

EGOS INFLATING OVER TIME:  
RISING NARCISSISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR SELF-CONSTRUAL,  
COGNITIVE STYLE, AND BEHAVIOR

by

Sarah H. Konrath

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Brad J. Bushman, Chair  
Professor Norbert W. Schwarz  
Professor David G. Winter  
Assistant Professor Katherine A. Burson

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To Angela, Lacey, Milla, and Izabelle

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## Abstract

In four articles I examine changes in narcissism over time and the implications of those changes. First in the introduction I review research on the history of narcissism as a personality disorder and as a personality trait. In Article 1 my colleagues and I conduct a cross-temporal meta-analysis and find that scores on the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Terry, 1988) have been rising since the 1980s in American college students. In the second article we present our theory that high self-focus in combination with low other-focus (i.e. social atomization) is related to a highly analytic cognitive style as measured by tests such as the Embedded Figures Test (Witkin et al, 1971). We review research in three separate areas of psychology in order to provide evidence for our theory: individualism/self-construal, narcissism, and autism. In two studies the third article shows that narcissism is related to an analytic cognitive style and lower self-reported holism. We also find that narcissism is related to higher independent and lower interdependent self-construal. In the final article we find that inducing a feeling of similarity between narcissists and potential targets of aggression leads to reduced aggression after an ego-threat.