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# Toward an Anarchist Theory of Self: Wilderness, Actualization and Authority

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TOWARD AN ANARCHIST THEORY OF SELF: WILDERNESS, ACTUALIZATION  
AND AUTHORITY

by

JOSEPH AMOS GARCIA

(Under the Direction of William D. McIntosh)

ABSTRACT

This research investigated essential components of optimal human functioning. An anarchist model was used to emphasize the autonomous nature of an optimally functioning self. Utilizing Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs model, Leonard Martin's I-D compensation theory, fundamental principles of anarchist theory and environmental feedback paradigms it has been shown that time spent during backpacking experiences in the wilderness may simulate immediate return social systems, allow for recognition of need fulfillment and ultimately increase self-actualization. In addition it was shown that materialism, via an ownership index, is negatively correlated with actualization. Utilizing a backward regression analysis the resulting model supports the hypothesis that immediate return social systems as well as anti-materialist sentiments contribute to optimal function as indicated by the Short Index of Self Actualization. The results lend support to the anarchist theory of self as a meta model of optimal human function, socially as well as individually.

INDEX WORDS: Anarchism, Anarchy, Actualization, Authority, Self, I-D compensation, Terror management, Optimal functioning, Wilderness

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A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my son, Sammael Leanza Garcia, born on December, 19<sup>th</sup> 2007.

Tao Te Ching 44

Fame or self: Which matters more?

Self or wealth: Which is more precious?

Gain or loss: Which is more painful?

He who is attached to things will suffer much.

He who saves will suffer heavy loss.

A contented man is never disappointed.

He who knows when to stop does not find himself in trouble.

He will stay forever safe.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

One of the overarching themes binding the theories of self has been that the self, or the true self, is the source of psychological balance and health. Freud advocated a deep analysis of self in order to become free of hysteria. Psychoanalysis, developed by Joseph Breuer, was taken up and further developed by Freud. In this process the suppressed source of the symptoms of hysteria are excavated from the unconscious and confronted consciously. The ultimate function of this process is to consciously confront and integrate previously unconscious memories in order that the self might become less fractured and consequently emotionally unified. Through this integration, the power of an individual's unconscious memory to manifest in physical symptoms such as hysteria is alleviated (Freud, 1955).

Carl Jung postulated that the true Self is attained by individuation from social archetypes. Integration of these, as well as the conscious and unconscious aspects of Self, lead not only to a holistic view of Self but a healthy independence. Jung explains that the unconscious aspects of Self, if repressed, can result in psychosis. In the case of ignoring this aspect of Self torment by the very forces one is trying to ignore would ensue. This torment can take the form of dreams and sometimes possession in which the unconscious seems to be "acting out" in an attempt to restore natural balance. Jung called this union of the conscious and unconscious the "transcendent function" (Jung, 1959a, 1959c). Alfred Adler referred to a similar function as the "striving for perfection". He explained that man struggles against his own feelings of inferiority and that overcoming this is followed

by the development of abilities and talents that serve ultimately to enhance security and peace within the individual (Adler, 1956).

Abraham Maslow's term for this was "self-actualization". He explained that actualization of the self is a higher order need that can only be activated after having achieved lower order needs. He described this process as a dynamic hierarchy in which actualization did not mark a completion of need acquisition but a type of developmental entropy. That is, a person continually travels through actualization in a never ending cycle of self discovery (Maslow, 1968).

One theoretical perspective that has been hinted at but seldom confronted directly is anarchism. The philosophy of anarchism can be seen as the quintessence of individuation in which the self has become a fully functioning autonomous being.

From an anarchist perspective there is no higher moral authority than the self. Political anarchist philosophy asserts that the individual should not be governed by any outside force; the individual should be guided by intrinsic good manners. By good manners is meant a sense of social instinct. Adler refers to this indirectly in his essay "The Necessity for Communal Life". In this essay Adler describes the need for community from the perspective of social Darwinism. The individual is weak and so has created community and evolved within community in order to survive in a hostile environment (Adler, 1956). This survival mechanism necessitates good manners and a deep understanding of what Adler called "the ironclad logic of communal living". In this case the human is a free agent, entering into social contracts and obligations by agreement rather than by the imposition of any outside authoritarian force (Kropotkin, 1903). In anarchist theory of self (ATS), individuals become the supreme authority

concerning their own personal mental health. In this case, the ultimate analyst is the self. Individuals must take personal responsibility for their own mental states.

It has been argued that the anarchist political philosophy would not work as a state of society. Images of social chaos, thieves and murderers running amuck abound. This could also be a potential argument against the use of anarchism as a model of mental health. Considering the state of our social world as it stands now, one must ask if the use of excessive governmental force has really resulted in social peace (Nozick, 1974). This argument against anarchism also ignores the natural social tendency of our species. We are, like other higher order primates, social creatures. This natural socialism necessitates a basic cohesion and maintenance of social bonds. Perhaps it is not that an anarchist society would not work, but that the means of achieving it via politics will not work. The point at which political anarchists fail perhaps may be picked up by psychology. That is a free, autonomous society cannot be achieved until we are psychologically and individually free. In this way, society would be composed of actualized beings engaged in a social system based on mutual respect. Working from the micro to the macro, the transition would be smooth, if perhaps a bit time consuming.

However, the fear of total chaos in the face of sudden governmental collapse is not unfounded. ATS proposes that this situation can be modeled using the opponent-process theory of motivation (Solomon & Corbit, 1978). This theory states that by subtracting the opponent reaction (the brains attempt to counter extreme physiological or emotional reactions) from the primary affective reaction (the initial reaction to any stimuli) the result is the observed behavior. Taking this model and adapting it to social circumstance, government rule may be seen to activate a primary affective state. When

this occurs, the need of the individual to self regulate moral and social behavior decreases, as the state of government rule has taken over this naturally intrinsic role. The problem with this extrinsic primary state is that if it were suddenly swept away, we would be left with nothing but the opponent process. The opponent process, in this case reverting to a morally depraved society with no skills to self-regulate social action, would be all that remained. The initial response would be chaos and it would take time for self-regulatory processes to regain their original level. We can avoid this detoxification period by slowly but steadily rebuilding the intrinsic motivation for social maintenance. Essentially, society can be healed by first healing the members of society.

An unfortunate example of opponent process at work may be seen in the bystander effect, often illustrated by the story of Kitty Genovese, who was brutally murdered by stabbing in the streets of New York city. Her neighbors, numbering around forty, watched her being beaten and raped for thirty minutes with three intermissions during which her assailant left and returned (Aronson, 2004). The bystander effect has been attributed primarily to a diffusion of responsibility. In the case of Genovese, the bystanders perhaps did nothing because they believed that one of the other forty people would call the police. However, ATS posits that this is explained not by a diffusion of responsibility to the immediate crowd but by diffusion of responsibility to the state itself. The primary affective reaction is represented by police control of the criminal element of society. When there was no police action taken, there was likewise no reaction by the bystanders. The opponent process at this time was in effect and resulted in a complete lack of aid to Genovese. The bystanders had been alleviated of their personal responsibility by the state. In essence, the state has crippled people's ability to act

autonomously even in cases of life or death. ATS does not challenge the fundamental explanation of bystander effect; it merely takes it further by suggesting that the ultimate root cause for the effect lay in the hands of the state and an institutionalized helplessness.

ATS views the self as a dynamic force that follows the laws of nature. The anarchist principle states that the human condition--namely civilization--will function smoothly and properly if allowed to follow the natural order or natural law rather than those imposed upon it by an institution or government. This reasoning implies that by taking responsibility from the people in the form of rigid laws and institutionalized order, people temporarily forget that they themselves are ultimately responsible for these things. Rather than individuals deciding what is right or just, the state does this for them. This state of affairs cripples the emotional health of its citizenry in much the same way that being bed ridden will atrophy the muscles of the body.

From an ATS perspective, the self thrives when free of the conditioning of a mentally ill system, namely society and the state. This allows the individual to find the self and then adopt social constructs willfully and with intent rather than blindly. With the self free from the confines of this sightless social conformity the individual may then, and only then, begin the process of discovering self as a natural, optimally functioning entity.

Breaking free from one's social conditioning is not easy. In fact this part of the process may be dangerous. It can be likened to entering naked into the wilderness. The time before self-discovery may be lonely and terrifying (Jung, 1959c; Irving & Williams, 2001). A similar situation has been found in the realm of Gestalt therapy where "...extensive experience with Gestalt therapy will likely make patients more unfit for or

unadjusted to contemporary society. However, at the same time, they may hopefully be more motivated to work toward changing the world into a more compassionate and productive milieu in which human beings can develop, work, and enjoy their full humanness” (Shepherd, 1970, p.238).

Though the individual may be viewed more accurately as a veritable fractal manifestation of selves, for the purpose of this paper we will focus on four aspects of self that seem equidistant taxonomically. These four aspects of the self are not intended to be viewed as stages in a developmental sense but perhaps more accurately as gates through which the self should pass. Becoming stuck at any point in a stage-like fashion would result in stagnation and psychological ill-health. It is better to view these divisions as gates in order to keep salient the need to pass through, rather than linger at any given point. These gates include the interface-self, the observer-self, the shadow-self and the actualized-self.

There have been many theories and religions that have viewed the self in a similar taxonomic “gateway” fashion. The Buddhists consider the process to be a means of letting go of the ego and attaining illumination by eliminating desire. Within the tradition of Hinduism, the transcendence of the self is a primary goal. The pantheon of Hindu gods are seen as internal manifestations. These gods are not external autonomous beings but aspects of the psyche of the Hindi (Scott & Hiatt, 1996). Reminiscent of Jung’s archetypes, the gods can further be understood as divisions of the self. Considered in this way, the Hindu system of self-division is immense. The goal, however, remains the same: transcendence of the ego and unification of the divided self.

ATS borrows from theoretical models such as Freud, Jung, and Maslow, as well as from eastern religious tradition in its taxonomy of self. To begin, the interface-self is the aspect of the self that is in constant contact with the world, interacting in it and reacting to it. This aspect of self involves a symbiotic dynamic relationship between all aspects of the self and the external world. In order to pass through this self and begin the journey inward, there must be a strong element of security that is related to the Maslowian hierarchy of needs. A further requirement of passing through this gate is summed up in the Hindu metaphor, “polishing the mirror of the mind” which explains the method by which the journey of transcendence begins; “...one should allow oneself to experience the emotion, observe it with detachment, and allow it to dissipate” (Scott & Hiatt, 1996, p. 109).

To observe the interface-self is in effect the activation of the observer-self. Utilizing this gate, one begins the process of detachment from the external world and one’s relations in it. This is a step away from conditioning. Unchecked, the observer-self takes on a function similar to that of the Wizard of Oz, safely behind the curtain of the interface-self attempting to control how others view and interact with the self. This aspect of the self is consistent with impression management theory (Goffman, 1959). While this self focus can be stressful, it also serves to begin the process of individuation by leading to awareness of the self as an entity separate from the world. This gate can also be the most dangerous, as it leads one into contact with the shadow-self.

The shadow was first proposed by Carl Jung (1959b). As is described below, the high self-awareness of the observer-self combined with the insecurities of the shadow can lead to the desire for escape, and this escape can be costly. The shadow contains those



aspects of the self that people do not want to think about, much less confront in any meaningful way. The shadow generates fear and concern that aspects of our being will be undesirable, or cause us to be outcast. ATS views the shadow self as a gatekeeper of actualization similar to the mythology of the archangel who guarded the gate of Eden after the Judeo-Christian fall of man. People desire the garden but cannot bear to face the darkest aspects of self, or worse, rejection from our peers, to get there.

Beyond this shadow-self is the actualized-self. This self was first proposed by Kurt Goldstein and elaborated by Abraham Maslow as the primary higher order need. Maslow's description of self-actualization included a list of people that by his estimation were actualized. By analysis of these personalities he developed a list of attributes that he deemed to be those of actualized people. This list implied that actualized people were reality centered, problem centered, had a different perception of means and ends, sought solitude, were autonomous, resisted enculturation, had a non-hostile sense of humor, accepted self and others, were spontaneous, had humility, respected human kinship, had strong ethics, and had peak experiences which Maslow described as ego transcending and religious in nature (Maslow, 1968). In this light the peak experience may be related to the ego transcendence discussed above in relation to Buddhist and Hindu doctrine.

As discussed previously, in order to pass through the gates of ATS into actualization, basic needs must be met. These basic needs were discussed extensively by Maslow in the context of necessary requirements for actualization. He expounded upon the idea of human needs from their most basic forms (e.g. physiological sustenance), to their highest form (actualization). Intermediate stages exist between these polarized needs. Within this intermediate realm lay social needs and love needs.

Maslow utilized two broad categories through which to divide his needs. The lower needs he labeled basic needs, and the upper, growth needs. Lower needs include things such as food, water, shelter etc. These basic needs also include the needs of the self that are acquired from others, or interpersonal needs. In large part the fulfillment of these needs require conversation with the observer-self, as the observer-self is the evaluator of whether these needs are met or not. Until these needs are fulfilled they are considered deficiency-needs (d-needs).

D-needs, or more properly, d-motivations, are the motivations generated by the shadow-self. This is the nagging, often torturous, realm of insecurity. When entering the realm of the shadow-self we are entering the realm of self that is incomplete. The shadow draws off of our insecurities. In this way the shadow-self serves to hinder the very growth that would serve to move us away from the shadow-self and toward actualization.

Maslow described growth motivation as an autonomous enterprise in which the individual explores the world freely and without restriction. This type of exploration can only be enacted during times of freedom from insecurity. In his schema a person will move toward growth and consequently away from safety. This is not to say that safety needs are not met; quite to the contrary. Safety needs are indeed met and have become a non-issue for the growth motivated. This satiation of d-needs allows people to freely and excitedly explore their world, and all the possibilities that this entails.

Once d-motivations have been met the individual may begin the process of actualization. Actualization, as Maslow points out, should not be considered an end, but is itself a perpetual development and satisfaction of growth motivations. Once the d-motivations have been met (physiological, safety & security, belongingness & love, self-

esteem) the person enters a new realm of need: actualization. Maslow (1968) succinctly describes the needs of actualization as;

...ongoing actualization of potentials, capacities and talents, as fulfillment of a mission (or call, fate, destiny, or vocation), as a fuller knowledge of, and acceptance of, the person's own intrinsic nature, as an unceasing trend toward unity, integration or synergy within the person. (p. 25)

In exploring the conditioning aspects of the current social climate, ATS pays special attention to the "resistance to enculturation" aspect of actualization. Negative enculturation can condition a person, through norms, media and institutional education, to be insecure. When this occurs the individual is fixated in a regressed emotional state. Constant threatening stimuli can create and maintain an emotional state in which the individual cannot grow past their d-motivations. Positively, enculturation can serve to create a climate in which the individual feels safe. Basic needs are being met, and the individual is able to explore the world unfettered by lower order needs. In hunter gatherer societies for instance, people may not experience fear of their environment per se, but rather a sense of wonder and drive to explore that is indicative of growth motivation. Any fear of stimuli in this environment would have an adaptive quality and would be in response to direct threat. For instance, it is adaptive to fear a jaguar, as this is a very real and present threat. However this threat can be avoided, thereby lessening the fear. By contrast, to fear something on the order of terrorism is abstract and persistent. This threat cannot be avoided and creates a base level of fear that can create overwhelming insecurity, firmly embedding people in the shadow. It has been suggested that these threats are buffered by our cultural connections. This catch-22 scenario seems to suggest

that the very thing that serves to increase terror offers in itself a reprieve from the terror that it itself has encouraged.

Terror management theory posits that culture is a method by which we ultimately attempt to avoid the terror associated with mortality salience, which in turn is a bi-product of self awareness (Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 1991). ATS posits that culture in and of itself does not serve this purpose but that culture's buffering qualities are dependant upon enculturation (this will be further explored in more detail below). From an ATS perspective, death is relatively inconsequential. This fear or terror is the result of the shadow-self, which threatens everything that we have been conditioned to believe that we are. Thus, the ultimate driving force in life is not fear of death but fear of self. Terror stems from the fear that there will be no true, unadulterated self on the other side of the shadow. When people look toward actualization, the first thing they see is the shadow. From the shadow comes a fear of the entire actualized self concept. In this case fear of self may be derived from fear of social rejection, as the actualized self is very often eccentric and has discontinued its concern for external validation.

Terror management theory cites religion, alignment with cultural values, and having children as methods by which people avoid the issue of their own mortality. Children are a separate issue in ATS as they derive from a biological drive that differs significantly from any drive that has its origins in man-made nonphysical structures. Religion and culture present themselves as abstract ideas that have force and power only because we give them force and power. What these forces do immediately allow for is a separation of self from the actualized self. In this way the self is distracted momentarily and in some cases semi-permanently from the true self. By allowing the individual to be

absorbed in pre-fabricated selves we do not have to face the often treacherous path toward actualized being. Interestingly, Helmuth Kaiser cited very similar human developments (i.e. religion, institutions etc.) as methods through which we avoid the ultimate truth of our individual aloneness. These “delusions of fusion” as he called them were collectively referred to as a universal psychopathology (Kaiser, 1965).

Roy Baumeister has extensively examined the idea of escape from self as an explanation for much of human motivation and behavior (Baumeister, 1990, 1992; Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996; Baumeister & Exline, 2002). His theory examines escape from self as a continuum. At the positive end of this continuum is the escape from self during activities such as “certain states of flow, ecstasy and, religious insight” (Baumeister, 1992, p. 23). At the negative end is suicide. Positive escape from self, Baumeister points out, may be better described as ego dissolution. In this sense the self is not so much being lost as it is being expanded into a greater whole (Baumeister & Exline, 2002), which echoes the theme of Eastern spiritual practices involving meditation and devotion.

ATS would continue this line of reasoning. Awareness of the self in this schema passes through to the shadow. At this point the individual is faced with spiritual crisis. If one can attach a positive perspective to the experience of the shadow and overcome, then actualization will ensue. If on the other hand the person becomes fixed in the shadow and finds no alternative escape, the dangers of this path become imminent.

Baumeister (1990) proposed that suicide was an escape from self. He explained that this decision was in essence a means by which to avoid a damaged sense of self. He expanded on this theme by exploring the idea of self awareness and image. If the person

were both highly self aware and the self image was significantly damaged, the person will seek to escape from this self. Baumeister examined many methods of escape, including eating disorders, alcoholism, and spiritual ego dissolution. The most grim of these alternatives was suicide.

The theory holds an interesting argument against terror management, and implications for ATS. If death is the ultimate fear, then why would one choose death as an escape from the very thing that most efficiently escapes death, the living self? Perhaps the self can be much more treacherous, and much more painful, than death. While death is an inevitable future, it is a phantom, as all future thoughts are. Death of our own being is no more (nor less) real in our minds than memories of lost loved ones. While we have seen death, we have never experienced it. What is real is self, and self can cause real pain here and now.

Baumeister and Scher (1988; cited in Baumeister, 1990) found that negative states of mind as well as high self-awareness lead to suicide as escape from self. High self-awareness runs contrary to the concept of actualization. When people are highly self aware they become hyper-sensitive, not only to their own evaluations, but to the evaluations of others (Baumeister and Scher; 1988; cited in Baumeister, 1990). This hypersensitivity to evaluation from self and others is amplified by the shadow-self, which ultimately becomes the highest of all threats, as the individual in this state sees no other self outside the shadow. When this occurs in its most extreme form the answer is to escape from the self, which in ATS would more specifically be the shadow-self. Whereas the healthy will engage in activities to force awareness elsewhere, the healthiest will

engage in activities to escape from self in a positive self actualizing direction while the ill may seek to escape from the entire self, permanently.

Fear of self and self evaluation has a mythological history. This can be seen in images of the hermit living in self-imposed exile. This situation has its roots in reality, as can be seen by the many eccentrics who have chosen to live in relative isolation. The eccentrics, hermits, monks etc. that have extracted themselves from mainstream society may well be on the actualized side of the spectrum and have lost the need for external evaluation and validation. Essentially, they have passed through the shadow and no longer need reassurance through social comparison.

This break in the image ends in the individual never considering that his or her anxiety, depression or other clinical disorders may in fact be caused by the repression of the natural tendency toward actualization. This fear of being outcast and Kaiser's delusion of fusion, which are supported by cultural myth and media distraction, ultimately stunts the growth of the individual.

Leonard Martin (1999), in I-D compensation theory (Immediate-Delay), offers a similar argument against the idea that we are driven by fear of death. Martin argues that it is equally likely, perhaps more likely, that we are driven by more autotelic forces (Martin, 1999). In this respect I-D compensation theory is consistent with ATS. Martin cites Woodburn (1982) in saying "Fear of death is much higher in cultures that stress self aggrandizement, the accumulation of assets, and the focus on the future and past than in cultures that do not". Martin explains this relationship with the transition from hunter-gatherer society (immediate-return) to agricultural society (delayed-return). Hunter gatherers spend much less time working and planning for the future; in this way they

spend more time living in the present, focusing on family, interpersonal relationships and individual goals (Martin, 1999).

I-D compensation theorizes that much of what people seem to be missing in the quest for true self is immediate feedback on the self. Using the model of the immediate versus the delayed return society, Martin convincingly lays the groundwork for a model of psychological health based on a hunter-gatherer style (immediate-return) social system by stating explicitly that, according to the theory, “individuals function optimally when receiving frequent feedback indicating that they are progressing toward their goals and that their efforts will pay off” (Martin, 1999, p. 197). Delayed-return culture is a state of social being in which individuals work toward projected future goals. In this system the individual may work for years toward a goal that is set in the distant future with little to no feedback on progress or assurance that said goal will actually be met. The immediate-return system, by contrast, gives the individual immediate feedback on progress toward goal acquisition (Martin, 1999).

I-D compensation theory does not advocate a return to any perceived superior state of social being but predicts that as delayed-return society encroaches on the needs of the autonomous self the individual will seek out immediate forms of feedback in other ways. In this way people may break down their larger goals into smaller goals that are more likely to provide immediate feedback. Martin gives the example of a malfunctioning computer. It may not be within the immediate ability of a person writing a paper to fix the computer, but the smaller goal of finding someone who can will give immediate-return gratification as well as indicate progress toward the larger goal of having a functioning computer. The self in this case can function more independently and



with less fear of evaluation, as evaluation feedback is relatively constant. This consistency would tend to create a more secure relationship between self and environment.

ATS as well as anarchist political theory proposes that social interaction should be guided by good manners rather than federal government, and that those good manners imply a system in which a person gives according to ability and receives according to need. The hunter-gatherer (immediate return) society is based on this principle. In these systems an individual's daily effort is also the group's daily sustenance. More importantly, as Martin and Shirk (n.d.) point out in their explanation of reverse dominance hierarchy, the immediate return society is dependant on the principles of autonomy and egalitarianism. The idea of there being a leader is so intrinsically distasteful that there are informal pressures in place to prevent any individual or individuals from acquiring power over other members of the group.

Another aspect of political anarchist philosophy that ties into both ATS and I-D compensation theory is that of property. In most immediate return societies the concept of ownership is foreign. Not only is the idea foreign, but it would be detrimental to the very social structure under which they exist. In these cultures the sharing of acquired resources is vital to social bonding and, more importantly, subsistence. The Yanomamo of Brazil, who are not pure hunter gatherers and are hardly a good example of a peaceful society, hold food sharing in such high regard that they will greet each other by saying "I am hungry!" (Chagnon, 1968).

Pierre-Joseph Proudon (1840) with the war cry “Property is robbery!” called ownership and property one of the pitfalls of government (i.e. agricultural society). He argues:

No extended argument would be required to show that the power to take from a man his thought, his will, his personality, is a power of life and death; and that to enslave a man is to kill him. Why, then, to this other question: What is property! may I not likewise answer, It is robbery, without the certainty of being misunderstood; the second proposition being no other than a transformation of the first? (p.11)

From an ATS perspective, fear of death is more accurately attributed to fear of losing what one owns. Fear of losing one’s monetary assets, land, cattle, crops, etc. In agricultural society we are from the beginning of our enculturation taught to think of our things as the very essence of who we are. If we do not have things we are taught to desire things, to acquire things that we may become more comfortable, model citizens, in essence better people. When we begin to define ourselves as the things we own, we begin to fear the loss of those things. If those things are lost, this signals death, just as death signals the loss of our things. Cultures that are based on the concept of ownership begin looking for ways to either protect the things they own or to lessen the loss of those things by creating afterlife mythologies that can replace the loss with even better things (i.e. gold paved streets and/or mansions in the sky).

How does an ATS perspective reconcile these possessions with the self? The self likewise becomes a possession. In a culture of cultivation we not only cultivate crops and livestock, we cultivate the very nature of who we are. It becomes more important to be

what we want to be than what we are. The unfortunate consequence of this is that our cultural training has defined us as consumers, thus it is as consumers that we function.

This distinction can be seen in contrasting interdependent versus independent cultures. The interdependent culture defines self not by what one desires to be, but by what one is seen as, in combination with what one needs to be. The independent culture fiercely guards the self as an isolated and highly personal entity. On closer examination, it can be argued that in most cases this is merely philosophical lip service. Much of self cultivation in the independent culture is based not on self-actualization, but on being what one has been conditioned to be. Anecdotally one can see this theme in Western commercials; “buy *this* product because it will individuate you!” (i.e., express your true self via corporate America). ATS holds that the “independence” of the independent culture is more mythology than fact. Rather than independent, a more appropriate descriptor may be “isolated.”

The interdependent culture may be more adept at cultivating actualized beings than the independent. In the interdependent culture the self is implicitly a part of one’s community and family. There would never be call to question this, thus the individual may freely and securely explore the deeper aspects of self that lead to actualization. In large part the lower order needs are securely met. The independent culture, on the other hand, desperately tries to connect in a sea of isolation. People are taught that the isolated self is the most vital component of existence, and that without this all is for naught. In this culture the self ends up being cultivated not by loving family and community, but by impersonal education, jobs, and ultimately consumerism. Independent culture sends the message to people that this isolated self is the true self. Any notion that there may be

another true self is whitewashed by distraction. The attempt to surface this true self threatens what is the only known self. The loss of this created self signals death simply because there seems to be no other.

Individuals within interdependent cultures have historically been not only interdependent on social bonds but also on their relationship with nature itself. By this the individual has identified him or herself as a part of a larger order, that of nature. There are inherent rules of conduct in this larger order, and very clear guidelines regarding one's role in the larger system.

John Locke (1954) spent much time describing the laws of nature and their implications in the psyches of man. In his essay "Is there a Rule of Morals, or Law Given to Us? Yes." he expounds upon the idea that Law is something that is innate. In this way government itself is only possible due to the already inherent natural tendency toward social obligation and morals. While Locke maintains an old world dualism between the ideas of good and evil in his writing, he likewise illuminates a vital point concerning the self. The self is not separate from nature. Nature has unwritten laws and humanity by extension also carries within it these laws. Though law may be different from one man to the next, as Locke points out this moral relativism is merely more proof that natural law does in fact exist:

"...Likewise in morality it is improperly inferred that there is no law of nature, because in one place it is pronounced to be this, in another something different. This fact rather establishes the existence of the law more firmly, seeing that all the disputants maintain the same idea about

the law itself (for they all know that there is something evil and something good by nature), and they differ only in their interpretations of it.” (p. 115)

By this it can be seen that there is an innate template for law in man. This template is written in the social nature of man. Viewing man as a function of nature, laws in nature may serve to elucidate the philosophies of self.

The first proposed law is that the self can neither be created nor destroyed. This is of course based on the 1<sup>st</sup> Law of Thermodynamics. Admittedly, the first law borders on mysticism. The idea that the self cannot be created nor destroyed implies that the self has always existed and always will. The self as we know it at this time, the self we are intimately aware of, cannot be perceived of as not existing. When we attempt to do this we are left with the observer self that we cannot escape, except perhaps through trance states, peak experiences, or moments of actualization. During the height of these experiences however, the self is not perceived as not existing, it is simply not perceived at all. Thus, the self cannot be destroyed. The self does seem to be created but to cognize this necessitates that we imagine a time that the self was not. This is not within the normal realm of ability.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> law is that all energy tends toward entropy. The more energy is forced into order, the more that energy is taxed. What happens in this case is that energy resists this order, attempting to stabilize itself back to its natural state, that of entropy. In the case of the self, we are born relatively free of order and outside influence save the influence of our evolved biology. We are born as self actualized beings. Perfect in our essence and perfect in our action, we do what we do because that is what we are, perfect Taoist masters, being without question and acting without action. It is this state that we

are pulled from via socialization and this state that we naturally are being pulled back toward. This pulling creates increasing tension the further we are from it much like the tightening of a rubber band, causing cognitive dissonance, a state of emotional disquiet in which we feel emotionally torn (Festinger, 1957). Anxiety and fear come from this tension/distance from true self.

Spiritual masters throughout the ages, from universally recognized religions to obscure mystical sects, have described a primary aspect of heightened state of self or an enlightened state of being, as oneness with all things. This state of oneness has been likened to peak states mentioned above. Its correlate can also be found in physics. The American Heritage definition of entropy states “4. The tendency for all matter and energy in the universe to evolve toward a state of inert uniformity”. In this way our tendency toward self actualization is in fact in accord with the natural tendency of energy.

This natural tendency of energy and consequently the natural tendency of man are nowhere seen in its purity as strongly as it is seen in the wilderness. This concept has been supported through research indicating that not only wilderness areas (Young & Crandall, 1984) but simply “green” areas, defined as having grass and trees, are beneficial to the mental health of individuals (Kuo, 2001; Taylor, Kuo, & Sullivan, 2001). Taylor, et al. (2001) investigated children suffering from Attention Deficit Disorder and found that they enjoyed significant relief from their symptoms after being exposed to green play areas. Kuo (2001) found that financially impoverished individuals were more adept at dealing with the problems encountered in their daily lives when they had as little as a few trees and some grass near their building than when they did not. Of interest in both of these studies is the seemingly small treatment condition. If in these

cases this small amount of nature can aid in such significant ways, it seems logical to consider how increasingly natural settings may affect the human psyche. Wilderness therapy programs for example have shown similar results with adolescents (Russell, 2003). In these programs the patient is in fact deep within a wilderness environment and involved in social circumstances that simulate immediate-return social systems. The healing nature of these environments viewed from the ATS perspective lends support to the idea that humans function optimally when in a natural environment.

Evolutionary theory may also provide much in the way of understanding these phenomena. Kuo (2001) points out habitat selection theory and research indicating the crippling effects of artificially sterile environments. Kuo describes a polarized situation in which an animal or individual will seek out environments that will nurture and will essentially deteriorate if deprived of these nurturing environments. Considering that humans have for the vast majority of their time on this planet been hunter gatherers, and then further considering the immense amount of time the evolution of any single trait actually requires, we must wonder if our cultural circumstance has evolved faster than our ability to reconcile our separation from the wilderness. We still need social cohesion in an individualist society. We still need the canopy of trees amidst the tiled ceilings of our concrete cages.

Dubos (1968):

Whatever science may have to say about the fundamental processes and constituents of the natural world, we regard Nature holistically and respond to it with our whole being. Deep in our hearts we still personalize natural forces and for this reason experience guilt at their desecration. The

manifestations of Nature are identified with unchangeable needs of human life and are charged with primeval emotions because man is still of the earth earthy (sic). (p. 114)



## CHAPTER 2

### EXPERIMENT

Abraham Maslow's self-actualization theory predicts that as people meet the hierarchy of basic needs in their lives they will ultimately meet with a new need. This need is the drive to be fully and completely who the self is, to *self-actualize*. At the base of this hierarchy of needs are the physical needs such as food and water, then safety needs such as shelter and personal space. As you progress up the hierarchy you encounter interpersonal needs (i.e., love and friendship), then more personal needs such as self esteem and confidence. The present research sought to demonstrate that during activities such as long distance backpacking, an individual will be given more of an opportunity to experience need fulfillment free from preconceived social notions of personal need and be confronted with the true fulfillment of basic needs, allowing for a natural progression toward self-actualization. Specifically, wilderness exposure time (WET), anti-authoritarianism, and an ownership index were used to predict actualization.

The argument proposed here is that the wilderness, specifically extended time intervals in the wilderness, offers an individual the opportunity to experience the immediate fulfillment of basic needs and ultimately to achieve self-actualization. After these needs are met, the person may begin the process of becoming actualized. Actualization represents a state of optimal being in which the human can achieve according to her or his highest ability and function as a psychologically healthy being (Maslow, 1968).

Research has indicated that simple exposure to nature or even simply the desire for exposure is correlated with self-actualization (Young & Crandall, 1984). Simple

exposure is here defined as wilderness experiences that are not full submersion experiences (i.e. driving to wilderness areas and staying near one's vehicle). While simple wilderness exposure does correlate with actualization, I predict a larger effect size with extended wilderness exposure.

Backpackers constitute a different population from that which has been used in previous research, as the backpacker is not merely utilizing the wilderness as a leisure experience. Backpackers, defined as those spending more than two days in the wilderness with no immediate access to civilization, have the unique experience of living in the wilderness. This population will have access only to what they can carry, leap-frogging from town to town only to re-supply.

From an ATS perspective, WET should be a significant predictor of self-actualization. The backpacker will in essence be meeting all the basic physiological Maslowian needs as well as simulating an immediate-return social system in which Martin (1999, n.d.) predicts optimal functioning through much the same mechanism. The backpacker has the necessary food in his or her pack and also carries water that is re-supplied along the trail. Safety needs are met via shelter. Most backpackers will carry a tent or tarp under which to escape the elements. There are likewise often many shelters (lean-tos and sometimes cabins) on longer hiking trails. Belonging needs are met via social relations developed with other backpackers. These interpersonal relationships often take the form of lasting friendships and cohesive groups that hike together and camp together. These groups quickly become very intimate as they share living space, cooking space and often gear. Esteem needs are met daily as well. Immediate feedback on goals is linked to every activity that one engages in along the trail. It may be that goals become

simpler and more defined, but they are goals nonetheless. These may begin with the goal to make breakfast and break camp by a certain time, to planning to make it to a particular camping area before dark. Regardless of the goal, most goals are met. Even when goals are not met (e.g. didn't make the 25 mile hike today) there is immediate feedback on progress toward goals.

Within the anarchist model there are two measurements, the Authoritarian-Rebellion scale (A-R) and the Ownership Index (OI, pack weight / WET). OI is designed to determine if an individual's desire to own things that are not necessary to survival is linked to WET and actualization. The index takes into account WET. Being out for one day with only a small snack is very different from being in the wilderness for 14 weeks. An individual with a 10 lb. pack, for instance, may be out for 2 days and get a score of 34. However if that same person stayed in the wilderness for 14 weeks there score would plummet to .71<sup>1</sup>. ATS predicts that as individuals spend more time in the wilderness their resistance to materialist values will increase and likewise aid in predicting actualization. Pack weight will reflect this by showing that the individual becomes more concerned with the basic needs than with the trappings of materialistic culture. In this case the hiker performs a cost benefit analysis. Is the object being carried worth the weight it adds to my pack? Is the object truly a necessity? This analysis should become more critical as hikers detach from cultural norms, becoming more resistant to enculturation (i.e. rebellious) and consequently more objects are extracted from their pack.

The present research investigated several hypotheses.

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<sup>1</sup> WET was measured in weeks.

*Hypothesis I:* It was predicted that SISA scores would be predicted by WET. Specifically that as WET increased actualization scores would also increase.

*Hypothesis II:* Self esteem and general life happiness should be predictive of SISA scores. The higher one's self esteem and general life happiness the more actualized they would be.

*Hypothesis III:* SISA scores will be predicted by rebelliousness as measured by the A-R scale. In this case the further toward the rebellious side of the scale the participant is the more actualized they should be.

*Hypothesis IV:* The ownership index will predict SISA scores. Lower scores on the ownership index should predict higher actualization.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

#### *Participants*

A convenience sample of 47 willing hikers along the Appalachian Trail served as participants. Six were excluded from analysis due to missing data. The mean age of these participants was 33.

As a control condition, another sample of 81 participants volunteered from Georgia Southern University introduction to psychology classes. The mean age of this sample was 20. These participants were given extra credit in their class for participation.

#### *Materials*

The questionnaire consisted of four measures: the Short Index of Self Actualization (SISA; Jones and Crandall, as cited in Hill and Hood, 1999), the Authoritarian-Rebellion Scale (A-R; Kohn, as cited in Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991), the Life 3 Scale (L3S; Andrews & Withey, as cited in Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991) and the Self-Esteem Scale (SE; Rosenberg, as cited in Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991). These scales were combined to form a 57-question survey. The demographics questions included; age, backpacking experience, thru-hiking and direction (N or S), how long the participant had been out on the current trip, and how heavy their pack was.

The SISA (Appendix A) consists of 15 items measuring self actualization scored on a four-point Likert scale. The SISA was designed by Jones and Crandall as an alternative to the larger Personal Orientation Inventory (Hill and Hood, 1999). Jones and Crandall reported a .69 correlation between the two surveys. The SISA includes questions

such as “I don’t accept my own weaknesses”, “I do not feel ashamed of any of my emotions” and “I can like people without having to approve of them” (SISA; Jones and Crandall, as cited in Hill and Hood, 1999, p.523). Questions like these tap into subcomponents of the concept of self actualization (i.e. self esteem and openness to self and others). The scale was altered so that all responses for the larger fifty seven question survey have a score of one being “disagree” and four being “agree,” to avoid confusion.

The A-R Scale (Appendix A) consists of 30 items, utilizing response items such as “Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn” and in contrast “No principle is more immoral than that of obedience” (A-R; Kohn, as cited in Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991, p. 545). The original six-point Likert scale was reduced to four to maintain continuity the rest of the survey. The response items were likewise altered so that they were suited to participants from any country of origin, rather than Canada exclusively, and references to ‘he’ were changed to androgynous terms.

The L3S (Appendix A) consists of one question repeated twice with fifteen to twenty minutes of questions between them on the same scale. The question is; “How do you feel about your life as a whole?” (L3S; Andrews & Withey, as cited in Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991, p. 90). For the purpose of this research the question maintained its original one to seven Likert scale and was separated by forty four questions requiring approximately five minutes to read without scanning the response scale or considering an answer.

The SES (Appendix A) consists of ten questions scored on a four-point Likert scale and are designed to measure self esteem. Example response items include; “I take a

positive attitude toward myself” and “at times I think I am no good at all” (SE; Rosenberg, as cited in Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991, p. 123). The response scale was changed from disagree to agree to match the survey as a whole.

### *Design and Procedure*

Beginning in August I hiked north on the Appalachian Trail, starting in New York. This timing put me mid-trail (between the Georgia and Main trail heads) when many thru-hikers were passing through the area. When I met hikers along the trail at shelters and resting areas, I presented them with my research conversationally to assess interest; if the hikers did express interest I presented them with the informed consent form to sign, followed by the survey. Depending on time constraints I either waited for them to finish, taking the survey with me, or I gave them a stamped, self-addressed envelope with which to mail the survey back to me when they reached the next mailbox along the trail. Surveys were also left at shelters and hostels, along with copies of the informed consent form, debriefing form and return instructions. Debriefing consisted of a full emailed disclosure of purpose. This includes the hypotheses and a conversational explanation of my research theory. The control participants were given the survey in a classroom on the Georgia Southern University campus.

## CHAPTER 4

## RESULTS

*Wilderness data.* Backward multiple regression was used to assess the predictor variables (WET, L3S, SE, Age, OI and AR) in regard to SISA scores. The analysis indicated that that the resulting model significantly predicted SISA scores,  $R^2=.620$ ,  $F(4,36)=5.626$ ,  $p=.001$ . The model accounted for 62% of variance in SISA scores. Table 1 summarizes the regression coefficients for the four predictor variables (WET, Age, OI and AR) that contributed significantly to the model.

**Table 1** Coefficients for Model Variables in Wilderness Data

	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
WET	-.205	-.582	-2.205	.034
Age	.054	.286	2.160	.038
OI	6.503	.929	3.455	.001
AR	.133	.434	3.182	.003
Constant: SISA <sup>2</sup>				

*Non-wilderness data*<sup>3</sup>. In the next analysis a backward regression was conducted on the second group of participants to determine what variables may predict SISA scores absent of wilderness exposure and OI. In this group four variables (Age, AR, SE, L3S) were included as predictors of SISA scores. Data screening eliminated one case due to missing data. Results revealed one significant predictor (SE),  $R^2=.26$ ,  $R^2_{adj}=.25$ ,  $F(1, 77)=27.052$ ,  $p<.001$ . The resulting model accounted for 26% of the variance in SISA scores. Table 2 summarizes regression coefficients for all predictors.

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<sup>2</sup> It should be remembered that the SISA scores were reversed so that they would be consistent with the scale used throughout the questionnaire. This resulted in a negative  $\beta$  for WET and SISA and positive  $\beta$  for the AR scale and SISA.



**Table 2** Coefficients for Model Variables in Non-wilderness Data

	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Age	-.046	-.066	-.658	.513
AR	.021	.036	.337	.737
SE	.787	.491	4.544	<.001
L3S	-.215	-.050	-.487	.628

Constant: SISA<sup>4</sup>

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to determine if there were significant differences on the measures of SISA, AR, SES and L3S between the wilderness exposure (WE) group and the non-wilderness exposure (no-WE) group. ANOVA results revealed significant differences in the measures of age ( $F(1, 119)=55.65, p<.001$ ) and self esteem (SE) ( $F(1,119)=336.265, p<.001$ ). The mean age for WE ( $M=33$ ) was significantly higher than that of the no-WE ( $M=20.5$ ) group. SE was significantly greater for WE ( $M=15.22$ ) than for no-WE ( $M=26.67$ ).

<sup>3</sup> Due to the unbalanced nature of the data (sample size, lack of OI and WET scores as well as issues of ecological validity) the wilderness exposure data and control group were analyzed separately.

<sup>4</sup> SES scores were reversed as well, resulting in a positive  $\beta$  for SISA and SES.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The findings of this research are generally consistent with anarchist theory of self (ATS). The pattern of results concerning the relationship between wilderness exposure time, antiauthoritarianism, anti-materialist sentiment and actualization was as predicted. The ownership index (OI) accounted for the most variance in the model, followed by the authoritarian rebellion scale (AR), wilderness exposure time (WET) and age. As a general model these results mirror the ATS theory, in that materialist values combined with philosophical commitment to cultural regulation run counter to self-actualization as an example of an optimally functioning individual. This is significant, considering the emphasis placed on material wealth and acquisitiveness in modern industrialized societies.

The OI was a measure of an individual's willingness to carry only the essentials in life. Measured by dividing pack weight by WET, an index was obtained that indicated a person's attachment to material objects beyond food, water, and shelter. Through the use of this scale differences in attachment to material possessions were explored. It was found that the less attached an individual was to material possessions, the more self actualized they were. This of course is not interpreted as a mere lack of attachment as much as it is interpreted as an indication of a basic security that these needs are being met. Beyond food, water and shelter, most items carried are unnecessary and indicate an attempt to fulfill some perceived deficiency. The less an individual is carrying, the more secure they may be. This security allows for the safe exploration of other needs such as social, self esteem, and eventually growth needs.

According to ATS, the acquisition and retention of material objects runs counter to people's optimal state. It can also be seen as a reaction against the absence of an immediate return social system. In an immediate return system the individual lives in a world that provides when there is need. Delay return systems may encourage rapacious activity by encouraging insecurity. That is, when one needs something, it may not be there. In this respect the OI may also be tapping into issues of security. The lower the IO score, the more secure people may feel in their environment and within their social circumstances. This further supports the hypothesis that extended wilderness experiences may be simulating immediate return social systems. The wilderness traveler experiences that when he or she needs food, food is there, when he or she needs shelter, shelter is there. With these most basic of the Maslowian d-needs met, the individual is free to explore further up the pyramid of needs toward actualization. Paradoxically, possessions (which might be perceived by individuals as providing for safety needs) may block people from progressing toward actualization.

Connected to these ideas of anti-materialist sentiment is the socio-political concept of anarchism. Anarchism, having been described above, represents a belief that the individual can and should govern the self. Rebelliousness as measured by the AR specifically deals with one's resistance to governmental and authoritarian control of individual actions and belief. Lower scores on this scale indicate a more rebellious nature. A positive correlation between SISA and AR indicates that the more rebellious people are, the more actualized they are. This supports the notion of "resistance to enculturation" that Maslow indicated was an aspect of actualization. Further, this is indicative of realignment toward a more autonomous self. ATS explores the concept of

the social contract as one that must be made between free agents (Kropotkin, 1903).

Those who lean away from authority as a guiding force in their lives have reclaimed the autonomous self as the principle authority.

Perhaps the self-regulatory processes mentioned above have replaced the role of government in guiding social interaction. On the trail, there are no police; intrinsic good manners must replace institutional enforcement of law, otherwise the trail becomes lawless and unsafe. This social aspect of the model relates to the third stage in Maslow's hierarchy, where social belongingness and friendship are concerned. By virtue of being on the trail, one finds they belong to a very select group of individuals. There is camaraderie and sharing of information and resources. This pack mentality also gives way to feelings of physical security--there is safety in numbers.

Wilderness exposure offers an individual the opportunity to separate from the normal activities of social obligation and engage in obligation to the self. These obligations to the self include the basic needs mentioned above, as well as introspective opportunity. During a wilderness exposure experience social interactions are also of a less obligatory nature. In this an individual is given the opportunity to meet basic needs for the self, explore introspective needs such as self esteem, and engage in interpersonal interactions as free agents. This combination of physical, social, and interpersonal fulfillment may lead one to think that the longer an individual is in the wilderness the more actualized they may in fact become. This is what was shown. As WET increased so did scores on the SISA. In addition, the wilderness serves as the backdrop for the experience of freedom. Throughout history, exploration of the untamed territory has been viewed through a romantic lens. This was the inspiration of the existentialists. Extended

stays in the wilderness return us to simpler states of being. These states of being, again, simulate a base need in humans, namely to experience immediate feedback on our efforts and immediate return on our investments. Within the wilderness social interactions between people are uninhibited by any force outside of the individual's personal code of conduct. There is no threat of arrest or fines for breaking group mores. There is only the threat of isolation, and in the worst case aggressive group retaliation. Thus the individual is allowed to function as an autonomous individual entering into social contracts freely.

A fundamental weakness in the study should be noted here. As the analysis is based on correlational data there is no way to be certain that more actualized people do not simply choose to be in the wilderness longer. In fact, Kuo's (2001) habitat selection theory may indicate that hikers and backpackers have self-selected by seeking out environments that nurture these deep instinctual needs. If this is the case, does it matter? This alternative explanation does not undermine ATS. The fact that these environments are sought out by self-actualizers indicates something about these environments that is nourishing to the optimal functioning of these individuals. One may argue that should a person be unaffected by wilderness experiences, it would not serve to aid the person in any therapeutic sense. Evidence from wilderness therapy research seems to indicate that this is not the case. In these programs, adolescent patients are often more resistant to the idea of spending time in the wilderness than average, yet the environmental setting still helps in healing these patients. More convincing are reports that solo time in the wilderness seemed to have even stronger therapeutic affects than some of the group-oriented therapies (Russell, 2003).

The last significant predictor in the model came as somewhat of a surprise. The relationship between age and SISA was positive, indicating that younger participants scored higher on the self-actualization scale than older participants. Age predicting SISA scores are not surprising, it is the direction of the correlation that was unexpected: younger participants were more likely to be self-actualized than older participants. This seems counterintuitive; however it is comprehensible from an ATS perspective. Through my conversations with the hikers as I collected my data, I noticed differences between younger hikers and older ones. The older hikers generally had jobs and savings accounts. These hikers had often just retired or were on vacation. The younger hikers often seemed more like Jack Kerouac's *Dharma Bums*--many had not yet begun careers and many were fresh out of college. A few of the younger hikers I spoke with were openly hostile to the idea of getting jobs when they finished their hiking. These issues may represent fundamental differences between older and younger hikers as it relates to actualization: older hikers may be taking a break from the socio-economic status-quo, while younger hikers were actively resisting it. Of course this observation is speculative, as it is based on casual conversations rather than actual data. The issue merits further research.

In the interest of comparison, a second sample of participants was surveyed. This sample was obtained from the participant pool at Georgia Southern University. As this group was not experiencing wilderness exposure at the time nor carrying anything, WET and OI were not viable variables to measure. As indicated above, of the measures that were obtained from this group, only the self esteem scale (SE) presented itself as a significant predictor of SISA scores. This brought to light an important factor in the hierarchy of needs that seemed to be missing in the model developed from the wilderness

group: self esteem. Self esteem represents the last of the d-needs in the hierarchy before actualization and growth needs. An ANOVA was conducted on the demographic and predictor variables between the two groups. It was found that there was a significant difference ( $p < .001$ ) for two of the variables: age and SE. While the difference between ages was expected, as undergraduate college students are often young, the difference in SE was profound. The participants in the wilderness condition had significantly higher self esteem. The wilderness condition had such consistently high self esteem in fact that it was among the first of the predictors to be excluded from the regression. This variable was ultimately removed from the overall data. It was found that the OI was an important aspect of the resulting model. Without the OI, results were inconclusive.

In conclusion, this research presents evidence in support of the ideas expressed through ATS. It was shown that, using self-actualization as an indicator of optimal functioning, materialist culture may run counter to the nature and psychological benefit of the human being. Results further suggested that autonomy is a vital component in human social relations and that the wilderness is an excellent environment in which to simulate optimal social and individual functioning. Results also indicated that people who are engaged in wilderness experiences tend to have higher self esteem than those who are not.

While WET indicates time in “green” areas, it might also be perceived as extending into the social realm. Specifically, ATS makes the claim that the individual is experiencing “greener” social relationships. By this it is meant that the social relationships that people are experiencing are in fact more natural. Being cultivated by personal investment, the individual has the opportunity to engage in deep relationships as

they see fit. For example an individual may act subordinately to another individual out of a deep sense of respect for that individual rather than acting subordinately due to artificial power plays such as uniforms or titles. Further, reciprocity is achieved mutually. Very often reciprocity is achieved by means of manipulation. In the case of capitalist economy there is an exchange of money (read as “time”) for goods. These goods are often manufactured for far less than what one pays. This disparity is exaggerated when the goods paid for are necessary items to life such as food and medications. Future research should include the possibility that other environments may contribute to the sense of autonomy and self esteem that seems to predict actualization. The wilderness may be only one of many possible environments that foster the actualization of the individual.

While the results provide support for ATS predictions, they extend beyond ATS. The results add to a growing body of evidence that nature is good for us. The results may be taken as evidence that our nation’s wilderness areas and nature reserves should be protected, if not for their own sake then for the psychological benefit of our species.



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## APPENDIX A

## SCALES

## Short Index of Self Actualization (SISA)

Please respond to the items below using the following rating scale:

- 1 = agree  
 2 = somewhat agree  
 3 = somewhat disagree  
 4 = disagree

1. (P) I do not feel ashamed of any of my emotions.
2. (P) I feel I must do what others expect me to do.
3. (P) I believe that people are essentially good and can be trusted.
4. (P) It is always necessary that others approve of what I do.
5. (N) I feel free to be angry at those I love.
6. (P) I don't accept my own weaknesses.
7. (P) I can like people without having to approve of them.
8. (N) I avoid attempts to analyze and simplify complex domains.
9. (P) It is better to be yourself than it is to be popular.
10. (P) I have no mission in life to which I feel especially dedicated.
11. (P) I can express my feelings even when they may result in undesirable consequences.
12. (P) I do not feel responsible to help anybody.
13. (P) I am loved because I can give love.
14. (P) I am bothered by fears of being inadequate.
15. I fear failure. (Original SISA item omitted from Watson et al., 1990)

## Life 3 Scale (L3S)

\*\*How do you feel about your life as a whole?  
 Terrible = 1...2...3...4...5...6...7 = Delighted  
 -----Repeat-----

## The Authoritarian-Rebellion Scale (A-R)

1. Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn.

Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Strongly	Somewhat	Slightly	Slightly	Somewhat	Strongly

- \*2. What we need least is an authority to tell us what to do or how to do it.

3. Every person should have complete faith in some supernatural power whose decisions he obeys without question.
4. People can be divided into two distinct classes: the weak and the strong.
- \*5. To be a decent human being follow your conscience regardless of the law.
- \*6. No principle is more immoral than that of obedience.
7. Familiarity breeds contempt.
- \*8. Astrology will never explain anything because it is a fraud.
- \*9. The Canadian way of life is so resistant to progress that revolution is necessary to end its injustices and oppressions.
10. Nowadays, when so many different kinds of people move around and mix together so much, a person has to protect himself against catching an infection or disease from them.
- \*11. Children don't owe their parents a thing.
- \*12. Canada can't exert moral leadership among nations until it until it abandons its corrupt material values.
- \*13. Sex crimes like rape and child molestation reflect a sick society and we must change society rather than punishing individual offenders.
14. Obedience is the mother of success.
15. Strong discipline builds moral character.
16. Canada is spiritually predestined to lead the world.
17. Some day it will be probably be shown that astrology can explain a lot of things.
- \*18. People of different nationalities, social classes and races should mix together more. Everybody would benefit from it.
- \*19. To know people well is to love them.
20. The true Canadian way of life is disappearing so fast that force may be necessary to preserve it.
21. Sex crimes, such as rape and attacks on children, deserve more than mere imprisonment: such criminals ought to be publicly whipped, or worse.
- \*22. Obedience is the mother of enslavement.
- \*23. True morality only develops in a fully permissive environment.
24. There is hardly anything lower than a person who does not feel a great deal of love, gratitude, and respect for his parents.
25. No principle is more noble or holy than that of true obedience.
- \*26. The strong and the weak are not inherently different. They are merely the advantaged and disadvantaged members of an unfair society.
- \*27. Obedience and respect for authority aren't virtues and shouldn't be taught to children.
28. To be a decent person always stay with the law.
29. Our chief want in life is somebody to make us do what we should.
- \*30. Faith in the supernatural is a harmful self-delusion, and submission to religious authority is dangerous.

Note: \*, reverse scored items

## Self-Esteem Scale (SES)

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.
1. STRONGLY AGREE    2. AGREE    3. DISAGREE    4. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
- \*3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
- \*5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
- \*8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
- \*9. I certainly feel useless at times.
- \*10. At times I think I am no good at all.

Note: \*, reverse scored items

## APPENDIX B

## SURVEY

## Demographics

How would you rate your lifetime backpacking expertise?  
(Circle the number that applies)

Expert = 1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8...9...10 = Novice (first time backpacking)

How long have you been hiking this particular trip?

Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Days: \_\_\_\_\_

Weeks: \_\_\_\_\_

Months: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you Thru-Hiking? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, North or South bound? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the estimated weight of your backpack without food and water? \_\_\_\_\_

Your Age: \_\_\_\_\_

## SISA + L3S + A-R + SES

Please respond to the questions by circling the *number* that applies.

Strongly Disagree = 1

Agree = 2

Disagree = 3

Strongly Agree = 4

1. Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree



2. It is better to be yourself than it is to be popular.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

3. What we need least is an authority to tell us what to do or how to do it.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

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

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

5. Every person should have complete faith in some supernatural power whose decisions he obeys without question.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

6. I do not feel ashamed of any of my emotions.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

7. I am loved because I can give love.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

8. How do you feel about your life as a whole?

Terrible = 1...2...3...4...5...6...7 = Delighted

9. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

10. People can be divided into two distinct classes: the weak and the strong.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

11. I don't accept my own weaknesses.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

12. To be a decent human being follow your conscience regardless of the law.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

13. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

14. I can like people without having to approve of them.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

15. No principle is more immoral than that of obedience.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

16. Familiarity breeds contempt.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

17. I do not feel responsible to help anybody.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

18. Astrology will never explain anything because it is a fraud.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

19. My country's way of life is so resistant to progress that revolution is necessary to end its injustices and oppressions.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

20. I feel I must do what others expect me to do.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

21. Nowadays, when so many different kinds of people move around and mix together so much, people have to protect themselves against catching an infection or disease from them.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

22. Children don't owe their parents a thing.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

23. My country can't exert moral leadership among nations until it abandons its corrupt material values.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

24. Sex crimes like rape and child molestation reflect a sick society and we must change society rather than punishing individual offenders.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

25. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

26. Obedience is the mother of success.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

27. I fear failure.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

28. Strong discipline builds moral character.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

29. At times I think I am no good at all.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

30. My country is spiritually predestined to lead the world.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

31. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

32. Some day it will be probably be shown that astrology can explain a lot of things.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

33. I avoid attempts to analyze and simplify complex domains.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

34. People of different nationalities, social classes and races should mix together more. Everybody would benefit from it.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

35. To know people well is to love them.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

36. My country's way of life is disappearing so fast that force may be necessary to preserve it.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

37. I feel free to be angry at those I love.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

38. Sex crimes, such as rape and attacks on children, deserve more than mere imprisonment: such criminals ought to be publicly whipped, or worse.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

39. Obedience is the mother of enslavement.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

40. I believe that people are essentially good and can be trusted.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

41. True morality only develops in a fully permissive environment.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

42. There is hardly anything lower than a person who does not feel a great deal of love, gratitude, and respect for his parents.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

43. I have no mission in life to which I feel especially dedicated.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

44. No principle is more noble or holy than that of true obedience.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

45. I certainly feel useless at times.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

46. I am bothered by fears of being inadequate.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

47. The strong and the weak are not inherently different. They are merely the advantaged and disadvantaged members of an unfair society.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

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

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

49. I can express my feelings even when they may result in undesirable consequences.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

50. Obedience and respect for authority aren't virtues and shouldn't be taught to children.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

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

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

52. To be a decent person always stay with the law.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

53. It is always necessary that others approve of what I do.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

54. How do you feel about your life as a whole?

Terrible = 1...2...3...4...5...6...7 = Delighted

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

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

56. Our chief want in life is somebody to make us do what we should.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree

57. Faith in the supernatural is a harmful self-delusion, and submission to religious authority is dangerous.

Strongly Disagree = 1...2...3...4 = Strongly Agree