A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF BULLYING IN TEEN TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

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Youth bullying is a societal problem that must be addressed by public health professionals to help stem negative psychosocial outcomes – and other related violent behavior – for the aggressor and the victim. Bullying is a type of aggression that is estimated to affect one in every three school-aged youth in the United States.\textsuperscript{1} Recent research on bullying consistently uses a definition with three primary components: the intentional infliction of harm to another individual, the repetition of this behavior over time, and the delivery of this action in a context in which the aggressor has more power than the victim.\textsuperscript{1-3} Within this definition, bullying can include acts of aggression that are verbal, physical, or relational.\textsuperscript{4} Examples of these types of aggression can include verbal threats, hitting, and gossiping, respectively. Among youth, the type of bullying perpetrated often varies by gender. Males are more often involved in physical bullying while females are more commonly involved in verbal and relational bullying.\textsuperscript{5} Additionally, aggressive youth are significantly more likely to grow up to be aggressive, violent adults.\textsuperscript{1}

Bullying has negative consequences for the psychosocial functioning of the perpetrator and the victim. Youth perpetrators of bullying are more likely to take part in other risky behaviors, like substance use.\textsuperscript{1} They are also less likely to have high academic achievement and perceive their school environment as positive.\textsuperscript{1} Youth who are victims of bullying are more likely to report poor social and emotional adjustment – meaning they are less likely to have social support from classmates and more likely to report feeling lonely.\textsuperscript{1} Other studies have shown that youth bullying victims are at greater risk for depression and low self-esteem.\textsuperscript{3,6} However, Brunstein-Klomek et al. (2007) found that both victims and
perpetrators of bullying are at higher risk for depression, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts than youth not involved in bullying.\textsuperscript{7} These serious consequences call attention to the need for effective interventions to reduce youth bullying.

To create these necessary interventions, researchers must first understand the underlying causes of bullying. It has been shown that youth bullying is negatively associated with early cognitive stimulation and early emotional support from parents, while it is positively associated with television exposure – even while controlling for age, race, ethnicity, sex, and socioeconomic status. Of these three proposed causes, the association between television exposure and bullying was the strongest.\textsuperscript{8}

Violence and aggression are ubiquitous in modern television programming. It is estimated that by the time an individual turns 18 years old, they could have viewed as many as 200,000 violent acts on television alone.\textsuperscript{9} Violence is present in approximately 60\% of all television programs.\textsuperscript{10} Surprisingly, this violent content is often concentrated in children’s programming like cartoons, which contain a higher frequency of violence than dramas or comedies.\textsuperscript{11} Oftentimes, though, violence portrayed in cartoons is done so in a comedic or unrealistic manner.\textsuperscript{12} Although research is limited and at times equivocal, this may help to camouflage the aggression and subsequently reduce the likelihood that it will lead to aggressive actions on the part of the viewer.\textsuperscript{12} Viewing non-comedic violence in cartoons, however, has been shown to increase object- and peer-oriented aggressive behavior.\textsuperscript{12}

In an effort to educate the public about the extent of violent content in a particular program, television stations have implemented age-based rating systems. However, due to the lack of published standards for all networks to rate the content of their programming,
there is not a reliable means of monitoring whether a television show will be appropriate for a particular age-based audience.\textsuperscript{13} In fact, a study investigating the legitimacy of these rating systems found poor validity among aggressive content in popular television shows for young girls.\textsuperscript{13} Programs rated as appropriate for youth contained higher levels of some forms of aggression than programs rated appropriate for general audiences.\textsuperscript{13}

Two primary theories underpin the relationship between television exposure and bullying in youth: Social Learning Theory and Script Theory.\textsuperscript{13} In the Social Learning Theory model, children obtain aggressive or bullying behaviors through observational modeling of the behaviors they view on television.\textsuperscript{14} Script Theory explains this relationship between television exposure and bullying through the process by which the viewer’s attitudes and beliefs adapt to accept aggression as normative after repeated exposure to this behavior in television programming.\textsuperscript{15}

**PRIOR RESEARCH AND INTERVENTIONS**

Working off of these theories and data on the prevalence of aggressive behavior on television, researchers have examined the relationship between television exposure and being a perpetrator of aggression and bullying. Several studies found associations between youth’s total television viewing and bullying their peers.\textsuperscript{8,16,17} Others looked at the association between certain types of aggression (e.g., verbal, physical, relational) and how the context of violence affected the viewers’ resulting behavior.\textsuperscript{12,13} However, there have not been content analyses that look at the prevalence of bullying, a more systematic form of aggression, in television programming geared toward children or teens.

Although research has been published about interventions aiming to specifically address aggressive behavior among children as it relates to television viewing (e.g.,
entertainment education), a current review of the literature does not find similar interventions for teens. Past childhood interventions have used various strategies to reduce the likelihood that children will adopt violent and aggressive behaviors they view on television. One strategy, called active mediation, has been used since the late 1960s. Active mediation is when an adult makes comments condemning violent or aggressive behavior before, during, or after children view violent media content.\(^{12}\) This can include phrases like “hitting is wrong” and “shooting someone is terrible.”\(^{12}\) The aim of these comments is to dispel any attitudes or beliefs children may have that aggressive behavior has positive consequences.\(^{12}\) Although this strategy has been shown to reduce the likelihood that children will imitate the aggressive behavior they view on television, this is not an intervention that could have efficient widespread implementation.\(^{18}\)

Other interventions that aim to decrease the negative effects of television viewing among children have implemented media literacy curricula in the classroom. These curricula attempt to convey that aggression – like that portrayed in the media – is socially unacceptable and unrealistic, and some have encouraged youth and parents to limit their television exposure because of high rates of violent content. Oftentimes, these interventions are too short to produce the desired results.\(^{19-21}\) However, Rosenkoetter et al. (2009) were able to reduce consumption of violent television content in children through a media literacy campaign that lasted over the course of one year and included a booster lesson.\(^{22}\)

Finally, the Cartoon Network recently launched an anti-bullying entertainment education campaign geared toward their middle school-age audience. The campaign will focus on including “teachable moments” into their programming.\(^{23}\) These lessons will center around bystanders’ ability to prevent bullying by successfully intervening on behalf
of the bullying victim.\textsuperscript{23} Although this campaign is addressing a younger audience, if research is able to show that this intervention strategy is effective, it may provide the impetus necessary for entertainment education interventions among teen audiences as well.

This review shows that what is missing from the literature is an examination of both the prevalence of bullying on television and how television programming that depicts bullying – which is a more systematic type of aggression – affects teen viewers’ behavior. As a result, this content analysis chose to look specifically at bullying in teen television programming. Because the aggression portrayed in teen and adult television shows is more realistic than that in children’s programs – where much of the aggression may occur between cartoon characters – this may increase the likelihood that viewers adopt the aggressive behaviors of the characters they see on television. Additionally, contrary to popular belief, teens are not leaving television behind in favor of new media. Instead, their exposure to television rose 6\% between 2004 and 2009.\textsuperscript{24}

**METHODS**

This content analysis sought to determine how bullying is portrayed in teen television shows. Additionally, it was concerned with whether or not bullying was portrayed as acceptable, as measured by the presence or absence of an individual intervening on behalf of a bullying victim. The definition used to code bullying in this content analysis – and consistently used in other academic literature – includes three primary components: the intentional infliction of harm to another individual, the repetition of this behavior over time, and the delivery of this action in a context in which the perpetrator has more power than the victim.\textsuperscript{1-3}
The sample of media coded included the first four episodes from four of the top five shows in which teens (ages 13-17) were most engaged during the 2008/2009 season – as measured by Nielsen. This included *One Tree Hill* Season 6 (CW), *Heroes* Season 3 (NBC), *Desperate Housewives* Season 5 (ABC), and *Real Housewives of Orange County* Season 1 (BRAVO). Season 1 of *Real Housewives of Orange County* is from the 2006 season and was used because the more recent seasons were unavailable. *Privileged* (CW) was excluded from the analysis because it was also unavailable to the coders.

The analysis originally hoped to look at the top five most popular teen (ages 13-17) television programs, as measured by number of viewers. However, this data was unavailable to the coders for the present analysis. Therefore, coders analyzed the television programs in which teens were most engaged. Engagement is measured by Nielsen IAG through a survey given to viewers one day after watching a program. The survey requires them to recall what they watched the previous day to determine the attention they paid to the show while watching. According to Nielsen, teens ages 13-17 were 54% more engaged in *One Tree Hill* than the average reported engagement level across all shows measured. While *One Tree Hill* and *Privileged* are geared toward teen and young adult audiences, *Heroes*, *Desperate Housewives*, and *Real Housewives of Orange County* are geared toward young and more mature adult audiences. Therefore, teens may be more engaged in programming targeting and about people their parents’ age than they are in programming meant for their age bracket.

The general domains of content coded within the episodes of teen television programs were verbal, physical, or relational acts of aggression (e.g., name calling, verbal teasing, verbal abuse; physical pushing, hitting; spreading rumors, exclusion from groups).
The recording unit of analysis was an event of verbal, physical, or relational aggression. Finally, the context unit of analysis was an individual episode. Because bullying, by definition, takes place repeatedly over a period of time, it was important for coders to analyze the context in which the acts of aggression took place.

To appropriately determine how bullying was portrayed in these television shows, coders looked at several variables relating to the victim and the aggressor as well as the context of, and reason for, the aggression. Characteristics of the victim and aggressor included gender, age, race/ethnicity, and relationship to the other individual(s) involved in the act of aggression. Coders recorded the type of aggression displayed, if there was an obvious reason for the aggression, whether there were bystanders or an intervention, provided a qualitative description of the scene, and whether the act of aggression constituted bullying. If an intervention took place, coders recorded characteristics of the individual(s) who intervened and provided a qualitative description of the intervention. See Appendix 1 for an example of the coding sheet used for this content analysis.

The 16 teen television episodes included in this content analysis were obtained through Netflix and full episodes available on The Internet Movie Database (IMDb). Two coders individually coded each episode. After viewing all four episodes from one of the selected shows, the coders met to compare coding sheets. If discrepancies arose, coders discussed and came to consensus about how to code the content.

RESULTS

Using SPSS version 13.0, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data. The 16 episodes included 68 acts of aggression. Four episodes of Heroes contained 31 acts of aggression. Desperate Housewives, One Tree Hill, and Real Housewives of Orange
Country contained 19, 15, and 3 acts of aggression, respectively. Twenty-five acts of verbal aggression, 46 acts of physical aggression, and seven acts of relational aggression were coded in the 16 episodes. The number of specific types of aggression acts is higher than the first count because certain acts of aggression qualified as more than one type of aggression. For example, one scene in the Desperate Housewives episode titled “Kids Ain’t Like Everybody Else” includes two mothers verbally insulting each other’s child and eventually wrestling one another. This was coded as both verbal and physical aggression. See Appendix 2 for storyline descriptions from each of the 16 episodes.

Heroes had the most individual acts of aggression. (See Graphs 1 and 2 for frequency and types of aggression in each show.) Thirty-one acts of aggression were coded for Heroes. Twenty-eight of these acts of aggression were physical acts, more than the physical acts of aggression in the other three shows combined. Desperate Housewives had the most verbal acts of aggression (nine acts), closely followed by One Tree Hill with eight acts of verbal aggression. Four of the six acts of relational aggression occurred in Desperate Housewives.

Graph 1. Frequency of Acts of Aggression in TV Shows Teens are Most Engaged In
Graph 2. Frequency of Different Types of Aggression in TV Shows Teens are Most Engaged In.
The content analysis explored the characteristics of the aggressors and victims of aggression. Fifty-three (77.9%) acts of aggression were perpetrated by main characters in the shows. Fifty-five (80.9%) acts of aggression included a main character as the victim. More females than males were aggressors, with 53.2% (42/79) being female and 46.8% (37/79) being male. On the other hand, 59.7% (46/77) of victims were male and 40.3% (31/77) of victims were female. A majority of the aggressors (75.9%) and victims (62.3%) were adults, ages 25-55.

Contrary to previous research, the content analysis found that females perpetrated more physical aggression than verbal or relational aggression. In fact, females perpetrated a higher number of all three types of aggression than males. Refer to Table 1 for a comparison of the frequency of verbal, physical, and relational acts of aggression between female and male aggressors.
Table 1. Gender Comparison of Types of Bullying Aggression Perpetrated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Relational</th>
<th>Total*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Gender total may be less than the three types of bullying aggression combined due to acts of bullying that included two types of aggression.

**Note: Total acts of bullying is 31, rather than 26 because some acts of bullying included more than one aggressor.

The majority of aggressors were Caucasian (74.7%; 59/79). Seven (8.9%) aggressors were Latino, six (7.6%) were African American, four (5.1%) were Asian, and three (3.8%) aggressors’ races were unable to be determined by coders. Reasons for being unsure about race included aggressors wearing masks or the viewer only seeing the back of the aggressor. The majority of victims were also Caucasian (71.4%; 55/77). Eight (10.4%) victims were Latino, seven (9.0%) were Asian, five (6.5%) were African Americans, and coders were unsure of two (2.6%) victims’ races. Two victims were coded as unsure because the scene took place in the dark and viewers could only see the backs of the victims.

The content analysis also examined the relationship between the aggressor and the victim. Aggressor/victim relationships were nearly divided into thirds, with 32.9% of aggressors being in a close relationship to the victim, 32.9% of the aggressors having no relationship with the victim, and 34.2% of aggressors falling into the “other” category. Close relationships included parent/child, child/parent, significant others, friends, or other relatives. “Other” relationships could include classmates and neighbors. One example of an “other” relationship is from One Tree Hill, in which six acts of aggression were perpetrated by a former nanny of the victim’s grandson. Heroes provides an example of both an “other” relationship and “no relationship” with six acts of aggression perpetrated by one or more
“villain inmates.” The “villain inmates” perpetrated three acts of aggression upon strangers (no relationship) and three acts of aggression upon fellow “villain inmates” or other people with super powers (“other” relationship). See Graph 3 for a more detailed summary of the aggressor/victim relationships observed in the 16 episodes.

**Graph 3. Distribution of Relationships between Aggressor and Victim**

![Graph 3](image)

Coders could not identify an obvious reason for twelve acts of aggression (17.6%). Examples of pre-determined categories for obvious reasons include gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, intelligence, weight, and physical appearance. Of these pre-determined categories, intelligence and weight were the most frequent obvious reasons for aggression, with three acts each. Forty-six (67.6%) acts of aggression were coded as having an “other” obvious reason for the aggression. Coders specified reasons for these instances. “Revenge” and “self-defense” were commonly specified reasons with seven and four acts of aggression, respectively. Most reasons from *Heroes* could not have been anticipated, and include reasons like “to get a person’s super power” or “to steal the chemical formula.”

The main objective of this media content analysis was to observe acts of bullying within television shows in which teenagers are most engaged. Twenty-six acts of
aggression (38.2%) qualified as bullying when coders used the following criteria: 1) multiple events between the same aggressor and victim; or 2) the context implies repeated acts; and 3) an imbalance of power, with the aggressor possessing more power than the victim. Of the total number ($n=26$) of bullying instances, 65.4% (17/26) included physical aggression. Fifty percent (13/26) of bullying acts included verbal aggression. Relational aggression accounted for 15.4% (4/26) of bullying acts. Of the total number (n=7) of relational acts of aggression throughout the 16 episodes, 57.1% (4/7) were part of an act of bullying. Again, the individual acts of aggression add to a total larger than the total number of bullying instances because two types of aggression were incorporated into 30.8% (8/26) of bullying instances. (See Graph 4)

**Graph 4.** Distribution of Bullying Types of Aggression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Aggression</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal/Physical</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal/Relational</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bystanders were present in less than half (41.2%, 28/68) of the acts of aggression, leaving less opportunity for interventions. Only nine (33.3%) of the 26 bullying situations took place among bystanders; therefore, opportunities for bullying interventions were minimal.

Coders collected data on interventions that took place within the episodes and the characteristics of those who intervened. Six interventions took place, all of which were in
response physical acts of aggression, but only three (50%) of the interventions resulted in a resolution. One of the interventions was in response to an incident of aggression that included both physical and verbal aggression. Fifty percent (3/6) of the interventions were initiated by parents of the victims. Five of the six (83.3%) interventions were initiated by females. Five of the six (83.3%) people who intervened were Caucasian. The remaining intervener was Latino. Only four (14.8%) of the bullying situations included some sort of intervention. Two of the four (50%) interventions resulted in a resolution, defined as an end to that instance of bullying.

Most of the qualitative data collected by coders included brief descriptions of, the context around, and the primary messages delivered through the acts of aggression, intervention, and/or bullying. With this context, it is demonstrated that the acts of aggression in Heroes are often unrealistic and for reasons that did not fit the original categories created to describe an aggressor’s reason for perpetration or bullying. For example, a main character, Sylar, uses telekinetic powers and other aggression to steal super powers away from other main characters in the show. Other characters in Heroes demonstrate physical aggression through “fire throwing” or “freezing people to death.”

Also using qualitative data, it can be noted that bullying was the main theme of one entire episode of Desperate Housewives (“Kids Ain’t Like Everybody Else”). The messages throughout the episode were coded as “bullying gets you what you want,” “bullying is natural of children and adults,” and “interventions don’t work.”

DISCUSSION

This content analysis sought to address two research questions: 1) how is bullying portrayed in teen television shows; and 2) was bullying portrayed as acceptable? Within 16
episodes of four of the television shows in which teens are most engaged (i.e. *One Tree Hill, Heroes, Desperate Housewives, and Real Housewives of Orange County*), 68 acts of aggression occurred. Twenty-six (38.2%) of those acts of aggression qualified as an act of bullying.

Interestingly, female characters perpetrated more aggression and bullying of all types (verbal, physical, and relational) than male characters. In this case, these television shows are not depicting trends in real life bullying behavior. Studies have found that females are more likely to participate in verbal or relational bullying, and less likely to engage in physical bullying than males.⁵ If female viewers are engaging in television shows demonstrating female verbal, physical, and relational bullying, they may be more likely to adopt any of these behaviors.

About 70% of the acts of aggression in these television shows take place between people who know each other. Nearly one-third (32.9%) of aggressors were in a close relationship with the victim. Teen viewers may observe these acts as more adoptable than the acts that involve robbery or murder of a stranger. They may observe characters – often main characters – solving their problems with aggression or bullying and adopt similar coping strategies to deal with people with whom they have close relationships.

Only 15.4% of the bullying acts included an intervention. Two-thirds (4/6) of the interventions that were incorporated into these television shows addressed bullying rather than single acts of aggression. This may suggest that scriptwriters are more comfortable including an intervention for a bullying situation; however, most bullying situations within television shows in which teens are most engaged go unaddressed. Bystanders were present for about one-third of the bullying acts, offering limited opportunities for intervention.
School bullying interventions often address the role of the bystander, and this message could be enforced by including this type of intervention in television shows watched by youth.²⁵,²⁶

An unsettling finding is that only 50% of the bullying interventions resulted in a resolution. Furthermore, Desperate Housewives dedicated an entire episode to an almost “pro-bullying” theme, with the main messages including “bullying gets you what you want” and “interventions don’t work.” These findings highlight an additional aspect to consider when analyzing bullying in the media. Because aggressive situations on television can influence youth’s attitudes and beliefs about the appropriate ways of responding to these situations, it is important to not only know the prevalence of bullying on television shows but also the prevalence of successful interventions.¹⁵

**Limitations:** Two limitations to this content analysis include the chosen definitions for bullying and bullying acceptance concepts. Bullying was coded if an act of aggression was either repeated or the context suggested repetition and the aggressor possessed more power than the victim. Although this is the definition most often used in research, some of the shows implied bullying when these criteria were not met. For example, a character in Desperate Housewives admitted to using bullying as a method to getting what she wants, but her acts of aggression did not qualify as bullying because she did not possess more power than her victim.

This content analysis defined bullying as being portrayed as acceptable by the presence of an intervention. However, it did not anticipate that interventions could take place while context (e.g., narration, implicit or explicit messages) suggested that bullying was both necessary and acceptable. These findings indicate that defining the acceptability
of bullying with the presence or absence of an intervention alone is not adequate. Although open to subjectivity and, therefore, variance between coders, the context around bullying should be considered when determining whether an act of bullying is being portrayed as acceptable on television shows. Coders for this content analysis did collect data on the relevance of the intervention message and qualitative descriptions of the intervention messages. *One Tree Hill’s* episode “Bridge Over Troubled Water” contained the only intervention that had an “anti-bullying” message, but it was only implicit. The three school students that were bullying a new student were stopped by the teacher (a main character) and received detention.

For this content analysis, the first season of *Real Housewives of Orange County* was the only season available to the coders. Coders viewed the first four episodes of each show, which for Real Housewives of Orange County included mostly introductions to each character and their families. If another season were available, it is likely that there would have been more relational and verbal bullying available to code.

**Implications:** Bullying accounted for 38.2% (26/68) of the acts of aggression coded in this analysis. Before determining whether this percentage warrants an intervention that is specifically tailored to address bullying, instead of simply individual acts of aggression, researchers must first study how viewers respond to witnessing this systematic form of aggression. If responses are different to viewing systematic aggression, this may provide evidence that bullying should be addressed separately from other forms of aggression.

Research has shown that campaigns aimed at reducing the prevalence of violence on television are ineffective, and it is impractical to tell teens to stop watching television. Therefore, a logical approach would be to try to reshape how teens view the violence they
see on television. One potential solution is to conduct an entertainment education intervention with the scriptwriters for the shows in which teens are most engaged. If anti-bullying storylines (e.g., the presence of a successful intervention on behalf of a bullying victim) are incorporated into television shows in which teens are engaged, they may be more likely to remember the message. Because the television shows in which teens are most engaged tend to be the programs that their parents are watching as well, this message could reach child and parent simultaneously. This could provide a promising means of changing the social norm around this behavior and subsequently making it less acceptable for viewers to adopt.
References


APPENDIX 1: BULLYING IN TEEN TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

1. REVIEWING INFORMATION
   a) Case ID Number:
   b) Date/Time Viewed:
   c) Original Air Date:
   d) Show Aired on Station:

2. SERIES INFORMATION
   a) Series Name: 1 – One Tree Hill (CW)
                   2 – Heroes (NBC)
                   3 – Desperate Housewives (ABC)
                   4 – Real Housewives of Orange County (BRAVO)
   b) Genre: 1 – comedy
             2 – drama
             3 – action
             4 – fantasy
   c) Episode Length: 1 – 30 minutes
                     2 – 60 minutes
   d) Main Character Names:

3. EPISODE DESCRIPTION
   a) Episode Title:
   b) Episode Theme:
   c) Storyline Description:
   d) Episode Priority: 1 – subject matter
                        2 – activity (action-driven)
                        3 – characters’ social interaction

4. ACTS OF AGGRESSION
   a) Is there an event of aggression? 1 – yes
                                       2 – no
   b) What type(s) of aggression are inflicted on the victim(s) by the aggressor(s)?
      1 – Yes  2 – No
      1. verbal  1  2
      2. physical 1  2
      3. relational 1  2
   c) Describe the act of aggression (e.g., teasing, words spoken, hit, slapped, rumors)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AGGRESSOR(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) How many aggressors participate in the act of aggression? Use additional coding sheet to code more aggressors, if necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Is one of the aggressors a main character?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Aggressor #1 Gender:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Aggressor #1 Age:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – child (0-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – teen (13-18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – young adult (19-24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – adult (25-55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – older adult (56+)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| e) Aggressor #1 Race/Ethnicity: | 1 – White/Caucasian  
|                             | 2 – Black/African American  
|                             | 3 – Latino  
|                             | 4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American  
|                             | 5 – Middle Eastern  
|                             | 6 – Unsure  
|                             | 7 – Other (specify) |
| f) Aggressor #1 Relationship to the victim(s): | 1 – parent  
|                             | 2 – child  
|                             | 3 – sibling  
|                             | 4 – other relative  
|                             | 5 – friend  
|                             | 6 – significant other  
|                             | 7 – teacher  
|                             | 8 – no relationship  
|                             | 9 – other (specify) |
| If only one aggressor, skip to 6. |
| g) Aggressor #2 Gender: | 1 – male  
|                             | 2 – female |
| h) Aggressor #2 Age: | 1 – child (0-12)  
|                             | 2 – teen (13-18)  
|                             | 3 – young adult (19-24)  
|                             | 4 – adult (25-55)  
|                             | 5 – older adult (56+) |
| i) Aggressor #2 Race/Ethnicity: | 1 – White/Caucasian  
|                             | 2 – Black/African American  
|                             | 3 – Latino  
|                             | 4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American  
|                             | 5 – Middle Eastern  
|                             | 6 – Unsure  
|                             | 7 – Other (specify) |
| j) Aggressor #2 Relationship to the victim(s): | 1 – parent  
|                             | 2 – child  
|                             | 3 – sibling  
|                             | 4 – other relative  
|                             | 5 – friend  
|                             | 6 – significant other  
|                             | 7 – teacher  
|                             | 8 – no relationship  
|                             | 9 – other (specify) |
| If only two aggressors, skip to 6. |
| k) Aggressor #3 Gender: | 1 – male  
|                             | 2 – female |
1) Aggressor #3 Age:  1 – child (0-12)
                           2 – teen (13-18)
                           3 – young adult (19-24)
                           4 – adult (25-55)
                           5 – older adult (56+)

m) Aggressor #3 Race/Ethnicity:  1 – White/Caucasian
                                         2 – Black/African American
                                         3 – Latino
                                         4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American
                                         5 – Middle Eastern
                                         6 – Unsure
                                         7 – Other (specify)

n) Aggressor #3 Relationship to the victim(s):  1 – parent
                                                   2 – child
                                                   3 – sibling
                                                   4 – other relative
                                                   5 – friend
                                                   6 – significant other
                                                   7 – teacher
                                                   8 – no relationship
                                                   9 – other (specify)

If more than three aggressors, use additional coding sheet.

o) Additional notes about aggressor(s)

6. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VICTIM(S)

a) How many people are victims of the act of aggression? Use additional coding sheet to code more victims, if necessary.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>sibling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>other relative</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>friend</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>significant other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>no relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Is one of the victims a main character?  1 – yes
                                          2 – no

c) Victim #1 Gender:  1 – male
                        2 – female

d) Victim #1 Age:  1 – child (0-12)
                           2 – teen (13-18)
                           3 – young adult (19-24)
                           4 – adult (25-55)
                           5 – older adult (56+)
| e) Victim #1 Race/Ethnicity: | 1 – White/Caucasian  
| | 2 – Black/African American  
| | 3 – Latino  
| | 4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American  
| | 5 – Middle Eastern  
| | 6 – Unsure  
| | 7 – Other (specify)  
| f) Victim #1 Relationship to the aggressor(s): | 1 – parent  
| | 2 – child  
| | 3 – sibling  
| | 4 – other relative  
| | 5 – friend  
| | 6 – significant other  
| | 7 – teacher  
| | 8 – no relationship  
| | 9 – other (specify)  

If only one victim, skip to 7.

| g) Victim #2 Gender: | 1 – male  
| | 2 – female  
| h) Victim #2 Age: | 1 – child (0-12)  
| | 2 – teen (13-18)  
| | 3 – young adult (19-24)  
| | 4 – adult (25-55)  
| | 5 – older adult (56+)  
| i) Victim #2 Race/Ethnicity: | 1 – White/Caucasian  
| | 2 – Black/African American  
| | 3 – Latino  
| | 4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American  
| | 5 – Middle Eastern  
| | 6 – Unsure  
| | 7 – Other (specify)  
| j) Victim #2 Relationship to the aggressor(s): | 1 – parent  
| | 2 – child  
| | 3 – sibling  
| | 4 – other relative  
| | 5 – friend  
| | 6 – significant other  
| | 7 – teacher  
| | 8 – no relationship  
| | 9 – other (specify)  

If only two victims, skip to 7.

| k) Victim #3 Gender: | 1 – male  
| | 2 – female  

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| I) Victim #3 Age: | 1 – child (0-12)  
|                | 2 – teen (13-18)  
|                | 3 – young adult (19-24)  
|                | 4 – adult (25-55)  
|                | 5 – older adult (56+)  
| m) Victim #3 Race/Ethnicity: | 1 – White/Caucasian  
|                     | 2 – Black/African American  
|                     | 3 – Latino  
|                     | 4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American  
|                     | 5 – Middle Eastern  
|                     | 6 – Unsure  
|                     | 7 – Other (specify)  
| n) Victim #3 Relationship to the aggressor(s): | 1 – parent  
|                                      | 2 – child  
|                                      | 3 – sibling  
|                                      | 4 – other relative  
|                                      | 5 – friend  
|                                      | 6 – significant other  
|                                      | 7 – teacher  
|                                      | 8 – no relationship  
|                                      | 9 – other (specify)  
| If more than 3 victims, use additional coding sheet.  
| o) Additional notes about the victim(s)  
| 7. INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF THE VICTIM(S)  
| a) Is there an intervention on behalf of the victim(s)? | 1 – yes  
|                                      | 2 – no  
| b) Describe the context of the intervention.  
| c) Describe what is done to intervene.  
| d) How relevant to the storyline/plot is the intervention?If coder answers 1 or 2 below, skip to 8a.  
|                                      | 1 – not relevant at all (gratuitous)  
|                                      | 2 – not very relevant (momentarily relevant to plot/character development)  
|                                      | 3 – somewhat relevant (minor impact on plot/character development)  
|                                      | 4 – very relevant (integral factor to plot/character development)  
| e) Describe the primary message(s) and how it is incorporated into the episode.  

f) Does the intervention resolve the aggression? (Does the aggressive behavior stop?)
   1- Yes
   2- No

8. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERVENER(S)

a) How many people intervene on behalf of the victim(s)? Use additional coding sheet to code more interveners, if necessary.
   1
   2
   3
   Other (specify)

b) Is one of the interveners a main character? 1 – yes
   2 – no

c) Intervener #1 Gender: 1 – male
   2 – female

d) Intervener #1 Age: 1 – child (0-12)
   2 – teen (13-18)
   3 – young adult (19-24)
   4 – adult (25-55)
   5 – older adult (56+)

e) Intervener #1 Race/Ethnicity: 1 – White/Caucasian
   2 – Black/African American
   3 – Latino
   4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American
   5 – Middle Eastern
   6 – Unsure
   7 – Other (specify)

f) Intervener #1 Relationship to the victim(s): 1 – parent
   2 – child
   3 – sibling
   4 – other relative
   5 – friend
   6 – significant other
   7 – teacher
   8 – no relationship
   9 – other (specify)

g) Intervener #1 Relationship to the aggressor(s): 1 – parent
   2 – child
   3 – sibling
   4 – other relative
   5 – friend
   6 – significant other
   7 – teacher
   8 – no relationship
   9 – other (specify)

If only one intervener, skip to 9.
| h) Intervener #2 Gender: | 1 – male |
|                        | 2 – female |
| i) Intervener #2 Age:  | 1 – child (0-12) |
|                        | 2 – teen (13-18) |
|                        | 3 – young adult (19-24) |
|                        | 4 – adult (25-55) |
|                        | 5 – older adult (56+) |
| j) Intervener #2 Race/Ethnicity: | 1 – White/Caucasian |
|                        | 2 – Black/African American |
|                        | 3 – Latino |
|                        | 4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American |
|                        | 5 – Middle Eastern |
|                        | 6 – Unsure |
|                        | 7 – Other (specify) |
| k) Intervener #2 Relationship to the victim(s): | 1 – parent |
|                        | 2 – child |
|                        | 3 – sibling |
|                        | 4 – other relative |
|                        | 5 – friend |
|                        | 6 – significant other |
|                        | 7 – teacher |
|                        | 8 – no relationship |
|                        | 9 – other (specify) |
| If only two interveners, skip to 9. |
| l) Intervener #3 Gender: | 1 – male |
|                        | 2 – female |
| m) Intervener #3 Age:  | 1 – child (0-12) |
|                        | 2 – teen (13-18) |
|                        | 3 – young adult (19-24) |
|                        | 4 – adult (25-55) |
|                        | 5 – older adult (56+) |
| n) Intervener #3 Race/Ethnicity: | 1 – White/Caucasian |
|                        | 2 – Black/African American |
|                        | 3 – Latino |
|                        | 4 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian American |
|                        | 5 – Middle Eastern |
|                        | 6 – Unsure |
|                        | 7 – Other (specify) |
| Relationship to the victim(s): | 1 – parent  
| 2 – child  
| 3 – sibling  
| 4 – other relative  
| 5 – friend  
| 6 – significant other  
| 7 – teacher  
| 8 – no relationship  
| 9 – other (specify) |

If more than three interveners, use additional coding sheet.

p) Additional notes about the intervention.

### 9. DOES THE ACT OF AGGRESSION CONSTITUTE BULLYING?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Do multiple events of similar aggression between the same aggressor(s) and victim(s) take place in the same episode? (Note: Coders may need to revisit this question at the end of the episode.) If yes, skip to 9c.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 – yes  
| 2 – no |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b) Does the context suggest that the aggression is repeated over time?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 – yes  
| 2 – no |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>c) Is there an imbalance of power between the aggressor(s) and victim(s) (i.e., aggressor has more power)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 – yes  
| 2 – no |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>d) Does this act of aggression constitute bullying? Mark yes if yes was checked for 9c AND 9a OR 9b. If no, skip remaining questions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 – yes  
| 2 – no |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e) How relevant to the storyline/plot is the bullying? If coder marks 1 or 2 below, skip 9f.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 – not relevant at all (gratuitous)  
| 2 – not very relevant (momentarily relevant to plot/character development)  
| 3 – somewhat relevant (minor impact on plot/character development)  
| 4 – very relevant (integral factor to plot/character development) |

| f) Describe the primary message(s) and how it is incorporated into the episode. |
Appendix 2

Television Show Storyline Descriptions

One Tree Hill, Season Six

Episode One- Touch Me I’m Going to Scream Part 1

The girl of Lucas' (Chad Michael Murray) dreams shows up at the airport. Nathan's (James Lafferty) comeback is halted by news that could change his career, while Dan's (Paul Johansson) life hangs in the balance. Mouth (Lee Norris) and Millicent (Lisa Goldstein) wrestle with leaving Tree Hill, as Brooke (Sophia Bush) and Victoria's (guest star Daphne Zuniga) battle over Clothes Over Bros comes to a surprising head.

Episode Two- One Million Billionth of a Millisecond on a Sunday Morning

After Lucas (Chad Michael Murray) and his fiance enjoy planning their dream wedding, Brooke (Sophia Bush) and Peyton (Hilarie Burton) reconnect. Nathan (James Lafferty) works with Quentin (guest star Robbie Jones) on his basketball skills, but Haley (Bethany Joy Galeotti) is worried for Nathan's well-being. Reeling from a threat to her store, Brooke reaches out to an unexpected ally. Jamie (Jackson Brundage) catches Skills (Antwon Tanner) and Deb (Barbara Alyn Woods) kissing.

Episode Three- Get Cape.Wear Cape. Fly.

Lucas (Chad Michael Murray) returns from Las Vegas to face a tragedy, as Nathan (James Lafferty) and Haley (Bethany Joy Galeotti) struggle to find a way to help Jamie (Jackson Brundage) understand the death of someone close to them.

Episode Four- Bridge Over Troubled Water

Lucas (Chad Michael Murray) struggles to inspire the Ravens, while Haley (Bethany Joy Galeotti) investigates the disappearance of Dan (Paul Johansson). Brooke (Sophia Bush) confronts an old demon from her past, as Nathan (James Lafferty) comes to terms with Deb's (Barbara Alyn Woods) relationship with Skills (Antwon Tanner). Peyton (Hilarie Burton) is surprised when a famous musician visits her studio.

Heroes, Season 3

Episode One- Chapter 1: The Second Coming

In order to change the course of history, a scared and cynical Peter Petrelli travels back in time from four years to the day his brother Nathan revealed the existence of the super-humans and was the one who shot him. In attempting to capture future Peter, Matt Parkman gets teleported to a desolate African landscape. In Japan, Hiro takes control of his father's company when, courtesy of a DVD, he and Ando receive instructions from Hiro's late
father about a deadly secret contained in the office safe. Hiro can't help but open the safe and the contents are promptly stolen by a "speedster"; a woman with super-fast speed called Daphne. Meanwhile, Nathan undergoes a religious experience while recovering from the shooting and is offered a new job in Congress by a shady blond government woman named Tracy Strauss, someone who looks remarkably like the late Niki Sanders. Elsewhere, Sylar confronts Claire, whose alone in her house, in a bid to get hold of her powers.

**Episode Two- Chapter Two: The Butterfly Effect**

A egoistical and super-charged Sylar goes to the Company to kill all the leaders, and inadvertently releases 12 super-powered criminals from the place's notorious Level 5 prison block during a fight with Elle. Peter, trapped in the body of one of the criminals, is set free as well and is forced to team up with a group for a crime spree. Meanwhile, Future Peter tries to fix his mistake with Nathan, as Angela takes over the company in the wake of Bob Bishop's murder and frees Noah Bennett to help the Company track down the 12 escapees to bring them back, or eliminate them. In California, Claire learns more about her powers as she recovers from Sylar's attack. Hiro and Ando travel to Paris to track down speedster Daphne Milbrook who robbed them and learn that she is working for a more darker power. In New York, Maya discovers that Mohinder's injection has changed him by making him super-strong, but also altered his personality. In Africa, Matt meets Usutu, an African shaman with a familiar power of painting the future. Elsewhere, Tracy learns that she has the power to super-freeze anyone and anything wild dealing with a hounded tabloid reporter seeking any dirt on her and the shady Govenor Maldon whom are continuing to groom Peter for a position in the U.S. Congress.

**Episode Three- One of Us, One of Them**

Noah Bennett is stunned when Angela Petrelli assigns him a brainwashed Sylar as his new partner to track down the escapees from the notorious Level 5, as Peter, still trapped in the body of Jesse the Sonic Man, is forced to team up with a trio of deadly super villains who are on a murderous crime spree by holding up a local bank. Future Peter eventually releases Present Peter from his body-cell and shows him his dark future. In Africa, Matt learns more about his spiritual guide, Usutu, who also has the ability to paint the future. Meanwhile, Hiro and Ando track Speedster Daphne to Berlin to recover the mysterious formula, and find out that the rouge Haitian is behind it and working for another third party. In California, Claire asks her biological mother, Meredith Gordon, to teach her how to fight. Elsewhere, Micah Sanders, mourning the death of his mother is approached by the shadowy Tracy Strauss who asks him information about her past and why she and the late Niki Sanders are very identical looking, which leads to the mysterious Dr. Zimmerman, who may hold a clue.

**Episode Four- I Am Become Death**

Having time-traveled four years in the future, the future Peter shows his younger counterpart that people have access to drugs that give them various super powers and some of them will destroy the world. Past Peter is forced to run from the dark and evil future.
versions of Claire, Daphne, and Knox, all of whom work as killers for government agencies to track him down. Past Peter is forced to look for allies and finds one in a very subdued version of Sylar. From his spot in Africa, Matt Parkman has a vision of his future in four years in which he is married to Speedster Daphne and is still looking after Molly Walker whom also works for the agencies. In the present, Hiro and Ando are locked away in a Level 2 prison cell where their situation starts to drive a rift between them. Tracy learns more about her origins from Dr. Zimmerman, and Nathan receives more tips from the ghost of Mr. Linderman over his position for congress. Also, Mohinder learns that the powers he gave to himself are irreversible and could lead to disaster.

**Desperate Housewives, Season 5**

**Episode One- You're Gonna Love Tomorrow**

Susan flirts with her painter but is not willing to commit to a relationship; Bree denies all the help "her" company has received from her business partner Katherine; Lynette still has problems in getting Tom to see the light when it comes to their over exuberant trouble-making twins Porter and Preston; Edie moves back to Wisteria Lane with a new husband: a charming but mysterious guy named Dave Williams who no one knows anything about; Gabrielle deals with Carlos who is still blind as well as their two spoiled and overweight daughters Juanita and Celia.

**Episode Two- We're So Happy You're So Happy**

Lynette discovers her son, Porter, has a softer side, which she finds endearing; Gaby amusingly attempts to mask her demise in social stature; and the time has come for the men in Susan's life to meet. Meanwhile Bree begins to feel the pressures of balancing marriage and a career, Edie is reminded just how hostile the neighbors on Wisteria Lane can be, and a suspicious Mrs. McCluskey enlists Katherine's help to uncover more about their new neighbor, Dave.

**Episode Three- Kids Ain’t Like Everybody Else**

Bree's estranged daughter, Danielle, returns to Wisteria Lane and is met with a deluge of criticism; Gaby and Susan find themselves embroiled in a catfight brought on by an altercation between their kids; to her chagrin, Lynette comes home to find Tom and Dave have formed a garage band after she told him to get rid of his old things; and Katherine and Mrs. McCluskey invite Edie to lunch to press her for more information on Dave.

**Episode Four- Back In Business**

Bree's new cookbook and entrepreneurial success has the women of Wisteria Lane feeling envious; Lynette's longing for a taste of her breadwinning days as an ad-exec leads her to lend an unsolicited hand to Bree's marketing plan; and MJ's drawing of a family portrait has left Mike feeling like he's not a presence in his son's life. Meanwhile, Gaby hatches a plan
to have more sex with Carlos, Susan teaches a reluctant MJ how to fall, and Dave's motives for moving to the neighborhood continue to take shape

**Real Housewives of Orange County, Season One**

**Episode One- Meet the Housewives**

Shane is nervous about graduating high school and the pressure of making it big in baseball as his father did; Kimberly discusses the option of breast implants; Jo begins to deal with being engaged to an older, richer man.

**Episode Two- While the Housewives Are Away**

Jo meets some of the other housewives in Coto; Briana and Shane graduate from high school; Lauri’s son gets sent to juvenile hall for drug possession and assault at school; Ashley moves home to live with Lauri

**Episode Three- Business and Pleasure Trips**

Shane is in Arizona visiting a college; Kara passes the time by spending money; and Vicki and Lauri get Botox treatments before going to an insurance convention in New Orleans; Kimberly takes a trip to Palm Springs with girlfriends and flirts with other men; Slade tries to seal a deal with a wealthy man in Coto and uses Jo for help.

**Episode Four- Kimberly and Scott Go House Hunting**

Kimberly and Scott go house hunting with Jeana; Shane takes a liking to Jo; Lauri has problems with her 16 year old son; Vicki and family go to Lake Havasu, but Briana can’t come because of her job.