BEYOND CARE AND ORDER IN SCHOOL CLIMATE: A QUALITATIVE

STUDY OF DEFENDER AND OUTSIDER COGNITIONS IN BULLYING

SITUATIONS

By

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Abstract

BEYOND CARE AND ORDER IN SCHOOL CLIMATE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY
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William S. Richards

This study examined the cognitions of students who intervene or do not intervene
when they witness bullying incidents along with the ways that these cognitions may
relate to these students' perceptions of school climate at a small, rural high school in
Northern California. Because increasing the frequency of bystander intervention has been
found in prior studies to decrease bullying, this study illuminates the cognitive processes
that support agency to intervene in bullying and distinguish them from cognitive
processes that reduce agency to intervene. This study also identifies possible links
between the ways students perceive school climate and their agency to intervene. Using a
reduced version of the Participant Role Questionnaire, students were peer-identified to be
Defenders or Outsiders. The participants engaged in confidential semi-structured
interviews, and their statements were organized by grounded theory in regard to student
cognitions and using a predetermined list of constructs to analyze student perceptions of
school climate. The results of this study indicate that Outsiders did not intervene in
bullying incidents primarily due to fear, including social fears of losing status by standing
out from others, and their cognitive processes reflected many aspects of moral
disengagement. In contrast, the Defenders intervened in bullying incidents because they
believed that bullying is "just wrong," and they translated their moral thinking into moral
action during incidents once they assessed the events to be bullying rather than lesser

forms of antisocial behavior. The participants widely perceived their school climate to be high in Care and low in Order, thus meeting the criteria for a Permissive school climate. It is likely that the Permissive school climate reduced defending behaviors during bullying incidents while increasing the frequency of the instigation of bullying. The effectiveness of using only the two orthogonal constructs of Care and Order to define school climate types and their effects was not contradicted by this study, but the findings of this study suggest that additional school-climate related constructs and moving beyond binary ratings of high or low should be considered when designing school climate-improvement plans that could lead to increased Defender behavior and fewer bullying incidents.

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Table of Contents

List of Appendices

Introduction

At the heart of this study are twelve students at a small, rural high school situated in the remote redwood forests of northern California. The central area of the region is referred to as the Emerald Triangle because of its half-century old economy and culture based upon marijuana cultivation. Though the school district spreads out over nearly 900 square miles of rugged, mountainous terrain, the single high school serves fewer than 200 students, many of whom travel for more than 90 minutes between home and school twice each day. The area is home to many who take pride in the differences between the alternative way of life of this community and other nearby communities, whose societies they view as straighter, and thus narrower, than their own.

The students of the high school bring this sense of living in a special, different and "cooler" community than others, yet the teens of this region engage in many activities common to teenagers in much of America: they attend school, study math and English, play football and softball and attend prom. The community based upon illegal commerce has brought with it a society of open secrets, of staying out of other people's business, of keeping silent. And along with their pride in belonging to this community, the students carry a contrasting sense that they go to a "poor" school, an institution with fewer resources or programs than other schools, and some have internalized criticisms voiced by others outside the community who believe that the students are all "hippies", unmannered hill people, and live their school days stoned and unmotivated.

Set within this community and its widely-accepted alternative beliefs, the high school appears to the students to be both representative of the community's people and

alternative values but also part of a government-run system with rules written elsewhere that the school must negotiate. While the school board is composed of locals, the administrators and teachers have increasingly come from outside of the community, and hiring quality administrators and teachers who can fit in with the alternative mores of the community has been challenging. It is within this tension between free-thinking alternative values and institutional school order that the students grow up and experience their interpersonal relationships and social roles. As at other schools in other communities, when students are getting along and engaging each other with common kindness and respect, relationships and student culture exhibit youthful and playful ease. But when disrespect or cruelty arise, the interpersonal, social and institutional mechanisms for addressing them are processed through the tension between freedom and an order that adheres to the community norms of live and let live and the maintenance of silence and secrecy. And so when instances of bullying and other antisocial behaviors appear, the responses from the students and school personnel arise within the specific dynamics of this unique ecocultural environment.

Focused on one school, this study uses a survey and semi-structured interviews with students who were peer-identified to be most likely or least likely to defend victims in bullying situations. This study looks at ways that the cognitions of these students in regard to bullying relate to the ways that these students perceive their school climate. The literature on bullying has shown that defending behaviors can end 60% of bullying behaviors within 10 seconds (Craig & Pepler, 1997), and an increase in the frequency of defending behaviors in bullying situations leads to a reduction in the instigation of

bullying incidents in the first place (Karna, Salmivalli, Poskiparta & Voeten, 2008; Saarento, Boulton & Salmivalli, 2014; Salmivalli, Voeten, & Poskiparta, 2011). This study addresses a number of questions in order to better understand the thinking of students who defend victims in bullying situations, *Defenders,* and that of students who passively bystand or evade bullying situations they may witness, *Outsiders*; further, this study elicits the perceptions these students have of school climate and looks at possible connections or correlations these might have with students thinking during bullying situations.

This study is guided by the following overarching research question and subquestions:

Research Question:

In this given context, what are the distinguishing cognitions of Outsiders and Defenders in bullying situations?

Subquestions:

1. What cognitions contribute to the Defenders' agency to intervene in bullying situations?

2. What cognitions contribute to the Outsiders' decision not intervene in bullying situations?

3. How do the Defenders' and Outsiders' perceptions of school climate relate to their agency in bullying situations?

This research is presented in the following format. Chapter two provides a thorough review of the literature, including discussions of the prevalence of bullying and its negative effects, the aspects of a major theoretical model of bullying, research that has looked at the participant characteristics, aspects of school climate, self-efficacy and collective efficacy, and moral disengagement. Chapter three explains the methodology of this study, how the survey was created and utilized, how interview subjects were selected, how the semi-structured interviews were conducted. Chapter four provides the results of the data gathered from the surveys and interviews. Chapter five provides a discussion of the results within the context of existing literature and implications for school practice and further research.

Literature Review

The prevalence of bullying in schools in the U.S. and internationally undermines humanity's ability to educate and nurture its young toward healthy and productive lives. Bullying interferes with the academic achievement and emotional, social, and mental health of students from early childhood through adolescence and adulthood (Dempsey & Storch, 2008; Juvonen, Wang, & Espinoza, 2011; Ttofi, Farrington, Losel, & Loeber, 2011). Ultimately, bullying jeopardizes the formation and maintenance of civility in democratic societies, and thus our collective ability to address the problems that society and our planet must address.

Research into how schools can most effectively address this institutional and human problem have produced diverse results in regard to the efficacy of school-based programs to prevent and intervene in school culture to reduce the incidence of bullying (Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012; Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004). Some productive approaches have taken into account the proposition that bullying is not merely an interaction between two people, the bully and the victim, but instead takes place in a larger social framework (Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukiainen, 1996). Lines of inquiry that take this approach are themselves diverse and include the participant role model (Salmivalli et al., 1996), theories accounting for the interactions among social groups (Hawley & Williford, 2015), the child-by-environment approach (Ladd, 2003), and broader conceptions arising from eco-cultural theory that includes the larger context of families and communities in understanding the social dynamics of bullying situations (Smokowski, Cotter, Robertson, & Guo, 2013;

classroom context: anticipated peer and teacher reactions in bullying situations;

mediating factors in bystander intervention in bullying; self-efficacy for defending and

collective efficacy; moral sensitivity and moral disengagement; and a section on applying

typologies from parenting styles research to school climate.

Bullying: Prevalence and Effects

Bullying in schools is prevalent in the United States and internationally, with

studies indicating ranges between 10% and 38% of students experiencing bullying either

as victims or bullies (Frey, Hirschstein, Edstrom, & Snell, 2009; O'Connell, Pepler, &

Craig, 1999; Olweus, 1991).

Common definitions of bullying reflect that it is repeated behavior over time in

which an aggressor (the bully), with intent to harm, has greater power than another

student (the victim) and causes the victim to experience distress through physical or

verbal aggression, intimidation, exclusion, or coercion (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Olweus,

1993); more recently, cyberbullying, which shares some of the dynamics of other forms

of bullying, has been added as a method that bullies use to enact antisocial behavior

(Wong-Lo & Bullock, 2014). Significantly, some researchers have added social and

psychological dimensions to the power differential of bullying (Center for the Study of

the Prevention of School Violence, 2008; Smith & Ananiadou, 2003).

Importantly, the negative short-term and long-term effects of bullying go to the

heart of academic, emotional, and social growth. For victims, the consequences include

decreased attendance; it has been estimated that 15% of school absenteeism is related to

being a victim of bullying (DeHaan, 1997). In addition, a victim's academic achievement

and grades have been shown to drop (Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992). Lowered self-esteem (Rigby & Slee, 1993), depression, and anxiety (Hawker & Boulton, 2003) have been associated with victimization, while the tendency to be socially isolated increases as peers shy away to avoid becoming victims themselves. At the most extreme, these symptoms can lead some victims to attempt suicide, and studies have shown a relationship between school shootings and status as a victim of bullying (Espelage & Swearer, 2003).

While victims suffer the effects of bullying, the students engaged in bullying also encounter their own short-term and long-term consequences. Bullying behaviors can be precursors to other antisocial behaviors including vandalism, fighting, and the use of drugs and alcohol at school. In the long term, studies find strong correlations between bullying behaviors and legal problems as adults, including an increased rate of criminal conviction (Olweus, 1993) and a decreased rate of developing positive relationships (Banks, 1997). In addition to the negative effects upon bullies and victims, the negative consequences experienced by bystanders include depression, anxiety, hostility, somatic complaints, and substance use (Rivers, Poteat, Noret, & Ashurst, 2009). In order to inform intervention programs that could lessen the painful effects of bullying on young people, researchers have designed and tested models to better understand the interpersonal dynamics of bullying.

The Social Context of Bullying: The Participant Role Model

A landmark study by researchers in Finland influenced the social context lens of bullying (Salmivalli et al., 1996). Rather than view bullying as a dyadic system limited to

the bully and the victim, the dominant structure of theory, research, and intervention practice considers bullying as a group process. In addition to the *bully* and the *victim*, the researchers' formulation of the participant role model identifies and defines participants related to bullying situations according to the different ways they respond while witnessing bullying. These roles consist of the *assistant* to the bully, the *reinforcer* of the bully, the *outsider*, and the *defender* of the victim (Salmivalli et al., 1996; Sutton & Smith, 1999). Assistants are bystanders who join with the bully in targeting the victim. Reinforcers are those whose behaviors, such as laughing or cheering, provide positive feedback for the bully's actions and thus are perceived by the bully as supporting the bully's targeting of the victim. Outsiders are those who withdraw or leave the scene of the bullying, and though they do not actively support the bully, as do assistants, their withdrawal can be perceived by the bully as acquiescence and even support for the bully's actions against the victim; indeed, some researchers have referred to outsiders as silent approvers (Salmivalli, 2014). Only defenders actively oppose the bully's targeting of the victim, either through direct action, which might actively confront the bully to stop it or actively support the victim by providing them with emotional support, or through indirect action, which would include reporting the bullying behaviors to adult school staff or teachers.

Subsequent research revealed that bystanders witness as much as 85% of bullying situations (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Hawkins, Pepler, & Craig, 2001; O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999), but intervene less than 20% of the time (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Hawkins et al., 2001). When bystanders intervene in bullying situations, in approximately 60% of

bullying situations the bullying stops within 10 seconds (Craig & Pepler, 1997; Salmivalli, 1999). In addition, in some cases, more than 50% of students in a classroom have been identified by peers as either defenders or outsiders, roles that imply that they have negative views of bullying behaviors and dislike children who bully others (Olthof & Goossens, 2008; Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). This combination of the high frequency of bystander presence with the low incidence of bystander intervention has led to theorizing and research that attempts to explain why bystanders fail to intervene and how intervention programs can be designed to increase the frequency of bystander intervention in bullying situations. Salmivalli (2014) has emphasized that ". . .the success of bullying prevention/intervention efforts often depends on how well peer bystanders are utilized in such efforts" (p. 289). The importance of this role shift toward defending behaviors and away from bystander behaviors that reinforce the actions of bullies is underscored by research that aggregates peer-assigned individual role scores to describe the kinds of typical and atypical behaviors that exist around bullying behaviors within single classrooms. This research into aggregate classroom role scores shows that classrooms that have a greater level of peer reinforcement for bullies tend to have more bullying, while classrooms that have greater levels of supporting and defending victims tend to have less frequent bullying (Karna et al., 2008; Salmivalli et al., 2011).

To understand how bystanders who relate to bullying situations as assistants, reinforcers, and outsiders can become defenders of the victim, and to understand how bystanders who hold anti-bullying attitudes can be prompted to act according to these beliefs, researchers look to models for human bystander behavior in general (Latane &

Darley, 1968), group dynamics in bullying situations (Salmivalli et al., 1996), and individual factors that affect bystanders in bullying situations (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). Indeed, the individuals who experience bullying situations, whatever their roles, are "driven by diverse emotions, attitudes, and motivations" that "interact with environmental factors" (Salmivalli, 2010, p. 113), such as classroom norms, school climate, and teacher attitudes toward bullying.

Why Bystanders Fail to Intervene

To understand the factors related to bystanders' failure to intervene, as well as to provide a sequential model for steps that result in bystander intervention, Nickerson, Aloe, Livingston and Feeley (2014) have looked to the situational model of bystander behavior posited by Latane and Darley (1968). The situational model of bystander behavior identifies the bystander effect, which describes the ways that the decision to take action during a troubling situation can be affected by the presence of others, and classifies the following sequence of intrapersonal processes experienced by an individual bystander: (1) noticing the troubling situation, (2) interpreting the situation as troubling, (3) seeing oneself as responsible to take action in the situation, (4) knowing what action to take in response to the situation, and (5) taking the identified action.

Each of these five steps provides opportunities for necessary intrapersonal processes to result in a bystander taking action in a troubling situation. Considering the frequency of bullying at school, some potential bystanders may not even notice a troubling situation in the first place. Derogatory language or other cues to potential bullying might not be "vivid" or "notable" if they are part of the norm in a given school

culture (Nickerson et al., 2014). Indeed, much bullying activity is designed by the bully to create psychological rather than physical damage, and the bully's words and actions might be explained away as "only joking" (Terasahjo & Salmivalli, 2003).

Due to the bystander effect, an individual bystander can be inhibited from acting in a troubling situation. Pluralistic ignorance, the false assumption that the inaction of other bystanders to intervene in bullying situations results from an attitude of approval of the specific bullying action being witnessed, can cause a bystander who holds disapproving attitudes toward bullying to fail to intervene because they believe that others think the bully's actions are okay (Burn, 2009). The bystander effect might also inhibit action by individual bystanders by diffusing apparent responsibility, leaving each bystander expecting someone else to take action in response to the troubling situation (Darley & Latane, 1968). Knowing what action to take in response to a troubling situation may be hampered by a lack of social or intervention skills (Burn, 2009). Furthermore, taking an identified action in response to the situation might be perceived as ineffective or even risky because it could lead to retaliation from the bully or peers (Rigby & Johnson, 2005). Other interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics might also hinder bystanders from choosing to carry out actions in defense of victims.

The relatively high social status of bullies and the relatively low social status of victims tend to place bystanders, even when they hold anti-bullying attitudes and possess strategies for responding to bullies in defense of victims, in the position of choosing between siding with the bully and maintaining or gaining social position, or siding with the victim and risk losing status and becoming potential victims themselves. While

bullies self-report that they carry out bullying behaviors to enhance the extent to which

they are perceived as respected, admired, and dominant (Bjorkqvist, Ekman, &

Lagerspetz, 1982; Sitsema, Veenstra, Lindeberg, & Salmivalli, 2009), bullies also choose

their victims to both maximize the extent to which peers view them as powerful

(Juvonen, Graham, & Schuster, 2003) and minimize potential risks to themselves by

choosing unpopular or low-status peers as their victims (Ladd & Troop-Gordon, 2003;

Perry, Kusel, & Perry, 1988; Salmivalli et al., 1996). Thus bullies can increase social

rewards from peers while they "choose their victims so as to minimize loss of affection"

(Veenstra, Lindenberg, Munniksma, & Dijkstra, 2010, p. 485).

Research also shows that bullies can possess high levels of social intelligence

which enables them to manipulate group situations and individuals (Garandeau &

Cillessen, 2006). In addition, bullies tend to pick on only one or two target victims

(Schuster, 1999). This allows for a number of perceptions that are favorable to bullies to

become prevalent with bystanders. First, bystanders may find it is easy to blame the

victims for being targets, an idea that can arise already from the victim's lack of

popularity or, sometimes, psychological or social maladjustment. Research shows that in

cases where very few victims are targeted, the most maladjusted classmates are those

who become victims (Huitsing, Veenstra, Sainio, & Salmivalli, 2012). Thus, bystanders,

as well as victims, "might be more prone to blame the target when few children share his

or her plight" (Salmivalli, 2010, p. 115). Even worse for victims, the more they are

victimized, the more that bystanders and victims tend to blame the victim for being

responsible for becoming targeted (Terasahjo & Salimivalli, 2003), and the more rejected

the victims become (Hodges & Perry, 1999; Ladd & Troop-Gordon, 2003). Salmivalli

(2010) provides the even more painful and poignant insight that over time, the "target of

harassment starts to resemble a social role in the group" that further degrades "how others

view the victim" and diminishes the "victim's possibility to connect with peers" (p. 115).

Congruent with the belief that bullies carry out bullying behaviors as ways of

enhancing their social status is the finding by researchers that peers, including

mainstream peer groups, can perceive bullies as "cool, powerful, and popular**" (Caravita,

De Blasio, & Salmivalli, 2009)**. Importantly, peers appear to separate the perception of

disliking a bully from the idea that the bully is cool or popular (Estell, Farmer, Pearl, Van

Acker, & Rodkin, 2008; Rodkin, Farmer, Pearl, & Van Acker, 2006). One explanation

for why adolescent peers perceive bullies as "cool" suggests that antisocial and rebellious

behaviors represent challenges to adult norms and that adolescent youth admire bullies

when they show power (Moffitt, 1993). Additional explanations include resource control

theory, which suggests that individuals who succeed in their goals have greater access to

social and material resources, which in turn makes their peers value them (Hawley,

2002), and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), which also suggests that individuals

appreciate and learn the value of emulating those around them who have achieved their

goals. According to Salmivalli (2010), a bully can be "rejected (personally disliked by

many classmates) and yet perceived as popular, as the latter construct reflects the social

centrality, visibility, and impact of children in their peer group—exactly the things bullies

seem to value" (p. 114). Two important concepts in regard to peer relations with bullies

are perceived popularity and sociometric popularity. Perceived popularity is based upon

peer identification of classmates who are considered popular (Asher & Coie, 1990) and contrasts with sociometric popularity, which is based upon peer liking or disliking (Lansu & Cillessen, 2012).

According to one longitudinal study, the perceived popularity of bullies continues to grow over time as bullying behaviors continue (Cillessen & Borch, 2006). The apparent contradiction between the dislikeability and perceived popularity of bullies confronts peers with a threatening conundrum that perhaps pushes more peers to take the personally safe role of outsider vis a vis bullying situations rather that choosing to act as a defender of the victim.

In looking at the factors that maintain bullying behaviors, researchers have noted that bullies find reinforcement by assistants, reinforcers, and silent approvers to be a stronger influence on bullies than negative reinforcement that results from defender interventions and other school factors that counter bullying (Salmivalli, Voeten, & Poskiparta, 2011). Clearly, if school programs to reduce bullying are to succeed, these programs must address not only how to generate greater defender intervention, but must also address the ways that assistants, reinforcers, and silent approvers relate to their roles in bullying situations in order to reduce reinforcement of bullies.

Research shows that bullies, assistants, and reinforcers hold attitudes that are more approving of bullying than do defenders (Boulton, Bucci, & Hawker, 1999; Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004), and that they appear to lack empathy for the victims rather than lack self-efficacy (Poyhonen & Salmivalli, 2008). In addition, because bullies often enjoy perceived popularity, bystanders who lack measures of empathy, self-efficacy, and

social status that might lead them to be defenders, may well adapt their behaviors to move toward the bullies and away from the victims; this adaptation to the dynamics of the group suggests either an awareness of what it takes to adapt to the group (Juvonen & Cadigan, 2002) or anxiety in regard to reacting more favorably to victims (Nishina & Juvonen, 2005). Garrandeau and Cillessen (2006) suggest that this response by assistants and reinforcers might be a way of "fitting in" to the peer group. Meanwhile, outsiders, the "silent approvers," have empathy for victims but lack self-efficacy in regard to defending (Gini, Albiero, Benelli, & Altoe, 2008; Poyhonen & Salmivalli, 2008).

Classroom Cliques and Bullying-Related Attitudes

Research on the social groupings within classrooms shows that the qualities shared by clique members include bullying-related attitudes and behaviors (Espelage, Holt, & Henkel, 2003). While students cannot choose their classmates, they do affiliate in cliques and dyadic friendships through social selection processes (Kandel, 1978), partially based upon similarities with others. Researchers have noted that these cliques and dyads tend to consist of students who take on similar participant roles in relation to bullying situations, with the result being that defenders often group up with other defenders, outsiders with other outsiders, and bullies, assistants, and reinforcers with other students who take on these antisocial roles **(**Salmivalli, Huttunen, & Lagerspetz 1997).

The processes that result in these groupings by participant roles and the effects of affiliating with a like group within the classroom have received little empirical study, though these processes may have large ramifications for programs that aim to intervene

in bullying; researchers have considered some aspects of selection and socialization processes and mechanisms regarding student groupings, participant roles, and changes in attitudes and behavior in relationship to bullying (Espelage et al., 2003; Evans & Smokowski, 2017; Olthof & Goossens, 2008; Prinstein & Dodge, 2008; Salmivalli, 2010).

In regard to selection, researchers have found that, contrary to the general assumption that individuals join groups of like others, adolescent boys who take on pro-bullying roles join groups despite scoring low on received acceptance from other boys with pro-bullying roles; however, these boys scored alike in relation to desired acceptance (Olthof & Goossens, 2008). Some researchers have suggested that children might join groups with bully role affiliations not because they like others in these groups but because they wish to increase their own social standing (Witvliet, Olthos, Hoeksma, Smits, Koot, & Goossens, 2009). This argument seems plausible given the relatively high perceived popularity of bullies. Researchers have argued that in addition to being a means to gaining social status, becoming part of a bullying clique might create a sense of belonging for children who participate in bullying groups (Roland & Idsoe, 2001), thus serving an individual's essential needs for fitting in and defining identity.

Once children have become affiliated with a bullying group, longitudinal studies suggest that socialization processes increase their bullying or pro-bullying behaviors over time (Espelage et al., 2003). In addition, Salmivalli (2010) has suggested that "deviancy training" (Granic & Dishion, 2003) might take place in pro-bullying groups and would

involve "verbal and nonverbal cues of acceptance" during or between bullying episodes (p. 116).

While the antisocial roles seem to become more prevalent in these ways, the prosocial role of defending might also have its own peer socialization effects which allow peers to serve as positive models to one another (Salmivalli et al., 1997). Indeed, an association has been found between being willing to intervene in bullying situations and the belief that one's friends and parents expected them to support victims (Rigby & Johnson, 2006); however, this association has not been empirically tested, so whether the connection arises due to selection, socialization, or other factors remains undetermined.

While personal attributes and interpersonal and group dynamics reflect qualities that lead individuals to fail to intervene in bullying situations, different personal and social attributes are associated with defending behaviors.

Personal and Social Antecedents to Intervention

A number of studies have looked at various personal qualities of bystanders and their relationship with either the intent to intervene or actual intervention (Pozzoli, Gini, & Vieno, 2012). The primary qualities that researchers have focused on include empathy (Barchia & Bussey, 2011) which in some studies is split into emotional empathy and cognitive empathy (Poyhonen, Juvonen, & Salmivalli, 2010), and bystander self-efficacy relative to intervention in bullying situations (Gini, Albiero, Benelli, & Altoe, 2008), while additional studies have looked at individual student perceptions of how other bystanders will react (Barchia & Bussey, 2011; Saarento et al., 2014), student perceptions of how teachers will react (Saarento et al., 2014), attitudes about social

justice (Cappadocia, Pepler, Cummings, & Craig, 2012), group dynamics dealing with

social preference and perceived popularity (Caravita et al., 2009), moral disengagement

and moral sensitivity (Thornberg & Jungert, 2013), social capital, antisocial capital, and

social skills (Evans & Smokowski, 2015; Evans & Smokowski, 2017).

Empathy and defenders

Studies considering the relationship between empathy and intent to intervene in

bullying situations have revealed a variety of correlations, with distinguishing features

arising based upon gender, age or developmental stage, and distinctions between

affective and cognitive domains of empathy (Barchia & Bussey, 2011; Caravita, De

Blasio, & Salmivalli, 2010; Warden & Mackinnon, 2003). Empathy has been defined as

the ability to share and understand another person's emotional context or state (Cohen &

Strayer, 1996). Researchers have analyzed empathy as an interrelation between affective

or emotional empathy, which involves sharing others feelings, and cognitive empathy,

which deals with recognizing others' emotions and taking others' perspectives (Davis,

Luce, & Krauss, 1994; Feshbach & Feshbach, 1982; Strayer, 1987). The relationship

between these parts of empathy changes during the course of human development, with

individual differences of style and timing.

Since empathy has been hypothesized to be related to both bullying and defending

(Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006; Warden & MacKinnon, 2003), it is important to understand

the complex facets of empathy as they relate to human development, as well as to

interpersonal and group dynamics. An important developmental observation is that as a

child ages, his or her capacity for empathy evolves and becomes more cognitively

mediated (Caravita et al., 2009; Strayer, 1987), and the ability to take the perspective of others increases (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). While some researchers have found evidence that empathy inhibits aggressive behavior (Kaukiainen et al., 1999; Kaukiainen, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Lagerspetz, 1996), other research has suggested that cognitive empathy and social intelligence may actually be positively related to aggression (Kaukiainen et al., 1999). Garandeau and Cillessen (2006) suggest that the subtle manipulations bullies sometimes engage in require a strong ability to understand the emotions and perspectives of their victims and other group members and bystanders.

Rose and Rudolph (2006) found gender differences in the relationship between empathy and bullying. On self-reported measures of empathy, females tend to score higher than males, with gender differences increasing with age from mid-childhood to adolescence (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998).

Though the evidence is mixed, research shows the negative relationship between affective empathy and bullying, including inhibiting potential bullies from engaging in bullying behaviors and motivating intervention behaviors by bystanders in bullying situations (Caravita et al., 2009). Some researchers have suggested that empathy needs to be studied relative to specific outcomes, such as empathy for the victims of bullying, as opposed to merely being a unitary form of affective empathy in regard to all outcomes (MacEvoy & Leff, 2012; Poyhonen et al., 2010). Researchers have subsequently studied these differing levels of intervention behaviors as they relate to empathy by using child-by-environment models, which consider both individual and social variables (Ladd, 2003), and which provide researchers with a theoretical framework for studying how

personal traits are moderated or mediated by additional personal, social group, and other school factors.

Perceived popularity, social status, and social capital of defenders

        While researchers have identified perceived popularity as a source of social power for bullies, they have also found that children and adolescents who are socially preferred often engage in prosocial interactions (Hastings, Utendale, & Sullivan, 2007; Newcomb, Bukowski, & Pattee, 1993; Wentzel, 2003). Though defending the victim in bullying situations is a prosocial behavior that carries risks due to the potential to become a victim or to lose social standing, children and adolescents who are perceived as popular might have advantages over other children when they take on the defender role because they have more elevated and secure positions in the group (Salmivalli, Karna, & Poskiparta, 2009). In addition, Caravita et al. (2009) suggest that "social status might moderate the association between empathy and defending" because students with high perceived popularity do "not need to worry about the negative social reactions to his/her behavior to the same extent as an equally empathic child with low status" (p. 144**).** In addition, Caravita et al. (2009) have concluded that defenders have the highest status among peers because they have both high perceived popularity and high sociometric preference.

        The complex relationships among affective empathy, age, gender, and defender social status become evident when considering the research of Caravita et al. (2009), who found that while affective empathy predicted the defending behavior of boys who scored high on social preference—more so for adolescents than mid-childhood youth—these factors did not predict defending behavior by girls, even though girls have been found to

be more empathic than boys (Warden & Mackinnon, 2003). These complex relationships have led researchers to investigate social factors that operate as moderators for affective empathy (Barchia & Bussey, 2011; Poyhonen, Juvonen, & Salmivalli, 2010).

Other researchers have studied how specific components of social capital are associated with bystander behavior on their own rather than as moderators for affective empathy (Evans & Smokowski, 2015). In studying the ways that prosocial bystander behavior is associated with forms of social capital, the researchers found that friend and teacher support, ethnic identity, religious orientation, and future optimism are forms of social capital that are significantly associated with defending behaviors (Evans & Smokowski, 2015). Interestingly, the findings failed to find significant associations between prosocial behaviors in bullying situations and a number of hypothesized aspects of social capital, including parental support, positive school experiences, self-esteem, school satisfaction, and selected school characteristics such as teacher turnover rate, number of short-term suspensions, school size, and percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch (Evans & Smokowski, 2015). The findings lead Evans and Smokowski (2015) to assert the "importance of positive social relationships and community engagement in increasing prosocial bystander behavior and ultimately decreasing bullying" (p. 2289).

Classroom context: Anticipated peer and teacher reactions in bullying situations

Interestingly, students who believe their peers would intervene in bullying behaviors are more likely to take on defender roles in bullying situations, perhaps seeing intervention as a classroom norm (Saarento et al., 2014). Likewise, students who

perceive that their teachers have strong anti-bullying attitudes are more likely to express defending behaviors (Saarento et al., 2014). In classrooms where students believe that bullying behaviors can be successfully stopped by the group, this sense of collective efficacy leads to an increased sense of individual efficacy in relation to successfully intervening in bullying situations (Saarento et al., 2014). Researchers have suggested that, given the prevalence of anti-bullying attitudes among children, bullying interventions by peers can be increased by making these private attitudes salient, thus decreasing the bystander malaise caused by pluralistic ignorance and other factors (Salmivalli, 2010).

Research has shown that differences between classrooms in regard to levels of bullying and victimization vary, with a significant portion of the variation due to differences in classroom norms and practices after accounting for individual differences (Karna, Voeten, Poskiparta, & Salmivalli, 2010). Something in class contexts inhibits or facilitates bullying (Salmivalli, 2010). Karna et al. (2010) found that more than a third of the difference between classrooms in the prevalence of defending behaviors was based on the classroom, while researchers also report that the extent to which empathy was related to defending behaviors was also significantly moderated by the classroom in which the behaviors took place (Poyhonen, Karna, & Salmivalli, 2008). The explanation for the differences is often expressed in terms of injunctive norms, explicit rules of the classroom, and descriptive norms, the witnessed norms in behavior as they are experienced in the classroom (Pozzoli et al, 2012). Researchers have reported that in classrooms where a higher rate of bullying behavior is normative, the bullying is more

highly associated with peer preference than with peer rejection (Sentse, Scholte, Salmivalli, & Voeten, 2007), which is further supported by the finding that bullying is more normative in classrooms where popular students engage in high levels of bullying (Dijkstra, Lindenberg, & Veenstra, 2008). The findings related to expectations of how other students and the teacher will respond to bullying have ramifications for programs designed to intervene in bullying.

Mediating and moderating factors in bystander intervention in bullying

In evaluating KiVA, a nationwide, school-based bullying intervention program in Finland, researchers identified a number of specific approaches that generated mediated, or indirect, effects that decreased self-reported bullying perpetration (Saarento et al., 2014). Researchers found that most of their hypotheses in regard to the indirect effects of the KiVA program were supported, including reducing self-reported bullying by influencing students' attitudes toward bullying, bystander behaviors in bullying situations, and perceptions of teacher's bullying attitudes (Saarento et al., 2014). Importantly, the researchers showed that the KiVA program was able to reduce self-reported bullying perpetuation by creating intervention actions that led the bullies to perceive increased defense of the victimized students in the classroom (Saarento et al., 2014). Thus, the researchers showed that changing students' perceptions of how bystanders respond to bullying led to reduced bullying behavior.

While the results of assessment of the KiVA program support the important roles of specific mediating factors, researchers have also investigated the moderating effects of positive psychosocial school climate and positive normative cultures in classrooms (Low

& Van Ryzin, 2014; Pozzoli et al., 2012), and found both to be significant in relation to decreasing bullying. These findings support child-by-environment and ecocultural approaches to bullying intervention.

In their study of the moderating effect of campus climate on the Steps to Respect anti bullying program, Low and Van Ryzin (2014) found that students and teachers who reported more positive psychosocial climates at their schools reported stronger attitudes against aggression, improved bystander behavior, and lower levels of victimization and bullying perpetration whether or not their school was engaged in the Steps to Respect program. Perhaps this failure to find positive effects from the program was due to ineffective implementation of the program, or perhaps school climate is an extremely powerful moderator of individual and group factors in relation to bullying.

Pozzoli et al. (2012) found that different class norms significantly contributed to differences in regard to bystander behavior in different classrooms. Specifically, class norms explained differences between classes of both defending and passive bystanding behavior. Pozzoli et al. point out that perhaps classes that have prosocial norms provide students with ways of fitting in to the group by performing prosocial actions. The researchers also consider that students may be taking advantage of modeling and imitation according to the social learning theory of Bandura (1977).

Self-efficacy for defending and collective efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as the belief that one has the ability to carry out an action (Bandura, 1997). Research has shown that self-efficacy in regard to defending bullying situations greatly increases the likelihood that a bystander will take on a defending role

(Poyhonen & Salmivalli, 2008). Bandura (1997) found that people have little incentive to act unless they believe they can be successful. Researchers observed that social self-efficacy beliefs connected to defending attitudes are positively associated with defending behavior (Poyhonen et al., 2010; Poyhonen & Salmivalli, 2008), while self-efficacy beliefs linked to defending skills are positively associated with defending behavior and negatively related to passive bystander behavior (Gini et al., 2008). However, a later longitudinal study examining relationships among affective empathy, cognitions related with defending efficacy, and moral disengagement found no connection between defender efficacy and defending victims of bullying after accounting for other predictors such as prior defending behavior and collective efficacy (Barchi & Bussey, 2011). The differences between results of these studies could be a result of the measurement tools used to assess defending efficacy.

In addition to the supported relationship between individual self-efficacy toward defending in bullying situations, researchers have suggested that the actions of other students and teachers may strengthen individual intervention behaviors by increasing beliefs in the efficacy of the group, or collective efficacy (Barchia & Bussey, 2011); indeed, individual defending behaviors may be "encouraged by positive perceptions of school-wide efforts to stop peer aggression" (p. 290). Bandura (1997) proposed this connection between belief in collective efficacy, the belief in collective ability to achieve a group outcome, and individual behavior.

Moral Sensitivity and Moral Disengagement

Recently, researchers have begun to assess the effects of moral sensitivity and moral disengagement upon participant roles in bullying. Thornberg and Jungert (2013) found that lower moral sensitivity is negatively mediated by moral disengagement in bullying, leading to pro-bully behavior. In contrast, they found that high social sensitivity combined with low moral disengagement is not sufficient to predict defender behavior unless it is also moderated by self-efficacy when defending in bullying situations. The researchers argue that programs designed to decrease bullying can inhibit pro-bully behavior by increasing basic moral sensitivity, reducing mechanisms linked to moral disengagement, and increasing defender self-efficacy.

Moral Disengagement Theory.

Moral disengagement theory describes the social and cognitive processes through which individuals separate the moral standards that they learned through socialization from their actions, resulting in the moral validation of behaviors that contradict one's personal ethics (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara and Pastorelli, 1996). Bandura (1991) describes processes that link moral thinking to moral actions. Bandura theorizes that through self-regulatory processes, individuals monitor their own actions, and this influences them to do things that align with their moral thinking because these actions provide them with self-worth and satisfaction. Actions that are contrary to one's own moral thinking engender "self-censure" and "anticipatory self-sanctions" (Bandura, 1991, p. 69), thus keeping one's actions in line with one's moral reasoning.

According to Bandura, the cognitive processes that lead to moral disengagement operate through three subfunctions: self-monitoring, judgmental, and self-reactive processes. (Bandura, 1991) Breakdowns within the self-regulatory system lead to specific mechanisms of moral disengagement. (Bandura et al., 1996, p. 364) Bandura identifies four mechanisms by which "selective activation and disengagement of internal control" (Bandura et al., 1996, p. 364) allow for disparate kinds of conduct to manifest without altering underlying moral standards: "reconstruing" one's conduct, "obscuring" personal responsibility, "misrepresenting" the seriousness of the conduct and blaming the victim. (Bandura et al., 1996, p. 364)

These four mechanisms of moral disengagement themselves break down into specific cognitive constructs that sever moral thinking from moral conduct. Cognitions that reconstrue the conduct include morally justifying the conduct, comparing the conduct to other conduct in order to minimize one's own conduct, and euphemistically labeling the conduct in order to describe the conduct in language that inhibits one's self-censure from engaging. Next, cognitions that evaluate the harm created by the conduct as minimal, or that misconstrue or ignore the harmfulness of the conduct. Additional cognitions that disconnect moral thinking from moral agency are either the blaming or dehumanization of the victim. Finally, Bandura (1986) identifies the displacement of responsibility or diffusion of responsibility to others as being cognitive processes that may provide rationales for action in contradiction to one's moral reasoning.

Bandura et al. (1996) state that the most effective cognitive processes that sever moral conduct from moral thinking are moral justification for the conduct and palliative

comparisons through either minimization by comparison or euphemistic labeling. In these ways, a person can actually engage "self-approval in the service of harmful exploits" (Bandura et al, 1996, p. 365) while eliminating self-deterrents.

School Climate: Applying Typologies from Research on Parenting Styles

In a research environment lacking a consistently-applied set of methods, questions and analysis tools for describing and evaluating school climate, some researchers such as Ferrans and Selman have utilized concepts of socialization that arise out of the work of Diana Baumrind and the typology of parenting styles and their effects upon their children's socialization. (Ferrans & Selman, 2014) The research pathway that leads from Baumrind's initial research about parents to evaluating the efficacy of this approach within a school context has been varied in purpose and approach, yet it has led to at least two studies (Ferrans, Selman & Feigenberg, 2012 and Ferrans & Selman, 2014) that explicitly analyze the relationship between bystander cognitions and conduct during bullying incidents and students' perceptions of school climate as typologized in a system informed by the one theorized by Baumrind (1967, 1971) and refined by Maccoby & Martin (1983) in relation to parenting styles. The validity of applying parenting style typologies in school climate research was validated by Pellerin (2005).

The trail from Baumrind's initial parenting style typology to Ferrans and Selman's adaptation of subsequent related typologies takes a number of steps as discussed by Pellerin (2004). Baumrind's initial work in parenting styles (Baumrind, 1966, 1967, 1971) anchored itself in the binary of conservative or authoritarian parenting versus liberal parenting, grounding itself in child and parent observational and survey

data that were analyzed in clusters of similarly-themed behaviors. In 1967, Baumrind

defined three groups of normal children who differed in social and emotional behavior

and connected these qualities to three different styles of parenting: authoritative,

authoritarian, and permissive. By 1983, Maccoby and Martin created a parenting styles

model that added a fourth typology based on two orthogonal dimensions: parental

responsiveness and parental demandingness. Their model used Baumrind's descriptions

of parenting styles defined by high or low parental responsiveness and high or low

parental demandingness. To Baumrind's three parenting styles, Maccoby and Martin

(1983) added a fourth, indifferent or negligent parenting. Meanwhile, Baumrind's own

studies, which had started by looking at preschool age children (Baumrind, 1967), had

expanded its age range for study to elementary school children (Baumrind, 1978), and

then to adolescents (Baumrind, 1991).

In comparing the associated child outcomes with parenting styles, Baumrind and

later others found that children of authoritative parents, those who were high in both

responsiveness and demandingness, were more likely to exhibit higher social and

cognitive competence, greater aspirations, better psychological and behavioral well-

being, and better grades. (Baumrind, 1978; Cohen & Rice, 1997) Baumrind also found

that children of authoritative parents, those who were low in responsiveness but high in

demandingness, had relatively low rates of problem behaviors including drug use, but

also had lower social competence and self-esteem. (Baumrind, 1991) In regard to

permissive parents, those who were characterized by high responsiveness but low

demandingness, Baumrind (1991) found that the children had relatively high social

competence and self-esteem, but relatively low grades at school and high rates of
problem behaviors including drug use.

In 1993, a study using the four parenting styles was used to examine whether
authoritative socialization at school could compensate for a lack of authoritative
parenting that arose in situations of parental divorce. (Hetherington, 1993) The
researchers found that the best outcomes for children, especially at high school age, were
the result of authoritative school socialization climates, while the worst outcomes for
children occurred at schools with negligent climates of low responsiveness and low
demandingness.

To evaluate whether the outcomes of the parenting styles typologies described by
Baumrind and Macoby and Martin were consistent when applied to schools' socialization
styles, Pellerin (2005) performed an "exploratory" study that aimed toward developing a
"middle-range theory of authoritative socialization" in relation to high schools. Using the
vocabulary of Baumrind (1996) and Maccoby & Martin (1983), referring to
"responsiveness" and "demandingness" measures, and focusing on how these school
socialization style constructs related to student disengagement as measured by absences
and student dropout rates. Pellerin (2005) found that students from authoritative schools
had a high opinion of the fairness of the school though they found the rules to be strict.
Meanwhile, the students at permissive schools also had a high opinion of the fairness of
their schools' discipline, though they perceived their schools as lenient. Thus, the
students from schools that scored high on responsiveness were perceived as being fair. In
contrast, the students at schools that scored low on responsiveness, the authoritarian and

indifferent schools, perceived their schools to be equally unfair, though they also perceived the corresponding high level of demandingness from the authoritarian schools and the low level of demandingness from the negligent schools. Further, Pellerin (2005) found that "parenting styles when applied to schools" produced the predicted outcomes, with authoritative schools scoring lowest for student disengagement and indifferent schools scored highest for disengagement, with authoritarian schools having the worst results for dropout. Pellerin concluded that these "results [were] consistent with the descriptions of the four parenting styles...and support the application of parenting styles to schools."

In a study that adapts the parenting styles typologies to analyze school climate, Ferrans and Selman (2014) argue that witnesses' responses to bullying incidents arise from students' developmental skill sets as they attempt to meet their personal needs for safety, connection, and power while functioning within the ecological framework that makes up school climate. Ferrans and Selman sought to see how, within a student's perception of school climate, witnesses to bullying try to respond within the rules of school culture.

The researchers identify four school-level constructs in regard to school climate based upon the reflections and stories shared by the eighth grade students in their study. In relation to the nomenclature of Baumrind and previous researchers, Ferrans and Selman (2014) have replaced responsiveness with "care," and demandingness with "order." Based upon their interview data with students at four high schools, the researchers also include two additional constructs in their analysis of school climate:

safety and empowerment. Ferrans and Selman (2014) found that these four constructs

combined in various measures to produce four student-perceived climates at the schools

they studied. The school climates they discuss are analogous to the parenting styles of

Baumrind et seq.: authoritarian, negligent, and permissive, with the correlative to the

authoritative climate being labeled "cohesive school climate." (Ferrans & Selman, 2014,

p. 182) Though similar to authoritative climate, Ferrans and Selman's formulation of

cohesive school climate differs in a number of ways. First, rather than being defined by

only the two orthogonal factors of care and order, as in authoritative climate, cohesive

school climate adds perceived safety and perceived student empowerment as it relates to

opportunities to help students develop conflict resolution skills. According to Ferrrans

and Selman, cohesive school climates consist of high levels of safety and care, and

moderate levels of order and student empowerment. The researchers preference for

moderate order rather than high order arises from their assessment that systems with a

high level of order are often marked by "strict rules enforced by punishment," which

"seems to lead some students to sneaky aggressive behaviors and other students to

bystanding responses that may reflect various forms of moral disengagement." (Ferrans

& Selman, 2014, p. 182) With moderate order, however, the researchers describe a school

structure in which "teachers and students co-construct and enforce the rules," (Ferrans &

Selman, 2014, p. 170) and in which "teachers are aware of and responsive to what goes

on in the peer group." (Ferrans & Selman, 2014, p. 170) The researchers' concept of

cohesive school climate describes moderate student empowerment as consisting of

teachers using "proactive strategies to prevent misbehavior with a focus on individual

(not collective) social skills development" (Ferrans & Selman, 2014, p. 170), and they also suggest alternatives to punishment, including positive discipline and restorative justice. Ferrans and Selman state that schools might encourage more students to defend in bullying situations by achieving "adequate levels of order" while increasing care and student empowerment to learn conflict resolution skills. They add that their student participants recommended that increased order and rules should focus on holding students accountable for their negative actions and address the underlying causes of these actions rather than emphasizing punishment.

While Ferrans and Selman (2014) express surprise that no perceived permissive school cultures were identified by students in their study, the interview narratives "suggest that perceptions of low levels of order have negative effects on witnesses' responses to bullying," (p. 182) leading students to become either assistants to bullying or reinforcers of bullying through providing an audience.

Methods

A common finding in studies of bullying in school is that increases in the frequency of Defender behavior correlates with decreases in instances of bullying being initiated within a classroom or school (Karna et al., 2008; Saarento et al., 2014). The purpose of this research was to identify Defenders and Outsiders in a single school context, ascertain the cognitive processes that are prevalent among those in each group and that distinguish them from those in the other group, and situate these cognitive processes within their perceptions of school climate. Knowledge of these cognitive constructs and their potential interactions with school climate may have a high translational value in regard to the dynamics of the relationship between school anti-bullying initiatives and specific school climates.

This study used a peer-identification survey to choose Defenders and Outsiders to participate in semi-structured interviews in order to elicit both the most precise and the most broad understanding of these participants' cognitions in regard to both bullying and school climate. The peer-identification method of identifying interview subjects was chosen because it has the advantage over a self-identification method in that it relies on input from numerous peers rather than from the single source of each subject herself. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed this study to both ensure that it would elicit in-depth responses that were likely to generate data related to themes and constructs that widely appear in bullying and school climate literature while also allowing the opportunity to go deeper into individual cognitions and to identify and explore cognitions

that might appear less in the literature or be idiosyncratic to a participant or the specific school setting.

Research Questions

This study seeks to address the following research question and subquestions:

Research Question

In this given context, what are distinguishing cognitions of Outsiders and Defenders in bullying situations?

Subquestions

1. What cognitions contribute to the Defenders agency to intervene in bullying situations?

2. What cognitions contribute to the Outsiders' decision not intervene in bullying situations?

3. How do the Defenders and Outsiders perceptions of school climate relate to their agency in bullying situations?

Participants

This study draws upon data from semi-structured interviews with 12 selected students at a rural high school with enrollment of 185 students during May and June of 2017. Participants were selected through a peer survey. Of the 185 students at the school, 178 were provided information about the study and received Parent Consent (Appendix A) and Student Assent forms (Appendix B). The study was designed to identify students whom their peers believed were most likely to act as Defenders in bullying situations and which of their peers were most likely to act as passive bystanders in bullying

situations. These passive bystanders are labelled Outsiders in the Participant Role Model of bullying. The survey included selected questions related to defending and outsider behaviors from the Participant Role Questionnaire (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004) included in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011) publication "Measuring Bullying Victimization, Perpetration, and Bystander Experiences: A Compendium of Assessment Tools" that relate to the roles of Defender and Outsider. (Appendix C) In order to have their names included on the survey, participants were required to agree to being interviewed if they were selected. In all, 51 students turned in consent or assent forms, and of these 47 (25.4% of the school's population) completed surveys. The top six Defenders and top six Outsiders were scheduled for interviews. Among the Defenders interviewed, five were female and one was male, while among Outsiders one was female and five were male. The Defenders broke down by class in school as follows: Freshmen (n=1), sophomores (n=2) , Junior (n=1) and Seniors 9 (n=3); the Outsiders broke down by class in school as follows: Freshmen (n=0), sophomores (n=2) , Junior (n=2) and Seniors 9 (n=2). To ensure the anonymity of participants in this study, racial demographic information is not shared.

All participants in this study were aware that they were participating in a study looking at bullying and the school environment. They were informed and debriefed and provided complete informed parent consent and student assent as required by the Institutional Review Board.

Survey Procedures

To determine the students that peer opinion believed to most likely have acted as Defenders or Outsiders, all students at the school were provided with a brief in-person presentation by the researcher along with a Parental Consent Form (Appendix A) and Assent Form (see Appendix B) for minors and an Assent Form for students who were 18 years old. Students were allowed ten days to return the forms to the researcher.

All students who returned permission paperwork had their names included on the survey, which was made up of selected questions from the Participant Role Questionnaire (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004) that relate to Defenders and Outsiders. Questions from the Participant Role Questionnaire that relate to other roles in the Participant Role Theory, that is, the Bully, the Assistant and the Reinforcer were not included in the survey. Survey participants were instructed to provide responses in regard to students other than themselves and that they could skip any students they were unsure of. They were additionally instructed that if they responded to one question about a person, they were required to respond to all of the questions about that person.

At the beginning of both the survey and the interview, participants were orally read the definition of bullying that is used in the version of the Participant Role Questionnaire published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

> One child being exposed repeatedly to harassment and attacks from one or several
> other children; harassment and attacks may be, for example, shoving or hitting the
> other one, calling names or making jokes of him/her, leaving him/her outside the

group, taking his/her things, or any other behavior meant to hurt the other one.

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011, p. 101)

The survey (Appendix C) as made up of six questions; three questions related to Defending behaviors and three questions related to Outsider behaviors. Completed survey entries about an individual student were scored by tallying a score of zero points for a response of Never, one point for a response of Sometimes, and two points for a score of Often.

Each student was then scored individually, and an index score was calculated to reflect the relationship between each student's peer scores for Defending and peer scores for acting as an Outsider while accounting for the varying number of responses each student received from their peers. The procedure was as follows: for each student, the sum score of all scores from individual surveys for both Defending and acting as an Outsider was divided by the number of surveys filled out in relation to the student. The quotient for Defending was then divided by the quotient for Outsider behavior, thus resulting in an index score representing the peer-perceived extent of each student's behavioral tendency in bullying situations. The number of surveys tabulated for students who were interviewed ranged from 14 to 39, that is from 7.6% to 21.1% of the total school population and from 29.8% to 83% of the survey pool. The index scores for peer-identified Defenders ranged from 1.52 to 1.13, indicating that the sum of their peer-generated score for Defending activity varied from 152% of their Outsider activity to 113% of their Outsider activity. The index scores for peer-identified Outsider activity

ranged from 0.34% to 0.47%, indicating that their peer-generated score for Defending

activity varied from 34% to 47% of their Outsider activity.

Interview Procedures

For each of Defender and Outsider interviews, two students who scored in the top

six students became unable to be interviewed, either by their personal choice or by life

circumstances that kept them away from school for long periods. The students

interviewed thus range from the highest scoring to the eighth highest scoring student for

each of the two Participant Role categories. Although all of the participants were known

by the interviewer, the recordings and transcriptions of the interviews were only

identified by code numbers that reflected their status as either a Defender or an Outsider

and their rank order for these tendencies as identified by the peer survey.

The interviews of the six Defenders and six Outsiders were semi-structured and

included a base of a grand tour question to get the interview comfortably started and 14

substantive questions with room for follow-up and probing questions to further engage

with the interviewee and clarify and expand on the interviewee's expressed ideas

(Appendix D). Of these 14 base questions, five related to Defending and Outsider

behaviors in bullying situations, and the remaining nine inquired by specific constructs of

school climate. The bullying situation questions were designed to elicit responses about

their thoughts and perceptions of other students during bullying incidents as well as the

interviewees personal experiences, and the school climate questions related to Safety,

Care, Order, and Student Empowerment, the constructs of school climate identified by

Ferrans and Selman (2014) with the addition of student-school Connection, which is

common construct in school climate surveys and questionnaires, and Administrator and

Teacher Efficacy to intervene in bullying situations, also a familiar construct in school

bullying literature.

Data Analysis

This researcher transcribed the interviews himself. The 12 interviewees, all of

whom were known to this researcher, were identified on the digital voice recordings and

on the analysis spreadsheet by code numbers indicating their status and rank as Defenders

or Outsiders and not by their names in order to ensure greater objectivity by the

researcher during coding.

The researcher then reviewed the transcripts to determine the constructs that

would prove useful to organizing and analyzing the data. These constructs came under

one of two general headings, either related to school climate or to bullying

intervention. The school climate construct codes were predetermined. School Climate

data is divided among six constructs (see Appendix E): Care, Order, Safety, Teacher and

Administration Efficacy in regard to addressing bullying, Student-to-School Connection,

and Student Empowerment. The surveys were then coded by the researcher. The

constructs related to bullying intervention arose from grounded theory during initial

reading and review of the interview transcripts, with the identified constructs all being

prevalent in the literature. The constructs were then organized on a Microsoft Excel

spreadsheet and the interview transcripts were reviewed in their entirety to extract

specific quotations relating to the identified constructs.

The student interview responses were coded, with three climate constructs scored on a Likert-type scale based on the following categories: Care, Order, Teacher and Administration Efficacy in addressing bullying. The five-point scale used scores ranging from 1-strongly not present to 5-strongly present, with a score of three being neutral. The author of this study scored the student responses. Participant responses related to Safety have been analyzed without being scored. Participant responses related to Student-to-School Connection and Student Empowerment were organized by construct, but upon review of the data, recollection of the interview process and review of the interview transcripts, this data was determined to contain many partial or inaccurate understandings of the construct definitions. The data for these two school climate constructs were neither scored on a five-point scale nor are they included in the Results or Discussion chapters of this study.

During coding, certain constructs were combined, split or omitted. Subsequent analysis of the spreadsheet data involved determining patterns in the data in order to find commonalities and differences in responses both within and between the two groups, Defenders and Outsiders. Exemplary and representative quotations from each student's interviews were identified, organized and reviewed in light of patterns in the data, constructs in the literature and grounded theory.

Limitations and Potential Conflicts

The interviewer for this study had been a classroom teacher at this school for 15 years at the time the surveys and interviews were undertaken, and the majority of interviewees were known by the interviewer. In order to minimize interviewer bias

during coding, all interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded by the interviewer without reference to names, but each student was provided a code number that only indicated their status as either a peer-identified Defender or Outsider and the interviewee's rank order relative to either defending or bystanding. No rewards were provided to survey takers or interviewees based upon participation or responses in this study. As this study uses qualitative methods at a single school site, the findings may not be transferable to other schools.

Results

The results that follow are based upon a focus on understanding the similarities and differences among the cognitions of Defenders and Outsiders in bullying situations, how these cognitions relate to their agency to intervene or not intervene and to their perceptions of school climate. As student intervention to stop bullying has been shown to often lead to a quick cessation of a specific bullying incident and also be effective at preventing the initiation of bullying activity, these results may have the potential to inform school initiatives that address either school climate or bullying prevention.

From the responses and stories that students shared in interviews, Defenders and Outsiders were in substantial agreement in their perceptions of school climate, including agreeing that the school maintained a climate of high Care and low Order. A noticable difference between Defender and Outsider perceptions appeared in regard to perceived efficacy of teachers and administrators relative to bullying intervention. While both participant roles found the teachers and administrators to be ineffective in responding to bullying, the Defenders found them to be ineffective to a noticeably higher degree than did the Outsiders. In regard to cognitions about bullying situations, Defenders and Outsiders shared many of the same thoughts abouts personal, interpersonal and social constructs related to defending in bullying situations. However, the Defenders showed significantly greater empathy for bullying victims and expressed that acts of bullying were an injustice, while the Outsiders cited fear of retaliation or loss of social standing as significant factors inhibiting their own potential defending behaviors, while the Defenders explicitly stated that they were not deterred by fear of retaliation.

School Climate in Four Dimensions: Safety, Care, Order and Teacher Efficacy in Relation to Intervention in Bullying

The following sections analyze and compare Defender and Outsider perceptions and cognitions in regard to four constructs related to school climate: Safety, Care, Order, and Teacher and Administrator Efficacy in Relation to Intervention in Bullying.

Safety

All 12 participants in this study perceived that the school maintains a high degree of safety, with no participant expressing that there are either particular students or particular locations on campus that they believed were unsafe. Defenders and Outsiders consistently expressed that they felt physically safe while at school. Defenders stated that no one at the school is "MEAN mean," there were "not a lot of crazy fights," and "nothing really bad has happened here," while they perceived that "other schools have experienced all kinds" of "gun violence" and "gang violence." Like the Defenders, the Outsiders felt the school was safe, with comments ranging from thinking the school is "very safe" to saying "it's not that bad", with three of the six Outsiders viewing the school as "pretty safe" in regard to physical safety. One Outsider attributed this safety to the school being "smaller and less kids," and both Defenders and Outsiders consistently attributed this safety to the smallness of the school and often by extension, as expressed by one Outsider that "everyone kinda knows everyone else." One Defender stated that the "school itself is effective in being a safe place" but that "students themselves struggle at being a safe place for themselves and for each other" because of "the way that they are raised." Another Defender stated that while the school was "about as safe as you can get"

that "like girls at this school are kind of like dumb with boys." A third Defender noted

that "most of the lawbreaking is just drugs, and it's like if you don't want to be with the

drugs then you're not with the drugs." The participants agreed that the existence of

substance use in the bathrooms, was not a safety concern. One Outsider summarized the

school in regard to safety as "people go to the bathroom to get high--they don't go to the

bathroom and get swirlies." The participants did not feel that users would threaten them

or pressure them into using substances themselves. The participants also expressed that

they felt that students are safe from violence on campus, even if alone, and that they felt

safe in the hallways and would feel safe on a long walk alone across the campus.

Care and Order

With the exception of one Outsider, the participants consistently expressed that

the school exhibited Care for students but had a low degree of Order. The constructs of

Care and Order have been organized together first for Defenders (Appendix F), and also

for Outsiders (Appendix G) in order to facilitate analysis of school climate in a way that

is analogous to Baumrind's (1973) typologies of parenting styles. As reflected in

Appendix F and Appendix G, the combination of high Care and low Order was expressed

by 11 of the 12 interviewees, thus meeting the definition of a Permissive school climate

in the perception of students. One Outsider described a school climate marked by low

Care and low Order, reflecting their perception of a school climate categorized as

"Negligent" by Ferrans and Selman (2014, p. 169) and analogous to the parenting style

described as "neglectful" by Maccoby & Martin (1983).

Care. Both Defenders and Outsiders believed that the adults had care and showed their care for students. The students described a variety of kinds of care and the ways that this care is evidenced by teachers and administrators. Students talked about care about academics, emotional or personal health, homeless status, food security, and safety. Students broadly stated that many teachers care and some explicitly expressed that they care about students. Students also said that they were some teachers who just seemed to be doing their jobs and did not exhibit particular care for students, though the students' descriptions presented the adults more as indifferent to students than as harmful to students. Students also stated that the school experienced frequent changes in administrators and that the administrators during the school year that these interviews took place seemed to be particularly involved and caring, perhaps suggesting that the students perceived that prior administrators had been less caring. Another frequently cited issue related to Care was that many students said that the school employed an academic guidance counselor but lacked a counselor trained in personal or emotional counseling, although one student stated that this counselor had been personally supportive to them emotionally.

All six of the Defenders described evidence for their perception that teachers care about students. One stated that the "school does a pretty good job of finding teachers who care," while another said that "most of them seem like they really care." In addition to identifying that teachers care, another Defender added that "the administrators here this year are pretty involved in student life." Individual Defenders provided specific evidence of caring, sharing that "they ask 'How are you doing?' or 'Are you okay?'" or "they ask

questions about what is going on in your life." Showing the closeness of these caring relationships, one Defender noted that "they interact with you like they care about you, like a parent would," and another continued this parental theme, saying that "[teachers are] like part of your family as well." Another Defender described the teachers and administrators as "treat[ing] you like people and not like a child who doesn't know what you're doing," while another appreciated that teachers "listen to what you have to say." One Defender addressed the prevalence of this care exhibited by teachers and administrators, stating that "there are a lot of people here you can talk to emotionally."

Five of the Outsiders also expressed their impression that the teachers on the campus care about the students. One stated that "some of them have stated this specifically," and another shared that a teacher had "said very candidly that he would take a bullet for each and every one of us…and I'm fairly certain he was sincere." Different Outsiders noted that the teachers exhibit their care for students by helping them; the students stated that some teachers "try to help out any way possible," and that "they go out of their way to help a lot of students," and "they spend extra time after school when they should be going home." Outsiders also noted that in addition to academic support, "a lot of [the teachers] provide emotional support at one time or another for some students," and another addressed the prevalence of this kind of emotional care, saying that "if you need to talk about something more personal, most teachers will."

Among the 12 interview participants, only one student, an Outsider, felt that teachers did not care, stating that some teachers are "simply doing their job" and do not "pay attention to their students' lives."

Order. In regard to Order, Defenders and Outsiders were largely in agreement as well, finding the school to generally have a low level of Order. Students talked about a number of different ways of thinking about Order, including disciplinary rules and their enforcement, classroom noise level, response to student tardiness, rigorousness or laxness of class assignments, supervision of students on campus, student substance use in bathrooms, management of how students may leave classrooms during class time, and communication between administrators and teachers. Some students indicated that they thought that in some ways the low level of order reflected the values of the community and order within the students' homes, and one student even indicated that though students from other schools might be "appalled" at how disorderly the school is, in some ways the laxness of the school in enforcing rules made the students more comfortable and perhaps even was necessary for motivating students to attend school. All of the students found the school to be at most somewhat not orderly, and none of the interviewees' descriptions of the school's level of Order achieved even a neutral score.

When prompted to consider various ways that the school might implement an increase in Order, the students generally expressed the idea that a higher level of Order might actually be detrimental to the atmosphere at school, and could even make the campus less safe. They asserted that while the relatively low level of Order was unusual for a school and that it was perhaps due to frequent changes of administration or staff, they seemed not to think that adhering to clearer routines, expectations or having clear and consistent consequences for infractions would improve the school or their experiences. Though the students generally felt that there were no consequences at all for

many behaviors that they felt would lead to detentions or other consequences at most high schools, they stated that having no consequences didn't really seem to hurt anyone because nothing really "*bad* bad" ever happened. The students seemed to feel that the lack of Order "kind of worked" at their school, and that this lack of Order might even help maintain higher attendance.

Many of the students contrasted their school to their perceptions of a "neighboring" high school 40 miles to the north that they believed to have a far greater level of Order. The students described the neighboring school as having fistfights every day, and some noted that it had recently experienced even greater incidents of violence, including a stabbing and credible bomb threats. The students did not feel that these were kinds of events that were likely to ever happen at their school, but that if the school had more orderly systems, including norms and consequences, the students would feel more stressed and would act out, thus making the school less safe, and themselves less comfortable.

A number of the students did indicate, however, that having a more orderly way to support students could be beneficial. They stated that having a "real" counselor, not just an academic counselor, would be welcome. Many students expressed that a number of students at school had difficult home lives or other difficult emotional or personal situations that would be helped by having a professional counselor on staff at the school. The students expressed that there were some specific teachers that students could go to for emotional support, but that this was not part of the regular school structure. Thus, the students' only suggestion for increasing order--hiring a professional counselor--

could be interpreted as a desire for a more consistent, institutionalized form of Care to be added to the interpersonal care that already existed at the school.

Administration and Teacher Efficacy in Bullying Intervention

Noticeable differences were evident between the responses of Defenders and those of Outsiders in regard to the construct of Teacher and Administrator Efficacy in relation to addressing bullying. (see Appendix H) Defenders found the actions of administrators and teachers to be far less efficacious in addressing bullying than did the Outsiders. All of the Defenders responded with criticisms that indicated that they found school staff to be not effective at addressing bullying. They criticized the administration and teachers for not responding effectively when bullying events are pointed out by students, not responding fairly based upon the students involved, and for being unaware of student experiences. Among the Outsiders, however, only one described the administrators and teachers as being less effective than neutral, and three of the six described administrators and teachers as being somewhat effective in bullying intervention. These Outsiders stated that teachers would be willing to help if asked and that they would be "relatively" effective. Outsiders also linked the perception that they "don't see much bullying" with a sense that they imagined that this must mean that the teachers are effective at preventing or intervening in regard to bullying. Notably, half of the Defenders described administrator and teacher efficacy at the lowest level on the scale, while none of the Outsiders scored them this low, and only one of the Outsiders scored the administrators and teachers as less than neutral in regard to efficacy.

Overall, the responses by both Defenders and Outsiders in regard to the school's existing levels of Order and Care describe a Permissive school climate, with the Defenders' responses suggesting a greater degree of permissiveness than did the responses of the Outsiders. In addition, in regard to the school's responses to bullying, the Defenders generally found the efforts of administrators and teachers to be somewhat inefficacious while Outsiders found the school's responses to be about as good as could be expected, seeming to reveal an attitude of futility in regard to preventing and responding to bullying.

Defender and Outsider Cognitions in Bullying Situations

While Defenders and Outsiders shared some perspectives in common in regard to intervening in bullying situations, either with direct interventions against bullies or by comforting victims, some significant cognitive differences existed between the two groups. Participants provided their thinking in relation to a number of constructs.

Identifying Bullying: Is it Bullying or Merely "Drama"?

At the beginning of both the survey and the interview, participants were orally read the definition of bullying that is used for the Participant Role Questionnaire:

> One child being exposed repeatedly to harassment and attacks from one or several
>
> other children; harassment and attacks may be, for example, shoving or hitting the
>
> other one, calling names or making jokes of him/her, leaving him/her outside the
>
> group, taking his/her things, or any other behavior meant to hurt the other one.
>
> (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011, p. 101)

Defenders and Outsiders both stated that bullying was rare on campus. One Defender stated that "traditional bullying in terms of a predatorial *[sic]* relationship where you are one person seeking out a weaker person to have conflict with is becoming, at least at this school, a dying breed." Another Defender attributed the perceived rarity of bullying to high school students being "older and all." Despite this perception that bullying was rare on campus, the students were able to identify specific incidents that they considered to be bullying. However, both Defenders and Outsiders described a much greater prevalence of sub-bullying anti-social behaviors which they described as "students being rude to each other, like, 'Why are you wearing that?'," "weird drama," "name-calling," students talking about others "behind their back," "people being excluded," and students "joking around with each other" but they "didn't seem offended." Some of these behaviors might meet parts of the definition of social bullying, including cyberbullying, excluding, verbal harrassment and sexual harassment, but the students interviewed consistently perceived the witnessed behaviors to be below the threshold for being labeled as bullying. In distinguishing these harmful behaviors from bullying, some interviewees stated that the power dynamics were fairly equal between the individuals in conflict, thus contrasting with a characteristic aspect of Olweus's definition of bullying. A couple of interviewees cited cases in which initial harassment of a student by name calling, usually an action taken by males, eventually resulted in the name becoming accepted by the victim and other students, even if they had initially opposed it, so that what started as an insult became normalized speech and perhaps even a sign of an acceptable status within the social order.

Friendship with Victims of Bullying

In regard to friendship with victims of bullying, four Defenders and three Outsiders cited being friends with a victim as being a reason for a peer to intervene in a bullying incident. Among these responses, three Defenders indicated that this had been a specific motivation for themselves to intervene in an incident in the past, with one stating that they had intervened to stop the bullying and one stating that they had comforted a victim who was a friend after an incident. Only one Outsider reported having intervened in a bullying incident specifically to aid a friend, and their action was to comfort the victim rather than to stop the bullying.

Dislike or Blaming of Victims

None of the Defenders identified not liking a victim or thinking that a victim was guilty or deserving of bullying as reasons why they or other bystanders would choose to intervene or not intervene in a bullying incident. In contrast, one Outsider suggested that one reason a student might not intervene in a bullying incident is that they don't like the victim. In addition, this Outsider stated that a bystander might not intervene because they blamed the victim: "Cuz sometimes they do things and they deserve some sort of repercussion. Like, well, you know, now it's your fault." Another Outsider also blamed some victims for not fitting in with others, stating that "they are usually just far out...like in their own head and doing their own thing. It's hard to get on that level."

Empathy

Involving empathy, both two Defenders and two Outsiders cited having intervened in bullying situations on behalf of Victims out of empathy. However, in total,

five of the six Defenders cited empathy as a motivation for themselves or others to intervene in bullying situations, while only three of six Outsiders cited empathy as a reason why they or someone else would intervene in a bullying incident, either because the victim was "in need" or "lonely" or because they "felt bad." One Defender expressed that students who intervene may feel sorry for victims because they "may have gone through bullying themselves" and that "a victim is oriented toward helping a victim." An Outsider added the idea that a Defender might feel empathy either for bullies or for victims, stating that that a Defender had perhaps been "either a victim or a perpetrator in the past, and those experiences might motivate them to step in because they can empathize with the victim and possibly certainly with the bully."

Knowledge of Intervention Methods

The Defenders spoke of a variety of strategies that they had used for bullying intervention. Three of the six Defenders recalled directly intervening, and one said that "there's a lot you can do" to intervene in a bullying incident. Strategies cited by Defenders include telling bullies to stop, saying "That's rude", yelling, distracting a bully, and physically getting between a bully and a victim. One Defender suggested that talking with the bully to find "what their issue" is that's "making them bully." Three of the six Defenders also said that they comforted victims saying that "I always listen" because "it helps them process what's happened" and "showing them support kind of takes away from the bullying a little bit." One Defender cited giving the victim advice, such as "Don't listen to them. You're you and you shouldn't listen to anyone that you're wrong, weird or anything." Only one of the six Defenders, and none of the Outsiders,

spoke of going to administration or teachers for help, and this Defender said that they had

spoke to the school counselor but that this had been ineffective at stopping the bullying.

Two Outsiders suggested the strategy of talking to the bully and victim as ways

that students could intervene in a bullying situation. One Outsider suggested that a

student could say to the bully and victim, "Why? There's no reason to it?", while a

second Outsider said that if there was "real bullying going on", they would ask "Why are

you doing this?" and ask the bully "What are you gaining from this?" Unlike with

Defenders, no other strategies of intervening in bullying were mentioned, and one

Outsider said that perhaps students did not intervene because "they're not entirely sure

what to do to stop it."

Ethical Considerations

In regard to ethics as it related to bullying, three of the Defenders cited ethics as

reasons that they intervene in bullying situations, while none of the six Outsiders spoke

of bullying and intervention as actions that have an ethical dimension. The Defenders

described bullying as "just wrong" or said that "it is something that should never happen

to anyone," and that these ethical positions were part of what motivated them and others

to intervene in bullying situations. In addition, three of the six Defenders said they were

motivated to intervene by a belief that bullying is morally wrong, that it "should never

happen," "it wasn't right," "nobody deserves to get bullied and if somebody needs help

you should help them," and "victimization is a morally righteous opportunity." The

Defenders did not state any sense of personal responsibility to intervene other than their

generalized sense that the situation was unethical. In contrast to the Defenders, none of the six Outsiders said that bullying is morally wrong.

The participants also cited that there were aspects of group ethics that tend to inhibit intervening in bullying incidents. One Defender spoke of the idea that some students think it is "wrong to step in," and two other Defenders cited the idea that some students do not intervene in bullying situations because "they may think it's not their place" because they thought "they're not picking on me, why should I be a part of it?" These statements echo one Outsider's comment that among students there is a "code of honor" that prevents students from intervening. One Outsider did express the idea that "snitching" about bullying or anything else goes against his "personal ethical code."   This Outsider goes on to state that they "feel bad personally" for "snitching," and that "even if it's justified and I snitch. someone and they get in trouble, that bothers me. It's something inside me that says it's not right." This student continued, tying this personal ethic to not "snitch" to the social norm of staying quiet that exists in the larger, local community outside of the school. This Outsider further tied this community value to the idea that most of the families in the community were in some way involved in the illegal marijuana trade:

> ...growing up in this community, you know, you see your neighbors growing
>
> marijuana or doing other various illegal activities that are socially acceptable
>
> around this community, and especially, say, even eight or ten years ago where the
>
> consequences of actually being caught by the authorities...were very serious. It

was kind of built in… it was just not something you even questioned. It's just:

Don't tell on anybody.

This expression of a community-specific morality, mirroring the general student code of not "snitching," provides an ethical reason for engaging in passive bystander behavior. In contrast, none of the Outsiders spoke of ethical reasons that would lead one to intervene in bullying incidents.

In addition to not engaging in snitching, five of the six Outsiders spoke of students avoiding intervening in bullying situations due to cognitions that allow them to actively avoid believing they have personal moral responsibility to take action. The Outsiders cited a number of rationales supporting non-intervention, such as students "exclude things or don't pay attention because they don't want to know it exists," "they "don't care about it," or even blame the victim for being "guilty" in some way, thus viewing the bullying itself as an ethical action in response to the wrong done by the victim, they "don't want it to be their responsibility," they "choose to ignore it," they "want a change but don't want to do anything about it," or think that "it's none of my business—why do I care?" One Outsider suggested that a Defender might act in order to avoid "regretting later" if they did not intervene.

One Outsider said somewhat cynically that students even want to watch bullying incidents as a form of entertainment, and that sometimes at some schools they even film them. While this Outsider's bitter tone revealed that they do not condone these behaviors, neither do they intervene to stop either the bully or those bystanders who are watching.

Fear of Retaliation

Both Defenders and Outsiders cited fear of becoming a target of bullies as a factor in students deciding not to intervene in bullying situations, but the interviewees responses revealed significant differences between the perspectives of Defenders and those of Outsiders. Three of the six Outsiders cited feared being targeted by a bully if they intervened in a bullying situation,with an additional Outsider citing fear as a force that inhibits students from intervening in bullying situations. These Outsiders spoke of fear of "being made fun of," not wanting to "risk having happen whatever would happen," avoiding getting hurt when "things get physical," and not wanting to "paint a metaphorical target on my back" but just wanting a "smooth experience of getting through it."

Among Defenders, none of the six indicated that they had avoided intervening in bullying incidents out of fear of what might happen to them, but four of the six cited that other students might not intervene in bullying incidents because they were afraid of either becoming targets of bullying themselves or of suffering other interpersonal or social consequences because they acted in support of a victim. All four Defenders who cited fear as a reason that some students do not intervene in bullying said that "they don't want to be bullied" in retaliation for intervening, and that "they're afraid if they comfort somebody that was being bullied" it makes them "an easy target if [they're] friends with the person they're going after." And so Defenders perceived that students act as Outsiders rather than Defenders because they are thinking that "I gotta protect myself," and despite the fact that they "don't agree with what [the bullies] are saying," they're

"not going to say anything at all because [they] don't want to be bullied" themselves, either by the bully or by their own friends. In contrast, the Defenders stated that fear of retaliation was not a deterrent to intervening for themselves, and one said that "I'll intervene, I don't really care. I'm not scared of anybody at this school."

Social Risks of Intervening. No students identified that taking a defending role in a bullying situation would help them gain social acceptance or status, while a number of students stated that being neutral or uninvolved either helped them to fit in or at least not stand out in a way that might prove risky to their position among friends or in the general school social order.

Three of the six Defenders also said that Outsiders would avoid intervening because "they don't want other kids to make fun of them," which includes other bystanders who are not the bully in the original incident. One Defender elaborated, stating that "you have this thought process where maybe your friends who don't agree with you" in regard to intervening "will turn their back on you and then you will be alone." One Defender expressed the idea that some students might not intervene in bullying incidents because "they are just trying to keep their head down because they don't want to stand out. I guess they don't want to be seen as, I don't know, I guess somebody who cares a lot."

Three of the six Outsiders cited fear of negative interpersonal or social outcomes as a reason that students would not intervene in bullying situations. One Outsider stated that it can be difficult to make friends, and that this can lead to people being picked on. They stated that sometimes students are "friends with other people who don't like,

are bystanders," and "if someone is getting bullied, they don't get it, they don't want to lower theirself *[sic]*." Another Outsider said that students avoid intervening because they are "afraid to have people think in a different way about them…like in a negative way." This Outsider stated that there were risks to becoming associated with a victim, for instance "if they stood up for the kid that everyone thought was less than everyone else, then everyone else would then think that they are then less for supporting the kid." They said that they were fearful of standing out by intervening, and as a result they would have trouble making friends or maintaining relationships within the student social structure and its rules of behavior.

Efficacy of Defending

In addition, both Defenders and Outsiders spoke of the kinds of limited efficacy in social interactions that act as hindrances to intervening in bullying situations, but the Defenders who mentioned this issue of social efficacy viewed it as something that they worked around, while the Outsiders who spoke of efficacy saw it as part of a larger set of reasons to avoid intervening. Defenders spoke of being physically small, and so tended to avoid physical bullying situations but intervened in verbal bullying situations. They also spoke of the difficulty of being an underclassman and coming across upperclassmen who were bullying. This Defender said that they would intervene with older students even though they probably would not be listened to. Another Defender also cited shyness as a reason why a student might not intervene in a bullying situation. One Outsider cited being bad at social interactions, and so avoided intervening, though this student cited numerous other reasons they did not intervene, including the social prohibition of

"snitching," fear of reprisal, having an uncertain assessment of the situation as to whether it is bullying or not, or fear of misjudging the wishes of the victim in regard to accepting intervention by another student.

Discussion

Findings

Overall, this study reveals the thoughts and experiences of 12 students attending a single, small, rural high school in Northern California. By using a survey to peer-identify students most likely to be either Defenders or Outsiders in bullying situations within this single whole-school environment, and then engaging the identified students in semi-structured interviews, this study illuminates the differences and similarities of these students' perceptions of school climate along with their individual perceptions, thoughts and feelings during bullying incidents that relate to their choice to intervene or not. As described by Salmivalli (2010), whatever their participant roles when they experience bullying situations, students are driven by personal qualities and perceptions that interact with environmental and social factors. A look at the student responses in this study provides some insights and raises some questions in regard to dynamic interactions among personal and environmental factors.

As described below, this study produced five major findings and three primary conclusions. The findings include specific cognitive factors that support the agency of Defenders to intervene in bullying incidents or that inhibit Outsiders from intervening; these include the way that the belief of Defenders that bullying is morally wrong motivates them to intervene, while the Outsiders are inhibited from intervening by their fears of retribution by the bully and the potential loss of social standing among their peers if they take action that makes them stand out as different from others. The findings also include analyses of the ways that the Permissive school climate that the students

perceived interacted with Defender and Outsider cognitions during bullying incidents; specifically, the ways that perceptions of a Permissive school climate likely led both Defenders and Outsiders to experience an elevated threshold in regard to distinguishing bullying from less serious antisocial incidents, and the specific cognitions of Outsiders that evidenced aspects of moral disengagement. The findings also include the concept that the overall perception by students that administrators and teachers were ineffectual in dealing with bullying led to a campus at which there were likely fewer students who were willing to act in defense of the victims of bullying, and the likelihood that those who acted as Defenders in bullying situations were thus exceptional.

Outsiders' Fears of Retaliation and Loss of Social Status

The Outsiders spoke of being deterred from intervening in bullying situations by their fear of retaliation, which sometimes was specifically related to "things getting physical" and other times more conceptual, worrying about "having happen whatever would happen." These fears of a bully retaliating against them for intervening were also noted by Defenders as reasons that some students did not intervene, though none of the Defenders indicated that they themselves were deterred by fear of retaliation. The fact that both Outsiders and Defenders identified fear as a significant deterrent underscores its prevalence and influence within the student population in regard to bullying intervention. The unanimous lack of fear by the Defenders, along with the nearly unanimous expression among Outsiders that fear deterred them from intervening in bullying situations, defines one of the greatest contrasts between the thinking of Defenders and that of Outsiders.

The same contrast also was evident in regard to social fears as potential inhibitors of defending actions in bullying situations. The social structure dimension of student life and the fear of losing social status played roles that Outsiders cited as reasons not to intervene. In this way, the students' observations of themselves and others went beyond the five roles related to bullying situations that are described in the Participant Role Model (Salmavalli et al., 1996) as being discrete roles in relation to each other. Instead, the students, both Defenders and Outsiders, illuminated the importance of interpersonal and social perceptions among bystanders who do not choose to become Assistants or Reinforcers of Bullies. The students describe the importance of relationships and social acceptance or rank in relation to the choice to intervene or not. That is, while students perceived bullying incidents to be between specific individuals, they as bystanders needed to consider their own personal relationships or social position relative to other bystanders, not merely their relationships with bullying instigators or victims. In all cases, these social and relational considerations tended to inhibit taking on a defending role, and instead supported passive bystanding. Thus, the choices made by Outsiders in bullying situations were strongly mediated by fear of retaliation by the bully but also profoundly by their fear of damaging their own personal relationships or position within the social order if they were to stand out by intervening on behalf of a victim. In contrast, the choices made by Defenders were not dampened by fear of reprisal or of damage to their place in the student social order. In the moments when they had to choose to intervene or not, the Outsiders thought the safest option for them to avoid falling in the social order was to remain invisible.

Defenders Turned Moral Reasoning into Moral Action

The Defenders frequently referenced the moral wrongness of bullying as a motivator behind their defending behaviors. This significantly contrasted to the Outsiders, none of whom attached an ethical aspect to bullying, though some expressed empathy. In regard to Defenders, moral thinking combined with personal agency to produce moral action, without the potential inhibiting rationales of moral disengagement inhibiting them from taking action in accordance with their moral thinking.

Ethical thinking also arose in regard to the Defenders' choice of intervention strategies. As an ethical factor that inhibits defending behaviors, the student honor code of not "snitching" by telling adults was a clear deterrent to intervention by at least one Outsider. Among the 12 students in this study, only one Defender stated that they had ever reported a bullying incident to a school administrator, and that the administrator's response had been passive and ineffectual in ending the bullying. Reporting bullying to an adult was so outside of consideration that 10 of the 12 students, both Defenders and Outsiders alike, did not mention reporting incidents to adult authorities as even an option among strategies to defend. The Defenders generally, along with the Outsiders in this study, indicated that directly intervening in a bullying situation or comforting the victim afterwards, were the methods of intervention that they had used.

Thus, the Defenders in this study were motivated to intervene by their moral belief that bullying is wrong, but their choice of intervention methods was influenced by the common student code of not snitching which was reinforced by the community-specific ethic, born of the illegal marijuana trade, of never telling on anyone.

Permissive School Climate

Eleven of the 12 students in this study perceived a climate of high Care and low Order at the school, a combination of dimensions meeting the definition of a Permissive school climate as used in the work of Ferrans and Selman (2014), which itself uses analogous concepts to those formulated by Baumrind (1973) for analyzing parenting styles. School climate research associates a number of student outcomes with Permissive school climates that can provide context for the experiences and cognitions of the students in this study. Research about permissive school climate and its effects on student behavior may provide some insight into how perceived school climate may have affected students' agency in bullying situations that determined their participant role.

The Tolerance of Antisocial Behavior. Ferrans and Selman (2014), in their study of four urban middle schools, state that permissive school climates tend to be marked by a student culture that has a large degree of normalization of some antisocial behaviors. The researchers were surprised to find that none of the schools in their studies had student-perceived Permissive climates, and this limits the ability of their research to analyze student outcomes at schools perceived to be Permissive. Other research available to them, however, identifies the result of a permissive school climate as being similar to a household marked by permissive parenting, that is as an environment in which young people "become tolerant of unacceptable attitudes and behaviors" (Chaux, 2012 as cited in Ferrans & Selman, 2014, p. 167). While the Outsiders in this study may not have approved of bullying, they tolerated it. The specific thinking patterns that led Outsiders to

avoid intervening in bullying incidents represent cognitions described by a variety of theories.

Latane and Darley's (1968) situational model of bystander behavior provides a sequential structure to analyze the choices that bystanders make to intervene or not. Many of the students interviewed in this study held the view that there isn't much "real" bullying going on at their school while also citing a prevalence of antisocial behaviors that they assessed as being less serious than bullying. This kind of minimization of potential harm equates to a breakdown in the second step of the situational model of bystander behavior. That is, the students notice the antisocial behavior, the first step, but they fail to interpret it as troubling, and thus they don't even need to consider intervening. This assessment of minimal harm is consistent with the idea that in the Permissive climate at the school, the frequency of derogatory language or other antisocial actions might not be "vivid or notable" because they have become normalized as posited by Nickerson et al. (2014). In this environment, any given antisocial action becomes easy to label as "only joking" as described by Tersahjo and Salmivalli (2003). Further, reflecting the concept of pluralistic ignorance, a bystander to these antisocial behaviors might believe that, despite their own negative sense of the witnessed behavior, other bystanders view it as acceptable, as posited by Burn (2009). This variety of explanations for not intervening adds rational support for students who already feel fearful of taking defending actions in response to bullying incidents. Below, these cognitions that minimize the harm of antisocial behaviors are viewed more precisely through the lens of moral disengagement theory.

Moral Disengagement of Outsiders Provided Rationales for Not Intervening

Another dimension of student cognition within the Permissive school climate was the overall moral disengagement that influenced the thinking of both the Outsiders and the Defenders, though in different ways. By failing to interpret certain antisocial events as meeting the criteria for bullying, both Defenders and Outsiders in this study exhibited some essential characteristics of moral disengagement (Bandura et al., 1996), including palliative comparison, euphemistic labelling and minimizing or ignoring. When one Outsider mentioned having witnessed situations involving name-calling or social exclusion, behaviors that could be considered to be social bullying, the Outsider did not assess these situations as being serious enough for them to even consider intervening, thus minimizing the behavior so that it could be ignored. Both Outsiders and Defenders in this study further minimized the seriousness of antisocial behaviors at their school by stating that the kinds of antisocial events they witness are prevalent at all schools and are likely much worse at other schools, thus evidencing the morally disengaged cognition of palliative comparison. With antisocial behaviors being perceived as normal--or at least less intense than students experience at other schools--and thus not exceptional or serious, the Outsiders in this study avoided needing to consider whether or not they should intervene. If a witnessed event is not serious, no intervention is necessary, nor need it be contemplated. In addition, the Outsiders could avoid the feedback systems of self-censure (Bandura, 1986) and anticipatory self-sanctions (Bandura et al., 1996) described in moral disengagement theory that would tend to support taking intervening action when one does not approve of bullying. For Defenders, the moral disengagement

processes or minimization and palliative comparison likely raised the threshold for distinguishing an act of bullying from less severe antisocial acts; thus, the Defenders likely intervened in fewer bullying incidents than they might have in an Authoritative school climate that provides an environment that does not promote moral disengagement the way that a Permissive school climate does.

But Outsiders expressed additional aspects of moral disengagement not expressed by Defenders for not intervening as described by Bandura. When one Outsider said that the victims sometimes "deserve some sort of repercussion...now it's your fault" because of their actions, they provided an explicit example of "moral justification" and "attribution of blame." When another Outsider described victims as being "just out there" or "in their own world", they provided an example of dehumanization.

An aspect of moral disengagement that distinguished Defenders from Outsiders was the Defenders shared sense that once an incident met their threshold for being considered bullying, they felt they had an ethical responsibility to intervene. In this way, they exhibited moral action in accordance with their moral thinking, and so they avoided being diverted into the aspects of moral disengagement that Bandura et al. (1996) refer to as "diffusion of responsibility" and "displacement of responsibility" (p. 365). The Defenders in this study simply saw themselves as morally responsible to act whether or not anyone else might be present, including bystanders who might appear to have greater responsibility in a given situation, such as if the victim was a closer friend of theirs.

The constructs of moral disengagement provide specific patterns of thinking that may describe the underlying processes that Ferrans and Selman (2014) summarize as

"tolerance of antisocial behaviors" (p. 167) within permissive school climates. Yet, within this permissive climate, three of the six Defenders stated that bullying is morally wrong and then converted their moral thinking into congruent moral action by intervening in bullying incidents. Meanwhile, none of the Outsiders condemned bullying as immoral action, and instead, through the processes of moral disengagement, they experienced cognitions that allowed them to believe that not intervening was the right thing to do, thus avoiding any dissonance between thoughts and actions and also shielding them from facing their fears of retaliation or loss of social status.

Adult Inefficacy in Relation to Bullying Makes Defenders More Exceptional

In regard to the school's responses to bullying, the Defenders generally found the efforts of administrators and teachers to be somewhat inefficacious, thus revealing a critical attitude toward adult action or inaction; meanwhile, Outsiders found the school's responses to be about as good as could be expected, thus revealing either an attitude of acceptance, or possibly an acceptance of futility in regard to preventing and responding to bullying. Notably, two of the three Defenders who stated that bullying is ethically wrong gave teachers and administrators the lowest possible efficacy score in regard to responding to bullying. As this study identified those students most likely to engage in defending behavior as opposed to a broader cross-section of Defenders, perhaps the Defenders interviewed in this study were more likely to be motivated by strong ethical beliefs than would Defenders in general, and perhaps this stronger than average ethical belief also accounts for their more critical view of administrator and teacher efficacy.

This critical stance of the Defenders in this study might at first seem counter to existing research. For instance, some studies have shown that the frequency of Defending behavior is positively correlated with students beliefs that teachers have strong anti-bullying attitudes (Saarento et al., 2014) or that the classroom group has a high level of collective efficacy in regard to intervening in bullying. That is, there are qualities in some classrooms or schools that generate more Defenders and more defending interventions in bullying incidents. The results in this study, in which Defender action correlates neither with administrator or teacher attitudes and behaviors nor with a high level of collective efficacy in regard to addressing bullying, may suggest that within a school climate perceived to be Permissive, Defenders tend to be even greater exceptions to social norms than at schools with more positive psychosocial climates.

Logically, a school at which only the students who are exceptions will intervene in bullying will have fewer students willing to intervene. Thus, a school with a Permissive school climate may be more likely to produce increased Outsider behavior, perhaps increased behaviors that assist and reinforce bullying, and less frequent Defender behavior.

Conclusions

The primary outcomes of this study include the ideas that the Defenders acted in accordance with their ethics while the Outsiders did not act because of fears, including their fear of not fitting in. In addition, this study finds that the perceived Permissive school climate had significant effects upon student cognitions in regard to bullying incidents even while the students accepted or even preferred their Permissive climate,

including its lack of Order, and they expressed fear that increasing the degree of Order on their school campus would lead the school in the direction of an undesirable Authoritarian school climate.

Differing Motivations of Defenders and Outsiders: Doing Right Versus Fitting In

As a result of the normalization of antisocial behavior, the negative norms at the school led to there being no clear way for a student to "fit in" by defending in bullying situations. On the contrary, the Outsiders feared that by standing out and bringing attention to themselves, they would show that they do not fit in, and they would lose their existing social position. When encountering a bullying situation, the Outsiders safest behavioral choice was to become invisible.

In contrast, despite this risk that inhibited the Outsiders, the Defenders intervened anyway; they did not intervene in order to fit in, but rather to manifest their ethical belief that bullying is wrong. Thus, within the school's Permissive climate that normalized the acceptance of negative behaviors, the Defenders acted not out of social reasons, but ideological ones, and once the Defenders identified an incident as meeting the threshold for bullying, they proved more resistant to moral disengagement than did Outsiders. While disapproving of bullying, the Outsiders avoided intervening in order to avoid not fitting in, and the processes of moral disengagement provided them with ideas that allowed them to believe that they were doing the right thing by not intervening, and thus they avoided self-generated feedback in the form of self-censure. Perhaps a school climate that finds ways to normalize defending behavior as a means to fitting in would incentivize students to engage in intervention behaviors (Pozzoli et al., 2012).

Permissive School Climate's Effects on Defending Behavior

A Permissive school climate, like the one identified by students in this study, has been shown to lead to less successful outcomes for students than does an Authoritative school climate. In theory, since the Authoritative climate would lead to the most positive results overall for its students, school leaders and other school stakeholders should promote structures and systems that engender this climate.

However, despite the less successful social-emotional and behavioral outcomes associated with a Permissive school climate, both Defenders and Outsiders in this study accepted the non-orderly status quo at their school. This acceptance of a problematic school climate is correspondent to the findings in previous studies that found that students in Permissive climates and students in Authoritative climates are equally happy with their schools because they perceive them as exhibiting fairness (Pellerin, 2005).

Thus, the students in this study were resistant to ideas that might increase order and that might move their school toward an Authoritative climate. In fact, the students generally expressed the idea that a higher level of Order might be detrimental to the atmosphere at school and could even make the campus less safe. The students seemed to feel that the lack of Order "kind of worked" at their school, and that this Permissive school climate might even help maintain higher attendance. And so these perceptions by the students reveal their concern that an increase from low Order to high Order would create an Authoritarian school climate.

The students did not perceive that the Permissive climate of their school may have supported an environment of greater antisocial behavior and moral disengagement, which

in turn may have led to a greater threshold for identifying behaviors as bullying while also providing Outsiders with a number of rationales to avoid intervening in bullying incidents. Therefore, neither the Defenders nor the Outsiders perceived the real and detrimental effects that the climate that they described as Permissive had upon their own thinking processes when they witnessed instances of bullying.

Students Desire More Care, Not More Order

A number of the students expressed that having a more orderly way to support students could be beneficial. They stated that having a "real" counselor, not just an academic counselor, would be welcome as it could support student mental health and perhaps reduce student stress and conflict before negative behaviors such as bullying arise. Many students expressed that a number of students at the school had painful home lives or other difficult emotional or personal situations that would be helped by having a more regular support system at school. They stated that there were some specific teachers that students could go to for emotional support, but that this was not part of the regular school structure. Thus, the students' only suggestion for increasing Order could be interpreted as a desire for a more consistent, institutionalized form of Care to be added to the interpersonal care that already exists at the school. From the student perspective within their Permissive school climate, the best way to improve the school's level of Order would be to improve its level of institutionalized supportive Care.

Implications for School Practice

While the school climate typology based upon Baumrind's parenting styles typologies (1978) was found by Pellerin (2005) to produce results for schools that were

consistent with the results for parenting, the two orthogonal constructs of Care and Order

measured by a binary of high or low may be insufficient for producing prescriptions for

ways to improve schools at which students perceive the school climates to be the

theoretically inferior Permissive school climate, as in this study.

At this point, the emergent framework of Ferrans and Selman (2014) may offer an

analysis and a potential approach to improve a school with a student-perceived

Permissive school climate. Expanding beyond the two orthogonal dimensions of Care and

Order by adding the dimensions of student empowerment and safety and adding the level

"moderate" between the levels of high and low, Ferrans and Selman identify the preferred

school climate they designate as "cohesive." This cohesive school climate, marked by

high levels of safety and care, along with moderate levels of order and student

empowerment, supersedes the preferred Authoritative school climate that has arisen as

the analog to the Authoritative parenting style identified by Baumrind (1978). The

emergent framework of Ferrans and Selman (2014) provides a lens that, when considered

in light of the perceptions of the students in this study, may offer a new synthetic

perspective on the likely weaknesses of the school's Permissive climate and the students'

suggestions for improving their school.

In this study, the students' recommendation to add a school counselor for the

purpose of aiding students who might be experiencing negative emotions or conflicts that

could lead to bullying could be considered to be a suggestion that is a hybrid of Care and

of Order, rather than being clearly one or the other. In this way, perhaps the students are

proposing a way that the school's level of Order might move not toward high order, but

to a moderate level of order that brings students and an adult counselor together to work in a proactive way to head off potential bullying incidents before they occur. Clearly, the students perceive their recommendation to be an increase of Care, but the suggestion of hiring a counselor or work directly with students to help address stresses and conflicts at school can hardly be seen apart from the construct of institutional Order. From within their Permissive school climate and their student norm of keeping quiet about bullying incidents, perhaps this improvement is as far as they can see. Still, this student-adult connection to proactively inhibit bullying could perhaps be a first step toward the kinds of partnership that is described as moderate empowerment by Ferrans and Selman. In this school climate marked by moderate student empowerment, adults on campus and students would work together to co-construct ways to build individual student social skills and to provide systems of positive discipline and restorative justice that would avoid mere punishment, but would decrease bullying by holding students accountable while promoting more student social skill and empowerment.

While the crossroads of Care and Order brings to a halt the analysis of school climate and its relationship to defending in bullying situations, the roads forward offered by Ferrans and Selman combine the students' thoughts about how to improve their school climate and decrease bullying with an emergent framework that suggests the relevance of a more nuanced approach along with addition of the construct of student empowerment in regard to addressing and preventing bullying. This emergent framework, while providing a road toward a cohesive school climate, evades the students' fear that any increase in school order would be a movement in the direction of an Authoritarian school climate.

Implications for Future Research

This study focused on the most extreme peer-identified Defenders and Outsiders in order to clearly identify contrasting cognitions of these two participant roles at one school site and see how they intersected with these students' perceptions of school climate. Future studies could look at multiple school sites and interview a broader spectrum of students and include additional participant roles such as Assistant or Reinforcer; these studies could analyze the intersection of the cognitions of these students about bullying situations and school climate, as well as the cognitions of less extreme Defenders and Outsiders.

Another potential area for future study is the cognitions of Outsiders in regard to social fears. Though some studies have identified ways that bystanders to bullying weigh their personal social status relative to the bully during bullying incidents, the Outsiders in this study did not mention the relative status of bullies at all, but instead they framed their social fear of intervening within their relationships with other bystanders and their own friends. Future studies could examine Outsiders' fear of standing out and not fitting in as it relates to their other cognitions about bullying incidents and their perceptions of school climate. A greater understanding of the relationship between classroom and schoolwide environmental factors and students' fears of fitting in to the group would illuminate an Outsider cognition that contributed to their lack of agency to intervene in bullying situations.

Finally, the relationship between school climate and students' cognitions during bullying incidents could use mixed methods and grounded theory in regard to both

dimensions while focusing on individual school sites. This research could help us to better explain how the interrelated energies of individual, interpersonal, and classroom and schoolwide factors at a chosen site influence the social fears and processes of moral disengagement that inhibit passive bystanders while also illuminating the factors that promote the agency that allows some students to translate their moral objections to bullying into moral action, and thus decrease bullying instigation by intervening in bullying incidents by taking on the role of the Defender.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form for Parent/Legal Guardian

INFORMED CONSENT FORM for PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN
Study: "Bullying at School: The Defender's Role and School Climate"

Your child,_____, is invited to participate in a research study which will involve short surveys and interviews with selected students in order to understand the thinking of children who act as defenders in bullying situations and how this may relate to overall school climate.

My name is Bill Richards, and I have taught English at South Fork High School for 16 years and am currently a master's student at Humboldt State University in Education. The purpose of this research is to improve the safety and positive experience of students. Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study along with all other students in her/his grade. If you decide to allow your child to participate, he or she will be asked to complete a short multiple-choice survey, about 5 minutes, and may be selected to participate in a 30- to 45-minute interview.

Potential risks to participants are minimal. Some survey and interview questions could bring up memories of negative experiences of bullying situations, but participation in the study will not elicit emotional distress in excess of that expected by any normal educational or psychological interview.

If your child is selected to be one of the interviewees, s/he may find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. If, however, s/he feels uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, s/he has the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

Your child's participation in this project is entirely voluntary. Even after you agree to allow your child to participate, you may decide to stop their participation in the study at any time without penalty. No students, teachers, or administrators will be informed of any student's participation or non-participation.

Notes will be written during the interview, and an audio recording will be made and transcribed so that the content of interview can be more accurately studied. If your child does not wish to be recorded, s/he will not be able to participate in the interview portion of the study. Survey responses will be destroyed after the interview participants have been identified. Interview recordings and transcripts will be destroyed after the study is completed and approved.

Your child will not be identified by name in any notes or reports using information obtained from this interview, and complete confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions. Faculty and administrators will neither be present at the interview nor have access to raw notes or transcripts in order to maintain complete confidentiality.

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Studies Involving Human Subjects at Humboldt State University. For research problems or questions regarding subjects, the Institutional Review Board may be contacted at: Institutional Review Board, Student Services Building, Room 427, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA, 95521, or telephone 707-826-5165.

If you have any questions about the research at any time, please call or email me at 707-943-3144 or wsr2@humboldt.edu, or my advisor, Professor Eric Van Duzer at 707-826-3726.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to your child's participation, and that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue your child's participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which he or she is otherwise entitled.

Please check the appropriate boxes:
> c **I am willing to have my child participate in the short survey.**
> c **I am willing to have my child participate in an interview.**

Signature:_____Date:_____

Printed Name:_____

Signature of person obtaining consent:_____Date:_____

Printed name of person obtaining consent_____

Appendix B

Minor Assent Form

"Bullying at School: The Defender's Role and School Climate"
Minor Assent Form

My name is Bill Richards, and I am a graduate student in Education at Humboldt State University.

The purpose of this research is to understand the thinking and experience of defenders in bullying situations and how it may relate to school climate. I am interested in how schools can make safer, more positive environments for students.

I would like you to respond to a short survey about bullying and perhaps engage in a 30- to 45-minute interview. This research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate at all, or you may stop participation at any time, even after you have decided to participate. If you have any questions about what you'll be doing, or if you can't decide whether to do it or not, just ask me if there is anything you'd like me to explain. If you want to participate, please sign your name on the line below. Your parent(s) have already allowed you to make your own decision whether or not to participate.

Signature:_____ Date:_____

Printed Name:_____

Signature of person obtaining consent:_____Date:_____

Printed name of person obtaining consent:_____

Appendix C

Survey

Grade Level (circle one):   Sophomore   Junior   Senior
NO NAME: PLEASE **DO NOT** WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS FORM.

Bullying Participant Role Questionnaire

For each student that you are familiar with, please indicate whether they Never, Sometimes, or Often take the actions listed **when bullying happens**. Your answers are completely anonymous, so please be as honest as you can.   If you don't know about a listed student, you may leave that student blank.

Definition of bullying for this survey:
"One child being exposed repeatedly to harassment and attacks from one or several other children; harassment and attacks may be, for example, shoving or hitting the other one, calling names or making jokes of him/her, leaving him/her outside the group, taking his/her things, or any other behavior meant to hurt the other one."

This Student: **Circle:** **N-**Never **S-**Sometimes **O-**Often	Comforts the victim or encourages him/her to tell the teacher about the bullying.	Tells the others to stop bullying.	Tries to make the others stop bullying.	Is not usually present in bullying situations.	Stays outside the situation.	Doesn't take sides with anyone.
Example: Joe Smith	N S **O**	N S **O**	N S **O**	N S **O**	N S **O**	N S **O**

Appendix D

Interview Schedule

I.Introduction:
-Briefly describe the purpose of the research and explain participants' rights and principle of confidentiality. Explain that the interviewees can avoid using names or can use pseudonyms for other students.
- Definition of bullying: "One child being exposed repeatedly to harassment anz;d attacks from one or several other children; harassment and attacks may be, for example, shoving or hitting the other one, calling names or making jokes of him/her, leaving him/her outside the group, taking his/her things, or any other behavior meant to hurt the other one."

II.Witnessing Bullying Situations:
Grand Tour question: Have you ever had a day here where you became aware of someone being bullied at this school?
1. Please give an example of a school bullying incident you have witnessed personally.
2. Have you ever provided assistance to a victim of bullying? Why?
3.Have you witnessed any school bullying incident in which you did not want to intervene? Why?
 4. There are some students who are willing to help a victim; do you know why they would do that?
    4. Some students choose to be bystanders without intervening; do you know why they do this?

III. School Climate:
6.How safe do you think this school is for students?
7.How effective do you think teachers and administrators are in responding to bullying incidents at this school?
8.Do you think the teachers and administrators at this school care about students? How do you know? What do the adults do that suggests this to you?
9.Do you think this is an orderly school? What suggests to you that the school is orderly or not orderly?
10.What about this school do you think allows bullying incidents to happen?
11.Do you feel connected to this school? Do you think other students feel connected to this school?
12.Do you think students feel empowered at this school? In what ways do you think they feel empowered or not empowered?
13.Is there anything the school could do to make this a safer place?
14.Is there anything that students could do to make this a safer place?

Appendix E

Codebook

School Climate Related Constructs

Bullying: "One child being exposed repeatedly to harassment and attacks from one or several other children; harassment and attacks may be, for example, shoving or hitting the other one, calling names o0r making jokes of him/her, leaving him/her outside the group, taking his/her things, or any other behavior meant to hurt the other one." (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011)

Safe: Students indicated that the school creates and maintains a safe environment for students that is free from violence.

Connection: Students indicated that students feel connected to the school.
Order: Students indicated that the school creates and maintains orderly structures and systems in relation to student behavior in regard to student discipline and counseling and support of students.

Care: Students indicated that the administrators and/or teachers exhibit personal care for the students that is genuine and not directly related to academics.

Empowerment: Students indicated that the school offers and supports opportunities for students to make choices and to resolve conflicts.

Administrator and Teacher Efficacy: Students indicated that the school creates and maintains effective processes for preventing and responding to bullying.

Bullying-Related Constructs

Defenders: Defenders are bystanders who are willing to stop bullying, support the victim and/or report bullying incidents. (Salmivalli, 1996)

Outsiders: Outsiders are bystanders who do not actively assist a bully or reinforce the bully's behavior but also are not willing to intervene in a bullying incident, support the victim, or report bullying incidents.

Affective Empathy: Affective Empathy refers to an individual's shared emotional response with a victim of bullying.

Cognitive Empathy: Cognitive Empathy refers to an individual's perspective-taking abilities and allows an individual to detach and analyze a situation for someone else's point of view. (Gini et al., 2007)

Friends: Friends refers to a bystander who self-identifies as a friend of a victim.

Fear of Targeting: Fear of Targeting refers to a bystander's fear that s/he might be targeted by a bullying in response to the bystander intervening in a bullying incident.

Justice: Justice refers to a bystander's cognition that a given behavior is ethically or morally right.

Personal Responsibility: Personal Responsibility refers to a bystander's belief that they have an individual responsibility to act to prevent an incident that they think is unjust.

Social/Interpersonal Rules: Social Rules or Interpersonal Rules refer to shared beliefs in regard to how individuals should think or act within a student culture.

Knowledge of Defending Strategies: Knowledge of Defending Strategies refers to expressed ideas and strategies about specific actions that an individual can take in order to intervene in bullying incidents.

Identifying Bullying: Identifying Bullying refers to the process and beliefs that an individual may have that allow her/him to determine that a specific incident to which the individual is a bystander meets the criteria to be considered to be bullying.

Appendix F

Table of School Climate Perceptions of Defenders

School Climate Perceptions of Defenders
Scoring: Student interview responses for Care were scored on a scale from 1 to 5 as follows:
1 = Teachers/Administrators Strongly Don't Care about Students
2 = Teachers/Administrators Somewhat Don't Care about Students
3 = Teachers/Administrators are Neutral in Regard to Care about Students
4 = Teachers/Administrators Somewhat Care about Students
5 = Teachers/Administrators Strongly Care about Students

Defender Rank	Care Score	Care Comments	Order Score	Order Comments	School Climate Type
1	5	"Teachers and administrators do care about students, but they also favor some students"	1	"It's not to plan, like it's not in an orderly way how it's supposed to go"	Permissive
2	4	"Yeah, some more than others, but yeah, I feel like they care" "They're here… they gotta care at least somewhat"	2	"I think every school has some order and some disorder and not everything is going to be in order all the time" "I think the school does a pretty good job keeping things in order--I don't know, maybe not"	Permissive
3	5	"I know that [teachers] care about students at this school" "The administrators right now it really seems that they care about the students and their well-being"	2	"This school is, uh, pretty orderly, depending on what you define orderly as" "There's a lot of miscommunication here, and there's not always the most effective way of doing things, ha ha"	Permissive
4	5	"I think the school does a really good job of finding people who care" "I think there are a lot of people who care"	1	"I would say no." "It seems that there is a chaotic order to the functionality of this school that is operational but is maybe not as efficient as it could be"	Permissive

Defender Rank	Care Score	Care Comments	Order Score	Order Comments	School Climate Type
5	5	"There's people you can talk to emotionally…most of the teachers you could probably go to" "You can tell just by the way they interact with you like they care about you like a parent would."	1	"I don't think it's an orderly school because we have a new administration almost every year" "There is like a protocol or whatever that you are supposed to follow like these kids should be expelled or suspended like multiple times already and like here it's like, Well, don't do it next time, and then it happens again and then it happens again and it's like, Well, try not to do it again…there's not discipline"	Permissive
6	5	"They listen to what you have to say…most of them treat you like people" "Since like the teachers are caring they're like a part of your family as well"	1	"No, we're not orderly at all" "We don't give out any real discipline"	Permissive
Mean	4.8	N/A	1.3	N/A	Permissive

Appendix G

Table of School Climate Perceptions of Outsiders

School Climate Perceptions of Outsiders
Scoring: Student interview responses for Order were scored on a scale from 1 to 5 as described in Methods section:
1 = The School is Very Disorderly
2 = The School is Somewhat Disorderly
3 = Neutral: The School is neither Order nor Disorderly
4 = The School is Somewhat Orderly
5 = The School is Very Orderly

Outsider Rank	Care Score	Care Comments	Order Score	Order Comments	School Climate Type
1	5	"They are all very solid. They all genuinely care"	2	"It could be more orderly" "Usually, people do what they are supposed to do, to a degree. Of course, there's obviously a lot, some amount of drug use on campus, but nothing too serious, no hard drugs, nobody dies, so in that respect I think it's pretty orderly"	Permissive
2	4	"They try as much as they can if they know what is going on" "I don't think they really care about academics, but they care about the well-being of people"	1	"It's not orderly" "There's no detention, no one really cares if you're tardy or anything. Definitely very, very lax. It makes it chill"	Permissive
3	5	"A lot of the teachers go out of their way to help a lot of the students" "I'm sure a lot of them provide emotional support at some time for some of their students"	1	"Pretty disorganized...like the people in charge don't know what's going on" "A lot of the rules aren't well-enforced or they are generally just disregarded"	Permissive

Outsider Rank	Care Score	Care Comments	Order Score	Order Comments	School Climate Type
4	5	"I think they definitely care cuz…most of the teachers will stay after school and tutor you if you need extra help or anything like that" "if you need to talk about something more personal, most teachers will"	2	"I think parts of it are orderly and parts of it aren't, ha ha" "I think we do to a point, but I also think we get taken into what people want to make it"	Permissive
5	5	"I think they do-- I mean I have a lot of relationships with my teachers" "With smaller class sizes you're in touch with your teacher more"	1	"We've been getting a lot of new teachers, it kind of mixes things up" "There's instances when it's orderly but then it gets mixed up again. We have rules, but I know a lot of people that break them"	Permissive
6	2	"Some do and some don't--I wouldn't know if they really cared of it's just their job" "They don't really pay attention to their students' lives. They don't focus on how things are going socially"	1	"A lot of people don't really follow the rules here, kind of Oh, teachers, whatever, they don't really care, like dress codes, food, like any rule in general"	Negligent
Mean	4.3	N/A	1.3	N/A	Permissive

Appendix H

Administrator/Teacher Efficacy in Regard to Bullying Intervention

Administrator/Teacher Efficacy in Regard to Bullying Intervention
Scoring: Student interview responses for Order were scored on a scale from 1 to 5 as follows:
1 = Administrators/Teachers Are Ineffective at Bullying Intervention
2 = Administrators/Teachers Are Somewhat Ineffective at Bullying Intervention
3 = Neutral: Administrators/Teachers Are Neither Effective Nor Ineffective at Bullying Intervention
4 = Administrators/Teachers are Somewhat Effective at Bullying Intervention
5 = Administrators/Teacher are Effective at Bullying Intervention

Defender Rank	Score per Defenders	Defenders Comments	Outsider Rank	Score per Outsiders	Outsider Comments
1	3	"I think the teachers are pretty good at it… but I've never told any administrators about it" "The last time I talked to our counselor she told me basically that it's just going to be a waiting game and a cool down and I was like, No…that's not how bullying works, sorry"	1	4	"I think that most of the teachers I know would be open, would certainly help them if someone approached them asking" "We might not have someone who's specifically trained to deal with this kind of thing, so that's a deficiency"
2	1	"Not very effective" "Like even if they do respond it might stop for a while but then it keeps going" "They're not as aware as they should be"	2	2	"Probably not that well, I don't know" "I don't think teachers really try, but then again, I don't think there's that much bullying"

Defender Rank	Score per Defenders	Defenders Comments	Outsider Rank	Score per Outsiders	Outsider Comments
3	2	"Kind of depends, it depends on the administrator's opinions of the students beforehand" "There's kind of bias there…they don't always deal with it the same way"	3	4	"Relatively effective. I feel like if someone specifically tells them that there's a problem that they try to do something to help" "I mean there's no way the teachers are going to be able to keep everyone from calling names and whatnot"
4	1	"[They] suffer a small disconnect from knowing what to do" "There are a lot of people who don't know how to appeal to people who need help"	4	4	"I think it's pretty effective because it's more of a rare thing to see actual bullying incidences." "They'd be more aware of it when it happens…so it'll get more attention"
5	1	"Not great. Like I told on a kid at the beginning of the year [for calling a special education student names] …but they didn't like do anything to get him to stop and it still happens every day"	5	3	"As teachers and administrators, they can't really do anything if a victim isn't willing to speak or a bystander doesn't stand up" "It's kind of a both-way thing. They are there to help, but if you don't speak up…"

Defender Rank	Score per Defenders	Defenders Comments	Outsider Rank	Score per Outsiders	Outsider Comments
6	3	"I think most don't know what to do with it and then they don't do anything" "I think it's either not handled or it's handed pretty well, it depends upon the person"	6	3	"They're not very effective, like they're way of doing things" "Teachers don't really understand because they don't see what's going on within the student crowd" "But teachers, I don't know, I guess they are kind of effective. [Teacher's Name], she dealt with a lot of people, people going to her for help and she helped them…she was fairly effective"
Mean	1.8	N/A	Mean	3.3	N/A

Appendix I

IRB Exempt Status Letter

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
707-826-5165 l irb@humboldt.edu l www.humboldt.edu/human_subjects

MEMORANDUM

Date: 3/7/2018

To: **Eric V Van Duzer**
William Richards

From: **Susan Brater**
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

IRB #: **IRB 17-165**

Subject: **Bullying at School: The Defender's Role and School Climate**

Thank you for submitting your application to the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research. After reviewing your proposal I have determined that your research can be categorized as Exempt by Federal Regulation 45 CFR 46.101 (b) because of the following:

Your research will involve the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interviews procedures or observation of public behavior, and that information obtained will be recorded in a manner that the human subjects will not be able to be identified directly, or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

The Exempt designation of this proposal will expire on 2/6/2019 . By Federal Regulations, all research related to this protocol must stop on the expiration date and the IRB cannot extend a protocol that is past the expiration date. In order to prevent any interruption in your research, please submit a renewal application in time for the IRB to process, review, and extend the Exempt designation (at least one month).

Important Notes:
  • Any alterations to your research plan must be reviewed and designated as Exempt by the IRB prior to implementation.
    - Change to survey questions
    - Number of subjects
    - Location of data collection,
    - Any other pertinent information
  • If Exempt designation is not extended prior to the expiration date, investigators must stop all research related to this proposal.
  • Any adverse events or unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others must be reported immediately to the IRB (irb@humboldt.edu).

cc: Faculty Adviser (if applicable)
    Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

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