Exploring the Moral Domain: How Adolescents Make Decisions About Violent and Aggressive Behaviour in Schools.

by

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B.A., University of Victoria, 2000

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the self-report answers of 27 of the most highly aggressive students from 3 different school sites on lower Vancouver Island through the lens of Johnson and Johnson's (1998) Social Interdependence Theory, in order to understand the impact of competitive, individual and cooperative social conditions on adolescent decision-making about the use of violent and aggressive behaviour in schools. The data analysis in this study is based on a quantitative and qualitative mixed methods approach that is anchored in theories that examine the social conditions of decision-making and subsequent action with respect to moral questions. The study's findings suggest that we should shift our understanding of adolescents who engage in violent and aggressive behaviour, away from deficit-based models that portray such young people as somehow morally delayed and disengaged, or as flawed with respect to character development, and instead pursue an examination of the conditions promote positive moral experience through connectedness and collaboration in our quest to assist non-violent choices.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introductions

The Beginning

The purpose of this study is to investigate how adolescents make decisions about using aggressive and violent behaviour in schools, specifically about how they decide if doing something is right or wrong. My interest in focusing on this topic has developed from my experience as both a student and as a dispute resolution practitioner within schools, my own reading and research on moral development, and my subsequent exploration of the literature on youths' involvement in aggression and violence, in particular the literature that focused on the role of moral development in such behaviour.

As a Student

My experience being a student began when my family moved from Hornby Island to London, England when I was five years old. The transition from pre-school, on Hornby Island, to Grade One in England was extremely confusing for me. What was considered acceptable behaviour in England was very different from what I was used to on Hornby. The difference went beyond the shock of being required to wear a school uniform and not being allowed to wear my Super Woman costume – the difference was deeper, less tangible.

By way of example, I will provide a microcosm of the differences between the two schools by illustrating how they approached the use of playground equipment. The yard (it literally was a yard, fenced in with 8 foot wire mesh) at the school in England had very limited jungle gym equipment, so the rule was

first-come, first-served. In this context it was perfectly acceptable to push, shove and race others to the equipment of choice. Whereas on Hornby, competing in any way over the school's playground equipment was considered unacceptable and if we could not share among ourselves, no one could play on the equipment. These two differing approaches to how school equipment was used set up very different contexts for the relationships between students and how behaviour was viewed as right or wrong.

For example, at school on Hornby, I understood that it was in the best interest of all involved to share the equipment and, as such, I worked to ensure that everyone had equal time on the equipment, assuming that if everyone got his or her share so would I. This set a context where we, as students, recognized that our success was tied to the success of those around us resulting in strong, caring and trusting friendships.

In contrast, in England I understood that if I were to have time on the jungle gym I would need to beat others to it in order to succeed. This set a context in which students were pitted against each other resulting in relationships that were suspicious, competitive, and tenuous at best.

My family stayed in England for one year and then we returned to Hornby where I attended school until I started commuting to Courtenay in Grade 8. The transition from going to school on Hornby to going to school in Courtenay was also extremely confusing.

To enlighten the differences between the school in Courtenay and the school on Hornby I will speak about my friendships within each of the schools. The

population on Hornby is, and was, approximately 800 people, so the numbers of people my age, or close to my age then, was quite low. Due to the low numbers of young people growing up on Hornby, we were (and most still are) very close. There was very little violent or aggressive behaviour among my group of friends because if there were, it would have impacted the entire group. It was understood that one treated others as one would like to be treated. This approach worked because there was no getting away from each other. Treating someone poorly meant not being able to walk away.

In contrast, the school in Courtenay had 1500 students. My experience of friendship in this school was one in which a student could be the most popular in the group one day and the next day not allowed to be part of it. I found myself taking part in the shunning, teasing and sometimes even the pushing and shoving. I knew that this behaviour was wrong in the context of my schooling on Hornby, but I felt that it was the right thing to do in Courtenay. It was the right thing to do because if I had not engaged in the behaviour, I would have been considered different (i.e. unlikable) and would have opened myself up to being the recipient of the same behaviour.

Thus, reflecting on my childhood school experiences through to adolescence, I can see now that my decisions about what behaviour was right and what behaviour was wrong, and my subsequent actions, shifted depending on the school that I was attending. This made me wonder what was it about the schools that caused the shift. Was it the schools, or was it the larger social conditions in which the schools were situated that caused the shift?

This led me to ask, what are the circumstances that lead to the use of aggression and violence? Or more importantly, what are the circumstances or conditions that give rise to the regulation of aggressive and violent behaviour? Another reason I chose to investigate how adolescents make decisions about using aggressive and violent behaviour in schools, and specifically how they decide if doing something is right or wrong, has to do with my experience as an adult, working as a dispute resolution practitioner within schools.

As a Dispute Resolution Practitioner

My experience working as a dispute resolution practitioner within schools has alerted me to the fact that many of the approaches used to explain, mediate and address, as well as intervene in the use of violent and aggressive behaviour, are primarily focused on individual behaviour and fail to consider the context in which the behaviour occurs. Many of the anti-bullying policies and codes of conduct in place in schools speak to the behaviour and prescribe forms of retributive punishment for the individual who engages in that behaviour.

One of the situations that I often find myself in is one in which I am called to mediate between students who have been engaging in violent or aggressive behaviour. The first step that I take in this kind of situation is to review whatever documentation there is about what has happened and then I meet with each of the students separately in order to get a sense of the situation and to allow them to speak freely from their own perspectives. During these discussions it is not uncommon for apparent contradictions to arise.

For example, I was called in to meet with two girls who had been caught fighting in the hallway at their school. The incident report described a situation in which one student pushed another in the hallway, resulting in a yelling match between the two students. The report stated that there was a clear dislike between the parties and suggested that there was little chance of reconciliation. When I asked one student who had done the pushing why she had done it, she replied that it was no big deal. When I asked her to talk more about this, she responded that it was not as if she would just push somebody walking down the street, that this kind of thing happens in the hallway all the time and that it was not about not liking the other person, it was about "sticking up for yourself". She said that for the past couple of weeks the other girl had been "staring her down" when they passed in the hallway so she had pushed her to show that she was not intimidated. She continued to say that if you did not stick up for yourself then you lacked self-respect and everybody would think you were a loser.

I found this interesting for two reasons: first, the student seemed to feel that she had to engage in some kind of violent or aggressive behaviour in order to preserve her sense of self and how others viewed her, and secondly, she felt that pushing was okay in some situations (in the school hallway) and not okay in others (on the street). I encounter these kinds of responses often as a dispute resolution practitioner within schools, and they pique my interest in how students, both male and female, decide when it is right or wrong to use violence. This affirmed my interest about morality so I began reading about moral development.

My Own Reading on Moral Development

My exploration of moral development began with reading the work of Kohlberg (1984) and Gilligan (1982), and although I found both of their theories interesting, I could not put my finger on why neither of them seemed to entirely address my experiences and my subsequent question about how adolescents decide if doing something is right or wrong. From further reading I realized that they did not take into account the context in which my experiences occurred.

As I read further it became apparent that I was not alone in my concern that many approaches to moral education and development ignore the context and conditions that give rise to moral experience and subsequent action (Artz, 2004; Baek, 2002; Haviv & Leman; 2002).[1] So I began to recognize that shifting away from an individual stage theory approach to moral development towards investigating the social conditions that give rise to the justification of aggressive and violent action may provide a more fully rounded understanding of moral action (Artz, 2004).

In examining the use of violence, Katz (1998) suggests that the direction of enquiry needs to be turned to the qualities of experience that distinguish forms of criminality, and focus on the conditions and interpretations that are the context for such behaviour. Similarly, Haviv and Leman (2002) point to the need for examination of what values are espoused by society as a whole and in specific contexts, and how these play a role in moral decision-making and moral action. In addition, cultural context should not be ignored because individuals develop

[1] A full discussion of theoretical problems in moral development will be provided in the literature review portion of this thesis.

moral reasoning and make decisions about moral action mainly through interactions with others within their culture (Baek, 2002).

Similarly, Porter (1991) recommends an approach to moral development where self-knowledge of the moral agent is grounded in ethical principles and everyday context as part of the concept of a self-interpreting moral being. Along the same lines Prat, Hunsberger, Pancer, and Alisat (2003) advocate for an analysis of moral motivation that considers the subjects' values, culture and specific context.

The call for the development of theories and interventions that go beyond the limited focus of the individual and his or her offending behaviour is needed to include the context of their complex realities (Reitsma- Street, Artz, & Nicholson, 2005). This necessitates a framework for examining the conditions that promote moral experience. Therefore I employed Magnuson's application of Johnson and Johnson's (1989,1998) research on goal structures of social interdependence theory to investigate how adolescents make decisions about passively or actively engaging in or intervening in aggression and violence in schools since, ultimately, these decisions are about the right and wrong of using aggression and violence.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Moral problems and dilemmas, questions about ethics and character and concerns about conflicting values and their effect on individual action have long been examined and debated and still continue to be central aspects of contemporary life. One issue often focused on within the domain of morality, ethics and values is how children and adolescents develop their morality and what role social institutions – particularly schools – should play in facilitating the process by which youth acquire their moral and ethical sensibilities (Tappan, 1998).

A vast array of approaches to understand moral development and the practice moral education have been developed in the field, some of which are examined in the following sections of this paper. Due to the extensive amount of literature in the field of morality and moral development, only some of the main approaches are examined and the analyses brief in order to provide a general overview of the research in the field. The eight approaches to moral development that are examined in the following section are: Rest's (1984) Four Component Model, Damon's (1984) Identity Theory, Blasi's (1983) Self Theory, Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, Turiels' (1983) Domain Theory, Kilpatrick's (1992) Character Education Approach, Kohlberg's (1984) Cognitive Developmental Theory, and Johnson and Johnson's (1998) Social Interdependence Theory.

I chose to examine these approaches to understanding moral development and practicing moral education because I believe they provide a good overview of research in the field and provide a foundation for comparison of different approaches. Comparing how they shape our understanding of youth with regard to moral development is integral to the development of appropriate and effective intervention programs for aggressive and violent youth.

Before delving into an exploration of the various theories and ways of dealing with moral development, it is important to explicate what lens I will be examining these theories through. Lens in this context means the perspective through which I examine and interpret these theories. The need for a description of the lens I will be employing is demonstrated through a review of the literature which reveals that the term "morality" has been applied to a variety of different notions, for example: "moral choice" (Turiel, 1983), "moral reasoning" (Rest, 1984), "moral behaviour, moral development, moral judgment" (Piaget, 1965; Kohlberg, 1986), "moral orientation" (Gilligan, 1982), "moral responsibility" (Blasi, 1980), "ethical response" (Noddings, 1984), and "moral agency" (Bandura, 2002). Each of these ideas carries with it a specific meaning and, as such, emphasizes the complexity and pervasive nature of the concept of "morality". Thus, for the purpose of this investigation, the lens through which I examine and interpret the aforementioned approaches focuses on the role that situation and context play in the development of morality, in subsequent decisions about engaging, or not engaging, in violent and aggressive behaviour.

James Rest's (1984) Four-Component Model of Moral Behaviour

In relation to the study of moral development, Rest (1984) observes "...that the majority of research and exploration in moral psychological research has been largely tripartite: depending on one's theoretical orientation, one studies either moral thought, or moral emotions, or moral behaviour" (Bergman, 2002, p.109). He proposes instead to "...think of moral functioning as involving four inner processes or components all of which must perform adequately to produce moral behaviour and all of which involve 'cognitive-affective interaction' (Rest, 1984, p. 27). Thus Rest's (1984) model is based on four internal processes or components that are interactive, and not proposed as part of a linear decision-making model.

The first component is interpreting a situation in terms of how one's actions affect the welfare of others through processes of empathy and role-taking. The second component involves the process of formulating what a moral course of action would be and identifying the moral ideal in the situation. The third component is the process of deciding whether to pursue the moral ideal or other values. Component four is the process of taking steps "to execute and implement what one ought to do" (Rest, 1984, p. 14).

While Rest's (1984) four component model of moral behaviour focuses mainly on cognition, or making sense of the moral situation and orienting one's action, it also recognizes that moral behaviour is an exceedingly complex phenomenon and no single variable or process is sufficiently comprehensive to represent the psychology of morality. Instead he suggests that the production of

moral behaviour is the result of one performing all four processes adequately, and he goes as far as to say that "deficiency in any process can result in moral failure" (Rest, 1984, p. 27). In an attempt to understand why people fail to behave morally, Rest (1984) catalogues situational factors in terms of how they influence each component process:

Possible Influences on Component 1 – Interpreting the situation in terms of how one's actions affect the welfare of others.

Ambiguity of people's needs, intentions, and actions
Familiarity with the situation or the people in it
Time allowed for the interpretation
Degree of personal danger and susceptibility to pressure
Preoccupation with other component processes
Sheer number of elements in the situation and the embeddedness of cues
Complexity in tracing cause-effect claims
Presuppositions and prior expectations that blind a person to notice or think about certain aspects

Possible Influences on Component 2 – Deciding what a moral course of action would be; to identify the moral ideal.

Factors affecting the application of particular social norms or moral ideals, or their "activation"
Delegation of responsibility to someone else
Prior conditions, promises, contracts, or expectancies that affect role responsibilities, reciprocity, or deservingness
The particular combination of moral issues involved
Preempting of one's sense of fairness by prior commitments to some ideology or code

Possible influences on Component 3 – Deciding whether or not to try to fulfill one's moral ideal.

Factors that activate different motives other than moral motives
Mood states that influence decision-making
Factors that influence estimates of costs and benefits
Factors that influence subjective estimates of the probability of certain occurrences
Factors that affect one's self-esteem and willingness to risk oneself, defensively reinterpreting the situation by blaming the victim, denying need or deservingness

Possible Influences on Component 4 – Executing the plan.

> Factors that physically prevent one from carrying out a moral plan of action
> Factors that distract, fatigue, or disgust a person
> Cognitive transformations of the goal
> Timing difficulties in managing more than one plan at a time (p.35).

The premise of Rest's four component model is that the production of moral behaviour involves all four component processes, and deficiency in any component (which could be the result of any of the above influences) can result in failure to behave morally. Thus, while Rest recognizes that we must look beyond reasoning to a broader range of motivational factors if we are to more adequately understand the linkage between moral thought and moral action, he only goes as far as cataloguing what those motivational factors may be. Rest (1984) himself asserts that there is a need to look more closely at which situational variations and motivational factors affect moral decision-making and subsequent moral action in order to better understand the link between the two.

The works of Damon (1984), Colby and Damon (1992) and Blasi (1983, 1984, 1989, 2004) speak to the need to look more closely at certain motivational factors that may affect moral decision-making and subsequent moral action by examining, specifically, the role of self in these processes or, as Bergman (2002) suggests, one's increasing ownership of, or sense of accountability for, one's own moral reasoning and actions as an essential motivational factor in moral-decision-making.

William Damon's (1984) Identity Theory

At the crux of Damon's (1984) approach to the study of moral development are the concepts of self and one's understanding of self in relation to one's moral beliefs. Damon (1984) states:

> A person's level of moral judgment does not determine the person's views on morality's place in one's life. To know how an individual deals with this latter issue, we must know about not only the person's moral beliefs but also the person's understanding of self in relation to these moral beliefs (p.110).

For Damon, morality and self are two separate conceptual systems which are unrelated in childhood but which come together later in life. Damon (1984) posits that the self during childhood is construed physically and actively which excludes consideration of one's moral interactions and beliefs in one's self-concept, resulting in "...opposition between the conceived interests of the self and the conceived demands of morality, as can be seen from common childhood inconsistencies in moral judgment and conduct" (p.109). Following this line of reasoning, Damon (1984) suggests that this opposition is resolved in adolescence when "...the self is conceived socially and psychologically...leading to the self becoming more defined in moral terms" and allowing "one's moral interests and self-interests to become more clearly defined and connected to each other, and a greater awareness of their mutual influence and interrelation to emerge" (p.109).

A central finding of Damon's two rounds of longitudinal testing with children and adolescents (Gerson & Damon, 1978) was that "only at the oldest age group did we see some real consistency between hypothetical moral judgment and actual conduct ..."(p.63). Furthermore, "morality does not become a dominant

characteristic of self until…middle adolescence" (Damon, 1984, p. 116). This indicates that, according to Damon, it is only as children get older that they are able to make connections between their own behaviour and how that behaviour may impact others. Thus, the key to Damon's understanding of moral development is the integration that begins in late adolescence, of how one sees one's self as an individual and how one sees one's self as a moral being.

Colby and Damon (1992)

In a study of 23 moral exemplars, Colby and Damon (1992) found high levels of integration between self and moral concerns, although they found no signs of elevated levels of moral reasoning on the Kohlberg moral judgment measure. Colby and Damon (1992) concluded that sustained moral commitment requires a "uniting of self and morality". "People who define themselves in terms of their moral goals are likely to see moral problems in everyday events, and they are also likely to see themselves as necessarily implicated in these problems. From there it is a small step to taking responsibility for the solution" (Colby & Damon, 1992, p.307).

In addition, Colby and Damon (1992) emphasize that what characterizes these moral exemplars most deeply is their exceptionally high degree of the uniting of self and morality, "…all these men and women have vigorously pursued their individual and moral goals simultaneously, viewing them in fact as one and the same…rather than denying the self, they define it with a moral center….none saw their moral choice as an exercise in self-sacrifice" (Colby & Damon, 1992, p.300). Due to this extraordinary integration of self and morality,

time and again we found our moral exemplars acting spontaneously, out of great certainty, with little fear, doubt, or agonized reflection. They performed their actions spontaneously, as if they had no choice in the matter (Colby and Damon, 1992, p. 303).

Thus, for Damon (1984) and Colby (1992) the view that unity of self and morality, or the integration of morality into one's identity is central to moral action, implies that those who do not achieve this integration will fail to act on their moral beliefs. This view suggests that the individual is the unit of analysis, and this becomes problematic when examined from a less individualistic perspective. What if one were to remove the integration of morality from one's identity at the center and replace it with family, or community, or country?

Moreover, if as Colby and Damon (1992) suggest, it is the integration of self and morality that facilitates moral action, then this challenges the more traditional emphasis on moral reasoning and suggests that situational factors have no bearing on moral decision-making and subsequent moral action. However this begs the question, what situations or contexts lead to the full integration of self and identity? Also, assuming that some kind of reasoning accompanies the integration of self and morality, what is the relationship between moral reasoning and moral identity? The work of Augusto Blasi expands on this theory while also placing the relationships among moral reasoning, moral motivation, and moral identity at the center of his approach to moral development.

Augusto Blasi's (1980) Self Theory

Blasi's (1980, 1983, 1984, 2004) approach stresses the role of moral identity in moral development. Blasi (1984) argues, "...it is important for a psychological theory of morality to...recognize that morality that actually works, not only in this or that action but also in one's life in general, must be rooted in some form of identity"(p.137). It seems that Blasi and Damon agree that the integration of morality and identity is key. However, for Blasi (1980), but not for Damon, moral cognition plays a central role in moral functioning, providing unity to the many processes that compose it. From this perspective, the study of the relations between moral cognition and moral action is of primary importance. Thus, Blasi has been highly concerned with preserving the centrality of moral reasoning within morality generally, and enhancing our understanding of the relationships among moral reasoning, moral motivation, and moral identity specifically (Bergman, 2002). However, Blasi (2004) asserts that cognitive developmental theory falls short as an explanation of moral behaviour unless it is shown how moral understanding is a motive for action.

In order to pursue his joint aims of preserving moral reasoning and enhancing understanding of the relationships between moral reasoning, moral action and moral identity, Blasi (1983, 1984) has proposed what he calls the "Self Model" which focuses on "...the transition from moral cognition to moral action and on the issue of judgment behaviour consistency" (1983, p.194). In this model Blasi (1984) hypothesized,

> (1) that the outcome of moral judgments becomes, at least in some cases, the content of judgments of responsibility; in other words, that the agent, having

> decided the morally good action, also determines whether the action is strictly obligatory for him or her; (2) that the criteria for responsibility (in the sense of strict obligation) are related to the structure of one's self, or to the essential definition of oneself; (3) that the motivational basis for moral action lies in the internal demand for psychological self-consistency; and (4) that moral action will be more likely to follow moral judgment if the individual has the ability to stop defensive strategies from interfering with the subjective discomfort of self-inconsistency (p.129).

Why act on one's moral judgments? It is because "...not to act according to one's judgment would be perceived as a substantial inconsistency, as a fracture within the very core of the self..." (Blasi, 1983, p.201). Thus for Blasi (2004), it is imperative that the study of moral development, moral decision-making and subsequent moral action take into account such things as self-definition, self-organization, self-awareness, and sensitivity to internal consistency.

The integration of cognitive developmental theory and processes related to the self, serves to expand the study of moral development, moral decision-making, and moral action, from the centrality of reasoning, while at the same time narrowly focusing on internal processes, and ignoring what may be outside influences and affects. This focus also begs a number of questions, for example, what roles do situation and context play in the development of processes related to self? How do context and situation affect the relationship between moral judgment and moral action in the moment? A theory put forth by Albert Bandura (1986), may have some answers to these questions.

Albert Bandura's (1986, 2001, 2002, 2006) Social Cognitive Theory of the Moral Self

Like Blasi (1980), Bandura argues that in order to understand moral action or "moral agency", as it is termed by Bandura, one must understand the relationship

between moral reasoning and conceptions of self. According to Bandura, "a complete theory of moral agency must link moral knowledge and reasoning with moral conduct. This requires an agentic theory of morality rather than one confined mainly to cognitions about morality" (Bandura, 2002, p.101).

In his social cognitive theory of the moral self, Bandura (1986) links moral reasoning to moral action through affective self-regulatory mechanisms by which moral agency is exercised. The moral self is thus embedded in a broader socio-cognitive self-theory encompassing self-organizing, proactive, self-reflective, and self-regulative mechanisms (Bandura, 2001). The self-regulatory mechanisms that Bandura is speaking of are the internal standards of right and wrong that individuals develop and adopt within themselves, and it is "these self-referent processes that provide the motivational as well as the cognitive regulators of moral conduct" (Bandura, 2002, p.102).

In other words, Bandura is suggesting that individuals have the capacity to not only develop standards of what is right and wrong through reasoning, but also have the ability to make judgments and decisions about moral action on the basis of those standards. Further, he is suggesting that it is the internalized standards of right and wrong that not only provide reference for decisions about moral action, but also provide the motivation for that action.

Thus, for Bandura (1986) the development of a moral self entails the adoption of standards of right and wrong that serve as internal guides for conduct and "it is within this self-regulatory process that people monitor their conduct and the conditions under which it occurs, judge it in relation to their moral standards and

perceived circumstances, and regulate their actions by the consequences they apply to themselves" (Bandura, 2002, p.102). It would seem that like Blasi (1983, 1984), Bandura is suggesting that morality is rooted in internal processes relating to conceptions of self as opposed to abstract reasoning as posited by theorists such as Lawrence Kohlberg (1984).

However, unlike Blasi (1983), Bandura (2006) uses social cognitive theory to expand the exploration of moral development further to include social influences. According to Bandura (2006) human functioning is embedded in social systems that are created by human activity to organize, guide, and regulate human activity. This means that there is a reciprocal relationship between human action and social systems, in that the social systems that influence human action are also the product of human action, suggesting that because people have the ability to produce social systems they also have the ability to influence those systems or be agents of change.

If it is the case that people create the social systems in which they live and have the capacity to influence those systems, how then do people come to make decisions about behaviour that could be seen as harmful or even morally reprehensible? Bandura (2002) suggests that because moral standards do not function as fixed internal regulators of conduct and that self-regulatory mechanisms do not operate unless they are activated, people can experience moral disengagement, meaning they are disengaged from inhumane conduct. Therefore, "selective activation and disengagement of self-sanctions permits different types of conduct by people with the same moral standards" (Bandura,

2002, p.102), explaining the inconsistencies often found between what people think is the right thing to do and what they actually do.

Bandura (2002), suggests eight different mechanisms of moral disengagement and elaborates on some of the grounds and conditions that make disengagement possible:

1. Moral justification- works on the reconstruction of behaviour itself by making pernicious conduct personally and socially acceptable by portraying it as serving socially worthy or moral purposes. People then can act on a moral imperative and preserve their view of themselves as moral agents while inflicting harm on others. An example is military pursuits where the morality of killing is cognitively redefined as fighting ruthless oppressors, protecting cherished values, preserving world peace, saving humanity from subjugation or honouring one's country's commitments. Moral justifications sanction the violent means.

2. Euphemistic labeling- is used widely to make harmful conduct respectable and to reduce personal responsibility for it. Specifically sanitizing language such as soldiers "waste" people rather than kill them. Bomb missions are described as "servicing the target". Government agencies referring to firing someone as a "career alternative enhancement".

3. Advantageous comparison- how behaviour is viewed is coloured by what it is compared against. For example, the massive destruction in Vietnam was minimized by portraying the American military intervention as saving the populace from communist enslavement. Adopters of violent means are quick to point out that democracies, such as those of France and the United States, were achieved through violence against oppressive rule.

4. Displacement of responsibility-when people view their actions as stemming from the dictates of authorities rather than being personally responsible for them. Because they are not the actual agent of their actions they are spared self-condemning practices. Self-exemption from gross inhumanities by displacement of responsibility is revealed most gruesomely in socially sanctioned mass executions such as the Holocaust and military atrocities such as the My Lai massacre.

5. Diffusion of responsibility- the weakening of moral control when personal agency is obscured by diffusing responsibility for detrimental behaviour. Division of labour, subdivided tasks seem harmless in themselves and people shift their attention from the meaning of what they are doing to the details of their specific job. Group decision-making creates the feeling that everyone is responsible so no one really feels responsible. Collective

action provides anonymity and any harm done by a group can be contributed to the behaviour of others.

6. Disregard or distortion of consequences- minimizing, disregarding or distorting the effects of one's action. When people pursue activities that harm others , they avoid facing the harm they cause or minimize it. If minimization does not work the evidence of harm can be discredited. As long as the harmful results of one's conduct are ignored, minimized, distorted or disbelieved there is little reason for self-censure to be activated.
7. Dehumanization- The strength of moral self-censure depends on how the perpetrators regard the people they mistreat. It is difficult to mistreat humanized people without risking personal distress and self-condemnation. Self-censure for cruel conduct can be disengaged or blunted by stripping people of human qualities. Once dehumanized, they are no longer viewed as persons but as "savages", "gooks", "satanic fiends", "degenerates" and "worms".

8. Attribution of blame- blaming one's adversaries or circumstances for one's bad behaviour. People view themselves as faultless victims driven to injurious conduct by forcible provocation. Victims get blamed for bringing suffering on themselves (Bandura, 2002, 103-110).

Moreover, many conditions of contemporary life are conducive to impersonalization and dehumanization. "Bureaucratisation, automation, urbanization and high mobility lead people to relate to each other in anonymous, impersonal ways. In addition, social practices that divide people into ingroup and outgroup members produce human estrangement and fosters dehumanization" (Bandura, 2002, p.109). The isolated and individualized nature of contemporary Western life breeds a society of strangers, and strangers can be more easily depersonalized than acquaintances.

A final condition that Bandura points to in the process of moral disengagement is one of progressive disengagement of self-censure. In this process people perform mildly harmful acts that they can tolerate until they become routine. Once a person is able to tolerate the harmful acts through

repetition, his or her level of comfort with such acts is heightened and soon, acts that were once considered abhorrent, are considered normal or just part of the job. "The continuing interplay between moral thought, affect, action and its social reception is personally transformative, and people may not even recognize the changes they have undergone as a moral self" (Bandura, 2002, p.110).

Moral development has typically been studied in terms of abstract principles of morality and measured under decontextualized and depersonalized circumstances. Adolescents who differ widely in delinquent conduct do not differ in abstract moral values (Elliott & Rinehart, 1995). According to Bandura (2002), "Almost everyone is virtuous at the abstract level. It is the ease of moral disengagement under the conditionals of life where the differences lie" (p.115). This leads us again to the questions of what life conditions support moral engagement and what does this mean for future intervention strategies?

Another approach to dealing with moral development that attempts to address the relationship between social conditions and contextual influences on moral decision-making and subsequent moral action is Elliot Turiel's (1983) Domain Distinction Theory.

Elliot Turiel's (1983, 2002, 2006) Domain Theory

Within domain theory, a distinction is drawn between the child's developing concepts of morality, and other domains of social knowledge, such as social convention. According to domain theory (Nucci, 2004; Nucci & Weber, 1991), a child's concepts of morality and social convention emerge out of the child's attempts to account for qualitatively differing forms of social experience

associated with these two classes of events. Actions within the moral domain, such as unprovoked hitting of someone, have intrinsic effects (i.e., the harm that is caused) on the welfare of another person. Such intrinsic effects occur regardless of the nature of social rules that may or may not be in place regarding the action. From this, Turiel (1983, 2006) surmises that the core features of moral cognition are centered on considerations of the effects that actions have upon the well being of persons, and morality is structured by concepts of harm, welfare, and fairness.

In contrast, according to Turiel (1983), actions that are matters of social convention have no intrinsic interpersonal consequences. For example, "there is nothing intrinsic to the forms of address we employ that makes calling a college teacher 'professor' better or worse than calling the person Mr. or Ms., or simply using their given names. What makes one form of address better than another is the existence of socially agreed upon rules" (Nucci & Weber, 1991, p.254). According to Nucci (2004) these conventions, while arbitrary in the sense that they have no intrinsic status, are nonetheless important to the smooth functioning of any social group. Conventions provide a way for members of the group to coordinate their social exchanges through a set of agreed upon and predictable modes of conduct. Concepts of convention, then, for Turiel are structured by the child's understanding of social organization.

Therefore, according to domain distinction theory (Turiel, 1983) morality and convention are distinct, parallel developmental frameworks. However, because all social events, including moral ones, take place within the context of a larger

society, a person's reasoning about the right course of action in any given social situation may require a person to access and coordinate his or her understanding from more than one of these two social cognitive frameworks (Turiel, 1983). Since the social world is varied, social situations often require a balancing and coordination of different social and personal considerations, which result in moral decisions and subsequent actions taking different forms depending on the context (Nucci, 2004; Turiel, 2006). Thus, as Nucci and Weber (1991) point out,

> How people coordinate the possible interactions that may arise between issues of morality and convention is a function of several factors including: the salience of the features of the act (what seems most important – the moral or conventional elements); and the developmental level of the person (adolescents for example view conventions as unimportant and arbitrary norms established by adult authority) (p.255).

It seems that Turiel's (1983) domain distinction theory suggests that moral action and moral reasoning are related to a set of age-related efforts people make at different points in development to coordinate their normative understandings from several different domains. Following this notion, domain theory posits a great deal more inconsistency in the moral judgments and subsequent actions of individuals across contexts. However, while domain theory recognizes the larger society's influences on the moral decision-making and subsequent action of an individual, it does not deal directly with specific, situational and contextual influences, and how they may impact moral decision-making and moral action.

The next two approaches to moral development that will be examined are the character education approach (Kilpatrick,1992) and the cognitive developmental approach (Kohlberg, 1984). The vast amount of literature on the cognitive

developmental (Kohlberg, 1984) and character education (Kilpatrick, 1992) approaches to moral development coupled with the up-surge of interest (which will be examined in the following discussion of character education), mainly in the later approach, has led me to take a more detailed look at these ways of dealing with moral development than I have with the previous approaches. Thus, the following section of this paper looks at where character development and cognitive development approaches have come from, some of the assumptions underlying them, and some of the specific critiques of each approach.

Character Education

Character education in the broadest sense has been around for time immemorial (Clouse, 2002), meaning that children have always had to learn right from wrong, how to be a contributing member of society, to take care of their things, ..., and to be dependable. According to Clouse (2002) "character education is based on the premise that adults know better than children what is proper and are therefore responsible for the acculturation of the children within their care" (p.23). In this sense, character education has been a part of parenting and schooling from the beginning.

The philosophical underpinnings of character education go back to Plato and Aristotle. Following the line of reasoning in Plato's "The Republic", some character educators distinguish character education as "knowing the good, loving the good, and doing the good" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Plato's Theory of Forms (Robinson, Jones & Hayes, 2000) emphasized the good –the supreme values from which all else is understood, this truth being absolute. Plato looked for this

universal truth believing that it surpassed the individual examples and incongruence of people (Allen, 1957).

Alternatively, Aristotle (Stalley, 1995) emphasized individual differences and characteristics in humans through a more scientific approach (Robinson, Jones & Hayes, 2000). Whereas Plato was more concerned with the solution to all problems and with the one answer that could make all things understood beyond the observable, his student Aristotle looked more to reconcile observable differences. Aristotle stated, "neither by nature, then, nor contrary to nature do virtues arise in us; rather we are adapted by nature to receive them, and are made perfect by habit" (Ross, 1927, p.38). Good character, then, is a matter of practice and the development of habits.

Although character education has been around of a long time, it began to lose favour in the late 1930s and 1940s for a number of reasons. Both a criticism of some of the methods used in character education (e.g., harsh physical punishment or frightening children into being good), and research by Hartshorme and May (1928-1930) that revealed that programs emphasizing character development were ineffective (Clouse, 2002), helped with the demise of character education.

Also, Clouse (2002) points out that in "...the forties and fifties...the main thrust in education, other than teaching the necessary skills of reading, writing, and ciphering, was to promote social adjustment" (p.24). It was thought at the time of the demise of character education that if children could get along with their

parents, teachers, and peers they would develop into the kind of adults who were contributing members of society and who would become good citizens.

A further explanation for the demise of character education was the growing role that standardized achievement testing has taken in assessing school effectiveness. Williams (2000) noted, "In asserting that such testing has become the measure by which schools are judged and that what gets tested is what get taught...character has been relegated to the sidelines...because character cannot be easily assessed" (p.3). In other words, character education's fall in popularity can be partially attributed to the focus of schools on academic achievement and standardized scoring as the yardstick used to assess the effectiveness of a school.

However, recently there has been a dramatic rise in both interest in and implementation of character education approaches to moral development in schools (Berkowitz, 1997; Clouse, 2002; Davis, 2003; Howard, Berkowitz & Schaefer, 2004; Lickona, 1996; Nash, 1997; Robinson et al., 2000; Williams, 2000). Berkowitz (1997) suggests three main reasons for this groundswell of interest and support:

1. A reaction against the popularly cited statistics about the deteriorating state of youth in our society (Damon, 1988; Lickona, 1991; Wynne & Ryan, 1993).
2. A response to the declining confidence in the family to deal with youth misbehaviour (Damon, 1995).

3. A product of groups that traditionally had differing approaches to character education, coming together and presenting a unified front, and subsequently creating a strong lobby for character education.

The rise in popularity of character education raises questions about the effectiveness of the approach. Two problems that have been identified with the character education approach to moral development, moral decision-making and subsequent moral action have to do with the assumption of consistency and the negative bias in the overall message. Both of these perceived problems are explored in the following sections of this report.

Assumption of Consistency

One of the general assumptions underlying a character education approach to moral development is that a degree of consistency exists in human beings, not only within the same trait, but also across traits that share a common characteristic (Blasi, 1980). Traits, in this sense, are character and personality traits that are invoked to explain what people do and how they live: Chad did not mingle at the party because he is shy, and Tina succeeds at her work because she is diligent. Traits are also used in prediction: Jo will be on-board because she is spontaneous, and Jill will never go for it as she is too cautious. Character education approaches to moral development assume that if an individual possesses a certain trait, for example, impulsiveness, he or she will act impulsively across differing situations and contexts.

Moreover, character education approaches assume that if one does not posses a certain trait or characteristic, one can develop it through the development of habit. For example, according to Kilpatrick (1992),

> From a traditional point of view, the chief way to counter our lack of will and determination is through the development of good habits. An effective moral education should be devoted to encouraging habits of honesty, helpfulness, and self-control until such behaviours become second nature. The idea is that we could then respond to tempting situations in an automatic way, much as an expert tennis player responds automatically to a hard serve. If we become persons of a certain kind, we won't need to debate our course of action, we will know instinctively how to act. (p.97).

Thus, Kilpatrick's assumption is that if we are able to learn and habituate the traits of good moral behaviour we will be able to act consistently across a variety of situations regardless of situation or context. Also, this assumption precludes any agency on the part of the individual and suggests that the mind is something to be programmed and indoctrinated.

A useful framework from which to examine the assumption of consistency found within the character education approach to moral development is described as globalism by Doris (2002). According to Doris (2002), Globalism maintains the following three theses, two regarding the nature of traits and the third regarding personality organization:

(1) *Consistency.* Character and personality traits are reliably manifested in trait-relevant behaviour across a diversity of trait-relevant eliciting conditions that may vary widely in their conduciveness to the manifestations of the trait in question.
(2) *Stability.* Character and personality traits are reliably manifested in trait-relevant behaviours over iterated trials of similar trait-relevant eliciting conditions.
(3) *Evaluative integration.* In a given character or personality the occurrence of a trait with the particular evaluative valence is probabilistically related to the occurrence of other traits with similar evaluative valences. p.22

According to Doris (2002), "...existing empirical evidence for globalist conceptions of traits is seriously deficient" and has given rise to a new research tradition, known as situationalism (p.24). Situationalism's three central theoretical commitments concern behavioural variation, the nature of traits, and personality organization.

(1) Behavioural variation across a population owes more to situational differences than dispositional differences among persons. Individual dispositional differences are not so behaviourally individuating as might have been supposed; to a surprising extent it is safest to predict, for a particular situation, that a person will behave in a fashion similar to the population norm (Ross & Nisbett, 1991).

(2) Systemic observation problematizes the attribution of robust traits. People will quite typically behave inconsistently with respect to the attributive standards associated with the trait, and whatever behavioural consistency is displayed may be readily disrupted by situational variation. This is not to deny the existence of stability; the situationist acknowledges individuals may exhibit regularity over iterated trials of substantially similar situations (Ross & Nisbett, 1991; Wright and Mischel, 1987; Shoda, Mischel & Wright, 1994).

(3) Personality is not often evaluatively integrated. For a given person, the dispositions operative in one situation may have an evaluative status very different from those manifested in another situation; evaluatively inconsistent dispositions may cohabitate in a single personality (Doris, 2002).

Therefore, the assumption of consistent behaviour across different situations due to the attribution of invariant and stable character traits is problematic in that it does not allow for the effects of situational, contextual and social conditions.

Also a number of experiments from the field of social psychology have shown that contexts and situational factors make a difference in people's behaviour where a moral decision and necessary action are required. For example, when

looking at the research conducted by Milgram (1974), Turiel (1983) found that most people actually defied authority and refused to inflict pain on another.

The well known finding that people obeyed comes from an experimental condition in which the participant was face to face with the experimenter and the person being shocked was not in the room. When other conditions varied in location and proximity to the person being shocked (e.g. in the same room) or the place and role of the experimenter (e.g. commands given by telephone) the majority of people refused to go along with the commands of the authority, see Turiel, 1983 for discussion of the experimental conditions and findings. Thus, the situation and context of the experiment made a difference in the decisions made and the actions taken.

Another set of experiments on bystander intervention also shows contextual variations (Darley & Latanne', 1968; Latanne & Darley, 1970). This research was based on whether people would intervene to help others. Participants were placed in situations in which they could choose to help others who appeared to be in distress or danger. A typical experimental manipulation was to vary the number of persons witnessing the person in distress. It was found, consistently, that people were much more likely to intervene and help if they were alone than if others were present (Turiel, 2002). One explanation for this finding could be Bandura's (2002) work on moral disengagement and the diffusion of responsibility.

Negative Bias

Another major limitation to the effectiveness of character education approach to moral development is a negative bias in the overall message conveyed by the approach itself. Most often, the focus is exclusively on bad behaviour and how to deter, defuse, or repair it (Lickona, 1996; Magnuson, 1999; Oser, 1996). Kilpatrick (1992) suggests that schools need to be run in the same way as the military; they should be unapologetically authoritarian, have autonomy from the state, bureaucracy and courts, and be able to punish, suspend, and expel students when and how they wish. The solutions are preventative in nature, controlling and punitive, based on the premise that if people follow society's rules, abide by proper values, develop virtues, respect traditional codes, understand principles of right and wrong and rely on fair negotiation procedures, they will avoid conflict, resist temptation and stay out of trouble (Damon & Gregory, 1997). In other words, if people act the way they "should" everything would be fine and wrong action is really about wrong people.

Thus, the overwhelming thrust of character education is to show children how to stay within societal bounds. As pointed out by Damon and Gregory (1997) "behavioural regulation is certainly important for every young person to learn, but it is not the sum total of a moral life. In fact, preventative proscriptions cannot provide young people with the motivation that they need to form moral goals, construct a moral identity and build enduring moral commitments" (p.121).

Further, using the example of Hitler youth, Magnuson (1999) points out that the assumption of a unidirectional process of development, specifically, the child

adapting to the social institutions, is an unacceptable view of development in its entirety. This approach is a complete capitulation to the idea that morality is equivalent to "community convention" (Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972). In other words, youth or children adapting to the expectations and conventions of the specific community they are living in (i.e. Hitler youth joining the Nazi regime) is not an adequate conception of moral development.

Further, this conception of moral development assumes that as long as the child is behaving according to what is socially desirable in that specific time and place, adequate moral development has been achieved. What does this mean- when a community has been divided along racial or religious lines and acts of violence are a social norm? For example, is it acceptable for a Catholic youth to attack a Protestant youth in Ireland? Or what about the genocide in Rwanda? Many of the people involved in that massacre were acting in a way that was socially sanctioned as acceptable, or even prescribed institutionally. Are these behaviours evidence of moral development? The obvious answer to these questions is no, adaption to social convention is not an adequate assessment of moral development.

In addition, the negative bias in the overall message of character education approaches to moral development presumes competition as the normative human condition. Kilpatrick's (1992) conception of an individual's moral life is explicitly competitive. "One of the metaphors that can be used to describe an individual's moral life is that of warfare or battle…if one has to do battle in life, one needs to be trained to do battle." (p.25). Battle with one's base nature, or

perhaps battle with the devil. This conception of an individual's moral experience necessitates a competitive stance. The use of a battle metaphor is in itself competitive and suggests that the development of morality is a competition between, within, and among individuals. "The most perfectly rational plan of action is to always put yourself first" (Kilpatrick, 1992, p. 25). From this perspective, competition is assumed to be the normative human condition, which leaves the individual bereft of any moral agency other than what is learned and habituated.

In sum, the character education approach to moral development is problematic because it assumes consistency of behaviour across different situations and contexts, and because the negative bias (the focus on wrong people, community convention, competitive assumption) of the message is implicit in the approach. An alternative to this approach is Kohlberg's (1984) cognitive developmental theory of moral development.

Kohlberg's (1984) Theory of Moral Development

The "cognitive developmental" approach was initially articulated by Lawrence Kohlberg (1969, 1976, 1981a, 1984). Before delving into the specifics of Lawrence Kohlberg's (1969) cognitive developmental approach to moral development, it is important to provide some background on how the approach was developed. This is where we now turn with an overview of the work of Jean Piaget.

Jean Piaget (1965)

Piaget's (1965) vast array of work focuses specifically on the moral lives of children, studying the way children play games in order to learn more about right and wrong. According to Piaget (1965), all development emerges from action; that is to say, individuals construct and reconstruct their knowledge of the world as a result of interactions with the environment. Based on his observations of children's application of rules when playing, Piaget (1965) determined that morality, too, can be considered a developmental process. For example,

> Ben, a ten year old studied by Piaget, provided the following critique of a rule made-up by a child playing marbles, "it isn't a rule! It's a wrong rule because it is outside of the rules. A fair rule is one that is in the game." Ben believed in the absolute and intrinsic truth of the rules, characteristic of early moral reasoning. In contrast, Vua, aged thirteen, illustrates an understanding of the reasoning behind the application of rules, characteristic of later moral thinking. When asked to consider the fairness of a made-up rule compared to a traditional rule, Vua replied "it is just fair because the marbles are far apart (making the game equally difficult) (DeVries & Zan, 1994, p. 54).

In addition to examining children's understanding of game rules, Piaget (1965) interviewed children regarding acts such as stealing and lying. When asked what a lie is, younger children consistently answered that they are "naughty words" (Piaget, 1965). When asked why they should not lie, younger children could rarely explain beyond the forbidden nature of the act, "because it is a naughty word" (Piaget, 1965). However, older children were able to explain, "because it isn't right", and "it wasn't true" (Piaget, 1965). Even older children indicated an awareness of intention as relevant to the meaning of an act: "a lie is when you deceive someone else. To make a mistake is when you make a mistake" (Piaget, 1965). From his observations, Piaget (1965) concluded that children begin in a

"heteronomous" stage of moral reasoning, characterized by a strict adherence to rules and duties, obedience and authority.

Heteronomous means not autonomous. In other words, in Piaget's "heteronomous" stage of moral reasoning means children are not making decisions based on their own autonomy. Rather, they are making decisions based on their knowledge of outside rules and their understanding of obedience to authority.

This heteronomy results from two factors. The first factor is a young child's cognitive structure. According to Piaget (1965), the thinking of young children is characterized by egocentrism. That is to say, young children are unable to simultaneously take into account their own view of things with the perspective of someone else. "This egocentrism leads children to project their own thoughts and wishes onto others, and is associated with the unidirectional view of rules and power associated with heteronomous moral thought, and various forms of moral realism" (DeVries & Zan, 1994, p. 57). In other words, children make decisions about behaviour based on what the rules are, not on why the rules are there.

Moral realism is associated with objective responsibility, which is valuing the letter of the law above the purpose of the law (Kurtines, 1984). This is why young children are more concerned about the outcomes of actions rather than the intentions of the person doing the act. Moral realism is also associated with a young child's belief in imminent justice, in which the expectation is that punishment automatically follows acts of wrong-doing (Kuritnes, 1984).

According to Piaget (1965) the second major contributor to heteronomous moral thinking in young children is children's relative social relationships with adults. In the natural authority relationship between adults and children, power is handed down from above. Thus, the relative powerlessness of young children, coupled with childhood egocentrism feeds into a heteronomous moral orientation.

However, Piaget (1965) found that children find this strict heteronomous adherence to rules problematic, especially during play, in which the group seeks to play together in a way that all find fair, and suggests that as children consider these situations they develop towards and "autonomous" stage of moral reasoning. According to Piaget (1965) the "autonomous" stage of moral reasoning is characterized by the ability to consider rules critically, and to selectively apply these rules based on a goal of mutual respect and cooperation, which signifies a shift in the child's cognitive structure from ego-centrism to perspective-taking. "Coordinating one's own perspective with that of others means that what is right needs to be based on solutions that meet the requirements of fair reciprocity" (DeVries & Zan, 1994, p. 57). Thus, Piaget viewed moral development as the result of interpersonal interactions through which individuals work out solutions which all deem fair.

Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) modified and elaborated Piaget's work. Consistent with Piaget, he proposed that children form ways of thinking through their experiences that include understandings of moral concepts such as justice, rights, equality and human welfare. However, Kohlberg (1969) followed the development of moral judgment beyond the ages studied by Piaget, and

suggested that the process of attaining moral maturity took longer and was more gradual than Piaget had proposed.

As implied by the name for Kohlberg's (1984) theoretical approach, Kohlberg's model of morality focuses on the development of moral cognition, or thought. In particular, Kohlberg (1984) defines the moral aspect of personality in terms of structures of moral reasoning and focuses on the study of moral reasoning development through an invariant and systematic sequence of three levels that include six hierarchical stages. The three levels and six stages of Kohlberg's (1984) theory are detailed below, along with what is considered right, the reasons for doing the right thing, and the social perspectives which are contained within each of the stages in order to provide definition of the terms used to characterize the components of each stage.

LEVEL I. PRECONVENTIONAL MORALITY

Stage 1: Heteronomous morality

What is right – Avoiding breaking rules backed by punishment; obedience for its own sake; in avoidance of physical damage to persons and property.

Reasons for doing right – Avoidance of punishment, and the superior power of authorities.

Social perspective of stage – *Egocentric point of view*. This means that one does not consider the interests of others or recognize that they differ from the actor's and one doesn't relate two points of view. Actions are considered physically rather than in terms of psychological interests of others. Also one confuses the perspective of authority with one's own.

Stage 2. Individualism, instrumental purpose, and exchange.

What is right – Following rules only when it is to someone's immediate interest; acting to meet one's own interests and needs and

letting others do the same. Right is also what's fair, an equal exchange, a deal, or an agreement.

Reasons for doing right - To serve one's own needs or interests in a world where one has to recognize that other people have interests too.

Social perspective – *Concrete individualistic perspective.* This means that one is aware that everybody has his or her own interest to pursue and that these may well conflict, so that right can be relative.

LEVEL II. CONVENTIONAL MORALITY

Stage 3. Mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships, and interpersonal conformity.

What is right – Living up to what is expected by people close to the oneself or what people generally expect of people in roles such as sister, daughter, friend, etc. "Being good" is important and thus one must have good motives and show concern for others. This also means keeping mutual relationships, and showing trust, loyalty, respect, and gratitude.

Reasons for doing right – To be a good person in one's own eyes and those of others. One desires to maintain rules and authorities which support stereotypically good behaviour.

Social perspective – *Perspective of the individual in relationship with other individuals.* This means that one is aware of shared feelings, agreements, and expectations and that these take primacy over individual interests. Thus one relates points of view through putting one's self in the other person's shoes.

Stage 4. Social system and conscience.

What is right – Fulfilling the actual duties to which one has agreed. Laws are to be upheld except in extreme cases where laws conflict with other fixed social duties. One does the right thing by contributing to society, the group, and the institution.

Reasons for doing right – To keep the institution going as a whole, to avoid the breakdown in the system and to fulfill the imperative of conscience to meet defined obligations.

Social perspective – *Differentiation of societal points of view from interpersonal agreement or motives.* This means that one

takes the point of view of the system that defines roles and rules. From this perspective one considers individual relations in terms of place within the system.

LEVEL III. POST-CONVENTIONAL OR PRINCIPLED MORALITY

Stage 5. Social contract or utility and individual rights.

What is right – Being aware that people hold a variety of values and opinions, that most values and rules are relative to one's group. These relative rules should usually be upheld in the interest of impartiality and because they form and support the social contract. What is right is in some cases related to non-relative values and rights like life and liberty, however, must be upheld in any society regardless of majority opinion.

Reasons for doing right – A sense of obligation to the law because of one's social contract to make and abide by laws for the welfare of all people's rights. A feeling of contractual commitment, freely entered upon, to family, friendship, trust, and work obligation. Concern that laws and duties be based on rational calculation of overall utility, "the greatest good for the greatest number."

Social perspective – *Prior-to-society perspective.* This means that one is aware of values and rights prior to social attachment and contracts. One integrates perspectives by formal mechanisms of agreements, contract, impartiality, and due process. One considers moral and legal points of view and recognizes that these sometimes conflict and finds it difficult to integrate them.

Stage 6. Universal Ethical Principles.

What is right – Following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles, one acts in accordance with the principle. Principles are universal principles of justice, and the equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

Reason for doing right – The belief as a rational person in the validity of universal moral principles, and a sense of personal commitment to them.

Social perspective – *Perspective of a moral point of view* from which social arrangements derive. This perspective holds that any rational individual recognizing the nature of morality or the fact that persons

> are ends in themselves must be treated as such. In other words, the point of view that all human beings should take toward one another is as free and autonomous persons. This means equal consideration of the claim or points of view of each person affected by the moral decision to be made.
> (Kohlberg, 1984, pp. 174-176).

Kohlberg (1969) rejected traditional character education practices which are premised on the idea that virtues and vices are the bases to moral behaviour, or that moral character is comprised of a "bag of virtues", such as honesty, kindness, patience, strength, etc., primarily due to the lack of consensus on what virtues should be taught. He also rejected the focus on values and virtues because of the complex nature of practicing such virtues. Take for example the virtues of honesty and kindness; Joan may think that she is being kind by telling Jim that his cooking is terrible (being honest), while Stu may see himself as being kind by not telling Jim that his cooking is terrible (not being honest). This example of difference in the practice of kindness and honesty do not necessarily mean that Joan and Stu hold fundamentally different moral values, however, the way they conceive and enact the virtues of kindness and honesty are different.

Kohlberg believes a better approach to moral behaviour could be found in focusing on stages of moral development in order to structure an exploration of the differences found in people's orientation to and enactment of morality. His focus on a stage-wise approach to moral development was influenced not only by Jean Piaget but by the work of (Dewey & Tufts,1932) and James Baldwin (1906), both of whom emphasized that human beings develop in a progressive fashion.

Kohlberg's six stage, three level progressive approach to morality, detailed above, can be seen as primarily addressed in the formal structures of society (laws, roles, institutions, general practices) instead of to personal, face-to-face relationships, in particular, everyday dealings with people. It is this focus on the formal structures of society, and its relationship to moral judgment, that has raised questions about the absence of other processes, constructs and influences (such as motivation, compassion, and energy involved in the moral conflict, and situation and context), in Kohlberg's approach to morality.

Moral Judgment as One Component

As mentioned earlier, Kohlberg's (1984) three level, six stage cognitive developmental theory focuses on one component of moral development— moral judgment. A focus on only one process in the larger psychology of morality neglects moral motivation, moral sensitivity, and follow through on behaviour (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau,& Thoma, 1999). Kohlberg (1984) discusses various component processes in the psychology of morality, dividing up morality mainly into judgments about justice, individual responsibility, and outward behaviour (Kohlberg & Candee, 1984), but dealing with moral judgment alone fails to address other possible processes involved in the psychology of morality. In essence, Kohlberg's preference for the philosophic tradition of reasoning and subsequent focus on judgment has led to a restrictive emphasis on justice and fairness which neglects the role of personal/intimate relationships, and ultimately abstracts the individual from his or her context.

Gilligan (1982), a student of Kohlberg's, was influenced by the stage theory approach to understanding moral reasoning. However, she disagreed with Kohlberg's emphasis on justice and fairness as the only content of the moral system within which people developed. Gilligan (1982) also suggests that Kohlberg's theories were biased against women, as only males were used in his studies and by listening to women's experiences, she offered that a morality of care could serve in the place of the morality of justice and rights espoused by Kohlberg (1984).

Like Kohlberg's (1976) stage theory, Gilligan's (1982) has three major divisions: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional but for Gilligan (1982), the transitions between the stages are fueled by changes in the sense of self rather than changes in cognitive ability.

> She suggests that the developmental course of morality for females is premised initially on being responsible for solely for the needs of self, then, as girls mature, becomes focused on a responsibility for meeting the needs of others before self, and finally when moral maturity is achieved, is anchored to a balanced approach that promotes taking responsibility for meeting the needs of both self and others (Artz, 2004, p.102).

Thus, Gilligan's (1982) stage theory of moral development has served to point out the male-centered view of many approaches to moral development and has challenged the idea that there is only one dimension of moral reasoning.

Gilligan (1982) is not the only person to question the centrality of a justice orientation to morality. Nel Noddings (2002) calls for a move away from the restrictive focus on justice towards a focus on the centrality of caring and noted in her earlier work that,

One might say that ethics has been discussed largely in the language of the

> father: in principles and propositions, in terms such as justification, fairness, justice. The mother's voice has been silent. Human caring and the memory of caring and being cared for, which I shall argue from the foundation of ethical response, have not received attention except as outcomes of ethical behavior (Noddings, 1984, p.1).

Noddings' (1984) emphasis on caring is complementary to Gilligan's proposition that "... girls' morality is grounded not in the justice orientation that Kohlberg claims for all human beings, but in the care orientation that makes primary the preservation of relationships" (Artz, 2004, p. 102).

In her initial work, Gilligan (1982) emphasizes the gender differences thought to be associated with these two orientations. The morality of care emphasizes interconnectedness and presumably emerges to a greater degree in girls owing to their early connection in identity formation with their mothers (Murray, 2003). The morality of justice, on the other hand, is said to emerge within the context of coordinating the interactions of autonomous individuals, and was proposed as more prevalent among boys because of their relations with their mothers, and their subsequent masculine identity formation which entails boys separating from that relationship and individuating from the mother (Murray, 2003).

However, further research has suggested that moral reasoning does not follow the distinct gender lines which Gilligan (1982) originally reported, and has shown that both sexes have the capacity to see ethical issues from the two perspectives, although they tend to select one focus or the other depending on how they view themselves (Griffin, 1991; Murray, 2003). Debates about gender differences in moral reasoning aside, Gilligan's (1982) critique of Kohlberg's (1976) cognitive developmental model broadened the focus of studying moral

development and questioned the assumption of moral judgment as the center of moral development.

Porter (1991) critiques both Gilligan and Kohlberg asserting that,

> ... in construing moral decisions as the outcomes of underlying developmentally driven cognitive structures, stage theory based systems fall short by not taking seriously the importance of self-description and instead abstract self from world and fail to take into account both the agency of persons as self-interpreting human beings and the personal context of the moral dilemma(As cited in Artz, 2004, p. 102).

Moreover, Porter (1991) examines the issue of a restrictive formal developmental theory such as Kohlberg's (1984) and points out that "...unconditional absolutes stand in tension with the way morality figures in our lives, because such absolutes foreclose connections between moral reasoning, moral action and individual life-plans" (p.148). Simply put, principled moral judgment is so abstract that it ignores both context and the fact that morality affects people on a personal and experiential level. "As self-interpretive beings, we attach different meanings to experiences. Moral action is influenced by a host of motivations that affect our self-understanding, our interpretation of situations and the ultimate outcome of moral judgment, of which we can only speculate on the possibilities" (Porter, 1991 p. 148).

Thus, an examination of the context and conditions that give rise to moral experience may provide a more well-rounded explanation of moral judgment and subsequent action than a focus on one or two cognitive processes. In her 2004 study on adolescent girls' perspectives on the use of violence, Artz points out that,

...there is strong agreement that the interpretation of self and world is key to

> moral action. Katz (1998), in examining the use of violence suggested that the key to behaviour that is otherwise nor espoused but non-the-less practiced, can be found in an analysis of the conditions that are the context for such behaviour. Moretti, Holland and Mackay (2001) have also offered evidence for the importance of self-representation to indirect and direct use of aggression in girls. Thus, if one is to understand moral judgment, one must first of all understand the interpretive, contextual basis of that judgment. Analyzing first for moral development stage may foreclose, rather than assist such an inquiry. (p.103).

Thus, the main limitation of Kohlberg's (1984) stage theory of moral development is that it ultimately abstracts the individual from his or her context and ignores the social conditions that give rise to moral experience. An alternative approach to moral development in which the context and conditions that promote moral experience are central is Johnson and Johnson's (1989, 1998) research on the goal structures of Social Interdependence Theory.

Social Interdependence Theory

The basic premise of Social Interdependence Theory is that the ways in which participants' goals are structured determine how they interact, and the interaction pattern determines the outcomes of the situation (Deutsch, 1949). According to this premise, cause and effect can go both ways. Thus, cooperation tends to induce and be induced by mutual assistance, exchange of needed resources, and trust. Competition tends to induce and be induced by obstruction of each other's success, tactics of coercion and threat, enhancement of power differences, deceptive communication, and striving to "win" conflicts. Individualistic efforts tend to induce and be induced by an avoidance of other people (Johnson, 2003a).

In other words, the way in which one's goals are structured arises out of the social conditions in which they are embedded, and one's moral experience is dependent on one's goal structure and vice versa. One may expect, therefore, radically different types of decision-making and subsequent behaviour depending on how the social context is structured.

As mentioned previously, Johnson and Johnson (1998) propose that there is a relationship between social interdependence conditions – cooperation, competition, and individualism – and morality. The relationship being that "...the interdependent condition of cooperation encourages the practice of normative - moral behaviour while competition and individualism work against it" (Magnuson, 2002, p.5). In other words, moral decision-making and moral action are influenced by the social conditions and the subsequent goal structures in which they are embedded. Thus, in social interdependence theory the conditions (cooperative, individualistic, competitive) of the social structure, not individual traits, are central to understanding individual action.

Social Interdependence Theory includes three different goal structures of social settings: competitive, individualistic, and cooperative. Johnson and Johnson (1998) propose that each condition structures a "hidden curriculum that permeates the social and cognitive development of children, adolescents and young adults. Each type of interdependence has a set of values inherently built into it..." (p.3). As Artz (2004) points out, "These conditions provide us with clues as to how people may be interpreting self and world and how they may be morally positioned with regard to their actions" (p.104).

Competitive Values. Under competitive conditions, individuals can only achieve their goals by working to deny others the same goal. The values associated with this are:

1. A commitment to getting more than others.
2. Success depends on beating, defeating, and getting more than other people.
3. Opposing, obstructing, and sabotaging the success of others is a natural way of life.
4. The pleasure of winning is associated with others' disappointment with losing.
5. Other people are a threat to one's success.
6. Other people's worth is contingent on their "wins".
7. Self-worth is conditional and contingent on one's "wins".
8. Competitors value external motivation based on striving to win...-
9. People who are different than one are to be either feared or held in contempt. (Johnson & Johnson, 1998, pp. 4-5).

Individualistic Values. Under individualistic conditions, whether persons achieve their goals has little relationship to whether others achieve their goals. The values associated with this are:

1. Commitment to one's self-interest.
2. Success depends on one's own efforts.
3. Other people's success or failure is irrelevant and of no consequence.
4. The pleasure of succeeding is personal and isolated.
5. Other people are irrelevant and of no value to one's efforts to succeed.
6. Self-worth is based on a unidimensional view of oneself.
7. Individualistic experiences result in valuing extrinsic motivation based on achieving criteria and receiving rewards rather than striving to learn.
8. People who are perceived to be different are disliked while people who are perceived to be similar are liked. (Johnson & Johnson, 1998, pp. 6-7)

Cooperative Values. Under cooperative conditions, persons pursue goals that can be achieved only if everyone achieves them. The values associated with this are:

1. Commitment to the common good.
2. Success depends on the joint efforts of everyone to achieve mutual goals.
3. Facilitating, promoting, and encouraging the success of others is a natural way of life.
4. The pleasure of succeeding is associated with others' happiness in their success.
5. Other people are potential contributors to one's success.
6. Other people's worth is unconditional.
7. Self-worth is unconditional.
8. Cooperators value intrinsic motivation based on striving to learn, grow, develop and succeed. (Johnson & Johnson, 1998, pp.7-9)

The values inherently taught by cooperative efforts include a commitment to one's own and others' success and well being, a commitment to the common good, and the view that facilitating and promoting the success of others is a natural way of life. Engaging in competitive efforts inherently teaches the values of obtaining more than others and beating and defeating others, the importance of winning, and the view that opposing and obstructing others' success is a natural way of life. The values inherently taught by individualistic experiences are a commitment to one's own self-interest and the view that the well being of others is irrelevant. Schools inculcate numerous values in students, and the instructional methods used influence the values that students develop. See Johnson (2003b) for an in-depth discussion of theoretical research on social interdependence theory and its relationship with practical application.

In order to explore the relationship between the structure of social settings and what is valued in a moral sense, as a result of that structure, Magnuson

(2002) combines the work of MacIntyre (1984) and Johnson & Johnson (1998), suggesting three different social and moral conditions:

1. In competitive social settings, it is in the best interest of individuals to value "external goods," that is, external to the setting or activity such as status, money, or other extrinsically motivated acquisitions and rewards. Moral values are defined as whatever makes possible acquiring these goods or winning.

2. Within individualistic social contexts, it is in the best interest of individuals to value whatever meets the needs of the self. Morality emerges from the need to negotiate between rational, autonomous individuals.

3. Within cooperative social contexts, it is in the best interest of individuals to value and contribute to common moral and non-moral goods that transcend individuals, and moral values are those qualities that enhance and sustain those goods or goals. (Magnuson, 2002, p.6)

Magnuson's (2002) study shows how examining cooperative, competitive, and individualistic goal structures might be used to interpret the way morality is present in a wide variety of social settings.

> ...it is possible to compare the moral experience of youth in different groups by observing whether their goal structure is cooperative, competitive, or individualistic. In this way theory can be used to evaluate the quality of moral experience. For example, caring in a cooperative setting ought to be the more powerful experience in addition to the normative moral experience. Under individualistic conditions, caring is something one receives, such as a teacher's care for a student; but caring can also be competitive, such as in a family where a parent's intent to care for a child may in reality be a battleground....It suggests that an important part of the practice of work with youth in formal and informal settings is the skill of organizing experiences and social groups characterized by cooperative goal structures (p.19).

This perspective suggests that by paying attention to the conditions of the social structures (cooperative, competitive, individualistic) that young people are inhabiting and the effects they may have on moral experience, we may be able to develop a better understanding of how they are interpreting themselves and the world and gain insight into how they may be morally positioned with regard to

their actions. Moreover, attending to the conditions and structures of the life worlds of youth may help to illuminate which conditions promote normative moral experience and encourage moral action.

Following this line of reasoning, Magnuson (1999) theorizes that,

> Competitive, individualistic, and cooperative conditions describe the three different types of "moral experience" with cooperation being the moral norm. Social situations, settings and institutions can be interpreted in terms of quality of moral experience provided according to whether they are constructed cooperatively, competitively, or individualistically. Further, if cooperation is the morally normative condition, then social interdependence theory can be used to prescribe how to organize a situation to enhance moral commitment. (p.39).

In conclusion, one of the primary problems with theories of moral development is the disregard for situational and contextual influences that give rise to moral experience. Magnuson's (1999, 2002) application of Johnson and Johnson's (1989, 1998) research on the goal structures of Social Interdependence Theory offers a framework for exploring moral development and subsequent moral action, in which the context and conditions that promote moral experience are central. Thus, I propose to examine the responses of youth gathered from the Survey of Student Relationships (Artz, Nicholson, & McNamara, 2003) see Appendix A, the Survey of Student Life (adapted from Artz & Riecken, 1994, 1998) see Appendix B, and the School Climate Questionnaire (Artz, Nicholson, & McNamara, 2003) see Appendix C, through the framework of Social Interdependence Theory, in order to explore what the students' orientation to social interdependence(i.e. competition, cooperation, or independence) is and how this orientation impacts their moral experience and subsequent decisions about moral action.

It is my hope that through this analysis the organization of the social structures that youth are inhabiting will be illuminated on the broader social organization or "hidden curriculum" identified by Johnson and Johnson (1998) and how it impacts the moral experience of youths in order to better understand how they are making sense of the world and positioning themselves with regard to moral decision-making and moral action. If the "hidden curriculum" is fundamental to explaining youths' orientation to moral decision-making and moral action, we may be required to treat their behaviours as symptomatic of their social structure. This will necessitate a change in how intervention strategies are conceived and implemented and broaden the responsibility for the moral experience of youth to society as a whole, as opposed to constructing the individual youth that engages in violent or aggressive behaviour as deviant or flawed.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

The Big Picture

My research is embedded in *The Gender and Aggression Project (GAP),* which is funded by the Canadian Institute of Health through a New Emerging Team (NET) Grant co-sponsored by the Institute of Gender and Health and the Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health. This project brings together researchers from Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, University of British Columbia, York University, University of Montreal, and University of Virginia to study the risk and protective factors related to the etiology and development course of aggression and violence in the lives of girls and young women. The researchers involved in the *Gender and Aggression Project* (GAP) are studying the contributing factors, and developmental course of aggressive and violent behaviour in girls, and are developing and evaluating empirically-based intervention strategies for working with girls who use violence.

The central gain anticipated to accrue from the formation of this research team rests in the integration of multidisciplinary perspectives in the investigation of aggression and violence in girls. The multiple domains that are integrated into this NET through key investigators and associates include education, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, child and youth care, dispute resolution, and criminology. Researchers of the GAP also span across diverse methodological strategies. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies are employed to

ensure a comprehensive understanding of the 'life space' of girls that give rise to aggressive behaviour.

Although the GAP project is focused on girls, I have decided to expand my study to include boys. The rationale for this decision is that my interest is in how adolescents, generally, make decisions about violent and aggressive behaviour, and how the social interdependence conditions in which their experiences are grounded may influence these decisions.

The Participants

The total number of participants in this study is 27. These 27 participants can be seen as exemplars in the sense that out of 210 respondents they reported the highest usages of physical, relational, and/or sexual aggression on the Survey of Student Life. The participants are from three different sites within the Victoria, B.C. area, two public schools and one private girls' school. Table 1 illustrates the number, location and gender, of the participants.

Table1.

All Girls' School		Middle School		Community School	
Total Number 8		Total Number 9		Total Number 10	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	8	3	6	5	5

The number of participants is almost evenly distributed across the three schools. The uneven ratio of males to females, 8 males to 19 females, is mainly a result of our including participants from the all girls' school, and because a large number of males did not complete the questionnaires fully.

The participants were 13-15 years of age in either Grade 8 or Grade 9. All of the participants identified themselves as Caucasian except one who identified herself as Asian. As well, all of the participants reported being able to read and write in English and only one reported "other" as a first language.

Data Collection

The method of data collection used in this study included three questionnaires.Some benefits and limitations to the questionnaire method of data collection will be discussed later in this chapter. The rational for choosing the questionnaire method of data collection was based more on opportunity than anything else. The opportunities that influenced my decision to use the questionnaire method of data collection included: the ability to fulfill course requirements, the chance to gather data from a much larger sample than if I was working on my own, access to the sites of study and the opportunity to take advantage of funding already supplied to a larger study, *The Gender and Aggression Project*.

Within the larger context of the CIHR Gender and Aggression Project I had the opportunity to fulfill my methodological course requirements by assisting the team in developing three self-report surveys (Appendices A, B, & C)..The first two surveys were formatted for automatic scanning and produced quantitative data. The third survey requires students to respond to open-ended questions about what they and other students would do in a variety of scenarios. There are three kinds of questions on the questionnaire:

1. What should someone in the scenario do?

2. What would you do?
3. What would most people in your school do?

The questions were developed with the hope of uncovering not only how adolescents view others and themselves with respect to violent and aggressive behaviour, but how they view their school environment (i.e. what would most people do?). This survey requires manual review and qualitative analysis.

Using the questionnaire method of data collection also allowed me to draw on a much larger sample than if I were working on my own (details of sample size and related topics will be discussed in the following research design portion of this chapter). Working with a team provided the ability to administer the questionnaire to several classrooms at one time, minimizing disruption to the students, and saving time spent on attempting to coordinate school and researchers' schedules.

In addition, using the questionnaire and working within the context of the larger study granted me access to the research sites. The principle investigator on the Gender and Aggression Project had worked with all three of the research sites previously. The existing relationship between the principle investigator and the sites allowed me access to the sites under the umbrella of the larger project.

Finally, using the questionnaire developed within the context of the larger study provided me the opportunity to take advantage of the funding already granted to the Gender and Aggression Project. The funding provided for the printing of the questionnaires, the hiring of interpreters for students with English

as a Second Language, and counselling services if needed, none of which I would have been able to afford working on my own.

Before moving into looking at benefits and limitations of the questionnaire method, I must explain that the School Climate Questionnaire) is something of a hybrid. Unlike traditional survey or questionnaire methods adopted by quantitative researchers, which focus on 'fixed- choice' questions (e.g. 'yes' or 'no') (Silverman, 2001), this questionnaire focuses on open-ended questions to produce quite different responses. As a result, the responses to this questionnaire can be interpreted as akin to responses elicited in an interview situation in so far as they are not confined to 'yes' or 'no' and are not necessarily directed by the questions themselves. In other words, this questionnaire invites the participants to speak from their own perspectives and experiences in an open-ended way, encouraging the participants to answer in ways that are relevant to them while allowing participants to use their own language.

Some Benefits and limitations of the Questionnaire Method

Two benefits of the questionnaire method for collecting research data include: lower costs of sampling respondents over a wide geographic area, and the time required to collect the data is typically much less (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). As mentioned previously, the questionnaire method in this specific study allowed for both the use of a large sample population and timely data collection (i.e. multiple administrations of the questionnaires at one time).

However, unlike an interview method of data collection the questionnaire method is unable to probe deeply into the respondents' opinions, feelings and

experiences. Also, once the questionnaire has been administered it is not possible to modify the items, even though they may be unclear to some respondents. Also, the nature of the questions asked in these questionnaires (mainly around delinquent behaviour) leaves one wondering if the responses are honest or if they are tailored in ways to protect the respondent from perceived disciplinary action (even though anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed and fully explained before questionnaire administration).

Ethics Approval

This research project was approved by The University of Victoria, Office of the Vice-President, Research Human Research Ethics Committee on August 25th, 2004, approval number 103-04 In addition, Ethics approval #427-03 was granted for the larger *Gender and Aggression* Project. A further explanation of ethical considerations are discussed in the following.

Research Design

Prior to administration, the surveys were tested on two groups of adolescents during informal focus groups held by myself and the principle investigator on the CIHR Gender and Aggression Project, Dr. Sibylle Artz. The purpose of the focus groups was to gain feedback from the participants on the survey design and to troubleshoot anything that might come up during the administration of the questionnaire to the larger sample. One of the outcomes of the focus groups was the need to provide youth with definitions of terms for clarity.

Consent forms were distributed to parents of students who were under 13 years of age and general information about the project was distributed to all other

parents of students who were being asked to participate in the surveys. At the time the surveys were administered in each school, students were provided with an oral introduction to the project that stressed their voluntary participation and the efforts being taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, and were presented with a school youth consent form detailing the project (see Appendix D).

In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, students were assigned a 5 digit alphanumeric code that was pre-entered on their individual copies of the surveys at the time of administration. A removable name label was placed over the code to facilitate distribution and students were instructed to peel off the label before beginning the surveys. Thus, when completed surveys were returned, only the code appeared on the surveys.

It was stated explicitly both in the consent forms and verbally that any information collected in the study will remain confidential. However, it was also made clear in both the consent forms and verbally that I would be required to tell someone who could help if I found out that a participant was planning on hurting himself or herself, others, or was being abused by someone.

In order to protect and support the participants in this projectin case of discomfort arising from dealing with the subjects of violence and aggression, during the oral introduction of the project, participants were advised that if discussing their experiences upset them, we would refer them, at no charge, to a certified counsellor who is experienced with youth on issues of aggression, violence and related issues. Youths could consult the counsellor regarding any

difficulties that arose as a consequence of participation in this study. This consultation would be paid for by the project. The content of that consultation would remain strictly confidential and the researchers would not have access to any information shared during the consultation.

In addition, during the oral introduction I acknowledged the possibility that describing their experiences of violence, and aggression might bring up feelings of sadness, frustration, grief, anger, disappointment, or fear. I encouraged the participants to reveal only what they felt comfortable with and that they could at any time choose to withdraw their participation without explanation.

The questionnaires were administered to 210 students in Grades 7 to 9 at three different sites within the Victoria, B.C. area: two public schools and one private girls' school. The number of girls who responded was 144 and the number of boys who responded was 66. The uneven ratio of males to females is mainly a result of including participants from the all girls' school, and because a large number of males did not complete the questionnaires fully.

Limitations of the Questionnaires

There are some limitations to these questionnaires, which include:

1. The School Climate questionnaire is lengthy at 8 pages, which includes 12 questions with multiple components. The participants may have found this arduous and, as a result, may not have taken the time required to answer all of the questions completely and thoughtfully.
2. The sheer amount of data has necessitated this report to focus only on the responses from the questionnaires. Future researchers may want to

draw from the taped interviews that were conducted as part of the larger study in order to deepen the analysis.

3. The questionnaires are newly developed and this is the first time they have been used. There may be room for improvement and further development of the scenarios, length, language, etc.
4. Again, the sheer amount of data collected meant that I could only focus on the first five questions on the School Climate questionnaire and this necessitated a paring down of the number of questionnaires examined.

How I Proceeded

I read through the 210 responses to the School Climate Questionnaire in their entirety. I pulled out any questionnaires that were incomplete, answered with the same answer repeatedly, or answered in a joking manner. Rude and flippant language signaled that the student was not taking the questionnaire seriously.

At this point the number of questionnaires (N=66) was still too many for a detailed analysis, so I decided to use purposeful sampling in order to focus on those respondents that had reported high uses of violence and aggression on the Survey of Student Life. Purposeful sampling of this kind is defined by Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) as extreme or deviant case sampling because it focuses on cases that are unusual or special. The data from the Survey of Student Life was transformed into rank cases from highest to lowest on 3 forms of aggression: physical, relational, and sexual.

The ranking procedure using SPSSx entailed six steps.

1) The "Transform" command from the SPSS pull-down menu was selected.

2) "Rank cases" was selected from the menu.
3) 'Relational aggression', 'physical aggression', and 'sexual aggression' were selected from the variable list.
4) Rank 1 was assigned to 'largest value'.
5) Under 'Rank Types", 'rank' was selected.
6) Under 'Ties', 'low' was selected.

There was no need to put any variable in the "By" box because all I wanted to do was rank the students on each of the aggression variables. The order was displayed with the most severe as having the lowest number, i.e.) 1, and any ties reflected the placement down the list. For instance, if 2 students tied scores at 5th place, the next line would assume the 7th position. From these rankings I pulled the 27 respondents that reported the highest usages of physical, relational, and/or sexual aggression on the Survey of Student Life.

I consider this study to be a multi-site (Creswell, 1998), collective case study (Stake, 1995) because data was collected from three different schools and more than one case is being studied. I used categorical aggregation (Creswell, 1998), looking at a number of instances arising out of the data in order to allow issue-relevant meanings to emerge and from those, looked for patterns and themes that arose. In addition, I employed both cross-case and within-case analyses in which I examined themes across cases to discern which are common to all cases and also unique themes within a single case.

In this sense my approach can be seen as interpretive analysis because I examined the case study data closely in order to find constructs, themes, and

patterns that could be used to describe and explain the phenomena being studied (Gall et al.,, 1996). In the reporting of these findings I was mindful of the need to leave the students' responses in their own words to ensure that their experiences of and perspectives on the use of violence and aggression in schools were honoured.

In order to address the issues of reliability and validity within this study, I decided to adopt Altheide and Johnson's (1994) conception of interpretive validity because it moves away from the more traditional constructs of validity which become problematic when

> ...one rejects the positivist assumption of a reality that can be known objectively" and questions how a researcher arrives at valid, reliable knowledge if each individual being studied constructs his or her own reality (the constructivist assumption), if the researcher becomes a central focus of the inquiry process (the "reflexive" turn in the social sciences), and if no inquiry process or type of knowledge has any authority over any other (the postmodern assumption) (Gall et al., 1996, p.572).

An interpretive approach to assessing the validity of this research fits because I am approaching this research as an interpretive researcher with the aim of illuminating what the participants' orientation to social interdependence is grounded in (competition, cooperation, independence) and how this may impact their decisions about violent and aggressive behaviour in schools, as opposed to looking for facts that exist independently of my efforts to know them.

Altheide and Johnson's (1994) conception of interpretive validity includes four types of criteria used to assess the credibility of an interpretive researcher's knowledge claims: usefulness, contextual completeness, researcher positioning, and reporting style.

1. *Usefulness.* Do the sources used enlighten the individuals who read the report of its findings? Do they liberate (stay true to and refrain from abstracting from their experience) the individuals being studied, the readers of the report, or some other group?
2. *Contextual completeness.* Is the context in which the participants locate their experience taken into account?
3. *Researcher positioning.* Does the researcher demonstrate sensitivity in how he or she relates to the situation being studied?
4. *Reporting style.* Does the researcher achieve verisimilitude, which Adler and Adler (1994) describe as "a style of writing that draws the reader so closely into the subject's worlds that these can be palpably felt" (p. 381).

In addition to the use of Altheide and Johnson's conception of interpretive validity, I used the process of triangulation in order to help eliminate any biases that might result from relying exclusively on any one data-collection method, source, or theory. The process of triangulation "...is the process of using multiple data-collection methods, data sources or theories to check the validity of case study findings" (Gall et al., 1996, p. 574). The data sources I used include the self-report answers gathered by the School Climate Questionnaire , the self report answers gathered by the Survey of Student Life, the self report answers gathered by the Survey of Student Relationships, and relevant literature within the field.

I began with the quantitative data from the Survey of Student Life, and the Survey of Student Relationships in order to get a sense of how the participants

saw themselves, their relationships with others, their perspectives on gender, values, rejection, moral judgments, school connectedness and their use of violence and aggression. I looked at each response individually and then combined them so that the numbers would give a sense of what commonalities and differences existed within the responses. I then moved to the qualitative data from the School Climate Questionnaire.

I looked at each response individually and cycled through the data (read and reread) looking for themes and patterns. I then compared the responses from the qualitative and quantitative data.

What I discovered through this comparison was a series of contradictions in what the participants were saying and doing. I focused on the contradictions that arose and moved back to the qualitative data in order to identify any themes or patterns within the participants' rationales, looking for clues as to what their orientation to social interdependence were grounded in and how these may explain the contradictions.

My aim was to approach the qualitative data in a way that did not abstract the participants from their actual experiences, but protected and honoured the participants' perspectives on violence and aggression. I wanted to approach the data in a way that valued the local and experiential knowledge of the participants without objectifying that knowledge and subsequently subsuming or displacing the participants' experiences.

In order to ensure that I was approaching the qualitative data in this way, I decided to employ the work of Christie L. Barron (2000) and her use of Dorothy

Smith's (1987) standpoint epistemology to examine the lack of youth's voice and perspective on violent crime, as a touchstone during my analysis. Barron (2000) argues for the importance of listening to the voice of youths and insists that in order "...to overcome adult-centered interpretations and covert relations of power, it is essential to employ a methodology that allows youth to speak from, and be appreciated for, their own perspective" (p.45).

Since the primary aim of this study is to explore how adolescents make decisions about moral action in the context of moral decision-making and how their experiences of social interdependence may affect their decision-making with respect to violent and aggressive behaviour in schools, then Barron's insistence on the recognition of youths' voices and perspectives made sense to me. Indeed, it would follow that when conducting an exploration into what encompasses adolescent experience with violence and aggression, much could be learned from the adolescents themselves. The standpoint perspective also fits with my need to recognize the participants as the experts on their own experiences. My rationale for the use of Smith's (1992) standpoint epistemology as a touchstone was that it would help me be mindful of my own subjectivity during the analysis. In what follows, I will elaborate on my understanding of Smith's (1992) standpoint epistemology, and how I see it relates to the data.

An Overview of Dorothy Smith's (1987) Stand Point Epistemology

Smith's (1987) standpoint epistemology grew from her dissatisfaction with sociological orthodoxy and her observation that the conceptualization of sociology was a male activity and that, as such, sociology had been

disconnected from the materiality of everyday life of many people (e.g., primarily women and children but also those men who are not members of a dominant group) (Campbell, 2003). Smith's dissatisfaction caused her to examine her own training as a sociologist and subsequently embark on a journey to work toward a different sociology primarily for women, but one that can be adapted to other non-dominant groups.

Reflecting on her own training as a sociologist, Smith (1990a) has written:

> Sociology creates a construct of society that is specifically discontinuous with the world known, lived, experienced and acted in. The practice of sociology in which we were trained as graduate students was one that insisted that the sociologist should never go out without a concept; that to encounter the raw world was to encounter a world of irremediable disorder and confusion; to even begin to speak sociologically of that world required a concept, or concepts, to order, select, assemble, a sociological version of the world on paper" (p.2).

As a result of these reflections on her training, Smith began to focus on an analysis of ideological practices in social science and the methodological moves that an intellectual makes to generate objective knowledge. She argues that such methodological procedures end up abstracting the participant or knower from his or her context and lived world, thus moving knowing to an abstract conceptual plane (Campbell, 2003). In reaction to the social sciences' tendency to abstract subjects from the subjectivity of their own knowing, Smith (1990b) insists, "there is an actual subject prior to the subject constituted in the text. She is active as reader (or writer)" (p.5).

Smith's resistance to the deconstruction of the subject in sociological studies is informed by her methodological commitment to a standpoint epistemology that is made up of a mix of Marxism and ethnomethodology (Clough, 1993). It is this

methodological mix that allows Smith (1990b) to imagine a social inquiry that "begins where people are and explores the actual practices engaging us in the relations organizing our lives" (p.10). It is also with this methodological mix that Smith (1990b) approaches texts and discourse because it can provide "an entry beyond the text, to relations and organization that are necessarily part of, hooked into, more extended relations"(p.10).

During the 1950's and 1960's Smith's writing and teaching drew from the thinking of Alfred Schutz and Maurice-Ponty in phenomenology, George Herbert Mead in symbolic interactionism, Harold Garfinkel and his students in ethnomethodology (specifically ethnography), as well as Marx and the other more traditional theorists (Campbell, 2003, p.6). Phenomenology has been defined as "...the study of the world as it appears to individuals when they place themselves in a state of consciousness that reflects an effort to be free of everyday biases and beliefs... and the researcher is intimately connected with the phenomena and comes to know himself within his experiencing of these phenomena" (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996, p.600). Symbolic interactionism is a sociological research tradition that "...involves the study of how individuals engage in social transactions and how these transactions contribute to the creation and maintenance of social structures and social identity" (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996, p. 607). Ethnography, an approach to the study of human group life that was first used by anthropologists, "involves first-hand, intensive study of the features of a given culture and the patterns of those features" (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996, p.607).

These influences, combined with a feminist reading of Marx, led Smith (1990a) to view "concepts and categories as expressions of social relations and hence as opening up a universe for exploration that is 'present' in them but not explicated" (p.37). Marx's analysis of the economy of his own time lead Smith to examine the connections between what she terms the 'local' world and extra-local domain or setting. She was making connections between how the subject lived and experienced her everyday life in ways that were connected to and embedded in other relations outside herself and her experiences. For Smith (1987) it is only through the examination of the extra-local relations that the relations of the local setting could be understood.

Marie Campbell (2003) quite aptly summarizes the various influences on Smith's development of the standpoint epistemology:

> Phenomenology had opened the possibility of a sociology that could address people's experiences. Ethnomethodology offered the specialized way of seeing people's activities as integral to any account of what was happening. From Marx came the notion of social relations that makes theoretical sense of Smith's conviction about the inseparability of micro and macro analysis. Seeing that people work *knowledgeably* to concert their action with ruling regimes puts the possibility of that material connection into the analysis. For Smith, the latter is also how the politics of the setting can be dissected and viewed. No setting is an isolated unit, but is part of an organized whole. (p.12).

Smith's (1987) conviction about the inseparability of micro and macro analysis fits nicely with my commitment to examining not only the self-reported responses of youth, but also to examining the social relations within the school, the school climate itself, and the larger social relations in which the responses were made. In other words, the focus of this inquiry is on the actual responses of youth and how they are related to and influenced by the social relations in which they are

embedded and generated by. I am using the standpoint approach to begin an enquiry from the self reported experiences of youth to a conceptualization explaining the interplay between the experience and the larger context in which that experience exists.

The standpoint approach is a method of guiding and focusing inquiry, not an attempt to sever experience from the larger social relations that provide the context for experience (Barron, 2000). Hence, by honouring the voice of youth my study is meant to explore their responses as "knowers" situated in their own experiences, and relate this to the larger social relations in which they are embedded (namely the social relations within the school and larger social relations of community, and society).

Characterization of the Method of Enquiry

In the standpoint method of enquiry the central focus is on the exploration and explication of what "...he/she does not know – the social relations and organization pervading her or his world but invisible in it" (Smith, 1999, p.5). In this project I relate this to the examination of competitive, individualistic and cooperative social interdependence conditions, which are invisible but still permeate social relations and, subsequently, may affect a youth's decision-making about violent and aggressive behaviour. Smith (1999) advocates a method of enquiry with five basic tenets that relate to: 1. the subject/ knower of the enquiry (meaning both the researcher and the participant), 2. the inseparability of the social (including the context, conditions, time, place and milieu), people and their activities (including their actions and reactions to

themselves and to others), 3. the centrality of social organization and social relations, 4. the text as a bridge (between the actual social conditions, contexts and relations of the participant' s everyday world to the abstract world of the written word) 5. the politics of the project.

The Subject Knower

According to Smith (1999) the subject of the inquiry is not an isolated phenomenon that can be examined outside of his or her lived world and the social relationships that inhabit that world. This means that the subject is a situated knower, in that the subject is situated within his or her life world and social relations (both micro and macro), and it is within and through these social relations that the subject's experience is formed and subsequent knowledge is informed.

In addition, Smith (1999) suggests that the researcher is also a situated knower in that the researcher is situated in his or her life world and social interactions and, by exploring the data (or subject), is participating in the same social interactions that he or she is exploring. This means that in applying this perspective to my inquiry, as I read the data that I have gathered and write about it, I am also participating in the very same social interactions that I am framing as my data. In relation to this, I see myself as a situated knower who is also a participant in the social phenomena I am exploring. In other words, in reading the data and in writing the text, I am within and among the data and the text and also participating in the very same social interactions that I am exploring. I must be aware of this (as much as I can be, as it is often difficult to see the larger picture

when one is in it) and forthright about my active participation and subsequent shaping of the inquiry.

The Inseparability of the Social, People and Their Activities

Smith (1999) proposes that "...the social, that is, sociology's business or focus, is *the ongoing concerting and coordinating of individuals' activities*" (p. 6, emphasis hers). Thus, social life and social interactions should not be focused on only the individual, but should recognize always that the individual is in relation with others and the sites and times in which everyday experience occurs. Smith (1999) expresses this point by saying, "The social [the focus of the study] therefore, is not conceived as an entity separable from the actual people and the activities in which we find it" (p. 6). This assertion points to the need for me, the researcher, to understand the responses from participants as not necessarily individual expressions, but as being grounded in relation with others and in the context in which they occur.

The Centrality of Social Organization and Social Relations

Smith (1999) argues for the centrality of concepts such as social organization and social relations within the standpoint perspective in order to avoid conceptualizations that lift phenomena out of time and place. In the context of my research, I understand this to mean that it is essential to remain committed to examining not only the individual responses but also to the social organization and social relations in which these are embedded. From my perspective, this means broadening the lens through which I am analyzing the individual

responses of the participants in order to make room for an examination of the social interactions and relations that shape and are shaped by the responses.

The Text as a Bridge

Smith (1999) sees the text as a bridge between the actual social conditions, contexts and relations of the participant' s everyday world and the abstract world of the written word. Smith (1999) asserts that,

> The text is a material object that brings into actual contexts of reading a standardized form of words or images that can be read/seen/heard in many other settings by many others at the same or other times. It creates something like an escape hatch out of the actual and is foundational to any possibility of abstraction of whatever kind...Writing the social exploits the power of writing and of the text to analyse and isolate dimensions of organization that are fully embedded in the actualities of living. It is the text that confronts that writing with the challenge of standardization across settings and of wrestling with preserving the presence of actual individuals in deploying a technology that displaces them (p.8).

In saying this, Smith seems to be warning us about the challenge of keeping the actualities of peoples lived experiences present in text. The simple act of writing something down moves the phenomena from the actual to the theoretical. I see this as a challenge to make visible in the text not only the responses of the participants but also the actualities and realities within which these responses, the participants themselves, and the organizational and social relations are embedded.

The Politics of the Project

According to Smith (1999), when working from the standpoint perspective the researcher must find the politics of the project as foundational. I understand this to mean that the way the researcher understands his/her orientation to the project is foundational to the aim and outcome of the project. For example, if a

researcher sees himself/herself as outside the inquiry, an objective outsider, the aim and outcome of the project will probably be to explain people's behaviour as if such behaviour were completely separate from similar behaviour that the researcher might engage in. In contrast, Smith (1999) argues that when working from the standpoint perspective "the aim is not to explain peoples' behaviour [as if these people were some how separate from all other people] but to be able to explain to them/ourselves the socially organized powers in which their/our lives are embedded and to which their/our activities contribute" (p.8).

In relation to my work on this project, I understand this to mean that by working from a standpoint mode of inquiry, I am engaging in an approach to research that requires a self-conscious attention to the social-relational dimension of my research practice. This means that I do not consider myself as an outsider to this enquiry, in the sense that I am not necessarily outside of the social and organizational relations in which people's behaviour occurs. Instead I see myself as within the enquiry in that I too live, make decisions, and behave in certain ways that both contribute to and are shaped by the larger social and organizational relations that I am exploring and attempting to explain.

In the next chapter I will describe the findings that emerged from the data and then I will move to an analysis of the data and a discussion of the findings. During the analysis and discussion of the findings I will use to Dorothy Smith's (1999) Standpoint Epistemology as a touchstone.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Findings

In the following, I present the quantitative data gathered from the Survey of Student Life and the Survey of Student Relationships concerning how the participants describe themselves and their relationships with others, their perspectives on gender, values, rejection, moral judgments and school connectedness, followed by their self-reported use of violence and aggression. I then describe the qualitative data on how the participants responded to the 5 scenarios in the School Climate Questionnaire. I am disregarding gender differences in the responses because there were few, if any, differences and to report the findings based on gender would be confusing because of the uneven ratio of males to females. Also, there was very little difference between the schools so the findings speak to all participants regardless of which school they attend. In fact, there were more commonalities than differences in the 27 participants' responses.

Participants' Self Descriptors

All 27 participants responded that they sometimes, often or always defend their own beliefs and are willing to take a stand, and all 27 participants responded that they are sometimes, often or always independent, strong and powerful. Twenty-six of the 27 participants describe themselves as having leadership abilities. Eighteen of the 27 participants see themselves as often or always assertive, 25 of the participants see themselves as dominant and all of

the 27 responded that, at some point, they are aggressive. The finding that every one of the participants describes himself or herself as sometimes, often or always aggressive fits with the above ranking scores used to identify them as exemplars in this study.

In addition, all of the participants reported being tough sometimes, often or always; 25 of the 27described themselves as hard sometimes, often or always and 26 of the 27 reported being forceful. At the same time, 25 of the 27 reported being gentle, compassionate, affectionate, sympathetic, warm and tender. Along the same lines, 26 of the 27 participants reported being sensitive to the needs of others and 24 of the 27 participants describe themselves as being eager to soothe hurt feelings. All of the participants reported being understanding, reliable and truthful sometimes, often or always and 26 of the 27 reported being conscientious and tactful.

The seemingly incongruent responses point to the multiple ways people can view themselves in relation to others and the world. For example, the participants describing themselves as tough and gentle, hard and tender, could be seen as paradoxical or contradictory but could also be seen as needing to understand not only individuals but also their relations with others and the contexts and conditions in which their experiences occur.

Relationships With Others

When asked about how they relate to or with others, 23 of the 27 reported that they know when it is okay to talk to other people about their problems and that other people find it easy to confide in them. In addition, 20 of the 27 said that

they do not find it difficult to understand why others are feeling the way they do and 26 of the 27 said that they could tell how others are feeling by listening to their voices. Twenty-one reported being aware of the non-verbal messages they send out to others and 25 of the 27 said that they help other people feel better when they are down. Twenty-three of the 27 participants described themselves as a soft hearted and reported having tender and concerned feelings for people less fortunate than themselves. This suggests that, at least from their perspectives, the participants see themselves as aware of and connected to other people's feelings and emotions.

With regard to taking the perspective of others, 22 of the 27 participants reported that they believe there are two sides to every story and 21 of the 27 said that they try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before making a judgment. In addition, 21 of the 27 participants reported that when they are upset with someone they try to put themselves in the other person's shoes for a while and that before criticizing someone they try to imagine how it would feel to be in the other person's place. Twenty-five of the participants reported that they try to understand their friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.

Perspectives on Gender

When asked about their attitudes towards gender roles, the majority of the participants did not agree with stereotypical gender attitudes. The larger number of females in this sample may have something to do with the overwhelming rejection of gender stereotypes. For this reason I decided to tease out the boys responses from the girls. Table 2 illustrates how the participants responded to gender stereotypes.

Table 2

	Boys Disagree	Boys Agree	Girls Disagree	Girls Agree
Swearing is worse for a girl than for a boy	5	3	18	1
On a date, the boy should pay all the expenses	5	3	16	3
On average, girls are as smart as boys	3	5	3	16
It is more important for boys to go to university than for girls	8	0	19	0
It is okay for girls to play rough sports like football	1	7	1	18
The father should have the authority in making family decisions	5	3	19	0
It is okay for a girl to ask a boy out on a date	1	7	1	18
It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school	8	0	19	0
If both husband and wife have jobs, the husband should do a share of the housework such as washing dishes and doing the laundry	2	6	0	19
Boys are better leaders then girls	5	3	19	0
Girls should be more concerned with becoming good wives and mothers rather then desiring a professional career	7	1	18	1
Girls should have the same freedom as boys	1	7	0	19

As the Table 2 shows, 3 of the 8 boys reported agreement with the stereotypical attitudes toward gender roles. Of the 3 boys that agreed with the stereotypical gender roles, only 1 of them was consistent in his agreement. That is, only one of the three boys agreed with every statement that displayed a gender stereotype, except for the two questions about school.

All of the participants disagreed with the statements that it is more important for boys to go to university than girls and it is more important for boys to do well in school.

Perspectives on Values

When asked about what they value, all of the participants said that they value friendship, humour, and having choices. Twenty-five of the 27 said that they value respect for others, honesty and forgiveness and 24 of the 27 said that they value intelligence and concern for others. Twenty-four of the participants reported that they value being recognized and 26 reported they value being respected. Twenty of the 27 participants reported that they value being loved and 24 reported that family life is of value to them. Again, the responses seem to show a highly connected and concerned group of students who place high value on relationships with others, specifically friendship. Interestingly, when the participants were asked about how they would feel in situations where their friendship with someone who was facing some kind of challenge, the responses were low on concern. The following table illustrates how the participants responded with regard to rejection.

Perspectives on Rejection

Table 3 illustrates the answers from the participants regarding their sensitivity to rejection from friends.

Table 3

Your close friend has plans to go out with another group of people but you would rather go out alone with him/her.	Not at all	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
How angry would you be if he/she would not willingly choose to stay with you?	10	15	1	1
How worried would you be?	12	10	4	1
Your relationship with a close friend is falling apart and you would like to talk to him/her about it.				
How angry would you be if you thought he/she might not want to talk about it?	7	11	7	2
How worried would you be?	8	9	7	3
You and your close friend have a bad argument and you call him/her to talk about it.				
How angry would you be if you thought he/she might not want to talk about it?	9	10	6	2
How worried?	8	11	5	3

As the table illustrates, the majority of the participants do not report being very worried or angry in situations where there is a relationship breakdown with a friend. Although this does not seem to fit with the high value the participants place on friendship, it may be that they feel confident enough in their friendships to know that the situation will resolve itself regardless of the friends' reaction in the moment.

Perspectives on Moral Judgments

When asked if right and wrong is a matter of personal opinion, 21 of the 27 participants said that it was. Twenty-two of the participants disagreed that it is okay to punch or hit someone and that fighting is a good way to defend your

friends. Nineteen of the participants did not think it was okay to use threats to get what you wanted, and 24 participants did not think that it is okay to make someone give you something that you really want. Twenty-six of the participants thought that it is not Okay to damage property or buildings and 21 of the participants did not think that if someone made them really mad they deserved to be beat up.

School Connectedness

When asked about how connected they feel to their school, 22 of the 27 participants responded that they feel like they belong at their school. Twenty participants said that they could influence decisions that affect them at their school. Eighteen students reported that they like attending their school and 12 responded that they are proud to tell others where they go to school. Twenty-four of the participants reported that they interact with people from different backgrounds and 20 of the participants reported that their individual differences are respected at their school. Interestingly, when asked if they had ever experienced discrimination at their school, 13 of the 27 reported that they had. Seventeen of the participants responded that they have not felt excluded at their school.

Twenty-seven of the students said that they rarely get discouraged at their school. Twenty-three of the students said that they believe that if one works hard one can succeed and, at the same time, five of the students reported that they are afraid they will fail. Twenty-four of the 27 said that they believe their teachers want them to do their best. Twenty-six of the 27 said that they are rarely lonely in

their school. Nineteen of the 27 said that the teachers care about their feelings. Twenty-three of the students said that they like working with others and that they can learn from other students. Eighteen of them said that working in groups is better than working alone and 19 of them think that they learn a lot more when they are working with others. Twenty-two of the students believe that it is a good idea for students to help each other learn and 18 of them said that they like to help other students. These answers seem to suggest that the participants' experiences in their schools are mainly cooperative and that they feel connected to others in their schools.

The Self – Reported Use of Violence and Aggression

Six of the 27 participants reported having beat up another kid in the past year. The following tables display the participants' self reported use of violence and aggression, broken down by violence and aggression towards males and females, as shown by the ranking scores used to identify the participants as exemplars in this study.

Table 4. Aggression Towards Males

Behaviour	Number of Respondents Who Have Engaged in the Behaviour and How Many Times in the Last month		
	1-3	4-9	10+
Called a boy an inappropriate name	15	2	5
Used obscene language to a boy	11	4	5
Threatened a boy	4	0	3
Sexually harassed a boy	1	0	0
Damaged something that belonged to a boy	7	0	0
Pushed or shoved a boy	12	3	3
Stole something from a boy	2	1	0
Blackmailed a boy	2	0	0
Spread rumours about a boy	3	0	0
Excluded or shunned a boy	6	1	3
Put down a boy for being gay	2	0	1
Put down a boy by calling him 'gay' or 'queer' or 'fag'	9	2	5

Table 5. Aggression Towards Females

Behaviour	Number of Respondents Who Have Engaged in the Behaviour and How Many Times in the Last month		
	1-3	4-9	10+
Called a girl an inappropriate name	12	6	7
Used obscene language to a girl	13	2	7
Threatened a girl	8	1	1
Sexually harassed a girl	3	0	0
Damaged something that belonged to a girl	4	0	0
Pushed or shoved a girl	12	3	4
Stole something from a girl	4	0	0
Blackmailed a girl	2	0	0
Spread rumours about a girl	3	1	0
Excluded or shunned a girl	11	0	0
Put down a girl for being lesbian	1	0	0
Put down a girl by calling her 'gay' or 'butch' or 'lesbian'	6	0	1

Participants' Qualitative Responses to the Scenarios in the School Climate Questionnaire (Artz, Nicholson, & McNamara, 2003)

Scenario 1.

Bob, a Grade 8 student, who has just a few friends, was passing by the entrance to the gym and heard some noise. When he checked, he saw two well-known and popular Grade 9 male students pushing Bob's friend Carlos, also a Grade 8 student who has just a few friends. When Bob approached them, the two grade 9 students left saying that both Bob and Carlos "better keep their mouths shut". Bob and Carlos are not sure about whether to tell a teacher about this incident.

Regarding the above scenario in the School Climate Questionnaire (Artz, Nicholson, & McNamara, 2003) where Bob witnesses Carlos being bullied, 14 of the 27 participants responded that Bob should report the bullying, 10 responded that he should not report it, and 3 said they were unsure whether he should report it or not. Eleven of the participants reported that if Bob was not a friend of Carlos, it would make a difference as to how Bob proceeded (i.e. whether he would tell or not). When asked what most students in their school would do with regard to scenario 1, 9 of the students responded that most students in their

school would report the bullying and 18 reported that most students would do nothing.

Scenario 2.

Jenny, a Grade 9 student who is very quiet, is in the washroom when she overhears three popular Grade 9 girls plotting to ruin another Grade 9 girl's reputation by telling everyone they know that the girl is a "slut" because she phoned up a boyfriend of one of the girls and arranged a meeting with him without telling the boy's girlfriend. Jenny also overhears the girls say they might even have to beat the girl up in order to teach her a lesson.

In response to the above scenario, 13 participants said that Jenny should report what she heard to a teacher, 10 said that she should not report what she heard, and 4 were unsure if she should report what she heard. When the participants were asked if it is important in a school for students to not be afraid of being physically hurt, verbally abused, or threatened 24 of the 27 responded yes it is important, 2 responded no it is not important and 1 was unsure if it is important or not.

Scenario 3.

Samantha does not like school and attends only because her parents make her. She says she doesn't care about getting an education, and often skips classes. She also says that she is very unhappy with her parents. Yesterday, she told a friend that she was going to run away from home because she had found somebody that would set her up with ways to make lots of money and not be dependent on her parents.

In response to the above scenario, 23 of the 27 participants said that a friend should take some kind of action in order to stop Samantha from running away and all of the 23 reported that they would do the same. When asked what most students would do in this situation 14 participants responded that they would take

some kind of action to stop Samantha from running away, 3 said that they would not do anything, and 10 responded that they were unsure what others would do.

Scenario 4.

Jim is a new student in this school. He would like to make new friends, but very few people have spoken with him during his first week in his new school. On the last day of his first week, he was asked by another student, Frank, who seems Okay, if he wanted to do some drugs with him. Jim has tried drugs before, and got into trouble with his family for it, so he has decided to stay away from drugs for now. However, he is also worried that Frank might turn against him if he turns down his offer of drugs, so he is not sure what to do.

In response to the above scenario, 26 of the 27 participants said that Jim should say no to the drugs. All 26 also said that they would say no to the drugs. When asked what most students in their school would do, ten participants responded that most students would say no to the drugs, 12 responded that most students would say yes to the drugs, and 5 responded that they were unsure what most students would do.

Scenario 5.

On her way home from work last Friday evening, Lise saw three other students from her school painting graffiti on the school wall, and smashing a glass door at the school. She doesn't agree with this behaviour, but the people who did it are her friends at school. The principal of the school called Lise and several other students into the office and asked them to anonymously give information about who did the damage. Lise is thinking about telling the principal, as long as it doesn't get back to her friends.

In response to the above scenario, 13 participants said that Lise should tell the principal what she saw, 13 participants said that Lise should not tell the Principal, and 1 participant was unsure what Lise should do. Of the 13 participants that said Lise should tell the principal, 4 of them said she should tell only if she would remain anonymous. When asked what they would do in this

situation, 11 participants responded that they would tell the Principal, 15 responded that they would not tell the principal, and 1 responded that he/she was unsure what he/she would do. When asked what most students in their school would do with regard to the above scenario, 7 participants responded that most students would tell, 16 participants said that most students would not tell, and 4 participants were unsure what others would do.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Analysis

Making Connections

I began this analysis by reading and re-reading the data looking for patterns and themes. What I realized as I was moving in and through the data was that there were themes that arose from places of tension within the data. There were contradictions between what the participants were saying and doing. I decided to focus solely on what the participants were saying, allowing the contradictions within their responses guide my analysis.

In the following, I explore some of the main contradictions that arose from the data when compared with quantitative and qualitative responses from the participants and then I move to an examination of the main themes that emerge from those contradictions. The main contradictions that become apparent in the analysis include: perspectives on the use of threats, perspectives on the use of physical aggression, perspectives on vandalism, perspectives on school connectedness and perspectives on friendship.

The Use of Threats

The first contradiction that emerged from the data was related to threatening behaviour. The majority of the participants reported that they disagreed with the statement that it is okay to use threats to get what one wants. However, 12 of the participants reported that they had threatened someone recently in their school. The responses to scenario 2 in the School Climate Questionnaire, in which Jenny overhears some Grade 9 girls threatening to ruin another girl's reputation and

possibly beat her up, 10 of the participants said that Jenny should not report what she heard, and four were unsure if she should she should report it. The rationale given for these decisions to not take action against the threatening behaviour were consistent along two lines: it is none of her business and if she reports the threats she will be putting herself at risk. There is a contradiction between what the participants say are their beliefs about the use of threats, and what they are saying they do/would do with regard to the use of threats.

Physical Aggression

The second contradiction that emerged from the data is related to the use of physical aggression. Twenty-one of the participants disagreed that if someone made them very angry then the enticer deserved to be beaten up and 6 agreed. At first glance this seems to correlate with the participants' self-reported use of violence and aggression because 6 of the participants reported that they had beaten up another kid in the past year. However, with a closer look it became evident that 3 of the 21 participants, who disagreed that a person deserved to be beaten up, were part of the six who reported having beaten up another kid within the last year. Furthermore, 22 of the respondents did not think that it is okay to punch or hit someone and 20 of them said that they try to talk through their problems, but they were split down the middle regarding the statement that sometimes there is no other choice but to fight.

Interestingly, in the responses to scenario 1 in the School Climate Questionnaire where Bob witnesses Carlos being physically bullied, 10 participants responded that Bob should not report what he had seen and 3 were

unsure if Bob should report it or not. There is a contradiction here between what the participants have said they believe about the use of physical violence and their decisions about how it should be approached in their schools. The main rationale given for not reporting the bullying was that if Bob reports he is putting himself at risk for retribution from the Grade 9's.

With regard to the questions about it being important in a school for students to not be afraid of being physically hurt, verbally abused, or threatened the majority of participants responded that it is very important. The two main reasons that the participants gave for the belief that it is important in a school for students to not be afraid of violent and aggressive behaviour were that they would be able to perform better and that if they were afraid they would become targets.

Vandalism

The third contradiction that emerged from the data was related to vandalism. Twenty-six of the participants disagreed with the statement that it is okay to damage property and buildings, but 10 of the participants reported that in the past year they have damaged property or buildings.

Furthermore, when asked about scenario 5 in the School Climate Questionnaire, where Lise has witnessed her friends defacing school property, 13 of the respondents said that she should not tell the principal. Of the 13 respondents who thought that Lise should tell the principal 7 said that she should only do so anonymously, in order to keep her friends. There is a contradiction here between what the participants say they believe about vandalism and how they would deal with vandalism when faced with it. The main theme running

through these responses is that one should not tell on one's friends because doing so means losing them. All except 2 of the respondents were consistent in what they thought Lise should do and what they would do themselves. The two that were inconsistent said that Lise should tell the principal what she saw but that they would not because they would not want to lose their friends.

School Connectedness

The fourth contradiction that arose from the data was an apparent disconnect between the participants' perspectives on school connectedness and how they viewed other's behaviour in their schools. The majority of participants reported that they feel like they belong in their schools, that they have influence, that they enjoy attending, that they feel encouraged, that they are supported and that they are liked in their schools. Moreover, the majority of participants reported that they enjoy working with others and believe that they can learn more when they do. These answers seem to suggest that the participants' experiences in their schools are mainly cooperative and that they feel connected to others in their schools.

However, when asked what they thought other students in their school would do, with regard to scenarios 1 and 5 in the School Climate Questionnaire, the participants' answers point to a different kind of experience. The following tables illustrate how the participants responded to scenarios 1 and 5 in the School Climate Questionnaire. I chose to break down the responses by school in order to show the differences between the schools.

Table 6. Bullying – What would most students do?

	Do something to help Carlos	Do Nothing
All Girls' School	4	4
Middle School	4	6
Community School	1	8
Total	9	18

Table 7. Vandalism – What would most students do?

	Tell the Principal	Do Nothing
All Girls' School	4	4
Middle School	1	8
Community School	3	7
Total	8	19

As the above tables show, most of the participants did not think that other students in their school would take action in either scenario 1 or scenario 2. In addition, it is interesting to note the variation within the schools. Respondents from the all girls' school are split down the middle with regard to how they think other students would respond while the respondents from the middle and community schools are far less inclined to think that their fellow students would take action in either of the scenarios. The two main themes running through the responses with regard to why other students would not take action are that they do not care and that they would be afraid of being labeled a snitch and losing their friends.

Another contradiction between the participants' perspectives on school connectedness and how they view others' behaviour in their schools is illustrated by the responses to scenario 4 in the School Climate Questionnaire. The 26

participants who said that Jim should say no to the drugs also said that they would say no to the drugs. However, when asked what they thought others in their schools would do, the picture looked very different.

Table 8. Drugs – What would most students do?

	Take the Drugs	Not Take the Drugs	Unsure
All Girls' School	4	2	2
Middle School	5	2	2
Community School	1	8	1
Total	10	12	5

All participants that responded who were unsure if others would take the drugs said it would depend on how much a person wanted to be accepted.

Friendship

The fifth contradiction that emerges from the data is related to friendship. All of the participants reported that one of the things they value the most is friendship. The high value that the participants place on friendship is illustrated by their responses to scenario 3 in the School Climate Questionnaire where Samantha is thinking about quitting school and running away. An overwhelming 23 of the 27 participants wrote that the friend should take some kind of action in order to stop Samantha from running away, and all of them also wrote that they would do the same. The participants were clear and consistent in their belief that a true friend should help Samantha and stop her from running away.

However, when asked about their perspectives on rejection, the participants did not report being very angry or worried in situations where there is a relationship breakdown with a friend. This finding does not seem to fit with the

fact that one of the main rationales given by the participants for their actions, or lack thereof, was that they were afraid they would lose their friends.

The Themes and What They Tell Us

Through examining the contradictions and rationales found in the participants' responses, clear themes arose. These themes include: it is no one's business, self-preservation, losing one's friends, school performance, and feeling like nobody cares. What do these themes tell us?

When examined against theories such as Damon's (1984) Identity Theory of Moral Development, and Blasi's (1983, 1984) Self Model, these themes point to a group of individuals who are delayed with regard to the integration of self-interest and morality. According to Damon's (1984) Identity Theory, consistency between hypothetical moral judgment and actual conduct becomes a dominant characteristic of self in middle adolescence. It would then follow that according to Damon (1984) the contradictions displayed by these participants are evidence that they have not achieved the integration of morality into their identity and, therefore, fail to act on their moral beliefs.

In addition to the integration of morality and identity, Blasi (1984) suggests that the motivational basis for moral action lies in the internal demand for psychological consistency, and that moral action will be more likely to follow moral judgment if the individual has the ability to stop defensive strategies from interfering with the subjective discomfort of self-inconsistency (p. 129). So from this perspective, the contradictions in the participants' responses are related to a

lack of self-awareness and a lack of sensitivity to internal consistency on the part of the participants.

When examined against Kilpatrick's (1992) Character Education approach to moral development, the themes running through the participants' responses demonstrate that the participants do not have the character and personality traits that will allow them to act in a morally responsible way. Moreover, according to the character education approach, the more important issue revealed by the contradictions in the responses is that the participants have failed to learn and habituate the traits of good moral behaviour.

When examined against Kohlberg's (1984) stage theory of moral development, the themes derived from the responses of the participants demonstrate a pre-conventional approach to moral reasoning in which one follows rules only when it is in one's immediate interest. As well, acting to serve one's own needs or interests is right and fair. In this stage the reasons for doing what is right are informed by an expectation of punishment and a belief in the superior power of authorities. This approach suggests that the participants are delayed at the pre-conventional stage because the expectation is that they should have moved out of this stage by the ages of 13 or 14.

When examined against Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory of the Moral Self the contradictions found in the participants' responses are evidence of moral disengagement. Bandura (2002) suggests that "almost everyone is virtuous at the abstract level. It is the ease of moral disengagement under conditions of life where the differences lie"(p.115). So according to Bandura, the

contradictions found in the participants' responses are the result of life conditions, or contexts that allow for moral disengagement.

All of these theories find the contradictions in the participants' responses evidence of delayed or deficient moral development with regard to decision-making and moral action. In contrast, when examined against Turiel's (1983) Domain Theory approach to moral development the contradictions found in the participants' responses are seen to be the result of what social conventions are salient in the context of the larger society. Furthermore, Turiel suggests that because adolescents view conventions as unimportant and arbitrary norms established by adult authority, they may make different decisions with regard to moral action (Nucci & Weber, 1991). Thus, according to Turiel (1983), the contradictions found in the participants' responses are the result of interaction between how the individual participants view what is important (moral or conventional elements) and their developmental level.

When the themes that have arisen out of the contradictions found in the participants' responses are examined through the framework of Johnson and Johnson's (1989, 1998) social interdependence theory, yet another story emerges. In order to make sense of the examples of individualistic and competitive experience evidenced by the research participants I have organized them into categories focusing on the themes that arose out of the contradictions: it is none of her/his business, self-preservation, losing one's friends, school performance, and nobody cares.

It is None of His/Her Business

One of the themes that arose from the contradictions in the participants' responses was that it is none of his or her business so he or she should not take action. For example, one of the participants responded, "Jenny should just ignore it and mind her own business. She may risk being disliked or beaten up by the girls." Explicit in this response is a perception that if Jenny was to take some kind of action in order to help the other girl she would risk losing something herself. Another participant responded, "She should mind her own business and let them work it out! She shouldn't put her own reputation on the line." When asked why others in their school would not do anything, one of the participants responded, "They would try to be friends with the bullyers to raise their status and not risk being beaten up again." Again the responses suggest a feeling of competition in that if one wins the other loses, and the losses would be the "external goods" that Magnuson (2002) describes as "...external to the setting or activity such as status..." and it also suggests that in a competitive social setting "...moral values are defined as whatever makes possible acquiring those goods or winning" (p.6). Inexplicably linked to this theme of "none of his or her business" is the theme of self-preservation.

Self Preservation

Examples of the theme of self-preservation were rampant throughout the participants' responses. Some of the responses included, "Bob may get mocked and beaten up for telling", "If Bob and Carlos report the problem, the Grade 9 students might get slightly reprimanded only to turn around and make it worse for

Bob and Carlos", and "Because if he told he would be labeled a snitch and would be taken out." These statements make sense when the assumption is that beating, defeating and getting more than others are the conditions in which they are made. It is also notable that these statements describe a sense of moral obligation to one's self, and this is often an attempt at self-protection.

In addition, respondents wrote about the need to feel safe in order to avoid becoming the target for violent and aggressive behaviour. Statements like, "If they are afraid they will become targets and the bullies will win", and "bullies often pick on those who are afraid; if you are afraid you are a loser", suggest a need to show strength in order to avoid victimization and point to competitive social conditions in which self-worth is conditional on one's "wins".

Losing One's Friends

Throughout the participants' responses friendship is consistently reported as highly valued. The scenario that elicited the most thorough, or explicit and lengthy, answers from the participants was the scenario in which Samantha is talking about running away and quitting school. Every participant responded that he or she would take some kind of action in order to help a friend like Samantha.

Much of how the participants' responded is expressed in the example that follows:

> They should talk her friend out of it and see if she wanted to talk to someone, or spend the night at someone's house and make sure she knows she is always welcome. If they don't, she could start doing drugs or prostituting herself. She may get killed or kill herself. I would devote all of my time to talking her out of it, and helping her overcome her problems. I would also suggest going to see the counselors, because I care about my friends and don't want anything bad to happen to them. A true friend will do anything for their best friend.

The responses seem to demonstrate a cooperative experience of friendship where facilitating, promoting, and encouraging the success of others are natural ways of life. However, one of the main themes running through the participants' responses with regard to not taking action in the other scenarios is the fear of losing one's friends. When asked what most students would do about witnessing vandalism, one of the participants responded, "They wouldn't tell anyone because their friends are more important than their morals." Another participant responded, "I would keep my mouth shut and not tell the principal about it because otherwise I wouldn't have any friends." When asked how other students would respond to an incident of bullying, one participant wrote "I think that they would ignore it because most people in this school would not want to lose their friends." It would seem that the participants' cooperative understanding of friendship is embedded in a competitive social setting in which friendship is then viewed as "external goods", something to be given, taken away or negotiated over as opposed to something unconditional.

School Performance

The theme of school performance arose out of the question about the importance of students not being afraid of physical and verbal abuse at school. The majority of students thought that it was important for students to not be afraid in school, but the reasons that they gave point to competitive conditions where external motivation is based on striving to win. Some of the responses include, "So you can work without being scared, and if you are uncomfortable here then you wouldn't ask questions if you don't get it, and you would probably fail",

"Students need to feel comfortable going to school or they will not perform their best", and "If they are afraid, they don't perform well in school and will become losers and drop out."

Nobody Cares

The last theme that arose from the contradictions in the participants' responses is that other people in their schools would not take action because they do not care. Some of the responses included, "They would ignore it because most people are jerks in this school and don't care about other people", "Nothing, because nobody cares and they just want to make sure they get what they want", and "They wouldn't care because they have their own stuff to worry about."Implicit in these responses is the expectation that others would not take action because they need to make sure they are taking care of themselves and that if they were to help someone else they would lose something for themselves. These responses suggest a zero sum game in which a win for one is a loss for the other.

The participants in this study are describing a world in which they are constantly struggling and competing for social survival. The participants wrote about the need to show strength in order to avoid victimization, losing friends, losing their reputations, and losing their status as good students.

CHAPTER SIX

Discussion

Coming Full Circle

In order to structure this discussion I am "coming full circle" meaning that I am structuring the following discussion around a revisiting of the five basic tenets of Smith's (1999) mode of enquiry: a. The subject/ knower of the enquiry (meaning both the researcher and the participant), b. The inseparability of the social (including the context, conditions, time, place and milieu), people and their activities (including their actions and reactions to themselves and to others), c. The centrality of social organization and social relations, d. The text as a bridge (between the actual social conditions, contexts and relations of the participants' everyday world to the abstract world of the written word), e. The politics of the project.

The Subject Knower

My use of Smith's (1999) writing on the subject knower with regard to this research project meant that not only did I need to be aware that the participants were not isolated individuals that could be examined outside of their lived worlds and social relationships, but that I, as a researcher, needed to be aware of and forthright about my active participation in and subsequent shaping of the inquiry. So I would like to speak briefly to how my participation shaped the inquiry.

The self-descriptions of the participants came straight from the raw data without any interpretation or manipulation on my part. This allowed a portrait to emerge of how the participants view themselves as individuals, in relation with

others, and their schools, as opposed to my making some kind of definitive statement about the participants. In this way I was able to honour the participants as situated knowers (Smith, 1999), who are experts, situated in their own life worlds and social interactions, of which I am trying to understand and participate.

When I moved into the analysis I realized that in order for me to handle my own subjectivity I needed to release the questions that I was initially using to guide the elicitation of themes. I needed to instead focus on the tensions or contradictions that arose from the data. Doing this enabled me to step back from shaping the enquiry to a certain extent (of course this decision shaped the inquiry simply by changing the way I was approaching the data). What I mean by that is instead of using questions to guide the inquiry, I allowed the contradictions within the data to guide the inquiry. This enabled me, in some small way, to manage my subjectivity and surrender some control over what I was reading and writing.

I see this approach as akin to the use of open questions versus closed questions. Asking someone closed questions, questions that can be answered yes or no, means a guided discussion, and prompting the interviewee's answer. In contrast, when you ask someone an open question he or she is free to answer in the way that makes sense. For example, if I was to ask someone "Did you feel sad when that happened?" I am suggesting that they should feel sad and/or I am focusing the discussion on the feeling of sadness. On the other hand, if I was to ask someone "How did you feel when that happened?" I am leaving it open for the interviewee to respond in the way that makes sense to him/her without any leading or guiding on my part.

So by allowing the themes to arise naturally from the data, by noticing the contradictions between what the participants were saying they believed should be done and what they themselves would do, I was able to participate in a way that was lighter, less directive, and perhaps truer to the data itself.

The Inseparability of the Social, People and Their Activities & the Centrality of Social Organization and Social Relations

I chose to deal with these two tenets of Smith's (1999) mode of inquiry together because I think they are linked in many ways. To me, these two tenets meant that I needed to understand the responses from the participants as embedded in context, conditions, and in relation with others, as well as how these social interactions shape and are shaped by the responses. Simply by choosing to examine the responses through the framework of social interdependence theory, I broadened the lens through which I analyzed the responses regarding context, conditions, social interactions and social organization in which the responses were made.

It was interesting to see how the frameworks determine the perceptions of behaviour and of the individuals themselves. The power of theory became very evident when I examined the themes that arose from the data against other theories of moral development. The theories or frameworks that are used to examine the responses of research participants shape the perspectives on adolescents and their behaviour with regard to violence and aggression in the same way that the responses inform the theories. From this perspective it is clear to me that when engaging in research and analysis, the framework that one is working from must allow for the inclusion of context, conditions, social

organizations and social relations from which the data or responses are embedded.

The Text as a Bridge

With regard to this research project, I took Smith's (1999) tenet of the text as bridge as a warning about abstracting the participants from their experiences by moving them from the actual to the theoretical. By including the participants' responses in their own words in the text, I tried to make visible not only the participants' responses but also the actualities and realities within which these responses, the participants themselves, and the organizational and social relations embedding them. The participants described themselves and how they see themselves in relation with others. Through the framework of social interdependence theory, the underlying value systems and goal orientations were illuminated in order to shine the light on the organizational and social relations from which the responses arose.

The Politics of the Project

The politics of the project speak to the way that the researcher understands his/her orientation to the project. With regard to this research project, I understand myself to be inside the inquiry in that I, too, live, make decisions, and behave in certain ways that both contribute to, and are shaped by, the larger social and organizational relations that I am exploring. For example, my reasons for choosing the questionnaire method of data collection speak to the power economic relations that, through Marx's illumination, lead Smith (1987) to conclude that it is only through the examination of the larger relations (extra-

local) that the local relations can be understood. Many of my decisions on how to move forward with this research project were informed by having access to economic and social benefits afforded by the larger study in which this research is embedded.

I can relate to and understand all of the themes that arose from the participants' responses in this study, specifically self-preservation. The theme of self-preservation plays out in my life in a number of ways and is connected to how I view myself and how I behave in relation to others.

For example, when someone is upset, my natural reaction is to console him or her in some way, however, in my new job where there is a high level of competition, I find myself not consoling others because I am afraid that I will be showing weakness. I can understand when the participants in this study speak about their need to show strength in order to avoid victimization. In conditions where the underlying structure is competitive, moral values and moral goals may be substantially different. This addresses my experiences as a student, and as a dispute resolution practitioner within schools, in that it offers an explanation for the shifts in my decisions about which behaviour was right or wrong, and my subsequent actions, depending on the school I was attending.

Interestingly, when moral decision-making is occurring in a competitive context, it can be seen that the struggles about what moral action to take, or what goal to aspire towards, are more than contradictions; they are struggles about what kind of students we should be, what kind of friends we should be, and what kind of employees we should be. These struggles are key to understanding

ourselves, interpreting situations and ultimately, making decisions about moral action.

This research has informed my work as a dispute resolution practitioner by highlighting the need to address the context and conditions in which conflict arises. More often than not, conflict is viewed as an individual problem, or a problem between individuals. My experience, and this research, has shown that there is more to conflict than individual differences. Schools often focus on fixing the kids as opposed to looking at the culture of their school and recognizing the "hidden curriculum" that may be contributing to the conflict.

Based on these findings, I would recommend that both schools and the dispute resolution practitioners that work with them, pay close attention to the culture within the school and work in long-term ways to shift the culture from one of competition to one of cooperation. In order to make this kind of cultural shift a success, we must start with the adults. Adults must take responsibility for the contexts in which children and youth live and learn and support training and education in creating positive conflict "smart" cultures and behaviours as models for the children and youth. If we make children and youth the source of the problem where conflict, aggression and violence in schools is concerned and focus our attention only on them without also first of all ensuring that the adults that are involved with young people know how to deal with conflict aggression and violence in themselves and others, I we have little hope of creating lasting change. Those students who are exposed to conflict resolution and other violence prevention programs may well learn some useful skills but will lack the

sustaining support or understanding from those whom they need most when it comes to dealing with conflict, aggression and violence. We need to begin with the adults and work in long-term ways to build capacity within the schools so that the culture can shift and the change can be organic and sustainable.

Michelle Lebaron (2000) points out that culture is invisible to those surrounded by it, and yet it is omnipresent, and insists that conflict resolution practitioners must consider how culture influences any given interaction, in order to structure an appropriate intervention. Lebaron (2000) is suggesting that an understanding of the culture or context in which violent or aggressive behavior occurs will allow for the development of an appropriate and effective intervention strategy.

Similarily, Mayer (2000) states that, "When we understand the different forces that motivate conflict behavior; we are better able to create a more nuanced and selective approach to handling conflict" (p.8). Mayer (2000) incorporates the concept of structure into his *Wheel of Conflict*, which demonstrates the causes of conflict and suggests that the structure or external framework, in which an interaction takes place can be the cause of the conflict itself. In conflict resolution work we cannot just treat the symptom, or the violent behavior, we need to treat the cause. A step towards treating the cause is to pay attention to the underlying culture, context, and conditions in which the behavior occurs so that we can better understand the cause of the behavior.

Conclusion

More research on the social conditions of competition, individualism, and cooperation and their relationship to moral decision-making and subsequent moral action is one way we can better understand the structures, cultures, conditions and contexts in which violent and aggressive behaviors occur. Specifically, research in this area could be furthered by an examination of cooperative conditions and how such conditions support decisions that move people away from the use of violent and aggressive behaviour. If we know what such conditions look like, we will know what to work towards in our schools, and we can begin to shift the cultures within our schools to ones that promote non-violent interaction. This study has shown how the frameworks and lenses we use to examine participants' responses in research have an impact on how these participants are perceived, and, ultimately, how they inform the models and interventions employed to deal with questions of moral development and moral action. This brings us again to the importance of employing theories that examine the social conditions of actions, in order to shift our understanding of adolescents who engage in violent or aggressive behaviour, so that we can move away from deficit based models that portray them as somehow delayed, and instead, assist schools in taking some responsibility by recognizing how the culture and conditions within the schools themselves may be contributing to the use of violent and aggressive behavior and use this as a basis for change.

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Appendix A

A SURVEY OF STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Fall 2003

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

This survey asks about the way you feel and act in different parts of your life. Please try to answer all the questions. However, if you do not understand a question, simply move on, rather than trying to give an answer. Feel free to make comments in the margins.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. We want your honest answers. Your answers are very important because they will help make your school a better place for you to be.

Please remove your name label before you begin. Only your participant code should appear on this page when you hand in your completed survey.

There are several parts to this survey, and each part has its own instructions about how you answer. Please read all the instructions carefully. Thank you for your cooperation.

PARTICIPANT CODE _____

1. Are you male or female? (Circle)

a. Male

b. Female

2. What is your age? (Circle)

a. 12	d. 15	g. 18
b. 13	e. 16	h. 19
c. 14	f. 17	

3. Please write the name of your school in the space provided

a.. _____

Grade: (*circle*) b. **7** c. **8**
d. **9** e. **10**
f. **11** g. **12**

4. What is your first language (the first one you learned to speak) *please circle*

1. English 2. French 3. Chinese 4. Punjabi 5. German
6. Spanish 7. Italian 8. Dutch 9. Tagalog (Philipino)
10. Korean 11. Japanese 12. Vietnamese 13. Other

5. Can you read and write easily in English? Yes ____No ____Somewhat ____

6. People sometimes think about themselves in terms of race or the colour of their skin. How do you identify yourself? (*Check more than one if appropriate*)

a. ____African/Caribbean (Black)
b. ____Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, etc.)
c. ____Caucasian (White)
d. ____First Nations (Native, Indian, Aboriginal)
e. ____South Asian (Indo-Canadian, East Indian, Pakistani, etc.)
f. ____Other (Please describe)_____
g. ____I don't know

7. Below are listed a number of personality characteristics. We would like you to use those characteristics to describe yourself, that is, we would like you to indicate by circling a number on the scale from 1 to 4, how true of you each of these characteristics is.

Defend my own beliefs	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Affectionate	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Conscientious	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Independent	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Sympathetic	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Assertive	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Sensitive to the needs of others	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Reliable	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Understanding	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Forceful	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Compassionate	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Truthful	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always
Have leadership abilities	**1** Never	**2** Sometimes	**3** Often	**4** Always

Eager to soothe hurt feelings	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Willing to take risks	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Tough	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Warm	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Adaptable	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Dominant	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Hard	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Tender	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Willing to take a stand	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Strong	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Love children	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Tactful	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Powerful	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Aggressive	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Intimidating	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always
Gentle	1----------2----------3----------4 Never Sometimes Often Always

Alone 1----------2----------3----------4
Never Sometimes Often Always

8. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement below (*Circle* the appropriate number on the scale).

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Swearing is worse for a girl than for a boy.	1	2	3	4
b. On a date, the boy should be expected to pay all expenses.	1	2	3	4
c. On the average, girls are as smart as boys.	1	2	3	4
d. In a family, more encouragement should be given to sons than daughters to go to college.	1	2	3	4
e. It is all right for a girl to play rough sports like football.	1	2	3	4
f. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in making family decisions.	1	2	3	4
g. It is all right for a girl to ask a boy out on a date.	1	2	3	4
h. It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school.	1	2	3	4
i. If both husband and wife have jobs, the husband should do a share of the housework such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.	1	2	3	4
j. Boys are better leaders than girls.	1	2	3	4
k. Girls should be more concerned with becoming good wives and mothers rather than desiring a professional business career.	1	2	3	4
l. Girls should have the same freedom as boys	1	2	3	4

9. Each of the items below describe things that adolescents sometimes ask or do. Please imagine that you are in each situation and answer the following questions by *circling* the response that best fits for you.

i. Your close friend has plans to go out with another group of people but you would rather go out alone with him/her.

a) How angry would you be if you thought that he or she would not willingly chose to stay with you?

1----------2----------3----------4

Not at all angry | Somewhat angry | Very angry | Extremely angry

b) How anxious would you be if you thought that he or she would not willingly chose to stay with you?

1----------2----------3----------4

Not at all anxious | Somewhat anxious | Very anxious | Extremely anxious

ii. You are worried that your relationship with a close friend is falling apart and you would like to talk to him/her about it.

a) How angry would you be if you thought that he or she might not want to talk about it?

1----------2----------3----------4

Not at all angry | Somewhat angry | Very angry | Extremely angry

b) How anxious would you be if you thought that he or she might not want to talk about it?

1----------2----------3----------4

Not at all anxious | Somewhat anxious | Very anxious | Extremely anxious

iii. You and your close friend have a bad argument and you call him/her to talk about it.

a) How angry would you be if you thought that he or she might not want to talk about it?

1----------2----------3----------4

Not at all angry | Somewhat angry | Very angry | Extremely angry

b) How anxious would you be if you thought that he or she might not want to talk about it?

1----------2----------3----------4

Not at all | Somewhat anxious | Very anxious | Extremely

anxious anxious

10. If you have a boyfriend or girlfriend, please answer the next three questions. If you do not have a boyfriend or girlfriend please go directly to question number 19.

i. Your boyfriend/girlfriend has plans to go out with friends tonight, but you really want to spend the evening with him/her, and you tell him/her so.

a) How angry would you be imagining that he or she might not willingly choose to stay with you?

1----------2----------3----------4
Not at all angry Somewhat angry Very angry Extremely angry

b) How anxious would you be imagining that he or she might not willingly choose to stay with you?

1----------2----------3----------4
Not at all anxious Somewhat anxious Very anxious Extremely anxious

ii. You ask your boyfriend/girlfriend if he/she really loves you.

a) How angry would you be imagining that he or she might not answer you directly or honestly?

1----------2----------3----------4
Not at all angry Somewhat angry Very angry Extremely angry

b) How anxious would you be imagining that he or she might not answer you directly or honestly?

1----------2----------3----------4
Not at all anxious Somewhat anxious Very anxious Extremely anxious

iii. You call your boyfriend/girlfriend after a bad argument and tell him/her you want to see him/her.

a) How angry would you be imagining that he or she might not want to see you?

1----------2----------3----------4
Not at all angry Somewhat angry Very angry Extremely angry

b) How anxious would you be imagining that he or she might not want to see you?

1	2	3	4
Not at all anxious	Somewhat anxious	Very anxious	Extremely anxious

11. Each of the following items asks you about your emotions or reactions associated with emotions. After deciding which statement is generally true for you, use the 4-point scale to respond to the statement. Please *circle* the 1 if you strongly disagree that this is like you, the 2 if you somewhat disagree that this is like you, the 3 if you somewhat agree that this is like you, and the 4 if you strongly agree that this is like you.

There are no right or wrong answers. Please *circle* the response that best describes you.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
a. I know when it is okay to talk to other people about my personal problems.	1	2	3	4
b. When I have problems, I remember times that I had similar problems and was able to overcome them.	1	2	3	4
c. I expect that I will do well on most things I try.	1	2	3	4
d. Other people find it easy to confide in me.	1	2	3	4
e. I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people.	1	2	3	4
f. Some of the major events in my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.	1	2	3	4
g. Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living.	1	2	3	4
h. I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.	1	2	3	4
i. I expect good things to happen.	1	2	3	4
j. I like to share my emotions with others.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
k. I arrange events others enjoy.	1	2	3	4
l. I seek out activities that make me happy.	1	2	3	4
m. I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send to others.	1	2	3	4
n. I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.	1	2	3	4
o. When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.	1	2	3	4
p. I know why my emotions change.	1	2	3	4
q. I have control over my emotions.	1	2	3	4
r. I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.	1	2	3	4
s. I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I have to do.	1	2	3	4
t. I compliment others when they have done something well.	1	2	3	4
u. When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.	1	2	3	4
v. When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.	1	2	3	4
w. I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.	1	2	3	4
x. I help other people feel better when they are down.	1	2	3	4
y. I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
z. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	1	2	3	4

Thank You for Participating!

Appendix B

A SURVEY OF STUDENT LIFE
Fall 2003

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

This survey asks about the way you feel and act in different parts of your life. Please try to answer all the questions. However, if you do not understand a question, simply move on, rather than trying to give an answer. Feel free to make comments in the margins.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. We want your honest answers. Your answers are very important because they will help make your schools a better place for you to be.

Please remove your name label before you begin. Only your participant code should appear on this page when you hand in your completed survey.

There are several parts to this survey, and each part has its own instructions about how you answer. Please read all the instructions carefully. Thank you for your cooperation.

PARTICIPANT CODE _____

1. How important are the following to YOU? (*Skip any that you don't understand*)

1= Not important at all

2= Not very important

3= Somewhat important

4= Very importany

a. Friendship	1	2	3	4
b. Recognition (being appreciated)	1	2	3	4
c. Family life	1	2	3	4
d. Spirituality	1	2	3	4
e. Being loved	1	2	3	4
f. Respect for others	1	2	3	4
g. Honesty	1	2	3	4
h. Forgiveness	1	2	3	4
i. Intelligence	1	2	3	4
j. Humour	1	2	3	4
k. Concern for others	1	2	3	4
l. Your looks	1	2	3	4
m. Being popular	1	2	3	4
n. Having the right clothes to fit your group	1	2	3	4
o. Having choices	1	2	3	4
p. Politeness	1	2	3	4
q. Belonging to a group	1	2	3	4
r. Generosity	1	2	3	4
s. Being respected	1	2	3	4
t. Your cultural group heritage	1	2	3	4
u. School	1	2	3	4

2. The following statements ask about your **thoughts and feelings** in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate **how well it describes you** by circling the appropriate number on the scale. **READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING.**

	Not like me	**A little bit like me**	**Mostly like me**	**Always like me**
a. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.	1	2	3	4
b. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other person's" point of view.	1	2	3	4
c. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for people who are having problems.	1	2	3	4
d. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.	1	2	3	4
e. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.	1	2	3	4
f. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.	1	2	3	4
g. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.	1	2	3	4
h. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.	1	2	3	4
i. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.	1	2	3	4
j. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.	1	2	3	4
k. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.	1	2	3	4
l. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.	1	2	3	4

	Not like me	A little bit like me	Mostly like me	Always like me	
m. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in their shoes" for a while.		1	2	3	4
n. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.		1	2	3	4

NEXT, WE WOULD LIKE TO TURN TO SOME OF YOUR VIEWS ON A NUMBER OF SOCIAL AND PERSONAL ISSUES (*circle* the appropriate number on the scale)

3. Please indicate the extent to which you AGREE or DISAGREE with these statements.

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

a. What is right or wrong is a matter of personal opinion.....	1	2	3	4
b. If someone has something you really want, it's okay to make them give it to you	1	2	3	4
c. It's okay to punch or hit someone when you're having an argument.....	1	2	3	4
d. Fighting is a good way to defend your friends	1	2	3	4
e. It's OK to use threats to get what you want	1	2	3	4
f. If I don't like my teacher it's OK to act up in school.....	1	2	3	4
g. It's OK to damage buildings and property as a way of getting even.....	1	2	3	4
h. There are people and places I can go to if I need help	1	2	3	4
i. If I'm mad at someone I just ignore them.....	1	2	3	4

j. Even if other kids would think I'm weird I I would try to stop a fight.....	1	2	3	4
k. Sometimes a person does not have any choice but to fight.....	1	2	3	4
l. When my friends fight I try to stop them.....	1	2	3	4
m. I try to talk out a problem instead of fighting.....	1	2	3	4
n. If people do something to make me really mad, they deserve to be beaten up.....	1	2	3	4

4. How accurately would you say the following statements describe you? (please *circle*)

1=Not well at all
2= Not very well
3=Fairly Well
4= Very Well

a. I am well-liked.....	1	2	3	4
b. I am good-looking.....	1	2	3	4
c. I can do most things very well.....	1	2	3	4
d. I have lots of confidence.....	1	2	3	4

5. On a very personal note, much publicity has been given to a number of serious problems affecting teens. ARE YOU AFRAID THAT YOU MIGHT BE:

	Yes	No
a. Physically attacked at school.....	1	2
b. Beaten up by more than one person at a time.....	1	2
c. Physically abused at home.....	1	2
d. Talked into having sex with your boyfriend/ girlfriend against your will.....	1	2
e. Sexually harassed.....	1	2
f. Sexually assaulted.....	1	2
g. Physically attacked on your way to or from school.....	1	2

6. HAVE YOU EVER:	Yes	No
a. Been beaten up by more than one person at a time.....	1	2
b. Been physically abused at home.....	1	2
c. Been sexually harassed.....	1	2

d. Been sexually abused..... 1 2
e. Been talked into having sex with your boyfriend/ girlfriend against your will..... 1 2
f. Been attacked on your way to and from school..... 1 2
g. Stayed away from school because you were afraid..... 1 2
h. Been physically attacked at school..... 1 2

7. In the last MONTH at school, have any of these things BEEN DONE TO YOU BY A BOY? If "Yes", how many times in that one-month period?

Behaviour	Has this happened to you? If yes, how many times? (*circle* one)			
a. Been called a name	Never	1 – 3 times	4 – 9 times	10 + times
b. Had obscene language used towards you	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
c. Been threatened	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
d. Been sexually harassed	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
e. Something that belonged to you been damaged by someone else	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
f. Been rough housed	Never	1 – 3 times	4 – 9 times	10 + times
g. Something of yours been stolen	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
h. Been blackmailed	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
i. Had rumours spread about you	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
j. Been excluded or shunned	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
k. Been put down for being gay or lesbian	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
l. Been put down by being called 'gay' or 'lesbian'	Never	1-3 times	4-9 times	10+ times

8. In the last MONTH at school, have any of these things BEEN DONE TO YOU BY A GIRL? If "Yes", how many times in that one-month period?

Behaviour	Has this happened to you? If yes, how many times? (*circle* one)			
a. Been called a name	Never	1 – 3 times	4 – 9 times	10 + times
b. Had obscene language used towards you	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
c. Been threatened	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
d. Been sexually harassed	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
e. Something that belonged to you been damaged by someone else	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
f. Been rough housed	Never	1 – 3 times	4 – 9 times	10 + times
g. Something of yours been stolen	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
h. Been blackmailed	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
i. Had rumours spread about you	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
j. Been excluded or shunned	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
k. Been put down for being gay or lesbian	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
l. Been put down by being called 'gay' or 'lesbian'	Never	1-3 times	4-9 times	10+ times

In this part of the questionnaire we're interested in knowing how often you have done different things. Remember, your answers are completely confidential. Try to be as honest and truthful in your answers as possible.

9. During the past year, how often have you:

		Never	Once or Twice	Several Times	Very Often
a.	Smoked without your parents' permission.....	1	2	3	4
b.	Taken little things that don't belong to you.....	1	2	3	4
c.	Skipped a class.....	1	2	3	4
d.	Skipped school without a legitimate excuse.....	1	2	3	4

		Never	Once or Twice	Several Times	Very Often
e.	Broken into a place that is locked just to look around	1	2	3	4
f.	Damaged public or private property that did not belong to you just for fun	1	2	3	4
g.	Lied to your parents about where you have been or whom you were with	1	2	3	4
h.	Beaten up another kid	1	2	3	4
i.	Stayed out all night without your parents' permission	1	2	3	4
j.	Taken something from a store without paying for it	1	2	3	4
k.	Carried a weapon	1	2	3	4
l.	Damaged school property on purpose --like library books, or musical instruments or gym equipment	1	2	3	4
m.	Deliberately ruined something your parents valued after having an argument with them	1	2	3	4

10. In the last MONTH at school, have YOU DONE any of the following things TO A BOY? If "Yes", how many times in that one-month period?

Behaviour	Have you done this? If yes, how many times? *(circle one)*			
a. Called someone a name	Never	1 – 3 times	4 – 9 times	10 + times
b. Used obscene language	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
c. Threatened someone	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
d. Sexually harassed someone	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
e. Damaged something that belonged to someone else	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
f. Rough housed	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
g. Stole something	Never	1 – 3 times	4 – 9 times	10 + times
h. Blackmailed someone	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
i. Spread rumours	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
j. Excluded or shunned someone	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
k. Put down someone for being gay or lesbian	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
l. Put down someone by calling them 'gay' or 'lesbian'	Never	1-3 times	4-9 times	10+ times

11. In the last MONTH at school, have YOU DONE any of the following things TO A GIRL? If "Yes", how many times in that one-month period?

Behaviour	Have you done this? If yes, how many times? *(circle one)*			
a. Called someone a name	Never	1 – 3 times	4 – 9 times	10 + times
b. Used obscene language	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
c. Threatened someone	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
d. Sexually harassed someone	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
e. Damaged something that belonged to someone else	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
f. Rough housed	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
g. Stole something	Never	1 – 3 times	4 – 9 times	10 + times
h. Blackmailed someone	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
i. Spread rumours	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
j. Excluded or shunned someone	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
k. Put down someone for being gay or lesbian	Never	1 - 3	4 - 9	10 +
l. Put down someone by calling them 'gay' or 'lesbian'	Never	1-3 times	4-9 times	10+ times

12. If you answered "yes" to any of the items in questions 10 and 11 above, please fill in the "yes" cirlcle below and complete the second half of this question. If you have answered "never' to ALL of the items in questions 10 and 11 above, please fill in the "no" circle and go on to question 13.

Yes__

No__

IF YES: Have you ever tried to stop doing any of the behaviors that you said you have done in the past month at school?

Yes, I have been trying to stop, but for <u>less</u> than 6 months.
No, but I intend to try to stop in the next <u>month</u>.
No, but I intend to try to stop in the next <u>6 months.</u>
No, and I do <u>not</u> intend to try to stop in the next 6 months.

13. How often do you yourself: (please *circle* the number)

a.	Smoke cigarettes	1	2	3	4
b.	Drink beer, wine or other alcohol	1	2	3	4
c.	Smoke marijuana or hashish	1	2	3	4
d.	Use other illegal drugs	1	2	3	4
e.	Binge eat	1	2	3	4
f.	Stop yourself from eating so you will stay thin	1	2	3	4
g.	Use over-the-counter drugs	1	2	3	4

14. Do you have a job during the school year? (please *circle* the number)

no	yes
1	2

IF YES:

Approximately how many HOURS A WEEK do you work?

1 Less than 5
2 5-10
3 11-15
4 more than 15

Approximately what is your HOURLY WAGE (or equivalent)?

1 $4 or less
2 $5-6
3 more than $6

15. Do you receive an ALLOWANCE? (please *circle* the number)

1 yes 2 no

IF YES:

Approximately how much A WEEK?

1 $5 or less 2 $6-10 3 $11-25 4 over $25

16. Next to each statement, *circle the number* that tells how true each of these statements is of you.

1=Always false
2=Sometimes false
3=Often true
4=Always true

a. In this school, we work together.	1	2	3	4
b. My teachers think it is important to support me.	1	2	3	4
c. In this school everyone has an equal chance to succeed if they do their best.	1	2	3	4
d. In this school it is important that we learn things by ourselves.	1	2	3	4
e. Whenever I participate in classes I am afraid I will fail.	1	2	3	4
f. When we work together in small groups, we all achieve the same goal.	1	2	3	4
g. I find it hard to speak my thoughts clearly in this school.	1	2	3	4
h. I cooperate to keep the teachers from getting mad at me.	1	2	3	4
i. In this school, we do not talk to each other.	1	2	3	4
j. Other students here care about my feelings.	1	2	3	4
k. I often get discouraged at this school.	1	2	3	4
l. If a student works hard, he/she can definitely succeed.	1	2	3	4
m. In this school, we work by ourselves.	1	2	3	4
n. I have a lot of questions I never get a chance to ask in this school.	1	2	3	4
o. In this school, we learn more when we work with others.	1	2	3	4
p. My teachers want me to do my best.	1	2	3	4
q. The teachers like me as much as they like other students.	1	2	3	4

r. I am often lonely in this school.	1	2	3	4
s. In this school, students get the reward they deserve.	1	2	3	4
t. The teachers care about my feelings.	1	2	3	4
u. All the students in this school know each other well.	1	2	3	4
v. I like to share ideas and materials with other students.	1	2	3	4
w. It bothers me when I have to do it all myself.	1	2	3	4
x. I like my work better when I do it all myself.	1	2	3	4
y. I like the challenge of seeing who's best.	1	2	3	4
z. I don't like to be second.	1	2	3	4
aa. I am happiest when I am competing with other students.	1	2	3	4
bb. I do not like working with other students in this school.	1	2	3	4
cc. I can learn important things from other students.	1	2	3	4
dd. I work to do better than other students	1	2	3	4
ee. I like to help other students learn.	1	2	3	4
ff. Working in small groups is better than working alone.	1	2	3	4
gg. I try to share ideas and materials with other students when I think it will help them.	1	2	3	4
hh. It is a good idea for students to help each other learn.	1	2	3	4
ii. I like to do better work than other students.	1	2	3	4
jj. I do better work when I work alone.	1	2	3	4
kk. I like to do the best in my classes.	1	2	3	4

17 In this question, we want to understand your experience with feeling like you are part of a community in this school. By *circling one of the numbers* in the scale below, please state the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree
When I am away from school, I am proud to tell others where I go to school	1	2	3	4
I like going to this school	1	2	3	4
It would take a lot for me to want to leave this school	1	2	3	4
I like to contribute by volunteering to do things at school when I am asked	1	2	3	4
If I had a problem outside of school, I know I could ask someone at school to help me with it	1	2	3	4
I share a common vision and sense of purpose with other people here	1	2	3	4
I feel like I belong here	1	2	3	4
I can influence decisions that affect me	1	2	3	4
My individual differences are respected here	1	2	3	4
I interact with people from different backgrounds here	1	2	3	4
I have experienced few incidents of discrimination here	1	2	3	4
I have not felt excluded by people here	1	2	3	4
The way things are done here requires few, if any changes	1	2	3	4

18. All in all, would you say that you are: (*Circle* your answer)

1 Very happy
2 Pretty happy
3 Not too happy
4 Not happy at all

19. How much education, in total, do you expect you will eventually get?

1 High school
2 Some vocational/community college
3 Complete vocational/community college
4 Some university
5 Graduate from university
6 I don't expect to finish high school

Thank you for participating!

Appendix C

SCHOOL CLIMATE QUESTIONNAIRE
2003

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

This survey asks about the way you feel and act in different situations at school. It also asks you to think about what you think other people in your school are likely to do in different situations. Read the questions and think about what you would do and why you would do it in each of the situations described. Please try to answer all the questions.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. We want your honest answers. Your answers are very important because they will help make your school a better place for you and others to be.

Please remove your name label before you begin. Only your participant code should appear on this page when you hand in your completed survey.

Thank you for your cooperation.

PARTICIPANT CODE

Below are 5 different situations. Please read them and then answer the questions that follow. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. We would just like to know what you personally think people should do in situations like these.

- **In the first part of the question, you need to choose between 3 choices: 'Yes', 'No' and 'Not Sure.'**
- **In the second part of the question please write something in response to 'Why?' even if you are 'not sure' about what should happen in the situation (that is, you can explain *why* you are not sure about what should be done).**

---

1. Bob, a Grade 8 student, who has just a few friends, was passing by the entrance to the gym and heard some noise. When he checked he saw two well-nown and popular Grade 9 male students pushing his friend Carlos, also a Grade 8 student who has just a few friends. When Bob came up to them, the two Grade 9 students left, saying that both Bob and Carlos "better keep their mouths shut". Bob and Carlos are not sure about whether to tell a teacher about this incident.

Should **Bob** report the Grade 9 students to a teacher? Yes __ No __ Not Sure __

Why? _____

_____

_____

Should **Carlos** report the grade 9 students? Yes __ No __ Not Sure __

Why? _____

_____

_____

What if Bob is not a friend of Carlos; would that make a difference?
Yes __ No __ Not Sure __

Why? _____

_____

_____

What would **most** students in this school do if they were in Bob's position? _____

_____

Why? _____

_____

_____

2. Jenny, a Grade 9 student who is very quiet, is in the washroom when she overhears three popular Grade 9 girls plotting to ruin another Grade 9 girl's reputation by telling everyone they know that the girl is a "slut" because she phoned up the boyfriend of one of the girls and arranged a meeting with him without telling that girl. Jenny also overhears the girls say they might even have to beat the girl up in order to teach her a lesson.

Should **Jenny** report what she has heard in the washroom to a teacher?

Yes __ No __ Not Sure __

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

Is it important in a school for students not to be afraid of being verbally abused or threatened?

Yes __ No __ Not Sure __

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

Is it important in a school for students not to be afraid of being physically hurt?

Yes __ No __ Not Sure __

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

3. Samantha does not like school and attends only because her parents make her. She says she doesn't care about getting an education, and often skips classes. She also says she is very unhappy with her parents. Yesterday, she told a friend that she was going to run away from home because she had found somebody that would set her up with ways to make a lot of money and not be dependent on her parents.

What should **the friend** do in this situation? _____

_____

_____

_____

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

What would **you** do in this situation if you were the friend? _____

_____

_____

_____

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

Would **most** other students in your school think it would be a good thing to try to stop Samantha from running away from home? Yes __ No __ Not Sure __

Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Jim is a new student in this school. He would like to make new friends, but very few people have spoken with him during his first week in his new school. On the last day of his first week, he was asked by another student, Frank, who seems okay, if he wanted to do some drugs with him. Jim has tried drugs before, and got into trouble with his family for it, so he has decided to stay away from drugs for now. However, he is also worried that Frank might turn against him if he turns down his offer of drugs, so he's not sure what to do.

What should **Jim** do in the situation?

Why?

What would **you** do in this situation?

Why?

What would **most** other students in this school do in this situation?

Why?

5. On her way home from work last Friday evening, Lise saw three other students from her school painting graffiti on the school wall, and smashing a glass door at the school. She doesn't agree with this behaviour, but the people who did it are her friends at school. The principal of the school called Lise and several other students into the office, and asked them to anonymously give information about who did the damage. Lise is thinking about telling the principal, as long as it doesn't get back to her friends.

What should **Lise** do in the situation?

Why?

What would **you** do in this situation?

Why?

What would **most** other students in this school do in this situation?

Why?

What would you do?

Below are several situations. After each one, write down what you would do if you were in that situation. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, so please be honest. We are just interested in what you think.

6.

i. You are walking down the hallway in school when an older **girl** comes up to you and starts yelling at you. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

ii. You are walking down the hallway in school when an older **boy** comes up to you and starts yelling at you. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7.

i. You're coming out of school. A **female** student who is smaller and younger than you throws a basketball at your head. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

ii. You're coming out of school. A **male** student who is smaller and younger than you throws a basketball at your head. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

8.

i. A **female** student in your class is bragging to other people that she is smarter than you. One of your friends tells you. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

ii. A **male** student in your class is bragging to other people that he is smarter than you. One of your friends tells you. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

The next 2 questions are just for <u>girls</u> to answer:

9. You are at a party and you see a younger girl flirting with a boy your age or older. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Some of your friends are heading to the mall after school. You start walking with them when one of your best friends tells you that they don't want you to come. What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

The next 2 questions are just for <u>boys</u> to answer:

11. You are walking down the hall and you hear one guy telling another guy that one of your friends is a "pussy." What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Some of your friends start a basketball game after school. You walk over to join in. You are bent over tying your shoelace when a new guy who has joined the game chucks the ball and nails you in the ribs, knocking the wind out of you. Before you recover, he comes over and says "What's the matter, wuss, can't you take it?" What would you do?

_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT!

Appendix D

SCHOOL YOUTH CONSENT FORM

I understand that I am being invited to participate in a study entitled: ***Aggressive and Violent Girls: Contributing Factors, Development Course and Intervention Strategies*** being conducted by Dr. Sibylle Artz. Dr. Artz is an Associate Professor in the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria and I know I may contact her at 721-6472 if I have any questions. I also know that I can ask questions of the person meeting with me at any time.

I understand that the research is about understanding aggressive and violent behaviour in youth and that the researchers hope to develop effective gender specific prevention activities. I understand that I will be asked to complete a questionnaire about aggressive behaviour, and can, if I like, volunteer to discuss my experiences with aggressive/violent behaviour in an individual interview. I can also, along with other youth, participate in some prevention activities at my school that will be aimed at preventing, reducing or eliminating aggressive/violent behaviour (such as conflict resolution training, student led assemblies focusing on school pride and accomplishment, social skills, assertiveness, and peace-making training, school grounds clean -up and beautification, and specific training for teachers and counselors). Parent participation will be encouraged and parents will be notified of the school's efforts via newsletters and other notices.

I understand that some interviews or questionnaire completions might take place after school when I could choose to do other things with my time and that I will be expected to attend meetings that we arrange together. I also understand that I might enjoy having an opportunity to talk openly about some of my experiences and my talking will contribute to the understanding of youths' aggressive/violent behaviour and how to change it.

I understand that if I choose to participate in an individual interview, I will be offered $20 to thank me for my time and encourage me to continue to participate over the 5-years of the project. I will be given $20 for each interview I attend with the researchers. The money being offered me has not coerced me to participate in the project, and if I'm just doing this to get the money, I should not sign this consent form nor participate in this study.

I understand that talking about my experiences may upset me and that if I appear upset, the researcher will offer to refer me to a registered counsellor (Pearl Arden, 383-1045) at no charge to myself. I also understand that I don't have to answer any questions that make me feel uncomfortable and that I can leave the room or withdraw my participation at any time without explaining why.

I understand that the interviews will occur twice a year for 5 years and will last from 1 to 1 1/2 hours; that the questionnaire will be completed once a year and will take approximately 1 hour to complete. I understand that the prevention activities will be arranged by my school and my school will solicit my participation along with the participation of other youths. The researchers may want to look through my school file to see how others interpret aggressive events or things that go on between youths. The researchers will not be able to look at my file unless I give my permission in writing. I understand that I can say "no" and that they will not be allowed to look at my file and

that saying "no" will not change my chance to participate in any way. I understand that I can ask questions of the researcher at any time. I understand that the researchers will contact me to arrange follow-up interviews or questionnaire completions and may also contact me in order to clarify information that I shared previously. In order to make sure that I continue to consent to participating over time, I understand that the researcher will ask me to re-sign the consent form each time we meet for an interview or to complete a questionnaire over the course of the 5-year period.

My participation is completely voluntary and I can, without explanation, withdraw from the study at any time. I also understand that at no time will my privileges be dependent upon my participation in this study. Whether I participate or not will have no effect on the treatment I receive at school. Further, should I withdraw my participation at any time this will also in no way have an impact on my status at school.

I understand that my interviews may be audio-taped with my permission and that the tape will be destroyed immediately after it has been transcribed, and that all information collected from the interviews will be destroyed within 6 months after the project is over. I also understand that I can refuse to have my interviews taped but can still participate in the study. Should I withdraw my participation mid-stream, I understand that my data will be destroyed unless I give my explicit permission for it to be retained. I understand that I can contact the researcher after any interview to delete any information I shared, change how I expressed myself or add anything that I didn't share.

I understand that any information collected in the study will remain confidential (it won't be shared with other people); interview results and questionnaires will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked room. However, I understand that the researcher is required to tell someone who can help if I tell the researcher that I am planning to hurt myself or others or if I am being abused by someone. I also understand that the researcher could be asked by a court of law to tell things that I have shared in my interview. A secretary may transcribe the interview tapes; however, I understand that he/she will not have access to identifying information. Furthermore, I understand that my name will not be attached to any published results, and that my anonymity will be protected by using a code number to identify the information source. I understand that some researchers at other Canadian universities will have access to my information, in order to compare and contrast it with information they are collecting, but the information will not include my name. I understand that the information I share will be combined with information from other youths to develop gender-specific prevention activities, journal articles, and reports and that the project findings may be shared at public workshops and conferences.

Should I have any questions or concerns, I understand that I can call any of the researchers or the Associate Vice-President Academic, Research Office at the University of Victoria, noted below.

I have received a copy of this consent form, and know how to contact the researchers in the future if I have questions or concerns.

NAME:
_____SIGNATURE:_____

DATE: _____Researcher: _____

Contacts: Sibylle Artz phone: 250-721-6472
Diana Nicholson phone: 250-472-4131

Office of the Associate Vice-President Research, University of Victoria phone: 250-472-4362