

LIFE'S FOOTPRINTS: UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS REFLECTING ON THEIR
EXPERIENCES WITH DELINQUENCY, BULLYING, & SOCIAL SUPPORT

By

Rudolph Alexander Bielitz

A Thesis Presented to

The Faculty of Humboldt State University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts in Sociology

Committee Membership

Dr. Renée Byrd, Committee Chair

Dr. Joshua Meisel, Committee Member

Dr. Meredith Williams, Graduate Coordinator

May 2016

ABSTRACT

LIFE'S FOOTPRINTS: UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS REFLECTING ON THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH DELINQUENCY, BULLYING, & SOCIAL SUPPORT

Rudolph Alexander Bielitz

The Life's Footprints study investigated the bullying and delinquency experiences of 11 undergraduate students at Humboldt State University (HSU) in Arcata California. Two specific time frames were used to investigate the participants' bullying and delinquent experiences. The first time frame dealt with the participants' previous experiences with bullying and delinquency during their time as an adolescent growing up in their hometowns¹ and the second time frame dealt with their current experiences with bullying and delinquency as undergraduate students attending HSU.² The first time frame was shown to be the most significant amongst the participants, and through analyzing the data most of their bullying and delinquent experiences occurred during childhood and/or adolescence. Further, this qualitative study used grounded theory as presented by Kathy Charmaz (2006). The Life's Footprints study provided an insight to each participants' personal experience with bullying and delinquency. Moreover, as participants were questioned about their experiences with bullying and delinquency, the participants indicated that they were either a victim, a perpetrator, or both a victim and a perpetrator of

¹ Time Frame 1: Before College

² Time Frame 2: During College

bullying. Social bonding, social identity, symbolic interactionism and social support, were three theoretical foundations that were used within this study, so as to address the key themes within the study. In addition, the participants' delinquency as juveniles was seen as a result of their peer social acceptance and *attachment* to their delinquent peers, via social bonding (Hirschi 1969).

Key words: Attachment, Appraisal Support, Beliefs, Belongingness, Bullying, Commitment, Delinquency, Depersonalization, Emotional Support, Informational Support, Involvement, Involved Support, Social Acceptance, Social Aggression, Self-Categorization, Social-Comparison, Social Bonding Theory, Social Identity Theory, Symbolic Interactionism,

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'd like to dedicate this to my academic mentors at HSU.

To Dr. Byrd and Dr. Meisel thank you both so much for the support and guidance in helping me
to construct and to develop my thesis paper.

And a special thanks to Dr. Chew, Dr. Eichstedt, Dr. Martinek, Dr. Virnoche, and Dr. Williams
for challenging me to do my best, as well as providing me with opportunities to gain more
teaching and research experience.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	x
INTRODUCTION	1
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
Theory I: Social Bonding Theory.....	19
Theory II: Social Identity Theory.....	22
Theory III: Symbolic Interactionism and Social Support	23
METHODOLOGY	28
Subjects	28
Recruitment	30
Method One	30
Method Two	31
Risk Management Procedures.....	31
Data	33

Setting.....	36
Data Analysis	36
REVIEWING CONCEPTS OF PEER ATTACHMENT, PEER INFLUENCE &	
PARTICIPANTS' ANECDOTES	41
Peer Social Attachment & Its Impact on Delinquency	41
Allison and Kevin: A New Home Means New Friends	42
Allison: Looking for Acceptance	44
Kevin: "I Just Wanted to Make Friends"	48
Kevin: Three Flip.....	48
Anthony: Living in a Disorganized Community, School, and Bullying	52
Anthony: Selling Crystal	54
REVIEWING CONCEPTS OF BULLYING, SOCIAL SUPPORT, & PARTICIPANTS'	
ANECDOTES.....	56
Bullying: Social Identity	56
Incessantly Ridiculed and Teased.....	57
Bullying, Popularity, and Physical Appearance	59
An Athletic Identity	61
Victims of Bullying: The Value of Social Support	64
Steven	65
Steven: They Were Like Brothers	66

Steven: Two Friends Have a Falling Out	67
Kelly	69
Kelly: “I would Count My as Like a Bully”	70
Kelly: Channeling Her Frustration	72
FINDINGS	75
ANALYSIS: PEER SOCIAL ATTACHMENT & ITS IMPACT ON DELINQUENCY	76
Attachment: Allison and Kevin.....	76
Attachment: Anthony	78
Commitment and Involvement: Allison, Kevin, and Anthony	79
Beliefs: Allison, Kevin, and Anthony	81
ANALYSIS: BULLYING & SOCIAL IDENTITY	83
ANALYSIS: THE VALUE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT	86
Steven: Symbolic Interactionism and Social Support.....	88
Kelly: Symbolic Interactionism and Social Support.....	90
DISCUSSION.....	92
IMPLICATIONS	94
LIMITATIONS.....	95
FUTURE RESEARCH.....	98
REFERENCES	99

APPENDICES 108

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Participants Interviewed	29
Table 2 Offending Survey Questionnaire Number 6	35
Table 3 Participants' Rationale for Offending	37
Table 4 Sub-Theme Bullying.....	39

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A..... 108
Appendix B..... 113
Appendix C..... 115

INTRODUCTION

“A deep sense of love and belonging is an irreducible need of all women, men, and children,” wrote Brené Brown, “we are cognitively, physically, and spiritually wired to love, to be loved, and to belong. When those needs are not met, we don't function as we were meant to. We break. We fall apart. We numb. We ache. We hurt others. We get sick” (2010:26). Belongingness and/or social acceptance embodies the notion of attachment, and social identity for those who are socially accepted by others (Osterman 2000, Stets and Burke 2000). In addition, belongingness is a component that influences an individual's sense of self-worth (Carstensen, Fung, and Charles 2003, Baumeister et al. 2007, Maslow 1943). However, those who experience social rejection in the form of bullying tend to develop a sense of frustration, hopelessness, or depression (Brissette, Scheier, and Carver 2002, West and Salmon 2000).

The research on belongingness and/or social acceptance reveals that the desire to belong to a social group can influence an individual's behavior (Baumeister, et al. 2007). For example, an individual desiring to belong to a social group of deviant peers will most likely commit delinquent acts, so that he or she may form an attached bond (Hindelang 1973). Similarly, an individual who shares the actions and norms of his or her in-group members develops a shared identity, which is known as social identity (Stets and Burke 2000). For instance, if a group of people were to bully a single individual they would be reinforcing their shared collective action of bullying, as well as as highlighting their

social differences between them and their victim. Thus reinforcing their social identity (Stets and Burke 2000).

Therefore, the problem is that the need to belong can influence individuals to become attached and partake in similar activities as their delinquent peers who either bully, or commit delinquent acts. Hence, the purpose of this study is to examine the concept of belongingness and its impact on both delinquency and bullying. In addition, in order to address this problem three research questions were posed, 1) How does the need or desire for belongingness and/or social acceptance influence delinquent behaviors? 2) How can social identity theory (Stets and Burke 2000) explain and or examine the notion of belongingness in regards to bullying? 3) How does social support mediate the negative effects on bullied victims?

Moreover, the concept of bullying can be problematic, because of its social construction, which consists of various perceptions. For instance, according to Wayne (2013) between “the years to 1999 to 2005” (2013:38) “bullying was considered a social ill, an indicator of depression and anxiety, and a predictor of school violence” (2013:38-39), and at this time bullying was viewed as being curable (Wayne 2013). However, in 2006 the media covered the death of a 13-year old girl named Megan Meier. Megan was a victim of bullying, and it was ultimately her victimization that influenced her decision to commit suicide. According to Wayne (2013) the 2006 coverage of Megan Meier’s death had sparked a media sensation, which influenced public discourse in believing that bullying is no longer a social ill that is curable, but rather it is an act of callousness that

can result in the death of another. Hence, bullying has now drifted away from being viewed as a curable social ill to a serious social problem where the perpetrator can now be criminally charged for bullying (Wayne 2013). Therefore, the media's portrayal of bullying as an act of criminalization influences the perceptions of its viewers, as well as the social construction of bullying.

Nonetheless, for the purpose of this paper I conceptualize bullying as a form of persistent harassment, where the perpetrator emphasizes negative aggressive behaviors, so as to reinforce their social status and/or power between them and their victim(s) (Juvonen and Graham 2001). In addition, this study views the perpetration of bullying as an act of either persistent and continual aggression, social aggression, relational aggression, harassment, or negative social expressions which are meant to reinforce the social status and/or power between the perpetrator and the victim. Furthermore, this particular conceptualization of bullying is useful for investigating the social power dynamic between the victim and the perpetrator, via social identity theory (Stets and Burke 2000).

The conceptual frameworks for this study were chosen for the purpose of understanding the significant relationship that the concept of belongingness has on both delinquency and bullying, as well as the significance that social support has for bullied victims. Therefore, I first investigated the conceptual framework and definitions of social

bonding theory (Hirschi 1969), and how it relates to my first research question³.

Moreover, by utilizing social bonding theory (Hirschi 1969) it provided the framework that was necessary to investigate my respondents' anecdotes, which describes their desire for social acceptance and/or belongingness to their peers, as well as how their attachment to their delinquent peers influenced their own delinquent behavior(s).

I then explored the conceptual framework and definitions of social identity theory (Stets and Burke 2000), and how it relates to my second research question⁴, which examines the power dynamic between the perpetrators and the victims of bullying. Lastly, I investigated the conceptual framework of symbolic interactionism, via social support and dramaturgy, and how it relates to my third research question⁶, which examines the benefits of social support for bullied victims.

The Life's Footprints study is a narrative case study of undergraduate students and their experiences with bullying, delinquency, and social support. This study recruited 11 participants from Humboldt State University (HSU), and at the time of each interview all 11 participants were currently enrolled as undergraduate students at HSU. In addition, recruitment was accomplished through posting recruitment flyers at HSU, and by scheduling and making class announcements in general undergraduate courses at HSU.

³ How does the need or desire for belongingness and/or social acceptance influence delinquent behaviors?

⁴ How can social identity theory (Stets and Burke 2000) explain and or examine the notion of belongingness in regards to bullying?

⁶ How does social support mediate the negative effects on bullied victims?

Furthermore, demographic questionnaires, Twenty Statement Test (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954), offending survey, and audio-recorder were used to collect data. All recorded interviews were then transcribed and analyzed using a systematic filing system, which was devised, so as to maintain the order of key anecdotal themes and sub-themes.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) How does the need or desire for belongingness and/or social acceptance influence delinquent behaviors?
- 2) How can social identity theory (Stets and Burke 2000) explain and or examine the notion of belongingness in regards to bullying?
- 3) How does social support mediate the negative effects on bullied victims?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines the prior research literature regarding the need to belong. Subsequently various aspects at the collective level will be covered, such as social support and social preferences. Following this, the literature will examine power, such as social and relational aggression, social power, social dominance, and popularity. The next feature that will be examined is social disorganization, and how an individual's surrounding impacts their behaviors. Additionally, family economic strain and poor parental communication will be examined to further understand the impact that resources, or lack thereof has on an individual. Consequently, the perpetrator and victim of bullying will be discussed; along with how social bonding theory influences both of these groups. Lastly, the literature will explore social identity theory, and how an individual's personal identity impacts symbolic interactionism via social support.

People tend to seek social acceptance through relationships, such as friendships, romantic relationships, or mentorships (Gardner, Pickett, and Brewer 2000; Maniaci 2009). According to the belongingness hypothesis (Baumeister and Leary 1995), people seek to create and to maintain social bonds, such as friendships. Also, according to this hypothesis, belongingness has multiple effects on people's behavioral and emotional responses (Baumeister and Leary 1995). For instance, belongingness influences the way that people socially interact with one another. "One study found that individuals reporting a relatively strong need were more likely to cooperate with others in a large group.

Individuals who have a strong need to belong will seek more individuals for a larger social relationship” (Maniaci 2009: 166). The need to belong especially in adolescence stems from wanting to feel connected to others. Similarly, children who possess a high need for social acceptance are more inclined to cooperate with others, and are more inclined to conform to group tendencies, while those who have a low need for social acceptance do not comply to group tendencies (Lorber 1966).

There may be a distinctive behavioral quality that compels people to form social bonds. For instance, according Abraham Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs. Maslow (1943) theorizes that humans are behaviorally driven to satisfy their most basic needs, such as food, water, and safety, and once these needs are satisfied, people can then focus on their personal goals (i.e. self-actualization). However, what is interesting to note, is Maslow’s third stage of love and belongingness (Gardner et al. 2000; Baumeister and Leary 1995); because according to this stage, the need to belong is contingent upon satisfying “food, hunger, safety, and other basic needs” (1995:497) but the need to belong takes “precedence over esteem and self-actualization” (Baumeister and Leary 1995:497). Thus, the need to belong is such a strong behavioral quality that it outweighs one’s self-esteem and self-actualization.

The need to belong is a powerful motivational basis for interpersonal behavior, but when social exclusion or rejection occurs it can cause some adverse affects, such as aggression and apathy (Baumeister, et al. 2007). Research shows that when people are socially rejected they begin to describe themselves in a negative way (Baumeister, et al.

2007). Comparably, someone who is socially excluded is more likely to be an introvert, and is more likely to be fearful of making new friends (Baumeister, et al. 2007). Hence, social rejection can lead to a distorted social reality were one is fearful of making friends, because of the fear of being perceived negatively by others.

Similarly, the need to belong can change a person's social perception (Gardner et al. 2000). For instance, while physical hunger builds up awareness to food signals, "social hunger increases sensitivity to social cues" (Gardner et al. 2000:495). For example, studies have shown that individuals who are socially rejected are more likely to remember social details and social cues more than those who are socially accepted by others (Gardner et al. 2000). Thus, it may be that by one remembering social rejection it increases their likelihood in being socially accepted by others in the future.

Therefore, it may be that the need to belong is such a strong behavioral quality that people actually remember their social failures, so that they can avoid being socially rejected in the future. Understanding this is both significant and important to my study's qualitative data, because Gardner's et al. (2000) finding bolsters my participants' personal anecdotes, which are their personal accounts of experiencing social rejection during childhood, adolescence, and/or both.

Likewise, adolescents who lack a network of support and who are socially excluded from others are more likely to be frustrated and depressed (Brissette et al. 2002; West and Salmon 2000), and are more likely to cope with their frustrations dangerously (Deykin, Levy, and Wells 1987; Osterman 2000). For instance, by lacking a network of

support adolescents are more likely to cope with their frustrations through either violence, promiscuity, suicidality, drugs, or alcohol (Deykin, Levy, and Wells 1987; Osterman 2000). Reports on adolescents' frustrations reveal that those who are depressed, are four times more likely to abuse alcohol and/or drugs (Deykin et al. 1987). Therefore, having a strong network of support not only helps adolescents in coping with their frustrations, but it may also help them to avoid using drugs, alcohol and other dangerous coping mechanisms. Further, this was shown to be significant for one of my participants, who recounts that when he was an adolescent he would cope with his depression through consuming alcohol.

Scholars have also explored social support specific to the context of undergraduate education. For instance, studies on social support have shown that social support operates as an effective coping tool for individuals dealing with feelings of stress, frustration, and/or depression (Brissette et al. 2002). Moreover, social support is positively associated with having positive adjustments to life stressors, as well as being positively associated with having high levels of optimism (Brissette et al. 2002). Hence, increases in social support leads to greater levels of positive life adjustment and optimism. (Brissette et al. 2002). Thus, unlike dangerous types of coping mechanisms (Deykin, Levy, and Wells 1987; Osterman 2000), social support is an efficient and an effective way for individuals to cope with their frustrations and/or depression.

Social support has also been examined through old age as well. According to the socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen et al. 2003), as people age they begin to

narrow down their social networks to reflect individuals whom they are close to, such as family members or best friends. As people get older they try to maximize their social networks, allowing them to spend more time with those whom they care for the most.

Thus, the theory concludes that older adults look to satisfy their feelings of belongingness by communicating with partners, friends, and family members that they are close to. As Carstensen et al (2003) states, “emotionally close social partners, as opposed to strangers, are preferred because they are more likely to provide emotionally meaningful social experiences and feelings of social connectedness” (2003:110). Hence, the effects of social support are important, because it provides the receiver with the awareness and the feeling that they belong, or are socially accepted by others, and this is evident in regards to social support and how it ceases to fade away.

Furthermore, the concept of the need to belong expands across the notion of social preferences, and it is important to note that social preferences are a subjective quality. Individual’s use social preferences to determine, which group of people that they have a common set of interest with, or to determine which group of people that they would like to associate with, because of their level of popularity (Andreou 2006). Therefore, social preferences give way towards individuals integrating themselves with others, as well as rejecting or excluding those that they believe are undesirable members from entering their social group (Andreou 2006). Research on social integration has focused on social preferences or popularity, and how they influence social aggression.

For instance, Helborn and Prinstein (2008) define social aggression as a behavior that aims to damage another person's social status or social relationship through "nonconfrontational" methods, such as negative facial expressions, negative gestures, gossiping, social exclusion, and ostracism. In addition, social aggression may involve the manipulation of other group members, so that they can help in the process of socially excluding unwanted members. Similarly, Helborn and Prinstein (2008) describe relational aggression as causing social harm, but despite relational aggression being similar to social aggression, relational aggression does not include "direct manipulation of peers," and it "does not include negative facial expressions or gestures," (Helborn and Prinstein 2008:2). Nonetheless, social aggression and relational aggression are methods used by individuals looking to damage another person's social status, which is consistent with my participants' descriptions of either impeding the social attempts of others, or experiencing the hostility of social aggression and relational aggression from others.

Similarly, popularity is positively related to social dominance or social aggression (Lease, Kennedy, and Axelrod 2002). For instance, according to Lease et al (2002) children and adolescents who are described as being popular and not well-liked tend to possess positive prosocial characteristics such as, intelligence and attractiveness, being cool, athletic, and gregarious. However, these particular children and adolescents were also viewed as being socially aggressive (Lease et al. 2002). Therefore, Lease et al. (2002) concluded "that being perceived as popular is a key determinant of social power in peer groups." (2002:1) Meaning, that popularity is dependent upon social power or social

aggression.

Likewise, both Cillessen and Mayeux (2004), found that popularity among adolescents influences their levels of social aggression. Meaning that socially dominant adolescents tend to use either physical aggression, relational aggression, or both as a tool for maintaining their high social status (Cillessen and Mayeux 2004). Hence, popularity was associated with higher levels of relational aggression and physical aggression. In addition, Cillessen and Mayeux (2004) defined relational aggression as a behavior that ignores, and excludes others from entering the in-group, and they defined physical aggression as starting fights and teasing others (Cillessen and Mayeux 2004).

In contrast to popularity influencing aggression (Cillessen and Mayeux 2004). Rose, Swenson, and Waller (2004) found that relational aggression influenced popularity. In fact, studies have shown that when teachers, and students describe another student as being “tough” that particular student is also characterized as being cool, athletic, and popular (Rodkin et al. 2000). According to Rodkin et al (2000) “recent findings in sociology... suggest that a substantial proportion of preadolescent boys are very popular and very antisocial” (2000:15). These findings are consistent with other research that indicates that as individuals age into adolescence, they become drawn towards peers that they identify as being aggressive (Rose et al. 2004).

However, it is important to note, that there are mixed results within the study of social aggression and popularity. According to Andreou (2006):

One study found a stronger relation with perceived popularity for boys than for girls (Parkhurst and Hopmeyer, 1998), a second found a stronger relation for girls than for boys (Lease et al., 2002), and a third found similar relations across gender (LaFontana and Cillessen, 2002). The third study also found similar relations across gender between relational aggression and perceived popularity (2006: 347-348).

Likewise, in a study conducted by Adler and Adler (1998) they discovered that popular adolescents used aggression as a way to display their physicality or social dominance. Thus more research is needed within this area of study.

Nevertheless, social aggression and relational aggression are closely related to bullying. Bullying is defined as persistent harassment that occurs within a social setting, and it emphasizes negative aggressive behaviors, which reinforces the power dynamic between the victim and the perpetrator (Juvonen and Graham 2001). Also, it is worth mentioning that there are various types of bullying, such as racial and sexual bullying which can take the form of either physical or verbal bullying (Juvonen and Graham 2001).⁷

Furthermore, there are several situational variables that can influence bullying, for instance moving to a new area and attending a new school, living in a disorganized community, living in a dysfunctional family/household, poor parenting, and conforming to peer pressure (Bradley and Corwyn 2002; Burns et al. 2008; Dong et al. 2005, Tucker,

⁷ Therefore, for the purpose of this literature review and for the purpose of this paper I view social aggression and relational aggression as being synonymous with bullying.

Marx, and Long 1998; Punyanunt-Carter 2008; Sampson and Groves 1989; Shaw and McKay 1942; Whitbeck et al. 1991). Moreover, children and adolescents who move to a new area to attend a new school are at risk of being bullied (Dong et al. 2005; Tucker et al. 1998), because of their unknown social status as being either new or different (Frisén, Johnson, and Persson 2007; Georgiou and Stavriniades 2008; Juvonen and Graham 2001).

Likewise, living in a disorganized community that is devoid of resources where people are constantly moving and communication is unstable among residents, and there are constant family disruptions such as economic strain, tends to foster aggression among residents (Sampson and Groves 1989; Shaw and McKay 1942). Therefore, since disorganized communities lack resources perpetrators tend to seek victims who are the most vulnerable and defenseless, so that they can either easily steal from them, harass them, or bully them for resources, such as money. According to Anderson (1999), intimidation (i.e. bullying) and street crimes are apart of the social fabric of low-end communities, which he refers to as, “the code of the streets.”

In addition, economic strain on a families' household can create a dysfunctional atmosphere. According to Bradley and Corwyn (2002) and Whitbeck et al. (1991) families that experience financial difficulties are much more likely to express themselves negatively towards one another (i.e. bullying). Hence, this is an important concept, because bullying is not only an issue that can occur outside the household, but it can also occur within the household as well. In fact, studies have shown that some bullying perpetrators and victims have experienced teasing from family members at home

(Jankausiene et al. 2008).

Similarly, poor parental communication can influence adolescents' need to belong, or need for social acceptance. For example, research has shown that daughters who lack a strong communal bond with their fathers are more inclined to seek emotional support elsewhere, such as friends, boyfriends, or other adults (Punyanunt-Carter 2008). Therefore, an adolescent who feels rejected at home may seek acceptance elsewhere. This of course is an unsafe or risky circumstance for adolescents, because many times adolescents find individuals who are either looking to manipulate them, or they find individuals who have a poor character and are a poor source of influence. However, adolescents who lack a network of support at home will quite often take the risk in looking for social support or social capital elsewhere (Coleman 1988).

According to Rigby's theory of reasoned action (2005), peers, parents, mentors, and teachers can influence the behaviors of others. Rigby (2005) claims that students can peer pressure or influence certain children or adolescents to bully others. For example, Burns' et al. (2008) states, that adolescents can be pressured into bullying others due to social factors such as, group social norms, popularity, and reaffirming one's social position. However, the theory of reasoned action also proposes that people can influence others in behaving altruistically (Rigby 2005). For example, parents, and teachers can influence the behaviors of others (i.e. children and adolescents) by encouraging them to intervene when they see someone being bullied. Hence, positive guidance can influence others to intervene when they see someone being bullied.

Furthermore, some bullies become popular among their classmates and their peers. For instance, Olweus (1978) found that bullies were well liked and were positively evaluated by their school peers. This particular finding on bullying and popularity correlates with Lesae's et al. (2002) finding on social aggression and popularity.

It is important to note that the concept of bullying itself has been the source of much debate. For instance, Wayne (2013) observed that between "the years to 1999 to 2005" (2013:38) "bullying was considered a social ill, an indicator of depression and anxiety, and a predictor of school violence" (2013:38-39), and at this time bullying was viewed as being curable. However, in 2006 the media covered the suicide of 13-year-old Megan Meier (Wayne 2013). According to Wayne (2013), in 2006 Megan was a victim of cyberbullying, via Myspace, where she continually received unflattering messages from Lori Drew. Unfortunately, it was these unflattering messages that influenced Megan's decision to take her own life, however her death inspired the enactment of "the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act in the Missouri statute 565-090" (Wayne 2013:39), and following this enactment, Lori Drew was prosecuted for the messages that she sent to Megan.

Likewise, in 2008 the media reported an incident that was similar to Megan Meier's death, which was the suicide of 12-year-old bullied victim, Brandon Myer (Wayne 2013). According to Wayne (2013) both the 2006 and 2008 media coverage of Megan Meier's and Brandon Myer's suicide sparked a media sensation, which "brought nationwide attention" (Wayne 2013:39) to bullying. Before these two cases were made

public, society simply viewed bullying as a social ill. For instance, it was viewed simply as something that children and adolescents did, however through the media's coverage on bullying and the impact that it has its victims this then resulted in the redefinition of bullying as a serious criminal act, which can result in the death of a victim. Hence, public discourse now holds that bullying is no longer a social ill, but rather an act of criminalization (Wayne 2013). Therefore, the media's portrayal of bullying as an act of criminalization influences the perceptions of its viewers, as well as the social construction of bullying.

To reiterate my conceptualization of bullying, bullying is a form of repeated harassment, where the perpetrator displays negative aggressive behaviors to bolster their social status and power between them and their victim(s) (Juvonen and Graham 2001). In addition, there are three different types of roles within the literature on bullying, which are the bully (i.e. perpetrator), the victim (i.e. passive-victim), and the bully-victim (i.e. aggressive-victim) (Georgiou and Stavrinides 2008; Juvonen and Graham 2001). Bullies are characterized as being aggressive, dominant, confident, and showing little to no empathy (Frisén et al. 2007; Georgiou and Stavrinides 2008; Juvonen and Graham 2001). Victims, however, are often characterized as being different, insecure, shy, introverted, vulnerable, and submissive. (Frisén et al. 2007; Georgiou and Stavrinides 2008; Juvonen and Graham 2001). However, the bully-victim is an individual that possesses some overlapping characteristics as the bully and the victim, although the bully-victim is more well-known for having few to no friends (Georgiou and Stavrinides 2008; Juvonen and

Graham 2001). Though, it may be possible that by the bully-victim not having any friends or a network of support to rebuff their victimization (Gottlieb 1985) the bully-victim may then be inclined to seek out victims of his or her own. Hence, giving the bully-victim the sense of power in playing the role of the perpetrator (Pepler et al. 2006; Theriot et al. 2004).

Lastly, relational and verbal bullying are associated with social rank theory, which states that victims of bullying tend to be socially relegated or rejected by others (Juvonen and Graham 2001). Thus causing social harm to those who are being bullied (Heilbron and Prinstein 2008). However, social support is an invaluable social resource for adolescents especially for those who are being bullied. Social support provides victims of bullying with a sense of belongingness (Brissette et al. 2002; Gottlieb 1985, Osterman 2000), and having a sense of belongingness is an important quality, because it provides people with a feeling of security (Cohen, Underwood, and Gottlieb 2000; Osterman 2000). Hence, being well-liked by others increases one's feelings of social acceptance, and as result it creates a social bond between them, and their community (Hawkins and Weis 1985). An individual can be impacted negatively when there is a lack of social support, or a lack of social bonding, which is true not only for the victim, but for the individual who commits the delinquent acts as well.

Theory I: Social Bonding Theory

Social bonding theory proposes that “delinquent acts result when an individual’s

bond to society is weak or broken” (Hirschi 1969:16). There are four components that structure an individual’s bond to society, which are attachment, commitment, involvement, and beliefs. Therefore, if the individual has a weak bond to society, the greater the likelihood that an individual will commit delinquent acts. The stronger these components are, the greater the likelihood that an individual will conform to societal norms.

Hirschi (1969) defines attachment as the degree to which an individual is emotionally attached to others such as, parents, teachers, peers, and mentors (Akers and Seller 2004). Within society if an individual has a strong attachment to their interpersonal relationship the more likely that individual will conform to society. Parents have a strong impact on their children, for example individuals who are strongly attached to their parents’ look to satisfy their parents’ expectations and norms. Whereas, individuals who have a weak level of attachment to others are less likely to worry about others expectations or societal norms, and are therefore more likely to commit delinquent acts (Akers and Sellers 2004).

However, Hirschi (1969) also proposes that the character of the individual that one is attached to does not govern conformity, instead it is the bond of attachment to others that governs conformity. As Hirschi (1969) states, “the more one respects or admires one’s friends, the less likely one is to commit delinquent acts. We honor those we admire not by imitation, but by adherence to conventional standards” (1969:152). Therefore, it is the overall practice of attachment that dictates conformity. Whereas, those

who have no level of attachment to others tend to exhibit apathetic qualities, and are therefore more likely to commit delinquent activities (Akers and Sellers 2004).

Commitment is defined as the level of investment that an individual has pledged towards societal norms, such as education and employment. The greater the commitment, the greater the investment. Therefore, if an individual were to commit an unlawful act he or she would potentially be risking their personal project, which they have cared and invested in. Hence, commitment is a rational component where one weighs the costs and benefits of committing a delinquent act (Akers and Sellers 2004).

Involvement is defined as the level of commitment that one spends doing conventional activities, such as studying, spending time with family, and participation in extracurricular activities (Akers and Sellers 2004). Thus, an individual's commitment to involvement in conventional activities, means that he or she is too preoccupied to commit any non-conventional delinquent activities (Akers and Sellers 2004).

Beliefs is defined as the acceptance of conventional norms and societal laws. Meaning that individuals who accept societal norms believe that laws and rules are in place for a specific reason. Whereas, those who neither accept, nor believe that rules are set in place for a specific reason are more likely to violate societal norms than those who do. Therefore, belief is the conformist stage of social bonding theory. The weaker the beliefs that one holds regarding society's rules, the more likely that he or she will violate the conventional rules of society (Hirschi 1969; Akers and Sellers 2004). Furthermore,

the rules that an individual set in place for themselves, especially for the group to which they believe they belong to, assist in forming their social identity.

Theory II: Social Identity Theory

Social Identity theory, states that people tend to categorize themselves and others into groups, because it allows them to identify themselves and others, via their in-group (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Abrams and Hogg 1988). This process is known as self-categorization, which proposes that the self is an object that belongs to a specific social group, and the self is then labeled to a specific category or classification, via the individual's group membership (Stets and Burke 2000). Self-categorization serves the purpose of enabling group members to emphasize their own similarities among their in-group, while simultaneously highlighting their differences among out-group members (Stets and Burke 2000). Hence, in-group members' identities are formed through the process of self-categorization.

According to social identity theory, salient identity (i.e. salience) is known as the activation phase. For instance, when an individual is placed in a setting or in a situation where he or she needs to declare his or her membership, the individual's identity will be activated. Thus, by an individual activating his or her social identity that particular individual will be able to confirm his or her group membership (Stets and Burke 2000). It is also important to note that different identities can occur, but that depends on the situation. As a situation changes, so does the relevant stimuli which causes the

individual's self-categorization to change (Stets and Burke 2000). For example, according Stets and Burke (2000) an individual's personal identity is activated when he or she is reflecting on his or her own personal goals and desires. However, if the same individual were to compare his or her social group to another social group then that individual's social identity will be activated, which in turn suppresses their personal identity. Therefore, an individual's identity is dependent upon the situation or setting.

Likewise, depersonalization, is known as the cognitive and behavioral process of social identity. Depersonalization, is the process whereby the individual suppresses his or her personal identity, so that he or she may fully identify with their in-group (Stets and Burke 2000). Hence, the salient identity produces the individual's depersonalization. However, the importance of depersonalization is that it creates a bond among group members through "social stereotyping, group cohesiveness, ethnocentrism, cooperation, and altruism, emotional contagion, and collective action" (Stets and Burke 2000:232). Therefore, creating and reaffirming one's social identification. Thus, social identity explains the overall purpose of individuals creating, sustaining, and reaffirming their identities, via their social network. As the individual's social network confirms their social identity, the individual is then able to discover and form their role within society, as well as develop a standard for social interaction.

Theory III: Symbolic Interactionism and Social Support

Symbolic interactionism, via social support explains the process and standards of

social interactions (Cohen et al. 2000). Symbolic interactionism explains the social relationship of an individual and society, through investigating the meanings of the individual's actions, the individual's social network's language and etiology, the individual's social networks' language hierarchy, as well as that hierarchy's definitional adaptation (Appelrouth and Edles 2011). Hence, social support helps to create and to maintain an individual's action, which aids in their process of solidifying their identity and self-esteem, via symbolic interactionism (Cohen et al. 2000).

Stryker's (Appelrouth and Edles 2011:178), defines symbolic interactionism as “a satisfactory theoretical framework that must bridge social structure and person, must be able to move from the level of the person to that of large-scale social structure and back again” (Appelrouth and Edles 2011:178). Meaning, that a connection is required in order for there to be a fluid cyclical motion that begins at the social structure level to the person level, and then from the person level to the large-scale social structure level, and then back again to the social structure level. Therefore, according to Stryker (Appelrouth and Edles 2011:178-179) an individual's “societal role(s)” and “behavioral expectations” are the connections, or the “bridge” that creates this cyclical motion that allows the individual to create and to maintain their identity. More specifically, through the process of symbolic interactionism an individual is able to develop their social processes and meanings, which accompany their social frameworks or networks. In other words, an individual's self is developed and sustained, via the interactions that the individual has within his or her social framework or network.

Similarly, dramaturgy is a sub theoretical concept of symbolic interactionism that explains why people assume a specific social role when they are in a specific social setting (Goffman 1959). According to this concept, the behavioral interactions that occur everyday are similar to actors performing a scene within a play. This is evident through the everyday interactions that people have. For instance, people are inherently concerned with how others perceive them within their social environment, so they naturally assume a social role which helps them to guide their actions. However, not all social environments are the same, therefore Goffman (1959) proposes that people tend to perform multiple roles or multiple ideation of themselves within a single day. For example, a woman who is a professor and mother assumes two social roles. She assumes the role of an educator and the role of a parent, but her social role as a professor is activated when she is instructing her course.

Hence, dramaturgy explains the purpose of behavioral expectations, or social roles, which are dependent upon social structure rather than human agency. Nonetheless, an individual's self is developed and sustained, via the interactions that the individual has within his or her social framework or network. "Thus, according to the symbolic interactionist perspective" (Cohen 2000:40). a healthy social environment that looks to encourage "health and well-being" (2000:40) provides people with the ability of being able to make sense of their social world (Cohen et al. 2000). Further, social support is a feature that is a part of a healthy social environment, and social support is significant to symbolic interactionism, because it provides people with social resources of support,

which helps them to create and to sustain their identity and self-esteem (Cohen et al. 2000).

There are four ways in which social support is provided to an individual, which are emotional, informational, involved and appraisal (Gottlieb 1985). According to Gottlieb (1985) “Social support can be tentatively conceived as the feedback provided via contact with similar and valued peers” (1985:6). Emotional support is defined by the quality of an individual’s social network, and not the quantity of their network (Gottlieb 1985). Meaning that an individual’s emotional support is dependent upon the quality of the relationship that he or she has with a fellow member of their social network.

Whereas, Informational support is defined as the communication component between two socially intimate partners such as, best friends, spouses, and mentors (Gottlieb 1985). Further, within informational support are essential components that create and stabilize an individual’s emotional support, which are support, guidance, advice and suggestions.

Involved support is defined as the laborious component of social support network, because it entails that the helper will share the burden of the receiver’s stress and that the helper will lend his or her resources to the receiver (Gottlieb 1985). Hence, “support is founded on a sense of security” (1985:13). that certain members and certain resources will be available if needed (Gottlieb 1985).

Appraisal support is defined as the process of assessing the type of support that one is being provided through their social network. During this stage, if the receiver of

the support believes that he or she is not receiving adequate support from their network. The receiver may then adjust his or her network of support, in order to satisfy their needs (Gottlieb 1985). Therefore, individuals are able to create and sustain their identity and self-esteem, via social support's four processes of emotional, informational, involved, and appraisal. Next we will take a closer look at my study's methodology and data collection.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The Life's Footprints study is a narrative case study of undergraduate students and their experiences with belongingness, peer social acceptance, delinquency, bullying, delinquency, and social support. This study recruited 11 participants from Humboldt State University (HSU), and at the time of each interview all 11 participants were currently enrolled as undergraduate students at HSU.

Table 1 Participants Interviewed

Gender
Females: 4
Males: 7
Age
Age Range: 21-26
Average Age: 23.3 years
Race/Ethnicity
White: 4
Hispanic: 4
African American: 1
Native American: 1
Income
Income Range: \$10,000 to \$149,999
Average Income: \$62,237
Region
Northern California: 7
Southern California: 3
Out of State: 1

Recruitment

The overall selection process was on a first come first serve basis. Meaning, that undergraduates who wanted to participate in the study needed to first contact the researcher either by email, or phone. Once a participant had contacted the researcher of the study, the researcher would then schedule an interview with the participant. All interviews were scheduled around the participants' availability, and all interviews were held in the Department of Sociology's Interview Room, which is located on the 5th floor of the Behavioral Social Science (BSS) building in room 529.

Furthermore, out of the 11 participants that were interviewed none withdrew from the study, and the recruitment phase was accomplished, via two methods.

Method One

The researcher conducted recruitment speeches or class announcements in several undergraduate courses at HSU, and the average amount of time of each recruitment speech was three minutes. Furthermore, these recruitment speeches addressed the important key aspects to the study, such as the purpose of the study, participant compensation, procedures for risk management, and the procedures for confidentiality. Also, the average amount of students that were present during each recruitment speech was 30. Further, once each recruitment speech was concluded the researcher then dispersed recruitment flyers to all of the students. The purpose of the flyers was to serve as both a reminder of what the study was about, as well as how to contact the researcher

for either participation, or for further inquiry. A total of 4 undergraduate class announcements were made.

Method Two

The researcher designed and printed recruitment tear-off flyers, which were posted inside the BSS building at HSU.⁸

Risk Management Procedures

The potential risk factors associated with this study were embarrassment, anxiety, and/or distress. However, proper procedures were taken to ensure that these risk factors were either mitigated or eliminated from this study, so as to ensure the safety and well-being of the participants. For instance, before beginning an interview the researcher would remind the participants that their participation was strictly voluntary. The researcher would then have the participants read over the consent form, and would carefully explain to them the purpose of the consent form, particularly the confidentiality clause. The confidentiality clause was highly emphasized, because it ensures the safety and protection of each participants' identity. The confidentiality clause clearly states that each participants' information would be assigned a code number, which would protect their identity, and that all data would be kept in secured files, in accordance with the

⁸ Note: that all flyers were posted in the main lobbies on all five floors inside HSU's BSS building. Also, each tear off flyers contained 12 separate slips that could be torn off, and each slip contained the researcher's contact information

standards of the University, Federal regulations, and the American Sociological Association.

Prior to beginning any interview, all of the consent forms were signed and dated by both the researcher and the participants. In addition, when using an audio recording device, the researcher would inform the participants that their voice was being recorded on tape, and before beginning the interviews the researcher would state on the audio recording device, “If you do decide to withdrawal from the interview you do have the right to ask NOT to have your information used for the purposes of my study, and upon this request I will properly delete all the information that you would given me thus far. Do you have any questions?” In addition, HSU’s counseling and psychological service pamphlets were made available for all participants.

Moreover, an additional key concern was the acknowledgment that there was an academic power imbalance between both the researcher (i.e. graduate student) and the participants (i.e. undergraduate students). More specifically, this academic power imbalance resulted from the academic roles between the graduate student who was the researcher, and the participants who were undergraduate students. Therefore, the study had the potential risk of unethically coercing undergraduate students to participate in the researcher’s (i.e. graduate student’s) study. However, in order to minimize this potential risk of coercing undergraduate students the researcher did not provide any form compensation. Consequently, by not providing any form of participant compensation the

study avoided participant coercion, as well as reinforcing the study's validity, because all of the participants were then participating out of their own volition.

Data

After the consent forms were signed, the researcher administered several questionnaires before beginning the audio recorded interview with the participants. The researcher administered a demographic questionnaire, a Twenty Statement Test (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954), and an offending survey.

The demographic questionnaire was used to capture the participants' personal background such as, gender identity, age, ethnicity, number of siblings, and parent's household income. The participants were then given a TST (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954) to complete. The TST, is a scale that was formulated by both Manfred Kuhn and Thomas McPartland (1954) as a tool meant to measure a person's self-perception by having either him or her answer the question, "Who am I?" twenty times. More specifically, the TST is meant to further Mead's theory of the self as an object, by capturing the organization and the direction of human behaviors in the facet of humans' attitudes towards themselves (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954). According to Kuhn and McPartland (1954) Mead's theory states that the self is an object, and like all objects the self has a planned or specific action (i.e. purpose), which is the self's attitude. Therefore, Kuhn and McPartland (1954) looked to empirically bolster Mead's theory of the self by capturing the object's purpose or the person's attitude.

In the Life Footprints' study the TST was graded and scored on a scale between low self-concept, moderate self-concept, or high self-concept. The TST were scored based on the adjectives, or abstract terms that the participants used to describe themselves. For instance, a participant who states "I am fat" would receive a low self-concept score, a participant who states "I am an okay student" would receive a moderate self-concept score, and a participant who states "I am a great singer" would receive a high self-concept score. Hence, the TST was utilized to measure the participants' self-perception.

The offending survey was designed with the intent to eliminate question(s) that did not pertain to a participant's offending behavior(s). The interviewer would only ask questions if a participant had marked "Yes" to one or more offending survey questions. For instance, the offending survey contained the following question:

Table 2 Offending Survey Questionnaire Number 6

<p>6A. Before attending college, did you ever get into a physical fight with anyone?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>No</p>
<p>6B. While attending college, did you ever get into a physical fight with anyone?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>No</p>

Therefore, if a participant had marked “Yes” for number 6A, and marked “No” for number 6B, the interviewer would only ask questions pertaining to question 6A and not 6B. Hence, the purpose of the offending survey was to eliminate any repetitive questioning. As this could potentially exhaust a subject’s participation during the audio recorded interview.

All interviews were semi-structured. The interviews began with the interviewer asking the participant when was the first time that he or she committed a particular offense? (i.e. which they indicated on their offending survey) And how old were they at the time of their offense. Therefore, as a result of what the interviewee said resulted in follow-up questions. In addition, all interviews were audio recorded and stored on the researcher’s hard drive, which was password protected.

Setting

All interviews were held in the Department of Sociology's Interview Room, which is located on the 5th floor of the BSS building in room 529. The Sociology Interview Room is a private location that is designated for the purpose of conducting research. The room's interior consisted of blank white walls, along with a large table, which was shared between the both researcher and the participants. Also, in order to provide a pleasant or comfortable atmosphere the room included a chair that was cushioned and comfortable to sit in. In addition, having a comfortable chair was particularly important to the sessions, because each interview was one-on-one and the average length of time for each interview was 90 minutes. Thus, each participant was expected to sit for an extended period of time as they reminisced about themselves, via their personal anecdotes.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began with transcribing all 11 interviews. The transcribed interviews were then read overly thoroughly, so as to look for either one or several key themes and sub-themes. During the analysis portion, the key themes that emerged, was peer social acceptance, peer influence, delinquency, and bullying. Several sub-themes emerged as well, which were poor parental care and supervision, neighborhoods, fighting, alcohol and drug use.

In addition, a systematic filing system was devised, so as to maintain the order of key themes and sub-themes. For instance, the onset for the participants' offending behaviors (i.e. the participant's rationale) were categorized and coded by a special index. This special index allowed the researcher to categorize the specific themes under either peer acceptance, poor parental control or supervision, social acceptance, neighborhoods, bullying, fighting, alcohol and drug use. For instance, table 3 and table 4 show the researcher's process of categorizing themes.

Table 3 Participants' Rationale for Offending

<p>Michael, #1 pg. 8:</p> <p>(Friends' Home Environment and their rationale): "Not vastly different. I think they were dealing with a different set of circumstances than I was. Their families were never left for wanting for anything, but they [their homes] were angry places. Yeah they had some violent parents. Some angry, angry parents. I think they [their parents] were little a less prepared for children, and I think that reflected in their [parents'] behavior in the way that they treated them. And so the kids basically behaved the way that they were taught to behave."</p>	<p>Anthony, #1 pg. 17:</p> <p>"Yeah I do have OCD. I definitely do have OCD. I think I do have OCD. I'm pretty sure I have OCD... Yeah, stamps to. I was fucking obsess with stamps too for a while, and Pokémon cards of course."</p>	<p>Kelly, #1 pg. 9:</p> <p>"School is always my escape. So, when I hit the point when school wasn't giving me what it use to give me I was just like, 'Oh my god.' And so I was... I don't know what really triggered [those thoughts and feelings] it was really... I think it was really just the transition. I was really sad that I had to come to HSU, and that's cause it was my own fault. Cause I wanted to transfer to a different school, but in like March or May of when I was suppose to be graduating from CR I hadn't applied anywhere. It was just kind of. It was just my own fault."</p>
---	---	---

Table 4 Sub-Theme Bullying

<p>Kevin, #1 pg. 1:</p> <p>“At the school that I went to I was the only. I was the only kid that wasn’t African American. Like all of my friends were black essentially, and I was the only one besides may be this one other kid that was not African American. So, you know it was just kind of that. That difference you know.”</p>	<p>George, #1 pg. 5:</p> <p>“Actually, my family their kind of bullies. You know, like when they find the weak one, when comes to like personality. And we pick on them. Yeah. Just to like. Wow. Wow yeah. That doesn’t make sense at all. Just to like boost their self-esteem. Just by proxy and by force. Man!”</p>	<p>Kelly, #1 pg. 1:</p> <p>“So I would count my dad as like a bully. He wasn’t exactly supportive of like anything. And so it was mainly like for school. I don’t if its like because he didn’t graduate school, so my commitment to it made him kind of rude about it. And comments about [my] weight and stuff, so it all mostly came from home. Yeah school not so, so bad. Yeah but home [is where most of the bullying came from.”</p>
---	--	--

As the example illustrates, every key theme or sub-theme is annotated from each transcript. Therefore, this process of creating and utilizing index sheets created a simple procedure for accessing data information; because again each index sheet was appropriately marked with transcriptions that fell under either a key theme or sub-theme category.

REVIEWING CONCEPTS OF PEER ATTACHMENT, PEER INFLUENCE & PARTICIPANTS' ANECDOTES

Peer Social Attachment & Its Impact on Delinquency⁹

“The need for belonging refers to fundamental and universal human motivation to develop and maintain stable and caring interpersonal relationships” (Maniaci 2009:165).

As human beings we are socially constructed, and motivated to seek personal relationships with others. In fact, this quality is an instinctive one, because studies have shown that humans look to obtain peer social acceptance, and or a sense of belongingness from others (Baumeister and Leary 1995). For instance, most humans are motivated to seek out possible relationships with others through their social environment, and if social acceptance is rejected, or is not met the individual still continues to seek social acceptance, but elsewhere (Gardner et al. 2000). As previously mentioned¹⁰ peer social acceptance is an important quality, because it is seen as “the degree to which a child or adolescent is socially accepted by peers. It includes the level of peer popularity and the ease with which a child or adolescent can initiate and maintain satisfactory peer relationships” (Encyclopedia of Children’s Health 2016:

<http://www.healthofchildren.com/P/Peer-Acceptance.html>), which leads to having a

⁹ Note that the following participants discussed in this section are Allison, Kevin, and Anthony. In addition, all names that given are alias, which are meant to protect the participants’ identity.

¹⁰ See victims of bullying: the value of social support

network of social support, which is useful for mediating life stressors (Brissette et al. 2002; Gottlieb 1985). In addition, children who have high levels of social acceptance tend to have a positive personality, whereas those who do not, are more at risk of having behavioral issues (Lorber 1966). Thus, we as humans view social acceptance as a positive attribute, which we strive for, but even though friends can be a great source of support, some can be a poor source of encouragement, which can negatively impact one's judgment.

Allison and Kevin: A New Home Means New Friends

Residential mobility was a topic that a couple of my participants brought up when discussing friends and delinquency. My participants felt that having moved to a new residential area when they were young disrupted their previous network of friends. They described themselves as feeling upset when they found out that their families had decided to move. Their feelings of stress resulted from the fact that they had to leave behind their friends, and that they had to move to a new place where they did not know anyone. Their personal feelings of stress are supported by research on residential mobility. For instance, research on the effects of residential mobility reveals that, a change in residence can cause stress for children, which can adversely affect their school lives and school performance (Dong et al. 2005; Tucker et al. 1998).

Allison is originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, and she describes the area where she grew up as being “predominately middle-class,” as well as being ethnically

and culturally diverse. Though, in 2007, her and her family moved from the Bay Area to Shasta County, because her father had lost his job. Allison was 13 years-old at the time, and she remembers the conversation that her parents had with her. She recalls that her father said, “we just can’t afford to live here anymore. I’ll never be able to get a job that will pay enough for... you know, everything.”

However, fortunately in 2003 her father had purchased a lot of land near Shasta County, so when her father had lost his job, her family decided to move. Allison says:

When we moved...my parents had a mobile home that we lived in for several years. Then probably like six years ago [2009] my parents built a house that we’ve been living in ever since.

For Allison, moving meant having that she needed to attend a new school, which was not an easy transition for her. As Allison says, “Like everyone already had like cliques and I was like all alone, and stuff.” Additionally, Allison was quickly given the title as being the “new girl.” Hence, Allison now felt socially isolated from the other students at her new school.

Likewise, when Kevin was 8 years old, him and his family moved as well. After moving to a new area Kevin’s parents enrolled him, and one of his sisters into a private Catholic school, which Kevin attended from 4th to 6th grade. However, attending a new school was also a difficult transition for Kevin. Mainly, because he was now at risk of being bullied:

I was always a bigger kid, but I was bigger. I was chunkier. I was fat. So, you know the [other] kids would always make fun of me...So I would get made fun of...[And] I mean it kind of sucks when you're a kid, [because] you kind of question like why are those other kids making fun of me? And you know I just want to make friends...[So] in 4th grade that's when I started this new school, and you know its just kind of hard to make friends with people... And you know, at the school that I went to I was the only... I was the only kid that wasn't African American.

Moving from one residential location to another socially impacted both Allison's and Kevin's school lives, because moving to a new community presented them with the challenge of being perceived as different and new by their latest school peers (Dong et al. 2005; Tucker et al. 1998). In order for both two of them to develop a sense of belongingness both Allison and Kevin needed to make new friends. Thus, being in a new social setting nudged the two of them in having to get to know their new classmates.

Allison: Looking for Acceptance

Allison stated that towards the end of Allison's 8th that she remembers being happy because she had made some new friends. As Allison states, "I was happy, because I became friends with the popular kids at school." However, being apart of the popular crowd created pressure in trying to fit in. In fact, Allison says that she felt compelled to go along with what her friends wanted her to do. Even if it meant doing something that she was not comfortable with.

For instance, the first time that Allison drank alcohol she was nervous, because she had stolen her mom's bottle of alcohol to drink, but she felt that she needed to do it, so that she could fit in with her new friends:

The first time that I drank alcohol was when I moved and I was in 8th grade, and it was after the school dance and my friend Jen and I came back to my house and stole some of my mom's rum [that] was hiding in the kitchen cabinet... I wouldn't say that we got super drunk or anything, but that was the first time.

When I asked Allison, "Do you remember why you and your friend decided to steal your mom's rum?" She answered:

Being rebellious. Thinking that it was cool, and hearing our friends say to us, 'Oh... You guys have never drank before. You got to try it. You need to try it.' And then yeah... And yeah I was super young... So I did it, but I was super nervous to... cause like I had to steal my mom's rum to do it...

However, once Allison was a sophomore in high school her parents found out that on the weekends she was drinking alcohol with her friends. Allison said that at first her parents were uncomfortable with the idea of her drinking alcohol at such a young age, but at the same time they understood or believed that she was going to drink no matter what. Therefore, her parents told her if she is going to do it to "at least drink responsibly." This conversation that Allison had with her parents about drinking responsibly had no bearing

on her, because according to Allison, her and her friends would normally drink and drive on the weekends when going home or when going from one party to the next:

Once I got my license and stuff. I would leave parties kind of drunk and drive home or go to another party while being in the car with other people and stuff. So, I mean not like crazy reckless. But we never got in an accident or ever got pulled over, or anything ever happened. But I still look back on those times and think, 'Well that's pretty stupid.'

I then asked Allison about her alcohol consumption when partying with her friends. Allison said:

Oh Yeah! I have no self-control... But mostly when there is hard alcohol involved I don't have any control. I can't stop. And I wish I could! I really...But I think that's something that I need to work on.

When I asked Allison, "what is that just doesn't allow you to regulate you drinking at parties?" Alison then said:

I think its just peer pressure and just being around and seeing someone say, 'Oh you want shot? You want shot?' It's just like, I can't say no. So, I'll just keep going until I'm completely belligerent. And I'm just still up and going. I guess... But it's not like I do that every night. You know, its just when I go out with my friends or yeah. [But] I haven't really gone to the bars, since I've turned 21 a couple of weeks ago. But we'll see how that goes.... I don't know. I'm just a very social person and when I go around talking to others and around different groups of people and stuff its just you know...I just get more drunk I guess.

Allison recalls, that while being in high school her and her friends would occasionally pick on other students for fun, but afterwards Allison states that she would always feel guilty about it. When I asked Allison “Do you remember a time when you felt that you did something wrong, and then afterwards regretted doing it?” Allison said:

The first time that I teeped someone’s house was with one of my good friends and her sister. We had fun and we were ...I was probably in 8th or 9th grade, and we did this probably throughout that year...Well this one time, we really messed up this one girl’s house, cause we didn’t like her. I guess that could be considered bullying...[But] we just put paper shreddings all over her roof and we just took it to the extreme.

When I asked Allison, “At the time, what was your motivation for wanting to tepee that girl’s house?” Allison said:

I don’t really remember. There was a group of us that didn’t like her for some reason, and we just went [and did it]. And she found out that it was us, and her parents were calling on my parents and everyone else’s parents to come clean it up... And I think...I don’t know, girls just being 13 year olds. And it was group of like me and four other girls.

I then asked Allison, “Was that girl mean to you, or someone specifically in your group of friends?” To which Allison stated:

No she wasn’t. She was fine. We were just being you know... Being bitches...And I guess that Jen was just someone that we wanted to get for some reason... I don’t know why... I’m trying to think of the reason why we wanted to do it so bad, and why it was her...I think we just didn’t like her.

Kevin: “I Just Wanted to Make Friends”

Kevin was bullied by the other students at his school, but as time went on Kevin and his perpetrators soon became friends. Oddly, bullying was an aspect that created solidarity between him and his perpetrators (Rees 2010). Kevin remembers that he began bullying others after he become friends with his previous perpetrators, but he also became friends with some of his new victims as well. As Kevin says:

I just wanted to fit in. There was a white kid at my school. Like he was kind of different, and once I made friends with all of the other African American kids, like we kind of picked on him, and you know I kind of felt bad, because he ended up being one of my friends also. [But] that’s after you get to know each other.

Kevin: Three Flip

When Kevin was attending middle school his parents enrolled him into a new school district. Therefore, Kevin was considered the new kid again, but this time it only took him a few days until he was able to make some new friends. Kevin believes that the reason why it took him a short amount of time to make new friends was because during this time he was undergoing puberty, which gave him an early growth spurt, and as result he was no longer overweight. Also, during this time Kevin was an avid skateboarder, which was something that him and his new friends bonded over:

We would write on our notebooks three flip. That's what we called like our little group of people. It was a skateboard move it was called a three flip... We just thought it sounded cool.

Also like many 13-year-olds, both Kevin and his friends wanted money, but they realized that obtaining a job was challenging, because according to Kevin there are not too many employers that look to hire young teenagers for work. Yet despite this realization, Kevin and his group of friends remained determined in wanting to make money. Therefore, they discussed their options in regards to potential avenues for earning money, and the boys decided that theft was the best solution to solving their financial dilemma. However, at first Kevin was somewhat apprehensive in want to steal:

When we were in 7th and 8th grade we really wanted to make money, so we kind of were trying to figure out a way to [make] money easily. Because we couldn't get jobs, cause not a lot of people look to hire teens, but one of my friends suggested that we should just steal stuff from like a convenient stores. At first I was all worried, because I had never like really stolen anything [before], but I went along with my friends and I just did it and for the most part it worked out fine... And we would go back to our middle school... And we would sell them for like a dollar, or two dollars, three dollars, and you know at the end of the day we would make a lot of money.

Kevin and his group of friends were making a decent amount of money from selling stolen items, but this would eventually come to an end. In fact, a manager from one of the convenience stores that the boys would frequently visit, recognized them from the store's surveillance footage. Therefore, once the manager recognized the group of

boys he immediately detained them. However, during this particular moment Kevin was “at the right place at the right time.” As Kevin says:

I actually never got caught. The one day I could've been caught I just happened to be at the right place and the right time, and I saw what was going on through a window, so I just took a step back. I ended up going the other way, cause I was already in the store. All of my friends were outside. The store actually called the principal of our middle school to come by and discipline them, and he came by, and all of my friends that were outside [and they] got in trouble and I just happened to be one of the only people that was inside. So, I decided not to leave the store and just kind of pretend like I was shopping, but really I was there stealing stuff like a klepto.

Since Kevin was neither caught, nor punished for stealing, he figured that there was no reason for him to stop. For instance, during his sophomore year in high school, Sony electronics had just released their new video game console known as the PlayStation portable (PSP), and Kevin and his friend Alvin were very eager to own one, but again neither of them had the money to purchase it. Therefore, Kevin and Alvin decided to just steal them:

When me and my friends got a little bit older we were in high school. It was our sophomore year and we were still doing dumb stuff. You know, just because it was fun, and since I had never really been caught for anything. I was very good at like alluding that type of stuff at that time. Anyways, it was sophomore year that...the PlayStation portables came out. The PSPs...We all wanted one, we were like, ‘Man how are we gonna get one of those?’ My friend Alvin and I came up with a plan...And are plan was that we were gonna steal them.

Kevin and his friend Alvin strategically planned to steal a set of PSPs from an electronic store. According to Kevin:

We scoped out the place, [and] we left. We came back the next day, and it was just me and Alvin. We didn't tell anyone we were gonna do this. So we [went] in and Alvin grabs two PSPs and I also grab two PSPs, and we just ran out of the emergency door.

The next day both Kevin and Alvin brought their new PSPs to school, and their friends were curious in how they were able to get them, so Kevin explained to them what him Alvin had done. Eventually, Kevin would take the initiative in instructing his friends on how to steal their own set of PSPs. After Kevin and his friends had stolen their PSPs, the group of boys decided to drive to a nearby mall where they could sell their extra PSPs at a video game store. As Kevin states:

We ended up flipping them...And Alvin and I had two extra ones, so I ended up selling them, and I ended up getting like \$500.00 for the extra ones. So, it was a very big come up for me.

I then asked Kevin, "So how many PSPs did you and your friends take, and how much money do you think they were worth?"

Like each one of those PSPs was the bundle [pack]. It was around \$600.00 [each]. I had two. Alvin had two, and everyone else got at least one. So there was like eight that we stole, so...\$4,800.00 of stuff umm... It's a lot of money you know, being 16-year-old kid, like that's a lot. But we didn't even give it a

second thought, because the next day in class we all had PSPs. Like they were wireless and we [were] all playing games with each other, so it was fun for us... But it was stupid.

Anthony: Living in a Disorganized Community, School, and Bullying

Anthony is a 25-year-old Hispanic male who is originally from Southern California. Anthony has seven siblings, and he is the middle child in his family. Anthony's father does construction for living and the highest level of education that he completed was some college. Anthony's mother works as a maid, and the highest level of education that she completed was some grade school. Anthony's parents' household annual income is between \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year.

When I met Anthony he was in his 4th year in your college, and when I asked him, "Why did you decided to attend college?" Anthony said, "Because I wanted to be the first in my family to earn their Bachelor's degree and I wanted to make my parents proud."

Anthony's motivation for higher education stems from his high school experience. In high school Anthony was not seen as a model student, instead he was seen as a distraction to the other students. He says that he was a disruptive student, and was rebellious in that he did not respect his teachers. As Anthony puts it:

Sophomore year [in high school] I got kicked out...I think we had a fire drill. There were like gun shots in front of my class building, and so then I called my parents because I was like...I don't know why I called my parents. I just heard gun shots and I'm like, 'I'm gonna call my dad.' So I called my parents and then my teacher, Ms. Sam, kind of started going off on me, you know

[while] I was on the phone. So, then I kind of just like cuss her out and I was like, 'I don't give a shit! School is over! You don't have any authority over me!' And then she kind of left and [she] put in a referral for suspension, or whatever.

Anthony's disruptive behavior, caused him to attend several high schools including several continuation and probation schools. As Anthony says, "so, I went to regular high school, to continuation school to probation school to county probation school. [Then] back to regular four-year high school." However, by Anthony attending several continuation schools he realized that if he began to apply himself he could become academically successful:

I went to a continuation school... which is no help at all, because that's where like all of the gangsters and fucked up tweaker kids, like the homeless kids, or the kids that really didn't give a shit about anything besides like fucking party crews, or girls or guys. So like went there and that was like a horrible experience. And I was like, 'Yeah I don't belong with these kids.' Throughout my entire high school career I knew that I was going to end up at a college or university I just didn't know what my process would be to get there. So I kind of just like...I knew that I had the ability to comprehend. It was just that at school I didn't have the mentality or the familial support to be pushed that way, and there were a lot of factors at my old high school of just like location and where you live and who you hangout with based on demographics. Like me living in this neighborhood and like hanging out with people in this neighborhood. So, there was a lot of different context that goes into all of that. Like who you hangout with and like where do you go to hangout. You know, so that was also a huge issue. But [when I went to continuation school it] was more of a realization that I didn't belong in continuation school let alone with individuals who don't really give a shit about school.

Anthony describes the part of Southern California of where he grew up as being a low-income area that has “very little to no resources for the community.” Anthony goes onto say that the area is known for its “high drug criminal activity, and violence from both different gangs within the area.” In fact, Anthony was friends with several gang members in his neighborhood. According to Anthony:

I lived like on the opposite side of the ghetto, but then in front of my house is like a park where they would all [gang members] hangout at. So the neighborhood that I grew up with. I'd had friends that were kind of a part of it [gangs].

Living in a disorganized neighborhood meant that people needed to lookout for themselves. Anthony admits that while growing up that he would occasionally harass or threaten others for money.

Yeah when I was younger, there was this one kid that me and my friends would sometimes pick on, but most of the times it was just me. Like this kid was weak and small and I was able to over power him. So, I would take stuff from him like money, food, and just stuff.... Like I remember this [one time] I took his hat.

Anthony: Selling Crystal

Anthony then told me that when he was 16 years old he began selling crystal meth, so that he could make some money for himself:

I was kind of like their middle man. [My dealer was] all like, ‘Oh Hey. So and so what’s a forty sack could you go drop it off?’ and I did this for like a year,

so between [the time that I was] 16 and 17. Yeah, I would drop [it] off and pick up the cash go home, and count the cash. And then he [my dealer] would either pay me in cash or pay me in weed, but he would offer me meth but I would always say no. Until I saw him, and like my friend do it and I was drunk as shit. And I [also] saw another friend of mine do it and they were all doing it together, and I was like, 'Well if I'm going to try it I might as well try it with you guys.' So, then I kind of tried meth and I was like... The first hit that was like fucking amazing. Just because like there's these little rocks in this glass pipe [and] you fucking turn it like a float and you light it up and you like kind of let it melt and then when it starts melting and you see the little smoke you kind of start turning it. And then once you start turning it, you inhale. But it's not like weed were you inhale it like [quickly]. You can have [to] like...I would call it more like hooka where its just more like a [soft inhale], and then your not suppose to inhale it. My first hit I felt like the hairs on my back just automatically spring up, and I was like, 'Holy shit!' Like have you ever have those things on your back where you get like the shivers? Where it starts at the back of your neck all the way down to your spine. So, I felt that and I was like, 'Holy Shit! And that's just from one fucking hit.' And I was like, 'What about your friends that smoke this shit for hours? How do they feel?' You know, so then I got curious of how it felt to smoke this shit like more than once. I did it like twice and then like three times.

REVIEWING CONCEPTS OF BULLYING, SOCIAL SUPPORT, & PARTICIPANTS' ANECDOTES

Bullying: Social Identity¹¹

Victims of bullying are commonly subjected to name calling, teasing, threats, theft of money or damage to property, and violence (Therorit et al. 2005), and studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between peer perceived-popularity and social aggression (Andreou 2006; Cillessen and Mayeux 2004; Heiborn and Prinstein 2008; Lease et al. 2002; Rose et al. 2004). For instance, Cillessen and Mayeux (2004) discovered that youths or adolescents who have high social status, or peer perceived-popularity are much more likely to use social aggression, as a means to maintain their high social status. However, Cillessen and Mayeus (2004) also state that it may be possible that youths' view social aggression as a potential source of peer popularity (Cillessen and Mayeus 2004). Likewise, other researchers have investigated the relationship between appearance and popularity among adolescents, and have found that adolescents who are described as being "tough kids" are characteristically perceived by themselves, their teachers and their peers as being "cool, athletic, getting into fights, causing trouble, and being disruptive" (Rodkin et al. 2000:21). In addition, "tough kids"

¹¹ Note that the following participants discussed in this section are Cody, George, Nichole, Carol, Wally, and Michael. In addition, all names that given are alias, which are meant to protect the participants' identity.

viewed themselves as being very popular, aggressive and physically athletic (Rodkin et al. 2000). Furthermore, investigators have found that there is a correlation between early physical maturation and bullying among adolescents (Pepler et al. 2006). Hence, adolescents who undergo early-maturation experience and obtain high status among their peer groups, whereas adolescents who undergo late-maturation often experience bullying from adolescents who have already physically matured (Pepler et al. 2006). Thus, there is a positive correlation for both early-maturation and bullying, and late-maturation and being bullied. However, as hard as it may be for individuals whom are currently experiencing some form of bullying, they should keep in mind that their experience is most likely temporary, which was the case for my following six participants.

Incessantly Ridiculed and Teased

When discussing bullying with my participants, some of them indicated that they were consistently ridiculed and teased throughout their academic career, which is consistent with studies on bullying. For instance, according to Juvonen and Graham (2001) research on bullying indicates “that approximately 10% of children in elementary and middle schools are repeatedly harassed and victimized by schoolmates. Studies also show that victimization tends to be rather stable over time, with the same children enduring these negative peer experiences year after year” (2001:266). This continuous victimization that certain students endure was supported by Cody’s statement, “there’s pretty much been a bullying during each stage of my education.” In fact, Cody’s bullying

experience began when he was in pre-school and it lasted till his junior year of high school.

When I asked Cody, “Why do you think that you were picked on so much while growing up?” Cody simply stated:

I’m a fat kid. I know that. I wear glasses. I was quite, very [quite]...and I was also new for very long time and that attracted a lot [of] dire. Uh...something that I think holds true for a lot of people uh...is that if you come to a new social group at like a meddling point your going to be looked on with some animosity, because you’re an unknown. I came into many people’s schooling experiences out of the blue. I don’t know where. I was a unfamiliar. I was a stranger it was a little weird [I went] from a little rural town where everybody knew everybody in little groups of people. Umm...so that scared me. It put other people on edge and it made me kind of very distant for a long period of time, and I think that made pretty easy to pick on [me].

In addition, when Cody was 14 years-old he started to become depressed, and he began drinking alcohol as a means to cope with his depression. According to Cody, “I would drink alone, and I would usually enjoy the feeling of it, but it was definitely an intent to not be cognitive.” Cody’s statement relates with reports on adolescents and alcohol use, because studies have shown that adolescents who are depressed are four times more likely to abuse alcohol (Deykin et al. 1987).

However, during Cody’s senior year of high school he stopped drinking alcohol, and when I asked him, “why?” he stated:

I was happier. I joined my high school theater group and I cheered up a lot more. I made more friends, and I went role model mode, because I was a senior and there was a bunch of incoming freshman that were very shy and they were new. A lot of them were new, and I felt responsible in a way for taking care of the rookies.

Bullying, Popularity, and Physical Appearance

Popularity and physical appearance were subthemes that emerged from my study, and it seems that popularity and physical appearance are in some ways synonymous.

There is evidence that supports the notion that adolescents use their physical appearance and aggression as social tools for achieving and maintaining popularity (Burns et al. 2006). This notion is supported by my participants' anecdotes.

During high school, George would frequently try to befriend the football players at his school, who were considered to be a part of the popular crowd, but his attempts were never successful. George believes his small stature was the contributing factor as to why he was not accepted by the football players.

I'm small and skinny, so people picked on me for that. And I would gravitate to those people for some reason. Like I would try to be with the big people. Like I would try to be friends with the people that were on the football team, or whatever. But then like as a side effect they would pick on me, because I was tiny and brown, and I guess effeminate.

Like George, Nichole was also bullied, because of her small stature. She admits that once she had her growth spurt things began to change for her. She became more

confident in herself, and due to her newfound confidence she decided to tryout for her school's cheerleading team. Nichole made the team, and was quickly considered to be apart of the popular crowd at her school, and because of this she now felt pressured in trying to fit in with the other members on the team. As Nichole states:

So, being on the cheerleading squad there was like a pressure to fit in. I don't know, there was a ritual for like cheerleaders and football players to pick on like team members younger siblings, so like "Freshman Friday" would come around and we would just do like little taunting things to their siblings. Well at the time though I was just like, "Oh [just] I want to fit in." You know, like I'm gonna do what they do to fit in. And then like deep down you know that this isn't right. Like you went through this and now your putting someone else through this. So, looking back on it. It was negative experience.

Similar to George, Carol was also bullied throughout high school as well. When she was a sophomore in high school she had a bully who would constantly tease her about her appearance. Carol admits that during high school she went through a period of an "awkward phase" wear she had to wear "big bulky braces," which some of the kids would mock her for. Although, Carol's main bully was a young boy that was in the same grade as her. Even though Carol had never done anything wrong to this boy, he would persistently tease her about her appearance, so that he could get "cheap laughs from the other kids." As Carol says:

I was bullied. This young boy was mean to me. I was a sophomore, he said that I was fat, and he would constantly say mean things. Just so that he could make his friends laugh. But one day I had like enough, and [So] I said "screw

you,” but obviously in other words, and so he punched me in the face. That was the first time that I had ever been hit and I just remember that his friends telling him to leave before they get into trouble for hitting a girl.

Carol states that her bullying experience was “terrible” and she hopes that it will never happen to her again. Carol also states that this experience not only left her with physical scars, but emotional scars as well. As Carol puts it:

I just [had] continual depression. It didn’t feel good. It didn’t feel like I was myself. You don’t want to be around anyone. [It’s] that kind of thing.

Carol’s reflection supports the evidence that victims who are bullied are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, and problems with self-confidence (West and Salmon 2000).

An Athletic Identity

Several of my participants stated that they were bullied by others who were bigger than them. Their statements are in line with studies that show that adolescents who undergo early pubertal development are more likely to use social aggression (Juvonen and Graham 2001) or bullying as a means for establishing popularity and/or dominance (Pepler et al. 2006). Though, once my participants began to physically develop that’s when things changed for them. For instance, for two of my participants Wally and Michael, they were relentlessly bullied as youths due to their small statures, however things began to change for them once they had a growth spurt, because they were now

able to defend themselves, and they also felt that due to their growth they were able to develop an athletic identity.

For instance, while Wally was growing up he was frequently bullied by the other children at his school. Wally notes that his victimization was partly do to the fact that he was very small, and skinny, which attracted a lot of negative attention. As Wally says, “Yeah, cause the thing is I can’t defend myself, so they would try and take some stuff from me, or things like that, and just beat on me.” However, the bullying stopped for Wally once he was in high school and was on the youth ice hockey team.

Likewise, before developing an athletic identity Michael was also bullied, and during this time he describes himself as being a floater:

I kind of floated. I was a floater. I tended to kind of put my toes in whatever group seem the most interesting, or the most convenient for me at the time... Yeah it just all depended on who accepted me at the time.

However, when I asked Michael, “At what age, or what time did the bullying stop for you?” Michael said:

When I hit puberty. Pretty much, well with all honesty when I could put my fist up, and essentially defend myself. That’s when that stopped, and it stopped promptly

As it turns out Michael had a late growth spurt during his junior year of high school he went from being five foot three inches tall to six feet tall:

A group of guys that use to bully me when I was younger were trying to punk on me again. And this time I had shot up and I was working out everyday, and I felt pretty cocky about myself... So yeah I think we were at somebody's house and alcohol was involved and I hadn't had any at that point... But these group of guys were there and they had already kind been drinking and it was like all great. And [then] they started chatting about the way the use to treat me and that really pissed me off... and so I basically just walked over there and I knock a couple of them in the face... One of them ended up running away and then I pretty much let the other guy up and I said to him, Are you going to do anything?" and he was red in the face and bleeding and he said, No. Then I was like, Okay.

Like Nichole, Michael began to feel more confident about himself, because of his new physical appearance, and so he decided to join his high school's water polo team. By joining the water polo team Michael was no longer a "floater," because he now had a social group of friends. In addition, not only does both Wally's and Michael's anecdote support studies on how participating in sports is related to having an athletic identity (Jankauskiene et al. 2008), but more importantly their anecdotes draw attention to the fact that having possessed an athletic identity paved their way towards belongingness and acceptance. In that both Wally and Michael were now apart of a collective team, which inevitably gave them a sense of belongingness and acceptance. Therefore, it is possible that involvement in sports can help adolescents in overcoming their issues with bullying.

Victims of Bullying: The Value of Social Support¹²

Bullying is a prominent issue that negatively effects many children and adolescents all across the world (Rigby 2005), and studies have shown that perpetrators who bully look to target those who are the most emotionally vulnerable, such as having a low self-esteem (Seixas et al. 2013). In fact, it is the victim's lack of confidence that tends to attract the unwanted attention of bullies, and this lack of confidence may develop from various sources such as appearance, athleticism, poor social competency, academic success, etc. (Seixas et al. 2013). As for the individuals who perpetrate bullying, they are merely establishing their social dominance at the expense of others (Pepler et al. 2006), and as a result they tend to feel a sense of confidence and self-worth. For instance, according to Seixas et al. (2013), there is a positive correlation, which indicates that "being aggressive is related to feeling more confident in oneself, less rejected, and less incapable" (Seixas et al. 2013:68). Hence, these are simply some of the motives for why people bully.

Nonetheless, bullying is an important issue, because of its pervasiveness in that it can occur in almost any situational or social setting, such was the case for two of my participants whom encountered bullying among family members at home, as well as at school. However, upon interviewing these two particular participants, they both

¹² Note that the following participants discussed in this section are Steven and Kelly. In addition, all names that given are alias, which are meant to protect the participants' identity.

unwittingly described the four process of social support, as proposed by Gottlieb (1985). Social support was an important factor for these two participants, because by utilizing their social networks they were both able to overcome their feeling of distress. According to Gottlieb (1985) “supportive peers buttress the behavioral dimensions of coping by re-directing problem solving strategies, by providing concrete services and tangible aid, and by offering a set of emotionally-sustaining provisions. To the extent that the types of support rendered by peers match the demands and needs imposed by the stressors, they will ameliorate ongoing adjustment strivings” (1985:17).

Steven

Steven is a 23-year-old white male who is originally from Southern California, and he has one sister who is a year and a half older than him. Steven’s father used to work as a driving instructor, but now he is currently unemployed. His father received his high school diploma, which is the highest level of education that he completed. His mother currently works as a teacher for special educational courses, and she received her bachelor’s degree along with a teaching certificate, which is the highest level of education that she completed. Steven’s parents’ household annual income is between \$80,000 to \$90,000 a year. When I met Steven he was in his 5th year in college, and he says that he decided to attend college because of his parents. His parents wanted to see him graduate from a four-year university. However, Steven admits:

If I had like a legitimate idea of what I wanted to do I would have committed to that, but I didn't have anything. Like I had nothing else going that I could like convince them [my parents] like, 'Oh this is why I am not going to go to college.

Steven: They Were Like Brothers

Steven met his best friend Alan when he was in third grade. Steven recalls that "there was an instant connection" between him and Alan, because as Steven says, "Alan and I became friends really fast, because we just shared the same interest, over music, movies, and just stuff." According to Steven, the two of them were so inseparable that their mutual friends would occasionally comment on their relationship.

Yeah our other friends would say that we would bicker over things like a married couple, so they would tease [us] over things like that. But him and I we would never like talk about like serious stuff like politics or anything like that. You know?

Steven felt that he and Alan shared a clear specific understanding about their relationship, which was that they were like brothers. Meaning that no matter what happens the two of them, they would always be there for one another, and by Steven referring to Alan as his brother it illustrates the quality of their emotional support that they have for one another. For instance, while growing up Steven described his relationship with Alan as being a pair of friends who were inseparable. The two of them would constantly going to each other's homes to either watch television, play board

games, or to just “kick it.” Further, Steven’s and Alan’s friendship may have been further solidified, by the fact that neither of them had any male siblings. Hence, their emotional support may have been buttressed by the fact that neither of them actually had a brother. In addition, the quality of their emotional support is further illustrated, via Steven’s comments on their experiences with bullying:

Well there was always the kids that were just dicks. They were just like the bullies. Every now and then they would pick on like everybody, and every now and then I or Alan would be like the target.

Since, both Steven and Alan were victims of bullying the two of them shared the same subjection of ridicule and misfortune that goes along with being a victim. Therefore, the two of them shared each other’s burden of being a victim, and as a result of their shared burden their relationship fostered the qualities of involved support (Gottlieb 1985).

Steven: Two Friends Have a Falling Out

During Steven’s junior year of high school, he and Alan had a falling out. Steven had felt disrespected by Alan, because Alan had declined his invitation to his birthday party. Though, according to Steven, it wasn’t that Alan could not attend his party that frustrated him, it was the fact that he felt that he was being jerked around by his best friend. First Alan would say that he could not go, and then the next day he would say that he could go, but then the next day after that he would say again that he could not go.

Alan, would continue to go back and forth with his commitment all while not providing a legitimate reason as to why he could attend, other than him simply saying “I can’t go.”

As Steven puts it:

I was losing it, and I was like, to my sister and her friends, “We’re going to teepee his house. We are going to fuck up his house.” And it just so happened that when we teepeed his house and put the forks in his lawn and everything...And that was it. That was the final straw. And I guess as turns out that day he had like a horrible day.

The same day that Alan was planning on going to Steven’s birthday party was the same day that he had been the victim of some intense bullying. Alan who is a Hispanic male, was five feet tall, slender, and was neither muscular, nor athletic. Hence, Alan was seen as an ideal target for bullies. Steven says, that day:

He got picked on and bullied and pushed around by this dude because he’s like [a] tiny dude. So, [that day he] was just getting pushed around, and he was just having a really shitty day. And then he was like, and he told me, “And then my best friend does this fucking shit to me.” He couldn’t take it and so that’s why he stopped being friends with me. He just totally snuffed me he wouldn’t talk to me the next day.”

In reviewing Steven’s transcript, it is apparent that his relationship with Alan eroded at the informational support junction, because it seems that if Alan had been more effective in communicating with Steven, then Steven may have possibly not have overacted. The same could also be stated for Steven as well, because if he had made more

of an effort to communicate with Alan, then he could have known as to why Alan did not want to attend his birthday party. For instance, Steven could have possibly made a personal visit to Alan's home where he could have checked in on him, and then he could have understood as to why he did not want to attend his birthday party. Nonetheless, if there had been an effective form of informational support between the two of them, then Steven could have lent emotional support to Alan, so that he could maintain his confidence and/or self-esteem.

However, as a result of both Steven's and Alan's failure to effectively communicate with one another, Alan was then left to reexamine his relationship with Steven, via the appraisal support phase. So, through Alan's reexamination in regards to his social network of support, he concluded that Steven's support was inadequate. Hence, by Alan snuffing Steven he was simply adjusting his social support network, via the appraisal support phase.

Kelly

Kelly is a 22-year-old white female who is originally from Northern California, and Kelly is the youngest child of four. Kelly's father is currently on disability and the highest of education that he received was some high school. Kelly's mother currently works as a cafeteria cook for an elementary school, and the highest level of education that she received was her high school diploma. Kelly's parents' household annual income is between \$10,000 to \$20,000 a year.

When I met Kelly she was completing her 4th year of college. One of the reasons as to why Kelly decided to attend college was because of her mother. Kelly's mother didn't graduate from high school until she was 28, and Kelly understands the struggle that her mother had to go through in order for her to earn her high school diploma. Therefore, Kelly has a great amount of respect for her mother, and she appreciates and understands that she is currently in a good position to further her education. As Kelly puts it, "I think it's important, cause I'm a first generation college student in my family. So, it's kind of nice to have that."

Kelly: "I would Count My as Like a Bully"

Growing up, Kelly never encountered any schoolyard bullies. For Kelly, her high school experience was "pretty neutral." She says, "I wouldn't call it like those best years, but it definitely wasn't bad." However, even though Kelly did not have any bullies at school she did however have a bully at home. Sadly, for Kelly her bully was her father. Kelly describes her father as being a bitter man who was, and still continues to be upset over the fact that he never had the opportunity to further his own education. Therefore, Kelly's father resents her for attending a university, and this resentment stems from his own insecurity about himself. Further, Kelly's father's insecurity tends to manifest into a barrage of criticism that is directed towards her and her mother, which of course is unfortunate for both Kelly and her mother.

I asked Kelly, “Well when growing up with him how often did you feel that he was judgmental towards you?” Kelly replied:

Oh. As long as I can remember. He wasn't exactly supportive of like anything. And so it was mainly like for school, because he didn't graduate school. So my commitment to it made him kind of rude about it. And comments about [my] weight and stuff, so it all mostly came from home. Yeah school not so bad. Yeah but home [is where most of the bullying came from].

In addition, a couple of structural theories on poverty view poverty from macro perspective lens, via the labor market, location, and class inequality (Brady 2005). For instance, according to Marxian theory, a capitalistic society's structure or ideology reinforces the practice of workers' exploitation, because corporations are encouraged to financially compensate its labor force as minimally as possible (Yapa 1996). Likewise, Wright (1979) proposes that location influences human capital as well, which in turn influences class inequality. Wright (1979) also states that income inequality is a result of class location. Meaning that areas that are more affluent provide more resources for its citizens, such as education. Whereas areas that are disadvantaged are unable to provide a consistent flow of resources (Brady 2005; Shaw and McKay 1942; Anderson 1999), and because these impoverished areas lack resources, they create a sense of frustration and stress amongst its residents (Shaw and McKay 1942; Anderson 1999)

Therefore, I believe that Kelly's parents' financial hardship had an influence on her father's negative acerbic behavior, because studies have shown that parents who have

financial difficulties are much more likely to experience negative emotional conditions, such as anxiety, depression, resentment, and hostility (Bradley and Crowyn 2002; Whitbeck et al. 1991). Hence, these negative emotions are then transmitted towards family members, which in turn, creates a dysfunctional relationship within the family unit (Bradley and Crowyn 2002; Whitbeck et al. 1991).

Kelly: Channeling Her Frustration

When growing up, Kelly had three main outlets that she would use as a means for evading the problems that she had at home with her father, which were school, boyfriends, and friends:

I had boyfriends and [I] basically like lived with them, which is like super awkward when you're like 15. I'm sure for like my parents, and their parents there was definitely conversation like, "Why aren't you at home?" [and I'm like] "Cause dad's a dick!" You know, what I mean? So yeah. As for school I was like on the honor roll, so I could definitely do [my] homework and not have to worry about anything else. So, mainly before [my outlets] were like homework and friends, and just being out of the house.

When Kelly was 15, her system of emotional support came primarily from her boyfriends whom provided her with the quality of support that she needed. This of course was do to her father's ill treatment towards her in not being able to properly communicate with her. In fact, when fathers and daughters have either little, or poor communication between one another, "the daughters may look to others for comforting words and or to rebel against family rules" (Punyanunt-Carter 2008:31). Hence, Kelly's father's negative

treatment and comments had emotionally pushed her away from him causing her to become emotionally distant from him, which in turn influenced her decision to search for emotional support elsewhere (Gottlieb 1985)."

However, Kelly admits that her friends' homes were just as dysfunctional as her own, however she states that by staying in their homes she could at least lend them support when dealing with their parents. Hence, the loyalty that Kelly displayed to her friends demonstrates her involved support, in helping them to carry their burden of stress (Gottlieb 1985). This of course was reciprocated for Kelly by the fact that her friends would allow her to stay in their homes, so that she could evade her problems at home.

Even though Kelly did not have a good relationship with her father growing up, she did have a good relationship with her mother. Kelly's mother would always encourage her to do her best:

My mom didn't graduate from high school until she was 27 or 28. It was a year after I was born. She went back to actual adult school and got a high school diploma, and not like a GED, and it was really important to her that she got her diploma. So, as she told me as I was growing up, she was like, "I couldn't tell you to go to school if I didn't do it myself." And then she was always the kind of parent that was like, "I don't care how well you do. Just do your best." And so I didn't have that pressure to be in school but I felt like a lot of other kids had that [pressure that] made them not like going [to school]. I was able to like freely do it without this pressure like, My mom is going to be mad at me if I get a B, [or] my mom is going to be mad at me if I take this one class.

From Kelly's statement it is apparent that her mother served as a source of informational support (Gottlieb 1985). Kelly's mother clearly provided her with guidance and advice, which Kelly used to further her motivation for wanting to be academically successful, and her pursuit for academics also served as an outlet from her problems at home.

FINDINGS

Participants were questioned about their experiences with bullying and delinquency. As for bullying the participants indicated that they were either a victim, a perpetrator, or both a victim and a perpetrator of bullying. Peer social acceptance, peer influence, delinquency, and bullying were factors that emerged as key themes. There were also several subthemes that emerged from investigating bullying, which are social support, popularity, physical appearance, and athletic identity. The level of acceptance that one received, via social support mediated the negative effects of bullying for those who were victimized. Perpetrators who valued popularity and physical appearance intensified their level of socially rejecting others through bullying. Having an athletic identity was seen to enhance the collective structure, via group conformity. Finally delinquency was investigated in this study by using Hirschi's (1969) social bonding theory. However, contrary to Hirschi's (1969) attachment hypothesis, which states that the character of the individual that one is attached to does not matter in regards to influencing delinquent behaviors is in stark contrast to my results. My results mirror Hindelang's (1973) results, in that attachment to delinquent peers produces delinquent behaviors.

ANALYSIS: PEER SOCIAL ATTACHMENT & ITS IMPACT ON DELINQUENCY

Attachment to peers was measured by the participants' descriptions of being either emotionally or enthusiastically attached to their peer groups (Akers and Sellers 2004; Hirschi 1969). Also, contrary to Hirschi's attachment hypothesis, which states that the character of the individual that one is attached to does not matter in regards to influencing delinquent behaviors, is in stark contrast to my results. My results mirror Hindelang's (1973) results, in that attachment to delinquent peers, produce delinquent behaviors.

Attachment: Allison and Kevin

For Allison and Kevin, at first moving to a new neighborhood and having to attend a new school produced stress. Primarily, because of their new social status which made it difficult for either of them to make new friends and/or receive social acceptance (Dong et al. 2005; Tucker et al. 1998). However, once they began developing friendships, both Allison and Kevin described their newly formed friendships as being valuable to them. For instance, Allison stated that once she became friends with "the popular kids," at her school she became happy. This statement of hers is consistent with literature on social preferences (Andreou 2006). Further, according to Akers and Sellers (2004) the notion of attachment to others, is characterized or emphasized via either one's affectional ties, admiration, or social identification (Akers and Sellers 2004; Hirschi 1969).

Therefore, once Allison became friends with “the popular kids” she was able to identify with them (Akers and Sellers 2004; Hirschi 1969). Also, the admiration as well as the value that she placed on popularity bolstered her level of peer attachment (Akers and Sellers 2004; Hirschi 1969).

Likewise, when Kevin was in 4th grade he grew attached to his previous bullying perpetrators. His attachment to his perpetrators developed from his victimization as being an outsider, or as someone who was ethnically different from his new classmates. As Kevin stated:

I didn't know like what cultural backgrounds they came from. I didn't know that they uh.. You know. What they liked. What kind of music they listened to. Like what they were in to. I was just kind of thrown into this new place and so I was an easy target. And, you know I ended up making friends with all of them.

Therefore, Kevin's bullying was a form of group initiation (Rees 2010). In that he first needed to endure the pain of being different before who could be accepted by the larger social group (Rees 2010). Therefore, once Kevin was accepted by his new peers he began bullying other students that were different from his new peer group. However, Kevin and his new friends would eventually become friends with their bullying victims. Thus perpetuating this cycle of initiation through bullying and hazing (Rees 2010). Further, this notion that bullying can be used a form of group initiation and solidarity is seen within fraternities, or sports teams as an attempt to build unity (Rees 2010). Though,

once Kevin began middle school, he formed new friendships with new peers that also identified with skateboarding. Hence, his attachment to his peers in middle school developed through their common interest and identification through skateboarding (Akers and Sellers 2004; Hirschi 1969).

Attachment: Anthony

As for Anthony, I believe what may have reinforced his peer attachment may have been an attenuated bond between him and his parents (Akers and Sellers 2004; Hirschi 1969). Especially when considering that he was the middle child of seven, and that his parents were constantly working in order to provide for him and his siblings (Bradley and Corwyn 2002; Whitbeck et al. 1991). Therefore, these particular factors may have inadvertently contributed to a weakened bond between him and his parents, because they may have been too preoccupied to have been involved with his social life.

In addition, it is possible that having grown up in an area that provided “very little to no resources” other than drugs may have influenced his attachment to his peers, because they understood that selling drugs were a viable source of income when having to live in a community that lacks social resources. (Sampson and Groves 1989; Shaw and McKay 1942). However, at this point I am unable to make any type of generalization, because Anthony was my only participant who identified living in a neighborhood that was devoid of resources. Therefore, in order to further study this aspect of social disorganization (Shaw and McKay 1942) and its influence on delinquency (Anderson

1999) there needs to be more than one participant whom identifies living in a disorganized community.

Nonetheless, by living and adapting to a social environment that was devoid of resources influenced Anthony's attachment to his drug dealing friends, whom could provide him with the job of selling crystal meth (Anderson 1999).

Commitment and Involvement: Allison, Kevin, and Anthony

“Commitment refers to the extent to which individuals have built up an investment in conventionality or a ‘stake in conformity’ (Toby, 1957:12) that would be jeopardized or lost by engaging in law violation or other forms of deviance” (Akers 2010:193). Involvement refers to the level of commitment that one spends doing conventional activities (Akers and Sellers 2004). Meaning that an individual's weak commitment to conventionality produces delinquency, also by an individual having a weak commitment to societal norms is more likely to not be involved in conventional norms. This notion that an individual that has a low sense of commitment and involvement towards society's norms leads to delinquency is evident through my following participants' transcripts.

For instance, Allison stated that despite knowing the risks of driving under the influence, her and her friends continued to drink and drive on the weekends. Therefore, by Allison consciously deciding to disregard both her parents' and society's rules on drinking and driving, as well as underage drinking exemplifies her small level of

commitment to both her parents and society's rules. Hence, Allison's weak commitment to society's norms influenced her reckless behavior, which also influenced her level of involvement in partying with her friends. Moreover, Allison's actions displayed a stronger commitment to her friends and their social norms, which by proxy influenced her involvement with them, such as drinking, bullying, and reckless behavior.

Similarly, Kevin's weak commitment to society's rules influenced his thieving behavior. For instance, when Kevin was telling me about the time that his friends got in trouble for stealing. Kevin said, "I decided not to leave the store and just kind of pretend like I was shopping, but really I was there stealing stuff like a klepto."

In addition, since Kevin had never been caught or punished for stealing it influenced his decision in wanting to steal the PSPs. Therefore, it was Kevin's weak commitment to society's norms that influenced his behavior to steal (Akers and Sellers 2004). Also, by Kevin assisting his friends to steal the PSPs illustrates his level of commitment and involvement towards his peer group. In fact, at that point Kevin did not need to steal anymore PSPs, because both him and his friend Alvin already had their own. However, Kevin's willingness to assist his other friends to steal the PSPs demonstrates his strong level of commitment and involvement towards his peer group.

Likewise, while Anthony was attending high school he admits that he was not a model student. Anthony acknowledges that he did not respect his teachers, which led him from one continuation school to another. Hence, Anthony's disobedience illustrates his contempt for the conventional rules of society, via school, which influenced his

delinquent behavior. Likewise, Anthony's involvement in selling crystal meth shows his lack of care of society's rules as well.

Beliefs: Allison, Kevin, and Anthony

Beliefs is defined as an individual accepting society's rules, because he or she believes that the laws and rules that are in place in society are there for a specific reason. However, those who neither accept nor believe that rules are set in place for a specific reason are more likely to violate society's rules. Therefore, the weaker the beliefs the greater the likelihood that one will violate the conventional rules of society (Hirschi 1969; Akers and Sellers 2004).

Moreover, through analyzing my participants' transcripts they enjoyed violating the conventional norms. For instance, Allison describes the first time that she teeped someone's house, as being "fun." Likewise, what drove Kevin to continue to steal was the fact that it was also "fun." As Kevin states:

It was our sophomore year and we were still doing dumb stuff. You know, just because it was fun, and since I had never really been caught for anything. I was very good at like alluding that type of stuff at that time.

Similarly, Anthony's describes his first time smoking meth as being, "fucking amazing." Therefore, by describing their previous unconventional activities in pleasant terms of either fun or amazing more than likely tended to reinforce their attachment,

commitment, and involvement to their peer groups, as well as their participation in unconventional activities.

ANALYSIS: BULLYING & SOCIAL IDENTITY

Bullying others is a form of social aggression, which allows the perpetrator to display his or her social dominance (Andreou 2006). Bullying could be used as a social tool to reinforce one's status. In fact, those who consistently bully others tend to perpetuate their social status as being tough, cool, or popular. (Burns et al. 2008). Therefore, consistency in bullying is essential for maintaining one's social status, because if a perpetrator does not consistently bully others then the perpetrator may lose his or her social status (Burns et al. 2008). This notion that bullying can be used as source for gaining and maintaining peer popularity was supported by my participant's anecdotes as either being a perpetrator, or a victim of bullying, as well as social identity theory.

Physical appearance played an essential component in my participants' bullying experiences. They were all bullied either because of their small physical stature, being overweight, or for having an awkward appearance. However, as some of them physically matured they began to develop both the strength and confidence to standup to their perpetrators, and some of them were able to develop a social identity. Further, their comments overall supported social identity theory in how they socially perceived themselves in high school. For instance, all six participants' comments reflected their own self-categorization (Turner et al. 1987) of themselves. Whether it was being a stranger (i.e. Cody), a cheerleader (i.e. Nichole), an effeminate person (i.e. George), an

awkward person (i.e. Carol), a hockey player (i.e. Wally), or a water polo player (i.e. Michael).

Additionally, all six participants at one point consciously emphasized the differences between themselves and others, through social-comparison (Turner et al. 1987). In fact, at one point all six participants saw themselves as being outsiders who were rejected by the in-group (Turner et al. 1987). However, as for Cody, Nichole, Wally, and Michael they all were able to develop a social identity. Cody's was theater, Nichole's was cheerleading, and Wally's and Michael's was athletics, and through their individual social networks their identities became salient (Stets and Burke 2000). For example, as a result of Nichole's salient identity, she had to suppress her personal identity in order to maintain her in group status, via depersonalization (Stets and Burked 2000). Nichole suppressed her personal identity in the sense that she ignored her personal feelings that it was wrong of her to participate in the cheerleading teams' bullying activities. However, by Nichole suppressing her personal identity, via depersonalization it created a collective and emotional bond between her and the other cheerleaders (Stets and Burke 2000). Thus, solidifying her feelings of belongingness and social acceptance amongst her in-group members.

In addition, through using social identity (Stets and Burke 2000) as a theoretical lens to investigate bullying, I was able to understand the social inner workings of bullying, and how self-categorization, social-comparison, and depersonalization,

perpetuate bullying. This of course is useful when deciding on an effective preventative measure for bullying.

ANALYSIS: THE VALUE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT

As previously mentioned, people perpetrate bullying because it allows them to establish social dominance (Pepler et al. 2006), but there are several facets that influence bullying, such as social-class, or a particular cultural ideology. For example, according to Parcel and Menghan (1993) they theorized that a family's social capital impacts the child's or adolescent's behavior. For instance, they showed that children and adolescents who are bullies normally come from lower-class neighborhoods and typically live in households that are less-educated. They also revealed that changes within a parent's social structure affects their children's social adjustment, which places them at-risk of bullying others (Parcel and Menghan 1993). In addition, a culture's ideology can perpetuate bullying as well. For instance, since the norms in heterosexual cultures believe that the ideal practice of sexuality is heterosexuality, it reinforces queer bullying (Farrar 2006). Hence, this sexual ideological framework privileges heterosexuality, which encourages heterosexual perpetrators to victimizes homosexuals (Miller and Gilligan 2014).

However, people also perpetrate bullying as a form of managing stress (Swearer and Hymel 2015). According to the diathesis-stress model, stressful life events, such as the loss of a love one, having to attend a new school, or living in broken home can intensify one's propensity for acquiring stress (Swearer and Hymel 2015). Especially for those who live in a stressful environment (Swearer and Hymel 2015), which lacks resources (Sampson and Groves 1989; Shaw and McKay 1942). Hence, individuals who

live in a stressful environment are more inclined to suffer from modes of stress or depression, and because of this, certain individuals are more inclined to bully others as a form of stress release (Swearer and Hymel 2015).

For instance, individuals who are highly stressed may manifest their frustrations in the form of negative-self concepts, and studies have shown that an individual's negative-self concept is a component that acts as a predictor for one's participation in bullying (Marsh, et al. 2001; Swearer and Hymel 2015). For example, bullying perpetration can occur from negative-self concepts such as, Everyone, here is going to pick on me so I better do it first or It's better for me to say nasty things about that person before they start saying mean things about me (Swearer and Hymel 2015). Hence, negative-self concepts can lead individuals to become more defensive and overtly aggressive towards others, so that they can either try to retain, or obtain social dominance (Swearer and Hymel 2015), which as a result builds their self-confidence (Seixas et al. 2013).

In speaking with both Steven and Kelly, it is clear that both of their bullies manifested these common traits of establishing social dominance and self-confidence (Pepler et al. 2006; Seixas et al. 2013). Steven described his and Alan's bullies as being "the kids that were just dicks" and "every now and then they would pick on like everybody." Hence, these individuals were seeking to establish social-dominance by picking on "everybody" at their school (Pepler et al. 2006). Likewise, Kelly's father

manifested the common trait of wanting to boost his own self-confidence at the expense of belittling his own daughter (Seixas et al. 2013).

In answering the question, “How does social support mediate the negative effects on bullied victims?” it was found that for both Steven and Kelly that social support had proven to be an important element to them, because of its affect in providing them with a feeling of acceptance and belongingness (Osterman 2000). Therefore, as a result their network of social support, their network helped to mitigate the negative effects of being bullied, which are having feeling of frustration and/or depression (Brissette et al. 2002; West and Salmon 2000). Subsequently, this is why both Steven’s friend Alan, and Kelly held friendship to such a high regard, because of its mitigating factors.

Therefore, the importance of social networks cannot be underestimated, because it is well documented that individuals who possess a supportive social network of friends, family, and peers have a sense of belongingness, a sense of self-worth, and a feeling of security (Osterman 2000), which aids in combating against negative self-thoughts (Gottlieb 1985).

Steven: Symbolic Interactionism and Social Support

After Steven learned why Alan could not attend his birthday party the two of them had remained distant for that entire year, but after this particular year Alan reached out to Steven asking him if he would like to be a part of his new band. Steven agreed and the two of them are now best friends again. According to Steven:

Yeah at first it was kind of weird but we just both kind of said that we were sorry to each other, and yeah we just moved on from there...And now [we] are best friends again. Yeah, cause you know I'm his best friend and he's my best friend, so it was just nice to have your best friend back kind of thing...

According to Cohen et al. (2000), symbolic interactionism, explains the process of the self being developed, which is through the interactions that one has with his or her environment, and Cohen et al. (2000) propose that social support functions similarly to symbolic interactionism. In that social support helps "to create and sustain" a person's "identity and self-esteem" (Cohen et al. 2000), and this is evident, via Steven anecdote. For instance, it appears that their value of emotional support may have been far too great for either of them to lose. Especially when considering that the two of them considered themselves to be each others' brother, and the importance of their brotherly like relationship may have bolstered by the fact that neither of them had an actual biological brother. Therefore, their identification as being like brothers to one another may have been a crucial component to their friendship. Thus, reinforcing their identity as being like siblings to one another.

Moreover, in reading Steven's statements it is clear that the two of them needed sometime apart before either of them could reconsider their friendship, via the appraisal support phase (Gottlieb 1985). More specifically, by both Steven and Alan revisiting their appraisal support phase, it allowed the two of them to reassess each other as a friend, and as a supporter of one another (Gottlieb 1985). As a result, Steven now has reestablished

Alan as his best friend, and as Steven says, “Yeah, cause you know.. I’m his best friend and he’s my best friend, so it was just nice to have your best friend back kind of thing.”

Kelly: Symbolic Interactionism and Social Support

As previously stated, Kelly believes that she is blessed to have the type of mother that she has, because she realizes that her mother is an awesome woman who is a great advocate for her. Also, what makes Kelly particularly thankful to have the type of mom that she has, is that while growing up her mother never placed any added pressure on her:

My mom was just happy that I was in school. That’s why I didn’t have that pressure that other kids have. So, when high school was ending it was just a natural thing for me to be like I’m going to go to college. And so having a supportive mom helped. It was just a natural progression for me. It never really ended at high school and at this point. It really doesn’t end at a Bachelors. It’s like... So, I didn’t have a lot of pressure. I could do it if I want to, and if I didn’t want to my mom would still be like, “just finish high school or whatever.” That’s how she is with me.

Kelly used both her mother’s support and her feeling of belongingness at school as motivation in wanting to be academically successful. As a result, Kelly was on the honor roll, and after graduating from high school she attended the College of the Redwoods. Then during her junior year, she transferred to HSU, where she is currently in her final semester. Also, Kelly is the first person in her family to attend a four-year university, and soon she will be the first to earn her Bachelor’s degree

Furthermore, the negative criticism that Kelly faced and endured by her father had affected her view of herself. However, by Kelly receiving social support from members of her social network (i.e. mother, boyfriends, and her friends), it helped mitigate her father's negative criticism, which she internalized. This particular finding that social support helps mitigate stress correlates with Brissette's et al. (2002) finding. According to Brissette et al. (2002) social support is positively associated with having a good social and academic adjustments, as well as having high levels of optimism. Hence, Kelly's self-confidence and her motivation for academic success is partially attributed to her social support network, who supported and encouraged her to achieve her academic identity.

DISCUSSION

This paper investigated social support, social identity, and peer attachment and its influence on delinquent behaviors. The findings revealed that youths who have a desire for belongingness and/or social acceptance are likely to be influenced, and or coerced by their peers, so that they can either attain, or remain in good standings with them. For instance, attachment to peers that practice unconventional norms, such as bullying, drug use, theft, underage drinking, and risky behavior influenced participants through coercion. However, this particular finding is in stark contrast to Hirschi's (1969) attachment hypothesis, which states that the character of the individual that one is attached to does not matter in regards to influencing delinquent behaviors. Nonetheless, this finding is similar to Hindelang's (1973), who revealed that attachment to delinquent peers, produce delinquent behaviors.

Similarly, bullying among perpetrators was seen as creating group solidarity and cohesion by highlighting the differences of out-group members (i.e. social identity) (Rees 2010). Consequently, bullying emphasized the victims' social perceptions of themselves as being the outsiders, whom were socially rejected and ostracized, but after having physically matured some participants were able to successfully integrate themselves into a social network of friends where they were then able to develop a social identity. However, a strong social support network was shown to mitigate the negative effects of

bullying among victims. Moreover, victims of bullying who had a strong social support network were shown to have a high sense of acceptance and belongingness from either a specific friend, or parent.

The results on bullying and social support are consistent with literature that states that bullying is a form of social dominance (Pepler et al. 2006), which perpetrators use as a tool to build their self-esteem (Seixas et al. 2013), or social status (Burns et al. 2006). Also, when bullying is perpetrated by members of a social group it creates a system of exclusivity where only the in-group members are able to socially identify with one another (Turner et al. 1987; Stets and Burke 2000). Lastly, social support was shown to improve the feelings and motivation of those who were victimized by bullies (Gottlieb 1985; Osterman 2000).

IMPLICATIONS

There are several social policies that can be implemented, which can help to reduce juvenile delinquency. However, I will focus on Hawkins and Weis (1985) Social Development Model (SDM) as a system that can effectively reduce at-risk youths from engaging in delinquent activities. The SDM uses both bonding and learning principles to effectively teach children and adolescents prosocial behaviors (Hawkins and Weis 1985). The SDM looks to establish a strong social bond between children, family, and school. The SDM is most effective when it is applied early on during childhood, because it teaches children prosocial skills, attitudes, and behaviors before they learn delinquent patterns (Hawkins and Weis 1985) through their friends (i.e. attachment). Hence, early intervention is key for effectively impacting children's behaviors. More specifically, the SDM can be effective in reducing bullying, because by reinforcing children's prosocial behaviors it can remove the exclusivity factor among social networks, which again, is the factor that reinforces bullying. Therefore, since the SDM has the potentiality for reducing bullying, it allows children and adolescents to form a social identity without the fear of being ridiculed or rejected by others through bullying.

LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations that stand out in the Life's Footprints study. First, the sample size of the study is small, but this small sample is attributed towards the fact that there was a time constraint on the recruitment phase to complete the interviews. In addition, by not being able to compensate participants either financially, or by providing them with extra credit towards an undergraduate course at HSU, also impacted the limitation of obtaining a larger sample size. However, it is important to note, that by not providing any form of participant compensation the study avoided participant coercion, as well as reinforcing the study's validity, because the participants were all participating out of their own volition.

Likewise, the study's participants was limited to HSU undergraduate students, and the participants ages ranged between 21 to 26, and the participants were all reflecting on their previous bullying and/or delinquency experiences which occurred between the ages of 8 to 21. Therefore, it is possible that the participants' recollections of their life accounts may have inadvertently been altered when recalling incidents that occurred several years prior. However, the data materials (demographic questionnaires, the TSTs (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954), and the offending surveys) that were administered to the participants helped them to recollect key anecdotes that were related to their experiences of either bullying and/or delinquency. For instance, by having the participants answers questions related to their childhood, neighborhood, parents, friends (i.e. demographic

questionnaires), bullying, stealing, drugs, and alcohol use (for example, offending surveys), as well as how they perceived themselves (i.e. TST; Kuhn and McPartland, 1954) helped to jog their memory of certain key events. In addition, by conducting a semi-structured interview, the researcher was able to probe for more details, as opposed to a structured interview. In that when using a structured interview, the questions are more rigid and after a participant's response has been recorded the researcher is more inclined to move onto the next question.

Moreover, the participants' responses to the offending survey¹³ were mixed. In that not every participant indicated that they had either vandalized, stolen, been in a fight, or had consumed alcohol and/or drugs. However, each participant did indicate that they were either once a perpetrator, a victim, or both a perpetrator and a victim of bullying, which was related to their sense of belongingness. Although, those who did indicate either stealing, vandalism/bullying, alcohol and/or drug use were seen to be influenced by their fellow peers, via social bonding.

Lastly, the TST (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954) was unable to capture the participants' self-concept of themselves of when they either committed a delinquent act, or when they either were a victim, or a perpetrator of bullying. However, the TST (Kuhn

¹³ See Table 7

and McPartland, 1954) was useful for priming the participants to recollect certain life events.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Since, bullying was an aspect that occurred mostly between grade school and high school a more appropriate study should look towards interviewing students who are between those grade levels, and who are currently experiencing some form of bullying. Furthermore, by interviewing children and adolescents who are currently experiencing bullying, the TST (Kuhn and McPartland 1954) would be successful in capturing their current attitudes and self-perception. In addition, it would research peer influence and its impact on delinquency.

Moreover, investigating the differences between participants' neighborhoods and the impact that it has on their level of bullying, delinquency, and social support should be analyzed as well. For instance, Anthony who had lived in an environment that was devoid of resources influenced his attachment to his drug dealing friends, but in order to further study this aspect of social disorganization (Shaw and McKay 1942) and its influence on delinquency (Anderson 1999) there needs to be more than one participant whom identifies living in a disorganized community.

REFERENCES

- Abrams, Dominic., and Michael A. Hogg. 1988. "Comments on the motivational status of self-esteem in social identity and intergroup discrimination." *European Journal of Social Psychology*. 18 :317-334.
- Adler, A. Patricia., and Peter Adler. 1998. *Peer power: Preadolescent Culture and Identity*. New Jersey: Rutgers University
- Akers, Ronald L. 2010. *Social Learning and Social Structure: A General Theory of Crime and Deviance*. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.
- Akers, Ronald L., and Christine S. Sellers. 2004. *Criminological Theories: Introduction, Evaluation, and Application*. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing Company.
- Anderson, Elijah. 1999. *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Andreou, Eleni. 2006. "Social Preference, Perceived Popularity and Social Intelligence." *School Psychology International*. 27 (3) :339-351.
- Applerouth, Scott., and Laura Desfor Edles. 2011. *Sociological Theory in the Contemporary Era*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Ashforth, Blake E., and Fred Mael. 1989. "Social Identity Theory and the Organization." *The Academy of Management Review*. 14 (1) :20-39.
- Baumeister, Roy F., Lauren E. Brewer, Dianne M. Tice, and Jean M. Twenge. 2007. "Thwarting the Need to Belong: Understanding the Interpersonal and Inner

Effects of Social Exclusion.” *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*. 506-520.

Baumeister, Roy F., and Mark R. Leary. 1995. “The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation.” *Psychological Bulletin* 117 (3) :497-529.

Bradley, Robert H., and Robert F. Corwyn. 2002. “Socioeconomic Status and Child Development.” *Annual Review Psychology*. 53 :371-399.

Brady, David. 2005. “Structural Theory and Relative Poverty in Rich Western Democracies, 1969-2000.” *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*. 24 (2006) :153-175.

Brisette, Ian, Michelle F. Scheier, and Charles S. Carver. 2002. “The Role of Optimism in Social Network Development, Coping, and Psychological Adjustment During a Life Transition.” *Journal of Personality and Psychology* 82 (1) :102-111.

Brown, Brené. 2010. *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are Your Guide to a Wholehearted Life*. Center City, MN. Hazelden.

Burns, Sharyn., Bruce Maycock, Donna Cross, and Graham Brown. 2008. “The Power of Peers: Why Some Students Bully Others to Conform.” *Qualitative Health Research*. 18 (12) :1704-1716.

Carstensen, Laura L., Helene H. Fung, and Susan T. Charles. 2003. “Socioemotional Selectivity and the Regulation of Emotion in the Second Half of Life.” *Motivation*

and Emotion. 27 (2) :103-123.

Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications.

Cillessen, Antonious H. N., and Lara Mayeux. 2004. "From Censure to Reinforcement: Developmental Changes in the Association Between Aggression and Social Status" *Child Development*. 75 (1) :147-163.

Cohen, Sheldon., Lynn G. Underwood, and Benjamin H. Gottlieb. 2000. *Social Support Measurement and Intervention: A Guide for Health and Social Scientist*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology*. 94 :95-120.

Deykin, Eva Y., Janice C. Levy, and Victoria Wells. 1987. "Adolescent Depression, Alcohol and Drug Abuse." *American Journal of Public Health*. 77 (2) :178-182.

Dong, Maxia., Robert F. Anda, Vincent J. Felitti; David F. Williamson, Shanta R. Dube, David W. Brown, and Wayne H. Giles. 2005. "Childhood Residential Mobility and Multiple Health Risks During Adolescence and Adulthood." *American Medical Association*. 159 (12) :1104-1110.

Encyclopedia of Children's Health. 2016. "The Encyclopedia of Children's Health: Peer Acceptance." Retrieved Mar. 8, 2016 (<http://www.healthofchildren.com/P/Peer-Acceptance.html>)

Farrar, Brandy Deneen. 2006. "Race, Gender, And Bullying Behavior: The Role of

- Perceived Stereotypes.” *North Carolina State University*. :1-69.
- Frisén, Ann., Anna-Karin Johnson, and Camilla Persson. 2007. “Adolescents’ Perception of Bullying: Who is the Victim? Who is the Bully? What Can Be Done to Stop Bullying?.” *Adolescence*. 42 (168).
- Gardner, Wendi L., Cynthia L. Pickett, and Marilynn B. Brewer. 2000. “Social Exclusion and Selective Memory: How the Need to Belong Influences Memory for Social Events.” *Society for Personality and Social Psychology* 26 (4) :486-496.
- Georgiou, N. Stelios., and Panayiotis Stavrinos. 2008. “Bullies, Victims and Bully-Victims Psychosocial Profiles and Attribution Styles.” *School Psychology International* 29 (5) :574-589.
- Goffman, Erving. 1959. “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.” *The American Journal of Sociology*.
- Gottlieb, H. Benjamin. 1985. “Social Networks and Social Support: An Overview of Research, Practice, and Policy Implications.” *Health Education Quarterly*. 12 (1) 5-22.
- Hawkins, David J., and Joseph G. Weis. 1985. “The Social Development Model: An Integrated Approach to Delinquency Prevention.” *The Journal of Primary Prevention*. 6 (2) :73-97.
- Heilbron, Nichole, and Mitchell J. Prinstein. 2008. “A Review and Reconceptualization of Social Aggression: Adaptive and Maladaptive Correlates.” *Clin Child Fam Psycho Rev*.

- Hindelang, Michael J. 1973. "Causes of Delinquency: A Partial Replication and Extension." *Social Problems*. 20 (4) :471-487.
- Hirschi, Travis. 1969. *Causes of Delinquency*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Jankausiene, Rasa., Kestutis Kardelis, Saulius Sukyus, and Laimute Kardeliene. 2008. "Associations Between School Bullying and Psychosocial Factors." *Social Behavior and Personality*. 36 (2) :145-162.
- Juvonen, Jaana, and Sandra Graham. 2001. *Peer Harassment in School: The Plight of the Vulnerable and Victimized*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Kuhn, H. Manford., and Thomas S. McPartland. 1954. "An Empirical Investigation of Self-Attitudes." *American Sociological Association*. 19 (1) :68-76.
- Lease, Michelle A., Charlotte A. Kennedy, and Jennifer L. Axelrod. 2002. "Children's Social Constructions of Popularity." *Social Development*. 11 (1) :87-109.
- Lorber, M. Neil. 1966. "Inadequate Social Acceptance and Disruptive Classroom Behavior." *The Journal of Educational Research* 59 (8) :360-362.
- Maniaci, R. Michael. 2009. *Belonging Need for*. Thousand Oaks, CA: The Encyclopedia of human relationships.
- Marsh, W. Herbert., Parada, H. Roberto., Yeung, Alexander Seeshing., and Healey, Jean. 2001. "Aggressive school troublemakers and victims: A longitudinal model examining the pivotal role of self-concept." *Journal of Educational Psychology*. (93) :411-419.

- Maslow, H. Abraham. 1943. "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review* 50 :370-396.
- Miller, S.J., and James R. Gilligan. 2014. *Gender and Sexualities in Education: Heteronormative Harassment Queer Bullying and Gender-Nonconforming Students*. Peter Lang Publishing Inc., New York.
- Olweus, Dan. 1978. "Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys." *European Journal of Social Psychology*.
- Osterman, Karen F. 2000. "Students' Need for Belonging in the School Community." *Review of Educational Research*. 70 (3) :323-367.
- Parcel, L. Toby., Menaghan, G. Elizabeth. 1993. "Family Social Capital and Children's Behavior Problems." *Social Psychology Quarterly*. 56 (2) :120-135.
- Pepler, Debra J., Wendy M. Craig, Jennifer A. Connolly, Amy Yuile, Loren McMaster, and Depeng Jiang. 2006. "A Developmental Perspective on Bullying." *Aggressive Behavior*. 32 :376-384.
- Punyanunt-Carter, Narissra M. 2008. "Father-Daughter Relationships: Examining Family Communication Patterns and Interpersonal Communication Satisfaction." *Communication Research Reports*. 25 (1) :23-33.
- Rees, Roger C. 2010. "Bullying and Hazing/Initiation in Schools: How Sports and physical Education Can Be Part of the Problem and Part of the Solution." *Physical Educator: Journal of Physical Education New Zealand*. 24-27.
- Rigby, Ken. 2005. "Why Do Some Children Bully at School?." *School Psychology*

International. 26 (2) :147-161.

Rodkin, Philip C., Thomas W. Farmer, Ruth Pear, and Richard Van Acker. 2000.

“Heterogeneity of Popular Boys: Antisocial and Prosocial Configurations.”

Developmental Psychology. 36 (1) :14-24.

Rose, Amanda J., Lance P. Swenson, and Erika M. Waller. 2004. “Overt and Relational

Aggression and Perceived Popularity: Developmental Differences in Concurrent and Prospective Relations.” *Developmental Psychology*. 40 (3) :378-387.

Sampson, Robert J., and Bryon W. Groves. 1989. “Community Structure and Crime:

Testing Social Disorganization Theory.” *American Journal of Sociology*. 94 (4) :774-802.

Shaw, Clifford R., and Henry D. McKay. 1942. “Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Seixas, Sónia R., Joaquim Pinto Coelho, and Gustave Nicolas-Fischer. 2013. “Bullies,

Victims, and Bully-Victims: Impact on health profile.” *Sociedade & Culturas*.

Stryker, Sheldon. 1980. *Symbolic Interactionism: A Social Structural Version*. In

Applerouth, Scott., and Laura Desfor Edles. 2011. *Sociological Theory in the Contemporary Era*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Stets, Jan E., and Peter J. Burke. 2000. “Identity theory and Social Identity theory.”

Social Psychology Quarterly. 63 (3) :224-237.

- Swearer, Susan M., and Shelley Hymel. 2015. "Understanding the Psychology of Bullying Moving Toward a Social-Ecological Diathesis-Stress Model." *American Psychologist*. 79 (4) :344-353.
- Theriot, Matthew T., Catherine N. Dulmus, Karen M. Sowers, and Toni K. Johnson. 2004. "Factors relating to self-identification among bullying victims." *Children and Youth Services Review*. 27 (2005) :979-994.
- Toby, Jackson. 1957. "Social Disorganization and Stake in Conformity: Complementary Factors in the Predatory Behavior of Hoodlums." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* . 48 (1) :12-17.
- Tucker, Jack C., Jonathan Marx, and Larry Long. 1998. "'Moving On': Residential Mobility and Children's School Lives." *Sociology of Education*. 71 :111-129.
- Turner, John C., Micahel A. Hogg, Penelope J. Oakes, Stephen D. Reicher, Margaret S. Wetherell. 1987. "Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory." *American Journal of Sociology*. 94 (6) :1514-1516.
- Wayne, Rachel. 2013. "The Social Construction of Childhood Bullying Through U.S. News Media." *Journal of Contemporary Anthropology*. 6(1) :36-49.
- West, Anne., and Gill Salmon. 2000. "Bullying and Depression: A Case Report." *International Journal of Psychiatry in Clinical Practice*. 4 :73-75.
- Whitbeck, Les B., Ronald L. Simmons, Rand D. Conger, Frederick O. Lorenz, Shirley Huck, and Glen H. Elder. 1991. "Family Economic Hardship, Parental Support, and Adolescent Self-Esteem." *Social Psychology Quarterly*. 54 (4): 353-363.

Wright, Erik Olin. 1979. "Class Structure and Income Determination." *New York: Academics.*

Yapa, Lakshman. 1996. "What Causes Poverty?: A Postmodern View." *Association of American Geographer.* 86 (4): 707-728.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

<p>1. What is your gender identity?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Male</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Female</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Transgender</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A (Non-Applicable)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>	<p>(If Yes) 11B. Which type (check all that apply)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Financial Aid</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>
<p>2. What is your age? _____</p>	<p>11C. How much money do you receive per year? _____</p>

<p>3. Please specify your ethnicity.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Native American or American Indian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>—</p>	<p>12A. Do you have a job?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>4. How many siblings do you have?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p>	<p>(If Yes) 12B. What type of job do you have?</p> <p>_____</p>

<p>5. How many children do you have?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p>	<p>12C. How much money do you earn per hour?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>—</p>
<p>6. What is your marital status?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Single, never married</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Partnership</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Married</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Widowed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Divorced</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Separated</p>	<p>12D. How many hours do your work per week?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>—</p>
<p>7. What town/city did you grow up in?</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>13. What is the highest level of education that your father completed?</p>

<p>8. What is your current status as a college student?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1st year (Freshman)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2nd Year (Sophomore)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Year (Junior)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4th Year (Senior)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5th Year</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More than 5 years</p>	<p>14. What is the highest level of education that your mother completed?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Some high school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High school graduate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Some college</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Trade/technical/vocational training</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> College graduate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Some postgraduate work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Master(s) Degree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate(s) Degree</p>
<p>9. What is your college major? _____</p>	<p>15. What type of job does your father have? _____</p>
<p>10. Are you full-time or a part-time student?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Full-Time</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Part-Time</p>	<p>16. What type of job does your mother have? _____</p>

<p>11A. Do you receive any type of funding for your college tuition, such as financial aid, scholarships, and/or grants?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>17. What is your parents' household income?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 to 19,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 to 29,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 to \$39,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 to 49,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 to 59,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000 to \$69,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$70,000 to 79,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000 to 89,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$90,000 to \$99,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 to 149,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 or more</p>
---	---

Appendix B

Twenty Statement Test (TST)

There are twenty numbered blanks on the page below. Please write twenty answer to the simple question “Who am I?” in these blank. Just give twenty different answers to this question; answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself- not someone else. Write your answers in the order that they occur to you. Don’t worry about logic or “importance.” WHO AM I?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

Twenty Statement Test (TST)

There are twenty numbered blanks on the page below. Please write twenty answer to the simple question “Who am I?” in these blank. Just give twenty different answers to this question; answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself- not someone else. Write your answers in the order that they occur to you. Don’t worry about logic or “importance.” WHO AM I?

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

Appendix C

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

1A. Before attending college, **were you ever** picked on, or bullied by someone either at school,
at home, and/or in public? **Also this includes either physical and/or verbal bullying.**

Yes No

1B While attending college, **were you ever** picked on, or bullied by someone either at school, at
home, and/or in public? **Also this includes either physical and/or verbal bullying.**

Yes No

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

2A. Before attending college, **did you ever** pick on, or bully someone either at school, at home,

and/or in public? **Also this includes either physical and/or verbal bullying.**

Yes

No

2B While attending college, **did you ever** pick on, or bully someone either at school, at home,

and/or in public? **Also this includes either physical and/or verbal bullying.**

Yes

No

3A. Before attending college, did you ever vandalize public or private property, such as

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

graffiti, tagging, drawing, destroying, or damaging anything that did not belong to you?

 Yes No

3B. While attending college, did you ever vandalize public or private property, such as graffiti, tagging, drawing, destroying, or damaging anything that did not belong to you?

 Yes No

4A. Before attending college, did you ever drink or consume alcohol before the age of 21?

 Yes No

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

4B. While attending college, did you ever drink or consume alcohol before the age of 21?

Yes

No

5A. Before attending college, did you ever do anything that may have been considered reckless endangerment either to yourself, or to someone else? **FOR EXAMPLE:**

Standing or sitting on the roof of a moving car, or possibly having thrown an object into a crowd of people.

Yes

No

5B. While attending college, did you ever do anything that may have been considered

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

reckless

endangerment either to yourself or to someone else? **FOR EXAMPLE:** *Standing or sitting on the roof of a moving car, or possibly having thrown an object into a crowd of people.*

Yes

No

6A. Before attending college, did you ever get into a physical fight with anyone?

Yes

No

6B. While attending college, did you ever get into a physical fight with anyone?

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

Yes No

7A. Before attending college, did you ever steal or take anything that did not belong to you? Yes No

7B. While attending college, did you ever steal or take anything that did not belong to you?

Yes No

8A. Before attending college, did you ever smoke marijuana for recreational purposes?

Yes No

8B. While attending college, did you ever smoke marijuana for recreational purposes?

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

Yes No

9A. Before attending college, did you ever use any illegal **hallucinogenic drugs**? *Such as Salvia, Mushrooms, LSD, DMT, Ketamine, Peyote, PCP, and/or any other type of hallucinogen?*

Yes No

9B. While attending college, did you ever use any illegal **hallucinogenic drugs**? *Such as, Salvia, Mushrooms, LSD, DMT, Ketamine, Peyote, PCP, and/or any other type of hallucinogen?*

Yes No

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

10A. Before attending College, did you ever use any illegal **stimulant drugs**? *Such as, Cocaine, Crack, Crystal Meth, Methamphetamine, Amphetamines, Ecstasy, and/or any other type of stimulants?*

Yes No

10B. While attending College, did you ever use any illegal **stimulant drugs**? *Such as, Cocaine, Crack, Crystal Meth, Methamphetamine, Amphetamines, Ecstasy, and/or any other type of stimulants?*

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

Yes No

11A. Before attending college, did you ever use any illegal **depressant drugs?** *Such as, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Opiates, Opioids, and/or any other type of depressant?*

Yes No

11B. While attending college, did you ever use any illegal **depressant drugs?** *Such as, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Opiates, Opioids, and/or any other type of depressant?*

Yes No

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

12A. Before attending college, did you ever use any **inhalant drugs**? *Such as, Nitrous Oxide,*

Poppers, Whippets, and/or any other type of inhalant?

Yes

No

12B. While attending college, did you ever use any **inhalant drugs**? *Such as, Nitrous Oxide,*

Poppers, Whippets, and/or any other type of inhalant?

Yes

No

13. Are there any other type of drugs that I may have overlooked that you may have either

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

used for recreational purposes before and/or while attending college? And these drugs can

either be prescriptions or illegal drugs that you may have used for recreational purposes?

Yes

No

14A. Before attending college, did you ever hold onto any property, or anything that you knew was stolen, either for yourself, or for a friend?

Yes

No

14B. While attending college, did you ever hold onto any property, or anything that you

Life's Footprints Offending Survey

The majority of the following questions deal with illegal activities in which you may have been involved in. Although, this information that you are providing is sensitive it is important to remember that all of this information is and will remain **confidential**. It is also important that you answer every question truthfully, so as to ensure the strength (i.e. validity) of the study. In addition, it is important for you to remember that you have the right to stop, or **withdrawal** from the study at any time. In addition, **any information** that was collected prior to your **withdrawal** maybe terminated from the research study, but only upon the request from you the participant.

knew

was stolen, either for yourself, or for a friend?

Yes

No