AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Brandy Kaye Robinson for the _Master of Science_

in _Psychology_ presented on _November 17, 2004_

Title: _An Examination of the Effects of Adolescent Bullying on Women's Self-Esteem_

Abstract approved: _Connie B Holmes_

Bullying damages the self-esteem of the victim. This study identified implications of this behavior into adulthood. A sample of 214 volunteers was used for data analysis. Subjects completed two self-report questionnaires, one in which bullying behaviors were retrospectively identified and a self-esteem inventory to detect a current self-esteem level. A current self-esteem score was calculated for each individual based on the self-esteem inventory. Through the bullying questionnaire participants were separated into two categories based on the reported frequency of the behavior and the reflected intensity. Within each category, participants were further sorted into four groups determined by answer selection on the questionnaire. Two separate one-way analyses of variance were computed to compare the mean self-esteem scores of the four groups of individuals in each category. Significant differences indicate that the frequency and intensity of bullying behavior does, in fact, associate with a lowered self-esteem level for adult women.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTS OF ADOLESCENT BULLYING ON

WOMEN'S SELF-ESTEEM

———

A Thesis

Presented to

the Department of Psychology and Special Education

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

———

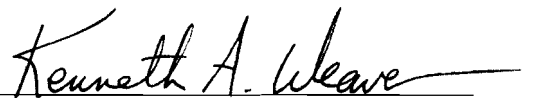In Partial Fulfillment

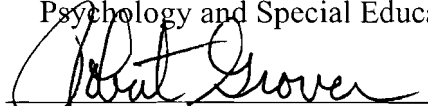Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

———

by

Brandy Kaye Robinson

December 2004

Kenneth A. Weave

Approved for the Department of
Psychology and Special Education

Robert Grover

Approved for the Graduate Council

ii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Bullying among youth has become a prominent research area within the past

decade. A need for a healthy developmental environment for youth raises concern for the

repercussions of this behavior. Bullying is a form of inter-child aggression in which peers

expose the child to negative actions.

Background

Bullying affects approximately 40% of the nation's youth on a daily basis. Fried

and Fried (1996) speculate that this statistic is significantly low and that many cases go

unreported. Some children may endure bullying throughout their entire school

experience, beginning in kindergarten and following throughout their high school years.

Others recount only instances of extreme discomfort with peers or a few incidents.

Reports indicate that bullying incidents occur chiefly between the ages of 12 and 17.

Whether peer conflict is continuous or short-term, it can play a significant role in the

development of its victims.

Typically bullying research has focused on overt types of aggression such as

punching, hitting, and physically confronting the victims. When identifying acts,

researchers discovered that gender plays a significant role in bullying behaviors. Boys

tend to use physical harm whereas girls use non-physical subtle actions such as taunting,

gossip, and isolation from relational ties. Cultural rules against overt aggression leads

girls to engage in other, nonphysical forms of aggression (Simmons, 2002). This

discovery has opened a new world to researchers. Girls' use of psychological means to

abuse their victims explores hidden aspects of adolescent bullying.

Literature Review

Literature supports the importance of studying bullying behavior in youth. Studies have found that bullying can be a traumatic experience for young people. An understanding of these experiences is a foundation for further research in determining the long-lasting effects.

Bullying is defined in many different ways. Casey-Cannon, Hayward, and Gowen (2001) states that peer victimization (another term for bullying and teasing) is an unprovoked attack that causes hurt of a psychological, social, or physical nature. Espelage, Bosworth, and Simon (2003) defines bullying as intentional action that causes physical and psychological harm to the recipient An all-encompassing definition of bullying is "one or more individuals inflicting physical, verbal, or emotional abuse on another---includes threat of bodily harm, weapon possession, extortion, civil rights violation, assault and battery, gang activity, attempted murder, and murder" (Fried & Fried, 1996, p. 5). Bullying is a subtype of aggression and these behaviors have social, academic, and psychological consequences that impact the well being of the victim (Casey-Cannon et al., 2001).

Self-Esteem and Bullying

Bullying erodes self-esteem for many children. Although bullying is common, it is not normal behavior. It is a sign of poor psychological, emotional, and social development (often called psychosocial adjustment) and may lead to serious emotional and social difficulties for children who are victimized. Baldwin and Hoffman (2002) examined the dynamics of self-esteem and found that average levels initially increased with age, then decreased during middle adolescence, especially for females, and then

increased in young adulthood. This natural decrease during adolescence is due to developmental changes and bullying amplifies this situation. Numerous investigations have, with a high degree of consistency, supported the case for an association between being victimized and manifesting symptoms of poor psychological and/or physical health. On the whole, being victimized by peers is related to low levels of psychological well-being and social adjustment and to high levels of psychological distress and adverse physical symptoms (Rigby, 2003). Children and adolescents who are aggressed against are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, emotional deregulation, social withdrawal, low self-esteem, and loneliness that may possibly follow into adulthood (Banks, 1997; Browning, Cohen, & Warman, 2003; Ditzhazy & Burton, 2003). Researchers have determined that victimization from bullying increased risk of psychological harm. It is important for researchers to establish any association between this experience and adult welfare.

Specific Concerns for Girls

Bullying research has typically focused on male bullies, due to the more easily observable ways in which they exhibit aggression. In 1992, a group of Norwegian scientists published an unprecedented study of girl bullies. They predicted that "when aggression cannot, for one reason or another, be directed (physically or verbally) at its target, the perpetrator has to find other channels" (Bjoerkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, as cited in Simmons, 2002, p. 20). Study results indicated that girls were not at all averse to aggression; they just expressed bullying behaviors in unconventional ways. Girls do not usually bully their victims physically. Their social world operates by way of psychological abuse of their victims. Girls fight with body language and

relationships instead of fists and weapons. Simmons (2002) identified three categories of girl aggression. *Relational aggression* includes acts that harm others through damage (or threat of damage) to relationships or feelings of acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion. In these acts, the perpetrator uses her relationship with the victim as a weapon. Many girls do not show any outward aggression or even anger. *Social aggression* is intended to damage the self-esteem or social status within a group. Activities such as rumor spreading, the "silent treatment," and revealing secrets are example of this type of aggression. Girls also use *indirect aggression*, which allows the perpetrator to avoid confronting her target. The perpetrator covertly makes it seem as though there has been no intent to harm at all. Simmons found that survivors of these particular acts of bullying were left feeling unfamiliar with the most basic rules of relationships. This type of destruction is detrimental to the development of a girl's sense of identity. The amount of time spent in peer group increases during the course of adolescence. Especially for girls, close and intimate ties with friends help her explore identities and define a sense of self. Exclusion, spreading rumors, and betraying trust can debilitate an adolescent girls' sense of security, and damage the developing self-esteem.

In her book *Queen Bees & Wannabees*, Wiseman (2002) described the turmoil within this adolescent social world. She explained that girls have strict social hierarchies based on what culture tells them about what constitutes ideal femininity. "Cliques" are an exclusive group of girls who are close friends. Wiseman views cliques as "a platoon of soldiers who have banded together to navigate the perils and insecurities of adolescence" (p. 19). The girls themselves police each other, conducting surveillance on anyone breaking the laws of appearance, clothes, interest in boys, and personality – all of which

have profound influence on the women they become. At no time in a girl's life is it more important for her to meet these elusive girl standards then adolescence. Girls are constantly comparing and contrasting themselves to each other within social cliques. These moments dictate an entire self-concept, and it is all interconnected – the value she places on the social pecking order, and the choices, quality, and dynamics of her friendships are the basis for her self-esteem. Teasing and gossip are the lifeblood of cliques. Gossip is so humiliating because girls' natural self-focus literally has them feeling like the whole world notices everything they do, and what is said about them and their social status in school often serves as the basis for their self-identity. A reliance on peers for social support is coupled with increasing pressures to attain social status (Wiseman, 2002). Friendship in a peer support system is an essential ingredient for human development and a sense of well-being. It is during adolescence that peer groups become stratified and issues of acceptance and popularity become increasingly important (Espelage, 2002). One of the greatest examples of a peer support system is the clique. However, during their period of greatest vulnerability, girls' competition with, and judgment of each other, weakens their friendships within the clique and effectively isolates them. This is what the power of the clique is all about; acceptance, popularity, and power that is used to weaken or strengthen bonds of adolescent friendships.

Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls (Pipher, 1994) conveys the importance of understanding the social world of female adolescents. Psychology has a long history of ignoring girls this age. Until recently adolescent girls have not been studied by academics, and they have long baffled therapists. Because they are so secretive with adults and full of contradictions, they are difficult to study. So much is

happening internally that is not communicated on the surface. Pipher (1994) reports that many of her adult clients struggle with the same issues that overwhelmed them as adolescent girls, such as activities that occurred within the cliques. The desire to be accepted created friendships that were used as weapons. Shame and embarrassment transpired through spreading rumors or sharing secrets by ones considered friends. This may lead to doubts about their ability to create healthy relationships, which further supports the need for an understanding of this complex social world.

While peers can be satisfying and growth producing, they can also be growth-destroying. Many girls can describe a universal American phenomenon—the scapegoating of girls by one another (Vail, 2002). This scapegoating functions as the ultimate form of social control for girls. Scapegoats are shunned, teased, bullied and harassed in a variety of different ways such as intentional isolation, non-confrontational fighting using other girls to relay messages, and turning friends against one another by use of rumors or lies (Vail, 2002). The ways girls handle allegations of scapegoating have implications for their adult lives and these betrayals may haunt girls for the rest of their lives. A current myth is that girls are mean, but they will get over it; however this type of bullying may set girls up to accept abusive behavior (Vail, 2002).

Victims of bullying often suffer humiliation, insecurity, and a loss of self-esteem during childhood and adolescence. Most people believe a girl's task is to get through it, grow up, and put those experiences behind her. Overall girls are more likely than boys to use withholding friendships as an act of aggression (Vail, 2002). Girls can be each other's worst enemies. Girls' friendships in adolescence are often intense, confusing, frustrating, and humiliating, the joy and security of "best friends" shattered by devastating breakups

and betrayals. Often girls use "best friends" to gain status within a group. Once this status is achieved, friendships are dissolved in order to obtain popularity and power. These early relationships can propel girls into making dangerous decisions and shape the basic rules of relationships as they mature into young women (Wiseman, 2002).

Research is needed to determine the effects of girl-to-girl bullying during adolescence on adult development. Bullying damages the self-esteem of the adolescent victim, but new research is needed to understand if the effects of adolescent bullying follow the victim into adulthood.

Statement of the Problem

Adolescence is a turbulent time for both boys and girls. They are experiencing substantial changes in their physical, mental, and social identities. They are also beginning to gain independence (Erickson, as cited in Coon, 1997) that leads to creation of their self-image and guides development of their future adult self. Peers are a major influence in this process. Peer-to-peer abuse may damage their self-esteem and identity formation. Girl victims often report loneliness, confusion, and emotional pain when confronted by peers who bully. This type of trauma and social rejection may damage the young woman's developing self-esteem. There is speculation that this type of behavior may have implications that continue into adulthood. Research has provided evidence which verifies the harmfulness of adolescent bullying. However, new research on the prolonged effects of adolescent bullying on an individual's adult self-esteem is essential to understand the danger of girl-to-girl bullying.

Research Questions

   Research Question 1. Does a difference in self-esteem levels exist for college undergraduate women ages 18 through 21 when associated with the frequency of girl-to-girl bullying during adolescence?

   Research Question 2. Does a difference in self-esteem levels exist for college undergraduate women ages 18 through 21 when associated with the intensity of girl-to-girl bullying during adolescence?

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

The participants were 214 women, ages 18 through 21, recruited from a small

midwestern university. Students from Introduction to Psychology and Developmental

Psychology classes volunteered in order to obtain research points to fulfill class

obligations.

All volunteers were provided with a description of the research and signed an

informed consent document (see Appendix A). Each participant was given sufficient

opportunity to ask any questions, and informed there were no risks. They were also

advised that there were no repercussions if they chose to withdraw.

Research Design

A quasi-experimental design was used to compare differences in the self-esteem

levels of adult women when associated with retrospective report of bullying behavior

during adolescence. The independent variable of the frequency of bullying for Research

Question 1 had four levels: Never, Occasionally, Often, and Frequently. The levels for

the intensity of bullying independent variable for Research Question 2 were: No Impact,

Light, Moderate, and Severe. The dependent variable of self-esteem was operationalized

as scores on the SEA's Program Self-Esteem Inventory.

Instruments

Peer Group Behavior Report. The peer group behavior questionnaire was

designed by the researcher (see Appendix B). Questions pertaining to indirect aggression

experienced during the ages of 12 through 17 years were self-reported. Reliability and

validity measures are not available at this time due to the development of the test specifically for this research.

SEA's Program Self Esteem Inventory. The SEA's Program Self-Esteem Inventory (Messina & Messina, 1999) determined the level of self-esteem in each woman (see Appendix C). It consisted of 30 items rated on a 1 (Low) to 5 (High) Likert Scale. Participants answered the statements in relation to how they view themselves currently. After totaling the scores, higher scores indicate lower self-esteem. Scores for each individual indicate: 0-30 not affected by low self-esteem; 31-45 traces of low self-esteem; 46-61 presence of mild low self-esteem; 62-90 presence of moderate low self-esteem; 91-120 presence of severe low self-esteem; 121-150 presence of profound low self-esteem. The SEA's Program Self-Esteem Inventory has not been through research scrutiny for reliability and validity (J. Messina, personal communication, February 12, 2004). However, due to the ease of accessibility and the measure being free of cost influenced its use.

Procedures

Permission was obtained from the Institutional Review Board for the Treatment of Human Subjects. Volunteers signed a form posted outside the Psychology Department office and met with the researcher one week after sign-up. The inventories were completed in small groups of up to 20 participants. When participants arrived, they were given a brief description of the research and signed an informed consent document. Both inventories were administered concurrently, with the peer group behavior questionnaire being followed by the self-esteem inventory. Before completing the inventories, participants were assured total anonymity when directed to not place their names on the

inventories. To explain behaviors relevant to this study, the researcher, a 24-year-old White woman, identified the specific peer group behaviors by reading the definition of each to the participants. The definitions were also found at the top of the peer group behavior questionnaire and were read from this directive. Relational aggression includes acts that harm others through damage (or threat of damage) to relationships or feelings of acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion. Social aggression is intended to damage the self-esteem or social status within a group. Activities such as rumor spreading, the "silent treatment," and revealing secrets are seen in this type of aggression. Researcher noted that many girls use indirect aggression, which allows them to harm victims without physically confronting them. Therefore, participants were aware that physical acts of aggression were irrelevant to this particular study. The inventories required approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Research Question 1 Data Analysis

The peer group behavior report's Question 1 identified the frequency category in which each participant was placed. Participants were placed in the Never, Occasionally, Often, or Frequently groups based upon their self-report of the frequency of being bullied.

Table 1 specifies self-esteem means and standard deviations for each set. The mean self-esteem score for the groups were analyzed using a one-factor between subjects Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). All assumptions underlying use of the one-way statistical model (independence, normality, and homogeneity of variance) were verified. ANOVA results indicated statistical significance, $F(3, 213) = 11.16, p < .001$, as shown in Table 2. Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference post hoc test indicated that women who were frequently bullied when they were 12 to 17 years of age had less self-esteem than women in any of the three other groups. In addition, women who were often bullied when they were 12 to 17 years of age had less self-esteem than women who were occasionally bullied.

Research Question 2 Data Analysis

Question 3 of the peer group behavior report requested intensity of the bullying behavior and was used to place participants in either the No Impact, Light, Moderate, or Severe groups. Table 3 specifies mean self-esteem scores and standard deviations for each set. Mean self-esteem scores for this category were compared using a one-factor between subjects ANOVA. Participants within each level were accompanied by their self-esteem

Table 1

Frequency Group Means and Standard Deviations for Self-Esteem Scores

Group	n	M	SD
Never	16	70.19	13.91
Occasionally	138	72.24	15.62
Often	45	82.12	14.09
Frequently	15	93.80	23.16
Total	214	75.47	16.92

Table 2

Analysis of Variance for Frequency Groups on Self-Esteem Score

Group	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between	8381.47	3	2793.83	11.16	.001
Within	52589.86	210	250.43		
Total	60971.33	213			

score. All assumptions underlying use of the one- way statistical model (independence, normality, and homogeneity of variance) were verified. ANOVA results indicated statistical significance, $F(3, 213) = 4.53$; $p < .01$, see Table 4. Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference post hoc test indicated that women who reported that the impact of the bullying on themselves was severe had lower self-esteem than women who reported that the impact of the bullying was light or had no impact.

Additional Analyses

Data were analyzed using the number of respondents that selected a particular item and compared to the entire sample. Question 2 of the bullying questionnaire asked participants to indicate which behaviors they experienced, choosing as many as applied. Of the items selected, the behavior of spreading rumors and revealing secrets was the most frequently identified with 57.47% of the sample reporting experiencing these activities. Social rejection was the second most frequent, with 42.52% of the respondents noting this behavior. 40.19% of respondents indicated name-calling experiences, while 37.38% reported receiving the silent treatment. A small minority of individuals specified any taunting experiences, being 13.55% of the sample.

When asked if the respondents felt as if they suffered any long-term effects of this behavior, 23.83% reported "yes," whereas 67.76% reported "no." Of those that reported yes, 68.63% felt it made them more assertive compared to 41.18% reporting it made them more passive. Statements such as: "I am emotionally stronger person and know not to do the same things to others, so it was a negative experience that helped me in the long run," "These things made me a stronger person," and "Learned how to get along with many different types of people, adapt" were added to research materials. Conversely, many

young women added statements such as: "I suffered from depression as a result of rejection and that is still something I struggle with today," "It's hard for me to talk or associate with other females," and "I do not trust or like most girls."

Table 3

Intensity Group Means and Standard Deviations for Self-Esteem Scores

Group	n	M	SD
No Impact	27	70.74	15.37
Light	73	72.23	14.95
Moderate	97	77.31	16.44
Severe	17	86.35	23.86
Total	214	75.47	16.92

Table 4

Analysis of Variance for Intensity Groups on Self-Esteem Scores

Group	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between	3710.44	3	1236.81	4.53	.01
Within	57284.83	210	272.79		
Total	60995.27	213			

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The results of the present investigation indicate that a difference exists between

reports of female bullying during adolescence and self-esteem levels for college

undergraduate women between the ages of 18 to 21. The findings support that the

frequency of the behavior and the intensity both have a connection with women's adult

self-esteem. Adolescents who are aggressed against are at an increased risk to suffer high

levels of psychological distress, one of those factors being low self-esteem, which could

possibly follow into adulthood (Banks, 1997; Browning, Cohen & Warman, 2003;

Ditzhazy & Burton, 2003). As a result, the present study confirms research speculation

that the report of bullying behavior during adolescence is related to differences in self-

esteem levels in adult women.

The social world of psychological abuse for women is intended to damage the

self-esteem or social status of the young woman. The present research indicated that the

most frequently identified behaviors were spreading rumors and revealing secrets. Over

half of the women associated this behavior with experiences in junior high and high

school. The second most frequently classified behavior was social rejection, with nearly

half of the women reporting encounters of this nature. Simmons (2002) reported that

exclusion, spreading rumors, and betraying trust can debilitate a girls' sense of security

and damage the developing self-esteem. Name-calling and receiving the silent treatment

was also a common reported occurrence. Taunting behaviors were the least reported

among the research respondents. It may be speculated that this behavior is overt behavior,

and does not allow the perpetrator to avoid confrontation.

A majority of respondents in the present study did not believe any long-term effects were suffered due to this behavior. However, a majority of women that did indicate long-term effects felt that assertiveness was gained rather than passivity. Statements such as: "I am emotionally stronger person and know not to do the same things to others, so it was a negative experience that helped me in the long run," "These things made me a stronger person," and "Learned how to get along with many different types of people, adapt" were added to research materials. Conversely, many young women added statements such as: "I suffered from depression as a result of rejection and that is still something I struggle with today," It's hard for me to talk or associate with other females," and "I do not trust or like most girls." These statements may support speculation that peer aggression possibly affects the basic rules of relationships adolescents are attempting to gain during development as speculated by Pipher (1994).

Research Question 1

Significant mean differences in the self-esteem scores of respondents that reported the behavior occurring more frequently were found in the present study. Participant's self-esteem was significantly lower when reports of the activity were more frequent in contrast to bullying occurring at smaller intervals. This leads to an assumption that adolescents who experience bullying on a near regular basis suffer more dramatic damage to her developing self-esteem than those who report the experiences less frequently. Suffering frequent indirect aggression may have more damaging effects on an adult woman's self-esteem. Certain implications must be mentioned in connection with how women viewed past behaviors. Of the reported frequency, a majority of the women fell within the set, Occasionally. Women within this set reported the behavior occurring "a

few times." Speculations may be made as to the abundant reporting for this particular group. Based on testing procedures, definition of time span may have been too great for women to identify the behaviors occurring throughout their entire adolescence. Therefore, "a few times" may have been a best fit definition for many young women. This assumption may also explain respondents nested within other definitions. At the ends of the spectrum, the Never and Frequently sets, the sizes were relatively small in comparison to the middle sets. Due to the definition of almost daily activity for the choice of "frequently," many young women may not have been able to identify the behaviors occurring on a daily basis throughout the extended time span.

Research Question 2

The present study supported that the way in which women viewed the intensity of the behavior also had an impact on their adult self-esteem. The most dramatic difference was indicated through a belief that the behaviors were light in nature compared to severe in nature. Therefore, if women viewed their victimization in severe terms their self-esteems as adults were lower. Due to the nature of self-report, it may be speculated that the manner in which women reflect on bullying forms a connection to their self-esteem presently. A majority of respondents were nested within the Moderate and Light in nature sets. It is possible that most young women did not feel that the behaviors had no impact at that time or were severe, and chose the neutral terms of Moderate or Light.

Overall Research Support

Overall, the results of the present investigation support the notion that bullying during adolescence is associated with women's self-esteem levels as adults. Adolescents who are aggressed against are at increased risk of low self-esteem, depression, and

anxiety that may possibly follow into adulthood. Pipher (1994) also revealed that many of her adult clients struggle with the same issues that overwhelmed them as adolescents. Most people believe a girl will get through it, grow up, and put these experiences behind her. As such, these findings shed light on the relation between the frequency of the behaviors on adult self-esteem as well as the view of intensity. The knowledge provided by this research may help to provide a more insightful understanding of the long-term effects of bullying during the adolescent years. A more thorough understanding of the long-term effects may aid mental health professionals, teachers, and parents in developing an awareness to reduce the psychological distress and increase the self-esteem of victims.

Limitations

Several limitations of the present research need to be mentioned. The data was obtained using university students at one mid-western college. These students participated to fulfill introductory psychology class obligations. Thus, these results may be generalized to only one particular population. Future research needs to use a wider range of women for a more representative sample. Demographic information such as race, ethnicity, specific age, and religion may be beneficial. Further research into the validity and reliability of testing measures is also recommended. Due to the beginning nature of this research, retrospective questionnaires were unavailable to determine victimization. The behavior questionnaire utilized was designed by the researcher. Based on this design, definitions and the range of time span covered may have influenced respondent answers. It is recommended that this questionnaire undergo research scrutiny for reliability and validity. Through direct correspondence with the author of the self-

esteem inventory, it was acknowledged that the test measures current self-esteem levels although the inventory had not undergone research scrutiny. Research scrutiny to determine reliability and validity of this measure is recommended. The order in which the inventories were administered may have influenced self-esteem scores. Respondents were asked to reflect on bullying behaviors and continue on to the self-esteem level. It may be speculated that the remembrance of these experiences may have manipulated the manner in which young women were currently viewing themselves; therefore, impacting their self-esteem score. It is recommended that future research randomize the inventory order to control for this effect. It is also suggested that other factors that could affect self-esteem be controlled. The nature of bullying behavior may not be the only influential factor for a lowered self-esteem in adulthood. Such factors as family environment, socioeconomic status, and significant life events (births, marriages, deaths, etc.) may have great influential power on self-esteem levels. Future research needs to be designed to overcome these limitations. Nonetheless, the present research represents a first step toward an understanding of the relation between female bullying during adolescence and adult self-esteem.

REFERENCES

Baldwin, S.A., & Hoffman, J.P. (2002). The dynamics of self-esteem: A growth-curve

analysis [Electronic version]. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 31*, 101-113.

Banks, R. (1997). Bullying in schools. *ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early*

Childhood Education Champaign IL. Article ED407154. Retrieved March 10,

2004, from http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed407154.html

Browning, C., Cohen, R., & Warman, D. (2003). Peer social competence and the stability

of victimization [Electronic version]. *Child Study Journal, 33*, 73-90.

Casey-Cannon, S., Hayward, C., & Gowen, K. (2001). Middle school girls? Reports

of peer victimization: concerns, consequences, and implications. *Professional*

School Counseling, 5, 138-147.

Coon, D. (1997). Essentials of psychology exploration and application seventh edition.

Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Ditzhazy, H.E.R., & Burton, E.M. (2003). Bullying: a perennial school problem

[Electronic version]. *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, 70*, 43-48.

Espelage, D., Bosworth, K., & Simon, T. (2003). Examining the social context of

bullying behaviors in early adolescents. Retrieved June 17, 2003 from the World

Wide Web: http://www.whittedclearlylaw.com/FSL5CS/links/links85.asp

Espelage, D. (2002). Bullying in early adolescence: The role of the peer group.

Retrieved June 13, 2003 from the World Wide Web:

http://ericeece.org/pubs/digests/2002/espelage02.html

Fried, S., & Fried, P. (1996). Bullies and victims helping your child through the

schoolyard battlefield. New York: M. Evans and Company, LLC.

Messina, C., & Messina, J. (1999). *The SEA's Program Self-Esteem Inventory.*

Retrieved February 2, 2004, from http://www.coping.org/seas/inventory.html

Pipher, M.(1994). *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the selves of adolescent girls.* New York:

Ballantine Books.

Rigby, K. (2003). Consequences of bullying in school [Electronic version]. *Canadian*

Journal of Psychiatry, *48*, 583-590.

Simmons, R. (2002). *Odd girl out.* New York: Harcourt, Inc.

Vail, K. (2002). How girls hurt. *American School Board Journal*, August, 14-18.

Wiseman, R. (2002). *Queen bees and wannabees: Helping your daughter survive*

cliques, gossip, boyfriends, and other realities of adolescence. New York:

Crown Publishers.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent Document

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

The Division of Psychology and Special Education at Emporia State University supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research and related activities. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time, and that if you do withdraw from the study, you will not be subjected to reprimand or any other form of reproach.

Participants will be asked to fill out two self-report inventories. The first survey consists of questions pertaining to the behaviors within peer groups during junior high and high school. The second inventory, SEA's Program Self-Esteem Inventory will be administered as a measure of current self-esteem levels.

Behaviors within a peer group have been intensely studies for several years. Certain behaviors, whether positive or negative, are thought to shape the adult self. This is the topic of this research.

I have read the above statement and have been fully advised of the procedures to be used in this project. I have been given sufficient opportunity to ask any questions I had concerning the procedures and possible risks involved. I understand the potential risks involved and I assume them voluntarily. I likewise understand that I can withdraw at any time without being subjected to reproach."

Subject   **Date**

Contact Information:
Should any questions or concerns arise after the completion of this study, feel free to contact Brandy Robinson (brandyrobinson@hotmail.com) or by phone:
Home: (316) 832-2315
Work: (620) 341-5776

APPENDIX B

Peer Group Behavior Report

Peer Group Behavior Report

Types of behaviors to be identified:

Relational aggression: acts that harmed you through damage (or threat of damage) to relationships or feelings of acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion. In these acts, the perpetrator used her relationship with you as a weapon.

Social aggression: this behavior was intended to damage your self-esteem or social status within a group. Activities such as rumor spreading, the "silent treatment," and revealing secrets are seen.

Generally, these two types of aggression can be referred to as indirect aggression. Many girls use indirect aggression, which allows them to harm their victims without physically confronting them. These are the types of behaviors that are the focus of this questionnaire.

For each of the following statements, choose the statement(s) that best describe activities directed towards you during ages 12-17 years.

1. When thinking back to junior high and high school, how often did you experience these types of behavior directed towards you?

    A. Never
    B. Occasionally (a few times)
    C. Often (once or twice a month)
    D. Frequently (almost daily)

2. The following activities were directed towards me:

    A. Verbal/name-calling
    B. Social rejection/Exclusion by your peers
    C. Psychological/taunting
    D. Spreading of rumors/revealing secrets
    E. Silent treatment

3. Would you consider these behaviors:

    A. Severe in nature
    B. Moderate in nature
    C. Light in nature
    D. These behaviors had no impact

4. Do you think you suffered any long-term effects?

    A. Yes
    B. No

    If Yes, Feel free to explain:

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

5. If you answered Yes to Question 4, did it affect you by:

    A. It made me more assertive
    It made me more passive

6. Do you consider any of the following as effects from these behaviors at the present time:

    A. Loss of self-esteem
    B. Loss of confidence
    C. Problems forming relationships
    D. Being afraid of conflict

APPENDIX C

SEA's Program Self-Esteem Inventory

The SEA's Program Self-Esteem Inventory

DIRECTIONS: For the statements below, circle the rating which is most true of your level of exhibiting these behaviors in your life. Use the following rating scale:

1 = never
2 = rarely
3 = sometimes
4 = frequently
5 = almost always

1 2 3 4 5 (1) I seek approval and affirmation from others, and I am afraid of criticism.

1 2 3 4 5 (2) I guess at what normal behavior is, and I usually feel as if I am different from other people.

1 2 3 4 5 (3) I isolate myself from and am afraid of people in authority roles.

1 2 3 4 5 (4) I am not able to appreciate my own accomplishments and good deeds.

1 2 3 4 5 (5) I tend to have difficulty following a project through from beginning to end.

1 2 3 4 5 (6) I get frightened or stressed when I am in the company of an angry person.

1 2 3 4 5 (7) In order to avoid a conflict, I find it easier to lie than tell the truth.

1 2 3 4 5 (8) I have problems with my own compulsive behavior, e.g., drinking, drug use, gambling, overeating, smoking, use of sex, shopping, etc.

1 2 3 4 5 (9) I judge myself without mercy. I am my own worst critic, and I am harder on myself than I am on others.

1 2 3 4 5 (10) I feel more alive in the midst of crisis, and I am uneasy when my life in going smoothly; I am continually anticipating problems.

1 2 3 4 5 (11) I have difficulty having fun. I don't seem to know how to play for fun and relaxation.

1 2 3 4 5 (12) I am attracted to others whom I perceive to have been victims, and I develop close relationships with them. In this way I confuse love with pity, and I love people I can pity and rescue.

1 2 3 4 5 (13) I need perfection in my life at home and work, and I expect perfection from others in my life.

1 2 3 4 5 (14) I seek out novelty, excitement, and the challenge of newness in my life with little concern given to the consequences of such action.

1 2 3 4 5 (15) I take myself very seriously, and I view all of my relationships just as seriously.

1 2 3 4 5 (16) I have problems developing and maintaining intimate relationships.

1 2 3 4 5 (17) I feel guilty when I stand up for myself or take care of my needs first, instead of giving in or taking care of others' needs first.

1 2 3 4 5 (18) I seek and/or attract people who have compulsive behaviors (e.g., alcohol, drugs, gambling, food shopping, sex, smoking, overworking, or seeking excitement).

1 2 3 4 5 (19) I feel responsible for others and find it easier to have concern for others than for myself.

1 2 3 4 5 (20) I am loyal to people for whom I care, even in the face of evidence that the loyalty is undeserved.

1 2 3 4 5 (21) I cling to and will do anything to hold on to relationship because I am afraid of being alone and fearful of being abandoned.

1 2 3 4 5 (22) I am impulsive and act too quickly, before considering alternative actions or possible consequences.

1 2 3 4 5 (23) I have difficulty in being able to feel or to express feelings; I feel out of touch with my feelings.

1 2 3 4 5 (24) I mistrust my feelings and the feelings expressed by others.

1 2 3 4 5 (25) I isolate myself from other people, and I am initially shy and withdrawn in new social settings.

1 2 3 4 5 (26) I feel that I am being taken advantage of by individuals and society in general; I often feel victimized.

1 2 3 4 5 (27) I can be overresponsible much of the time, but I can be extremely irresponsible at other times.

1 2 3 4 5 (28) I feel confused and angry at myself and not in control of my environment or my life when the stressed are great.

1 2 3 4 5 (29) I spend a lot of time and energy rectifying or cleaning up my messes and the negative consequences of ill-thought-out or impulsive actions for which I am responsible.

1 2 3 4 5 (30) I deny that my current problems stem from my past life. I deny that I have stuffed-in feelings from the past which are impeding my current life.
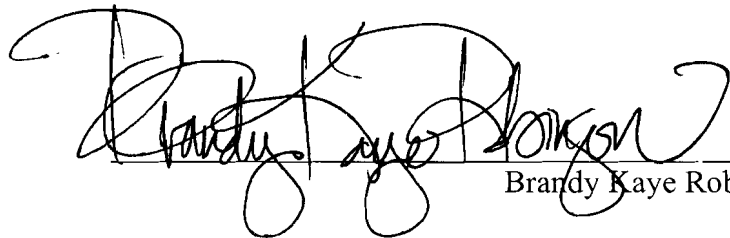
Research Information

Add the ratings circled. This score indicates the degree to which the self-esteem is affected.

SCORE INTERPRETATION

0 – 30 Not affected by low self-esteem

31 – 45 Traces of low self-esteem

46 – 61 Presence of mild low self-esteem

62 – 90 Presence of moderate low self-esteem

91 – 120 Presence of severe low self-esteem

121 – 150 Presence of profound low self-esteem.

I, Brandy Kaye Robinson, hereby submit this thesis to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission.
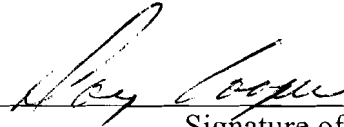
_____
                                              Brandy Kaye Robinson

_____
January 17, 2005
                                              Date

An Examination of the Effects of Female Bullying on Women's Self-Esteem

_____
                                              Signature of Graduate Office Staff

_____
1-26-05
                                              Date Received