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**“CAUSE THAT’S THE ONLY SKILLS IN SCHOOL YOU NEED”
A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF REVENGE GOALS IN POOR URBAN YOUTH**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Science at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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Abstract

“CAUSE THAT’S THE ONLY SKILLS IN SCHOOL YOU NEED” A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF REVENGE GOALS IN POOR URBAN YOUTH

By Lena Jäggi, MLaw.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2013.

Major Director: Wendy Kliewer, Ph.D.
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Ample research shows that revenge goals are correlated with maladjustment and retaliation is an important factor driving youth violence. Still, in environments with limited institutionalized interventions revenge might be an indispensable tool to maintain social equilibrium. This qualitative secondary analysis of 50 (30 Boys) revenge scenarios from a larger longitudinal study (N=358 dyads of youth/maternal caregiver) expands existing one-dimensional knowledge of revenge from closed-answer vignettes to the rich real world experience of 10-16 year old youth from an urban community sample. Key findings showed significant qualitative differences in both cognition and emotions of revenge scenarios. Ten distinct patterns emerged and were discussed in relation to the revised model of Social Information Processing (SIP) by Lemerise and Arsenio (2000). Specifically, importance of reputation, retaliation as a public event, confidence in non-violent solutions, parental messages, and the influence of intense

emotions were important themes. Gender differences and implications for prevention are discussed.

A qualitative Analysis of Revenge Goals in Poor Urban Youth

Much has been written about aggression, violence and bullying behavior and the connection to childhood adjustment difficulties for both perpetrators and victims. One approach to understanding youth's interpersonally aggressive behavior is the study of underlying social goals or cognitions that might motivate such behavior. Consequently, there are numerous studies that have shown a link between social cognitions and behavioral outcomes. One such motivation behind aggressive behavior is the desire for revenge or retaliation. Research has shown that retaliation or revenge goals are correlated with maladjustment (e.g., Lochman, Wayland, & White, 1993), that reactive aggression is linked to proactive aggression in children (e.g., Camodeca & Goossens, 2005), and that children with revenge goals have fewer and poorer quality friendships (e.g., Rose & Asher, 1999).

The knowledge on revenge and retaliatory attitudes in samples of adolescents is more limited than in children. However, both revenge and retaliatory attitudes may be particularly important to examine during adolescence for three reasons: Adolescence is the developmental stage where youth move to developing moral reasoning that follows principles of reciprocity, justice and mutual respect rather than following rules laid down by authority figures (Kohlberg, 1963; Piaget, 1965). The major source of influence in the lives of adolescents is their peers; peer status becomes increasingly important (Steinberg, 2005). Concerns about image, friends' support and peer pressure are key developmental processes especially during early adolescence (Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001). Finally, one of the fundamental tasks of this stage is to explore and form identity (Erikson, 1968). Thoughts of revenge often occur in the context of an incident that threatened one's identity or reputation, and retaliation often serves the purpose of restoring or protecting one's reputation in the eyes of peers and oneself (Copeland-Linder, Johnson, Haynie, Chung, & Cheng, 2012). Consequently, approval for retaliatory strategies

could increase during adolescence. Taken together, this suggests that adolescence is a stage where investigating revenge and retaliatory attitudes is particularly important, for such attitudes could be an important factor that drives youth violence.

However, not all revenge-seeking children are dysregulated, experiencing a desire for revenge is quite common, and the vast majority of individuals do not act on this desire (Garot, 2009). In common usage, the term retribution emphasizes the return of unfavorable treatment as an appropriate response to a misdeed. The terms revenge and vengeance give recognition to the anger that generally accompanies an individual's return of unfavorable treatment (Collins English Dictionary, 2003). Beyond their subtle differences, these terms capture the general ethic that unfavorable treatment should be paid back in kind (Eisenberger, Lynch, Aselage, & Rohdieck, 2004). Besides its destructive nature, the desire for retaliation is an inevitable part of social interaction and there are facets of revenge that are indispensable to maintain the social equilibrium within a group: Revenge fantasies can help offended individuals to cope with disempowerment and feelings of unjust treatment (Yoshimura, 2007). Especially in an environment where institutionalized interventions are absent, like a school high in violence, aggressive retaliatory behavior could be a form of self-justice which includes high awareness for moral standards and equality.

These examples show that revenge goals are embedded in a rich context and numerous factors play into whether or not, and how an individual enacts those goals. Most of the existing work however has concentrated on revenge as one general, undifferentiated construct, of 'infliction of harm in return for a perceived wrong' that is associated with negative outcomes. While acknowledging the negative consequences of revenge, this is an oversimplification of a complex construct. In order to make meaningful inferences from revenge goals to aggressive and maladaptive behavior, the differences and ambiguity of the construct should be accounted for.

Given the complexity of the construct of revenge and its limited exploration in previous studies, a qualitative approach lent itself ideally to investigate the topic.

The present study was a secondary analysis of a qualitative study building on the underlying framework of Lemerise and Arsenio's (2000) modified Social Information Processing Theory (SIP). In contrast to quantitative inquiry which emphasizes objective measurement and a positivist orientation, in general, qualitative research follows a constructionist view of the world (Merriam, 2009). This means, that instead of uncovering absolute truth, the focus lies on how people construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences. The aim of general qualitative data analysis is the identification of recurring patterns in the data; findings are the successfully identified recurring patterns or themes, making qualitative analysis especially suitable for exploring rich contexts (Merriam, 2009). The method of inquiry for the present study was the constant comparative approach used in grounded theory, as adapted for secondary analysis (Heaton, 2004). This study was a supra-analysis of a primary study, exploring new empirical questions that arose from the primary study, but which transcended the scope of the primary analysis, (Heaton, 2004). Finally, youth's own explanations and accounts of their aggressive behaviors are interesting phenomena in their own right (de Castro, Verhulp, & Runions, 2012). More importantly though, they provide insight in their theories of morality and social interaction, providing more informed starting points for relevant interventions. After all success in altering cognitions that lead to a behavior is more likely, if those cognitions and beliefs are targeted which the actors perceive as causes for their problematic behavior. As experts of their worlds, youth might introduce explanations for their behavior that are specific to their daily experience, but which researchers have yet failed to see (de Castro et al., 2012).

By qualitatively examining the narratives of scenarios of revenge in a sample of poor urban youth from high violence neighborhoods, this thesis furthered the understanding of

different motives for endorsing retaliatory goals in a real life context. It illuminated the content of the chosen strategies and explored conditions under which youth chose to act on them. By connecting emerging patterns to their relevant place in the SIP model, the study finally generated knowledge on how to integrate the rich worlds of juveniles into a well-established theoretical framework. This points to new avenues for further focused inquiry and may lead to more targeted interventions.

Review of the Literature

Revenge as a Social Goal

One approach to study children's adjustment is the study of the underlying motivation that drives their behavior (Delveaux & Daniels, 2000). One part of this motivation is the pursuit of certain social goals. Social goals have been defined by Crick and Dodge (1994) as "focused arousal states that function as orientations toward producing (or wanting to produce) particular outcomes" (p.87). Emmons (1996) simply defined them as "objectives that a person strives to attain or avoid" (p. 314).

It is hypothesized that orientation towards a certain goal influences subsequent situational behavior (Delveaux, 2000, Crick and Dodge, 1994). Consequently, one approach to study children's adjustment is to study their social goals (Delveaux & Daniels, 2000). The study of goals seems particularly relevant to understanding aggressive behavior, as it is thought that one reason why children repeatedly have social and behavioral problems with peers could be that they are acting on social goals that are inappropriate for the situation (Adrian, Lyon, Oti, & Tininenko, 2010; Erdley & Asher, 1999); e.g. wanting revenge instead of striving for reconciliation.

Social goals have mainly been studied with school-aged populations at single time points using written vignettes, or more recently, videos (Adrian et al., 2010). Thus, the majority of the

research has been conducted by presenting children with closed answer options in response to vignettes of various hypothetical social situations such as ambiguous provocations or peer conflict (Fontaine, 2010). Individuals are then asked to choose from a list the goal they would pursue in the situation or rate the likelihood that they would pursue different goals (McDonald & Lochman, 2012). Still, a broad body of research indicates that there is an association between children's goals, their strategies in those hypothetical situations and behavioral measures (for reviews see Adrian et al., 2010; or Erdley & Asher, 1999).

Finally, the study of social goals is embedded in the literature regarding Crick and Dodge's (1994) SIP theory and its additions by Lemerise and Arsenio (2000); revenge goals have mainly been examined as part of understanding the SIP of aggressive or rejected children (McDonald & Lochman, 2012).

Social information processing (SIP). Current SIP theory proposes that there are different processing or attribution styles which influence decision-making in social interactions (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). At the core of the initial theory, Crick and Dodge (1994) proposed a heuristic model of a circular series of six steps through which social information is processed, evaluated, and a behavioral response is chosen and enacted. In the first and second steps of the model, individuals encode and interpret different cues in social interactions; e.g. the multiple hints that allow an individual to differentiate sarcasm from a genuine compliment. In the following third step, individuals select and clarify goals for the interaction, i.e. what they want to achieve in the interaction. Based on those objectives, possible responses are constructed (step four) and evaluated based on perceptions of consequences and expected self-efficacy in enacting them (step five). Ultimately a behavioral response is enacted (step six). This final step again requires monitoring of the reaction of the social partner, leading to new cues that need to be encoded and the cycle starts again (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005).

Since the SIP model was proposed, overwhelming evidence has supported the notion that there are individual differences in processing styles and that there is a relation between those different styles and social adjustment (for a Review see Adrian et al., 2010). All steps of the model are affected by the individual's history of social interactions and how this shaped beliefs, biases and schemas, as well as by the individual's temperament and personality traits, resulting in a unique processing style (McDonald & Lochman, 2012). Specific aspects of different processing styles are likely causally involved in deciding on responses in social interactions. It is thought that social competence is connected to processing the entire SIP cycle in a skillful way, while limited or biased processing at any of the steps can lead to socially inappropriate or deviant responses, especially in ambiguous social situations (Adrian et al., 2010; Dodge & Rabiner, 2004; Erdley & Asher, 1999)

Emotions and SIP. One of the limitations of the initial SIP model was the missing role of emotions. Crick and Dodge (1994) indicated that the framework would be enhanced by adding the role of emotion, and Lemerise and Arsenio (2000) integrated emotions and moral values into the latest addition to the model. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of their modified model which served as the underlying framework for this study.

In the new model, all steps in the cycle are influenced by emotion processes. Namely, encoding and interpretation of social cues (steps one and two of the SIP model) are influenced by the nature of the relationship, and attribution of intent depends on the ability to read or identify other's emotions. The selection of goals (step three) is influenced by anger or empathy with the victim; response generation and decision (steps four and five) are not only determined by past interactions, but influenced by pre-existing emotions, emotional representation of past experiences, or capacity to regulate emotions.

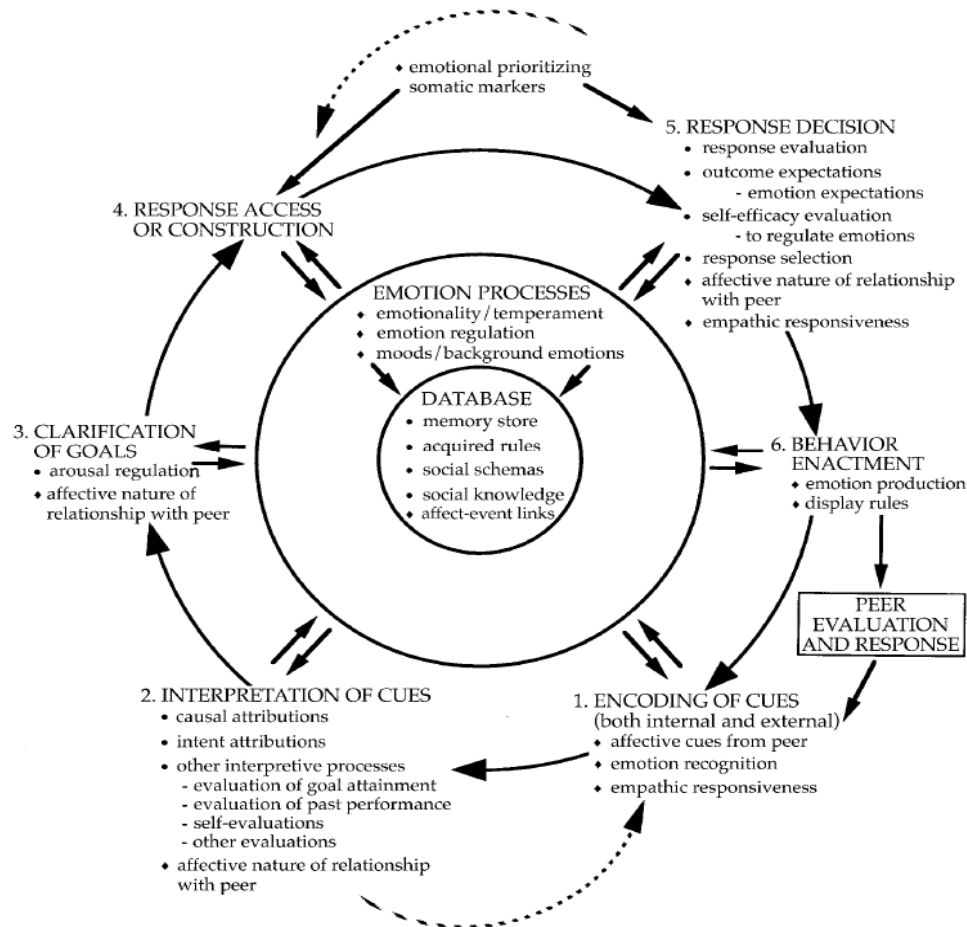


Figure 1 Replication of the integrated model of emotion processes and cognition in social information processing from Lemerise and Arsenio (2000).

Finally enactment (step six) is determined by capacity for emotion control and ability to convey emotions appropriately (Arsenio & Lemerise, 2004; Camodeca & Goossens, 2005; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). Consequently, a growing number of researchers have expanded their models to include emotional and moral aspects which interact with the cognitive processes (Adrian et al., 2010; Dodge & Rabiner, 2004). Research has since shown that emotions influence behavior for example via choice of coping strategies (Goodman & Southam-Gerow, 2010). Anger in particular is a unique predictor of aggressive coping strategies, and retaliatory coping

was linked to indices of maladjustment in vignette-based studies of peer rejection and victimization (e.g. de Castro et al., 2012).

SIP and aggressive behavior.

The importance of beliefs. The SIP model hypothesizes that behavioral responses to a situation are enacted after a choice between different alternative responses has been made (Crick & Dodge, 1994). The goal-directedness of the model implies that this decision-making process includes an evaluation of alternatives according to certain criteria. In addition to general goals, other criteria that have been identified as influencing that decision are feasibility, outcome expectancy, and personal values (Adrian et al., 2010; Dodge & Rabiner, 2004; Erdley & Asher, 1999). As individuals strive to justify their actions, behavioral responses tend to correspond with an individual's moral values and beliefs (Erdley & Asher, 1999). There is evidence that beliefs are concrete and differentiated. For example, Farrell and colleagues (2012) were able to differentiate between youth who predominantly endorsed beliefs against fighting, youth who thought that fighting is sometimes necessary, and youth who supported aggressive behaviors across different contexts. Specific beliefs are matched to the corresponding specific behavior. For example a study with adolescents (Werner & Nixon, 2005) demonstrated that beliefs about relational aggression uniquely predicted relational aggressive behavior, while beliefs about physical aggression only predicted physically aggressive behavior. Another study with early adolescents confirmed that their reasoning about the legitimacy of different forms of aggression was complex and specifically associated with ratings of acceptability of the corresponding behavior in hypothetical scenarios (Goldstein & Tisak, 2010). In a real life setting, attitudes supporting the legitimacy of aggression predicted changes in participants' coping responses and an increasing use of externalizing responses over the course of the school year in a sample of 5th and 6th graders (Terranova, 2009). The study with a rural, South-western sample showed that

continuous victimization did not alter problem-solving abilities as was expected, but instead increased participants' sense that it is legitimate to use aggression in peer interactions. In conclusion, a wealth of research shows that underlying beliefs are important factors associated with specific behaviors. Beliefs about the appropriateness of different behaviors and underlying goals are rooted in community norms, cultural values and personal experience (Adrian et al., 2010), making it crucial to understand and include those contexts in future SIP research.

Different forms of aggression. It is well established that physically aggressive children have been shown to exhibit a variety of processing deficits at all stages of the SIP model relative to their non-aggressive peers (see Adrian et al., 2010 for a review). Because of memory deficits or selective attention, aggressive children have sometimes been found to encode fewer social cues (step one), attribute more hostile intentions (step two) and select more goals which harm the relationship (step three). They tend to rate aggression more favorably and expect thus more positive outcomes from aggressive behavior or might feel more confident enacting it (steps four and five). Deficits in the first steps might influence all subsequent steps of the cyclical process, but each deficit can lead to enactment of aggressive behavior. However, the underlying motivation for such behavior changes at different stages (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005; Delveaux & Daniels, 2000). Accordingly, there are not only differences in SIP of aggressive children compared to non-aggressive children, but different forms of aggression are associated with specific differences in SIP. Namely, there are different patterns for children that tend to be physically versus relationally aggressive and reactively versus proactively aggressive (Adrian et al., 2010).

While there is substantial overlap in the SIP of children who endorse physically and relationally aggressive strategies, both strategies have been associated with different goals. Specifically, children who chose relationally aggressive strategies put value on prosocial goals of

maintaining relationships to the peer-group and avoiding trouble, compared to physically aggressive children who only endorsed negative goals (Delveaux & Daniels, 2000). Results regarding the difference patterns in SIP for reactively versus proactively aggressive children are more mixed (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005). Reactive aggression is a defensive response to perceived provocation. It is a way to defend oneself or retaliate against abuse and is usually accompanied by anger (Crick & Dodge, 1996). In contrast, proactive aggression has been described as an offensive, deliberate and cold-blooded action that is deemed useful to achieve certain goals by the actor. It requires no provocative stimulus and may even involve pleasure or satisfaction (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005). Reactively aggressive children attribute hostile intent to their peers and then respond in an aggressive way, presenting more deficits in the first steps of the SIP when social cues are interpreted. According to this view, proactively aggressive children differ from others in the final stages of the SIP sequence, evaluating aggression more positively as a valid means to reach their goals compared to reactively aggressive children (Crick & Dodge, 1996). Recently however, Camodeca and Goossens (2005) challenged this finding. In a study with 242 Dutch fifth and sixth graders, they found that bullies and victims did not differ in their levels of reactive aggression; they had the same deficits in almost every step of the SIP model. Both groups exhibited a hostile attribution bias, perceiving more threats in ambiguous situations and thus responding with anger and retaliation. These results are consistent with the circular nature of the model in which every step influences the following one, as initially suggested by Crick and Dodge (1994). Camodeca and Goossens (2005) hypothesize that the initial cognitive bias (e.g. when attributing intent) gets carried along the entire cycle, influencing the selection of antisocial goals, expression of anger and creating aggressive responses for all aggressive children. As only bullies engaged in proactive aggression however, this group might pursue different outcome goals.

In summary, aggressive behavior has been associated with a variety of deficits in each step of SIP. However, research also suggests that there are multiple forms of aggressive behavior with different underlying reasons, which are connected to distinct deficits in SIP (Adrian et al., 2010).

Social goals and behavior. In the third step of the SIP model, after having encoded the situational cues, individuals select a goal or desired outcome for the situation. There are multiple goals that children could pursue, ranging from instrumental desires, like obtaining an object, to goals that are more relational or social in nature, like wanting to maintain a friendship with a peer. Extant research illustrates that deficits in the development of effective SIP skills affect an individual's adjustment and that there is a connection to childhood disorders. Both internalizing and externalizing disorders, such as depression, conduct disorder, and oppositional defiant disorder, have been associated with unique pathways of deficits in certain elements of SIP (Adrian et al., 2010). Research with school-age children suggests that socially rejected children seem more likely to make attribution errors when interpreting their peer's intentions in social situations, more often inferring hostile or negative intent (Dodge & Rabiner, 2004). Repeatedly, the selection of pro-social goals was related to the use of pro-social problem solving strategies, while the endorsement of goals centered on hostility, power, control, or revenge was associated with aggressive strategies (Erdley & Asher, 1999). For example: In a study with fourth and fifth graders, participants were asked to rate goals and strategies in conflict situations with a friend showed that the goals children rated highest were consistently related to the selected strategies: relationship-maintenance goals were positively correlated with compromising/accommodation strategies and negatively correlated with hostile and self-interest strategies (Rose & Asher, 1999). These results have been repeated in older samples: A study with a sample of adolescent males showed a consistent pattern of association between a combination of low values on

affiliation goals with high values on social goals of dominance and revenge on one hand, and a wide range of delinquent and substance-using behaviors as well as other adjustment difficulties like peer rejection and low self-esteem on the other (Lochman et al., 1993). In an experimental setting, Eisenberger and colleagues (2004) found in a sample of college psychology students previously assessed previously for individual differences in the endorsement of a negative reciprocity norm, that differences in endorsement of this norm were connected to students' reactions to unfavorable or favorable treatment by a new acquaintance in the experiment.

Conclusion. In summary, there is a broad body of research showing the connection between SIP, social goals, behavior and adjustment. Research has generally supported that socially accepted, rejected, and neglected children differ in their SIP abilities at each step of the SIP process (Adrian et al., 2010). Even though the associations between endorsement of certain goals and behavioral strategies have been primarily correlational in nature, it seems that social goals are likely contributing to how youth respond to and cope with experiences of victimization and aggression (Erdley & Asher, 1999).

However, it remains unclear whether deficits in SIP precede or follow social rejection, as our knowledge regarding the direction of the connection between social competence and social status is limited. Still, goals are an important theoretical locus for interventions with youth, and many prevention programs try to change the goals youth have for their social encounters (Adrian et al., 2010).

Quantitative Research about Revenge Goals

Defining reciprocity, retaliation and revenge goals. Before discussing findings of research on social goals of revenge or retaliation, it is first necessary to define the construct. It is safe to assume that endorsing revenge goals is connected to beliefs about reciprocity and expectations about general rules of behavior in others. If it is proportional, revenge can be seen

as a personal response to unjust treatment which restores equity, thereby putting the world back into balance (Gollwitzer & Denzler, 2009). The belief in such proportionality could be associated to beliefs about reciprocity in general. In that sense, *neutral* reciprocity refers to beliefs about mutual exchange in the sense of *giving back what you receive*. This encompasses the belief to return favorable treatment; a trait generally viewed as positive. When referring to revenge goals in the literature however, especially in the context of aggressive behavior, studies usually focus exclusively on the negative side of this construct: the belief in *payback of unfavorable or unjust treatment with similarly unfavorable treatment* (Yoshimura, 2007).

In a study with a sample of psychology college students, Eisenberger and colleagues (2004) showed that beliefs favoring the reciprocation of unfavorable treatment form a construct that is distinct from beliefs favoring the reciprocation of favorable treatment, suggesting that people possess a distinctive set of beliefs concerning the appropriateness of returning unfavorable treatment. The study also found that there was little relationship between endorsement of positive and negative reciprocity beliefs, but a strong relationship between beliefs about benevolence of people and positive reciprocity and between malevolence of people and negative reciprocity beliefs, respectively (Eisenberger et al., 2004). Finally, the study showed that negative reciprocity norms exist independently and are different from personality traits of need for dominance, or impulsivity, which might also heighten a desire for vengeance, but are positively connected to a self-assessed tendency toward anger in everyday life (Eisenberger et al., 2004). It is necessary to bear in mind that this study was conducted with college students, and there is no current knowledge whether children and adolescents show the same difference in belief systems (yet). However, there is evidence that there is a distinction between general aggression beliefs, retaliation beliefs and their connection to aggressive behavior in children and adolescents (Amjad & Skinner, 2008). In a study with elementary

school children, Huesmann and Guerra (1997) found that there is a difference between situation-specific (“It is okay to hit others if they hit you first”) and general (“It is generally okay to hit others”) normative beliefs of aggression.

In conclusion, it seems that even though studies of adolescents are still missing, taken together with other evidence, the results of the study strengthen the practice of treating revenge goals as a separate construct from goals centered on justice and the returning of favorable treatment (Eisenberger et al., 2004).

Overview of quantitative studies. The majority of research on revenge goals and vengeful behavior has been conducted on non-community samples. Including qualitative studies, the special samples include mainly aggressive youth (de Castro et al., 2012), but also adjudicated (Adamshick, 2010), incarcerated (McMurrin, Jinks, Howells, & Howard, 2010), assault-injured (Copeland-Linder et al., 2012), and homeless youth (Tyler & Johnson, 2004). Special samples of adults include street criminals (Jacobs, 2004; Stewart, Schreck, & Simons, 2006), “drug robbers” (Jacobs, Topalli, & Wright, 2000), victims of crime (Orth, Montada, & Maercker, 2006) and even police officers (Cancino & Enriquez, 2004). When concentrating on general population samples, there is an extensive body of knowledge regarding revenge goals and vengefulness in college students’ relationships with friends, romantic partners or roommates (e.g. Eisenberger et al., 2004; McDonald & Asher, 2012), romantic partnerships in adults (e.g. Boon, Deveau, & Alibhai, 2009), retaliation in the workplace (e.g. Skarlicki & Folger, 1997) and vengeful driver aggression (e.g. Hennessy & Wiesensthal, 2004). Only a limited number of quantitative studies have concentrated on non-institutionalized youth from community samples. Due to that fact, studies with non-institutionalized special youth samples will be included in this review.

Community samples in the quantitative literature mainly constitute of lower middle class and middle class elementary- and middle-school children from the U.S., Canada, Finland, and

Holland. The age groups included 4th and 5th graders, (Erdley & Asher, 1996; MacEvoy & Asher, 2012; Rose & Asher, 1999) 4th through 6th graders (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005; Chung & Asher, 1996; Delveaux & Daniels, 2000) and aggressive 4th through 7th graders (McDonald & Lochman, 2012), respectively. The data on high school youth is more limited with only two studies (Lochman et al., 1993; Yeager, Trzesniewski, Tirri, Nokelainen, & Dweck, 2011), one of which only looked at aggressive boys (Lochman et al., 1993). Only one study has been conducted with a diverse, urban U.S. sample (Yeager et al., 2011). Distinctions in revenge goals by different developmental stages of children or adolescents have not yet been investigated.

Previous research on revenge goals in youth mainly has concentrated on the connection of revenge, alone or in combination with other negative motivations, and aggressive behavior (for an overview see for example McDonald & Lochman, 2012). Most studies have been cross-sectional, with the exception of one study that examined trajectories of revenge goals over time (for an overview see e.g. McDonald & Lochman, 2012). One study used an experimental design to assess whether altering normative beliefs influenced the desire for vengeance (Yeager et al., 2011). Similar to studies assessing goals in general, all quantitative studies besides the experiment assessed revenge goals using vignettes describing hypothetical conflicts or victimizations in a peer context (for an overview see Erdley & Asher, 1999).

Underlying cognitions as motivation for revenge.

Normative beliefs about revenge and aggressive behavior. Individuals who believe in retaliation or who view taking revenge as a justifying motive see their own aggressive behavior as justifiable, and are thus at an increased risk for engaging in such aggressive behavior (Copeland-Linder et al., 2012). As mentioned above, due to the developmental changes in adolescence, this connection might be especially strong for adolescents, making this a crucial stage for understanding such beliefs. While there is only limited research regarding adolescents'

beliefs about revenge, there is evidence that there is a connection between such beliefs and behavior in younger samples. For example, Huesmann and Guerra (1997) found in a study with elementary school children from poor urban neighborhoods, that individual differences in normative beliefs about violence predicted later differences in aggressive behavior. Similarly, Farrell and colleagues (2012) found in a diverse urban sample of 6th graders, that different patterns of beliefs about aggression correlated differently with perceived effectiveness of both aggressive and nonviolent behaviors, parental messages regarding violence, and measures of empathy. Contradicting the notion that parental messages lose importance through adolescence, in one of the few studies about retaliatory attitudes in adolescence, Copeland-Linder and colleagues (2012) found in their sample of 10-15 year old assault-injured African American youth, that the strongest predictors of youth's retaliatory attitudes were their perceptions of their parent's attitudes towards fighting. However, the same study also found that this relationship decreased in strength for older youth, with the older participants being overall more likely to endorse positive attitudes towards retaliation in both genders (Copeland-Linder et al., 2012). It is important to note though, that this study was not performed in a community sample, but with African American youth presenting in an emergency room of two large urban hospitals with a peer-assault injury. Only one third of the sample was female (Copeland-Linder et al., 2012).

While this evidence and “a myriad of [other] studies have linked approval of retaliation with aggressive behavior” (Copeland-Linder et al., 2012), it is important to state that beliefs about revenge are not identical to beliefs about the appropriateness of aggression in general, and that different beliefs are differentially associated with behavior: In a study with 118 children and adolescents in England, Amjad and Skinner (2008) were able to differentiate between three different subtypes of normative beliefs about aggression -excessive retaliation beliefs, equal retaliation beliefs, and beliefs about general aggression. While all three subtypes were associated

with behavioral aggression, the study showed that endorsing different subtypes explained the inhibiting effect of restraint due to self-censure on the severity of aggressive behavior.

The importance of implicit theories. Although research has concentrated on the importance of normative beliefs, less is known about underlying determinants of those beliefs, and their susceptibility to change. One of the few sources of empirical knowledge addressing this issue was conducted by Yeager and colleagues (2011). Across three different correlational and experimental studies with multiple samples from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds, Yeager and colleagues (Yeager et al., 2011) found a consistent robust relation between implicit theories and the desire for vengeance. Implicit theories are sets of beliefs about the world, which for the purposes of the described study were divided into an entity theory (believing in fixed character traits, e.g. some people are bad and will never change), versus an incremental theory (believing in malleable traits, e.g. people can change). The authors showed across all samples of adolescents that a normative belief in fixed character traits was related to a greater desire for vengeance. The experimental part of the study additionally revealed that participants who changed their beliefs after learning an incremental theory of potential for change reduced the desire for revenge in response to the experimental peer victimization situation (Yeager et al., 2011).

Taken together with the aforementioned literature regarding the connection between underlying cognitions, social goals and behavior, the evidence suggests that implicit theories influence the desire for revenge and normative beliefs about the appropriateness of violence and revenge, and this in turn influences how individuals behave when they encounter conflict situations. The literature also indicates that there is a difference between general beliefs about the appropriateness of aggression, and beliefs about retaliation. Thus, these studies highlight the

importance of understanding underlying cognitions when trying to conceptualize aggressive and vengeful behavior.

Revenge goals and adjustment. The adult literature suggests that the desire for revenge can be regarded as a maladaptive coping reaction in response to experienced injustice (Orth et al., 2006). The literature regarding revenge goals in youth illustrates this point by showing that pursuing revenge goals repeatedly has been associated with negative adjustment outcomes apart from aggressive behavior. For example in their sample of high-school aged boys, Lochman, Wayland and White (1993) found that those boys who rated goals of dominance and revenge highly while giving low ratings to affiliation goals were more likely to have committed a crime against a person, had higher levels of drug and alcohol involvement, had lower self-esteem and were more rejected by peers. In younger samples, retaliation goals are associated with lower peer acceptance and seem to have damaging effects on children's friendships (Erdley & Asher, 1999; Rose & Asher, 1999). Specifically, endorsement of retaliation goals predicted having fewer and poorer quality friendships, with higher conflict ratings and lower ratings on positive friendship qualities like caring, companionship or intimate exchange etc. by the best friend (Rose & Asher, 1999). Additionally, children who are primarily focused on retaliation goals are less prosocial in everyday life and are more likely to attribute hostile intentions underlying their peer's behavior (Erdley & Asher, 1996). Taken together, children who prominently endorse revenge goals are socially more rejected and isolated, placing them at risk for a variety of emotional and behavioral adjustment problems.

Studies also show, however, that revenge goals are endorsed at similar levels by children who differentially endorsed or rejected other goals, resulting in groups with different behavioral and coping patterns. For example, the use of pro-social coping strategies is thought to be associated with relationship-maintaining and other pro-social goals while being negatively

correlated with revenge goals. However, a study with Canadian 4th through 6th graders found that there was a subset of relationally aggressive children who did endorse revenge goals in combination with relationship-maintaining goals and avoiding trouble (Delveaux & Daniels, 2000). The authors suggested that those children might believe that relationally aggressive strategies are most efficient in achieving goals of self-interest, control and revenge while simultaneously keeping them out of trouble and allowing them to maintain good relationships with the rest of the peer group (Delveaux & Daniels, 2000) resulting in a unique association pattern of revenge goals with a specific behavior in this group of children.

Similarly, a study with 242 Dutch 5th and 6th graders showed that both bullies and victims find it equally easy to act aggressively and share similar levels of endorsement of retaliatory goals (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005). The study also highlighted, that the two groups, while sharing the retaliatory goals, did so out of different motivations: The authors hypothesized that the Victims may resolve to select goals which destroy the relationship either because they are not capable of behaving pro-socially, or as a result of exasperation and frustration, or because they think it is a way of defending themselves from the bullies' attacks. The proactively aggressive bully group on the other hand may use retaliation as another means to reach their goals, -for example obtaining higher status or an object- or because they simply find it easy and useful for their purpose (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005).

The results discussed in his chapter show that while retaliation goals are generally associated with adjustment difficulties, endorsement of such goals alone might not be a sufficient marker to make inferences about specific behaviors. In contrast, the evidence supports the fact that the relationship between revenge goals and behavior is complex, and highlights that there are multiple possible underlying reasons for children to endorse retaliation goals; a difference which is mirrored in different behavioral patterns. Importantly, most evidence about connections

between revenge goals and behavior is correlational, making it impossible to infer causal relationships and identify whether revenge goals are risk factors or outcomes.

Trajectories of revenge goals. Evidence about the causal pathways from revenge goals to behavior is further restricted by the fact that most research has simply accumulated cross-sectional evidence regarding the endorsement of certain goals and corresponding behaviors; to date there has been only one study examining the behavioral trajectories of revenge goals over time (McDonald & Lochman, 2012). In this study, a sub-sample of 240 4th graders who scored in the top quartile of aggression ratings by their teachers in a larger study was followed over 5 years. The study examined how revenge goal trajectories related to concurrent aggressive behavior over 4th through 7th grade and assessed adjustment outcomes one year later in 8th grade. The youth were presented with vignettes to assess their revenge goal endorsement and fearful reactivity and outcome expectancies, self-reports assessed deregulation, and teacher ratings were used for behavioral data on aggression and adjustment outcomes in 8th grade. Results showed that there were 3 trajectories similar to those found in the aggression literature: A low-stable group (80.42%), an increasing group (7.92%) and a decreasing group (11.67%). While the decreasing and increasing groups both differed from the low-stable group in outcome expectancies for aggressive behavior and dysregulation, the two groups differed from each other only on fearful reactivity. The results comparing how revenge goal trajectory overlapped with aggressive behavior trajectory were mixed: Revenge group membership overlapped with corresponding proactive aggression patterns, but there was no overall effect for reactive aggression. Outcomes in 8th grade showed that youth in the increasing trajectory group were more reactively aggressive and more depressed compared to both other groups, and rated lower on social skills compared to the low stable group.

In conclusion, for most children revenge goals were stable over time, suggesting that having continually high or increasing revenge motivations seems to be quite unusual, even in an aggressive sample. It is noteworthy that increase in beliefs that aggression would gain them rewards and showing more behavioral dysregulation, increased the likelihood of children being in the increasing OR decreasing trajectory group (McDonald & Lochman, 2012). The authors unfortunately did not discuss implications for this ambiguity. The study provided evidence that children who increase in their revenge goals over time show poorer social functioning, are more reactively aggressive and seem to be more depressed than their peers (as rated by their teachers). It also seems noteworthy that all children endorsed revenge goals to some degree, underlining the fact that having some revenge motivations might not be maladaptive per se. Finally, while the study succeeded in showing that there are different revenge goal trajectories, and that those changes sometimes mirror aggressive behavior patterns, there were also several limitations: Aggression was assessed using teacher reports, and due to its covert nature there is thus no data on relational aggression. Also, the internal reliabilities on some scales were low. However, the major limitation of the study in establishing a temporal relationship between revenge goals and behavior consists of the fact that only children who already showed increased aggressive behavior were eligible to participate. Whether and how revenge goals predict behavior in non-aggressive children remains unclear. Thus, even though the empirical work of this longitudinal study supports the theoretical notion, there is still no evidence that having revenge goals specifically predicts later maladjustment in a population sample. Nevertheless, the results indicate that even within children who exhibit aggressive behavior, there are nuances of underlying motivations which result in different trajectories of revenge goals over time, and that those trajectories have effects on behavioral patterns, beliefs and adjustment outcomes (McDonald & Lochman, 2012).

Revenge goals and aggressive behavior. Most research on revenge goals in youth has been assessed in the context of aggressive behavior. Thus, studies often sort community samples according to their aggressive behavior and only use subsamples of (highly) aggressive youth or compared them to their non-aggressive peers. One of the studies looking at a subsample of aggressive versus nonaggressive youth is Lochman and colleagues' (1993) earlier study of adolescent boys' (mean age 15) relationship between their social goals and their adjustment and social problem solving. Not surprisingly, the authors found that aggressive boys differed from their peers in that they put higher value on revenge and dominance goals, and that this choice was related to their problem-solving strategies. More interestingly, this was only half of the story. The authors found that aggressive boys did not just prefer revenge goals; they valued revenge and other goals the same, while non-aggressive youth had a clear hierarchy of their goals. This could mean that a subset of aggressive boys is not one-sided or limited in their response, but might have difficulties in choosing their response to a situation. The difference in their processing of social information could in fact be that they value revenge as one of many equally valid options and not something bad, thus possibly experiencing more inner conflict in the same social interactions (Lochman et al., 1993).

While Lochman and colleagues' study (1993) has expanded on our view of the relationship between revenge goals and aggressive behavior, a more recent study has challenged the goal orientation of the SIP model in aggressive children as a whole (de Castro et al., 2012). According to the authors, even though the SIP model hypothesizes goal-directedness of aggressive behavior, aggressive children seem to feel driven by uncontrollable anger and rage, and those emotions make them act aggressively even when this will sabotage their goals. Thus, even if such behavior might subconsciously be linked to goals, the authors state that aggressive behavior does not seem to be experienced as goal directed. In order to investigate this

hypothesis, de Castro et al. (2012) studied revenge and other social goals in a Dutch sample of highly aggressive boys and a control group of non-aggressive peers. The authors let the children explain their responses to ambiguous provocation scenarios in their own words, instead of forcing them to choose between closed options like in previous vignette studies of goals. Results showed that aggressive boys used significantly more emotional explanations than the control group, and rarely referred to specific goals. Furthermore, when explaining aggressive solutions, all boys referred mainly to emotions, not goals or expected outcomes (de Castro et al., 2012). This corresponds with results from a study in a community sample of 4th and 5th graders, where the more angry children said they would be, the more they endorsed aggressive strategies and revenge goals, and the less important relationship maintenance and problem solving strategies were rated (MacEvoy & Asher, 2012). Finally, even though aggressive boys favored aggressive solutions, they actually expected less positive relational outcomes as a result of their behavior than the control group. Thus, the authors conclude that the study did not find support that aggressive behavior is perceived as outcome goal directed (de Castro et al., 2012).

Interestingly, the one goal that did appear in the responses to explain aggressive behavior was taking revenge; not as an outcome, but as a moral value. More than control youth, aggressive boys were concerned with adhering to specific moral norms that promote aggressive behavior, summarized as ‘there is an obligation to get even,’ ‘fear of negative consequences is weakness,’ and ‘revenge prevents conflicts in the future’ (de Castro et al., 2012). This finding is interesting in light of one recent study with adults that showed that higher endorsement of revenge norms in men, not differences in trait anger, was one mediator that accounted for the difference in physical aggression between genders (Wilkowski, Hartung, Crowe, & Chai, 2012). The authors in the de Castro et al. (2012) youth study hypothesize that considering the backgrounds of the boys -which consist of mostly coercive families and peer groups that operate

under such norms- a moral code concentrating on revenge norms might be functionally adaptive to survive in systems where forgiving, compromising and fear of conflicts are punished. This interpretation also corresponds to the finding that while most boys explained aggressive behavior with negative emotions, a subgroup of boys seemed to enjoy aggressive behavior and connected it with positive emotions. For them, taking revenge might instill a sense of pride for adhering to the moral code and for doing ‘the right thing’ (de Castro et al., 2012).

While opening up a new line of explanation for the connection between revenge and aggressive behavior, a limitation of the de Castro et al. (2012) study is that no age differences in respondents were assessed. The participants’ age ranged from 7 to 13 years, making this a comparably young sample. Due to the profound improvements in metacognition during late childhood and early adolescence (Piaget, 1965; Steinberg, 2005), it can be hypothesized that there could be changes in goal directedness, with improvements as adolescents grow older, warranting follow-up studies with older youth. Also, because only boys’ responses were investigated, there is no knowledge whether these results translate to girls. Finally, the data analysis strategy consisted of chi-square tests with dichotomized variables indicating whether or not an explanation was given at least once versus never and group membership (aggressive versus non-aggressive). It seems that a considerable amount of valuable qualitative information regarding individual choice of explanation as well as variation of those choices across situations was not fully investigated. The authors conducted a qualitative analysis of responses, but the results of that analysis were short and the technique used was not disclosed.

Gender differences. Much of the literature on aggression and revenge goals has concentrated on samples of boys. Most of the studies conducted with both genders have revealed gender differences in youth’s strategies and goals in vignette studies of conflict or ambiguous provocation situations (Erdley & Asher, 1999). For example, Rose and Asher (1999) found that

boys gave higher ratings to instrumental/control and retaliation goals compared to girls, while girls gave higher ratings to relationship maintenance goals compared to boys. Moreover, boys endorsed self-interest assertion and hostile strategies more strongly compared to girls and girls endorsed accommodating/compromising strategies more frequently than boys. Taken together, there is a broad body of research which indicates that there are gender differences in revenge goal endorsement in the context of children's peer relationships. Girls seem to be more skilled in conflict resolution in friendships, while boys are more angry, hostile and aggressive in their strategies and pursue more maladaptive goals, like revenge, in their friendships (For a review see Erdley & Asher, 1999).

The only results deviating from this pattern comes from a recent study by MacEvoy and Asher with 270 4th and 5th graders (2012). In this study boys and girls showed identical levels of revenge goals and aggressive strategies in response to violation of core friendship expectations, like betrayal, unreliability, or failure to provide emotional support or help. However, girls perceived the core violations to be much more severe than boys, attributing more negative intent and reporting higher levels of anger. Flipping the perspective, this means the boys endorsed revenge goals and aggressive strategies just as much as the girls, even though they did not feel very angry and did not interpret the transgressions as negatively. Interpreted that way, even this finding supports the majority of the literature which found gender differences in endorsement of retaliation and revenge goals (MacEvoy & Asher, 2012). In their study about retaliatory beliefs in an older sample of assault-injured African American youth, Copeland-Linder and colleagues (2012) found different relationships between attitudes and behavior among boys and girls: Boys endorsed more retaliatory attitudes if they were affiliating with aggressive peers, even though endorsement of those attitudes did not influence their own aggressive behavior. On the other hand, peer's aggressiveness did not influence girls' attitudes, but if they had highly retaliatory

attitudes, they were more likely to be aggressive (Copeland-Linder et al., 2012). Across studies girls' high endorsement of retaliatory goals or attitudes is rarer than for boys; girls especially do not seem to adopt such beliefs just as a result of peer culture as readily as boys. It could be that endorsement of such norms for girls is connected with more deviance per se, and that it thus correlates more with other deviant behaviors like aggression.

In conclusion, gender differences in endorsement of retaliation and aggressive strategies have been found repeatedly and reliably. The study by MacEvoy and Asher (2012) especially underlines the fact that it might not be that genders differ by their response to conflict, but that an increased desire for revenge is connected to different volatile situations across genders.

Limitations of quantitative research. One of the biggest limitations of the quantitative research on revenge goals is the fact that studies use vignette situations with closed answer options. This approach has several drawbacks: First, while attempting to provide a standardized research condition by prompting all participants with the same hypothetical situation, it in fact does not control for the interpretation of this situation by the participant (Farrell et al., 2010). For example: The vignette prompt might say *the student in the cafeteria line behind you pumps into you, what would you do?* As suggested by the SIP model adapted by Lemerise and Arsenio (2000), the answer to this question likely depends on who the participant assumes said student is, if it is a friend, a personal enemy, somebody unknown, a girl or boy. Second, there could be a number of environmental constraints that would prevent youth from acting the way they would want to. Picking between forced goal-directed answers misses all those aspects, and vignettes thus only provide a very limited standardized measure of revenge goals. The only exception to this practice is the study by de Castro and colleagues (2012). In this study the authors presented the participants with standardized peer-conflict situations but let them elaborate on what they would do and how they judged different given solutions in an open-ended format instead of

using forced choices between different goals. To complement the quantitative part of the study, the open-ended answers were then coded using a qualitative approach. While this approach yields more nuanced data, the design of the study still used standardized situations and in some cases given solutions. While this is more informative, unfortunately the published analyses did not fully report the qualitative information, and the authors do not disclose their technique or give detailed accounts of their qualitative findings.

Qualitative research about aggression and revenge

The role of social cognitions in qualitative research. In an attempt to disentangle the above mentioned limitations of research with vignette situations, Farrell and colleagues (2010) conducted a series of qualitative studies with low socioeconomic status (SES) urban middle-schoolers to explore factors associated with choosing a specific behavior in response to vignette situations (for an overview see Farrell et al., 2010). The studies apply the methodology of the social cognitive framework used in the above discussed research about social goals and aggressive behavior, but add an open ended format. Similar to the qualitative part of the Dutch study of highly aggressive boy's cognitions (de Castro et al., 2012), in one study Farrell et al. (2010) had youth respond in an open format to peer-conflict situations that had been validated in previous studies and elaborate on the reasons for choosing either violent or non-violent behaviors. The analysis showed that the children mentioned an abundance of factors that influenced their choice to react in those situations that have not been accounted for in quantitative studies. Namely, differential interpretations of the depicted situation, as well as numerous environmental factors from their daily lives, including school climate, parental messages about fighting influence the behavioral response to the hypothetical situations. The study also highlighted that choosing non-violent behaviors alone is not always a sign of good

adjustment, because it does not account for the effectiveness or other important characteristics of the response.

There has been only one qualitative study that explicitly explored cognitions using the SIP framework: a mixed methods dissertation from Canada, comparing a sample of 51 high school girls with 48 violent offender girls (Pleydon, 2008). Similarly to previous research, the quantitative results showed that young offenders reported significantly more verbal and physical aggression, perceived the world as more hostile, and valued aggression, retaliation and self-defense more highly than non-offending girls, but did not differ in relational aggression from the high school girls. Follow-up interviews with 6 high school and 6 young offenders showed that in both groups, personal experiences of aggression were related to both hypothetical and actual reasons for peer aggression. The girls legitimized this aggression by highlighting that victims deserved it, focusing on their own anger, and being protective. Overall, the findings support the notion that aggressive behavior is connected to pre-existing schemas or underlying normative beliefs.

Overview of qualitative studies with youth samples. In the following overview I will discuss qualitative research of aggression and retaliation in youth samples, but due to the limited number of qualitative studies in community samples, I will include special youth samples such as physically aggressive girls, male violent offenders and homeless youth. However, the discussion will focus on the studies with community samples. Table 1 presents an overview of methods, samples and main study aims of qualitative studies describing aggression and retaliation in adolescents. One study strived to develop a typology of different types of retaliation by examining girls' strategies in response to social aggression, categorizing different volatile events and corresponding responses (Kozlowski & Warber, 2010). While providing a good first attempt in categorizing different types of retaliation and volatile events, the typology is limited to a very

Table 1

Overview of method of data collection, data analysis, sample and aim of qualitative studies on aggression and retaliation in adolescents

Study (by author)	Method of data collection	Method of data analysis	Sample	Aim of the study
Adamshick (2010)	Open-ended unstructured interviews and field notes	Interpretive phenomenological study	6 girls Age 13-17 Special sample of physically aggressive girls placed in an alternative school	Describing marginalized girls' experience of girl to girl aggression in their own words, focusing on their life worlds and relationship contexts.
Farrell et al. (2010)	Structured Interviews using open ended answers for vignette situations	Constant comparative analysis, open and axial coding	106 youth 6th and 7th graders Age 11-15 Urban sample with low SES, 97% African American	Exploring environmental factors within family, peer, school, neighborhood and societal domains that influence violent versus non-violent responses to problem situations with peers.
Harris & Walton (2009)	Written narratives about experience with personal conflict, collected as part of an activity relating to a non-violence education program	Grounded theory approach	364 youth 4-6th graders Urban low SES, 65% African American	Investigating the connection between level of violence, narrative skills and conflict management strategies in written narratives of youth.
Kozlowski & Warber (2010)	Semi-structured qualitative Interviews using funnel sequence	Critical process analysis, involving stages of description, analysis and interpretation	15 girls Age 10 and 16 Convenience sample from university staff daughters and at-risk after-school program	Exploring what topics ignite retaliation and what retaliation strategies are used by victims of social aggression among girls and building a typology of retaliation strategies in response to different incidents among adolescent girls.
Letendre & Smith (2011)	4 Focus groups, 2 1-hour sessions per group	Grounded theory methods, including open and axial coding	20 girls 13 in 7th and 7 in 8th grade Sample from public school mainly African American	Developing a clear understanding of triggers and other factors for girl fighting in middle school girls, as well as possible solutions to the problem.
Ness (2004)	1 year of, observations, field notes and talks while immersing in the culture	Ethnographic study	15 girls from poor Philadelphia neighborhoods followed closely, plus data from relatives, friends, police and teachers etc.	Exploring the resort to violence, especially "street fighting," by inner-city girls, and rich description of the external factors that impinge on them
Tyler & Johnson (2010)	In-depth semi-structured interviews	Open-ended coding, explaining findings using an integration of pre-existing theories	40 youth 16 male, 24 female Age 19-21 Sample of homeless youth from the Midwest	Accounts of paybacks to explore why some individuals are at higher risk for victimization compared to others; why some offend while others do not; and why criminal victims are likely to retaliate
Wilkinson & Carr (2008)	In-depth semi-structured interviews	Grounded theory approach Event analysis	416 young men Age 16-24 Sample are violent offenders from high violence NYC neighborhoods recruited in jail, hospital or on the street	Descriptions of 344 violent events involving guns to investigate under what circumstances violent reactions of youth exposed to intense community violence are adaptive or transactional.

particular convenience sample of girls and responses to relational aggression only. The remainder of the studies is more descriptive in nature, illuminating differential contexts and backgrounds of aggression and retaliation without an attempt to develop a theory about different categories of violent or retaliatory responses.

The particular role of girls. It is apparent from this overview that research on multiple types of aggression in girls is increasing (Adamshick, 2010; Kozlowski & Warber, 2010; Letendre & Smith, 2011; Ness, 2004; Pleydon, 2008). The literature about aggression in girls has traditionally focused on relational aggression (Ness, 2004), but recently there has been an increase in concern about physical aggression in girls and several of the studies have focused on this form of aggression (Adamshick, 2010; Ness, 2004). Without explicitly focusing on retaliation or revenge, all studies underline the fact that girls' reasons to fight are complex, that there are gender differences in aggressive behavior, but that contrary to general belief, there seems to be a trend for physically aggressive girls to become more similar to physically aggressive boys (Adamshick, 2010; Letendre & Smith, 2011; Ness, 2004). (Adamshick, 2010; Kozlowski & Warber, 2010; Letendre & Smith, 2011; Ness, 2004; Pleydon, 2008) Interestingly though, this does not seem to hold true for all samples, and the studies repeatedly describe clear cultural and class differences in fighting behavior of girls. For example, in White middle class samples girl fighting tends to be viewed as non-feminine behavior and is thus looked down upon by girls themselves and heavily discouraged by the environment. Thus, in much of the research in middle class samples, physically aggressive girls are described as maladjusted overall, in conflict with normative gender roles, unpopular and socially isolated (Adamshick, 2010; Letendre & Smith, 2011; Pleydon, 2008). The qualitative studies with a population sample from a high-violence neighborhood (Ness, 2004) as well as adjudicated girls in an alternative school (Adamshick, 2010) both with urban, low SES, Hispanic and African American girls, paint a

different picture: In those samples, physical aggression was viewed as normative and was encouraged by the mothers as a way to instill a sense of independence and ensure self-protection of their daughters. The girls described having the reputation to be a good fighter to enhance status, self-esteem, popularity and used physical aggression to express identity, to find attachment, connection and friendship, and as a means of self-protection through deterrence. This clear class difference even emerged in the small convenience sample by Kozlowski and Warber (2010), where only the at-risk girls spoke about physical retaliation in response to relational aggression. In the focus group study by Letendre and Smith (2011), the authors had difficulties recruiting White girls because they denied being involved in and having a problem with fighting.

In summary, traditionally girl aggression and retaliation have been investigated in the context of social aggression. However, there is more recent qualitative research exploring the circumstances of physical aggression in girls. Studies consistently have shown clear class differences in employment of physical violence and unearthed a ‘code of the street’ mentality (Stewart et al., 2006) of marginalized inner-city girls from high-violent neighborhoods which seems very similar to findings among their male counterparts. These findings underscore that aggression and retaliation are multifaceted, serve multiple purposes, depend on numerous outside factors, and can in certain situations even appear adaptive.

Research in samples of young men. The qualitative literature about aggression and retaliation in boys is more limited and generally concentrated on older, legally deviant samples (Tyler & Johnson, 2004; Wilkinson & Carr, 2008). Studies usually focus on the ‘code of the street’ of offender subgroups and the spread of urban violence through violent retaliation patterns which tends to perpetrate conflicts and increase victimization by adding new reasons to retaliate and becoming the victim of retaliation (Stewart et al., 2006). In regards to revenge specifically, a

study of 416 young violent offenders showed that of the recalled violent events involving guns, those with revenge as an underlying cause were much more likely to escalate: in 94% of the cases a gun was present in a revenge event, it also was fired (Wilkinson & Carr, 2008).

All studies discussed so far focus on reasons of how, why and when individuals in different circumstances retaliate. Still, even when factoring in all currently known variables, the majority of individuals in those situations are more likely not to retaliate than to retaliate (Garot, 2009). One noteworthy exception is Garot's (2009) ethnographic study of 46 young men who want to retaliate, but abstain from doing it due to structural constraints.

Research in a community sample. There is one qualitative study in a community sample: Harris and Walton's (2009) population study of 4th through 6th graders regarding the management of conflict in urban schools. While a number of qualitative studies have attempted to expand on hypothetical conflict vignettes and give children a voice to account for their own conflict experiences, as discussed above most of this research has used probes to elicit specific information about conflicts and aggression. The Harris and Walton (2009) study expanded this approach by using narrative data in the form of children's written accounts of an actual experience. According to the authors, when children create narratives of conflict they take an evaluative stance and seek to convince others of the moral justifiability of their and other's actions. Story-telling thus helps in establishing the self as a moral actor. Working from a grounded theory approach, the authors coded 364 narratives collected as part of a writing exercise in a non-violence intervention in two inner-city elementary schools. Teachers asked students to write about a conflict that really happened to them, recounting it from beginning to end. Those stories then were sorted into categories that emerged from the data. In their sample of younger children, the authors identified 6 themes; one of them being retaliation, defined as "participant reacting to an antagonist's provocation with a comparable or escalated act of

aggression or threatening to do so” (Harris & Walton, 2009, p. 294). A relationship emerged between response to conflict and narrative skills, moral evaluations, descriptions of mental states, emotions and intentions; mentioning retaliation in the narrative was associated with a lowered likelihood of discussing internal states of the actors or of displaying a strong narrative form. Overall, this secondary data analysis approach allowed the authors to explore how children construe their experienced conflicts and how they make sense of them, providing crucial insight into the applied conflict resolution of those children.

Summary and Gaps in the Literature

The large body of quantitative literature, while providing insights into the cognitive processes of children and adolescents who pursue revenge goals, and their association with numerous indicators for maladaptation or negative mental health outcomes, is also limited by its uniform use of closed answer formats in response to vignette situations. Farrell et al.’s (2010) study has shown the limitations of that approach. Yet, Farrell et al. (2012) have not assessed explanations for desires of revenge in their study. De Castro et al. (2012) investigated the desire for revenge, using a similar approach of open ended answers to vignette situations, but the Dutch sample was limited to a group of highly aggressive boys, and the qualitative analysis was rudimentary.

In contrast, qualitative studies show that there are variations in the desire for retaliation, and that if we want to understand this variation, we need to use methods that go beyond vignette studies (Jacobs, 2004). The qualitative studies show that desiring and exerting revenge and aggression is embedded in numerous personal, contextual, and emotional as well as cognitive or instrumental factors. Some of them have been suggested by quantitative research, but numerous factors, especially in regards to girls’ goals for using physically violent strategies, were not previously described or understood in quantitative studies. Qualitative studies have been

exploring contexts in which revenge is not only the result of distorted reactions to situations due to social deficits, but has given individuals a voice to illuminate situations where, for example, following a code of honor is seen as adaptive strategy to negotiate highly violent environments. Retaliation can be an answer to failing social institutions, an attempt to maintain safety and friendship, a desire to reach equilibrium, or a motivation to inflict pain and establish or maintain power. In summary, this provides further evidence that there are different forms of revenge, and that they are connected with different deficits (or none at all) in social functioning and behavior. In summary the qualitative studies have illuminated there is “more to the story” than vignette-assessed goals, but there has yet to be a study of revenge and retaliation in a non-deviant population sample of both boys and girls concentrating on revenge goals.

Both quantitative and qualitative studies have, with few exceptions (cf., Garot, 2009), concentrated on individuals who enacted revenge goals. There is a dearth of studies investigating reasons why certain individuals, despite having the desire to retaliate, do not end up acting on this desire. Even though the work of Yeager and colleagues (2011) has shed some light on the importance of explicit theories to explain the desire for vengeance, it remains critical that we improve our understanding of why some adolescents fantasize about revenge in response to peer conflict victimization, while others seek pro-social solutions. Whether and how revenge goals are predictive for behavior in non-aggressive children remains unclear. Thus, even though the theoretical and empirical work supports the notion (cf., McDonald & Lochman, 2012) there is still no evidence that having revenge goals specifically predicts later maladjustment in a community sample. Empirical studies of revenge have rarely studied non-aggressive individuals (Amjad & Skinner, 2008) and there is virtually no knowledge about the retaliatory beliefs of individuals who decide not to act on them. As McDonald and Lochman have put it “not all revenge-seeking children are dysregulated.” (McDonald & Lochman, 2012, p.227) I would add

that additionally, not all revenge-seeking children are maladjusted, and we still do not understand what discerns them from their revenge-seeking and maladjusted peers. The exploration of such reasons could give insight in possible avenues for prevention.

Finally, even though their study was performed with a younger sample, Harris and Walton's (2009) analysis has shown that analyzing narratives is a valid approach in disentangling children's management of conflict. The authors point out that when children create narratives of conflict they take an evaluative stance and seek to convince others of the moral justifiability of their and other's actions. Story-telling thus helps in establishing the self as a moral actor (Harris & Walton, 2009). Still, there has not been a study using a similar approach with either older samples or to investigate revenge specifically. As adolescents mature, their ability to take an evaluative stance and reflect on the self as moral actor increases (Steinberg, 2005), providing important insights about lived management of conflict. Additionally, recounting past conflicts and elaborating on possible solutions constitutes an excellent opportunity to explore the nuanced, heterogeneously construed justifications of vengeful behavior and its association with other indicators of maladjustment. Not all revenge-seeking children are dysregulated, not all revenge-seeking children are maladjusted, and we still do not understand what discerns them from their maladjusted revenge-seeking peers. The exploration of such reasons in the present study using narratives closed the aforementioned gaps in the literature and could give insight into more effective avenues for prevention.

Present Study

Research shows that goals influence behavior, and revenge goals are one underlying factor driving aggressive behavior. However, not all children with revenge goals enact them, and not all aggression is driven by revenge motivations. There is a gap from fantasy to maladaptive behavior. Revenge goals are embedded in a rich context and numerous factors play into whether

or not and how an individual enacts those goals. In psychological research, however, revenge mainly has been assessed as a one-dimensional goal of retaliation, without distinction regarding how this goal is presented, what means of enactment are discussed, the extensiveness of the desire to get back, and whether revenge is about getting even or about inflicting pain, establishing power or achieve destruction of an enemy. Based on previous research the present study investigated the following assumptions: (1) There are qualitative differences within the one-dimensional construct of revenge and youth's narratives of fictional solutions to stressful situations can tell us more about those different types of retaliation; (2) In reality, revenge goals encompass a multitude of qualitatively different responses to victimization, and they are connected to differences in behavior and adjustment; and (3) There are gender differences in the context of victimization and reactions to victimization and thus in revenge goals. This lead to the following research questions:

Question one: What types of revenge scenarios are discussed and how are they qualitatively different?

Question two: Are differences in revenge scenarios connected to differences in recounted aggressive behavior, choice of type of retaliation, and level of violence in the solution?

Question three: Are there differences in the way girls discuss and use revenge goals compared to boys? Are there other kinds of behavior or adjustment issues which are connected to discussing or settling for revenge scenarios?

Methods

Design of the Study

The present study was a secondary analysis of qualitative data. The method of inquiry for the proposed study was the constant comparative approach as used in a grounded theory approach, adapted for secondary analysis. The present study explored new empirical questions

that arose from the primary study, but transcended the scope of the primary analysis. It was thus a supra-analysis of a primary study. The underlying framework used was Lemerise and Arsenio's (2000) adapted SIP model.

In the following chapters I introduce both secondary analysis and the grounded theory along with relevant fundamental issues pertaining to those methods. Then I discuss necessary modifications of grounded theory to suit secondary analysis and finally assess the re-usability of the primary dataset for the proposed study according to the current guidelines in the field, concluding with the plan of analysis for the proposed study.

Secondary analysis of a qualitative study. The proposed study consisted of a secondary analysis of qualitative data, and the specific issues pertaining to this method need to be discussed. Even though the technique has been widely applied in quantitative research, its application in qualitative research is still quite new and more controversial (Szabo & Strang, 1997). Recently, the method is gaining popularity and a growing number of researchers across the social sciences are re-using qualitative data in their studies as well as donating their data sets to archives (Heaton, 2004). It seems that overall, secondary data analysis in qualitative research has the makings of a methodology (Heaton, 2004), but unfortunately there are only limited sources about the application of the technique. One of the few systematic methodological sources on the topic is Heaton's (2004) book on reworking qualitative data. In this work, Heaton describes a list of methodological matters that should be discussed in reports of qualitative secondary studies (2004). In order to facilitate future work in the field, she also developed practical guidelines to check the accessibility, quality and suitability of data-sets for secondary analysis (see appendix 1), expanding on a previous assessment tool (Hinds, Vogel, & Clarke-Steffen, 1997). The present study utilized these guidelines.

What is secondary analysis of qualitative data? Secondary data analysis has been defined as “the use of an existing data set to find answers to a research question that differs from the question asked in the original or primary study” (Hinds, et al, 1997, p. 408). In qualitative research, it is usually understood as new analysis of artefactual data, e.g. data which is generated for research purposes, such as transcripts of interviews or focus groups, which has originally been collected for other purposes. According to this view, new analysis of natural data, e.g. data that has not been artificially generated for research purposes, like a collection of private letters, always stays primary in nature. Secondary analysis is further distinct from meta-analysis, where findings from multiple studies are synthesized and no new research question is developed. Theoretically secondary analysis could be used to verify or refine findings of existing studies, but a recent review of studies showed that this is hardly done. The review also showed that most secondary analysis studies conducted are using researcher’s own data or data that has been shared informally (Heaton, 2004). In summary, secondary analysis can be defined as “a research strategy which makes use of pre-existing quantitative data or qualitative research data for the purposes of investigating new questions or verifying previous studies” (Heaton, 2004, p. 16).

As early as 1963, the inventor of grounded theory, Barney Glaser, advocated for secondary analysis, stating that this “strategy can be applied to almost any qualitative data however small its amount and whatever the degree of prior analysis. ... Secondary analysis is something that the sociologist can do with data of his own choosing.” (Glaser, 1963, p. 11).

In fact, there are many benefits to secondary analysis of qualitative data, such as facilitating research on hard-to-reach groups without overburdening informants, enabling additional research on sensitive topics, or promoting the generalizability of findings, and it has become an increasingly popular method of investigation in recent years (Heaton, 2004; Long-Sutthall, Sque, & Addington-Hall, 2011). Still, the re-use of qualitative data is perceived to be

more problematic than with quantitative data (Heaton, 2004; Hinds et al., 1997). Next to problems around confidentiality and the problem of not having been there, a particular concern is the degree of ‘fit’ of the pre-existing data with the new research question.

The problem of data fit. The problem of data fit arises in secondary analyses because, per definition, they deal with data that has been collected for another purpose. Therefore, both in quantitative and qualitative research, the potential re-use of any data are limited by the composition of the original sample and the extent of vital missing data. Due to the unstructured, rich, and diversified nature of qualitative data, this problem is exacerbated in qualitative research: According to most qualitative methodology, analysis and data collection happens simultaneously in an iterative process, —analysis begins from the start and informs further data collection— allowing the researcher to develop and refine her analytic focus as she proceeds. The extent of data collection is flexible and usually ends whenever emerging themes are ‘saturated’ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Heaton, 2004; Hinds et al., 1997; Merriam, 2009). Consequently, qualitative data sets are especially dedicated to a particular set of primary research objectives, and due to the ongoing refinement of the research questions have likely not covered all emerging topics with the same depth. Qualitative secondary studies could thus be regarded as inferior to primary studies, if the data fit is not carefully assessed (Heaton, 2004; Hinds et al., 1997; Long-Sutell et al., 2011; Thorne, 1994).

It has been suggested to assess data fit according to three considerations (Heaton, 2004; Hinds, Vogel, & Clarke-Steffen, 1997; Thorne, 1994): 1. The extent of missing data; A primary study which addressed a defined set of aims from the start results in a more even coverage of themes and might thus be more suitable for secondary analysis (Heaton, 2004). 2. The degree of convergence between the primary and secondary research; the closer related they are, the more likely the data will contain enough relevant information for the second investigation (Hinds,

Vogel, & Clarke-Steffen, 1997). 3. The methods used to produce the data; e.g. comparative secondary analyses require similar qualitative data and samples (Thorne, 1994).

In previous studies, the fit between data and research question has been accomplished using several means: In several studies, the questions addressed were issues that emerged during analysis of the primary research. This means they were derived from the primary research and thus already grounded in the material. In those cases, data fit was easily established. Another technique frequently applied by researchers is the re-shaping or sorting of the qualitative data set so that it fits the purposes of the secondary study. Researchers sorting the data only re-used part of the original data set, for example separating qualitative from quantitative data (Clayton, Rogers, & Stuifbergen, 1999). They also generated sub-samples (Kearney, Murphy, & Rosenbaum, 1994) limited the focus to a particular group of informants (Clayton, Rogers, & Stuifbergen, 1999), or concentrated the analysis on selected themes (Long-Sutehall, Sque, & Addington-Hall, 2011; for more references see Heaton, 2004, p. 59). Following those examples, in the present study a sub-sample consisting of all youth discussing revenge in their narratives from the larger primary study was generated as outlined in more detail below.

In conclusion, researchers used secondary analysis to extend primary research, taking advantage of the flexible nature of qualitative data in a pragmatic way.

Types of secondary analysis. According to Heaton's (2004) review of studies published in the health and social care literature there are 5 types of secondary analysis of qualitative data: 1. Supra-analysis which transcends the focus of the primary study, examining new empirical, theoretical or methodological questions, 2. Supplementary analysis, which is a more in-depth analysis of an issue emerging from the data which was not fully addressed in the primary study, 3. Re-analysis, which verifies and corroborates prior analyses with the same data, 4. Amplified analysis, which combines data from two or more primary studies, and 5. assorted analysis which

combines secondary analysis with new primary research or naturalistic qualitative data. The present study was a supra-analysis. The reasoning for this design is outlined below.

Supra-analysis involves the investigation of theoretical or empirical questions which go beyond the terms of the initial study. In such studies the focus is on other aspects of the data and researchers might even apply a different theoretical framework compared to the primary research. Because the terms of the initial study are transcended, theoretically the issue of data fit is more likely to limit the scope for this type of analysis (Heaton, 2004). The difference to supplementary analysis is the degree of relatedness between the primary and secondary research questions. The latter involves a more in-depth focus on an aspect of the data which is already part of the primary research, but was not or only partially addressed (Heaton, 2004). The present study used a subset of qualitative data obtained in the context of a large quantitative study. The particular SCI interview data was collected in order to make youth relive stressful experiences involving violence and collect physiological data, as well as obtain responses about coping strategies. The exploration of revenge specifically was not intended. Thus, the present study, while closely related, explored new empirical questions under a different framework.

Supra-analysis was used in a similar way to explore new empirical questions which arose from primary research. For example, Clayton, et al. (1999) used it to undertake a secondary analysis of qualitative data that was collected as unsolicited part of their primary quantitative survey study. The study was not part of an initial research interest and consisted of three completely new empirical questions, two of which were qualitative. The authors analyzed written feedback that was voluntarily added on the surveys by a sub-set of their sample, using Strauss and Corbin's (1998) micro-analytic grounded theory method to code the data into categories. Although the authors did not name it a secondary analysis, in the above discussed study of urban

youth's narratives, Harris and Walton (2009), the authors analyzed essays that were written as part of an open ended, school-based violence prevention activity.

Grounded theory. Grounded theory was developed by the sociologists Glaser and Strauss in 1967. Challenging existing prejudice, they developed a methodology which showed that qualitative research can be systematic and rigorous —it can even generate theory. They abandoned the (in their view) arbitrary divisions between theory, research and analysis, and made clear that qualitative research is more than just a precursor for quantitative studies (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Their method consists of a set of systematic guidelines for inductive gathering, analyzing and conceptualizing qualitative data to construct theory (Charmaz, 2003). Starting with individual, concrete information from the data, it allows researchers to progressively construct more abstract conceptual categories that explain the whole of the data. Relationships are identified and patterns established. In such a way one can generate theory which is still 'grounded' or coming from within the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

One particular feature of grounded theory is theoretical sampling. In qualitative research, analysis and data collection are a parallel process. Through constant memo-writing additional thoughts and hunches are formed during analysis. Those subsequently influence further data collection. The primary interest of the grounded researcher is the fit between data and emerging theory. Thus, the goal is not a representative sample, but to obtain more relevant data from a meaningful sample, leading to theory-driven or "theoretical sampling" (Merriam, 2009). According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) grounded theory is a very broad methodology that can address any kind of research question. It is well compatible with the constructionist view inherent to all qualitative inquiry. The constant comparative analysis method proposed by grounded theory "is inductive and comparative and so has been widely used throughout qualitative research without building grounded theory" (Merriam, 2009, p. 175).

Grounded theory adapted for secondary analysis. There are two main issues when using grounded theory methods in secondary analysis: Theoretical sampling and saturation of themes. One of the key features of primary research using grounded theory is the constant revision of decisions regarding what data to collect through theoretical sampling. Based on the coding of data already collected, research questions are constantly growing more refined,—and so does data collection. In secondary analysis where all data is already given, this is potentially problematic (Heaton, 2004). To solve this issue, Strauss and Corbin (1990) have indicated that there are other ways of theoretical sampling which are compatible with re-using data and advise to proceed with a normal circle of coding and sampling. One alternative method that has been used by researchers is the purposeful selection of exemplary data from within the larger sample (Kearney et al., 1994). Another strategy is to select the informant required to saturate specific categories as they emerged from the data (Szabo & Strang, 1997) or to select only transcripts that contained a specific content (Jairath, 1999). Both strategies were used within the newly generated sample of youth discussing revenge goals in the present study.

The second issue is the problem of variance in saturation across themes. This is more complicated to deal with. Due to the fixed nature of already collected data, it is likely that in secondary analysis some emerging themes will be less well saturated than others. Also, it is usually not possible to validate emerging themes with the participants to ensure optimal saturation. In the absence of an alternative, researchers in previous studies dealt with this limitation by indicating it in the findings where necessary (Kearney, Murphy, & Rosenbaum, 1994). As it occurred in the present study, variance in saturation in the findings was discussed where it occurred as well as in the limitations of the study.

In conclusion, grounded theory methodology can be adapted to suit secondary analysis; purposeful weighting and sorting data as the secondary analysis proceeds is a valid alternative

way of theoretical sampling. If it occurs, variance in saturation should be indicated in the findings as well as in the limitations (Heaton, 2004).

Assessment of the COPE data set for the proposed secondary study.

When doing a secondary analysis it is necessary to make an assessment regarding the accessibility and quality of the primary dataset, and whether it is suitable to answer the questions of the secondary research (Heaton, 2004; Hinds et al., 1997; Long-Sutecall et al., 2011). After summarizing the primary study, I will assess the re-usability of the COPE dataset used in the present study, following the aforementioned practical guidelines (see appendix 1) established by Heaton (2004), as they applied to the context of this study.

The primary study. Data for the present study was drawn from Project COPE, a 4-Wave longitudinal study on community and peer violence and substance use in a sample of urban adolescents in Richmond, VA. Project COPE was funded by the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA). Project COPE was built on a model of risk and resilience, with attention to risk factors for adjustment difficulties, and individual, family-level, and community-level protective factors. For additional information on the procedures and findings of the primary study see (Reid-Quinones et al., 2011).

Participants. The primary study consisted of 358 dyads of youth (47.3% male) and their maternal caregivers recruited from areas with moderate to high violence rates. At the start of the study, youth ranged in age from 10 to 16 years ($M = 12.17$, $SD = 1.65$). A two-cohort design was employed, to follow youth in their transition into middle school or high school, respectively. In Wave 1, all youth participants were enrolled in either the 5th or 8th grades. At Wave 4, most youth were in the 8th or 11th grades. Most (>85%) of the maternal caregivers were the youth participants' biological mothers. Most of the youth (>90%) and their female caregivers were African American. Socioeconomic status varied, but most of the sample came from low SES

backgrounds. Median weekly household income was \$401-500, with 22.8% reporting household earnings of \$200 or less per week.

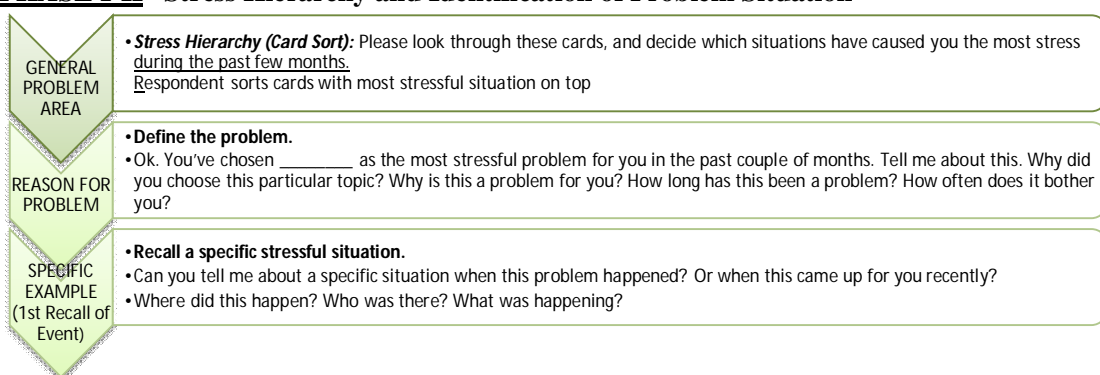
Procedures. Participants were recruited from areas of moderate to high violence, based on police statistics within Richmond, VA and the surrounding counties. Families were recruited through community events and agencies, by participant referral and through flyers posted door-to-door in eligible neighborhoods. To be eligible, participants had to be the female caregiver of a 5th or 8th grade child during the first wave of data collection. Sixty three percent of the approached eligible families enrolled in the study.

Interviews were conducted in eligible families' homes unless otherwise requested by the family. Two trained interviewers arrived at the home – one to interview the caregiver and one to interview the adolescent. The caregiver and youth were taken to separate rooms where they each were interviewed privately. At the start of the interview, the staff reviewed the maternal caregiver consent forms and child assent forms, answered any questions the participants had, and obtained written consent. Participants were informed that their responses were protected by a Certificate of Confidentiality from NIH. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and lasted approximately 2-3 hours. Except for a small portion of the adolescent interview that was presented in booklet form, all questions were read aloud using visual aids. Unless the child demonstrated difficulty in reading, the youth was asked to complete the booklet independently. Families were compensated with \$50 in Wal-Mart gift cards at each wave they participated. Additionally, families were eligible to be entered in a monthly drawing for a \$25 Wal-Mart gift card if they returned monthly post cards with address updates, and lottery prizes of \$100, \$200 and \$300 were distributed at the end of the study. Interviewers for the project included bachelors and master's level students and community professionals. Interviewers completed a lengthy training lasting approximately 20 hours, during which they were provided written and verbal

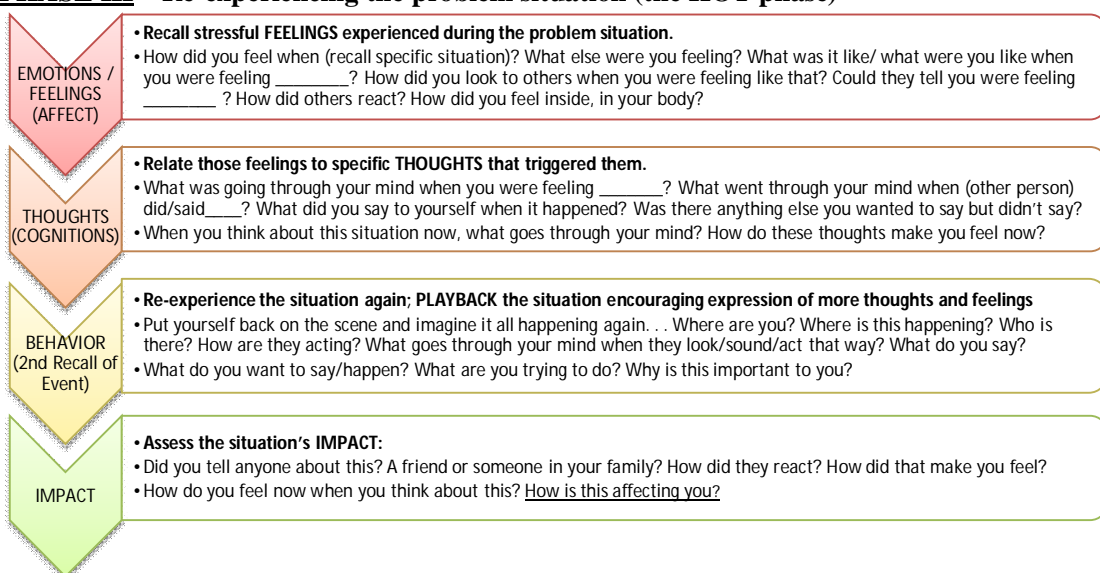
feedback on their performance. Most interviewers observed actual interviews prior to conducting interviews themselves and all met training goals. Ten percent of families were contacted as a quality control measure, to ensure that interviewers maintained professional standards when interacting with the participants.

Measures. The Social Competence Interview (SCI). One part of the child interview was the SCI (Ewart, Jorgensen, Suchday, Chen, & Matthews, 2002), a 15-20 minute audio-taped interview in which youth were asked to re-experience their most stressful event of the past couple months. Students were prompted to discuss situations that involved witnessing or experiencing violence, including peer victimization. Figure 2 shows a graphic representation of the SCI procedure with sample questions in a flowchart. As a guide for choosing a stressful event, students were asked to rank categories of stressors from most to least stressful. Eight categories were provided on index cards and included: 1) relational victimization by peers; 2) physical victimization by peers; 3) situations involving drugs; 4) situations involving accidents or breaking and entering; 5) situations involving guns; 6) situations involving threats, hitting, or punching; 7) situations involving serious violence that included knives, muggings, beatings, or wounding; and 8) any other situation where the youth felt frightened, or thought they could get hurt very badly or die. After the youth ranked the index cards, the interviewer asked the adolescent if he or she could identify a recent, stressful situation that exemplified the category he or she deemed the most stressful. This situation was then discussed in detail during the first half of the SCI. In the second half of the SCI youth imagined to be the director of a movie in which a character is in the same situation the adolescent described before, but had the opportunity to create their own ending or solution to the situation. Finally, the youth were asked to evaluate their solutions and estimate a) how confident they felt to actually be able to engage in the chosen strategy in a similar situation in the future and b) how realistically the solution would have the

PHASE I-II –Stress Hierarchy and Identification of Problem Situation



PHASE III – Re-experiencing the problem situation (the HOT phase)



PHASE IV – Assessing Goals, Coping Strategies, Self-Efficacy, and Anticipating Consequences (the COOL phase)

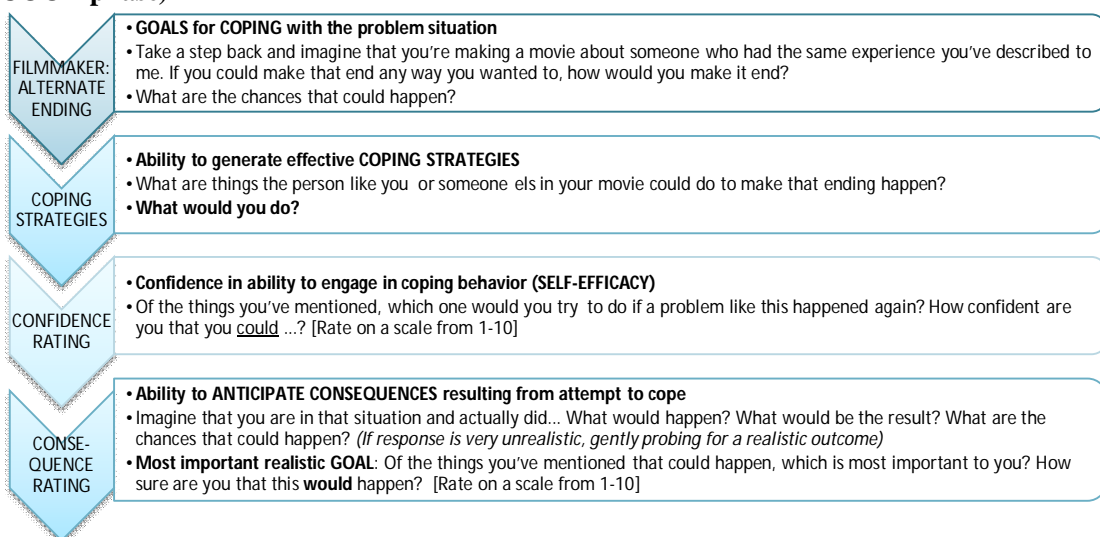


Figure 2. Flowchart of the SCI sequence with sample questions.

described result. They were asked to quantify those chances on a scale from 1-10. Based on this ranking they could go back and change their ending to a more realistic scenario if they wanted to.

Previous coding. The SCI was previously coded for the type of event, type of coping strategy, emotion, and goal of the solution to the movie scenario. One of the emerging goals was revenge, defined as “getting back at somebody physically or emotionally (Reid-Quinones et al., 2011). Previous coding, consistent with most existing literature, did not include an exploration of different types of revenge scenarios. In the current study coders were blind to the previous coding. However, previous classification was used as one measure of quality control for the coding in the present study.

Assessing the re-usability of the COPE dataset.

Accessibility. For a dataset to be suitable for secondary research the data should be easily and completely accessible. If the secondary researcher is independent from the primary research team, it would be preferable that the primary researcher(s) can be consulted with questions relating to the context of data collection. Finally, the data should be legally accessible; e.g. the consent of the informants has to include the purpose of the secondary study (Heaton, 2004). In the present case the secondary researcher was part of the research team of the primary researcher, who also was the mentor and a committee member for this secondary study. The design, analysis and reporting of the present study was developed under the supervision of the primary researcher. All data was collected by a number of research assistants over multiple years. Most of them are not available anymore, but archiving of all records and supporting documents has been done. The complete data set could be accessed, transcripts and original tapes if necessary, as well as the complete quantitative information collected from the youth and their caregivers.

There were no conditions or terms of use associated with the data set that prevented the secondary analysis. Consequently, complete accessibility of the data set was given.

Quality. A secondary analysis can only be as good as the data it stems from. Thus, it is important to establish the overall quality of the primary data set. Next to general methodological issues and the conduct of the primary work itself, in secondary analysis the extent of missing data could be an important and hard to gauge issue (Heaton, 2004).

The design, conduct and methods of the primary COPE study were discussed above. The quality of the data set with quantitative information from multiple reporters was high. The SCI interviews were semi-structured and the children discussed retaliation scenarios in varying depth or not at all, making missing data a possible issue. In the present case this limitation pertained more to the suitability of the data rather than being a question of quality. Thus it will be discussed more in depth with the sorting and theoretical sampling strategies that ensured data fit.

Suitability. When doing secondary research it is crucial to establish whether or not the data has the potential to answer the research questions; whether it sufficiently fits the proposed study (Heaton, 2004; Long-Sutthall et al., 2011). The main issues around the problem of data fit as well as possible solutions were discussed above. In the present case, the research questions of the secondary analysis stemmed from observations made in a subset of transcripts. Generally, the question of data fit is less likely to be an issue when the secondary research questions are centered on issues that arose from the primary data. Similarly, the related issues of sample fit and whether there is enough substantive material for the secondary study are less likely to be issues with secondary questions that are grounded in the primary data (Heaton, 2004). Following Long-Sutthall et al. (2011), sufficient fit is established when there is “enough being said in the primary transcripts about the topic of interest so that it would be reasonable to assume that the secondary research question can be answered” (p. 340). From the overall sample of the COPE dataset, 60

youth who discussed revenge scenarios in their interviews were included in the sample of this study. The sample was mixed in terms of gender, age, and other variables. These youth were guided to develop comprehensive movie scenarios and regularly weighted different solutions, freely elaborating on underlying reasons for the choice providing enough richness in the data to answer the research questions.

Finally, when discussing the suitability of an existing data set for secondary analysis, it should be addressed how “not having been there” influences the analysis (Heaton, 2004). In the present case, the lack of involvement in data collection of the secondary researcher does not seem to negatively affect the analysis. It is in contrary supposed that being independent from the primary study can be an advantage, as the independent “has the ability to engage in a fresh, intensive analysis of the data” without being influenced by the primary research design (Glaser, 1967: p. 12). Reading all transcripts with the same perspective, possibly allowed for a more neutral comparison of the different scenarios. The object of study was to gain more insight into how revenge and retaliation appear in the narratives of inner-city youth. While of course those narratives need to be understood in their particular context, this context was similar for all participants and the focus of the study lied in the differences despite a similar context. While it would have been desirable to be directly involved in the context of the primary data collection, the lack of involvement did not result in a major disadvantage, or even might have given a particular different advantage in the present study.

Data Analysis

Using ATLAS.ti (Atlas, 2010), the following steps of analysis were performed in the present study: As mentioned above, researchers doing secondary analysis often draw upon the primary data selectively. This technique of manipulating and shaping the data allows working with a data set that fits the secondary research questions, but the sorting also has the potential to

serve as form of theoretical sampling for secondary grounded analysis (Heaton, 2004). In the present study both were done. In a first step, all codes for social goals were removed from wave 1 transcripts and transcripts were sorted into two groups: Revenge was not discussed, and revenge was discussed. For this purpose, all transcripts were re-read by multiple coders and excluded or included into the sample for the secondary analysis according to whether or not they contained any accounts, thoughts or elaborations on retaliation scenarios. The definition of revenge used for this purpose was “getting back at the person emotionally or physically.” This followed the one-dimensional definition used in the majority of previous studies. This process resulted in a sample of 50 transcripts from wave 1 where revenge was discussed; these transcripts subsequently were entered into ATLAS.ti (Atlas, 2010) and included in the present study. In a second step, the 50 transcripts were sorted into two categories: Discussed revenge and settled for it (i.e., identified this as the viable strategy to achieve the desired outcome) versus discussed revenge but settled for other option. In addition, type of situation (e.g., peer victimization, witnessed violence, etc.) and gender of child were used as additional criteria to form sub-groups as a starting point for qualitative analysis. Starting with exemplary transcripts from those groups, a coding framework was developed by two coders. Disagreements were solved through discussion and the final decision was made by the principal investigator. Transcripts of the whole (newly generated) sample were analyzed to validate, saturate, and refine emerging themes. This form of successive data analysis has been suggested as an adaptation of grounded theory’s theoretical sampling for secondary analysis (see above; Heaton, 2004; Glaser, 1967, Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

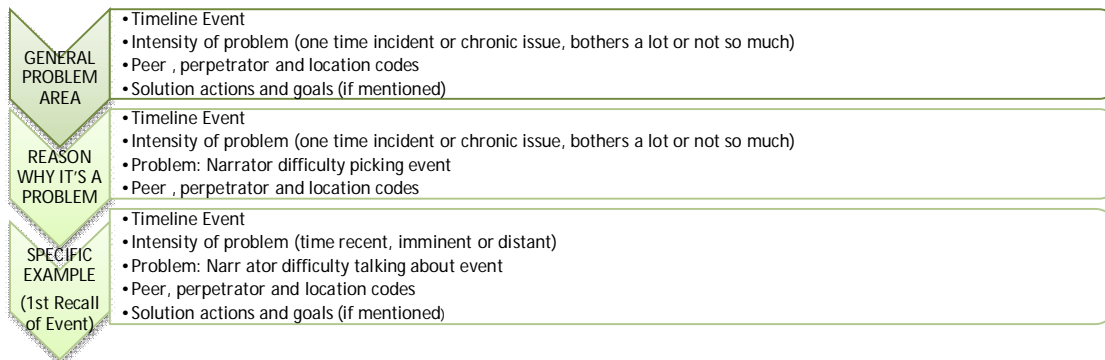
Results

Developing the Coding Framework

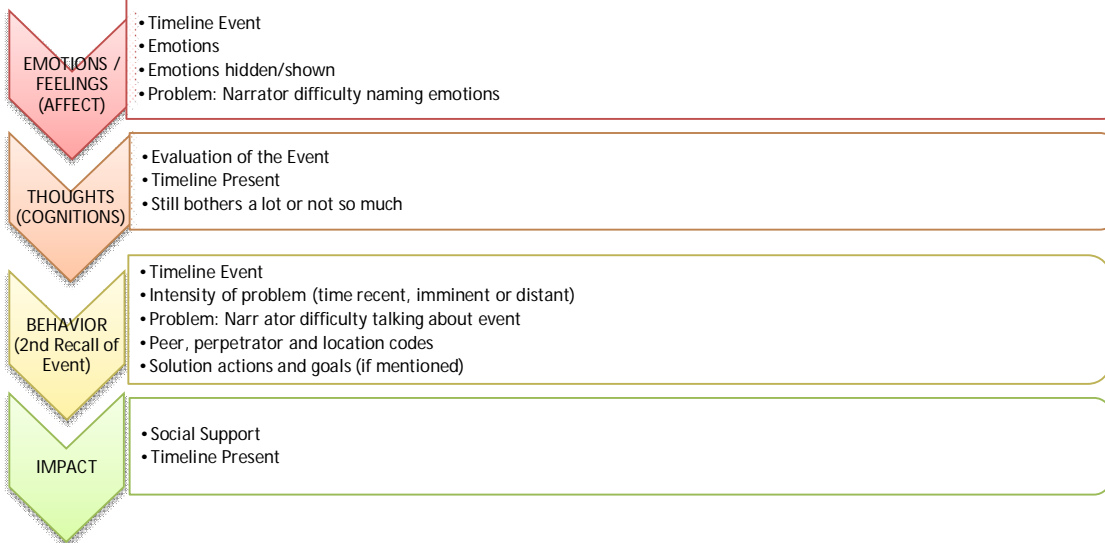
All transcripts containing revenge scenarios were coded in ATLAS.ti v6 software (2010) and a coding framework was developed. The structure of the coding framework was partially pre-determined by the structure of the SCI and the software, which influenced the coding process and resulted in a system of different hierarchies of co-occurring codes. For a graphic representation of crucial codes in relation to their occurrence in the SCI interview, see Figure 3.

The final coding framework consisted of 115 primary codes, grouped in 4 hierarchical groups of code categories: Main Codes I and II, and Auxiliary Codes I and II. Starting with the codes that were farthest removed from emerging content themes, Auxiliary Codes II are the codes that were completely determined by the structure of the SCI; the categories were created before coding started and served the purpose to structure the data. The codes in this category only are significant in combination with other codes. For example, the SCI has distinct temporal dimensions of description of event, relevance to the present, hypothetical scenario (movie), and solution in a future real situation. It is important to consider a described strategy in relation to this temporal dimension, but the temporal codes alone do not contain information as they are standardized content in all interviews. While most codes in this category were predetermined, some individual codes belonging to the categories are grounded in the data and emerged during coding. The Auxiliary Codes I assist in understanding the discussed event. As in the Main Codes groups, some of the categories in this group are grounded in the structure of the interview, but the individual codes are completely grounded in the data. Some descriptive categories emerged while coding. Auxiliary Codes I are descriptive and provide an overview of what took place.

PHASE I-II –Stress Hierarchy and Identification of Problem Situation



PHASE III – Re-experiencing the problem situation (the HOT phase)



PHASE IV – Assessing Goals, Coping Strategies, Self-Efficacy, and Anticipating Consequences (the COOL phase)

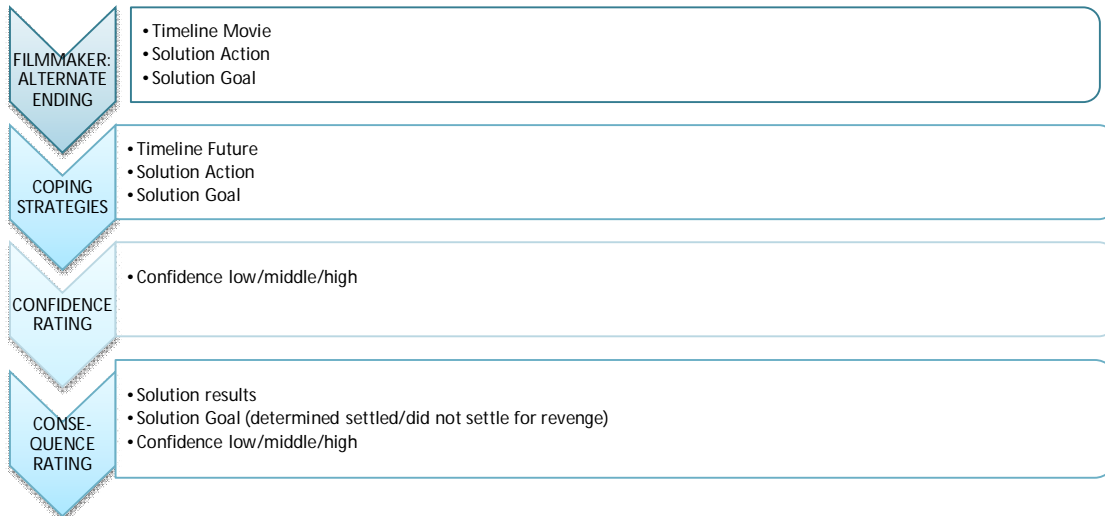


Figure 3. Flowchart of code categories in relation to the SCI sequence.

Main Codes II are less directly descriptive in nature. They are removed one step from the event and evaluate how the narrator views the situation. This group consists of references that are situated on a meta-level, like statements about beliefs or values, weighing of actions or events, as well as the regulation of emotions and behavior. Finally, the most important codes are in the Main Code I group. The emerging goals, results, and chosen actions in the scenarios and events, as well as named desired or undesired consequences/results of proposed or committed actions are in this category. A full list of all codes with definitions is attached (see Appendix 2).

To unify coding the following guidelines were used by the two coders as the framework developed. When first reading through the transcript, selected codes were coded by category. Those codes included codes that were not associated with timeline and could be coded separately: examples include key statements, values, and problems from interviewer or narrator side. In the same reading, the most complete description of the event, movie, and future solutions were identified. In a second reading, starting from the main event, main movie and solution quotations, the content was coded. All repetitions and elaborations/further details were coded in relation to the main quotations. This strategy allowed keeping repetitive coding in check. Due to the way the software is designed, it was crucial to code certain auxiliary codes together with the main codes, even if the information pertaining to them did not appear at the same location in the transcript. Codes that were coded together when possible included for example “location,” which was always coded as to whether the event occurred when the youth was supervised or unsupervised. If possible, emotions or the level of confidence were coded with the action/goal/result with which they were associated.

Descriptive Overview and Main Findings

In the present study, 50 SCI interviews (30 boys) in which revenge was discussed were analyzed in ATLAS.ti software (2010). This sample was different from the youth coded as

having revenge goals in a previous study (Reid-Quinones et al., 2011), as it was the result of a new sorting procedure. While it included all youth discussing revenge scenarios identified before, it significantly expanded the sample by including participants that discussed retaliation without settling for it as their main goal. Participants' age in the final sample ranged from 10 to 15 years ($M = 12.42$, $SD = 1.69$). All youth were enrolled in 5th (20) or 8th (30) grade at the time of the study. Most (43 or >85%) of the youth lived with their biological mothers most of the time. Only 7 youth (14%) reported to live with their biological father most of the time. Most of the youth (>85%) and their female caregivers were African American. Income levels varied, but most of the sample came from low SES backgrounds. Median weekly household income was \$401-500, with 20% reporting household earnings of \$200 or less per week.

In order to explore the research questions, findings of the study are organized in two independent and substantially different parts. The first part consists of a descriptive overview of the type of events that were discussed in the revenge scenarios in the entire sample and across gender. The events are put in the context of all discussed outcome goals and behavioral actions as they were described in the participants' narratives. Tables are included in this section of the results showing the relative importance of different descriptive codes across gender and the most important types of events. Main differences and themes are described as they emerged out of this context. The aim of this section of the results is to provide a descriptive overview of the most important stressful events experienced by the participants, in order to illuminate in detail the context and content of the revenge scenarios developed by those youth. Thus, this description establishes background from which to understand the overarching patterns of retaliation that emerged from the data. Patterns of retaliation consist of systematically different characteristics of narratives across and within events that were described in similar ways. Those patterns are described in the following second section of the results.

In the following second section of the findings the descriptive observations were compacted into main overarching patterns and put in the context in which they would appear within the SIP model adapted by Lemerise and Arsenio (2000). The SIP model was used as the underlying framework for the present study. I organized the patterns in a way that described manifestations of different steps and possible deficits in those steps, as they are hypothesized by the SIP literature. The aim of this section was to describe the different facets of the revenge scenarios in a way that reassembled the individual codes again into an overarching picture, while putting these facets within a well-established theoretical framework. While the first section of the findings described the detailed situational circumstances that lead to youth talking about revenge, the second section illuminated the different manifestations of the decision-making processes that influenced different reactions to similar events. Significant findings in the second section thus were not so much influenced by the number of youth mentioning the same goal, but the degree to which the internal coherence of narratives illuminated a distinct way of constructing meaning and making decisions. The findings described the full array of overarching differences in patterns of revenge narratives; testing, validating and describing the distributions of the identified patterns across and within populations of adolescents will be the task of future studies.

Findings Part I: Overview of discussed events.

Description of scenarios - What are the kids talking about? Fifty SCI interviews (30 boys) in which revenge was discussed were analyzed in ATLAS.ti software (2010). Eighteen participants (7 girls) developed a scenario in which they settled for revenge in the end. More importantly, however, a substantial number - 17 participants across both conditions - discussed possible peaceful endings but stated low levels of confidence of those endings happening in reality. Only a subgroup of 5 boys experiencing peer violence did not discuss any alternatives to their violent endings. The most numerous type of event involved 27 participants (11 girls) who

Table 2

Characteristics of events by percentage of transcripts mentioning specific element

	Physical Violence			Relational Violence			Total
	Boys	Girls	Combined	Boys	Girls	Combined	
Number of Transcripts (N)	16	11	27	9	8	17	44
Number of Transcripts (%)	36%	25%	61%	20%	18%	39%	100%
Settling for revenge	50%	64%	56%	11%	0%	6%	36%
Low confidence in peaceful ending	38%	64%	48%	22%	25%	24%	39%
Location school	75%	82%	78%	100%	88%	94%	84%
Location is supervised	63%	73%	67%	89%	63%	76%	70%
Event bothers a lot	44%	55%	48%	22%	38%	29%	41%
Chronic situation	44%	64%	52%	33%	25%	29%	43%
Chronic situation with one peer	19%	18%	19%	56%	13%	35%	25%
Creating emotional distance	31%	73%	48%	67%	50%	59%	52%
Fear	50%	27%	41%	33%	0%	18%	32%
Anger	69%	64%	67%	89%	88%	88%	75%
Intense, unusual anger	31%	45%	37%	11%	13%	12%	27%
Detachment or numbness	13%	55%	30%	22%	50%	35%	32%
Sadness or hurt	19%	18%	19%	44%	75%	59%	34%
Peers encourage confrontation	69%	55%	63%	22%	25%	24%	48%
Peers are laughing or teasing	6%	0%	4%	78%	13%	47%	20%
Feeling rejected by peers	13%	45%	26%	44%	88%	65%	41%
Gossip and false rumors	13%	27%	19%	78%	50%	65%	36%
Perpetrator is a former friend	13%	27%	19%	22%	75%	47%	30%
Narrator did/would initiate physical violence	81%	91%	85%	44%	13%	29%	64%
Perpetrator initiates physical violence	63%	64%	63%	11%	0%	6%	41%
Adults encourage confrontation	25%	27%	26%	11%	0%	6%	18%
No social support sought	19%	18%	19%	56%	50%	53%	32%

Note: Categories were not mutually exclusive

talked about physical violence with peers, and 17 youth (8 girls) mentioned relational peer victimization. All 7 girls who settled for a revenge ending were talking about events that involved physical peer victimization. The remaining participants talked about violence experienced in the community ($N=4$) or at home ($N=2$). The location of a discussed event was linked inseparably with the choice of possible solutions, especially whether or not the event

happened in a supervised environment. Surprisingly, as shown in Table 2, most discussed events occurred in a supervised setting during school. Table 2 gives an overview of key characteristics of the physical violence and relational violence events discussed across boys and girls, by percentage of transcripts mentioning a specific code pertaining to the situation at least once. Some youth talked about peaceful endings, even though they did not believe those endings to be a feasible solution for them. In some of the interviews this was due to slight pressure of the interviewer to develop a realistic or 'good' ending. Whether the interaction lead them to settle for the peaceful ending despite the low confidence rating or they confirmed a revenge solution, those transcripts yielded interesting comparative data of different possible endings. Overall, 39% of transcripts contained peaceful solutions that were discussed but rated as unrealistic.

Physical and relational violence events differed on numerous aspects, with some further gender differences within those event categories.

Characteristics of physical violence events. Overall, typical physical violence events were conflicts with one disliked peer at school in the hallways or in class:

Uh, when I was in-when we was in technology. We was going in the cafeteria in the morning, there was this boy who kept hitting me in my head...kept hitting me in my head then he was like, "What's you going to do? What's you going to do?" Then he would walk away then he would come back and he would hit me in the back. I felt like he just wanted to bother me or something. (Boy, 46:5, 46:46).

S: Yeah she was singing in my ear and getting on my last nerve.

I: Aww, so you told her look shut up, I can't take it anymore.

S: Yeah and then we got in an argument and then we got into the fight and then we started standing up in each other's face and yelling at each other and then she

threw a chair, so I threw a book at her and then the teacher broke it up, and told me to go in the hallway. (Girl, 55:7, 76:76)

Physical violence was not always initiated by the perpetrator. While usually the conflict was perceived as starting because of the perpetrator, this could mean insults or verbal threats, to which the narrator then answered by initiating a fight, or wanting to get back at them physically:

He had walked by me and pushed me. And I told him, "Don't push me again."

He said he'll do whatever he wanted to. And I told him to try it again and he tried it and I hit him. We started fighting in the street. (Boy, 3:13, 111:111)

Even though the events were chosen to talk about as an example for a stressful event, only around half of the youth classified the event or situation as bothering them a lot - a finding that especially for the girls was often combined with attempts at creating emotional distance and statements of emotional detachment or numbness.

S: 'Cause people just be getting on my nerves sometimes, and I don't like people like that.

I: What do you mean? How do they get on your nerves?

S: 'Cause they just think they're all that and think they're gonna keep saying stuff to me and I ain't gonna say nothing back.

I: Uh huh. So how long has this been a problem?

S: Everyday...all day

I: Everyday all day. And how often does it bother you?

S: It don't bother me I be ready to beat their tail. (Girl, 34:1, 23:27)

I: Ok. How long has this been a problem for you?

S: Ever since I moved in here.

I: How long ago was that?

S: Five years.

I: Ok. So for five years you've had a problem with physical fights in the neighborhood?

S: [Non-verbal Response]

I: Ok. And, um, how often does it bother you?

S: It don't really bother me.

I: Ok. How often does it happen?

S: Um, I say about once every other week. (Girl, 49:3, 18:37)

As the above quote illustrates, often youth mentioned that being in physical altercations was a regular, chronic occurrence over different contexts and over a long period of time. For example, youth stated that "Kids shove me every day, really but I don't really pay them no mind-but it bothers me..." (Boy, 8:2, 18:18). Another youth made the pervasiveness of the problem even more explicit:

S: Because in my life I had, I have fought a lot and been banked a lot and having to run from like a person or a people. To, like I fear that I might get caught and when I do I'll get beat up so that's, I've been in a whole bunch of fights in my life. That's why I chose that card.

I: And why is this a problem for you?

S: Because no matter where I go and no matter how hard I try, I wind up always getting in a fight. (Boy, 50:1, 26:38)

There was only one transcript in this group where the event was not bothersome because "there's really no ones I can choose from, 'cause I really don't have none of these problems" (Girl, 40:1, 19:19). Not surprisingly, the event described in this transcript has a very low level of violence and is about a situation where the girl felt that she had to intervene and protect her little

sister. Most youth reported that the event elicited anger, with a subset experiencing intense, uncontrollable anger or rage often in context with youth describing that they have an ongoing problem with a hot temper. Statements include “Man because, they be trying, people be tryin to mess with me for real and I be getting mad, stressed out, be ready to kill somebody.” (Boy, 24:3, 32:32), or “I be ready to fight. I don’t know what’s wrong with me I just I don’t know cause can’t nobody calm me down when I am ready to fight” (Girl, 34:31, 215:215).

In contrast to relational violence, events involving physical violence only seldom elicited sadness, and rather were more often associated with fear, especially for boys. Several boys referred to a high overall stress level in their lives due to being very concerned about various threats of violence:

S: I chose death because I am threatened often of being beat up, or shot. And, because, you know, I think about it a lot.

I: You think about it a lot?

S: Yeah, and it stresses me out.

I: How long has that been going on?

S: Ever since I got to middle school. (Boy, 3:3, 31:35)

Even though the described event in this case appeared at first sight to be a rather benign incident of a small altercation because another boy bumped into him in front of the school, a climate of fear appears to surround this youth, where even small incidents are evaluated and responded to in the context of this overarching fear. While the context of most events described in the SCI was an altercation at school, there were more serious incidents among the boys’ stories. For example in response to an escalation during a basketball game with peers at the Boys and Girls Club, one boy stated that “I didn’t know if they really was gonna get guns. ...Something different, I never would have thought of it before, I just, saw it in someone’s eyes,

that they are not over being shot at. ... over a basketball game” (Boy, 5:3, 53:57). Another boy mentioned a situation where he bumped into a peer in the neighborhood who provoked an altercation, and the uncle encouraged the confrontation and handed the adversary a gun:

So I walked round there buy me some wrist bands, so then this boy name Michael ran up on me and he said, I said get out my face, he said I ain’t in your face and I said alright and I start walking, then uncle said that’s the boy you wanna fight? Then he said yeah, then his uncle gave him a gun, then me and my friend start running. So then the next day at school, I seen him in school then I hit him. (Boy, 19:5, 62:62).

Taken together, the quotes show that the possibility of even smaller conflicts to have serious consequences involving multiple people or weapons was salient to these youth. Peers were often referred to as encouraging confrontations, making it necessary to stand up against peer pressure when choosing to refrain from retaliation.

S: I thought about it and I was like I don’t want to get in trouble so I got to focusing on my school work so if I get into a fight then that would really mess things up so I was like just tell the teacher and stay cool.

I: And how did other people react to you telling the teacher, how did the other people react to it?

S: They called me punk but I really don’t care. (Boy, 46:9, 62:66)

This also held true for girls: “And then we started arguing and everybody was like oohh, ooohh, ... and then everybody was like get her, spawk her, hit her” (Girl, 55:31, 288:288). The last key finding about events involving physical violence was that settling for a revenge solution was more often tied to such situations for boys, and exclusively so for girls. In fact, there were no girls discussing relational victimization who settled for a revenge solution.

Characteristics of relational violence events. Not surprisingly, the level of violence in relational violence events was much reduced, and confidence in peaceful endings was substantially higher, for both boys and girls. However, more boys than girls discussed or reported enacting physical responses to relational victimization. Overall, the typical events that involved a discussion of revenge looked somewhat different by gender. Boys were more likely to talk about events involving laughing, teasing, or, maybe surprisingly, rumors and gossip, while girls mainly talked about experiencing rejection. For the boys, the salient aspect appeared to be being ridiculed in front of peers, with teasing and name-calling to their face. There was some reference to normative verbal play-fighting and being picked on maybe in the context of not being quick or skilled enough to return the jokes. For example,

S: Um, we was jokin and ballin with each other.

I: And...

S: And it was like me and three friends and another person wanted to come and ball and stuff and um they just got out of hand with it. Kept doin it and doin it until it got real annoying.

I: Ok, and what goes through your mind when they are balling on each other, talking, and keep going and going. What's going through your mind?

S: It's just, they say rude and un-nice things. I'm just thinking "that's not nice" or when we're sayin OK things, like ballin, like not getting serious. (Boy, 17:19, 165:173)

However, there were two scenarios where boys talked about being targeted more systematically by one specific peer.

S: Well mostly because, most of the kids in my school they like... like tease me mostly just one boy. ...

And really he makes everybody else like... he tries to make everybody else not like me....

And so that really gets on my nerves.

I: And why is that a problem for you?

S: Because really that's interrupting me, and then he tries to like blame, boss things on me, like he would say threw an eraser at myself. He would throw an eraser at me and said I threw it to try to get him in trouble. (Boy, 43:2, 38:50)

It seems that for boys, relational rejection happened mainly in their presence. When boys self-selected that option and talked about "rumors" being spread, they usually referred to stories being spread which targeted their reputation and ridiculing them as they were present, for example by disclosing a private nickname, and talked about scenarios of exclusion. Often teasing and spreading rumors thus were really occurring together and used to exclude and tarnish a reputation.

S: ... So and he kept on telling people don't be around him and don't be your friend, don't be his friend 'cause he will probably, um, give you a, um, bad thing, he'll probably tell you bad things about him. Like he's not a geek or a dork, he's not a nose-picker and he's not a monkey. So, um, so they can, um, keep me away from friends and make me not have any friends. So they kept on spreading false rumor, like, "Don't go near him. He'll probably give you cuties or else...or else he'll make you another one of his mon- another one of his monkey friends.

...

I: Just in general these kids are saying those things about you at school

S: Yeah, behind my back.

I: Okay. How do you hear about it if they're saying it behind your back?

S: Um. I, like, go near them when they're talking and they just stopped. So I ask them, "What were y'all talking about?" "Some other kid that's a geek, dork and he acts like a monkey." And I know no one else acts like that, so I knew they were talking about me. (Boy, 15:1, 14:34)

Emotionally, boys reported anger and often attempted to create emotional distance from their peers and the event, by saying "it just don't phase me no more. I just, like, brush right off my shoulder." (Boy, 45:7, 54:54), "it doesn't matter what they say" (Boy, 1:11. 64:64) or "its childish and un-nice and annoying." (Boy, 17:22, 181:181). The girls on the other hand, were mainly talking about relational violence by framing it as rejection by peers that happened behind their back, with people being "really two-faced and fake and stuff" (Girl, 2:1, 20:20). The typical situation involved former friends who excluded the adolescent from new friendships or turning on the youth, adding in an aspect of broken trust and rejection by someone who used to like them. Girls expressed feeling sad and hurt as well as angry in these situations.

S: My friend, one of my friends had lost her best friend, so my best friend started spending more time with her instead of me, and she like, didn't do things for me anymore like she used to, she wouldn't talk to me like she used to.

...

S: And like, every day we go to lunch, there were kids saving her a seat, in front of her or beside her, and that day she had saved a seat for [name] instead of me, so I had to sit at another table.

I: Mm-hmm, oh, okay, and how did you feel about the way they were acting, like at that time, how did you feel?

S: I was disappointed and I was sad and mad. (Girl, 23:4, 30:130)

There was no physical violence in the girls' accounts of relational victimization, but there were physical elements in the situation for some boys. However, the main problem discussed concerned exclusion and teasing. Generally, youth were less likely to seek social support at home in situations of relational victimization. This corresponds to overall more statements in this group that the events did not bother them a lot, with 5 participants having some initial trouble pinpointing any stressful experience, ending up talking about relational violence because "it's just the one that kind of happened, I guess." (Girl, 7:1. 52:52).

Description of Goals and Solutions - How do they alter the conflict? As expected, there was a multitude of different goals discussed in the transcripts, along with a multitude of different actions in order to reach those goals. Often there were multiple goals and actions mentioned within one solution. The difference between goals and actions is mainly that goals describe what the narrator wants to achieve with his solution, an intended result, while actions describe the concrete steps that are taken to achieve a certain outcome. However depending on the solution there could be substantial overlap between the two. Table 3 provides an overview of all goals and actions that were mentioned in the context of physical and relational peer violence during the cool down phase of the SCI, both during the movie or as real future solutions.

Types of goals and actions discussed were grouped into four overarching categories by activity level and degree of harm inflicted on others. Active negative solutions consisted of goals or behaviors that consisted of escalation, were harmful to others, and placed the self above others in importance. Active neutral goals and actions might still inflict some harm on others, but instead of describing escalation, the focus here was on restoring equilibrium. Harm is returned in kind and thus the self is treated as equally important as the other. Active positive strategies and intentions were not harmful to others, but sought to solve the conflict for everybody, restoring equilibrium without insistence on retribution, and subordinating the wish for retaliation in favor

of a solution that would resolve the conflict and reestablish peace. Finally passive actions and goals summarized those solutions or desires that were empty of initiative and characterized by the absence of goal-directed or solution-oriented thinking.

Table 3

Solution scenario by percentage of transcripts mentioning specific goal or action

		Physical violence			Relational Violence			Total
		Boys	Girls	Combined	Boys	Girls	Combined	
Number of Transcripts (N)		16	11	27	9	8	17	44
Number of Transcripts (%)		36%	25%	61%	20%	18%	39%	100%
Negative Actions	Breaking rules	13%	18%	15%	0%	0%	0%	9%
	Escalation	50%	45%	48%	0%	0%	0%	30%
	Perpetuating conflict.	13%	27%	19%	0%	13%	6%	14%
	Any negative actions	63%	55%	59%	0%	13%	6%	39%
Negative goals	Inflicting physical pain	31%	9%	22%	11%	0%	6%	16%
	End friendship	0%	0%	0%	11%	50%	29%	11%
	Sending a message	19%	36%	26%	0%	13%	6%	18%
	Creating reputation	13%	9%	11%	11%	25%	18%	14%
	Any negative goals	44%	45%	44%	33%	75%	53%	48%
Neutral actions	Retribution in kind	19%	0%	11%	33%	13%	24%	16%
Neutral goals	Teaching a lesson	25%	18%	22%	22%	13%	18%	20%
	Retribution through karma	25%	9%	19%	33%	38%	35%	25%
	Any neutral goals	38%	27%	33%	33%	50%	41%	36%
Positive actions	Involving authority	38%	36%	37%	44%	38%	41%	39%
	Confronting peers	6%	18%	11%	22%	63%	41%	23%
	Withstanding peer pressure	13%	9%	11%	11%	0%	6%	9%
	Narrator deescalates	63%	27%	48%	56%	13%	35%	43%
	Any positive actions	81%	82%	81%	78%	88%	82%	82%
	Knowledge	0%	9%	4%	11%	13%	12%	7%
Positive goals	Opportunity for justice	0%	9%	4%	11%	38%	24%	11%
	Peer acceptance	0%	18%	7%	22%	63%	41%	20%
	Peaceful solution	31%	27%	30%	33%	25%	29%	30%
	Any positive goals	31%	45%	37%	56%	88%	71%	50%
Passive actions	Preparing for defense	13%	9%	11%	11%	0%	6%	9%
	Inaction/no change	25%	18%	22%	22%	25%	24%	23%
	Any passive actions	38%	18%	30%	33%	25%	29%	30%
Passive goals	Make them stop	13%	27%	19%	78%	25%	53%	32%
	Never happened	6%	9%	7%	0%	0%	0%	5%
	Any passive goals	19%	36%	26%	78%	25%	53%	36%

Note: Categories were not mutually exclusive

Solutions in this category often were expressed in situations where the narrator was in a state where he or she could not think of ways to alter the experienced situation at all, was just reliving the event as it happened, or had just wanted it to be over without generating a perspective of results or changes after the problem situation would be over. A list of all individual code definitions can be found in Appendix 2.

Solutions and actions in events involving physical violence. Maybe somewhat surprising considering the fact that all transcripts were discussing scenarios of retaliation, the goal mentioned most overall was a peaceful management and settling of the situation. , In the case of the boys this occurred mostly in combination with deescalating the conflict, across both types of physical and relational victimization events. Examples include “I want it to end on the right foot. Like don’t let things get out of hand. And control what you say, control your actions and um, just don’t get out of hand with it” (Boy, 17:32, 246:246) or “one of them could be the bigger person...bigger person. Decide not to push” (Boy, 3:43, 373:383). However, while it was mentioned often, sometimes there was not much confidence that it could happen:

S: Um. An ending like them apologizing, making up, having lunch together, and just thinking about things that happened. They shouldn’t’ve never done it. Make up and be best friends.

I: Mm-hmm. That sounds like a good ending. What are the chances that that could happen?

S: Zero to zero. (Girl, 10:31, 135:139)

As expected, goals and actions involving physical violence were most numerous in the context of physical victimization events, while positive goals like peer acceptance, knowledge, or opportunity for justice were not mentioned often. There was an escalation of the conflict in half of the transcripts, and especially the girls were perpetuating conflicts, being unforgiving and

ignoring attempts by the adversary to de-escalate the conflict. For example, in talking about an inevitable fight as retribution for an insult against her and her sister, one girl in her movie ending states that “if I don’t beat her when I fight her...if I don’t beat her I came back I go back... that’s my story [laughing]” (Girl, 34:47, 319:319). However, it is mainly a small group of boys who mention the desire to inflict physical pain as a goal, always in the context of massive escalation. For example, this boy would have the movie end “by me end up breaking a neck or beating him up for talking about me. I: Okay. Anything else you want to do? S: Nope. I’d just end the movie” (Boy, 11:33, 189:221). A main theme that came up in boys’ solutions was the importance of creating a reputation for a wider audience of peers and sending a message to the perpetrator. An example where this all comes together in a violent escalation is the following movie scenario:

S: Oh I want to start I want to start where I was near the gate and then he started like giving me the look.

...

S: And then I was just like putting my bags down and then just humiliated him in front of everybody by like, like he was like smaller than me

...

S: So I just like picked...so I just like picked him up and threw him...and threw him to the tree down like he was nothing

...

S: And then I will just like punch him in the face, like one time, and kicked him on the private part, and that will just hurt him for hours. That’s what I heard from my grandma. (Boy, 32:28, 205:217)

The ‘default’ solutions of involving authority into the conflict and teaching the adversary a lesson was mentioned uniformly across gender and different events. Finally, the same held true

for solutions that involved no change from the event, - perhaps because this was a solution (or non-solution) that was driven more by the narrator than the specific event.

Solutions and actions in events involving relational violence. Corresponding to the lower level of violence in the scenarios, there are comparatively low numbers of incidents of negative actions or goals in the transcripts involving relational violence. Additionally, there seemed to be a shift in the harmfulness of the endings, with more youth mentioning neutral actions and goals in relational violence scenarios compared with physical violence scenarios. Half of the girls who discussed relational victimization, however, mentioned wanting to end friendships as means to inflict emotional pain. The goal of inflicting emotional pain, coupled with the salience and importance of peer acceptance and the frequency of confronting peers and giving them a piece of one's mind, speaks to the nature of most of the conflicts happening with former friends. One example of a movie where this all is expressed along with involving authority figures is the following:

S: I would fix it by, later on like a couple of days would pass and then the popular girl, like we were best friends and then they said I became popular because people thought it was really cool that like I wasn't talking to her because everybody like talks to her and doesn't be mean to her and people thought I was cool because I stepped up to her. Instead of letting her boss me around. So that movie would end that I became popular and she didn't she just became me like she wasn't popular anymore.

I: Ok so it sounds like the way you would have it end would be that people really respected you because you stood up to her.

S: Yeah and I am like the only person who did that

...

I: Yeah, ok, so you were the popular one. How do you think, what do you think you could do to make that situation happen, other than just not talking to her?

S: I would go up to her and ask her why did she do that to me and then if she like goes mad at me because I was mad at her then I would just try to figure out a way for her to be my friend again or like wrote her a note and tell her to read it after school and call me and tell me why she is mad at me. And if that didn't work I would probably have to go tell the counselor so we wouldn't be mad at each other anymore. (Girl, 54:38, 482:502)

In situations that involved payback in kind, there were two variations that emerged. Almost exclusively boys were talking about retribution in kind as an action, where they would return the treatment they received. In contrast, both boys and girls discussed solutions or endings that involved retribution in kind where they themselves would not engage in any negative behavior, but would wait until it just happened to the perpetrator. Those adolescents were often referring to the universe, or some karma energy where "He got beat up by somebody else. What goes around comes back around" (Boy, 57:40, 154:158). The most original way of ending a movie also falls in this category: "A bird comes in-comes over and just poops on them" (Boy, 15:31, 166:166). Another creative example is this:

S: I'd make it so that he walking away, and my brother come in that joint. And he be like, "Aye, He dissin' you dog?" And I'm like, "Yeah, but you said don't do nothing about it 'cause if I get suspended, you know, you gonna beat me down and everything." So he's like, "Well it's alright." So I say, "Nah, I ain't even gonna mess with him 'cause it's too late now." So then my brother leaves, and a big flood come in, and a tidal wave just wipe dude away, and God be like, "I got your back." (Boy, 23:33, 235:235)

Finally, mainly boys in events of relational victimization were talking about how they want the situation to stop or to be safe, without an ambition of teaching lessons, creating a different reputation, or wanting to be more popular. They for example just state that “he would be mad and he would stop spreading rumors about me” (Boy, 58:36, 230:230) or even clarify that “the most important thing that they would leave me alone. I: Okay. S: Not that they would get suspended” (Boy, 43:27, 230:234).

Description of Beliefs - How are social interactions explained and justified? The final overview consists of a description of different values and beliefs that were mentioned by the adolescents. Table 4 provides an overview of the different beliefs cited by the youth, divided by type of event and gender. It entails categories encompassing all remarks relating to norms; general rules for different behaviors; and things that were done out of reference to how people are in their school, regardless of whether the youth was citing their own beliefs, were repeating lessons from home, or mentioning general observations of their environment. Examples for general rules include: “most of the time when people get called names or something, they’ll just, um, instantly fight ‘em back with more names or something” (Boy, 45:12, 65:65), “well the situation with people at that school is, was, if you just stood there and did nothing they’d think you were afraid of him” (Boy, 56:35, 302:302), or “cause when in my class room and something is wrong like they are mad or something they will pass notes” (Girl, 54:20, 204:204).

Beliefs in transcripts involving physical violence. A common belief cited in transcripts involving physical violence for both boys and girls were remarks that fighting is a normative experience that one has to engage in, even against one’s will: “I mean, it took me like a month to fight her, because I don’t like fighting if I don’t have to. And it was a stupid situation to fight over.” (Girl, 42:7, 64:64).

Table 4

Beliefs by percentage of transcripts

	Physical violence			Relational Violence			Total
	Boys	Girls	Combined	Boys	Girls	Combined	
Number of Transcripts (N)	16	11	27	9	8	17	44
Number of Transcripts (%)	36%	25%	61%	20%	18%	39%	100%
Fighting is normal	44%	45%	44%	22%	25%	24%	36%
Strict reciprocity	44%	45%	44%	22%	13%	18%	34%
Importance of reputation	38%	55%	44%	22%	13%	18%	36%
Special target	0%	18%	7%	11%	13%	12%	9%
It's a self-thing	19%	64%	37%	0%	0%	0%	23%
Necessity for Self-justice	25%	36%	30%	0%	0%	0%	18%
Standing up for yourself	13%	55%	30%	11%	0%	6%	20%
Involve authority	6%	18%	11%	11%	25%	18%	14%
Fairness	13%	0%	7%	44%	50%	47%	23%
Behavior of a friend	6%	36%	19%	11%	38%	24%	20%
Being the bigger person	0%	9%	4%	11%	25%	18%	9%

Note: Categories were not mutually exclusive

This was connected to beliefs about rules of strict reciprocity, laid out in a very concise way by this boy's mother:

S: Well, my mama always says sticks and stones would break my bones and she says until someone puts their hands on me, I don't do anything, but I guess I just take it until he touches me or hits me, and then my mom says that you could fight him and I won't get in trouble. 'Cause he had no right to put his hands on me. Because he didn't give birth to me, he's not related to me, and he doesn't take care of me. So... (Boy, 1:13, 176, 176).

For youth in physical violence situations, many felt that they were on their own, with nobody helping them out, making it necessary to take things into their own hands:

S: 'Cause every time we call her, her grandma always say she gonna get after her and do this and that. And we don't...it don't never work. It worked for about like a week, and then next thing you know, it's a different problem. So I said okay, I'll handle it myself (Girl, 42:40, 138:138).

Connected to this, mainly the girls made statements in which being able to stand up for oneself and being able "to handle my own business" (Girl, 27:33, 270:270) was a valued skill. This was something that was sometimes encouraged by mothers or, in this case, the father: "My dad had told me before though, when I get fed up with something, I'm gonna do something about it." (Girl, 42:36, 134:134). This also might explain why in those transcripts there was not much mention of involving authority being the right and good thing to do. On the other hand, if fighting is a regular and normative occurrence, it seems natural that having a certain reputation is deemed important. Correspondingly, in a number of interviews youth talked about being concerned about one's 'image', or referenced the importance of how a situation is perceived and judged by peers or expressed a desire to appear strong or more powerful: "S: I told him, he could do whatever he want. I ain't scared." I: Was that true? S: No" (Boy, 3:9, 83:87). Another example was a boy talking about a fight on the bus which he still thinks about "because it was a lot of my friends on the bus with me and I felt that I lost and they were on the bus with me and I felt that they were going to brag and tease me about it" (Boy, 57:1, 14:26). Connected to this belief were references to special characteristics, like for example size, which make one especially vulnerable and likely to be picked on, which might increase the necessity to build a tough reputation or stand up for oneself. For example:

S: Look this...I am in my class, I don't say nothing to nobody I'll sit right there and don't say nothing to nobody everybody...everybody up in there will gang up on me. ... Out of all the people they picked me to snap on 'cause I am small; I'm

the smallest person in the class. ... Just pick me think I won't do nothing but I'm gonna show them (Girl, 34:34, 219:219).

If fighting is used as a means of building reputation, then it is important that there is an audience to see it. In this example consequently, the narrator dropped the confrontation and ran in the real situation with no audience, because fighting "wouldn't be worth nothing for my respect" (Boy, 32:8, 41:41), but in his scenario would have people there to witness his victory:

I: ...Alright if you made that situation happen and you actually did humiliate him in front of everybody, just tossed ... him what do you think would happen?

S: I think the other people would like insult him and I will have just felt better at the end because I would have left with my respect.

...

I: What do you think this guy would do?

S: Umm, it wouldn't mean nothing, I don't think he would do anything since I embarrassed him.

Finally, some girls mentioned how they are victims of their own temper, sometimes realizing that the conflicts are partly own fault, but seeing this as an unchangeable thing about themselves that they have to come to terms with. For example, "I tried not to think about it too much cause if I think, if I think about stuff that makes mad too much I will act out and that's a that's a that's a given" (Girl, 20:30, 277:277) or "I be ready to fight. I don't know what's wrong with me I just I don't know cause can't nobody calm me down when I am ready to fight" (Girl, 34:31, 215:215).

Beliefs in transcripts involving relational violence. As was to be expected due to the lower level of physical violence in transcripts involving relational victimization, youth mentioned beliefs about the normativeness of fighting less frequently, were less likely to discuss

strict reciprocity, and commented on the lack of necessity to stand up for oneself or to resort to self-justice. However, there still were references to the pervasiveness of certain normative relational violence behaviors, like “popular people get to be mean to people” (Girl, 54:50, 522:522). Similarly, the rules for reciprocity were present but slightly different:

S: I was thinking about if they tell anyone about it, I would have given them payback and actually the better thing to do would be just tell on them.

I: Okay, you were thinking about telling on them or payback, and what kind of payback ... is going through your mind?

S: Like, talking behind their back like they did to me. (Girl, 48:13, 174:178)

As mentioned in the quote, involving authority as the right thing to do was mentioned in some cases. In this group, youth mainly were talking about fairness or standards for how one is supposed to treat people in general and how to behave with friends. For example, being left out from playing a game with peers was bothering a girl a lot:

S: Because, umm, cause I’m not different from everybody else, how everybody else get to play and he get to play. I can see if we just both couldn’t play cause we came out late but they let him play and didn’t let me play and then the game was uneven and they still played and they didn’t let me play. ... Because they treated me wrong because you’re supposed to treat everybody equally, they didn’t treat me equal (Girl, 4:4, 42:54).

Being left out by friends was addressed as “we could have been mutual friends, that’s no way to choose your friends” (Girl, 23:13, 106:106). Another example was a girl talking why it bothers her that her friends are talking behind her back: “Because it’s just not right and I just think that if you’re going to be somebody’s friend then you shouldn’t be fake about it. You should be real” (Girl, 2:2, 28:28). Finally, being a good friend included general rules like “me

and her was friends at first; I wouldn't go with her boyfriend or whatever" (Girl, 42:24, 110:110). Again, given that multiple situations for the girls were involving former friends, the salience of etiquette in friendships was not surprising.

Finally, a theme almost exclusively mentioned by youth who did not settle for a revenge solution, were beliefs that de-escalation or being different is not weakness, but being the bigger person and following a moral compass that might differ from peers is a strength. For example, the girl that got excluded from playing states that "it didn't make me feel nothing about myself, cause I'm me. And...and they didn't...if I suck at football oh well-you still should have let me play" (Girl, 4:20, 174:174). Another statement comes from a boy that reported constantly being teased for being too feminine, smart and bad at sports:

S: What I'm trying to do is, I'm trying to show them that I'm a bigger person, because, like, I don't need to retaliate to, um, prove my point. I know what I am and I know what I'm not, and nobody can change that. They can't make me or break me. (Boy, 45:23, 121:125).

Summary of events, goals and beliefs - How do these interrelate? The above chapter provided an overview over the stressful events talked about by the adolescents in the study, their solutions to the conflicts, and the underlying beliefs that are part of their worldview when making sense of their experiences. Overall there was surprising consistency within the individual transcripts, with adolescents setting the stage by framing the problem in the beginning of the interview and then gravitating back to the themes that they first mentioned throughout the entire interview. There were only few transcripts that violated this consistency. For the most part, there was consistency between values, beliefs, messages from home, and the way the event and reactions to the event were narrated. This corresponds to research findings that individuals strive to make narratives that are coherent and justify their own actions (Harris & Walton, 2009).

Finally, different profiles emerged out of the data. It was evident that there were differences between events that were discussed in the SCI in regards to situational characteristics, which in turn determined some of the solution options and were mirrored in different goals, which finally corresponded to values and beliefs discussed. Gender differences emerged as a consequence of some of these differences. For example, for situations involving relational violence several girls talked about former friends as perpetrators which subsequently was connected to discussion of beliefs about what is appropriate or expected behavior in friendships. These situations were more likely to evoke sadness than fear, and to goals of making up and becoming friends again, highlighting the importance of peer acceptance. Similarly, there was a group of transcripts where retribution was connected to reputation, and goals were centered on sending messages to both the perpetrator and the audience. The following chapter will integrate the main profiles and themes that emerged from the combination of events, solutions and beliefs.

Findings Part II: Overarching Patterns Emerging from the Data

When reassembling the individual codes again into a complete picture of a network of meaningful relationships, 10 overarching patterns of qualitative differences in revenge narratives emerged from the data. The emerging patterns differed not only in their main themes; they also differed in manifestations of distortions or adaptations in social information processing. Thus, the findings in this chapter were organized around the hypothesized steps of information processing described within the framework of the SIP model adapted by Lemerise and Arsenio (2000). All emerging patterns were structured and placed in the different steps within the model in which their main distinguishing feature was situated. The patterns thus consisted of a description of influences, deficits or adaptations as they are hypothesized to occur in particular steps according to the SIP literature. Because the unit of analysis consisted of a description of

different patterns of processes when youth were constructing meaning and deciding on responses, different youth's narratives could contain multiple different patterns. In fact it would be expected to see multiple patterns in complex narratives, considering that all youth are hypothesized to experience the full circular model of social decision-making. Thus, youth could theoretically experience particular distortions or adaptations on every level, as well as take initial biases with them through the entire model.

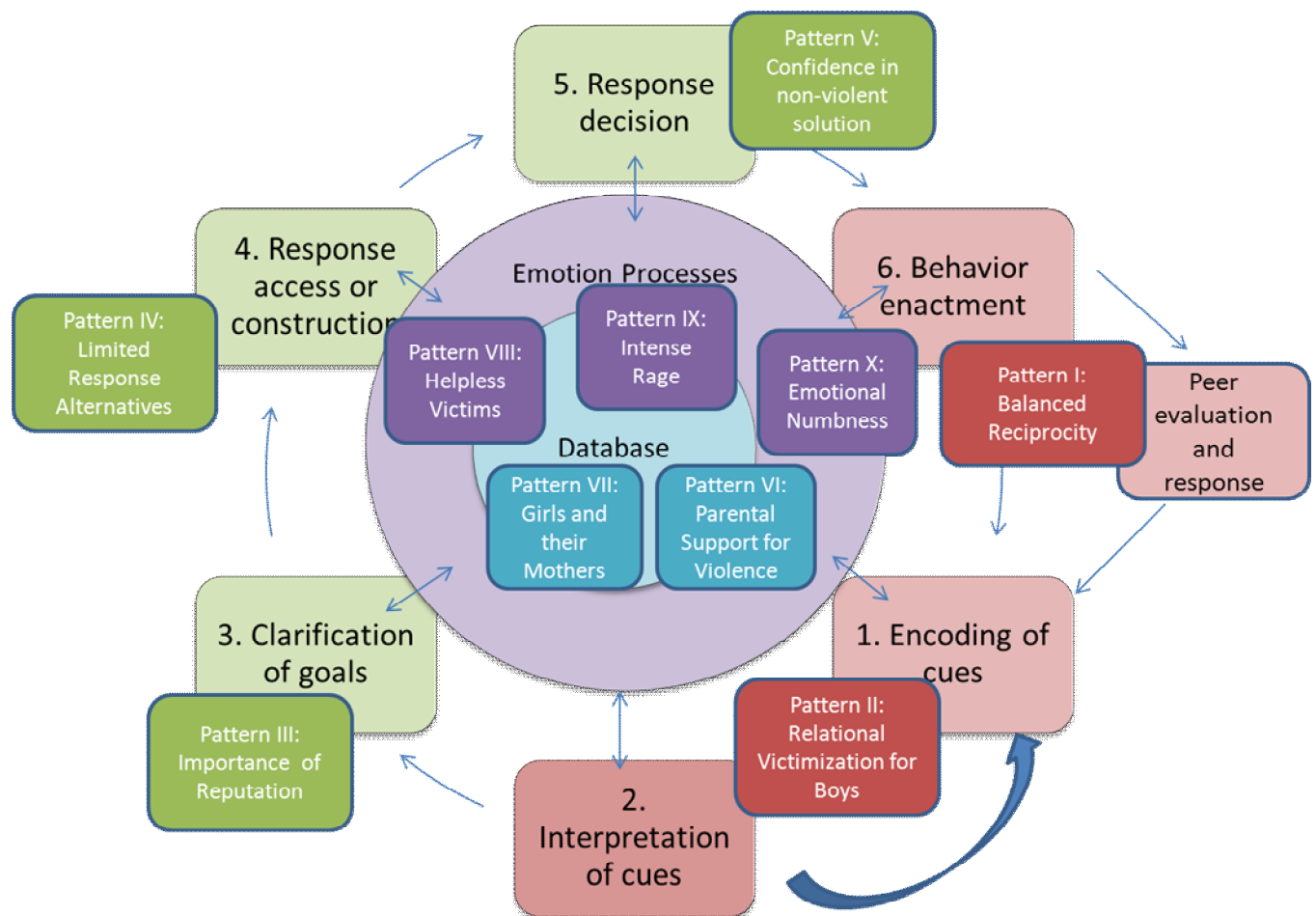


Figure 4. SIP model as adapted by Lemerise and Arsenio (2000) with integrated result patterns

Figure 4 provides a visual overview of the emerging patterns as put in their respective place in the SIP model. In brief, there were two patterns where a particular appraisal of events played a crucial role. Three patterns were mainly influenced by cognitions or limitations of cognitive abilities relating to response selection, while two more patterns appeared to be driven

by elements situated on the database level of the SIP model of surrounding culture and past experience. Finally, there were different patterns that were mainly connected to particular emotions. Below, all patterns are described in the order of the respective steps of the SIP model where they appear.

Appraisal of the event level in the SIP model.

Pattern I: Balanced reciprocity (SIP steps 1, 6, encoding, behavior enactment, and peer evaluation). The majority of transcripts had a certain balanced reciprocity for level of violence of the event and the solution. Reactions and solutions were never perceived as random by the narrator, they evolved out of the event and were for the majority targeted at the level of transgression. Retaliation in kind, where there is a certain code that is followed, where insults are retaliated with insults, and pushing leads to pushing back, hitting to hitting back, was the norm in this sample.

The majority of physical responses happened in the context of physical events. Still, there were different levels of physical violence and there were also multiple events where the narrator escalated name calling into physical violence. However, a closer look at these incidents revealed that they mostly were a reaction to recounted ongoing provocations, or a reaction to volatile topics that provoked intense anger, like insulting family, and it was not unusual that several warnings by the narrator were ignored.

One example where the proportionality was almost broken is the following story: This boy stated in the beginning that his problem was that “I don’t like people pushing me” (Boy, 21:1, 22:22) to proceed to talk about a peer provoking him in school, where they talk back and forth: “Well, he was talking all his junk and I was like bet you won’t say it to my face. That’s when he said it, and then I pushed him down” (102:102). The peer pushed him, and he pushed back: “He, he just got up and pushed me. and I I was like whatchu doin? Pushing me? He

tried to push me again, and I grabbed him. I had grabbed him and pushed him back” (197:201). At this point he reported feeling very mad and ready to start fighting for real. However, when “I was bout to hit him, that’s when they grabbed me” (141:141), -his peers intervened and held him back when he escalated, even though they had been encouraging of the confrontation before. This was a pattern that was repeated in other transcripts. Even though peers were often encouraging confrontations, or even got involved, usually this happened on the same level of violence:

And he had come back with all of [his friends] and they started chasing me and I went over to the basketball court and got all my friends and we started running. And then we had like this little match up where they were calling us names and we would call them names and I got a whole bunch of people to get on my side and he had them on his side. So it’s like 20 versus 20, and we’re like yelling names at each other. And then [my ‘enemy’] went and told the teacher and we all got in trouble (Boy, 1:26, 108:109).

On the other hand, when there was an escalation or breach of code, peers were more likely to intervene trying to deescalate, like in this interview containing a comparatively high level of narrated violence from a girl who stated about herself that she has trouble controlling her temper:

S: What did I do? I calmed down calmed down and put my head down until it was time to go. ... after they told me to calm down

...

I: What did you do before they told you to calm down?

S: I was ready to fight I was up and headed to her. (Girl, 34:22: 117:125)

It is important to note that in her recalled event it was not close friends who were getting involved, but peers who happened to be in the classroom. Another example was a boy who talked about a peer who repeatedly turned playful wrestling into real hurtful wrestling. In the eyes of the narrator, the peer repeatedly misinterpreted what was appropriate and when it would be time to stop. The movie scenario was escalation in a game, where the other boy would get so mad for losing that somebody else got hurt really badly, so that he would get seriously punished to teach him to stop behaving like that. "Well he wouldn't exactly have to go to jail, but the cops would come and talk to him. And then, for the rest of the year, he would be a nice, a nice boy" (Boy, 44:14, 186:186). Even though this transcript was low in revenge, it provided an interesting outside perspective of a peer who misinterpreted roughhousing, was thus violating 'the code' and was being disliked for it.

Accounts where this proportionality was gravely violated were narrated as memorable and almost shocking, as shown in this example of a girl who apparently was accustomed to herself being involved in physical fights regularly: She talked about an event happening the year before, when she got in a fight with a girl (which she partially instigated) "because she was bothering me, no, no cause she was picking on me and she knocked all my stuff down and so....And she hit me first, and then I hit her" (Girl, 31:21, 113:113). In reaction to this, the adversary drew scissors and threatened her with them which resulted in the narrator involving the teacher and her family. Even though the narrator was not very vocal, it seemed throughout the transcript there was shock at the escalation with a weapon, maybe suggesting that this was too serious for self-justice solutions. Similarly, there was shock expressed when proportionality was broken in a fight on the basketball court, when adversaries threaten to bring guns into a normal fight in the example of the altercation at the Boys and Girls Club mentioned above. Additionally, this was another transcript where peers played a crucial role in the conflict, as they offered to

help and retaliate the threat of guns with “well, they said they could already get the car to go over there, and they said guns and all that,” which prompts the narrator to de-escalate: “I was just like, naw, I’ll be alright, and just left it alone” (Boy, 5:41, 266:266).

In the rare example where proportionality was gravely violated by the narrator, throughout the interview there seemed to be something peculiar in the way the narrator perceived the event. For example there were small contradictions in the construal of the logical sequence of actions or in the recounting of others’ actions that in sum amounted to a skewed perception of reality in general. This is an example of a boy describing why he chose to talk about physical problems with peers:

S: Because when I am in school, everybody comes up and hits me a lot. And I try to hit them back- but the teacher said I can’t or I’ll get suspended.

I: And why is this a problem for you? Why is that a problem?

S: ‘Cause I don’t like people hitting me- and I can’t hit them back.

I: Do they get in trouble when they hit you?

S: No. ... Because my principal said if you hit somebody back, the person that hits back will get suspended.

I: But not the person who that hit you.

S: They’d get suspended only if they like punched you somewhere where it hurts.

I: So when they hit you, where did they hit you?

S: In my shoulder.

I: That didn’t hurt?

S: No.

I: But it bothered you?

S: Yes. (Boy, 52:6, 32:42).

Such rare narratives of seemingly skewed appraisals of situations repeatedly lead to perseveration on a narrow understanding of strict reciprocity, which in reality seemed to have consisted of a substantial escalation. This could indicate problems with the proper interpretation of social rules and thus, as with the boy mentioned earlier who did not understand when ‘enough is enough,’ possibly issues with peer rejection.

In summary, proportionality in action and reaction was the norm in this sample. There emerged a shared code of retaliation that seemed to have been enforced by peers, who were portrayed as encouraging and expecting certain reciprocity, but also condemning or stepping in, it seemed, to limit excesses. Narratives where the balance was violated repeatedly included a background story of prolonged provocation or reference to volatile topics. It is remarkable thus that even in accounts which involved substantial violence, one of the most common values stated by the narrator were rules of strict reciprocity. Massive escalation was the exception, and was interestingly still falling under this rule in the perception of the escalating narrator. This misinterpretation of the rule and a rigidity in applying it connects such scenarios to possible limitations in appraising social events correctly. Such distorted appraisals of the environment (SIP steps 1-2) repeatedly co-occurred with accounts of rejection by peers and is thus probably reason for concern.

Pattern II: Relational victimization for boys (SIP steps 1-2, encoding and interpretation of cues). In this sample, a difference in definition of relational versus physical victimization for boys and girls emerged. While there were no physical components in girls’ relational violence events, the difference between relational and physical victimization was more blurry for boys. As mentioned above, the main aspect of relational violence for boys was being ridiculed in front of peers. Repeatedly, this humiliation and exclusion happened in the context of playing team sports. For example

Well, we're on the playground, behind the kickball field and the soccer field and they were all like chasing us until we stopped at the big oak tree which is in the middle of the whole playground and they like circled around us and they started [calling] us names. We started calling names back and then [name] said something really, really, really mean and we all went and told the teacher and she didn't listen to us because there was like three of us and like 15 of them and so we went back over there. We started running again and they started chasing us, and we started playing freeze tag and while we were playing freeze tag [name] tackled me and he whispered in my ear something mean at me. So we were playing freeze tag the next day, when we were going, he hit me in the back of my head when he tagged me. (Boy, 1:2, 16:16).

However, these physical altercations were not perceived as someone 'starting a fight', but were conceptualized as part of a strategy to humiliate, tease, or "so they can, um, keep me away from friends and make me not have any friends" (Boy, 15:1, 14:14). They might even be skirmishes about group hierarchy, where it was stated that for example the aforementioned adversary wanted to:

Take my position as like... Well, I'm the kind of kid in school that you go to and ask like spelling words, how to spell something or I help with math homework or something like that, or will you play kick ball with me. Well, [name] wants to be that kid, so [name], he's trying to make me, like, everybody hate me, so he can take my position. (Boy, 1:32, 128:128)

Additionally, the choice of language as boys were talking about relational victimization suggests a more blurry line between relational and physical involvement as well: For example this boy stated that his problem was when "me and some friends was ballin on each other and...

I: What's it called? S: Ballin. I: What's that mean? S: Like jumpin on each other" (Boy, 17:5, 49:57). It is only after more questions by the interviewer that it becomes clear that he means: "Like, like everyday talking about each other. ... Just talking about me" (Boy, 17:10, 106:106).

In summary, there were gender differences in the presentation of accounts of relational versus physical victimization that lead to different appraisals of events, different ways of talking about events, and different solutions.

Cognition level of the SIP model.

Pattern III: Importance of reputation (SIP step 3, clarification of goals). Retaliation and revenge happen in context, and in this sample, where fighting was generally viewed as a normative, 'necessary evil,' it often also happened as a public event in the context of school. In the transcripts where revenge was discussed as a public event, it was apparent that evaluation by peers was important and there was concern about maintaining a reputation that says 'I am not to mess with. For example: "The most important part of it is just showing that I...showing that I have the courage that I'm not going to let nobody push me around anymore. ... I mean, that's what I really want. ... Since he embarrassed me, I want to embarrass him" (Boy, 32:41, 301:317). In this sense, for some youth reactions to an insult were part of efforts to communicate strength, build a reputation of being tough, and deterring future harm not only by sending a message to the perpetrator but to a wider audience of peers. It might even be that youth perceived that they do not have a choice but to retaliate, if they do not want to end up being a regular target. For example, this girl talked about the difficulties in her efforts to change her behaviors, concentrating on school and stopping the fighting she used to engage in:

And I was in the hallway talking to my friend, and she walked up just grinning. I said, "Stop looking at me before I come over there and hurt you." She said, "You won't, you wouldn't do it. And I said, "Your mama." And then the girl was like

“I’ll punch you in the face, you stupid bitch.” And then I went in my class. So I started shaking and stuff, ‘cause I was mad she keep on thinking I’m a joke. So I calmed down, tried to...I put my head on my desk and started crying. But I snapped out of it because of school is more important. (Girl, 27:22, 166:166).

The drawback of such a culture of normative violence is that in order to build one’s reputation, one has to engage in fights, preferably with someone who will lose the altercation. Some youth consequently reported an increased pressure to build a reputation. This seemed increasingly important to youth who thought that some attribute of themselves made them a frequent or likely target of aggression. Characteristics that were reported as increasing the likelihood of being such a special target were race, being small, and being different. One girl stated for example: “she thought she could push me around probably because I was white” (Girl, 7:2, 64:64). For youth who endorse this thinking, on the one hand this results in more pressure not to end up or remain in the category of ‘easy targets.’ False allegations of a fight that was lost were thus perceived as quite stressful:

When the fight happened, what was going through my mind is that if I fight him and I lose that is going to be the main thing people are going to be talking about the next day. ... That I got into fighting and I lost in front of my friends and after they was gone, it wasn’t gonna upset me because I lost, but see my friends’ friends, they gonna spread rumors. (Boy, 57:17, 74:90)

This also shed some light on the comparatively higher incidence of boys being concerned about peers spreading ‘rumors.’ It seems that it was rumors and stories of outcomes of altercations that they were mostly worried about. On the other hand though, endorsing high importance of reputation might make youth more likely to repeatedly end up in fights, possibly increasing their risk of being victims of retaliation instead of protecting them from being a future

target. It is thus not surprising to encounter statements like “it don’t bother me if somebody say something to me I’m gonna beat their tail, it don’t bother me. ‘Cause that’s the only skills in school you need” (Girl, 34:4, 30:30) in this group. An even more concerning example of this reasoning came from a youth who talked about an event in the community:

S: Because I was thinking about joining a gang.

I: Because you were thinking about joining a gang? Ok, well, um, how long has this been a problem for you?

S: A year.

I: About a year? Ok, and how often do you think about that?

S: Every day.

...

I: Um, ok, and so, and that was because your friend was in a gang, and you were thinking why were you thinking that you wanted to do that? What was the reasoning behind it?

S: To me it makes me closer with like my friends and stuff.

...

S: And plus most of my friends are in the gang.

I: Oh, okay. So do you think, do you think that will be more protection for you? Is that where you’re coming from?

S: Yeah. (Boy, 16:1, 14:76)

In summary, a pervasive theme in the overall sample was the discussion of retaliation as a public event with a judging audience of peers. Revenge thus served to communicate a twofold message of deterrence: communicating to a perpetrator to ‘stop messing with me,’ but also showing toughness towards peers to build ‘respect.’ In this context, the goal was not just to get

revenge, punish for a transgression, teach a lesson, or restore equilibrium; the real goal was to build a reputation that is supposed to increase personal safety and decrease the likelihood of future attacks. The overall comparatively increased description of problems with violence in the transcripts of youth who endorsed this set of beliefs however shows that this might be a contortion of reality.

Pattern IV: Limited generation of response alternatives (SIP step 4, response access and construction). In order to select and behaviorally enact a certain solution, an individual needs to generate response possibilities first. One of the emerging patterns was that some youth who generated revenge scenarios seemed to have trouble constructing response alternatives. Those youth also showed limitations in verbal skills, lower ability to generate a coherent narrative, and what seemed like possibly skewed social cognitions. Sometimes, this was combined with reference to needing adult direction and intervention to regulate emotions and solve a conflict.

There were different manifestations of constraints in the generation of response alternatives. Some youth generated scenarios that were comparatively limited in narrating the event or framing the problem. There seemed to be difficulties with explaining causality within their narratives, with understanding interactions and with generating independent solutions to their conflicts with peers. In their narratives were indicators that they seemed to depend on guidance from adults to regulate their negative emotions and to help them move on or make up and be friends again. . For example, one boy stated that he did not like rumors being spread:

S: Because they spread stuff we're not supposed to.

I: And why is that a problem?

S: Because it's a story.

I: And...

S: It's make believe. (Boy, 41:2, 56:66).

S: I would have the movie end with the um, person who was talked about jumping up and down with money falling from the sky, so they would be really excited, and so that they are the winners.

...

I: And, and why would that be again?

S: Um, because she would, um, because she could be saying, "Yes, I won!"

I: Oh, she won.

S: "And you didn't."

...

S: Like it's a millionaire. Um, Who Wants to be a Millionaire game, and she won all the money so that's why the money's coming down.

I: Oh I see, I see. Well can you think of an ending that could really happen? ...

S: Um, could go home and tell her parents how, how exciting her day was.

I: Okay.

S: And how she had a bad part of the day. (Girl, 48:33, 350:370)

The last example illustrates difficulties in coming up with a scenario where the youth would be solving the problem themselves. Along the same lines is the following example of a revenge scenario that was acted out by this girl in answer to feeling left out by her friends:

S: Um, what I would do is I would, I would normally just tell the teacher, but I was working on not telling her anything, [because peers called her a "tattle tale"] but what I really do is try to get them back in a way honestly. I try to get them back. But the reason I got them back was that I had like learned we always used to

play games at recess like one person would make up a game and it would be their game and I didn't let them play.

...

I: So how did they react to that?

S: Um, they, they, now they started to notice that that was really wrong what they did so they started to apologize

I: Ok

S: Cause they talked to like the teacher

I: Ok, and how did that make you feel?

S: Really good because they finally noticed that I was mad because they are my best friends so I was waiting for a long time.

...

I: And then what happened?

S: Well we became friends we had a choice to not be friends and be friends, but she is my best friend so I had. . . so.

I: Ok did you explain to her why you were upset?

S: No I think she finally found out why I was what she did because she told the teacher what she did so I think she finally found out. (Girl, 54:13, 136:442)

This shows that there was relief when someone would step up, tell the youth what to do or help regulate negative emotions. Youth in this group repeatedly talked about how they were waiting and counting on grown up intervention to help them solve the conflict so that everybody could become friends again. All in all, accounts of youth in this group reminded of altercations more typical for younger children. Revenge scenarios were talked about because there seemed to

be limits in the generation of effective solutions for communicating frustration and resolving conflicts within a friendship in a different way.

This dependent group was quite vocal in the communication of their frustrations and clearly stated their wish for a particular outcome (usually reconciliation). They were actively trying to navigate and influence their environments, albeit with limited social ‘tools’ and need for some assistance. Another group of youth, in contrast, showed limited abilities to generate any active solution to past conflicts, perseverated on their wish to retaliate and often narrowly relived the situation exactly as it had unfolded in real life, including adults interfering and punishing them. This is a boy talking about “we was in the bathroom, both of us started fighting and all that, and then he said nobody was fighting in there, and then he said he wanted to fight me again in the classroom....And so we started fighting” (Boy 29:7, 56:64) until it got broken up by a teacher:

S: I wanted to beat him up so bad, he gets on my nerves.

I: Mm-hmm. So what didn’t you do that day that you wanted to do?

S: Make him all bloody.

...

I: And how did that make you feel when you told [your momma] about it?

S: Real mad, I wanted to fight him again.

I: Mm-hmm, okay, and how do you feel right now when you think about it?

S: I just want to fight him again.

...

I: What would you have David do in the movie? What would you want David to do to the boy that came over and hit him?

S: Fight him.

I: You'd want him to fight him? And what else, that's all?

...

S: I'll break them up. (Boy, 29:20, 221:247)

The only alternative this boy could think of was to not fight him in school to avoid getting suspended, even though suspension did not seem to be a major concern. Transcripts showing this pattern of narrowly reliving what happened in the event were overlapping with a sub-pattern that was mentioned earlier: The group of youth who in their scenarios gravely violated the principle of proportionality. As mentioned above, those scenarios were combined with numerous distortions in the narratives, including accounts of misunderstandings that suggested problems in recognizing others' intentions, limited use of emotion vocabulary and limited communication on own mental state to the interviewer. Within those narratives there was often a perseveration on the desire to escalate, disregard for social rules, and accounts of continued peer rejection. This is an example of a girl talking about a high amount of physical violence in her interview, stating that she picked to talk about fighting "Cause people don't, most people around here don't like me, so I'm always trying to find fights" (Girl, 49:1, 16:16). In the subsequent interview she had difficulty singling out an event, there was no imagination to alter the events and no ideas were communicated about what would happen as a consequence of her getting in a fight again. In a repetition of the above example of the boy who had an 'off' understanding of his principal's rules around the appropriateness of retaliation, this girl's statement also constitutes of a peculiar explanation of her own behavior. As for the boy, the impression of listening to a distorted account further solidified over the course of his interview. The described event consisted of an altercation at the bus stop with a peer that punched the boy in the shoulder. Based on contextual clues from the narrative it seems that this was more horseplay than serious instigation; the boy stated that it did not hurt him. The teacher interrupting

his retaliation lead to the following statement that was ruminated on over and over throughout the remainder of the interview: “I should have hit him back ... before the teacher came” (Boy, 52:17, 150:170). The amount of escalation becomes clear when in a later part of the interview he mentions that he already got his payback later in the bus, when he hit his peer in the face until he started to cry:

I: Did you get in trouble? You said that you’re told not to hit nobody. I don’t understand how that works out. How did you have to, if you’re like, if you hit him then, but didn’t you hit him before?

S: Because the teachers, she told me that she was gonna keep a eye on me.

I: What then?

S: Then, after we got on the bus. And he kept on punching me and I got really mad. And I punched him in the face until he started crying.

I: You said, you said that they’re cameras on the bus?

S: Mm-hmm.

I: You’re not worried about getting in trouble? ...Why not?

S: Because I’m defending myself.

I: How is that different than when he was standing in line?

S: The teacher was there. (Boy, 52:33, 268:290)

This shows that even though he conceptualized his actions as proportionate and justified self-defense, he really was narrating an escalation (getting hit in the shoulder repaying by hitting in the face).

A similar pattern was found in this transcript of escalation, even though this boy reduced the amount of violence from the actual event to his scenario. Again, it started out with a peculiar statement for why he chose to talk about problems with peers:

S: Because uhm, really I'on really run from nobody like talking bout, but I be the one doing it for them

I: Okay you so you be chasing them or

S: Yeah, yeah jes playing and stuff like that

I: Why did this, why did become a problem, how does it make you stressful

S: Cause thangs don't go my way (Boy, 24:2, 12:20)

The situation he talked about was happening in the classroom that day while the teacher stepped out for a minute:

S: Alright like today, we was sittin in our lil group thang right, so the dude walked up to me talking bout some 'yeah we got you now' I'm like whatever, and then he kept on hittin me in my arm so I got up and I punched him in the mouth.

And then he uhm,

I: You punched him in the mouth?

S: Yeah, and then he uhm, and he just sat down.

I: (laughing) He aint come back at you at all

S: Naw, and then, then the teacher walked in aint say nothing to them so

I: Oh y'all were in a room by yourself at this time

...

S: Yeah, so it, it was like four us in there and he, he had hit me so I was like oh okay, punched him right in his mouth.

I: Okay. And that was it? He just backed off

S: Yep, yep he just backed off and sat down holding his mouth. (Boy, 24:6, 48:68)

Even though he was not referring to any intense affect as he remembered his event, there was surprising initiative coming from this youth when inventing his movie scenario which involved guns, going into hiding to Kansas for 10 years and a final showdown with police. In reality he would: “Don’t beat, don’t beat’em to a blood bath, jes hit’em jes break his nose or sometin to get him up off ya.” (24:32, 263:263).

In summary, there emerged two different patterns where constraints in the generation of response alternatives were connected to particular revenge scenarios. One small group of youth seemed to depend on adult intervention in solving their conflicts and their retaliation strategies were connected more to a lack of repertoire of independent social strategies than intent to harm. Also, those situations unfolded in the context of management of conflict in friendships. The other small group showed more concerning patterns where either past events were relived exactly without generating alternatives of action, or the solutions were connected to escalations, a lack of attention to social rules of reciprocity, perseveration on desire to harm, mentioning repeated problems with violence and no insight in necessity to come up with alternative scenarios after prompting by the interviewer.

Pattern V: Importance of confidence in a non-violent solution (SIP step 5, response decision). As mentioned above, cognitive ability combined with insight into necessity to generate response alternatives is crucial for the ability to engage in effective and peaceful interactions with peers. However, while a necessary prerequisite, this is not enough to actually employ such a solution. For those youth who were able to discuss multiple solutions to their past event, a pattern emerged where confidence in non-violent solutions was the determining factor in their decision-making regarding their future behavior. In this study, there were a substantial number of adolescents who did not believe that employing authorities or engaging in other non-violent solutions would yield successful results. There were multiple remarks of how trying to

involve authority simply did not work, even though there were statements that involving authority would be the right thing to do:

S: I tried everything else I could think of. ... To deal with him. I tried talking to the principal, the teachers, my mom. There was a, I think compliance officers at our school, I tried talking to him.

I: Mm-hmm.

S: None of that worked.

I: And why didn't it work?

S: He was just...he was the kid at that school that nobody could deal with. (Boy, 56: 64, 486:498)

I: Ok, so when you told the teacher, originally, the teacher didn't do anything. Is that what you are telling me?

S: I, no, no she didn't. I tried to tell her but then, but then um, she told us to sit down.

I: Ok, and how did that make you feel?

S: Angry. (Girl, 31:15, 331:337).

In this climate where fighting was normative and regulating structures were failing, there were seemingly plenty of messages from the environment that relayed ,you're on your own,' ,you have to fend for yourself,' and if you want to successfully navigate your daily life, 'you need to stand your ground.' This is an example of a boy's views on his school's policy on him fighting back after being provoked by a peer: "She [the teacher] saw it, but that's how, how they are. They gon be like, 'oh he trying to bully you, he trying to bully you,. But if they see that I'm not let him bully me then they won't suspend me" (Boy, 21:51, 343:343). This example makes

clear how messages from the environment, even those intended to stop bullying, influenced retaliatory behavior in the adolescents in this sample.

Overall, girls seemed more vocal than boys about different retaliation scenarios, and a high number discussed how they would try to employ peaceful solutions, but anticipated that this would not be successful and rationalized how they would have to take things in their own hands:

S: Okay. This is what I'd have happen. I'd have 'Tasha go to the office, 'cause this way I know is right. I'd have 'Tasha go to the office, tell them about it. If the situation get worse when they go back to class or whatever, handle it herself and just take whatever consequences and deal with it, because it'll blow over.

...

S: [in reality] I think we'll get it straight by saying that we don't like each other, but it'll still be a little friction with us walking down the hallways; girls just walking in the hallways. People talking about it and everybody here is just gonna get boosted up again and we're just gonna end up fighting. (Girl, 42:44, 162:220)

They made it clear that a peaceful ending of the situation would not be realistic, especially if the future event would include the same person again:

S: With the same person?

I: Mmmmm...

S: [laughs] 'Cause if it's the same person I would hit her so forget about that.

...

I: Ok now if it were the same person to do it again, can you think of another way to handle the situation instead of decking her, or spawking her or...

S: Asking her one time and then after that I'd tell the teacher about what happened.

...

I: Ok so if it were, what if it were that same girl?

...

S: No way in heck that could just stand right there and just let her sing in my ear
or go tell the teacher 'cause I would hit her 'cause I really don't like her at all.

(Girl, 55:54, 528:548)

However, this was a theme that held true for both genders, with a boy making almost an identical statement, after he successfully ignored a boy who was insulting and threatening him while eating lunch: "S: Or if the same thing happened. You know, I gotta beat him down. I: If it happened again, you'd beat him down? ... S: Twice in a row. Can't get none" (Boy, 28:42, 299:307). Both genders also agreed on the consequences of their actions, with this girl stating that "I will get suspended, probably for ten days, come back to school, be back up there she probably won't be messing with me" (Girl, 34:59, 419:419). Confirming this point of view, the boy mentioned above puts it this way: "Uh, if I did beat him down, I'd probably get suspended. Be at home, then go back to school. Won't have no problems with him again." (Boy, 28:45, 335:335). Overall, the examples show that this youth sees the fighting just as an inevitable outcome that is going to happen if not today then tomorrow, and this is just seen as part of the normal experience of going to school. In summary, this shows that it is not only the cognitive capability of generating peaceful response alternatives that determines whether or not they are enacted. After the step of generation, it is mainly the evaluation of how successful different strategies would be that seemed to drive their enactment in this sample.

Database level of the SIP model.

Pattern VI: Importance of parental messages, family support for violence. Violence, specifically appropriate retaliation, was conveyed by many actors in the school context.

Additionally, there was substantial support for violence from parents. It might be the case that youth only discussed school violence with parents who would support their responses to provocation by peers. Still, a pattern emerged about the connection between parental messages on fighting and retaliation, whether they were positive or negative, and a child's behavior. There were substantial gender differences regarding when explicit advice was sought from parents and in the messages parents relayed to their children. These are two examples of messages of de-escalation in physical violence events leading to boys dropping confrontations and refraining from retaliation:

I would try to stay to myself and keep it from happening because I hate getting in trouble because every time I get in trouble, something messes up. Like if I get suspended, my grades are going to go down because I can't make up the work I don't want my grades to go down because my grades depend on my future toward my momma. Because if I don't have good grades, like if I didn't have a good report card before my birthday, she not going to ... buy [me] nothing. (Boys, 46:35, 202, 202)

So then I said I ain't like him either. Then I said, "Get out my face." then he walked off, and I was trying to go get him, just beat him down. Then I thought about what my brother said, about getting suspended. And he said, if I get suspended or go to jail, he said he gonna call me and he gonna make sure that I feel worse than I feel when I get suspended or go to jail. (Boy, 28:22, 163:163)

The second example shows the importance of getting advice not only from mom, but involving older brothers; -a theme that came up multiple times. Messages that encouraged violence for boys were usually rules about how to stand your ground without letting it escalate.

This is a reaction after a student told his mother that he would stand up to a bully after all other avenues were explored:

S: Well she just said, “Well now that I know if I get a phone call home saying you had a con, confrontation with another student, I’ll know what it was about.”

I: Okay. Is that all she said?

S: And she said, “Well try to avoid getting into a fight with him, but if you do get in a fight defend yourself and don’t let him beat you up.”

I: And how did that make you feel? That advice?

S: Well I knew that if, if I got into a fight and he threw the first punch and attacked me then my mom felt that I was doing the right thing. (Boy, 56:54, 450:458)

In contrast to the messages boys were getting in physical violence events, none of the girls involved in physical fighting reported messages of de-escalation from home. De-escalation messages only emerged in interviews of girls talking about relational violence, and mainly consisted of the advice to ignore the mean girls. In conclusion, it seemed that mothers of sons involved in physical violence were more trying to appease situations and teaching their sons to limit their fighting, whereas mothers of daughters who engaged in physical violence were more supportive of that behavior. However, because boys were more reluctant to volunteer the nature of social support and thus did not talk about maternal messages in depth, this theme was not well saturated. Given how embedded girls’ behavior was in maternal messages it seems though that this would be a promising avenue for future inquiry.

Pattern VII: The special case of girls and their mothers. A theme repeatedly discussed by the girls involved in physical violence in this sample was the normativeness of the experience for girls. Accounts of past and future physical altercations with other girls were repeatedly

portrayed as things that are just bound to happen once in a while, and there was no stigma attached to girls getting ‘physical.’ Quite in contrary being a good fighter was discussed as a valued ability. It is important to note that this was confined to fights with other girls only; engaging in violence with boys was not part of this rationale. In this example, the girl seemed popular, and consulted intensely with her friends about whether or not and when to engage in fighting, showing that this is not behavior of a shunned outsider but closely embedded in the management of popularity in peer relationships.

I would through the house all day and talk on the phone. But when I’m on the phone with my friends now, me and my friends don’t like them either. So it’s like somehow I always end up bringing that subject back up because I just want to fight her so bad and get it over with. (Girl, 42:32, 122:122)

She justified and rationalized her own behavior, described the importance of having a reputation of being a good fighter, and reported using physical aggression (or at least the talking about it) to express identity. This is her paraphrasing what she already talked over repeatedly with her friends:

But when we in school and she talking all her junk, that’s when I’m gonna hit her in the face ‘cause I ain’t got time for all of it. She’s gonna keep saying...because when me and [name] got to fight, [name] had got the best of me, but I told her she did not beat my tail. Because beating my tail, if they know what it means in beating somebody, is them standing right there letting somebody beat them. And I said, “Oh, I fought her back. It wasn’t like I didn’t fight her back.” I hadn’t fought ever since third grade and that was sixth grade, so I was all out of it when I was fighting. I was just hitting her any kind of way. So I was like “Yeah, she got the best of me. But she didn’t beat me.” (Girl, 42:33, 126:126)

It was not only friends who played an important role in the navigation of physical conflicts. Repeatedly, the mothers played an important role in sanctioning this behavior; mothers were aware of what was happening, encouraged that behavior and underlined the normativeness of such experiences. This is an example of a girl struggling to control her quick temper in the face of perceived ongoing provocation because “I can’t fight her because I love school so much, and my school is getting real strict. When you get to fighting, they start with suspending you from school” (Girl, 27:5, 30:30). This is her recounting her mother’s reaction to the situation:

S: [My mom] was like control yourself...[IA]...as long as she doesn’t let her put her hands on you, and if she does, you know what to do.

I: Okay, she said as long as she...she doesn’t put her hands on you and then if she does then you know what to do. And what is that?

S: Hit her back

I: Hit her back? Ok and how does that make you feel when your mom said that to you?

...

S: She was telling me how to handle my own business. (Girl, 27:33, 256:278)

Following that advice, she gave the other girl her address to be able to handle her ‘business’ away from the supervised school. Her movie solution is “that she came into my residence, she stepped on my property. We fought and then we solved it out ... and the last thing, she’d get beat up” (Girl, 27:42, 306:306). Another example from an interview where the girl talked about an inevitable fight as retribution for an insult against her and her sister follows below. Again, the normativeness of fighting was mentioned and the mother sanctioned her daughter’s reactions. The most important thing seemed to give the mother a warning before the suspension would happen:

S: I told my momma.

I: How'd she react?

S: I told her I might get to fighting tomorrow and she was like for what and I told her what happened she was what did she say...she says...she said well long as you get killed or something like that.

I: Mm-hmm, so how did that make you feel her reaction to it?

S: Nothing 'cause my momma she'll, she'll tell me to beat her tail if she hit me.

I: Alright, what went through your mind when you were talking to your mom about it?

S: Nothing, I just made sure I told her before I was supposed to get to fighting and get suspended too. (Girl, 34:39, 275, 287)

This is also the girl stating that fighting was the only skills in school you need and mentioned in passing the importance of body size: that they were picking on her because she is the smallest in class. The final example about the normativeness of girls fighting is from the perspective of the person giving the advice. This is a girl talking about a conflict her little sister had when a friend turned on her and tried to instigate a fight. The big sister interfered and confronted the girl the following day. While she stood up for her sister, she also discussed how her little sister should learn how to take care of her own business, which is why she encouraged for the fight to actually happen under her supervision:

S: I mean I wasn't... I was mad, but it's not like I was very angry. 'Cause, I mean my sister, she gonna have to learn regardless.

...

S: Well at the time I was thinking that if I had heard anything about it, I was gonna let my sister fight her.

...

S: ... and if they're gonna fight or whatever they do, do it in front of me. (Girl, 40:12, 95:215)

In summary a significant number of girls reported navigating physical aggression and retaliation as a normative part of growing up. This fact was supported by messages from mothers, and in one instance from the father as well, that encouraged daughters to engage in physical fights when necessary. The examples show that the fighting girls overall maintained a high level of disclosure with their mothers, who were well-informed about their daughter's lives. Repeatedly, daughters disclosed in advance of something happening, as this example shows again: "I already told my momma before that me and [name] weren't getting really good. And I think something's gonna happen or whatever" (Girl, 42:11, 68:68). Having a good relationship seemed to consist of talking to their mothers in the early stages of a conflict suggesting the importance of their feedback. Being a good fighter was discussed as a valued part of a girls' identity and a necessary skill to master.

Emotion processes level of the SIP model.

Pattern VIII: Overwhelmed and scared victims. One emerging pattern was that revenge scenarios in events that elicited fear in the youth were discussed differently than scenarios from other events where fear was not prominent. While fear was referenced only in few instances that involved school-based events with peers, being scared was the main emotion in events of youth recounting community violence or domestic abuse. It was notable that the group of adolescents talking about revenge scenarios in answer to events other than peer violence was dominated by boys. Two boys were talking about experiencing a drive-by shooting. In one event, the boy and his friends get shot at directly before they could run for cover, while in the other instance the boy and his friend managed to run inside before they were noticed. In both instances the boys were

talking about intense fear, but while the first boy was just “happy that I’m still here” because “I could be dead right now” (Boy, 6:7 105:109), the second boy was also talking about anger and feeling “frustration” (Boy, 33:5, 64:66). Both movie scenarios are similar in that the shooters would get punishment by the hands of the boys. The first scenario is that they either get killed by somebody else, or that he himself would shoot at them. It is however unclear how serious he takes that second alternative. In the second boy’s scenario, the police would come, apprehend the shooters “and then everybody will come over there and beat them up”(Boy, 33:26, 190:190) before they are put in jail. While calling the police in real life is explored by both boys, confidence in that action was very low and they would both just run in the house real fast and relive the event. A similar pattern was followed in an interview where a boy talked about a hypothetical revenge scenario following an event where he was scared and helpless when an older youth in the community took his bicycle from him. Again, in his movie he would fight back but would otherwise relive the event as it happened. In reality, he gave fighting back a confidence level of one.

This shows that there is a common denominator in the transcripts of scared youth, where they invent scenarios of revenge where they have the courage to stand up, break their helplessness and change from being at the mercy of other actors, to taking charge. Even though the event is substantially different, this basic pattern also emerged in the context of domestic violence. A boy talking about being abused by his mother’s new boyfriend stated how he was too scared to tell mom what was happening. In his movie again, he wanted to stand up to the perpetrator, making himself strong enough to attack him: “Let me see...He’d probably gather up that courage and you know, find it within himself. It’s like, yeah instead of him hitting me, I’m gonna hit him back this time. And, I’m gonna show him what I’m really feeling, you know physically. Instead of just talking it out” (Boy, 30:25, 193:193). The only girl in this group

followed that pattern when talking about her abusive father who threatened to shoot her and her mother, which made her very scared. Her main motive in the transcript was desire to protect her mother, and end the situation. But she also stated that:

S: Oh, I was scared, but um...I felt, even though I was scared, I wanted my mom to be safe. ... I wanted to hurt him 'cause all the times he hurt me, he slapped me and he punched me, he pushed me down, he called me names. He did the same to my mom. I wanted him to just feel one time how I felt

...

S: Or just tie him up to a tree and just get something and just beat him up or something like that to let him know how I feel. You know, you know, I wanted him to know how I felt; how I went through the struggles and stuff like that.

That's what I mean. (Girl, 51:15, 208:212).

In reality she just wanted to leave and get out of harm's way. Both the boy mentioned above and her overcame their fears in real life and talked to their mothers who took care of the situation. In summary, there was a subgroup of youth who experienced situations characterized by a power imbalance where they were at someone else's mercy, which made them feel helpless, overwhelmed, and very scared. In the case of the community violence events this feeling was contained to only a short period of time, while in situations of domestic violence this was happening over prolonged periods of time. The revenge scenarios discussed by those youth were fantasies where they would stand up to the perpetrators, experience themselves as powerful, and shake the role of the victim, while knowing that in reality they would not be in the situation where they would or could enact those desires.

As this last example shows, fantasizing about a self that would be more powerful and fight back in the face of overwhelming challenges might have been a way for boys who felt

helpless in real life to re-establish masculinity. This is the interview of a boy who gets teased repeatedly about being too feminine in school because he is smart and not very athletic. This probably true bullying situation illustrated how he protected himself from succumbing to being a helpless victim through constant cognitive restructuring. He was trying to take pride in his ability for self-control and trying to maintain an orientation towards a future when he would be out of school and successful. While he was showing immense coping skills and stood by his belief that “What I’m trying to do is, I’m trying to show them that I’m a bigger person, because, like, I don’t need to retaliate to, um, prove my point” (Boy, 45:4, 121:121), there was a part of him that wished he was more assertive: “Um, I would re-change the last part when um, I said I felt physically weak. I would, I would probably change that, and I would be sitting in my seat feeling like I was on top of the world.” (Boy, 45:25, 156:156).

Pattern IX: Intense rage. A major influence on choice of solution was the experience of intense anger. However, first a remark about the use of language in this sample: In answer to the question about how a certain event made the youth feel, numerous youth stated things like ‘it made me want to beat them up,’ ‘I felt like killing him/her,’ ‘I want to go and cut her up’ or ‘I felt ready to smack her/him.’ In the interviews it became clear that this did not necessarily mean that the youth did or would follow up with those plans, but in context should be understood as an expression of intense anger, and would be most appropriately translated to ‘it made me really mad.’

In the events involving higher amounts of physical violence almost all girls and several boys were talking about problems with controlling their temper. One of the effects of intense rage were that youth would retaliate without considering consequences, as is shown by this boy who stated that when “just steam was coming” he was “so mad I aint even care about” (Boy, 21:25 161:169) that he could have gotten suspended. Another is that they would retaliate even

though this might be in contrast to their beliefs: “I know [fighting them] wouldn’t be a solution, but it’s just something I wanted to do at the point when I was real mad” (Boy, 5:39, 256:256).

While boys reporting rage and intense desire to fight usually did not report any attempts at emotion regulation, girls repeatedly talked about attempts to regulate their emotions. For them, feelings of extreme rage often lead to statements about either needing help with emotion regulation or experience of failure even at assisted attempts of emotion regulation. This is an example of a violent girl who reported a complete loss of control when mad:

S: I was saying don’t kill her, just beat her, but my mind was saying kill her.

...

I: So what goes through your mind when she says that... all that to you?

S: Hmm, I don’t know it just...I don’t know it flashed in my mind, it’d just...I be ready to fight. I don’t know what’s wrong with me I just I don’t know cause can’t nobody calm me down when I am ready to fight.

...

I: What does mad look like physically like in your body?

S: I don’t know ‘cause when I get mad, I go crazy. (Girl, 34:23, 153:267)

This is another girl, recounting her efforts at stopping herself from engaging in fights, even though when she is mad she feels like “throwing desks and chairs and hitting people when they ain’t doing nothing to me” (Girl, 10:8, 55:55):

People come and touch me, I tell them, “Don’t touch me,” or, “Don’t talk to me.

Don’t say nothing else to me until I calm down.” Because you don’t have to do nothing to me, I’ll snap on you when I’m mad.

...

I have to think for a while. Sit down. You think you feel better about doing it, but when you look at it and think about it, you shouldn't've did it. You should have just let it slide. That's what I'm trying to do now, but it don't work with a lot of people. (Girl, 10:847:95)

In summary, numerous youth talking about problems with violent behavior talked about the experience of intense anger, getting angry easily or having problem with an explosive temper. Almost all physically violent girls were mentioning the experience of intense rage in combination with a loss of control. They were discussing problems with anger in relation to attempted (and mostly failed) emotion regulation and reflected on their inability to control their own emotions. Physically violent boys in contrast reported intense anger mainly without mentioning any attempts to control or regulate their emotions, and just 'went' for it without much verbal reflection in the interviews.

Pattern X: Emotional numbness. Finally, the last emerging pattern was a very small proportion of youth who distinguished themselves by the absence of things one would normally expect. While there was overlap with the scared victims group insofar as this youth also seemed overwhelmed and helpless, instead of the expression of fear or rage, there was a complete shutdown of feelings. Overarching through their narratives was an absence of affect, or the presence of emotional numbness, severe trouble naming emotions, passivity instead of action and subsequently an indifference to outcomes, absence of goals or even an inability to think about goal-driven behavior. This is from the girl mentioned above who picks fights because peers don't like her:

S: I told my momma.

I: And what'd she say?

S: She ain't say nothing.

I: Ok. Did she react any way when she found out you had been suspended?

...

S: No.

I: Ok. And you said that, and how is this affecting you now?

S: It don't.

I: It don't? So how about, just in general, would getting in fights with people in the neighborhood or at school, how does it affect you?

S: It don't. It don't.

I: Um, how do you feel about them not liking you?

S: Don't care." (Girl, 49:18, 137:147).

The overarching theme in this transcript was indifference not only on her part, but also from her environment, her peers as well as from her mother, who does not even react to her suspension. She had difficulty singling out an event, no imagination to alter the events and no idea about what would happen as a consequence of her getting in a fight again, even though that was the only scenario she could think of.. There was an even more extreme case of emotional detachment and numbness in this interview:

"Mm-mm (I don't know). I don't know why I'm unhappy 'cause I don't need no friends. God didn't put me on this earth for to have friends, so...in a way I do feel happy, 'cause I don't got nobody going back and forth telling each other's stuff about me now" (Girl, 12:9, 77:77).

Repeating the pattern from the interview mentioned above, it was striking that in this interview as well there was mentioning of isolation and complete indifference. In addition, there was no goal or intended result of actions neither in the actual event nor in the imagined or future

scenario mentioned. In fact there was not even any directed "action", it seemed that the whole narrative consisted of purely passive reaction, and the impression of a deep hopelessness formed.

Discussion

The desire for revenge is one motivation behind aggressive behavior. In addition, research has shown that revenge goals are correlated with other forms of maladjustment (e.g. Lochman et al., 1993). While there has been extensive research connecting revenge and other goals to the corresponding behavioral correlates such as endorsing relationship-maintaining goals to more pro-social behavior (e.g., Adrian et al., 2010), revenge in quantitative research mainly has been assessed in a limited way. Revenge typically has been assessed using vignette based, closed-answer methods, in studies investigating the social information processing of aggressive children. Most researchers have treated revenge as a one-dimensional construct without distinguishing a child's means of enactment, extensiveness of the desire to get back, or other accompanying and overlapping outcome expectancies. In contrast to quantitative studies, qualitative studies of revenge have accounted for the rich context in which this construct is embedded, described the many functions it can fulfill and shown that numerous factors play into whether or not and how an individual enacts revenge. Despite the information gained from qualitative studies of revenge, the findings are largely descriptive in nature, contained to special sub-samples, and have not connected vengeful attitudes and behaviors to a well-established framework, such as SIP. The present secondary analysis of qualitative data strove to contribute to existing knowledge about revenge from existing quantitative and qualitative studies by analyzing urban youth's narratives of revenge scenarios and answering three research questions: (1) what type of revenge scenarios are discussed and how are they qualitatively different?; (2) Are those differences connected to differences in recounted aggressive behavior, type of retaliation and level of violence in the solution?; and (3) are there gender differences in the way youth discuss

and use revenge goals? Those research questions were answered in a first section of the results in which a descriptive overview of the narratives was presented. In an additional step, ten overarching distinct patterns of revenge goals and their context which emerged from the data were connected to different points in the SIP model, allowing for the qualitative findings to be integrated into a body of well-established quantitative research. In the discussion that follows I illustrate how the main findings in the general sample relate to the research questions and to findings from both SIP and qualitative studies, followed by a detailed discussion of those emerging patterns warranting special attention. Finally I discuss the limitations of the present study and summarize some directions for future research and practice.

Qualitative Differences in Scenarios of Revenge

The main aim of this study was to describe different types of revenge in youth's narratives of fictional solutions to stressful situations and investigate the qualitatively different responses to different forms of victimization. As the description of the events showed, different events were associated with different behaviors, emotions, and goals as hypothesized. Namely, the overarching category of revenge goals in this study could be divided along the dimensions of negative (excessively harmful to others), neutral (inflicting proportionate harm and restoring equilibrium), positive (solving conflict for everybody), and passive (no initiative to actively solve conflict) goals and actions. The next aim was to investigate whether differences in those revenge scenarios were connected to differences in recounted aggressive behavior, choice of type of retaliation, and level of violence in the solution. The study indeed showed that there were substantial differences in revenge scenarios, and that they were connected to differences in recounted (reactive) aggressive behavior, choice of retaliation strategy, and violence level. For example, events of relational violence had considerably fewer negative actions and goals and more positive and passive goals. The one negative goal that was connected stronger to relational

violence events was the desire to end the friendship as an emotional punishment, which (expectedly) was more common in events consisting of relational violence that happened in the context of friendship relationship. Youth, especially girls, discussing relational violence events also were more concerned with peer acceptance, and more often discussed retribution through a higher force or by the hand of others. There were other gender differences in the reactions to similar events. For example boys seemed comparatively more helpless in the face of relational violence and mentioned the passive wish for the perpetrators to just stop without concrete ideas on how to achieve this, while girls talked more about confronting their peers. Events involving physical violence were more connected to negative actions such as breaking rules and escalating the amount of violence, and youth recounting such events were more concerned about sending a message. Finally, both groups did not really differ in the amount of overall positive actions discussed. Overall the descriptive findings underline that revenge goals served numerous purposes, differed in the amount of harm inflicted on others, and were intimately connected to the type of situation that generated the desire to retaliate. Furthermore, it is important to note that most youth described a host of different actions, goals and solutions to their conflict situations, and even within a subsample of youth discussing retaliation scenarios, the majority discussed positive actions and the wish to pursue positive goals.

In summary, key findings showed that there are qualitative differences in both cognitions and emotions of revenge narratives, as well as in levels of violence discussed in the events and solutions. Those differences were closely connected to type of event discussed, which independently influenced outcome goals and actions chosen by the youth. This corresponds to findings in qualitative research which described rich contexts of revenge that were influenced by a multitude of situational factors across all investigated subsamples (Adamshick, 2010; Farrell et al., 2010; Harris & Walton, 2009; Jacobs, 2004; Kozlowski & Warber, 2010; Letendre & Smith,

2011; Stewart et al., 2006). The different emerging patterns of revenge scenarios were embedded in factors on the family, peer, school and neighborhood levels of the environment confirming for example themes of contextual influences related to fighting and non-aggressive behaviors identified in a qualitative analysis with a similar sample of predominantly African American middle schoolers from urban neighborhoods (Farrell et al., 2012).

The analysis revealed that most revenge scenarios were developed in answer to physical or relational victimization experiences involving peers at school. This corresponds to prevalence rates of youth victimization according to the National Crime Victimization Survey 1993-2003, according to which 53% of the violent crimes experienced by the age group of 12-14 year olds took place at school, 17% on the street and 15% at home (Baum, 2005).

Results also showed that in most cases youth had multiple different goals and actions in their scenarios. Additionally, it was not unusual to have one action fulfill several overlapping goals in the outcome scenarios. This finding confirms other research which found that closed answer questions that only allow for one most important goal do not appropriately capture the reality of youth deciding on a particular action (Farrell et al., 2010).

Emerging patterns showed that there were different profiles of youth, whose particular revenge fantasies were connected to different motivations and values respectively. This confirms a more recent body of SIP research which showed that rather than uniquely focusing on the presence or absence of revenge goals, it is the combination of different goals that predicts behavior (e.g. Camodeca & Goossens, 2005). Delvaux and Daniels (2000) for example showed that children who differ in their relational versus physical aggressive actions endorse different combinations of revenge goals with other goals. In their study, relationally aggressive children endorsed revenge plus relationship-maintaining goals with the desire to stay out of trouble, -a pattern that was repeated in the present study with interviews of youth who chose relational

means of revenge in their scenarios. While authors of quantitative SIP studies hypothesized about different underlying reasons for the same amount of retaliatory goals for example in victims and perpetrators of bullying (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005), the present study showed that there are some youth who select revenge goals which destroy the relationship because they seem to have limited capabilities to behave pro-socially, feel frustrated, and just want the peer victimization to stop, while others believe that it is necessary to build a reputation and use aggression as a way of defending themselves from future attacks. Overall, the present study confirms that endorsement of revenge goals alone is not a sufficient marker to make inferences about specific behaviors, and adds to the evidence that the relationship between revenge goals and behavior is complex, that there are multiple underlying reasons for youth to engage in revenge, and that this difference is mirrored in the choice of behavior (e.g., Bettencourt & Farrell, 2013).

The multitude of different beliefs discussed in the narratives shows that the majority of youth had defined and concrete values about what kind of behavior was morally right or wrong in particular situations. Examples which were referenced frequently among the youth in the present study include detailed rules about the conditions under which it is appropriate to engage in retaliatory behavior (strict reciprocity), or the emphasis on fairness and being a good friend. This confirms research that there is a difference between general beliefs about the appropriateness of aggression, beliefs about retaliation and different behavioral patterns (Adrian et al., 2010; Amjad & Skinner, 2008; Farrell et al., 2012; Huesmann & Guerra, 1997; Werner & Nixon, 2005).

Missing Link of Revenge Goals to Maladjustment

It was hypothesized that under certain circumstances, retaliatory attitudes and revenge goals would not be connected to indices of maladjustment, or would even be adaptive and be

connected to high levels of social competence and peer acceptance. The present study indeed showed several patterns where endorsing revenge solutions did not appear maladaptive and could even be adaptive. The analysis revealed that a majority of youth were following the general principle of proportionality, and that youth who skillfully employed this principle seemed better adjusted than their peers who violated this principle and escalated the amount of violence in their scenarios. Most previous studies have focused exclusively on whether or not children or adolescents would engage in retaliatory behavior or not, and in SIP research there has been only limited investigation on the type of retaliatory behavior youth endorse, for example the amount of violence they would employ in which situation. One tentative exception is the study by Amjad and Skinner (2008), where the authors differentiated between two subtypes of beliefs about the amount of retaliation-excessive retaliation beliefs and equal retaliation beliefs-next to beliefs about aggression in general. Endorsing different sets of beliefs was connected to the expected difference in severity of self-reported frequency in aggressive behavior. However, as in most SIP research, no connections to the type of event in which specific aggressive behaviors were exhibited were made in the study. Building on the hypothesized underlying connection of earlier work, the present study confirms an emerging pattern where excessive, escalating violent retaliation in youth was connected to differences in beliefs and social abilities compared to youth who narrated management of proportional (equal) retaliation. While the first group showed deficits in social and verbal skills, recounted problems with peer rejections and had more trouble identifying emotions or generating non-violent response alternatives, the second group recounted their conflicts in a more socially skillful way, weighed different response alternatives and seemed to operate in close accord with the surrounding (peer) culture.

It has been hypothesized that social aggression might function as an outlet for the expression of anger, because it poses a reduced likelihood of negative consequences in the form

of punishment or retaliation (Heilbron & Prinstein, 2008). It was thus suggested that relational aggression represents a “potentially adaptive form of reactive aggression” (p.180) which would be connected to high levels of social competence (Heilbron & Prinstein, 2008). This was not confirmed in the present sample. In contrast to this hypothesis, the choice of particular revenge strategy was almost exclusively driven by the nature of the victimization experience: The majority of narratives employed strictly relational means in relational events and physical means in physical events. The fear of punishment in the context of physical aggression led to abstaining from enactment of revenge for good, there was no displacement of physical aggression in favor of relational means as less punishable form of aggression. However, there was a transfer of directly experienced desire to retaliate into scenarios where revenge happened through somebody else, a higher power or accumulation of bad karma. This was a form of revenge where the self could possibly indulge in the satisfaction of revenge-the perpetrator would get the deserved punishment- while staying in concordance with values against engagement in direct retaliation.

In summary, other than hypothesized in research with predominantly middle class elementary school children, in the present sample physical aggression did not appear to be particularly stigmatized, neither for boys nor for girls. In such a context, retaliatory behavior within the limits of proportionality might be an expression of social competence; in the youth of the present sample both physical and relational reactive aggression can be conceptualized as a skillful form of anger expression by those youth who navigate the rules of proportionate non-excessive retaliation.

Another potentially adaptive form of retaliation scenarios emerged from the narratives of youth who experienced victimization over long periods of time, in the context of the power imbalance of domestic abuse, or just in situations where they experienced themselves as being helpless or at someone else’s mercy. As mentioned above, the adult literature suggests that the

desire for revenge can be regarded as a maladaptive coping reaction in response to experienced injustice (Orth et al., 2006). In the narratives of this group of juveniles however, a different picture emerged: In their narratives revenge was confined to the imaginary world and seemed more like a coping strategy of cognitive restructuring. The impression formed that imagining themselves in the role of the avenger might enable those youth to reconcile the fact that one was deprived of power and thus incapacitated with an image of the self as active, self-determined and worthy agent who is in control of its own destiny. The fact that this group consisted mainly of boys, suggests that this might be especially important as a way of reestablishing masculinity. Most youth in this group mentioned that they had taken action and worked on resolving the situation to the best of their abilities in real life, speaking about their high social competence and healthy sense of agency, suggesting that revenge fantasies which are not acted on might be an expression of adaptive cognitive restructuring that might help to re-establish agency in the face of overwhelming potentially traumatizing experiences.

Youth's Evaluation of Different Ending Scenarios

In contrast to the leading methodology in the SIP field, in this sample whether or not the youth settled for revenge in their scenarios at the end was of limited importance. While the limited significance of this variable was partially driven by the structure of the SCI and the interaction with the interviewer, the narratives more importantly highlighted that the more valid question considers why youth would choose one over another ending.

Results showed that there were youth who had problems coming up with any alternative ending or goals at all. This sets this study apart from quantitative SIP research using vignettes with predetermined answers. In this sample, youth had to generate the solutions and possible outcome goals themselves. As results showed, difficulties in that step were related to evidence for limited verbal skills and other indices of maladjustment, like for example peer rejection or

references to sadness and emotional numbness. This is in accordance with findings from Harris and Walton (2009), who found that children narrating revenge scenarios had overall lower narrative skills and were less likely to report on emotional states. The SIP research is inconclusive, but some early studies found that aggressive children generate fewer solutions compared to their peers (e.g., Lochman & Dodge, 1994). Even though recently there has been increased attention on the role of response evaluation and decision step in the SIP model (Fontaine, 2010), the ability to generate different responses as a necessary prerequisite for this step has largely been ignored. Similarly, the other emerging subgroup of youth where difficulties in generating alternatives of actions coincided with a seeming lag in maturation that prevented them from developing efficient self-directed non-violent solutions, have not been discussed before and might represent a distinct group of vulnerable youth which has been overlooked before.

Recent studies focusing on the fifth step in the SIP model demonstrated that response evaluation and decision is a multi-componential construct that accounts for a considerable amount of behavioral variability and has mediated effects of hostile attribution bias on antisocial behavior (Fontaine, 2010). The present study confirms these results qualitatively. A significant number of youth discussed non-violent solutions, but gave such solutions low confidence ratings and evaluated them as unrealistic. The confidence in success and feasibility of a non-violent solution was of crucial importance for the choice of such a solution, supporting both earlier SIP research on the importance of beliefs and outcome expectations (e.g. Adrian et al., 2010), and qualitative findings about perceived obstacles to engage in non-fighting versus fighting behavior (Farrell et al., 2010).

Overall, in contrast to much SIP research which focused mainly on the choice of goals, in this study the underlying reasons for this choice emerged to be of more significance; whether or

not youth were able to come up with a peaceful scenario at all, and how they evaluated the likelihood of such an ending to actually happen appeared to be more important for drawing conclusions about adjustment.

The Special Developmental Stage of Adolescence and the Code of the Street

Early adolescence is a developmental stage that is marked by an increase in concerns about peer status and reputation, making adolescents especially susceptible to peer influences (Kuhn, 2000; Steinberg, 2005). It was thus expected that the importance of peers and of one's reputation was an important theme in the revenge scenarios of youth in the present study.

Indeed, concern with maintaining a certain reputation and a desire to appear tough was a major theme in the revenge scenarios, and revenge was often discussed as a public event directed not only at the perpetrator, but at witnesses and peers in general. Confirming research with a similar sample (Farrell et al., 2010), peers emerged to play a major role in influencing responses to conflicts, and youth generally described a peer climate where fighting was supported. Peer influences were largely encouraging of retaliation, confirmed perceptions that maintaining reputation was important, and trying to walk away was complicated by a simultaneous need to withstand peer pressure. However, while generally encouraging a code of revenge, there were instances in which peers interfered and tried to contain escalations, and very violent scenarios often entailed references to peer rejection. Overall, there was a strong impression that in this sample fighting, revenge and maintaining a reputation of being a good fighter was a normative experience for participants and their peers.

Additionally, concern with reputation was connected to low confidence levels for peaceful solutions, and the idea that maintaining a tough reputation would help avoid fighting in the future. This pattern was almost an exact replication of findings from a recent study with a diverse sample of rural and urban adolescents who found that 41 % of adolescents believed that

if they would not stand up for themselves in response to particular types of provocation they would be considered weak and would be subject to continued harassment and victimization (Farrell et al., 2012). Further, the same youth also indicated that they believed that fighting was often simply unavoidable, that fighting now would make them safer in the future whereas nonviolent responses simply postponed the inevitable. A pattern of similar beliefs has been qualitatively investigated in adult samples from environments where legal regulatory means of social control are absent (Jacobs & Wright, 2010). It has been suggested that following this code of the street and engaging in retaliatory behavior to build a reputation of being 'tough' might be an appropriate adaptation for particular high-violence environments (Anderson, 1999). However, a recent longitudinal study found that African American adolescents endorsing a code of the street mentality were engaged more often in violence, and instead of deterring future harm, were at an increased risk of becoming victims of retaliation (Stewart et al., 2006). It is thus thought that this code with its rules about mandatory retaliation is one of the driving factors for youth violence (Copeland-Linder et al., 2012). Results of the present study fit well into this research. While at first glance a concern with reputation and beliefs in necessity for self-justice and strict reciprocity of behavior seem adaptive to the environment, youth endorsing such beliefs in the present study also indicated that they might actually be under an increased risk of repeatedly engaging in violence. Narratives of youth most concerned with their reputation were more often talking about physically violent scenarios, and seemed to report more chronic problems with being involved in incidents of physical violence over and over. Bettencourt and Farrell (2013) found that well-adjusted youth did not share similar perceptions regarding the necessity of aggression as youth who are concerned with preserving a tough reputation, even though they share the same school environment. De Castro and colleagues (2012) found that highly aggressive boys advocated aggression by referring to the moral rule that taking revenge is

imperative regardless of consequences. It seems likely that in the present sample endorsement of importance of reputation beliefs was an indicator for maladjustment, similarly placing youth at an increased risk to repeatedly having to engage in aggression, thus increasing their chances for continuing victimization and increasing their risk of experiencing sanctions, jeopardizing their academic achievement.

In summary, social goals of revenge in the context of a code of the street are different from ideas of justified punishment grounded in moral values or maladaptive desire to inflict pain. Nevertheless, they are possibly an indicator of maladaptive outcomes, even though the driving motivation as perceived by the youth who referenced this as mainly driven by a desire for safety and prevention of future harm. Beliefs that revenge prevents conflicts in the future are “risky” beliefs, not because the motives are particularly void of empathy or because aggression is enjoyed, but because they put individuals at an increased risk of being victimized over and over.

While the importance of peer messages about fighting was a main influence in narratives of youth, peers were not the only source of messages about fighting. Numerous narratives indicated the high importance of parental messages or family support for violence, especially as source of support for abstaining from retaliatory behavior. This underlined again the social context in which retaliatory behavior occurs: A substantial number of youth reported that their caregivers know of and approve or even encourage their retaliatory behavior, while almost all youth abstaining from it in the end referenced a close family member that would support this decision. Even though it is well established that parental influence declines with the beginning of adolescence as peers gain importance (Steinberg, 2005), these findings are in accord with other research on retaliatory attitudes in adolescents: Copeland-Linder and colleagues (2012) found in their study of assault injured African American adolescents that adolescent’s perceptions of parental attitudes about fighting had the strongest impact on retaliatory attitudes. Similarly,

Farrell et al. (2010) found that the most often mentioned deterrent to fighting were parental values against fighting. In summary, the present study confirms the importance of parental messages against fighting for refraining from retaliation, but expands the source of the message to other family members. Specifically boys mentioned following the advice of older brothers who coached them to concentrate on school and abstain from fighting.

Normative Girl Violence

It was hypothesized that there would be gender differences in revenge scenarios and enactment of revenge in boys and girls. As expected, gender specific patterns emerged in the study. However, it was notable that the level of physical violence for a stable subgroup of girls did not differ from the level of physical violence talked about by boys in this sample. A prevailing theme for the girls involved in physical violence in the present study was the normativeness of the experience for them. There was no reference to any stigma attached to girls getting 'physical.' In contrary, accounts of past and future physical altercations with other girls were repeatedly portrayed as inevitable part of navigating their environments. Additionally and in contrast to boys however, mothers appeared as well-informed actors who encouraged their daughters to stand their ground and engage in physical fights when necessary. While this is in stark contrast to findings about girl aggression in Caucasian middle-class samples where girls almost exclusively engage in social aggression (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005; Crain, 2005; Erdley & Asher, 1999; MacEvoy & Asher, 2012), there has been an increased awareness of serious girl fighting behaviors in more recent studies with low-SES and minority samples (e.g. Pleydon, 2008). In qualitative studies, similar patterns of normative girl fighting were discovered, often in similar close connection with positive maternal messages about fighting (Adamshick, 2010; Kozlowski & Warber, 2010; Letendre & Smith, 2011; Ness, 2004). For example, in an ethnographic study of street-fighting in girls from poor neighborhoods in

Philadelphia, mothers were reported to play an integral role in their daughters' use of violence(Ness, 2004): In those neighborhoods girls were "socialized from a young age to stand up to anyone who disrespects them and hold their own" (p. 37). In this study, mothers encouraged aggression as a way to instill a sense of independence and ensure self-protection of their daughters, and it can be assumed that similar mechanisms were at play in the present study.

Other qualitative studies on revenge and fighting in girls concentrated on triggers for fighting and special topics that would ignite retaliation (Kozlowski & Warber, 2010; Letendre & Smith, 2011). In the present sample, the importance of loyalty and friendship identified in Letendre and Smith's (2011) study was repeated, however more in the context of relational violence than as trigger for physical fights as in their study. On the other hand, special volatile topics as identified in the study of revenge in the context of relational aggression by Kozlowski and Warber (2010) in the resent study appeared in the context of physical events. However, the authors in their study also found a clear class difference between the girls from a convenience sample of university employee's daughters compared to the part of their sample who were at-risk girls enrolled in an after-school program. Those girl's reactions to transgressions which provoked intense anger were more similar to what was reported by girls in the present study.

Boys' Relational Violence

The present study showed gender differences in the presentation of relational versus physical victimization. Most research has used the same definition for girls and boys when classifying relational versus physical aggression, with everything that involved physical contact like pushing being classified as the latter(e.g. Werner & Nixon, 2005). The present study suggests that this might not be an appropriate conceptualization of events for boys, because their normal interactions involve more physical contact, with for example playing team sports, play fighting, or wrestling. Pushing and shoving in those contexts in this sample were not perceived

as physical attacks or ‘starting a fight’ warranting physical payback. In contrast, they were appraised as subordinate elements of someone targeting a boy’s relationships with others, as teasing, or as attempts at humiliating and excluding in front of others,- all characteristics of relational violence. Overall, this points to the possibility that events can be misclassified if objective criteria of physical versus relational violence are used for both genders, possibly drawing wrong conclusions when predicting differential effects of involvement in relational versus physical violence. It seems that those definitions should be gender specific and could be more accurate if the appraisal of the involved actors is considered relying on the way an attack is subjectively perceived by the victim instead.

Emotions and Goal-Directedness of Aggression

A subgroup of youth in the present study with increased violent scenarios and endings recounted uncontrollable rage, loss of control, disregard of consequences, and sometimes developed endings with harmful results for the self or even talked about revenge despite this being in conflict with one’s beliefs. This is interesting in the light of newer research which called the goal-directedness of aggressive behavior in question, at least on the subjective level of experience. De Castro and colleagues (2012) found that both highly aggressive and normal comparison boys in their own words explained their aggressive responses in provocation situations to be driven by feelings of uncontrollable rage and failure to control those feelings, not with reference to outcome goals. Specifically reactive aggression was related to emotion explanations with no other goal in mind than venting anger. Highly aggressive boys would engage in such behavior, despite their expectations that their responses would have more negative relational outcomes than comparison boys. De Castro and colleague’s sample was restricted to younger boys, but it seems like their findings translated equally well to the girls in

the present sample: Almost all physically violent girls discussed feelings of extreme anger and the inability to control their own emotions.

The findings seem in contrast with other recent research on the effect of induced mood on SIP, where anger showed no effect on evaluation and selection of responses (Fontaine, 2010). However reports of intense anger have been documented as driving factors leading to excessive retaliation and a disregard for consequences in several qualitative studies of retaliation of males (Jacobs & Wright, 2010) and females (Ness, 2004).

Another group of youth where emotions were strongly influencing retaliatory endings were youth who seemed numb and disconnected from the stressful events they described. Those youth also seemed completely indifferent to possible outcome goals, had difficulties describing any alternative endings, and instead narrowly relived events where they reacted aggressively as they had happened.

Overall the findings highlight the importance of including emotional states into SIP research (Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). The emotional patterns also confirm that subjectively, emotional states of intense anger might lead to aggressive behavior that overrides directed outcome orientation, while an inability to experience emotions or numb disconnect leads to behavior that seems void of outcomes. Findings showed that dysregulated emotional states even lead to aggressive behavior despite the awareness of outcomes that are harmful for the self. This validates a new line of SIP research questioning the goal directedness of the experience of aggression in the context of extreme rage across both genders, and points to potential for further investigation of the connection between absence of experienced emotions and goal-orientation.

Limitations

The present study had several limitations. Due to its nature as secondary data analysis, there were varying degrees of saturation across the different patterns. The structure of the SCI

limited the type of information that was elaborated on by the juveniles, and might have forced them to conceptualize the stressful events they were choosing to talk about in a certain way; for example the focus on the detailed emotional experience during the HOT phase of the interview might have forced attention to negative affective states as opposed to coherence in the narrative, or potentially shifting focus from others' emotional states to the self, making the narrator seem less empathic.

There was one emerging pattern where limited saturation was a substantial concern: It seemed that there was a theme of special maternal messages of fighting with boys emerging, but due to the limited explicit focus on interactions with mothers in the SCI interview in combination with boys' overall reluctance to elaborate on their social support seeking behaviors (in contrast to some girls), there was not enough depth in the interviews of the boys to fully develop that theme. Still, based on the limited information it seemed that mothers of physically violent boys were more likely to relay messages intended to limit fighting behavior in comparison to the messages coming from mothers of physically violent girls. Given the higher levels of serious threat perceived by the boys in this sample, it could be that this was more salient for mothers of boys as well. Thus mothers could be trying to communicate more messages of de-escalation out of fear of their boys' getting caught in serious violence, gangs, and becoming victims of retaliation. While unfortunately there were not enough substantiated findings on this hypothesis in this analysis, this certainly highlights a promising avenue for future investigation.

Another limitation of the SCI data was that sometimes only actions were described and there was only limited elaboration on to what desired end a certain solution was chosen, resulting in limited information regarding the existence of different goals. While this poses challenges from an SIP perspective, it can be argued that this is approximating the natural context of creating narratives: When recounting events or describe hypothetical scenarios, individuals often

exclusively reflect on different actions they would undertake in a situation. It can be argued that it requires advanced self-awareness to be aware of underlying abstract goals that drive one's behavior, and as was evident in some of the interviews, especially of the youth with limited social skills, this level of abstraction was not always reached (yet).

Similarly, whether or not and which different alternatives of solutions were discussed were in part a result of the particular interaction with the interviewer. However, the majority of themes and patterns were consistent throughout individual interviews, with youth repeatedly coming back to how they framed the problem they were discussing in the very beginning of the interview. Even though fragmented, there was high internal consistency of most themes. The value in investigating narratives lies in the fact that individuals strive to explain and justify own behavior when constructing them (Harris & Walton, 2009). Such descriptions of events are thus rich in information about underlying cognitions, such as perspective-taking ability, the amount and nature of cues that are encoded, how intent is attributed and how causality is constructed (de Castro et al., 2012). Limitations in narrative skills of some youth though made it sometimes hard to understand how they constructed the explanation for their behavior in detail. However, this limitation corresponds with findings that children talking about revenge showed poorer narrative skills (Harris & Walton, 2009), and with research that shows impaired SIP in aggressive youth and youth endorsing revenge goals (Adrian et al., 2010; Crick & Dodge, 1994; Dodge & Rabiner, 2004; Lochman et al., 1993; McDonald & Lochman, 2012).

Overall, even though the SCI structure was limiting in some instances, it also provided a standardized format of describing events, emotions and outcome expectancies in future situations, allowing to compare interviews for salient themes on a more even playing field. The structured format for example made differences in narrative skills more apparent, allowed for a detailed analysis of different emotions connected to an event, as well as highlighted the relative

ability to talk about emotions of a participant. Finally, despite the mentioned limitations, the SCI's structure made it possible to match the findings with the SIP model. This allowed to bridge qualitative findings to an extensive body of quantitative research while still preserving the richness of qualitative data.

Summary and Directions for Future Research and Prevention

The majority of transcripts showed a balanced reciprocity of revenge which was embedded, monitored and enacted in the context of peers. In this sample, the normativeness of fighting was pervasive. Overall, the youth seem to navigate an environment in which it was regarded as normal to sometimes engage in retaliatory fighting, and this was condoned by authority figures such as parents, but also by school policy. There was an understanding that standing up against bullying is encouraged, and beliefs that it is not right to be punished when an adolescent acts in self-defense. It seems that in such an environment it is socially appropriate to conform to the rules of retaliatory reciprocity, and it might even be necessary for success in the peer group. On the one hand thus, socially skilled and successful individuals, rather than refraining from the behavior in general, might be skilled in the navigation of this social 'code.' They know when and how to get back in an appropriate way, thus maintaining equilibrium and social status. The multitude of beliefs on fairness, behavior of friends and wanting peaceful solutions show that many youth are not only skilled in the navigation of the social rules in their environment, they might actually have a very distinct idea of what is morally right and wrong. For such individuals, there might not be any negative adjustment outcomes despite them having revenge goals and engaging repeatedly in retaliatory behavior.

On the other hand, it seems that the pathology and negative adjustment lies with individuals that have difficulties managing their emotions and staying within the boundaries of strict reciprocity in kind. It is the youth who escalate conflicts, hold grudges after comparatively

minor transgressions and statically relive their events without having any goals or sense of agency that seem to be more at risk for bad adjustment outcomes. Correspondingly it should not come as a surprise that it was those youth whose narrative skills and construal of both the event and hypothetical scenario was limited. It seems that in the few interviews where justifications of responses seemed incoherent with the ‘objective’ situation the youth were narrating there was also not much insight in own or other’s motivations or even alternative blueprints for positive interactions, pointing to difficulties in appraising events correctly. This validates research on SIP deficits in aggressive children (for a review see e.g. Adrian et al., 2010).

In summary, there emerged roughly two groups of adolescents with revenge goals from the data. The well-adjusted youth who are correctly perceiving and reacting to events happening in their environment, according to the rules of their environment, and the youth who break the relative rules of this environment, escalating where they should only retaliate in kind. The latter group of youth showed deficits in appraising events correctly, had only access to a constrained repertoire of actions, or had low efficacy beliefs for peaceful alternatives. They reported problems in emotion regulation or seemed to have trouble with emotion identification, and recounted tales of chronic peer rejection. In short, -they showed deficits in almost all steps of the SIP model even in the construal of personal narratives of events and their hypothetical solution.

Despite its limitations as secondary data analysis, this qualitative analysis validates previous research about deficits in SIP of aggressive youth and youth with revenge goals. It however also points to new directions and highlights gaps in the existing SIP literature: More assessment of context and content of revenge goals seems warranted. At a minimum, future research on revenge goals should assess the extent to which a youth wants to ‘get back’ at another person. Is the youth talking about retribution in kind or escalating the infliction of pain? More ideally, if predictions about adjustment are to be made, goals should be assessed in relation

to their conformity with a given culture, employing more of an environment-fit model. Parental messages about fighting seem of crucial importance there and should be included into further research. The present study might point to the validity of peer assessment of behavior, as it seems that for those youth peers are the main intended audience and judges of retaliatory behavior.

The present study points to the importance of school-based prevention initiatives, as this was the overwhelmingly most common stage for stressful events and retaliatory behavior in this study. It also seems of crucial importance to assess and integrate not only beliefs of the children, but similarly to parental beliefs about fighting, include school culture and beliefs into all prevention programming. The results of this study emphasize that when altering cognitions to reduce violent behaviors, it is essential to target the underlying beliefs of the system in which they occur. Finally, numerous youth stated that they felt the need to take things into their own hands because they were facing situations where authority failed to intervene in a sustainable way. It seems that strengthening a school's skills in mediating and de-escalating conflicts versus trying to just alter adolescents' beliefs is an avenue for future intervention that is worth exploring.

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Appendix 1

Guidelines for assessing the re-usability of qualitative data sets

Accessibility

Where, when and how can the data set be accessed?

Are all the data accessible, or only part of the data set (e.g. transcripts but not tapes)?

Have informants given informed consent for the data to be used for the purposes of the proposed study?

Are there conditions, or terms of usage, associated with the use of the data set?

Can the primary investigator(s) be consulted, if desired?

Quality

Is the data set complete for the purposes of the secondary study (i.e. no or minimal missing data)?

Has the data been recorded fully and accurately (e.g. accuracy of transcriptions)?

Have any data been modified (e.g. to preserve anonymity) and, if so, how?

Has the data set been adequately prepared for possible secondary analysis?

Is the meta-documentation of the data set sufficient for the purposes of the secondary analysis?

Was the primary study well designed and executed?

Suitability

Is the data set 'fit' for the purposes of the proposed research?

Is the sample adequate for the proposed research?

Are there sufficient data to address the proposed question?

Is the type, and format, of the qualitative data compatible with the proposed research?

Can the data be combined or compared with other data sets, if required?

Is the age of the data set appropriate?

Source: cited from Heaton, 2004, p. 93.

Appendix 2

Complete Coding System for Revenge Scenarios

Code Category	Code Name	Definition
Auxiliary Codes II		Codes that are determined by the structure of the interview; the categories were created before coding started and serve the purpose to structure the data. They only get significance in combination with other codes. The individual codes belonging to the categories are grounded in the data and emerged during coding.
Timeline		Flow of time through the SCI.
	Event	Recalling the event, everything that really happened.
	Present	Effects of the past/recalled event on the narrator at the time of the interview, how it is affecting now. Includes emotions/actions that are connected to talking it over with another person, looking back at it after the event happened, as long as there is some distance to it. e.g. after getting home, thinking about it again etc.
	Movie	The hypothetical scenario in the movie. Starting from the made up ending.
	Future	Expected consequences, what would happen as a result of the chosen scenario in reality
Confidence		Answer to the final questions about confidence in an ending, chosen strategy or result of the hypothetical future action.
	High	Rating from 7-10 on the scale from 1-10
	Middle	Rating from 4-6 on the scale from 1-10
	Low	Rating from 1-3 on the scale from 1-10
Location		Where is the event happening and is it supervised
	School	The event happens at school or on the bus to school
	Other	Any location that is not school
	Supervised	There is an authority figure present who could interfere, even if this does not actually happen. The event happens in the context of grown-ups. Most likely the case on school grounds.
	Unsupervised	Absence of authority figure that could step in and solve the situation or punish a violent reaction
Intensity of problem		How intensely is the problem perceived by the narrator, combination of answers to questions 1-3, time when event happened and how much it bothers.
	Time recent	The situation happened recently, some time has passed but it is still fresh in memory. Examples include last week, last month.
	Time imminent	The situation happened immediately before interview, the same day or the day before. Emotions are still very fresh.
	Time distant	The situation happened a longer time ago, anything more than a month ago.
	One time incident	The discussed event was a one-time, surprising, out of the ordinary incident. Does not say much about life otherwise
	Chronic problem	The event is example of an ongoing problem that has been happening for a long time, there is reference to similar issues involving numerous people and situations. The concrete situation is a symptom of something that might be part of the personality of the narrator. If it is contained to one specific perpetrator it should be coded =>history of suffering Examples include people just don't like me, I somehow always seem to end up in trouble, problem has been going on for all my life, for years, problem is everywhere.
	Problem bothers a lot	The Situation/Problem bothers a lot, examples include I think about it all the time, happens often, stresses me out.
	Problem does not bother much	Even though it was chosen to talk about, problem does not bother much, is reported to not affect the narrator anymore. Only thinking about it every once in a while.
Problems		Problems in the interview that interfere with the storytelling or limit the quality of it

	Interviewer interpreting	The interviewer is filling in gaps in the story that were not mentioned or misinterpreting what the participant says
	Interviewer judgmental	The interviewer is judgmental, communicates disapproval of a chosen ending
	Interviewer pushy	The interviewer is pushing the participant towards a certain scenario/ending.
	Difficulty developing scenario	Narrator has trouble developing a movie scenario or coming up with ideas for a future solution. Says, I don't know what could happen, not very verbal. Includes difficulty imagining results of proposed actions. If actual event is relieved with no liberty to change anything, no imagination of alternative ending or interference with unfolding of event this should be coded -> sol_act inaction/no change
	Difficulty naming emotions	Narrator does not know about own emotions, has trouble describing or naming them. Says doesn't know about feelings. -> This is different from stating to feel nothing.
	Difficulty picking event	Narrator has difficulty picking event, either because none of the cards seems to relate to a personally painful experience or because there are so many that it is difficult to pinpoint one particular event.
	Difficulty talking about event	Narrator has difficulty talking about the past event in a coherent way that allows the listener to follow what happened. Likely due to very limited verbal competence and connected to low social skills. Difficulties remembering a concrete event after it has been picked, if it is a memory problem it should be coded as difficulty picking event.
Auxiliary Codes I		While some of the categories are grounded in the structure of the interview, the individual codes in this category are completely grounded in the data. Some categories emerged when coding. The content of the Auxiliary Codes II assists in understanding how the event took place, addresses the roles of different actors on a close descriptive level.
Emotions	Calm/ok/closure	Feeling calm, being at peace with what happened, reached closure, feeling safe, trouble is over, I don't worry about it anymore it's in the past
	Creating emotional distance	I don't care what they say, the situation is ridiculous, funny; THEY are childish, it doesn't matter to me, I am better than that/they. Feeling nonchalant, brushing things off, even though it clearly bothers. It's not worth it.
	Disbelief	Includes disbelief, being taken by surprise, not expecting what just happened.
	Embarrassed	Feeling embarrassed or humiliated.
	Empathy	Acknowledging the perspective of the perpetrator or other peers/victims, seeing his/her side of the story, empathy, insight.
	Fear	Being scared, afraid, nervous, feeling overpowered, helpless
	Hyped/excited	Feeling agitated, hyped or "wild". Arousal that is not connected to intense anger or fear
	Isolation	Feeling lonely, isolated, alone. I don't have anyone, I don't have friends, I don't need friends.
	Mad	Normal level of mad/angry, not a little or extremely more than usual mad/angry
	Mad a little	A little mad, annoyed, irritated. Less than usual or normal mad, includes statements like feeling irritated. There is reference to a decreased level of anger/madness.
	Mad very	Being really ticked off, extremely unusually mad. Anything that is a superlative from being mad or just being a little mad. Highest level of anger, possibly connected to loss of self-control. I hate it, rage, very mad
	Nothing/detached/numb	I felt nothing, numbness, detachment. Is a passive reaction or non-reaction to events. My mind just goes blank, I am thinking/feeling nothing, I don't feel no different, just normal me. As opposed to -> creating distance that involves creation of a reaction, actively constructing distance as a coping strategy.
	Positive	Positive emotions like feeling good, relieved, proud, glad or happy
	Ready	Being ready, prepared for what there is to come. Is possibly related to emotion control in boys, preparing themselves to fight, dealing with fear.
	Sad/hurt	sadness, hurt, wanting to cry
Peers	Emotion is hidden	Emotions are hidden from peers or perpetrator. Saving face, not letting them know about own weaknesses. Is connected to self-control.
	Emotion is visible	people know about emotion of narrator, emotion is communicated
	Peers support	Involvement of peers. Influence of peers of any sort. As audience, witnessing conflict, as a source of support, control source of moral judgment or values or part of the problem. Peers provide emotional support, help out, assist, validate position. Positive and nurturing interactions with peers.
	Peers deescalate confrontation	Peers get involved in confrontation and try to deescalate, hold narrator or perpetrator back, try to calm down, discourage escalation
	Peers encourage confrontation	Peers are creating pressure for narrator or perpetrator to engage in confrontation, particular type of support.

Perpetrator	Peers are indifferent	Peers don't get involved, don't care, stay out of it or are just watching. lack of social support.
	Peers are laughing or teasing	Peers are laughing, teasing, name-calling as a result of event or this is perceived as a threat
	Rumors and gossip	Peers are spreading false rumor, there is gossip, can be mentioned as a general problem.
	Rejection	Peer rejection that is not captured by laughing or teasing/spread false rumors and gossip. The rejection is either physical or it is a broad statement where we don't know what they do exactly
		Characteristics to the event that are driven by the perpetrator (e.g. starting physical violence or dropping the conflict) or the particular relationship to the perpetrator. Qualifiers for relationship are anything that defers from the normal scenario of a known enemy. For example a special closeness due to a former friendship. It includes volatile topics of the confrontation, for example insulting family or boyfriend jealousy as well as relentless provocation.
	Former friend	Supposed friends turn on narrator, making the experience especially hurtful, added qualifier of betrayal.
	History of suffering (Chronic situation with one peer)	Continuous martyrdom, power imbalance, the classical bully, if narrator suffers under that person. Just calling the perpetrator a bully is not enough. Captures also domestic violence.
	Ongoing provocation	After warning or please stop, perp. keeps provoking, does not understand or does not care when it would be better to stop. Ignores warning. Potentially because perpetrator wants to escalate or has low social skills and doesn't get it
	Perpetrator drops confrontation	Perpetrator avoids confrontation, de-escalates, just threatens and does not follow through, apologizes or even offers peace.
	Perpetrator initiates physical violence	Perpetrator introduces the physical violence. Perpetrator either unprovoked starts physical violence or escalates from verbal to physical violence. (we know that fighting happened based on the transcript title).
Social Support	Perpetrator is not known	There is no relationship prior to the confrontation, or it is unclear who was responsible for spreading a rumor. Completely out of the blue, leaves victim wondering why me? I don't know you. What did I do? Or who could that have been?
	Volatile topic	E.g. boyfriend jealousy or insulting family is like qualified provocation because it is known that for example insult of mother results in increased aggressive reaction.
		Talking to a family member, mostly mom, about the event. If talking to peer -> peer social support. If talking to counselor, teacher etc, ->involving authority. Grown-ups, family members know about it, provide assistance, consolation, assist in emotion regulation or validate opinion/values. Should include what they said/did and how it made the participant feel.
	Adults are indifferent	Even though participant seeks social support by telling about the situation, family members react indifferently, do not want to talk about it or ignore the event.
	Adults discourage confrontation	Confrontation is discouraged, viewed critical, or strategies for de-escalation are discussed.
	Adults encourage confrontation	Family members encourage confrontation, approve of past escalation, physical involvement or give advice to retaliate, physically confront, stand your ground etc. in the future.
	Adults get involved	Parents/caregivers get actively involved in the solution of the conflict as a result of seeking social support by the participant.
	Adults provide emotional support	Family members provide emotional support as a result of being told about stressful situations.
	Getting advice	Family members are asked for and provide advice that is not directed at encouraging or discouraging a particular confrontation: for example mom is often consulted on various issues to give advice on.
	No social support sought	The participant didn't tell anybody about it. Whether it was because participant says I don't need social support, or it was not important enough to tell or I decided not to tell because I did not want to provoke a certain reaction/get in trouble/have drama.
Main Codes II		Main Codes II are less directly descriptive in nature. They are removed one step from the event and evaluate how the narrator views the situation. Statements about beliefs or values belong in this category. References that are situated on a meta-level, weighing of actions or events, the regulation of emotions and behavior.
Narrator Evaluates Situation		Meta-level of the narrator taking an evaluative stance at the situation. How chances for different endings are judged or evaluated. Whether or not he/she is satisfied with own reaction. If they hold on to their grudge, ruminate about the past event or move on.
	Conflicted about own emotions	Conflict of emotions with values, morals. Narrator elaborates on this conflict. Example: I don't want to admit that, but it makes me feel real good that somebody's

		going to beat her tail right there.
	Dissatisfaction- wish for confrontation	Should have stood up, should have said something, held my ground, taken a stand, escalated Should be coded with the desired action. E.g. I should have hit him back before the teacher came. Connected to => ruminating.
	Dissatisfaction-feeling responsible/remorse	Questioning of own actions, acknowledging own part in the events. Taking responsibility and feeling remorse, wishing own reaction would have been different.
	Key statements about self	Statements that are very descriptive and informative about self, ones worldview etc. that don't fit anywhere else. Quotations that seem crucial to keep, comments that summarize whole transcript or big parts of it in a concise way. Might lead to more subcategories in the future.
	Satisfaction with reaction	There was nothing left undone or unsaid in the scenario. The narrator is satisfied with own reaction.
Narrator Personality	Thinking about consequences for self	Considering consequences, thinking about the possibility of consequences happening, weighing chances, anything related to thinking about the consequences. Aspects of the narrator that are connected to emotional personality, impulsivity etc. Attempts to regulate emotions and exercise self-control or failure to do so. Holding a grudge, rumination and defiance also fall under this category.
	Defiant	Narrator does not want to admit feeling scared/weak/hurt by denying the existence of such feelings. Interpretation of coder makes this different from creating distance, where there is a statement that suggests the existence of feelings, this is denial of feelings.
	Emotion regulation	Narrator talks about attempts to regulate own emotions, be it calming oneself down, counting to ten, or talking oneself out of fear. Attempt is to change or manage emotions, managing/regulating behavior is captured by -> exercising self-control, even though both are possibly related. Better emotion regulation allows for more self-control. Is an advanced social skill.
	Holding a grudge	Holding on to negative feelings towards perpetrator. No chances for peaceful ending because no possibility for forgiveness. Including turning down peace offers or apologies or apology does not change the fact that narrator doesn't want to forgive.
	Ruminating	Narrator is still holding on the negative feelings associated with the event, thinks about it a lot. Might even be aware that he should "let go" or "get over it" but can't. Narrator might want to do something else but can't stop thinking about the event, continuously dwells on what he/she could have or should have done. Opposite of closure.
	Self-control	Even though there is desire to act in a certain way, narrator refrains from doing so. E.g. even though desire to hit somebody walking away instead.
	Self-control fails impulsive reaction	Narrator reports feeling overwhelmed by emotions, even though self-control might have been attempted it fails. Emotions are too strong. "Snapping" losing control, going crazy, my mind goes blank and I just go wild. Loss of control over own behavior. Connected to feelings of intense emotions, probably mostly anger.
	Beliefs	Statements about values or beliefs about what is right or wrong. Moral judgments. Includes referrals to a certain culture, or what is perceived as normal reactions to a certain situation because "everybody does that."
	Behavior of a friend	References to the code of conduct for friendship. You are not supposed to be mean etc. to your friends, the standards for how to treat people who are close. Friends stand up for one another, friends do not fool around with one's romantic partners etc.
	Being different is strength	Being the bigger person, de-escalation is not weakness. Usually includes reference to a "norm" of fighting or other peer norms, but withstanding that and following own compass is valued as strength. Positive counter part to the self-thing.
	Fairness	General principles of fairness, equality, how to treat people in interactions that are not in close friendships. Moral statements that are general in nature.
	Fighting is normal	Fighting is normal, this is what everybody does when in such a situation. normativeness of a certain behavior (usually on that we would see as negative) These are the rules, that's what everybody does, whether you like it or not ou have to comply. seeing fighting behavior as compliance.
	Importance of reputation	importance of reputation, being concerned about "image", importance of how situation is perceived and judged by peers. "Losing face," peers are witnessing defeat. Also importance of appearing strong, sending a message.
	Involve authority	Reference to involving authority as "the right thing to do." Following rules is good and necessary.
	It's a self-thing	Wish to retaliate is overwhelming. I have this urge to do it, that's just how I am, nobody else has control over that, it is completely in my hands. might include the realization that the conflicts are partly own fault. that's just the rules I made and I will follow them
	Necessity for self-justice	Involvement of authority is not sustainable, no help. Narrator has to take care of

	business him/herself, even though that is not a desired way of solving things, there is no choice. Even if authorities are informed, conflict would flare back up regardless. Statements that things would be taken in own hands if or when authority fails to handle the situation.
Special target	Reference to size, or other characteristics that make it more probable to end up as target. Connected with importance of reputation.
Stand up for yourself	Reference to being able to stand up for oneself as a desired quality. It is right and important to rely on oneself to take care of own "business." Different from "necessity for self-justice" which includes stance that authority should be involved in an ideal world, but fails in reality.
Strict reciprocity	Fighting is not always ok. You are not supposed to start a fight, but if you retaliate in strict reciprocity that is ok or even warranted.
Weighing severity of attack	Weighing the motif of the perpetrator (was it accident or intentional provocation) or the severity of the attack (if the chair would have hit me I would have retaliated, but it didn't) If she would have insulted me that is fine, but insulting the family...
Main Codes I	The main codes were the emerging goals, results and chosen actions in the scenarios and events, as well as named desired or undesired consequences/results of proposed or committed actions.
Solution Goals, Intended Results	Most important goals, the results of the solution on an instrumental level. What does the narrator try to achieve with his solution? This encompasses solutions of the past situation, goals that were initially there, that were part of the movie, as well as goals that were ultimately settled for.
Creating reputation	creating a reputation for a wider audience, e.g. peers in general. Sending the message that nobody can mess with me, prevent being a target in the future, either of physical attacks or of ridicule/teasing by peers. Action is directed at audience, bystanders and witnesses. If the message is intended only for perpetrator -> sending message to perpetrator.
Inflicting pain	Wanting to cause hurt, punish or injure the perpetrator. Most severe form of revenge and possibly connected to intense emotions. Should only be coded if inflicting more pain than what happened in the moment is mentioned as a goal. Goes beyond the pain that is inflicted in any physical fight. For example: "I want to make him bloody;" "I want to make him suffer;" "I want to hurt him real bad"
It never happened	Wanting to turn back time, wishing conflict had never occurred. Extreme form of avoidance or denial, most likely to come out in the movie scenario and then changed to a realistic strategy.
Knowledge	Wanting to know why one was target of the "attack" or transgression, why did the perpetrator choose me? why did you do that to me, what did I do to you? Trying to understand, make sense of the experience. Includes trying to figure out who it was when identity of perpetrator is unknown.
Make them stop	Importance is not punishment, just wanting people/perpetrator to stop hurting/fighting/attacking/teasing without naming any other goal beyond that. "I just want them to leave me alone." "I just want them to stop."
Opportunity for justice	It is important that justice is served, as opposed to putting emphasis on punishment or having people stop. A public declaration or acknowledgement that there was a transgression, that it was wrong and that narrator was right. Achieving a (public) apology.
Peer acceptance or friendship	Wanting to gain acceptance or friendship, making people behave nicely, wishing to become (more) popular. Wanting to be friends again.
Retribution through karma	Retribution in kind through Karma, it just happens, not through action of narrator but through destiny, unfolding of unrelated events, somebody else (including the perpetrator himself) taking care of it. What goes around comes around. Through continued negative actions perpetrator brings his punishment upon himself, somebody else takes care of it. Narrator does not have to make own hands dirty, just has to wait. Delegation of punishment to the universe. No escalation
Sending message to perpetrator	Sending a message to perpetrator like "don't mess with me," nobody does that to me, better watch out. Builds a reputation that is directed at the perpetrator, as opposed to building it for the world/peers in general. Involves the aspect of getting him first, protection in the future, like a pre-emptive strike to deter individual perp. (preemptive attack to deter everybody, wider audience, falls under building reputation)
Situation is managed peacefully	Kids are managing situation peacefully without help from grown-ups, they work it out amongst themselves. No need for violence or punishment, just working it out.
Teaching a lesson	The goal is to teach the perpetrator a lesson, so that he learns that this behavior is not ok. Difference to -> sending message to perpetrator is the moral aspect of it, teaching a lesson for life, for future situations with other victims. The lesson goes beyond "don't mess with me" to "don't behave like this towards people." "This behavior is wrong." It has a wider moral scope, difference in perspective.

Solution Actions	What does the narrator say he would do/did or other people would do/did in his solution scenario/past event. This describes WHAT HAPPENS as opposed to the Solution Goals, which describe what the action LEADS TO, what is tried to ACHIEVE
Breaking rules	Solution is to take conflict away from school or other supervised location to be able to escalate without being punished. is probably connected to escalation.
End friendship	Ending or withholding friendship as a punishment. Includes employment of relational violence like stop speaking to the person, ignoring and excluding the person from future activities. Possibly related to rumination, perpetrator is a former friend, and irritable over-reaction to a comparably mild transgression.
Escalation	As opposed to retribution in kind, the reaction exceeds level of violence/intensity of transgression. The punishment inflicts disproportionately more pain than was inflicted on the narrator.
Ignore explicit order from authority	Breaking rules, going against an explicit directive from a teacher etc. knowing that action is forbidden and will have consequences if caught. deciding to do it anyways.
Inaction/no change	Narrator feels there is nothing anybody (including self) could do to make ending happen, to shape ending or interfere with unfolding events. There is no action or initiative taken to direct events. Is opposite of taking control and actively influence the scenario. Will likely be connected to difficulty coming up with a scenario and ending will repeat/restate what actually happened in the event before. Absence of goals, narrow reliving of event the way it happened.
Instigating or perpetuating conflict	Narrator instigates or perpetuates conflict through his/her actions. Includes turning down/ignoring or sabotaging efforts from the side of the perpetrator to appease the situation. After provocation is over and perp. drops it, turning around, going back. Any way with which the narrator prolongs the life of the conflict, provokes back etc. that does not fall under another form of vengeful action.
Involving authority	the act of the narrator getting help, telling on somebody, involving authority out of own action/desire. Different to ->result authority interferes in conflict, where authority chooses to interfere on own account, involvement is not desired or sought after by narrator. Authority refers to professional authority like teacher, bus driver, principal, counselor etc. Family members, private persons stepping in as authority should go under -> social support
Make self seem powerful	Make self seem powerful, awarding special skills, trying to appear more confident and strong than one actually is. Includes movie scenarios where the hero has superpowers.
Narrator deescalates,	Narrator deescalates by walking away, dropping the situation, ignores perpetrator or tries to rationalize with him/talk him out of confrontation. Actions/behaviors that are directed at avoiding the conflict, narrator chooses to actively disengage.
Physical violence	Employing physical violence in the conflict or ending. Physical violence is a qualifier for escalation or retribution. It does not need to go with inflicting pain, because it is redundant. It can stand alone for reactive aggression during event.
Preparing for defense	Bracing oneself for what comes. Getting ready to fight if necessary
Retribution in kind	Returning treatment of perpetrator with similar treatment or less intense treatment (slap in the face is retributed with a push in the chest).
Withstanding peer pressure	Standing up against the opinion of peers, doing own thing and withstanding peer pressure.
Confronting peers	Confronting peers or the perpetrator about his or her actions, letting them know about own opinion, feelings. Giving someone a piece of their mind.
Results	Result of action, what would or did actually happen, whether or not that corresponds with goals of narrator. Includes anticipated results that are negative. Is associated with ability to think about consequences
Authority interferes in conflict	Authority interferes in conflict and attempts to deescalate or punish. No statement about type of involvement or consequences of involvement besides interrupting the conflict.
Perpetrator gets mad	Result of action is aggravating the perpetrator, leading to a more insecure or threatening situation. Could also be goal, if narrator just wants to make the perpetrator angry to inflict pain. Enjoying to annoy the perpetrator.
Perpetrator gets in trouble	Authority punishes perpetrator
Self gets in trouble	Authority punishes narrator

Vita

Lena Janina Jäggi was born on August 16, 1985 in Basel, Switzerland and is a Swiss citizen. She received her Bachelor of Law from the University of Berne, Switzerland, in 2007 and subsequently traveled and worked for one year in Central America. After an exchange semester in Finland in 2009, she received her Master of Law in Criminology and Criminal Law from the University of Berne, Switzerland, in 2010. After earning that degree she continued to study psychology at the University of Basel, Switzerland, while working as a legal counselor for asylum seekers. She is currently a third year student in the Developmental Psychology Ph.D. program at VCU working with Dr. Wendy Kliever. Her research interests include program evaluation in the context of violence and delinquency prevention for youth, and the impact of violence, neglect, and delinquency on adolescent adjustment. She is also interested in crime prevention and effects of incarceration in juveniles across different cultural settings