful way. The findings of this study suggested that knowledge bias and reporting bias could provide clarity to social distance as well as an adaptive ability to compensate for the situational nature of TPE investigation. Through these changes to the methodology, this investigation of behavior garnered better and more consistent results.

#### Pilot Study-Experiment Method of Investigation

After the data from the pilot test was analyzed, the scales were constructed, and experiment was administered, one can suggest that examining a population before testing in this case produced a depth of data not previously seen in typical TPE research. A common issue in effects-based research is that many scales created by researchers have low Alphas, which suggest that the scales created do not clearly work together in any cogent way; the presence of the pilot

test addressed and provided a solution to that problem. The pilot test was crucial to the experiment in that it provided all the data necessary to test this specific population. To test future populations in any meaningful way with the TPE, it is necessary to understand the population qualitatively so that quantitative examination can provide meaningful and generalizable information.

### Research Questions 1&2

The first research question examined whether a manufactured state of interpellation affected subject perception of the other. The second research question examined whether a manufactured state of interpellation affected subject perception of himself/herself. In both cases, the RQ's were interested in a manufactured state of interpellation and the effect it would have on perception. In response to the RQ's, the state of interpellation does affect subject perception of the other, but the state of interpellation does not affect perception of the self. However, the state of interpellation does seem to reinforce perception of self. The theoretical implication is that the inclusion of constitutive rhetoric provided a clear and concise explanation of initial perception formation and how over time that perception changed or solidified. On a methodological level, the implication lies in the fact that qualitative methods of investigation helped create understanding of perception in a sample and also a population.

There are several commonalities in regards to the results of these two research questions. In the experiment, the manufactured state of interpellation was manifested in the pre-test/post-test format over a weekend when a football game was played at the major Southeastern university. It was important to remember that when one interpolated a rhetorical situation, one

was creating an other group that existed not only in the mind but theoretically in reality as well. In fact, constitutive rhetoric suggests that only when one believes in the interpellation of the rhetorical situation to the point that the imagined other group IS found in the real world will the subject believe in the constituted reality. In terms of RQ1 and RQ2, the subject, a student at a major Southeastern university, was placed into a situation in which interpellation was necessary: the subject completed a pre-test to create a high level of focus in the mind on the major Southeastern university football program in relation to four specific other groups as well as the self and was then sent out into a community actively engaging in activities that the subject would more than likely interpret as parts of the imagined community he/she just formed. The subject therefore was more than likely in a higher state of alertness to the activities he/she witnessed as well as took part in. Then the subject returned to take a post-test re-addressing perception as well as behavior. The rhetorical situation created by the pre-test triggered an interpolated state in the subject. The subject must confirm or deny the interpellation when taking a post-test, at which time that confirmation or denial could be expressed. In terms of self relation to other, the perception of self remained constant and the perception of the other groups became more resolute. Utilizing previous research, this assumption was based in theory garnered over several decades.

Where both RQ1 and RQ2 were concerned, the difference in the number of items as well as the difference in the testing of others on a specific versus general basis were possible methodological explanations for the findings of this study, but the findings were explained best by the manufactured state of interpellation. Previous TPE research centered around a single post-test format of investigation that asks the subject to make an assessment of several others as well as the self to harvest perceptual data. If current use of constitutive rhetoric in this study is to

be supported, asking subjects to engage in this sort of interpolative act is similar to basing research on first impressions: it is usually faulty and uninformative. In fact, the subject, when first confronted with questions assessing an other group or the self from a constitutive perspective, is more likely engaging in the othering process outlined by Jasinski (2001). Jasinski suggested that when one engages in othering, a group of others is created by stripping differences from the other, making the behavior of the other essential to their existence, identifying the alluring yet differentiating substance of the other from the self, and then placing the self at some metaphysical distance from the other. The othering process in constitutive rhetoric is the TPE equivalent of the imaginary community one creates to assess perception. The subject must form the community before perception can be assessed, and while it may take only seconds to form, refining the community may take time in order to correctly place the self in or some distance from that community as well as the different sub-communities that might be involved.

The results of this experiment suggested that, with regards to RQ1, a manufactured state of interpellation affected perception of the other. The results also suggested that, regarding RQ2, a manufactured state of interpellation affected perception of the other *and* further cemented the perception of self. One can suggest that only through a manufactured state of interpellation in which the subject is forced to focus his/her perceptual othering capabilities towards pulling a new community of others out of the ether of his/her subconscious through an interpolative process could the subject truly answer perceptual questions in a consistent and confident fashion about the other. Unless future research considers mundane or habitual others used by the subject, the subject should be given time and interaction to correctly engage in the othering process and subsequently the interpolative process to come to any real perceptual answers. The fact that personal perception showed no change, only reinforcement, suggests that the TPE and

media theory in general is correct in the assumption that people can only be told what to do. Testing for change in self perception is possible with the TPE, but finding some seems difficult.

The theoretical fusing of constitutive rhetoric to TPE provided clearer and better explanation of perception formation in this study and a methodological road map to follow in experiment creation and stimulus presentation in the future. So, the results of RQ1 and RQ2 suggested that the othering process occurs when one is asked to explain his/her perception of presented others. The manufactured interpellation begins here, and through interaction with the world, the other was reduced to a clear picture in his/her head, at which point the self could carefully assess the self, the other, and the relationship between the two. The manufactured interpellation affected perception of the other and solidified perception of self.

#### Research Questions 3 & 4

RQ3 and RQ4 attempted to address the current linear nature of TPE perceptual research. Previous analysis of perception is mapped in Figure 2.

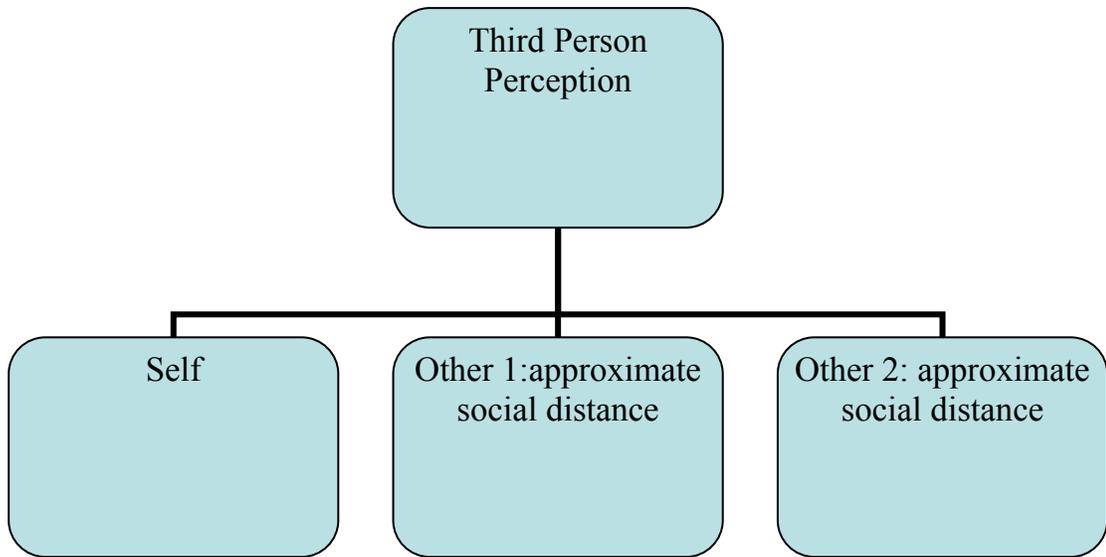


Figure 2. Linear formation of perception.

The linear format oversimplified perception. This study sought to create a method and a theory which would change TPE research, as shown in Figure 3.

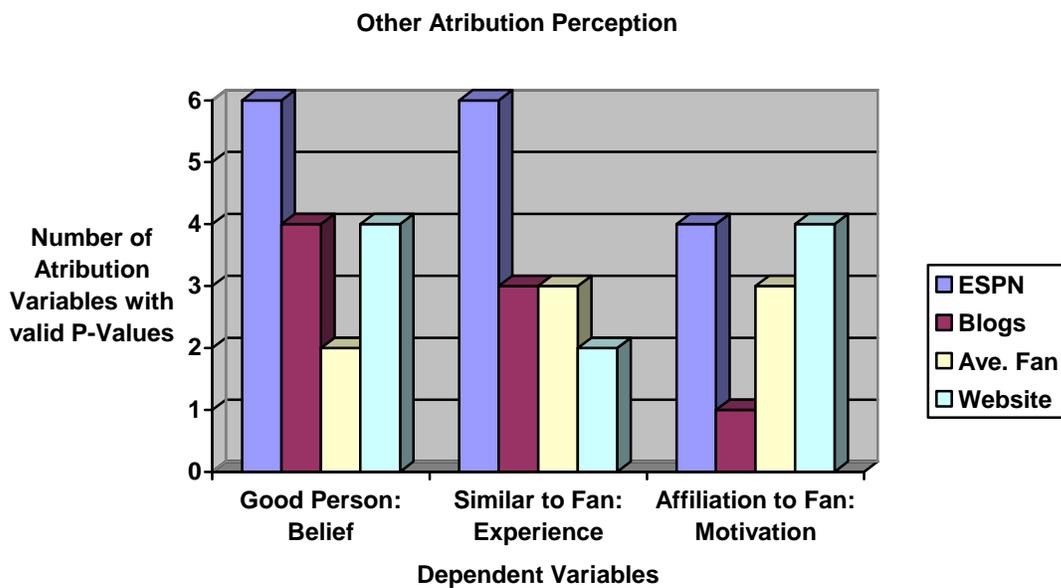


Figure 3. Other attribution perception.

Instead of a linear graph, this graph provides a visual representation of a model on several different characteristics that can combine to explain perception. Since attribution is broken into three characteristics (experience, belief, and motive), this graph allows perception to be interpreted on several levels. First, which of the three characteristics seems to drive perception can be assessed for each individual other or in general. Second, it is important to differentiate between self and other and distinguish between closest, a measure of distance, and like, a measure of similarity. This information provides a clearer picture of affinity for the self across the three characteristics. Finally, this formation removes social distance as a construct from this level of analysis. Separating social distance from affinity allows the researcher to analyze perception first as a construct of affinity. The benefit of this is that now perception is not based on simple differences but on a multi-layered understanding of psychological assessments based on the acknowledgement of an othering process. Perception is multi-layered and takes time. This construct accounts for that.

Regarding RQ3, the other did inform other perceptual formation. However, there were very few significant betas, suggesting that no individual items had a significant amount of importance to the dependent variables individually. In the same fashion, regarding RQ4, the pre-test scales of the four other groups, as well as the self perception scale, influenced self perception formation in the post-test. Again, there were few betas of any significance. In both cases, the reason for the lack of significant betas but the presence of high R-squared coefficients lies in the theoretical explanation of attribution. The definition of attribution and the graph constructed centered on the idea of identifying characteristics. When one looks at an individual characteristic there is no sense of the whole. For instance, if one looks only at the nose, there is no perspective on the face. Similarly, if one examines the individual questions for high betas,

none are found, because the whole of the scales together creates a clear picture, whereas the characteristics are only a part that by itself signifies little. However, with no sense of the strength and direction of the connection, the only inference that can be drawn is that there is a connection. With time and future research, the betas will most likely become universally acceptable as this method of testing is refined. At that time, the use of this method of perception investigation should become very important.

Given that attribution theory is considered dynamic in its ability to change with regard to a set of criteria, these findings are not surprising. The three characteristics of attribution, when combined, offered a set of data that provided more information about perception than any one scale could provide (Figure 3). Essentially, breaking perception down into component parts allowed the researcher to examine the overall perception of self and other, as well as, more importantly, which of the characteristics of attribution held sway over that perception. Attribution theory helped clarify perception on a theoretical as well as a methodological level by utilizing the constitutive rhetorical act of othering one goes through in perception formation. This process brought the community of others into being, at which point an interpolative state assessed new and old information based on that new community of others created by the rhetorical situation. Only through understanding the population first on a qualitative level can a researcher create a series of items that could explicate something as complex as perception. Future studies should be done to examine whether the use of qualitative methods to inform quantitative scales is possible in the same community as well as new communities.

On a quantitative level, this study separated perception into characteristics of attribution, which provided a depth of information well beyond normal investigation, including order of importance in characteristics of perception, the driving force behind perception, and clarity of

understanding in the formation of perception as a whole entity instead of parts. The strength and direction of the connection is still in question. As these findings related to a contribution to the field of media effects as well as TPE research, this methodology provided several benefits; future investigation in perception utilizing this methodology should be more informative and provide a rationale for the use of a multi-dimensional investigation of perception previously left out of most studies. It is important to note that these benefits, as they stand after this study, are only found in this study. Until future examination can provide support for these claims as well as show significant improvement in beta examination, their merit is simply that they spur future examination under this rubric to provide clarity in assessing whether they are in fact supported.

#### Research Question 5

One of the largest issues in TPE research is social distance. In traditional TPE research, social distance is measured as the perceived difference between an other group and the self. This measurement usually stands for perception in traditional TPE. This measurement works in relation to conventional perceptual hypothesis testing through a simple scale of perception based questions. Because this research suggested that attribution characteristics are more telling of perception, relying on traditional measures of social distance seems problematic. Social distance needs to have more grounding in order to move forward under this new rubric. Knowledge bias versus reporting bias provided adequate solutions to these problems regarding social distance on a theoretical level. Research Question 5 asked, “Did knowledge bias and reporting bias play an integral part in perception formation?” On a theoretical level, this study suggested they did, and

the findings provided data that could be interpreted as providing concrete support for this position.

Knowledge bias and reporting bias are based on a self assessment of personal experience, belief, and motivation that may or may not be realistic. In this study, the search for knowledge bias or reporting bias occurred on all three levels of attribution. As Frewer and Miles (2003) succinctly explained, knowledge bias and reporting bias are terms for concepts essentially examining where perception comes from: a place of knowledge, knowledge bias, or a place of relative ignorance, reporting bias. Social distance, as used in the TPE when discussing the perceptual hypothesis, was the perceptual difference a subject ascribed to the self versus an other group or groups. Methodologically and interpretationally, from a standpoint of measuring results, social distance as an indicator of knowledge bias and reporting bias gave perspective to perceptual results. Instead of a researcher interpreting differences between paired T-tests as social distance (the self is closer to high school students than people his/her parents' age), researchers can interpret differences between paired T-tests as knowledge bias and reporting bias. Similar to traditional TPE studies, the difference in T-test figures drives the finding of knowledge bias or reporting bias. However, social distance now provides an extra level of understanding, because the difference is now informed by knowledge bias or reporting bias. So, the self is now not only different from the other, but that difference is due to the presence or lack of knowledge (Figure 4).

#### Knowledge Bias and Reporting Bias in General Other Perception Formation

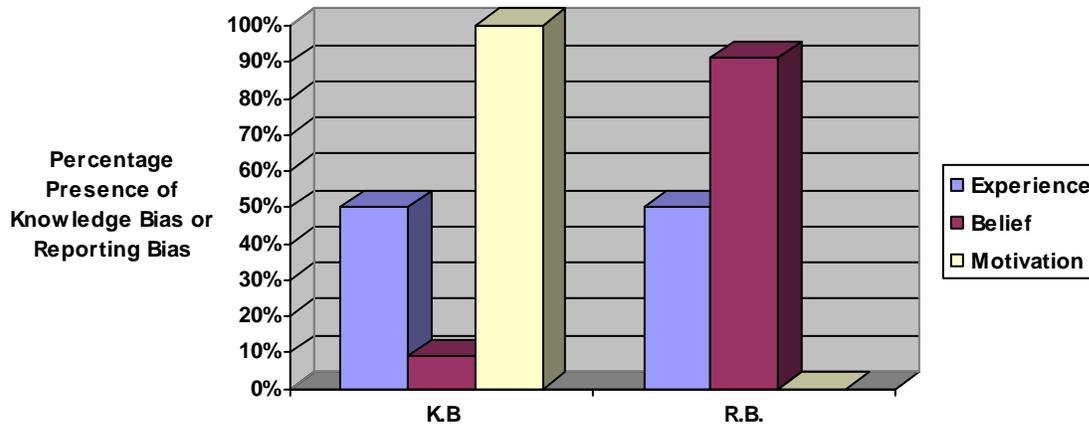


Figure 4. Knowledge bias and reporting bias in general other perception formation.

Simply, perception scales in the past only provided information on social distance as differences between self and other, and those differences confirmed or denied the presence of a TPE (Figure 2). Now, perception scales could inform whether one could interpret the attribution characteristics of perception as based on knowledge bias or report bias and then assess the differences as clear social distance markers of differentiation to different degrees. Figure 4 depicts the graphing of knowledge bias and reporting bias against the attributions that make up perception. It does not state how different the self is from an other; Figure 4 depicts where the affiliation to each attribute comes from. The interpretation of this data is in conjunction with an analysis of attributions. The attribution analysis provides information about the level of affiliation the self has to each other or the self. This analysis gives context to the attributions. If an other is predominantly perceived as similar to the self, and that similarity is guided by the attribute of belief, that perception is based on reporting bias. Social distance was used as a

simple examination of perception; now it is a method of contextualizing perception by understanding where perception originates.

These assumptions, while logically and theoretically sound given the discussion of knowledge bias, reporting bias, attribution theory, and constitutive rhetoric, are unfortunately just assumptions. While these assumptions seem to be supported by this study, more research should be done to supply the necessary support for these assumptions to become commonplace through multiple significant findings. In this study, these assumptions were used to evaluate knowledge bias and reporting bias to investigate what merit might be present once they leave the theoretical realm. Knowledge bias was represented by assessing others with a high amount of correct knowledge, and reporting bias was represented by a low amount of correct or faulty knowledge about the other groups.

Social distance is synonymous with perception in current TPE studies. Social distances is a multi-step procedure. First, an analysis of attribution is necessary to provide an idea of social distance based on affinity. Then, an analysis of knowledge bias and reporting bias gives context by quantifying that affinity in terms of perception formation based on a lack or abundance of knowledge. In this study, it could be specifically suggested that reporting bias was the basis for this perception. These findings are limited to this investigation at this particular institution; however, future research could test other populations to see whether the perceptions of this major Southeastern university sample change given distance, education, social status, race, ethnicity, or any other permutation one can think of from reporting bias. If the findings for other populations were based on reporting bias, then it could be surmised that knowledge bias and reporting bias provided a depth of perceptual knowledge previously untapped by the field: a knowledge of where perception originates.

## Research Question 6

In response to RQ6, “Does the creation of the other inform a third person effect more than the self?” The answer in this case is no; the results suggested that the self was more important to the creation of a third person effect. However, the importance of this research question was not in the answer to the research question, but in the way this conclusion was arrived at in this study and how it may be arrived at in future studies.

Attribution theory, as previously discussed, has a fourth aspect that at first glance seems to go against the TPE. People perceive that others have similar characteristics as themselves (Paul et al., 2000, p. 59). The TPE suggests that people usually believe others to be more affected by media than the self. However, the inclusion of the fundamental attribution error helps fit this fourth criterion of basic attribution theory into the TPE effectively. The fundamental attribution error, as scholars suggested in the aforementioned discussion of attribution theory, was mistaken. Perception of self versus the other found the self seeing the other as different. Usually, subjects perceive themselves as better or worse, smarter or dumber, or more affected or less affected than others. It is also possible that occasionally the self could perceive himself/herself as the same as others, when the situation calls for it. The inclusion of the fundamental attribution error streamlines the TPE. No longer is there a first person effect, just a third person effect, and the self can see others as similar or different or the same. Perception creation deals with who one identifies with and how one identifies with them. The logically clear and methodologically easy set of assumptions found in the area of attribution theory provides a clear examination of this definition of perception creation.

When the fundamental attribution error was examined in this research, it was put in terms of who is most important to the creation of perception. Therefore, understanding the pre-test

examination of perception was important, as that step was the beginning of the othering process in the manufactured interpolative state. It was the subject's first response to questions of what he/she knew about the other and how that other might in the future be perceived on a consistent basis. Once that was examined, looking to the post-test perception questions should suggest whether the self or the other was more indicative of perception by being similar or different. Methodologically, by seeing that the self was consistently different than the others, the fundamental attribution error suggests no similar assessments. The self defined the perception of others by seeing significant differences. Since RQ5 suggested a new way to understand perception, the analysis of these perceptually based results did not lie in ascribing social distance or a TPE versus a first person effect; it dealt with the fundamental attribution error. If the results are interpreted from that point of view, they suggest that the fundamental attribution error was in effect, and the subject did generally consider the self to be better than the other.

Interpreting these results in this manner was important to the use of attribution theory in TPE research. The subject perceiving himself/herself as better, more stable, and more moderate than the other implied that there in fact was a TPE present. One of the reservations previous researchers addressed was the situational nature of the TPE around negative media, or that a TPE was rarely found around other types of media messages. This study suggested this previous assumption was due to the testing methods currently used. These methods do provide interesting and usually significant perceptual findings, but only for negative media. This study suggested that this reliance on negative media could be overcome by a reliance on attribution theory and a reinterpretation of data. Moving away from a simple single scale versus another simple single scale to assess perception would provide more perceptual information and possibly help overcome the reliance on negative media; a reinterpretation of data could also help.

Researchers believed their negative or insignificant results signified no TPE. However, the usual method of testing perception in the TPE never truly assessed perception; instead, it centered on the presence and direction of the fundamental attribution error, interpreted as social distance. Instead of assessing perception, the thing being assessed was the placement of the self in relation to the other. The fundamental attribution error provided an explanation of the original perception investigations. Perception investigations in a pre-test or single experiment were more focused on presence and direction of a TPE due to the fundamental attribution error. The TPE was always present; the existence of the error was found in the significance of the paired items, and the positive or negative mean scores suggested whether the self or the other was responsible for the initial assessment of self and other.

Acknowledging previous examinations as research into the fundamental attribution error opens further TPE avenues. Now researchers can suggest another level of social distance by examining sameness or difference, all as part of the TPE. When faced with a set of questions meant to assess the presence of the fundamental attribution error, the mind has no choice but to identify the direction, magnitude, and force of the similarity or difference subjects see between themselves and any given other. The study of the fundamental attribution error was integral to TPE research because it suggested the prime distance between the self and other before the community of others split into multiple subgroups. The fundamental attribution error can give the distance of affinity to social distance.

#### Research Question 7

In an effort to examine the TPE in a traditional way, RQ6 examined single perception scales against single behavioral scales to find perceptual and behavioral data. Research Question

7 tested the traditional pre-test other group scales as well as the self against the post-test scale of behavioral intent. The difference between this and previous research was the time gap between the first and second testing. The idea of this study was to address the many issues present within the TPE in order to increase the ease with which the theory can be used and the breadth of artifacts and populations on which it could be used. One of the central issues with the TPE is that the behavioral hypothesis has never had consistent significant findings; the use of time as an extra variable was employed in an attempt to increase the correlations found between perception and behavior. The results suggested that using traditional TPE methods to test perception and behavior do not increase the correlation between the two over time.

It is possible that the lack of results was from the change in perception based scales between the pre- and post-tests. The above correlations should be investigated in future research; however, it is the opinion of this researcher that the results would not show any more correlations in any situation under current testing methods. While previous research does provide a cursory understanding of perception and behavior at some level, as this study suggested, the theoretical issues and methodological differences between studies in the area of TPE research would hinder any future advancement of the theory. As it stands, the TPE theory and method are too simplistic. It is hard to definitively claim that under this new method of investigation, findings would become uniform and ubiquitous, but previous methods and theory have not provided any great leaps forward in almost three decades.

## Research Question 8

One of the central reasons this study suggested RQ7 would not succeed under current testing methods was the success of RQ8: “Is the perception of the other or the attributions ascribed to the other more indicative of an expression of behavioral intent?” In the investigation of RQ8, it seemed important to also include an investigation of the attributions of self against the behavioral intent of self to allow for comparisons between both analyses of attribution and perception. While there was not universal significance between the three attributions of other or self and their corresponding scale of behavioral intent, the sheer number of positive significant correlations suggested that utilizing attribution to test perception in conjunction with behavioral intent would produce more results indicative of behavioral intent. Previous TPE research treated the behavioral hypothesis as a yes or no question: Does perception link to behavior? Utilizing attribution theory provides a set of results that suggest perception does link to behavior, and it presents a method to show how and in what direction (Figure 5).

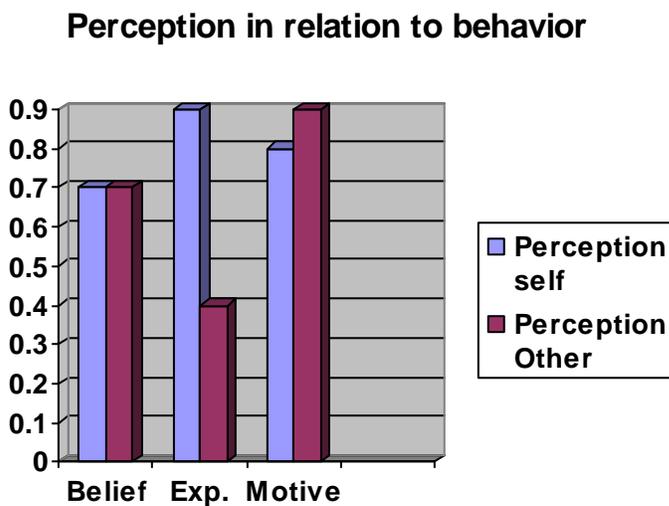


Figure 5. Perception in relation to behavior.

This graphical representation depicts the three attributes of perception in relation to their importance to behavioral intent. With the in-depth analysis of perception, behavior can become more predictable. The graph suggests that, given the examination of an other in relation to self, researchers can predict which attribute will guide behavioral choices in ascertaining direction with a calculable force. From the perspective of the results, the use of attribution analyses to examine perception garnered significantly more significant correlations than did simple perception scales. In addition, the Alpha scores suggest the scales are very secure, reliable, and valid. Also, the actual correlation coefficients were extremely large for media effects studies.

It is safe to suggest the attribution analysis of perception presented an alternative to current perceptual investigation that could present better and more consistent correlation data between behavior and perception. However, this study set out to examine the theoretical as well as methodological issues with the TPE. From a theoretical viewpoint, the fusion of constitutive rhetoric with attribution theory provided a clear methodological and theoretical underpinning that could be universally applied to behavioral intent.

In this case, the attributes of experience and belief were the most telling in perception formation. The highest bar shows the highest percentage of coinciding attributes versus behavior. The ability to take a scale from a microcosm of fanaticism and apply it more generally is not unheard of. Many social scientific fields focus on the unique few to explain the mundane many. Future research can provide more results to support this assumption.

## General Advancements in the Field

### *Media Effects*

The field of media effects has largely been concerned with making advancements in new directions. While this is a very good endeavor, re-examining the theory's basic elements is also important. The process by which theory moves forward, disproof, is generally effective but usually operates under the key assumptions of the theory without questioning them in any real way. This research attempted to produce a model to examine theory in a way that could be reproduced to improve and expand media effects investigation. Through the codification of a workable theoretical shift that produced different results than traditional research, future researchers can now apply this model to other theories.

In this research, the TPE's perceptual hypothesis was examined with the suggestion that the simplicity of it was problematic for examining all populations. The manner for providing an alternative was simple; look to other theories clearly explaining the meta-concept, constitutive rhetoric and attribution theory, and find materials showing the obvious connections between the new theoretical additions and the TPE. After providing a model for re-creating the theory, this research provided a working methodology that displays how a revisioning of theory could be put into practice to create better data for an examination of a much wider array of populations. The purpose of this research is not only a new addition to TPE research, it is to provide a model and methodology that can be applied to many other theories in media effects or other communication-based fields. Allowing for a broader conceptualization of communication will forward the field in a more unified and possibly more useful way.

Another addition made by this examination of media effects theory is providing an example of how to streamline a theory. If this examination continues to be supported in the

future, one of the issues noted will more than likely be that this research actually added steps to the investigation of perception and behavior according to the TPE. This is true; however, the theory becomes more streamlined in terms of providing usable results that are clear, concise, predictive, and generalizable. The TPE in the past provided limited perceptual information that was largely unclear and based off of the conjectures of stock questions and a single examination of a sample. The behavioral assumptions made by past results of TPE studies were few and mostly ineffective in comparison to what the researcher set out to accomplish. If media effects research is based on providing clear results that are easy to interpret and generalize, the model created in this research provides a streamlining effect for future research in the TPE and several other areas. The model provides a template that can be followed to identify the clear problems with a theory, apply non-conventional methods to address those problems, and in the end come up with solutions that may add more steps to the research but will also ensure that the results exceed current standards of clarity, generalizability, predictability, and conciseness. It stands to reason that since we think of streamlining as making something less cumbersome, this model accomplishes that goal by unencumbering the researcher from having to make logical leaps to apply results in a way not clearly sanctioned by the theory or the methodology.

Finally, in the past, media effects theory was solely based on social science methodologies and theories. While basing media effects theory in social science is correct as well as necessary, adding elements from areas like rhetorical criticism seems to provide huge benefits because of the fact that areas of thought like constitutive rhetoric explain concepts in a very clear and concise fashion not seen in the social sciences. The social science axiom of only reporting what can clearly be observed limits researchers' ability to understand certain things that are not entirely understandable, like the specific functions of the brain. Other areas of

communication do not have that problem and can explain phenomena, such as the steps one goes through in the creation of a perception, in such a way that the explanation can be used in social science research. This research provides a clear mixed methodology that can be applied in the future. Allowing for the possibility that the explanation of something as complex as perception can be enumerated through the responses of a focus group, scales can be created that will delve further into a sample than previous research; this methodology is new but not novel. The discipline has engaged in discussion after discussion about why using mixed methodologies is beneficial. This research provides a reproducible example that finally shows how effective mixed methodologies can be and the extent to which they can be useful. If future research confirms these findings and methodologies to be sound, media effects research can be opened up to mixed methodologies in such a way that all theories will benefit from the explanative nature of other areas of study.

### *Rhetorical Theory*

Rhetorical theory is one of the oldest fields of communication study and has much to offer. However, since its focus is on a textual analysis, researchers in the social sciences do not usually consider it as a viable option for inclusion. This research provides support for the fact that rhetorical criticism has much to offer many other disciplines in the communication pantheon. Also, most of the other fields probably have insights to offer rhetorical theory. The explanation of perception formation in a person's mind is something usually conceptualized in social science as a very difficult to test phenomena occurring within tenths of a second. Constitutive rhetoric can codify the process in steps which can be applied in social science. This

means rhetorical theory is a social scientific area that can be mined for both quantitative and qualitative methods. In fact, using rhetorical theory, as it has been done in this research, is unique and rarely reproduced in this fashion, although one could argue that it should be because it opens rhetorical theory up to new populations and new ways of examining communication. Traditionally rhetorical theory would focus solely on messages or conversations on a verbal and possibly nonverbal level. This research suggests that rhetorical theory need not be limited to just these areas. It is possible that rhetorical theory can also focus on the mechanics of communication creation in spontaneous circumstances, given an examination of previous rules. Rhetorical theory, constitutive rhetoric in this case, can be predictive.

Constitutive rhetoric in this research takes on many psychological elements when examining the construct of perception formation. Usually, communication researchers and theorists discuss rhetorical theory in a vacuum, but this research suggests it lives and breathes in multiple areas other than communication analysis. The connection to psychology discussed in this research attempts to provide evidence to suggest that rhetorical theory should be examined in conjunction with areas of theory dealing with the brain in every discipline. While rhetorical theory may be analyzing words, the mechanics necessary to do so come from sociological assessments and psychological inferences, or possibly historical microcosms of events. Utilizing constitutive rhetoric in terms of these other fields opens rhetorical theory up by suggesting that as an area, rhetoric has much to say about everything from how we construct thought to how culture is currently put together; these findings put forth by rhetoric should be utilized by social scientists to further research and to ask different and better questions.

## *Sports Communication*

The use of sports communication in this study provided an understanding of the population utilized for investigation. In essence, this study created a pilot test, a pre-test/post-test experiment, and then an interpretation of both based on assumptions found first through an investigation of pertinent sports communication literature and then later from a combination of the literature and the pilot test investigation. Without an understanding of the population at investigation in a TPE study under the proposed new rubric, interpreting the data as well as creating effective testing materials would be relatively impossible. This study required an investigation and inclusion of materials pertinent to the population at study to provide insight into the investigation as well as the interpretation of results. As evidenced by the results of RQ1-8, an understanding of the population provided better, deeper, and more significant results than previous studies utilizing traditional methods. The nature of this study was to provide experimental information for future study, so while the findings here were generally significant and robust, previous research has produced findings over three decades that have been continuously significant and at least moderate. Without future investigation, the importance of an inclusion of understanding about a population at study falls in line with the rest of the findings of this study as purely speculative.

Additionally, sports communication as a field is theoretically based, but it is a relatively new area of exploration in the field of communication. So, there is a large amount of room for results to be interpreted differently as well as in new ways. This research attempted to look at sports communication through a new and different media effects lens. Instead of examining why fans would attend a sporting event or what purchasing power different sports have, this research

was interested in explaining the phenomena of fandom. Instead of just understanding the motivation behind the fan, this research wanted to understand the psyche of the fan, how one assesses the world, through what lens. This research contributes to sports communication by providing an analysis of sports fandom that can be used in the future to assess the perceptions and behaviors of different fan bases regarding a myriad of phenomena. Also, the findings here can be used as a base of assumptions about sports fans. Fandom is not only a part of the makeup of a fan, it might be the driving force behind decisions as little as what potato chip product to purchase or as big as what to name child. Most fans would suggest that this information is common knowledge, but the significance of it to the field of sports communication to provide support for examining sports-related communication, not only because it is important to understand, but also because it governs a good portion of society's decisions, to some degree.

Also, the field of sports communication had usually borrowed theory from other areas in order to create a theoretical base for itself. In this research, the reverse is present. Wann's different motivation scales were shown to be applicable in other areas of communication, such as media effects research. Sports communication has largely been seen as a microcosm that exists by itself away from the larger body of communication because of its fascination with only one type of population and question. However, by using scales created to examine sports motivation to examine perception and behavior in an attempt to retool a theory and to create an understanding of a community, sports communication is shown as a legitimately generalizable field of study.

Examining college fans at a major university is something not usually done by sports communication. There is discussion of what a fan is, where a fan goes, and what and why a fan purchases sports-related items, but there is not much discussion about understanding sports fans

as a group in terms of their perception of the world around them. Understanding that these fans look at the rest of the world in terms of its history and tradition provides new information about one population that can be used to test others. If other populations feel the same way about their programs, the examination becomes legitimate and important because then examination of those groups can stop asking what makes up the group and start asking questions leading to more generalizable and predictive results.

### *TPE*

The main goal of this research was to provide alternative solutions to problems continually found in third person effect theory. Perception as a construct in the original envisioning of the theory was limited and narrow. This research provided a different way to look at perception on a theoretical level and a workable methodology that is universally applicable to future research. Given the different figures and graphs, it is this researcher's opinion that perception, when examined from each of these different perspectives, provides a more in depth examination that can be replicated in the future. Being able to break perception down into component parts and tell the direction of perception, as well as gauge true distances between the self and other groups, provides a better way to analyze TPE results and produce better and more applicable findings.

The ability to test behavior has traditionally been either narrow or non-existent. This research elucidated a new theoretical frame by which to examine behavior as well as a replicable method to provide predictive and generalizable results. If these results are replicated, it will make future research using the TPE more insightful. If a researcher can explain which perceptual attribute is guiding the possible behavioral choice, then the research can provide

discussion about not only the sample, but also new knowledge about how perception and behavior link in any given population. Both of these advancements in perception and behavior make the TPE a more universal theory. The TPE is not bound to the type of phenomena being examined; it can examine any phenomena. This makes the TPE more important in media effects research because it provides a universally applicable theory and method for gaining understanding about what people think and how those thoughts lead to action.

### *Limitations and Future Research*

While each of these research questions may present a good amount of information that can be used to help address the theoretical and methodological issues of the TPE as well as investigations of perception and behavior, there are limitations. First and foremost, the generalizability of these findings must be limited to just the sample and population at study. The information gathered came from a specific sample of the fan population, and all questions asked pertained only to that aspect of the subject's life. People are complex physical and mental organisms, and to suggest that understanding just the perception and behavior of one area of their lives can be applied to all areas would be short sighted. This study might provide a new area of investigation in media effects literature, perception, behavior, and/or the TPE, but it does not provide a comprehensive understanding of perception, only perception of one aspect of life. However, given that the nature of these findings served a dual purpose in discussing a sample of the population at study and a theory, the theoretical implications provide hope for generalization. If the theoretical and methodological additions to the TPE find support from future research, then this study can safely suggest that it is possible all fans who ascribe to a team/sport in a similar way will respond in a uniform manner to the findings in this study. So, for future research,

studies should be undertaken with different populations to reproduce the findings of this study to support this form of investigation when considering the TPE, perception, and behavior and to increase its generalizability to other members of a similar population.

Another limitation is the mixed methods used. The use of qualitative and quantitative methods together has always been a very difficult task. The reason is the connections found can be argued to be spurious due to the lack of some unforeseen common element currently used in each investigation separately. Additionally, combining theoretical terms is also problematic. There may be empirical evidence and previous research that combines terminology; it is still a rhetorical game of explanation and justification with little data to support it unless rigor is maintained throughout experimentation. While this study did maintain a rigorous adherence to previous definition and combinational methodology, some could still provide evidence to the contrary. Since both of these limitations are present in this study, future research will have to be undertaken to provide support that the results from this combined terminology and mixed methods can be reproduced. No matter what level of importance was given to theoretical construction and methodological heurism, the level of skepticism given to new methods of investigation without past specific research to support the claims is high. Therefore, future research in the area of the TPE perception and behavior will be necessary.

Finally, a limitation of this study is simply that the interpretation of statistical models based on new theoretical constructions and mixed methodologies is always under extreme scrutiny. Essentially, if a statistical model is normally envisioned to produce certain outcomes that will be interpreted in certain ways, any different use/interpretation can be hard to accept. Because this study focuses on a change in mindset that changes some interpretations of statistical

models given the theoretical explanation, future research must be undertaken in the area of the TPE to provide support for the interpretation of statistics by this study.

Despite the limitations, this study contributes in several key ways: first, this study provides experimental theoretical and methodological constructs in media effects theory that can streamline theory and make findings more applicable. Second, this study provides a case in which the behavioral hypothesis of the TPE is usable in a way that does not involve censorship. Third, sports communication benefits from this study because it provides new theoretical ideas, with the addition of a media effects lens, as well as examining a population in a new way that can be referenced for future research. Finally, rhetorical theory benefits from this study by opening up a discussion for rhetoric's place in media effects studies. Also, rhetorical theory can now utilize this study to engage in conversations about communication in new and unique ways. This study provides several key contributions to not only media effects theory, but to the investigation of communication from many different perspectives. While the limitations should be addressed to solidify these contributions, this study has taken major strides in furthering thought and investigation in communication as a field.

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## APPENDIX A

### INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

#### CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PILOT TEST (NON-CONTROL)

You are being asked to be in a research study. The study is called " A reexamination of the theoretical and methodological concerns of the third person effect: Being an effective custodian of communication theory." The study is being conducted by Dr. Kim Bissell and Ian Turnipseed.

We would like your opinion about perception and behavior, especially when it relates to sports related topics. We want to know what you think and feel about other University of Alabama Crimson Tide football fan's perceptions and behaviors as well as your own. We also want to know about the people who help you form your opinion about others. There are two parts to your participation in this. We will be asking you to watch a clip about football and then take a survey. The following day we will be asking you to come in and talk about the clip as well as what you think about other's thoughts on the clip as well.

These questions will help us understand how television, participation, magazines, and other forms of media impact how you and others think. The answers you give us will help us understand the role of media in our lives. If you agree to participate in this project, you will participate with

Thomas Robert Ian Turnipseed in a computer lab. He will be there to help you if you have any questions.

- Participation in this research project is **completely voluntary**.
- If at any time you wish to stop filling out the survey, you may. You do not have to complete or return the survey. You do not have to answer all of the questions and you may stop or skip a question if you would like.
- You will not put your name on this survey and your answers will not be linked to you in any way.
- You will not receive anything from us for your answers or participation.
- It will take you about 10 minutes to answer the questions.
- This is not like a test in school. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want your opinion.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to ask one of us. If you have questions later today or at a later date, you may contact Dr. Bissell at (205) 348-8247 or at [kbissell@bama.ua.edu](mailto:kbissell@bama.ua.edu). If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, contact Ms. Tanta Myles, the UA Research Compliance Officer at (205) 348-5152.



Thomas Robert Ian Turnipseed or Dr. Kim Bissell and no one else. After the examination those tapes will be destroyed

These questions will help us understand how television, participation, magazines, and other forms of media impact how you and others think. The answers you give us will help us understand the role of media in our lives. If you agree to participate in this project, you will participate with Thomas Robert Ian Turnipseed in a computer lab. He will be there to help you if you have any questions.

- Participation in this research project is **completely voluntary**.
- The confidentiality of your statements could be breached by someone in the group discussing the responses outside the group. While we ask that the focus group members not say anything outside of the group, it could still happen.
  - If at any time you wish to stop answering questions or participating in the focus group you may. No one is required to complete the focus group. You do not have to answer all or any of the questions.
  - You will not state your name during this focus group and your answers will not be linked to you in any way. Your statements will be kept confidential.
  - You will not receive anything from us for your answers or participation.
  - It will take you about 1 hour to participate in this focus group.

- This is not like a test in school. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want your opinion.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to ask one of us. If you have questions later today or at a later date, you may contact Dr. Bissell at (205) 348-8247 or at [kbissell@bama.ua.edu](mailto:kbissell@bama.ua.edu). If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, contact Ms. Tanta Myles, the UA Research Compliance Officer at (205) 348-5152.

I willing agree to participate in this survey. I understand what I am being asked to do.

_____	_____	_____
<i>Signature</i>	<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Date</i>
_____		_____
<i>Ian Turnipseed</i>		<i>Date</i>

CONSENT STATEMENT PILOT TEST (CONTROL)

You are being asked to be in a research study. The study is called " A reexamination of the theoretical and methodological concerns of the third person effect: Being an effective custodian of communication theory." The study is being conducted by Dr. Kim Bissell and Ian Turnipseed.

We would like your opinion about perception and behavior, especially when it relates to sports related topics. We want to know what you think and feel about other University of Alabama Crimson Tide football fan's perceptions and behaviors as well as your own. We also want to know about the people who help you form your opinion about others. There are two parts to your participation in this. We will be asking you to watch a clip from Law and Order Criminal Intent and then take a survey. The following day we will be asking you to come in and talk about the clip as well as what you think about other's thoughts on the clip as well.

These questions will help us understand how television, participation, magazines, and other forms of media impact how you and others think. The answers you give us will help us understand the role of media in our lives. If you agree to participate in this project, you will participate with Thomas Robert Ian Turnipseed in a computer lab. He will be there to help you if you have any questions.

- Participation in this research project is **completely voluntary**.
- If at any time you wish to stop filling out the survey, you may. You do not have to complete or return the survey. You do not have to answer all of the questions and you may stop or skip a question if you would like.
- You will not put your name on this survey and your answers will not be linked to you in any way.
- You will not receive anything from us for your answers or participation.

- It will take you about 10 minutes to answer the questions.
- This is not like a test in school. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want your opinion.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to ask one of us. If you have questions later today or at a later date, you may contact Dr. Bissell at (205) 348-8247 or at [kbissell@bama.ua.edu](mailto:kbissell@bama.ua.edu). If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, contact Ms. Tanta Myles, the UA Research Compliance Officer at (205) 348-5152.

I willingly agree to participate in this survey. I understand what I am being asked to do.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Printed Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Ian Turnipseed*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

#### CONSENT STATEMENT PRE-TEST/POST-TEST EXPERIMENT

You are being asked to be in a research study. The study is called " A reexamination of the theoretical and methodological concerns of the third person effect: Being an effective custodian of communication theory." The study is being conducted by Dr. Kim Bissell and Ian Turnipseed.

We would like your opinion about perception and behavior, especially when it relates to sports related topics. We want to know what you think and feel about other University of Alabama Crimson Tide football fan’s perceptions and behaviors as well as your own. We also want to

know about the people who help you form your opinion about others. There are two parts to your participation in this. We will be asking you to a survey now. The following Monday or Tuesday we will be asking you to come in and another survey.

These surveys will help us understand how television, participation, magazines, and other forms of media impact how you and others think. The answers you give us will help us understand the role of media in our lives. If you agree to participate in this project, you will participate with Thomas Robert Ian Turnipseed in a computer lab. He will be there to help you if you have any questions.

- Participation in this research project is **completely voluntary**.
- If at any time you wish to stop filling out the survey, you may. You do not have to complete or return the survey. You do not have to answer all of the questions and you may stop or skip a question if you would like.
- You will not put your name on this survey and your answers will not be linked to you in any way.
- You will not receive anything from us for your answers or participation.
- It will take you about 10 minutes to answer the questions.
- This is not like a test in school. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want your opinion.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to ask one of us. If you have questions later today or at a later date, you may contact Dr. Bissell at (205) 348-8247 or at [kbissell@bama.ua.edu](mailto:kbissell@bama.ua.edu). If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, contact Ms. Tanta Myles, the UA Research Compliance Officer at (205) 348-5152.

I willing agree to participate in this survey. I understand what I am being asked to do.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Printed Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Ian Turnipseed*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*













c. Any blogs devoted to the Alabama football program

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no						extremely
responsibility					great	responsibility

d. Sports news outlets like ESPN, ESPN.com

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no						extremely
responsibility					great	responsibility

**13.** To what extent do you think each of the following sources of information is expert in the area of Alabama football?

a. An Alabama football fan you know

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not						extremely expert
					expert	

b. The official Alabama sports website [www.rolltide.com](http://www.rolltide.com)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not						extremely expert
					expert	

c. Any blogs devoted to the Alabama football program

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not						extremely expert
					expert	

d. Sports news outlets like ESPN, ESPN.com

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not						extremely expert
					expert	

**14.** To what extent do you think each of the following sources provide *sensationalized* information about Alabama football?

a. An Alabama football fan you know

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not						extremely
sensationalized					sensationalized	

b. The official Alabama sports website [www.rolltide.com](http://www.rolltide.com)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not						extremely
sensationalized					sensationalized	



1                    **c.** Any blogs devoted to the Alabama football program                    6                    7  
 not                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7  
 protective                                                                                                                                                                             
 self-protective

1                    **d.** Sports news outlets like ESPN, ESPN.com                    6                    7  
 not                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7  
 protective                                                                                                                                                                             
 self-protective

**17.** To what extent are you personally *in favor* of using each of the following sources to obtain information about Alabama football.

1                    **a.** An Alabama football fan you know                    6                    7  
 not                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7  
 favor                                                                                                                                                                             
 in favor                                                                                                                                                                             
 extremely in

1                    **b.** The official Alabama sports website [www.rolltide.com](http://www.rolltide.com)                    6                    7  
 not                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7  
 favor                                                                                                                                                                             
 in favor                                                                                                                                                                             
 extremely in

1                    **c.** Any blogs devoted to the Alabama football program                    6                    7  
 not                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7  
 favor                                                                                                                                                                             
 in favor                                                                                                                                                                             
 extremely in

1                    **d.** Sports news outlets like ESPN, ESPN.com                    6                    7  
 not                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7  
 favor                                                                                                                                                                             
 in favor                                                                                                                                                                             
 extremely in



6. The segment of the documentary I just saw sums up the feelings I have heard **people my parents age say they have EXPERIENCED** as fans of Alabama.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not a good summation a good summation

7. The segment of the documentary I just saw sums up the feelings I have heard **people my age say they have EXPERIENCED** as fans of Alabama.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not a good summation a good summation

8. The segment of the documentary I just saw sums up the feelings I have heard **people who are NOT Alabama fans say they have EXPERIENCED** when attending Alabama games.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No a good summation a good summation

9. The segment of the documentary I just saw sums up the feelings I have heard **people in high school say they have EXPERIENCED** as fans of Alabama.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No a good summation a good summation

10. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **me think** about the requirements of being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not effective a great deal of effect

11. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **typical Alabama fans think** about the requirements of being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not effective a great deal of effect

12. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **Alabama fans my parents age think** about the requirements of being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not effective a great deal of effect

13. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **Alabama fans my age** think about the requirements of being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not effective a great deal of effect

14. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **non-Alabama fans** think about the requirements of being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not effective a great deal of effect

15. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **High-school aged Alabama fans** think about the requirements of being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not effective a great deal of effect

16. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **me** question what it requires to be an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No questioning a great deal of questioning

17. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **typical Alabama fans** question what it requires to be an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No questioning a great deal of questioning

18. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **Alabama fans my parents age** question what it requires to be an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No questioning a great deal of questioning

19. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **Alabama fans my age** question what it requires to be an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No questioning a great deal of questioning

20. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **non-Alabama fans** question what it requires to be an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No questioning a great deal of questioning

21. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **High-school aged Alabama fans** question what it requires to be an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No questioning a great deal of questioning

22. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **me** fully commit to being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No commitment a great deal of commitment

23. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **typical Alabama fans** fully commit to being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No commitment a great deal of commitment

24. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **Alabama fans my parents age** fully commit to being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No commitment a great deal of commitment

25. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **Alabama fans my age** fully commit to being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No commitment a great deal of commitment

26. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **non-Alabama fans** fully commit to being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No commitment a great deal of commitment

27. The segment of the documentary I just saw makes **High-school aged Alabama fans** fully commit to being an Alabama fan.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No commitment a great deal of commitment

28. **Your** experiences, beliefs, and motivations make you see the segment of the documentary you have just seen as a successful portrayal of what you see as Alabama football.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No success a great deal of success

29. **Your** experiences, beliefs, and motivations make you see the segment of the documentary you have just seen as an average portrayal of what you see as Alabama football.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not average very average

29. **Your** experiences, beliefs, and motivations make you see the segment of the documentary you have just seen as an unsuccessful portrayal of what you see as Alabama football.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not unsuccessful very unsuccessful

30. **Other Alabama fan's** experiences, beliefs, and motivations make you see the segment of the documentary you have just seen as a successful portrayal of what you see as Alabama football.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
No success a great deal of success

31. **Other Alabama fan's** experiences, beliefs, and motivations make you see the segment of the documentary you have just seen as an average portrayal of what you see as Alabama football.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not average very average

32. **Other Alabama fan's** experiences, beliefs, and motivations make you see the segment of the documentary you have just seen as an unsuccessful portrayal of what you see as Alabama football.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Not unsuccessful very unsuccessful

APPENDIX D  
QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP

1. So, the first thing I wanted to ask you was what did you think about the video clip that you saw?
2. Alright, well with that in mind, what did the clip make you think about in relation to anything you've experienced in the past?
3. Interesting, did the clip make you think of anything you feel is extremely important in your life? I mean anything related to Alabama football, or anything else?
4. After watching the clip did you feel the need to go and do something Alabama related?
5. Well that was an interesting discussion, but I wanted to know (Wann question) how you feel about Alabama football, does it give you a way to escape the world for a while at least while you are watching it? (looking at escapism)
6. I understand that! Alright, but I was just thinking about fans in general, do you feel that you only like to watch Alabama when you know there is a good chance they are going to win? (self-esteem)
7. Great stuff, something else I'm interested in knowing is, I noticed in the clip how excited people get when they watch Alabama play, why do you think that is? (eustress)
8. Interesting, well I was wondering if you could tell me why you think going to a game is such a group even? Do you think being a fan means you are in a group? (group affiliation)

9. Alright, so If you were to think about the average Alabama fan, what do you think they do in order to be seen as an Alabama fan? (their assessment of other and behavioral intent)
10. Do you do those things? Why? (social distance and behavioral intent)

## APPENDIX E

### EXPLANATION OF CODING OPTIONS

**BEHAVIOR-** An action that can include a physical act of movement, purchase, interaction, communication, dress, attendance of or to, seeking out the group, seeking out an interaction concerning the group, reading about the group, reading about football in general

**PERCEPTION-** The act of characterizing the world from a specific point of view. The subject examines the world and makes judgments about themselves and others based on that examination.

**OTHER or OTHER GROUP-** An other is anyone not the self. An other group is a group consisting of others. High school students, college students, parents, adults, average Americans, extreme Americans, less than average Americans, fans, Alabama fans, sec fans, etc.

**Behavior self video (BSV)-** Any mention of how one behaves in relation to the clip the participant watched. This would include physical actions like looking up Alabama football in any mass medium, purchasing tickets, taking part in Alabama related activities, dressing in or purchasing Alabama gear as a direct result of the video.

**Behavior self football (BSF)-** Any mention of how one behaves as a result of Alabama football either on game days, at tail gates, after games, during off season, or during the week. This behavior must be a **DIRECT** result of being a part of or thinking about these different things.

**Behavior self fan (BSFAN)-** Any mention of how one behaves as a result of being an Alabama football fan. These behaviors must be a direct result of fan related feelings. This includes behaviors to show that the person **IS** a fan, in their own life, in public, with a group, in Tuscaloosa, in Alabama, in the country, in other countries. The behavior must be a direct result of the individual perceiving themselves as **JUST** a **FAN** of Alabama football.

**Behavior other video (BOV)-** Any mention of how others behave in relation to the clip the participant watched. This would include physical actions like looking up Alabama football in any mass medium, purchasing tickets, taking part in Alabama related activities, dressing in or purchasing Alabama gear as a direct result of the video.

Behavior other football (BOF)- Any mention of how others behave as a result of Alabama football either on game days, at tail gates, after games, during off season, or during the week. This behavior must be a DIRECT result of being a part of or thinking about these different things.

Behavior other fan (BOFAN)- Any mention of how others behave as a result of being an Alabama football fan. These behaviors must be a direct result of fan related feelings. This includes behaviors to show that the person IS a fan, in their own life, in public, with a group, in Tuscaloosa, in Alabama, in the country, in other countries. The behavior must be a direct result of the individual perceiving themselves as JUST a FAN of Alabama football.

Perception self positive (PSP)- Any utterance of a perception that is positive about self. This can include, positive perception as a fan, as an Alabama student, as a Alabama fan, as a member of the crimson nation. It MUST be in relation to the way the subject views the world, an other group in comparison to themselves or themselves in comparison to an other group, the University of Alabama, other students, other fans, other friends, other family and how that bolsters their self image.

Perception self negative (PSN)- Any utterance of a perception that is negative about self. This can include, negative perception as a fan, as an Alabama student, as a Alabama fan, as a member of the crimson nation. It MUST be in relation to the way the subject views the world, an other group in comparison to themselves or themselves in comparison to an other group, the University of Alabama, other students, other fans, other friends, other family and how that denigrates their self image.

Perception other positive (POP)- Any utterance of a perception that is positive about other. This can include, positive perception of others as fans, as Alabama students, as Alabama fans, as members of the crimson nation. It MUST be in relation to the way the subject assesses others view of the world, an other group in comparison to that group or that group in comparison to another other group, the University of Alabama, other students, other fans, other friends, other family and how that bolsters the other's self image.

Perception other negative (PON)- Any utterance of a perception that is negative about other. This can include, negative perception of others as fans, as Alabama students, as Alabama fans, as members of the crimson nation. It MUST be in relation to the way the subject assesses others view of the world, an other group in comparison to that group or that group in comparison to another other group, the University of Alabama, other students, other fans, other friends, other family and how that denigrates the other's self image.

Sameness perception (SP)- The subject views themselves as similar to an other group in world view. The way they view a situation as a student, fan, Alabama fan, non-fan, college student, teenager, adult, fanatic is articulated as similar to an other group. Sameness can mean exactly the same to mostly the same. Anything less than mostly the same is NOT sameness.

Sameness behavior (SB)- The subject behaves as similar to an other group. The way they believe they will behave given a situation as a student, fan, Alabama fan, non-fan, college student, teenager, adult, fanatic is articulated as similar to an other group. Sameness can mean exactly the same to mostly the same. Anything less than mostly the same is NOT sameness.

Differentiation perception (DP)- The subject views themselves as different from an other group in world view. The way they view a situation as a student, fan, Alabama fan, non-fan, college student, teenager, adult, fanatic is articulated as different from an other group. Differentiation can mean diametrically opposed to mostly different. Anything less than mostly different is NOT sameness.

Differentiation behavior (DB)- The subject behaves as different from an other group in world view. The way they believe they will behave given a situation as a student, fan, Alabama fan, non-fan, college student, teenager, adult, fanatic is articulated as different from an other group. Differentiation can mean diametrically opposed to mostly different. Anything less than mostly different is NOT sameness.

Self affirmation by comparison perception (SACP)- The subject affirms their past, current, or future perception of the world, Alabama football, fanship, fanaticism, etc. by comparing their perception to the perception they have of other groups. If a subject explains their view of the world in relation to other groups and affirms that view they are affirming their perception by comparison.

Self affirmation by comparison behavior (SACB)- The subject affirms their past, current, or future behavior in relation to the world, Alabama football, fanship, fanaticism, etc. by comparing their behaviors to the behaviors they see or expect of other groups. If a subject explains their behavior in relation to other groups and affirms that behavior they are affirming their behavior by comparison.

Self esteem by comparison perception (SECP)- The subject builds their self esteem through their past, current, or future perception of the world, Alabama football, fanship, fanaticism, etc. by comparing their perception to the perception they have of other groups. If a subject explains their view of the world in relation to other groups and how it builds this self esteem by sharing a similar view they are building self esteem by comparison.

Self esteem by comparison behavior (SECB)- The subject builds self esteem through comparison of their past, current, or future behavior in relation to the world, Alabama football, fanship, fanaticism, etc. by comparing their behaviors to the behaviors they see or expect of other groups the subject builds self esteem. If a subject explains their behavior in relation to other groups and confirms that behavior in others they are building self esteem through their behavior by comparison to other behavior.

APPENDIX F

CODING SHEET FOR FOCUS GROUP

1. So, the first thing I wanted to ask you was what did you think about the video clip that you saw?

BSV    BSF    BSFAN    BOV    BOF    BOFAN    PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

2. Alright, well with that in mind, what did the clip make you think about in relation to anything you've experienced in the past?

BSV    BSF    BSFAN    BOV    BOF    BOFAN    PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

3. Interesting, did the clip make you think of anything you feel is extremely important in your life? I mean anything related to Alabama football, or anything else?

BSV    BSF    BSFAN    BOV    BOF    BOFAN    PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

4. After watching the clip did you feel the need to go and do something Alabama related?

BSV    BSF    BSFAN    BOV    BOF    BOFAN    PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

5. Well that was an interesting discussion, but I wanted to know (Wann question) how you feel about Alabama football, does it give you a way to escape the world for a while at least while you are watching it? (looking at escapism)

BSV    BSF    BSFAN    BOV    BOF    BOFAN    PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

6. I understand that! Alright, but I was just thinking about fans in general, do you feel that you only like to watch Alabama when you know there is a good chance they are going to win? (self-esteem)

BSV    BSF    BSFAN    BOV    BOF    BOFAN    PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

7. Great stuff, something else I'm interested in knowing is, I noticed in the clip how excited people get when they watch Alabama play, why do you think that is? (eustress)

BSV    BSF    BSFAN    BOV    BOF    BOFAN    PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

8. Interesting, well I was wondering if you could tell me why you think going to a game is such a group even? Do you think being a fan means you are in a group? (group affiliation)

BSV    BSF    BSFAN   BOV    BOF    BOFAN   PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

9. Alright, so If you were to think about the average Alabama fan, what do you think they do in order to be seen as an Alabama fan? (their assessment of other and behavioral intent)

BSV    BSF    BSFAN   BOV    BOF    BOFAN   PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

10. Do you do those things? Why? (social distance and behavioral intent)

BSV    BSF    BSFAN   BOV    BOF    BOFAN   PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB

11. Off topic question.

BSV    BSF    BSFAN   BOV    BOF    BOFAN   PSP    PSN    POP

PON    SP    SB    DP    DB    SACP    SACB    SECP    SECB



3. I believe other students are a part of the Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

**Behavior as Fan**

1. When I am in a store of any kind, if I see something with Alabama on it I will go look at it.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

2. When I see two products that are similar but one is associated with Alabama I will buy that product over the one that is not associated with Alabama.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

3. I am kind and a good sports fan with fellow Alabama fans as well as rivals because I know I represent Alabama tradition in those situations.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

4. I would rather be an Alabama fan not associated with other Crimson Nation members.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

5. As an Alabama fan, I feel I should always buy products that support Alabama when I can.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

6. As an Alabama fan, I feel I should always attend Alabama events when I can.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

7. As an Alabama fan, I feel I should always defend Alabama when someone is talking about the University in a negative way.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

8. How influential in your decision-making are your friends in where you go to eat.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

9. How influential in your decision-making are your friends in what clothing you buy.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

10. How influential in your decision-making are your friends in what kind of Alabama gear you buy.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

11. How influential in your decision-making is your Alabama fan status with others in what kind of Alabama gear you buy.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

12. How influential in your decision-making is your Alabama fan status with others in what kind of Alabama gear you buy.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

13. How influential in your decision-making is your Alabama fan status with others in what you do on the weekends.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

14. How influential in your decision-making is your Alabama fan status with others in what clothing you wear.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

15. How influential in your decision-making is your Alabama fan status with others in who you associate with when you are in public.

Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

16. How influential in your decision-making is your Alabama fan status with others in who you associate with when you are in private.

Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

17. I would say I could easily tell anyone information about former UA coaches or players, even from many years ago.

Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

18. I am interested in reading pre and post-game sports stories about the game because I like to be as informed as possible about the players, the team, and the stats.

Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

19. I never missed watching an Alabama football game on TV or in person while I was in high school.

Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

20. I never missed watching an Alabama football game on TV or in person while at Alabama.

Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

21. I never missed watching an Alabama football game on TV or in person ever.

Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Behavior of Other Fan**

1. I think other Alabama fans would buy products that are Alabama related more than other products just because the products are Alabama related.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

2. Other Alabama fans would watch commercials that are Alabama related more than other commercials just because they are Alabama related.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

3. Other Alabama fans would listen to those that are Alabama related more than others who are not Alabama related just because they are Alabama related.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

4. As a member of the Crimson Nation other members will act in a certain way to uphold the Crimson Nation's beliefs and values about behavior.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

5. As Alabama fans, others feel they should always buy products that support Alabama when they can.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

6. As Alabama fans, others feel they should always attend Alabama events when they can.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

7. As Alabama fans, others feel they should always defend Alabama when someone is talking about the University.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

8. How influential in decision-making are other Alabama fans friends in where they go to eat.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

9. How influential in decision-making are other Alabama fans friends in what clothing they buy.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

10. How influential in other Alabama fans decision-making is their Alabama fan status with others in what kind of Alabama gear they buy.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

11. How influential in other Alabama fans decision-making is their Alabama fan status with others in what they do on the weekends.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

12. How influential in other Alabama fans decision-making is their Alabama fan status with others in what clothing they wear.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

13. How influential in other Alabama fans decision-making is their Alabama fan status with others in who they associate with when they are in public.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

14. How influential in other Alabama fans decision-making is their Alabama fan status with others in who they associate with when they are in private.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

15. Other Alabama fan's would say they could easily tell anyone information about former UA coaches or players, even from many years ago.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

16. Other Alabama fans are interested in reading pre and post-game sports stories about the game because they like to be as informed as possible about the players, the team, and the stats.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

17. Other Alabama fans never miss watching an Alabama football game on TV or in person while they were in high school.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

18. Other Alabama fans never missed watching an Alabama football game on TV or in person while at Alabama.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

19. Other Alabama fans never missed watching an Alabama football game on TV or in person ever.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

**Affiliation Self**

1. I surround myself with Alabama clothing, paintings, wallpaper, lamps, etc. because it reminds me of tradition.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

2. I believe the Crimson Nation is a family that I am apart of.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

3. I believe that I am similar to others in the Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

4. I support Alabama through buying Alabama related things because it makes me feel apart of the Alabama Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

5. I support Alabama through attending Alabama events because doing so makes me feel apart of the Alabama Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

6. I support Alabama through defending Alabama through conversation because doing so makes me feel apart of the Alabama Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

7. Only when I wear Alabama clothing do I think I am a true Alabama fan

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

8. Only when I paint Alabama colors or symbols on my face or body do I think I am a true Alabama fan.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

9. Only when I am wearing Alabama clothing, painted in Alabama symbols, talking about Alabama football do I think I am a true Alabama fan.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

10. Only when I talk about Alabama football do I think that I am a true Alabama fan.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

**Affiliation Other**

1. Other Alabama fans participate in tailgating, wearing Alabama gear, saying “roll tide”, and other things because it affirms them as ~~only~~ Alabama fans ONLY.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

2. Other Alabama fans participate in tailgating, wearing Alabama gear, saying “roll tide”, and other things because it affirms them as human beings.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

3. Other Alabama fans surround themselves with Alabama clothing, paintings, wallpaper, lamps, etc. because it reminds them of tradition.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

4. Other Alabama fans believe the Crimson Nation is a family that they are apart of.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

5. Other Alabama fans believe that they are similar to others in the Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

6. Other Alabama fans support Alabama through buying Alabama related things because it makes them feel apart of the Alabama Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

7. Other Alabama fans support Alabama through attending Alabama events because doing so makes them feel apart of the Alabama Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

8. Other Alabama fans support Alabama through defending Alabama through conversation because doing so makes them feel apart of the Alabama Crimson Nation.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

9. Only when Other Alabama fans wear Alabama clothing do they think they are true Alabama fans.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

10. Only when Other Alabama fans paint Alabama colors or symbols on their face or body do they think they are true Alabama fans.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

11. Only when Other Alabama fans are wearing Alabama clothing, painted in Alabama symbols, talking about Alabama football do they think they are true Alabama fans.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

12. Only when Other Alabama fans talk about Alabama football do they think that they are true Alabama fans.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

**Self Esteem Self**

1. If given a choice, I'd rather associate myself with Alabama football tradition because it makes me feel better about myself.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

2. I feel good about being a part of the Crimson Nation family.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

3. I like being a part of the larger Crimson Nation

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

4. Acting in a kind yet sporting manner as a member of the Crimson nation gives me a sense of pride.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

5. I feel better about myself when I wear Alabama colors.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

6. I support Alabama through buying Alabama related things because it makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

7. I support Alabama through attending Alabama events because doing so makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

8. I support Alabama through defending Alabama through conversation because doing so makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

9. I feel better about myself when I have academic success.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

10. I feel better about myself when I make new friends.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

11. I feel better about myself when I participate in organized sports like intramurals or pick up games at places like the rec.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

12. I feel better about myself when I watch organized sports.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

13. I think other Alabama fans act the way they do because it makes them feel good to be seen as Alabama fans.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

14. Other Alabama fans participate in tailgating, wearing Alabama gear, saying, "roll tide", and other things because it boosts their self esteem as only Alabama fans.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

15. Other Alabama fans participate in tailgating, wearing Alabama gear, saying "roll tide", and other things because it boosts their self-esteem as human beings.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

16. I seek out friendships with Alabama supporters because they make me feel good.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

17. Associating with Alabama tradition makes me feel good about me.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

18. Other Alabama fans feel good about being a part of the Crimson Nation family.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

19. Other Alabama fans like being a part of the larger Crimson Nation

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

20. Acting that way for the Crimson Nation gives Other Alabama fans a sense of pride.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

21. Other Alabama fans feel better about themselves when they wear Alabama colors.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

22. Other Alabama fans support Alabama through buying Alabama related things because it makes them feel good about themselves.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

23. Other Alabama fans support Alabama through attending Alabama events because doing so makes them feel good about themselves.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

24. Other Alabama fans support Alabama through defending Alabama through conversation because doing so makes them feel good about themselves.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

25. Others feel better about themselves when they have academic success.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

26. Others feel better about themselves when they make new friends.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

27. Others feel better about themselves when they participate in organized sports like intramurals or pick up games at places like the rec.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

28. Others feel better about themselves when they watch organized sports.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

29. If I see someone wearing Alabama clothing I feel connected to them as Alabama fans.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

30. I like to go to restaurants or bars where I know I'll be surrounded by other Alabama fans.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

31. I believe that fans exhibiting extreme behavior—tattooing a part of their body with a UA symbol, wearing body paint to a football game, or being loud and boisterous at a game is often done for attention-seeking and not because the individual is a true fan.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

32. I seek out friendships with Alabama supporters because they see things the same way I do.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

33. I generally want to fit in with society  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

34. I generally want to fit in with my class mates  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

35. I generally want to fit in at Alabama.  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

36. I generally want to fit in as an Alabama fan.  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

37. I would rather be seen as a part of a group of Alabama fans than as a lone Alabama fan.  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

38. I would rather be seen as a lone Alabama fan than as a part of a group of Alabama fans.  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

39. Going to UA is a family tradition.  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

40. Going to UA was something I was expected to do.  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

41. Going to UA was based only on Alabama's academic reputation.  
Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strongly Agree 10

42. Going to UA was based only on Alabama's athletic reputation.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

43. Going to UA was based both on Alabama's athletic and academic reputation.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

44. If you (the individual) supported another SEC team, would there be conflict in your household.

Strongly Disagree											Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	