THESIS

EMOTIONED DISCOURSES IN K-12 BULLYING CAUSE, PREVENTION, AND

RESPONSE: THE AFFECTIVE PERFORMATIVITY OF BULLY AND VICTIM

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Fall 2020

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ABSTRACT

EMOTIONED DISCOURSES IN K-12 BULLYING CAUSE, PREVENTION, AND

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Bullying is a serious and exigent public health concern that affects millions of students in K-12 education every year. This thesis employs Critical Emotion Theory to reconceptualize *bullying* as a discursive issue of social justice, not merely behavioral. The first chapter outlines bullying as an affective issue. The second chapter analyzes ways that *shame, disgust,* and *hate* mechanize bullying. Chapter three traces discourses of *empathy, pain* and *regret* in public responses to four bullying incidents. Chapter four examines social-emotional learning (SEL) and federal programmatic prevention models, addressing *empathy, love*, and the absence of emotioned discourses. Finally, conclusions are outlined in chapter five. This inquiry ultimately found that the role emotions play in bullying's cause, prevention, and response are undertheorized on the macro- (emotions as a whole) and micro- (as individual emotions) level. Additionally, a prominent theme throughout each chapter that warrants critical consideration is an emergent pattern of entrenched affective divides between bullying's actors: how *bully* and *victim* become divergent, performed roles and how that affective performativity allocates attention and, subsequently, prevention and response resources.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To Michael and Loretta Jane ~

You are quirky weirdos, and this project reflects my hope that kiddos like you won't bully or be

bullied in school. In the meantime, know that I love you!

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CHAPTER ONE: CURRENT AFFECTIVE DIMENSIONS OF BULLYING

Channing Smith was a junior at a high school in Manchester, Tennessee, a small community known best for its annual music festival and rural spread of land. Most of his classmates knew Channing as a somewhat clumsy band kid, and members of his community fondly recount hearing him play "Amazing Grace," his favorite song, on the tuba. He spent a lot of time with his older brother and his girlfriend. While he hadn't openly discussed his sexuality, he privately identified as bisexual. According to his friends, he'd been subjected to bullying from his peers because he occasionally demonstrated flamboyant behaviors; as they put it, he "talked in a girly voice and walked with sass" (Chiu, 2019). Still, when asked what people remembered about Channing the most, it was his mom who summarized that he was someone who always made time for his friends when they needed support.

In September 2019, Channing was the victim of a single act of cyberbullying. It was different than taunts in the school halls. Two of his classmates, whom Channing said he thought he could trust, posted images of a private text conversation between him and another boy on their Instagram and Snapchat. The messages were graphically sexual in nature, leaving no room for Channing to claim some kind of misunderstanding. He was outed without his consent in what his brother Justin described as an act of bullying intended to "humiliate and embarrass" him and to "assassinate his character" in their rural town (Rueb, 2019). After he realized what had been done, Channing called people he knew in a panic, but there was not anything he could do about the permanence or breadth of circulation of his private information. That night, after leaving one final post on his Instagram, Channing committed suicide.

The story of this incident swept much of the country. Headlines of Channing's suicide topped the pages of several national and local news sources: *The New York Times, The*

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Washington Post, CNN, Fox News, NBC News, USA Today, Buzzfeed, People, Teen Vogue, Insider, Out.com, Yourtango.com, NYDaily News, *Advocate.com, Diversity Inc*., and many more, all the way down to the conservative local papers and news stations where he'd lived. #JusticeforChanning was born and came to be plastered on t-shirts and signs and even a tattoo on his brother's arm. Vigils were held where he was nationally mourned by politicians, celebrities, schools, parents, advocates, and peers alike. But on a local level, response was not without tension. The lead investigator as well as Channing's family pushed for the two teenagers who committed the act of cyberbullying to be criminally processed, but the District Attorney's office declined. D.A. Craig Northcott is openly known for his anti-gay sentiment. He refused to recognize "homosexual marriage" and would not prosecute domestic violence cases involving same-sex couples (Tamburin, 2019), though he denies that Channing's sexuality influenced his decision to end further investigation. #JusticeforChanning circulated in response, demanding action, but while outrage festered, it ultimately went nowhere. Channing eventually trickled out of the national limelight, another incident about a bullied teen and a queer death.

At another time in September 2019, a story about a boy in the fourth grade from Florida also made a mark across news headlines that reached even farther and circulated more than Channing's. Excited for his elementary school's "College Colors Day" but without any gear from his favorite school, the boy's teacher Laura Snyder told him wearing a plain orange shirt to represent the University of Tennessee would be just fine. The next day, the boy showed up in his orange shirt with a creative addition: a piece of paper with U. of T. clumsily yet charmingly drawn across the page and pinned to his shirt front. (As he's remained anonymous, I will be calling him the child moving forward.) According to his mother, he was so, so proud of his creative solution.

According to a long diatribe Snyder wrote in a Facebook post that went viral and began circulation of the child's story in the first place, she and the boy were "DEVASTATED" when the child dejectedly came to her desk at lunch, crying because a group of girls had been mocking and berating him for his homemade design. The internet explosively reacted, springing in defense of the child and unifying in condemnation of bullying. It didn't stop there. When administrators at U.T. heard about the incident, they applauded the child, raining him with care packages overflowing with U.T. Volunteer swag. Then, shortly thereafter, U.T. began selling the child's shirt design with a portion of the profits going to STOMP Out Bullying, a bullying prevention program. People flocked to buy the t-shirt, U.T. fan or not, in droves, crashing the online shop website on the first day due to the heavy traffic. Over 50,000 shirts were sold from pre-orders alone. A huge rock on the U.T. campus was painted with his design. But, again, it didn't stop there.

The response to the child's story came to a zenith when the university announced that the child was extended an offer of admission to the Class of 2032. Come 2028, so long as he met basic admission requirements, he'd automatically become a U.T. Volunteer with honors. To top it all off, the child was extended one more offer: a four-year full-tuition scholarship that would cover all tuition and student fee costs for his time as a student there. Thus was the overwhelming national, emotional response to the fourth grade boy who was teased at lunch for the paper he pinned to the front of his shirt.

Whether like Channing's heartbreaking one or the child's heartwarming one, stories about victims of bullying proliferate in our discourse. I can also point to the news coverage of Tyler Clementi's suicide in 2010 after cyberbullying outed him without his consent, as well as the long trail of news coverage that followed thereafter as Ravi and Wei, his cyberbullies, went

through varying degrees of criminal prosecution and trial. Nine years after, in June 2019, Clementi's incident was still making headlines (see Kline, 2019), and his story resurfaced again when Channing died, as news channels drew parallels between them. I can also point to Keaton Jones, a middle schooler in Tennessee, whose emotional minute-long video from 2017 went viral overnight; in it, his mother records him as he cries in the front seat of their car, asking why kids bully while he recounts how harmful it is to be subjected to it. I could also point to coverage of bullying that spills over into hate crime, like an incident in which two white girls, ten and eleven, whose bullying of a ten-year-old black girl on their school bus elevated to assault.[1] Like with Channing and the child, this incident happened in September of 2019, and like with Tyler Clementi, the two bullies face criminal charges.

Stories about bullying are saturated with discourses of emotion. In them, we see narratives of pain and grief, disgust and shame, hate and love, and cries of and for (in)justice; but our current theorization of bullying's cause and solutions do not adequately account for the role these various emotions play in defining this issue. Drawing foundation from Critical Emotion Studies (CES) scholarship, I believe greater attention needs to be paid to the affective[2] discourses that circulate around and through bullying as a phenomenon, and I will return to the discourses of emotion extant in these victims' stories as an entry point to do so. Through this, we can illuminate areas where our current theorization of emotion and bullying is insufficient. Namely,

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[1] I return to this incident in chapter three.

[2] In Critical Emotion Studies, as well as similar fields in psychology and sociology, there is a lively and intriguing debate about the difference between affect and emotion. In *How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain,* Feldman Barrett (2017) describes the difference as thus:

> Affect is your basic sense of feeling, ranging from unpleasant to pleasant (valence), and from agitated to calm (arousal). Emotion is a much more complex mental construction. […] In the science of emotion, the word "affect" can sometimes mean anything emotional. This is unfortunate, because affect is not specific to emotion; it is a feature of consciousness.

This being said, for the purposes of this thesis, I will be using *emotion* and *affect* interchangeably.

we need to further understand how bullying is shaped by discourses of affect, which is to say how emotion is (re)formed and circulated within *language*—between us, not merely inside or outside of us. In discourse, we can see how different affective constructs produce certain effects that mechanize bullying. Further, in analyzing how we conceptualize bullying in popular discourse, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of how *bully* and *victim* come to be delineated and performed through affect, both in cause and in solution to bullying. Ultimately, my goal for this analysis is to open up avenues of critical emotion theory that problematize and expand upon our current understanding of the role affect plays in bullying.

Defining Bullying in Theory

I begin laying the groundwork for my theory examining bullying in terms of affect by first defining how I frame *bullying* as a construct. This being said, answering the question "What is bullying?" is easier said than done for a number of reasons. To the layman, bullying seems to be easily recognizable when it happens: a mean kid pointedly picks on another kid who exhibits some weakness that the mean kid is trying to exploit, like their ratty clothes, their acne or braces, the way they talk, the shape of their body, the color of their skin, their sexual orientation. This conception is reflected in popular dictionary definitions like *Merriam-Webster's*: bullying is the "abuse and mistreatment of someone vulnerable by someone stronger, more powerful" and the "overbearing mistreatment and domination of others" ("Bullying," n.d.). A survey of common dictionary definitions broadcast the same components: an overbearing, intimidating, domineering individual abusing a weaker one. As I will showcase later, this is how bullying is publicly defined in popular bullying stories like the child's. However, Volk, Dane, and Marini (2014) call attention to the discrepancies between popular definitions of bullying and those used by researchers (p. 328). Definitions of bullying in scholarship are deeply debated and constantly

changing, despite sharing a common root: the pioneer bullying research conducted by Dan

Olweus in the 1970s, published in 1993 in his fundamental book *Bullying in School.*

Olweus' (1993) research legacy is etched prominently in contemporary bullying

prevention and response. To this day, he remains the most cited researcher on bullying (Volk et.

al, 2014). He states, "the phenomenon of bullying is […] characterized by the following criteria:

it is aggressive behavior or intentional 'harm doing,' which is carried out repeatedly and over

time in an interpersonal relationship characterized by an imbalance of power" (p. 9). Of

important note are two requirements excluded from popular definitions: 1) intentionality and 2)

repetition of acts, which permeate theoretic definitions to varying degrees. Olweus also

emphasizes the necessity of a power imbalance between bully and victim.

The U.S. federal government's definition of bullying was built from Olweus'. The U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice, and the Department of

Education teamed up to create StopBullying.gov, a federal repository and legal ground-zero of

bullying information. Reflecting the classic definition, they define bullying as "unwanted,

aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power

imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time" ("What is

Bullying?", n.d.). This is the most official definition of bullying in broad terms. Before I delve

into scholarship that rejects and refines the federal definition, however, StopBullying.gov,

amongst bullying scholars, calls attention to the different forms of bullying to further complicate

their definition and analysis: verbal, social/relational, physical,[i] and cyberbullying, each of which

have their own affective dimensions.

While specific definitions of the first three types of in-school bullying can be found in the

endnotes, it is important to take a moment to define cyberbullying, which deviates from the

classic definition due to its mode of offense. StopBullying.gov developed their definition of bullying in response to the first three types of in-school bullying, but they've been called upon to take action against cyberbullying as well, which has its own unique challenges in prevention and response.[ii] The federal definition of cyberbullying is "bullying that takes place over digital devices [which] includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else" ("What is Cyberbullying," n.d.). Common digital platforms employed for these purposes are social media, text messaging, instant messaging, and email. While not expressed in the excerpt included above, something to note, which has come under fire from several scholars, is that the federal definition of cyberbullying shares two core characteristics that their definition of in-school bullying does: an imbalance of power between participants and repetition or the potential for repetition over time.

Finally, before I move on to complicate the federal definition, I want to provide their qualifications for their two main requirements for bullying. Again, StopBullying.gov's definition is "unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time." On their "What is Bullying?" page, they clarify that repetition means that "bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once." Furthermore, they clarify that real or perceived power imbalance means "kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others."

Since its initial conception, however, this definition has been both contested and contended with, and this is in large because of how complex and multi-faceted the issue of bullying is. On the most fundamental level, definitions can vary depending on theoretical framework (Liu and Graves, 2011). Kyriakides, Kaloyirou, and Lindsay's (2006) research

highlights divides in research foci between bias-induced bullying and approaches that focused on developmental/maturational differences amongst youth. Still further, Marini, Dane, and Bosacki (2006), in collaboration with YLC-CURA, highlight divides in research foci between bullying as direct, physical acts of violence and bullying as indirect acts of violence like harassment and intimidation. Hymel and Swearer (2015), meanwhile, call for greater attention to the many forms that bullying can take and how differences between forms can impact students in different ways (p. 295). Scholars like Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger, and Lumpkin (2014) and Olweus' (2013) later re-articulation of his theories emphasized physical and/or psychological harm in a shared social context. Others question traditional requirements for repetition of bullying behavior, especially with concern for cyberbullying (see Slonje & Smith, 2008); and this is only to scratch the surface.

These variances in framework go beyond mere semantics, influencing key factors of prevention and response. An example is how these frameworks differently impact the development of assessment and measurement tools like the Olweus Bullying Victimization Questionnaire (Currie et al., 2012; see also questionnaires developed by Book, Volk, & Hosker, 2012; and Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Björkqvist, Österman, & Kaukiainen, 1996). How we define bullying can also impact the development and implementation of school bullying policies (Hall, 2017). Furthermore, Volk et al. point out that these variances can impact educator training to address this issue. Indeed, many prominent scholars in the field of bullying research, like Nansel and Overpeck (2003), Aalsma and Brown (2008), Pepler and Craig (2009), Hanish Bradshaw, Espelage, Rodkin, Swearer, and Hone (2013), and Volk et al., question if such variances and discrepancies in definitions and conceptions inhibit our ability to properly respond to and prevent bullying altogether.

I am prone to agree with Hymel, Swearer, McDougall, Espelage, and Bradshaw's (2013) speculation that there has yet to be an adequate definition of bullying despite the volume of research on the issue. Their assessment is backed by a national symposium for the Society for Research on Child Development called "40 Years of Bullying Research: What We Know," which concluded in a general consensus of its attending scholars that we have yet to sufficiently define bullying (Hymel et al., 2013). Their findings, amongst others, supports Hughes and Quiñones' (2018) articulation that bullying is "*a unique form of aggression* that merits additional theoretical and applied research that can inform anti-bullying interventions and policies*" (authors' italics, p. 1). With these things considered, I ultimately rely on Volk et al.'s definition of bullying as "*aggressive, goal-directed behavior that harms another individual within the context of a power imbalance* [emphasis added]" (p. 327). According to them, the three core components of their definition are goal-directed behavior, a power imbalance, and victim harm. There's a number of things that I believe makes Volk et al.'s definition effective, and I will break down my reasoning as follows, referencing Channing's story to demonstrate my points.

Firstly, Volk et al.'s definition removes Olweus' and the federal government's stipulation for repetition in order for something to count as bullying. This requirement has historically been deeply incorporated in theoretical definitions and assessment and measurement tools (Berger, 2007), but shifts in our understanding of bullying, fueled in large by rising prominence of cyberbullying, is changing that. In fact, when Olweus revisited some of his initial concepts in 2013, he recognized that cyberbullying's a relatively recent and difficult phenomenon to address that presents some challenges to traditional definitions. After all, it only took one act of cyberbullying for Channing's world to irreparably change, which was Slonje and Smith's core argument to abolish this requirement. Another such example is Tyler Clementi, who was also

forcefully outed as homosexual when his college roommate illegally recorded and posted a video of Tyler with another man online (Parker, 2012). In both cases, only one act of cyberbullying resulted in victim suicide. Channing and Tyler are two stories that, in accord with Slonje and Smith, support other studies about cyberbullying that show that even one act of bullying, particularly regarding posting private information online, can be exceedingly harmful to the victim (DeHue, Bolman, & Völlink, 2008). According to DeHue et al., these single acts can be so damaging because they are easily accessed by a wide audience for extended, if not indefinite, periods of time. Hughes and Quiñones likewise join the chorus of scholars attempting to de-emphasize repetition of a particular act of harm and instead focus more on acts of intentional harm in general, whether occurring in an individual incident or otherwise. Volk et al.'s definition addresses these concerns by removing this requirement entirely.

Secondly, Volk et al. has a fairly effective response to concerns about determining the intentionality of an act of bullying. Intentionality is an important, albeit tricky, requirement for something to count as bullying—although, it was not included in the federal definition, which I will be returning to shortly. In fact, in Olweus' initial, full definition of bullying, he emphasizes intentionality three times (1993, pp. 8-9). He defined intentional simply as non-accidental, with which most bullying scholars agree (Greene, 2000). However, intentionality can be a subjective measurement to an extent, especially in the context of developmental/behavioral approaches to understanding bullying, like those examined by Kyriakides et al.; with a developmental/behavioral approach, where under-developed prefrontal cortexes are considered at fault, defining a bully's intent becomes trickier. This is my core critique of a developmental approach: it focuses more on biology than on power imbalances—even if the two can be interconnected.

Volk et al. captures the requirement of intentionality with the wording "aggressive, goal-directed behavior that harms another individual." They defend this phrasing well, articulating the ways it reflects intentionality while helping with difficult issues with assessment of bullying acts. They say,

> given that goals are a reflection of internal motivations and desires (conscious or not), the pursuit of goals is in fact a reflection of intentionality. Assessing the function or goals of bullying circumvents issues and concerns related to parsing out the degree to which a behavior is consciously intended (Kahneman, 2011) as opposed to accidental, by providing an explicit measurement of the actor's objective (p. 329).

This parallels and builds upon Marsee et al.'s (2011) attempts to define intentionality as "aggressive," as proactive acts to achieve goals, such as those employing power and popularity for instrumental outcomes. To say all of this differently, Volk et al.'s definition emphasizing goal-directed behavior helps clear up some fuzzy lines about intentionality by distinguishing between proactive aggression (which is bullying if it occurs within a context of power imbalance) and reactive aggression (which is not bullying) (p. 329).

Interestingly enough, the federal government appears to have taken a different approach to address confusion about defining intentionality. As I said before, despite StopBullying.gov's dependence on Olweus' theories, and despite Olweus' emphasis of intentionality thrice-over, the federal government replaced intentionality in their definition with "unwanted, aggressive behavior." Volk et al.'s definition replaces "unwanted" aggressive behavior with "goal-directed" action. I find this to be a particularly important distinction that influenced my decision to employ Volk et al.'s definition; no longer is the definition of bullying dependent on whether or not we could call the action "unwanted" by the victim, but instead focuses on the bully's *proactive intent to harm* the victim. While the federal definition attempts to address the "How do we define intentionality?" question that I have criticized, it has a drawback that ultimately leads me to reject it: in a subtle way, Volk et al.'s language shifts the focus—and subsequently, the

responsibility—of the actions back to the one who is doing the harm rather than the one being subjected to it. Under Volk et al.'s definition, we do not need to ask Channing the degree to which the act of cyberbullying against him was unwanted in order to define an act as bullying; rather, we look at the perpetrators' proactive, aggressive action that intended to cause harm in order to make the definitive distinction. Moreover, the intent to recognize a transgression against a victim, which the federal definition's "unwanted" achieves, is still maintained in Volk et al.'s definition, which acknowledges harm to the victim as one of its three core components.

Thirdly and finally, Volk et al. provide the clearest articulation of what I believe is the most important element of bullying's prevalence: that *it occurs in a context of power imbalance*. This single component is included in almost all scholars' definition and conceptualization of bullying (Volk et al., 2014, p. 331), and its importance persists in my theory as well. For example, there was a distinct power imbalance in the case of Channing Smith,[iii] who faced derogatory treatment due to his sexuality. This being said, a context of power imbalance is also important because it helps distinguish between aggression, whether proactive or reactive, and bullying. Volk et al. state, "Whereas the goal-directed nature of bullying distinguishes it from reactive aggression, it is the assessment and measurement of the balance of power between the bully and victim that differentiates it from general proactive aggression" (p. 331). They later put a finer point on this when they say, "bullying can be distinguished from proactive aggression by the fact that it is generally *only in the case of the former* that an imbalance of power between the bully and victim is considered, both conceptually and methodologically" (emphases added, p. 332).[3] A context of power imbalance must be present for a situation to be classified as bullying,

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[3] We can see the significance of this distinction in action by examining certain measures to prevent bullying. For example, we can look to "Citywide Behavioral Expectations to Support Student Learning Grades 6–12," put forth by NYC Department of Education Chancellor Richard Carranza (2019). This is the code of conduct for New York City

as opposed to general aggression or conflict. Power imbalance is the keystone of this and nearly every definition of bullying, so it should come to no surprise that it is the keystone of my theory as well.

All of this being said, even as bullying research unifies behind a context of power imbalance to delineate bullying and general aggression, we're still seeing a gap in this research. A vast pantheon of bullying scholars (see Dodge & Coie, 1987; Buss & Perry, 1992; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Raine et al., 2006; Marsee et al., 2011; and numerous others) focus more on act, cause, and method of bullying than on the relational politics that create the context of power imbalance in the first place. I am not unique in seeing this gap; Volk et al. point it out as well (another reason I have chosen their definition), though not in the same words. To use their language,

> Measures of aggression tend to focus only on *form* (what was done; e.g., overt or relational) and/or *function* (how or why it was done; e.g., reactive or proactive), aspects that pertain to the behavior and motivation of the perpetrator *rather than the characteristics of the person against whom the aggression was directed* [emphasis added] (p. 332).

This is a particularly important distinction as we move forward with the theory of bullying I will be employing throughout this thesis: *dislodging our conception of bullying from form, function, and behavior of the perpetrator to instead focus on the affective dynamics of the actors—the bullies, victims, bully-victims, bystanders, and the public—that construct the very contexts of power imbalances in the first place.* Addressing bullying requires greater attention to how these

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School Districts, the largest school district in the United States, reaching over one million students. In the bullying section of this code of conduct, Carranza sets guidelines for all school district bullying policies to have written differentiation between bullying and conflict—the difference between which comes down to a context of power imbalance. The differences in their definitions reflects Volk et al.'s distinction between reactive aggression, proactive aggression, and bullying. This is not a common distinction in school anti-bullying policies, but is an effective decision that sets NYC school districts apart in terms of clarity when assessing incidents of bullying.

affective dynamics mechanize bullying, as well as how current under-theorization of these dynamics present themselves in extant bullying solutions.

My theory, building from these scholars, eschews conceptions of and approaches to bullying as a behavioral issue—something to which cruel, misbehaving children subject other, weaker children—and looks instead at *bullying as an issue of social justice*. This is not to say that there are not behavioral factors at work here, both deriving from and causing bullying, but to say that we need to pay more attention to the way that bullying is, as Pepler et al. (2006) say, a "relationship problem – because it is a form of aggression that unfolds in the context of a relationship in which one child asserts interpersonal power through aggression." By shifting our focus in this way, we can work to remedy the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's observation that bullying research generally fails to adequately address contextual factors that affect bullying in favor of largely descriptive approaches ("Preventing Bullying," 2016). In my own research, the contextual factors I will be analyzing as I look at bullying through a social justice lens is affect—the emotions present in bullying discourse. The theoretic framework I employ is Critical Emotion Studies, which I fully introduce in chapter two. To say this precisely, I am looking at bullying as an issue of social justice that is influenced by emotions as they circulate in discourse about bullying. In particular, I am looking at the discursive role that emotion plays in constructing, mechanizing, perpetuating, and attempting to resolve bullying as a phenomenon.

Refining Bullying as a Matter of Social Justice

Defining bullying as a matter of social justice is supported by a body of research that examines cause and motivation. Core framework in this research in an understanding that "young people are rarely bullied because of their sameness, rather it is because of their differences to

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their peers, even if these differences are positive" (Murphy, Turbitt, & O'Higgins Norman, 2018, p. 17). With this in mind, I will explore how research shows that bullying plays an integral role in determining and maintaining social hierarchies, as well as maintaining insider/outsider effects that displaces certain identities and bodies as "beneath" others. On another vein, this body of research also establishes bullying as a moral dilemma, going so far as to say that it is a human rights violation. Finally, the research that frames bullying as more of a social justice phenomenon than a behavioral one posits bullying as an issue of empathy—or lack thereof. When taken together, all of this research suggests *that bullying serves a normative function*. I will break that down.

To begin, several scholars have examined bullying in light of maintaining social hierarchies. Studies show that individuals or groups who engage in bullying do so to navigate complex social hierarchies in relations of dominance and displacement (see Pellegrini, 2001; Kolbert & Crothers, 2003; Berger, 2007; Salmivalli, 2010). Rai and Fiske (2011) approach it from an Authority Ranking perspective: students believe they are entitled to leverage power granted by social and socioeconomic status, dominance, or physical form with little regard for victims. Scholars like Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) and Hong and Espelage (2012) caution how we think of power, however, when it comes to bullying. Both of these studies suggest we need to broaden our conception of power imbalance beyond stable, individual factors like size or strength, and instead consider what they refer to as a *dynamic ecology* of factors that influence bullying power imbalances. This dynamic ecology, according to these scholars, include situational, social, and environmental factors—collective, not individual.

Furthering the relationship between bullying and social hierarchies, Vaillancourt, Hymel, and McDougall (2003) connect power structures in bullying to popularity, which serves a

normative function by elevating some individuals (and the qualities and/or elements of identity that they possess) over others (see also Garandeau, Lee, & Salmivalli, 2014). This is an extremely important concept for my research, as I spend the entirety of chapter two analyzing affective discourses surrounding bullying in terms of how we collectively create an idealised[4] norm; I come to claim that the affective construction of an idealised norm creates a context of power imbalance that elevates some identities as appropriate, putting them in a position of power, at the same time that it relegates other identities as deviant, priming them as victims. While approached from a different angle, Volk, Craig, Boyce, and King (2006) point out that this is intimately tied to group dynamics, such as minoritized ethnic populations who are targeted more than majority populations. Furthermore, power structures of popularity, influenced by normative values, can create insider/outsider effects that create and insulate power imbalances. Bazelon (2013) and Garandeau and Cillessen (2006) assert that bullying and being a passive bystander to bullying can function to show in-group solidarity of a particular kind, a proof of allegiance to a specific, popular normative value, the enemy of which is the victim. Bullying or passive support for an act of bullying can serve as membership to the more powerful group (Salmivalli, 2010). Further, Volk et al. (2006) conclude that bullying and its dominance goals, in a complex relationship with popularity, is behind race-, religion-, and ethnicity-driven bullying. This—how bullying is wrapped up in maintaining social hierarchies of power that accept some and reject others—is one reason we need to look at bullying as a matter of social justice.

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[4] "Idealisation" is terminology used by Ahmed, a CES scholar and grounding theorist for my research, in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004). I will discuss it in length in chapter two and return to it throughout my research. When I use idealisation, idealise, and idealised in parallel to how she employs it in her theory, I spell it with the Australian *s* instead of a *z;* this is how these terms are used in her work.

Building off of these findings, as well as his own extensive research on pedagogy and moral development, Jevtić (2014) states that bullying is a problem of a moral nature. This makes sense in concert with the other research discussed so far that ties power imbalances in bullying to derogatory treatment of specific group identities. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) goes so far as to say bullying is a human rights violation of Article 29 of the accord, which can be summarized as: "I have the right to an education which develops my personality, respect for others' rights and the environment" ("Article 29," n.d.). Pepler and Craig cite violations of "[a] spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of the sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin" as reason for the human rights violation, continuing to assert that "we must educate children to ensure they develop positive attitudes and behaviors and avoid using their power to bully or harass others." Viewing bullying from this morality and human rights lens, this problem has gained even more exigence as an issue of social justice and public health.

Finally, I look at bullying as an issue of social justice because it is so deeply involved with emotional politics. In particular, current scholarship greatly aligns and entwines bullying and empathy, both in cause and solution. O'Brennan, Bradshaw, and Sawyer (2009), Davis (1996), van Noorden, Haselager, Cillessen, and Bukoski (2015), Murphy et al., Gini (2006), and others posit an empathy deficit, what Gini called "the lack of empathetic reactivity towards the victims' suffering" (p. 535), as not only an attribute that bullies have but also as a primary motivation for bullying behavior. Additionally, Uhls et al. (2014) tie this to cyberbullying, suggesting that increased access to and reliance upon digital platforms jeopardizes students' capacity to empathize with others. The theory, then, to reduce bullying is to train teachers and implement curriculum designed to teach students empathy (Jevtic, 2014; Jolliffe & Farrington,

2006; and many others whom I will address later on in this chapter when I discuss current affective theorizations of bullying solutions in detail). The rationale is that empathy evokes a particular kind of tolerance, one that asks an individual to "step into another's shoes," so to speak, and understand an other, therefore reducing acts of prejudice and discrimination (Feshbach & Feshbach, 2009). I explore this literature more later in this chapter and devote my entire third chapter to examining empathy and bullying discourse, but what's important to understand from a definitional perspective is that "good" and desirable emotions like empathy have already been established as a road to tolerance and the dismantling of prejudice behind power imbalances.

To conclude my discussion of how I define bullying and will be employing it in my inquiry, I return again to contexts of power imbalance. This is the core definitional requirement at the heart of my social justice framework. As I move forward, I will be examining affective discourses at work in and surrounding bullying that create the crucial power imbalance that marks bullying across the literature, regardless of variations in theoretical approaches (Liu and Graves, 2011). Therefore, Volk et al.'s definition of bullying—again, "aggressive, goal-directed behavior that harms another individual within the context of a power imbalance" (p. 327)—will be used framed by and in union with the theorization of bullying as an issue of social justice.

Bullying's Rise as an Affective Issue

I spent the previous section laying groundwork to conceptualize bullying as an issue of social justice, supporting this premise by discussing the primacy of a context of power imbalance. This opens the door to theorizing bullying as a sociocultural rather than behavioral phenomenon, which in turn opens avenues of inquiry into the mechanisms of bullying at a greater scale: on the level of affect that plays a role in determining its social and performative

aspects. In later chapters, I look at affective discourses surrounding bullying outside of the school halls (inside which most current bullying scholarship remains), but in order to do so, I want to first establish how bullying gained affective weight in the realm of discourse. In this section, I discuss bullying's prevalence and consequences, the affective impact of the Columbine high school shooting, and the correlation drawn between bullying and youth suicide, all of which were and are significant factors for how and why bullying emerged as and remains an affective issue in schools as well as in public discourse.

To begin, bullying gained affective weight inside and outside of school walls as an exigent public health concern in large due to its breadth and prevalence despite years spent trying to mitigate it. While bullying peaks in middle and high school, it can begin as early as preschool (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). One in five students in the U.S. self-reported being bullied at school in 2017, according to the CDC's[5] education survey (Kann, 2017). While the National Center for Education Statistics' (2019) comparable study shows that this number decreased from 29 percent to 20 from 2005 to 2015, the numbers have held steady since then ("Indicator 10: Bullying at School and Electronic Bullying"). Both the CDC and National Center for Education Statistics further show that this is a gendered problem, with girls being bullied at significantly higher frequency than boys. The CDC also reveals that frequency of bullying jumps to 30% for self-reporting LGBT students. Taken together, this means that approximately five million children aged 12–18 are bullied in a single school year alone—a disconcerting measurement that *only accounts for those who are victims on school property*, not those who bully or are bystanders or who were subjected to cyberbullying. A similar census conducted by Bradshaw, Sawyer, and

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[5] The 2017 CDC survey is the most recent broad-based survey for self-reported student bullying statistics provided by StopBullying.gov.

O'Brennon (2007)[6] shows that approximately 30 percent of students self-report that they have *bullied* another student, and 70.6 percent say they've witnessed bullying in their schools as a bystander. These numbers have yet to account for the increasingly concerning problem of cyberbullying,[iv] which is transforming how and where bullying occurs, on the digital platforms youth carry everywhere. According to the Pew Research Center, 59 percent of students report having been subjected to it (Anderson, 2018). Said simply, then, bullying is an expansive issue that negatively impacts millions of youth's lives, a persistent socio-emotional problem, potentially following them wherever they go.

Bullying has also heightened in national attention as a serious affective problem due to the expansive and continuously growing body of research that stipulates countless negative consequences of bullying that bloomed in the wake of Olweus' groundbreaking work (see Arseneault, Bowes, & Shakoor, 2010; Buhs, Ladd, & Herald, 2006; Gini & Pozzoli, 2009; Hong & Espelage, 2012; Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2000; Kaiser & Rasminsky, 2009; Kim & Leventhal, 2008; Klomek, Sourander, & Gould, 2010; Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010; Patchin, 2017; Reijntjes, Kamphuis, Prinzie, & Telch, 2010; amongst others). Together, the culmination of these studies correlate involvement in bullying with negative declines in student health, well-being, and psychosocial and social-emotional development, as well as with other adversities.[v] These studies make a point that these negative consequences do not only apply to the victims of bullying but also apply in varying degrees to the other roles youth play: the bullies, bully-victims, and bystanders.[vi] As awareness grew about the prevalence and effects of bullying, so did concern about the long- and short-term emotional impact on participants, which is reflected in

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[6] The CDC and National Center for Education Statistics' surveys only included if students self-reported having been the victim of bullying, not if they have acted as bullies or bystanders.

the slew of emotion-based solutions to bulling implemented in schools—though, more on that shortly.

This being said, bullying became an important, affectively charged issue to address not solely because of how common it was in schools or what research said about its negative consequences; bullying became discursively aligned with a myriad of emotions when it became a presence in life beyond school halls, plastered on national headlines, emergent in public discourse. An irrefutably significant factor for how bullying emerged as an affective issue can be traced back to one specific point in time: in 1999, the Columbine High School tragedy, when an onslaught of sensational news coverage intimately and perhaps irrevocably married bullying with mental health and school shootings in the aftermath of the Columbine High School tragedy[vii] (see Adams & Russakoff, 1999); the two perpetrators, amplified by the media, called out bullying at several points in justification for their violent and deadly actions. This led to a number of paradigm-shifts in public awareness and affective engagement.[viii] Bolstering the media's representation of bullying-as-cause in the year that followed Columbine, the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center implicated bullying as a cause for more than two-thirds of the 37 studied premeditated school shootings in their Safe School Initiative (Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002). Now a matter of school safety, school bullying policies emerged in the aftermath (Birkland & Lawrence, 2009). In whole, 1999 was the year that bullying became an affective and exigent presence for not just students roaming the halls, hassling and being hassled by their peers, but entered a realm of emotional politics for students, parents, teachers, and the nation as a whole.

Finally, bullying affectively proliferated in public discourse on the curtails of connections drawn between it and youth suicide, which the CDC found also became prominent in the wake of

Columbine ("The Relationship Between Bullying and Suicide," 2014, p. 2). Claims of

correlation and causation between bullying and suicide is complicated, as far as research goes.

While some research suggests the relationship is mediated by a myriad of other factors and is

therefore problematic,[ix] further studies draw the connection.[x] Of note is Kim and Levinthal's

(2008) systemic review of 37 studies investigating the relationship between these factors, which

examined a broad range of analyzed communities, methodological approaches, and strengths and

limitations of the research. Their results indicated "it is increasingly clear that any participation

in bullying increases the risk of suicidal ideations and/or behaviors in a broad spectrum of youth"

(p. 133). Beyond the research, the CDC suggests that the connection between bullying and youth

suicide has been heavily drawn in the public mind, following headline after headline of stories of

youth suicide that suggest suicide as cause ("The Relationship Between Bullying and Suicide,"

2014), like those for Channing, This correlation, drawn somewhat debatably in research and

directly in the public's mind, is significant, especially when a study sponsored by the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services shows that suicide is the third leading cause of death

for youth aged 10-19 (Heron, 2018) and the CDC's "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance" survey

indicates that 17.2 percent of students self-report suicidal ideation (Kann, 2017).

What's important in my analysis at this point is not necessarily what statistics or solid

research says about the validity of claims correlating bullying and suicide—as well as between

bullying and mental health and between bullying and school shootings (see endnotes for more

research on this)—in a causal relationship. Rather, what's important to take forward is the

affective weight *bullying* gained in the realm of public discourse when it was repeatedly

connected as a cause for a national tragedy and a number of personal tragedies, such as Tyler

Clementi and Channing Smith, that have occurred since. Bullying has been intimately tied to

critical issues in the public's mind—and has been tied to all of the affect that circulates in public discourse surrounding these tragedies in the tides of affect generated at the perceived intersection of these issues. Beyond research, the affective discourses surrounding mass shootings, mental health, and teen suicide also circulate in parallel to and overlapping with the affective discourses of bullying. That is a lot of charged, vital affect lifting institutional awareness and responsiveness to bullying as social issue. With the connection between these actions and bullying, reducing bullying became an increasingly exigent, increasingly emotional issue: a severe matter of school safety.

Social-Emotional Learning and Empathy as Bullying's Solution

Currently implemented solutions intended to eliminate bullying are highly variant. Different approaches bring different degrees of focus on prevention, intervention, recovery, and punishment, and they render different degrees of success, as well. One core avenue attempting to mitigate bullying is through anti-bullying policies implemented on the state- and district-level.[xi] Policies approach bullying from the vantage of punishment after an act of bullying has been committed. On the other end of the spectrum, schools often implement programmatic interventions[xii] targeted at prevention from the beginning, intervention when bullying occurs, and recovery for those affected by it. While some programmatic interventions emphasize conflict resolution skills and situational awareness, the most commonly employed programs are ones that focus on students' social emotional development. It is this latter, most employed approach that is of particular importance for my analysis because most Social Emotional Learning (SEL) approaches, in their effort to foster emotionally intelligent students, posits empathy as the ultimate solution to bullying. Therefore, our most commonly employed bullying prevention approaches engage in complex politics of emotion, even if they are not considered as such.

While I dedicate this section to discussing SEL programs and empathy, I need to touch briefly on anti-bullying policies, without which discussion of bullying solutions would be incomplete because 1) they are the most universally implemented solution to bullying (Hall, 2017) and 2) their inadequacies fueled the turn to affective programmatic interventions. Anti-bullying policies lack consideration of emotion.[7] Their primary purpose is to serve as a legal mandate for school administrators, teachers, and students to report, investigate, and punish acts of bullying *once they have occurred* (Hall, 2017, p. 47; 59; Pepler and Craig 2009). This being said, there's an incredible array of research that has found that school anti-bullying policies are ineffective at addressing bullying for a number of reasons,[xiii] with major problems dwelling with identifying bullying and policy implementation (Hall & Chapman, 2016; Mishna, Pepler, & Wiener, 2006). Both Hall's and Ferguson, San Miguel, Kilburn, and Sanchez's (2007) systemic, meta-analytic review of review of 68 bullying policy studies total marked a significant blow to policies' perceived effectiveness when they concluded that policies are ultimately ineffective and yield little to no positive shifts in bullying trends or school culture. With anti-bullying policies' focus on punishment of bullying after it occurs, as well as their proven ineffectiveness as merely a systems-level solution, McKinlay (1998) notes that schools have turned to targeted programmatic intervention aimed at socioemotional prevention rather than response. In this regard, anti-bullying policies and SEL programmatic intervention foil each other.

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[7] This claim is based on a survey I conducted of school anti-bullying policies from the fifteen highest-population school districts in the U.S.. These documents were composed nearly entirely of definitions (which many did not have), reporting measures, and consequences for perpetrators. The closest they got to addressing affective concerns were the handful that included a statement of purpose for the policy, and even then, the closest they came to addressing the affective dimensions of bullying were general statements that they wanted to create a safe and/or respectful atmosphere.

I will focus on programmatic intervention not only because they focus on prevention and have shown more promise with reducing bullying but also because programs are where we see complex emotional politics emerging in our proposed solutions for this issue. Programs typically focus to varying extents on staff training, curricula, counseling, and other approaches to change school culture, like increasing bullying awareness (Hall, 2017, p. 8). They reach beyond policies to impact teachers' teaching style and implement new curricula, and they have three general approaches. Firstly, programs like Steps to Respect and the Olweus Bully Prevention Program focus on surveillance and communication skills,[xiv] aimed specifically at training bullying awareness skills to teachers and students, like recognizing it when it happens, reporting it, and intervening. Secondly, programs like Friendly Schools, Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways, and CoolKindKid emphasize conflict resolution and relationship communication skills, like collaboration, confidence, and respect—what Kalman (2019) calls the psycho-educational approach. However, I will discuss neither of these approaches because 1) they do not focus on affect and 2) they're less widely employed than SEL curriculum because they have also shown to be less effective at reducing bullying; they're reactionary and do not explicitly and effectively confront the goals and causes of bullying (Ttofi and Farrington, 2011), amongst other issues.[xv] Therefore, of importance for my discussion of bullying is the third and final general approach: SEL intervention, which the majority of schools and a body of research rally behind.

The third and final approach, SEL programs, begin to alleviate Ttofi and Farrington's concern that anti-bullying measures do not sufficiently account for bullying's cause. Rather than taking a reactionary approach, SEL takes a more proactive curricular role: "SEL is the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative

behaviors (Elias et al., 1997)" (Zins, 2004, p.4). SEL was pioneered in large part by Elias (2004) and focuses on students' development of empathy and recognition of the emotions of others, regulation of their own emotions, managing positive and negative emotions, and otherwise developing emotional intelligence skills. SEL curriculum also emphasizes goals and decision-making skills. Overall, SEL programs have been shown to work; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger's (2011) analysis of 213 schools that implemented SEL programs found that they "demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance that reflected an 11-percentile-point gain in achievement" (p. 405). It is important to note, however, that this study supports the use of SEL models in general rather than assessing SEL-based bullying programmatic intervention.

The programs that follow SEL principles are KiVa, the Second Step Violence Prevention Program, FearNot!, Roots of Empathy, STOMP Out Bullying[8], Operation Respect, and Friendly Schools. Out of all of the programs, KiVa, STOMP Out Bullying, and Second Step are the most popular, critically acclaimed, and widely employed, and have been deemed best suited to teach students empathy (Wolpert, 2016; "Our Mission," n.d.). That being said, *every* SEL program listed here includes a variation of developing student empathy, teaching empathy, engaging empathetically with others, and/or promoting a more empathetic society in their mission

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[8] STOMP Out Bullying is a special case because it is considered an anti-bullying *organization*, not a program. They are a non-profit that provides school-independent resources like a HelpLine that victims or students at risk of becoming victims can call. They also accept donations and produce public PSAs by celebrities. However, they still provide SEL curricular resources for teachers and administrators and generally function in a comparable capacity to the other programs. For the scope of my analysis, then, this distinction between organization and program is irrelevant, and I will refer to STOMP Out Bullying as a program.

statements. Therefore, it can be said that SEL programs pursue a common goal: solving what

Borba[9] (2018) called the "empathy crisis" as a means to reduce bullying.

Borba is not alone in her claims about an empathy crisis and student development. Borba

defines empathy here as the ability to understand other people's feelings, "to not only

sympathize with a person but the ability to understand another person from their perspective and

to be able to put yourself in their shoes" (Christy, 2018). Jolliffe and Farrington (2006) similarly

articulate that teaching appropriate empathetic reactions and moral sensitivity should be a

primary goal for educators. Other researchers like Boler (1999) point out that this call for

empathy goes beyond the classroom, cited as a key factor in fostering a democratic society as a

whole. This feeds off of the body of research discussed earlier in this chapter that posits an

"empathy deficit" (Gini, 2006) as a primary cause for bullying (see also Davis, 1996; O'Brennan

et al., 2009; Murphy et al., 2018; Noorden, van et al., 2015; Uhls et al., 2014). Meanwhile, a

body of research correlates higher levels of empathy with better social awareness and

understanding (Sullivan, Cleary, & Sullivan, 2003; and others who will be discussed

momentarily). Ultimately, SEL models posit empathy as the answer to improve school climate,

to advance students' individual achievement and development, and to solve bullying.

Borba claims that empathy is "the foundation of a safe, caring, and inclusive learning

climate," which is crucial to reducing incidents of bullying. Eisenberg, Eggum, and DiGiunta

(2010) support her claim about empathy and school climate, their study suggesting that empathy

boosts what they call other-oriented prosocial behaviors and reduces aggression, fueling

humanitarianism and, therefore, improving school climate. Santos, Chartier, Whalen, Chateau,

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[9] Dr. Borba is considered a leading expert on empathy and education, traveling to give presentations and keynote speeches on her book *Unselfie: Why Empathic Kids Succeed in Our All About Me World* (2017) and her renowned heuristic "Nine Competencies of Teaching Empathy," published in *The Promise of Social-Emotional Learning* (2018).

and Boyd's (2011) study of the Roots of Empathy program found that empathy can improve school climate by improving student's mental health. Scholars also name empathy's correlation with individual development as reason that it is the solution to bullying. Research claims that higher levels of empathy: 1) produce students with better academic achievement, classroom engagement, and communication skills (Jones, Weissbourd, Bouffard, Kahn, & Ross, 2014); 2) increase and predicate academic achievement even more than IQ (Lehrer, 2009); 3) mark more resilient and successful students (Gottman & DeClaire, 1997); and 4) indicate higher tendencies to be outgoing, popular, and emotionally adjusted (Goleman, 1995). Borba comes to encapsulate this research correlating empathy, school climate, and student achievement in a single, catchy term: the "empathy advantage."

Many of these scholars address bullying in the context of their research, listing it as a factor that can be reduced by increasing student empathy. Santos et al. even come to claim that empathy is our best antidote to solving both bullying and racism in schools,[xvi] with which Borba agrees. What Borba calls for is the development of upstanders, what she terms "the empathetic elite" to act with moral courage to end bullying. She states, "[Those with moral courage] are upstanders—the empathetic elite—who stand up for others because they know deep down it is the right thing to do." She references Hawkins, Pepler, and Craig's (2001) findings that bystander intervention is effective at stopping more than half of bullying incidents within ten seconds in support of her proposed solution. This starts, these scholars concur, with the development of empathy. But in order to develop empathy, they agree that we must truly start with *teachers*: they must 1) teach empathetically through modeling at the same time that they 2) must teach empathy in their curriculum.

Firstly, Murphy et al. (2018) argue in their study "The Role of Empathy in Preparing Teachers to Tackle Bullying" that teachers must *teach empathetically*. Specifically, they place the responsibility on the teachers' shoulders, claiming that not only should teachers teach empathy, but that they must constantly practice and demonstrate empathy as they teach and interact with students in order to be successful. They claim that more empathetic teachers[10] will "take time to understand students' behaviours and manage [them] appropriately" (p. 19), and are therefore much more prepared to address bullying in schools. Bazalgette (2017) likewise touts a direct correlation between a teacher's level of empathy and their preparedness and ability to address bullying. Furthering this connection, Craig, Henderson, and Murphy (2000) clarify that more empathetic teachers are more effective at addressing bullying because they were more likely to identify it, intervene, and report it. In addition to better preparing teachers to tackle bullying, Cooper (2011) states that teacher empathy is intimately connected to the development of students' moral self, values, achievement, and overall impact on society. The theory is that, by demonstrating empathetic behaviors, teachers can cultivate those behaviors in their students, creating an environment of respect, empathy, and equality in their classrooms (Murphy et al., 2018, p. 19). After all, Borba poses, what she calls "using a toolkit or a one-off program" is ultimately ineffective without "ongoing, embedded work guided by strong school leaders who are empathetic themselves."

In this regard, teaching empathetically is presented as a *moral necessity* for teachers. Glendenning (2012) calls this teachers' "duty of care for their students" (cited in Murphy et al.,

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[10] Murphy et al. determined the extent to which teachers were empathetic using Davis' (1983) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). This five-point Likert scale survey asks a total of 28 questions that test a subscale of four components: *Perspective Taking* (PT), *Fantasy Scale* (FS), *Empathic Concern* (EC), and *Personal Distress* (PD).

2018, p. 17), an emotional investment in their relationships with students that is founded on empathy. Murphy et al. further this concept of teachers' duty of care, stating, "realising their duty of care requires teachers who are empathic, with specific competencies to consider the needs of their students and to respond to them appropriately" (p. 17). Jevtić (2014), who I referenced earlier for his work positing bullying as a moral issue, weighs in on teacher empathy as well. He claims that empathetic teachers create an environment that promotes empathy, which in turn produces more morally developed and aware students; this, he says, ultimately reduces the likelihood of bullying. Goroshit and Hen (2016) support these claims, their study of 543 teachers in Israel correlating higher levels of teacher empathy with a higher sense of morality. From this, they found that teacher empathy and morality was crucial to students developing empathetic relationships. All of this taken together, Murphy et al. concluded that teacher empathy directly correlated to moral concern for students, relationships of trust in classrooms, student self-worth, and the development of empathetic students; this, their study stated, ultimately acts as a deterrent for bullying behaviors.

All of this being said about teachers, it is important to note that, while teaching empathy/empathetically is considered teachers' responsibility, there is also an administrative imperative and requires managerial support as well. This is largely due to administrators' responsibility to invest in and implement programmatic intervention and continued training for teachers. Borba states, "school leaders must create the right culture, vision, guidance, and professional training so teachers can succeed [in teaching empathy]." This is especially relevant to bullying prevention because some teachers are naturally less empathetic than others (Bazalgette, 2017), and therefore, if the other scholars are correct, are less prepared to address bullying. Waasdorp and Bradshaw (2011) point to continuous professional development for

teachers to bridge this gap in empathy levels, helping teachers develop approaches to teach more empathetically and to use those skills to develop and act on bullying intervention strategies. Administration shares responsibility, Borba asserts, because they are responsible for educating teachers on the importance of empathy for students and the school climate and for recruiting them to incorporate it into their classroom in pedagogy and praxis.

Secondly, teachers are not only called upon to model empathy by teaching empathetically but also to *teach empathy* to students. This is often achieved by introducing and integrating what Noddings (2007) calls themes of care into school curriculum. Borba and Wood, Kinkaid, and Kissel (2019), who develop themes-of-care curriculum for English classes, emphasize that this means themes of empathy and compassion. The types of skills this curricular approach aims to teach are: micro and macro perspective-taking and role-playing; collaboration and collaborative problem-solving; contextual research about and discussion of systemic barriers, "historical patterns of discrimination and oppression," and "the conditions and lived realities of [students'] own and other identity groups" (Segal and Wagamen, 2017, p. 210); facilitating conversations about belonging, compassion, kindness, and moral identity; reading literature that promotes diverse perspectives and identities and develops students' moral imagination and imaginative empathy; emotional literacy and self-regulation; moral courage; and practicing kindness (Borba, 2018; Davis, 1983; Murphy at al., 2018; Noddings, 2007; Seaman, 2012; Segal and Wagaman, 2017; Wood et al., 2019).

Of these scholars, Borba, Murphy et al., Seaman, Segal and Wagaman, and Wood et al. directly state that implementing these approaches and skills in curricula can reduce bullying. In fact, Seaman states that "the real goal [of implementing these goals in trans-disciplinary curricula] should be to undermine bullying by fostering compassion in classrooms." Likewise,

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Wood et al. suggest that including themes of compassion in literature classes can "thwart any signs of bullying before it starts, and [promote] empathy and belonging" (p. 40). Further, Segal and Wagaman claim that integrating such elements in curriculum helps students develop interpersonal and social empathy, which ultimately promotes social justice—which is an important distinction to make since, as I claimed earlier in this chapter, bullying is primarily a matter of social justice, not a behavioral issue alone. This considered, while approaches and skills like perspective-taking, contextual understanding systemic barriers, discrimination, and oppression, and others listed above move beyond reporting and punishing bullying behaviors to instead deter bullying by developing students' sense of empathy, they also illuminate systemic power imbalances and privilege. According to Volk et al., "recognizing a power imbalance is pivotal to developing effective anti-bullying interventions" (p. 332). Seeing as a context of power imbalance is a defining element of bullying, it makes sense that programmatic intervention involving SEL and curricula that integrates themes of empathy and care is the leading approach to reduce bullying.

In summary, bullying prevention and response is comprised of a scattered array of options, and a vast assortment of research vies for primacy of different approaches. While every school implements anti-bullying policies to establish a legal mandate to report bullying and punish the perpetrators, bullying scholars denounce the approach. At the very least, they claim that policies alone are not enough and ultimately unsuccessful at reducing bullying's prevalence. Because of this, schools have turned to bullying prevention programs that take a curricular approach. While some focus on communication skills, conflict resolution, and peer mediation, the majority of and most commonly employed programmatic interventions treat bullying as an affective issue. They focus on promoting empathy by integrating themes of care into their

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curriculum and recruit teachers to nurture appropriate emotions in the classroom by demonstrating empathy in all of their interactions with students. Schools rally behind the empathy model, but bullying prevalence has plateaued since 2015 at a steady 20% for in-school bullying ("Indicator 10," 2019; Kann, 2017; "What is Bullying," n.d.), and has continued to skyrocket for cyberbullying (Anderson, 2018). The question is *why,* despite our persistent anti-bullying efforts? While I cannot offer any paradigm-shifting answers to this question, I propose a few dimensions of the politics of emotion that I do not believe have been critically examined to the extent that this issue warrants as a place to start.

The Emotional Politics of Bullying Cause, Response, and Prevention

My chief concerns with our current theorizations of bullying align with concerns already voiced by some scholars. Bullying scholars need to work to remedy the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's observation that bullying research generally fails to adequately address contextual factors that affect bullying in favor of largely descriptive approaches ("Preventing Bullying," 2016). Chiefly, I agree with Ttofi and Farrington's claim that we are not paying enough attention to the goals of bullying. Implicit in this is the fact that we are not explicitly addressing the *cause* of bullying, which predicates its goals. I also principally agree with Volk et al.'s fundamental claim that we need to recognize the power imbalance extant in bullying in order to effectively address it. I do not believe we've sufficiently addressed the affective dimension of either of these factors. Empathy-as-solution attempts to address both of these things: 1) it attempts to address the goal of bullying by increasing student empathy, the lack of which is attributed as cause; and 2) it proposes empathy as a way to erase the power imbalances between children by having them "walk in each other's shoes." However, my primary criticism is that empathy is not enough, and throughout the rest of this thesis, I will

expound this criticism by looking at additional emotions involved in bullying's cause and solutions. Through this, I hope to problematize and expand upon our current understanding of the role affect plays in bullying.

I believe our emphasis on empathy undermines other crucial emotions at work in bullying that mechanize it; therefore, chapter two will be a more expansive analysis of the emotions involved in bullying's cause. Analyzing public discourse that circulated around the bullying stories introduced at the beginning of this chapter, I trace how *shame*, *disgust*, and *hate* work in a complicated relationship to cause bullying. I explore how these emotions are often undermined, uncritically explained away as a cause with the adage "kids are cruel." In order to do this, I first spend some time explicating Critical Emotion Studies scholars' theorization of emotion, finally landing on Ahmed's theory of affective economies and idealisation as the grounding theory for my affective rhetorical analysis. Ahmed's theory accounts for how emotion discursively constructs an idealised norm, perceived deviation from which marks victims and may motivate bullies. By looking at how *shame*, *disgust*, and *hate* (re)form and result from a discursively constructed ideal norm, I investigate how *bully* and *victim* come to be performed.

In chapter three, I analyze affective discourses of response to bullying by analyzing four incidents of bullying that gained national attention, two of which I introduced at the beginning of this chapter. To frame this analysis, I problematize our current theorization of empathy-as-solution by exploring the emotional politics of *empathy*, a task I extend into chapter four as well. In this chapter, I employ critical theory from Ahmed and Spelman and focus on *empathy* as a response to *pain*, the second major emotion I examine in chapter three, which I argue can create and maintain power imbalances between bullying actors due to inequities between the spectator who extends empathy and the sufferer who is the subject of it. Specifically, I analyze discourses

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and (in)actions taken in response to my selected incidents to trace the presence and absence of empathy in relation to the fetishization of victims' wounds, commodification of victimhood, statements of *regret,* and the (mis)appropriation of suffering to defer responsibility for action. As with chapter two, I conclude this chapter by addressing how my analysis of bullying response expounds the conclusions drawn in that of bullying cause about how the roles and actors in bullying come to be delineated and performed.

Chapter four is dedicated to bullying prevention. I begin the chapter by laying the foundation of schools' increasing role in the socioemotional development of students, which is increasingly being posited as the best way to address bullying. I extend this discussion into the second component of *empathy*: empathy as fellow-feeling *love,* which is the second primary emotion I address in this chapter. I provide a brief analysis of the emotioned discourses of the STOMP Out Bullying, KiVa, and Second Step prevention programs, but my analysis of these programs is ultimately truncated due to the fact that their curriculum cannot be accessed without purchase. Because of that, I was limited to an analysis of the emotioned discourses extant on their websites and secondary assessments. That being said, I conduct an in-depth analysis of the StopBullying.gov's free federal bullying prevention training and continued education program, the limitations of which ultimately indicate the exigence of adopting an emotioned rather than behavioral view of bullying.

Finally, I offer closing thoughts on a prominent theme that arose in each chapter—how *bully* and *victim* are delineated and performed—in chapter five. I outline what I view to be the greatest hurdle we currently face in addressing the affective politics of bullying and expound the exigence of redefining affective dynamics of bullying prevention and response with a more careful consideration of its subjects. I conclude with avenues for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: SHAME, DISGUST, AND HATE IN MECHANIZING BULLYING

In the first chapter, one of my primary purposes was to introduce a theoretical approach to understanding bullying as a social justice issue rather than a behavioral one, emphasizing the critical role that relationships of power imbalance play in defining it. My goal in this chapter in response to that claim is to break down some of the emotions at work in creating and perpetuating those relationships of power imbalance in the first place. Namely, I examine how *shame*, *disgust*, and *hate* work in a complex and overlapping dynamic to mechanize cultural contexts of power that enable bullying. In order to do so, I draw upon Critical Emotions Studies (CES) theory to explore how emotion circulates and saturates a number of prominent incidents of bullying that have surfaced in recent years and gained significant attention at the national level.

A second major purpose of my first chapter was to explain the ways and reasons that bullying has increasingly become an affectively charged issue from the national- to the local school-level. Calls for solutions have led to the development of several anti-bullying policies and programmatic interventions. While policies are employed after an incident of bullying occurs, programmatic interventions are geared more generally toward prevention than response; and the majority and most prominent interventions focus on Social-Emotional Learning for the primary development of a specific emotion, singled out flagrantly by many as the cause and solution to bullying: *empathy*. In this chapter, I will be focusing primarily on other emotions that *cause* bullying, complicating the notion that a lack of empathy is the leading culprit. As I do so, I look at potential causes of bullying in broad-scale, in a national context as a mass-cultural issue rather than remaining solely in school halls. This being said, I will be returning to school halls when I discuss affective dimensions of bullying solutions in chapter three.

For the beginning portion of this chapter, I will briefly revisit the incidents of bullying that I am examining and why the public discourse that surrounds them are an apt entry point to discuss this issue throughout my second and third chapter. This is followed by a literature review of CES theory, which leads to a closer investigation of Ahmed's theories of affective economies and idealisation, grounding frameworks for my analysis, though I incorporate parallel theories from other prominent CES scholars, as well. Drawing heavily on Ahmed's methodology examining discourses of racism in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004)*,* I trace *shame* as it circulates amongst victims as a result of idealisation, shaping how *victim* comes to be performed as an identity. Similarly, I trace *hate* and *disgust*, the various ways they are employed in our discourse, and how *bully* comes to be performed. This exploration will prime my discussion of how our proposed solutions play on performative elements of bullying, which I delve into in chapter three.

Affectively Examining My Selected Bullying Incidents

I began chapter one detailing the stories of a number of victims of bullying. There's Channing Smith, a bisexual 16-year-old boy who committed suicide after two peers cyberbullied him, posting explicit messages between Smith and another boy on Snapchat and Instagram, forcedly outing him in his small, conservative community. This story, which gained national recognition in September 2019, draws several parallels to the suicide of Tyler Clementi, who died in September 2010 after similarly being outed via cyberbullying. But at the same time that headlines touted Smith's tragedy, another story about a victim of bullying circulated even more prominently: a triumphant tale about an unidentified child who was bullied at school for wearing a t-shirt with a homemade University of Tennessee sign pinned to the front. The child was

subsequently showered with gifts and praise, including the U. of T. selling tens of thousands of t-shirts with his design, an offer of admission to the class of 2032, and a four-year full-tuition and -fees scholarship. While these are the primary stories I will be examining, I also touch on Keaton Jones, a then-middle school student whose short video lamenting his experiences as a victim of bullying went viral in 2017, similarly garnering national applause and reaping financial benefits for him and his family.

Ahmed, who looks at select cases of charged discourse about racism in a similar manner that I intend to with these incidents of bullying, states the importance of looking at rhetoric that circulates at the national level: "Each of these cases shows us the very public nature of emotions, and the emotive nature of publics" (p. 14). I hope to demonstrate throughout this chapter that beginning with public discourse, as opposed to looking specifically at schools' discursive practices, is particularly important because, as a social justice issue, the cause of bullying begins on a broader cultural level, not merely a classroom culture level. These are not mutually exclusive, of course; Gorzelsky (2005) articulates the exigence of analyzing rhetorical habits in not only pedagogic interactions but also day-to-day interactions, which she explains trickles down to impact our approaches in classrooms that intend to implement change (p. 29). In other words, my analysis of various emotions that mechanize bullying benefits from beginning on the level of national discourse because the affective power dynamics at work in bullying are greatly constructed in popular discourse. This is my first rationale for why beginning on the national level when examining this issue is exigent.

The second reason I devote this chapter to looking at the causes of bullying on a national level is because popular discourse is, I hope to show, where *bully* and *victim* develop

performative roles that significantly impact power dynamics between bullying's actors.[11] I will examine the emotionality of bullying discourse in these texts to examine the way that they name and perform emotions (Ahmed, 2004, p. 13). This is apt to explore in popular discourse, especially; Jaggar (1992), a prominent CES scholar, asserts that emotions are "socially constructed on several levels" and "reflect prevailing forms of social life" (p. 150, 151). According to Jagger, affective constructs do not happen passively; the emotions evoked in our discourse result from "an activity of selection and interpretation" (p. 154). Jaggar goes on to say, "What is selected [as an object of our focus] and how it is interpreted are influenced by emotional attitudes," and "is not simply a passive process of absorbing impressions or recording stimuli" (p. 154). Therefore, our popular discourse about bullying, which reflects the performative dynamics of *bully* and *victim*, is ripe for study because it constructs and perpetuates relations of power through collective evaluative structures extant and heavily circulated in our culture.

The third and final reason I am looking at these specific texts is because they reflect a cultural shift in which stories of pain and suffering, injustice and triumph, are no longer individual experiences but are increasingly entering public discourse. I am speaking here of what Ahmed and Stacey (2001) call "testimonial culture," in which private stories enter public

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[11] As discussed last chapter, this refers to what I term *direct actors,* like the victims, bullies, bully-victims, and bystanders. However, as I look at public discourse, this also broadens to include *indirect actors:* those who engage in and contribute to discourse about bullying, such as teachers and school administrators, the victims' parents, journalists, celebrities who respond to bullying stories, the administrative board at U. of T. who made decisions that impact the child following coverage of the incident, etc.—in other words, those who play a role in defining the performativity of the direct actors, though more on that later.

discourse, circulating in affective economies of unity, difference, and displacement. While

Berlant (2004) calls this shift by a different name,[12] she articulates the increasing prevalence:

> This is a particularly modern topic, because members of mass society witness suffering not just in concretely local spaces but in the elsewhere brought home and made intimate by sensationalist media, where documentary realness about the pain of strangers is increasingly at the center of both fictional and nonfictional events (p. 5).

In her analysis of discourse, Ahmed claims that victims' stories are being shared, and in

exposure, seek healing (p. 200). She says, "Often such testimonies have to be repeated, again and

again. Doing the work of exposure is hence both political and emotional work" toward

recognition, justice, and recovery (p. 200). This can be deeply problematic; Spelman (1997),

another prominent CES scholar who devoted her studies to the politics of compassion, aptly

points out that stories of pain and responses to stories of pain occur in a context of power

imbalance (p. 7), which, I will argue, contributes to the performativity of bullying. Finally, these

testimonies and the affect evoked in its discourse have significant consequences for how we

conceptualize bullying. This, in turn, impacts the performativity of *bully* and *victim* and the

contexts of power between them.

I am analyzing the discourse in these texts, therefore, as an entry point to work through a

number of questions. How do emotions engage with politics of bullying? How do emotions

mechanize it? How is bullying affectively performed? How do emotions circulate amongst us,

orienting and reorienting collective affective attitudes and what role does that play in bullying's

causes and solutions? What emotions are evoked when we talk about bullying and how are we

responding? Furthermore, what does this discourse reveal about the relationship between

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[12] Berlant (see also Brown, 1995) similarly theorizes this shift as "wound culture," a very important concept when it comes to the performativity of *victim* and our conceptualization of solutions. I will devote significant time discussing wound culture and empathy in chapter three.

emotion and power? Thoroughly answering each of these questions is overly ambitious for a project of the scope I am attempting here, but I do believe there is power in asking them, framing my inquiry and, perhaps, future inquiries to come. Ultimately, if further attention is not paid to the intricacies of affect, both surrounding bullying and its solutions, then attempts to solve it run the risk of tacitly perpetuating bullying.

Critical Emotion Studies and Affect

Edbauer Rice (2008) describes Critical Emotion Studies[13] as the "interdisciplinary study of affect and its mediating force in everyday life" (pp. 201-202). Edbauer Rice clearly articulates a core precept of CES theory: emotion as a mediating force in everyday life and public culture. Researchers in fields such as Biology, Neuroscience, Sociology, Psychology, and a broad spectrum of disciplines within the Humanities increasingly study emotions: things like what they are, where they come from, how they're delineated from each other, what stimuli evoke them, their physiology and how they impact the body, how we might artistically express them, etc.. CES, however, is not concerned with what emotions are so much as *what they do*. This involves what Berlant calls understanding "*emotion in operation*" (p. 4), examining emotions as a mediating force that is central rather than marginal or reactionary in creating and maintaining cultural power structures, norms, and knowledge.

Throughout this section, I review CES scholarship that posits emotion as epistemic, systemic, mediated/mediating, and discursive, and as something that actively shapes public culture. This framework stands in opposition to positivist and neo-positivist traditions that

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[13] In her research, Edbauer Rice calls this field of study "critical affect studies," and other scholars call is "critical emotion studies." Both terms refer to the same field of inquiry: critical examination of emotion. This being said, I will consistently be referring to various discursive theorizations of emotion as CES, even if specific scholars use a different term.

theorize emotion as antithetical to the formation of knowledge, a tradition that has long allowed affect to remain un- and under-examined. I share research that problematizes this tradition; when left under-examined, CES scholars suggest, affective structures can be mis-employed to serve and perpetuate cultural hegemony and inequitable power structures that serve some and relegate others (Boler, 1999). Understanding emotion with an agentive, participatory[14] framework is necessary to understand the role it plays in mechanizing bullying.

The first task of CES theory is to overcome a deeply embedded positivist view of emotions: the Cartesian Tradition. The Cartesian Tradition's theorization of emotion is called the Dumb View, which maintains a strict dichotomy between emotion and rational thought by portraying emotions as urges, as internal physiological phenomena triggered, often irrationally, by external stimuli (Spelman, 1989). In this positivist model, emotionality is considered a weakness "'beneath' the faculties of thought and reason" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 2); genuine knowledge, Jaggar accounts of this model, depended on the ability to free oneself from emotional judgements and focus instead on empirical testability and the neutralization of emotional values—a hallmark of positivist inquiry called "the myth of the dispassionate investigator" that still persists in many forms today. Jaggar states a critical and comprehensive account of affect must overcome generations of theory positing emotion as epistemically disruptive: as "something she suffered rather than something she did" (p. 146). Exploring what emotions do as opposed to merely what they are can be difficult when our conception of emotion has historically been relegated to the realm of the irrational and the impulsive, viewed as an

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[14] Reconceptualizing emotion as participatory stems from Zembylas' examination the role of emotion in critical pedagogy in posttraumatic contexts, which I will return to later.

impediment to the construction of knowledge; however, there are two core problems with this positivist view that ultimately mandate new avenues of affect theory.

Firstly, the Dumb View of emotions is problematic because of its historic and continued embeddedness in racist, classist, and sexist politics (Jaggar, 1992, p 158). Jaggar claims the positivist myth of the dispassionate investigator, upon which the Cartesian Tradition is founded and maintained, is masculinist and serves a political and social function to discredit women and people of color; she states that the myth of the dispassionate investigator "functions, obviously, to bolster the epistemic authority of the currently dominant groups, composed largely of white men, and to discredit the observations and claims of many people of color and women (p. 158). Likewise, Spelman points out that this traditional conception of emotions can reinforce intersectional superordinate-subordinate power relationships that can reiterate long-entrenched patterns of oppression (p. 7, 98). This power dynamic is insular and self-sustaining; Jaggar points out that "the more forcefully and vehemently [women and people of color] express their observations and claims, the more emotional they appear and so the more easily they are discredited. The alleged epistemic authority of the dominant groups then justifies their political authority" (p. 158). Ellsworth (1997) similarly describes this oppression of "the irrational Other," used for women, POC, and "exotic Others," calling it "a vehicle for regulating conflict and the power to speak" (p. 301). Therefore, the Dumb View of emotions supports what Ahmed described as emotions' function securing social hierarchies (p. 4) in ways that perpetuate problematic power inequities.

Secondly, the Dumb View of emotions is problematic because it posits emotions as pre-social: as something that are created and occurring *inside of us*. In this model, emotions are not about anything; they're uncontrollable impulses that take over the body in unwelcome bursts.

The investigation of neurons and the limbic system in neuroscience show physiological processes of emotions as they light up different parts of our brain (Chow et al., 2018) and the amygdala may evaluate situations and produce correlating bodily sensations known as emotions (Feldman Barret, 2017), but CES scholars refute arguments that emotions are solely or even primarily internal features. Instead, Jaggar advocates that we need to move away from the separation of emotions and external stimuli and turn our attention instead towards how emotions influence and are influenced by cultural discursive values, which I will expound soon.

The Dumb View Contagion model of emotion demonstrates how emotions have been historically undertheorized, and this is largely occurring in two general ways: on a macro- and micro-level. On the macro-level, we're seeing emotions' function undertheorized as a whole. In their examination of affect in service learning, Langstraat and Bowden (2011) state, "when emotions are discussed in some detail, rarely are they understood in light of social justice issues or the politics of emotion" (p. 5). This parallels how bullying has been seen as a behavioral issue rather than of social justice, and both must be overcome to understand how emotion is employed in both the cause and solution to bullying. This is easier said than done however, because historic undertheorization of emotion has lent itself to a general lack of cultural-theoretical vocabulary with which to conceive emotions' political function (Massumi, 1996). While CES theory has been working to alleviate the particular issue Massumi describes, we are still facing the second general way that emotions are undertheorized: on the micro-level, where specific emotions are less theorized than others.

Ahmed acknowledges that, even as emotion is more widely and methodically theorized as a mediating force and the Cartesian hierarchy between emotion and reason gets displaced, there is still a prominent, under-theorized hierarchy between individual emotions (p. 4). This is

to say, some emotions are considered more civilized, desirable, and appropriate than others, which constitute and are maintained by a culture's "emotioned rules[15]" (Trainor, 2005). This hierarchy between appropriate and inappropriate, good and bad emotions results in discursive acceptance of certain emotions as an "unmitigated good," as Langstraat and Bowden put it (p. 6). Yoon (2005) similarly describes these desired emotions as "noble' sentiments, which he insists distinctly impacts classrooms by influencing teacher-student relationship dynamics and teaching goals. This has direct implications for bullying prevention and response, as empathy is positioned as unmitigatedly good, a noble sentiment perhaps above all other emotions, and is hence employed as bullying's solution. I believe this is a primary reason for as well as resulting from Pekrun and Stephen's (2012) observation of how emotion is still neglected in many ways in education research. When hierarchical relationships between emotions remain undertheorized, tacit ideology surrounding those emotions run the risk of going unexamined as well. This concept is a central in my discussion of empathy in chapter three.

In light of these historic and current challenges, CES theory is moving past emotion as passive or transmissive to "forge methodologies for the documentation and examination of the structures of affect that constitute cultural experience and serve as the foundation for public cultures" (Cvetkovich, 2003, p. 11). Rather than peripheral or antithetical, emotions are positioned as a central component of how we not only come to understand the world but also to process our ideological and political beliefs (Jacobs & Micciche, 2003). Following this thinking, Lindquist's (2004) examination of affective relationships between writing teachers and students

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[15] I use the term "emotioned rules" as Trainor employs it in her research *Rethinking Racism: Emotion, Persuasion, and Literacy Education in an All-White High School.* Therefore, I will be attributing my discussion of "emotioned rules" to her. However, Trainor acknowledges that "emotioned rules" is a term borrowed Zembylas' 2005 essay on poststructuralist views of emotion and identity, another source I draw from.

found that affect critically develops one's actionable beliefs (p. 191). Indeed, Trainor premises her study of racism in *Rethinking Racism: Emotion, Persuasion, and Literacy Education in an All-White High School* on the innovative claim that "the persuasive appeal of racist discourses is *affective and emotioned* [emphasis added], rather than logical or rational, and that it is rooted not in abstract political or identity-based calculations but *in local experiences and feelings* [emphasis added]" (p. 3). To delve into this more, I will be breaking down CES theory of emotion based on four features: emotion as *epistemic*, as *systemic*, and as *mediated/mediating*, which build into emotion as *discursive*. While I distinguish between these four features to help break down some general CES tenets of emotion, however, they most certainly are not mutually exclusive and, in fact, heavily relate and overlap.

1. Emotion is epistemic. When I say this, I do not only mean that emotion is a way of knowing but also that a critical account of emotion must break away from the Cartesian Tradition that maintains a strict dichotomy between it and rational thought. As Jaggar puts it, "our emotions are epistemologically indispensable [even if] they are not epistemologically indisputable" (p. 163). Ahmed states that emotions "involve a stance on the world, or a way of apprehending the world" (p. 7). Micciche (2005) has emphasized the necessity of viewing emotion, rationality, and ethics as intimately entwined, claiming that doing so is central to human persuasion. Trainor (2008) and Nussbaum (2001) similarly emphasize that emotions can no longer be conceived as distinct from reason, the latter scholar describing emotions "as essential elements of human intelligence, rather than just as supports or props for intelligence" (p. 9). While his scholarship reflects the conclusions of these scholars as well, Giroux (1991) offers another reason altogether promoting emotion as an episteme; he claims that rationality and reason have limited power on an individual level because it cannot compete with the formative

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appeal of "feeling, pleasure, and desire," which is what gives individuals—and students in particular, he specifies—"a sense of meaning, purpose, and delight" (p. 241).

When the divisive dichotomy between emotion and reason is displaced, so too is the dichotomy between emotion and knowledge, and this allows us to explore the ways that emotion acts as an episteme. Jaggar articulates that "[emotions] are ways in which we engage actively and even construct the world" (pp. 152-153). She goes so far as to say that emotion is necessary for the construction of knowledge (p. 146), though she notes that this is not a one-directional relationship; just as appropriate emotions presuppose the development of knowledge, expansion of knowledge contributes to developing appropriate emotions (p. 163). Yoon, who examines "noble" sentiments in critical pedagogy and composition, agrees, his examination of affective critical pedagogy concluding that any responsive account of knowledge must also account for affect's role in creating and sustaining that knowledge. These claims by Jaggar and Yoon about the power affect has in constructing and supporting knowledge is an important distinction when considering emotions' systemic normative function, which I will return to in the next two paragraphs as well as repeatedly in a later section dedicated entirely to this concept.

2. Emotion is systemic. When I say this, I do not want to imply that emotions are solely social instead of individual, but that their meaning is interpreted, understood, and communicated on a systemic level. Cintron (1998) states that emotions "do not just well up from the interior of a person but are distinctly shaped along systemic lines" (p. 131); they have a public dimension that is intimately tied to a personal dimension, what Trainor similarly describes as "the complexity of inner life within larger institutional forces" (p. 77). Drawing from Micciche's (2002) claims in ""More Than a Feeling," Yoon states that "emotion is active within particular social and institutional locations" (p. 719). This being said, Jaggar makes an important

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distinction about this line of thought: "group emotions [do not] historically precede or are logically prior to the emotions of the individuals; [rather] individual experience is simultaneously social experience" (p. 151). To put a finer point on my earlier discussion of how positivist views of emotion perpetuate problematic power relationships between "the dispassionate investigator" and "the irrational Other," oppressive power relationships exist on a systemic level (see Ellsworth, 1997), and CES scholars agree that these power dynamics are affective in nature. Abu-Lughod and Lutz (1990), for example, articulate that discourses of emotion "establish, assert, challenge, or reinforce power or status differences" (p. 14). Boler draws direct implications of this theory for schools, claiming emotions inform and are informed by complex power dynamics and moral and cognitive perceptions particularly situated "within the institutional and ideological framework of critical pedagogy," which forms and is formed by taught emotional dispositions (p. xix).[16]

Emotions' institutional dimensions play a crucial role in forming systemic values. Jaggar states, "just as values presuppose emotions, so emotions presuppose values" (p. 153). Concurring, Crowley (2006) states, "emotions affect belief, and beliefs arouse emotion. Belief is stimulated, supported, or changed by emotional responses to an environment" (p. 87). I have already visited this concept when I discussed Jacobs and Micciche's and Lindquist's claims about how emotions shape political, ideological, and actionable beliefs, but to take it further, emotions are systemic because of the "emotioned rules" we abide by: "norms of behavior, ways of valuing and viewing the world that are taught via feeling" (Trainor, p 79). Crawford (2002), who examines affective racial pedagogy in composition, describes this as "emotional

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[16] I return the role emotion plays in critical pedagogy in chapter three, in which I discuss the role affective/critical pedagogy plays in bullying prevention.

identifications" and "affective stances" that are formed by histories and politics of oppression (p. 680). Giroux, amongst others, attributes this to a collective *investment* in specific affective structures—an investment that exists on the systemic level of societal values and "emotioned rules." I ultimately argue that this results in emotion serving a prominent normative function that creates oppressive and inequitable power relationships, and in my section "Idealisation and Emotions' Normative Function," I begin to outline the impact of this normative function on creating and perpetuating the imbalance of power that marks bullying as a phenomenon.

　　3. Emotion is mediated/mediating. I began my discussion of CES theory with Edbauer Rice's description of affect as a "mediating force in everyday life" (p. 202). This aligns with Berlant's call to look at "emotion in operation" (p. 4), as something that *does,* not just something that is. So far, I have touched on a number of ways that emotions are an agentive force—their systemic normative function, for example, which plays a role in (re)producing cultural values (Trainor, 2008; Langstraat & Bowden, 2011), though this does not always mean that affect is an emancipatory force (Yoon, 2005, p 745). This being said, emotion should be considered as not only a mediating force but also mediated. Contrary to what the Cartesian Tradition believes, emotions are intentional, which is not to say that we have intentional control over them but instead to say that they are not irrational; they are not immediate or passive but instead involve evaluation and judgement (Jaggar, 1992, p 149). Another way to conceive of this is that emotions are *about* something (Parkinson, 1995, p 8); they're purposefully mediated and mediating, *doing* things, as opposed to being reactionary to external stimulus alone. For example, Ahmed describes *disgust* as mediated/mediating rather than a "gut feeling"; we feel disgust based on prior histories and impressions, not from "out of nowhere," and we act on disgust based upon

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those histories. I return to this concept with another example when I discuss Ahmed's theory of emotion in the next section.

It would be reductionistic, however, to consider emotion as exclusively socioculturally mediated and mediating. Significantly, Ahmed calls attention to how emotion is mediated at the bodily level:

> Focusing on emotions as mediated rather than immediate reminds us that knowledge cannot be separated from the bodily world of feeling and sensation; knowledge is bound up with what makes us sweat, shudder, tremble, all those feelings that are crucially felt on the bodily surface, the skin surface where we touch and are touched by the world (p. 171).

In other words, emotion is an embodied mediating force as well. Trainor supports this claim, observing that "beliefs become persuasive through mediating and mediated processes of emotional regulation" (p. 3). This is reflected in Jaggar's assessment of emotion and intentional judgements, as she specifies that "physiological disturbances are integral elements in emotions" (p. 149). However, she diverges from Ahmed's conversation about embodied affect by emphasizing that we should "define or identify emotions not by the quality or character of the physiological sensation that may be associated with them but rather by their intentional aspect, the associated judgment" (p. 149). Nevertheless, remembering that affect is both sociocultural and embodied is a crucial element of Ahmed's theory of affective economies, which is a discursive model of tracing emotion discussed in the next section that I employ to analyze my selected texts.

4. Finally, emotion is discursive. Emotion as epistemic, systemic, and mediated/mediating culminate in this final feature, markedly significant because the discursive interpretation and circulation of emotions is a major platform of its power as well as an opportunity for critical analysis and intervention. Perhaps the best place to start when discussing this topic is the work of Giroux, whose significant research into the relationship between affects

of racism in discourse and ideology and power primed many prominent tenets of CES theory today. He, amongst so many others, look at what he called narratives of emotion influenced by "the syntax of learning and behavior" (1991, p 249). Zembylas (2005), a prominent scholar on the discursive theory of emotions, captures this sentiment more directly, stating that "emotion is a discursive practice" (p. 937), which premised his reconceptualization of emotion as participatory. Exploring emotions as a discursive practice is prominent in the work of Ahmed, Abu-Lughod and Lutz, Berlant, Boler, Cintron, Giroux, Jaggar, Langstraat and Bowden, Lindquist, Massumi, Michicce, Edbauer Rice, Trainor, Yoon, Zembylas, and countless other critical affect scholars.

A primary reason these scholars concur that emotion is discursive is because it is taught by "learning the language of emotion" (Jaggar, 1992, p 159). In addition to being learned through language, Zembylas articulates that emotions are "socially experienced and constructed" through language (p. 937). This is intimately tied to Trainor's concept of "emotioned rules," which she contends become persuasive through "the dynamics of persuasion and rhetoric," a combination of cultural practices and language that construct affective discourses that determine individual and shared "lived affective experiences" (p. 3). Giroux states that it is these learned discourses that drive our investment in affective constructs like racism, what Yoon similarly calls the cultural currency of pathic discourse (p. 718). While I devote significant time later delving into emotions and performativity, Abu-Lughod and Lutz claim that emotions are performed in public discourse. They also articulate significant consequences of emotions' learned discursiveness, pointing out that "emotion discourses establish, assert, challenge, or reinforce power or status differences" (p. 14). This is a reason that Zembylas, expanding on Abu-Lughod and Lutz's theory, claims the words used in our discourse to describe emotions, specifically, are

"'actions or ideological practices' that serve specific purposes in the process of creating and negotiating reality" (p. 937). Therefore, emotions are entwined with power imbalances, politics, and ideology, and this is primarily achieved in the realm of discourse.

What's missing from my current discussion of emotions' discursive function is Ahmed's theory of *affective economies*, which is as grounding for analytical process as it is deeply complex and involved, requiring a discussion of several other core concepts in her theory such as discursive circulation of emotions, contact between surfaces of objects, impressions, stickiness, and (re)orientation, to which I dedicate my next section. However, it is fitting to touch briefly on one more precept of emotion and discourse: the power of the referential signs for emotions. Without overcomplicating things for now, Ahmed asserts that emotions' discursive power comes from the circulation of affective signs, which is how they accrue ideological power and value (p. 45); it is in this discursive realm and process that certain signs become saturated in affect (p. 195).

This is all exigent, especially in schools, because discourses of affect can be misemployed in service of emotional hegemony (Langstraat & Bowden, 2011, p. 13; see also Boler, 1999; Jaggar, 1992). While Boler, a pioneer of this theory, acknowledges that emotion is taught and learned at home, she primarily emphasizes' schools' role in teaching emotion. One problematic misemployment of emotion is social control: "the social control of emotions is a central and underexplored aspect of education in relation to hegemony" (Boler, 1999, p. 4). Amsler (2011), who examines what she calls the therapeutic model of education and "pedagogy of the heart," states that education teaches emotion to reproduce the status quo (p. 50). This is a core way that taught and learned "emotioned rules" secure and perpetuate dominant cultural hierarchies and values (Boler, 1999, p. xvii; see also Ahmed, 2004, p. 4). Consequently, Yoon

articulates that this is why affect and affective critical pedagogy can "potentially [serve] exclusionary and ultimately conservative ends" (p. 745). Another hegemonic misemployment of emotion is the elevation of certain "desired" emotions while those considered less hierarchically desired are disregarded or, in some extremes, penalized (Jaggar, 1992). This carries significant concerns for schools who, because they serve to teach specific affective dispositions (Yoon, 2005, p. 718, 721), can act as a cog in the wheel of emotional hegemony.

Because SEL programmatic interventions for bullying are designed to teach desired emotions like empathy to mitigate the problem, they are not exempt from these hegemonic concerns—and, in fact, are deeply embedded in them. However, I do not delve into this further until chapter three, which I dedicate to bullying solutions. That being said, "teaching" emotion is still relevant to this chapter, in which I explore bullying's cause, because other taught emotions in schools can work towards emotional control. Trainor offers shame and guilt in example, both of which I examine in this chapter, stating "few have examined the ways in which rules about empathy, shame, and guilt are actually taught" in education (p. 110). She challenges the idea that ignorance and a lack of empathy are primarily to blame for the inequitable power dynamics of racism (p. 23), just as I reject them as the predominant cause of bullying's power imbalance.[17] Unlike these scholars, however, I do not begin my analysis in school discourses but at the level of national public discourse, though I address both of these discursive domains between this chapter and the next. I rely on so heavily on Ahmed's contributions to CES theory in my analysis

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[17] I believe examining the power imbalances between actors in bullying is important and will be the foundation of my analysis. In the previous chapter, I proposed Volk et al.'s definition of bullying as my primary theoretical foundation: "aggressive, goal-directed behavior that harms another individual within the context of a power imbalance" (p. 327). Even though I employ Volk et. al's definition, a context of power imbalance between actors is the one unifying marker of bullying across all the critical and official definitions I have surveyed. Volk et. al explain that a power imbalance is what truly delineates bullying from other kinds of aggression and conflict on both conceptual and methodological levels (p. 332). Therefore, I focus heavily throughout my analysis on bullying's context of power imbalance between actors.

of bullying's affective causes and solutions because she provides an excellent theoretical model with which to investigate discourses of emotion.

Ahmed's Theory of Emotion and Affective Economies

Ahmed's affective theory is so formative and complex that it deserves and requires a more in-depth discussion. Ahmed is concerned, as with all CES scholars, with what emotions *do*. Her theory in particular, however, blends gender and cultural studies and considers "the emotionality of texts," which she applies in an analysis of texts about racism, international terrorism, asylum, and migration. B There are a number of reasons I depend so heavily on her theory, the first of which is her concrete theorization of multiple individual emotions that have allowed me to break down and specifically examine shame, hate, disgust, pain, grief, regret, and calls of and for (in)justice in bullying discourse. Additionally, her theory of affective economies, which I will explain in this section, provides a concrete conceptual framework with which to trace what emotions are doing in and around bullying, particularly in public discourse. Thirdly, Ahmed's analysis of racist discourses clearly laid out reasons and ways that emotions are performative, which I apply in my analysis of *bully* and *victim* identities. Finally, while I discuss this in the next section along with other CES scholars who consider emotions' normative function, Ahmed's theory of idealisation provides my grounding framework to discuss the emotions that mechanize bullying's context of power imbalances.

Ahmed's theory reflects the tenets of CES theory already discussed with extensions and provisions. While she maintains the view of emotions as a mediating force deeply embedded in politics of power, she brings an embodied perspective that complicates the idea that emotions are *about* something. She states that, rather than thinking of emotions as characteristics of bodies either individually or collectively, we need to look at the ways characteristics of emotionality are

assigned to some bodies and not others; "in order to do this," she states, "we need to consider how emotions operate to 'make' and 'shape' bodies as forms of action" (p. 4). This complicates our conception of emotion; emotions, she claims, are not transparent and are "not simply about a relation of the subject to itself, or even the relation of the subject to its own history" (p. 194). Rather, she offers a model where emotions discursively and tacitly circulate between us, "operating precisely where we do not register their effects, in the determination of the relation between signs" (p. 195). To preview her theory, emotions do not reside within us but circulate amongst us in a relationship of (re)orientation towards some bodies and away from others and in the sticking of certain affective figures together, which results from contact between the surfaces of objects that leave affective impressions. Now I will break that down.

The first step to understanding Ahmed's theory is understanding what she means by impressions and contact between the surfaces of objects. Ahmed provides an example of a child encountering a bear to introduce this dynamic. If a child encounters a bear in the woods, she becomes afraid. In the Dumb View, the bear *makes* the child afraid, the emotional response impulsive and irrational on the part of the child. However, Ahmed asks "Why is the child afraid of the bear? The child must 'already know' the bear is fearsome" (p. 7). On its own, Ahmed claims, the bear is not fearsome, but is fearsome *to* someone. Cultural histories of impressions and memories construct the meaning of the bear as something *to be feared.* "So fear is not in the child, let alone in the bear, but is a matter of how child and bear come into contact. This contact is shaped by past histories of contact, unavailable in the present, which allow the bear to be apprehended as fearsome" (p. 7). In this encounter, emotions exist in the contact between objects, as histories of affect impress upon the objects' surfaces.

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Beyond Inside/Out or Outside/In models of emotion, Ahmed claims that emotions do not reside in the subject or object (p. 6). Rather, Ahmed offers the theory that emotions are what create the surfaces that delineate an inside and an outside in the first place. She states, "it is through emotions, or how we respond to objects and others, that surfaces or boundaries are made: the 'I' and the 'we' are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others" (p. 10). She further explains,

> emotions are not a positive form of dwelling, but produce the effect of surfaces and boundaries of bodies […] It is not simply that the subject feels hate, or feels fear, and nor is it the case that the object is simply hateful or is fearsome: the emotions of hate and fear are shaped by the 'contact zone' in which others impress upon us, as well as leave their impressions" (p. 194).

We return here, then, to Parkinson's (1995) assertion that emotions are *about* something (p. 8). These concepts are predicated on Descartes' (1985) model of contact and objects and on Heller's (1979) stipulation that objects do not require or shouldn't be presumed to have a material existence (p. 12). From this, Ahmed asserts that emotions are about objects because they have the power to shape and are shaped by other objects upon contact (p. 7), *between* objects rather than in or out of them. This is rooted, she expounds, in discourse.

Ahmed's theory offers a unique and nuanced perspective on emotions and their referents. Of course, Ahmed is not alone in her examination of emotions' referents. Zembylas, for example, articulates that "the words used to describe emotions are not simply names for […] preexisting situations with coherent characteristics; rather these words are themselves 'actions or ideological practices' that serve specific purposes in the process of creating and negotiating reality" (p. 937). Likewise and further, Ahmed indicates that she does not look at

> emotion as being 'in' texts, but as effects of the very naming of emotions, which often works through attributions of causality. The different words for emotion do different things precisely because they involve specific orientations towards the objects that are identified as their cause (p. 13).

I will be returning to the concept that emotions involve specific orientations towards objects

momentarily, but first I want to explain that Ahmed's theory takes this examination of emotions'

referents a step further; she claims that emotions do not have referents altogether, or at least not

the stable referents they are typically assumed to have (p. 105). She states that, much how it does

not reside in an object, affect does not reside in the sign, either. Instead, she suggests that affect

is produced from the relation between signs, in their circulation, and in the circulation of those

signs between and against bodies. This is the premise of her theory of affective economies.

Affective economies refer to the circulation of affect in discourse and the value affect

accumulates as it does. Ahmed shaped this theory based on Marxist and Neo-Marxist principles

about circulation: that magnitude and movement of objects converts into capital (p. 45):

> What I am offering is a theory of passion not as the drive to accumulate (whether it be
> value, power or meaning), but as that which is accumulated over time. Affect does not
> reside in an object or sign, but is an effect of the circulation between objects and signs (=
> the accumulation of affective value). Signs increase in affective value as an effect of the
> movement between signs: the more signs circulate, the more affective they become (p.
> 45).

In other words, emotion has capital not residing in the commodity but as a product of its

circulation, its movement between signs and bodies in discourse. Going back to Smith, for

example, the affects of this incident circulate in the attachments to and movement of signs of

queer loss, young loss, bullying, cyberbullying, suicide, victim, and injustice, converting to

affect built upon and intensified by histories of affect where we've pressed against the surfaces

of these objects before. In circulation, signs move against the surfaces of objects, accumulating

affective value and leaving their impressions upon the objects.

Ahmed terms signs' accrual of value in circulation "stickiness," which she explains plays

a significant in role in problematic affective power dynamics. She describes stickiness as "how

'signs' become sticky or saturated with affect" (pp. 194-195). These "signs" then stick to specific

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bodies (p. 13). She explains, "this model of 'sticky signs' shows how language works as a form of power in which emotions align some bodies with others, as well as stick different figures together" (p. 195), and offers the term "Paki" in example. The sign "Paki" is used in association with certain bodies and conceals other meanings generated in circulation, like "immigrant, outsider, dirty, and so on" (p. 92). This same principle would apply to the N-word. A sign accumulates affective value in circulation and attributes that affective value to objects, which orient or reorient bodies and affect upon contact "in relationships of difference and displacement" (p. 44). Emotions' (re)orienting power contributes to relationships of inequity, as they involve collective "orientations towards and away from others" (p. 4) depending on what "signs" have impressed upon and "stuck" to which bodies. Ahmed provides the emotion *hate* to exemplify how the "sticking" of signs to bodies can result in active (re)orientation away from those bodies: "when others become 'hateful', then actions of 'hate' are directed against them" (p. 13); the objects to which the affect has "stuck" are then attributed as the affects' cause (p. 13).

When I consider bullying, and consider its actors *bully* and *victim* in particular, I examine how related signs circulate, what emotions accrue value as they do, and which bodies have and are being "stuck" together in (re)orienting relationships of difference and displacement. In other words, I will be employing this theory to "[track] how words for feeling, and objects of feeling, circulate and generate effects: how they move, stick, and slide" (Ahmed; p. 14) in bullying. Doing so can elucidate how we, as subjects, become invested in particular affective and affected structures (p. 12), structures in bullying like the common adage *kids are cruel*. Additionally, doing so can elucidate how emotions like shame, disgust, and hate "stick" to *bully* and *victim* and how that "sticking" in circulation draws upon and builds performative roles that serve a normative function that may be perpetuating bullying rather than absolving it.

Idealisation and Emotions' Normative Function

When I discussed how emotions are systemic, I laid out theory from a number of CES scholars who assert the various ways that emotions shape and reproduce ideological, moral, political, and sociocultural values, what I have generally been encapsulating with Trainor's term "emotioned rules." Many CES scholars agree that emotions determine values in a complex interplay between the individual and the collective, and that they are discursively taught and learned; as Trainor summarizes, "we are taught how to feel as part of our socialization into a particular culture's dominant norms" (p. 22). In that section, I touched briefly on how, due to their power to determine individual and collective values, emotions serve a pronounced normative function in society. In this section, I expound how emotions' normative function defines appropriate behavior, especially appropriate affects, and how this is embedded in problematic power dynamics. Considering how subjects become invested in affective constructs, I break down Ahmed's theory of idealisation, which influences and is influenced by performativity, historicity, and iterability of affect and affective/affected identities. I finish this section by discussing how idealisation and emotions' normative power delineates subjects. Much as with most of the research presented so far, these principles can be applied to bullying as evidence that it is a social justice issue, rather than behavioral, and that the power imbalance of bullying is affective and performed.

Emotions are normative, in large part, because of the role they play in determining what is appropriate and inappropriate. Micciche, for example, found that we reside in a cultural system that teaches workers, and composition instructors, specifically, what are "appropriate and inappropriate emotional dispositions" (p. 437; see also Boler, 1999; Trainor, 2008). This is yet another reason why CES scholars reject the Dumb View of emotions; Jaggar states that, in

relegating emotions as an irrational victim to external stimulus, "we can give no sense of the notions of feelings fitting or failing to fit our perceptual judgments, that is, being appropriate or inappropriate" (p. 150). Rather, Jaggar suggests that sociocultural upbringing teach individuals the appropriate evaluation of situations: "to fear strangers, to enjoy spicy food, or to like swimming in cold water" (p. 150). As I discussed earlier, when we begin delineating appropriate and inappropriate emotional dispositions, there is a risk of emotional hegemony. Yoon cautions about this, especially with our ethical and pathetic attachments to certain "noble" sentiments (p. 717)—what Langstraat and Bowden similarly describe as emotions considered an "unmitigated good" (p. 6). The potential for emotional hegemony really shines through in Bizzell and Herzberg's (1990) term for this concept, which they describe as one's ability "to entertain the *right feelings,*" (p. 160). As "appropriate" emotions are elevated and "inappropriate" emotions are devalued or even condemned, the bodies associated with those emotions through the process of circulation and "stickiness" are likewise elevated, devalued, or condemned. In other words, groups of individuals gain or lose value based upon their ability to reflect and reproduce dominant affective dispositions and norms, a central idea in Ahmed's theory of idealisation.

Ahmed's theory of idealisation addresses how *normal* is formed and reproduced. Idealisation, she claims, creates an image of an "ideal self" and an ideal image of a nation—a nation comprised of white, able-bodied, heterosexual, nuclear families, for example. This being said, while some identities have been posited as an ideal, such as whiteness or heterosexuality, Ahmed specifies that the ideal does not have certain characteristics so much as it differentiates and displaces different identities. To say this differently, *normal* is formed not through inclusionary but through exclusionary means. She states, "The ideal is an approximation of an image, which depends on being inhabitable by some bodies rather than others" (p. 133). This

mirror's Yoon's observations that rhetorics of affect often "[serve] exclusionary and ultimately conservative ends" (p. 745). The process of idealisation creates an image of an ideal self and marks those who do not fit as Other. When a subject reflects and reproduces the ideal, (s)he joins the community of an ideal "we" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 106). The ideal as an effect of idealisation delineates the normal, and therefore accepted, and the deviant, and therefore Other. Through my textual analysis in this chapter, I demonstrate how idealisation marks and delineates *bully* and *victim* in a performed affective relationship, but how and from where does idealisation gain its power? The answer to this question is investment in particular affective constructs and through the influence of affective performativity.

Ahmed suggests that idealisation is maintained by affective investments in social norms (p. 196). Giroux also connects oppressive narratives of power to investments in "*feeling, pleasure, and desire,*" the emotions that give people "a sense of *meaning, purpose, and delight,*" (p. 249). Ahmed's theory examines a number of specific emotions that inspire significant emotional investment, primary of which is hate. She states, "attending to the politics of hate allows us to address the question of how subjects and others become *invested* in norms such that their demise would be felt as a kind of living death" (p. 56). Many CES scholars attribute this investment to what Trainor described as the persuasive pull of discourse (p. 23; see also Yoon, 2005, p. 720). Crowley, however, specifies that investment in affective structures depends on the ability to attribute those emotions to a source: "'the extent of affective influence depends on whether the experience is elaborated or punctuated, and the potential for elaboration depends on the structure of beliefs regarding the object of attribution'" (p. 84). Ahmed's theory reflects this

idea;[18] as I will explore more thoroughly when I trace hate in bullying discourse, idealisation

attributes emotions like love to those who fit the idealised self and attributes emotions like hate,

disgust, and shame to those who do not. In other words, investment in affective norms depends

on the ability to attribute that affect to its cause. Ahmed's work uniquely considers another

aspect of affective investment, however: "to consider the investments we have in structures is

precisely to attend to how they become meaningful – or indeed, are felt as natural – through the

emotional work of labour, work that takes time, and that takes place in time" (p. 56). To say this

differently, investment in affective structures and attribution of affect to certain objects and

bodies occurs through performativity, historicity, and iterability built and building over time.

Ahmed is certainly not the only scholar who explores emotions' performativity—Abu-

Lughod and Lutz, for example, attribute emotions' "meaning and force from its location and

performance in the public realm of discourse" (p. 7)—but the concept of performativity,

historicity, and iterability are particularly important in how emotions function in affective

economies and how they accrue value that "sticks" to certain objects and (re)orients them

through difference and displacement. Butler (1993) says that performativity is about the "power

of discourse to produce effects through reiteration" (p. 20). An utterance becomes performative

in its iteration, in its history of repetition that accrues value and can be reproduced (p. 13). We

come to perform *normal*—or, based upon the theory of idealisation, subjects whose bodies can

approximate an idealized norm can come to perform it. This reiteration of performances adds up:

"The surfaces of social as well as bodily space 'record' the repetition of acts, and the passing by

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[18] While I scaffold my analysis of emotion, affective investment, and (re)orientation of subjects and objects based on attribution of cause with the works of Giroux, Yoon, and Crowley, I rely primarily on Ahmed and Trainor, who do not examine emotion as one means to understand greater ideological relations of power but who predominantly theorize emotion as an object of study.

of some bodies and not others" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 148). Ahmed correlates this with historicity:

"While […] historicity plays a crucial role in theories of performativity and iterability, it is

linked to repetition, to the very fact that signs must be repeatable, and with them, forms or

conventions" (p. 93). All of this together is to say, then, that the sedimentation of iterated,

repetitious signs in circulation comprise the histories of affect which enact and perform cultural

norms and "emotioned rules" in the present moment when the surfaces of objects come into

contact, therefore (re)producing emotion.

Idealisation has a pronounced impact on marking and delineating subjects, securing

social hierarchies of "higher" and "lower" bodily traits through the attribution of emotions to

certain bodies, and the attribution of bad feeling, in particular, to those who are Other (Ahmed,

2004, p. 4). Ahmed notes, significantly, that this is not an innate or natural process: "assimilation

and transgression are not choices that are available to individuals, but are effects of how subjects

can and cannot inhabit social norms and ideals" (p. 153). Social norms, because they're

constructed by idealisation of a certain kind of likeness, "elevates some subjects over others" (p.

131). For those who can approximate the ideal, the approximation is rendered tacit, invisible, and

comfortable: "one fits, and by fitting, the surfaces of bodies disappear from view (p. 148).

Ahmed correlates approximating the ideal and pride, which is an insular and exclusionary

construct when those who fit and (re)produce the idealised norm "*feel pride at approximating an*

ideal that has already taken their shape" (p. 109). Therefore, idealisation is not only intimately

tied up in and constructing privilege of some bodies over others, but is, in its nature, rendering

that privilege tacit, concealed by investments in and the reproduction of an ideal social norm.

But what of those who do not or are not able to approximate the ideal? Ahmed articulates

that the relationship between idealisation and social norms, constructed through sedimented

performativity and iterability, is marked by love and shame. Investment in social norms is a bond

of love, a mechanism through which individual selves can belong to an idealised community, and

love is attributed to those who fit the ideal: "an 'ideal' is what sticks subjects together

(coherence); through love, which involves the desire to be 'like' an other, as well as to be

recognised by an other, an ideal self is produced as an approximation of the other's being"

(Ahmed; p. 106). When we love and reproduce the ideal, we belong in the "we" of the ideal

community. Those who fail to fit the ideal, however, are subjected to shame for their inability to

comply: "*[those who cannot approximate the idealised norm] feel shame because [they] have*

failed to approximate 'an ideal' that has been given to us through the practices of love" (p. 106).

Attribution of shame to certain bodies due to investment in an idealised norm constitutes the

following section and is pivotal in my analysis of how *victim* comes to be determined and

performed in bullying.

Shame and Bullying

    Shame plays a central role in mechanizing bullying, and while I am certainly not the first

to examine the relationship between bullying and shame (see Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2004, 2005,

2006; Lewis, 2004; Menesini & Camodeca, 2008; amongst countless others), most look at it

rather clinically: as a correlated consequence typically experienced by bullying actors rather than

a discursive, performative emotion embedded in ideological politics and entwined with other

mechanizing emotions like disgust and hate, to which I turn my attention after my discussion of

shame. What I have found this scholarship lacking is a more critical examination of *why* shame

marks bullying actors, and my research thus far points to shame's role in maintaining

sociocultural norms and the ideal. Violations of the ideal marks individuals as Other, a deviance

and difference from idealised peers that has repeatedly been attributed as a core cause for

bullying (Murphy et al., 2018, p. 17). As I will return to throughout this section, shame permeates each of my selected stories: the victims and their loved ones lamenting the shame the victims were subjected to when they were bullied. However, research also suggests that shame plays a formative role in the bully's actions. Therefore, understanding bullying requires a more critical understanding of the mechanisms of shame.

Shame is all about one's relationship with oneself, "not an isolated act that can be detached from the self" (Lynd, 1958, p. 50). Ahmed (2004) describes shame as a form of self-recognition, "an intense and painful sensation that is bound up with how the self feels about itself, a self-feeling that is felt by and on the body" (p. 103). It is a very prominent emotion, what Tomkins (1963) describes as one of the primary "negative affects." Likewise and further, Brown (2012), a pioneering expert on shame and vulnerability, goes so far as to state that "shame is an epidemic in our culture" that deeply impacts our ability to work and the way we view each other. While Brown stipulates that some amount of shame is necessary—the complete lack of which indicates sociopathic tendencies—she stresses the importance of mitigating its prominence in our culture. Beyond improving personal health, she advocates to pay more attention to shame and its effects because of its connection to power politics. Her extensive research suggests that shame is "organized by gender" and, additionally, that we cannot discuss exigent issues like racism without discussing shame. She states this is "because you cannot talk about race without talking about privilege. And when people start talking about privilege, they get paralyzed by shame." She attributes much of our difficulty discussing shame to our negative feeling about it; because we feel shame is a horrible topic, she explains, we avoid discussion of it. Nevertheless, I similarly assert the exigence of further examining shame, its connection to power politics, and ultimately, its role in bullying.

Affect scholars differentiate between *shame* and *guilt*, the difference between which further supports a framework of bullying as a social justice rather than a behavioral issue and, therefore, as deeply embedded in power politics rather than being a misbehaving child's problem. The difference between them ultimately comes down to the extent to which the emotion is an internalized and total assessment of self. Nathanson (1987) states, "Guilt implies action, while shame implies that some quality of the self has been brought into question" (p. 4; cited in Ahmed, 2004, p. 105). Similarly, Brown explains, "Shame is a focus on self, guilt is a focus on behavior. Shame is 'I am bad.' Guilt is 'I did something bad.'" She later summarizes the difference as "I am sorry, I made a mistake" and "I am sorry, I *am* a mistake." A study conducted by Menesini and Camodeca that investigated experiences of shame and guilt in what they call perpetrators and receivers of harm in bullying situations found that victims scored much higher in demonstrating feelings of shame. Brown's research has found the same, stating that shame is highly correlated with aggression and bullying while guilt is inversely correlated with them. In summary, then, guilt is behavioral but shame, which marks bullying actors, "becomes what the self is about" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 105). Therefore, shame is deeply embedded in how actor identities in bullying come to be performed, and this is where much of bullying's mechanizing power comes from.

Ahmed's theory of idealisation can account for how shame gains cultural power to be employed in bullying. As I introduced in the previous section, shame relates to individuals' ability to approximate an idealised norm. To be precise, Ahmed calls shame "*the affective cost of not following the scripts of normative existence*" (p. 107). To avoid feeling shame and being shamed, individuals must follow a "contract," so to speak, of social norms and approximate the ideal. I suggest that a student's proximity to the ideal is related to power structures in bullying

and popularity; popularity, like/as the ideal, can create social hierarchies between subjects based on the qualities and/or elements of identity that they possess (Vaillancourt et al., 2003). Vaillancourt et. al suggest that popularity plays a normative function by elevating and relegating subjects based on the elements of identity they possess, and further research shows that student pursuit of idealised popularity creates insider/outsider group dynamics that position students in roles of *bully* and *victim* in the first place (see Garandeau et. al, 2014). Students can show allegiance to or solidarity with the popular, idealised community by bullying or supporting the bullying of students who do or cannot (Bazelon, 2013; Garandeau & Cillessen, 2006), and the divide between these groups has been correlated with ideological identity politics: the students' race, religion, sexual orientation, and ethnicity (Volk et. al, 2006). To say this differently, being a bully, bystander, or victim is tied up in idealisation and a student's (in)ability to or (dis)interest in approximating a popular ideal. Therefore, bullying actors are involved in the politics of shame that go along with idealisation. Students who want to secure their alignment with the ideal and/or who wish not to become targets for failing to align with the ideal have to fit in, and this "fitting" of their surfaces has to take the shape of the normative ideal.

Along this line, shame can occur when a subject's "unfitting" surface is witnessed by another—or, Ahmed clarifies, is at risk of being witnessed by another. Ahmed stipulates that shame comes into existence through the *witnessing,* literal or imaginary, of the shamed identity or act by others who approximate or appear to approximate the ideal, rather than coming into existence innately or organically (p. 106). Much like fear in the child and bear example, shame is ultimately ambivalent, Ahmed claims, impressing upon the surface of the shamed one's skin as the gaze of another, exposing their failure to reproduce the ideal. It is a matter of how the shamed subject appears before loved and ideal others, which then gets internalized (pp. 104-105). For

example, for the student bullied for their acne, the shame is not in the presence of the acne on its own but when that perceived deviance from the ideal norm is witnessed by those who do not demonstrate that deviance in the contact zone where their surfaces impress upon each other. The act of witnessing is key. "To be witnessed in one's failure," Ahmed says, "is to be ashamed: to have one's shame witnessed is even more shaming. The bind of shame is that it is intensified by being seen by others *as* shame" (p. 103). Shame in bullying is about exposure of a subject before others. "Subject" as used here does not necessarily only refer to the victim in bullying, which I will address in more detail momentarily (indeed, I will soon discuss how shame plays a role in forming both *bully* and *victim* identities). However, our discourse primarily focuses on the shame imposed upon the victim.

Our discourse positions shame as the principal cause for Smith's suicide, which demonstrated the pronounced relationship between witnessing and victim shame. Smith's final Instagram post as well as testimony from his loved ones stated that shame and embarrassment from the dissemination of texts that exposed his queer identity drove Smith to take his own life. In *The Washington Post's* story "A teen's intimate messages to another boy were leaked by classmates. Hours later, he killed himself, his family says," Smith's brother Justin stated, "Being in a small, rural town in the middle of Tennessee, I could imagine being the laughingstock and having to go to school Monday morning […] He couldn't face the humiliation that was waiting on him when he got to school on Monday" (Chiu, 2019). The wound to Smith and the imposition of shame was not in his intimate messages with another boy but the *exposure* of them when his cyberbullies posted the private messages on Instagram and Snapchat, and the subsequent witnessing of that by others. The same rang true in the child's case with his homemade t-shirt. According to his teacher Laura Snyder's Facebook post about the incident, which is how it first

gained national attention, as well as in the subsequent media frenzy, the child was excited and proud of his homemade sign until lunch later that day, when a group of girls pointed out his sign and began laughing at it (Vigdor, 2019; Wilusz, 2019). These incidents, as well as those of Clementi and all of the other bullying cases I reviewed before narrowing down my analysis, illuminate one role the bully can play in victim shame: the bully is the one who pulls back the veil for the victim's deviance to be witnessed by their community, exposing them and subjecting them to ridicule.

While much focus is placed on the victim, however, shame produces and is produced by multiple actors in bullying. The example I provided earlier about a child bullied for his/her acne demonstrates how a victim may be targeted because of an unidealized trait or behavior: a victim being shamed for something through the act of bullying. However, there is no clear divide between the "normative" and ideal bully and the "non-normative" and therefore shameful victim. Boulton and Smith (1994) suggest that bullies can be unpopular at school and seek to rectify that fact through the act of bullying. Another study by Caravita and Cillessen (2012) identified popularity as mediating bullying's agentive goals and as a means to secure one's popular status. This cannot be divorced, however, from Ahmed and Braithwaite's (2004) repeated findings that bullies are often motivated by "unacknowledged shame" that gets displaced to "other-directed blame and anger" (p. 269). Ahmed's (2004) theorization of shame can account for shame's presence for *bully* and *victim.*

Shame exists through the witnessing of the shameful, and this shame can exist even when a subject is alone: "it is the imagined view of the other that is taken on by a subject in relation to itself. I imagine how it will be seen as I commit the action, and the feeling of badness is transferred to me"; shame also exists in the attempt to conceal the shameful (pp. 105-106). This

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is where bystanders come in: as witnesses or imagined witnesses to both the victim and a bully. Bullies may induce shame in victims through bullying, and they may employ bullying in covering over their own unacknowledged shame. Therefore, shame can exist as a deterrent for behavior (p. 107), i.e. a motivation for students to seek to approximate the ideal, as much as it may encourage bullying behavior in an attempt to conceal or displace the bully's shame. This reveals shame's self-fulfilling nature; it only works when the student desires to fit in and reproduce the norm—or, at least, to conceal their point of deviance. To say all of this differently, shame can motivate the bully and demark the victim: one to avoid witnessing (displacement) and the other to be marked for witnessing.

While research connects bullying to love for a popularized ideal and the failure to meet it,[19] current conceptions of "popularity" and its role in bullying are largely insufficient because we generally neglect popularity's affective aspects and its attributive capabilities. Rather than looking at popularity's role in bullying as discursive and affected, it is looked at in terms of social skills and maladjustment (see Postigo, González, Mateu, & Montoya, 2012). This stance disregards the fact that further research suggests that popularity is determined by resemblance, with children engaging in bullying behaviors to maintain resemblance to and likability with the image of the popular, idealised peers (Witvliet, Olthof, Hoeksma, Goossens, Smits, & Koot, 2010). When we place popularity and shame in the context of Ahmed's affective economies, however, we can examine the way that popularity is a manifestation of our investment in an idealized norm that does not reside in a single sign or object but in the attribution of specific

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[19] Popularity is related to idealised identities and "indicates visibility, dominance, and prestige" (de Bruyn, Cillessen, & Wissink, 2010, p. 543). de Bruyn et al.'s study demonstrated that bullying and victimization were predicated by perceived popularity: a positive correlation between popularity and bullying and an inverse correlation between popularity and victimization.

affective orientations towards some objects and away from others. This is especially the case for shame: "In experiences of shame, the 'bad feeling' is attributed to oneself, rather than to an object or other" (p. 104). This occurs on different levels of bullying. Put in concert with Ahmed and Braithwaite's (2004, 2006, 2012) body of research into bully's displaced shame, shame can mechanize bullying when the bully fails to acknowledge their shame: the shame becomes displaced outward, resulting in aggression. On another level, shame (re)orients victims' bodies in an affective economy when the circulation and accumulation of shame "sticks" to victim bodies, attributing those bodies as the cause of that shame (p. 107). Our current conceptions of bullying's machinations do not adequately address shame's (re)orienting power to perpetuate relationships of inequity between idealised and unideal identities that occur across bullying actors.

Disgust and Bullying

In my overview of CES theory, I argued that emotions are "distinctly shaped along systemic lines (Cintron, 1998, p. 131). Cintron emphasizes that this is particularly the case for negative emotions like anger and nastiness, stating these emotions "do not just well up from the interior of a person" but are systemic (p. 131). Likewise, Ahmed rejects views of disgust as an unmediated "gut feeling," and suggests instead that disgust "is mediated by ideas that are already implicated in the very impressions we make of others and the way those impressions surface as bodies" (p. 83). I spend most of the rest of this chapter analyzing *hate* in bullying, but in order to do so, I first need to turn attention briefly to *disgust*, which works intimately with *shame* and *hate*. In fact, when it comes to bullying, I look at *disgust* as a crucial mechanizer: the negotiator between *shame* and *hate* that acts in many ways as the breaking point between *bully* and *victim,* hate on one side and shame on the other. In this section, I explain Ahmed's theorization of

disgust, which relates back to idealisation and the attribution of affects to different bodies in relationships of difference and displacement. I examine the role of witnessing in disgust, like with shame, and how it relates to the roles *bully, victim,* and *bystander*. I then turn my attention to the intimacy between disgust and hate, introducing their metonymic function that I expound and apply in my next section, "Hate and Bullying: Kids Are Cruel."

As I claim with all of the emotions I examine, *disgust* is discursive and performative, but disgust is a unique emotion because it functions as an emotion and an emotive speech act (Ahmed; p. 94). This means that disgust is an utterance intended to *do* something.[20] An apology is a speech act meant to reconcile, for example. Disgust, meanwhile, is a speech act meant to condemn: "*That is disgusting!*" Ahmed explains that, when used as a speech act, disgust is associative; it "sticks" to certain objects in metonymic association upon contact with other objects or signs that feel them to be disgusting "*as if that was* a material or objective quality" (p. 88). This is the case, Ahmed suggests, for the sign "Paki"; "Paki" sticks to specific bodies metonymically and saturates those bodies with the negative affective values (the disgust) the sign has accumulated as it circulates and makes contact between bodies (p. 195). Disgust depends on contact, Ahmed claims; when one's surface impresses upon that which is attributed as the cause of disgust due to iterated histories of negative affect that have "stuck" to that object or sign, the disgusted recoils from the object the disgust is about, and the "feelings of sickness become attributed to the object ('I feel sick, you have sickened me, you are sickening')" (p. 85). "Through sticking these two objects [metonymic association between an object and its disgustingness] together (adherence)," Ahmed explains, "disgust allows the subject to recoil, as

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[20] Ahmed describes disgust as an utterance, but as I apply this theory to bullying, I regard *acts* of bullying to be speech acts of disgust. I will return to this shortly.

if from an object, even given the lack of an inherent quality to the object" (p. 88). Therefore, disgust acts upon bodies in relationships of rejection, attribution, and displacement.

Disgust as an emotion can be attributive because speech acts of disgust "stick" disgust to objects and subsequently (re)orient the objects away from the surfaces of the objects that perform the speech act with which the "disgusting" object comes into contact. According to Ahmed, "disgust binds objects together in the very moment that objects become attributed with bad feeling, as 'being' sickening" and "move[s] objects through the recognition of likeness [metonymy]" (p. 88). For Smith, Clementi, and other LGBT individuals targeted in bullying for their queerness, disgust "sticks" to their bodies when their surfaces come into contact with homophobic surfaces in metonymic association with *gay, dyke, fag, queer*. Further, when cyberbullying outed Smith as bi and as having exchanged sexual messages with a man, he becomes attributed as the *source* of disgust experienced by any bigoted members of his micro and macro community, rather than being merely what the disgust was about. According to Ahmed, the presence and proximity of the "disgusting" object is read as an offense, and upon offense felt in the contact between the two objects, the "disgusting" is expelled from the disgusted. Much as with shame and idealisation, therefore, disgust works to delineate subjects and secure power hierarchies, "as an imperative not only to expel, but to make that very expulsion stick to some things and not others" (p. 99). Also like shame, then, disgust is ambivalent, and dismantling feelings of disgust towards certain objects can be difficult and self-insular because that object becomes attributed with the bad feeling.

Returning to my consideration of *shame*, *bully*, and *victim*, I suggest that disgust accompanies bullying actors' shame: the bully's unacknowledged shame (as internal-facing disgust) that gets expunged in speech acts of disgust (the bullying); the victim's internal-facing

disgust when shame, upon witnessed exposure, negatively colors their relationship with him- or

herself. Disgust is a catalyst for and results from shame, a multi-directional relationship equally

connected to mechanisms of idealisation and acts of shared witnessing in order to align bodies:

> The demand for a witness shows us that the speech act, 'That is disgusting!' generates
> more than simply a subject and an object; it also generates a community of those who are
> bound together through the shared condemnation of a disgusting object or event. A
> community of witnesses is generated, whose apparent shared distance from an event or
> object that has been named as disgusting is achieved through the repetition of the word
> 'disgust' (Ahmed, 2004, p. 94).

While disgust and shame between bullying actors will vary by case, in Smith's experience, the

cyberbullies' decision to post his private sexually queer messages online was a speech act of

disgust ("Look at these disgusting messages, this should be condemned"), which exposed his

non-normative identity to his small, rural town in Tennessee, a community specifically known

for conservative and homophobic sentiment (Tamburin, 2019; Tensley, 2019). The attribution of

disgust to Smith as an object is affirmed through a generated community of likeminded

bystanders who will reiterate that disgust. In his specific situation, the cyberbullies' disgust

exposed the messages, opening Smith to the shared disgust of his greater community; in turn,

Smith experienced shame,[21] which turns inward, impacting Smith's relationship with himself: I

am bad, I am shameful, I am disgusting.

Both *shame* and *disgust* are performative, generating instances of *bully* and *victim* as

objects that repeat past associations of disgust and shame, shame and disgust, in a tug-of-war of

love for the ideal and aversion to the unideal—though not necessarily in binaries or one-

directional relationships. Relationships of disgust and shame are performed, built upon histories

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[21] This claim is based on the Smith's older brother's account of his actions: that Smith could not "imagine being the
laughingstock and having to go to school Monday morning" and "couldn't face the humiliation that was waiting on
him when he got to school" (Chiu, 2019).

of contact of reiterated negative affects that "stick" to an object (p. 87). Ahmed sates that disgust performatively intensifies the contact between bodies and objects, drawing from and constructing affective signs "and with them, forms and conventions" (p. 93). This is yet another reason these affective structures can become so insular:

> [Disgust] relies on previous norms and conventions of speech, and it generates the object that it names (the disgusting object/event). To name something as disgusting is not to make something out of nothing. But to say something is disgusting is still to 'make something'; it generates a set of effects, which *then adhere as a disgusting object* (p. 93).

As such, disgust can have a "binding" effect that can "block" signs from accruing new meaning (p. 92). The performativity of disgust, then, resists new avenues of affect that may generate new meanings for "disgusting" objects. I believe this is yet another obstacle we must overcome in order to interrupt the power imbalances that mark bullying as a phenomenon—a claim I will expound in the following section when I discuss how *hate* and *disgust* (re)orient bodies towards and away from each other in relationships of attribution and displacement.

Hate and Bullying: "Kids Are Cruel"

I conclude this chapter with a discussion of *hate*, an emotion that has readily been correlated with bullying in our discourse, though once again without comprehensive critical consideration of how hate functions and is maintained. In this section, I examine hate's metonymic function, similar to that of *disgust*, and how *hate* has metonymically "stuck" to *bully,* built from and contributing to its performative dimensions. I offer examples from my selected texts of hate's metonymic function in popular discourse about bullies. This evidence furthers the connection to and reliance upon idealisation that *shame*, *disgust*, and *hate* demonstrate. I finish my discussion, however, by turning my attention to a particular affective structure we heavily depend on in our discussion and conceptualization of bullying: the adage "kids are cruel." Further theorizing *cruelty* and its relationship to *hate,* I reject this convenient and uncritical

explanation for the cause of or intention behind bullying, making the case that this adage blocks a more systematic and comprehensive account of the role negative affects play in mechanizing children's acts of bullying. Altogether, I hope to illuminate how bullying performs the "hateful" versus the "hated," and in doing so, call attention to affective dynamics extant in bullying that have hitherto remained largely tacit.

While Ahmed makes the case that emotions do not reside in a subject or object but, rather, circulate between the surfaces of objects, "sticking" and (re)orienting bodies upon contact, this is perhaps the case most of all for *hate*; she states, "Hate is economic; it circulates between signifiers in relationships of difference and displacement" (p. 44). According to Ahmed, this occurs on multiple levels: in the boundaries between selves and others and between communities (p. 51). Hate exists "where 'others' are brought into the sphere of my or our existence as a threat. This other, who may stand for or stand by other others, *presses* against me, threatening my existence" (p. 51). In that contact, "hate involves a turning away from others that is lived as a turning towards the self" (p. 51), which is how hate relates to idealisation: one turns away from those "others" who do not approximate the ideal, turning towards themselves and, in doing so, reaffirming their love for the ideal that already takes their shape (p. 109). In this regard, hate works to align subjects, directing the hateful towards the ideal and condemning those who do not or cannot. Ahmed clarifies, however, that hate is not in one figure but in the alignment of different figures as objects of hate, "a creation that crucially aligns the figures together, and constitutes them as a 'common threat'" (p. 44). Hate works, in other words, to delineate subjects and communities of subjects, "working to differentiate some others from other others" (p. 47).

An important precept about hate, particularly for bullying, is that hate functions in an affective economy, which determines and delineates relationships between subjects. Ahmed explains,

> My model of hate as an affective economy suggests that emotions do not positively inhabit *anybody* or *anything*, meaning that 'the subject' is simply one nodal point in the economy, rather than its origin and destination. […] Hate is not contained within the contours of a subject [but] constitutes the relationality of subject, objects, signs and others" (p. 46).

In affective economies of hate, hate circulates between signs and bodies, as opposed to residing positively in signs (p. 60). This allows for the (re)orientation of subjects as objects in difference and displacement: "hate circulates in signs that are detached from particular bodies, affect[ing] the way bodies take shape" and aligning bodies as the objects of hatred (p. 55). Without a fixed referent, hate cannot be reduced to a particular body, allowing hate to economically circulate in ways that delineate subjects, "a differentiation [between subjects] that is never 'over,'" which subsequently "justifies the repetition of violence against the bodies of others" in the name of protecting and securing the ideal image (p. 47). Under this theory, we can initially see how hate may mechanize bullying: it is not necessarily the body of the particular victim that is hated but their approximation to hated figures in an economy that affects the way the victim's body can take shape, a determination wrapped up in performed histories that "seal" others as objects of hate (p. 60).

I discussed in the previous section that disgust functions metonymically, "sticking" to objects in a relationship of (re)orientation, that binds objects together by attributing that object with the negative affect, and hate functions similarly: in recognition of likeness and metonymy (p. 88). "Stickiness" regards how signs become saturated with affect, a metonymic proximity between signs that conceals the emotions attributed to objects extant therein (p. 194). Ahmed claims that "this model of 'sticky signs' shows how language works as a form of power in which

emotions align some bodies with others, as well as stick different figures together, by the way they move us" (p. 195). Ahmed contends that is the case for bodies "stuck" as "hateful,"[22] against whom acts of hate are directed (p. 13, 60). While I discuss performativity more towards the end of this section, metonymic "sticking" is performative in nature, accruing affective value ("stickiness") based on iterated histories of affective circulation and impressions upon the surfaces of objects. In bullying, *hate* has been reiterated in connection to the bigotry and intolerance of bullies, and this correlation has elevated to the point of metonymic "sticking." It is an intimate proximity between *bully* and *hate*: bullies are hateful: their hate did this: hate did this: *bully* is *hate*. We see this metonymic association and proximity quite literally in the discourse surrounding Smith's death, for example: "At a time when we want to believe that we're on the brink of toppling some of our country's remaining anti-LGBTQ barriers, *lingering hate not only exists—it also blots out queer stories before they're even told* [emphasis added]" (Tensley, 2019). Here, *bully* and *hate* have "stuck" to the point that hate has metonymically become the subject, replacing and eclipsing the cyberbullies as the agentive force behind the posting of Smith's messages.

While the sample discourse above demonstrates literal metonymic proximity between *bully* and *hate*, "sticking" of negative affect to objects often occurs in more tacit ways, and this is the case for a significant discursive construct that plays a prominent role in our understanding of bullying: the adage "kids are cruel." Also said as "kids can be cruel," I argue that this is more than a phrase but an affective construct in which we are invested, a "common knowledge"

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[22] Beyond this one instance of use, I deviate from Ahmed's language regarding "hateful." Her use of "hateful" refers to those against whom hate is directed: "I suggest that the work of emotion involves the 'sticking' of signs to bodies: for example, when others become 'hateful', then actions of 'hate' are directed against them)" (p. 13). However, as I move forward in my analysis, I will be referring to those against whom hate is directed as "hated" and those who feel the hatred toward the other as "hateful."

understanding that can somewhat dismissively explain away unkind behavior. We see this employed when discussing the act of bullying's motivation. The child's teacher fell back on this tried-and-true adage, for example: "I know kids can be cruel […] I am aware that [the homemade drawing pinned to his shirt was] not the fanciest sign, BUT this kid used the resources he had available to him to participate in a spirit day'" (Vigdor, 2019). The idea of "cruel kids" came up in discussion of Smith as well, described as the "obvious cruelty" of the cyberbullies' actions (Tensley, 2019). The reiterated logic is that kids are cruel and therefore bully. *Bullies,* simply, are cruel kids. There may be something to this, to an extent, due to factors like children's under-developed prefrontal cortexes. What concerns me here, however, is how the adage "kids are cruel" shapes our conception of bullying, ultimately over-simplifying the affects at work that motivate bullies and, therefore, mechanize bullying. "Kids are cruel" shifts our focus without careful examination; it summarizes the actions and intentions of the bullies in three words before attention is shifted back to the victim, the protagonist in the discourse. The incident with the child is the perfect example of this, as I will further explore in the next chapter. Meanwhile, discourses and economies of affect like *hate* and *disgust* at work in the dynamic remain un- or under-examined.

Ahmed does not theorize *cruelty*, which is apt considering cruelty is not an emotion but a behavior. This can be misconstrued in popularized definitions of cruelty that describe it as "callous indifference to or pleasure in causing pain and suffering" ("Cruelty," def 1), as if it were an emotional disposition. However, in critical and legal terms, cruelty is a behavior: inflicting physical or mental harm or suffering ("Cruelty," def 1.1; "Cruelty," def 1.2). With this understanding, I would indeed describe bullying as a form of what Shklar (1989) theorized as "public cruelty": "the deliberate infliction of physical, and […] emotional, pain upon a weaker

person or group by stronger ones in order to achieve some end, tangible or intangible" (p. 29). This aligns with Volk et. al's theorization of bullying as aggressive, goal-oriented behavior. Additionally, mirroring some of Ahmed's claims about hate and disgust, Shklar specifies that cruelty is not sadism or "an occasional personal inclination" (p. 29). Rather, she states that public cruelty "is made possible by differences in public power" that cause and are caused by systems of coercion (p. 29). This is yet another strong tie between cruelty and bullying: they occur in the context of a power imbalance. These formative correlations, as well as studies that suggest that cruelty can be linked to child development (see Dadds, Whiting, Bunn, Fraser, Charlson, & Pirola-Merlo, 2004), suggest why it may be so tempting to explain away bullying with "kids can be cruel." However, this very understanding of cruelty as a *behavior* instead of an emotion renders this adage no longer viable as an explanation for bullying behavior; this is to say, if cruelty *is* the bullying behavior, then we cannot posit "cruelty" as the motivation behind or cause for that behavior. The motivation or cause, I suggest, comes from elsewhere: negative affects of *hate* and *disgust*. Therefore, while bullying and cruelty may be thought of as correlated behaviors, we must reject the adage "kids are cruel" as explanation of the cause of bullying and look instead at discourses of *hate* and *disgust*.

I believe the distinction I made above is important because: 1) viewing cruelty as a behavior instead of a disposition dislodges "cruelty" from being a characteristic of or intrinsic to the bully; and 2) situating "cruelty" in a context of power imbalance allows us to examine the discursive mechanisms surrounding it. We need to resist reliance upon or affective investment in constructs that posit "kids" or "bully" as fixed referents for negative affects or "cruelty." As already discussed, Ahmed explains that emotions do not have fixed referents (p. 60, 105); instead, signs may become "sticky" and saturated with affect through the process of circulation.

In the metonymic case of "bullies are hate," predicated on "kids are cruel," the object is metonymically bound to a negative affect and as such, becomes a blockage in an affective economy. Ahmed explains blockages thusly: "When a sign or object becomes sticky it can function to 'block' the movement (of other things or signs) and it can function to bind (other things or signs) together" (91), which can "slow down or 'clog up' the movement between objects" (p. 92). Objects that have become metonymic blockages in affective economies run the risk of becoming fetishized (p. 92), and this crops up in our discourse. In addition to the hate-bully metonymic example I provided early in this section, we can see a one-dimensional and fetishized performance of *bully* in our discourse about Keaton Jones when he "describes *the abuse [he] suffers at the hands of bullies* at his school [emphasis added]" (Trimble, 2017); the bullies are cruel, even villainous, in such descriptions while our attention is maintained on the victim-protagonist. When we let objects become blocked with specific affective orientations and performative conceptions, we cut off new avenues of theory for understanding those objects. If kids are cruel and bullies are abusive, it *comes from somewhere.* Beyond behavior, I propose it does not come from individual bodies but from affective economies, and that it comes not from the behavior "cruelty" but from discourses of *hate* and *disgust*. We need to move past the convenience of "kids are cruel" in explanation, which takes these two dangerous mechanizing emotions for granted.

Hate, its function to delineate "hateful" and "hated" subjects, and the way we metonymically associate it with *bully* impacts how *bully* and *victim* are performed. My concern is, rather than examining hate in order to dismantle discourses that elevate some bodies over others, we're embracing the sentiment of "kids are cruel" and "bullies are hate" in our focus on the hero-victim in ways that perpetuate power imbalances and divides between subjects. To say

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this differently, we too uncritically assign *hateful* to *bully,* placing them "over there" where they are the ignorant and cruel villains while we turn our attention to the victim, the good and unfortunate hero for whom we cheer, a deeply engrained dynamic that reflect and reiterate ways that *bully* and *victim* are performed in our discourse. Anderson (2000) describes the necessary but potentially problematic issue of "moral boundary drawing," which constructs a line between "us," the enlightened and moral, and "them," the intolerant who advance injustice. While she contends that social justice requires moral boundary drawing, she warns that such a mentality can promote moral exclusivity. Trainor observes that this kind of moral line-drawing "makes clear distinctions between those on the side of justice and those who perpetuate injustice" in ways that can undermine our attempts to teach tolerance and appreciation for difference. As I discussed earlier in this section, hate operates in the negotiation of boundaries between selves and communities (Ahmed; p. 51) that are performed based upon past histories of encounters (p. 54), and our current theorization of bullying's cause suggests an altogether simplistic theorization of kids who are unempathetic and cruel (the "hateful") and kids who are victim to that cruelty (the "hated") in performed patterns that fail to delve deeper into the power dynamics at work. Ultimately, I propose that a more nuanced understanding of (i) how *bully* and *victim* come to be performed, (ii) how we undertheorize the cause for bullying, and (iii) how affective and "common sense" constructs in our language like the adage "kids are cruel" may be perpetuating—if not more deeply embedding—performed roles of "us" versus "them" is required in order to more effectively reveal and dismantle extant power imbalances in bullying.

What's Next?

My purpose in this chapter was tri-fold: 1) to introduce central tenets of Critical Emotion Studies theory I employ in my analysis, which views emotion as epistemic, systemic,

mediated/mediating, and discursive; 2) to explain how *shame*, *disgust*, and *hate* work in a complex and overlapping dynamic to mechanize cultural contexts of power that enable bullying, particularly through idealisation, the delineation of subjects, and performed roles; and 3) to employ Ahmed's affective theory to examine examples of these mechanizing affects in our discourse surrounding prominent bullying stories. My exploration of CES theory also endeavored to expose emotions' normative function, which I propose contributes to bullying through the process of approximation and orientation toward or away from the normative ideal mechanizes bullying—providing platforms through which *bully* and *victim* come to be determined, come to be discrete, and come to be performed. My hope in doing so was to complicate the popular notion that a lack of empathy is the leading culprit behind bullying, as well as to illuminate and refute common affective and discursive structures like the adage "kids are cruel," which work to render other emotions and power structures extant in this issue tacit.

In my next chapter, I turn my attention from causes of bullying to our discursive responses to it and the politics of emotion extant therein. I believe that *shame*, *hate*, and *disgust* in circulation press up against and spill over into bullying response. For example, idealisation and discursive focus on and amplification of *victim* is tied up in the politics of *empathy, pain,* "wound culture," and the commodification of victimhood, and are integral in shaping how we respond to bullying. Likewise, attribution and (re)orientations of *disgust* and *hate* as they move between signs in relationships of 'sticking,' difference, and displacement are shaping how we respond to bullying; an example being how our inclination towards *bully-hateful* and *victim-hated* moral boundary drawing is impacting our conception of punishment and compensation for bullying and restorative justice. This being said, the bevy of affects at work in bullying are still tacit or considered uncritically inconsequential compared to *empathy,* posited at the heart of

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bullying prevention and response. As with this chapter, I hope to continue to complicate that

notion in chapter three as I move beyond bullying's cause to examine discourses of response.

CHAPTER THREE: EMPATHY, PAIN, AND (IN)ACTION IN BULLYING RESPONSE

For the remainder of my thesis, I turn my attention from bullying's cause to affects extant in bullying solutions, split along two dimensions: our prevention efforts and our response. I classify *prevention* as the curricular and programmatic interventions employed by schools to mitigate power imbalances and bolster socioemotional skills to prevent bullying *before* it occurs. However, I center this chapter on bullying *response*, which encapsulates the discourse that circulates about and actions taken in reaction to bullying and its actors *after* it has occurred. I locate my discussion of response in my selected incidents of bullying and the public discourse that surrounded them, and I return to the school halls to discuss prevention in the next chapter. There are two reasons I examine response before I examine prevention. Firstly, our response to incidents of bullying illuminates popular conceptions of bullying and its actors, which impacts conceptions of viable and/or necessary preventions and solutions. Secondly, the affective economies that circulate in discursive responses to incidents of bullying further reveal the complex politics of emotions that comprise this issue—politics of emotion must be addressed in our prevention efforts should they truly get to the heart of bullying and dismantle its emotioned core. In order to discuss the emotions extant in—or absent from—our prevention efforts, I intend to elucidate the current popular, affective machinations of bullying that construct discourses and performed roles for bullying's actors. In particular, I employ CES theories of *empathy* in bullying prevention and response: the role it plays, the other emotions evoked in empathy, and its political functions.

In this chapter, I examine discourses of affect surrounding and actions taken after highly circulated incidents of bullying that gained national appeal and rendered—or, notably, did *not*

render—an immense public response. In doing so, I return once again to the fourth-grade child's, Keaton Jones', and Channing with bullying and their stories' national discursive aftermath, within which affective power structures are produced, reflected, and maintained. I also explore another bullying incident that occurred in September 2019 and circulated in conjunction with the child and Smith: a ten- Smith's experiences year-old black girl who was bullied and assaulted on her school bus. While I depend on Ahmed's theories of *pain, grief*, and *regret,* all of which reproduce and shape our response to bullying and, subsequently, future prevention efforts, I also rely heavily on Spelman's theories of *pain* and *suffering* in my analysis: how pain exists in an economy of suffering, how it can be (mis)defined and (mis)appropriated in the realm public discourse, and how empathy and compassion in response to suffering may perpetuate inequitable power dynamics. Expounding further problematic elements of empathy, I examine discourse and actions taken surrounding the child's story, exploring empathy's unreliable and uneven effects and the fetishized production of wound culture, which significantly impacts how *victim* is performed as an identity. I analyze how discourses of pain are employed following Smith's suicide and the role *apologies* and *regret* play in our response to different incidents of bullying. Ultimately, these examples demonstrate not only how *victim* comes to be performed in popular discourse but also how different types of victims come to be performed differently. I end this chapter by exploring a pendulum of hate between *bully* and *victim/spectators* that exists in bullying response that creates oversimplified divides between bullying subjects through increasing demands for punishment and compensation.

Critical Theories of Empathy

Were I to answer the question "What is empathy?" in the simplest, most popular terms, empathy might be thought of as the answer to the vast majority world's problems. I already

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visited literature touting perceived benefits of empathy for students in the first chapter, giving

students what Borba pithily called the "empathy advantage": "the edge they need to lead

meaningful, productive lives." While Palmer (2018) describes empathy as "a hotly contested

keyword" in education (p. 34), the empathy craze extends to the global level. Empathy has

broken into the private sector, listed as an "essential ingredient for leadership success and

excellent performance" in the *Harvard Business Review* (Goleman, 2014); 20% of businesses in

the U.S. offer empathy training for managers in 2017 (Zaki, 2019). Even more pervasive,

however, are the connections being drawn between empathy, global problems, and democracy.

In addition to their commentary on empathy and education, both Boler and Friere (2004)

examine the relationship commonly posed between empathy and the promotion of democracy

and ethics, and while the former is rather critical of such a claim, the latter contends that

empathy plays a central role in "*ethicizing* the world" (p. 7). Perhaps the most prolific proponent

of empathy, Baron-Cohen (2014) goes so far as to suggest that if we were to leave empathy out

of global decision-making, we risk repeating Nazi Germany and the Final Solution, having

attributed lack of empathy as the reason Nazis were able to morally justify their actions.

      This sort of empathy hype has flooded our popular discourse; in 2008, Obama stated,

"The biggest deficit that we have in our society and in the world right now is an empathy deficit.

We are in great need of people being able to stand in somebody else's shoes and see the world

through their eyes" (Conroy, 2017). This mirrors Solomon's (2012) claims that we are currently

living in "a crisis of empathy" (p. 6), what Gini similarly describes as an "empathy deficit."[23]

Repeatedly, empathy is described as the foundation for morality, "the glue that makes social life

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[23] Such sentiment is reflected by those who examine bullying. In *Sticks and Stone: Defeating the Culture of Bullying and Rediscovering the Power of Character and Empathy,* for example, Bazelon states, "The scariest aspect of bullying is the total lack of empathy," both by the bullies and the bystanders (p. 55).

possible" (Hoffman, 2001, p. 3) and "the glue that binds us together in functioning, beneficial families, communities and countries" (Bazalgette, 2017). All of this is to say, then, that a very straight-forward and exceedingly positive connotation of "empathy" already circulates amongst us.

Moving beyond this, however, into a more critical domain is another matter altogether. Answering the question "What is empathy?" concretely is far more complex. While an increasingly common word employed in our cultural lexicon, Cunningham (2009) describes empathy as a "fuzzy concept" (p. 681), often confused for or conflated with compassion, sympathy, and pity. Its Grecian roots combine "em" and "pathos": in-feeling, with "feeling" meaning passion or suffering. This seems particularly apt given the two primary emotions I examine in relation to empathy are *love* and *pain.* The *Oxford Learner's Dictionary* captures the most common conception: "The ability to understand and appreciate another person's feelings, experience, etc." ("empathy," n.d.). This is what Adam Smith (1966) generally calls "sympathy": feeling what others feel, particularly with regards to their pain. Murphy, Costello, and Lilienfeld (2018) similarly define it as "*feeling the same emotion that one thinks another person is feeling*" (p. 1703). I will explore the difference between empathy and compassion in the next paragraph, but to put it in popular terms, empathy encourages us to "walk in each other's shoes," mirroring the emotions of others. This is different from pity, which is about your reaction to other's feelings, such as feeling bad for them instead of mirroring those emotions (Bloom, 2016, p. 40): "It sucks that you feel pain" instead of "I feel your pain." This all being said, it is Nussbaum, a prolific philosophical ethicist and author of *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotion*, who offers a crucial conception of empathy upon which I rely: empathy as a particular type of reactionary fellow-feeling that is an "imaginative reconstruction of another person's experience,

without any particular evaluation of that experience" (p. 302). In particular, I will be returning to Nussbaum's observation that empathy lacks critical evaluation of another's experience, which is central to multiple avenues of critique I provide throughout this chapter.

Although widely conflated, CES scholars contend that *empathy* and *compassion* are two completely different things, and this generally manifests in three core differences: the extent of feeling the other's feeling, the extent those feelings are evaluated, and the associated actions taken or not taken in response. Succinctly, Langstraat and Bowden state that compassion usually "entails both judgement *and* action, unlike empathy, which may result only in a judgement" (p. 7). They predicate this claim on Nussbaum's research, particularly on the supposition at the end of the previous paragraph. Singer and Klimecki (2014) articulate that compassion is not characterized so much by sharing suffering but by "a strong motivation to improve the other's well-being" elicited by concern and care: "feeling for and not feeling with the other" (p. 875). At first glance, it may therefore appear that compassion is better than or preferred to empathy for addressing social justice—and is, in fact, a hotly debated concept in areas of CES theory—but as applied to my research, I look at empathy and compassion as more intimately entwined. I am not alone in this regard; several scholars consider empathy as "a precursor to compassion" (Christov-Moore & Iacobini, 2014) or compassion to be "the extension of emotional empathy" through applied cognitive effort (O'Connor & Berry, 2014). Nussbaum generally concurs, though she is more conservative with such claims, stating that empathy is not sufficient or necessary for compassion, but very well may be a route to it (p. 328, 332). Palmer provides an excellent heuristic for conceiving of this difference: "the distinction between something internal (experienced by an individual) and something external (enabling action ideally to alleviate suffering)" (p. 35). Therefore, while I make no hierarchical claims between empathy and

compassion at this point in my research, I concur with Langstraat and Bowden's assessment that "compassion might therefore be understood as a more fully social and political emotion than empathy" (p. 7).

All of this being said, the differences between empathy and compassion do not play a crucial role in my analysis, especially to the extent they usually do in similar CES investigations. Throughout my analysis, the proposition that empathy does not involve critical evaluation is crucial, for my intents and purposes specifically, this mostly comes down to semantics. The distinction between these emotions is more relevant, I believe to bullying response than prevention, but only marginally so. For example, because I rely on Spelman's theories of suffering, I more commonly use the term "compassion" during my initial discussion of pain because this is the term she uses when describing "co-suffering." Nevertheless, when it comes to applying the theory to bullying responses, I lean towards more universally using the term "empathy." This is because some of the discursive responses, based on the definitions provided above, only count as empathy while other responses slide into the realm of compassion because they are certain actions taken in response to perceived injustices; however, problematic dimensions of empathy act as a precursor to the arguably compassionate (as opposed to empathetic) responses I examine, and distinguishment between them therefore renders no significant insights regarding the elements of bullying I am investigating in the scope of my two remaining chapters. Therefore, while this certainly is not and shouldn't be the case for most CES investigations, my application of "empathy" and "compassion" are fairly aligned because my analysis of bullying responses relies on the ways that their deficiencies and problematic elements are likewise aligned. I will be returning for now, then, to the term "empathy."

For my analysis of public response to bullying in this chapter and SEL curricular and programmatic prevention efforts next chapter, it is important to attend to where empathy comes from. While certainly not the only source, science roots empathy in biology, first connected by Di Pellegrino, Fadiga, Fogassi, Gallese, and Rizzolati in 1992 when their study found that certain neurons in the brain were dedicated to making meaning of and reflecting behaviors and characteristics of observed others. Later, Gallese, Fadiga, Fogassi, and Rizzolatti (1996) termed these neurons "mirror neurons," which have since been correlated with human empathy and the ability to understand and mirror the mental and emotional states of others (Iacoboni, 2009). Indeed, V.S. Ramachandran (2000) described these empathy neurons as the driving force behind "the great leap forward" in human evolution, bringing us together as a species by compelling us to connect with one another. Taking this even further, Iacobini described the "tiny miracles" (p. 4) that are mirror neurons as central to empathy and, subsequently, human morality, going so far as to then stipulate that such an empathy-driven morality "is deeply rooted in biology" (p. 5). A biological approach that posits empathy as an evolutionary impulse and innate capacity, as "mirror neurons" do, has severe implications for bullying prevention and response, or our understanding of prevention and response, because the extent of teachers' expression of empathy has been directly correlated with their ability to reduce bullying and promote social justice in schools (Murphy et. al, 2018),[24] especially considering that research suggests that some teachers are naturally more empathetic than others (Bazalgette, 2017).

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[24] While Murphy et. al vehemently tout this claim in their research, there is also a wide pool of research that questions or altogether negates the claim that there is a correlation between empathy and one's ability help others, reduce instances of aggression, or otherwise demonstrate higher levels of morality than their innately "less empathetic" peers (see Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Neuberg, Cialdini, Brown, Luce, Sagarin, & Lewis, 1997; Prinz, 2011; Vachon, Lynam, & Johnson, 2014). Nevertheless, Murphy et. al's findings align with popular prevailing assumptions about empathy and bullying.

Of course, empathy's source is more involved than hard-wired biology—and indeed, it must be for empathy-based bullying prevention efforts to be remotely viable, regardless of other problematic elements I will later expound. Davis states that there are a number of factors that produce empathetic behavior beyond biological capacity, such as one's socialization of empathy and context, which impacts "the *processes* taking place within the observer and the affective and non-affective *outcomes* which result from those processes" (p.12). More specifically, Gilbert (2005) takes a "biopsychosocial" approach, explaining that empathy[25] emerges "from genes that guide the building of physiologies, and physiologies that are shaped via experience, through to social contexts that shape self-identifies and roles people enact with each other and within themselves" (p. 9). As such, he describes empathy as a *mentality* and, further, claims that one has the ability to turn that mentality off (this, he claims, results in *cruelty*). While she does not describe it as something that can be turned on and off, Nussbaum also calls empathy "a mental ability" (p. 333). Such a view exists in juxtaposition with "mirror neuron" models, positing empathy as something that requires effortful control in order to interpret other's emotions (Boyer, 2010, p. 313); and this is where we see schools' opportunity to intervene. A way to frame the variety of factors involved in empathy, especially in terms of schools' ability to intervene, is by delineating interpersonal and social empathy. Segal and Wagaman state that social empathy "*is rooted in a deep understanding of those who are different from us*" (p. 201), while interpersonal empathy is "a practice skill" (p. 208). While they distinguish between these two types, however, Segal and Wagaman also stipulate that both can be developed when coupled

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[25] Gilbert uses the term "compassion," but a survey of his work reveals that his conception of "compassion" is conflated with common conceptions of "empathy."

with curriculum of contextual understanding and perspective-taking, and therefore serve as a framework for social justice pedagogy, to which I return in chapter four.

Primarily biological models are problematic because they posit empathy as something apolitical and unideological. Through curricular approaches based on individual practice, contextual understanding of systemic barriers, and macro perspective-taking, teaching empathy has been described as "[having] no significant correlation with political views related to social and economic justice" and "as a tool for teaching social justice separate from political affiliation" (Segal and Wagaman, 2017, p. 208). However, CES scholars reject any claims that emotions can be taught, learned, and employed separate from ideology. Lindquist states that emotions, and especially affective values taught in schools, do not exist "relationally or chronologically or linearly; they were, rather, points of entry into the textured densities of ideology" (p. 74). This is, in large, because emotions are deeply wrapped up in individual observation and evaluation (Jaggar, 1992, p. 153); this evaluation involves ethical judgments which cannot be divorced from ideology. Langstraat and Bowden state, "the injustice that is the source of suffering, as well as the evaluation of that injustice, are directly connected to shared social and political values" (p. 7). Palmer, meanwhile, rejects schools' capacity to teach empathy whatsoever: "if […] empathy represents a genuine emotional, individual experience, then it cannot be faked or taught uniformly (just as left-handed pupils cannot write naturally with their right hand)" (p. 36). He goes on to say that, because of this, "there is something almost sinister in the idea of forcing empathy on others" (p. 36). Further, Vachon, Lynam, and Johnson (2014) make the important distinction that, despite altruistic claims that empathy inspires us to help and avoid hurting others (see Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004), it does not necessarily mean that empathy produces positive consequences. We must reject claims that education, and the education of emotion, is

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apolitical or unideological. In fact, it is when these sorts of claims are made that it precisely the

most important that we pull back the veil and take a closer look.

Therefore, before I even begin my analysis of empathy's deficits, it is clear that

empathy's oversimplification, blind praise, and perceived separation from ideology has sheltered

it in many ways from critical consideration. Questioning empathy's virtue is often a road to

instant refutation and rejection.[26] After all, as Bloom points out, we operate under the general

sentiment that "you can never be too rich or too thin . . . or too empathetic" (p. 15). However,

through the rest of this thesis, it is not my intention to completely reject empathy, its value, or the

importance of encouraging it. Rather, as I transition into my analysis, I approach empathy as an

object of critique with the cautious care forwarded by Berlant. She asserts, "this worry—that

critique seeks to befoul its object—is especially acute in response to writing on what we might

call the humanizing emotions: compassion, sentimentality, empathy, love, and so on" (p. 5).

However, she goes on to say, "scholarly critique and investigation do not necessarily or even

usually entail nullifying the value of an affirmative phase or relation of affinity. It is more likely

that a project of critique seeks not to destroy its object but to explain the dynamics of its

optimism and exclusions" (p. 5). This is precisely my intent. I believe social optimism

surrounding empathy masks and, subsequently, supports its exclusions—that is to say, the ways

it does not serve the ends we so commonly assume it does. Attending to this dissonance and

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[26] It is difficult and awkward, for example, to tell people that I am critically examining empathy and its deficient and problematic role in bullying prevention and response when I am asked about my thesis. The pushback I receive the moment I mention anything that suggests empathy is not unmitigatedly good is immediate and passionate, and my arguments are instantly dismissed. I have even developed the habit of altering my "elevator pitch" explanation, stating that my thesis is about "looking at emotions *other* than empathy that are involved in bullying's cause, prevention, and response because empathy is our primary focus but it is not enough." When stated this way, their attention is maintained and they buy into my claims, which has allowed me to witness our profound attachment to *empathy* first-hand.

discrepancy is crucial if we are to move forward with more nuanced and equipped understanding of bullying as a phenomenon.

My examination of empathy in this chapter and the next is largely split between the two primary emotions of *em-pathos*: passion and suffering. Empathy involves an intimate relationship between *love* and *pain*. Ahmed describes empathy as a particular kind of love that "is often conveyed by wanting to feel the loved one's pain, to feel the pain on her behalf" (p. 30). She continues, "I want to have her pain so she can be released from it, so she does not have to feel it. This is love as empathy: I love you, and imagine not only that I can feel how you feel, but that I could feel your pain *for you*" (p. 30). Empathy can therefore be broken down into two affective veins: *empathy* (i) as an extension of *love* (ii) in response to another's *pain*. With regards to bullying, these two veins align respectively with (i) SEL bullying prevention efforts that encourage students to extend empathy and love to others and (ii) public discourse and response to incidents of bullying, which result from and evoke victim pain. I will return to empathy as the extension of a particular "fellow-feeling" love in chapter four, but focus in this chapter on how empathy is evoked in response to particular instances and types of victim pain. While I examine different dimensions of empathy in each chapter, my concerns in both fall under a central problem: the stark power inequity that exists between the spectators who extend empathy and the sufferers with whom the spectators empathize. Across empathy-as-love and empathy-responding-to-pain, power inequities between actors in an empathetic relationship result in issues like the (mis)appropriation of the suffering's experiences and pain, the potential erasure or oversimplification of difference, the fetishization of wounds, and the commodification of victimhood—the former two of which I discuss with bullying prevention and the latter two with bullying response. I will delve more deeply into the power inequities in empathetic

relationships when I discuss each of these issues, but first I must expound a thread that stitches each of these issues together: how empathy is unreliably extended based identification with the sufferer.

We are more likely to experience empathy for those who we perceive are like us, and our empathetic responses are stronger based on the strength of our identification with the object of suffering. Official definitions of empathy suggest this: the OED's definition of *empathy* is "the power of projecting one's personality into (and so fully comprehending) the object of contemplation" ("empathy," n.d.) and the definition of *to empathize* is "to understand another person's feelings and experiences, especially because you have been in a similar situation" ("empathize," n.d.). Both of these definitions highlight a largely under-considered dynamic of empathy: that it presupposes a thorough understanding of another's feelings and that that understanding is prefaced on similar experiences, things they already have in common. In more critical terms, research by Stotland (1969) found that we are more likely to empathize with, feel bad for, and pay a personal cost to aid suffering others with whom we perceive a greater likeness. Expanding on Strotland's findings, Trout (2009) describes empathy as a highly biased impulse that depends greatly on personal proximity to suffering and likeness to the sufferer (p. 25). This is a deeply problematic and even dangerous[27] "egocentric pattern of empathy" (p. 23), which promotes love of the self through love for likeness—what Bloom (2016) scathingly describes as empathy's propensity to view "blood as thicker than water." Langstraat and Bowden offer support from their examination of students involved in service learning, stating it "can be

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[27] Nussbaum offers a rather grim example of how empathy's dependence on likeness can render dangerous consequences: that Nazis did not extend empathy to Jewish people because they were unable to perceive likeness between them, deeply entrenched in viewing them as "a separate kind, similar to vermin or even inanimate objects," elevating instead those who shared the likeness of the Aryan race (p. 335).

harder for [the students] to feel compassion for their campus peers who might have different sexual standards from their own" (p. 12). I explore these claims and their implications in further detail later, but my analysis of different problems with empathy return again and again to this central root: that empathy, despite what we intend it to be, is inequitable. As I will show, these inequities permeate our responses to incidents of bullying, and until we illuminate and account for empathy's inequities, it cannot be the prevention tool we presume it to be.

Empathy and Pain in Bullying Response

"How does pain enter politics?" Ahmed asks; "How are lived experiences of pain shaped by contact with others?" (p. 20). *Pain* is fairly unique out of the emotions I discuss in the course of my research. While I have described *shame, disgust, hate,* and *love* as highly social and discursive, pain is markedly less so, at least in some regards. As I will discuss in this section, pain is a deeply individual and private emotion (Kotarba, 1983, p. 15; cited in Ahmed, 2004, p. 20); however, it becomes political when an individual's pain enters the collective realm when evoked in public discourse—or when evoked by an empathetic spectator. It is when pain enters what Arendt (1977) describes as the "public realm" that it becomes deeply problematic. In this section, I explain Ahmed and Spelman's theories of pain and empathy/compassion[28] and how the latter relates to the politics of pain. While my examination of pain extends through the rest of this chapter, what I am concerned with in this section is introducing the relationship between empathy and pain and the dynamic between sufferers and spectators who feel empathy for their

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[28] Ahmed discusses pain in relation to empathy and Spelman discuss suffering in relation to compassion. "Pain" and "suffering" as they use them are interchangeable. Empathy and compassion, as I discussed in the previous section, are not the same emotions, the reductionistic difference between them being empathy-as-emotion extending into compassion-as-action. Some responses to bullying stop at empathy while others extend to compassion (especially with regards to the responses to the sample bullying incidents, to be discussed later). However, because both are similarly aligned in their problematic relationship to pain and aligned in their impact on bullying response, I will continue to use them interchangeably in my theory.

suffering: the victims of bullying and the conglomerate of other actors in the public and educational spheres who respond to it. I explore how empathy for suffering can sustain power inequities between these subjects, tacitly maintaining differences between them. Additionally, the uneven power dynamic between these subjects lends itself to the (mis)appropriation of suffering in the public realm through assumptions of sameness and the power empathetic spectators have to define the meaning of the sufferer's pain.

Pain is complex, ranging from a physical sensation in response to an external stimulus to emotions like sadness, grief, regret, trauma, and more. Naturally, it is the latter in which I am interest. Ahmed describes pain as "that which even our most intimate others cannot feel," marked by "the impossibility of 'fellow feeling' (p. 39). As a deeply individual emotion, pain is shaped by "lived affective experiences" and emotional regulation (Trainor, 2008, p. 3), by "the attribution of meaning through experience" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 23), and through the process of memory coding and recall (Godinho, Magnin, Frot, Perchet, & Garcia-Larrea, 2006)—something that, Godinho et. al's study suggests, interacts with an individual's expression of empathy. Further, Ahmed explains that "even when we feel we have the same feeling, we do not necessarily have the same relationship to the feeling," meaning emotions innately involve miscommunication and an ability to have "shared feelings" (p. 11). This being said, Ahmed clarifies that pain also demands a collective politics because "the pain of others is continually evoked in public discourse, as that which demands a collective as well as individual response" (p. 20). This is precisely Arendt's point about discourses of suffering entering the "public realm," which, Spelman criticizes, makes one's pain debatable and creates "a moral and political worry about what happens to it when it becomes publicly discussed" (p. 63). Ahmed agrees, adding, "The sociality of pain – the 'contingent attachment' of being with others – requires an

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ethics […] the ethical demand is that I must act about that which I cannot know" (p. 31). This is why, she explains, it is difficult for pain to be shared through empathy, impossible to reconcile between subjects (p. 39). This is contrary to popular and public sentiment, such as those I explore later, that proclaim shared pain and understanding in the wake of tragedy.

Popular parlance asserts that empathy mitigates the differences between us, forging a "bridge" between us and them, but we need to reconsider this notion when it comes to pain. When it comes to suffering, empathy can sustain differences and inequity under the guise of eliminating it—a claim I greatly expound and support in the following chapter. Ahmed describes empathy as an extension of love that involves the desire to share in another's pain and, in doing so, to reduce that other's pain, but this maintains clear divides between subjects. She states,

This is love as empathy: I love you, and imagine not only that I can feel how you feel, but that I could feel your pain for you. But I want that feeling only insofar as I do not already have it; the desire maintains the difference between the one who would 'become' in pain, and another who already 'is' in pain or 'has' it. In this way empathy sustains the very difference that it may seek to overcome (p. 30).

Further, Berlant asserts that "compassion is a term denoting privilege: the sufferer is *over there*" (p. 4). Spelman's analysis expands on this, fronting a crucial understanding about empathetic sentiment and differences in power: "Compassion, like other forms of caring, may also reinforce the very patterns of economic and political subordination responsible for such suffering" (p. 7), asserting claims of superiority and inferiority (p. 9) and exacerbating rather than reducing existing inequities (p. 89). Furthermore, power is implicated in empathy and compassion's definition, evaluation, and distribution (see Spelman, 1997, p. 89), all of which impacts how we conceive of and treat bullying's actors. For example, a study conducted by

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Nordgren, Banas, and McDonald (2011) that examined empathy, pain, and responses to social suffering found that, in addition to the fact that people felt more empathy for pain when they've had similar experiences, the relatability of a subject's pain impacted those who we empower in our relationship of empathy and those we condemn, something their research suggests has direct correlations for bullying. They found that the more similar our experiences of pain, the more empathetic we are towards the subject, which "led teachers to recommend both more comprehensive treatment for bullied students and greater punishment for students who bully." My concern is that this asserts an affective disparity between *bully* and *victim* that more deeply entrenches differences between students—a bias that is reflected not only in my upcoming analysis of responses but also in conceptions of bullying's cause and prevention efforts. I conclude this chapter reconsidering these concerns in light of affective economies in discourses response.

The actors who enter a relationship of empathy and pain are at the center of my inquiry, begging the question: when an empathetic person feels empathy (in bullying, the public spectators and bystanders) for the suffering of another (the victim), who does it serve? In asking this question, I am not trying to imply that empathy and compassion do not render positive effects for sufferers; Spelman acknowledges that "compassion tends to organize the resources of the compassionate person in a way that can be enormously consoling and practically helpful to the sufferer" (p. 7). However, what I want to call attention to is the fact that empathy and compassion are a social relationship between actors that involves a "subsequent relationship to material practice" (Berlant, 2004, p. 1). Empathy and compassion involve what Palmer describes as "a potentially non-consensual gaze on another individual," forming an asymmetrical relationship (p. 34). I discuss how this leads to the (mis)appropriation of other's suffering in

subsequent paragraphs, but first I want to touch on how the expression of empathy and compassion can be performed to the spectator's benefit or degenerate into a potentially problematic relationship of charity. Unexamined, Jureric (2011) asserts that "empathy is dangerous: it placates the privileged and obscures 'the cultural politics of emotion'" (p. 11).

Empathetic sentiment can be "all talk and no action," what Spelman describes as the "loquacity on the part of those professing such a feeling" who makes their feelings about the suffering of another public as if in proof of their connection to the pain of the sufferer (p. 64). Such spectators, she claims, benefit by empathizing with painful "experiences we desperately do not want to have had, but we seem ready to attach ourselves, at a safe distance, to any glamour that is associated with such experiences. (p. 119). This can entangle itself in inequitable politics of charity: "You, the compassionate one, have a resource that would alleviate someone else's suffering" (Berlant, 2004, p. 4). Ahmed sees this as deeply problematic; she contends that "the over-representation of the pain of others is significant in that it fixes the other as the one who 'has' pain, and who can overcome that pain only when the Western subject feels moved enough to give" (p. 22). Ultimately, the power and privilege that spectators of pain hold over the sufferer cannot be undermined or ignored in any relationship of empathy and compassion.

Ahmed and Spelman contend that empathy, suffering, and the power dynamic between subjects that these emotions sustain are problematic because it allows a privileged spectator to (mis)appropriate the sufferer's pain. This occurs, they concur, when an individual's suffering is made a public object; this cannot happen, Arendt asserts, without our understanding of that suffering undergoing drastic and even dangerous distortion (see Spelman, 1997, p. 64). This is because pain is such a private emotion but becomes subject to interpretation and use by another

who expresses empathy in discourse. In feeling and responding to the pain of others, Ahmed says,

> I must act about that which I cannot know, rather than act insofar as I know. I am moved by what does not belong to me. If I acted on her behalf only insofar as I knew how she felt, then I would act only insofar as *I would appropriate her pain as my pain, that is, appropriate that which I cannot feel* [emphasis added] (p. 31).

A subject puts another's suffering in the terms of our his or her own affective experiences, distorting it and, further, giving us power over its meaning when it becomes publicly discussed.

The risk of (mis)appropriating another's suffering for the spectator's benefit becomes especially relevant and problematic when that suffering is evoked in public discourse where "the pain of others becomes 'ours', an appropriation that transforms and perhaps even neutralises their pain into our sadness" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 21). This is not emancipatory or unifying:

> It is not so much that we are 'with them' by feeling sad; the apparently shared negative feelings do not position the reader and victim in a relation of equivalence […] Rather, we feel sad *about* their suffering, an 'aboutness' that ensures that they remain the object of 'our feeling' (Ahmed, 2004, p. 21).

In other words, feeling for the suffering of others will only ever approximate their feeling and maintains the sufferer and their suffering as an object distinct from the spectator. Therefore, we must treat spectator appeals to and for the suffering of others with critical caution and unveil the power politics extant therein—which is my intent when I turn my attention in the remaining sections to analyzing the discourses of empathy and suffering surrounding the child, Jones, and Smith.

All of this has implications for bullying response because, though empathy, the spectator has the power to define the meaning of the sufferer's pain. One reason for this is the reduction and essentialization of an Other's experience. Jurecic contends that while empathy and

compassion[29] "may seem authentically personal, we are warned, they can be expressions of power, appropriations of others' experience, and falsely oversimplified understandings of social and cultural relationships" (p. 11). Specifically for empathy and schools, Bowden and Scott (2002), who examined empathy in service-learning, warn that empathy can be misemployed by students who believe they understand the experiences of another subject with whom they empathize at the consequence of essentializing those experiences to strengthen their own assumptions about the subject's situation (p. 8). I am concerned for the effects that empathy, misappropriation of pain, and defining the meaning of other's pain has in our public discourse surrounding bullying. Spelman states, "Interpretive battles over the significance of a person's or a group's suffering reflect larger political battles over the right to legislate meaning. The political stakes in the definition, evaluation, and distribution of compassion are very high" (p. 89). As I hope to show in my following analysis, which focus on my selected texts, how we define, evaluate, and distribute compassion in response to bullying indeed demonstrates the misappropriation of victim suffering, interpretive battles over pain, and the employment of suffering to further entrench *victim* and *bully* as performed roles in relationships of empathetic (in)action.

The Economy of Suffering and Fetishization of Victimhood: The Child and Jones

In the previous section where I explored common criticisms of empathy, I explained that empathy is unreliable (see Bloom, 2016, p. 10) because you feel empathy unevenly based on perceived likeness and identification. In other words, empathy is biased. This is critically important for our responses to incidents of bullying, determining to whom we extend empathy, to whom we extend compassion, and the extent to which we do both; and these factors depend on

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[29] Jurecic makes these claims sympathy and pity as well.

what Spelman describes as the economy of suffering, a theory that accounts for how our collective attention is channeled towards some more than others, a bias that I intend to show significantly impacts how *victim* in bullying comes to be performed. The incidents with the child and Keaton Jones exemplify the impact of empathy, its uneven effects, and how our attention is dependent on an economy of attention to suffering. Both cases demonstrate that empathy functions as a "spotlight effect" in public discourse, directing our attention towards some while eschewing others depending on how much we are "touched" by that victim's story—a dynamic that produces deeply problematic and uneven sentimental and material effects. In this section, in addition to supporting the claims made above, I argue that adapting conceptions of bullying victims, posited as the poor and unlikely heroes, further rather than interrupt affective power structures. In particular, I am concerned with how wound culture is increasingly entwined with bullying response and the rising commodification of victimhood, both of which impact how we conceive of and treat *bully* and *victim,* which come to be performed as identities.

There is a very serious problem in our process of deciding who deserves to receive our empathy and compassion and who does not: our bias in extending empathy and compassion to those by whom we are "touched" and inspired. Ahmed states, "We are touched differently by different others (see Ahmed 2000: 44–50) […] what attaches us, what *connects us* to this place or that place, to this other or that other is also what we find most touching; it is that which makes us feel" (p. 28). This is connected to debates about "worthy" suffering deserving of compassion and empathy, which dates back to classical rhetoric; Spelman points out that "Aristotle thought all people suffer, but some suffer in more interesting and instructive ways than others" (p. 8). This was certainly the case for the child's pain, who received a tidal outpouring of sentimental and material support for his woes after he, as his teacher Snyder put it, "inspired and touched the

lives of so many people" (Wilusz, 2019). Indeed, this was precisely the language employed by Randy Boyd, interim university president of the University of Tennessee, who tweeted, "I was touched to learn of a young Florida school student's heart for the University of Tennessee, and I LOVED his imagination designing his own shirt" (Elassar, 2019; Vigdor, 2019) before he showered the child in gifts. This was also the touted reasoning for the outpour of sentimental and material support from the hundreds and thousands of people who responded to Snyder's post with money and praise, claiming in various and multitudinous ways that they were "touched by this great young man," "touched beyond words," and "moved by his story."

Being touched, moved, and inspired by a child's "abuse […] he suffers at the hands at the hands of bullies" (see Trimble, 2017) parallels language used when talking about Keaton Jones: a flood of support after his story "inspired" thousands of people and motivated the #StandWithKeaton hashtag—and, as I will discuss later, the drastic turnaround in empathy and support the moment scandal besmirched his family name and he ceased to inspire and "touch" the public. The response to both of these incidents—and, I will expound in the following section, the general lack of response to the incidents with Smith and the ten-year-old girl—begs the question: which incidents of bullying "touch" us enough to inspire empathetic and compassionate response, and why do those specific incidents garner such a monumental discursive response? Further, why do specific incidents garner disproportionate material responses as well? For example, I will soon go into detail about how people were so "touched" by the child's and Jones' stories that the children were inundated with gifts and pledges of action on their behalf—a tune altogether different than the apologetic platitudes that followed Smith's death and the assault on the girl. Therefore, we must also ask: what are the implications of inequities in response for issues of bullying equity and social justice?

This line of reasoning is why Bloom describes empathy as a "spotlight": it has a narrow, intense focus that is channeled based on proximity and likeness. He states, "[empathy] shines most brightly on those we love and gets dim for those who are strange or different or frightening" and "it can sway us toward the one over the many" (p. 34). Batson, Klein, Highberger, and Shaw's (1995) research, which examined the extent to which one felt empathy for and extended aid to a sick child when they were provided a more personal and relatable description of that child, found that our extension of empathy depended heavily on about whom we were given more information and on whom we were told to focus, even prioritizing that child over similarly suffering children. In other words, empathy and compassion for a victim's pain depends greatly on where and towards whom our attention is channeled—a spotlight on "worthy" and "important" suffering. I return to empathy's spotlight effect after I discuss all four of my selected incidents because the juxtaposition in sentimental and material reponse to the sad white children (Keaton and Jones) and the suicide of a queer boy and assault of a young girl of color are starkly contrasting. By the end of this chapter, therefore, I hope to demonstrate that we need to critically consider whom we deem important enough to bring into the spotlight, why that might be, and whom we are leaving in the shadows—a concern at the core of Spelman's theories about attention, suffering, and compassion.

Spelman considers the implications of "the economy of attention to suffering," which she explains is complicated and multi-dimensional (p. 7). At its core, the economy of suffering exists where sufferers are posited as the subjects of tragedy (p. 5) and, subsequently, as the objects of compassion (p. 6). It exists as a lens for our attention, determining not only towards whom our attention and compassion are directed but also conscribing different kinds of attention from

different spectators of the suffering[30] (p. 7). The economy is exclusionary; it "works to focus concern for some kinds of suffering but not others" (p. 7), allocating our sentimental and material acts of compassion based on what tragedy has made it into the spotlight. My selected incidents demonstrate that this does not merely come down to screen time and scope of dissemination—indeed, the incidents with the child, Smith, and the girl all occurred in September 2019 and made headlines in every major news source. Rather, this chapter is dedicated to examining the disparities in response to victims despite similarities in dissemination and circulation and despite the fact that the consequences of the act of bullying resulted in greater suffering for the more ignored victims than the others by whose suffering we were more "touched." Ahmed accounts for this as a result of dynamics of similarity and idealisation: "'being moved' for some precisely by fixing others as 'having' certain characteristics" (p. 11). This certainly puts a moral and ethical weight on which victims' stories we chose to share and those we do not, but it also goes beyond that, encapsulating why we extend more empathy and compassion to some victims than others even when those incidents similarly circulate in the economy.

Our responses to bullying, guided by an economy of attention to suffering, form and are formed by power inequities following the pleasure and suffering of others, what Ahmed describes the fetishization of victim wounds and tragedy—but only *worthy* wounds and tragedy. Ahmed weighs in with concerns, stating that "the differentiation between forms of pain and suffering in stories that are told, and between those that are told and those that are not, is a crucial mechanism for the distribution of power" (p. 32). The disparity in sentimental and

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[30] Spelman describes this as "a division of labor in the organization of attention to suffering" and offers the example that women are assumed to have a greater duty of emotional care when extending compassion in response to the suffering of others (p. 7).

material response between the child with the t-shirt and the ten-year-old girl of color support a claim that Ahmed makes about public response to pain:

> Given that subjects have an unequal relation to entitlement, then more privileged subjects will have a greater recourse to narratives of injury. That is, the more access subjects have to public resources, the more access they may have to the capacity to mobilise narratives of injury within the public domain (p. 33).

Both Ahmed and Spelman account for this inequitable dynamic—and for the latter, how this inequitable dynamic impacts one's propensity to extend compassion to the victim—to the fetishization of the tragedy. Spelman states, "great tragic scenes make grief seductive" (p. 19).

Ahmed says this differently, though the effect is the same: what she describes as the "fetishization" of a victim's wound, which fixes the sufferer as a fetishized object of feeling in "'testimonial culture' (Ahmed and Stacey, 2001), in which narratives of pain and injury have proliferated […] turn[ing] pain into a form of media spectacle" (p. 33). In turn, the proliferation of stories of victim suffering and the fetishization of the wound therein open avenues for the commodification of victimhood. Kleinman, Das, and Lock (1997) state, "Collective suffering is also a core component of the global political economy. There is a market for suffering: victimhood is commodified" (p. xi; cited in Ahmed, 32). This market is extant in our bullying discourse and is entwined with the identity politics of subjects who "touch" us the most. We culturally fetishize empathy and victimization, which I will now expound, and render subjects of suffering into objects.

Ahmed and Spelman demonstrate concern about the emotional politics of the fetishization of victim tragedy in popular discourse and the commodification of victimhood in which it can result, and this is not just present but central in bullying discourse. Children who lament having experienced bullying are increasingly being provided rewards and special treatment, and while I focus on my selected incidents, this extends to media domains beyond the

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news and social media responses.[xvii] Perhaps the most obvious pinnacle of profiting off of bullying victimhood is the child's acceptance with honors to the UT class of 2028 with a four-year full-tuition scholarship, a gift of arguably monumental scope compared to the scope of the child's "tragedy." His rewards trickled all the way down to the boxes of swag he and his entire school was sent, the pep rally held in his honor with UT representatives, and the massive success selling his t-shirt proved to be—over 109,000 shirts sold, over 1,000,000 dollars paid (Abrahamson, 2019). Further, the child was celebrated and positioned as a national hero based on a limited story that he was picked on by a group of girls during a lunch:

- "he is creative, smart, and well loved"
- "Love, love, love. GOD bless this child's sweet heart."
- "congratulate him on a great design. This young man will go far in life."
- "I will be figuring out how to order my son the shirt designed by that great lil guy!!"
- "our little Vol brother […] be sure to let our little VFL know that Vol Nation hasn't forgotten him and that we've always got his back."
- "Great work young man!"
- "GOD BLESS YOU"
- "You're an amazing person"
- "With that scholarship you're going to change lives in the future."
- "It was really moved. I wish his a future full of happiness!" (Snyder, 2019).

The examples above are a sampling of the overwhelming discursive response to the child, but it didn't stop there. There were also tens of thousands of posts with people modeling in the child's t-shirt they purchased, which abounded with declarations of alignment and pride: "Proudly supporting," "Proudly wearing my new UT […] Spread the news of love!!," "Just received and now wearing with pride," and "We will wear them proudly. Wearing it proudly tonight!," to only list a few (Vigdor, 2019; Williams, 2019).

The response to Keaton Jones' video likewise illuminates tendencies to commodify victimhood, as it resulted in a massive profit for his family. On one level, this occurred through endorsements, experiences, and highly sentimental statements of comradery: rock stars'

invitations to their concerts; a post from Snoop Dog hitting Keaton up to hang out; the actor for

Eleven from the popular show *Stranger Things* saying she wanted to be friends; Chris Evans'

personal invitation for Keaton and his mom to attend the *Avengers* premier in LA free of charge;

and several other highly sentimental celebrity endorsements, like that of football player Jarrett

Guarantano, who took Keaton out for a day of lunch and hanging out then posted, "So I got the

chance to spend the day with my new best bud Keaton. […] This dude is very special and has

changed my life forever. Now I have the little brother I always wanted!" (Trimble, 2017). Once

again, Guarantano's post demonstrates a fetishized hero-victim subject: Jones now the star's

"best bud" and "little brother" with the power to "change [his] life forever." Further, the Jones

family garnered immense material profit: $55,000 raised on a GoFundMe page a stranger created

"to help with this childs future" after viewing Jones' video, 100% of which went to his family

(Parkinson, 2017); comments were riddled with cries against bullying and praise for this "brave

hero."

However, the incident with Jones also reveals how empathy and sentimental support for

suffering can be highly contingent and immediate, automatically "modified by our beliefs,

expectations, motivations, and judgments" (Bloom, 2016, p. 68). Following the frenzied

attention on Jones, a number of things happened that had expressions of empathy and subsequent

acts of support drying up. First, images and videos of Jones and his mother holding confederate

flags surfaced. Shortly thereafter, images circulated of his father flashing white supremacist gang

signs associated with the Aryan Circle. Jones' mom protested that they were estranged from

Jones' father, who is currently in prison for a number of violent offenses, but the public was far

less convinced by her claims that her poses with the confederate flag were "meant to be ironic

and funny and extreme," and that "I feel like anybody who wants to take the time to ask anybody

who I am or even troll through some other pictures, I mean, I feel like we're not racist"
(Shugerman, 2017). The donations dried up, celebrity empathy was rescinded, and the discourse
around him flipped. People now floated unfounded suspicion that Jones' mother, not a stranger,
started the GoFundMe page for their own profit (Parkinson, 2017). Jamie Sugiyama posted ""In
other news Keaton Jones' father is a white supremacist doing time so I bet you all feel super
good about giving that family money now" (Shugerman, 2017). In response, his mother
lamented, "Yesterday he was a hero, today the world hates us." She continues, "I have been
judged and sentenced, my entire family has been judged and sentenced based on two pictures and
people who do not know us. And that is something I would not wish on anybody. It is a little
ironic that it is brought the bullies out" (Shugerman, 2017). The victim's narrative of injury and
the meaning of his "victimhood" instantly changed, and with it, spectator's willingness to
empathize with, show compassion for, and extend material resources to him.

Ahmed warns against forming an identity around a wound, and given our public
responses to bullying, I believe this is currently a risk. Ahmed explains that fetishization is
behind "the transformation of the wound into an identity," explaining that when we put stock in
media and "testimonial culture," like my selected incidents, the victim's wound becomes a sign
of identity and belonging (p. 32). This is the premise of what Brown (1995) calls "wound
culture," which

> takes the injury of the individual as the grounds not only for an appeal (for compensation
> or redress), but as an identity claim, such that 'reaction' against the injury forms the very
> basis of politics, understood as the conflation of truth and injustice (Brown 1995: 73).
> This becomes problematic when the wound becomes "proof of identity" (Ahmed, 2004,
> p. 59).

The primary reason that this is problematic is because wound culture works to align subjects, the
very delineation of which may perpetuate exclusionary divides by furthering "us" versus "them"
discourses. These narratives reiterate a dominant discourse of victimhood: "the tragedy of the

event is the consequence of 'their hate' for 'us' ('Why do they hate us?')" (p. 158). *Victim* comes

to be performed as a subject defined in being hated by others and resisting that hatred. With

wound fetishism and our intense focus on the victim, their wound, and wound as identity, we see

a coherent discursive subject emerge: "together, we are hated, and in being hated, we are

together" (p. 158). This can be commodified through appeals of unity and pride. For example,

before the tidal wave of new t-shirt owners "proudly wearing" the boy's design, UT leveraged

appeals to pride to sell the t-shirts in the first place: "Now you can share in this student's

Volunteer pride by wearing his design on your shirt too," which was posted on the UT bookstore

website (Vigdor, 2019), and "Be a true volunteer and always wear your college colors with pride.

#endbullying," which was a UT twitter post linked to the bookstore website as well

(Abrahamson, 2019).

  While this kind of subject/community alignment is not inherently bad, what we see

repeated in our discursive responses is further villainization of *bully* and reverence for *victim* in

the abstract. Just as the unifying (and commodifying/fetishizing) examples provided above by

show, we are asked to align ourselves in performed roles. Ahmed states,

"The possession of an ideal in feelings of pride or shame involves a performance, which gives

the subject or group 'value' and 'character'. We 'show' ourselves to be this way or that, a

showing which is always addressed to others […] that allows the 'I' and the 'we' to be aligned"

(p. 109).

  Such alignments can serve positive ends, but Ahmed points out that, when involved in the

politics of pain, the victim's injury is implicated in relationships of innocence and guilt: someone

is to blame. This relates back to concerns about idealization, especially the idealization of

multicultural love and speech acts of disgust against certain (groupings of) subjects; these

alignments form an ideal and deviation from an ideal that requires attribution of blame. As Ahmed states, "such an ideal requires that some others fail to approximate its form: those who do not love, who do not get closer, become the source of injury and disturbance" (p. 141). In other words, there's risk of more deeply entrenching performed categories of "us" the righteous and "them" the ignorant. Subjects align themselves without critical consideration of the exclusionary and narrow repercussions resulting from many of our empathetic responses to the proclaimed wounds of others—especially when the wound is expressed by a teary, white, suburban child. I return to this concept again at the end of the next section.

Both the child and Jones demonstrate empathy's spotlight effect on specific kinds of pain, illuminating the material ramifications of compassion following the fetishization of a hero-victim's suffering. They also demonstrate that empathy in response to bullying can be short-sighted and misdirected and "provide occasions for the commodification of suffering, avenues for the traffic in sorrow or grief" (Spelman, 1997, p. 10). Sentimental and material responses to stories of bullying and in support of victims are not inherently a bad thing; Spelman asks, "How can tragedy be so dangerous if it affects large groups of people in such a way that they jointly rejoice in the success of the hero and jointly wail at his demise?" (p. 29). However, I contend it can be dangerous because "commodification of suffering does not mean that all narratives have value or even equal value" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 32). Further, Spelman points out that "the community must grieve and rejoice in the right way *over the right things* [emphasis added]" (p. 29)—and within these distinctions of the "right things" worthy of our lament, we make judgments that delineate and privilege subjects in potentially problematic ways. While public condemnation of bullying is a good thing, are we really making things better by showering a victim with special privileges? Why do we shower *this* victim with money and privileges but not

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that victims over there, even when their need may be, by all measures, greater? Does such a response actually address the power imbalances between *bully* and *victim*? Does it function to unify us? Does it reduce the fetishization of wounds and victimhood or does it further it? Does it actually trickle down to make a positive impact in school halls and on children's devices, where bullying occurs? I remain unconvinced. Sentimental and material responses to the child and Jones—and the absence of such responses, for example, from the incidents I discuss in the following section—demand further scrutiny.

Empathy's Absence, Regret, and (In)Action: Smith and the Girl

I turn my attention now to the affective responses and (in)action following the cyberbullying and suicide of Channing Smith and the bullying and assault of the ten-year-old girl, the responses to which drastically juxtapose those to the child and Jones. At a very basic level, these two groups represent two completely different kinds of experiences with bullying. Smith's privacy was violated and deeply personal, sensitive, and explicit text messages were shared with the world that outed his bisexuality to his small, commonly homophobic town, resulting in irreparable damage. He killed himself that night. The ten-year-old black girl was subjected to racial slurs by a ten-year-old and eleven-year-old white girl on her bus, who said, "[N-word]s always start it" and "I like my people, but I do not like your people" (Vera & Frehse, 2019). The bus supervisor, a 28-year-old woman, sat watching, her only comment being "You guys are worse than my kids"; and when the two white girls started beating the black girl, an assault that lasted 20 minutes, the supervisor didn't intervene (Otterman & Paybarah, 2019). This scene was made graphically real because it was caught by the bus security camera. The grief and violence involved in these acts of bullying are an entirely different entity than the two children who cried to their teacher and mother about being teased at school that day. And yet, empathy

for Smith and the girl was largely absent, replaced for Smith by expressions of *regret* and missing altogether for the girl.

While many proclaimed empathy and sorrow for the incident, Smith's case reflects one of Palmer's primary concerns about empathy and empathetic responses: "the issue of mouthing platitudes masking a lack of action" (p. 35). The same could generally be said for the girl, but as I will explore later, no platitudes were mouthed, only inaction. They demonstrate a chief concern that Spelman, like Palmer, has about the economy of attention to suffering:

our emotions […] can be highly revelatory of who and what we care or do not care about. They provide powerful clues to the ways in which we take ourselves to be implicated in the lives of others and they in ours. And their absence provides such clues as much as their presence does (p. 109).

The difference in response between these cases perhaps makes sense to some degree, though, because they represent different kinds of pain: sorrow felt for a "little hero" and profound grief for a life lost. It is difficult to make any statements about the affective economies and emotions extant in public response to the girl because, beyond a bare, de facto description of her injuries, no emotional or supportive language was used in the stories describing the incident—a fact that, in its very absence of emotion, is highly revelatory about who and what we care about. However, considering the damage to the victims, the response of (in)action and fetishization and support of the victims seems skewed, the opposite of what might be expected were the public to consider the extent of damage caused and the victims' different emotional and physical aftermaths and needs.

I first discuss Channing Smith, who presents a different kind of suffering than the previously explored incidents: *grief*. As Ahmed explains, *grief* is a branch of pain that contends

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with its own politics of emotion, especially when it comes to the death of a queer individual, which is entwined with a long history of pain and grief. In addition to grief, I look at two additional emotions often correlated with grief: *regret* and *apology*.[31] Like *disgust,* Ahmed asserts that *regret* can function and *apology* functions as emotive speech acts; they are something a spectator *does* (performs) through expression. Whether we respond to tragedy with statements of regret or apology has a pronounced difference with regards to justice and reconciliation. In this section, I suggest that institutional responses to Smith have largely stopped at *regret* and, in the case of the DA investigating Smith's death, is employed to resist any statements of apology and support inaction. However, I end my discussion of Channing by touching on counterdiscourse that has arisen in response to speech acts of regret: the #JusticeforChanning rally cry employed by his loved ones, who are seeking a response that functions similarly to an apology. In doing so, I hope to expose further inequities in bullying response that mandate more scrutiny and action.

Apologies and regret exist in a complicated relationship with expressions of shame, and I turn my attention first to the role regret and shame play in response to certain instances of bullying. Both Spelman and Ahmed analyze the impact statements of regret have in response to incidents of grief; these speech acts work to somewhat acknowledge the incident but deny any semblance of responsibility (Spelman, 1997, p. 104). The way Ahmed puts it, "Regret is named as a kind of disappointment, an almost polite sense of 'What a shame' rather than 'We are ashamed', or 'We regret what happened, but we cannot condemn it, because it was not us" (p. 118). As such, regret side-steps expression of shame, the exact opposite of an apology. As I

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[31] It may be counterintuitive to consider an apology an emotion because it is an action (a speech act). However, as I delve into further, Ahmed theorizes it as an emotion because it is an emotive speech act, a statement acknowledging shame intended to reconcile.

demonstrate in this section, regret can therefore impede what victims believe are proper and just

responses to incidents like the act of cyberbullying that ultimately ended Smith's life; "Regret

becomes an alternative for responsibility and for reparation; it functions as a sign of an injury,

without naming a subject that can be called upon to bear witness, to pay back an unpayable debt,

or to compensate for what cannot be compensated" (p. 119). The reason that Ahmed views regret

as so potentially damaging is because it can therefore act "as a form of 'covering over'";

expressions of regret can function to make the spectator "feel better" in the present without

action (p. 197), a marked substitution for an apology, which is in and of itself an action that not

only acknowledges the event but also expresses shame for it. Regret serves the spectator just as

much as, if not more, than the victim, which my following text examples demonstrate: a

placation masked by an appeal of sorrow and empathy for suffering that can erase greater

problems. In other words, a spectator's "desire to feel good or better [after an incident] can

involve the erasure of relations of violence" extant therein (p. 197).

I want to call attention to Spelman's analysis of Ivylawn College's statements of regret

after a "racist incident" on their campus, which parallels institutional response to the incident

with Smith. Spelman suggest that the Ivylawn discourse, as well as similar institutional

statements of regret, functions to dodge responsibility following the event—which is to say,

dodge condemnation of injustice and acting in response to it. She says,

If Ivylawn College expresses regret that what it calls a "racist incident" happened on its campus,

all the college is doing so far is acknowledging that such an event took place and allowing that

that was in some unspecified sense undesirable. But it is not in any way assuming responsibility

for the "incident," nor indicating that there is anything morally troubling about it—as opposed to

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its just being undesirable for its nuisance value in terms of college publicity—*nor indicating that any action is in consequence required* [emphasis added] (p. 104).

Additionally, Spelman comments on the role embarrassment pays in motivating statements of regret: regret can act as an acknowledgement after a subject or institution "has been exposed, and consequently is subject to an adverse judgment of oneself in some suspect" (p. 104). She states that regret can be evoked to diffuse or mask institutional embarrassment over any responsibility for the incident. Spelman's example demonstrates Ahmed's claims about how regret is institutionally employed to its benefit. Ahmed articulates that "it is also no accident that in political rhetoric, 'sorry' moves to 'regret' by passing over 'shame'" (p. 120). She goes on to say, "the affective economies at work, where words are substituted for each other as 'names' and 'acts' of emotion, certainly do something – they re-cover the national subject,[32] and allow recovery for 'civil society', by allowing the endless deferral of responsibility for injustice in the present" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 120). This is precisely what happened in the conflict between Smith's loved ones and their county DA following Smith's suicide.

The discursive response to Smith's death was riddled with controversy, a controversy that is deeply embedded in politics of *regret* similar to the racist incident Spelman analyzed, though what happened to Smith is also implicated in the politics of *grief*. The controversy revolved around the Coffee County DA Craig Northcott's refusal to investigate Smith's death. The (lack of) response became especially inflammatory because Northcott is openly known for his anti-gay sentiment and has a history of refusing to recognize "homosexual marriage" and prosecute domestic violence cases involving same-sex couples (Tamburin, 2019). Under fire and facing

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[32] Ahmed's research analyzes a "national subject," but Ahmed's analysis of a national subject parallels Spelman's more specific analysis of an academic institution. In this quotation, we could replace "national subject" with a similar responsive institution following an "incident" or tragedy.

poor publicity, similar to the Ivylawn College example, Northcott evoked discourses of regret to divert adverse judgement of himself. His press release on September 26th, 2019 read

I, like the rest of the community, am deeply saddened by the tragic loss of the young life of Channing Smith […] I express my heartfelt condolences to his family. […] Any report that my office has failed or refused to act is inaccurate and I want to clarify this for the sake of the Smith family as they do not need the added burden to the already incomprehensible pain that they are experiencing" (Rueb, 2019).[33]

Regret is evoked in this statement in the sentence "I express my heartfelt condolences to his family." Grief is likewise evoked in the phrases "am deeply saddened by the tragic loss of the young life" and "to the already incomprehensible pain that they are experiencing." Nestled between these sentiments is his deferral of responsibility: "Any report that my office has failed or refused to act is inaccurate." What are lacking in this statement are precisely what Ahmed and Spelman warned of in expressions of regret: the lack of a moral statement, condemnation for the injustice, denouncement of those who cyberbullied Smith, and restorative actions taken in the name of justice.

Northcott's statement following Smith's death goes beyond deferral of responsibility for action, however, to misappropriate the victims' grief for his own benefit, exemplifying Spelman's concern that regret can be evoked to diffuse or mask institutional embarrassment over any responsibility for the incident after their lack of response has been exposed and subject to adverse judgment. When I make the claim that Northcott misappropriated victim grief, I do so not only because Northcott only felt the need to make a statement about Smith's death in order to

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[33] The portions that I removed from this press release were added commentary breaking up the statement in the news source that published it and transitionary phrases.

deny mounting public scrutiny and accusations that his proven history of discrimination against queer individuals influenced his decision not to investigate Smith's death—though that is certainly part of it. In particular, though, I am concerned with his statement, "Any report that my office has failed or refused to act is inaccurate *and I want to clarify this for the sake of the Smith family* [emphasis added] as they do not need the added burden to the already incomprehensible pain that they are experiencing." In this sentence, Northcott evokes the Smith family's grief to shelter himself from scrutiny and responsibility to act; he suggests that continued attack of his inaction likewise further wounds the Smith family. This misappropriative claim is particularly problematic because it directly contradicts the counterdiscourse that has arisen demanding further investigation, action, and justice, for which Smith's family, and his older brother Justin in particular, led the charge. Justin instigated counterdiscourse with the #JusticeforChanning hashtag and claims that his goal with this hashtag, which he circulated on t-shirts, flyers, social media, and at a self-organized rally and memorial service at which country singer Billy Ray Cyrus sung "Amazing Grace," was to push against institutional disregard of his brother's death and bring litigated justice by prosecuting the two cyberbullies for their actions (Rueb, 2019). This stands in contrast with Northcott's claim that criticizing him only hurts the family, which demonstrates how veiled statements of regret and misappropriated grief can be misemployed to cover injustice, inaction, and potential discriminatory biases that perpetuate them.

The response to Smith's death cascaded into further institutional (in)actions in his conservative community, expanding beyond the DA to include Smith's school. Following the incident, Smith's school didn't acknowledge the act of cyberbullying or his death by name in a public statement, on their website, or their social media (Chiu, 2019). Further, the school actively attempted to keep the #JusticeforChanning counterdiscourse from entering the institution; the

principal made students who wore #JusticeforChanning t-shirts change or go home and prevented them from hanging #JusticeforChanning posters in the halls (Chiu, 2019). The only institutional representative who addressed the issue was Dr. Charles Lawson, director of the Coffee Country Schools. His statement said the district was "not at liberty to make any statements concerning the matter" and "counseling was provided at the school for students and staff who were struggling with what occurred" (Rueb, 2019). Channing Smith, the act of cyberbullying, nor his bullies were mentioned. While it cannot be proven that this was because Smith was bisexual, Ahmed states that queer death has always "been bound up with the politics of grief, with the question of what losses are counted as grievable[34]" (p. 156). She explains that, like with empathy, grief is implicated in love and likeness: "If I can imagine that the person who was lost 'could-have-been me', then the other's grief can also become my grief," which she specifies once again relates to how closely one can approximate the ideal, "those that are imagined as loveable and livable in the first place" (p. 130). The veracity of Northcott's claim that his acted and litigated bias against queer individuals played no part in his refusal to investigate Smith's death is therefore suspect, as is the school's failure to fully acknowledge what happened. Furthermore, these responses support Ahmed's concerns that "some losses are privileged over others [while] some do not appear as losses at all" (p. 157)—a dynamic that directly parallels the privileging and commodification of victimhood for victims like the child and Jones over that of others.

#JusticeforChanning is about recognition, and in recognition, restitution, both of which the institutional response to Smith's death lacked. Justin said, "I can assure you that your school hopes you forget, your town hopes that you forget, right, they're going to hope that this goes

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[34] Ahmed draws the concept and language of "grievable losses" from Butler (2002).

away […] But we're not going to let that happen" (Rueb, 2019). This sentiment is punctuated by the #JusticeforChanning tattoo on Justin's arm (Chiu, 2019). #JusticeforChanning resists the "covering over" of injustice that both Ahmed and Spelman warn of in statements of regret; it instead calls for an apology: action through acknowledgement—and/or further response—that seeks reconciliation. This apology needs to take a specific form, however. Ahmed states, "recognition of injustice is not simply about others becoming visible (though this can be important). Recognition is also about claiming that an injustice did happen" or we risk erasing instances and histories of violence (p. 200). Institutional expression of empathy for the Smith family's loss exemplified mere "loquacity on the part of those professing such a feeling" (Spelman, 1997, p. 64). An apology, which in Smith's case would take the form of institutional recognition as well as action against the two cyberbullies, has felicity conditions, conditions that must be met for speech acts to have their intended effect (see Austin, 1962), that involves acknowledging shame. For restitution and justice, an apology is not enough for the receivers of the apology without action, even if that action is condemnation alone. Without action and condemnation of injustice, something that may masquerade as an apology slides into a mere statement of regret (p. 119). Lazare (2005) states that apologies require "the exchange of shame and power between the offender and the offended. By apologizing, you take the shame of your offense and redirect it to yourself" (p. 42). Ahmed states that refusing to apologize is refusing shame, which blocks avenues of recovery (p. 119). Because bullying and cyberbullying are mechanized by power imbalances, it is crucial to move beyond regret and inaction.

While the response to Smith was marked by inaction, it was saturated with affects of *grief* and *regret*; the response to the bullied girl was marked by punitive action against the bullies, which I will address in the following section, but devoid of any affective discourses that were

centered on the girl and her experiences, which sharply contrasts the other stories. For the remainder of this section, I discuss coverage of the girl's story, paying attention to the differences in response to her versus the boy with the t-shirt. The response to the girl demonstrates what Palmer describes as empathy's "asymmetrical applications" that are implicated in "a potential for gendered, racial, or cultural bias in what groups or people *are seen to be empathic or worthy of empathy* [emphasis added]*"* (p. 34), which plays a prominent role in our response to bullying—and, importantly, our response to bullying that reflects certain kinds of victims more than others. Discrepancies in extension and extent of empathy (what I have previously referred to as its "spotlight effect") is often explained by the "identifiable victim effect," in which we give a disproportionate amount of aid when we can identify a single, specific victim, as opposed to a group (Schelling, 1968). We're far more "touched" by the single, sensational story of the sad, bullied fourth grader and his clumsy drawing than we are, for example, by the larger, faceless group of 1,642 high-schoolers from minoritized populations who are victims of physical violence in Chicago *every day,*[35] victims from communities and schools in much greater need of the overwhelming emotional and material support that a single white, suburban child from Florida received after crying on his teacher's desk during lunch when he, unlike the other students, didn't already have swag for his future dream college. This calls back to Aristotle's commentary about how some individual's suffering means more than others because it is more interesting or instructive. However, the difference of the "identifiable victim

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[35] The Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention, housed in the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, found that an average of 1,642 high school youth are treated for physical harm every day. They also found that this this disproportionally happened to black youth, Hispanic youth, and American Indians and Alaska Natives, in that order ("About Youth & Community Violence," n.d.; see also Follman, Aronsen, and Pan, 2012).

effect" does not apply when it comes to the incidents with the boy and the girl, yet overwhelming empathy and support was offered to the boy.

The differences in our response between the boy and the girl are discursive and revelatory of whose tragedies we care about, not mere chance; our conception of such tragedies "operates rhetorically to arrest attention, to signal that the suffering being taken note of is—or ought to be—especially gripping or instructive or worthy of more than cursory recognition" (Spelman, 1997, p. 5). One need only to look at the language and numbers when it came to reporting both of these incidents to determine exactly who is deemed gripping, instructive, and worthy of more than cursory recognition. First, who does the language of the story focus on? For the t-shirt boy, the headlines focused on him: "Boy Bullied for Homemade Tennessee Shirt has Logo Become Official Design," "A Boy Was Bullied for His Homemade T-Shirt. Now the University of Tennessee is Selling It," "Bullied Boy who Designed University of Tennessee T-Shirt Just Got Free Tuition to the College," etc.. Meanwhile, headlines about the girl focused on the white girls who assaulted her: "White Girls, Ages 10 And 11, Accused of 'Racist' Assault on Black Girl on N.Y. School Bus," "2 Upstate New York Pre-Teen Girls Charged With Racist Attack on Bus," "11-Year-Old White Girl Charged With Hate Crime for Allegedly Assaulting Black Girl on School Bus," etc.. The girl's story didn't circulate on any primary conservative news channels, but the boy's and Jones' did. The numbers are also highly revelatory. A survey of the stories written about the boy ranged from 16 to 25 paragraphs. Stories about the girl ranged from two to nine. Further, while the boy's stories sang his praises, as I discussed in the previous section, the vast majority of the stories covering the girl mentioned her attackers more times than they mentioned her. My survey found they were mentioned an equal number of times only in two

depictions of the incident. Only one article, that of *CNN*, focused on the victim and included her statement of the events.

Why does the boy's "suffering" matter so much more in public discourse than that of the girl? Bloom points to media focus on singular, sensational stories of suffering, like mass shootings, and desensitization to what becomes "background noise" issues like starvation overseas or a year's worth of dead schoolchildren in Chicago (p. 95). He states,

We're constituted so that novel and unusual events catch our attention and trigger our emotional responses. But it is also in large part because it is easy for people like me to empathize with the children and teachers and parents of Newtown [referring to the Sandy Hook Promise school shooting]: They're so much like those I know and love. Teenage black kids in Chicago, not so much (p. 32). He later explains why this is so problematic:

> the salience of these cases does not reflect an assessment of the extent of suffering, of their global importance, or of the extent to which it is possible for us to help. Rather, it reflects our natural biases in who to care about. We are fascinated by the plight of young children, particularly those who look like us and come from our community. In general, we care most about people who are similar to us— in attitude, in language, in appearance— and we will always care most of all about events that pertain to us and people we love (p. 91).

This dynamic has permeated our political sphere for some time, rendering powerful consequences based on the scope of our economy of attention, such as that observed by Isaacson (1992), who asked, "Will the world end up rescuing Somalia while ignoring the Sudan mainly because the former proves more photogenic?" (cited in Bloom, p. 93).

Likewise, we can ask will we "save" the little fourth grader because his homemade t-shirt pulls at our heartstrings far more than other serious issues of bullying, like that of the girl. A cynic may ask why the fifth-grade black girl reaped no significant emotional and material support, and certainly not to the overwhelming extent that the fourth-grade white child received, who can now look forward to a four-year full scholarship to college for his t-shirt troubles? Why

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did the widely publicized incident—though nevertheless underrepresented in quantity and quality of focus on the girl in the articles about the incident—of severe bullying and hate crime, which presents a stark contrast between the child's supportive teacher who shared his story with the world and the girl's teacher who sat and watched a 20-minute assault happen, hasn't resulted in a full scholarship to the girl's dream college? Why was not a Go Fund Me page made and 55,000 dollars raised "to help with this child's future," to help her family with the girl's medical treatment or the cost of a lawyer to navigate the litigation of hate crimes, like it was for Jones? Where were her invitations to spend a day with different celebrities or attend an LA movie premier? On a far more basic level, where were the emotional statements in the article to celebrate or support the child? Why were the stories written the about incident besides the CNN story focused more on the white girls and parsed down to straight facts that could have been pulled directly out of the police report?

The evidence I have provided throughout this chapter about the limitations of empathy and compassionate action point to a rather damning answer: bias in what suffering matters and which victims of bullying to and for whom the general public feels more proximity and inclination to offer empathetic action. A primary difference exists between Smith and the girl, however: unlike with Smith, the girl's bullies have been charged with a second-degree aggravated assault, and the eleven-year-old was also charged with a third-degree hate crime, a felony. The supervisor was also charged with three counts of endangering the welfare of a child. As I explore in the next section, however, this is not without its own affective consequences. The response to these incidents of bullying further reinforce how victimization—but only certain types of victimization—can work to align subjects, as I discussed earlier, into "the hateful them" versus "the hated us," in which the public rallies behind a hero-victim. The differences between

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responses, namely public willingness to extend emotional and material support to and align with the victims, suggest that we more readily feel for and fetishize being picked on for being a little different, being creative and sensitive, than for being queer or black. As I move into the final section of this chapter, I take a zoom out from these stories to more broadly consider the implications for common conception of bullying actors: both victims and bullies. In this chapter, I primarily focused on *victim,* but I return to the final section from the previous chapter in which I discuss bullying and *hate,* which focused on general conception *bully.* Examined together, affective discourses surrounding *bully* and *victim* suggest that divides between subjects are being further entrenched rather than mitigated, a concern that needs to be addressed in order to more effectively address bullying.

Advancing Divides Between Bullying Subjects

A theme that has arisen in my analysis thus far is varying ways the actors in bullying have become and continue to be divided and performed: *us* and *them*, *victim* and *bully*—an iterated distinction that I ultimately do not believe is helping to mitigate bullying. Across both chapters, discourses of *disgust, hate, shame, empathy,* and *pain* produced and influenced divisive dynamics between bullying actors, aligning figures and bodies and reorienting others, forming communities of "we" that, Ahmed's research supports, are founded upon the affective relegation of "them." In this section, I first briefly review my main claims from chapters two and three about affective divides between bullying actors. These chapters suggest that both bullying cause and response are implicated in the "sticking" of certain affective values to (groupings of) subjects. In cause and response, affective attachments to *victim* have drastically oversimplified *bully* and the complex emotional politics that surround bullies, rendering conceptions of bullying and the affective politics extant therein as far more one-dimensional than they actually are. Due

to this, I believe the undertheories of *bully* and bullies' affective dimensions is resulting in a drastic shift in response towards increasingly severe punishment and demands for compensation. Together, affective divides between actors in bullying risks further embedding negative affects and contentious relationships between communities and identities, undermining the intents and, perhaps, the success of our prevention efforts.

In my discussion of mechanizing affects in chapter two, *disgust* and *hate* served to create affective divides between bullying actors. These emotions aligned and displaced subjects based on their approximation to an ideal through speech acts of disgust, "sticking" subjects together by attributing those subjects as the cause of disgust: a relationship of (re)orientation that binds objects together by attributing that object with the negative affect, which functions through recognition of likeness and metonymy (Ahmed, 2004, p. 88). In that chapter, I posited *disgust* as a mechanizing emotion because acts of bullying were rooted in feelings of disgust towards the unideal. In other words, I discussed *disgust* as a speech act directed against victims. However, my analysis of hate-as-cause complicated the role that negative affects play in mechanizing bullying; bullies' motivations for bullying, my research suggested, has been drastically oversimplified in our focus on the victim. To begin, *bully* is presented as a fixed referent for "hate." I proposed that this was a metonymic relationship, an intimate proximity between *bully* and *hate*: bullies are hateful: their hate did this: hate did this: *bully* is *hate*. Further, *bully* is presented as a fixed referent for "cruelty"—a behavior, not an emotion—which I connected to the popular and dismissive adage "kids are cruel." I explored how this adage has been commonly mobilized to easily and uncritically explain the cause of bullying, reiterating the logic that kids are cruel and therefore bully; *bullies,* simply, are cruel kids. However, I ultimately rejected this

concept. *Bully,* I concluded, has been rendered an undertheorized, oversimplified, and cruel/hateful "them," which is reflected in bullying response.

In my discussion of bullying response in this chapter, I examined how *empathy* for *pain* delineates subjects in biased and uneven ways. Wound culture and the commodified fetishization of *victim* work to align subjects as an "us" targeted by "them." Our intense focus on the victim and their wound creates a coherent discursive subject: "together, we are hated, and in being hated, we are together" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 158). Much like with speech acts of disgust, our response to incidents of bullying relies on attribution of cause: relationships of innocence and guilt in which someone is to blame. Additionally, subject divides were implicated in the politics of *empathy*, aligning subjects without critical consideration of the exclusionary and narrow repercussions of our empathetic responses to the proclaimed wounds of others—and to the wounds of some but not others. There is an intense public focus on the victim, and while there is focus on the bully, it is abstracted and damning. Similar to metonymic discourses of *bully-hate* and the adage "kids are cruel" from chapter two, *bully* is oversimplified and undertheorized in bullying response, eclipsed by problematic fetishizations of victim wounds and commodification of victim identity.

Together these chapters suggest rather definitive performed roles: *bully,* the cruel, hateful, maladjusted, ignorant, and intolerant; *victim,* the tragically hated, the protagonist and hero, the "brave kid." I have already expressed that we too uncritically assign *hateful* to *bully,* placing them "over there" where they are the ignorant and cruel villains while we turn our attention to the victim, the good and unfortunate hero for whom we cheer—those who maintain injustice and those who oppose it. These performative roles gain momentum, magnitude, and capital in affective economies, and have "stuck" certain figures together. There is a problem with

affective "stickiness," however, when negative affects are metonymically bound to (groups of) subjects; these subjects become "blockages" in the affective economy[36] (Ahmed, 2004, p. 90). Blockages prime the bound subjects to be fetishized (p. 92), which is already occurring with bullying's performed roles in different ways. Iterated and metonymic blockages that affix referents and identities with certain affective orientations and performative conceptions cut off new avenues of theory for understanding those subjects; it blocks us from digging deeper and seeing where negative affects and subsequent bullying behaviors come from. It also, I will now expound, risks further entrenching divides between subjects by heightening demands for punishment and compensation following acts of bullying.

Ahmed states that affective economies and metonymic binding of figures generates communities "who are bound together through the shared condemnation of a disgusting object or event" (p. 94). Discourses resisting and denouncing bullying instead of furthering the old sentiment that "it builds character" are important, but simplified classifications of *bully* and *victim* provide a platform for the pendulum of "hated us" versus "hateful them" to swing the other way. When I say this, my concerns here for bullying is an increasingly national push towards juvenile criminalization and punishment of bullies. Criminalization and increasingly extreme punishments for bullying is not only occurring on the level of severe school policies, however. There's also a massive push from parents, a vocal group of whom think "bullying" is too gentle of a word that does not take the phenomenon seriously enough (Otterman & Paybarah, 2019). In New York, for example, schools in North Tonawanda now follow a law where parents are fined $250 and jailed up to fifteen days if their children are caught engaging in bullying behavior—a law initially proposed by other parents of victims (Bogel-Burroughs, 2019). Ross

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[36] I explored metonymic "blockages" more thoroughly in Chapter Two: Disgust and Bullying.

Ellis, founder and CEO of STOMP *O*ut Bullying, sees this issue becoming more prominent and warns against it, citing an incident in which a mother was adamantly advocating to get a three-year-old on the playground arrested (Otterman & Paybarah, 2019). Ahmed describes this as "the culture of compensation, where all forms of injury are assumed to involve relations of innocence and guilt, and where it is assumed that responsibility for all injuries can be attributed to an individual or collective" (p. 32). Likewise, Brown (1995) states that wound culture provides a platform to appeal for compensation for injuries (p. 73). This has implications for *regret* and *apologies* because, as I discussed earlier, genuine acknowledgement of responsibility and wrong-doing are important for perpetrator-victim restitution and reconciliation. Hieronymi (2001) states that a wound "without apology, atonement, retribution, punishment, restitution, condemnation, or anything else that might recognize it as a wrong, makes a claim. It says, in effect, that you can be treated in this way, and that such treatment is acceptable" (p. 546). However, I am not alone in cautioning that these extreme responses are not the best way to go about it.

On the most basic level, these punitive measures treat the offense as strictly behavioral, which I have dedicated much time and effort to arguing that bullying is not. Blind, automatic punishment for bullies that is alienated from context does not address how power inequities are emotioned in the first place, as Trainor puts it, not merely about ignorance, impulse, or the lack of empathy. As an emotioned, discursive construct intwined with social justice and power inequities, bullying may be somewhat reduced out of fear of criminalization and punishment, but its underlying mechanizing affects won't be diminished and dismantled, especially considering the research that suggests a bully's unacknowledged shame and misdirected self-hatred can motivate his or her actions. Further, charging families fines and threatening jail time for parents risks further harming already vulnerable or disadvantaged populations, like those with lower

socioeconomic status and nontraditional family backgrounds or from minoritized populations.

Empathy and victim dynamics of similarity play a key role in this; Nordgren et. al found that a

more familiar and identifiable victim's experience of pain "led teachers to recommend both more

comprehensive treatment for bullied students and greater punishment for students who bully." As

wound fetishization and wound culture creates a national discursive subject aligning with the

victim-hero against the cruel, villainous bully, responses are becoming more punitive; as Ellis

puts it, "Parents are out for blood" (Otterman & Paybarah, 2019).

Debates on how to respond to bullying are complicated by the fact that there may be

incidents where "bullying" *is* too gentle of a word and warrants litigation, which is the case for

hate crimes. The line between hate crime and bullying directed at specific identities can appear

pretty irresolute. The Anti-Bullying Alliance differentiates the two as hate crime versus hate

incident; both involve aggressive behavior against a specific identity, but one is criminal and one

is not ("Hate Crime and Bullying," n.d.). This was the case for the two white students who

assaulted the ten-year-old girl. It is in constant debate whether children should be charged, even

in these violent circumstances, or if the solution should be counseling and meetings with parents.

The girl's school district reported they were planning to introduce further education about

bullying and race after the incident, for example (Vera & Frehse, 2019). Nevertheless, with a

violent incident like this one, as with all hate crimes, it is doubtful that slap-on-the-wrist bullying

policies and public condemnation would be enough. Whether the answer, then, is two children

under the age of twelve locked up is certainly beyond the scope of my assessment. At this point,

I can support Ahmed's argument about "the *importance of listening to the affects and effects of*

hate and hate crime as a way of calling into question, rather than assuming, the relationship

between violence and identity" (p. 59), ask what the implications are for criminalizing children's

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emotioned dispositions, and critically examine the affective power dynamics at work every step of the way.

I can, however, point out the problematic discursive and punitive pattern in which subjects aligned with a victim as the "hated us" against a "hateful them" are employing increasingly aggressive and hateful language and actions against the "hateful them." In other words, the push towards juvenile criminalization of bullies may be resulting from their oversimplification in our discourse and fetishized wound culture that elevates a boy and his t-shirt to a million-dollar hero—roles, especially for the bully, abstracted affect and abstracted from the actor. When we are unified under a banner of victimhood and band together in speech acts of disgust and hatred toward *any* sign, no matter how "wrong" that sign might be, there's risk for the pendulum to swing in the other direction. This is showing up in rather ironic ways, like the humorous follow-up post to Snyder's Facebook page that read "I ABSOLUTELY HATE BULLYING" before later condemning the hatred of bullies, stating, "[I] wish I could turn their hate into love." She certainly was not alone in this sentiment. Similar statements circulated in agreement, like "This Michigan alum and Indiana University staffer hates bullying. I just bought your student's UT Vols shirt and picked up one for each of my grandchildren." Victim-aligned subjects who pronounce hate for bullies and bullying contradict the dominant discourse of victimhood—"the tragedy of the event is the consequence of 'their hate' for 'us' ('Why do they hate us?')" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 158)—that aligns them in the first place. *Victim* comes to be performed as a subject defined in being hated by others and resisting that hatred, but in defense of the victim, bullies are uncritically hated and condemned. In other words, victim-aligned subjects denounce "us" versus "them" discourses at the same time they reify them.

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"Us" versus "them" discourses in bullying are fickle and far more multi-directional than they're depicted to be. The response to Keaton Jones demonstrates this, illuminating some of the implications of the pendulum of hate in the alignment of subjects in bullying response. As his mother said, "Yesterday he was a hero, today the world hates us […] It is a little ironic that [the scandal] brought the bullies out." As I stated before, the outpour of empathy and material support instantly stopped when the images surfaced of his family holding the Confederate flag. The public attacked him and his family, many of whom made statements that Jones deserved to be bullied if he had a racist family. The response was overwhelmingly negative; but one stood out as a potentially hopeful avenue different from the rest: the post by Jason Alexander, which read "I am reading how bullied child #KeatonJones has a father who is a white supremacist. Do not see why this should diminish our sympathy for how Keaton was treated. Best way to end hate? Show a better path to the children of haters" (Shugerman, 2017). How can we condemn bullying but not the bully? How can we bridge divides without furthering division? While not the approach reflected in public discourse or punitive laws and policies, Ellis agrees with the solution Alexander proposes. In response to the wave of parents attempting to arrest toddler bullies, she says, "I get that you do not want your child beaten up, but it is got to stop on both ends."

What's Next?

A prominent narrative in bullying response is that of empathy for victims, a unifying banner of emotional and material support. However, the discrepancies between national response to (i) the child and Jones and (ii) Smith and the girl demonstrate that empathy does not shine evenly on subjects, nor does it shine the brightest on those whose suffering may most necessitate the material resources that empathy and compassion can mobilize. In the midst of wound

fetishization, the commodification of victimhood, and the one-dimensional villainization of *bully,* I contend that, rather than making progress in a direction that dismantles the power imbalances between *bully* and *victim*, such responses tacitly escalate affective divides and intolerance, potentially adding fuel to already-tense and divisive fires. We need to pay more attention to such responses, asking whom they privilege, whom they ignore, what assumptions are being made, and whom these decisions serve; these all play a role in how *bully* and *victim* come to be performed and, therefore, impact *bullying* as a political and discursive construct.

While changes to affective discourses are difficult to render on the public level, there are more immediate opportunities to intervene in schools through curricular and programmatic intervention efforts. Therefore, as I bring my investigation to a close with an eye towards prevention, I devote chapter four to analyzing four prevention models: the STOMP Out Bullying, KiVa, and Second Step programs and the StopBullying.gov bullying prevention training course, the latter of which I devote the majority of my examination. I critique where attention to the emotioned dynamics of bullying are—and notably, are not—included in prevention efforts, where elision exists between prevention and response, and how discourses of the training program contribute to the existing pattern I have been tracing as to how *bully* and *victim* are delineated and performed.

CHAPTER FOUR: AFFECTIVE DYNAMICS OF SELECT K-12 BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAMS

In chapter three, the primary emotion I examined was *empathy.* However, I distinguished between two types of empathy: (i) *empathy* in response to *pain* and (ii) *empathy* as fellow-feeling *love.* I see these two types of empathy aligning with bullying response and bullying prevention, respectively, which is why I have split these two facets of empathy between chapter three and this one. Empathy-for-pain exists where there is already suffering—where there is already a victim, after bullying has occurred. Empathy-as-love, I argue in this chapter, is being employed in SEL bullying prevention measures through appeals to reach across and love difference— curricular and programmatic intervention aimed at stopping bullying before it can occur by shifting school culture and adjusting students' affective values. I spend the first part of this chapter explaining the shift in schools towards affective intervention in youth's lives, which I believe has led to the increasing prevalence of SEL curricular models. Because the most popular anti-bullying programmatic interventions evoke *empathy* and loving difference, I take some time to discuss the emotional politics of *empathy* as fellow-feeling love.

I explore *empathy* in relation to SEL curriculum with the intent to illuminate potential ways that assumedly good and appropriate emotions are being taught without critical consideration of potential power inequities extant in emotioned relationships, and specifically in empathetic relationships. This critique applies to three SEL programs that I examine: 1) STOMP Out Bullying, the largest anti-bullying organization[37] in K-12; 2) KiVa, the most widely used

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[37] As I explained in chapter one, STOMP Out Bullying is considered an anti-bullying *organization*, not a program. They are a non-profit that provides school-independent resources like a HelpLine, accepts donations, and produces public PSAs by celebrities. However, for the scope of my investigation, the organization aligns with the work of the traditional anti-bullying programs and is treated the same.

anti-bullying program in the world, though primarily used overseas (Wolpert, 2016); and 3) Second Step, an anti-bullying program that only caters to K-8 schools but is employed in 40% of the K-8 schools in the U.S. ("Bullying Prevention in Schools," p. 5). However, my analysis of these programs is ultimately truncated, limited only to the public discourses available on their website, general materials, and secondary assessments because access to their curriculum is blocked by a wall of material and licensing fees. Their public discourse aligns with the concerns I posit about empathy and loving difference, but a more in-depth analysis is necessary to draw conclusions.

Because of this limitation, I turned my attention to the free prevention resources provided by StopBullying.gov: a teacher training and continued education course for bullying prevention. This included two additional resources: a Community Action Toolkit and a Youth Engagement Toolkit. I intended to analyze the free federal resources with the same CES lens as STOMP Out Bullying, KiVa, and Second Step, but this proved to be ultimately impossible. While the purchasable programmatic interventions engaged the emotional politics of bullying by positioning it an emotioned issue, the StopBullying.gov resource ultimately failed to posit bullying as anything more than a behavioral issue. I trace the meager places where the government training module alludes to the emotioned dynamics of bullying, but despite their emphasis on a context of power imbalance between subjects of bullying in their general definition of bullying, the training course offers no avenues through which to dismantle power inequities between subjects; instead, their idea of "prevention" revolved around student surveillance. That being said, the StopBullying.gov module reveals continued patterns about how *bully* and *victim* are performed as well as ineffective elisions of prevention and response.

The Schooling of Emotion

Schools are the primary site for bullying prevention, and they are also a site for students'

emotional development. Worsham (2003), a prolific scholar in emotion, cultural rhetoric, and

trauma, argues that the primary objective of schooling is teaching emotion, and that "all

education is sentimental […] all education is an education of sentiment" (p. 163). While emotion

scholars concede that emotion is also taught at home (Trainor, 2008, p. 22), Larabee (1997)

points out that schools are where cultural values are institutionally taught and trained. Mirroring

this, Boler suggests that schools "discipline" students' emotions, a claim Trainor furthers in her

exploration of the "emotioned rules" taught at school; and Amsler suggests "emotional

intervention in young people's lives" is only becoming more prominent in schools (p. 50), which

are taking an increasingly active role in fostering the development of students' emotional health

and intelligence and in promoting "good" emotions—a concept I will return to later. Quandahl

(2003) likewise describes how schools employ "pedagogy as paideia,[38]" an endeavor to

socioculturally educate students to become efficacious members of society, and while she

acknowledges that this entails imbuing "knowledge, perspective, and strategies of reason," she

claims that paideia must also offer and account for "the very forms of emotion" in developing

subjects (p. 11). All of this being said, I concur with mandates forwarded by both Lindquist and

Trainor to pay closer attention to potentially problematic dimensions of the idealised emotions

schools encourage, the way the schools structure those ideals, and how those emotions relate to

students' understanding of the world in addition to merely positive ways that those affective

structures may "create rhetorics of social change that persuade" (Trainor, p. 102).

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[38] The term "pedagogy as paideia" was originally proposed by Worsham, but because I am using it as Quandahl does
in her research, I will be attributing it to her.

Because bullying is an issue of social justice and inequitable power relationships, it cannot be divorced from domains in schools that address injustice and power inequity. Therefore, I see bullying prevention efforts as inextricably entwined with the efforts of critical pedagogy to address injustice. Forwarded by scholars such as Friere (1970) and hooks (1997), critical pedagogy questions hegemonic structures that perpetuate racist, sexist, classist, ableist, discriminatory religious, and otherwise Othering discourses—differences between peers that mark bullying as a phenomenon (Murphy et. al, 2018). Further, critical pedagogy is employed in classrooms to advance the work of social justice and encompasses any oppositional pedagogies which promote transformative and socially transgressive education (Giroux, 2004). While more recent turns in critical pedagogy have moved away from positioning teachers as the "transformative intellectual" mobilizing critical pedagogy to forward democracy, citizenship, and morality (Bizzell & Herzberg, 1990, p. 160), O'Higgins Norman (2008) suggest that teachers a play central in empowering students to address social justice issues like racism and bullying. This all being said, Trainor's analysis of anti-racist critical pedagogy found that such approaches were falling short because the affective politics of critical pedagogy have yet to be fully considered; instead, its foundation and goals are too often located in rationality rather than in "lived affective experiences" (Trainor, 2008, p. 3), which negatively impacts its effectiveness to further social justice.

Despite the fact that Yoon describes affect as "the 'what' *and* the 'how' (the object and the means, the content and the conduit) for critical pedagogy" (p. 723), he and other scholars suggest that critical pedagogy is all too commonly based in rationalism instead. Ellsworth fronted this critique, stating that "by prescribing moral deliberation, engagement in the full range of views present, and critical reflection, the literature on critical pedagogy implies that students

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and teachers can and should engage each other in the classroom as fully rational subjects" (p. 301). This has implications for how empathy is taught, too. For example, scholars like Segal and Wagaman suggest that empathy-oriented critical pedagogy that encourages social justice through "contextual understanding of systemic barriers and macro perspective taking, are ways of *understanding larger social issues using fair-minded skills of critical thinking* [emphasis added]" (p. 208); they posit empathy as a tool in critical pedagogy that is rational and fair-minded. However, scholars like Yoon, Ellsworth, Trainor, and more would disagree with Segal and Wagaman's promotion of "fair-minded skills" in the emotioned domain of critical pedagogy, whether evoked as empathy or other emotions. Yoon articulates critical pedagogy currently asserts a binary between the rational and the irrational, which runs the risk of perpetuating Ellsworth's concerns about furthering rational, masculinist myths and disregarding or depressing those viewed as "the irrational Other," which I discussed in chapter two. Zembylas (2013) suggests that this is precisely where we run the risk of discourses of critical pedagogy "serving exclusionary and ultimately conservative ends" (p. 4; see also Yoon, 2005, p. 745). Rather critically, Worsham (2001) wonders if critical pedagogy's too often attempts to change students' rational understanding of social justice issues using reason and knowledge, undermining or altogether not considering the role of affect—what Yoon similarly describes as critical pedagogy's attempt to "take irrationality and make sense of it, find the causes and the reasons for it" rather than looking at problematic discourses as situated in affect and desire (p. 271)— ultimately sustain hegemonic structures rather than resolving them.

This considered, then, a comprehensive account and employment of critical pedagogy would be incomplete without considering the politics of emotion extant therein. Yoon states that critical pedagogy is a "pedagogy of affect"; it turns classrooms into an epistemological point of

contact, an affective contact zone in which issues of social justice and trauma can be addressed (p. 718). Indeed, he claims that discourses of critical pedagogy gain cultural currency because of its reliance on pathos in addition to rationalism (p. 718, 723). Damningly, Trainor found that inequitable constructs like racism in the classroom are not located in rational constructs like ignorance or lack of exposure to difference, and that "as long as the origins of racism are seen in these terms, curricular and pedagogical responses aimed at ameliorating racism—everything from multicultural exposure to difference to critical interrogations of whiteness and privilege— will be ineffective" (p. 3). This is not to say that we do not formulate rational beliefs about the social world, but that we must remember that emotion plays a central role in forming those beliefs (Lindquist, 2004). Lindquist further calls on educators to acknowledge that critical pedagogy works through emotional structures of faith. Although the language they use differs, Williams (1997), Giroux, and Zembylas assert that we must understand the "structures of feeling" (Williams, 1997) in social justice issues if we are to address oppressive regimes with critical pedagogy. These critiques are particularly relevant to the affective features of curricular and programmatic critical pedagogy and bullying prevention, which is intended to discourage negative stereotypes and promote tolerance and diversity (Trainor, p. 95, 105); this is to say, critical pedagogy, for all of its good intentions, is imbued with and embedded in tacit politics of emotion and inequitable power dynamics that must be considered if they are to more successfully be employed to address social justice issues and bullying.

Putting the concepts thus far in this section together, through curricular and programmatic critical pedagogy, schools actively engage in and aim to teach certain emotions— what Trainor aptly calls "emotioned rules." I introduced this concept in prior chapters, paying particular attention to the relationship between taught "emotioned rules," emotions' normative

function, and, subsequently, emotions' role in idealisation. What I'd like to return to once again, however, is Trainor's assertion that "emotioned rules" are "taught and enforced via emotional exhortation in school," making them a site of social control (p. 23; see also Boler, 1999). Implicit in this is schools' mandate to teach "good" or "correct" emotions: that is to say, what are "appropriate and inappropriate emotional dispositions" (Micciche, 2002), what Yoon similarly calls "noble" feelings directly taught and intended to be learned through critical pedagogy (p. 718). In a very real way, teachers carry the weight of facilitating "correct" affect in education[39] in addition to a bevy of research directly correlating teachers' expression of empathy and their ability to teach it with their ability to employ critical pedagogy and reduce bullying.[40] In my prior chapters, I also discussed that a lack of critical theorization of emotions has created a hierarchy between "good" and "desired" emotions and "bad" emotions, which can be misemployed in service of emotional hegemony by elevating certain bodies and ways of knowing over others (Ahmed, 2004; Boler, 1999; Jaggar, 1992; Langstraat & Bowden, 2011). By schooling "good" emotions through critical pedagogy, the popular theory goes, we forward social justice and reduce bullying. However, what are the affective politics of *justice*? Further, what are the affective politics of *empathy* as fellow-feeling love? Both questions I tackle in this chapter, the former in this section and the latter in the next.

Because pedagogy is emotioned in nature, critical pedagogy's goal of social justice is embedded in politics of emotion. Ahmed does not posit *(in)justice* as an emotion but instead examines "the contingency of the relationship between injustice and emotion" (p. 196). Ahmed

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[39] It is worth noting that this pedagogic structure entails a great deal of emotional labor for teachers specifically, as well as for students. This in and of itself is deeply problematic, and I return to the concept briefly towards the end of this chapter.
[40] See Murphy et. al for a thorough exploration of this topic, but for a full review of this literature, see the "Social-Emotional Learning and Empathy as Bullying's Solution" section of chapter one.

acknowledges that affect and affective structures and norms are "crucial to the struggle against injustice" (p. 196); however, Ahmed's theorization of this relationship complicates the idea that critical pedagogy can imbue "good," justice-serving emotions in students. We popularly view "having" empathy as a champion of justice, a classical view forwarded by Hume (1964) and Adam Smith (1966) that posits justice as a virtue that revolves around "fellow-feeling" and feeling for others—what Smith describes as "sympathy," which aligns with what we currently understand as "empathy" (Solomon, 1995, p. 3; Smith, 1966, p. 10; cited in Ahmed, 2004, p. 182). However, current curricular and programmatic pedagogy designed to affectively intervene in student development, imbuing "good" emotions in them, risks transforming emotion, and "good," preferred emotion in particular, into something we can "deposit" in students as if they were containers for teachers to fill—a perception of teaching that Friere encourages teachers to reject (p. 52; see also Ahmed, 2004, p. 182). Again, this is also problematic because it positions teachers and students as rational subjects able to teach, learn, and use fair-minded skills in the development and application of these emotional dispositions to promote justice. Additionally, Ahmed poses concern that such a transactional view of emotion transforms emotions into fetish objects (p. 182)—which, I would argue, is the case for *empathy*.

Beyond this argument complicating curricular and programmatic critical pedagogy's goal of imbuing "good," preferred emotions in student subjects, I return again to Ahmed's foundational understanding of affect: that emotions do not reside in the subject, object, or sign, but rather circulate between the surfaces of objects, "sticking" and (re)orienting bodies upon contact (p. 6, 45, 105). Likewise, Ahmed contends that injustice "involves the proximity of the contact zone" and, much like disgust, "is a question of how bodies come into contact with other bodies (p. 196). Because one cannot possess emotions, she claims, "the terrain of (in)justice

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cannot be a question of 'having' or 'not having' an emotion" (p. 195). Justice, when viewed this way, can become "a sign of what I can give to others, and works to elevate some subjects over others, through the reification of their capacity for love or 'fellow- feeling'" (p. 195). As I explored in the previous chapter and continue to address in this one, such inequitable power dynamics between the empathetic subject and the subject of their empathy are deeply problematic, and may result in responses to injustice in "a way that shows rather than erases the complexity of the relation between violence, power and emotion" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 196)— something, I argue later, that can occur in with curricular and programmatic prevention imperatives to "love difference" through empathy, which I address in the next section. Therefore, social justice and mitigating bullying cannot primarily be a question of students having and extending empathy, or of "being the right kind of subject" (p. 195); indeed, it is much more complex than that.

All of this considered, Ahmed makes the potentially inflammatory claim that schooling "good" and preferred emotions shouldn't be the outcome of teaching whatsoever[41] (p. 182). Such a claim poses a significant conundrum for the bevy of SEL programmatic intervention strategies and "themes of care" curriculum for addressing bullying. While I cannot say I am entirely convinced of such a staunch and definitive position, I believe it is worth considering, at the very least, to question what makes a "good" and preferred emotion preferred, what makes other emotions less preferred or wholly rejected, and how such distinctions impact and delineate subjects. Further, what facets of certain emotions—both emancipatory and marginalizing—are

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[41] To clarify, Ahmed claims that it is impossible to eschew emotions in pedagogy because there is no pedagogy, or any discourse, "outside" of emotions. In fact, she claims that emotions are "crucial to feminist pedagogy (p. 181; see also Boler, 1999). However, she repeatedly warns against uncritically elevating and teaching *idealised* emotions; therein lies the complex emotional politics too often overlooked. The issue, she emphasizes, is how emotions are taught and what emotions are elevated over other.

we over-simplifying or altogether concealing in service of such hierarchies? Finally, once these

questions and concerns are considered, how might we use that knowledge to improve our current

programmatic and pedagogic approaches to bullying prevention and further social justice efforts

in the classroom? While the entirety of this endeavor is certainly beyond the scope and

capabilities of a single thesis or scholar, my hope is to lay the groundwork for such inquiries.

Therefore, I now turn my attention to *empathy* as fellow-feeling love and anti-bullying efforts

that posit loving difference through the extension of empathy as a primary outcome.

Empathy, Love, and Difference in Bullying Prevention

Discussing empathy in terms of bullying prevention is apt given existing and increasingly

popular research that posits it as central in the formation and execution of prevention efforts.

Because I provided a literature review of SEL programmatic interventions and empathy-as-

solution in chapter one, I will only briefly revisit core assumptions about empathy, teaching, and

bullying to preface this chapter's discussion. These assumptions are:

1. A lack of empathy is one of bullying's primary causes.[42]
2. Empathy is "the foundation of a safe, caring, and inclusive learning climate"; it is crucial to reducing incidents of bullying and the success of prevention pedagogy (Borba, 2018).[43]
3. Teachers must model empathy for students by teaching empathetically, and teachers who are more empathetic are better prepared to mitigate bullying.[44]
4. In order to disassemble social justice issues, teachers must teach empathy and integrate themes of care and compassion in their curriculum.[45]
5. SEL programmatic interventions are increasingly considered the best way for schools to prevent bullying on a long-term basis, and the promotion of empathy is central in SEL curriculum.[46]

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[42] Bazelon, 2013; Borba, 2018; Brown, 2012; Davis, 1996; Gini, 2006; Murphy et al., 2018; O'Brennan et al., 2009; Uhls et al., 2014; van Noorden et al., 2015.

[43] See also Eisenberg et. al, 2010; Hawkins et. al, 2001; Murphy et al., 2018; Palmer, 2018; Santos et. al, 2011.

[44] Bazalgette, 2017; Bonnet, Goossens, Willemen, & Schuengel, 2009; Cooper, 2011; Craig et. al, 2000; Glendenning, 2012; Goroshit & Hen, 2016; Jevtić, 2014; Murphy et. al, 2018.

[45] Cooper et. al, 2011; Davis, 1983; Murphy et. al, 2018; Nodding, 2007; Seaman, 2012; Segal & Wagamen, 2017; Wood et. al, 2019; Zembylas, 2013.

[46] Bosaki, Marini, & Dane, 2006; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007.

6. The most popular anti-bullying SEL programmatic interventions forward empathy as one of their primary goals and outcomes.[47]

Further, empathy sits at the top of our conceptual hierarchy for "good" and "desired" emotions, considered an "unmitigated good" (Langstraat & Bowden, 2011, p. 6); *empathy* is what we believe we must imbue in our students to pave a path to tolerance and social justice. Empathy in prevention efforts is different than empathy as I discussed in response; in bullying prevention, empathy is not necessarily a response to another's pain but an extension of "fellow-feeling" love.

In the last chapter, I posited a central problem with empathy regardless of whether it is conceptualized as a response to suffering or a loving bridge between subjects: power inequities that exist between the empathy extender and receiver. For pain, I discussed that empathetic spectators of suffering can (mis)appropriate the sufferer's experiences and pain, define the meaning of other's pain, and fetishize the subject's wound, rendering the sufferer into an object. Further, I discussed how empathy is inequitable, unreliable, and biased when determining whose pain is cared about. Founding these concerns is empathy's dependence on similarity dynamics and identification, which is the primary problem with empathy that I will be focusing on in my discussion of empathy as fellow-feeling love.

Expounding Ahmed's theory about the intimate relationship between *love* and idealisation, I argue that love plays a key role in determining to whom we extend empathy. Because *empathy* is being evoked in SEL curricular interventions to span differences and extend love between subjects, pedagogy designed to "love difference" is implicated in the politics of *love, empathy,* and idealisation. In this section, I want to complicate the assumed positive relationship between *empathy* and difference by discussing the potential for empathetic

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[47] Wolpert, 2016; "Home," n.d..

education models to promote love for sameness at the expense of accepting difference—a problem that risks more deeply embedding power imbalances than mitigating them through emotional hegemony and erasure.

Intriguingly, Ahmed asks, "What are we doing when we do something *in the name of love*? Why is it assumed to be better to do the same thing if it is done *out of love*?" (p. 24). What I believe Ahmed is getting at is that, like empathy, we are quick to assert and boast of the transformative and inclusive power of love, but also like empathy, we have a limited account of its politics and problematic dimensions. In my review of *empathy* in the previous chapter, I premised the view of empathy as an ethicizing emotion in our social world, and the same can be said for *love*; Oliver (2001), for example, states that "love […] is an ethical and social responsibility to open personal and public spaces in which otherness and difference can be articulated," offering it as the solution to racism and violence (p. 20; cited in Ahmed, 2004, p. 140). However, Ahmed views this as overly simplistic. She contends that "a politics of love is necessary in the sense that *how one loves matters* [emphasis added]; it has effects on the texture of everyday life and on the intimate 'withness' of social relations" (p. 140). Ahmed describes empathy as a way one loves: love as the fuel that drives one's empathetic inclination to feel another's pain; love as motivation to feel empathy, "a 'wish feeling', in which subjects 'feel' something other than what another feels in the very moment of imagining they could feel what another feels" (p. 30). *Empathy* as wishful fellow-feeling, therefore, is subject to the politics of *love*.

The relationship between *empathy* as fellow-feeling love and identification elicits a number of questions, one of which is: how does empathy influence our conception of difference and vice versa? This is important for bullying prevention efforts, which encourage students to

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bridge differences between each other and "walk in each other's shoes." For STOMP Out

Bullying and KiVa, this intent is reflected in their missions and proposed outcomes. Both

programs provide guides and initiatives to help teachers "discuss differences: cultures, weight,

sexual preferences, different ways kids and teens act and dress, disabilities and other differences"

("Online Educator Participation Toolkit," n.d.) and employ curriculum to extend empathy

towards those who are different with class discussions and role-playing ("Online Educator," n.d.;

"KiVa Anti-Bullying Program," n.d.-a). STOMP Out Bullying's manifesto states the intended

results clearly: "Schools are more inclusive. / Communities have more equality. Society has

more unity. / So that, a culture of cruelty can become a culture of civility" ("Our Manifesto,"

n.d.). Ross Ellis, founder of STOMP Out Bullying grounds the ability to achieve these goals in

empathy: "Our Educator's Bullying Prevention Toolkit promotes teaching empathy […]

Everything STOMP Out Bullying stands for is about kindness and empathy" (Beresford, 2016).

Further, empathy skills are the first designated objective for Second Step SEL curriculum[48]

("Full Scope and Sequence," 2020). These programs therefore reflect what Ahmed describes as

pedagogy[49] that is "an imperative to love difference" (p. 133). However, Ahmed cautions that

there are problems with pedagogic imperatives to love difference; she contends that difference-

oriented love and empathy can be employed to produce the opposite effects that they intend,

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[48] For example, the first SEL lessons are "Use empathy skills to identify ways they can help new students feel welcome and comfortable at school" for sixth grade and "Use empathy skills to identify why some students feel nervous when they're starting middle school and ways they can help new students feel welcome and comfortable at school" for seventh grade ("Full Scope and Sequence," 2020).

[49] Specifically, Ahmed discusses multicultural pedagogy's imperative to love difference. I do not discuss curricular and programmatic intervention efforts specifically as multicultural pedagogy, but according to The National Association for Multicultural Education, multicultural pedagogy seeks social justice and equality by attending to the pluralism of its students ("Definitions of Multicultural Education," n.d.). In other words, multicultural pedagogy addresses the differences between students and attempts to bridge those differences through expressions of love (Ahmed, 2004, p. 125), which aligns with the missions and goal statements of the prevention curriculum and programs. Because Ahmed's analysis of multicultural pedagogy addresses the relationship between pedagogy, difference, and love, I extend her critique of multicultural pedagogy to critical/affective pedagogy like SEL models. I also do this for Trainor's analysis of difference-loving pedagogy's relationship to racism in all-white high schools.

potentially presenting difference as the fault of the marginalized or erasing the complexity of difference altogether.

  Love as empathy can have profound consequences for the formation of communities and how those communities conceive of difference, which comprises my focus for the rest of this section. Ahmed contends that, despite its intent, "empathy [potentially] sustains the very difference that it may seek to overcome" (p. 30). Part of this is how *love* functions to align and (re)orient subjects in affective economies of idealisation. This is occurring when *love* creates and reinforces likeness based on identification and idealisation. Further, subjects are aligned by a new community ideal: the love of difference, which becomes a new point of sameness. After establishing support for these two claims, I explore their consequences. Firstly, I address how positing "love for difference" as a new ideal and aligning subjects based on that ideal can promote emotional hegemony by delineating "appropriate" and "inappropriate" affects. Secondly, I discuss how aligning under a new ideal that asserts sameness can erase the complexities of difference, ultimately undermining the intent of love-for-difference pedagogies. Finally, I discuss how a framework of extending empathy across difference may reflect the concerns I have brought up in the previous two chapters about furthering divides between subjects by perpetuating "us" versus "them" discourses.

  Ahmed implicates *love* and idealisation in the alignment of subjects not only based upon likeness but also in the creation of likeness. She states, "it is clear from the extension of self in love, or the way in which love orients the subject towards some others (and away from other others), how easily love for another slides into love for a group, which is already imagined in terms of likeness" (p. 129). Ahmed articulates that because *love* and idealisation are premised on likeness, extending love to difference, which is steeped in identity politics, risks conceptual

parallelism to extending love to "the abject" who are unideal. She warns that this "is not what will challenge the power relations that idealisation 'supports' in its restriction of ideality to some bodies and not others" (p. 141). This impacts and interacts with group dynamics, which is central to bullying, a group phenomenon played out in a social context (Salmivalli, 2010). Ahmed concedes that the ideal can shift and morph, adjusting the valued ideal as histories of affective ideals circulate. Nevertheless, she still asserts that the alignment of those subjects, even to a different ideal, is based on identification with a point of likeness. Because "identification involves *making likeness*" (p. 126) and "idealisation may also work as the 'creation' or 'making' of likeness" (p. 128), idealisation and the (re)orientation and alignment of subjects is always implicated in difference and politics of identity.

Ahmed contends that difference-loving discourses and pedagogy forward a new ideal of being open, loving, welcome, and diverse (p. 133). In other words, love "becomes the 'shared characteristic'" of the community (p. 135). As I established in the previous paragraph, however, this new ideal is still bound by identification and alignment. Ahmed states, "Difference becomes an ideal by being represented as a form of likeness; it becomes a new consensus that binds us together" (p. 138). Because of this, discourses and pedagogy that forward love for difference are somewhat paradoxical; the pursuit of love for difference creates, or tries to create, a single point of sameness. This can serve benevolent intent, but that does not necessarily mean that it always serves benevolent means:

> The transformation of pluralism into a consensus is telling. Others must agree to value difference: difference is now what we would have in common. In other words, difference becomes an elevated or sublimated form of likeness: you must like us – and be like us – by valuing or even loving differences (Ahmed, 2004, p. 138).

To say this differently, a love for difference risks a slippery slope to love for sameness, even if that "sameness" is the ideal "love difference." While the shared common interest is a love for

difference, I will come to argue that that single point of sameness can block avenues of embracing student pluralities. Specifically, this happens not necessarily in the promotion of loving difference but in an *imperative* to love difference, in which the community of the ideal "we" is formed by demonstrating the "appropriate" emotion, e.g. "by displaying 'my love', I show that I am 'with you'" (p. 135). *Love* becomes the point of sameness, and I see this as problematic because it can warp teacher and student perception of *difference* in two ways: by 1) positing inequitable differences as the responsibility and problem of the one who is marginalized and 2) erasing the complexity of *difference* altogether.

Firstly, idealising *love* to cohere a political community of "loving difference" risks positing deviance from this idealised emotion and community as dangerous, undesired, or a point of blame. This relates to the concerns I addressed in my overview of CES in chapter two about emotions' normative function: when an idealised emotion is elevated as "right" and "appropriate" and, subsequently, contradictory emotions are relegated as "inappropriate," bodies implicated in the circulation and impressions of those emotions are likewise elevated and relegated. Similar to concerns about the Cartesian Tradition and the myth of the dispassionate investigator, the delineation between "appropriate" and "inappropriate" affective dispositions and alignments can stand as a site of emotional and ideological control that disproportionately impacts women and people of color. Specifically, Trainor, Ahmed, and Jaggar have all found that this happens when people with marginalized identities—commonly the very identities difference-loving discourses and pedagogies proport to serve—are perceived to "fail" the ideal to love the difference between themselves and those who occupy a privileged position.

For example, Trainor's investigation of anti-racist pedagogies in an all-white high school found that multiculturalist lessons that explored social power, difference, and oppression led

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white students to perceive differences in a way that further Othered people of color. After

discussing white privilege and the differences in systemic treatment of white and black peoples,

Trainor reported, "If that is how they see us, students often told me, then '*no wonder they hate*

us' [emphasis added]" (p. 93). She found that not only did the students' reaction negate the

difference-spanning multiculturalist ideal of "getting along" (p. 93) but also blamed that negation

on the people of color, the ones who "hate" instead of "love." Ahmed demonstrated similar

findings in her examination of conflict between (i) migrant ethnic minorities and white working-

class communities and (ii) wealthier white communities following the 2001 North-West England

race riots, after which the poorer communities were perceived to reject living in harmony with

the privileged communities. She states,

> In such a narrative, 'others', including ethnic minorities and white working-class
> communities, in their perceived failure to love difference, function as 'a breach' in the
> ideal image of the nation. Their failure to love [the privileged communities] becomes the
> explanation for the failure of multiculturalism to deliver the national ideal. At the same
> time, the failure of 'ethnic minority communities' to integrate – to stick to others and
> embrace the national ideal – is required to 'show' how that ideal is 'idealisable' in the
> first place. Multiculturalism itself becomes an ideal by associating the failure to love
> difference with the origin of racism and violence (p. 139).

In both instances, the "different," marginalized subjects are implicated in the failure of the ideal.

They are posited as a source for "hate" or justification for displacement and difference in the first

place through their failure to love.

Jaggar in particular expresses concern when certain emotions and affective dispositions

are relegated as "inappropriate." Like with Trainor and Ahmed, Jaggar found that the relegation

of "inappropriately feeling" bodies has disproportionately affected women and people of color.

She states, "people do not always experience the conventionally acceptable emotions." When

this occurs, the response to such emotions can be a site of emotional hegemony and control.

However, Jaggar expresses that we must resist elevating and relegating subjects based on

affective dispositions. She premises this claim on her concept of "outlaw emotions," which exist

when people experience conventionally unacceptable emotions (p. 160). She states,

> The social situation of such people [who experience outlaw emotions] makes them unable
> to experience the conventionally prescribed emotions: for instance, people of color are
> more likely to experience anger than amusement when a racist joke is recounted, and
> women subjected to male sexual banter are less likely to be flattered than uncomfortable
> or even afraid (p. 160).[50]

In the example provided by Ahmed, the subordinated groups expressed outlaw emotions: their

dissatisfaction with embracing and loving difference with the wealthy community when that

difference spanned levels of privilege and power between the groups. While Jaggar articulates

that outlaw emotions are epistemologically subversive feminist opportunities to open new ways

of feeling and knowing, the expression of such emotions can serve to further subordinate or

justify the existing subordination of those, and especially the women and people of color, who

express it (Ellsworth, 1997; Jaggar, 1992). Once again, inequitable difference is preserved and

the onus of that inequity is placed on the Other who fails to love, fails to be amused, fails to be

flattered, etc..

Secondly, in addition to positing inequitable differences as the responsibility and problem

of the one who is marginalized, idealising fellow-feeling *love* to cohere a political community of

"loving difference" risks erasing the complexity of *difference*. This is a key reason for why

Trainor found that difference-loving and empathy-promoting approaches to addressing racism in

classrooms were ultimately ineffective (p. 3). She found that *difference* became a potential site of

conflict and loss of social and classroom control, something to be avoided (p. 23). Part of this

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[50] The concept of outlaw emotions is deeply interesting and important, and one I return to towards the end of this
chapter. In addition to the examples provided here, Jaggar offers other cases in explanation: "[Those who experience
outlaw emotions] may feel satisfaction rather than embarrassment when their leaders make fools of themselves. They
may feel resentment rather than gratitude for welfare payments and hand-me-downs. They may be attracted to
forbidden modes of sexual expression. They may feel revulsion for socially sanctioned ways of treating children or
animals" (p. 160).

was avoiding negativity, to "look on the bright side" (p. 25). What was deemed as "complaining" about difference was viewed as giving in to hopelessness and negating the original pedagogic intent of addressing difference (p. 91). As a result, Trainor stated that educators' and students' "fear of difference is managed by multiculturally inflected attempts to assert sameness" (p. 120), part of which was encouraged through empathy. The school she analyzed promoted harmony and community with difference-loving pedagogy that fronts an ethos of "togetherness" to account for student plurality by seeking common ground (p. 95). However, Trainor notes that teachers believed the best way to teach tolerance and the eschewal of negative stereotypes is "by teaching students that we're all the same on the inside, that difference didn't matter" (p. 105)—erasing difference altogether. Trainor suggests that, even when pedagogic efforts convince students that power inequity is legitimate and problematic, cultures of "sameness" and togetherness can negatively alter students' perception of the injustices' proximity, "support[ing] students' sense that racism happened elsewhere" (p. 95). Even more damaging, this "sameness" leads to further discourses that erase difference, like colorblindness; indeed, Trainor reports that teachers saw discussing differences in the classroom "as an opportunity to teach white students that 'race does not matter'" (p. 104). Therefore, pedagogies of *love* and empathy as "fellow-feeling" love across difference can align communities of subjects in ways that erase or cover over systemic power inequities between subjects in the name of loving difference.

All of this considered, *love* and *empathy* can serve exclusionary ends, (re)orienting subjects based on their approximation of an ideal in a similar way as *shame, disgust,* and *hate*: in attributing a subject as the cause of an injury. Repeatedly, Ahmed suggests that love for an ideal requires others to fail that ideal, how "an imperative to love difference and how this extension of love works to construct a national ideal that [requires] others fail (a failure that is read both as an

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injury and a disturbance)" (p. 133). She describes love for difference as conditional, drawing an intimidate relationship between it and *hate*; "The imperative to love difference cannot be separated from negative attachments such as hate, from the relegation of others into signs of injury or disturbance" (p. 140). At the end of the previous chapter, I discussed how *hate, empathy,* and *pain* are employed to further divides between bullying actors, delineating the "hateful" and the "hated," the *bully* and the *victim.* As I discussed before, Anderson was concerned that this kind of "moral boundary drawing" constructs a line between "us," the enlightened and moral, and "them," the intolerant who advance injustice. Just as with *hate*, "kids are cruel," and fetishized victimhood, division between (groups of) subjects occurs with *love* and some discourses of love-for-difference. Trainor associates this directly with affective/critical pedagogy that targets difference; "we teach students to feel negatively toward racism and positively toward a harmonious inclusiveness, while at the same time we insist that they practice moral line-drawing that makes clear distinctions between those on the side of justice and those who perpetuate injustice" (p. 113). Just as this reinforces a "hateful them" against a "hated us," it reinforces "ignorant and intolerant them" against a "loving and tolerant us," all of which impact how *bully* and *victim* come to be performed.

I transition now to analyze anti-bullying programmatic interventions. I believe the concerns I have brought up about empathy—its unreliability, how empathy is biased based on likeness, and how imperatives to "walk in each other's shoes" and love difference can undermine the importance of or erase difference—are important for all educators to understand when it comes to teaching empathy and affective/critical and SEL pedagogy. If the driving force behind anti-bullying efforts is facilitating conversations about bridging differences and feeling what others feel through empathy, as the goals and mission statements of the most prominent anti-

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bullying programs provided at the beginning of this section suggest, then I believe that these programs need to attend to the cultural politics of empathy in order to achieve the emancipatory effects to which they aspire. It will not be possible within the scope of this investigation to conduct an in-depth analysis of curricular discourses of *empathy* in the most prominent bullying prevention programs due to constraints I will detail in the following section. Nevertheless, my hope is that the connections I have drawn and will continue to posit between SEL curricular and programmatic intervention efforts, *empathy*, and bullying will be a foundation for future research that can navigate the barriers I have encountered in the course of my investigation.

Affordances and Limitations of Popular, Purchasable SEL Programs

The Second Step Committee for Children, the research committee for the Second Step prevention program, has identified three core components of bullying prevention: policies and procedures; staff response training; and SEL and bullying education ("Bullying Prevention in Schools," 2012, p. 4). They emphasize the importance of a multi-pronged approach that covers all three of these domains, but they place particular weight on SEL curriculum to foster empathy, emotional regulation, and social problem-solving. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), beyond empathy, SEL intends to help students "acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to recognize and manage their emotions, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging social situations constructively" (Ragozzino & Utne O'Brien, 2009, p. 3). The push for SEL models in bullying prevention is not anything new; in 1998, McKinlay noted that schools were turning towards programmatic socioemotional intervention because bullying policies' focus on punishment after bullying occurs was proving to be a largely ineffective systems-level solution. Meanwhile, curriculum focusing on student social and

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emotional development is suggested to lead to improved school climates (Bosaki, Marini, & Dane, 2006). It is important to note, however, that SEL curriculum is not anti-bullying curriculum; rather, anti-bullying curriculum has extended or is intended to extend from broader SEL curriculum; "When schools embed bullying prevention efforts within an SEL framework, these efforts become a natural extension of the underlying SEL practices in the school and are more likely to succeed" (Ragozzino & Utne O'Brien, 2009, p. 14).

The focus on empathy in particular in SEL interventions is more recent and increasingly popular, largely due to empathy hype and studies that suggest (i) children lack empathy for victims of bullying, (ii) "they [children] view being different from the social ideal, or social norm, as the cause of bullying," and (iii) they would intervene when they felt empathy for a victim (Ragozzino & Utne O'Brien; Swearer & Cary, 2007). The KiVa, Second Step, FearNot!, Roots of Empathy, STOMP Out Bullying, Operation Respect, and Friendly Schools anti-bullying programs all promote a variation of developing student empathy, teaching empathy, engaging empathetically with others, and/or promoting a more empathetic society in their mission statements, goal outcomes, and/or educator toolkits. Of these programs, I address (i) STOMP Out Bullying, (ii) the KiVa Anti-Bullying Program, and (iii) Second Step. However, my assessment of these programs is ultimately superficial and brief, limited to discourses available on their general website and secondary assessments due to constraints in accessing their curriculum: their considerable price tags.

Bullying prevention is a billion-dollar industry (Sherman, 2000). This revelation altered the course of my research and illuminated that the emotional politics of bullying are not only entrenched in power and identify politics but also in issues of school equity and access. My analysis of the most prominent programs in this chapter, which was my initial intent for this

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whole chapter, is truncated because access to the SEL curricular and programmatic intervention materials is safeguarded behind material and licensing fees. The KiVa program requires an up-front cost of $4,822.63 and an additional annual licensing fee of $1,129.18 (Huitsing, Iris Barends, & Lokkerbol, 2019) for twenty hours of content. Second Step bullying prevention for K-5 costs $4,529 dollars for *one* set of curriculum materials, which they recommend be shared between only two teachers; it is an additional $413 per bundle to get materials in Spanish ("Programs Price List," n.d.). Their middle school materials cost an annual licensing fee of $2,749 for 26 25-minute digital lessons with no material resources and no resources in Spanish ("Programs Price List," n.d.). I was unable to ascertain the costs for STOMP Out Bullying's various offerings because due to the Corona Virus, they have closed their merchandise store until further notice ("Shop for STOMP Out Bullying™ Merchandise," n.d.), and they did not respond to my emails requesting more information. While STOMP Out Bullying provides some free resources, which I will address in a moment, their detailed SEL toolkit for educators is only available through purchase.

STOMP Out Bullying

The STOMP Out Bullying program's overarching branding and merchandising motto is "End the Hate… Change the Culture," so right off the bat, they are engaging the politics of emotion and locating the cause of bullying in hate. This aligns with popular conceptions of bullying's cause and attributive discourses like "kids are cruel," the metonymic sticking of bully:hate, and the alignment of the "hateful them" against the "hated us"—constructs which I have already spent some time arguing are not helpful in deconstructing *bully* and *victim* as performed and fetishized roles. Consistent alignment of *bully* and *hate* alienate *bully* from other, perhaps more relevant, affects at work, like unacknowledged and displaced shame and disgust,

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and the important role that idealisation and emotions' normative function play. This all being said, this motto also sets up the promotion of SEL pedagogy, which focuses on improving school culture (Bosaki et. al). This, I argued in the "Schooling of Emotion" section, occurs through emotional intervention in students' lives. A major part of this, they propose, is raising awareness about bullying, which is a prominent feature in all of the other programs as well.

While the other programs promote "raising awareness" through staff training and class discussions defining bullying, STOMP Out Bullying takes a public approach. They create commercials with themes like victims saying "See Me" and PSAs by celebrities who promote STOMP Out Bullying's World Day of Bullying Prevention and state that bullying is "uncool." They encourage nominal public donations: "You Can Order STOMP Out Bullying™ Merchandise and Help Raise Awareness" and "When you order from our online store, you are not only making a donation to but you are helping to create awareness to eradicate bullying and cyberbullying. Order Awareness Bracelets, Pins and more!" ("Your Dollars at Work," n.d.). Raising awareness is also the heart of their #BlueUp Blue t-shirt campaign, for which the public, educators, parents, and students can show their support with the "2020 Limited Edition World Day of Bullying Prevention™ [t-shirt] ... Get Your Blue Shirt Here!," which they say "make great gifts as well" ("Home," n.d.; "Ways to Help," n.d.). They also have corporate sponsors who promote special deals, like J.Crew's "new collection of pocket squares WHERE 50 percent of the retail price will be donated to STOMP Out Bullying™," accompanied by a video from the company on how to fold a pocket square ("Special Offers From STOMP Out Bullying™ Partners," n.d.). STOMP Out Bullying indicates that 86% of their income goes to Program Services, 6% to Management and General, and 8% to fundraising; "Please Remember STOMP Out Bullying™ In Your Year-End Tax Deductible Giving" ("Your Dollars at Work," n.d.).

Because of the monumental amount of money donated to STOMP Out Bullying each year, which *Owler* estimates to be $4.3 million ("STOMP Out Bullying's Competitors, Revenue," n.d.), one million of which was raised by the child's t-shirt alone (Abrahamson, 2019), I was surprised at the altogether skinny resources provided on the free Online Educator Participation Toolkit. To clarify, there are two toolkits: one with material resources, like a cyberbullying DVD, teacher training materials, curriculum and student activities, and more,[51] and a free online one. STOMP Out Bullying describes its physical prevention materials thusly: The STOMP Out Bullying™ Educator's Bullying Prevention Toolkit enables educators to create meaningful dialogue, educate students through proven Social Emotional Learning methods, adopt character building in schools and involve both students and faculty in working together to change school climate ("Educators Page," n.d.).

Meanwhile, the information on the free online toolkit presents itself more as guidelines, recommendations under four different categories (Participate, Educate, Advocate, Inspire) that provide no concrete strategies and approaches to achieve the stated prevention methods. The Online Prevention Toolkit is a bullet-point list with things like

- Discuss the meaning of empathy, morals, ethics, and responsibility
- Roleplay to end hurtful language
- Teachers and faculty should be educated and trained on how to deal with bullies and get them the appropriate help they need in order to stop their behavior
- Teach empathy, tolerance, kindness and acceptance
- Look into SEL programs for your entire school
- Teach empathy, tolerance, kindness and acceptance
- Talk about how you can prevent bullying and cyberbullying in your school ("Online Educators Toolkit," n.d.).

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[51] I was unable to ascertain specific details about the products offered because the materials are only listed on the "Shop for STOMP Out Bullying™ Merchandise" page, which has been shut down since March 2020 and remains closed until further notice.

On their "School Responsibility" (n.d.) page, they state, "When educating students it is critical to teach Social Emotional Learning (SEL)," and while they state their physical Prevention Toolkit has materials to enable educators to use proven SEL methods, their free kit stops at merely suggesting schools use SEL methods. On a base and cynical level, the free toolkit feels like an advertisement preview to encourage the purchase of the physical toolkit materials. Overall, the resources to help educators transition from *what* they should do to *how* they should come at a cost.

KiVa Anti-Bullying Program

My discussion of KiVa will be incredibly brief because information about their SEL curriculum without paying for access to the materials is incredibly limited. Secondary assessments of their program indicate universal actions to prevent bullying and indicated actions to intervene when bullying occurs, which are taught in individual lesson themes that involve "discussion, group work, role-play exercises, and short films about bullying" ("KiVa Anti-Bullying Program," n.d.-a). The program is described as a "whole-school intervention, meaning that it uses a multilayered approach to address individual-, classroom-, and school-level factors" and encourages parent involvement as well ("Kiva Anti-Bullying Program," n.d.-b). Both their universal and indicated actions specify four central aims:

1. Raise awareness of the role that a group plays in maintaining bullying
2. Increase empathy toward victims
3. Promote strategies to support the victim and to support children's self-efficacy to use those strategies
4. Increase children's skills in coping when they are victimized

Of these, the second aim, "Increase empathy toward victims," raises questions. This was not one assessment's interpretation of KiVa's aim but the direct language employed across every secondary assessment of the program. It is interesting that KiVa specifies that they intend to increase empathy *toward victims,* not towards bullies and victims or towards students in general.

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While this might be written off as merely semantics, it fits the greater pattern I have identified across cause, prevention, and response discourses that focus almost entirely on the victim, at least in terms of supporting the emotional health and development of the child. The affective needs of the bully are not addressed, nor are bullies identified as worthy of increased empathy. I find this problematic because if the bully is the ultimate mechanizer of bullying, can prevention, which aims to stop bullying *before* it occurs, be successful without addressing bullies' affective needs? If, as Trainor and other CES scholars argue, social justice issues like racism and bullying are not merely matters of intolerance, ignorance, or the lack of empathy, but are emotioned in nature, then prevention must address the emotioned constructs that create and maintain power imbalances in bullying in the first place. While general SEL models, which are intended to help all children manage their emotions, may target bully *shame* and *disgust* and provide tools to dismantle those mechanizing emotions, my analysis of anti-bullying units extending from SEL curriculum lacks focus on the bully and deconstructing power imbalances, focusing instead on supporting victims, speaking up for victims, and being "upstandsers." In an ironic and somewhat antithetical way, this kind of "prevention" approach comes across more as "response"—as something that kicks in, so to speak, on the presumption that bullying and victimization has already occurred.

Second Step

The Second Step program dodges the concerns I brought up with STOMP Out Bullying and KiVa's lack of attention on or dismissive oversimplification of *bully* because they are more clearly focused on prevention—which is to say, their materials focus on the socioemotional development of the child and ways to resist victimization in order to prevent bullying before it occurs. Their program consists of four units (Learning Skills, Empathy, Emotion Management,

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and Problem Solving) that later extend into skill-oriented unit topics (Mindsets and Goals, Recognizing Bullying & Harassment, Thoughts, Emotions, & Decisions, and Managing Relationships & Social Conflict). They list empathy as the founding skill for why an SEL model helps prevent bullying; their research indicates that when students develop empathy and perspective-taking skills, they are less likely to engage physical, verbal, or social bullying ("Review of Research," 2020; McDonald & Messinger, 2011).

What stood out to me about the affective politics of Second Step, however, is how they define empathy: "feeling or understanding what someone else is feeling" ("Bullying Prevention in Schools," p. 5). Their conception of *empathy* demonstrates the importance of illuminating the politics of empathy from chapters three and four with regards to bullying because it forwards empathy as the co-opting of emotion. In other words, teaching students that the key to preventing bullying is feeling what someone else is feeling perpetuates Spelman and Ahmed's concerns about an uneven power dynamic between subjects in empathy, allowing the extender of empathy to assume sameness or emotional equivalence, to define the meaning of the sufferer's pain, or to erase the difference between the subjects and the role difference plays in power. Second Step suggests that empathy in this regard can help students "show care and compassion to others" (p. 5), which, on the whole, should be encouraged. However, as I have discussed in my literature reviews of *empathy* as response to pain and *empathy* as fellow-feeling love, overly affirmative and emancipatory accounts of empathy that do not recognize and consider the biased and self-serving elements of empathy risk perpetuating divides between subjects and the power inequities between bullying actors.

Where Free, Accessible Programs Fail to Address Emotions

Because the most popular programmatic materials that address bullying as an emotioned, relational issue were barred from public access, I decided to examine the primary free resource available to schools: StopBullying.gov's bullying prevention and continuing education training course *Bullying Prevention and Response Training and Continuing Education Online Program,* funded by The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). I also examined two resources that were linked and discussed in the training program: a Community Action Toolkit and a Youth Engagement Toolkit. My analysis of the emotional politics of bullying in this resource is ultimately an endeavor to locate a more nuanced, emotioned view of bullying in the first place—something that starkly juxtaposes this resource with the other programmatic interventions.

As a free and federally distributed resource, this program has the potential to reach the greatest number of schools in the U.S. and is perhaps the best or only option for schools with scant funding. The module is available as a PDF or PowerPoint and has six chapters:

Chapter 1: Learning Objectives
Chapter 2: Bullying Defined
Chapter 3: The Many Forms of Bullying
Chapter 4: Ten Key Findings About Bullying
Chapter 5: Misdirections in Bullying Prevention and Response
Chapter 6: Best Practices in Bullying Prevention and Response

I analyzed the PDF because it included the PowerPoint slides as well as the presenter's notes that expounded the claims and recommendations on the slides. In my analysis citations, I distinguish between the elements of the course I am addressing with (slide number) for the presentation slides and (PN slide number) for the presenter's notes discussing that slide. This distinction is not only important because the presenter's notes tend to go into more detail than the slides but also because the recommendations they make on some slides do not necessarily align with the support or advice they give educators to meet those recommendations. Further, another important

distinction that permeates my analysis is what I consider the difference between *prevention* and *response,* which I am treating as preventing bullying *before* it occurs and responding to bullying *after* it does. I make this distinction now because there are many places where the training program calls certain practices "prevention" that I would classify as response.

They state that "the overarching goal of this course is to empower you to understand bullying and how to take research on best practices and implement comprehensive, long-term prevention strategies" (PN3). They also claim their goals are to "Identify specific pathways for translating bullying prevention best practices into policy and practice" by describing harmful strategies, organizing community events and identifying stakeholders, and offering free resources (7), clearly clarifying that "THIS COURSE FOCUSES ON PREVENTION MORE THAN INTERVENTION, SO WE WILL NOT SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON WHAT TO DO IF BULLYING OCCURS [*sic*]" (PN7). Many elements of their program overlap with those of the other programs: that schools need to increase awareness of what bullying is, how prevalent it is, and that it requires buy-in from the whole school (9-56); that addressing bullying is more effective when parents and the larger community get involved (28-35); that students are often targeted in bullying for aspects of their identity that are perceived as different or unideal (e.g. special needs, obese, queer, CDL, etc.) (36-37); and that Zero Tolerance policies, conflict resolution and peer mediation models, and over-simplified connections drawn between bullying and suicide are not effective at addressing bulling (58-62). However, the extent to which schools are provided concrete curricular and programmatic resources to implement greatly diverge.

At the end of the presentation, the training course outlines ten Best Practices for bullying prevention, which comprises slides 68-91:

1. Focus on the Social Climate
2. Conduct Community-Wide Assessments of Bullying

3. Seek Out Support for Bullying Prevention
4. Coordinate and Integrate Prevention Efforts
5. Provide Training in Bullying Prevention and Response
6. Organize a Community Event to Catalyze Efforts
7. Set Policies and Rules About Bullying
8. Respond Consistently and Appropriately When Bullying Happens
9. Spend Time Talking to Children and Youth About Bullying
10. Continue Efforts Over Time and Renew Community Interests

Of these, half of them (2, 3, 4, 6, and 10) have to do with community intervention, not

necessarily targeted in-school intervention strategies. Recommendations 5, 7, and 8 are

administrative and, I will come to discuss, ultimately focus more on response than prevention.

Only recommendations 1 and 9 directly focus on student-oriented in-school efforts to prevent

bullying and open opportunities to address the emotioned elements of bullying. I will connect

more specific details to their correlated recommendations with the notation (R#).

StopBullying.gov's intense focus on the community—and its attention deficit on

emotion, though more on that later—is its greatest point of deviance from other programmatic

interventions. Schools are encouraged to conduct community-wide assessments (R2) to identify

"hotspots" for bullying, incorporating state and regional assessments of youth violence (PN69).

Further, educators are encouraged to identify and coordinate with a variety of local stakeholders

(e.g., law enforcement, juvenile justice officers, faith leaders, elected officials, businesses (72))

(R3) and create community safety groups (R4). StopBullying.gov provides a Community Action

Toolkit, a 34-page document[52] designed to help schools implement and integrate community

efforts through the years (R6, R10) ("Community Action Toolkit," n.d.). This toolkit provides

instructions on how to hold a community townhall that provides attendees the same general

bullying information that the training course does and encourages schools to complete a

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[52] The packet is 56 pages in total, but pages 35-56 are feedback forms for various stakeholders.

Community Planning Matrix,[53] which is a chart that lists stakeholders and tells educators to hold

an anti-bullying day in schools, create a local fund for businesses to support bullying prevention,

create a community newsletter, provide information on state/local bullying laws, create an

interfaith alliance, host a town hall or community event, submit op-eds and letters to the editor to

local media, help youth develop a media campaign, and hold a PSA contest ("Community Action

Toolkit," n.d.).

My concerns with the Community Action Toolkit have nothing to do with its inherent

qualities; rather, what strikes me about the Community Action Toolkit is the disproportionate

quality and quantity of support provided for educators to work with the greater community

compared to the support provided for educators to work with students. Five out of ten

recommendations center on holding a meeting with the community, and a lengthy, detailed

packet is provided to help. Conversely, the Youth Engagement Toolkit, the second and only

other toolkit provided, to help educators talk to students about bullying (R9) is skeletal in

comparison. It is only three-and-a-half pages long, and that shortens to three if you take out the

educator instructions about how "Bullying is a serious problem […] By following the steps in

this toolkit, you can…" ("Youth Engagement Toolkit," n.d., p. 1). Three-fourths of a page is a

bullet-point list providing examples of verbal, social, and physical bullying (pp. 1-2), followed

by four steps.

Step One: Watch the Cartoon Network "Speak Up" anti-bullying documentary—a link

and video that are no longer active. Step Two: Discuss it. Beyond the fact that these twelve

questions[54] respond to a video that can no longer be viewed, they are rudimentary and do not

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[53] See Appendix Two for images of the Community Planning Matrix.
[54] See Appendix Three for a list of the twelve questions.

allow teachers to fulfill the R9 recommendations in a way that addresses emotioned elements of

bullying, which I will return to soon. Some examples of the questions are

- Have you or anyone you know ever encountered bullying? What kind was it?
- Where do you feel like most bullying happens?
- What does cyber-bullying look like? Is it different from "traditional" bullying, and if so, how?
- What are the roles of teachers and counselors in addressing bullying? Do you feel that in your school teachers and counselors provide positive interventions when bullying occurs?

Step Three: "The Federal Partners want to hear from you"; provide feedback about your

experience with the documentary to the StopBullying.gov Tumblr and Facebook page. Thus far,

then, steps one and three out of four do not help educators engage youth and prevent bullying.

Finally Step Four: "Here's what you can do NEXT!" (p. 3). The final step is the HRSA *Stop*

Bullying Now! Activities Guide, a list of eight activities educators can employ, like

- A Battle of the Bands: "Everyone loves music, so why not organize an event that incorporates live music? Your event can be fun and entertaining while at the same time involving the whole community" (p. 3)
- A Stop Bullying Carnival: "An ideal way to give people important information about bullying prevention while having fun" (p. 4).
- A positive Rap Contest: Have students create raps about "the importance of kindness and respect and how bullying needs to be stopped in its tracks" (p. 4).
- Others like a Bullying Prevention 5K Race or Fun Run, Acts of Kindness Awards, and a Bullying Prevention Club (p. 4).

I comment further on these steps and their shortcomings throughout the following paragraphs as

I situate them in the context of where StopBullying.gov alludes to affect in bullying prevention.

The prevention training course vaguely evokes emotion and emotional intervention in

bullying on three general levels: improving the school climate (R1), talking to students about

bullying prevention (R9), and brief commentary on the role sympathy plays in bullying

dynamics. I will begin first with R9 because it extends most directly from the community

elements I have discussed so far. StopBullying.gov provided three ways schools might achieve

R9:

1. Talk about bullying and how to prevent it.
2. Hold class meetings for students and staff.
3. Incorporate lessons about bullying, positive behaviors, and *social-emotional[55] into your school's curriculum* [emphasis added] (87).

In the spoken extension of this recommendation, the presenters note that this involves regular discussions between adults and youth about bullying and peer relations; small group discussions to discuss "to increase their knowledge about bullying and the harms it causes, *share feelings and different viewpoints,* gain skills in preventing and responding to bullying, and *build understanding and empathy* [emphasis added]" (PN87); and anti-bullying themes incorporated into the curriculum (PN87). They bring up SEL when providing basic information about bullying earlier in the presentation, though briefly and only in the reader note[56]: "Incorporate social skills training and social-emotional lessons in classrooms and youth programs" (PN35). With regards to SEL, the most direct statement made in the program about it is "Whether in small groups or through classroom curricula, social and emotional learning boosts critical thinking, academic achievement, school connectedness, empathy and positive interactions with peers." (PN87).

　　While it is excellent that the training module brings up the role SEL curriculum can play in bullying prevention, bringing it up is all they do to help teachers implement this recommendation. The resource they provide to achieve R9 are the four (really only two) steps in the Youth Engagement Toolkit. Step four has nothing to do with students' socioemotional development, which leaves the twelve questions in response to the non-existent video as the only

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[55] This was copied from the slide, which I assume contained a typo that left this option incomplete.

[56] This is significant because if teachers only reference the Power Point—which has basic bullet-point information and is much more appealing since the full document with the presenter's notes is 209 pages long, as opposed to the 115-slide PowerPoint—they would completely miss this information. In fact, without the presenter's notes, nearly all of the information about SEL and bullying would not be included. Plus, this information about SEL is not included with the information about school engagement and prevention but "Protective Community Factors" (34, RN34). I find this particularly strange because only a couple slides prior to this one addresses "School Factors Related to Involvement in Bullying" (32), which seems a much more appropriate placement.

possible resource to incorporate SEL. Because they do not define what they mean by empathy

and social connectedness or ways to develop them, I can only assume that they may adopt

similar expectations that the purchasable programs do: feeling the feeling of others, trying to

understand the feelings of others, and perspective-taking. If so, there are some questions that

may vaguely allude to this intent:

- Have you or anyone you know ever encountered bullying? What kind was it? *Can you relate to anyone in the video?* [emphases added] Did you experience something similar to someone in the video?
- *Why do you think people pick on each other* [emphases added] for what they look like?
- *What do you think most people do when they see bullying?* Why?
- Think about kids who are bullies in your school or community. *Why do think that they bully* [emphases added], and how does it make them appear to their peers and friends?

The final question is a reiteration of the second one, so there are three instances in the 93-slide

training course[57] that offer curricular ways for students to consider the emotions and feelings of

others—though this is veiled in consideration of students' motivation for bullying. The rest of

the information falls under a general "awareness" category that provides basic knowledge about

what bullying is, statistics, and its impacts—information that comprises over half the training

course (9-59).

The second way that the training course evokes emotion is in its discussion of school

climate (R1). This comes up earlier on in the presentation in "School Factors Related to

Involvement in Bullying" (32) and "Protective Factors for Bullying" slides in chapter providing

basic knowledge about bullying. The presenters identify two factors of school climate that relate

to bullying: a sense of belonging and the degree of respect and fair treatment (32). Shortly

thereafter, they identify "Inclusive, nurturing and safe schools" as a protective factor in bullying

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[57] Although, this is not even listed in the training course but in the link to the Youth Engagement Toolkit—*a link in the presentation that is broken and does not even work,* which requires educators to go out of their way beyond the training course to locate the three-and-a-half-page resource.

(34). More specifically, they cite peer interactions and positive friendships as factors that can create a better school climate, as well as child-specific factors, like the claim that students "who are secure, caring and self-confident children" will help reduce bullying (PN34). In the P1 section, the advice they give to improve school climate is to help students feel more connected to their schools, citing that "students feel more connected to schools where they know, care about, and support one another, have common goals, and actively contribute"; to let students know that it is "uncool" to bully; to establish that stopping bullying was the responsibility of "parents and guardians, teachers, counselors, coaches, school resource officers, bus drivers, administrators, and of course youth themselves"; and to let students know that they are expected to "step in to be a friend or to help out in other ways if someone is bullied" (PN68).

This all being said, the more concrete guidance for how schools can achieve R1 generally come down to surveillance and recommendations that would be classified as response. Surveillance is a form of prevention. In order to improve school climate, educators are told to "be vigilant for signs of bullying and investigate whenever bullying is suspected" (PN68), identify and monitor "hot spots where bullying is most likely to occur" and "focus supervision efforts" (PN65), and "closely supervise behaviors" (PN34). This is concerning because supervision-oriented approaches posit bullying as a purely behavioral problem (indeed, they repeatedly state that "violence is learned behavior" (PN35). The Community Planning Toolkit also provides a list of activities for prevention and community improvement, which includes

1. Developing a taskforce to assess bullying in schools
2. Conducting team building exercises with youth
3. Creating a safety plan for children who are bullied
4. Developing screening processes to promote early detection and response
5. Training adults on gathering and using bullying data
6. Developing a follow-up procedure to monitor youth who have been bullied
7. Establishing in-school committees
8. Monitoring internet activities and mobile devices

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9. Sponsoring training sessions for adults on best practices in bullying prevention, response, and crisis planning

Many of these involve monitoring and surveillance, and only one is prevention that involves students: conducting team-building exercises—and while this might build trust and comradery, it still could not be classified as an activity or curriculum that advances student development. Some others on this list (3, 5, and 6) can only be implemented as response after bullying has occurred. Bullying continues to be posited as behavioral.

I turn my attention now to the final three recommendations, all of which have an administrative purpose and the majority of which deal with response instead of prevention. These include providing training in bullying prevention and response (R5), setting policies and rules about bullying (R7), and responding consistently and appropriately when bullying happens (R8). Over half of the presentation is devoted to R5 (9-56, 74-77). The course states that adults need to know "the nature of bullying, its effects, how to prevent bullying (e.g., the importance of adult supervision), and appropriate responses if bullying is known or suspected" (74). Their provided resources in order to do so include the very training course I am analyzing,[58] a module called "See Something, Do Something: Intervening in Bullying Behavior"—an intervention-oriented resource, not prevention—an infographic about bullying, and a course on substance abuse intervention. On top of the fact that this once again focuses on surveillance as the primary method of prevention and bullying as misbehavior, this is problematic because the information they provide to train teachers is drastically outdated with an incredibly drastic hole: the general absence of information about cyberbullying. In the entire training course, they only mention cyberbullying two times: 1) in their completely inaccurate assessment from 2015 that only 7% of

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[58] This includes basic information about bullying like statistics, the different types, research on how it impacts boys and girls differently, etc..

students report being cyberbullied[59] (21), and 2) that girls were more likely to be cyberbullied than boys (24). Cyberbullying was not addressed in prevention recommendations; the closest to be said for prevention is the eighth bullet point in the Community Planning Toolkit is list of activities: "Monitoring internet activities and mobile devices." Cyberbullying was included as an afterthought on the "How are children and youth bullied?" slide (21)—it did not have its own slide at any point in the course—and was not elaborated on beyond the previously mentioned statistics in any presenter's notes. They go into far greater detail about the federal laws to address discrimination and how it might relate to instances of bullying and the consequences when school personnel and school districts violate those laws (51, PN51).

Meanwhile, R7 and R8 are centered around bullying policies and response when those policies are violated. To achieve R7, educators are encouraged to be aware of state laws, create policies, and "make clear to children and adults that bullying behaviors are prohibited and explain what is expected of all of them to be good citizens and allies (not passive bystanders) if they're aware of bullying or if they're aware of students who seem troubled in any way" (PN82). Additionally, they are told, "if students violate rules and bully others, clear, developmentally appropriate, and proportional consequences should be applied" (PN82). For R8, despite the repeated insistence at the beginning of the course that it focuses on prevention and not intervention, teachers are reminded of "the importance of responding consistently and appropriately when bullying happens" (83). They are provided a list of "Do's" (e.g. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help; Separate the children involved; Make sure everyone is safe; Stay calm, etc.) (83) and "Do nots" (e.g. Do not ignore it. Do not think children

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[59] According to a 2018 Pew Research Center, 59% of students self-reported having been subjected to cyberbullying (Anderson, 2018).

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can work it out without adult help; Do not immediately try to sort out the facts; Do not force

other children to say publicly what they saw, etc.) (84). Included in the "Do's" is a list of

recommendations on what to do when a weapon, serious physical injury, sexual abuse, or hate-

motivated violence is involved (PN83). This is problematic because, like with everything else

thus far, it treats bullying as purely behavioral and, further, is not supported by research. Meta-

analytic reviews of studies on the effectiveness of bullying policies ultimately concluded that

policies were ineffective and yielded little to no positive shifts in bullying trends or school

culture (Ferguson et. al, 2007; Hall, 2017).

Advancing Divides Between Bullying Subjects, Cont'd

Now that I have addressed the ten recommendations for bullying prevention, which were

largely barren in terms of SEL, the emotioned dynamics of bullying, and discussion of the power

inequities between bullies and victims,[60] I close my analysis of their program by situating it

within the greater pattern I have analyzed in each chapter: trichotomous depictions of bullying's

actors. Specifically, this training course reflects victims as the different and vulnerable, bullies as

the maladjusted and violent, and bystanders as the sympathetic and potentially empathetic

spectator. Their presented understanding of bullies and bullying is a behavioral deficit model: *if*

only the bullies were more well-behaved, they wouldn't bully; we adults must supervise and

diligently monitor to make up for this deficit. While I would argue that the emotioned rules and

idealisation behind power imbalances in bullying is learned as discourses of emotion are learned,

this nuance does not exist in the government's depiction of bullying as a social phenomenon,

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[60] A curious exclusion considering StopBullying.gov lists a context of power imbalance as one of the three crucial factors that define bullying.

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especially with their intense emphasis on violent instances of bullying despite the fact that social/relational and verbal acts of bullying are far more prevalent (Hymel & Swearer, 2015).

The characterization of *victim* and *bystander* in the training course is on par with discourses surrounding these roles in cause and response. As I stated earlier, the training course indicated that identity differences from ideal social norms typically demarked victims, such as those with disabilities, queer individuals, students from racial or religious minoritized populations, those whose body types and/or appearance could be considered unideal, etc.. Victims were also depicted as likely having "a quiet, passive temperament" or potentially lacking in social skills (PN29). As I will discuss more in the next two paragraphs, they are identified as individuals who need and deserve multiple types of support from educators. Bystanders, meanwhile, were discussed in terms of emotional disposition, but not, surprisingly, in terms of empathy. Rather, the training course focused on bystander sympathy. However, what they define as "sympathy,"—" 90% of elementary students said they *felt sorry for students who are bullied* [emphasis added]" (49)—CES scholars would define as pity (Blum, 1980). Both Spelman and Blum warn that pity can further isolate and "heightens rather than eases differences between the nonsuffering and the suffering" (Spelman, 1997, p. 65). Aligning with affect research, the training course acknowledges that bystander sympathy/pity does not translate into preventative or interventive action (PN49), but they offer no alternatives for translating bystander sympathy/pity into action beyond the R7 (Set Policies and Rules) mandate to set expectations that bystanders need to intervene and be "aware of students who seem troubled in any way" (PN82).

As with my other chapters, however, what concerns me the most in discourses about bullying is how *bully* is depicted. The training course correlates bullies with delinquent behavior;

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fighting, stealing and vandalism; truancy; substance use and abuse; weapon use; having suicidal inclinations; "an active, 'hot-headed' temperament"; a lack of social competence and social skills; and a history of witnessing violence between adults (29, PN29, 30, PN35, PN43). These bully traits are presented as contagious, exposure to which by peers may encourage those peers to bully others as well (PN30). They paint bullies as starkly at-risk youth, yet socioemotional support for those students is absent in their prevention recommendations. In their general bullying knowledge section, they state that bullying can be mitigated by reducing "the ease of access by children and youth to alcohol and drugs, media violence, and firearms" (PN35). When emotional intervention is brought up in R8, which guides educators on how to address bullying actors, the interventions are only recommended for victims: "A trauma-informed approach should be adopted, which recognizes that *children who have been bullied* [emphasis added] may have experienced significant trauma and need special care to address their trauma and avoid inadvertently re-traumatizing them" (PN85). Despite the fact that they correlate damaging traits like exposure to violence, delinquent behavior, substance use and abuse, and suicidal inclination with bullies, they do not suggest emotional support for bullies but supervision.

What I view to be the most revealing, beyond bullies' exclusion in emotional intervention, is what *is* recommended to address their actions in R8. Their recommendation is made even more problematic in its juxtaposition to further recommendations for addressing victims:

> Follow-up responses are often needed in order to plan intervention strategies for *youth who are bullied* [emphasis added] to support them and provide protection plans. Follow-up is also needed with *youth who bully* [emphasis added] to help them appreciate the seriousness of the bullying, understand the consequences of their behavior, and learn alternative behaviors (PN85).

Here, victims are once again identified for support, including future plans crafted by the school to help them. Meanwhile, beyond whatever punishments are mandated by anti-bullying laws or

policies, bullies are reprimanded for their behavior, reminded why they are wrong, and told to do things differently. The power imbalance between actors—which, again, the government acknowledges in their definition of bullying but never addresses in prevention—and the emotioned discourses that may motivate bullies' actions are blaringly absent.

What they recommend to intervene with bullies is "Increasing adult supervision" (68), ""intentionally" looking out for [bullying]" (PN68), "focus supervision efforts" (PN68), "Monitoring internet activities and mobile devices" (PN73), and training adults to understand "how to prevent bullying (e.g., the importance of adult supervision)" (74). This stands in stark contrast to recommendations to "creat[e] a safety plan for children who are bullied" and "[develop] a follow-up procedure to monitor youth who have been bullied" (PN73). Support—let alone affective intervention—is only recommended for victims. Indeed, they list "anger management, skill-building, empathy-building, self-esteem enhancement" for bullies as the third misdirection for bullying prevention to avoid under the logic that group support for bullies would result in them being "poor role models and reinforce each others' antisocial and bullying behavior" (PN61). This is problematic considering increasing evidence that misplaced bully shame and self-anger may motivate their actions (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2004, 2006, 2012).

Ultimately, the StopBullying.gov prevention and continued education training module leaves much to be desired, most notably in its lack of consideration for the emotioned dynamics of bullying. There are several reasons this training module is lacking. For example, it consistently elides prevention and response and often offers response strategies under the guise of prevention. Its resources for in-class work are scant and the vast majority of the links to resources in the module are broken. It is guilty of violating its fifth misdirection and tenth recommendation, which warn against one-off anti-bullying events and assert the need for

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consistent, integrated prevention methods (64, 91); while they advocate for the latter, the resources they provide outline the one-off events they warn against, like the Rap Contest and Anti-Bullying Fun Run. Curricular and programmatic interventions that would satisfy R10 are missing. Much like the free Online Educator's Toolkit from STOMP Out Bullying, this free module likewise offers vague guidelines, like "use SEL" without steps to implement the solution—good advice that nevertheless would leave educators asking, "Yeah, good idea, but *how?*" All of this being said, this program's greatest weakness is that it completely eschews the emotional politics of bullying. It does not provide resources to address power inequities between bullying's actors. Further, it falls into the short-sited and superficial view that bullying is a problem of bully misbehavior and intolerance rather than the affective realm of social justice and only offers emotional support and intervention for victims of bullying, not the children who may bully. When this is the case for the free, federal resources, it is no wonder why and how bullying became a billion-dollar industry.

Two Levels of Affect in Bullying Prevention Programs

The process and results of my analysis this chapter were surprising. In my overview of Critical Emotion Studies, I established that emotions have been historically undertheorized on a macro- and a micro-level. On the macro-level, I argued that emotions have been undertheorized as a whole, dismissed or unacknowledged for their epistemic, systemic, mediative, and discursive power. On the micro-level, I argued that even as emotions are more widely and methodically theorized, there remains a prominent, undertheorized hierarchy between individual emotions, in which "good/appropriate" and "bad/inappropriate" emotions are apportioned and certain emotions, like "empathy," are deemed an unmitigated good.

Because of the bevy or research aligning empathy and SEL interventions with bullying prevention and response, I began my analysis of prevention programs under the assumption that the emotioned politics of bullying prevention needed to be addressed on the micro-level: reassessing assumptions about the unmitigated goodness of empathy and fine-tuning curricular and programmatic interventions that posited it as the answer without consideration of the power inequity between the extender and receiver of empathy. Further examination of their curriculum is needed to determine the extent to which these programs do or do not address the concerns I have raised about empathy-for-pain and empathy-as-love. However, even though my analysis of the SEL programs was truncated, the way that empathy and difference were evoked in their discourse—empathy as the co-opting of emotion in the Second Step program, for example— suggests that these programs are not exempt from the under-theorization of emotion on the micro-level. This is the conclusion I expected to draw going into my investigation.

While I did not initially plan to change the course of my examination to include the StopBullying.gov resource, it was illuminating nevertheless; the government training course revealed that, despite affective turns in research, the emotioned dynamics of bullying are still drastically under-theorized on the macro-level. After all, analyzing the emotional politics of a bullying prevention training course is only possible with those emotional politics are acknowledged in the first place. This was not the case in the training course, the Community Action Toolkit, or the Youth Engagement Toolkit, which focused on student surveillance instead of affective reorientation. The discrepancy between the purchasable programs and the free, federal program leave me with concerns with regards to education equity. While billions of dollars are allocated to schools for anti-bullying efforts (Sherman, 2000), it is no secret that that

funding is channeled inequitably to school districts, with as much as a $23 billion-dollar funding gap between predominantly white and black school districts (Meckler, 2019).

With regards to the SEL programs, the next steps to engaging emotions in bullying on the micro-level align with the recommendations I have made throughout chapter three as well: to more carefully consider (i) the emotions that are evoked in bullying prevention and response, (ii) how and for whom those emotions are evoked, and (iii) the power dynamics between actors who express those emotions. Meanwhile, the StopBullying.gov resources would need a complete overhaul in order to reach the threshold for addressing bullying on the macro-level of the emotional politics of bullying, let along the micro-level. While I expected more effective bullying prevention would be marked by attention to emotioned dynamics on the micro- and macro-level, I did not expect for the difference between them to be a severe issue of access.

CHAPTER FIVE: FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN BULLYING PREVENTION

I have attempted to cover a lot of ground thus far in my analysis of bullying's affective dimensions. In order to do so, I devoted my first chapter to a theoretic approach to understanding bullying with the following intent: to 1) posit bullying as a social justice issue rather than only a behavioral one, emphasizing the critical role that relationships of power imbalance play in defining it; and 2) explain the ways and reasons that bullying has increasingly become an affectively-charged issue from the national- to the local school-level. From there, I employed CES theory in chapter two to complicate current conceptions of bullying's cause, paying particular attention to role that *shame, disgust,* and *hate* play in mechanizing bullying; they function to align and (re)orient bodies based on an idealised norm. Finally, in chapter three, I turned my attention to bullying response, exploring *empathy* and *pain* in my analysis of the discourses that circulated following the bullying of Channing Smith, the fourth grader with this homemade t-shirt, Keaton Jones, and a ten-year-old girl teased and then assaulted on her school bus. That chapter indicated that empathy and an economy of attention to suffering produces uneven effects that commodify certain forms of victimhood while relegating other forms to the realm of *apologies* and *regret*. Finally, in chapter four, my analysis of the StopBullying.gov prevention program illuminated that affective politics of bullying that posit it as more than or not merely behavioral have yet to be federally recognized. Further, my analysis suggested that access to resources to affectively address bullying come at a considerable cost. Through cause, prevention, and response, a pattern surfaced: performed divides between *bully* and *victim,* villain and hero, hateful and hated.

These chapters were guided be several inquiry questions, many of which demand continued consideration and scrutiny:

1. How does bullying engage with politics of emotion?
2. How do emotions circulate amongst us, orienting and reorienting collective affective attitudes, and what role does that play in bullying's causes and solutions?
3. How is bullying affectively performed?
4. When a bullying spectator feels empathy for the suffering of the victim, who does it serve? Further, who do our responses to incidents of bullying serve and who do they ignore?
5. What does an exploration of these questions reveal about the relationship between emotions and the perpetuation and/or mitigation of power inequities in bullying?

Ultimately, the intent of this inquiry has been to call attention to uncritical or undertheorized assumptions we hold when it comes to bullying's cause, prevention, and response, without recognition of which may perpetuate the very problem we are trying to subvert. I bring my investigation towards a close with the hopes that this research warrants greater consideration of how we might alter or expand our current anti-bullying efforts to attend to the cultural politics of emotion.

Redefining Affective Dynamics of Bullying

Bullying prevention has come a long way from older perceptions of it as "kids just being kids" or something that "builds character." The turn towards SEL methodology and implementing "themes of care" in curriculum encourages educators to view bullying as an emotioned phenomenon. Despite the fact that, as the StopBullying.gov training course reveals, there are still significant domains where bullying is viewed in terms of misbehavior and supervision, socioemotional models continue to gain traction. I have argued that bullying is a matter of social justice because the power inequity between its actors is its defining feature. Bullying's entwined with power and identity politics and, as such, cannot be divorced from the politics of emotion. While programmatic interventions and the growing focus on the role education plays or should play in constructing discourses of emotion is a large step forward in

getting to the affective roots of bullying, my investigation has indicated areas where current approaches lack. Primarily, this is in the under-theorization of emotions and the emotioned motivations of its actors.

When emotioned discourses of bullying are over-simplified, so too are conceptions of its actors. My analysis of the affective dynamics and discourses of bullying cause, prevention, and response revealed a pattern of performed roles for *bully* and *victim.* A ready correlation and metonymic association between *bully* and *hate* has been posited as the cause in adages like "kids are cruel," prevention mantras like "end the hate," and the examples in the response discourse that described bullies as hateful or metonymically replaced "bully" with "hate" altogether. In prevention and response, spectators are encouraged to align with the victim against the bully, the "hateful them." The repeated prevalence of this pattern is telling. To begin, it reveals narrow and entrenched performed roles for *bully* and *victim,* and for the former especially. Additionally, the quick and consistent association of *bully* and *hate* in cause and response and the characterization of *bully* in the prevention module demonstrate a drastically oversimplified and one-dimensional depiction of the bully, undermining other potential emotioned motivations for his or her actions. I believe that deconstructing this pattern and the affective divide between subjects it poses is exigent for preventing bullying.

On a fundamental level, our intense focus on the victim, resulting in and from wound fetishization and commodification of victimhood, inevitably situates discussions about bullying firmly in the realm of *response.* When we focus on the victim, we talk about bullying *after* it has occurred; a victim can only exist when bullying is past tense. *Victim* does not belong in bullying prevention because, if prevention is successful, the victim does not exist. *Bullying prevention is and must be about the bully*. When I say this, I do not want to undermine the importance of

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supporting victims of bullying, which I believe is a crucial part of response. However, if we want to stop bullying altogether, we must focus on the one who creates it. Unfortunately, my analysis of prevention methods suggested that *bully* intervention primarily took the form of supervision or making students believe that being a bully is "uncool"—neither of which address the emotioned discourses and affective histories that may be negatively impacting the bullies' relationships with others and with themselves. Further, my analysis of bullying cause and response suggests that, even if prevention efforts were to focus more on the emotioned motivations of bullies, those motivations are drastically undertheorized as maladjusted "cruelty" or "hate."

Volk et. al stressed the critical and primary importance of recognizing and dismantling the power imbalance between *bully* and *victim* if we are to effectively address it in a meaningful, longitudinal way. The power imbalance between actors is what separates bullying from conflict in the first place, what makes bullying a form of "victimization," not conflict (Limber & Snyder, 2006). We must confront power imbalances: what perpetuates them and what disrupts them, and ways that we can identify when our prevention efforts are doing the latter. I contend that the power imbalance comes from affective economies of *shame, disgust, hate,* and *love,* which work in a process of idealisation to (re)orient bodies based on their (un)willingness and (in)ability to approximate an idealised norm. It does not stem solely from hate or the lack of empathy but from a complex and iterated history of emotioned discourses and will therefore require new complex and iterated emotioned discourses to dismantle. Part of this is recognizing that emotions, the development of emotioned knowledge, and discourses of emotion are constantly progressing and demand continuous investigation and intervention that resists old and limited performed roles.

Ideally, educators will employ prevention models with more nuanced insights about complex dynamics of affect and power. This means noticing, as Trainor did, places where

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identities and "less appropriate" ways of feeling are being displaced. It means dislodging certain bodies and identities as fixed referents for emotions. We need a greater examination of how pedagogies of love and empathy work in our prevention efforts, how these can serve both inclusionary *and* exclusionary ends, and who such discourses serve. We must also pay closer attention to how common assumptions in "critical pedagogy may overlook the complexity of students' emotional investments, in particular social positions and discourses" (Zembylas, 2013, p. 4). We need to ensure that our prevention efforts present inequity as systemic instead of as solely or even predominantly a local, individual relationship, even if inequity is founded on that as well. In other words, as Ahmed puts it, "We need to respond to injustice in a way that shows rather than erases the complexity of the relation between violence, power and emotion" (p. 196).

Recommendations for Future Research

I have engaged a number of emotions in my discussion of bullying's cause, prevention, and response. As with all research projects, however, there is always far more ground to cover than the scope of a single project could possibly tread. Because of this, I offer a few avenues of thought that I believe could be fruitful opportunities for further research. Some of these avenues are the gaps in my research that material resources or time have not allowed me to cover. Other avenues offer ways to complicate and expand the study I have undertaken, while further avenues suggest areas of CES research that offer possible alternatives and improvements to current understandings of bullying's affective dynamics response.

The most obvious and, I argue, most exigent opportunity for further research is a more thorough analysis of SEL anti-bullying programs' full curriculum with a critical eye for the emotional politics of empathy. I believe this is the greatest gap in my theory because, due to material access restrictions, I could only assess the affective dynamics extant in the

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programmatic interventions' public materials. As education and bullying prevention take a turn towards affective curricular and programmatic interventions, schools must attend to the nuances of emotion and learned "emotioned rules"—especially those touted as unmitigatedly good, like empathy. An opportunity for future research is to expand from textual analysis, which has been my approach, to ancillary qualitative research.

Inquiries guiding an analysis of prevention programs and empathy abound. How do these programs present the relationship between empathy and loving difference? Do they consider the role that similarity dynamics and identification play in the extension of empathy for pain and in fellow-feeling love? To what extent do they account for the interplay between empathy and difference, which risks a paradoxical elision of cohesion and plurality, similarity and difference? Which emotions are they elevating as "appropriate" and which emotions are relegated as "inappropriate"; further, whose bodies and experiences are being reoriented when these distinctions are made? Do these programs provide opportunities to embrace and explore outlaw emotions and the subversive openings they might entail? If STOMP Out Bullying and KiVa conceptualize empathy like Second Step does—as "feeling or understanding what someone else is feeling" ("Bullying Prevention," 2012, p. 5)—then are they allowing space to unpack and consider how empathy can serve inequitable power dynamics between the one who extends it and the one who is the subject of it? I suspect that these nuances are absent given my brief investigation of these programs but further, more thorough research is required to draw any conclusions in this regard.

Were I to extend this study, there are a number of factors involved in the emotional politics of bullying that I also believe would elevate understanding of bullying. On a fundamental level, this would include expanding the quantity and type of bullying incidents

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examined. This could be chronological: how have our responses to similar incidents of bullying changed throughout time (such as the similar cases of Channing Smith in 2019 and Tyler Clementi in 2012)? If a broader range of incidents were closely examined like those of Smith, the child, Jones, and the girl, what further patterns would emerge? Would a broader analysis reveal that the public responds more passionately—and with more material resources—to ultimately positive incidents, like that of the child? What would a broader case study reveal about the types of incidents and victim/bully identity metrics that "touch" the public the most? Additionally, research examining the affective dynamics of newer and adapting forms of bullying, such as cyberbullying through social media platforms, may not only be exigent due to the prevalence of cyberbullying but also, as my analysis of the StopBullying.gov training module demonstrated, due to current underrepresentation and consideration of bullying on and across digital platforms.

On a CES level, there are two areas that offer opportunities for future research. Firstly, while I acknowledged the difference between empathy and compassion in chapter three, my analysis did not differentiate between them. This was because I felt their affordances and limitations generally aligned given the scope of what I was analyzing. A future inquiry that I find intriguing is what a CES examination of my texts that differentiates between empathy and compassion might reveal about prevention and response. Is one more prevalent than the other? Are there patterns in the kinds of incidents that elicit empathy or compassion? Which is evoked more in curricular and programmatic interventions? Secondly, I think there is an incredible gap in theory that examines the emotional labor[61] of bullying prevention and response. What kind of

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[61] Hochschild (1983) suggests that managing emotions requires effort "to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (p. 7). This is emotional labor. Grandey

emotional labor is entailed in teachers' increasing mandate to consistently model empathy and maintain "a duty of care for their students" (Murphy et. al, 2018, p. 17)? Further, what kind of emotional labor do students experience as they are encouraged to demonstrate "appropriate" affects like empathy? Where in bullying prevention is emotional labor occurring the most? I believe these are two domains where future CES theory of bullying can help prevention efforts.

Finally, my analysis of the apertures in emotioned theories of bullying cause, prevention, and response opens the door to more nuanced research into possible alternatives and improvements to bullying prevention and response that would account for the complex politics of emotion that comprise bullying. One of these opportunities would be a specific inquiry into the role outlaw emotions might play in bullying. Jaggar states, "one way outlaw emotions can help in developing alternatives to prevailing conceptions of reality is by motivating new investigations" (p. 161). I believe outlaw emotions may exist in places where bullies and victims resist appeals for them to feel empathy and love difference as well as where bullies and victims might reject how popular discourse defines their performed role.[62] Because outlaw emotions can challenge perceptions, norm, and values (p. 160), tracing outlaw emotions expressed by bullying's actors may provide insight about power inequities in bullying relationships.

In addition to considering outlaw emotions and bullying's actors, I propose research into the potential of teaching critical wondering and reflective/affective solidarity in bullying prevention. Ahmed states "wonder opens up rather than suspends historicity" (p. 180). Critical wondering can suspend investments in affective structures, which I believe may open new ways

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(2000) indicates that it may cause emotional dissonance in a subject when they "must display emotions that are discrepant from his or her true feelings" (p. 97).

[62] For example, what are the implications when a victim resists the fetishization of their wound or commodification of victimhood?

to conceive of *bully* and *victim,* their motivation, and their potential. Ahmed also suggests

reflective solidarity as a way to counter the misappropriation of other's emotioned experiences.

She articulates that

> Solidarity does not assume that our struggles are the same struggles, or that our pain is
> the same pain, or that our hope is for the same future. Solidarity involves commitment,
> and work, as well as the recognition that even if we do not have the same feelings, or the
> same lives, or the same bodies, we do live on common ground (p. 189).

I therefore propose future research into positive affects that encourage fellowship without

appropriation, such as Ahmed's critical wonder and solidarity, as an alternative to teaching

empathy in bullying prevention and trace where these opportunities may already exist or could

exist in SEL intervention programs.

There are all manner of apertures and opportunities to address the relationship between

emotions and power in the classroom, and I believe doing so with an eye towards power and

bullying's actors will improve prevention efforts. If a context of power imbalance between *bully*

and *victim* is what differentiates bullying from conflict or general aggression and creates

victimization, then preventing bullying requires a more intensive focus on the politics of emotion

that construct and maintain power inequities between subjects. There are many domains in

bullying where discourses of emotion impact power and power impacts discourses of emotion:

the individual teacher, the school administration and culture, the bully, the victim, the

bystanders, the parents, the public. I have illuminated unacknowledged or under-theorized

politics of emotion that exist in bullying cause, prevention, and response, but I hope that this

research will frame future investigations of additional overlooked emotioned dynamics of

bullying. I further hope that these investigations not only examine the politics of emotion that

perpetuate bullying but, in doing so, also lead to emotioned discourses that can be employed to

mitigate it.

Endnotes

[i] There is general consensus that acts of bullying can take numerous forms. The following forms of bullying have been summarized from the "What is Bullying?" page of StopBullying.gov. There are (i) verbal acts of bullying, referring to mean utterances like name-calling, teasing, taunting, threats, and sexual slurs (this is what happened to the child); (ii) social or relational acts of bullying, referring to acts that negatively impact someone's reputation or relationships, like leaving someone out or embarrassing someone on purpose, spreading rumors, or otherwise attempting to isolate an individual; and (iii) physical acts of bullying, referring to injury to a person or their possessions, like hitting, pushing, spitting, damaging property, and rude hand gestures. While physical acts of bullying and cyberbullying—which I will address momentarily—are most often of greatest concern to schools, social and verbal acts of bullying are more commonly experienced by students (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). Moreover, the different forms can impact students in different ways, further complicating this issue (Hymel, et. al, 2013). I will delve into this further when I discuss the prevalence and impact of bullying.

[ii] Addressing cyberbullying is becoming increasingly exigent for schools, but this poses challenges. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine state that the "evolving nature of technology, the potential for anonymity, and the viral nature of online postings" are critical factors that make cyberbullying a difficult problem to solve ("Preventing Bullying," 2016). StopBullying.gov mirrors these concerns. They assert that cyberbullying presents its own unique challenges because digital bullying: 1) is persistent, meaning that the immediate and continuous communication available with digital devices can make it difficult for victims to find relief; 2) is permanent and public if not reported and removed by websites, which can negatively impact the student's personal, professional, and academic image; and 3) is hard to notice because cyberbullying does not often occur where teachers and parents might overhear or see it ("What is Cyberbullying?," n.d.). The case of Channing Smith also indicates that cyberbullying may be rendered even more complex because it overlaps with the other forms of bullying, which, for him, was social/relational cyberbullying. When we delineate between different forms of bullying, we can more clearly see the diverse scope and range of actions that qualify. With these various factors taken together, we see Hymel and Swearer's claims about the challenges of accurate measurement and assessment of and subsequent response to bullying take shape (p. 2).

[iii] Channing Smith is a prime example of the role power imbalances play in bullying. For starters, the teens who posted Channing's text messages held power over him due to the nature of cyberbullying; so long as these teens had initial access to Channing's explicit text messages with another man, there was nothing Channing could do to prevent them from posting it and nothing he could do to make it disappear once they did. Beyond this, however, there was a deeper social power imbalance that is completely independent of the type or form the bullying takes: Channing was a closeted bisexual man, a sexual orientation still considered by many as deviant, and therefore vulnerable to a degree and manner unique from his heterosexual peers. In posting those text messages, the perpetrators forcefully outed Channing, subjecting him to further cascading contexts and relationships of power imbalance, prejudice, and discrimination that are directed toward queer identities.

[iv] The Pew Research Center's 2018 study of cyberbullying attributes its heightened exigence to the proliferation of smartphones and increased access to and reliance upon digital platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, and other forms of social media—potentially bringing the issue into the students' homes and everywhere else they go. According to Pew, cyberbullying is so dangerous because of the growing connectivity amongst youth; digital platforms are a central way youth maintain relationships, but they open potential problems with permanent, nonconsensual exchanges (Anderson, 2018). This is a daunting but serious problem. Channing's experience alone demonstrates the immense potential for harm from a single virtual act that violates an individual's right of consent.

[v] Endless research is dedicated to analyzing bullying's effects on participants They highlight immediate consequences of bullying for the victim, such as humiliation, sadness, helplessness, rejection, or even physical injury. These studies also demonstrate that, in the long-term, bullying takes a toll on victims' mental health, leading to issues of low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and other forms of mental illness. There has also been evidence of behavioral issues, such as the development of anti-social behaviors, increases in substance abuse, risky behavior, illegal behavior, and absenteeism, and decreases in academic performance and social engagement. This is especially true for students who are cyberbullied, 60 percent of whom report that it impedes their ability to learn (Patchin, 2017). See: Arseneault, Bowes, & Shakoor, 2010; Arseneault et al., 2006; Buhs, Ladd, & Herald, 2006; Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003; DES, 2013; Gini & Pozzoli, 2009; Hong & Espelage, 2012; Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2000; Kaiser & Rasminsky,

2009; Kim & Leventhal, 2008; Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010; Patchin, 2017; Reijntjes, Kamphuis, Prinzie, & Telch, 2010; amongst others.

[vi] Whether bullying occurs in-school or online and whether children take the role of bully, victim, bully-victim (those who, at different points, play the role of bully and victim; see Swearer, Song, Cary, Eagler, & Mickelson, 2001), or bystander, all children involved can be negatively affected by engaging in or even witnessing bullying (O'Moore, 2010; Olweus, 1993). Compounding these concerning results, studies like O'Moore (2012) and Wolke, Copeland, Angold, and Costello (2013) show that these negative effects can inflict long-term damage that stretches far into adulthood.

[vii] I do need to elucidate a few gray areas about Columbine and its aftermath as they relate to my analysis. Chiefly, several scholars refute the various claims made by media in 1999 touting the causal relationship between bullying, mental health, suicide, and school shootings. First, Lawrence (2000) and Muschert (2007a) point to profit motives to increase interest in and dynamism of news stories, distorting public perception without careful analysis. Rather, Muschert (2007b) identifies several societal factors that contribute to such events, such as histories of abuse, levels of school security, school culture and peer relationships, and toxic masculinity. Sharrer, Weidman, and Bissell (2003) also point to a cultural norm to process events in terms of cause and effect, which predisposed the media and the public to scapegoat and settle upon easily identifiable and rationalizable causes. Direct correlations to mental health as cause have also been disputed; a study conducted by Stone (2015) looking at 235 mass shootings showed only 22% of the perpetrators were mentally ill. There are innumerable research articles and studies, expert debates, and news articles that both tout and challenge these correlations and causations in a constant tug-of-war.

[viii] The Pew Research Center (1999) found that 68 percent of the public reported closely following the incident, making it the most highly monitored news event that year; moreover, the same report demonstrated a momentous increase in public concern about addressing bullying and mental health, which was said to negatively impact teenagers' potential for violence.

[ix] There is a lot of research problematizing the correlation between bullying and suicide. Feldman et al. also point out that, while bullying and suicidal ideation are strongly associated, this association is most often mediated by other existing factors, like depression and delinquency. Likewise, Meltzer, Vostanis, Ford, Bebbington, and Dennise (2011) note that bullying co-occurs with several "victimization experiences including sexual abuse and severe beatings and with running away from home" (p. 498). Finally, while Komlek et al. (2009) liminally suggest that their results were evidence of a causal relationship between bullied teenage girls and suicide, the CDC ultimately concludes that, while correlations exist, it is impossible to determine if it is a direct causal relationship ("The Relationship Between Bullying and Suicide", 2014, p. 3). In fact, they suggest that such a claim would be deeply problematic because it could (i) normalize suicide as a response to bullying, risking encouraging copycat behavior, (ii) continue to sensationalize the relationship, potentially leading to what they call "suicide contagion," (iii) shift our focus away from support and treatment of victims and bullies and instead towards blame and punishment, and (iv) distract from other related issues present, such as substance abuse, mental illness, family dysfunction, and other elements of what Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) and Hong and Espelage (2012) called the ecology of factors at work (p. 4).

[x] Bauman, Toomey, and Walker's (2013) study further correlated bullying and suicide, though they note an additional correlation between subjects who demonstrate symptoms of depression, as well as a notable gender divide that posits females are more susceptible to suicidal ideation as a result from bullying than males (see also Komlek, Sourander, & Gould, 2010; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Further, Feldman Hertz, Donato, and Wright (2013) found that adults who report being bullied in childhood were twice as likely to attempt suicide later in life than those who were not.

[xi] The responsibility to set requirements for anti-bullying policies resides on the state and local level, and all 50 states address bullying differently. Some states, for example, create anti-bullying laws in addition to mandating school policies, some only establish policies, and some simply create recommended policies and leave it up to the school administration to decide. See Appendix One, "Bullying Policies by State," for a breakdown of which state-mandated policies require inclusion of which elements in district policies. Data gathered from "Laws, Policies & Regulations" (n.d.) on StopBullying.gov. The only time that that federal laws ever apply to situations of bullying is when the act of bullying overlaps with federal harassment or discrimination laws, which currently reside under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division (Hall, 2017).

[xii] Olweus' groundbreaking work prompted schools to be more aware about this issue and implement a programmatic safeguard, the Olweus Bully Prevention Program, which provided guidance to teachers to identify when bullying occurs and help victims cope with its effects (Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1999; cited in Ferguson et. al, 2007).

[xiii] There are many reasons, researchers have found, as to why anti-bullying policies are ultimately ineffective and stopping bullying. Young, Nelson, Hottle, Warburton, and Young, (2013) suggest an answer: while verbal and physical acts of bullying are directly observable, social/relational bullying is less obviously identifiable. This is a significant problem, considering Hymel and Swearer (2015) found that social/relational bullying was the most commonly occurring type in school. The most promising conclusion Hall drew was that educators have a generally positive *perception* of the effectiveness bullying policies; however, Petticrew and Roberts (2003) insist that descriptive statements about perception of effectiveness is not sufficient evidence for conclusive results. Hall's systemic review of bullying policies was irresolute at best, suggesting that they may be effective for verbal and physical acts of bullying, but not for social/relational (p. 57). Further, effectiveness of bullying policies may be compromised at a foundational level because there are no guarantees that school bullying policies will be implemented as intended (Hall & Chapman, 2016). One cause of this is educator's difficulty in assessing bullying incidents they did not witness (Mishna, Pepler, & Wiener, 2006). Meanwhile, Ferguson et al. (2007) mirrors these concerns and, in addition, point to publication bias for studies suggesting significant effectiveness.

[xiv] Programmatic interventions that focus on surveillance and communication skills have shown limited success. Steps to Respect and the Olweus Bully Prevention Program are aimed specifically at training bullying awareness skills to teachers and students, like recognizing it when it happens, reporting it, and intervening. This aligns with clinical practitioners' recommendation to have bystanders step in and interrupt bullying when it happens, which has been shown to stop bullying in an individual situation (Craig & Pepler, 1997; Pepler and Craig, 2009). This approach focuses on improving the individual's ability to proactively take a stand against bullying when it occurs.

[xv] Despite the promise of surveillance and communication skills programs and conflict resolution and conflict resolution and relationship communication skills programs, however, bullying persists. Once again, research suggests that these approaches still do not sufficiently address this problem. Ttofi and Farrington claim that the success of these programs is limited because they do not explicitly and effectively confront the goals and causes of bullying; they are reactionary. Further, Volk et al. point out that anti-bullying programs will always be insufficient and ineffective without recognizing and addressing the pivotal power imbalance that marks bullying as a phenomenon. Ferguson et al. extend their stipulations about policy ineffectiveness to programs as well, citing publication bias and financial motivations that over-represent how well these anti-bullying measures work. Finally, in accord with Ferguson et al., research conducted by The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine put a finer point on it when their review of literature concluded that conflict resolution, communication mediation, and mentoring approaches, whether peer-led or facilitated by educators, are ultimately ineffective ("Preventing Bullying," 2016).

[xvi] It may be important to note that Santos et al. state that, despite their positive conclusion, their analysis of "[Roots of Empathy] had almost no statistically significant or replicated effects on student-rated outcomes." Much like Hall's analysis of anti-bullying policies, Santos et al. rely on self-rated results, drawing their data from teachers' and students' perceptions. Again, this should be taken with a grain of salt, returning to Petticrew and Roberts' (2003) criticism that descriptive statements about perception of effectiveness does not always yield reliable conclusions.

[xvii] Rewarding children who publicly lament have been bullied has definitely become a trend, often in the form of celebrity acclaim and special treatment that unlocks extraordinary experiences for the child. For example, children who sing a song they made up about being bullied on shows like *America's Got Talent* disproportionately get the hallowed "Golden Buzzer," a high and limited honor awarded by one of the judges that propels the child straight to the finals in the competition, or teary standing ovations by the judges who applaud the child's bravery. "I would like to say something on your behalf to the bullies," Simon Cowell, a judge, said before slamming the golden buzzer for a child. He continued: "Most people are bullied because they are better than the people who bully them" (Yeates, 2019). As I have discussed elsewhere, I do not believe this is necessarily a bad thing in and of itself, but it becomes problematic when we view this as a definitive response that tackles or even properly addresses bullying.

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States	Prohibiting Statement	Definition of Bullying	Scope of Problem	Protected Groups	District Policy Requirement	Reporting and Investigations	Consequences of Bullying	Communication of Policy	Safeguards and Supports	Review and Update of Local Policies	Prevention Education	Staff Training	Parent Engagement
Alabama	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Alaska	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Arizona	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
Arkansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
California	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Colorado		✓		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Delaware	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
D. of Columbia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Florida	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Georgia	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Guam	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Hawaii	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Idaho	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Illinois	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Indiana	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Kansas	✓	✓	✓		✓							✓	
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Louisiana	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Maryland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Massachusetts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michigan	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Minnesota	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mississippi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Missouri	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Montana	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
Nebraska		✓	✓		✓		✓			✓			
Nevada	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Hampshire	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

States	Prohibiting Statement	Definition of Bullying	Scope of Problem	Protected Groups	District Policy Requirement	Reporting and Investigations	Consequences of Bullying	Communication of Policy	Safeguards and Supports	Review and Update of Local Policies	Prevention Education	Staff Training	Parent Engagement
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
New York	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
North Dakota	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Ohio	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pennsylvania	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Puerto Rico	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
South Carolina	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
South Dakota	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Texas	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Virgin Islands					✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Utah	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Vermont	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Virginia	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
Washington	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
West Virginia	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Wisconsin	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓

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Awareness Raising Action Planning Matrix [1 of 2]						
	Hold an anti-bullying day in schools	Create local fund for businesses to support bullying prevention	Create a community newsletter	Provide information on state/local bullying laws	Create an interfaith alliance	Host a town hall or community event
Elected Officials/Community Leaders						
Health & Safety Professionals						
Law Enforcement Professionals						
Child Care/After School & Out-of-School Care Professionals						
Faith Leaders						
Corporate & Business Professionals						
Mental Health & Social Services Professionals						
Educators						
Parents & Caregivers						
Youth Leaders Organization Members						
City/County Recreation Professionals						

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Awareness Raising Action Planning Matrix [2 of 2]						
	Submit op-eds and letters to the editor to local media	Help youth develop a media campaign	Hold a PSA contest			
Elected Officials/ Community Leaders						
Health & Safety Professionals						
Law Enforcement Professionals						
Child Care/After School & Out-of -School Care Professionals						
Faith Leaders						
Corporate & Business Professionals						
Mental Health & Social Services Professionals						
Educators						
Parents & Caregivers						
Youth Leaders Organization Members						
City/County Recreation Professionals						

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Prevention and Response Methods Action Planning Matrix [1 of 2]	Develop a taskforce to assess bullying in schools	Conduct team-building exercises with youth	Create a safety plan for children who are bullied	Develop screening processes to promote early detection and intervention	Train adults on gathering and utilizing bullying data	Develop a follow-up procedure to monitor youth who have been bullied
Elected Officials/ Community Leaders						
Health & Safety Professionals						
Law Enforcement Professionals						
Child Care/After School & Out-of -School Care Professionals						
Faith Leaders						
Corporate & Business Professionals						
Mental Health & Social Services Professionals						
Educators (including special education professionals)						
Parents & Caregivers						
Youth Leaders Organization Members						
City/County Recreation Professionals						

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Prevention and Response Methods Action Planning Matrix [2 of 2]						
	Establish in-school committees	Monitor Internet activities and mobile devices	Sponsor training sessions for adults on best practices in bullying prevention, intervention, and crisis planning			
Elected Officials/ Community Leaders						
Health & Safety Professionals						
Law Enforcement Professionals						
Child Care/After School & Out-of -School Care Professionals						
Faith Leaders						
Corporate & Business Professionals						
Mental Health & Social Services Professionals						
Educators (including special education professionals)						
Parents & Caregivers						
Youth Leaders Organization Members						
City/County Recreation Professionals						

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APPENDIX THREE: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you or anyone you know ever encountered bullying? What kind was it? Can you relate

   to anyone in the video? Did you experience something similar to someone in the video?

2. Where do you feel like most bullying happens?

   a. If it happens in school, do you feel like it changes the environment at school? Why or

      why not?

   b. If it happens outside of school, where does it happen the most, and does that make it

      easier or harder to deal with than in a school setting? Why?

3. Why do you think people pick on each other for what they look like?

4. What do you think most people do when they see bullying? Why?

5. When bystanders get involved in situations of bullying, what do you feel works or doesn't

   work?

6. Have you ever heard someone stand up for someone being bullied? Describe them– who were

   they, what did they do, and what made them want to defend the person being bullied?

7. How do friends deal with other friends being bullied? Does being a friend change the way

   people see bullying... why/why not?

8. What does cyber-bullying look like? Is it different from "traditional" bullying, and if so, how?

9. Think about kids who are bullies in your school or community. Why do think that they bully,

   and how does it make them appear to their peers and friends?

10. What are the roles of teachers and counselors in addressing bullying? Do you feel that in

    your school teachers and counselors provide positive interventions when bullying occurs?

11. What are some things that could change in our schools or communities that will make it easier to speak up about bullying?

12. What kind of action oriented project can we initiate in our community?