2010-07-15

Adolescents' Perceptions of Bullying Involving Male Relational Aggression: Implications for Prevention and Intervention

Brian C. Johnson
Brigham Young University - Provo

Adolescents' Perceptions of Bullying Involving Male Relational Aggression: Implications for Prevention and Intervention

Curt Johnson

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Educational Specialist

Melissa Allen Heath, Chair
Niwako Yamawaki
Sarah Coyne

Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education

Brigham Young University

August 2010

ABSTRACT

Adolescents' Perceptions of Bullying Involving Male Relational Aggression: Implications for Prevention and Intervention

Curt Johnson

Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education

Educational Specialist in School Psychology

Recent bullying research contradicts the stereotypes that only females use relational bullying and confirms that males use this type of bullying equally or more than females. No existing research could be found which examined differences in how each gender interprets relational bullying. Using a survey adapted from research on the rape myth and four video clips, researchers sought to examine gendered difference in the perception of relational bullying by males among adolescents. Two video clips depict scenes of cross-gender bullying and two clips depict scenes of male to male bullying.

In total, 314 students in grades 8-12 participated in the research (164 males, 150 females). Questions from the survey were loaded onto three constructs: minimizing bullying, blaming the victim, and excusing the bully. MANOVA results indicated a significant difference between genders but not age groups (middle school and high school). Results were analyzed clip-by-clip as each clip depicted a different scenario. Results indicated that males were more likely to excuse the bully, blame the victim, and minimize the bullying when both bully and victim actors were male. Both genders minimized homophobic bullying more than other types of bullying. This research suggests that homophobic bullying should be targeted with bully prevention efforts. In particular, males discounted homophobic bullying as normal behavior. Because gender differences is students' perceptions were significantly greater than age differences, another suggestion when planning and implementing adolescents' bullying prevention programs is to carefully consider gender issues, rather than simply accommodating for students' grade level or age.

Keywords: bulling, relational aggression, gender, adolescent, perception

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank Melissa Allen Heath for her significant contributions to all parts of this research, and for not losing patience or confidence in me during this overly arduous process. I would also like to thank Niwako Yamawaki and Sarah Coyne for the sharing of their expertise and contributions to the research.

This research would not have been possible without the support of Greg Hudnall and Cathy Bledsoe who believe in the necessity of research to better our public school systems. Much appreciation is expressed for the principals who allowed this research to take place in their schools.

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, who never doubted Ii would finish this. Most importantly, she taught me from an early age that bullying is degrading for everyone involved—not just the target.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Introduction

Dan Olweus (1993, 1994) began researching the topic of bullying in the early 1970's, forging an international momentum to identify, investigate, and counter the harmful behaviors of bullying. His efforts continue today, supported by a massive body of research, school-based bully prevention programs, and fueled by professionals focused on improving school environments and eliminating bullying from schools (Berger, 2007; Felix & Furlong 2008). In fact, the sheer number of publications demonstrate the growth of this topic in professional literature; Based on a PsychINFO literature search, publications on the topic of bullying increased from 62 citations dated between 1900-1990, to 289 publications cited during the 1990's, to 562 publications dated 2000-2004 (Berger, 2007).

Overview of Bullying

The standard definition of *bullying* involves three key aspects: (a) imbalance of power, (b) infliction of pain, and (c) repeated occurrences (Olweus, 1993; Peterson & Skiba, 2001). More specifically, repeatedly and over time an individual (or group of individuals) in a position of greater power inflicts physical or emotional pain on another individual or group of individuals. Those who participate in bullying take on various roles: the bully, the target (victim), and the bystander (Coloroso, 2002, 2005).

Bullying behavior must be understood in context, considering the nature of school environment that encourages, ignores, or rejects bullying (Chan, 2006; Felix & Furlong, 2008). In particular, adults and students may actually blame the *target* for the bullying, suggesting the target's behavior provoked the bully (Davis, Davis, & Steiner, 2007). Others casually observe bullying behaviors, taking no steps to intervene. *Passive bystanders* watch and observe the

bullying without intervening. Active bystanders may actually encourage the bully, giving the bully additional power and acceptance (Coloroso, 2002, 2005).

Bullying behavior is often categorized as physical, verbal, or relational (Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencourt, & Lemme, 2006). *Physical bullying* is direct physical aggression: hitting, shoving, grabbing, choking, etc. *Verbal bullying* includes insulting, name-calling, taunting, and harassing (Felix & Furlong, 2008). Unlike the directness of physical and verbal bullying, *relational bullying* is more indirect, often occurring behind the individual's back and out of their presence. Relational bullying includes gossiping, lying, and excluding (Felix & Furlong). Relational bullying also includes behaviors inflicted on another person with the intent to damage friendships and relationships in social groups (Werner & Crick, 1999).

Bullying and school safety. Bullying, admittedly a widespread problem in schools, has been associated with negative psychological, health-related, and judicial consequences (Fekkes, Pijpers, Fredriks, Verloove-Vanhorick, & Vogels, 2006; Haynie, Nansel, Eitel, Crump, Saylor, & Yu, 2001). Emphasizing the severity of this problem, the National Education Association reports, "Bullying deprives children of their rightful entitlement to go to school in a safe, just, and caring environment; bullying interferes with children's learning, concentration, and the desire to go to school" (Stein & Sjostrom, 1996, p. V).

In terms of school safety, following the 1999 Columbine High School massacre, the U.S. Secret Services' 2002 report created political pressure to mandate school-based bully prevention programs (Hall, 2006; Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002). This report emphasized that the majority of school shooters shared a common factor: They had a history of being bullied and their carefully planned homicidal spree was motivated by revenge.

Over the past 10 years, bullying has become highly visible in schools and communities, the popular media noting increased frequency and severity (Davis et al., 2007; Gabarino & deLara, 2002; Garrett, 2003). Based on Garrett's research, statistics indicate the extent and severity of bullying behaviors: Fifteen percent of students are routinely involved in bullying; 10% of all high school dropouts are repeatedly the target of bullying; almost one-third of students have witnessed a classmate issue a death threat; less than one-fourth of these death threats were reported to an adult; and one in five high school students personally know someone who brought a gun to school (2003, pp. 12-13).

In line with Garrett's (2003) research, in 2000 the Josephson Institute's national study polled over 15,000 youth. They reported that 1 in 5 middle and high school students have personally brought a weapon to school for self-protection within the last year (as cited in Davis et al., 2007, p. 12). This desire to protect one's safety demonstrates the reality of bullying and the prevalence of this problem in the everyday school-life of today's adolescents.

Bullying and gender differences. The American Association of University Women (AAUW, 2001) emphasized that gender was an important aspect to consider when differentiating perceptions of bullying and harassment. More specifically, based on previous research, females view bullying more negatively and are more likely to mention the harmful effects associated with bullying when compared to males (Naylor et al., 2006). On the other hand, males were more likely to stress the repetitive nature of bullying (Naylor et al., 2006).

Aggressors and targets of bullying are more likely to be males (AAUW, 2001; Garrett, 2003; Marsh, Parada, Craven, & Finger, 2004) and the percentage of male bullies remains fairly stable across all grade levels (Olweus, 1993). Of the three types of bullying (physical, verbal, and relational), females rely more heavily on relational bullying (Crick & Bigbee, 1998; Garrett,

2003). This is not to say that males do not engage in relational bullying. Contrary to established stereotypes, regardless of age, males employ all three types of bullying more than females (Pellegrini, 2004). Furthermore, Marsh, Parada, Craven, and Finger (2004) found that males engaged in and reinforced relational bullying more than females. In fact, cyber bullying, using the Internet and cell phones to spread rumors and taunt others, is also more prevalent among males both as targets and aggressors (Li, 2006).

Bullying and prevention programs. Although bullying is recognized as a significant problem in schools, anti-bullying programs have recently taken a blow from an unexpected nemesis, large meta-analysis studies (Felix & Furlong, 2008; Indiana University, 2007; Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004). Research now indicates that the massive influx of these programs implemented over the past several decades were basically unproven on U.S. populations and lacked the rigor of scientific investigation (Indiana University). Of the studies that evaluated change in pre and post data, the majority indicated ineffective or minimally effective outcomes (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Indiana University, 2007; Smith et al., 2004). Reeling from the kiss of death in today's data based world of accountability, proponents of school-wide bully prevention programs now fight an uphill battle in tailoring programs to meet a school's unique needs, targeting more refined goals, and charting data to document effectiveness.

Purpose of Study

Effective bullying intervention programs must stem from an accurate understanding and identification of the problem. After the problem is clearly defined on a local level, the school has the information to move forward with a plan to appropriately address the problem (Murphy, 1997; Umbreit, Ferro, Liaupsin, & Lane, 2007). This study proposes to clarify gender differences in perceptions of male relational bullying, then to summarize these perceptions,

drawing key points from students' perspectives to inform practical strategies for bullying intervention programs.

Statement of problem. Understanding how gender affects bullying experiences, the next logical step is to gain insight into why this is. Does the gender gap in the use of bullying reflect a difference in its interpretation? By understanding how bullying is viewed differently by each gender, more efficacious programs can be developed. Relational bullying is generally perceived as less damaging than physical bullying (Basow et al., 2007). Males' use of relational bullying is perceived as less damaging than its stereotypical use by females (Basow et al., 2007). Research is currently lacking which investigates how each gender views the use of relational bullying by males. This research seeks to gain a greater understanding for what role gender may play in the perception of various types of relational bullying.

Research questions. Two research questions were identified as the basis for this study:

1. On the following points, do males and females differ in their perceptions of video scenarios of male involvement in relational aggression?

   a. Excusing the behavior of the bully

   b. Blaming the target for the bully's behavior

   c. Minimizing the extent of the bully's harm

2. Considering the three points previously listed, are differences in students' perception noted across two age groups, junior high school students and high school Students?

Hypothesis. Males and females will differ in their perceptions of video scenarios of male involvement in relational aggression: excusing the behavior of the bully, blaming the target for the bully's behavior, and minimizing the extent of the bully's harm. Considering the three

points previously listed, differences in students' perceptions will be noted across two age groups, junior high school students and high school students.

Literature Review

"In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."
-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Bullying is defined by Olweus (1993) as "a student … exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students" (p. 9). This standard definition forms the basic foundation for bully-related research and subsequently the thrust of bullying prevention programs. Bullying is characterized by an imbalance of power in which the bully maintains power over the target (Peterson & Skiba, 2001). This power imbalance may reflect a disparity in physical size, age, mental ability, social status or popularity, or from a group of bullies outnumbering their target (Naylor et al., 2006).

Nature of Bullying

Building on the general definition of bullying, the social context of these behaviors is important to consider. Understanding the roles of those involved, the types of bullying, prevalence of bullying, impact of bullying, and bullying behaviors across age and gender builds the foundation for identifying and implementing effective prevention and intervention strategies to deter and extinguish bullying behaviors.

Role of bully, target, and bystander. Students who participate in bullying take on one or more of three critical roles: the bully, the target, or the bystander (Coloroso, 2002, 2005). Recent literature redefined terms, replacing the established pejorative term – *victim* - with a more neutral term, *target* (Davis et al., 2007). This change of terminology reframes implied characteristics of the individual subjected to the bully's harm, removing the stereotypical attributes of being powerless and helpless (Davis et al., 2007).

Additionally, bullying behavior does not occur in a vacuum, but rather the behavior must be understood in context, considering the nature of school environment that encourages, ignores, or rejects bullying (Chan, 2006; Felix & Furlong, 2008). The role of the target is more fully described in recent literature, identifying provocative characteristics that attract a bully's attention and tend to elicit torment from the bully (Frisen, Jonsson, & Persson, 2007). Bullying behavior must not be excused, though many adults and students place blame for bullying on the target, indicating the target's behavior provoked the bully (Davis et al., 2007).

Others casually observe bullying behaviors and take no steps to intervene or address the situation. As suggested by the statement made by Dr. Martin Luther King previously referenced, the role of bystanders in bullying is far from innocent. Bystanders may be considered active or passive depending on their role in the bullying. Passive bystanders watch and observe the bullying without intervening. Active bystanders who encourage and cheer the bully on give the bully additional power and acceptance (Coloroso, 2002, 2005).

Types of bullying. Though bullying behavior is sometimes divided into other numbers of descriptors, for the purposes of this study bullying is divided into three major categories: physical, verbal, and relational (Naylor et al., 2006). Physical bullying refers to direct physical aggression. Verbal bullying is also direct, and includes name calling, threats, insults, taunts, and sexual harassment (Felix & Furlong, 2008). Relational bullying refers to an attack on a peer's social standing and may include gossip, lies, and social exclusion (Felix & Furlong, 2008). Another section reviews research on how gender and age relate to the expression of and response to bullying.

Prevalence of bullying. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has identified bullying as the most common form of violence in our society today (Cohn & Canter,

2003). It is estimated that between 15 and 30 percent of all students are bullies and/or victims (Cohn & Canter, 2003; Nansel et al., 2001, p. 16). Cohn and Canter (2003) cite a study of more than 15,000 youth conducted by the American Medical Association, stating that when they examined only youth in grades 6-10, over 6.9 million youth were involved in bullying each year, either as bullies or targets. Numerous international studies have consistently identified the prevalence rates of regularly and habitually bullied children to be between 8-46% (Fekkes et al., 2006, p. 2; Nansel et al., 2001, pp. 16-17). The vast majority of students experience occasional bullying, even though these incidents were not included in statistics accounting for habitual bullying (Felix & Furlong, 2008). A survey conducted in several Texas middle schools found that 92% of youth reported occasional bullying, and 33% indicated this type of behavior was *often* observed in their school (Harris & Petrie, 2003, p. 36).

Prevalence rates of bullying vary from study to study. These differences are partially due to loose definitions of the term *bullying*. Depending on how each researcher defines the term, a varying number of cases may be included or excluded from the results (Carter & Spencer, 2006). The authors also warn that "caution has to be taken in generalizing results" of bullying prevalence estimates (Cater & Spencer, 2006, p. 22). Because of this variance in bullying prevalence, published estimates should not be used as the sole basis for local bullying prevention programs.

Long term effects of bullying. Current research indicates that the effects of bullying are longer lasting than previously imagined. Children and teens impacted by bullying suffer several long-term negative outcomes. Students involved as both bullies and targets have an increased risk for depression (Kaltiala-Heino, Marttunen, Rantanen, Rimpelä, & Rimpelä, 1999). Younger students who are identified as bullies tend to begin dating earlier than their peers and are more

likely to report using abusive behavior in their relationship (Connolly, Craig, Pepler, & Taradash, 2000). Perhaps the most startling statistic for students (American and British) identified as bullies is that when compared with their peers, bullies are 5-12 times more likely to have a criminal record as adults. The broad range is accounted for by the various ways bullying is measured across studies (Aronson, 2000, p. 103; Fox et al., 2003, p. 10; Garrett, 2003, pp. 7, 13; Ross, 1996, p. 68).

Risks for students identified as targets are none less serious than the risks for bullies. Targets of bullying are at an increased risk for depression, low self-esteem, bringing a weapon to school, and suicidal ideation when compared to their peers (Davis et al., 2007). The increased risk of depression has been found to be 4-5 times that of non-bullied peers (Fox, Christeson, Elliott, James, Kerlikowske, and Newman, 2003, p. 10). The rates of suicidal ideation in female targets have been found to be 8 times the base rate of peers (Fox et al., 2003, p. 9). According to some estimates, more than 160,000 children skip school each day for fear of bullying (Garrett, 2003). Targets of bullying have also been found to exhibit an increased risk of psychosomatic and psychosocial problems (Fekkes, Fredriks, Pijpers, Verloove-Vanhorick, & Vogels, 2006).

Population differences. When describing bullying behaviors and the impact of bullying on victims and bystanders, age and gender differences are commonly noted (Naylor et al., 2006). Research describing these differences are summarized in the following sections.

Age differences. Bullying in younger children is almost exclusively physical as social and language skills are immature, not sufficiently developed for more sophisticated forms of bullying (Crothers et al., 2008). As children age, physical bullying decreases and more covert forms of bullying, less likely to be noticed by adults, increase. Although bullying in general has

been found to peak in middle school, relational bullying peaks in later adolescence (Crothers et al., 2008).

Investigating age differences, some research has been conducted to examine how children and adolescents define and understand bullying. In an international study, participants were asked to group cartoon drawings (with descriptive captions) into similar categories and to name what the picture portrayed in their respective languages (i.e., *bullying, mobbing, verbal harassment*, etc.) (Smith, Cowie, Olafsson, & Liefoodhe, 2002). This study was effective in its demonstration that a 14-year-old uses more terms and categories to distinguish types of bullying and antisocial behavior than does an 8-year-old. Smith et al. found no significant gender differences in the conceptualization of bullying. However, the findings of this study may have been impacted by the methods used. By using cartoons (stick figures) the reality and severity of situations may have been somewhat removed. Additionally, captions describing the cartoons may have influenced student perceptions and interpretations of the situations (Smith et al., 2002).

A similar study was conducted by Naylor et al. (2006). Designed to compare teacher and student definitions of bullying, the study also examined the role age played in defining bullying (Naylor et al., 2006). The research posed an open-ended question to both students and teachers, asking for their definition of bullying. The research assumed a difference between teachers and participants and administered different questionnaires to both participants and teachers. Analysis examined the presence or absence of certain aspects of bullying: impact on the target, bully's intent to harm, repetition of offense, social exclusion, etc (Naylor et al., 2006). Their findings indicated that teachers expressed a more comprehensive understanding of bullying and its qualifying factors, while students were more likely to limit their definition to direct forms of bullying (Naylor et al., 2006). This research also found differences within the student population

based on both age and gender. Gender differences are described in the following section. In regard to age, 9th grade students were more likely than 7th grade students to mention social exclusion as a form of bullying. However, when only considering those who were targets of bullying, 7th grade students (targets) were more likely to note social exclusion.

Gender differences. Gender is an important aspect to consider when differentiating perceptions of bullying and harassment (American Association of University Women [AAUW], 2001). There is a known discrepancy in interpersonal understandings of bullying across gender. Research conducted by Walsh, James, and Khosropour (2001) indicated that females view bullying more negatively than males (as cited in Garrett, 2003). Refining the focus, in defining bullying behaviors, Naylor et al. (2006) reported that males were more likely to stress the repetitive nature of bullying, while females were more likely to emphasize its harmful effects.

In regard to observed behavior, bullying has been found to be more prevalent in males, both as aggressors and targets (Garrett, 2003; Marsh, Parada, Craven, & Finger, 2004). Across all grade levels, Olweus (1993) found stability in the percentage of male bullies. Physical and verbal bullying were reported as the most common types of bullying among males. Females rely more on the use of relational bullying (Crick & Bigbee, 1998; Garrett, 2003). More than any other type, this type of bullying is usually associated with females. In fact, reviews of relational bullying literature, such as the one conducted by Crothers et al. (2008), do not even mention relational bullying amongst the male population.

Contradicting the stereotypes, some studies have found that males engage in and reinforce relational bullying more than females (Marsh, Parada, Craven, & Finger, 2004). In fact, males have been found to use all three types of bullying more than females: physical, verbal, and relational (Felix & Furlong, 2008; Li, 2006; Pellegrini, 2004). This higher

involvement in bullying by males is true across all grade levels (Pellegrini, 2004). Cyber bullying, a new but widely used form of bullying, is also more prevalent among males, both as targets and aggressors (Li, 2006).

Because relational bullying is stereotyped as a female activity, male use of this type of bullying is viewed differently than other types of bullying. A seventh-grade female stated:

> Teasing/harassment is different from females to males, I think. Females are like vipers; they strike quickly and only the strongest can hold them off. Females exclude, tease, and drop snide comments easily. Males, however (I really don't know/ I'm guessing), are like bears, using muscle and brawn over brain. (Felix & Furlong, 2008, p. 1279)

Reactions to Bullying

Bullying behavior impacts students who are both directly and indirectly involved. It is important for school-based intervention programs to understand bullying behaviors from a variety of viewpoints, considering the nature of students' social relationships and school climate that may support bullying (Felix & Furlong, 2008). Prior to implementing interventions, school leadership must carefully investigate perceptions of bullying.

Perceptions of bullying. A 2007 study of perceptions of relational aggression among college students found that while males and females reported statistically similar involvement in relational aggression, both as aggressors and targets, perceptions of relational aggression varied across gender (Basow, Cahill, Phelan, Longshore, & McGillicuddy-DeLisi, 2007). The study also found physical aggression to be perceived as more damaging than relational aggression. Within relational aggression, Basow and colleagues found that the scenario was rated as less acceptable and more damaging when the aggressor was female. Thus male use of relational bullying was rated as the least damaging form of bullying.

Based on a survey conducted by Olweus (1994), an astounding 25% of teachers saw nothing wrong with bullying: In fact, many teachers admitted to threatening, harassing, or otherwise intimidating their own students as a means of maintaining order in the classroom. Even teachers who identified bullying as a problem admit having limited knowledge regarding how to properly confront or respond to bullying (Pollack, 1998).

It is little wonder why Harris and Petrie (2003) found that almost 60% of students believed that their teachers were disinterested in bullying that occurred at school, even after being informed of an incident. In fact, 73% of youth also perceived school administrators as disinterested in responding to bullying allegations (Harris & Petrie, p. 38). A survey of 59 Texas middle school principals found that principals viewed their schools as significantly safer and more supportive of bullying reduction than students perceived (Harris & Hathorn, 2006). After the 1999 Columbine massacre, one junior from Columbine High School offered, "I can't believe the faculty couldn't figure it out. It was so obvious that something was wrong" (Garrett, 2003, p. 49).

School-based bully prevention programs. Bullying prevention programs have proven somewhat effective with elementary school children (Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2006; Hirschstein, Edstrom, Frey, Snell, & MacKenzie, 2007). However, when implemented with adolescents, bullying prevention programs typically show minimal or no effect in student behavior across time (Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004). Research indicates that aggressive behaviors increase with age as aggressive tactics and attitudes about aggression also change (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997). Developmental changes in relation to bullying may account for the discrepancy in program effectiveness between these two age groups.

Effective interventions stem from an accurate understanding and identification of a problem (Murphy, 1997; Umbreit, Ferro, Liaupsin, & Lane, 2007). Once a problem is accurately defined, then energy can be focused on creating a plan to appropriately address the problem (Umbreit et al., 2007). However, an accurate understanding of a problem requires gathering information from multiple perspectives. Therefore, the word *accurate* may be somewhat deceptive, in that problems, such as bullying, are multidimensional and vary depending on viewpoint and perspective. Bullying prevention programs must take into account students' perspectives of the problem. Perceptions are influenced by several factors including social aspects, such as group membership and context of the incident (Gini, 2005; Naylor, 2006).

Adolescent Relational Bullying

Common ideas surrounding the causes and effects of bullying are similar to those of other forms of harassment and abuse. These include minimizing the bullying behaviors, blaming the target, and excusing the perpetrator. Before a bullying-prevention program can become effective, each of these three ideas needs to be addressed (Davis et al., 2007). Just as sexual harassment programs were instituted only after dismissing the belief that sexual harassment was a normal part of growing up, anti-bullying campaigns must first seek to extinguish this notion (Davis et al.). Because these three main beliefs represent categories of perceptions contained in this study's questionnaire, these constructs will be briefly examined.

The effects of bullying are often minimized by teachers, administrators, and bystanders. A bully's lack of empathy inhibits the bully's ability to correctly perceive the damaging effects of his or her behavior (Landau, Milich, Harris, & Larson, 2001). Adults far too often view bullying as normal youth behavior or a rite of passage. Another common belief is that a bully's behavior is merely a manifestation of immaturity and causes no harm to others (Garrett, 2003).

Another way in which bullying behaviors can be minimized is the idea that observed bullying behaviors only occur for a short period of time. When bullying behaviors are minimized, the likelihood of implementing effective intervention decreases (Garrett, 2003).

Childhood adages such as "stick and stones may break my bones, but words will never harm me," teach our children from an early age that the effects of relational or verbal bullying are minimal (Davis et al., 2007). In reality, verbal bullying is often regarded as the most common type of bullying, and often has disastrous consequences (Handwerk, 2005). Research conducted by Huesmann and Guerra (1997) found that, across time, children and adolescence are increasingly accepting of aggression. Implications of this research are that with time, the effects of bullying behaviors are increasingly minimized. This finding is particularly disturbing when the oldest people involved (teachers and administrators) are responsible for determining when to intervene in a bullying scenario.

When assessing a bullying situation, the target is often blamed for the bullying behavior. The target is thought to have "brought the bullying upon himself." In many instances this blame of the target is scapegoated by how the target looks or acts. "Because she is weird" is a form of blaming the target. Any attempt to justify the occurrence of bullying by pointing out a trait or characteristic of the target is blaming the target. The phrase "Linda gets picked on because she is overweight" inappropriately places the blame for her bullying on her. These notions are supported by research conducted by Frisen, Jonsson, and Persson (2007) which found that the most common reason given by adolescents for why others are bullied was due to the appearance of the target.

In a small minority of cases, the target appears to provoke bullying behaviors from his or her peers. In these instances the justification for bullying behaviors goes far beyond the way a

target dresses. Provocative targets appear to actively encourage their own victimization (Handwerk, 2005). Provocative targets appear easily aroused and much of the bullying they receive is in direct response to an elicited behavior. It is common for such provocative targets to be diagnosed with ADHD. In some instances a provocative target may actually tease the bully (Handwerk, 2005).

Just as you would not advise the victim of domestic violence to stop the violence by learning to cook better, provocative targets should not be held responsible for the bully's behavior (Davis et al., 2007). By focusing interventions only on the target, a message of blame and guilt is conveyed. This type of message does little to ameliorate the situation, and serves only to increase the emotional torment of the target (Davis et al., 2007).

Reasons for excusing the bully may underlie in either or both of the aforementioned factors. Placing blame on the target and/or minimizing the bullying behaviors may contribute to excusing the bully of his or her actions. Blaming the environment which produced the bully is also a way in which a bully may be separated from his behaviors. The more a bully is excused from his bullying behaviors, the less accountable he/she is for those behaviors and the likelihood of those behaviors changing decreases.

"To date, most efforts have focused on preventing bullying in the forms of physical and verbal aggression in schools" (Crothers et al., 2008, p. 1). Relational bullying is more likely to go unnoticed by teachers and administrators as it is less overt than other types of bullying (Crothers et al., 2008). Relational bullying is also less likely to be stopped if it is perpetrated by a male, since adults tend to view males' use of relational bullying as less damaging than other bullying scenarios (Basow et al., 2007). Relational bullying is particularly damaging as it attacks a child's friendships. Friendship in children and adolescents is thought to contribute to cognitive

development as well as the development of socio-emotional skills, moral reasoning, and empathy (Crothers et al., 2008). More research is needed to better understand the role of relational bullying in the lives of children and adolescents. To date, no research has been conducted to specifically examine the role of males in relational bullying and how males and females interpret male relational bullying differently.

Method

Research Design

A between-group design was utilized for this research study, with 2 independent variables: (a) participants' gender and (b) participants' age (whether attending junior high school or High School). Dependent variables were created from questionnaire data that tapped the following perceptions of bullying scenarios: (a) minimization of bullying, (b) blaming bully's victim, and (c) excusing perpetrator. The type of scenario (details related to the specific video clip) was identified as a dependant variable to better explain the relationship between gender and dependent variables.

Participants

A convenience sample was recruited from three secondary schools within a local (UT) School District, A High (enrollment =1,881), B High (enrollment =1,697), and C junior high school (enrollment =892). Potential participating students were enrolled in grades 8-12. A total of 317 students participated in this research, 110 attended junior high school and 207 attended high school (108 attending one high school and 99 attending the other). Based on the 712 potential students who were invited to participate in this research, the participation rate was 44.52%. Descriptive statistics for the total population and for each gender are included in Table 1. A fairly equal proportion of males (*n*=164, 52.74%) and females (n=159, 47.32%) participated. Three students did not indicate their gender. Because the intent of this study was to examine differences between genders, the three participants who did not indicate gender were excluded from the study. Therefore, the total number of participants was 314, rather than 317.

Each school's principal, in conjunction with teachers, identified the specific classes, times, and location for student participation. More specifically, high schools students' general health classes were offered to the researcher as the optimal class, time, and location to conduct

research. The health class is required of students prior to graduation, so a mixture of students from 9th through 12th grade were enrolled in this class. The only high school students not offered an opportunity to participate in this research were students who were not currently enrolled in health class and those students enrolled in fully self-contained classes who did not attend the general health class. Approximately 350 potential high school students were available to participate in the research.

Table 1
Sample's Descriptive Statistics

Group	*N*	*Percent*	*M*	*SD*	Range
All	314	100.00	15.50	1.23	13.00 -18.50
Males	164	51.74	15.64	1.23	13.00-18.50
Females	150	47.32	15.34	1.21	13.00-15.34

Note. Three participants did not indicate gender. Their questionnaires were Not included in the data analysis.

In the junior high school, the opportunity to participate in research was offered in every section of 8th grade history, a required class. Approximately 362 junior high school students were enrolled in 8th grade history class). The only 8th grade students who were not offered an opportunity to participate were students enrolled in fully self-contained classes who did not attend the general history class.

Demographic information comparing racial composition for national, state, and local district is included in Table 2. In comparison to national demographics, the participating district enrolls a higher percentage of White students, a similar percentage of Hispanic students, and less Black students.

Table 2
Racial Composition of Students Attending Public Schools

Race	National	Utah	Participating School District
White	55.9	81.8	70.4
Black	16.9	1.3	1.0
Hispanic	20.5	12.3	22.9
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.5	3.1	4.5
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1.2	1.5	1.2

Demographic information comparing the participating school district with participating schools is summarized in Table 3. Within participating schools, C junior high school has a higher percentage of Hispanic student enrollment (32.28%), higher percentage of Limited English Proficiency (22.45%), and higher percentage of subsidized student lunches (58.86%), indicating students from lower income families. In contrast, B high school has a lower percentage of Hispanic enrollment (13.56%), lower percentage of Limited English Proficiency (7.21%), and lower percentage of subsidized student lunches (30.53%), indicating students from higher income families. These factors should be considered when interpreting data representing these schools.

Recruitment of Participants

Two weeks prior to the scheduled research date, a researcher made a five minute presentation to each class selected to participate in the research. After introductions, the researcher read the following statement to each class, encouraging recruitment.

Your class has been selected to participate in a research study being conducted by Curt Johnson, a Graduate Student, through Brigham Young University and under the

Table 3

Participating (UT) School District Demographics: Ethnicity, Gender, Subsidized Lunch, Special Education Enrollment, English Proficiency, and Selected Risk Factors

Categories	Participating School District		A- High School		B- High School		C -Junior High	
Total Enrollment	**13,099**		**1,858**		**1,789**		**824**	
Ethnicity	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian	170	1.30	22	1.18	15	.81	8	.97
Asian	315	2.41	33	1.78	65	3.50	7	.85
Black	135	1.03	25	1.35	15	.81	8	.97
Hispanic	**3,394**	**25.91**	**468**	**25.19**	**252**	**13.56**	**266**	**32.28**
Pacific Islander	333	2.54	45	2.42	54	2.91	17	2.06
White	**8,686**	**66.31**	**1,259**	**67.76**	**1,384**	**74.49**	**517**	**62.74**
Undeclared	66	.50	6	.32	4	.22	1	.12
Gender								
Female	6,412	48.95	907	48.82	901	50.36	395	47.94
Male	6,687	51.05	951	51.18	888	49.64	429	52.06
Subsidized student lunch	**5,287**	**40.36**	**861**	**46.34**	**546**	**30.52**	**485**	**58.86**
Free	5,000	38.17	653	35.15	424	23.70	383	46.48
Reduced	1,287	9.83	208	11.19	122	6.82	102	12.38
Special Education								
Resource	1,004	7.67	144	7.75	99	4.53	65	7.89
Self Contained	642	4.90	118	6.35	65	3.63	50	6.07
English proficiency	**2,490**	**19.01**	**239**	**12.86**	**129**	**7.21**	**185**	**22.45**
Limited English Proficiency	1,435	10.96	100	5.38	54	3.02	96	11.65
Advanced Proficiency	1,016	7.76	130	7.00	37	2.07	89	10.80
Fluent	39	.30	8	.43	29	1.62	0	0.00
Selected risk factors								
Homeless	74	.56	7	.38	4	.22	3	.36
Migrant	78	.60	7	.38	8	.45	13	1.58

Note. Statistics are based on October 1, 2007 enrollment.

supervision of Melissa Allen Heath, Ph.D. The study will examine your perceptions of peer conflict in different settings. The study consists of watching two short video clips followed by a set questions. All those who choose to participate in the study will have their responses kept confidential. There is no obligation to participate in the research. If you choose not to participate, you will not be penalized in any manner. All those willing to participate in the research should bring these two forms back to your teacher within one week from today. Both forms explain your rights as a research participant and ask for your consent to participate. One form must be signed by your parent/guardian, and the other must be signed by you. Both of these forms must be completed in order for you to participate in this research. Are there any questions?

After reading the scripted statement, the researcher fielded students' basic and logistical questions, not revealing or explaining the research questions. Prior to signing the parental consent form parents (not students) were given the option of viewing the film clips. Video clips were posted on an Internet website: [*http://provoresearchvideoclips.4shared.com*] and were password protected with the word "education." Additional information was also included in the parent's consent form, including contact information (phone numbers included) for the major researcher and a contact person representing Brigham Young University's IRB. Appendix A contains the parent consent form and student assent form. These forms were completed by parents and students prior to participation in this research.

Materials

Rather than offering scenarios in printed format for students to read, short video clips were created. After viewing each video clip, students completed a short questionnaire. These materials are described in the following sections.

Video clip scenarios. Research has shown that the use of video clips is an effective way to ensure that all participants receive the same stimuli while still allowing for private interpretation of the facts (Guzell, 2001). The use of written scenarios removes some of the responsibility for interpretation from the participant and places it on the researcher. Kring and Gordon (1998) support the use of video clips to portray scenarios in research by saying "Film viewing is a relatively common occurrence for all people, and this method does not rely on participants' ability to recall past experiences. Second, slides or still photographs present momentary emotional scenes, whereas film clips present a more typical context in which emotional experiences typically develop over time" (p. 688). Film clips have also been shown to elicit emotion in a laboratory setting (Kring & Gordon, 1998).

Each group of participants (a classroom of students) watched two video clips totaling less than 2 minutes and 45 seconds for both videos. The four clips were grouped into two different sets, each containing one scene of male to male bullying and one scene of cross-gender bullying. This was done to examine how perceptions might change from an all male scenario to a scenario in which both males and females were involved. The order of video clips was rotated to counterbalance the potential impact of viewing sequence. To standardize viewing, all clips were shown using a video projector. After each video clip, students completed 12 Likert-style questions (two-page, hard copy, paper/pencil questionnaire). Each student completed two Likert-style questionnaires, each questionnaire associated with one specific video (labeled at the top of the questionnaire).

Four short video clips (each clip was 2 minutes or less in length) were utilized in this research study. Video clips are described in Table 4. Two video clips were taken from an episode ("Wannabe") of a popular television series, *Without a Trace.* Two additional video clips

were taken from a limited release 2004 independent film, *Mean Creek* (Estes). Each participant watched two of the four video clips. No participant saw two clips from the same source (movie or TV show). The number and percent of students watching each particular clip are listed in Table 4.

Questionnaires. Questionnaires were adapted from the Rape Supportive Attribution Scale (Langhinrichsen-Rohling & Monson, 1998; Yamawaki, 2007). The Rape Supportive Attribution Scale was originally designed to investigate rape perceptions among adults. Some of the questions were reworded to be better understood by adolescents. The questions were adapted and modified to reflect the situation of each clip. The questionnaire and scoring key are included in Appendix B. Using a six-point likert scale (ranging from 1, "not at all," to 6, "extremely"), questions loaded onto three factors: minimization of bullying behaviors, blaming of the target, and excusing of the aggressor.

Each video clip was accompanied by 12 questions, eliciting participants' perceptions of the bullying scenario, along with demographic information asking the participant's grade level and gender. Participants also reported whether they had previously seen the video clip.

Procedures

The researcher first made sure that all students participating in the research had turned in both Parental Consent and Student Assent forms (Appendix A). Then the researcher read the a short scripted statement:

> You have chosen to participate in this research study on peer conflict. If you have not turned in a signed consent form from your parents or yourself, please raise your hand now. At any point in this research you may discontinue participation without lowering your grade in this class. You will be shown two video short video clips, each lasting less

than two minutes. Following each clip you will be asked to answer a series of questions about the clip. Please do not speak or make jokes during the clips or while answering the

Table 4

Number and Percent of Participants Watching Video Clip and Description of Video Clips

n^a	%	Source of Clip	Length of clip	Description of clip
160	50.47	"Wannabe" episode, *Without a Trace* television series	45 seconds	Students are in a classroom before the teacher enters. A boy walks up to a girl and puts a dog treat on her desk and has a short conversation with her in which he calls her "a dog." All throughout his conversation he looks for approval of another student, who smiles and nods approval. This clip will be hereafter referred to as "cross-gender verbal."
148	47.32	*Mean Creek,* movie	2:00 minutes	A group of teenagers discusses how one boy who has been held back in school keeps picking on one of the boy's younger brothers. They, along with the younger brother invite the boy to a river trip under the pretense of a "birthday party." The younger brother discloses to a friend that the plan is to strip the boy, throw him in the river, and make him run back to town naked. This clip will be hereafter referred to as "male party invite."
161	51.10	"Wannabe" episode, *Without a Trace* television series	1:00 minute	Two students are being questioned separately about an embarrassing picture (not shown) of a boy, which a girl got hold of and e-mailed around the school. Dialogue indicates the boy had previously called the girl "a dog" and she wanted to get back at him. The girl admits looking for approval of "the popular girls." This clip will be hereafter referred to as "cross-gender cyberbullying."
158	50.79	Clip from *Mean Creek* movie	40 seconds	A group of boys are out in a small boat on the river. One boy has a video camera and is taping himself as he sings brief statements about the other boys in the boat. The boys all laugh along. The singer then calls one of the other boys "a fag" and

	his face shows emotional pain and hurt feelings. This clip will be hereafter referred to as "male homophobia."

[a] *N*= 317.

questionnaire. Please do not answer any of the questions about the clip until instructed to do so. If you do not understand one of the questions, please raise your hand and I will explain the question. Please do not ask your peers for help if you are confused. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions on the questionnaire. The questionnaire will only ask for your personal opinions. Are there any questions?

The researcher then handed out a two-page questionnaire to each participant. Participants were asked to circle their gender and age at the top of the page. Participants were reminded to remain silent during the video clips and when completing the questionnaire. A short description introducing each video clips was read prior to showing the clip (refer to information in Appendix C). The video clip was then projected onto the room's movie screen. Following the clip, the researcher asked all participants to quietly answer each question on the questionnaire, and to look up when they were done. When all of the participants completed the first set of questions the process was repeated with the second clip. When finished with the second clip, all questionnaires were collected.

After viewing the two video clips and completing the associated questionnaires (12 questions per video), the researcher debriefed the students by explaining that while relational bullying was common among males, it is stereotyped to be used by females. Relational bullying was defined. The researcher then led a group discussion about relational bullying with the students. Students were initially hesitant to make personal statements or discuss real-life issues involving their peers. The researcher led the discussion by asking questions: "How are boys and girls different in the way they bully?" "How common do you think the situations from the clips

are in real life?" "In the first /second clip, why do you think the boy would want to do something like that?" "How damaging can relational bullying be?" and "What can be done to stop relational bullying?" Prior to the end of the class period, students were asked not to discuss the clips or the research with their peers who had not yet participated.

Statistical Analysis

Each participant's age/grade, gender, and their questionnaires' Likert-scale scores were entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Scores representing each question were grouped into one of the three scales: (a) minimizing bullying behavior, (b) blaming the victim, and (c) excusing bully from responsibility. Questions, scores, and scoring are described in Table 5 and more fully explained in Appendix B following the questionnaires. After reversing scoring questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, and 12, each score ranged from 1-6, with lower scores indicating a more socially desirable attitude toward bullying and larger scores indicating a less desirable attitude toward bullying. Upon reviewing the internal consistency correlations, the construct of blaming the victim was pulled apart into its separate questions to be analyzed separately. Question 8 was also removed from the construct of excusing the bully and was analyzed separately. Internal consistency correlations can be found in Appendix D.

Data was first analyzed by using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with gender and age group as variables. Age group was used as a categorical variable with 2 levels, middle school and high school. Statistical significance level for determining differences between scales was set at .01 ($p \leq .01$). After analyzing the MANOVA the data was organized by video clip and a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run for each of the separate clips by gender.

Table 5
Questionnaire: Questions, Scales, and Scoring

Question	Scale	Meaning of higher raw scores prior to reversal	Scoring
1. To what degree do you believe that [VICTIM] will experience lasting mental/emotional effects from this incident?	(1) Minimizing bullying	Indicates empathy for victim & not minimizing behavior	Reverse raw score
2. How certain are you that this incident is considered bullying?	(1) Minimizing bullying	Indicates recognition of bully behavior & not minimizing behavior	Reverse raw score
3. How painful do you believe this situation was for [VICTIM]?	(1) Minimizing bullying	Indicates recognition of bully behavior & not minimizing behavior	Reverse raw score
4. To what degree did the guys' actions violate [VICTIM's] rights?	(1) Minimizing bullying	Indicates recognition of Bully behavior & not minimizing behavior	Reverse raw score
5. How much control did [VICTIM] have in this situation?	(2) Blaming victim	Indicates responsibility is on the victim—Blaming victim	Keep raw score
6. How much responsibility did [VICTIM] have in making this situation happen?	(2) Blaming victim	Indicates responsibility is on the victim	Keep raw score
7. To what degree did [BULLY] enjoy this situation?	This question is not part of the data	How much bully enjoys the situation. Does NOT tap into this study's research questions.	This question is not part of the data
8. To what degree did the other boys in the boat enjoy this situation?	(3) Excusing bully	Excuses aggressor	Keep raw score
9. How much do you think the [BULLY] should blame himself for what happened.	(3) Excusing bully	Responsibility is placed on bully	Reverse raw score
10. Do you think it is [BULLY's] fault things turned out the way they did?	(3) Excusing bully	NOT excusing the bully—BULLY is responsible	Reverse raw score
11. How much control do you think [BULLY] had over the situation?	(3) Excusing bully	NOT excusing the bully—bully is in control	Reverse raw score
12. How much sympathy do you feel for [VICTIM]?	(2) Blaming victim	High levels of sympathy indicate NOT minimizing bully behaviors	Reverse raw score

Note. With reverse scoring (as indicated for some of the questions), low scores indicate desirable attitude toward bullying. After reversing some of the raw scores to make all scores similar in direction, high scores indicate minimizing act of bullying and bully's behavior. The three scales include: (1) minimizing bully behavior, (2) blaming victim, and (3) excusing bully from responsibility.

Results

Only twelve questionnaires of the 627 questionnaires indicated the participant previously saw the movie or television program. Because students filled out two questionnaires and turned these in separately with no name to identify the questionnaires, the twelve questionnaires indicating the participant previously viewed the movie or TV program translates into minimally six and maximally twelve participants who previously viewed the movie and/or television program. Based on the researcher's opinion, this posed minimal concern for data tainted by students' pre-conceived perceptions of the video clips. Therefore, students who previously viewed the clips were included in the data analysis.

Each of the twelve questions included in the questionnaire had a scale ranging from 1-6. When comparing male score range with female score range, it was found that as a group males' scores spanned from the lowest option to the highest option. However, on question 2 "How certain are you that this incident is considered bullying?" On all four of the video clips, none of the females chose 1, "not at all." This indicated that females were always somewhat certain that the clips represented a bullying situation. It is interesting that across all four clips none of the females ever indicated that the scenario was definitely not bullying.

After omitting question 7 from the questionnaire as discussed earlier, eleven questions remained. The internal consistency of the three constructs (minimizing bullying, blaming the victim, and excusing the bully) can be found in Appendix D. Due to low internal consistency within the construct of blaming the victim, this grouping was removed from analysis and the questions that comprised it were all analyzed separately. Question 8 was also analyzed separately.

Group Differences

To investigate the potential impact of age on student perceptions of male involvement in relationally aggressive bullying as well as gender, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was employed to determine if the differences between the two age groups (junior high versus high school) and gender would be considered significantly different (statistical significance level was set at $p \leq .01$). Descriptive statistics for the multivariate analysis of variance are found in Appendix E. Results of the MANOVA are summarized in Table 6. Based on the results of this MANOVA, junior high school students and high school students showed no significant differences in their perceptions of relational bullying clips (*Lambda* = .981, $p = .072$). A significant effect was found (*Lambda* = .956, $p = .000$) between how males and females perceived the clips, however. The test of between subjects effects can be found in Table 7. In this analysis the constructs of minimizing bullying and excusing the bully remain grouped, but the construct of blaming the victim is broken up into its individual questions due to poor internal consistency within the construct. While age group did not show a significant effect for any of the constructs or questions, gender did show a significant effect on three of the areas. Gender differences for minimizing the bullying were found to be significant ($p = .004$) as well as for question 8 which asks to what degree the bystanders enjoyed the situation ($p = .001$) and question 12 which asks about sympathy for the victim ($p = .000$).

Gender Differences by Clip

Because gender had a significant effect and each clip deals with a different type of scenario, researchers sought to explore the differences in gender for each specific clip. Table 8 compares the means and standard deviations of each of the variables by gender for each clip. A one-way ANOVA was run for each clip by gender can be found in Tables 9-12. In the cross-

Table 6
Multivariate Tests

Effect		*Value*	*F*	*p*
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.976	4133.80	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.024	4133.80	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	40.594	4133.80	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	40.594	4133.80	.000
Gender	Pillai's Trace	.044	4.65	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.956	4.65	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	.046	4.65	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.046	4.65	.000
Age Group	Pillai's Trace	.019	1.94	.072
	Wilks' Lambda	.981	1.94	.072
	Hotelling's Trace	.019	1.94	.072
	Roy's Largest Root	.019	1.94	.072
Gender*Age Group	Pillai's Trace	.009	.912	.481
	Wilks' Lambda	.991	.912	.481
	Hotelling's Trace	.009	.912	.481
	Roy's Largest Root	.009	.912	.481

Table 7
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	*DV*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Corrected Model	Minimizing Bullying	74.88	5.18	.002
	Excusing the Bully	29.51	2.73	.043
	Q5 Victim Control	.15	.08	.974
	Q6 Victim Responsibility	3.50	1.21	.305
	Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	4.62	3.75	.011
	Q12 Sympathy	25.17	7.81	.000
	Minimizing Bullying	37602.75	2602.85	.000
Intercept				
	Excusing the Bully	22671.89	2100.54	.000
	Q5 Victim Control	3367.66	1722.69	.000
	Q6 Victim Responsibility	4373.93	1512.46	.000
	Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	13036.02	10577.47	.000
	Q12 Sympathy	6513.58	2020.08	.000
	Minimizing Bullying	119.80	8.29	.004
Gender				
	Excusing the Bully	35.26	3.27	.071
	Q5 Victim Control	.12	.06	.806
	Q6 Victim Responsibility	2.92	1.01	.315
	Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	13.34	10.82	.001
	Q12 Sympathy	62.23	19.30	.000

Table 7 (continued)
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	*DV*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Age Group	Minimizing Bullying	54.82	3.80	.052
	Excusing the Bully	37.84	3.51	.062
	Q5 Victim Control	.02	.01	.927
	Q6 Victim Responsibility	2.87	.99	.319
	Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	.46	.37	.542
	Q12 Sympathy	7.22	2.24	.135
Gender * Age Group	Minimizing Bullying	3.77	.26	.609
	Excusing the Bully	8.25	.76	.382
	Q5 Victim Control	.40	.21	.650
	Q6 Victim Responsibility	2.94	1.02	.314
	Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	2.93	2.37	.124
	Q12 Sympathy	2.92	.91	.341

gender verbal clip there was a significant effect on question 8, which asks how much the bystanders enjoyed the situation ($p = .003$). This instance was the only time when males ($M = 4.02$) endorsed a lower score than females ($M = 4.57$) on an item with a statistically significant difference. Lower scores one the scales are associated with a more appropriate view where higher scores represent increased minimization of the bullying, excusing of the bully, and blaming of the victim. In this particular question dealing with the bystanders there is room for argument that a higher score is a more appropriate view. The cross-gender cyberbullying clip produced a significant effect on question 12, which asks how much sympathy the rater feels for the victim ($p = .001$). The male party invite clip, which involves male-male relational bullying produced a significant effect on both the minimization of bullying construct ($p = .000$) as well as on question 12. The male homophobia clip, which also involves male-male relational bullying produced a significant effect on 2 items as well. Question 12 was found to be significantly different between males and females ($p = .000$) as well as question 6, which asks how responsible the victim is for the situation ($p = .007$). This latter finding is particularly interesting which it is taken into account that the victim in this scenario never speaks a word and the film introduction only states “The guys are out on the river in a boat on one Saturday. The guys suspect Clyde of being gay, and often tease him about it.”

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations by Gender for Each Clip

		Cross-gender Verbal		Cross-gender Cyber		Male Party Invite		Male Homophobia	
		n= 89 Male	*n*=69 Female	*n*=77 Male	*n*=81 Female	*n*= 80 Male	*n*=68 Female	*n*= 78 Male	*n*=79 Female
Minimize Bullying	*M*	9.10	8.13	8.67	7.72	6.31	4.91	11.27	10.00
	(SD)	(3.40)	(3.12)	(3.63)	(2.91)	(2.81)	(1.38)	(4.59)	(4.09)
Excuse Bully	*M*	5.01	4.48	9.79	9.17	5.52	4.74	6.36	5.33
	(SD)	(2.56)	(1.85)	(3.88)	(3.27)	(2.48)	(1.84)	(2.94)	(2.31)
Q5	*M*	2.32	2.54	3.11	2.91	2.53	2.44	1.88	1.87
V Control	*(SD)*	(1.21)	(1.40)	(1.60)	(1.26)	(1.40)	(1.52)	(1.08)	(1.22)
Q6	*M*	1.94	1.72	4.25	4.25	3.23	3.06	2.21	1.65
V Responsibility.	*(SD)*	(1.32)	(1.08)	(1.50)	(1.29)	(1.66)	(1.51)	(1.39)	(1.19)
Q8	*M*	4.02	4.57	4.60	4.70	5.42	5.57	4.89	5.09
Bystanders Enjoy	*(SD)*	(1.18)	(1.06)	(1.19)	(1.09)	(0.63)	(0.65)	(1.16)	(0.92)
Q12	*M*	5.26	5.56	3.96	3.17	2.56	1.79	3.10	2.05
Sympathy	*(SD)*	(1.10)	(0.99)	(1.48)	(1.33)	(1.46)	(1.04)	(1.62)	(1.12)

Table 9
ANOVA Between Genders for Cross-Gender Verbal Clip

		SS	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Minimizing Bullying	Between Groups	36.199	1	36.199	3.369	.068
	Within Groups	1676.264	156	10.745		
	Total	1712.464	157			
Excusing Bully	Between Groups	11.041	1	11.041	2.126	.147
	Within Groups	810.206	156	5.194		
	Total	821.247	157			
Q12 Sympathy	Between Groups	3.358	1	3.358	3.014	.085
	Within Groups	173.813	156	1.114		
	Total	177.171	157			
Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	Between Groups	11.687	1	11.687	9.108	.003
	Within Groups	200.181	156	1.283		
	Total	211.869	157			
Q6 Victim Responsibility	Between Groups	1.867	1	1.867	1.253	.265
	Within Groups	232.487	156	1.490		
	Total	234.354	157			
Q5 Victim Control	Between Groups	1.814	1	1.814	1.083	.300
	Within Groups	261.283	156	1.675		
	Total	263.097	157			

Table 10
ANOVA Between Genders for Cross-Gender Cyberbullying Clip

		SS	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Minimizing Bullying	Between Groups	35.835	1	35.835	3.331	.070
	Within Groups	1678.274	156	10.758		
	Total	1714.109	157			
Excusing Bully	Between Groups	15.143	1	15.143	1.183	.278
	Within Groups	1996.256	156	12.797		
	Total	2011.399	157			
Q12 Sympathy	Between Groups	24.524	1	24.524	12.403	.001
	Within Groups	308.463	156	1.977		
	Total	332.987	157			
Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	Between Groups	.446	1	.446	.342	.559
	Within Groups	203.408	156	1.304		
	Total	203.854	157			
Q6 Victim Responsibility	Between Groups	.000	1	.000	.000	.999
	Within Groups	303.373	156	1.945		
	Total	303.373	157			
Q5 Victim Control	Between Groups	1.534	1	1.534	.746	.389
	Within Groups	320.676	156	2.056		
	Total	322.210	157			

Table 11
ANOVA between genders for Male Party Invite clip

		SS	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Minimizing Bullying	Between Groups	71.477	1	71.477	13.892	.000
	Within Groups	751.217	146	5.145		
	Total	822.694	147			
Excusing Bully	Between Groups	22.561	1	22.561	4.614	.033
	Within Groups	713.957	146	4.890		
	Total	736.519	147			
Q12 Sympathy	Between Groups	21.350	1	21.350	12.955	.000
	Within Groups	240.615	146	1.648		
	Total	261.965	147			
Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	Between Groups	.881	1	.881	2.148	.145
	Within Groups	59.854	146	.410		
	Total	60.735	147			
Q6 Victim Responsibility	Between Groups	1.093	1	1.093	.430	.513
	Within Groups	370.737	146	2.539		
	Total	371.829	147			
Q5 Victim Control	Between Groups	.298	1	.298	.140	.709
	Within Groups	310.437	146	2.126		
	Total	310.735	147			

Table 12
ANOVA between genders for Male Homophobia clip

		SS	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Minimizing Bullying	Between Groups	63.227	1	63.227	3.346	.069
	Within Groups	2929.346	155	18.899		
	Total	2992.573	156			
Excusing Bully	Between Groups	41.627	1	41.627	5.978	.016
	Within Groups	1079.392	155	6.964		
	Total	1121.019	156			
Q12 Sympathy	Between Groups	43.431	1	43.431	22.366	.000
	Within Groups	300.977	155	1.942		
	Total	344.408	156			
Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	Between Groups	1.633	1	1.633	1.486	.225
	Within Groups	170.341	155	1.099		
	Total	171.975	156			
Q6 Victim Responsibility	Between Groups	12.289	1	12.289	7.360	.007
	Within Groups	258.794	155	1.670		
	Total	271.083	156			
Q5 Victim Control	Between Groups	.005	1	.005	.004	.952
	Within Groups	206.696	155	1.334		
	Total	206.701	156			

Discussion

Students (*N* =317; 164 males, 150 females, and 3 unreported gender) from three secondary public schools participated in this research study. The three participating schools, School A (high school), School B (high school), and School C (junior high school) are located in Utah. Students' ages ranged from 13 years to 18.5 years.

Summary of Research

This study adapted a questionnaire from the Rape Supportive Attribution Scale (Langhinrichsen-Rohling & Monson, 1998; Yamawaki, 2007). Similar to the original questionnaire, the current questions tapped into three categories of beliefs and underlying attitudes regarding bullying: (a) minimizing the bullying behavior, (b) blaming the victim, (c) excusing the bully from responsibility. Due to problems with internal consistency in within the construct of blaming the victim, the questions meant to load unto this construct were analyzed separately. Similarly, question 8 was removed from the construct of blaming the victim and was analyzed separately.

Although the consent form described how parents could access and view the video clips prior to granting permission for their student to participate in the research study, no parents at School A (high school) requested to see the clips, one parent from School B (high school) requested to see the clips, and three parents from School C (junior high school) requested to see the clips. Only 12 of the total 627 completed questionnaires (each participant competed two surveys) indicated the student previously viewed the TV show ("Wannabe" episode from *Without a Trace*) or the movie (*Mean Creek*) prior to the research. Therefore, the vast majority of participants were responding to novel relational bullying scenarios.

Researchers conducting this study originally hypothesized that males and females would differ in their perceptions of video scenarios of male involvement in relational aggression on the following points: excusing the behavior of the bully, blaming the target for the bully's behavior, minimizing the extent of the bully's harm, and overall denying the negative impact of bullying. Based on the current project, males and females differed significantly in their perceptions of relational bullying involving males (p = .000). Specifically, a significant effect was found on the following scales and questions: minimizing bullying (p = .004), determining what degree the bystanders enjoyed the situation (p = .001), and expressing a level of sympathy for the victim (p = .000).

Participants' perceptions of the bullying scenarios also differed significantly across clips, indicating that their perceptions were related to the context of the bullying and the specific details related to the bullying situation. Further discussion of details regarding the individual clips' impact on participants' perceptions of targeted variables is provided later in the discussion section.

The second research question dealt with differences in perceptions between the two age groups included in the research (junior high and high school). MANOVA analysis found that the differences between the two age groups were not significant for any of the variables. This suggests that among adolescents, differences in perception of male relational bullying are greater across gender than age. This finding is interesting when considering the fact that most bullying prevention programs differentiate instruction by grade and not gender.

When the descriptive statistics for the total population are studied, we see that each of the twelve questions had a range of 5 (1 to 6). When we look at the descriptive statistics for males only, across the questions we see a similar trend, each has a minimum of 1 and a

maximum of 6. When examining the descriptive statistics for the females, 11 of the questions follow this same trend. The question "How certain are you that this incident is considered bullying?" provoked a range of 4. On a scale where 1 is marked by "Not at all" and 6 is marked by "Extremely," no girl chose 1 for any of the clips. Since each of the clips chosen for the study clearly denotes a scenario of bullying, it is interesting to note that no female strongly believed that any of the clips were not bullying. Across all of the analysis we see that females had a more appropriate view of bullying; in no instances of statistical significance did the females minimize bullying, blame the victim, or excuse the bully more than did males.

Context of Video Scenarios

The cross-gender verbal clip depicted a young teenage male verbally harassing a female peer as he seeks the approval of a classmate. In this form of cross gender bullying, males and females differed significantly only on one item, which dealt with how much the bystanders enjoyed the situation. In the other clip involving cross-gender bullying, which we have been calling cross-gender cyberbullying, a girl emails an embarrassing picture of a boy around the school as a means of retaliation. Males and females had virtually no difference ($p = .999$) in their blame of the victim ($M = 4.25$) and yet did show a significant difference in the amount of sympathy they felt for him ($p = .001$). This is interesting because it shows that while males and females agree that the incident was largely the fault of the victim, females still felt sympathy for the bullying. Males were unable to separate their sympathy from their blame in this scenario.

The male party invite clip depicted a group of boys planning a way to socially humiliate a peer. When the responses of male and female respondents were compared, it was found that males and females differed highly in two areas, minimization of bullying ($p = .000$), and sympathy for the victim ($p = .000$). It is interesting to note the difference in the minimization of

bullying in this instance because the clip describes a physical form of bullying with a relational motive. They boys are planning to physically strip a peer naked and make him run back to town as a form of embarrassment because they do not like him. It is traditionally thought that more physical forms of bullying are more readily identified as such but this instance suggests that when the motive is relational, perhaps even physical bullying can be difficult for a male to identify as an incident of bullying.

The male homophobia clip produced a significant effect between males and females on two scales, sympathy (p = .000) and the level of victim responsibility (p = .007). The latter finding is particularly of note in this scenario. The introduction to the clip tells us that Clyde is suspected of being gay and that they other boys often tease him about it. During the clip, Clyde never speaks nor does he draw any attention to himself. Both males and females agreed (p = .952) that Clyde had little control over the situation (M = 1.88 for males and 1.87 for females) and yet males still hold Clyde responsible for the bullying situation. This clip is also of note because both males and females showed record high rates of bullying minimization on this clip. It is bothersome to note that both males and females found homophobic bullying to be less offensive than other forms of bullying. This clip is also the most interesting clip anecdotally. Though the participants were specifically asked not to speak during the research, junior high and high school students do occasionally talk out. By far, more talk outs occurred after this clip than any other. Males were quick to voice opinions of "why is that a big deal?" and "they're just joking around!" while females cued in on the facial expressions of the victim and how much it clearly bothered him to have heard that comment.

Males and females appear to have far greater differences in their perceptions of relational bullying when only males are involved, both as bullies and as targets. In cross gender bullying,

there seems to be far less variance in the scores reported by participants. In every statistically significant case, males had a worse perception of the effects of bullying. In stating that males had a worse perception, it is meant that males were more excusing of the bully, more minimizing of the bullying behaviors, and more blaming of the victim.

Limitations

Several limitations are noted in this research study. All of the participants were recruited from a single school district, limiting the potential to generalize the findings beyond this sample. This study should be replicated to determine if findings would generalize to other schools across the United States. The findings of this study cannot be generalized to elementary school students. More research should be conducted with younger students to determine what role gender plays in perceptions of relational bullying across development.

Although the sample had a representative percentage of Hispanic students, other ethnic groups were under-represented, particularly Black students. Additionally, in this research, all of the characters depicted in the video clips were White. In hind sight, video clips should have been more carefully selected to better represent races and ethnic groups in the general population. Further refining the focus, future research should examine the role of race in perceptions of bullying. For example, Pascoe (2005, 2007) and Froyum (2007) suggest a strong link between race and homophobia, in particular poor Black youth constructing a heterosexual identity by disassociating from effeminate characteristics and "policing sexuality" (Froyum, 2007, p. 603).

Implications for School Bully Prevention Efforts

Implications from this research towards bullying prevention programs are as follows. First, all students need to better understand that provoked bullying is still bullying. It is still

harmful and wrong, even as revenge. Second, special focus needs to be paid to males' perceptions of male to male relational aggression. While both genders appear to have closer perceptions of cross-gender forms of relational bullying, males are more likely to excuse the bully, blame the victim, and minimize the bullying when both bully and victim are male. Third, homophobic bullying in particular needs to be targeted with bully prevention efforts. Both genders minimized this typed of bullying more than other types, and males had a significantly skewed sense of it when compared to their female counterparts.

Fourth, in dealing with adolescents' bullying prevention programs should focus curriculum to specific needs based on students' gender, rather than simply focusing on students' grade level or age. During the debriefing sessions there were some comments by the students which lead to possible explanation of why girls have a more appropriate view of bullying than do boys. Research shows that boys are more likely to experience bullying than girls. Anecdotal comments from students seem to confirm this. In the debriefing session, in comparison to female participants, males expressed less adaptive coping skills and appeared to have minimal personal resources for dealing with bullying. Because boys deal with bullying on a more frequent basis and feel more social pressure to deal with it on their own ("get over it" was a comment sentiment expressed by males) they seem to depersonalize the bullying and minimize its impact. Psychologically, it seems that boys find it easier to assume that bullying is just a part of growing up and pretend like it is not a big deal than to admit that it does bother them while feeling as though they had no resources to deal with it. This further lends support to the idea that bullying prevention efforts may have more effect if they can focus on gender issues, rather than age.

References

American Association of University Women. (2001). *Hostile hallways: Bullying, teasing, and sexual harassment in school.* Washington, DC: Author.

Aronson, E. (2000). *Nobody left to hate: Teaching compassion after Columbine.* New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Basow, S. A., Cahill, K. F., Phelan, J. E., Longshore, K., & McGillicuddy-DeLisi, A. (2007). Perceptions of relational and physical aggression among college students: Effects of gender of perpetrator, target, and perceiver. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 31*, 85–95.

Batsche, G. M., & Knoff, H. M. (1994). Bullies and their victims: Understanding a pervasive problem in the schools. *School Psychology Review, 23*(2), 165-174.

Berger, K. S. (2007). Update on bullying at school: Science forgotten? *Developmental Review, 27*(1), 90-126.

Carter, B. B., & Spencer, V. G. (2006). The fear factor: Bullying and students with disabilities. *International Journal of Special Education, 21*(1), 11-23.

Chan, J. H. F. (2006). Systemic patterns in bullying and victimization. *School Psychology International, 27*(3), 352-369.

Cohn, A., & Canter, A. (2003). *Bullying: Facts for schools and parents.* http://www.nasponline.org/resources/factsheets/bullying_fs.aspx.

Coloroso, B. (2002). *The Bully, the bullied, and the bystander.* New York: Harper Collins.

Coloroso, B. (2005). A bully's bystanders are never innocent. *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick review, 70*(8), 49-51.

Connolly, J., Craig, W., Pepler D., & Taradash, A. (2000). Dating experiences of bullies in early adolescence. *Child Maltreatment 5*, 299-312.

Crick, N. R., & Bigbee, M. A. (1998). Relational and overt forms of peer victimization: A multi informant approach. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 66*, 337-347.

Crothers, L. M., Bell, G. R., Blasik, J. L., Camic, L. A., Greisler, M. J., & Keener, D. (2008). Relational aggression in children and adolescents: An overview of the literature for school psychologists. *Communiqué, 36* (6), 1, 5-6.

Davis, S., Davis, J., & Steiner, K. (2007). *Schools where everyone belongs* (2nd ed.). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Espelage, D. L., & Swearer, S. M. (2003). Research on school bullying and victimization: What have we learned and where do we go from here? *School Psychology Review, 32* (3), 365-383.

Estes, J. A. (Writer & Director). (2004). Johnson, S., Rosenthal, R., & Shaham, H. (Executive Producers), *Mean Creek.* Clackamas, OR: Whitewater Films.

Fekkes, M., Pijpers, F., & Verloove-Vanhorick, S. (2006). Effects of antibullying school program on bullying and health complaints. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, *160*, 638-644.

Fekkes, M., Pijpers, F., Fredriks, A., Vogels, T., & Verloove-Vanhorick, S. (2006). Do bullied children get ill, or do ill children get bullied? A prospective cohort study on the relationship between bullying and health-related symptoms. *Pediatrics*, *117*, 1568-1574.

Felix, E., & Furlong, M. (2008). Best practices in bullying prevention. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology,* 5th ed., *Vol. 4,* 1279-1289. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Fox, J. A., Christeson, W., Elliott, D. S., Kerlikowske, R. G., & Newman, S. A. (2003). *Bullying prevention is crime prevention.* Washington, DC: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids.

Frisen, A., Jonsson, A. K., & Persson, C. (2007). Adolescents' perception of bullying: Who is the victim? Who is the bully? What can be done to stop bullying? *Adolescence, 42,* 748-761.

Froyum, C. M. (2007). 'At least I'm not gay:' Heterosexual identity making among poor black teens. *Sexualities, 10*(5), 603-622. doi: 10.1177/1363460707083171

Garbarino, J., & deLara, E. (2992). *And words can hurt forever: How to protect adolescents from bullying, harassment, and emotional violence*. New York: Free Press.

Garrett, A. G. (2001). *Keeping American schools safe*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company.

Garrett, A. G. (2003). *Bullying in American schools.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company.

Gini, G. (2005). Bullying as a social process: The role of group membership in students' perception of intergroup aggression at school. *Journal of School Psychology, 44*(1), 51-65.

Guzell, J. R. (2001) *Family life education in the digital age: using digital media to increase participant involvement and understanding.* Paper presented at the 63rd Annual Conference of the National Council on Family Relations, November 8-11, 2001, Rochester, New York, USA.

Hall, S. S. (2006). *Size matters: How height affects the health, happiness, and success of boys—and the men they become.* New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Handwerk, M., (2005). Profiles of the key players. In J. Bolton & S. Graeve (Eds.), *No Room for Bullies* (pp. 19-31). Boys Town, NE: Boys Town Press.

Harris S., & Hathorn, C. (2006). Texas middle school principals' perceptions of bullying on campus. *NASSP Bulletin, 90,* 49-69.

Harris, S., & Petrie, G. F. (2003). *Bullying: The bullies, the victims, the bystanders.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow.

Haynie, D. L., Nansel, T., Eitel, P., Crump, A. D., Saylor, K., Yu, K., et al. (2001). Bullies, victims, and bully/victims: Distinct groups of at-risk youth. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 21,* 29-49.

Hirschstein, M., Edstrom, L., Frey, K., Snell, J., & MacKenzie, E. (2007). Walking the talk in bullying prevention: Teacher implementation variables related to initial impact of the Step to Respect program. *School Psychology Review*, *36*, 3-21.

Huesmann, L. R., & Guerra, N. G. (1997). Children's normative beliefs about aggression and aggressive behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72*, 408-419.

Indiana University. (2007, January 12). Bullying can be reduced but many common approaches ineffective. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved from http://www.sciencedaily.com /releases/2007/01/070111121858.htm

Landau, S., Milich, R., Harris, M., & Larson, S. (2001). "You really don't know how much it hurts:" Children's and preservice teachers' reactions to childhood teasing. *School Psychology Review*, *30* (3), 329-343.

Kaltiala-Heino, R., Marttunen, M., Rantanen, A., Rimpelä, M. & Rimpelä, P. (1999). Bullying, depression, and suicidal ideation in Finnish adolescents: school survey. *BMJ, 319*, 348-351.

Kring, A. M., & Gordon, A. H. (1998). Sex differences in emotion: Expression, experience, and physiology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 74(3),* 686-703.

Li, Q. (2006). Cyberbullying in schools: A research of gender differences. *School Psychology International 27,* 157-170.

Marsh, H. W., Parada, R. H., Craven, R. G., & Finger, F. (2004). In the looking glass: A reciprocal effects model elucidating the complex nature of bullying, psychological

determinants, and the central role of self-concept. In C. E. Sanders & G. D. Phye (Eds.), *Bullying implications for the classroom* (pp. 63-106). Boston: Elsevier Academic Press.

Merrell, K. W., Buchanan, R. S., & Tran, O. K. (2006). Relational aggression in children and adolescents: A review with implications for school settings. *Psychology in the Schools, 43*(3), 345-360.

Murphy, J. (1997). *Brief solution focused counseling in the middle and high school*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *JAMA 285,* 2094-2100.

Naylor, P., Cowie, H., Cossin, F., de Bettencourt, R., & Lemme, F. (2006). Teachers' and pupils' definitions of bullying. *British Journal of Educational Psychology.* 76, 553-576.

Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do (understanding children's worlds).* Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Olweus, D. (1994). *Bullying at School: What we know and what we can do.* Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Pascoe, C. J. (2005). 'Dude, you're a fag:' Adolescent masculinity and the fag discourse. *Sexualities, 8*(3), 329-346. doi: 10.1177/1363460705053337

Pascoe, C. J. (2007). *Dude, you're a fag: Masculinity and sexuality in high school*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Pellegrini, A. D. (2004). Bullying during the middle school years. In C. E. Sanders & G. D. Phye (Eds.), *Bullying implications for the classroom* (pp. 63-106). Boston, MA: Elsevier Academic Press.

Peterson, R. L., & Skiba, R. (2001). Creating school climate that prevent school violence. *Clearing House*, *74*(3), 155-163.

Pollack, W. (1998). *Real boys*. New York, NY: Henry Holt & Company.

Ross, D. (1996). *Childhood bullying and teasing.* Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association Press.

Sassu, M. A., Bray, K. A., Elinoff, M. J, & Kehle, T. J. (2004). Bullies and victims: Information for parents. In A. S. Canter, L. Z. Paige, M. D. Roth, I. Romero, & S. A. Carroll (Eds.), *Helping children at home and school II: Handouts for families and educators* (S4, 17-19). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

School Data Direct (2008). Retrieved November 17, 2008 from http://www.schooldatadirect.org/app/data/q/stid=45/llid=111/stllid=352/locid=45/catid=1015/secid=4570/compid=854/site=pes and http://www.schooldatadirect.org/app/data/q/stid=45/llid=116/stllid=351/locid=1017370/catid=1015/secid=4490/compid=851/site=pes

Smith, J. D., Schneider, B. H., Smith, P. K., & Ananiadou, K. (2004). The effectiveness of whole-school antibullying programs: A synthesis of evaluation research. *School Psychology Review, 33*(4), 547-560.

Smith, P. K., Cowie, H., Olafson, R. F., Liefooghe, A. P. D. (2002). Definitions of bullying: A comparison of terms used, and age and gender differences, in a fourteen-country international comparison. *Child Development*, 73, 4, 1119-1133.

Stein, N., & Sjostrom, L. (1996). *Bullyproof: A teacher's guide on teasing and bullying for use with fourth and fifth grade students*. Wellesley College, Washington, DC.

Steinberg, H. (Writer) & Barrett, D. (Director). (2004). Wannabe [Television series episode]. In J. Bruckheimer (Executive Producer), *Without A Trace.* New York, NY: CBS Productions.

Umbreit, J., Ferro, J., Liaupsin, C. J., & Lane, K. L. (2007). *Functional behavioral assessment and function-based intervention: An effective, practical approach*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Vossekuil, B., Fein, R., Reddy, M., Borum, R., & Modzeleski, W. (2002). *The final report and findings of the safe school initiative: Implications for the prevention of school attacks in the United States.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program and U.S. Secret Service, National Threat Assessment Center.

Werner, N. E., & Crick, N. R. (1999). Relational aggression and social-psychological adjustment in a college sample. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *108*, 615–623.

Yamawaki, N. (2007). Rape perception and the function of ambivalent sexism and gender-role traditionality. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 22*, 406-423. doi: 10.1177/0886260506297210

Yoon, J. S., Barton, E., & Taiariol, J. (2004). Relational aggression in middle school. *The Journal of Early Adolescence, 24*(3), 303-318.

Appendix A

Parental Consent to Allow Research Participation

Introduction

Your child's class has been chosen to participate in research being conducted by Curt Johnson, Graduate Student, through Brigham Young University under the supervision of Melissa Allen-Heath, Ph.D. The research for your child's class is scheduled to occur on ____/___/____. This research is about how participants interpret peer different scenes of peer interaction. No personal information will be collected about your child. Your child will only be allowed to participate in the research if both you and your child agree to do so. Should you or your child choose not to participate, a substitute class will be provided by the school. Please indicate whether you do or do not give permission for your child to participate and sign at the bottom of this sheet. Your child should return the signed form to his or her teacher.

Procedures

Your child will be asked to complete a set of questions which accompany 2 short video clips. The questions are not personal in nature, but ask for interpretations of scenes portrayed in each of the short clips. All of the responses are multiple-choice and will not ask your child to describe responses in his or her own words. All responses will be kept confidential. Clips used in the study are selected to reflect scenes of peer conflict which occur commonly in a school setting. Some clips may include depictions of harassment or teasing. None of the clips contain vulgarity, violence, or scenes of a sexual nature. Parents who wish to view the clips prior to signing this consent form may do so online, at their own convenience. Instructions on how to do this are listed below in the risks section of this document. The study will last about 20 minutes. After viewing the clips and answering the questions, a debriefing session will occur. Students will be allowed to ask specific questions about the clips, and classroom discussion about relevant research findings will be discussed.

Risks/Discomforts

There are minimal risks for participation in this study. However, your child may feel emotional discomfort when viewing some of the clips. None of the clips are vulgar in nature and have been selected as scenes which may be witnessed in a typical school day. All clips used in this research have been approved for student viewing by the Provo School District, as well as your child's school principal. This form has been sent in advance of the research in part so that parents who desire to view the clips prior to making a decision may do so. The clips which are used in the research are available for parents to view online at their own convenience. Parents/Guardians who wish to view the clips which will be used in the research should contact Curt Johnson by email to receive a link to the clips. The email will contain: a link to the website where the clips are stored and instructions on how to view the clips.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits to participation in this study. Participants will not receive compensation, monetary or otherwise, for their participation in this research.

Confidentiality
All information provided will remain confidential and will only be reported as group data with no identifying information. No information which identifies your child will be connected in any way with their responses. All data will be kept in a secure location and only those directly involved with the research will have access to it.

Participation
Participation in this research study is voluntary. Participants have the right to withdraw at anytime or refuse to participate entirely without jeopardy to class status, grade or school standing.

Questions about the Research
Parents/Guardians who wish to view the clips which will be used in the research should contact Curt Johnson by email. If you have questions or concerns regarding this research, please contact Curt Johnson at shadowchaser162@hotmail.com or Melissa Allen-Heath, Ph.D. at melissa_allen@byu.edu.

Questions about your Child's Rights as a Research Participant
Questions about your child's rights as a research participant should be directed to Christopher Dromey, Ph.D., Chair, Insitutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research; Brigham Young University; 133 TLRB; Provo, UT 84602; 422-6461; dromey@byu.edu.

_____I give consent for my child to participate in this research.

_____I DO NOT want my child to participate in this research.

Signature:_____ Date:_____

Appendix A (continued)
Student Assent for Research Participation

Introduction
This research study is being conducted by Curt Johnson, Graduate Student, through Brigham Young University under the supervision of Melissa Allen-Heath, Ph.D, to examine how you interpret different peer interactions.

Procedures
You will be asked to complete a set of questions which accompany 2 short video clips. All of your responses will be kept confidential. You will not be asked to put your name on any of the forms which contain your answers. This study should take about 20 minutes to complete.

Risks/Discomforts
There are minimal risks for participation in this study. Although none of the clips contain vulgar language, violence, or sexual content, it is possible that you may feel uncomfortable watching some of the situations. These feelings should not continue after the research is finished. These clips have been chosen as things you might see occasionally in your own school.

Benefits
There are no direct benefits to participating in this research. You will not be paid or otherwise compensated for your participation.

Confidentiality
Your name will in no way be connected to your responses to questions. Only researchers directly involved with this study will be able to see your responses, and none of the researchers will know whose responses they are looking at.

Participation
Participation in this research study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate, your grade in this class will not be affected and there will be no negative consequences. You may also choose to stop participating at any point during the study.

Questions about the Research
If you have any questions after this study is completed which you do not feel comfortable asking in front of your peers, you may contact Curt Johnson at shadowchaser162@hotmail.com. Please make sure you have permission from your parents before you contact Curt by email.

Questions about your Rights as Research Participants
If you have questions about your rights as a research participant that you do not feel comfortable asking the researcher, you may contact Dr. Renea Beckstrand, IRB Chair, 422-3873, 422 SWKT, renea_beckstrand@byu.edu.

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will to participate in this study.

Signature:_____ Date:_____

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRES

Clip 1A
Please Circle Your Grade Level: 7 8 9 10 11 12
Please Circle Your Gender: M / F
Have you seen this clip before? Y / N

(1) To what degree do you believe that the girl will experience lasting mental/emotional effects from this incident?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(2) How certain are you that this incident is considered bullying?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(3) How painful do you believe this situation was for the girl?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(4) To what degree did the guy's actions violate the girl's rights?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(5) How much control did the girl have in this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(6) How much responsibility did the girl have in making this situation happen?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(7) To what degree did the boy enjoy this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(8) To what degree did her classmates enjoy this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(9) How much do you think the guy should blame himself for what happened.

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(10) Do you think it is the guy's fault things turned out the way they did?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(11)How much control do you think the guy had over the situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(12)How much sympathy do you feel for the guy?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

Clip 2A

Please Circle Your Grade Level: 7 8 9 10 11 12
Please Circle Your Gender: M / F
Have you seen this clip before? Y / N

(1) To what degree do you believe that George will experience lasting mental/emotional effects from this incident?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(2) How certain are you that this incident is considered bullying?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(3) How painful do you believe this situation will be for George?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(4) To what degree did the guys' actions violate George's rights?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(5) How much control did George have in this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(6) How much responsibility did George have in making this situation happen?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(7) To what degree did Rocky enjoy this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(8) To what degree did the guys (not George) enjoy this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(9) How much do you think the guys (not George) should blame themselves for what happened.

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(10) Do you think it is the guys' (not George) fault things turned out the way they did?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(11)How much control do you think the guys (not George) had over the situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(12)How much sympathy do you feel for George?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

Clip 1B

Please Circle Your Grade Level: 7 8 9 10 11 12
Please Circle Your Gender: M / F
Have you seen this clip before? Y / N

(1) To what degree do you believe that Eric will experience lasting mental/emotional effects from this incident?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(2) How certain are you that this incident is considered bullying?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(3) How painful do you believe this situation will be for Eric?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(4) To what degree did the guys' actions violate Eric's rights?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(5) How much control did Eric have in this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(6) How much responsibility did Eric have in making this situation happen?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(7) To what degree did Lisa enjoy this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(8) To what degree did Lisa's classmates enjoy this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(9) How much do you think the Lisa should blame herself for what happened.

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(10) Do you think it is Lisa's fault things turned out the way they did?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(11)How much control do you think Lisa had over the situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(12)How much sympathy do you feel for Eric?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

Clip 2B

Please Circle Your Grade Level: 7 8 9 10 11 12
Please Circle Your Gender: M / F
Have you seen this clip before? Y / N

(1) To what degree do you believe that Clyde will experience lasting mental/emotional effects from this incident?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(2) How certain are you that this incident is considered bullying?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(3) How painful do you believe this situation was for Clyde?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(4) To what degree did the guys' actions violate Clyde's rights?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(5) How much control did Clyde have in this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(6) How much responsibility did Clyde have in making this situation happen?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(7) To what degree did George (the singer) enjoy this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(8) To what degree did the other boys in the boat enjoy this situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(9) How much do you think the George should blame himself for what happened.

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(10) Do you think it is George's fault things turned out the way they did?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(11)How much control do you think George had over the situation?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

(12)How much sympathy do you feel for Clyde?

<-1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6->

Not at all Minimally Extremely

QUESTIONNAIRE SCORING KEY

Note: With reverse scoring (as indicated for some of the questions below), low scores are desired.
After reversing some of the raw scores to make all scores similar in direction, high scores indicate minimizing act of bullying and bully's behavior Three scales= (1) minimizing bully behavior, (2) blaming target, and (3) excusing bully from responsibility

		As presented in the questionnaire, what do raw scores indicate (prior to score reversal)?	
Question	Scale	High raw score indicates	Low raw score indicates
1 To what degree do you believe that [victim] will experience lasting mental/emotional effects from this incident?	(1) Minimizing bullying Reverse raw score	Indicates empathy for victim & NOT minimizing behavior	Lack of empathy & High level of minimization of bully behaviors
2 How certain are you that this incident is considered bullying?	(1) Minimizing bullying Reverse raw score	Indicates recognition of bully behavior & NOT minimizing behavior	Indicates a lack of recognition of bully behavior
3 How painful do you believe this situation was for [victim]?	(1) Minimizing bullying Reverse raw score	Indicates recognition of bully behavior & NOT minimizing behavior	Indicates a lack of recognition of bully behavior
4 To what degree did the guys' actions violate [victim's] rights?	(1) Minimizing bullying Reverse raw score	Indicates recognition of BULLY BEHAVIOR & NOT minimizing behavior	Indicates a lack of recognition of bully behavior
5 How much control did [victim] have in this situation?	(2) Victim blame Keep RAW score	Indicates responsibility is on the victim—BLAMING VICTIM	Indicates responsibility is NOT the victims
6 How much responsibility did [victim] have in making this situation happen?	(2) Victim blame Keep RAW score	Indicates responsibility is on the victim	Indicates responsibility is NOT the victims
7 To what degree did [BULLY] enjoy this situation?	THIS IS NOT PART OF THE DATA	How much bully enjoys the situation. This does NOT tap into aspects we are focusing on in this study.	Do not include question 7 in the scoring
8 To what degree did the other boys in the boat enjoy this situation?	(3) Excuse Aggressor Keep RAW score	Excuses aggressor	Notes other's did not enjoy bully's behavior
9 How much do you think the [BULLY] should blame himself for what happened.	(3) Excuse Aggressor Reverse raw score	Responsibility is placed on bully	Indicates bully should NOT take responsibility for self
10 Do you think it is [BULLY's] fault things turned out the way they did?	(3) Excuse Aggressor Reverse raw score	NOT excusing the bully—BULLY is responsible	Excusing BULLY ---not bully's fault
11 How much control do you think [BULLY] had over the situation?	(3) Excusing the BULLY/Aggressor Reverse raw score	NOT excusing the bully—bully is in control	Excusing the bully --- consider bully behavior as outside their control
12 How much sympathy do you feel for [Victim]?	(2) Victim-Blame Reverse raw score so high score indicates high level of minimizing	High levels of sympathy indicate NOT minimizing bully behaviors	The lower the score the less empathy and the higher the minimization of bully behavior

Appendix C

Introduction of Film Clips

1A – None of the popular kids like Lisa. She is nerdy and is a teacher's pet. Eric is trying to get the popular kids in the class to like him more.

2A – George is always picking on Sam, Rocky's little brother. Rocky gets his friends to help out in teaching George a lesson. They pretend to be George's friend to set him up for embarrassment.

1B –Lisa is not a popular girl. Eric called Lisa "a dog" in front of their whole class. Everyone laughed the comment.

2B –The guys are out on the river in a boat on one Saturday. The guys suspect Clyde of being gay, and often tease him about it.

APPENDIX D

Internal Consistency Correlation Table

Table 13
Correlation Coefficients for Survey Questions with Combined Clips and All Participants

	Minimizing bullying				Blaming victim			Excusing bully			
Question	Q1-R	Q2-R	Q3-R	Q4-R	Q5	Q6	Q12-R	Q8	Q9-R	Q10-R	Q11-R
1-R	1.000	.514	.688	.548	-.016	-.098	.306	-.202	.293	.132	.088
2-R		1.000	.541	.495	-.008	-.011	.106	-.115	.308	.192	.128
Q3-R			1.000	.589	.064	-.047	.257	-.187	.271	.182	.151
Q4-R				1.000	.055	-.071	.300	-.190	.222	.124	.077
Q5					1.000	.382	.133	-.082	.152	.166	.074
Q6						1.000	-.021	.034	.292	.370	.274
Q12-R							1.000	-.327	.111	.100	.039
Q8								1.000	-.229	-.195	-.131
Q9-R									1.000	.663	.429
Q10-R										1.000	.536
Q11-R											1.000

Appendix E
MANOVA Descriptives

Table 14
Descriptive Statistics for MANOVA

	Gender	Age Group	*M*	*SD*
Minimizing Bullying	Male	High School	9.06	4.16
		Middle School	8.27	3.67
		Total	8.82	4.03
	Female	High School	7.97	3.59
		Middle School	7.50	3.48
		Total	7.78	3.55
	Total	High School	8.58	3.95
		Middle School	7.84	3.58
		Total	8.32	3.84
Excusing the Bully	Male	High School	6.48	3.31
		Middle School	6.76	3.79
		Total	6.56	3.46
	Female	High School	5.73	2.94
		Middle School	6.50	3.28
		Total	6.04	3.10
	Total	High School	6.15	3.17
		Middle School	6.61	3.51
		Total	6.31	3.30
Q5 Victim Control	Male	High School	2.44	1.36
		Middle School	2.50	1.49
		Total	2.46	1.40
	Female	High School	2.46	1.47
		Middle School	2.42	1.29
		Total	2.44	1.40
	Total	High School	2.45	1.41
		Middle School	2.45	1.38
		Total	2.45	1.40

Table 14 (continued)
Descriptive Statistics for MANOVA

	Gender	Age Group	*M*	*SD*
Q6 Victim Responsibility	Male	High School	2.87	1.74
		Middle School	2.87	1.70
		Total	2.87	1.72
	Female	High School	2.58	1.68
		Middle School	2.87	1.66
		Total	2.70	1.68
	Total	High School	2.74	1.72
		Middle School	2.87	1.67
		Total	2.79	1.70
Q8 Bystanders Enjoy	Male	High School	4.77	1.17
		Middle School	4.57	1.22
		Total	4.71	1.19
	Female	High School	4.94	1.06
		Middle School	5.02	.97
		Total	4.97	1.02
	Total	High School	4.85	1.12
		Middle School	4.82	1.11
		Total	4.84	1.12
Q12 Sympathy	Male	High School	3.79	1.71
		Middle School	3.70	1.88
		Total	3.76	1.76
	Female	High School	3.26	1.88
		Middle School	2.89	1.76
		Total	3.11	1.84
	Total	High School	3.56	1.80
		Middle School	3.26	1.86
		Total	3.45	1.83