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Behaviorally Disruptive Children's Reasoning About the Emotional Consequences of Victimization

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BEHAVIORALLY DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN'S REASONING
ABOUT THE EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF VICTIMIZATION

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
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Of the Requirements for the Degree
Educational Specialist in School Psychology

by
Kim Van Zee
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A sample of 58, 6 to 12 year-old children drawn from admissions to a local psychiatric hospital were read stories depicting acts of victimization and questioned about how both victims and victimizers would be feeling. Participants were randomly assigned to either imagine themselves as victimizers in the stories, or victimizers were presented as hypothetical characters. Acts of both physical and psychological harm were portrayed in which the victimizer either obtained a tangible gain or no gain was received. Children in the self-as-victimizer condition attributed fewer positive emotions and gave more moral rationales than did children in the hypothetical condition who attributed more positive emotions and gave fewer moral rationales. Children also required more probe questioning to attribute negative emotions in the hypothetical condition than in the self-as-victimizer condition. More positive emotions were attributed to hypothetical victimizers for stories of gain versus no gain; however, no distinction between gain versus no gain was found for the self-as-victimizer condition. No developmental effect was found for the positive emotions attributed in either the self-as-victimizer condition or the hypothetical condition. In the self-as-victimizer condition children of all ages attributed primarily negative emotions, while in the hypothetical condition children were more likely to attribute positive emotions across all age levels. In addition, no developmental effect was found for
the rationales attributed.
Chapter 1

Introduction

A considerable amount of research has looked at how children's cognitive processes guide their behavior in social situations. However, the influence of children's emotions upon their behavior has been underemphasized (Arsenio & Lover, 1995; Harris, 1983; Strayer, 1986). Harris (1983) pointed out that the importance of adults' emotional states for their judgements in social situations has been recognized. In their review of the literature, Arsenio and Lover (1995) noted that recently, many have questioned the necessity of separating research on affect and cognition. They argue that affect and cognition interact in children's evaluations of social situations.

Understanding the emotional expectancies children hold is important for those studying moral development (Arsenio & Kramer, 1992; Arsenio & Lover, 1995; Nunner-Winkler & Sodian, 1988). Children often encounter everyday situations in which they must make a choice that has moral implications. For example, a child notices another child on a swing that he wants. All of the remaining swings are occupied. He decides to push the other child off the swing and take the swing for himself (Arsenio & Kramer, 1992). How the child expects to feel after pushing the other child off the swing can influence his willingness to engage in the act or repeat the act in the future. If the child feels happy because he got the swing for himself, he may be more likely to repeat the behavior, but if he feels sad or guilty, he may decide against it (Arsenio &
Piaget was one of the first to emphasize that affect and cognition are interrelated (Piaget, 1954/1981). In his theory on moral development, he pointed out the importance of children's social experiences. According to Piaget, interactions with peers help children to better understand the perspectives of others. He described a series of moral development stages through which children progress. In the first stage, children between the ages of six and ten years develop a strong respect for the rules of authority figures. During this stage children believe in the idea of "immanent justice." This idea carries the indication that people can not escape punishment if they violate moral rules. However, when children enter the next stage, they begin to realize that social rules are not absolute. They begin to understand that rules can be challenged. Piaget believed that this stage occurred by the age of ten or eleven years. Piaget emphasized that for the transition between the stages to occur, children's cognitive and social abilities must mature. He also felt that interactions with peers provided the necessary social experiences to stimulate these changes.

Recent research has brought into question Piaget's idea of "immanent justice." Do children expect all violations to be punished even if the acts go undetected? A number of studies have shown that children reported feeling happy after acts of undetected dishonesty (Barden, Zelko, Duncan, & Masters, 1980; Nunner-Winkler & Sodian, 1988); this expectation has been called the "happy victimizer effect." If the children expected the acts to be punished, a reaction of fear or sadness would be more logical. These results suggest that it is important to examine children's expectations regarding the emotional consequences of responses to moral dilemmas.

Kohlberg (1984) expanded on Piaget's theory by describing a sequence of stages
that children progress through after ten or eleven years. Kohlberg presented children with moral dilemmas to find out how they would reason. One of Kohlberg's best-known dilemmas is about a woman who is dying of cancer and needs a special type of drug sold only at an expensive price by a druggist. The woman's husband does not have the money to pay for the drug, but the druggist refuses to sell it for a cheaper price. The husband then must decide whether to steal the drug for his wife. Kohlberg asked children what decision the husband should make and why. He was not interested in what they thought was the right thing to do, but how they reasoned about the situation.

Kohlberg did not take emotions into account in his theory. Clearly, the actions of the husband could have been motivated by powerful emotions. While Kohlberg's theory has been influential in moral development, it is lacking because it overlooks the role emotions play.

Children's Emotional Understanding

Children use their emotions to guide their behavior in a wide array of situations (Arsenio, 1988; Arsenio & Lover, 1995; Harris, 1983). Many of these situations have moral implications, while others are just ordinary social events. Harris (1983) was interested in finding out how children expect these ordinary events will make them feel. He asked six and ten-year-old participants how a story character would feel if his bike were scratched or his pet dog were ill. Some of the stories were likely to arouse either a neutral reaction, mild sadness, or intense sadness. The participants were then asked how the child in the story would feel at various points in the day after the situation occurred (i.e., later that morning, that afternoon, that evening, and the following morning). Harris found that both the younger and older children expected the emotion to persist after the
situation was over. Both age groups anticipated that the emotion would gradually wane over time.

In the second part of the study, participants were read stories about situations that would provoke conflicting emotions. For example, one story was about a child opening a Christmas gift and then having it snatched away by a younger brother. This type of situation could make the child feel happy that he got a gift but angry that his brother took it. The majority of children in both age groups denied that two conflicting emotions could occur at the same time. They did not think it was possible that the child in the story could feel both happy and angry at the same time.

The third part of the study was a combination of the previous two parts. Children were read stories in which a negative situation was followed by a positive situation. Participants were asked if a negative emotion aroused from an earlier situation could persist and be experienced along with a positive emotion aroused by a later situation. He found that participants from both age groups acknowledged that the child in the story could be feeling both negative and positive emotions following the two situations. In part two, participants denied that a single situation could produce conflicting emotions. However, the third part of the study revealed that participants did admit that conflicting emotions could be experienced when a negative situation was followed by a positive situation.

Strayer (1986) also looked at how children's emotional conceptions change with age. In her study she interviewed four to five-year-olds, seven to eight-year-olds, and adults to determine what types of situations they expected would make people feel emotions such as happiness or sadness. She predicted that with age, negative emotions
such as sadness or anger would increasingly be explained by interpersonal reasons because of increased socialization. However, she expected that positive emotions would be explained by more impersonal reasons such as material gain. It was also expected that achievement reasons would increase with age because of greater demands in school.

Participants in the study were asked to indicate what would make them feel "happy, sad, angry, afraid or surprised." Adults were also asked to judge what would make children feel the various emotions, and children were asked to make predictions for the adults. The adults were fairly accurate in their predictions for children. However, the children were not so accurate; they did not differentiate between their own experiences and those of the adults. Overall, the results followed the predictions made. With age, there was an increase in interpersonal themes to explain anger and sadness. Happiness and surprise were increasingly explained by material and event explanations. As Strayer notes, the results suggest that children learn to identify particular emotions with certain types of situations.

The work of Harter and Buddin (1987) and Harter and Whitesell (1989) supports a developmental pattern of how children understand emotions. Their research suggests that children must progress through a series of stages before they come to the understanding that a person can experience two conflicting emotions at the same time. Based on the research of Piaget, they reasoned that if children have trouble integrating two physical judgments such as height and weight, then it is possible they will have problems integrating two emotions, especially if these emotions were opposites.

Interviewing 126 children from the ages of four to twelve years, Harter and Buddin (1987) found that as children develop, they progress through a series of five levels
of understanding emotion. However, they noted considerable age variability within each level. Children seemed to progress through the different levels at an individual pace. Two dimensions were used to describe the levels: the valence of each emotion and the target of each emotion. At the lowest level, level zero, children completely denied that two emotions could occur at the same time. They might say that two emotions such as happiness and anger could occur one right after the other, but they firmly believed that the two emotions could not coexist. The mean age for this level was 5.2 years. At level one, children began to acknowledge that two emotions of the same valence could occur at the same time that were directed at the same target. Harter and Whitesell (1989) give the example of a boy feeling both happy and glad he got a new puppy. The mean age for this level was 7.3 years.

At level two, children progressed to the understanding that two same-valence emotions could be directed toward different targets at the same time. For example, a child could feel happy that he got an “A” on his test and glad he could take it home to show his parents. However, at this stage children still denied that two emotions of different valence could occur at the same time. The mean age for this level was 8.7 years.

At level three a major advancement occurred. For the first time children acknowledged that a person could feel opposite emotions directed at different targets. An example which Harter and Whitesell note is that a child could feel both mad at his brother for hitting him but happy that his father gave him permission to hit him back. The mean age for this level was 10.1 years.

At level four, the final stage in the sequence, children finally understood that two emotions of opposite valence could be experienced at the same time and directed toward
the same target. An example would be a child feeling happy that he got a new toy car but sad that it was not the model he wanted. The mean age for this stage was 11.3 years.

*The Emotion Event-Link*

Arsenio and Lover (1995) point out that social situations with moral implications produce especially powerful emotional consequences for children. They introduced a four-step model of how children begin to link emotions to particular types of sociomoral events. In step one of their model, children experience and witness different types of sociomoral events that cause a variety of emotional reactions. In step two, children begin to learn that similar types of events would cause them to feel the same way. For example, children might come to expect that when someone took their toys, they would feel angry or sad, and when toys were shared, they would feel positive emotions. In step three children use the knowledge they gained to anticipate the consequences of their behavior and to guide their behavior. In future situations, children might decide to share toys instead of taking toys from other children because they could anticipate the emotional consequences of these alternatives. Finally, in step four children begin to use the knowledge they gained to form general sociomoral principles. The children may have formed the principle that taking others’ belongings without their permission is wrong or that sharing toys is fair.

Arsenio (1988) explored how children learn to link emotions with different types of sociomoral events. Six categories of sociomoral events were used. It was expected that children would use their knowledge of how they felt in these types of situations in the past to predict how they would feel in the same types of situations in the future. One category was inhibitive morality, which involved acts of victimization in which one child is
deprived of his rights (e.g., one child pushes another child off his swing and then takes the swing for himself). In the active morality category, events were characterized by one child intervening to prevent another child from unfairly hurting a third child. The third category was conventional morality. Events in this category promoted the smooth functioning of social groups. The next category was personal morality. Events in this category only affected the child involved, and were usually viewed as outside moral and conventional regulations. The fifth category was distributive justice. These events involved the distribution of group-earned resources. The last category was prosocial morality. These events were ones in which the child used her own private resources to help another child. An example would be a child helping another child pick up a game that was dropped.

Arsenio (1988) studied kindergarten, third-grade, and fifth-grade students. Participants were read brief stories depicting each of the six different types of sociomoral events. They were then asked to assess the emotional consequences of these events for both participants and observers. It was expected that children would differentiate between the different types of events. This expectation is exactly what was found. Children were sensitive to differences in the types of sociomoral events. The emotional consequences predicted ranged from very positive for acts of prosocial morality to very negative for acts of inhibitive morality. They were also sensitive to the types of roles individuals played within these events. Both prosocial morality and distributive justice events were judged as having positive consequences for both the actor and the recipient of the action. However, for inhibitive morality, it was expected that the actor would feel positively and that the recipient and observer would feel negatively. There were no significant age-related
changes for how the children viewed the events.

In part two of Arsenio’s (1988) study, participants were given the emotional reactions of the characters in the story and were asked to predict the type of sociomoral event that caused them to feel that way. It was predicted that children would use their knowledge about the different types of events to infer which type of event caused the emotional reaction. As age increased, the level of accuracy increased. However, all age groups performed at better than chance levels. Clearly, children can use both parts of the emotion-event link. They can either start with the situation or the emotion to make inferences. Another interesting finding was that children who did poorly on the first task also tended to do poorly on the second task. Essentially, children whose affective conceptions differed from the norm in the first task were unable to match emotions in the second task with the appropriate sociomoral events. As Arsenio (1988) pointed out, this finding raises an important question about how children with atypical affective conceptions reason about the emotional consequences of sociomoral events. Do children with abnormal emotional expectancies foresee their actions as having results different from those of children with normal emotional expectancies?

Children With Abnormal Emotional Conceptions

Arsenio and Fleiss's (1996) study compared the moral reasoning of behaviorally disruptive (BD) and typical children. It was hypothesized that BD children would differ in their emotional expectancies because of problems with peer aggression and social limits. The following sociomoral events were used: inhibitory, conventional, personal, and prosocial morality. It was also expected that differences between the two groups might depend on the type of sociomoral event being assessed.
Seven- and ten-year-old participants were individually interviewed and read stories depicting each of the four sociomoral events used. They were asked to give an emotion judgment for each character in the story, and to give a reason for their choice. Differences were found between the emotion judgments of BD children and normal children for four types of sociomoral events. The most pronounced differences were for acts of prosocial and inhibitory morality. BD children expected the victims in the inhibitory events to feel more sadness and less fear than the normal children did. BD children also explained the victimizers' emotions with more references to the material gains the acts produced. For acts of prosocial morality, BD children attributed more positive emotions to the characters, especially for the recipients of the actions, than did their normal peers. At first it would appear that attributing positive emotions would promote prosocial behavior in BD children, but the reasons behind their emotion choices are revealing. BD children explained the emotion with more references to the fact that the actor had avoided unfairly harming or victimizing the recipient and with fewer references to the positive consequences for the recipient. Clearly the results of this study indicate that BD children have different emotional expectancies than do their peers. These emotional expectancies may influence how they behave in sociomoral situations.

Smetana et al. (1999) compared the emotional reasoning of both maltreated and nonmaltreated preschoolers. They examined how children reason about both hypothetical scenarios and "actual" events occurring in their everyday lives. Participants were from three to five years of age, and the maltreated group was from a center serving low income children who had been referred from the Department of Social Services. The maltreated children were also classified as to whether they were physically abused or neglected. The
nonmaltreated children were from two daycare centers and one kindergarten serving mostly low income families. None of the nonmaltreated children had been abused according to DSS records and all were from low income families receiving some type of public assistance.

There were two different conditions; in one condition, children were asked about hypothetical events and in the other about actual events. In the hypothetical condition, participants were presented with brief scenarios of transgressions and then asked questions in a fixed order. First, they were asked about how the victimizer would feel, and then they were asked about the victim. In the actual events condition, children were interviewed about naturally occurring events in their classrooms. The transgressions chosen were either aggression, psychological harm, or object disputes. Only transgressions in which a response from a teacher or a peer was obtained were used. Interviewers observed until a transgression fitting their criteria was obtained. Then they interviewed both the victim and victimizer immediately after the transgression occurred, if possible. A child was interviewed a maximum of two times for each type of transgression both as a victim and as a victimizer, for a maximum of twelve actual event interviews per participant. Not all children were interviewed either as a victim or victimizer for all types of moral transgressions. Interviewers observed for three sessions until no transgressions meeting the criteria were observed among those children participating.

Smetana et al. (1999) did find a difference between maltreated and nonmaltreated children’s emotional conceptions regarding victimization. They found that neglected children reported less sadness than nonmaltreated children when making judgments about how hypothetical characters would feel. Additional differences were found based on
gender. Physically abused boys reported less anger when being victimized than did nonmaltreated boys across both hypothetical and actual situations. Also, overall, females reported that hypothetical victims would feel more sadness in response to psychological harm than did males.

However, no differences were found between maltreated and nonmaltreated children’s moral evaluations about hypothetical and actual transgressions. Both groups judged the transgressions as being wrong and deserving of punishment. Smetana et al. (1999) hypothesize that their findings may be due to the fact that affective and moral responses are differentially organized or processed by children.

It is important to note some weaknesses with the Smetana et al. (1999) study. As Smetana et al. note, one limitation is that there could have been unreported maltreatment in the comparison group since low-income families receiving public assistance are a high risk group. Also, the researchers asked the participants about the feelings of the victimizer before asking about the feelings of the victim. There could have been an order effect and asking about the victimizer first may have influenced the participants to focus more on the feelings of the victimizer rather than the victim. In addition, in the actual events condition, some participants were interviewed more than others. Being interviewed more frequently may have influenced them to respond differently due to “knowing what to expect.” Also, if the same interviewer was used each time, being interviewed frequently may have given the participants a chance to form a “bond” or friendship with the interviewer which could have influenced the responses they gave. While the Smetana et al. (1999) has a number of limitations, it is important because it extends the research on the happy victimizer effect to an abnormal sample that has received little attention in the literature.
Further research is needed to explore the interrelation between affect and moral evaluations, in both typical and atypical samples. More research also needs to be done with a wider age range of children. The sample in the Smetana et al. (1999) study focused on a small number of preschool children. It would be interesting to determine whether older maltreated children would differ in their affective judgments or if their affective responses would become more similar to those of normal children.

"Happy Victimizer" Expectancies: Developmental and Individual Differences

The Barden et al. (1980) study was the first to draw attention to the "happy victimizer effect." They examined kindergarten, third, and sixth graders' emotional reactions to a variety of different social situations. Children were asked if they would feel happy, sad, scared, mad, or just ok (neutral) in the different situations described. Of particular interest in the happy-victimizer literature are their findings for acts of dishonesty in which the character in the story was not caught. They found that most of the younger children expected to feel happy, while older children expected to feel scared or fearful.

A later study by these same authors, Zelko, Duncan, Barden, Garber, and Masters (1986), revealed that there was a major discrepancy between how young children expected to feel and how adults expected them to feel. Most of the younger children expected to feel happy after an act of victimization in which they were not caught, but adults predicted that they would primarily feel fear and sadness. Clearly, the adults did not anticipate a reaction of happiness. Zelko et al. pointed out that this difference can make relations between adults and younger children problematic. If adults inaccurately believe that the young children will experience fear in these situations, their attempts to discuss moral issues with children and to discipline children may be ineffective. For effective interactions
to take place, it is important that adults accurately predict the emotional reactions of children.

Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988) were the first to focus exclusively on the "happy victimizer effect." They conducted a three-part study to examine the emotions four-, six-, and eight-year-old children attribute to a story figure who has violated a moral rule. In the first part of the study, they attempted to replicate the findings of Barden et al. (1980). The following two characters were presented: one who steals a bag of sweets from another, and one who resists the temptation to steal. Participants were asked to judge how each character would feel and to give justifications for their choices. They found that the majority of younger participants (4- to 6-year olds) expected the character who committed the theft to feel happy, while eight-year-olds expected a reaction of sadness or fear. Younger subjects also gave significantly more outcome-oriented reasons for their choices such as "the child got the candy he wanted." Older subjects gave more moral reasons such as "it isn't right to steal."

In the second part of the study, Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988) manipulated whether the character received a material gain and the salience of the harm done to the victim. In one of the stories, the victim was shown crying and bleeding after being pushed off a swing by the story character. Despite these manipulations, most younger children continued to expect the victimizer to feel happy. In the third part of the study the intention of the victimizer was examined. Do young children expect victimizers to feel happy only when they intend to do harm to the victim? This expectation was the case.

In summary, Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988) found that younger children (four- and six-year olds) expected a victimizer to feel happy and gave outcome
justifications for their choices while older children expected a reaction of sadness or fear and cited moral reasons for their choices.

Arsenio and Kramer (1992) did not find the dramatic shift described by Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988). In their two-part study, they found the "happy victimizer effect" to be more stable across a wider age range. In part one, participants across three age levels (four-, six- and eight-year-olds) were read a story in which a child stole candy from another child's locker at school. Participants were asked how both the victim and victimizer would feel at the end of the story. They were given a choice of whether to assess victims or victimizers first. Arsenio and Kramer (1992) reasoned that if the gain received by the victimizer was most prominent, they would judge the victimizer first. However, if the loss of the victim was more prominent, they would judge the victim first. In addition, participants were asked to give an intensity rating for their judgment. For example, participants were asked if the victim felt "a little sad, just sad, or very sad." They found that all but one of the four- and six-year-olds and most of the eight-year-olds expected the victimizer to feel "happy" or "good." Clearly, these results do not support the major attributional shift described by Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988). However, eight-year-olds who judged the victims first, expected victimizers to feel less happy than did the younger children. Arsenio and Kramer (1992) noted that it could be possible that rating the victims first made the eight-year-olds more aware of the negative consequences of acts of victimization. This awareness may have moderated the happiness they attributed to the victimizers. Arsenio and Kramer were careful to point out that order was not experimentally manipulated and few definite conclusions could be drawn. They stated that it is just as likely that those who rated victims first were more aware of the costs of
victimization before the experiment was conducted.

Because of these unclear results, Arsenio and Kramer (1992) decided to experimentally manipulate the pain or harm done to the victim in part two of their study. Two manipulations were made. Victims and victimizers were described as friends, and in one story the participant played the role of the victim and a known friend was described as the victimizer. Additionally, a series of increasingly direct probe questions were used in part two. These probes were used to see if the participant thought the victimizer could be feeling anything other than the emotion initially selected. These probes were included to address some of the methodological problems of previous studies. In many of the past studies, children had to select a single emotion outcome (Arsenio, 1988; Barden et al. 1980), and in Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988), participants were not questioned any further once they made their initial emotion judgment. Also, as Arsenio and Kramer (1992) indicated, the probes were included because of the tendency of younger children to select positive emotions and deny negative emotions. The probes would give the participants a chance to indicate if they thought the victimizer could be feeling both positive and negative emotions. Participants also were asked to explain why they chose the emotion they did or to give a justification for their choice.

Almost all of the four- and six-year-olds continued to expect the victimizer to feel positive emotions. However, eight-year-olds seemed to be influenced more by the efforts to increase the salience of the harm done to the victim. They attributed fewer positive emotions to the victimizer. However, slightly more than one half of their judgments were positive. The friendship factor did not seem to play an important part. There were no differences between the two conditions of victim and victimizers as friends versus
participants being victimized by a known friend. The rationales or justifications revealed that the eight-year-olds gave moral rationales more often than the younger children. However, the eight-year-olds still gave outcome-oriented reasons in high numbers (58 percent for victimizers and 36 percent for victims).

Arsenio and Kramer (1992) found that almost all of the four-year-olds expected the victimizer to feel happy or good even after the increasingly direct probes that drew attention to the victim's loss. However, a majority of the six- and eight-year-olds (66 and 88 percent) responded to the least directive probe by selecting an emotion of opposite valence from the one originally selected. Most of the older children originally expected the victimizer to feel happy, but when probed further they selected a negative emotion such as sadness or anger.

The results of the probing suggest that, for older children, mixed emotions play a significant role. This finding may be due to older children's ability to understand that a person can feel conflicting emotions such as happiness and sadness at the same time. Younger children may continue to attribute happiness to the victimizer because of cognitive limitations that prevent them from understanding that a person can experience mixed emotions (Harter & Buddin, 1987; Harter & Whitesell, 1989). The results of Arsenio and Kramer (1992) do not support the major attributional shift described by Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988). However, their results do support a more subtle shift from viewing victimizers as completely happy to an understanding that they may feel both happy and sad.

Lemerise and Scott (1995) looked at the emotional judgements of children with different peer statuses for acts of victimization. They conducted peer assessments on a
large sample of 443 children to identify children's peer acceptance and aggression level. Based on the previous research (Arsenio & Fleiss, 1996; Arsenio & Kramer, 1992), they expected that both younger children and children who were more aggressive and/or less accepted would have different emotional expectancies than the older, more-accepted children.

Participants were individually interviewed and read stories from Arsenio and Kramer (1992) that depicted two acts of victimization. The happy-victimizer effect was confirmed. The majority of all children expected victimizers to feel happy and victims to feel negative emotions such as sadness. However, older children expected victimizers to feel less happy than did younger children. Older children were more likely to attribute mixed emotions to victimizers, especially when questioned further. Younger children and children with higher levels of aggression had more difficulty attributing mixed emotions to victimizers. In addition, younger children and aggressive children were more likely to explain their choice of happiness for the victimizer with references to the "joy of victimization" itself. Clearly, younger children and aggressive children expected the victimizer to enjoy the act of victimization.

Keller, Edelstein, Schuster, Fu-xi, and Hong (1996) studied the happy-victimizer effect in a different culture to see whether it would be found in a non-western culture where children are socialized differently. Chinese children from Beijing participated; they were interviewed individually and read stories depicting moral transgressions. Participants were then asked for a description of what happened (to check their understanding) and to make an emotion attribution to the victimizer. In addition, they were asked how they would feel if they were the victimizer in the story. Finally, they were to indicate how the
victim would feel. They predicted that the Chinese subjects' moral development would be more advanced than that of the Western subjects used in previous studies. However, they still felt that the happy-victimizer effect would be found due to cognitive limitations on the part of younger subjects. Based on their findings in the pilot study, it was also expected that participants would differentiate between the victimizer described in the story and themselves. It was predicted that subjects would attribute more positive feelings to the hypothetical victimizers and more negative feelings to themselves as victimizers.

The findings for the hypothetical victimizer did not support the attributional shift described by Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988). Instead, the happy-victimizer finding seemed to be more stable across a wider age, range following the pattern of the Arsenio and Kramer (1992) study when participants were given scenarios about hypothetical characters. They found that 50 percent of all participants (with the exception of the five-year-olds) attributed negative feelings to the victimizer. No developmental trend was found for the hypothetical victimizer condition.

For the self-as-victimizer condition, a different picture emerged. The majority of all participants attributed negative feelings to themselves as victimizers. As age increased, the pattern of attributing negative feelings to one's self increased. With age children seemed to differentiate between hypothetical victimizers and themselves as victimizers. The findings for the self-as-victimizer condition support a developmental shift. Overall, the results indicate that the happy victimizer is a universal phenomenon. However, as Keller et al. (1996) acknowledge, more cross-cultural studies are needed before any definite conclusions can be drawn.

A later study by Van Zee, Lemerise, Arsenio, Gregory, and Sepcaru (2000) looked
at some of the contextual influences upon the happy victimizer effect. A sample of 104 participants across three different grade levels was used (2nd, 4th, and 6th graders). The previous studies described had used stories only about hypothetical characters who do physical aggression and receive a material reward as a consequence. In this study participants were read stories with both hypothetical characters and stories in which participants were asked to imagine themselves as the victimizer (the 2 interviews were 3-4 weeks apart). The order in which the two types of stories were presented was counterbalanced. Acts of both physical and psychological harm were portrayed in which the victimizer either received a tangible gain or no gain was received.

In the study, children did differentiate between themselves as victimizers and hypothetical victimizers. Children of all ages attributed more sadness when they were pretending to be the victimizer. When the victimizer was a hypothetical character, children attributed less sadness and more positive emotions. Unlike the Keller et al. (1996) study, no developmental trend was found for the self-as-victimizer condition, while for the hypothetical condition, a developmental trend was observed. In the hypothetical condition, younger participants attributed fewer negative emotions to victimizers and required more probing than older children to attribute negative emotions. However, the Van Zee et al. (2000) study looked at older children (8- to 12-year-olds) while the Keller et al. (1996) study used younger children (5- to 8-year olds).

Goals of the Present Study

Arsenio and Fleiss (1996) found that behaviorally disruptive (BD) children reason differently about acts of victimization due to problems with peer aggression and social limits. The BD children expected victims to feel less fear than did normal children, and
they also made more references to the material gains that the acts produced. However, this study used only stories about hypothetical victims and victimizers. The current study seeks to extend this research by examining how BD children reason about (a) themselves versus hypothetical characters as victimizers, (b) acts of psychological harm versus physical harm, and (c) acts associated with material gain versus no material gain.

The findings of Keller et al. (1996) support the conclusion that children differentiate between themselves and others in making emotion attributions. Participants in past studies on the happy-victimizer effect (Arsenio & Kramer, 1992; Barden et al., 1980; Nunner-Winkler & Sodian, 1988) may have judged the hypothetical victimizers in the stories to be “bad kids” or “bullies.” However, a limitation of the Keller et al. (1996) study must be noted. Participants were always asked to rate themselves before rating the hypothetical characters. A later study by Van Zee et al. (2000) did counterbalance the presentation of the hypothetical and the self as victimizer scenarios. They found that children across all age levels attributed primarily negative emotions to themselves as victimizers.

However, both the Keller et al. (1996) and Van Zee et al. (2000) studies examined the reasoning of normal populations of children. Little research has examined the self vs. hypothetical distinction with a group of behaviorally disruptive children. Since BD children engage in more aggressive acts than do normal children they may find such acts more acceptable and therefore may attribute fewer negative emotions to themselves as victimizers. Arsenio and Fleiss (1996) also found that BD children attributed less sadness and fear to victims than did normal children. Because BD children often underestimate the negative emotions victims may be feeling, they may not attribute
feelings of guilt or sadness to themselves for engaging in such acts. However, it is difficult to make a prediction because of the lack of research on the self vs. other distinction with abnormal populations. In the present study, the distinction between how behaviorally disruptive children reason about themselves and hypothetical characters will be explored.

Most past studies on the happy-victimizer effect have used stories describing acts of instrumental aggression, in which children receive material gains. Arsenio and Lover (1995) argued that children may expect victimization to produce happiness because a desirable object such as a "candy bar" is obtained. They suggested that the "joy of victimization" comes from the material gain received, not from actually doing harm to others. However, Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988) found that young children (four and five-year olds) expected victimizers to feel happy even when their actions produced no clear gains. The Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988) study used a small number of subjects, and it is unclear whether their results are relevant for older subjects because their study only included children up to the age of eight years. Arsenio and Kramer (1992) found that the happy-victimizer phenomenon is still present among older children.

Whether the happy-victimizer effect is due to the material gains involved remains unclear. Do children expect acts of hostile victimization, in which the victimizer receives no clear gain, to produce feelings of happiness? It is predicted that the reasoning of BD children will more closely resemble that of younger children who tend to be more influenced by the tangible gains involved because of their tendency to think in concrete terms. Van Zee et al. (2000) found that for acts of physical harm, younger children required more probe questions to attribute negative emotions in cases where a material gain was involved. The research of Arsenio & Fleiss (1996) also suggests that BD
children may be more influenced by the material gains involved as well. They found that BD children explained the victimizer’s emotions with more references to the material gains that the acts produced. However, the older children who think in abstract terms may focus less on the material gains involved (Piaget, 1954/1981). The present study will address this question. The distinction between instrumental and hostile victimization will be explored.

The difference between physical and psychological harm has also received little attention. Do children view acts of victimization involving physical harm (e.g., punching, hitting, kicking) differently from those involving psychological harm (e.g., teasing, name calling)? Physical aggression is much more common among younger children and those with behavioral disorders. The use of psychological aggression among children increases with age (Mash & Wolfe, 1999). Because acts of psychological aggression become more common during middle childhood than acts of physical aggression, younger elementary students and those with behavioral problems may view psychological harm as not being as “bad” as physical harm. Van Zee et al. (2000) found that by sixth grade children were more willing to attribute negative emotions to victimizers performing acts of psychological harm. This finding was consistent with other data that eleven to twelve year olds have a growing appreciation of psychological traits and motivation (Damon & Hart, 1988). It is hypothesized that behaviorally disruptive children may view acts of psychological harm as being less negative or harmful than acts of physical aggression. However, no specific predictions can be made because of the lack of research with abnormal populations. Previous research with abnormal populations has used stories depicting acts of physical aggression.
Overall, it is expected that the happy-victimizer phenomenon will be stable across a wide age range of children, following the pattern of Arsenio and Kramer (1992). Participants will be asked to make judgments for themselves and hypothetical characters. Stories involving instrumental and hostile aggression and physical and psychological harm were used to examine potential differences.

Hypotheses/Predictions

In summary, the following was hypothesized or predicted for the current study:

1. The reasoning of children with behavioral disorders will resemble the reasoning of younger children who are more influenced by the tangible gains involved in many acts of victimization.

2. Children with behavioral disorders may view acts of psychological harm as being less negative or harmful than acts of physical aggression.

3. It is expected that the happy-victimizer effect will be stable across a wide age range of children following the pattern of Arsenio and Kramer (1992).
Chapter 2
Method

Participants

This study was reviewed and approved by Western Kentucky University’s Human Subjects Review Board (See Appendix). Participants were drawn from children admitted to a local psychiatric hospital. The hospital, a 72 bed facility located in the South Central Kentucky region, provides inpatient services to children and adolescents up to the age of seventeen. Potential participants were identified through the intake process of the admissions department. A folder was created for each new admission which contained various documents that the parent or legal guardian reviewed and signed. During the intake process, the admissions staff conducts an interview with the guardians, the child, and any other relevant parties to obtain background and medical information on each new admission. During this process, the parent or legal guardian was asked to give consent for their child’s participation. Children also gave their assent for participation before the interviewer began the procedure (verbal assent for children younger than eight years and written assent for children eight years and older). Consent was obtained on approximately 71 percent of children admitted according to admission records. cords.

Fifty-eight children participated (39 males, 19 females; 94.8 % Caucasian). The age of participants ranged from six to twelve years (\(M = 10.57, \text{Mdn} = 10.96, SD = 1.88\)).
Participants were grouped into three age groups with kindergarten, first and second
graders in the youngest group (N = 15, M = 8.12 years, SD = 1.14), third, fourth, and fifth
graders in the second age group (N = 26, M = 10.77 years, SD = 1.11), and sixth and
seventh graders in the third age group (N = 17, M = 12.42 years, SD = .46). There were
12 males and 3 females in the youngest group (males M age = 7.94, SD = 1.09; females M
age = 8.82, SD = 1.32), 19 males and 7 females in the second age group (males M age =
10.99, SD = .94; females M age = 10.18, SD = 1.38), and 8 males and 9 females in the
oldest age group (males M age = 12.39, SD = .49; females M age = 12.45, SD = .47).
These age groups are referred to as “grade level” groups below.

Participants’ Aggression Levels

The hospital granted access to the information that was relevant to identifying the
severity of the children’s aggressive symptoms. Information on whether the child was
having suicidal ideations, had a history of suicidal attempts, homicidal ideations, and/or a
history of homicidal attempts was reviewed. Whether current aggression was reported,
the frequency of aggressive episodes, and the severity of aggressive symptoms was also
included in the review. The educational history was another area of importance in helping
to identify the severity of behavioral problems. Whether the child was reportedly engaging
in behavioral problems in the school setting and whether they were receiving services as a
student with an Emotional Behavioral Disability (Kentucky’s educational classification
terminology) was reviewed. The severity of behavior problems at school was coded in the
following way: 0 = no evidence, 1 = behavior problems noted at school, 2 = behavior
problems led to detention, 3 = behavior problems led to suspension/expulsion.
Information on admitting diagnoses was also included.
An adapted version of a behavior checklist developed by Dodge, Lochman, Harnish, Bates, and Pettit (1997) was used to rate the frequency and severity of children’s aggressive behaviors. See Table 1 for the specific behaviors listed on this rating form. When determining whether the behaviors were present for each participant, raters reviewed the information obtained during the intake interview. The behaviors on the checklist were coded based on frequency and severity. The frequency of the behaviors was coded the following way: 0 = no (behavior not present) or 1 = yes (behavior present) while the severity of the behaviors was coded the following way: 0 = no evidence of behavior, 1 = mild; 2 = moderate; 3 = severe.

After reviewing the background information on participants, it was found that 91.4 percent of the participants had recent aggression reported by parents or guardians. Looking at gender, more male participants had reported aggression (38 of 39, 97.4 %) than female participants (15 of 19, 78.9 %). For those who had current aggression reported, 39.7 percent engaged in aggression daily, 15.5 percent on a weekly basis, 1.7 percent on a monthly basis, 5.2 percent engaged in aggression rarely and for 37.9 percent, information on the frequency of aggression was missing from their intake interview. The duration of the aggressive episodes varied with 36.2 percent engaging in episodes greater than an hour, 6.9 percent engaged in episodes between 30-60 minutes, and 12.1 percent had episodes of 15-30 minutes, 3.4 percent had episodes of less than 15 minute minutes, and for 41.4 percent, information on the duration of aggressive episodes was missing. For information on the percentage of occurrence of specific types of aggressive behaviors listed on the checklist refer to Table 1. Regarding the participants’ educational history, 79.3 percent had reported behavior problems at school with 36.2 percent having severe
problems, 10.3 percent having moderate problems, 32.8 percent having mild problems, and, for 20.7 percent, information on severity was missing. Of the sample, 20.7 percent were receiving special education services as students with Emotional Behavioral Disabilities.

For each participant, a total aggression score was obtained by multiplying the frequency by the severity for each specific behavior on the checklist (See Table 1) and then taking the sum of these scores. The mean total aggression score for both male and female participants was 18.19 with a standard deviation of 8.79. Male participants had a mean total aggression score of 20.23 with a standard deviation of 7.62 (grade level 1 = $M = 20.17$, $SD = 7.08$; grade level 2 = $M = 19.95$, $SD = 8.90$; grade level 3 = $M = 21.00$, $SD = 5.63$) while female participants had a mean total aggression score of 14.00 with a standard deviation of 9.75 (grade level 1 = $M = 14.67$, $SD = 10.07$; grade level 2 = $M = 12.29$, $SD = 9.69$; grade level 3 = $M = 15.11$, $SD = 8.94$). The effects of gender and grade level upon the aggression score were examined in a 2 (gender) by 3 (grade level) ANOVA. Males had a significantly higher total aggression score than did females, $F (1, 52) = 5.74, p < .02$, but there were no significant effects of grade level group, $F (2, 52) = .24, p > .05$, or significant interactions.

For homicidal ideation, 29.3 percent of participants had reported homicidal ideations, and 8.6 percent had a history of homicidal attempts. As regards suicidal ideation, 55.2 reported having had suicidal ideation, and 5.2 percent had a history of suicide attempts. Information on the participants' admitting diagnoses was obtained. Participants had up to four admitting diagnoses. For the first diagnosis, the most common diagnoses were Depressive Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (43.1 %), Impulse Control
Disorder (24.1 %), and Oppositional Disorder (6.9 %).

All information obtained concerning participants was kept confidential and was used only for the purpose of identifying participants who had problems with aggression. Interviewers did not have any prior knowledge about participants. Only children with parental consent participated in interviews.

**Materials**

Each moral transgression was depicted in a three-frame sequence of line drawings with brief accompanying text. There were two sets of four stories. The set a participant received was randomly determined. In each set, two of the stories described acts of physical harm; in one of these stories the victimizer obtained a material gain as a result of an aggressive act; in the other story there was no material gain. The other two stories described psychological harm (e.g., teasing, insults). In one story there was no clear gain for the victimizer, while in the other story, the victimizer received a gain as a result of psychologically harming the victim. A three-point bar graph scale, with 3 being the most intense and 1 one being the least intense, was used to aid participants in making judgments about the intensity of the emotions they attributed to victims and victimizers.

**Procedure**

Participants were individually interviewed in one fifteen to twenty-minute session. During each interview, participants were read four stories. The order of the four stories was randomized. In one condition, the stories were written so that participants were asked to imagine themselves in the role of the victimizer, and in the other condition the victimizers were presented as hypothetical children. Participants were randomly assigned to either the self-as-victimizer condition (imagining themselves as victimizers) or to the
hypothetical victimizer condition.

Participants were first read stories and shown line drawings depicting the stories. After each story was read, participants were asked what happened in the story so that their understanding could be checked. If participants did not fully understand what happened in the story, the interviewer went through the story again until participants had a clear understanding. Participants were then asked how the victim would feel at the end of the story. After participants made an emotion attribution for the victim, they were then asked how the victimizer would be feeling at the end of the story. Next, the participants were shown the bar graph scale and asked to rate the intensity of the emotions they attributed to both the victim and the victimizer. At this point in the interview, another comprehension check was used to make sure participants still had a clear understanding of what happened in the story and had not forgotten any parts of the story. Next, participants were asked to give a rationale for each emotion choice. For example, if participants stated that the victim would feel sad, they were then asked why the victim felt that way; a parallel question was asked regarding the victimizer. Finally, standard probe questions were asked for both the victim and victimizer. Participants were asked if the victim and the victimizer could be feeling anything other than the emotions initially attributed. If participants stated that the victim and/or victimizer was feeling another emotion, they were then asked to give both an intensity judgment and a rationale for the emotion choice as before.

*Scoring*

The emotions children choose for both victims and victimizers were coded with the following numbers: 1 = happy, glad, good, etc.; 2 = scared, afraid, anxious, nervous, worried; 3 = angry, mad, annoyed, frustrated; 4 = sad, depressed, hurt; 5 = guilty, sorry,
regret; 6 = ashamed, embarrassed; 7 = mixed valence emotions (i.e., mixture of positive and negative emotions), and 8 = other negative (emotions that do not fit into the categories described above).

The intensity ratings for the emotions the participants choose for both the victim and the victimizer were rated on the following seven-point scale: -3 very negative, -2 just negative, -1 a little negative, 0 neutral, 1 a little positive, 2 just positive and 3 very positive. If more than one emotion was attributed to either the victim or victimizer, the intensity ratings were combined to arrive at an overall rating.

Probe questions were used to determine whether the participant felt that the victim and/or victimizer could be feeling anything else besides the initially attributed emotion. The participants’ responses to the probe questions for the victim were coded in the following way: 0 = same valence emotion as attributed in the initial questioning or the child said that the victim was not feeling any other emotion; 1 = opposite valence emotion was attributed. The participant’s responses to the probe questions for the victimizer were coded in the following way: 1 = mixed or negative emotions were attributed to the victimizer in the initial questioning; 2 = opposite valence emotions were attributed; 3 = same valence emotion as the one initially attributed; and 4 = no response (the child indicated that the victimizer was not feeling any other emotion).

Participants were also asked to give a reason or a rationale for their emotion choices for both the victim and the victimizer. The rationales provided for both the victim and the victimizer where coded into the following categories: 1.1-1.6 (Moral Reasoning) = moral reasoning such as references to the act being unfair, the act is unacceptable because the individual knows that he/she would not like it if it were done to him/her,
explicit references to the fact that the act would be likely to cause physical or emotional harm, the actor realizes that he/she has done something that he/she regrets having done, and references to implied victimization; 2.1 (Friendship/Relationship Concerns) = the individual expresses concern about the act having been committed towards or by a friend; 3.1 (Self Focused Negative) = only applies to victimizers, the action caused a self focused loss for the victimizer not having to do with material or psychological harm or the act is likely to lead to adult sanctions and/or punishments; 5.1-5.4 (Prior Conditions) = act is explained as resulting from some previous act, emotion, or relationship that was not mentioned in the original story; 6.1 (Outcome Oriented) = the act is a realization of (or failure to realize) the victimizer’s intention or a loss of an object for the victim; 6.2 (Joy of Victimization) happiness at the actual misdeed rather than any concrete gain; and 7.1 (Story Repetition/Restatement) = repeating of story words without additions.

Reliability

The coding of the information obtained on participants’ history of aggression was completed by one experimenter. To check the reliability, a second experimenter coded 25 percent of the information coded by the first experimenter. Cohen’s Kappa was used to calculate the obtained reliability. The mean Kappa obtained on all items of information coded was $K = .91$.

The rationales given by participants were coded by one experimenter. The experimenter then took 25 percent of the rationales and re-coded them to check reliability. Cohen’s Kappa was used to calculate the obtained reliability. For the victim rationales, the reliability was $K = .97$ and for the victimizer rationales the reliability was $K = .97$. All other information coded from the interviews was double-checked for accuracy by the
experimenter.
Chapter 3

Results

Overview

Elementary-age participants at an inpatient psychiatric hospital were asked how they expected both victims and victimizers to feel about acts of physical and psychological harm in which victimizers either received a gain or did not receive an apparent gain for their actions. Participants also were asked to give an intensity rating for the discrete emotions chosen for both the victim and victimizer. The emotions were rated on a seven point scale with a negative three being the most intensely negative and with a positive three being the most intensely positive. In addition, participants were asked to give a rationale for their emotion choice for both the victim and victimizer. Rationales were coded into the following categories: moral reasoning, friendship concerns, negative outcome for the victimizer, prior conditions, outcome reasons, and joy of victimization. Finally, probe questions were used to find out whether participants felt that the victim and victimizer could be feeling another emotion than the one initially selected. In addition, Pearson correlations were obtained to determine if any of the above mentioned variables correlated significantly with the total aggression score for participants. A significant correlation of $r (58) = .260, p < .05$, was found between the quantitative emotion ratings given for victims in stories in which the victimizer received a gain and the total aggression score for participants. No other significant correlations ($r$'s $(58) < .221, p > .05$) were found between any of the variables and the total aggression score for participants.

A series of chi-square tests of independence were performed to test the effects of
age, gender, and three experimental conditions (self versus hypothetical victimizer, physical harm versus psychological harm, and gain versus no gain) on the discrete emotions and rationales attributed to victims and victimizers since these variables were categorical.

Mixed design ANOVAs with between-subject factors of age, gender, and self versus hypothetical victimizer conditions, and within-subject factors of physical harm versus psychological harm and gain versus no gain were used on the intensity ratings and the responses to probe questions. Tukey’s HSD tests were used to test significant interactions that involved either within subject factors only or between subject factors only. Repeated measures t tests, and independent t tests were used to test significant interactions that involved both within- and between-subject factors.

Discrete Emotions Analyses

Attributions for victims. Children primarily expected the victim to feel either sad or angry in both the self-as-victimizer condition and the hypothetical victimizer condition, and there were no significant differences between the attributions made about victims in these conditions. For the self condition, the following percentages of emotions were attributed to the victim: 58.93 sad or angry in both the self-as-victimizer condition and the hypothetical victimizer condition, and there were no significant differences between the attributions made about victims in these conditions. For the self condition, the following percentages of emotions were attributed to the victim: 58.93 for sadness, 36.61 for anger, 3.57 for mixed negative, and .90 for scared. For the hypothetical condition, the following percentages of emotions were attributed to the victim: 61.61 for sadness, 25.83 for anger, 11.67 for mixed negative and .83 for scared (see Table 2). In summary, 100
percent of the emotions attributed to victims in both the self and hypothetical conditions were negative in valence. Chi-square analyses on discrete emotion attributions to victims failed to reveal any significant effects of condition (self versus hypothetical victimizer) or for type of story (gain versus no gain). Also, within each condition (self versus hypothetical victimizer) there were no significant effects of grade, but across conditions there was a significant effect of grade, $\chi^2(16, N = 227) = 23.37, p < .01$. Sixth and seventh grade children attributed more anger to victims than expected, $z = -2.42, p < .05$. Sixth and seventh grade children also attributed less sadness than expected to victims, $z = 3.93, p < .001$. Third, fourth, and fifth graders attributed more mixed negative emotions to victims than expected, $z = -9.46, p < .001$.

**Self-as-Victimizer Versus Hypothetical Victimizer.** There was a significant difference between the discrete emotions attributed by children to victimizers in the self-as-victimizer condition and children in the hypothetical victimizer condition, $\chi^2(8, N = 231) = 57.06, p < .01$. Children attributed fewer happy emotions than expected to themselves as victimizers, $z = 7.85, p < .001$. Children attributed more happy emotions than expected when the victimizer was a hypothetical character, $z = -4.15, p < .001$. Children also attributed more sadness than expected to themselves as victimizers, $z = -4.00, p < .001$. Children in the hypothetical victimizer condition, attributed less sadness than expected, $z = 4.58, p < .001$ (see Table 2). In summary, children who imagined themselves as victimizers attributed fewer happy emotions and more sad emotions than expected. However, when children reasoned about a hypothetical victimizer, they attributed more happy and fewer sad emotions than expected.

There was a significant effect of grade level for the emotions children attributed to
themselves when pretending to be the victimizer (self condition), $\chi^2 (16, N=112) = 39.78, p < .01$. Kindergartners, and 1st, and 2nd graders attributed sadness to themselves as victimizers more often than expected, $z = -2.10, p < .05$. Sixth and seventh graders attributed guilt to themselves as victimizers more often than expected, $z = 2.93, p < .01$ (see Table 3). In summary, kindergarteners, and 1st, and 2nd graders attributed more sadness to themselves as victimizers while 6th and 7th graders attributed more guilt to themselves as victimizers.

Chi-square tests also revealed a significant effect of grade for discrete emotions attributed to hypothetical victimizers, $\chi^2 (16, N = 118) = 23.70, p < .05$. Kindergartners, and 1st and 2nd graders attributed less anger to hypothetical victimizers than expected, $z = 4.14, p < .001$. No other significant differences were noted. Sixth, and seventh graders did attribute fewer happy emotions than did younger participants, however, the difference was not statistically significant (see Table 3).

There was a significant effect of gain versus no gain for discrete emotions attributed to hypothetical victimizers, $\chi^2 (8, N = 118) = 18.81, p < .05$. For stories in which the hypothetical victimizer received a gain, children attributed more positive emotions than expected, $z = 3.15, p < .01$. For stories in which the hypothetical victimizer did not receive a gain, children attributed fewer positive emotions than expected, $z = 3.37, p < .001$. Participants also attributed less anger than expected for stories in which a gain was received, $z = 2.21, p < .05$ (see Table 4). In summary, participants attributed more positive emotions when the hypothetical victimizer received a gain and fewer positive emotions than expected when no gain was received. Also, children attributed less anger than expected when the hypothetical victimizer received a gain.
Intensity of Emotions Attributed to Victims and Victimizers

A mixed design ANOVA examined the within-subjects effects of role (whether the child was making attributions for the victim or victimizer), type of story (whether the harm done was physical or psychological), and gain (whether a gain was received or not) on the intensity of the emotions attributed. Gender, grade level, and condition (whether the child was making attributions for self as victimizer or for a hypothetical victimizer) were between-subject factors. A main effect of role, \( F(1, 46) = 56.19, p < .001 \) was modified by a significant interaction between role (whether the child was making attributions for the victim or victimizer) and condition (self-as-victimizer versus hypothetical victimizer), \( F(1, 46) = 15.70, p < .001 \). Repeated measures \( t \) tests were used to examine mean differences between the intensity of emotions attributed to the victim and victimizer in both the self and hypothetical conditions since role was a within-subjects variable within each of these conditions. Independent \( t \) tests were used to test the effects of condition for judgments for victims and victimizers since condition was a between-subjects factor. Significance level for these tests was set at \( p < .0125 \) to avoid inflating alpha with multiple tests. There were significant effects of role in the self-as-victimizer condition \( t(27) = 6.13, p < .01 \) and in the hypothetical condition \( t(29) = 8.52, p < .001 \) (See Table 5). In both conditions, participants rated the victim's emotions as more intensely negative than those of the victimizer. There was no significant effect of condition (self-as-victimizer versus hypothetical victimizer) on judgments of emotion intensity for victims, \( t(56) = -.076, p > .40 \), but a significant difference was found for judgments about victimizers, \( t(56) = -5.35, p < .001 \). Children in the hypothetical condition judged victimizers as feeling significantly less negatively than did children in the self-as-victimizer condition.
A main effect of gain, \( F(1, 46) = 4.27, p < .05 \) was modified by a significant interaction between role and gain (whether the victimizer received a gain or not), \( F(1, 46) = 5.02, p < .04 \). A Tukey’s HSD analysis was used to examine this interaction. Children rated victims’ emotions as more intensely negative than those of the victimizer in both the gain and no gain conditions (both at \( p < .01 \)). There was no significant difference in the intensity ratings for the victims’ emotions in the gain and no gain conditions. However, a difference between the intensity ratings of the emotions attributed to the victimizer in the gain and no gain conditions was found with children attributing more intensely negative emotions in the no gain condition \( (p < .01) \) (See Table 6).

In summary, children always rated the victims’ emotions as more intensely negative than those of the victimizer. Victimizers’ emotions were rated as more intensely negative when the victimizer did not receive a gain than when he/she did. Also, children in the hypothetical victimizer condition rated victimizers’ emotions as less intensely negative than did the children in the self-as-victimizer condition.

*Rationale Analyses*

Participants were asked to give rationales for each emotion choice. For example, if participants stated that the victim would feel sad, they were then asked why the victim felt that way. The same procedure was used for the victimizer. The rationales given were coded into the following categories: moral reasoning, friendship concerns, negative outcome for the victimizer, prior conditions, outcome reasons, and joy of victimization.

*Self-as-Victimizer Versus Hypothetical Victimizer.* There was no significant effect of victimizer condition for the rationales given for victims’ emotions, \( \chi^2 (6, N = 232) = 5.94, p > .05 \), but there was a significant difference between the rationales children
provided for themselves as victimizers and the rationales they provided for hypothetical victimizers, $\chi^2 = (6, N = 242) = 49.36, p < .01$. Children attributed more moral rationales than expected for themselves as victimizers, $z = -5.81, p < .001$ and fewer moral rationales than expected for hypothetical victimizers, $z = 4.71, p < .001$. Children responded with more references to friendship concerns than expected in the hypothetical victimizer condition, $z = 7.98, p < .001$. Also, children attributed fewer outcome rationales for themselves as victimizers than expected, $z = 4.49, p < .001$, and more outcome rationales for hypothetical victimizers than expected, $\chi^2 = 3.02, p < .01$. For the self-as-victimizer condition, children gave fewer joy of victimization rationales than expected, $z = 3.56, p < .001$ (See Table 7). Overall, for the self-as-victimizer condition children responded with more moral responses, less outcome-related responses, and less references to the joy of victimization than expected. For the hypothetical victimizer condition, children provided fewer moral responses, and more outcome-related rationales than expected.

**Victims and Victimizers in Gain/No Gain Conditions.** There was a significant difference between the emotion rationales children gave for the victim in the stories in which they imagined themselves as victimizers who received gains and in the stories where they imagined themselves as victimizers who did not receive gains, $\chi^2 (6, N = 112) = 16.95, p = .05$. Children attributed fewer moral rationales to themselves as victimizers than expected when a gain was received, $z = 2.33, p < .05$, and more moral responses when no gain was received, $z = -8.03, p = .001$. For stories in which a gain was received in the self-as-victimizer condition, children responded with more outcome rationales for the victim than expected, $z = -2.33, p < .05$ and for stories with no gain children responded with fewer outcome rationales than expected, $z = 8.07, p < .001$ (see Table 8).
In summary, for the self-as-victimizer condition, children attributed more moral responses to the victim when no gain was involved for the victimizer and fewer moral rationales when a gain was received by the victimizer. Children also attributed more outcome responses for the victim than expected when a gain was received by the victimizer and fewer outcome responses than expected when no gain was received by the victimizer.

For the hypothetical victimizer condition, there was a significant difference between the emotion rationales children gave for victimizers in stories in which the hypothetical victimizer received a gain and for stories in which the hypothetical victimizer did not receive a gain, $\chi^2 (6, N = 129) = 21.74, p < .01$, but the parallel analysis of victimizer emotion rationales in the self-as-victimizer condition did not reach significance, $\chi^2 (6, N = 113) = 11.54, p > .05$. Children reported fewer references to prior conditions to explain victimizers’ emotions when a gain was received than expected, $z = 2.38, p < .05$. Also, for stories in which the hypothetical victimizer received a gain, more outcome rationales were given by participants for victimizers’ emotions, $z = -3.20, p < .01$ than expected; for stories with no gain, they gave fewer outcome responses than expected, $z = 3.43, p < .001$. For stories in which the hypothetical victimizer received no gain, children also gave more rationales for victimizers’ emotions relating to the joy of victimization, $z = 15.58, p < .001$ (See Table 8).

*Physical versus Psychological Harm Stories.* For the rationales given for victims’ emotions, there were no story type (physical versus psychological) effects in the self-as-victimizer condition, $\chi^2 (6, N = 112) = 0, p > .05$, the hypothetical condition, $\chi^2 (6, N = 120) = 4.16, p > .05$, or across conditions, $\chi^2 (6, N = 235) = 3.59, p > .05$.

There was a significant difference between the rationales given for hypothetical
victimizers' emotions in physical harm stories versus psychological harm stories, $\chi^2 (6, N = 141) = 14.46, p < .05$, but $z$-tests failed to reveal any significant differences. For the self-as-victimizer condition, no significant differences were noted between the rationales given in the physical harm stories versus the psychological harm stories, $\chi^2 = (6, N = 113) = 2.89, p > .05$.

**Developmental Analyses.** No significant differences between grade levels were noted for the rationales children attributed to victimizers in both the self and hypothetical conditions, $\chi^2 (10, N = 113$ or $119) < 15, p > .05$. Children primarily responded with either moral or outcome rationales across grade levels, and conditions (see Table 9). As noted, earlier children in the self-as-victimizer condition responded with more moral responses than outcome responses. However, their responses did not vary across grade levels. In the self-as-victimizer condition, children consistently gave more moral responses for themselves as victimizers across grades. Thus, no developmental differences in emotional rationales for victimizers were found for either the self-as-victimizer or the hypothetical victimizer conditions.

There were no significant effects of grade level for the rationales children attributed for stories in which the victimizer received a gain in the self-as-victimizer condition, $\chi^2 (10, N = 53) = 5.81, p > .05$, or in the hypothetical victimizer condition, $\chi^2 (10, N = 59) = 4.59, p > .05$. No significant effect of grade level was found for no gain stories in either the self-as-victimizer condition, $\chi^2 (10, N = 61) = 9.30, p > .05$ or the hypothetical victimizer condition, $\chi^2 (10, N = 60) = 13.14, p > .05$.

For stories in which physical harm was done, no significant effect of grade was found in the self-as-victimizer condition, $\chi^2 (10, N = 56) = 12.70, p > .05$, or the
hypothetical victimizer condition, $\chi^2(10, N = 60) = 7.52, p > .05$. Also, no significant
effect of grade was found for stories in which psychological harm was done, for either the
self-as-victimizer, $\chi^2(10, N = 53) = 7.63, p > .05$, or the hypothetical victimizer, $\chi^2(10, N
= 60) = 4.11, p > .05$.

In summary, no developmental effects for emotion rationales were found by type
of story (gain versus no gain) or by the type of harm done (physical versus psychological).
No developmental effects were found in either the self-as-victimizer condition or the
hypothetical victimizer condition.

*Probe Results*

Children were asked whether the victim would feel anything other than the initially
attributed emotion (probe question). Their answers were coded to reflect whether
opposite valence emotions were attributed (1) or not (0). Across stories and conditions
the mean for this variable was .03, indicating that children rarely attributed opposite
valence emotions to victims after being probed.

Children also were asked whether the victimizer could be feeling anything other
than the initially attributed emotion. Their answers were coded as follows: 1 = mixed or
negative emotions attributed in initial question, 2 = opposite valence emotions attributed
after probe question, 3 = same valence emotions attributed at probe question, 4 = said
victimizers would not feel any other emotion than the one initially attributed. Thus, higher
scores indicate children had difficulty understanding that victimizers might feel a negative
emotion in situations of victimization.

A repeated measures ANOVA with within-subject factors of type of harm
(physical versus psychological) and type of story (gain versus no gain) and between-
subject factors of gender, grade level, and condition (self victimizer versus hypothetical victimizer) was performed on probe results for victimizers. A main effect of condition, $F(2, 46) = 3.78, p < .04$ was found with children requiring more probing to attribute negative emotions to a hypothetical victimizer ($M=2.36, SD = 1.07$) than to themselves as the victimizer ($M = 1.88, SD = 1.05$). No significant interactions were found.

In summary, children rarely attributed opposite valence emotions to victims after being probed indicating that the probe methodology did not “force” children to change the emotions attributed. For the victimizer, children required more probing in the hypothetical victimizer condition than in the self-as-victimizer condition to attribute another emotion than the one initially selected.
Chapter 4

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to extend research on the "happy victimizer effect" to a sample of children with behavioral disorders. One goal was to examine how children reason about themselves versus hypothetical characters as victimizers. Little research has examined the self versus hypothetical victimizer distinction with a group of children with behavioral disorders. Since children with behavioral disorders engage in more aggressive acts than do other children it was hypothesized that they may find such acts more acceptable and therefore may attribute fewer negative emotions in both self-as-victimizer and hypothetical victimizer conditions. However, it was difficult to make a prediction because of the lack of research on the self versus other distinction with populations that differ from the norm.

In the present study, children did differentiate between themselves as victimizers and hypothetical victimizers. For themselves as victimizers, children attributed fewer positive emotions and more sadness than expected by random association. As in previous studies, children attributed more positive emotions to a hypothetical victimizer than to themselves as victimizers (Keller et al., 1996; Van Zee et al., 2000). Previous research by Van Zee et al. (2000) examined this distinction with a group of elementary students and found that children across all age levels attributed primarily negative emotions to themselves as victimizers. For the hypothetical victimizer in the Van Zee et al. (2000) study, children attributed fewer negative emotions and more positive emotions, and a developmental trend was observed in the hypothetical condition with older children (sixth
emotions to themselves as victimizers. For the hypothetical victimizer in the Van Zee et al. (2000) study, children attributed fewer negative emotions and more positive emotions, and a developmental trend was observed in the hypothetical condition with older children (sixth graders) attributing fewer positive emotions than expected. The findings of the current study and the Van Zee et al. study support the hypothesis that children may judge the hypothetical victimizers in the stories as just “bad kids” or “bullies.” When younger children were imagining themselves as the victimizers, Van Zee et al. found they were more likely to attribute negative emotions in the initial questioning and required less probing to attribute negative emotions to the victimizer. Thus, even the younger children in the Van Zee et al. study differentiated between themselves as victimizers and hypothetical victimizers.

In the present study, a developmental effect was found for the self-as-victimizer condition with first and second graders attributing more sadness than expected and sixth and seventh graders attributing more guilt than expected. For the hypothetical victimizer, children attributed more positive emotions and less sadness than expected. A developmental effect was found with first and second graders attributing less anger than expected to hypothetical victimizers. Older children did attribute fewer positive emotions than did younger children to the hypothetical victimizer, however this difference was not statistically significant; thirty-six percent of sixth and seventh graders still attributed positive emotions. In earlier research (Van Zee et al., 2000) it was found that older children (6th graders) attributed significantly fewer positive emotions to hypothetical victimizers than did younger children. Additionally, older children in the Van Zee et al. study were much more responsive to probe questioning than were the children in the
present study, indicating that they understood that victimizers may experience mixed emotions. Because the current sample had a significant history of aggression, they may have underestimated the negative feelings of the hypothetical victimizer or failed to recognize that a hypothetical victimizer may experience mixed emotions, simply labeling the hypothetical character as a “bad kid” who enjoys engaging in such acts.

There was also a difference in the intensity of emotions children attributed to themselves as victimizers versus to hypothetical victimizers. Children attributed more intensely negative emotions to themselves as victimizers than to hypothetical victimizers. Also, children attributed much more intensely negative emotions to victims than to victimizers. This finding supports the research of Van Zee et al. (2000) who also found that more intense emotions were attributed to victims than victimizers, and, similarly, more intense emotions were attributed to the self-as-victimizer than to hypothetical victimizers.

Participants also were asked to give rationales for each emotion choice for both the victim and victimizer. The rationales were coded into the following categories: moral reasoning, friendship concerns, negative outcome for the self, prior conditions, outcome reasons, and joy of victimization. There was a significant difference between the rationales children gave for themselves as victimizers versus hypothetical victimizers. Children made more moral reasoning rationales for themselves as victimizers and fewer than expected for hypothetical victimizers. Children also responded with fewer outcome rationales for themselves as victimizers and more outcome rationales than expected for hypothetical victimizers. For themselves as victimizers, children also responded with fewer references to joy of victimization than expected. Overall, for the self-as-victimizer
condition, children responded with more moral responses, fewer outcome responses, and fewer references to joy of victimization than expected. For the hypothetical victimizer, children provided fewer moral responses, and more outcome-related rationales than expected. These findings for the rationales attributed to victimizers add support to the finding that children reason differently about themselves as victimizers versus hypothetical victimizers.

There was no developmental effect for the emotion rationales children gave in either the self-as-victimizer or for the hypothetical victimizer conditions. Children responded with primarily moral or outcome rationales across grade levels. In the self-as-victimizer condition, children responded with more moral rationales, and in the hypothetical condition they tended to give more outcome rationales. However, their responses did not vary across grade levels.

In the current study, it was examined whether children with behavioral disorders would be more willing to attribute positive emotions when a tangible gain was received by the victimizer than when no gain was received. It was predicted that the reasoning of children with behavior disorders may more closely resemble the reasoning of younger children who tend to be more influenced by the tangible gains involved. Arsenio and Fleiss (1996) also found in their research that children with behavioral disorders explained the victimizer's emotions with more references to the material gains that the acts produced. The distinction between instrumental and hostile victimization also was explored with children with behavioral disorders in the current study.

In the current study, a difference was found for hypothetical victimizers in the emotions attributed for stories in which a gain was received versus stories in which no
gain was received. Children attributed more positive emotions than expected to the hypothetical victimizer when a gain was received and fewer positive emotions when no gain was received. Additionally, children attributed less anger to the hypothetical victimizer when a gain was received. For the self-as-victimizer condition, no distinction between gain versus no gain was found. Children in the self-as-victimizer condition primarily expected to feel negative emotions whether a gain was received or not. For hypothetical victimizers, children attributed more positive emotions for stories in which a gain was received and fewer positive emotions than expected when no gain was received.

The current research supports the hypothesis that children with behavior disorders may be more influenced by the tangible gains involved in acts of victimization resembling the reasoning of younger children when reasoning about hypothetical characters.

In previous research Van Zee et al. 2000 found that younger children required more probing to attribute negative emotions to the victimizer for stories in which a gain was received than for stories in which no gain was received. The current findings and the research of Van Zee et al. (2000) raise the possibility that younger children and children with behavioral disorders may be more influenced by the tangible gain involved in many acts of victimization. Nunner-Winkler and Sodian (1988) and Arsenio and Kramer (1992) also found that younger children gave more outcome-oriented rationales for their happy victimizer attributions.

In addition, for stories in which a gain was received, children rated victimizers’ emotions as less intensely negative than they did for stories in which no gain was received.

In the Van Zee et al. (2000) study, no difference in intensity of negative emotions attributed to victimizers in gain versus no gain condition was found. Clearly, the
participants in the current study appear to be influenced by the tangible gains involved in acts of victimization. The current sample of participants have a significant history of past aggression and may have had more personal experience in receiving gains from acts of victimization.

There was also a difference in the rationales attributed in stories in which a gain was received versus stories in which no gain was received in the self-as-victimizer condition. When providing rationales for the emotions chosen for victims, children gave fewer moral responses when a gain was received and more moral responses than expected when no gain was received. Children also provided more outcome rationales for the victim when a gain was obtained by the victimizer in the self-as-victimizer condition and fewer outcome rationales than expected when there was no gain. Outcome rationales for victims usually referred to the victim's loss (which was the victimizer's gain).

For the hypothetical victimizer, a difference in the rationales given for stories of gain versus no gain was also found. However, for the self-as-victimizer condition, there was no significant effect of gain versus no gain for the emotion rationales children gave for victimizers. In the hypothetical condition, children made fewer references to prior conditions than expected when a gain was received. Children also gave more outcome rationales when a gain was received and fewer outcome rationales when no gain was received for the hypothetical victimizers. In addition, children provided more references to the joy of victimization when no gain was received.

In summary, children appeared to be influenced by the tangible gains involved. Even in the self-as-victimizer condition, children gave fewer moral rationales for the victim for stories in which a gain was received and more moral rationales for the victim when no
gain was received. Children also gave more outcome-related responses than expected for the hypothetical victimizer when a gain was received. This finding supports the research of Arsenio and Fleiss (1996) who found that children with behavioral disorders explained the victimizer’s emotions with more references to the material gains that the acts produced.

The difference between physical and psychological victimization has received little attention in the happy victimizer literature. Physical aggression is much more common among younger children and those with behavioral disorders. The use of psychological aggression among children increases with age (Mash & Wolfe, 1999). It was hypothesized that the reasoning of children with behavior disorders may be more similar to that of younger children. However, no specific predictions were made because of a lack of research with populations that differ from the norm. Previous research with populations that differ has used stories depicting acts of physical aggression.

However, children in the current study did not appear to distinguish between physical and psychological harm in contrast to the Van Zee et al. (2000) finding that younger children (second and fourth graders) required more probing to attribute negative emotions when the victimizer did psychological harm and received a gain while by sixth grade children were more willing to attribute negative emotions to victimizers performing acts of psychological harm. In the current study, no developmental trend was found for the emotions attributed or rationales given in psychological harm and physical harm, suggesting that the current sample may not clearly differentiate between the two different forms of aggression.

Children also were asked if the victim and victimizer could be feeling any other
emotions than the ones initially chosen. Children rarely attributed opposite valence emotions to victims after being probed. Children required more probe questions to attribute negative emotions to hypothetical victimizers than for themselves as victimizers. For themselves as victimizers, children were more likely to attribute negative emotions in the initial questioning and required fewer probe questions to attribute negative emotions to victimizers which is consistent with previous findings (Van Zee et al., 2000).

The findings of the present study add additional support to the findings of previous research on the “happy victimizer effect.” As in previous research, the current sample of children viewed hypothetical victimizers differently from themselves (Keller et al., 1996; Van Zee et al., 2000). The majority of children across age levels expected to feel negatively when imagining themselves as victimizers. However, for the hypothetical victimizer, children attributed more positive emotions and less sadness than expected supporting the hypothesis that children may view hypothetical characters as “bullies” or “bad kids.” Children in the current study also appeared to be influenced by the tangible gains involved, attributing less intensely negative emotions in gain versus no gain conditions and attributing fewer moral responses to hypothetical victimizers when a gain was involved.

It should be noted that the current study had certain limitations. One limitation was that the study used a relatively small number of participants from one geographic region. Research on a larger, more diverse sample is needed before the results of the current study can be generalized. Another limitation is that participants were drawn from one inpatient psychiatric facility. More research is needed at additional psychiatric facilities to determine if the current sample is typical of children with behavior disorders.
A possible idea for future research may be to compare an inpatient and an outpatient population of children with behavior disorders to explore whether their views on victimization would differ in the type or intensity of judgments made. Another idea would be to extend the research of Smetana et al. (1999) who compared the emotional reasoning of both maltreated and non-maltreated pre-schoolers. Since maltreated children from low income families are a high risk group for developing difficulties with aggression, the distinction between maltreated and non-maltreated children is in need of further study with a wider age range. Overall, more research is needed to explore the interrelation between affect and moral evaluations, in both typical and atypical samples.
References


APPENDIX
Letter of Approval from Human Subjects Review Board
At Western Kentucky University
Kim Van Zee
302 Castle Heights Dr.
Bowling Green, KY 42103

Dear Kim:

Your research project, "Behaviorally disruptive children's reasoning about the emotional consequences of victimization," was reviewed by the HSRB and it has been determined that risks to subjects are: (1) minimized and reasonable; and that (2) research procedures are consistent with a sound research design and do not expose the subjects to unnecessary risk. Reviewers determined that: (1) benefits to subjects are considered along with the importance of the topic and that outcomes are reasonable; (2) selection of subjects is equitable; and (3) the purposes of the research and the research setting is amenable to subjects' welfare and producing desired outcomes; that indications of coercion or prejudice are absent, and that participation is clearly voluntary.

1. In addition, the IRB found that: (1) informed consent will be sought and documented from each prospective subject. (2) Provision is made for collecting, using and storing data in a manner that protects the safety and privacy of the subjects and the confidentiality of the data. (3) Appropriate safeguards are included to protect the rights and welfare of the subjects.

(a) Your research therefore meets the criteria of Full Board Review and is approved.

2. Please note that the institution is not responsible for any actions regarding this protocol before approval. If you expand the project at a later date to use other instruments please re-apply. Copies of your request for human subjects review, your application, and this approval, are maintained in the Office of Sponsored Programs at the above address. Please report any changes to this approved protocol to this office. A Continuing Review protocol will be sent to you in the future to determine the status of the project.

Sincerely,

Phillip E. Myers, Ph.D.
Director, OSP and
Human Protections Administrator

c: Human Subjects File0166R
Dr. Elizabeth Lemerise, Department of Psychology
Table 1

Percent of Children Engaging in Aggressive Behaviors by Frequency and Severity As Reported During Intake Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>% of Children w/Behavior</th>
<th>Mild</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Severe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arguing, Quarreling</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cursing Swearing</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily Angered, Irritable</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Destruction During An Argument</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Attacks out Of Anger</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks Back, Impertinent</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temper Tantrums</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Cruelty</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying, Teasing</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptive, Bothersome Behaviors</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatening Others</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Includes fire-setting and use of weapons.
Table 2

Percent of Children Attributing Discrete Emotions to Victims and Victimizers in Self and Hypothetical Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>Victims</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Victimizers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Hypothetical</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Hypothetical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>8.00*</td>
<td>47.10*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>36.61</td>
<td>25.83</td>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>58.93</td>
<td>61.67</td>
<td>58.90*</td>
<td>22.70*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>7.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Negative</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Negative</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Note. Significant as compared to the total expected percentage.

*p < .001.
Table 3

Percent of Children Attributing Discrete Emotions to Victimizer in Self and Hypothetical Conditions by Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Hypothetical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K-2nd</td>
<td>3rd-5th</td>
<td>6th-7th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>14.60</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>31.30</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>75.00*</td>
<td>54.20</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>34.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Neg.</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Neg.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant as compared to the total expected percentage.

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.
Table 4

Percent of Children Attributing Discrete Emotions to Victimizers in Self and Hypothetical Conditions by Gain/No Gain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Gain</td>
<td>No Gain</td>
<td>Hypothetical</td>
<td>Gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>66.70**</td>
<td>27.60***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>10.00*</td>
<td>27.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td></td>
<td>57.10</td>
<td>60.70</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>31.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>8.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Negative</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant as compared to the total expected percentage.

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.
Table 5

*Intensity of Emotions Attributed to Victims and Victimizers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Hypothetical</th>
<th>Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>-2.830&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-2.725&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimizer</td>
<td>-1.884&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>- .017&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>S &gt; H*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* On victim / victimizer differences: Means with different subscripts are significantly different from one another.

* *p < .0125.*
Table 6

*Intensity of Emotions Attributed to Victims and Victimizers: Effect of Gain/NoGain*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gain/No Gain</th>
<th>Gain</th>
<th>No Gain</th>
<th>Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>-2.79&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-2.76&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimizer</td>
<td>-.49&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-1.34&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>G &lt; NG&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. On victim/victimizer differences: Means with different subscripts are significantly different from one another.

* p < .05  ** p < .01
Table 7

Percent of Children Giving Emotion Rationales to Victimizers in Self and Hypothetical Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationales</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Hypothetical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>77.30***</td>
<td>34.80***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship Concerns</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1.50***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Outcome for Self</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Conditions</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Reasons</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>15.50***</td>
<td>44.00**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy of Victimization</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>.90***</td>
<td>6.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant as compared to the total expected percentage.

** p < .01. *** p < .001.
Table 8

Percent of Children Giving Emotion Rationales to Victims and Victimizers in Self and Hypothetical Conditions by Gain/No Gain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationales</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Hypothetical</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>Victimizer</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>Victimizer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain</td>
<td>No Gain</td>
<td>Gain</td>
<td>No Gain</td>
<td>Gain</td>
<td>No Gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>69.60*</td>
<td>98.20***</td>
<td>75.51</td>
<td>79.69</td>
<td>76.67</td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship Concerns</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Outcome for Self</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Conditions</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Reasons</td>
<td>30.40*</td>
<td>1.79***</td>
<td>22.45</td>
<td>9.38</td>
<td>21.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy of Victimization</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant as compared to the total expected percentage

* p < .05. ** p < .01 *** p < .001.
Table 9

Percent of Children Attributing Rationales to Victimizers in Self and Hypothetical Conditions by Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Hypothetical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K-2nd</td>
<td>3rd-5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>83.90</td>
<td>68.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Cond.</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of Auth.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy of Vic.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. No significant effects were noted.