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**Sex-typing, Contingent Self-Esteem, and Peer Relations  
Among Adolescents Males**

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**Sex-typing, Contingent Self-Esteem, and Peer Relations  
Among Adolescents Males**

by

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This dissertation is dedicated to my friends and family who believed in me – even when I

didn't believe in myself, including:

Tedd Holladay, who loved me through the good times and the bad

Chrissy Osborn, who lived with me through it all

My Mom and Dad – I couldn't have done any of this without your love and support

My brother, Tyler, who kept me laughing

and to my Aunt Vicky, I wish you were here to see the woman I have become

I love you all

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## **Sex-typing, Contingent Self-Esteem, and Peer Relations**

### **Among Adolescents Males**

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Current theoretical accounts of gender role development argue that children are active participants in their own and their peers' gender role development (Liben & Bigler, 2002; Ruble, Martin, & Szkrybalo, 2002). Specifically, children have been reported to bully peers whose behaviors do not conform to gender norms (Ruble & Martin, 2002). Gender-related bullying is especially problematic among adolescent boys who use gay-baiting (calling a boy gay when he does something atypical of his gender) to publicly harm male peers whose behaviors are incongruent with society's definition of masculinity (Pollack, 1998; Kimmel, 2003a; Kimmel, 2003b). Relationships among endorsing traditional masculine gender roles for the self-and others, contingent self-esteem, gender-based bullying, and academic performance have been hinted at in the literature, although there has not been a study connecting these themes.

The purpose of this dissertation, therefore, is to determine the relations among (a) endorsing traditional masculine gender roles via sex-typing of the self and others, (b) contingent self-esteem, (c) gender-related bullying, and (d) academic success. In addition,

I propose and test the notion that contingent self-esteem mediates the relationship between sex-typing of the self and others and gender-related bullying (perpetrators and victims).

Participants included 103 7<sup>th</sup> grade boys (31 European Americans, 72 Latinos) who reported on (a) their personal sex-typed attitudes (OAT-PM) and sex-typed attitudes towards others (OAT-AM), (b) levels of contingent self-esteem, and (c) gender-related bullying (perpetrators and victims) in the spring of 2008. Students' final GPAs were also obtained. Results indicated that Latino boys were more likely than European American boys to be perpetrators of gender-related bullying. European American boys, in contrast, were more likely than Latino boys to become victims of gender-related bullying. In addition, boys were more likely to engage in gender-related bullying if they were highly sex-typed and if their self-esteem was contingent upon proving their masculinity. Such findings suggest the need for researchers to develop intervention programs designed to teach students to have more flexible conceptions of gender in order to minimize the amount of gender-related bullying in the schools.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

In the past decade, adolescent boys have increasingly reported being victimized by their peers for acting atypically of their gender (Pilkington & D'Augelli, 1995; Egan & Perry, 2001; Kimmel, 2003). The experience of Dylan Theno, a young boy attending school in Missouri, illustrates the type of bullying that many gender atypical youth report. Beginning in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and continuing through his junior year in high school, Dylan was repeatedly taunted and victimized by slanderous rumors regarding his sexuality, despite the fact that he was not homosexual. Dylan's harassment was so severe that he did not feel safe walking down the hallways at school, and begged his parents to let him stay home from school every morning. Although the Thenos addressed their son's harassment with his teachers and principals, school officials were unable to stop the verbal abuse. The constant taunting became so severe that Theno dropped out of school and began seeking counseling. As a result of their son's psychological suffering, the family won a lawsuit against the district for failing to protect their son from the name calling and verbal insults (Gender Public Advocacy Coalition, 2005). In order to address this type of bullying, many states have passed laws protecting students from bullying based on their gender and/or sexual orientation. In some cases, like Dylan's, students have won suits against their school districts for failing to protect them from gender-based harassment by peers (Gender Public Advocacy Coalition, 2005). However, few districts have focused on addressing this type bullying on a school-wide level, particularly because little research has determined potential causes of such behaviors or studied the effectiveness of intervention programs aimed at reducing and eliminating such behaviors.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to extend previous research on peer-relations, self-esteem, and gender roles to answer unresolved and unexplored questions concerning the relations among boys' (a) sex-typing of the self and others, (b) self-esteem contingent on competitive behaviors and endorsement of stereotypical masculine gender roles, (c) gender-related bullying (perpetrators and victims), and (d) academic success.

It has been established that men who are invested in traditional gender roles also base their self-esteem on their success in competitive situations (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette, 2003). Crocker et al. (2003) have argued that men who feel that masculine attributes are important to their overall identity are driven to prove their masculinity by winning competitions. Although this relationship was found among college age men, adolescent boys are similarly driven to prove their masculinity in an effort to meet society's standards of masculinity and gain their peers' approval (Jones & Crawford, 2006). The desire to appear sufficiently masculine to others may drive even more extreme behaviors. For example, researchers have hypothesized that young boys are driven to commit violent acts (e.g., school shootings) due to homophobia and issues related to masculinity (Kimmel, 2003, Kimmel & Mahler, 2003). Kimmel (2003) noted, for example, that each of the 10 adolescent boys accused of school shootings in the United States had admitted to being "gay-baited" by their peers. Gay-baiting refers to publically labeling an individual as homosexual (e.g., calling a male peer a queer, sissy, wimp, or faggot) in order to establish one's dominance over that individual – regardless of the victim's sexual orientation (Connell, 1995). Additionally, Poteat (2007) found that middle school peer groups – particularly when composed primarily of boys – socialize

and reinforce homophobic behaviors and attitudes, including gay-baiting. Despite the fact that Poteat (2007) did not directly examine adolescent boys' endorsement of masculine gender roles, it is likely that boys are driven to gay-bait to prove their masculinity and feel accepted by their peers. This need to prove themselves and be accepted by others is also likely related to boys' self-esteem. Drawing from research on contingent self-esteem, people are motivated to succeed in areas that are important to their overall sense of self (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette, 2003). In this case, those boys who feel it is important to their sense of self to prove their masculinity to others will be more motivated to engage in gender-related bullying to meet this goal than their male peers. Although the relations among stereotypical masculine gender roles, self-esteem, and bullying are hinted at in the literature, no study has attempted to integrate these lines of research.

In addition to the gap in our theoretical knowledge, there is a pressing practical need for understanding this type of victimization. Peer relations and bullying researchers have established that bullying leads to poor academic outcomes for both bullies and their victims (Schwartz, Dodge, Coie, Hubbard, Cillessen, Lemerise & Bateman, 1998). However, upon further examination of bullying behaviors among adolescent boys, it appears that at least among ethnic minority students, this relationship might be related to traditional masculine gender roles (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). For example, Graham, Bellmore & Mitze, (2006) found that ethnic minority boys perceived by their peers as "tough" and "macho" were also more likely to be considered bullies despite the fact that many of them were not. These boys also reported negative attitudes towards school. For these boys, simply looking the part (e.g., acting more traditionally masculine) influenced

the way their peers perceived them, which in turn negatively affected their attitudes towards school. Therefore, an additional goal of this study is to examine whether poor academic achievement is related to how important boys feel it is to engage in traditional masculine gender roles—particularly among boys from minority groups (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1995). Thus, for both theoretical and applied reasons, it is critical for researchers to identify the connections between traditional masculine gender roles, contingent self-esteem and gender-related bullying in order to ensure that other students do not have to face the negative psychological outcomes that Dylan Theno faced at his school.

To address the potential relations among gender-related bullying, self-esteem, and masculinity, this study therefore seeks to examine whether adolescent boys who feel it is more important to act in traditionally masculine ways (e.g., high levels of sex-typing the self and others) are more likely to base their self-esteem on competitive behavior and stereotypical masculine gender roles, and in turn, bully others who act in gender atypical ways.

### *Research Questions*

To analyze the potential relations among sex-typing of the self and others, self-esteem, and gender-related bullying, the study is designed to answer five key research questions. Sanchez and Crocker (2005) found that college aged men who felt it was important to act like an “ideal” man were also more likely to base their self-esteem on winning competitions. Therefore, I examined the hypothesis that adolescent boys who feel it is important to act in traditionally masculine ways (e.g., high levels of sex-typing of the self and others) are more likely to have self-esteem that is contingent upon

competitive behaviors and stereotypical masculine gender roles than their peers who do not endorse stereotypical masculine gender roles. Second, I explored the hypothesis that adolescent boys who are highly sex-typed (e.g., high levels of sex-typing of the self and others) are more likely to engage in gender-related bullying – such as gay-baiting – to prove their masculinity to their peers than boys who are not highly sex-typed. This relationship is probable given that many boys who engaged in extreme acts of violence have done so in order to prove their masculinity to their peers (Kimmel, 2003). Third, I examined the hypothesis that high levels of contingent self-esteem based on competition with others and endorsing stereotypical masculine gender roles mediates the relations among highly sex-typed attitudes towards the self and others and gender-related bullying. The study also analyzes whether this relation is consistent across boys from diverse racial groups (i.e., Latinos and European Americans). Finally, this study examines the hypothesis that adolescent boys who endorse more stereotypically masculine gender roles are more likely to experience poor academic achievement than boys who endorse fewer stereotypically masculine gender roles.

#### *Dissertation Overview*

Chapter 2 highlights previous research on the development of gender roles, specifically focusing on the development of traditional masculine gender roles and the sociological construct of boy-code. The chapter also reviews research on the relations among the development of traditional masculine gender roles (e.g., sex-typing of the self and others) and two domains of contingent self-esteem (e.g., competition and traditional masculine gender roles). Also reviewed in the chapter is research on the endorsement of traditional masculine gender roles and gender-related bullying among adolescent boys,

including whether cultural conceptions of masculinity vary across ethnic groups, and how gender roles potentially relate to academic outcomes. Finally, a conceptual model describing the relationships among endorsement of stereotypical masculine gender roles, contingent self-esteem and negative psychological outcomes (e.g., gender-related bullying and academic achievement) is presented. Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive overview of the methodology and data analysis procedures. Finally, Chapter 4 describes the study's findings and their contribution to the field of gender-role development, peer relations and contingent self-esteem.



## CHAPTER 2

### Literature Review and Conceptual Model

#### *Gender Role Development*

Children begin to endorse stereotypic gender roles (e.g. occupations, activities and traits) by the age of three (Martin & Halverson, 1981). According to gender constructivists, children actively create their own schemata for what it means to be a typical boy or girl (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Children first learn to categorize incoming information by gender, then internalize this information and form gender stereotypes. In doing so, children learn that they should approach gender appropriate experiences—situations that fit in with their gender stereotypes—and avoid inappropriate experiences—situations incongruent with their gender (Bigler, 1995; Liben & Bigler, 2002). For instance, children learn that boys and girls must use separate bathrooms and that boys typically wear blue and girls typically wear pink. Children also learn the behaviors, attitudes and traits that are considered culturally appropriate for each gender (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Girls, for example, learn that they are supposed to be polite and emotional, whereas boys learn they are supposed to be aggressive and should not show emotions.

In this way, gender constructivists draw strongly from Piaget's theory of cognitive development by explaining gender in terms of schemas (Siegler, 1986). Schemas are mental structures that provide individuals with a model for behaviors in similar circumstances that range in complexity from grasping an object to understanding gender. By a very young age, then, children not only learn how to organize and interpret the world based on gender schemas; but also how to judge and avoid behaviors deviating

from these norms. As an example of these types of behaviors, Langlois and Downs (1980) examined three and five year old children's responses to peers' "sex appropriate" and "sex inappropriate" play. Analyses showed that young children actively punished their peers for sex inappropriate play. The degrees to which children invest in stereotypical gender schemas affect not only how they view themselves, but also how they view others around them.

Not surprisingly, children and adults tend to differ in how important it is for them to invest in stereotypical gender roles or schemas (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Endorsing in gender roles is defined as the degree to which individuals believe it is important for them *personally* to exhibit stereotypical characteristics of their gender (Maccoby, 1998).

Regardless of whether one chooses to invest in gender roles, these social constructions are extremely pervasive in our society (Wood, Christensen, Hebl & Rothgerber, 1997; Maccoby, 1998). With the threat of peer punishment associated with endorsing gender atypical behaviors (Langlois & Downs, 1980), it is imperative to understand not only how gender role development occurs, but also what causes children socialize their peers to endorse gender "appropriate" behaviors and discredit "inappropriate" behaviors.

#### *Sex-typing of the Self and Others*

An important aspect to understanding gender-role development and how we begin to identify with one gender over another involves sex-typing of the self and others.

Sandra Bem (1981) hypothesized that children begin to conceptualize gender as a salient social construct through two environmental factors: social interactions with others and pre-existing categories in their environment. First, children learn about gender through their interactions with others; specifically by watching and hearing people around them

organize and categorize information by gender (Bem, 1981; Liben & Bigler, 2002). An example of such an interaction occurs when children hear their peers comment on boys acting atypically of their gender: “Boys don’t wear pink, they wear blue. Girls wear pink. That means he’s a girl!” Second, children learn to organize themselves through pre-existing implicit and explicit categories in their environment based on gender through direct teaching (e.g. hearing a teacher say that only men have been presidents of the United States) and modeling behaviors (e.g., seeing only women teachers in elementary school) (Bem, 1981; Liben & Bigler, 2002).

Children’s conceptions of normative gender behaviors are so salient that children are sex-typed before they start school. After learning about gender norms in their home environment, boys and girls begin to formulate their own schemas for appropriate masculine and feminine occupations, traits, personalities and activities (Martin & Halverson, 1981). Children’s schemas for gender roles become more prominent once they start school. In the classrooms, it is not uncommon to hear teachers saying, “Good morning, boys and girls” or “Please line up boy/girl/boy/girl at the door.” After hearing gender used to categorize and separate groups, children’s gender schemas become more rigid as they learn to use gender as a functional method to organize and interpret the world around them (Bigler, 1995). As research suggests (Bem, 1981; Liben & Bigler, 2002), children learn how to organize and interpret gender in their world from implicit and explicit cues in their environment. Additionally, children learn via direct teaching and modeling how to behave in gender “appropriate” ways regardless of their own interests and attitudes.

*Consequences of Gender Atypicality: Attitudes About the Self and Others*

*Sex-typing of the self.* Although researchers agree that egalitarian gender attitudes towards others are probably associated with positive consequences, the consequences of gender atypicality of the self are more hotly debated. Much of this debate focuses on whether children benefit or suffer psychologically from their atypical behaviors. For example, Egan and Perry (2001) argue that endorsement of stereotypical gender roles results in positive psychological outcomes among boys—not girls. Specifically, girls who experience pressure to conform to stereotypical feminine gender roles appear to suffer psychologically as a result of not endorsing the more positive masculine-typed competencies such as assertiveness, confidence and power (Egan & Perry, 2001). On the other hand, boys who experience pressure to conform to stereotypical masculine gender roles tend to benefit from masculine competencies since they are valued in our society (Connell, 1995). In their study, boys investing in stereotypical masculine gender roles reported higher levels of self-esteem (Egan & Perry, 2001). According to their research, it appears that boys in our society are taught to conform to masculine gender roles and avoid less powerful feminine roles to experience better psychological health.

These findings are important when considering the impact of society's rigid social conventions for masculinity. That is, boys who show personal interest in stereotypically masculine gender roles (e.g., high levels of sex-typing of the self) have nothing to lose and everything to gain, whereas boys who show interest in stereotypically feminine roles have everything to lose and nothing to gain. As a result, Egan & Perry (2001) argue that boys will have better psychological health as a result from conforming to masculine gender norms as opposed to acting atypically of their gender. Similarly, Haldeman (2000) found that adolescent boys violating stereotypical gender role norms are typically

the victims of bullying in schools. Boys, therefore, learn that they must adhere to society's strict standards of masculinity and bully those who deviate from these norms to avoid their peers' punishment of atypical behaviors. Most importantly, these findings suggest that gender atypicality is especially problematic for boys.

To measure relations among sex-typing of the self, gender atypicality and psychological health, many researchers have used the Bem Sex Role Inventory Scale (BSRI; 1974), which measures the degree to which one possesses masculine and feminine sex-typed personality traits (e.g., independence vs. dependence). Individuals are identified as masculine-typed, feminine-typed or androgynous (i.e., high on both masculine and feminine traits). In a meta-analysis, Whitley (1984) found that one's psychological wellbeing is a function of the extent to which one has a masculine gender role orientation – not androgynous orientation – regardless of the individual's gender. More recently, Whitley and Gridley (1993) found that an individual's level of masculinity, rather than femininity, along with their level of self-esteem, negatively predicted depressive symptoms. Therefore, the more one identifies with masculine gender role traits, irrespective of gender, the better one's psychological wellbeing. These findings corroborate Egan and Perry's (2001) argument that it is psychologically beneficial for boys to endorse stereotypically masculine gender roles regardless of their own personal preferences.

In a study designed to test this theory, Lobel (1994) administered the BSRI and asked adolescent boys whether playing with stereotypically feminine games was appropriate behavior for boys. Not surprisingly, all of the boys in the study were acutely aware that they should not play feminine-typed games with girls and rated boys who

played feminine-typed games as “unpopular.” These results held for both feminine-typed boys (as scored on the BSRI) and boys who indicated a strongly liking of the game prior to the study. By adolescence, boys appear to feel great pressure to conform to stereotypical masculine gender roles (and avoid feminine ones) in order to maintain their dominant place in society—regardless of their own interest in feminine activities. The tension between wanting to play feminine-typed games and understanding the peer rejection that will likely follow resulted in negative psychological outcomes for these atypical boys (Lobel, 1994).

Although many authors have associated negative outcomes with identification with atypical gender roles, Sandra Bem, (1974) creator of the BSRI proposed an alternative view. According to her studies, those individuals who show androgynous personality traits (i.e., high levels of masculine and feminine traits) – not high levels of masculinity traits – exhibit high (rather than low) levels of self-esteem, problem solving skills and independence as a result of their ability to switch back and forth between stereotypical masculine and feminine gender roles depending on the situation (1975; 1977). Rather than arguing for the maintenance of strict gender roles, Bem (1981) advocates a more balanced and equal view of gender in which boys and girls are encouraged to explore both feminine and masculine characteristics. More recently, researchers (Cheng, 1999; Payne & Futterman, 1983; Zeldow, Clark & Daugherty, 1985) noted that in addition to increases in self-esteem and independence, individuals scoring high in androgyny also exhibit lower levels of depression. Unfortunately, Bem (1981) argues that our society perpetuates strict gender roles, thereby teaching children that typical female competencies are not valued by our society whereas typical male

competencies are valued and rewarded. Taken a step farther, this type of thinking argues that to be valued in society, males should endorse traditional masculine gender roles, despite the fact that males exhibiting both masculine and feminine characteristics have better psychological health.

To address whether boys who are more personally sex-typed experience negative psychological outcomes, Harter, McCarley and Rienks (2006) analyzed adolescent boys investment in “boy-code” (e.g., endorsement of messages arguing that boys should not engage in certain behaviors, feelings or attitudes that are deemed “unmasculine” by our culture). In their study, the authors found that maintaining strict standards of masculinity – using a scale designed to test adolescent boys’ level of “boy-code” – resulted in lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of depression among adolescent boys. Such findings are also consistent with those of studies of adult males. Rochlen and O’Brein (2002) found that stereotypically masculine males experience higher levels of depression, anxiety and relationship problems as a result of their endorsement in traditional masculine gender roles. Although researchers have used different measures to assess males levels of personal sex-typing, research presented here (e.g., Bem, 1981; Harter et al., 2006 and Rochlen and O’Brein, 2002) suggests that for males, sex-typing of the self is associated with negative psychological consequences.

It is important to note, however, that not all researchers agree on the psychological outcomes associated with high levels of sex-typing. The inconsistent findings noted throughout this review make it difficult to ascertain whether boys who exhibit traditional gender roles, as measured by their levels of personal sex-typing, experience psychological stress. These inconsistencies highlight a major issue in the

literature associated with the personal levels of sex-typing: many of these studies use a different measure (e.g., the BSRI, Gender Identity etc.) and also measure either stereotyped traits (e.g., men are independent, and unemotional) or behaviors (boys do not wear pink). Additionally, although the BSRI is commonly used, many authors have noted that the feminine items on the BSRI are typically undesirable (e.g. “gullible” and “shy”), whereas, the masculine items are typically desirable (e.g., “independent” and “assertive”) confounding what the BSRI purports to measure (Pedhazur & Tetenbaum, 1979). Such findings reflect the need to use a measure that reliably assesses both individuals’ personal interest in traditional gender roles and how these concepts relate to individuals beliefs about others. It is also important to examine if, and how, these attitudes influence behaviors. For example, it is likely that highly sex-typed boys will be more likely to tease their peers who engage in atypical behaviors.

*Sex-typing of others.* Developmentally, most children exhibit high levels of gender stereotyping (i.e., sex-typing of others) by the time they are in pre-school, regardless of their own interests. That is, despite the fact that some children enjoy engaging in atypical behaviors, all children apparently learn to endorse cultural stereotypes that define certain occupations, activities and traits as appropriate for only one gender. Pre-school age children have been shown to accurately match cultural conceptions of appropriate behaviors for men and women based on gender stereotypes (Levy & Carter, 1989).

Most researchers believe that high levels of sex-typing of others (i.e., the degree to which individuals endorse gender stereotypes regarding others) is associated with dysfunctional consequences, including discriminatory behavior towards others. For



example, boys who show high levels of gender stereotyping are more likely to forget or distort information that contradicts cultural gender stereotypes (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Furthermore, high levels of gender stereotyping are associated with the restriction of possible academic and occupational pursuits to “sex appropriate” domains and with the rejection of atypical peers (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Because sex-typing of others, or the endorsement of gender stereotyping, involves the endorsement of proscriptive (rather than descriptive) behaviors (e.g., “only girls *should* be good at English), such attitudes may be predictive of adolescent boys’ engagement in gender-related bullying.

Although individuals’ personal levels of sex-typing are often tied to sex-typed beliefs that we hold for others, these different constructs are rarely measured together. In an attempt to address issues with the BSRI and measure two separate constructs of sex-typing, Liben and Bigler (2002) created a scale designed to measure levels of sex-typing of the self and other for adolescents and adults (OAT), children (COAT) and preschool age and younger children (POAT). To measure participants’ own levels of sex-typing, they are asked to rate how much they like, participated in, or were like, respectively, various masculine, feminine, and gender-neutral occupations, activities, and traits. Liben and Bigler (2002) argue that sex-typing of the self and others are two separate constructs but that there are direct connections between these two constructs. Using the Developmental Intergroup Theory, Bigler and Liben (2007) argue that we use an *attitudinal pathway model* in which individuals’ personal sex-typing (e.g., sex-typing of the self) is used to negotiate and categorize situations based on their personal attitudes. These encounters then lead to individuals to form opinions (often in the form of stereotypes) about others (Bigler & Liben, 2007). Developmental Intergroup Theory,

therefore, illustrates that sex-typing of the self and other are independent constructs that work together to shape individuals' attitudes and stereotypes about gender.

In their analyses of psychological outcomes associated with sex-typing of the self and others, Liben and Bigler (2002) reported that boys who exhibited traditional masculine traits, meaning that they were highly sex-typed, tended to endorse few egalitarian beliefs. In contrast, boys who exhibited fewer traditional masculine traits, and therefore were not considered sex-typed, showed greater egalitarian beliefs. In a longitudinal analysis using their scale, Liben and Bigler (2002) found that boys who endorse more feminine traits during the beginning of 7<sup>th</sup> grade were also more likely to express greater gender egalitarian views (e.g., less sex-typing of others) at the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Therefore, the authors believe that children can be taught to have more egalitarian beliefs and that researchers should create interventions designed to teach children to have egalitarian gender views rather than teaching children to conform to gender stereotyped schemas (2002). In terms of psychological outcomes, while Liben and Bigler (2002) argue that gender egalitarian beliefs are psychologically beneficial characteristics, they are not usually measures of psychological health such as self-esteem. Currently, no study has analyzed the relations among sex-typing of the self, sex-typing of others and self-esteem.

#### *Sex-typing of the Self and Other, Boy-code and Gender-related Bullying*

One theory attempting to explain why boys are socialized to be highly sex-typed and, by extension, teach their peers to express similar stereotypical attitudes, focuses on the sociological concept of “boy-code.” According to boy-code, boys are taught to stifle their expressions of emotional feelings, fear, anxiety, vulnerability and any signs of

weakness to prove their manliness and assert their power over weaker peers (Pollack, 1998). Pollack (1998) further argues that boys in our culture are taught to endorse boy-code to fit into society's standards of masculinity and, as a result, exhibit higher levels of depression. In a study of young adolescents' perceptions of boy-code, Harter, McCarley and Rienks (2006) found that boys who internalize boy-code messages (e.g., are highly sex-typed) are more likely to suffer from lower levels of self-esteem than boys who do not engage in boy-code behaviors. Similarly, Pollack (2006) argued that boys' psychological wellbeing suffers because of the inner conflicts that they feel regarding what type of man they want to be (e.g., caring and emotional) versus what type of man society is telling them to be (e.g., tough, unemotional and "cool").

In private interview sessions with adolescent boys, Pollack (2006) discovered that when boys were in warm and trusting environments, they opened up and shared their feelings of isolation and loneliness. When removed from the peer-pressures to be "cool" (i.e., act in highly sex-typed ways), boys began talking openly about their emotions and personal relationships, explaining that they usually hold all of their emotions in for fear of being made fun of by others. Clearly, there are negative psychological ramifications for boys who ascribe to boy-code (e.g., are highly sex-typed) particularly when they gravitate towards stereotypical masculine behaviors and discredit feminine behaviors (e.g., express low levels of gender egalitarian views) without realizing that it is psychologically beneficial to engage in both.

It is also unsurprising that boys who hold in all of their emotions and feelings of isolation react aggressively. Stucke and Baumeister (2004) found that those individuals who practice self-regulation (i.e., constant regulation of behavior to adhere to a certain

standard) are more likely to express anger when provoked than those who do not practice self-regulation. Stucke and Baumeister (2004) believe that self-regulation taxes individuals' ability to positively deal with irritating stimuli, making it more likely that they will react aggressively when provoked. Similarly, adolescent boys who are highly sex-typed and express less gender egalitarian views (e.g., high levels of sex-typing of others) are constantly self-regulating their behaviors to ensure that they adhere to society's standards of masculinity. It is likely, therefore, that these boys will be more at risk for bullying than those boys who exhibit lower levels of sex-typing of the self and others. However, it is important to note that most of Pollack's interviews were conducted with middle-class white males and that it is possible that these findings do not generalize to boys from other ethnic groups.

Recently, Pollack (2000) extended his studies to other racial groups (such as Latino and African American). In these interviews, boys discussed feeling especially pressured to "be cool" and act "tough" because they came from less privileged ethnic groups that are stereotyped as being violent and aggressive. Many of the boys interviewed believed that they have been treated differently in society simply because of their race despite the fact that they have not done anything to enact these negative stereotypes. Plummer (2001) reported similar findings in interviews with adolescent boys throughout the UK. It is important to note that, although these interviews allow us to gain insight into the adolescent males' experiences across different ethnic groups, their experiences were not quantitatively studied. Therefore, the conceptions and consequences of boy-code need to be quantitatively studied among all ethnic groups to determine whether certain boys are more at risk for buying into boy-code than others.

### *Contingent Self-esteem*

As the previous section demonstrated, current research exploring gender role development and atypical behaviors tends to focus on the relations among sex-typing of the self and others and self-esteem. It was also established that the findings regarding this relationship are mixed: some researchers argue that males who are highly sex-typed and express fewer gender egalitarian views (e.g., high levels of sex-typing of others) experience positive psychological outcomes (Egan & Perry, 2001), whereas other researchers argue that highly sex-typed males experience negative psychological outcomes (Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006). Although self-esteem is a highly stable and reliable measure of psychological wellbeing, because of inconsistent findings in the literature, it is difficult to ascertain the exact relations among self-esteem and gender typicality. Recently, researchers in the field of self-esteem have begun focusing on more precise variables such as contingent self-esteem, which helps identify specific areas that are important to an individual's overall self-esteem. Incorporating this new concept in gender research has only just begun, and may begin to tease apart some of the inconsistent findings researchers have found in the relations among endorsing stereotypical masculine gender roles and psychological wellbeing.

### *Domains of Contingent Self-esteem*

Over a century ago, William James (1890) theorized that self-esteem is a global construct based on our perceptions of whether we are “good enough” in comparison to set standards in a particular domain important to our overall sense of self. For example, in a culture that values education, we feel good about ourselves when we perform well academically. In a culture that does not particularly value education, academic

performance does not influence self-esteem in the same way. Thus, contingent self-esteem (or self-worth) occurs when one feels pressure to achieve a certain positive goal in a valued domain that is linked to one's overall sense of self (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette, 2003). As such, contingent self-esteem fluctuates based on one's interpretation of environmental events that relate to one's successes or failures in a given domain.

Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper and Bouvrette (2003) have identified seven domains of contingent self-esteem that are pervasive across ethnic groups in the United States: (a) others' approval (or social approval), (b) appearance, (c) success in competition, (d) academic competence, (e) family love and support, (f) being a virtuous or moral person and (g) God's love. Investing in these contingencies of self-esteem results in extreme psychological costs when one fails, and intense emotional highs when one succeeds (Crocker & Park, 2004). Crocker (2004) argued that contingent self-esteem within specific domains creates an unstable sense of self that leads to increased levels of depression and narcissism. That is, when individuals believe it is important to perform well academically, they will *only* feel good about themselves when they meet this need, and will consequently feel worthless when they fail.

#### *Sex-typing of the Self and Others: Relations with Contingent Self-esteem*

According to Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette (2003), college males who feel it is important to act like the "ideal" man, regardless of ethnicity, also tend to base their self-esteem on competition and others' approval. Other researchers have found similar connections among males regarding the need to win competitions and self-esteem. For example, in a study examining factors contributing to domestic violence, Schwartz,

Waldo and Daniel (2005) found that adult males who experience gender role conflict (e.g., feeling devalued when their spouse makes more money than they do) are more likely to abuse women to gain power and win competitions with their spouse as a means of proving their masculinity thereby increasing their self-esteem. For many men, it appears that winning competitions and asserting dominance over others (particularly women and less masculine men) is an important part of their psychological wellbeing (Pence & Paymer, 1993; O'Neil, 1990). Similarly, Zeichner, Parrott and Frey (2003) found that when confronted with a competitive situation in a lab-based setting, men tend to exhibit heightened aggressive behaviors when they lose a competition when compared to women (Zeichner et al., 2003). This aggression could be a result from men's need to defend their ego after their self-esteem – particularly in a domain crucial to their masculinity such as winning competitions – has been threatened (Stucke & Baumeister, 2006).

This finding corroborates with gender schema theorists' notion that aggression is a defining trait associated with stereotypical masculine gender roles, and thus is often included on scales measuring individual's levels of sex-typing and sex-typing of others. It is likely, then, that males who are highly sex-typed and exhibit less gender egalitarian views (e.g., have high levels of sex-typing of others) will also believe it is important to engage in and win competitions to experience positive feelings about themselves. Therefore, it is also probable that adolescent boys who are highly sex-typed and express less egalitarian views will be more likely to base their self-esteem on competitive behaviors.

Similarly, studies examining gender differences and self-esteem have found that men in particular derive their self-esteem from feeling superior – especially in competitive situations – compared to others (Cross & Madson, 1997). In Crocker and colleague's (2003) study on contingent self-esteem, college-aged men, regardless of ethnicity, were more likely than women to base their self-esteem on their degree of success within competitive situations. In their study, college aged men who felt it was important to express stereotypical gender roles experienced higher levels of depression and lower levels of global self-esteem than did men who did not feel it was as important to express stereotypical gender roles. The consequences for depression and self-esteem were especially severe among men who based their self-esteem on external contingencies of self-worth (Sanchez & Crocker, 2005). According to their analyses, the negative relation between men's belief that it is important to act in stereotypically masculine ways and psychological wellbeing was mediated by contingent self-esteem (2005). It is hypothesized that this relation will also be true among adolescent boys. Specifically, those boys who are concerned with proving their masculinity by winning competitions will base their self-esteem on this domain. Interestingly, Sanchez and Crocker's (2005) finding concerning masculine gender roles is inconsistent with previous studies concluding that higher levels of masculinity result in higher levels of self-esteem (Lundy & Rosenberg, 1987; Whitley & Gridley, 1993; Egan & Perry, 2001). Such differences are likely to be the result of identifying specific domains of self-esteem that relate to the degree to which males believe it is important to invest in masculine gender roles.

Unfortunately, the measure used by Sanchez and Crocker (2005) to assess individuals' endorsement of stereotypical gender roles was not empirically validated. The



measure (based on Wood et al., 2007) asked participants to indicate how important it is to them to be similar to the “ideal man,” and to what extent acting like the “ideal man” is an important part of who they are. It seemed important to replicate their findings using a more sophisticated scale that assessed both the degree to which individuals are highly sex-typed and hold these same sex-typed beliefs towards others. Although the direct connections have not been studied, it is likely that boys who are highly sex-typed will be more likely to base their self-esteem on others’ approval than their less concerned peers, and by extension, bully atypical peers, in order to “prove” that they are masculine to their peers. In contrast, it is likely that boys who are not highly sex-typed will not base their self-esteem on others’ approval will be less likely to engage in gender-related bullying.

#### *Contingent Self-esteem: Traditional Masculine Gender Roles*

It is interesting to note that the most notable source of contingent self-esteem among males (i.e., competition) identified by Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette, (2003) is related to cultural conceptions of stereotypical masculine gender roles. It seems possible therefore, that sex-typing underlies these effects and may serve as a particularly potent factor contributing to contingent self-esteem among adolescent boys. Currently, scant research has focused on whether endorsing traditional masculine gender roles functions as a domain of contingent self-esteem among males. Sanchez and Crocker’s (2005) study is one of the few that examines this relationship – although the authors used a problematic scale. Results this study suggest that the pressure men face to act in accordance with stereotypical gender roles negatively affects their overall psychological wellbeing. Specifically, the more strongly men believed they must act in ways associated with stereotypical gender roles (e.g. the more sex-typed they are), the poorer their

psychological health (Sanchez & Crocker, 2005). It is important, therefore, for researchers to begin to measure contingent self-esteem based on traditional gender roles directly, rather than examining it indirectly via competition.

The connection between self-esteem and traditional gender roles can also be seen in recent studies examining body image dissatisfaction among adolescent boys. Researchers have found that young boys are driven to become more muscular in order to prove their manhood and meet society's – and their peers' – expectations of masculinity (Jones & Crawford, 2006; Edwards & Launder, 2000). Young boys are bombarded with images of masculinity – tough, chiseled athletic bodies – and create schemas for masculinity based on these unrealistic images. Similar to adolescent girls who develop eating disorders as a result of their body image dissatisfaction, many young boys take steroids and lift weights to gain approval from others so that their body matches society's image of the “typical” or “desired” male body (Edwards & Launder, 2000). Boys who are concerned with having a masculine appearance report higher levels of depression and lower levels of self-esteem than their peers who are less concerned about this topic (Olivardia, Pope, Borowiecki & Cohane, 2004). Although it was not included as a measure, it is possible that the pressure boys face to prove their masculinity via bodybuilding might result from basing their self-esteem on investing in traditional masculine gender roles as a domain of contingent self-esteem. Based on the research presented earlier on sex-typing and boy-code (e.g., Egan & Perry, 2001; Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Liben & Bigler, 2002), it is also likely that the motivation to body-build is stronger among boys who are more sex-typed and express less gender egalitarian views.

### *Contingent Self-esteem and Gender-related Bullying*

Although direct connections have not been examined, the literature suggests that boys who base their self-esteem contingent upon winning competition and masculine gender roles are more likely to engage in gender-related bullying (such as gay-baiting) as a means of “proving” their masculinity to others than their peers without such forms of contingent self-esteem. Basing their self-esteem contingent on these domains also means that it is important to these boys’ overall self-worth to continuously prove their masculinity, and thus dominance, among their peers.

Poteat (2007), for example, recently noted that adolescent boys often engage in homophobic behaviors (such as gay-baiting) because they fear being labeled “feminine” and “wussy” by their peers. Therefore, boys who feel it is important to prove that they are masculine – not feminine or homosexual – are more likely to utilize homophobic remarks than their peers who are not driven to prove their masculinity (Poteat, 2007). These types of comments are also more common among peer groups that are more aggressive and homophobic (Poteat, 2007). Although Poteat did not measure the relation between boys’ levels of sex-typing of the self and others and homophobia, other researchers have noted a positive connection among homophobia and endorsement in traditional masculine gender roles (Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman, 2005; Whitehead, 2005). Therefore, although endorsing traditional masculine gender roles (e.g., sex-typing of the self and other) has not been established as a domain of contingent self-esteem, research suggests that it may be related to underlying behaviors such as gender-related bullying. Specifically, it is likely that for males who believe it is important to behave in a stereotypically masculine way, self-esteem will increase when they succeed in establishing their masculinity (e.g.,

feel tough) and decrease when they fail to act in an appropriately masculine way (e.g., feel weak).

*Contingent Self-esteem: Potential Mediator of Sex-typing of the Self and Other and Gender-related Bullying*

As established earlier, Crocker and colleagues (2003) found that males who feel it is important to act like the “ideal” man, regardless of ethnicity, base their self-esteem on competition. It is also likely that males base their self-esteem contingent upon expressing traditional masculine gender roles. Potential links between contingent self-esteem in these domains and gender-related bullying can be found in the fact that boys often engage in gender-related bullying out of fear of being labeled “feminine” and “wussy” by their peers (Poteat, 2007). That is, boys who are highly sex-typed and do not endorse gender egalitarian views (e.g., express high levels of sex-typing of others) will base their self-esteem upon proving their masculinity to their peers. If their self-esteem is threatened – particularly if they fear being called “gay” – they will engage in gender-related bullying to protect their self-esteem. As a result, it is likely that boys who are highly sex-typed and do not express gender egalitarian views will lash out at others when their self-esteem is threatened, via gender-related bullying, to regain positive feelings about the self.

Additionally, research by Kernis (2003) suggests that those experiencing fragile self-esteem contingent on specific domains (e.g., competition and stereotypical masculine gender roles), report high levels of psychological stress because their self-esteem is in constant jeopardy. Furthermore, Stucke and Baumeister (2006), aggressive behaviors are often a form of ego defense after an individual’s self-esteem (particularly in a domain that is important to the self) has been threatened. The stress associated with constantly

regulating one's behaviors in a domain important to the self (e.g., winning competitions and traditional masculine gender roles), coupled with high levels of sex-typing of the self and others, is likely to result in gender-related bullying. Although the research is tentative, it is possible that contingent self-esteem based on winning competitions and/or traditional gender roles mediates the relationship among sex-typing of the self and others and gender-related bullying.

### *Masculinity, Gay-baiting and Gender-related Bullying*

#### *Masculine Gender Hegemonies*

Another important reason that males are driven to appear and act in stereotypically masculine ways – particularly in adolescence – is cultural conceptions of masculine gender hegemonies. Connell (1995) argues that, regardless of race, ethnicity and class, cultural connotations associated with stereotypical masculine gender roles are exalted as the “gold standard” towards which all men should gravitate, and to which all men are compared. This prototypical masculine gender identity is characterized by aggression, limited emotionality and overt heterosexuality (1995). Connell argues that masculine gender hegemonies are the most pervasive cultural identity in our society, and by extension determine all acceptable forms of subordinate identities including feminine behaviors and behaviors atypical of each gender (1995). Connell (1995) further theorizes that masculinity itself is divided into hierarchies, favoring heterosexual males and placing homosexual males and males who act atypically (that is, overly feminine), at subordinate levels. To maintain these strict distinctions, and to ensure that others understand their place in the masculine gender hegemonic caste, men learn to use verbal abuse in the form of gay-baiting by calling a subordinate man a queer, sissy, or wimp (1995).

### *Gender-related Bullying and Gay-baiting*

Among adolescents, aggression commonly manifests itself in males through bullying. Bullying is generally defined as the repeated victimization of an individual over time that is either physical (direct) and/or social (indirect) (Olweus, 1993). As Connell (1995) noted earlier, bullying among males is often based on peers' socialization of stereotypical gender roles via gay-baiting (e.g., making fun of an atypical boy for being a "sissy"). Bjorkqvist and Niemela (1992) found that overall aggression (both direct and indirect bullying) among males' peaks at age 11 regardless of race (Graham, Bellmore & Mize, 2006), with physical aggression declining across age. It has also been established that levels of sex-typing and endorsement of boy-code negatively affects males' self-esteem, aggression, and levels of loneliness, which are all correlated with bullying behaviors (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette, 2003; Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Young & Sweeting, 2004).

Through the sociological construct of masculine gender hegemonies (Connell, 1995), boys learn to "prove" their masculinity by using gay-baiting, or teasing peers who act in gender atypical ways. This specific form of gender-related bullying is a type of relational aggression, and stems from men's concern for social acceptance within their friendships and peer groups (Jones & Crawford, 2006). Not surprisingly, adolescent boys who are more aggressive tease others more often than adolescent boys who are less aggressive (Stoudt, 2006). Boys, therefore, who are more masculine and concerned with others' approval, should be more likely bully others to gain social dominance in their peer group and assert their masculinity. Young and Sweeting (2004) found that atypical boys were bullied more than typical boys, and reported higher levels of loneliness than

their “typical” counterparts. Recently, Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, (2008) compared boys who were bullied by peers because of gender atypicality (e.g, specifically being called “gay” regardless of sexual orientation) to boys who were bullied for other reasons (e.g., because they got good grades). Results indicated that boys who were bullied because their peers called them “gay” reported higher levels of depression and anxiety than boys who were bullied for other reasons. Neither of these articles examined possible factors that drive boys to bully their atypical peers such as endorsing traditional masculine gender roles or contingent self-esteem.

Recent reports in bullying literature have focused on establishing the common causes of bullying behaviors in the schools (Schwartz, Dodge, Coie, Hubbard, Cillessen, Lemerise & Bateman, 1998; Kimmel, 2003; Kimmel & Mahler, 2003). Researchers have noted that school-age children believe that bullying is used to teach victims that a certain behavior is unacceptable in their peer group (Oliver, Hoover & Hazler, 1994; Poteat, 2007). Researchers focusing on gay-baiting argue that this type of bullying is the single-greatest cause of school violence today (Kimmel, 2003; Kimmel and Mahler, 2003). To get adolescents’ perspectives on this topic, Kimmel and Mahler (2003) interviewed and read transcripts of interviews concerning boys’ reasons for shooting their classmates. In these interviews, Kimmel and Mahler (2003) noticed a striking pattern: all of the perpetrators were “gay-baited.” As a result of this teasing, boys develop a phobia of acting “like a girl,” causing them to display very aggressive behavior in order to overcompensate and prove their masculinity (Pope & Englar-Carlson, 2001). At a young age, boys learn that in order to be “normal” and accepted by their peers, they must fit into a very narrow definition of what it means to be masculine. Furthermore, when a boy

deviates from these social norms, their masculinity is brought into question resulting in gender-related bullying (such as gay-baiting) until they learn that such behavior is inappropriate. These social norms are so rigid that boys who simply witness the bullying are painfully aware of the social repercussions of acting outside of masculine gender norms. As a result, boys understand the importance of acting in a traditionally masculine (e.g., high levels of sex-typing of the self and others) way and as a result learn to not only hide their feminine traits, but to also bully their less masculine peers.

### *Ethnic Differences in Gender Role Development and Bullying*

Most research on gender role development has focused on European Americans. However, conceptions of masculinity vary across ethnic groups, with each particular group defining masculinity with different socially constructed attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs (Aboud & Joong, in press; deLeon, 1993; Harris, 1996; Hunter & Davis, 1992). For example, some researchers (Aboud & Joong, in press) posit that conceptions of masculinity and femininity are more restrictive among ethnic minority groups such as African Americans and Latinos. This is exemplified in the Latino cultural conceptions of *machismo* – which asserts the male as the head of household, and is often associated with overblown masculine attitudes, heightened physical abilities and chauvinistic tendencies (Baca Zinn, 1979) – and *marianismo* – which views women as a self-sacrificing mother figures who are willing to suffer for her children (Ramirez, 1990; Ginorio, Gutierrez, Cauce & Acosta, 1995). Accordingly, these gender roles place masculinity, particularly *machismo*, and patriarchy as the dominant cultural ideal among many Latino cultures, thereby oppressing the female gender role (Baca Zinn, 1979). It has been argued that gender-role development among Latinos is much more traditional, with young boys



learning to conceal their emotions – thereby conforming to boy-code – and act like men (Villereal & Cavazos, 2005). It has also been argued that Latino men begin to incorporate these traditional masculine gender roles into their overall sense of self. However, researchers are beginning to observe changes in Latino males' conceptions of traditional masculine gender roles, particularly if they have been born and/or educated in the United States, resulting in increases in egalitarian gender role attitudes (Cauce & Domenech-Rodriguez, 2002). As an example, Neff and Suizzo (2006) found that Mexican American male college students reported feeling more authentic in romantic relationships when they were in a subordinate position, which is in direct opposition to the Latino cultural conception of *machismo*.

This change in endorsement of *machismo* attitudes provides evidence for Connell's (1995) theory of masculine gender hegemonies. Connell (1995) believes that endorsement in stereotypical gender roles is a socially created concept that crosses all ethnic groups in a given culture. Therefore, in the United States, cultural conceptions of masculinity are similar among all ethnic groups, although this conception will likely differ from other country's definitions of masculinity. Interestingly, Sanchez and Crocker (2005) noted that the relations among endorsing traditional masculine gender roles and negative psychological wellbeing held across different ethnic groups (e.g., European American, Asian American and African American). Although little research exists comparing adolescent males' endorsement of traditional masculine gender roles across cultures, it is likely that Latino and European American boys will both endorse traditional masculine gender roles via sex-typing of the self and others, and by extension base their

self-esteem contingent upon masculine domains and engage in gender-related bullying to prove their masculinity to their peer group.

Given the relative newness of this topic, few studies, if any, have examined potential ethnic differences among adolescent males' proclivity to engage in gender-related bullying. Recently, however, researchers of peer relations have begun addressing potential variations in bullying behaviors based on ethnicity. Graham (2006) recently conducted a study among middle school students in Los Angeles to determine whether ethnicity (Latino, African American and White) affects students' perceptions of bullies and victims. Not surprisingly, students rated boys, regardless of ethnicity, as bullies more frequently than girls. Looking at potential differences among ethnic groups, Graham et al., (2006) found that students rated African American boys as the most aggressive group at their school regardless of how aggressive these students actually were. However, although African American boys were identified as the most aggressive group on their respective campuses, peers also perceived them as the "coolest" group in spite of their negative social behaviors. Perhaps students perceive African American boys positively, despite their bullying, because they enact traditional masculine gender roles such as showing dominance and aggression.

#### *Academic Achievement*

Currently, researchers, educators, and journalists have begun focusing on the recent trend for girls to outperform boys in academic domains. A recent article in *Newsweek* outlined educators' concerns about boys' psychological and social wellbeing in school (Tyre, 2006). The article corroborates recent research in peer relations and gender roles by describing the negative relations among aggressive behaviors and boys'

academic performance. Boys exhibit more problem behaviors, show more frequent emotional disturbances, and achieve lower test scores in elementary, middle school and high school than their female peers (Wodarski, Kurtz, & Gaudin, 1990). Once boys are in middle school, they are also more likely to skip classes because they do not feel safe at school, further contributing to their lower test scores. Pollack (1998) argued that boys display less psychological and social well being in the schools because they do not learn how to express their emotions and fail to let their parents know that something is wrong. In a sense, boy-code impedes their ability to discuss their problems at school, which results in negative psychological expressions such as bullying, academic failure and dropping out. On the other hand, boys who were gay-baited by peers were more likely to report negative attitudes towards school than boys who were not gay-baited (Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008). Clearly there is a connection between academic achievement and gender; however, it is unclear whether level of sex-typing (of the self and other) will be positively or negatively related to success in school.

Examining these issues across ethnic groups – particularly when including low SES as a factor – results in even more conflicting effects. Specifically, among poor African American youth, poverty appears to have more detrimental effects on boys than on girls (Spencer, Dobbs & Swanson, 1988). Some researchers (Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Graham, Bellmore & Mitze, 2006) argue that this relationship is related to conceptions of stereotypical masculine gender roles. That is, these researchers believe that boys' conception of school work as a feminine domain results in a "disidentification" (perceiving the domain as unimportant to the self) in academics. Among Latinos, language barriers frequently compound this relationship (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992).

However, Latino children who are able to effectively code-switch between their home and school environments tend to perform better in school (Szapocznik, Santisteban, Kurtines, Perez-Vidal & Hervis, 1984). Although cultural conceptions of *machismo* and *marianismo* might ostensibly place Latinas at a disadvantage academically because of strict cultural stereotypes and divisions of labor, research suggests that Latino girls are outperforming their male counterparts in school (Rodriguez, 2003). In sum, it appears that for some boys high levels of sex-typing might negatively influence their academic achievement, but low levels of sex-typing might also contribute to poor academic achievement. It is important, therefore, to examine the relationships among sex-typing of the self and other as they relate to academic achievement to begin to address these inconsistent findings.

### *Conceptual Model*

To summarize, research on bullying and masculinity indicates that it is likely that boys who bully their male peers do so to prove their masculinity over others and discredit their peers' atypical behavior. Although the links among (a) sex-typing of the self and others, (b) contingent self-esteem, (c) gender-related bullying (perpetrators and victims), and (d) academic achievement have not been studied, it is hypothesized that there will be several relations among these constructs.

Although the research is split regarding psychological outcomes associated with high levels of sex-typing of the self and others, researchers have consistently noted that boys feel great pressure to conform to masculine gender roles and avoid feminine gender-roles (Egan & Perry, 2001; Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Pollock, 2006). It appears that even if boys themselves express an interest in stereotypically feminine activities,

they understand that they should not exhibit these interests publicly (Lobel, 1994). Unfortunately, boys who are less sex-typed (e.g., express more feminine interests) are often the victims of bullying (Haldeman, 2000). As argued earlier, it is likely that boys who are more sex-typed and express less gender egalitarian views will, in turn, base their self-esteem contingent upon masculine domains. Although Sanchez and Crocker (2005) did not use a sophisticated measure of sex-typing of the self and others, they found that men who believe it is important to act like the “ideal” man base their self-esteem contingent upon winning competition. Therefore, it is hypothesized that boys who exhibit high levels of sex-typing of the self and others will also base their self-esteem contingent upon winning competitions and traditional masculine gender roles. As Bigler and Liben (2007) argued, sex-typing of the self and other are strongly related constructs and work together to develop stereotypical attitudes. Given that sex-typing of the self developmentally occurs first and leads to sex-typing of others, it is hypothesized that high levels sex-typing of the self will serve as a stronger predictor for engaging in gender-related bullying and low levels of sex-typing of the self will serve as a stronger predictor for being a victim of gender-related bullying. It is also hypothesized that the more boys sex-type others (e.g., the less gender egalitarian they are), the more they will be related to engaging in gender-related bullying. Conversely, it is hypothesized that less sex-typed boys and boys who express more gender-egalitarian views (e.g., less sex-typing of others) will be at greater risk for being victims of gender-related bullying than their more sex-typed peers.

In terms of contingent self-esteem and gender-related bullying, it is hypothesized that boys whose self-esteem is contingent upon the fulfillment of the masculine gender

role will be more likely to engage in gender-related bullying than boys whose self-esteem is not contingent upon the fulfillment of the masculine gender role. Stucke and Baumeister (2006) found that many individuals express aggressive behaviors as a form of ego defense after their self-esteem—particularly in domains their self-esteem is contingent upon—has been threatened. As Poteat (2007) found, adolescent boys who are concerned with proving their masculinity might turn to homophobic remarks to defend their self-esteem after a peer claims their behavior is feminine (rather than defending their own atypical behavior). The use of homophobic remarks is also likely when such boys observe male peers who act atypically of their gender. Observing a boy acting in a feminine manner likely provokes boys who are already emotionally taxed by regulating their own atypical behaviors, resulting in violent reactions when they observe atypical behaviors among their peers. Furthermore, research by Kernis (2003) suggests that those experiencing fragile self-esteem contingent on specific domains (e.g., competition and stereotypical masculine gender roles) report high levels of psychological stress because their self-esteem is in constant jeopardy. This stress, coupled with high levels of sex-typing, is likely to result in bullying behaviors among boys who base their self-esteem on traditional masculine gender roles, and/or winning competitions.

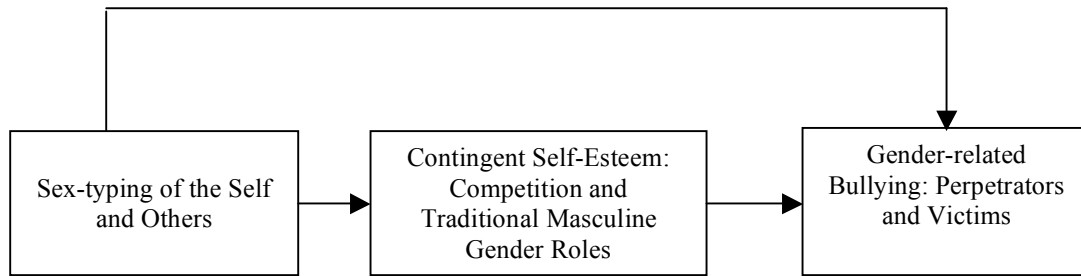
Scant research has addressed whether contingent self-esteem mediates the relationships among sex-typing of the self and others and gender-related bullying as a means of proving their masculinity to their peers. However, given the literature discussed thus far, it appears that these connections are possible. Combining the research on gender role development, contingent self-esteem and peer relations will allow researchers to begin to address what causes boys to bully other boys for deviating outside of their

gender norms and whether these factors contribute to poor academic achievement.

Answering such questions will also give researchers the opportunity to develop and implement effective intervention programs designed to create a more welcoming environment in schools for children of all backgrounds.

In sum, the literature suggests two problems concerning society's standards of masculinity: 1) boys who fail to conform to traditional masculine gender roles are rejected and bullied, and 2) boys who invest in traditional masculine gender roles (i.e., are highly sex-typed and express less gender egalitarian views, and who base their self-esteem on competitive behavior and masculine gender roles) tend to bully boys who act in gender atypical ways. As a result, it is hypothesized that some boys might bully or tease others simply to avoid the punishments from their peers. It is also hypothesized that minority status boys might be at greater risk for engaging in gender-related bullying and facing negative psychological outcomes. Therefore, it is important to study the relations among high levels of contingent self-esteem and sex-typing of the self and other because they function as potential risk factors for later developmental problems, such as depression, anxiety and poor academic achievement (Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Pollack, 1998; 2006; Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008).

To begin to examine these relationships, I am using conceptual model of relations among (a) sex-typing of the self and others, (b) contingent self-esteem, and (c) gender-related bullying (perpetrators and victims).



*Figure 1. Conceptual Model*

As the model suggests, I hypothesize that the more boys are sex-typed to endorse interests in traditionally masculine occupations and activities (e.g., sex-typing of the self; OAT-PM), and the less they express egalitarian attitudes (e.g., sex-typing of others; OAT-AM) will predict boys' tendency to base their self-esteem contingent upon competition and a new subscale measuring contingent self-esteem based on stereotypical masculine gender roles. Similarly, I expect high levels of sex-typing of self and others to be predictive of engaging in gender-related bullying, whereas low levels of sex-typing of the self and others to be predictive of victimization from gender-related bullying. Although exploratory, it is believed that sex-typing of the self will serve as a stronger predictor of contingent self-esteem and gender-related bullying than sex-typing of others. Next, I propose that contingent self-esteem will partially mediate the relations among adolescent boys' sex-typing of the self and others, and engaging in or victimization from gender-related bullying. Although I expect this model to successfully account for both Latino and European American adolescent boys' outcomes, I will run separate regression models to determine whether the relationships are similar across ethnicities.



As secondary hypotheses, I will test (a) whether levels of sex-typing is related to academic achievement and (b) if contingent self-esteem is related to academic achievement and (c) if gender-related bullying (victim and/or perpetrator) is related to academic achievement.

## CHAPTER 3

### Method

#### *Participants*

Participants were 103 7<sup>th</sup> grade boys (31 European Americans, 72 Latinos) attending a public middle school in the southern New Mexico. The number of Latino participants (69%) is representative of the school district's – and the city's – characteristics. That is, 66% of all K-12<sup>th</sup> grade students in the district identify as Latino, whereas 30% identify as European American. Similarly, Zia middle school is composed of 850 students, with Latino students making up the majority (73%) of the student body and European American students accounting for 23% of the student body. Most of the Latinos in the area identify as Mexican-American. This middle school also draws from a population composed of mostly low-to-middle socioeconomic status; the average family income in the school is \$29,101, with 60% of the student body receiving free or reduced priced lunch (55% district wide).

#### *Procedure*

After meeting with the principal and the two 7<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teachers, they agreed to have their students participate in this study. The social studies teachers agreed to pass out parental consent forms during their respective classes asking students to participate in a study about classroom climate and how students interact with each other. Of the potential pool of 150 boys of the total 256 total 7<sup>th</sup> graders, 103 parents gave consent for their son to participate, resulting in a 70% response rate. Students were given one week to turn in the consent forms. After the consent forms were turned in, I began data collection. Before handing out the questionnaires, I introduced myself and briefly

described the study and asked students to fill out assent forms if they agreed to participate in the study. All students choosing to continue with the study were told about confidentiality, to not share any of their responses, to not talk about the questionnaires with anyone else, and were encouraged to ask questions at any time during the investigation. They were also told that if they felt uncomfortable answering any question(s) they could skip the question(s) or quit participating in the study. Students not participating in the study either sat in another teacher's classroom and worked independently or, in one instance when there was a large number of students not participating in a given class, were moved to the library during the duration of testing and were monitored by the librarian. To ensure confidentiality of the students, each participant used a folder to hide their responses from their neighbors and all students without consent were sent to another teacher's classroom. The social studies teacher in each class helped me monitor the students while they were filling out the questionnaires to ensure they remained on task, did not look at their neighbors' answers, discuss the questionnaires with each other and answer students' questions. Students received two separate packets of measures over the course of two social studies class periods. The first packet contained sex-typing of the self and others measures (e.g., the OAT-PM and OAT-AM measures). The second packet contained the contingent self-esteem and gender-related bullying measures. Each packet took approximately 15-30 minutes to complete. When students were finished completing the measures, they were asked to sit quietly and begin working on their specific class assignments. After the second day of data collection, I gave a brief lecture about gender-related bullying and its consequences that met the principal's, teachers', and school counselor's approval.

## *Measures*

*Overview.* Because masculinity is a multidimensional construct (i.e., it includes self and other constructs, as well as multiple domains), adolescent boys' endorsement of traditional masculine gender roles was assessed using their levels of personal sex-typing and sex-typing of others.

*Sex-typing of the self (OAT-PM).* Students' endorsement of masculine and feminine items as characteristic of the self was measured using the Occupations and Activities subscales of the OAT—Personal Measure (OAT-PM; Liben & Bigler, 2002; see Appendix B). Specifically, boys were asked to rate how much they would like to perform a series of occupations and perform a series of activities. Each subscale consists of 10 masculine items, 10 feminine items and 5 gender-neutral items. Response options range from “not at all” to “very much.” Following Liben & Bigler (2002), two subscales were created: (a) boy's masculine sex-typing of self, created by summing across the two domains and (b) boy's feminine sex-typing of the self, created by summing across the two domains. Higher scores indicate higher levels of self-endorsement of items. Reliability for the masculine sex-typing of self subscale was ( $\alpha = .82$ ) and ( $\alpha = .80$ ) for feminine items.

*Sex-typing of others (OAT-AM).* Adolescent boys' sex-typing of others (i.e., gender stereotypic attitudes) was assessed using the Occupation and Activity subscales of the (OAT)—Attitude Measure (OAT-AM; Liben & Bigler, 2002; see Appendix C). Boys rated whether a series of masculine, feminine and gender-neutral occupations and activities should be performed by “only men,” “only women,” “both men and women,” or “neither men nor women.” Following Liben and Bigler's work (2002), the proportion of

“both men and women” responses were summed for across masculine domains (occupations, activities) and across feminine domains, with higher scores indicating more gender egalitarian views. The OAT-AM has been shown to be a highly reliable and stable scale for measuring children’s sex-typing of others, with the Cronbach’s alphas for the total feminine subscale .80 and .78 for the total masculine subscale.

Given that feminine and masculine subscales were highly correlated ( $r = .87$ ), and to reduce the number of predictor variables, a single index of boys’ egalitarian beliefs was created to determine students’ total gender egalitarian views and to reduce the number of variables examined in this study. The creation of total egalitarian scores is consistent with previous research using the OAT-AM scales (Liben & Bigler, 2002) and resulted in a Cronbach’s alpha of .80.

### *Contingent Self-esteem*

*Overview.* Boys’ level of contingent self-esteem was assessed in two domains. The first domain – competition – was based on Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette’s (2003) Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale. In addition, a subscale was created for this dissertation to determine boys’ level of contingent self-esteem based on traditional masculine gender roles. The complete set of scales appears in Appendix D.

*Competition.* To assess whether boys’ self-esteem fluctuated in response to their ability to successfully compete with others, participants rated their agreement with five statements: (1) doing better than others makes me feel good about myself, (2) knowing that I am better than others on a task makes me feel better about myself, (3) performing well in competitions with my peers makes me feel good about myself, (4) performing well on competitive tasks, like tests, makes me feel good about myself and (5) I feel good

about myself when I perform better than others on a task. Response options ranged from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), with 3 as a neutral option. Cronbach’s alpha for this sample was .81.

*Traditional masculine gender roles.* Although Sanchez and Crocker (2005) used the scale developed by Wood et al. (2007) to determine how important participants felt it was to be similar to the ideal woman (or man), and to what extent being similar to the ideal woman (or man) was an important part of who they were, this scale does not adequately measure contingent self-esteem based on gender roles. Given that no scale currently measures contingent self-esteem based on endorsing stereotypical masculine gender roles, I created a six-item scale designed to assess whether boys’ self-esteem fluctuated in response to their successful fulfillment of traditional masculine gender roles. Specifically, participants rated their agreement with six statements: (1) being more masculine/manly than my male classmates makes me feel good about myself, (2) knowing that I act more masculine/manly on tasks than my male classmates makes me feel good about myself, (3) knowing that my classmates think that I am very masculine/manly influences how I feel about myself in a positive way, (4) acting masculine/manly influences how I feel about myself in a positive way, (5) knowing that I am clearly more masculine/manly than my male classmates makes me feel good about myself and (6) looking manly makes me feel good about myself. Response options range from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), with 3 as a neutral option (see Appendix D). Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .88.

*Gender-related bullying: Perpetrators and targets.* To assess the frequency with which boys *perpetrated* and were *victimized* by gender-related bullying, participants

completed the *Homophobic Content: Agent Target Scale* HCAT scale which was developed specifically for middle school students (Poteat & Espelage, 2005; see Appendix E). Prior to administering this measure, I felt it was important to discuss the definitions of bullying (e.g., bullying is when someone says mean and hurtful things about someone else's race, gender, language or culture; someone teases someone else repeatedly in a mean and hurtful way; someone makes fun of someone else; someone completely ignores or excludes someone else on purpose; someone hits, kicks, pushes, shoves or threatens someone else; someone tells lies or spreads false rumors about someone else; someone sends mean notes to try to make other students dislike someone else) and then were told that bullying is *not* teasing that is done in a friendly and playful way. Finally, before filling out the measure, students read the following stem, "Bullying also happens when some kids call each other names or use phrases such as "you're so gay," "homo," "fag," "dyke," etc." Students were then asked, "How many times in the last 7 days did you say things to \_\_\_\_". Response options ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (7 times) with 3 labeled as "3 to 4 times:" (1) a friend who is the same gender, (2) someone I did not like, (3) someone I did not know very well, (4) someone I thought was lesbian or gay and (5) someone I did not think was lesbian or gay. Cronbach's alpha for this sample was .77.

The target subscale uses the same stem, but asks students to rate (on the same 1 to 5 scale), "How many times in the last 7 days were you called one or more of these names by: (1) a friend who is the same gender, (2) someone I did not like, (3) someone I did not know very well, (4) someone I thought was lesbian or gay and (5) someone I did not think was lesbian or gay. Cronbach's alpha for this sample was .83.

*Academic achievement.* Students' grade point averages (GPAs) were obtained from school records.

### *Data Analysis*

#### *Overview*

Data analysis was performed in four steps. In the first step, I tested for possible ethnic group differences in responding to the major variables (e.g., COAT-AM/PM subscales, contingent self-esteem measures, and gender-related bullying). In the second step, I computed correlations among variables hypothesized to predict boys' engagement in gender-related bullying victimization from gender-related bullying. In the final set of analyses, I used Baron and Kenny's (1986) causal steps to test whether contingent self-esteem mediates the relations among sex-typing of the self and other and gender-related bullying. After inspecting the intercorrelations among the predictor variables, however, tests for partial mediation were not justified. Given the fact that there were significant relations among the predictor variables, I ran three separate simultaneous regression models to determine the strongest predictors of: (a) perpetrators of gender-related bullying, (b) victims of gender related bullying, and in a more exploratory analysis (c) GPA.

#### *Descriptive Statistics and Tests for Group Differences Among Variables*

*Sex-typing of the self.* To determine whether Latino and European American boys differed in their personal level of sex-typing, a 2 (race: Latino, European American) X 2 (sex-typing: masculine and feminine) ANOVA was conducted, with the latter variable as a repeated measure. Results indicated a significant main effect of sex-type, with adolescent boys showing more interest in masculine than feminine sex-typed items,  $F(1,$



101) = 205.41,  $p < .01$ , (see Table 1). Neither the main effect of ethnicity,  $F(1, 101) = 2.05$ ,  $p = .80$ , nor its interaction with sex-type,  $F(1, 101) = 2.05$ ,  $p = .16$  were significant.

*Sex-typing of others.* To determine whether Latino and European American boys differed in their egalitarian views (e.g., OAT-AM; total sex-typing of others score), an ANOVA was conducted with total sex-typing of others as the dependent measure. Results indicated, however, that there was no effect of ethnicity,  $F(1, 101) = .26$ ,  $p = .61$ .

*Contingent self-esteem: Competition, gender roles.* To determine whether adolescent boys' ethnicity was related to their contingent self-esteem, a 2 (race: Latino, European American) X 2 (contingent self-esteem domain: competition and gender) ANOVA was conducted, with the latter variable as a repeated measure. Results indicated a trend for an interaction between contingent self-esteem and ethnicity,  $F(1, 94) = 3.04$ ,  $p = .08$ . European American boys to be more likely to base their self-esteem on winning competitions ( $M = 3.9$ ,  $SD = .79$ ) than Latino boys ( $M = 3.6$ ,  $SD = .66$ ).

*Gender-related bullying: Perpetrators and targets.* In order to determine whether the frequency of engaging in, and being victimized by, gay-baiting differed across ethnicity, a 2 (race: Latino, European American) X 2 (gender-related bullying: perpetrator, victim) ANOVA was conducted, with the latter variable as a repeated measure. Although there was no main effect of neither ethnicity  $F(1, 93) = .44$ ,  $p = .51$ , nor gender-related bullying,  $F(1, 93) = 27$ ,  $p = .60$ , there was a significant interaction between gender-related bullying and ethnicity  $F(1, 93) = 10.82$ ,  $p < .01$ . An inspection of the means indicated that European American boys were more likely to be victims of gender-related bullying ( $X = 1.81$ ,  $SD = .98$ ) than Latino boys ( $X = 1.43$ ,  $SD = .54$ ).

To get a better idea of the characteristics of gender-related bullying occurring among these students, I calculated the percentages of participants who were identified as a victim of gender-related bullying (e.g., boys with a mean score of over 1.0 on the target subscale) and a perpetrator of gender-related bullying (e.g., boys with a mean score of over 1.0 on the agent subscale). Regardless of ethnicity, 69% of the sample reported having been victimized by gender-related bullying, whereas 78% of the sample reported having been the perpetrators of gender-related bullying. After separating the sample by ethnicity, I identified 77% of the European American boys as perpetrators and 77% as victims of gender-related bullying. Among the Latino students, 70% of the boys were identified as victims and 82% as perpetrators of gender-related bullying.

Across race, students were more likely to engage in gender-related bullying if the victim was another boy (61%) or someone they did not like (61%). Similarly, students were most likely to be victims of gender-related bullying if the perpetrator was either another boy (50%) or someone they did not like (50%). The most common form of bullying among European American boys occurred when the victim was a student they did not like (61%); the most common form of victimization (68%) occurred when the perpetrator was a student they did not like. Among Latino boys, the most common form of bullying occurred when the victim was a male student (69%); the most common form of victimization (51%) also occurred when the bully was another male student.

*GPA.* To determine whether GPA differed across ethnicity, a one-way ANOVA by ethnicity was conducted. Results indicated that European American boys had higher GPAs ( $M = 3.16$ ) than their Latino peers ( $M = 2.43$ ),  $F(1, 91) = 15.24, p < .01$ .

Table 1: Means (and Standard Deviations) for Major Variables by Ethnicity

Variable Name	Latino	European American
<i>Sex-Typing of the Self</i>		
OAT-PM: Feminine	1.57 (.37)	1.52 (.30)
OAT-PM: Masculine	2.21 (.48)	2.30 (.50)
<i>Total Sex-Typing of Others</i>	.40 (.23)	.41 (.23)
<i>Contingent Self-Esteem</i>		
Competition	3.61* (.66)	3.91* (.79)
Gender	3.06 (.78)	3.09 (.79)
<i>Gender-related bullying</i>		
Bully	1.71 (.69)	1.56 (.61)
Victim	1.43* (.54)	1.81* (.98)
<i>GPA</i>	2.43* (.86)	3.16* (.80)

Note. \*designates that the means differ across ethnic groups at  $p < .05$

#### *Relations Among Variables*

Simple bivariate correlations were conducted to determine the relations among the main variables of interest: participant ethnicity, sex-typing of self (e.g., masculine and feminine scores) total sex-typing of others, contingent self-esteem (competition and traditional masculine gender roles), GPA and ethnicity. Correlations are presented in Table 2.

Examining relations among adolescent boys' levels of personal sex-typing, sex-typing of others, gender identity and gender-related bullying, I found that regardless of race, adolescent boys who reported more interest in feminine sex-typed items (e.g., were

less masculine sex-typed) were less likely to be perpetrators of gender-related bullying ( $r = -.21, p < .05$ ). Interestingly, adolescent boys expressing more interest in masculine sex-typed items were also more likely to be victims of gender-related bullying ( $r = .21, p < .05$ ). Finally, adolescent boys' with lower GPAs were also more likely to be victims of gender-related bullying ( $r = -.28, p < .05$ ).

In terms of contingent self-esteem, the more adolescent boys expressed gender-egalitarian views, the less likely they were to base their self-esteem contingent upon winning competitions with others ( $r = -.39, p < .01$ ). In addition, the more adolescent boys endorsed gender egalitarian views, the less likely they were to base their self-esteem contingent upon traditional masculine gender roles ( $r = -.43, p < .01$ ).

Table 2. Intercorrelations Among Main Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Masculine Sex-typing: Self (OAT-PM)	-	.46**	-.12	-.02	.21*	.19*	.13	.05	-.09
2. Feminine Sex-typing: Self (OAT-PM)		-	.09	-.21*	.13	-.08	-.14	-.11	.07
3. Total Sex-typing of Others (OAT-AM)			-	-.16	.05	-.39**	-.43**	-.04	.05
4. Gender-related Bullying - Perpetrator				-	.24*	.05	.18	-.17	.15
5. Gender-related Bullying-Victim					-	-.02	-.16	.02	-.25
6. CSE – Competition						-	.55**	.17	-.20
7. CSE – Gender Stereotypes							-	-.002	-.02
8. GPA								-	-.37**
9. Ethnicity									-

Note: \*designates that the correlation is significant at  $p < .05$ ; \*\* designates that the correlation is significant at  $p < .01$

Table 3. Intercorrelations Among Main Variables by Ethnicity

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Masculine Sex-typing: Self	-	.54**	-.43*	.15	.43*	.46**	.36*	-.05
2. Feminine Sex-typing: Self	.39**	-	-.35	-.18	.23	.24	.10	-.03
3. Masculine Sex-typing: Other	.04	.23	-	-.01	.26	-.42*	.50**	.14
4. Gay-Baiting - Victim	-.04	-.19	-.20	-	.23	-.22	-.03	-.08
5. Gay-Baiting - Bully	.05	-.18	-.08	.37**	-	.03	-.21	-.07
6. CSE – Competition	.09	-.17	.40**	.13	-.11	-	.62**	.09
7. CSE – Gender Stereotypes	.01	-.28*	-.48*	.33**	-.20	.56**	-	.10
8. GPA	.11	-.06	.20	-.16	.08	.11	-.03	-

Note: \*designates that the correlation is significant at  $p < .05$ ; \*\* designates that the correlation is significant at  $p < .01$ ; correlations on the upper diagonal are for European American students and correlations on the lower diagonal are for Latino students.

*Predictors of Gender-Related Bullying: Perpetrators, Victims, and GPA*

As described earlier, it was hypothesized that contingent self-esteem based on winning competitions and traditional gender roles would partially mediate the relations among sex-typing of the self and other and gender-related bullying. Figures 2-5 depict the four mediational models that were explored with their corresponding correlations to aid in the data analysis explanation. Using Baron and Kenny's (1986) causal steps approach to test for partial mediation, correlations among (a) the OAT-PM/AM subscales and the contingent self-esteem subscales must be statistically significant, and (b) the contingent self-esteem subscales and the gender-related bullying subscales must be statistically significant. However, initial examinations of the relations among the predictor variables (e.g., OAT-PM/AM subscales) revealed that the mediational variables (e.g., contingent self-esteem) and the outcome variables (e.g., gender-related bullying) were not statistically significant. Therefore, tests for partial mediation were not justified. The following figures depict the relations among each of the predictor variables, mediational variables and outcome variables.

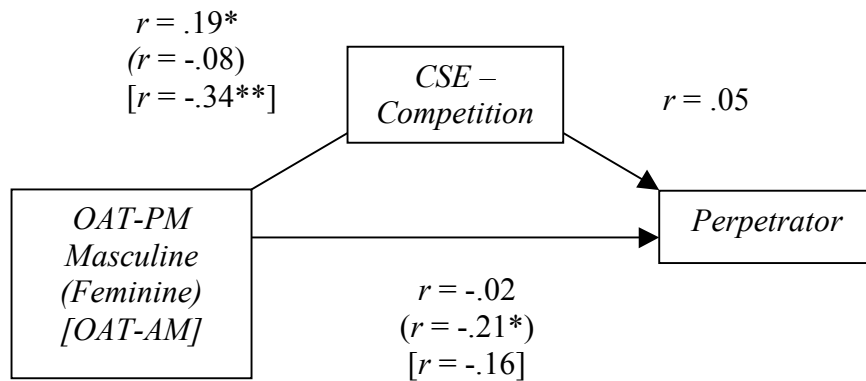


Figure 2. Mediation model in which the effect of the boys' OAT-PM/AM scores on engaging in gender-related bullying is mediated by contingent self-esteem based on winning competitions. Correlations in parentheses are for the OAT-PM feminine subscale, and correlations in brackets are for the OAT-AM subscale.

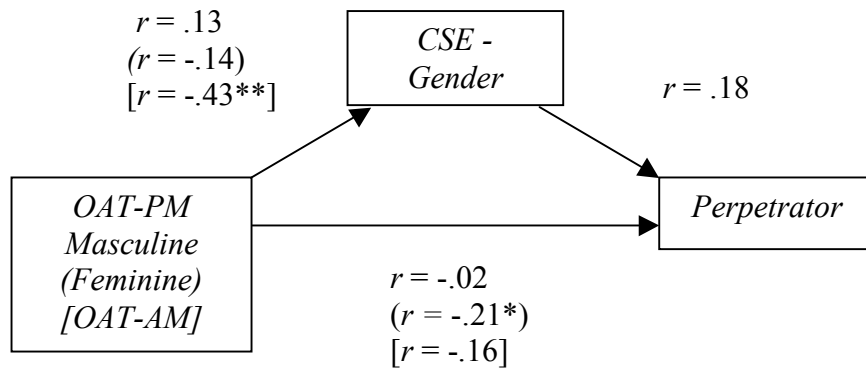


Figure 3. Mediation model in which the effect of the boys' OAT-PM/AM scores on engaging in gender-related bullying is mediated by contingent self-esteem based on traditional gender roles. Correlations in parentheses are for the OAT-PM feminine subscale, and correlations in brackets are for the OAT-AM subscale.



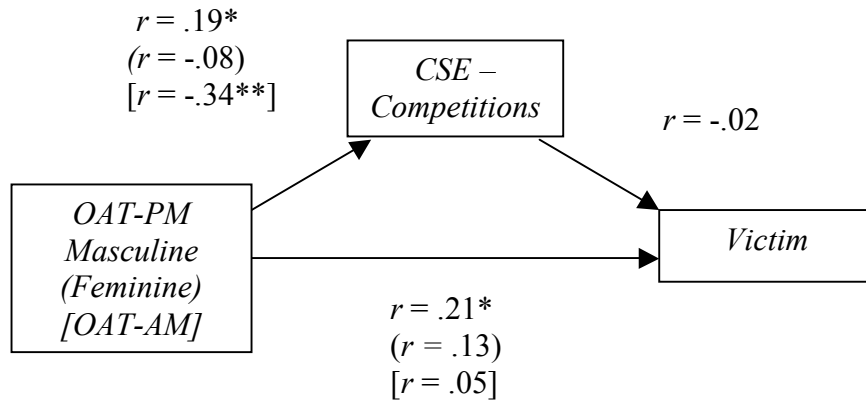


Figure 4. Mediation model in which the effect of the boys' OAT-PM/AM scores on victimization of gender-related bullying is mediated by contingent self-esteem based on winning competitions. Correlations in parentheses are for the OAT-PM feminine subscale, and correlations in brackets are for the OAT-AM subscale.

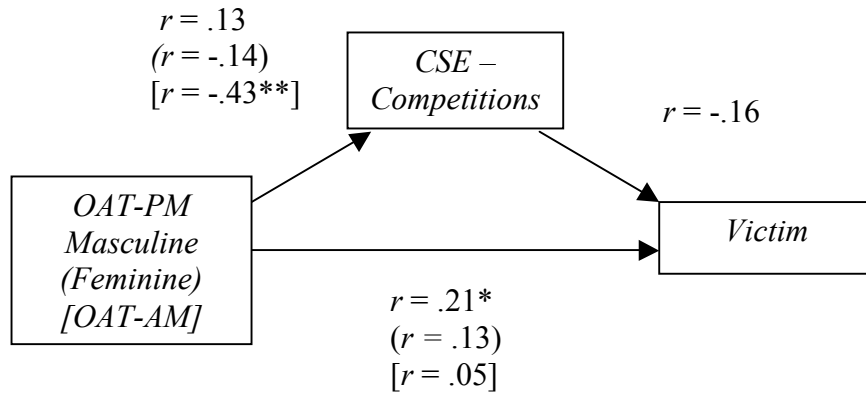


Figure 5. Mediation model in which the effect of the boys' OAT-PM/AM scores on victimization of gender-related bullying is mediated by contingent self-esteem based on traditional gender roles. Correlations in parentheses are for the OAT-PM feminine subscale, and correlations in brackets are for the OAT-AM subscale.

Given the fact that there are significant intercorrelations among the predictor variables as depicted in tables 2 and 3 (e.g., OAT-PM/AM subscales and contingent self-esteem measures), I ran three separate simultaneous regression models to determine the strongest predictors of: (a) perpetrators of gender-related bullying, (b) victims of gender related bullying and (c) GPA. Additionally, I ran a separate linear regression to determine if engaging in gender-related bullying and victimization from gender-related bullying predicted adolescent boys' GPAs. Results are presented in Table 4.

*Overview.*

In three separate simultaneous regressions, I entered boys' ethnicity (European American and Latino), sex-typing of the self (masculine and feminine interests), sex-typing of others, contingent self-esteem based on competition and contingent self-esteem based on traditional gender roles as predictor variables of: (a) perpetrators of gender-related bullying, (b) victims of gender-related bullying and (c) GPA.

*Perpetrators.* To predict boys' engagement in gender-related bullying, their ethnicity, personal levels of sex-typing (e.g., sex-typing of the self: masculine and feminine), total egalitarian attitudes (e.g., total sex-typing of others score), contingent self-esteem based on competition and traditional gender roles were included in the model as predictor variables. The overall model approached significance,  $F(6, 94) = 2.02, p = .07$ . Basing their self-esteem contingent upon traditional masculine gender roles served as the strongest predictor of boys' engagement in gender-related bullying ( $\beta = .26, p = .05$ ). Standardized beta weights associated with this analysis are listed in Table 4.

*Victims.* To predict boys' victimization from gender-related bullying, their ethnicity, personal levels of sex-typing (e.g., sex-typing of the self: masculine and

feminine), total egalitarian attitudes (e.g., total sex-typing of others score), contingent self-esteem based on traditional masculine gender roles and winning competitions were entered as predictor variables. The overall model was significant  $F(6, 94) = 2.56, p = .03$ , and several variables served as significant predictors for gender-related bullying suggesting that partial mediation did not occur. Ethnicity was the strongest predictor of victimization from gender-related bullying ( $\beta = -.23, p = .03$ ), with European American boys more likely to be victims than Latino boys. The standardized beta weights associated with this analysis are listed in Table 4.

*Academic achievement.* Boys' ethnicity, personal levels of sex-typing (e.g., sex-typing of the self: masculine and feminine), total egalitarian attitudes (e.g., total sex-typing of others score), contingent self-esteem based on competition and traditional gender roles were included in the model to predict GPA. The overall model was significant,  $F(6, 90) = 3.69, p < .01$ . However, only boys' ethnicity served as a significant predictor of GPA ( $\beta = -.39, p < .01$ ), with European American boys having higher GPAs than Latino boys. Standardized beta weights are reported in Table 4.

Finally, I ran a separate regression to determine whether engaging in gender-related bullying and victimization from gender-related bullying predicted adolescent boys' GPAs. Results indicated that there was a trend approaching significance for adolescent boys with lower GPAs to engage in gender-related bullying ( $\beta = -.19, p = .09$ ). Standardized beta weights are included in Table 4.

Table 4.

Predictor Variables	Dependent Variables		
	Gender-related	Gender-related	
	bullying: perpetrator	bullying: victim	GPA
	( $R^2 = .12$ )	( $R^2 = .15$ )	( $R^2 = .21$ )
<i>Ethnicity</i>	.13	-.23*	-.39**
<i>Sex-Typing of the Self</i> <i>(OAT-PM)</i>			
Feminine sex-typed interests	-.17	.04	-.09
Masculine sex-typed interests	.09	.20+	.13
<i>Total Sex-Typing of Others (OAT-AM)</i> <i>Contingent Self-Esteem</i>			
Competition	-.17	.05	.10
Gender	.26*	-.24+	-.12
<i>Gender-related bullying</i>			
Bully	-	-	-.19+
Victim	-	-	.06

*Note.* Standardized  $\beta$  coefficients are presented in the table. +  $p < .10$ , \*  $p < .05$  and \*\*  $p < .01$

## CHAPTER 4

### *Discussion*

As William Pollack passionately argued in his book, *Real Boys: Recruiting our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood* (2006), adolescent boys are suffering psychologically as a result of endorsing boy-code attitudes (or high levels of sex-typing of the self and others). From an early age, boys are taught that to be valued in our society, they must conform to rigid masculine stereotypes. Unfortunately, if boys do not conform to these strict definitions of masculinity, they are often bullied and harassed by their peers (Haldeman, 2000; Langlois & Downs, 1980; Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008). Not surprisingly, by an early age, boys learn to incorporate traditional gender roles in their self-concept in order to fit in with their peers (Langlois & Downs, 1980) and by the time they reach adolescence, boys are highly sex-typed and experience negative psychological outcomes (Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Pollack, 1998; 2006). Although the research is divided between teaching gender atypical youth to act in more typical ways (Egan & Perry, 2001) and teaching society to accept gender atypical youth (Liben & Bigler, 2002), it is clear that some gender atypical youth suffer psychologically from their non-conformity to gender norm (Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008). Until boys are taught that it is socially acceptable for them to express their interests and emotions – regardless of gender stereotypes – they will continue to face negative psychological outcomes for not conforming to social standards of masculinity. Motivated by these issues, this study examined the relationship among sex-typing of the self and others, contingent self-esteem, and gender-related bullying.

One of the primary purposes of this study was to examine the relations among (a) sex-typing of the self and others, (b) contingent self-esteem, (c) gender-related bullying and (d) in a more exploratory manner, poor academic achievement. I hypothesized that boys' with higher levels of sex-typing of the self and others (OAT-PM/AM) would base their self-esteem contingent upon competition and/or traditional masculine gender roles. I also hypothesized that high levels of sex-typing of the self and others would be related to engaging in gender-related bullying and poor academic achievement.

To test my hypotheses, I first examined the intercorrelations among these variables. Results indicated that boys who expressed more liking of feminine sex-typed items were less likely to engage in gender-related bullying. The corollary to this is that boys who disliked feminine items were more likely to bully less typical peers via gender-related bullying. In other words, more feminine boys were less likely to bully and less feminine boys were more likely to bully. In addition, the more boys expressed interest in masculine sex-typed items (e.g., high levels of sex-typing of the self), the more likely they were to base their self-esteem contingent upon winning competitions with others. These findings suggest that the more adolescent boys expressed traditional masculine attitudes (e.g., high levels of sex-typing of the self), the more likely they were to base their self-esteem on masculine domains (e.g., winning competitions and acting in traditionally masculine ways). These relationships corroborate with research examining boy-code and masculine gender hegemonies. Specifically, research by Pollack (1998) and Connell (1995) suggest that men are driven to prove their masculinity to others through teasing and taunting of other males' atypical behaviors.

There were several significant correlations related to adolescent boys' gender-egalitarian attitudes (e.g., sex-typing of others). For example, higher scores on the sex-typing of others scale (e.g., the more gender egalitarian the boys were), negatively correlated with contingent self-esteem based on winning competitions and traditional masculine gender roles. That is, adolescent boys who believed that both men and women should equally engage in stereotypically masculine and feminine occupations and activities did not base their self-esteem contingent upon masculine domains (e.g., winning competitions and acting in a traditionally masculine way). It is likely that for boys exhibiting gender egalitarian attitudes, they do not feel that it is not important to their overall self-esteem to prove their masculinity to others. The negative relationship between sex-typing of others and contingent self-esteem provides support for Liben and Bigler's (2002) claim that gender egalitarian views are associated with positive psychological outcomes. Specifically, these results indicate that boys who endorse gender egalitarian views do not experience the negative psychological outcomes that are associated with contingent self-esteem (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette, 2003).

Another important correlation to note is that between victims of gender-related bullying and perpetrators of gender-related bullying. This finding is consistent with research on peer relations, which often classifies students as *both* bullies and victims (Schwartz, 2000). Often, victims of bullying engage in bullying themselves in an attempt to be viewed positively in their peer networks (Schwartz, 2000). This finding could also be a result of boys socializing their peer group to engage in gender-related bullying as a means of teaching other boys how to act appropriately for their gender (Poteat, 2007). For example, boys might learn that engaging in gender-related bullying is appropriate

behavior for boys in their peer group, and as a result, are likely to experience both victimization and bullying to establish their place in their peer group (Poteat, 2007). These results also suggest that adolescent boys are using gender-related bullying as a means of establishing their place in their school's masculine gender hegemonic caste (Connell, 1995).

A second purpose of this study was to test the hypothesis that contingent self-esteem would partially mediate the relations among sex-typing of the self and others and gender-related bullying (perpetrators and victims). Unfortunately, after reviewing the relations among the predictor variables and the outcome variables, I found no evidence for partial mediation. Instead, I sought to determine the strongest predictors of engagement in and victimization from gender-related bullying.

In the model predicting engagement in gender-related bullying, I found that boys were more likely to engage in gender-related bullying when they based their self-esteem contingent upon traditional gender roles. That is, boys who felt it was important to their overall self-esteem to prove their masculinity to others were more likely than their peers to engage in gender-related bullying. These findings corroborate Baumeister's (2002) theory of ego-depletion, which asserts that the self is easily taxed when forced to self-regulate behaviors that are important to the ego, thus impairing the self's ability to function. This constant regulation puts them at greater risk of lashing out at others when faced with a situation that threatens their self-esteem (e.g., when they fail in a competition or do not act in a stereotypically masculine way).

When predicting victimization from gender-related bullying, I found that boys' interests in masculine sex-typed items predicted victimization from gender-related



bullying. Although this relationship was unexpected, it could be related to the fact that some boys are both bullies and victims. As Poteat (2007) found, peer groups tend to socialize and reinforce homophobic attitudes through teasing and taunting. It is likely, then, that boys who are in peer groups that are highly sex-typed (e.g., express high levels of sex-typing of the self and others) constantly reinforce these behaviors through gender-related bullying. As a result, boys who are in these types of peer groups are not only at risk for engaging in gender-related bullying, but also in being a victim of gender-related bullying to socialize and reinforce highly sex-typed beliefs. To gain a better understanding of this relationship, however, analysis of peer group members and friendship networks – similar to Poteat's (2007) research design which analyzed how students' peer groups socialized homophobic attitudes and behaviors – is necessary.

A secondary, and more exploratory, purpose of this dissertation was to determine the relations among levels of sex-typing of the self and others, contingent self-esteem and academic achievement. Regression analyses indicated that ethnicity was the strongest predictor of adolescent boys' GPAs. Specifically, in this sample, European American boys had higher GPAs than Latino boys. It is also worth noting that boys with lower GPAs were also more likely to engage in gender-related bullying. Taken together, these findings suggest that Latino boys are more likely to engage in gender-related bullying, and suffer academically. Given that in this sample gender-related bullying was related to less gender egalitarian views and higher levels of personal sex-typing, these results, although tentative, give evidence to support the fact that adherence to traditional masculine gender roles might be related to poorer academic achievement. Such findings support research on boy-code which has established that boys who endorse more

traditional masculine gender roles experience negative psychological outcomes such as poor academic achievement (Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Pollack, 1998; 2006). Although the findings provide evidence that boys who bully suffer academically (Schwartz, Dodge, Coie, Hubbard, Cillessen, Lemerise & Bateman, 1998), it does not support the fact that other researchers found that boys suffer academically as a result of being gay-baited (Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008). More research will be needed to understand how gender-related bullying influences academic achievement.

A third interest of this study was to determine if the mediational model varied by ethnicity. Unfortunately, given the low number of European American boys in this sample, few conclusions can be drawn. There are, however, a few trends in the data worth noting. First, as mentioned earlier, ethnicity predicted adolescent boys' academic achievement, with European American boys performing better than their Latino peers. Next, I found that Latino boys were slightly less likely to base their self-esteem on winning competitions than their European American counterparts. Finally, and most strikingly, ethnicity served as the strongest predictor of victimization from gender-related bullying, with European American boys at greater risk than Latino boys for victimization. According to the percentages, 82% of the Latino students engaged in gender-related bullying and 70% were victims, whereas 77% of the European American sample engaged in gender-related bullying and 77% were victims of gender-related bullying. These differences are particularly important because it suggests that adolescent boys' race and culture may play a crucial role in adolescent boys' conceptions of traditional masculine gender roles in this sample. Although tentative, these results suggest that Latino boys in this sample might feel more pressure to conform to rigid cultural conceptions of

*machismo* (Villereal & Cavazos, 2005) thereby increasing their likelihood to engage in gender-related bullying. Such findings are similar to those reported by Graham, Bellmore and Mitze (2006) who found that 6<sup>th</sup> grade African American boys are more likely than their Latino and Caucasian counterparts to be perceived by their peers as aggressive, but at the same time are perceived as “cool.” Although Graham, Bellmore and Mitze (2006) did not specifically test gender-related bullying, it does suggest that ethnicity has an effect on adolescent’s perceptions of aggressive behaviors, and by extension, social constructions of masculinity.

Taken together, the findings of this study reinforced the idea that adolescent boys will engage in gender related bullying if (a) they are highly sex-typed, or (b) base their self-esteem contingent upon masculine domains, or (c) have poor academic achievement. Unfortunately, these results reemphasize the fact that school is a very difficult place for adolescent boys who act in ways atypical of their gender (Egan & Perry, 2001; Haldeman, 2000; Pilkington & D’Augelli, 1995; Poteat, 2007; Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008). Most notably, this dissertation suggests that basing one’s self-esteem contingent upon traditional gender roles is an important domain of contingent self-esteem that should be included in future research on this topic. Specifically, this study suggests that adolescent boys who base their self-esteem on traditionally masculine domains (e.g., competition and traditional gender roles) are driven to improve their self-esteem, and thus their masculinity, by engaging in gender-related bullying (Kimmel, 2003; Pollack, 1998; Poteat, 2007).

This dissertation also provides evidence to support Connell’s (1995) theory of masculine gender hegemonies. In this sample, it appears that middle school boys are

constantly aware of their place in the masculine hegemonic caste. It is likely that for boys at this particular middle school, simply being Latino is a favorable masculine quality that places them on the top of their schools' gender hegemonic caste, leaving European American boys at subordinate levels. In order to prove their place at the top of the caste, Latino boys at this school bully their gender atypical European American peers. However, such findings are tentative given that data was not collected on adolescent boys' conceptions of racial identity.

#### *Limitations and Future Directions*

Although this study offered some support for my mediational model, there are, however, several limitations to this study. For example, using a self-report gender-related bullying measure could have been a problematic method of measuring adolescent male's bullying behaviors. Although many researchers have used self-report measures as a means of collecting similar data, (Poteat & Espelage, 2000; Poteat, 2007; Swearer & Cary, 2003; Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008) students might not be as honest in their ratings. Looking at the students' average scores, it is likely that they underreported their engagement in and victimization of gender-related bullying with average scores on both scales indicating that most students reported being a bully or a victim only one or two times a week which is mostly likely lower than the actual number of times boys engage in and are victims of gender-related bullying. This discrepancy could be due to the boys' homophobic attitudes. Although these issues might have lead to inaccurate results; the data do suggest that gender-related bullying is an issue at this middle school that should be further explored. Improvements to this aspect of the study could be to use a peer nomination method, which asks students to nominate peers in their class who

typically engage in gender-related bullying, and indicate how often they bully others. It should be noted that this dissertation proposed using peer nominations in this study; however, the Institutional Review Board did not grant me permission to use this type of methodology. Another method that might allow researchers insight into better understanding how peer groups socialize gender-related bullying - and is less controversial - are teacher evaluations. It will also be beneficial to include sociometric information regarding the students' peer groups and popularity – much like the methodology Poteat (2007) used – to determine how sex-typing and gender-related bullying are socialized in the peer group.

Most importantly, future research should include a larger sample size in order to more effectively analyze potential differences among Latino and European American boys' sex-typing of the self and other, contingent self-esteem and gender-related bullying. Although many of my hypotheses were partially confirmed, with a larger sample size, it is likely that the relations necessary to test mediational models will become statistically significant. Such results will provide important contributions to the fields of peer relations and gender development given that scant research exists on addressing this topic in both fields. Additionally, future studies should include measures of adolescent boys' racial identity, such as the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992), to begin to tease apart the differences between European American and Latino boys' levels of sex-typing, contingent self-esteem and engagement in and victimization from gender-related bullying.

Future studies should also extend the existing model to include other ethnic groups. It will be important to determine, for example, whether these results generalize to

schools in which European American boys are in the majority and Latino boys are in the minority. Additionally, it will be important to include other outcome variables such as depression, school climate and aggression, as they have been reported as negative psychological outcomes to high levels of sex-typing of the self and other and contingent self-esteem (Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Sanchez & Crocker, 2005; Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008).

Once we have a better understanding of how sex-typing of the self and others, and contingent self-esteem relate to gender-related bullying, we can begin to implement intervention programs that will reduce this form of bullying in our schools and will also broaden students' schemas for masculine gender roles. Such intervention programs should be designed to encourage adolescent boys to broaden their gender identity to include "atypical" behaviors and attitudes in their new schemas for appropriate masculine gender roles. Developing such intervention programs will not only help adolescent boys discover a broader view of the self and others in terms of their gender identity, but will also lead to less aggression in the schools.

### *Summary and Conclusion*

In sum, this study was designed to extend previous research by analyzing the relations among sex-typing of the self and other, contingent self-esteem based on competition and traditional gender, and gender-related bullying behaviors (e.g., perpetrators and victims) among adolescent boys. The findings of this study corroborate with previous research suggesting that boys often are bullied for acting outside of their gender norms, but at the same time suffer psychologically from being highly sex-typed

(Langlois & Downs, 1980; Haldeman, 2000; Harter, McCarley & Rienks, 2006; Liben & Bigler, 2002; Pollack, 2006; Swearer, Turner, Givens & Pollack, 2008).

This study also found that adolescent boys base their self-esteem contingent upon domains specific to masculine gender roles: winning competitions and endorsing stereotypical masculine gender roles. These findings extend Crocker's work (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper & Bouvrette, 2003; Crocker & Knight, 2005; Crocker & Park, 2004) on adults suggesting that contingent self-esteem is an important measure of psychological wellbeing to analyze among adolescents. Given a larger sample size, contingent self-esteem might also begin to mediate the relationship among sex-typing of the self and others and negative psychological outcomes (such as gender-related bullying). This study also gave evidence to support the assumption that traditional gender roles (in this case masculine gender roles) functions as a domain of contingent self-esteem. Future studies should include gender as domain of contingent self-esteem in order to replicate the findings presented here among women and different ethnic groups.

In order to help keep boys safe in school, psychologically healthy, and motivated to learn, it is imperative to study the possible negative psychological experiences boys face in schools as a result of adhering to strict masculine gender roles. Although much of this study was exploratory in nature, it is the hope of the author that it can be used as a tool for educators to begin to explore possible interventions for their classroom to ensure that students like Dylan Theno no longer have to experience fear when they enter school.

## Appendix A

**IRB APPROVAL # 2008-01-0018**

**APPROVAL DATE: 03/28/08-03/26/09**

### **PARENTAL CONSENT FORM Gender, School Climate, and Academic Success**

**Title:** Gender, School Climate, and Academic Success

**Conducted by:** Lindsay M. Lamb, MA, Department of Educational Psychology

Phone: (512) 417-9603 or (575) 526-5791

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**Faculty Sponsor:** Rebecca S. Bigler, PhD, Department of Psychology

Phone: (512) 471-9917 Email: [bigler@psy.utexas.edu](mailto:bigler@psy.utexas.edu)

You are being asked to allow your child to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The person in charge of this research will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time and your refusal will not impact current or future relationships with UT Austin or Zia Middle School. To do so simply tell the researcher you wish to stop participation. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this consent for your records.

**The purpose of this study** is to analyze school climate among middle school students and to determine the relations among bullying, gender roles, and academic success.

**If you agree to be in this study, we will ask your child to do the following things:**

- Participate in group-testing sessions during your child's social studies class designed to (a) assess his or her occupational interests, activity preferences, and, traits, (b) sources of self-esteem, (c) feelings of gender typicality, (d) how often they have made bullying-type comments to peers and/or been victims of bullying-type comments to peers during the past week.

**Total estimated time to participate** in study is 30 minutes, or two 15-minute sessions during your child's social studies class periods

**Risks of being in the study**

- Although there are no known risks associated with participation in this procedure, your child's participation may involve risks that are currently unforeseeable. There are no known risks associated with participation in these types of testing sessions, although it may involve risks that are currently unforeseeable. If you wish to discuss the information above or any other risks your child may experience, you may ask questions now or call Lindsay M. Lamb, MA (575-526-5791 or 512-417-9603; [llamb@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:llamb@mail.utexas.edu)).

**Benefits** of being in the study will be to help researchers identify specific behaviors in peer groups that contribute to positive school climates and help researchers design intervention programs to create positive school climates in the schools.



**Compensation:**

- Beyond the possible benefits of being in this study, there is no compensation for participation.

**Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:**

- Students who participate will be assigned an ID number, which will be used to track and analyze their data. Students' names will be blacked out with a marker after data has been collected
- The records of this study will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet in the Dr. Rebecca Bigler's lab in the Psychology Department at the University of Texas at Austin. Only authorized persons from the University of Texas at Austin and members of the Institutional Review Board can legally review your child's anonymous research records, and they will protect the **confidentiality** of those records to the full extent of the law. All publications will strictly exclude any information that would make it possible to identify your child as a participant. Throughout the study, the researcher will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.
- The data resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have any questions about the study please ask now. If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your child's participation call the researchers conducting the study. Their names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are at the top of this page. If you have questions about your child's rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact **Jody Jensen, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the** Protection of Human Subjects at (512) 232-2685 or the Office of Research Support and Compliance at (512) 471-8871.or email: orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

You may keep the white copy of this consent form.

**PLEASE HAVE YOUR CHILD RETURN THE  
SIGNED BLUE FORM TO THEIR TEACHER.**

You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to allow him or her to participate in the study. If you later decide that you wish to withdraw your permission for your child to participate in the study, simply tell me. You may discontinue his or her participation at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent(s) or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## ASSENT FORM

### Gender, School Climate, and Academic Success

I agree to be in a study about how kids feel and think about themselves, things kids like and don't like and how often kids are teased and bullied in my school. If I agree to be in this study, they will ask me questions about (a) jobs I am interested in, how I like to spend my free time and things I like to do, (b) how I feel about myself, (c) how I feel about being a boy or a girl, (d) how often I have bullied and teased others and/or been victims of bullying and teasing during the past week. This study was explained to my (guardian) and (they) said that I could be in it. The only people who will know about what I say and do in the study will be the people in charge of the study.

Writing my name on this page means that the page was read (by me) and that I agree to be in the study. I know what will happen to me. If I decide to quit the study, all I have to do is tell the person in charge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix B

### WHAT I WANT TO BE

Here is a list of jobs that people can do. Please circle the number that shows how much you would want to do each of these jobs.

HOW MUCH WOULD YOU WANT TO:	Not At All	Not Much	Some	Very Much
	1	2	3	4
1. Be a supermarket check-out clerk	1	2	3	4
2. Be an artist	1	2	3	4
3. Be a perfume salesperson	1	2	3	4
4. Be an elevator operator	1	2	3	4
5. Be a jockey (ride a horse in a race)	1	2	3	4
6. Be a librarian	1	2	3	4
7. Be a cheerleader	1	2	3	4
8. Be a cook in a restaurant	1	2	3	4
9. Be a secretary	1	2	3	4
10. Be a nurse	1	2	3	4
11. Be a banker	1	2	3	4
12. Be a writer	1	2	3	4
13. Be a geographer	1	2	3	4
14. Be a lawyer	1	2	3	4
15. Be a hair stylist	1	2	3	4
16. Be a construction worker	1	2	3	4
17. Be a scientist	1	2	3	4
18. Be a baker	1	2	3	4
19. Be a computer builder	1	2	3	4
20. Be an architect	1	2	3	4
21. Be a dental assistant	1	2	3	4
22. Be a ship captain	1	2	3	4
23. Be a spy	1	2	3	4
24. Be a jewelry maker	1	2	3	4
25. Be a florist (arrange & sell flowers)	1	2	3	4

## WHAT I DO IN MY FREE TIME

Here is a list of activities that people do. Please circle the number that shows how often you do each of these activities.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU:	Never 1	Rarely 2	Sometimes 3	Often or Very often 4
1. Wash the dishes	1	2	3	4
2. Iron clothes	1	2	3	4
3. Build forts	1	2	3	4
4. Paint pictures	1	2	3	4
5. Vacuum a house	1	2	3	4
6. Go fishing	1	2	3	4
7. Wash clothes	1	2	3	4
8. Fix a car	1	2	3	4
9. Practice cheerleading	1	2	3	4
10. Build with tools	1	2	3	4
11. Cook dinner	1	2	3	4
12. Play pool	1	2	3	4
13. Jump rope	1	2	3	4
14. Play tag	1	2	3	4
15. Play darts	1	2	3	4
16. Do gymnastics	1	2	3	4
17. Play dodgeball	1	2	3	4
18. Ride a bicycle	1	2	3	4
19. Play hide and seek	1	2	3	4
20. Watch game/quiz shows	1	2	3	4
21. Babysit	1	2	3	4
22. Hunt	1	2	3	4
23. Shoot a bow and arrow	1	2	3	4
24. Bake cookies	1	2	3	4
25. Draw (or design) cars/rockets	1	2	3	4

## Appendix C

### WHO SHOULD DO THESE JOBS?

Here is a list of jobs. We want you to tell us if you think each job should be done by men, by women, or by both men and women. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want to know who you think should do these jobs. If you think it should be done by only men, circle 1; if you think it should be done by mostly men, some women, circle 2; if you think it should be done by both men and women, circle 3; if you think it should be done by mostly women, some men, circle 4; and if you think it should be done by only women, circle 5.

WHO SHOULD BE A(N):	Only Men <b>1</b>	Mostly Men, Some Women <b>2</b>	Both Men And Women <b>3</b>	Mostly Women, Some Men <b>4</b>	Only Women <b>5</b>
1. dishwasher in a restaurant	1	2	3	4	5
2. refrigerator salesperson	1	2	3	4	5
3. artist	1	2	3	4	5
4. elevator operator	1	2	3	4	5
5. interior decorator	1	2	3	4	5
6. auto mechanic	1	2	3	4	5
7. telephone installer	1	2	3	4	5
8. librarian	1	2	3	4	5
9. cook in a restaurant	1	2	3	4	5
10. secretary	1	2	3	4	5
11. plumber	1	2	3	4	5
12. nurse	1	2	3	4	5
13. ballet dancer	1	2	3	4	5
14. hair stylist	1	2	3	4	5
15. engineer (a person who plans, designs, and constructs buildings)	1	2	3	4	5
16. police officer	1	2	3	4	5
17. umpire	1	2	3	4	5
18. dental assistant	1	2	3	4	5
19. ship captain	1	2	3	4	5
20. florist	1	2	3	4	5
21. welder (a person who makes things out of metal)	1	2	3	4	5
22. electrician	1	2	3	4	5
23. manicurist	1	2	3	4	5
24. dietician (a person who is an expert in health and nutrition)	1	2	3	4	5
25. physical therapist (a	1	2	3	4	5

person who treats medical problems with exercise or massage)					
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## WHO SHOULD DO THESE ACTIVITIES?

Here is a list of activities. We want you to tell us if you think each activity should be done by men, by women, or by both men and women. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want to know who you think should do these activities. If you think it should be done by only men, circle 1; if you think it should be done by mostly men, some women, circle 2; if you think it should be done by both men and women, circle 3; if you think it should be done by mostly women, some men, circle 4; and if you think it should be done by only women, circle 5.

WHO SHOULD:	Only Men  1	Mostly Men, Some Women  2	Both Men And Women  3	Mostly Women, Some Men  4	Only Women  5
1. Fly a model plane	1	2	3	4	5
2. Knit a sweater	1	2	3	4	5
3. Sew from a pattern	1	2	3	4	5
4. Go to the beach	1	2	3	4	5
5. Wash clothes	1	2	3	4	5
6. Fix a car	1	2	3	4	5
7. Build with tools	1	2	3	4	5
8. Play cards	1	2	3	4	5
9. Shoot pool	1	2	3	4	5
10. Ride a motorcycle	1	2	3	4	5
11. Fix bicycles	1	2	3	4	5
12. Do gymnastics	1	2	3	4	5
13. Practice a musical instrument	1	2	3	4	5
14. Read romance novels	1	2	3	4	5
15. Practice martial arts	1	2	3	4	5
16. Watch soap operas	1	2	3	4	5
17. Babysit	1	2	3	4	5
18. Shoot a bow and arrow	1	2	3	4	5
19. Bake cookies	1	2	3	4	5
20. Sketch (or design) clothes	1	2	3	4	5
21. Grocery shop	1	2	3	4	5
22. Draw (or design) cars	1	2	3	4	5
23. Build model airplanes	1	2	3	4	5
24. Sing in a choir	1	2	3	4	5
25. Participate in political activities	1	2	3	4	5



### Appendix D

Please read over the following statements and rate how much these statements are true for you.

1. Doing better than others makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. Knowing that I am better than others on a task makes me feel better about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. Performing well in competitions with my peers makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. Performing well on competitive tasks, like tests, makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. I feel good about myself when I perform better than others on a task or skill.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. Being more masculine than my male classmates makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

7. Knowing that I act more masculine on tasks than my male classmates makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

8. Knowing that my classmates think that I am very masculine makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

9. Acting masculine makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

10. Knowing that I am clearly more masculine than my male classmates makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

11. Looking masculine makes me feel good about myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix E

**Bullying sometimes happens when some kids call each other names or use phrases like ‘you’re so gay’, ‘homo’, ‘fag’, ‘dyke’ etc. Bullying is NOT teasing that is done in a friendly and playful way.**

**How many times in the last 7 days did YOU say these things to:**

1. A friend who is a boy

Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 4 times	5 or 6 times	7 or more times
1	2	3	4	5

2. Someone I did not like

Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 4 times	5 or 6 times	7 or more times
1	2	3	4	5

3. Someone I did not know very well

Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 4 times	5 or 6 times	7 or more times
1	2	3	4	5

4. Someone I thought was gay or lesbian

Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 4 times	5 or 6 times	7 or more times
1	2	3	4	5

5. Someone I did not think was gay or lesbian

Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 4 times	5 or 6 times	7 or more times
1	2	3	4	5

**Now, think about how many times in the last 7 days...**

1. A friend who is a boy said these things to you?

Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 4 times	5 or 6 times	7 or more times
1	2	3	4	5

2. Someone you did not like said these things to you?

Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 4 times	5 or 6 times	7 or more times
1	2	3	4	5

3. Someone you did not know very well said these things to you?

<b>Never</b>	<b>1 or 2 times</b>	<b>3 to 4 times</b>	<b>5 or 6 times</b>	<b>7 or more times</b>
1	2	3	4	5

4. Someone you thought was gay or lesbian said these things to you?

<b>Never</b>	<b>1 or 2 times</b>	<b>3 to 4 times</b>	<b>5 or 6 times</b>	<b>7 or more times</b>
1	2	3	4	5

5. Someone you did not think was gay or lesbian said these things to you?

<b>Never</b>	<b>1 or 2 times</b>	<b>3 to 4 times</b>	<b>5 or 6 times</b>	<b>7 or more times</b>
1	2	3	4	5

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