I. Historical Antecedents of the "Social Self" 

The publication by William James of his extensive treatise, The Consciousness of Self, in Principles of Psychology (1890) marks a major transition in conceptions of self. It is in this treatise that James departed from his philosophical predecessors with his conception of self as a social phenomenon. Also, although he approached the topic of self with the same discursive style as those of his predecessors, he wrote with a view toward the development of psychology as a natural science, capable of having empirically testable theories of mind and self. James' conception led to considerable theoretical elaboration and empirical study of the social self by the 20th century social psychologists, sociologists, and social psychiatrists. His classic statement that "a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him" (James, 1890, p. 294) refers both to the different perceptions that the various individuals hold of a person and to the different perceptions and enactments that the person has vis-a-vis each of these individuals. It is the latter that is at the core of social personality.

Less than a decade later, Baldwin published his Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development (1897)—apparently the first social psychology text in English—in which he laid out a developmental theory of the social self. His theory of the "socius," the term he frequently used to refer to social self, went considerably further than James by adding a developmental account and by making all aspects of the self a social and cultural product. For Baldwin, the socius is the self and is personality.

The term "socius" has little currency in contemporary personality and social
psychology, and Baldwin remains relatively obscure in the history of these fields. Nevertheless, he was the first psychologist to elaborate on an individual's personality as a social and cultural product that is reflected in his/her view of self and others. The socius, in Baldwin's conception, consists of two interrelated aspects, ego and alter. Ego and alter constitute a dialectic and make up a bipolar self with ego at one pole and alter at the other pole. Ego refers to the thoughts you have about yourself—how you view yourself. Alter are the thoughts—what is in your consciousness—that you have about people that you know, that you can imagine, or that are fictional or mythical.

How did Baldwin (1897/1973) support his univocal assertion, "I do not see . . . how the personality . . . can be expressed in anything but social terms" (p. 21)? He argued that ego and alter are inextricably related and form a self, a personality, because they develop together in the child. The development of your view of yourself—ego—requires others to imitate, and the development of your view of others requires the ego from which to "project"; actually he called it "eject." Baldwin thought imitation to be the primary mechanism in personality development. His use of imitation to account for personality development was subsequently criticized as being too limited an explanatory principle, but that is not of central interest here.

Baldwin was the only prominent psychologist of this period other than James to give self a social psychological perspective—and a thoroughgoing one at that. Baldwin's subsequent obscurity has also obscured the intellectual bond between personality and social psychology that existed in the early history of American psychology, with self at the nexus of this bond. The thinkers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries who are regularly featured as having elaborated the conception of the social self are Charles Cooley and George Herbert Mead. Cooley (1902), who gave a sociological perspective to the self, acknowledged that he was strongly influenced by James and by Baldwin as well. Mead (1934), the pragmatic philosopher, also acknowledged an indebtedness to these two psychologists in his conceptualization of self as a social outcome.

Within sociology, social self as first adumbrated by James and Baldwin and then elaborated by Cooley and Mead continued to be developed and is clearly represented among contemporary symbolic interactionists (e.g., Stryker, 1980; Sewny, 1945). However, some correctives are beginning to appear in the current psychological literature on self (e.g., Scheibe, 1985). Baldwin's developmental perspective has also enjoyed a revival in developmental psychology. In addition to his explication of the social influences on the child, he apparently anticipated a number of Piaget's basic ideas about cognitive development (Broughton & Freeman-Moir, 1982; Cairns & Ornstein, 1979). A number of writers have suggested that Baldwin's professional extinction in psychology is due, in part, to the reaction and subsequent blacklisting by his contemporaries when he was arrested during a raid on a house of prostitution.
The works of Cooley and Mead did not have the influence in psychology that they did in sociology. This is not to say that their works have been ignored in psychology. Studies of reflected appraisal (Shrauger & Schoeneman, 1979) are a direct outgrowth of Cooley's "looking-glass" self and Mead's taking "the role of the other." Other social psychological research on self also reflects the diffusion of Cooley's and Mead's social orientation to self (Gergen, 1971; Wegner & Vallacher, 1980). Nevertheless, among contemporary personality and social psychologists, Cooley and Mead are viewed as marginal figures, representing a "contextualist perspective"—a perspective that is only recently getting some attention in personality and social psychology (e.g., Georgoudi & Rosnow, 1985; Sarbin, 1977)—while Baldwin is relegated to some nebulous position in personality and personality development (Rosenberg & Gara, 1983).

There are also important tributaries of Cooley and Mead in social psychiatry, both with a psychoanalytic blend (Sullivan, 1953) and without such a blend (Laing, Phillipson, & Lee, 1966). Adler and post-Freudian psychoanalysts such as Erikson, Horney, and Kohut, not obviously influenced by early American social psychology and sociology, also introduced a dramatic shift toward the interpersonal aspects of personality and self. While the orientation of social psychiatry is psychological, this work has not by-and-large intersected with mainstream personality and social psychology, emphasizing as it does pathologies of social self and using as it does a clinically based and discursive methodology.

The most obvious reason for the eclipse of the socius, with its locus in consciousness, is the ideological shift to behaviorism that took place in psychology in the early part of the 20th century. Another reason is the lack, in the early part of this century, of an empirical methodology for studying the socius comparable in rigor to the experimental methods available at that time for the study of sensory processes, learning, memory, and so on. Experimental psychology had evolved from 19th century experimental physiology and physics, and for Baldwin (as for James), there was a "meagerness of the results of the psychological laboratories (apart from direct work on sensation and movement)," a "barrenness of the tables and curves coming from many laboratories" (1930, p. 4). Nor did psychologists of that era yet envision the possibility of studying social self and its development with the methodological rigor that is available to us now. The empirical study of self that did emerge in psychology in the 1950s and 1960s fell more strictly within personality and personality assessment (Wylie, 1974). Not only was this research methodology rather loose and imprecise, and the measures unpredictable of behavior, but also gone was a systematic conceptualization of the social psychological view of self (Scheibe, 1985).

While personality and social psychology may have neglected the socius, qua socius, they certainly did not neglect the study of alter, that is, how a person
views other people. The study of person perception is a well established research tradition in social psychology (Schneider, Hastorf, & Ellsworth. 1979; Wegner & Vallacher, 1977), with sophisticated methods for studying impression formation, person memory, implicit beliefs about personality, and so on. The psychological phenomena referred to as implicit personality theory are also of central interest in Kelly’s (1955) personality psychology. Although the range of Kelly’s personal construct theory is not limited to interpersonal perception, and although his theory would probably not be characterized primarily as a social personality theory, much of the explication of the theory, as well as the Repertory Grid method, are in terms of the personal constructs of interpersonal perception.

This overview of the antecedents of social personality, although necessarily brief, is not intended simply as a historical exegesis. The resurgence of interest in self in social psychology, handsomely reflected in the collection of articles in this volume, provides a new zeitgeist for reclaiming the conceptual links to an American past in which the study of self in personality and in social psychology was unified in a mutually enlightening way.

In the next section, a new set-theoretical model is described for representing the organization of the socius of an individual. New data-analytic tools are described that are tailored to this model. Much of the rest of the article is then taken up with recent empirical applications of this set-theoretical model, using both laboratory data and naturalistic materials, particularly autobiography. These empirical applications, although idiographically based, are yielding detailed information for fleshing out nomothetic principles about the content and organization of the socius.

II. Content and Organization of Social Personality

The broad distinction between habitual self and accommodating self (Baldwin, 1897/1973, p. 34) is useful as a first cut in examining the content and organization of social personality. Accommodating self refers to those psychological processes and events that are involved in everyday exigencies, while habitual self refers to the more stable views one has of ego and alters. These two aspects of self are dynamically related in the actual phenomena of social personality, with the habitual self acting to assimilate one’s experiences of self and others to established conceptions and the accommodating self reshaping these conceptions of habitual self with new information from everyday experiences. As an analytic distinction, it serves a useful purpose by partitioning the complex phenomena of social personality into tractable empirical and theoretical components: habitual self, accommodating self, and the relations between them.

This article is concerned primarily with the content and organization of habitual self. Significant components of this content are the characteristics that a person
perceives as relatively enduring aspects of self and other. These characteristics include perceived physical traits and attractiveness, personality traits, attitudes, competencies, and so on. Also included in habitual self are the affective experiences associated with self and other. The perceptions and feelings of habitual self are variously manifested in an individual's descriptions of self and others. Recurrent scenes and stories involving self and others, also part of the organization of habitual self, are not included as such in the work described in this article. The systematic empirical analysis of scene, plot, and so on in the service of understanding social personality remains relatively undeveloped. A working assumption is that the perceptual and affective categories and their organization are propaedeutic to whatever further analysis is done of narrative descriptions of self and others.

The task of extracting perceptual and affective categories from naturalistic materials such as ordinary conversation, letters, diaries, and literary works in sufficient quantity to map out an individual's socius can be extremely laborious and time consuming (Rosenberg & Jones, 1972). Computer-based techniques are currently being explored to assist in the extraction of such categories from narrative (Rosenberg, 1987). Laboratory methods using a free-response format have been developed that are both simple and economical for studying the social personality of fairly large numbers and varieties of individuals, each in detail. As in naturalistic descriptions, the free-response format allows individuals to use their own vocabulary to describe how they view different persons and how they feel in their relationships with them. In this article, we will examine social personality as reflected in both naturalistic and free-response laboratory data. Also illustrated in this article is the fact that this idiographic approach to data gathering offers no impediments to analyses that reveal nomothetic properties both in the content and structure of the social personality.

Whatever the data source, the perceptual and affective units (hereafter referred to as "attributes") variously associated with ego and alter elements can be summarized in a matrix in which the rows are ego and alter elements and the columns are attributes. The hypothetical example shown in Table I is a miniature version of the ego and alter elements, the attribute elements, and their relationship. A cell entry of 1 means that the person attributed the content of the given column to the given row element; blank, otherwise. Although hypothetical, this example was devised to illustrate certain organizational characteristics that are commonly found in real data. We will focus, in particular, on the set-theoretical relationships among attributes and among ego and alters. Assume, for the purpose of explicating the set-theoretical relationships implicit in such data, that the cell entries are error free.

First, we present some examples of set-theoretical relationships among attributes. Note that intelligent and articulate go together—are in the same set or class—whether or not other attributes are also associated with a person. A similar co-occurrence pattern exists for sad and shy. A superset—subset relation
also exists among certain attributes; for example, the attribution of intelligent and articulate to a person implies outgoing, but not vice versa.

Similar set-theoretical patterns exist among ego and alters. For example, Brother, Cousin, and Friend all have the same two attributes, kind and outgoing, and only these two attributes; hence, they are in the same set or class. Father is a superset of these persons in that he shares kind and outgoing with them, as well as having other characteristics not attributed to them. Mother is also a superset of Brother, Cousin, and Friend. Moreover, Self spans both Mother and Father as well as Brother, Cousin, and Friend in encompassing all of their attributes. Still other set-theoretical relationships exist in this example.

Thus, there are two set-theoretical structures for a two-way matrix. One represents equivalence and superset-subset relations among ego and alter elements. These elements are put into classes based on the attributes they do or do not share. A second structure represents set-theoretical relations among attributes. Attributes are classed according to the ego and alter elements to which they are associated. Finally, association relations can be defined that connect the structure of ego and alter classes to the structure of attribute classes. The two structures and their association relation constitute a formal set-theoretical model of the entire matrix.

Set-theoretical models are not new to this field. Hays (1958) proposed such a model for the relationships among attributes, but it received little subsequent attention. The set-theoretical relationships implicit in two-way matrices of the sort shown in Table I, as well as their psychological significance, were detected in laboratory studies of person perception (Rosenberg, 1977, pp. 203–221), but without benefit of an explicit model for representing them. A rudimentary model
was proposed and used for the empirical analysis of the structure of ego and alter elements in a study by Gara and Rosenberg (1979). More generally, the notion of a hierarchical set-theoretical organization among classes (as distinct from hierarchical clustering, which is not a hierarchical-classes model) has long been part of the theoretical discourse about personality organization and implicit belief systems but where theory-driven algorithms have been lacking (e.g., D'Andrade, 1976; Epstein, 1973; Kelly, 1955; Kihlstrom & Kantor, 1984; McCall & Simmons, 1966; Stryker & Serpe, 1983).

The potential applicability of set-theoretical notions to belief systems of various kinds led to the development of a general model for two-way matrices of the kind shown in Table I (DeBoeck & Rosenberg, in press). The model is comprehensive in that the two hierarchical structures, one for classes of rows and another for classes of columns, in combination with the association relation between them, make it possible to recover (except for what is designated "measurement error") all of the cell entries. DeBoeck's (1986) computer-based algorithm, dubbed HICLAS (acronym for HIerarchical CLASses), was developed specifically for fitting the hierarchical-classes model to data. HICLAS makes feasible for the first time the set-theoretical analysis of large empirically derived matrices since a visual search for the set-theoretical relationships is generally not feasible when actual data matrices are analyzed. That is, such matrices are usually larger and more complex than the hypothetical one in Table I and inevitably contain a certain amount of measurement error.

This new model and its associated algorithm will be used extensively in this article as a formal theoretical model for representing the structural organization of ego, alters, and their attributes as found in two-way matrices. These empirical applications are aimed at answering the question of whether these formalisms also reveal psychologically meaningful characteristics of the socius and, as such, suggest substantive principles about the socius.²

In order to illustrate concretely how HICLAS represents the content and organization of ego, alters, and their attributes as found in two-way matrices. These empirical applications are aimed at answering the question of whether these formalisms also reveal psychologically meaningful characteristics of the socius and, as such, suggest substantive principles about the socius.²

In order to illustrate concretely how HICLAS represents the content and organization of ego, alters, and their attributes, I will use the hypothetical example in Table I. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the HICLAS analysis of this example.

There are four bottom classes in the ego and alter structure and in the attribute structure as well. For ego and alter elements, the bottom classes are (1) Teacher,
(2) Brother, Cousin, Friend, (3) Acquaintance, and (4) Neighbor. A superordinate class is distinguished from a bottom class in that it spans two or more lower-ordered classes. Any given arrow in Fig. 1 denotes the fact that a lower class with the arrow leading to it is subsumed by all higher classes from which the arrow originates, either directly or indirectly through another superordinate class. There are several superordinate classes in this example, including Self, which is an example of a superordinate class that encompasses other superordinate classes such as Mother and Father. Since Mother and Father, in turn, subsume the bottom classes containing Teacher, Brother, Cousin, Friend, and Acquaintance, Self also subsumes these bottom classes.

On the attribute side, there is only one superordinate class: outgoing. The other attributes are all in bottom classes. The association of attribute classes to ego and alter classes is indicated by vertical zigzag lines. Thus, for example, intelligent, articulate, outgoing are associated with Teacher, Mother, and Self. Figure 1 is an exact model of the data in Table I: the goodness of fit is perfect.

III. Laboratory Studies of Self and Others

Laboratory studies of implicit personality theory using a free-response format (Rosenberg, 1977, p. 193) show that an individual's recurrent perceptual and
affective categories in person perception are elicited in his/her description of 30–35 persons when the majority of them are significant others. Moreover, the co-occurrence patterns among these categories as estimated from those 30–35 persons correlates .90 with the co-occurrence patterns estimated from a sample almost triple that size. This information guided the selection of a parsimonious sample of others in the two laboratory studies described in this section.

A. FREE-RESPONSE DESCRIPTIONS

The first laboratory study summarized here is of the free-response descriptions by each of a sample of college students of 33 people that he/she knew including family members, relatives (both intimate and not intimate), close friends, lover or spouse, a past lover, casual acquaintances, public figures, mythical people (religious and/or fictional figures), and various liked and disliked persons other than ones who might fit the previous roles or categories. In order to distinguish the students from the people they described (and out of habit) I will refer to the students as “subjects.”

To represent self, each subject was asked to describe three kinds of ego elements: Me Now (how I am now), Ideal Me (how I would like to be), Negative Me (how I would not want to be). The concept of ideal self (selves) plays an important role in a variety of personality theories because a person’s ideals are assumed to serve as standards for judging self and others. The development of ideals for self (and others) and their function in regulating behavior was adumbrated by Baldwin (1897/1973, p. 34–56) as part of his doctrine of the socius. Negative Me is another standard, not necessarily the complement of Ideal Me (Kingsley, 1977; Ogilvie, 1987).

The descriptions of self and others consisted of any physical and psychological traits that the subject perceived as descriptive of each of the 33 persons and the three “me”s and the feelings elicited in the subject by each of these others and “me”s. The data protocol of each subject thus consisted of a matrix with 36 rows and n columns, n depending on the number of traits and feelings generated by the particular subject. A cell entry of 1 in the matrix designated the fact that the subject attributed the given attribute (column) to a given “me” or given other (row); zero designated otherwise.

To give some idea of the kinds of terms used by the subjects in this study and to breathe some life into this material, I have extracted some terms and phrases from one of the protocols. Among the traits this subject, a female, used are “commanding,” “troubled,” “chain smoker,” “wild when it comes to guys,” “heart of gold,” “cute as all hell,” “loving,” “big daddy figure,” “snotty,” “sometimes a bitch,” “a little nutso,” “a lot nutso,” “beautiful,” “intellectual,” “wild when it comes to girls.” These trait terms illustrate the wide-
ranging and colloquial vocabulary that a free-response format can generate. On the feeling side, the terms and phrases she used included (makes me feel . . .) "peaceful," "dissatisfied," "sweet-sweet surrender," "some distrust," "guilt," "sadness."

Figure 2 shows the results of a HICLAS analysis of another subject’s protocol. This subject, DJ, is a female who described her ego and alter elements with 50 traits and 38 feelings. She was chosen from among the 14 subjects in the study because of the relative simplicity of her data structure, although she is not otherwise remarkably different from the other subjects. In fact, her structure illustrates a number of the general characteristics of structures found in this study.

For DJ, the overall goodness of fit of the structure in Fig. 2 is .87, which means that this representation accounts for 87% of her attributions in the two-way matrix—a rather sizeable proportion of the data. This is not unusual; for rank 3 the goodness-of-fit values for the 14 subjects range between .7 and .9. The HICLAS algorithm, like multidimensional scaling, generates solutions of progressively increasing rank (or "dimensionality"). Rank refers to the number of possible bottom classes in the hierarchy. In this study, solutions of rank

Fig. 2. HICLAS structure of DJ’s person classes and trait and feeling classes. (Data from Gara & Rosenberg, 1979.)
greater than three do not change the picture dramatically, although the goodness of fit (necessarily) continues to improve.

HICLAS also gives goodness-of-fit values for each of the ego and alter elements. I have shown some of these individual values in Fig. 2. For example, the number in parentheses next to Lover Past is .90, and next to Me Now is .97, and so on. The value, say .97, means that the location of Me Now in class 4 accounts for 97% of the trait and feeling attributions she made about Me Now.

The upper part of Fig. 2 shows the ego and alter classes and the relationships among them; the lower part shows the trait and feeling classes and their relationships. The association relation is indicated by the vertical zigzag lines. Because of space limitations all the trait and feeling terms and phrases that DJ used cannot be shown in the figure. Instead, the composition of each of the classes, A through F, is characterized in general terms along with a few of the actual terms in each class. There is also an empty bottom class of traits and feelings at the right of the figure, a device required for some protocols to specify the association relation between the top and bottom structures.

The trait and feeling classes formed by HICLAS for DJ are (except for class C) each very homogeneous in general evaluative tone. This finding is consistent with previous analyses of person-perception data using multidimensional scaling and hierarchical clustering. That is, general evaluation is the most salient dimension or basis on which perceived traits and feelings are clustered (e.g., Rosenberg & Olshan, 1970; Rosenberg, 1977), and this effect is extremely robust at the individual level (Kim & Rosenberg, 1980). Thus, the replication of this effect with HICLAS in this subject's protocol, as well as in all of the other subjects' protocols in this study, provides a basic psychological validation of the way trait and feeling classes are formed by HICLAS.

Another validation issue, particularly for HICLAS, is whether the set-theoretical relationships among these trait and feeling classes are psychologically meaningful. According to Fig. 2, F is the most superordinate class and is composed almost exclusively of traits that refer to activity and intellectual competence; D, consisting mostly of socially desirable traits, is more restricted in attribution to people; and B, consisting of feelings of self-worth, personal integrity, and happiness, is the most restricted. Thus, the representation says that the presence of intimate traits and feelings implies the presence of less intimate ones, but not vice versa. The relationship between the two negative classes, A and E, is analogous: the more negative traits and feelings comprising A are more restricted in attribution than those in E. Such asymmetric relationships between classes of traits and feelings, as well as their psychological significance, were detected in earlier work on person perception (Rosenberg, 1977, pp. 203–221) but without benefit of an explicit set-theoretical model or algorithm.

The relatively homogeneous content within each of the trait and feeling classes and the simultaneous representation by HICLAS of these classes and people
classes makes it possible to describe the latter rather easily in terms of the former. People in class 1 are viewed as primarily negative, both by the attribution of the two negative classes, A and E, and by the nonattribution of positive classes B and D. These people are in fact seven of the people that DJ picked as "disliked persons." In contrast, DJ views people in class 2 as primarily positive with classes B, C, D, and F. This class contains more than half of the people she described, including very significant people (Mother, Father, Lover Now, and so on) and Ideal Me. Notice that class 1 (disliked persons) and class 2 (liked persons) share the two trait and feeling classes, C and F, but do not share the strong and evaluative contrasting feelings in classes A and B. People in class 3, not personally known by the subject, are viewed as primarily positive (D, E, F), but the content of these trait and feeling classes is rather superficial compared with those found in B. HICLAS also identifies ego and alter elements as "residuals" when and if the traits and feelings associated with them are thinly scattered across several classes and hence cannot be reliably placed anywhere else, that is, in classes 1 through 5. For DJ, Negative Me is "residual." (HICLAS also identifies traits and feelings as "residuals" when and if they are thinly scattered over ego and alter elements.)

We now turn to the two superset classes, class 4 and class 5, which represent ego and alters that have still other combinations of trait and feeling classes. Class 4, consisting of Me Now and a Liked Person, is positively viewed—in particular, note that DJ does not attribute the very negative feelings (class A) to Me Now and the Liked Person. In contrast, DJ describes the four people in class 5 with strong ambivalence. That is, she has strong negative feelings (class A) and strong positive feelings (class B) for a Lover Past, a Brother, a Sister, and a Relative—obviously significant people for DJ.

A psychological characteristic of ego and alter classes, derivable from structure, is the degree of elaboration of a class. Elaboration refers to the full set of contexts in which a class functions. For any given class, these include the number of members in the class and all the links between the given class and other classes. Classes vary considerably in the degree to which they are elaborated. A class that has a number of alters is highly elaborated; conversely, one that is not well populated is not. It also follows that a superordinate class is more elaborated than those it subsumes. Elaboration appears to be an important property of identity structure, that is, where the multiple identities of ego are each described and represented in set-theoretical relationships (Rosenberg & Gara, 1985). As we shall see, elaboration is also important in understanding the structure of the socius.

In Gara's (1987) nomothetic analysis of the HICLAS structures of all 14 subjects, he used indices of elaboration to first classify the types of ego and alter classes common to all the structures. Five types of classes were identified for each subject: positive, negative, unelaborated, prominent, and prominent-ambivalent. The identification of these nomothetic types of classes in the structure of single subjects is easily and reliably done.
The first three types are generally bottom classes. The positive class consists of elements that are viewed very positively in terms of the attributes associated with them. This class is highly elaborated, according to the definition of that property; that is, the positive class contains more people than any other bottom class. Every subject had such a positive class. In contrast, the negative class contains a smaller number of elements than the positive class and hence is not as elaborated as the positive class. Other unelaborated class(es) are any remaining bottom classes as well as "residuals," if any of the latter exist for the subject. These three types of classes are readily identified in DJ's structure: class 2 is positive and elaborated; class 1 is negative; class 3 and any residuals are unelaborated. The remaining two types of classes, prominent and prominent-ambivalent, are superset classes. They are both elaborated and the distinction between them is based on whether the superset class subsumes both the positive and the negative bottom classes or not. If it does, it is dubbed prominent-ambivalent. For DJ, class 4 is prominent and class 5 is prominent-ambivalent.

The question is how to assess the psychological significance of this nomothetic typology beyond the fact that it is readily applied to all the structures. It certainly has an intuitive appeal, a face validity, as representing the major categories of ego and alters in an adult socius. Gara assessed this typology empirically in two ways.

In the first assessment, the relationship between this typology of persons and the subject's ratings of their significance in his/her life was examined. These ratings were obtained separately from the free-response description and were not part of the descriptive information that was used for the structural analysis. The ratings consist of responses to bipolar scales designed to differentiate others in terms of familiarity and perceived significance. A factor analysis revealed two basic factors with little cross-loading: the first factor, dubbed Overall Importance, consists of scales referring to the perceived closeness, concern, self-disclosure, self-expression, and range of interaction vis-a-vis the other; the second factor, dubbed Complexity/Ambivalence, consists of two scales, one referring to the perceived complexity of the other, and the second referring to perceived ambivalence in feelings about the other. (Exact wording of the scales can be found in Gara & Rosenberg, 1979.)

Gara found that positive, prominent, and prominent-ambivalent classes—the three most elaborated classes—are perceived by the subject as significantly more important (Overall Importance) than the negative and unelaborated classes combined. Prominent-ambivalent people are reported as less subjectively important than people in the other two kinds of elaborated classes (prominent, positive). The latter two classes are not distinguishable statistically from each other, although the difference between them in terms of Overall Importance is in the expected direction; that is, prominent people are more important than positive people.

A negative finding is that prominent-ambivalent people are not distinguished
from other people on either Complexity/Ambivalence or Ambivalence alone. Either subjects are unaware of a heightened ambivalence concerning these people—despite the fact that such strong ambivalence is manifested in the content of their descriptions—or the way we posed the question did not adequately engage the subjects’ phenomenological experience of different degrees of ambivalence.

In the second empirical assessment of the typology, Gara explored the relationship between the other’s role and the typology. Me Now was also included in this analysis, but not Ideal Me and Negative Me. Four categories of role relationships were formed: (1) intimates—Me Now, Mother, Father, liked Siblings, Present Lover, and Past Lover; (2) friends—close and casual Friends; (3) extended family; and (4) disliked/unfamiliar people—disliked people and mythical and public figures. Results indicated that prominent, positive, and unelaborated people (including negative) are significantly \( p < .001 \) differentiated by this role classification, whereas prominent-ambivalent people are not significantly related to role type.

In general, Gara’s findings attest to the psychological importance of elaboration, a property of self and others readily measurable in a set-theoretical representation of the socius. The location of self, Me Now, in this context of others reveals that while the self may be in an elaborated class for most people (13 out of 14 subjects, in this study), the self may not be unique as a “prototype” as some have suggested (e.g., Kuiper & Rogers, 1979). Intimates of various kinds were found to be as elaborated as self. This finding is consistent with a recent review on self-concept by Kihlstrom and Cantor (1984) in which they concluded that representations of self are not structurally different from those of other significant people. This is not to say that other psychological differences, not revealed by structure, do not exist between self and other.

Finally, we turn briefly to some observations about the co-occurrence or nonoccurrence of Me Now, Ideal Me, and Negative Me with certain kinds of people. Notice, for example, that for DJ, Ideal Me and Lover Now are both in the same, positive class. This is true for 11 of the 14 subjects. This is an interesting finding both in terms of the idealization that this age group has of their lovers and in terms of how an ego ideal might be represented and experienced with an alter. In contrast, Negative Me is in the negative class or in a superset class that subsumes the negative class for 10 subjects, and it is unelaborated, like DJ, for 4 subjects. The dynamics may be similar for Negative Me as for Ideal Me; that is, ego ideals (negative and positive) might frequently be represented and experienced with alters. With regard to Me Now and parents, it was found that for all 14 subjects, Me Now—ego—shares at least one trait and feeling class with Mother and at least one trait and feeling class with Father! Thus, a set-theoretical representation is especially suited to sorting out explicitly a person’s beliefs about whom he/she “takes after.” The location of parents (and other significant model figures) in a structure and its relevance to a person’s implicit
beliefs about his/her development are taken up more fully in Section IV,B,4 on autobiography.

B. THE SOCIUS IN A CLINICAL POPULATION

Pathological disturbances in the perception of self and others, and their consequences for interpersonal relationships, are common to a variety of clinical syndromes. These disturbances are sometimes given etiological significance, as when they are attributed directly to early family experiences. Sometimes they are viewed as derivative of biological/genetic anomalies and sometimes to a complex interplay of biological/genetic and social influences. While definitive answers to questions about etiology remain elusive, mappings of social personality with an explicit social psychological methodology may prove useful in identifying and sorting out various pathologies in social self. It is conceivable, albeit premature, to expect that measurable disturbances in social self are also indicative of their origins and, as such, help focus questions of etiology.

The kinds of disturbance in social personality vary among and even within the different clinical groups. Among the more heterogeneous clinical groups are the schizophrenias. In the study summarized in this section, the structural features of a sample of postadolescent men and women diagnosed as schizophrenic are examined and compared with those of a sample of normal men and women matched for age and socioeconomic characteristics (Gara, Rosenberg, & Mueller, 1986). The study revealed certain systematic differences between the two groups—indeed, so systematic that the presence or absence of one or more characteristics of the social self is very accurate in identifying from which group they came. There are also certain differences within the schizophrenic sample. Particularly unique is the way ego is represented in the structure of several of the schizophrenic patients. These findings reflect the sensitivity of the method in detecting disturbances in social personality.

The laboratory methods used in this study are similar to those described in the previous section. A persons-by-attributes matrix was obtained for each of 12 schizophrenic patients (6 men, 6 women) with a good-premorbid prognosis and each of 11 normal individuals (6 men, 5 women). In this study, only one ego element, Me Now, was described by the subjects. Thirty-four others were described and included Mother, Father, other nuclear family members, significant members of the extended family, and nonfamily friends and acquaintances. The attributes were the traits perceived in these others and self and the feelings associated with them. A free-response format was used.

Three variables, two derived from the HICLAS structure, were each significant in distinguishing the two groups. They are (1) whether or not Me Now is in one of the elaborated classes, (2) the overall goodness of fit of the HICLAS
structure, and (3) the number of traits and feelings used by the subject (per se, a nonstructural variable). Regression coefficients showed that the self is less elaborated in the schizophrenic group than in the normal group \(t(19) = 2.75, p < .01\), that goodness of fit (here interpreted as an index of stereotypy in social perception) is higher for schizophrenics \(z(19) = 2.22, p < .05\), and that schizophrenics used less traits and feelings \(t(19) = 3.52, p < .002\).

Taken together, these three variables predicted correctly whether the subject was in the normal group or in the schizophrenic group for all but one schizophrenic subject (SAS, Version 82, DISCRIM procedure). That is, some schizophrenics show an unelaborated ego, some show a more rigidly organized socius, an index of personal stereotypy in social perception, some show a more impoverished corpus of trait and feeling categories (although the latter may also reflect attention problems in doing the task), and some show a combination of these three characteristics.

The finding that some schizophrenics have poorly elaborated views of themselves is consistent with the idea that a person with insufficient diversity in his/her self-concept may be at considerable risk for psychosis (Gara, Rosenberg, & Cohen, 1987). That is, such a person can be viewed as having few psychological resources for handling challenges to self-definition that he/she may encounter in life. Self-fragmentation and conceptual disorganization may develop in such persons when interpersonal or other challenges to identity become especially intense.

The finding that social perception is stereotyped or rigidly organized in some schizophrenics is, as far as we know, the first demonstration of this phenomenon with a rigorous methodology. This finding reflects, as does the finding concerning self-elaboration, the sensitivity of the methods for detecting such disturbances in social personality. There is also the interesting speculation, consistent with Kelly's (1955) views on schizophrenic thought disorder, that an overly "tight" or rigid belief system about others becomes unraveled or overly "loose" when personal stereotypes prove inadequate for anticipating the actions of key people in one's life. If it were possible to obtain social perception data during an acute psychotic episode, one would expect goodness of fit to drop dramatically.

IV. Autobiography

A. INTRODUCTION

The nature of autobiographical memory is a topic that spans several diverse disciplines including anthropology, developmental psychology, history, literary
theory, psychoanalysis, personality, and social psychology. In spite of their
differences in method and conceptual framework, writers from those various
disciplines generally share certain fundamental assumptions about the psycho-
logical aspects of autobiography.

An important and widely shared assumption is that the recall of past experi-
ences is strongly influenced, and even distorted, by one's present views of self
and others. Several kinds of evidence exist for this assumption. The strongest
evidence is from the laboratories of experimental social psychology (Greenwald,
1980; Ross & Conway, 1986). A related and supporting assumption is that the
present exerts the influence that it does on memory because of a person's need to
provide his/her self with a sense of historical continuity. Moreover, when recall
of age-related selves is embedded in a narrative of one's life—an autobiogra-
phy—the narrative form itself also exerts a strong influence toward continuity
since a story is expected among other things to make meaningful connections
between past, present, and future (Cohler, 1982; Gergen & Gergen, 1983, this
volume; Spence, 1982).

In his thorough review of the psychological literature on personal narrative and
the life course, Cohler (1982) identifies three particular time periods in the life
course in which disruption and subsequent revision of the narrative typically
occur: early to middle childhood, childhood to adolescence and young adult-
hood, and adulthood to midlife. Unexpected dramatic events and changes in life
circumstance can also change the personal narrative in significant ways. Major
transformations in personality and conversions can, of course, occur at any age
and as part of a deliberate and intensive examination of one's past and present,
not obviously instigated by any external events. Thus, the autobiographical act
may itself have a transformational effect as the person constructs and recon-
structs the past. Indeed, psychoanalysis and other kinds of historically oriented
psychotherapies may be viewed as autobiographical methods designed to assist
individuals in developing skills for making a coherent and transformed account
of their life. In the course of such therapies, dredging up the past results in
successive revisions in the patient's subjective life history (Cohler, 1982, p.
208).

Anthropological (Langness & Frank, 1981), historical (Weintraub, 1978), and
literary (Eakin, 1985) perspectives suggest some caution in assuming that the
personal historical narrative is either universal or that achieving coherence in this
narrative is a necessary psychological mechanism for maintaining or restoring
psychological stability. Nevertheless, autobiography is sufficiently ubiquitous to
warrant serious attention. The fact that spontaneous adult accounts of childhood
self are filled with descriptions of others as well as self, and with the contrasting
of self with others (Bannister & Agnew, 1977), supports the relevance of auto-
biography in the analysis of the socius.

Is it necessary for the empirical study of the socius in autobiography to sepa-
rate fact from fiction—self-discovery from self-invention? A functional research stance for the social personologist is that meaningful research questions can be posed and answered about these phenomena as phenomena, even if fact and fiction are inextricably bound in autobiography. This stance is akin to that underlying the study of implicit personality theory; that is, the perception of people is lawful and worthy of study whether these perceptions are accurate or not. Indeed, the study of autobiographical memory, whether it be in the laboratory or in a person's account of his/her life, suggests a new rubric and research domain for personality and social psychology: implicit developmental theory. Ross and Conway (1986) recently enunciated a similar notion, implicit theories of stability and change, in their review of a wide range of laboratory (and other) findings on remembering one's own past.

The work described in this section is a study of implicit developmental theory; in particular, it is an analysis of the implicit beliefs about one's personality development in the context of one's perceptions of the personalities of other people in one's life. As in any investigation of implicit beliefs, the data must contain information relevant to such beliefs. Personal narratives, whether staged by an investigator in the laboratory or as found naturalistically in published autobiographies and memoirs, must indeed be personal documents, as Allport (1942) noted some time ago.

Thomas Wolfe's (1929) fictionalized autobiography, Look Homeward, Angel, the subject of this section, appears to have the desiderata of a personal document—a claim that I will support more fully below. The recently completed analysis (Rosenberg, 1986) of this novel using HICLAS, as well as conventional multidimensional scaling, will be summarized here to illustrate the applicability of these methods to autobiography in naturalistic form. The question of the possible transformational effects on Wolfe's personality of writing this autobiography will be taken up at the end of this section. The empirical analysis of a literary work also intersects with another research tradition in personality and psychoanalysis—that is, the use of literary materials for the study of personality generally (Runyan, 1984).

B. THOMAS WOLFE'S LOOK HOMeward, ANGEL

1. Biographical Sketch

Thomas Wolfe was born in 1900 in Asheville, North Carolina, a city in the mountainous, western part of the state. He was the youngest of eight children, one (Leslie) of whom died in infancy, another (Grover) at age 12, and a third (Ben) at age 26. Leslie is not described in the novel, but Grover and Ben are. The family tree with the real given names as well as the ones used in the novel is
shown in Fig. 3. Members of the family as well as other significant people in *Look Homeward, Angel* (LHA) will be referred to in this article by their real names.

When Thomas was still a child, his mother Julia bought a boarding house and moved into it with Thomas and his brother Ben. His father and his sister Mabel, the only other sibling who was still living at home, remained in the family house. Thomas returned frequently to the family house to visit with his father and sister. Thomas was a superior student and went to the University of North Carolina at the age of 16 to major in drama and literature. *LHA* ends with his graduation from North Carolina 4 years later and his arrival at Harvard.

He obtained a master's degree from Harvard and then moved to New York City, where he taught English at New York University and attempted to launch a career as a playwright. During this period he developed a close relationship with Aline Bernstein which lasted several years. He neither married nor developed a close relationship with another woman. He wrote *LHA* while living in New York and during his travels in Europe. *LHA* was an instant success, widely read for over a decade, particularly by young people for whom he articulated many of the strong feelings and desires associated with growing up.

Wolfe subsequently wrote three other novels, none of which attained the success and recognition of *LHA*. He also wrote a number of short stories and essays, some of which were published after his premature death in 1938 of a tuberculosis infection that had spread to his brain.

Like a number of other prominent writers, there is a plethora of readily available information about Wolfe's life, some of which will be useful in in-

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**Fig. 3. Wolfe's family tree, with the names used in *Look Homeward, Angel* in parentheses.**

---

**FATHER**

William Oliver Wolfe

1851-1922

(W. O. Ga(u)nt)

**MOTHER**

Julia Elizabeth Wolfe

1860-1845

(Eliza Gant)

---

Leslie

1885-1886

Frank

1888-1956

(Steve)

Grover Cleveland

1892-1904

(Grover)

Benjamin Harrison

1892-1918

(Ben)

Effie

1886-1950

(Daisy)

Mabel

1890-1958

(Helen)

Fred

1894-1983

(Luke)

Thomas Clayton

1900-1938

(Eugene)
interpreting and amplifying the findings from the present study. With the recent publication of Donald’s (1987) biography of Wolfe, there are now three biographies of him, the other two by Nowell (1960) and by Turnbull (1967). In addition, there are Kennedy’s (1962) literary biography, Steele’s (1976) psychoanalytic psychobiography, and Snyder’s (1971) more eclectic psychobiography. Several volumes of Wolfe’s letters have been published (Holman & Ross, 1968; Nowell, 1956; Stutman, 1983) as well as selected personal notes (Kennedy & Reeves, 1970).

2. Look Homeward, Angel as Autobiography

After several abortive attempts in his early twenties to portray his life and family history in plays and short stories, Wolfe turned to the novel as the artistic form adequate to encompass all that he had to say. At the age of 26, he started in earnest to plan the novel. His determination to portray the full impact of his family on his early development and his struggles to shape his own identity can be found among his very first notes about the book (Kennedy, 1962, p. 120).

Wolfe spent several months scribbling a voluminous chronology of his early life, starting with his earliest childhood memories, “allowing his mind to rove freely, dredging up memories as if he were on the psychoanalyst’s couch” (Kennedy, 1962, p. 120). Aline Bernstein, who was being analyzed at the time, also supported Wolfe’s venture into such a close scrutiny of himself and his early memories. Wolfe’s probings into his past were apparently influenced by the psychoanalytic method, although he was disdainful of psychoanalysts and the growing fashionability in the 1920s of being psychoanalyzed. His knowledge of psychoanalysis was not extensive and none of the writing in the novel is cast in psychoanalytic language or interpretation. Wolfe described the set or framework in which he wrote in his prefatory statement of the book: “that this book was written in innocence and nakedness of spirit, and that the writer’s main concern was to give fullness, life, and intensity to the actions and people in the book he was creating” (Wolfe, 1929).

Wolfe completed his intense self-exploration for the novel and the book itself within 2 years. The evidence that he indeed based the novel very directly on events and people from his own life is cogent (Watkins, 1957, p. 9). Most of the characters in LHA are readily identifiable. Wolfe’s strong determination to tell the story of his early life as he experienced it, his dedication to recovering these experiences by dredging up early memories, and his stream-of-consciousness writing style support the characterization of LHA as a highly personal document. Wolfe was also obviously aware of the influences of “narrative truth” (Spence, 1982). Again from his preface, “To the Reader”: “Fiction is not fact, but fiction is fact selected and understood, fiction is fact arranged and charged with purpose.”

There is the methodological issue of the role of the editor in shaping the
published version of the novel. The recent allegations (Halberstadt, 1980) of extensive editorial tampering with Wolfe’s writing—"Wolfegate," as some of the media referred to it—refer almost entirely to his posthumously published works. Still, the question about editorial influence on the final version of LHA, to which Halberstadt does refer briefly, has merit for a study such as this one where a working assumption is that the work has a character of coherence and wholeness coordinate with the social personality of the author.

When Wolfe submitted his manuscript to Scribner's, it was about 1100 pages in length. Although the editor, Maxwell Perkins, was enthusiastic about publishing the novel, he urged Wolfe to shorten the work. Wolfe shortened the novel to about 800 pages using a number of Perkins' suggestions. The suggestions required almost no rewriting but involved the deletion of several blocks of pages. The specific question for the present study is whether the novel as finally published is representative of the longer version in terms of character description. Kennedy's (1962, pp. 173-179) detailed account of the nature of the cuts suggests little if any bias in the data base extracted for the present study. The general nature of the cuts are perhaps best summarized by Wolfe, himself. In a letter to his former schoolteacher, Mrs. Roberts, he wrote of Perkins' suggestions:

The scenes he wanted cut or changed were invariably the least essential and the least interesting. . . . He said the book was new and original, and because of its form could have no formal and orthodox unity, but that what unity it did have came from the strange wild people—the family—it wrote about, as seen through the eyes of a strange wild boy. These people, with relatives, friends, townspeople, he said were "magnificent"—as real as any people he had ever read of. He wanted me to keep these people and the boy at all times foremost—other business, such as courses at state university, etc., to be shortened and subordinated. (Nowell, 1956, p. 169)

3. Extraction of Self and Other Descriptions

Terms and phrases in LHA that refer to stable personal characteristics were recorded verbatim and listed according to the person to whom they were attributed. The guidelines for identifying these terms and phrases are the same as those used in a study of Theodore Dreiser's writings (Rosenberg & Jones, 1972).

The terms and phrases extracted from LHA were grouped into trait categories, following the rules developed by Rosenberg and Jones (1972). In general, the intent of the categorization was to preserve Wolfe's linguistic categories without proliferating categories unnecessarily. Thus, no judgments were ever made about the possible synonymity of trait terms with different morphemes. For example, pretty and beautiful were treated as two different categories. On the other hand, a range of qualification was permitted within a category. For example, awkward, awkward bulk of puberty, and awkward muscles were assigned to the same trait category, awkward.

A total of 5410 descriptive units—trait terms and phrases—were extracted
from LHA. attributed variously to 270 persons. The categorization rules resulted in 2217 categories: 775 categories were attributed to two or more persons; 73 other categories were each attributed to only one of the persons but were repeated two or more times in the text; the remaining 1369 categories occurred only once in the text. These are the data upon which the analyses of LHA were based.

4. Analysis

a. Structure. A sample of 91 high-frequency trait categories, selected for their statistical representativeness (Rosenberg, 1986), was used for analyses aimed at representing the structure of Wolfe's social personality. Because persons with very few trait attributions would not provide a stable index of their similarity either to each other or to other characters, a frequency criterion was used to select persons to be included in the analyses. Persons described with more than five of the 775 shared traits were included and this resulted in a sample of 117 persons. This sample included all the family members as well as other people considered psychologically important in Wolfe's early life (Snyder, 1971). As the structural analyses will reveal, this sample proved more than sufficient for revealing Wolfe's views of self and others.

Five of the 117 persons are Wolfe himself, each corresponding to a different age period. That is, Wolfe's extensive descriptions of himself were partitioned into five chronological periods: 0–2, 3–5, 6–11, 12–15, and 16–early 20s. This partitioning corresponds to some extent to Wolfe's own partitioning. He wrote the book in a chronological order and divided it in three parts: the last two chronological periods correspond to Parts II and III, respectively; Part I covers his life from birth through age 11, which was partitioned for the analyses into 0–2, 3–5, and 6–11. The structural location of the five age-related selves provides a simple and effective way of tracing Wolfe's retrospective portrayal of his personality development in the context of the other people in his life.

Wolfe's attributions of the 91 traits variously to the 117 persons (chronological selves and others) are summarized in a two-way matrix. A small region of this matrix is shown in Table II to illustrate the nature of these data. Formally, this matrix is the same as that shown for the hypothetical example in Table I, and as such it lends itself to the same structural analyses.

Two kinds of structural analysis were used to represent Wolfe's beliefs about self and others as reflected in his character descriptions. One analysis, a multidimensional scaling (KYST; Kruskal, Young, & Seery, 1973), is a structural representation of the traits based on the degree to which they co-occur in the same persons; the second, a HICLAS analysis, portrays the set-theoretical relationships among the age-related selves and others.

The distance measure used in the multidimensional scaling of the 91 traits is the same as that used for Dreiser's trait protocol (Rosenberg & Jones, 1972) and
### TABLE I
A SMALL ILLUSTRATIVE SAMPLE OF THE PERSONS X TRAITS MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Eager</th>
<th>Vital</th>
<th>Terror</th>
<th>Alone</th>
<th>Proud</th>
<th>Kind</th>
<th>Tall</th>
<th>Heavy</th>
<th>Gentle</th>
<th>Soft</th>
<th>Blond</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
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<td>Father</td>
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<td>Ben</td>
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<td>TW: 16–20s</td>
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<td>TW: 12–15</td>
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<td>Mabel</td>
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<td>Fred</td>
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<td>Mrs. Roberts</td>
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<td>Grover</td>
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<td>Girlfriend</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ben's mistress</td>
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<tr>
<td>A child, male</td>
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</table>

*Extracted from Look Homeward, Angel.*
for subsequent laboratory studies of implicit personality theory (Kim & Rosenberg, 1980; Rosenberg, 1977). The measure reflects Wolfe’s beliefs about which traits tend to go together in a person and which do not, as well as the similarity in meaning of certain traits (e.g., Gara & Rosenberg, 1981; Shweder, 1977). As in other studies of personality perception, it is not necessary to separate these two components in order to identify the underlying dimensions of perception. What is more problematic, as noted earlier, is the symmetry assumption in the measure. Nevertheless, the trait space provides a familiar and useful perspective as well as a contrast for the newly developed HICLAS analysis.

Two of the most interpretable dimensions in the five-dimensional solution are shown in Fig. 4. These two dimensions correspond almost exactly to two properties of the traits. One property, family-nonfamily, is based on the proportion of times Wolfe attributed any given trait to a member of his immediate family, including each of his chronological selves, relative to its total frequency of occurrence among the characters. The second property, male-female, is based on the proportion of times Wolfe attributed any given trait to a male character relative to its total frequency of occurrence among the characters.

The multiple correlation between the family-nonfamily property and the trait space is .97 (p < .0001) and between the male-female property and the space is .53 (p < .007). It should be noted that there is nothing inherent in the scaling methodology or in the measurement of the properties, per se, that would necessarily produce significant correlations between the configuration and these properties. The correlation for family-nonfamily is empirically determined by the degree to which Wolfe tended to describe family members with certain traits and nonfamily with other traits. Similarly, the correlation of the male-female property is determined by the degree to which he tended to describe male characters in one way and female characters in another.

The correlation of .97 for the family-nonfamily is unusually high for naturalistic data. Wolfe obviously saw certain sharp differences between family, including self, and nonfamily. These differences can be discerned in Fig. 4 by comparing the trait content in the lower (nonfamily) part of the space with the upper (family) part. One difference is that traits ascribed to nonfamily refer primarily to physical traits, whereas the family traits include a large proportion of psychological traits. Another difference is that the psychological traits attributed primarily to nonfamily, for example, gentle, soft, elegant, shy, contrast in evaluative tone and "depth" with such core family traits as alone, desperate, dark fantasies, life of pain.

The predominance of physical traits in Wolfe’s descriptions of nonfamily members is characteristic of the way a child describes people (e.g., Livesley & Bromley, 1973; Peevers & Secord, 1973) and, as such, may reflect his ability to recreate and describe his childhood experiences. However, attention to physical traits also predominates in our initial impressions of others and in casual rela-
Fig. 4. Two dimensions from the five-dimensional configuration of traits from Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*. Self-attributions during the 3–5 age period are denoted with a C superscript; self-attributions during the 16–20 age period are denoted with an A superscript.
tionships and, as such, is a phenomenon not limited to children. Thus, the emphasis on the physical traits of nonfamily may also reflect Wolfe's social isolation from people outside of his family. The difference between family and nonfamily in the content of psychological traits is consistent with this interpretation.

The male–female property, although significantly related to the configuration with its $R$ of .53, is not as interpretative of the space as is the family–nonfamily property. That is, there are traits in the space not well located in terms of Wolfe's actual attribution of them to males and females. A glaring misplacement is mustache (lower left quadrant). On the other hand, the location of handsome, big, vulgar, powerful on the female side does indeed correspond to his attribution of them primarily to females. Overall, the kinds of traits Wolfe tended to ascribe to males and to females do not seem particularly unusual.

The multidimensional configuration can also be used to portray Wolfe's view of himself during the various periods of his youth. This is done by identifying in the configuration the traits he ascribed to himself during any given age period. Figure 4 illustrates this approach. The traits he attributed to himself during each of two age periods are identified: the C superscript for a childhood period (3–5) and the A superscript for the adult period (16–20s). A comparison of these two periods reveal a number of things about Wolfe's view of his personality development. From early childhood on, he identified himself almost exclusively with traits that he saw in certain other family members, particularly males; that is, traits in the upper right quadrant. The two intervening age periods (6–11 and 12–15), which are not shown in the figure, show progressively more of the traits in this quadrant being attributed to self. By the time he is a young adult, he sees himself as having acquired the bulk of these family traits. We also see that, as a young adult, he has added to his view of himself for the first time a scattering of traits which are not exclusively family traits (the lower two quadrants in Fig. 4).

The HICLAS analysis described next provides a more formal structural representation of the relations among the successive age periods.

A series of HICLAS analyses was performed to determine the optimal rank (number of "dimensions") for the data from the standpoint of interpretability as well as goodness of fit. It was found that in order to obtain an interpretable output with minimal rank it was best to use a rational starting point based on a hierarchical clustering (Johnson, 1967) of the traits. The HICLAS solution of rank 8, shown in Fig. 5, was selected as the most interpretable and most parsimonious solution.

Because this structure is more complex than those given earlier, the diagram is drawn somewhat differently. That is, some people including age-related selves are above the horizontal center of the diagram and some people are below, so as not to clutter up the diagram. The bottom trait classes are identified with the letters A through H and their content is listed at the bottom of Fig. 5. For
A: bitter; dark (complexion); thin face
B: alone; desperate; dark fantasies; long (body frame); lonely; life of pain; proud; sensual; shame; stranger
C: big (body frame); brooding; desires (various); fantasized; fear(ful); (filled with) terror
D: nervous; passion(ate); thin; wild
E: kind
F: big (body parts); drank; eager; needs (various); sensitive; straight (body frame); vulgar
G: grey eyes; old; red (complexion); sallow; shaven; small eyes; yellow (complexion)
H: black hair; bright; heavy (build); loose lips; scarred; scotch; triumphant
FATHER: confused life; sad; savage. FATHER AND MOTHER: intense; hunger (various).
MABEL: humorous; vitality. BEN: lost; powerful (strength); sick; white (complexion).
FAMILY TRAITS WITH NO SPECIFIC FAMILY EXEMPLAR: gaunt; liked money; superstitious; quiet; generous; mad(ness); strange; hard.
RESIDUAL: gentle; soft; elegant; shy; beautiful; young; wise; country manner; (plus 19 physical trait categories)

Fig. 5. HICLAS structure of persons and age-related selves in Look Homeward, Angel. Each number in parentheses is the goodness-of-fit of the person in the structure. Heavy lines are used to connect Wolfe’s age-related selves.
example, Mrs. Roberts, Wolfe's favorite schoolteacher, is associated with class D, consisting of nervous, passionate, thin, wild. TW:6–11 is also associated with class D. Moreover, class D is associated with all selves and others that are supersets of Mrs. Roberts or TW:6–11; these are Brother Fred and Sister Mabel (below the horizontal center) and TW:12–15, TW:16–20s, Brother Ben, and Father (above the horizontal center).

There are also a few trait classes that are superset trait classes. They are listed in the figure as associated with one of the following: Father, Mother, both, Mabel, Ben, the family generally. This means that any character that is a subset of the given character has the associated traits as well. Also listed are the "residual" (R) traits. They are primarily nonfamily traits and, according to the HICLAS analysis, are so scattered among the characters that no specific classes were found among them.

A family member is usually a superset. Fred, for example, spans two trait classes, D and E, while Mabel spans these two trait classes as well as classes C and F. As in previous diagrams of a HICLAS solution, when the descriptions of one person subsume those of another, that person is connected to some of their trait classes through other person(s). Thus, for example, Mabel's possession of trait classes D and E is shown by a single line to Fred, who also possesses D and E, rather than by lines from Mabel directly to D and E. The goodness-of-fit value for each person is shown in the parentheses in Fig. 5 next to each person.

With HICLAS we can trace Wolfe's implicit view of his development in terms of the traits subsumed by each successive age-related self. Figure 5 shows explicitly how a later self emerged from an earlier self and also identifies the people that were likely models for these age-related selves.

TW:0–2 is among the residuals. That is, the structure does not include Wolfe's infancy period, in which he described himself primarily with unique traits (e.g., "shiny," "tiny acorn," "imp") and not in terms of any of the basic classes in the figure—understandable for someone describing his infancy. The figure shows that, in characterizing his preadolescent development, Wolfe tended to emphasize one class of traits at 3–5 and another at 6–11. The fits, however, are rather low. The reason is that the traits Wolfe attributed to himself during these childhood periods are scattered among family traits classes other than C and D. The fit improves and the picture clarifies in the adolescent period in that it is at this point where he attributes the bulk of the traits in three main family classes, B, C, and D, to himself. Also interesting to note is the increasing superordinacy of self with age: a younger self is generally subsumed by an older self. This result is a consequence of the way he actually described himself at each age period and not an artifact of the analysis.

3It should be noted that three of the siblings are among the residuals. This is probably understandable from the fact that two of these siblings, Effie and Frank, left home and moved away from Asheville when Thomas was quite young and that the third sibling, Grover, died when Thomas was 4 years old.
During the period from ages 3 to 15 he views himself as very much like his father and only somewhat like his mother. Note especially that the mother has a sizeable class of traits (H) not shared by Wolfe or any other family member. It is only in the postadolescent period that his identity shifts away from the father to some degree, both in the traits he sees in his father and not in himself and in the traits he sees in himself and not in his father.

Thus, Wolfe's models were primarily his father and his brother Ben. Although scholars of Wolfe sometimes comment on his strong attachment to his mother, and this may be so, the analysis shows that his primary identification is with his father and Ben. The identification of "models" is, of course, an interpretation of the fact that Wolfe attributed to himself certain classes of traits he also saw in his father and Ben.\(^4\) The inclusion of Mrs. Roberts in the structure, albeit marginally, probably reflects a "projection" (Baldwin's "eject") rather than identification since she was his teacher after he attributed the traits to himself.

The analysis also identifies ego-alien traits—the not-me (not in the Sullivanian sense). There are two distinct aspects of the ego-alien component of Wolfe's socius—one elaborated and the other unelaborated. To identify these two aspects of not-me, we first identify his most comprehensive description of himself as his characterization of ego. This is, in effect, his postadolescent self (16–20s) since it subsumes all his younger selves. Thus, Wolfe spans the leftmost four of the eight trait classes. This leaves four other family trait classes that fall into the elaborated ego-alien social self.

This aspect of the ego–ego-alien contrast also corresponds, but only in part, to a contrast he saw within the family. Most notable is the fact that Mabel and Fred are not characterized by a core family cluster B (alone, desperate, dark fantasies, and so on) and are otherwise described somewhat more positively than other family members. With some exaggeration, perhaps, Fred was to say many years later, "I think with our family the two who were most opposite in temperament all the way through were Tom and myself" (F. Wolfe, 1971, p. 113).

The second, unelaborated aspect of the ego-alien component is the traits he saw in nonfamily. The basis for saying that this component is unelaborated is clear from the set-theoretical analysis. That is, Wolfe not only saw self (and family, except for Mother—class H) as very different from other members of the community, a contrast that we have already seen in the multidimensional scaling, but he also created no clear trait patterns in his description of most of the nonfamily characters in LHA. Almost all of the nonfamily characters and their associated sets of traits were represented as residuals.

Asymmetric elaboration of contrasts is probably not an unusual feature in person perception and in personality organization. What is noteworthy here is

\(^4\)The spurious effects sometimes associated with the use of questionnaires to study modeling and identity do not seem likely here. See Brofenbrenner (1958) for a full discussion of the theoretical and methodological issues of studying modeling.
that the degree of elaboration corresponds so closely to a family–nonfamily distinction. That is, although the analysis includes over 100 persons, there are almost no nonfamily members who emerged as models for self or as elaborated contrasts of self. Also, the tendency to view the self as rather negative is unusual.

The picture of Wolfe's social personality that emerges from this study of LHA fits with the fact that he rarely developed close relationships with people in his adult life, in spite of the numerous diverse social contacts that were available to him when LHA catapulted him into great fame. In his psychobiography of Wolfe, Snyder (1971, p. 70) writes,

Thomas Wolfe's loneliness was his most pervasive personality characteristic. He began to suffer from this as a very young boy, and he never overcame his sense of social isolation. Probably when his mother took him to live with her at the Old Kentucky Home [the boarding house], he felt his first severe sense of loneliness. Once he wrote to Mrs. Roberts that he had two roofs and no home from the time he was a little boy. Although Tom was somewhat lonely the first year at college his last three years at North Carolina were among the happiest of his life. But at Harvard his almost continuous loneliness began, with only two brief periods of happiness, or of relating to people, later in his life—the periods when he was close to Aline Bernstein (from 1925 to 1928), and with Max Perkins (from 1930 to 1936).

Snyder also cites Wolfe's own acknowledged discomfort with people, as expressed in his numerous letters, and his own explanation of it. He told Mabel in 1933 "the habit of loneliness, once formed, grows on a man from year to year and he wanders across the face of the earth and has no home and is an exile, and he is never able to break out of the prison of his own loneliness again, no matter how much he wants to" (Snyder, 1971, p. 72). Snyder's analysis and Wolfe's own explanation of his loneliness are in accord with the literature on the relation between childhood experiences and adult loneliness (Shaver & Rubinstein, 1980).

b. Perceptions Unique to Self, to Family Members, and Others. We now turn to the traits Wolfe attributed to one person only, and only once in the whole book. Some of these singleton categories refer to unusual physical traits: bulbous eyes, beanpole of a girl, wagnerian breasts; others to relatively unusual identities or highly specialized roles: son of the bishop, artist, butcher, milliner. Of the unique traits with a more psychological content, there are trait terms that seem similar in meaning to some of Wolfe's high-frequency terms but add a special nuance: patronizing, amiable, cheerful, daring. They vary in their frequency of occurrence in common parlance, the latter two terms having more common usage than the first two. A number of the unique traits are simply modifiers of high-frequency terms, another way of adding a special nuance in the perception of a particular individual: electric (energy), heavy (sensuousness), hot (pride), jet (black hair). Finally, there are Wolfe's unique poetic phrasings: air of travel, cruel openings of her life.

In everyday life, these unique characteristics are likely to refer to attributes that help the perceiver identify and give special meaning to a particular indi-
vidual. As such, they are an important part of the socius, a reflection perhaps of Baldwin's "accommodating self." This aspect of person perception has not been extensively investigated, certainly not at the individual level. This is not surprising since these unique characteristics are likely to be even more idiosyncratic than the categories frequently used by an individual perceiver. They are also likely to refer to perceptual categories that are difficult to articulate. Nor are they amenable to any structural analysis. The distinction between recurrent and singleton categories is akin to Baron's (1980, 1986) distinction in person perception between conceptual and perceptual cognition, respectively.

A large naturalistic corpus of traits from the work of an articulate writer such as Thomas Wolfe offers an opportunity to examine the nature of the singleton categories and their distribution in the socius. The analysis of these categories was guided by two questions about their distribution. One question is whether there is systematic shift in the proportion of unique traits that Wolfe attributed to himself as he was growing up. A second question is whether the uniqueness (or its converse, the stereotypy) with which a person is perceived is systematically related to the relationship of that person to Wolfe. In particular, is there a difference between family and nonfamily in the proportion of unique traits relative to shared traits?

With regard to the first question, Fig. 6 shows a plot of the proportion of singleton traits relative to all the traits that Wolfe attributed to himself during each of the five successive age periods. The results are clear. The proportion of

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

Fig. 6. Proportion of unique traits Thomas Wolfe attributed to self during successive age periods. Also shown is the average proportion of unique traits attributed to family ($N = 7$) and to nonfamily ($N = 258$).
singletons is highest in very early childhood and in adolescence. Although these findings are based on Wolfe's retrospective self-descriptions, they are in line with ideas about actual developmental patterns. That is, the elaborate conceptual system of traits that comes to dominate one's perception of self (and others) begins to emerge during very early childhood. The jump in proportion of unique traits during adolescence (12–15) is readily interpretable as a period in which one's conception of self, although rather well developed, typically undergoes reexamination and possible change. A reasonable conjecture is that the jump in proportion of unique traits occurs during any protracted period of intense self-examination. Adolescence is simply one such period (Cohler, 1982). The proportion of singletons drops again after adolescence, at least for the time of his life at which LHA ends.

What is also noteworthy about these findings is that they are found in a retrospective account. The results lend additional credence to the oft-repeated assertion among Wolfe scholars that he was deeply dedicated to incorporating his experiences into his literary creations. It also seems unlikely that Wolfe was guided by an explicit rule as to which age to emphasize the more unique aspects of self-perception.

With regard to the second question, Fig. 6 shows the proportion of unique characteristics that Wolfe attributed to members of the immediate family and to nonfamily members. The difference is large and significant. Family members are less stereotyped than nonfamily members. That is, Wolfe noticed (described) proportionately more unique characteristics in people about whom he also had a more elaborated conceptual picture.

This result is perhaps surprising and paradoxical at first blush. Let us suppose, however, that the unique characteristics we notice about another are an index of our interest in them. Viewed in this way, the results show that intimates are more likely than others both to attract our interest (unique traits) and to engage our elaborated conceptual system (shared traits). I would also conjecture that when this interest decreases for intimates, that is, when our view of an intimate is too dominated by the elaborated conceptual system or when the unique noticings increase for casuals, these shifts may signal an important change in the relationship—the first in the direction of distancing and the second toward closeness.

5. Life after Look Homeward, Angel

Thomas Wolfe had less than a decade of life after the publication of LHA. These were tumultuous and traumatic years for him. He severed his relationship with Aline Bernstein—his one intimate relationship with a woman—with considerable pain. He also terminated a close professional relationship with his editor, Maxwell Perkins, ostensibly because Perkins had become too intrusive in cutting his manuscripts. There are indications in his writings, his letters, and his talks that he was experiencing a major shift or crisis of some sort in personality.
The bold outlines of this shift can be discerned. For one thing, his preoccupa-
tion with his family and with their impact on him as a child diminished. This may
have been the result of his having written the autobiography. A major theme of
his second novel, Of Time and the River (1935), was the search for an ideal
father with whom he could identify. This "search for father", as he termed it,
then diminished also and he seemed to enter a "second cycle" (Slack, 1968, p.
106). The "first cycle," a strong identification with his actual father as revealed
in the present study, and the search for an ideal father "of a strength and
wisdom . . . to which the belief and power of his own life could be united"
(Wolfe, 1936/1983, pp. 37–38) was being replaced with concerns for "econom-
ics, politics, government, the organized structure of society" (Wolfe,
1938/1983, p. 124) and how they shaped the lives of people. In the context of the
present study, these concerns may be interpreted as an attempt to elaborate the
nonfamily contrast, albeit not necessarily in his interpersonal life. In any event,
he attempted to bring his sociocultural concerns into his last novel, You Can't Go
Home Again (1940, posthumous).

The nature of this psychological struggle to transform the personality he por-
trayed in LHA is a most interesting question for adult personality development.
His premature death prevents us from plotting the full course of this transfor-
mation. Snyder (1971), in his psychobiography, speculates that Wolfe's "person-
ality problems would have been likely to become more, not less, acute" (p.
228), which is to say that the elaborated side of self would continue to dominate.
We saw this in Wolfe's account of his adolescence where, in spite of his in-
creased attention to self (as indexed by the rise in unique characteristics). he
converged on the core family traits in young adulthood. Snyder's prognosis
apparently rests on the notion that a midlife crisis, in which Wolfe may have
again undergone an intensive self-examination, would have a similar, perhaps
less felicitous outcome.

It would require a very powerful theory of personality indeed to make a
reliable prediction about the course of his life had he not died prematurely. At
best such a theory would also need to factor in the cultural and interpersonal
exigencies of his life. This is not to say that the social personality structure
established in childhood can be discarded. On the contrary, it is within this
structure that possibilities exist for incorporating and elaborating aspects of not-
me so that the conception of me is altered and enlarged.

V. Summary and Conclusions

The article opened with an overview of the historical antecedents of social self
starting with James and Baldwin who, at the turn of the century, first adumbrated
the conception of self as a social psychological phenomenon. Their ideas, in
turn, played an important role in the further elaboration by Cooley and Mead of self from a sociological and cultural perspective. The influence of these seminal thinkers in early American psychology and sociology is then traced to modern conceptions of social self in psychology, sociology, and social psychiatry.

Baldwin's conception of social self—the socius, as he termed it—is particularly relevant to the work described in this article. For Baldwin, the socius consists of two aspects, ego (view of self) and alter (view of others), inextricably related in development and function. He argued that the socius is the self and is personality. The resurgence of interest in self in social psychology, as well as recent developments of a rigorous empirical methodology for studying the socius, provide a new zeitgeist for reclaiming a conceptual bond between personality and social psychology that has social self at the nexus.

A new, set-theoretical model is described in the article for representing the content and organization of habitual social self, that is, the relatively stable views and recurrent affective experiences one has of self and others. In this model, there are two hierarchical structures of classes (sets), one for ego and alter elements and another for the perceptual and affective units (attributes) variously associated with these ego and alter elements. Ego and alter elements are put into the same class when they share the same attributes; analogously, attributes are classed together when they characterize the same ego and alter elements. The structures are hierarchical in that superset-subset relations are specified among classes. Association relations that connect these two structures are also specified in the model. A computer-based algorithm, dubbed HICLAS, is used for fitting this model to data.

The rest of the article is then taken up with recent empirical tests and applications of the model, using both laboratory data and naturalistic materials, particularly autobiography. Free-response methods for describing self and others were used in the laboratory studies. The fidelity with which such data portray a person's social personality depends on obtaining from a subject descriptions of a representative sample of others. It also depends on establishing a commitment by the subject for going beyond superficial descriptions of self and others. The same consideration applies in the selection of naturalistic materials. Thomas Wolfe's autobiographical novel, Look Homeward, Angel, the subject in this article of an analysis of the socius in autobiography, appears to satisfy the desiderata of a highly personal document.

An important psychological characteristic of ego and alter classes, measurable from the hierarchical structure, is the degree of elaboration of a class. Elaborated classes are those that are supersets of other classes and/or contain a large number of ego and alter elements. Applications of the set-theoretical model to laboratory data show that elaborated classes are the ones that contain self and significant others. The laboratory studies also reveal how self is elaborated in the context of others. For example, in a college student sample, it was found that for each
subject ego had at least one attribute class in common with mother and at least
one attribute class in common with father. A study of young adult schizophrenics
reveals that anomalies in the elaboration of ego can be a sensitive indicator of
psychopathology. These studies also show explicitly how attributes associated
with persons who are significant in one's early development (mother, father,
certain siblings) participate in the elaboration of self and others in adulthood such
as lover, spouse, close friends, and so on.

An especially interesting finding in the study of Wolfe is that significant (also
elaborated) others also have proportionately more unique attributes associated
with them. Unique attributes are the traits Wolfe attributed to one person only
and are interpreted here as an index of interest in the person. Thus, intimates
were more likely than others to attract his interest (unique traits) and to engage
his elaborated conceptual system (shared traits). This finding is discussed for its
implications about dynamics of interpersonal attraction.

Contrast was also found to be a useful organizational property of the socius,
particularly in combination with elaboration. One pole of a contrast tends to
dominate in that it is the more elaborated part of the socius. The notion of
contrast was particularly useful in the study of Wolfe, where people other than
family and self in Wolfe's early life are quite unelaborated as psychological
beings. This extreme contrast between family and nonfamily is consonant with
biographical information about his social isolation throughout his life.

Concepts of contrast and elaboration can be found in a number of theories of
personality, including those not explicitly social psychological in orientation.
Contrast is central to Kelly's (1955) structural theory of personality, for exam-
ple, as is elaboration to his concept of "elaborative choice." Freud (1900/1958,
IV) saw the importance of "contraries" and argued for their psychological unity
from observations he had made of dream material. Jung's (1923) personality
typology is explicitly predicated on the notion of contrast within the individual,
with one side of a dichotomy such as introversion–extroversion generally more
dominant (elaborated) in the individual.

The studies described in this article illustrate the applicability of the set-
thetical model both to naturalistic and to laboratory data and, as such, also
create an important bridge and conceptual interplay between these two comple-
mentary data sources. Although idiographically based, these studies are yielding
detailed information for fleshing out nomothetic principles about the content and
organization of social personality. Still, the goal of psychology is an understand-
ing of the individual human being, and nomothetic principles must be systemat-
ically integrated into the analysis of an individual personality to be of service in
this goal. A sharable methodology that yields an idiographic picture of social
personality would seem to be an important component in such an integration. For
example, the analyses of Wolfe's autobiography provide a framework for under-
standing what he says to us about his experience of self and others and also a
framework by which certain particulars of his life can be interpreted and understood. The analyses themselves are quite general in applicability and, as such, are nomothetes, law givers.

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