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An Evaluation of Envy within Adolescent Friendships

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Abstract

Envy may be an unexplored component of adolescent social relationships. The main goal of the study was to determine if envy is experienced to a higher degree between best friends than with non-friends. A second goal was to assess the correlations between envy and friendship characteristics. A total of 109 seventh-grade students responded to 3 questionnaires, the Friendship Grid, the Best Friend/Non-Friend Envy Survey and the Friendship Qualities Questionnaire. No significant differences were found between reported envy for friends and non-friends. Envy significantly correlated with conflict ($p < .01$) and exclusivity ($p < .05$). A major challenge for future research is to develop a more accurate measure of envy—a survey format may not be the most useful technique. The relationship between envy and conflict and exclusivity demonstrates the importance of further research of envy in order to better understand the potentially negative effects of envy on friendships.

An Evaluation of Envy within Adolescent Friendships

“That’s Regina George, she’s the Queen Bee, the star ... she is flawless ... she has a silver Lexus ... she always looks fierce, and she always wins Spring Fling Queen.” The above quotes from the recent motion picture *Mean Girls* (Michaels, 2004) depict the way that the students describe Regina George, the most popular girl in the high school. *Mean Girls* (Michaels, 2004) provides a vivid example of the prevalence of social comparison during adolescence and how social comparison can often lead to envy—the girls describing Regina wish they could be blessed with her beauty, wealth and popularity. Even though *Mean Girls* is a fictional movie, it accurately portrays the experience of social comparison and the emotion of envy. Although social comparison and envy are common experiences for adolescents (Berndt, 1996b; Parrott, 1991), very little attention has been given to understanding how envy influences adolescent friendships.

A review of the literature on envy will be presented in the following sections. Important aspects to consider are: the definition of envy, how envy and social comparison are interrelated, the comparison of envy and jealousy, the perceived appropriateness of envy, the relationship between envy and competitiveness, and the role that envy plays in identity formation. Following this review, an extensive review of friendship characteristics will be provided. Seven key characteristics will be of focus: intimacy, companionship, reliable alliance, enhancement of worth, exclusivity, instrumental aid, and conflict. Knowing how friendships function in childhood and adolescence makes it possible to begin to understand how envy may impact adolescent friendships.

Envy and Social Comparison

Definition of Envy

Envy includes the “feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that arise when ... personal qualities, possessions, or achievements” do not measure up to those of others (Masse & Gagne, 2002, *p.* 16). In other words, an individual experiences envy when he or she lacks what another has. When individuals experience envy, they often report feeling inferior, frustrated and wishful (Parrott, 1991). Envious individuals may also feel as though life is treating them unfairly. Additionally, once they begin to feel envious, they may consequently feel guilty, ashamed, or embarrassed for feeling that way.

There are two types of envy: nonmalicious envy and malicious envy. Nonmalicious envy is experienced when an individual wants what another has (Parrott, 1991). Nonmalicious envy includes longing for what another has, despair of ever having what another has, or determination to improve oneself. Nonmalicious envy is seen as morally acceptable (Masse & Gagne, 2002; Mouly & Sankaran, 2002). Malicious envy, on the other hand, is the desire for others to lose what they have (Parrott, 1991). Those who experience malicious envy often incorrectly think that the other person is responsible for their inferiority. Malicious envy is often experienced with hatred, hostility, and resentment, and therefore is seen as morally reprehensible (Masse & Gagne, 2002) and is even categorized as one of the “seven deadly sins” (Exline & Lobel, 1999). An illustration of the disapproval of malicious envy is given in Mouly and Sankaran’s (2002) case study in which coworkers felt envy was destructive in the workplace.

Definition of Social Comparison

Social comparison exists when individuals compare themselves to others in order to evaluate themselves (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999; Blanton, Buunk, Gibbons & Kuyper, 1999). People may make comparisons on a variety of dimensions, from general accomplishments (i.e. grades or awards), to traits (i.e. physical appearance), and possessions or financial assets. Often individuals who are uncertain of themselves make social comparisons (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). Furthermore, individuals who are more interpersonally oriented than introspectively oriented are more likely to engage in social comparison (Gibbons and Buunk, 1999).

Objects of comparison. Individuals most often compare themselves to others who are similar to them (Blanton et al., 1999; Masse & Gagne, 2002). Simple aspects of commonality like gender, age, and ethnicity often define an appropriate object of comparison. Also, individuals tend to choose comparison targets based on prior knowledge that the target has similar ability levels. Moreover, an individual will choose an increasingly similar target when the area of competition becomes more personally significant (Masse & Gagne, 2002).

Because friendships are often formed between people who share similar characteristics (Berndt, 1996b), close relationships provide an environment that is conducive to social comparison. Friendships often occur between individuals that have similar physical characteristics, like age, gender and ethnicity; additionally, friendships occur between individuals that have similar activity preferences and academic achievement (Berndt, 1996b). Many activities like team sports, musical groups, or acting troupes provide opportunities for comparison, for example “Who scored the most points,”

“Who earned a solo position,” or “Who landed the leading role.” Academic achievement in itself also provides for comparison by the ranking nature of grades. Logically, the students who receive A’s are considered better students than those who receive C’s.

Function of social comparison. There are three key motives for social comparison (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). First, individuals use social comparison simply for self-evaluation. Comparison helps them to gauge their abilities (e.g., “How am I doing?”), their opinions (e.g., “What should I think or feel?”) and their position relative to others (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999, *p.* 129). Second, individuals use social comparison as a tool for improvement (Blanton et al., 1999). Often they will compare upwards to people with higher skill levels to judge where they stand and then plan to improve themselves. Lastly, individuals make comparisons to enhance their self-esteem (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). By making downward comparisons, individuals can gain confidence in knowing that they are superior to others in some domains. Although social comparison can function benevolently, it can also lead to negative self-evaluation, frustration, and therefore envy (Parrot, 1991).

The Relationship between Envy and Social Comparison

Upward social comparison is the foundation for envy (Parrott, 1991). Most often individuals with low self-esteem and unstable self-concepts partake in social comparison (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). Social comparison often makes individuals more aware of their own deprivation or lacking (Parrott, 1991). Social comparison also serves to emphasize that their deprivation or lacking is not shared by all. Both of these recognitions often lead to envy, a desire to eliminate that deprivation or lacking by having what others have.

Two main individual differences have been identified as key character traits in susceptibility to envy (Parrott, 1991). Individuals who interpret another's superiority as an indicator of their own inferiority—rather than becoming inspired to improve—are predisposed to become envious. Also, individuals who construe other's successes as their own personal loss—instead of keeping other's accomplishments separate of their failures—are more likely to experience envy. Therefore, only certain interpretations of social comparison outcomes will lead to envy.

The foundation of the hypothesis that best friends experience more envy than non-friends is based upon the relationship between envy and social comparison. Social comparison usually occurs between individuals who share similar characteristics; likewise, friendships mostly exist between similar individuals. Therefore, the coexistence of social comparison and friendship between similar individuals may imply that because envy is derived from social comparison, envy may also be prevalent between friends.

Envy and Jealousy

Many individuals mistakenly use the term jealousy to describe feelings of envy (Parrott & Smith, 1993); therefore, it is important to differentiate between these constructs. Envy has been defined as an emotion that people experience when they discover themselves lacking in areas compared to others (Masse & Gagne, 2002). Jealousy, on the other hand, can be defined as the emotion that is experienced when individuals feel that a friendship or relationship is threatened by a third person (Parker, Low, Walker, & Gamm, 2005). Therefore, it involves three elements: an individual, the individual's friend or partner, and a rival that the individual feels may threaten the

relationship (Parrott & Smith, 1993). Some characteristics of jealousy include fear of loss, distrust, and anxiety (Parrot, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993). Where envy focuses on wanting what another has, jealousy focuses on fear of losing a relationship that one already possesses.

There are two key reasons why the terms jealousy and envy have been confused (Parrott & Smith, 1993). The term “jealousy” in the English language is quite ambiguous—it can mean either envy or jealousy (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 1993). Envy, on the other hand, is fairly unambiguous. Schoeck (1969, as cited in Parrot & Smith, 1993) theorizes that the term envy is not used as often because its moral connotations evoke discomfort. A second reason that jealousy and envy are often confused is because of their co-occurrence. Jealousy is often accompanied by envy. For example, when a third party interferes with a relationship, an individual often feels threatened, and may also feel inferior to the third party as well.

Perceived Appropriateness of Envy

Although little research exists on perceived appropriateness of expression of envy, some inferences can be developed on the basis of previous research on display rules of jealousy. It is deemed less appropriate to express feelings of jealousy early in a relationship or between acquaintances (Aune & Comstock, 1997). As individuals become more interdependent, results show that people find it more socially acceptable to display feelings of jealousy.

Envy may have a pattern of appropriateness opposite to that of jealousy, in which it is more acceptable to be envious in the beginning of a relationship; however, there is no concrete data to support this supposition. Most individuals disapprove of envy (Parrot &

Smith, 1993), and accordingly, expressing envy on a regular basis is linked to peer rejection in children (Tassi & Schneider, 1997). It may be considered less appropriate to express envy towards close friends because enhancing a friend's sense of worth plays such an important role in friendship (French, Lee, & Pidada, in press), and displaying envy towards a friend would not be conducive towards building self-esteem in the friend. Envy then might be more appropriately expressed towards those with whom an individual is not close because there are no ties that exist that require any sort of supportive responsibility between the pair. Although envy may be less appropriate between close friends, it might actually occur more often and more strongly between close friends because of the co-occurrence of social comparison and friendship between similar individuals (Berndt, 1996b; Blanton et al., 1999).

Since the expression of envy may be deemed less appropriate within friendships, it may lead to difficulties in measuring envy between best friends and non-friends. If individuals are questioned about their tendencies to feel envious toward their best friends, it may make them alter their responses in order to seem more socially appropriate. Unfortunately, biased results may develop as a consequence; however, ensuring anonymity may encourage individuals to answer truthfully.

Envy and Competitiveness

Because envy and competitiveness share some commonalities but remain distinct constructs, it is important to compare and contrast each. Two types of competitiveness can be distinguished and need to be defined: superiority competitiveness and mastery competitiveness (Hibbard, 2000). Superiority competitiveness refers to the drive to be superior over rivals in various aspects, such as gaining a job promotion, winning a game,

or earning the highest grade on an exam. The main goal is to outdo individuals in achievement or social comparison. Superiority competitiveness has been called other-referenced competition (Tassi & Schneider, 1997). Mastery competitiveness refers to the desire to become personally successful at a task. The main goal is to master and dominate the challenges of the environment, independent of others (Hibbard, 2000). Mastery competitiveness is also known as task-oriented competition (Tassi & Schneider, 1997).

Envy and competitiveness may be easily confused because each is related to social comparison and self-improvement. Superiority competitiveness relies heavily on social comparison and refers to outperforming others. Envy, although it also relies on social comparison, does not make any reference to gaining superiority; rather, individuals who feel inferior and experience envy aim to gain what another has, but not necessarily to be better compared to that other person. Mastery competition, on the other hand, focuses less on superiority. The lack of social comparison in mastery competitiveness clearly differentiates it from envy. Therefore, although envy may seem similar to either superiority or mastery competitiveness, upon closer examination it is indeed a discrete construct.

Envy and Identity Formation

Adolescents face the difficult task of gaining an understanding of their identity and their self-definition (Waterman, 1982). Erikson (1968) identifies two key aspects for identity formation: self-esteem and continuity. Self-esteem is a necessary aspect of identity formation because individuals with high self-esteem feel confident that they are capable of developing into a functional, effective, and unique person. Additionally,

continuity must exist between who they envision themselves to be and who others perceive them to be. Continuity can be achieved through honesty, self-acceptance, and genuineness (Erikson, 1968). Through exhibiting continuity, adolescents can create unified, consistent identities (Harter, 1990). Unfortunately, envy may interfere with the process of identity formation.

Challenges in Identity Formation for the Envious

Individuals who are extremely envious of others may have difficulty forming a clear identity. Individuals who envy others rely on social comparison (Parrott, 1991). The constant comparison to others and feelings of envy have been found to correlate negatively with self-esteem (Feather, 1991; Gibbons & Buunk, 1999).

When envious individuals focus on their own shortcomings relative to others, it impacts their self-esteem (Parrott, 1991). Often those who utilize upward comparison find themselves coping with feelings of inferiority. Feelings of inferiority have been linked to depression, anxiety, and uncertainty about oneself (Salovey & Rodin, 1984). Furthermore, Gibbons and Buunk (1999) reported that individuals with low self-esteem more frequently make use of social comparison. It is important to note that there is no definite direction of causality between social comparison and low self-esteem. Making upward comparisons can lead to decreased self-esteem, and poor self-esteem may lead an individual to make more upward comparisons.

The lack of self-esteem associated with the constant social comparison involved in envy may interfere with the process of identity development. According to Erikson (1968), self-esteem is necessary for individuals to feel confident in their collective future, and in their ability to develop into “well-organized egos” (p. 49) within society. This

development is an integral component of identity formation. Therefore, individuals who lack the self-esteem to feel personally competent and successful (regardless of how others rank compared to them) may struggle through the process of identity development.

Challenges in Identity Formation for the Envied

On the opposite end of the spectrum, individuals who are the target of envy may also face difficulties during identity formation. Sometimes individuals who are highly successful will choose to downplay their successes in order to avoid envy and the negativity associated with it (Mouly & Sankaran, 2002). Feigning “normalcy” or disguising success can lead to difficulty in identity formation.

Individuals may choose to minimize their success in order to avoid becoming the target of envy for three key reasons. One reason is to maintain close bonds with friends (Exline, Single, Lobel & Geyer, 2004). Outperformers may risk damaging their social bonds because envious individuals may reject them (Exline & Lobel, 1999). For example, outperformers may break group norms of equality and therefore be socially excluded. Secondly, individuals may also underrate their success in order to prevent making others feel poorly about themselves (Exline & Lobel, 1999). They may feel sympathy or empathic pain when they know others feel inferior. Lastly, outperformers may disguise their success because they fear hostility or retaliation from those they outperformed. Those who feel inferior may make derogatory comments to the successful, or even verbally abuse them. For these aforementioned reasons, outperformers and successful individuals may choose to minimize their performance.

Outperformers may have difficulty forming a clear concept of their identity because they often disguise their true selves in order to fit in with a particular group.

Individuals adjust both performance and self-presentation on the basis of whether or not they think their achievement will be met with approval or disapproval (Exline & Lobel, 1999). The adjustment of identity perceived by others does not coincide with their inner identity (in this case, one that is high achieving). Erikson (1959) describes ego identity as the confidence that one can maintain inner sameness and continuity that is matched by the sameness and continuity presented to others. If individuals cannot reconcile their internal and external identities, they may encounter crisis during identity development.

Identity Formation and Intimate Relationships

It is important to consider how envy may impact identity development in adolescence because crises in identity formation may lead to difficulties in forming intimate relationships (Erikson, 1959; Erikson, 1968; Stein & Newcomb, 1999). Erikson (1959) claims that individuals who have gained clarity about their identity seek more interpersonal intimacy in friendship and love. Accordingly, a twenty-year longitudinal study discovered that healthy identity formation in adolescence facilitates the development of greater intimacy in young adulthood (Stein & Newcomb, 1999). On the other hand, individuals who fail to develop a clear sense of identity may struggle to form intimate relationships and consequently develop a sense of isolation and loneliness (Erikson, 1968). Thus, the importance of appropriately coping with envy is highlighted in terms of the negative consequences envy may have on identity formation and the subsequent formation of intimate friendships and relationships.

Envy and Friendship

Little research exists on how friendship and envy are interrelated. For example, it is unclear if envy influences companionship between friends. Furthermore, it is hard to

determine whether the level of intimacy or closeness of friendships moderates envy or if envy moderates intimacy. Also, the relationship between envy and conflict within friendships is ambiguous. This study aims to clarify some of these questions by measuring envy and comparing it to measured characteristics of friendships. In order to fully comprehend how envy and friendship may relate, it is important to gain an understanding of some basic components of friendship. In the following sections, seven key characteristics of friendships will be outlined. Then, the possible negative consequences of envy on friendship will be discussed.

Characteristics and Functions of Friendships

Due to school and extracurricular activities, most children are often surrounded by peers—individuals that are considered relatively equal to them in age (French & Underwood, 1996). Within these peer groups, many children develop friendships with specific individuals. For the purpose of this study, a friendship will be defined as an “ongoing, close, mutual and dyadic (paired) relationship” (French & Underwood, 1996, *p.* 156) between two individuals, formed on the basis of liking and attraction (Hartup & Abecassis, 2002). Furthermore, reciprocity and commitment between two individuals that see themselves as equals is seen as the hallmark of friendship (Hartup, 1992). The friendships of children and adolescents play an important role in development. For example, friendships have been found to increase social competence (Hartup & Abecassis, 2002) and to moderate self-esteem (Keefe & Berndt, 1996). In the following section, seven key characteristics of friendships will be discussed individually, including the functions of each specific characteristic: intimacy, companionship, reliable alliance, enhancement of worth, exclusivity, instrumental aid, and conflict.

Intimacy. Only the closest friendships will be intimate, i.e., the tendency of friends to disclose personal and private feelings and thoughts (Parker & Asher, 1993; Ginsberg, Gottman, & Parker, 1986). Because having an intimate relationship means that a dyad has access to information that others do not have access to (Duck & Vanzetti, 1996), certain parameters must exist within a relationship for intimacy to develop.

Three key factors promote intimacy within a friendship (Berndt, 1996b). First of all, an individual needs to be able to trust the person with whom they are sharing information. Because most shared information is private and sensitive, individuals need to know that their friends will not share the information with anyone else. Secondly, a common ground of understanding and emotional support must exist. Individuals need to know that they will be understood and still accepted, regardless of the information that is revealed. Finally, individuals need to be willing to actually self-disclose thoughts and feelings with their friends. Sometimes it may be difficult to discuss certain topics, so individuals need to overcome the anxiety that may be felt when sharing private information.

Intimacy first begins to play an important role in early adolescence (Berndt, 1982; Burhmester, 1990). Intimacy may not emerge until early adolescence because young children do not have the cognitive ability to partake in the role-taking that is necessary for intimate interactions (Berndt, 1982). Through role-taking, adolescents can cognitively appraise both their own views and their friend's views at the same time. Social development is necessary for early adolescents to gain the skill of engaging in intimate relationships (Burhmester, 1990). High levels of self-esteem and sociability are linked to increasingly intimate relationships. Additionally, skill in interpersonal

competencies (for example, appropriately disclosing information and giving honest responses and advice) is associated with the occurrence of intimate relationships.

Intimate relationships can benefit adolescents in multiple ways (Berndt, 1982; 1996b). Intimate disclosure may help increase adolescents' self-esteem. By having someone to listen to their feelings and ideas, it makes adolescents feel as though their thoughts are worth hearing. Disclosing may also contribute to the development of social skills that are necessary for intimate adult relationships, like active listening and honest communication. Sharing thoughts and feelings with friends may also reduce fears and anxieties about adolescent development, thereby improving adjustment. A trusting relationship provides for intimate sharing between individuals who are coping with the same developmental experience. Lastly, intimate disclosure helps adolescents shape beliefs about a larger society. Discussing current topics, whether on a micro- or macro-scale, can help them better understand the world and also learn how to determine standards for their own social world.

Companionship. Companionship is "the extent to which friends spend enjoyable time together" (Parker & Asher, 1993, *p.* 612). Companionship provides children and adolescents with a familiar and consistent partner or playmate (Ginsberg et al., 1986). Companionship also gives children the security of knowing that there is someone who is willing to spend time with them and join them in mutual activities. Furthermore, companionship may protect against loneliness in children (Parker & Asher, 1993).

Although companionship may occur with parents, siblings, and other individuals, peers become increasingly important companions as children age (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Furman and Buhrmester, 1985). Best friends are often constant companions

(Ginsberg et al., 1986). Most friends see each other on a regular basis outside of school. Adolescents may also use the telephone to keep in touch. Companionship provides children and adolescents with a fairly tangible way to define their friends—those they spend the most free time with are most likely their friends.

Reliable alliance. A reliable alliance between two individuals is a stable, dependable bond (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). An example of reliable alliance is having confidence that a friendship will remain, even if others do not like one individual of the dyad. Another illustration is knowing that a friend will always be supportive. Evaluating the stability of friendships is significant for two reasons (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). First, developmental outcomes of stable relationships are assumed to be mostly positive. Secondly, adolescents are more likely to be influenced by friends with whom they have a reliable alliance.

There are three key reasons friendships are maintained over long periods of time. One reason is stability of the larger social environment (Berndt & Hoyle, 1985). Opportunities for social interaction such as school classes and neighborhood peer groups usually remain stable (Berndt, 1996b; Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). Second, the attitudes and behaviors that a peer group may share encourage friendship stability (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). Friends that share common beliefs usually maintain friendships longer. A third reason is the concept of loyalty that functions to keep friendship bonds strong (Berndt & Hoyle, 1985). As adolescents develop, they may become more willing to help and support their friends. Additionally, they also form an increased capacity for recognizing the needs of their friends (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990).

There are three key short-term benefits of having a reliable alliance with a friend. First, individuals with stable friendships display better performance in school related achievement and behavior (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). Also, adolescents with stable friendships have positive reputations among peers and teachers alike (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). Lastly, stable friendships seem to bolster adolescents' self-esteem (Keefe & Berndt, 1996).

One long-term possible consequence of stable relationships is that adolescents may become stuck in their friendships (Berndt, 1996b). Although there is little research on this topic, Savin-Williams and Berndt (1990) hypothesize that not developing new friendships for a long time, and remaining friends with peers that no longer share a common ground, might prevent adolescents from growing and further developing their identities and personalities. Flexibility in making new friends when an adolescent meets new peers or joins new clubs could be as beneficial as a stable friendship (Berndt, 1996b).

Enhancement of worth. An important role that friends play is that of enhancing an individual's feelings of worth (Ginsberg et al., 1986), which includes supporting and encouraging the individual. Enhancement of worth also calls for helping to maintain self-esteem by reinforcing the individual as competent, attractive and worthwhile. This characteristic may be a particularly salient feature of adolescent friendships because of adolescents' heightened concerns of social validation (Buhrmester, 1998).

Friends may provide direct or indirect ego support (Ginsberg et al., 1986). Direct ways of enhancing worth include complimenting an individual or saying positive things about them to other peers. An example of an indirect way of boosting an individual's ego

includes actively listening and providing attention. Also, when individuals show that they value their friend's opinion by following advice they can indirectly enhance their friend's feelings of worth.

Some evidence exists that supports the conjecture that friendships lead to increased self-esteem. Students with friendships with more positive features have higher scores on four subscales for self-esteem (Berndt, 1996a). These subscales include scholastic competence, social acceptance, behavioral conduct, and global self-worth. These results were repeated for social acceptance and global self worth (Keefe & Berndt, 1996). However, it is important to interpret this data with caution because causality has not been determined. It is possible that individuals with high self-esteem have friendships with more positive features.

Exclusivity. Exclusivity is a mutual liking between friends, and a preference over other friends (Cleary, Ray, LoBello & Zachar, 2002). Some examples of exclusivity include liking an individual more than anyone else in class, playing mostly with that one friend on the playground, and preference for interacting in a dyad, without other children.

Exclusivity can be a positive factor in friendships. Exclusivity, along with companionship and intimacy, are friendship qualities that differentiate between a friend and a best friend (Cleary et al., 2002). These three friendship characteristics all play an important role in providing emotional support for children and adolescents (Cleary et al., 2002).

Exclusivity may also have some negative influences on friendship. Relationally aggressive children report higher levels of exclusivity (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996). This evidence follows the logic that relationally aggressive children place great importance on

maintaining relationships. Therefore, they may use relational aggression to attack any other children that infringe on the exclusivity of their friendship. Their reaction to the exclusivity violation reflects a strong tendency towards jealousy (Grottpeter & Crick, 1996).

Instrumental aid. Instrumental aid is the willingness and ability of an individual to give time, resources, and assistance to a friend in order for that friend to reach various goals (Ginsberg et al., 1986). Some examples of instrumental aid in childhood friendships are helping a friend with homework or chores, loaning money to a friend, or doing a favor for a friend. Instrumental aid functions simply to provide rewards within a friendship (Ginsberg et al., 1986). Additionally, it can be used for friendship repair. Friends become particularly inclined to help another individual when they perceive that the relationship is in danger (Ginsberg et al., 1986).

It is important to differentiate between the help that is offered in communal relationships from help that is given in exchange relationships. Communal relationships reflect those friendships in which children feel a special obligation to be responsive to their friend's needs (Ginsberg et al., 1986). Equality is not a factor in communal relationships, and friends usually do not "keep score" of the help that was provided. Exchange relationships, on the other hand, are more like business partner relationships (Ginsberg et al., 1986). Exchange relationships base helping one another on whether or not there is a direct proportion of benefits received in return.

The willingness to help friends differs in non-competitive and competitive situations (Berndt, 1982). Friends are more likely to share and assist one another when they are working towards an equal outcome in a non-competitive situation. In contrast,

friends are less likely to give instrumental aid in competitive situations. Berndt (1982) speculates that this outcome may be because friends have a greater tendency to compare performance with each other and avoid helping the other to succeed in order to prevent appearing inferior.

A developmental shift in instrumental aid occurs from childhood to adolescence (Berndt, 1982). Children tend to offer help based on equality and whether or not they will also benefit. Adolescents show a trend towards more communal relationships. Adolescents' emphasis on communal relationships may be due to three key issues (Berndt, 1982). First of all, adolescents have a greater ability for role taking and have a greater understanding of how to treat others as they would like to be treated. Secondly, adolescents show an increase in preference for equality and fairness in general. Lastly, because of cognitive developments, adolescents have a more mature conception of reciprocity and equality.

Conflict. Conflict is any type of disagreement, difference or incompatibility (Duck, 1996). Additionally, conflict includes opposition between two individuals (Hartup, 1992). Conflict can occur as brief disagreements or longer quarrels (Hartup, 1992). Minor conflicts may occur due to annoyances or differences in opinion, whereas more significant conflicts may include violations of trust.

Conflict is actually more prevalent in close relationships for several reasons. First, more conflicts occur in communal relationships than in exchange relationships (Laursen, 1998). The prevalence of conflict in communal relationships may be attributed to the fact that although communal relationships do not operate primarily on the principle of equity, individuals still may desire a degree of fairness within the friendship.

Secondly, situations that heighten social interdependence between two individuals are more conducive to opposition (Hartup, French, Laursen, Johnston, & Ogawa, 1993). Some circumstances that may increase interdependence include: occupying a small space, coordinated use of play equipment, or limited resources that must be shared. Lastly, children may display more conflict with friends than nonfriends because they are more open and honest with each other and feel more secure with the relationship (Hartup et al., 1993).

Friends tend to handle conflict in ways that minimize any damage to the relationship (Laursen, 1998). The main goal for friends is to settle the conflict with the fewest negative outcomes and to reestablish interdependence (Laursen, 1998). Adolescents can use three techniques to appropriately handle conflict: control anger, rely on negotiation, and view the conflict as an opportunity for learning more about the friend and relationship (Berndt, 1996b). By following those three guidelines, interaction will tend to continue after a conflict (Hartup, 1992).

Conflict can function as a useful tool in forming and maintaining friendships. Both agreements and disagreements alike are necessary for children to establish a common ground within their friendships (Hartup, 1992). In this way, individuals can set healthy boundaries early on within the relationship. As a maintenance technique, conflict between close friends helps individuals continue to learn about each other and to develop within the relationship. Friends that handle conflict well have more positive affect and more fair outcomes within the relationship (Laursen, 1998).

Negative Consequences of Envy on Friendship

The aforementioned literature on friendship characteristics illustrates the benefits of friendship for children and adolescents. Even negative aspects of friendship, like conflict, can be seen as useful. However, some emotions when experienced during friend's conflicts may be damaging to the friendship. Of particular focus is envy, and how it may generate further negative feelings between friends.

Although envy can be a relatively harmless emotion, it can also lead to anger, resentment and aggression (Parrott, 1991). Envious individuals may become frustrated and angry when they perceive another individual's advantage or success as an obstacle for attaining their own personal goal. The emotion of anger is most often acted out with aggressive behavior (Pettit & Clawson, 1996). Envy resulting in frustration and aggression may be particularly harmful to friendships.

Envy within friendships may lead to relational aggression, or aggression intended to harm peers through manipulation of social relationships (Steinberg, 2002). One key form of relational aggression is rejection. Individuals will often reject those that they envy (Exline & Lobel, 1999). Rejection may take many different forms, like excluding peers from social activities, ruining their reputation, or withdrawing attention and friendship from them (Steinberg, 2002). Peer rejection can subsequently lead to depression, behavior problems and academic difficulties (Steinberg, 2002).

The relational aggression and subsequent rejection that may arise from envy provides ample justification to further study how envy interacts with adolescent friendships. Although the current study is only preliminary in identifying the extent of

envy within friendships, it can lay groundwork for later studies to explore positive coping mechanisms for envy within friendships.

The Measurement of Envy

Past Measurement

Of the few studies that evaluate envy, most focus on the perspective of the envied, also commonly referred to as outperformers (Exline & Lobel, 1999). Exline and Lobel (1999) measured the sensitivity of outperformers in response to being the target of envy. Along the same lines, Exline et al. (2004) evaluated individuals' preference for forms of academic recognition and the implicit social dilemmas that may arise from public recognition.

Masse and Gagne (2002) approached the measurement of envy from the perspective of the envious. Masse and Gagne (2002) evaluated the relative intensity and frequency of envy towards various potential objects of envy, such as academic gifts and talents, financial successes and social successes. Their study helped to differentiate which situations elicit more feelings of envy for adolescents.

Current Measurement

The current study will also be focusing on envy from the perspective of the envious. Of particular interest is who adolescents experience more envy towards—their best friends or individuals they designate as non-friends. To evaluate the amount of envy they experience towards these individuals, adolescents will rate their feelings in response to hypothetical statements describing typical situations that evoke envy.

Overview

One goal of this study is to determine if envy is quantitatively different between best friends and non-friends. A second goal of this study is to determine how envy interrelates with other salient friendship characteristics. By gaining an understanding of how envy plays a role in friendships and non-friendships, it may be easier to help adolescents cope with envy within their relationships.

The main hypothesis of this study is that envy will be experienced to a higher degree in best friendships compared to non-friendships. Past research demonstrates that more social comparison exists between individuals who are highly similar (Blanton et al., 1999) and that friendships usually exist between similar individuals (Berndt, 1996b). Because these two conditions exist simultaneously, the envy that develops from social comparison is predicted to be present in close relationships, regardless of the fact that individuals are comparing themselves to their best friends. It is also predicted that female adolescents will feel more envy in general compared to male adolescents, similar to the results that Masse and Gagne (2002) found.

Additionally, several secondary hypotheses have been generated with regard to the relationship between envy and certain friendship characteristics. First, envy is predicted to negatively correlate with enhancement of worth. The construct of enhancement of worth is based on making friends feel good about themselves for their positive qualities (Ginsberg et al., 1986). Envy, on the other hand, is based upon feeling upset because others have positive qualities that the individual may lack (Parrott & Smith, 1993). These two constructs, therefore, are contrary to one another.

Second, envy is predicted to positively correlate with conflict. Envy generates feelings of inferiority and unfairness (Parrot & Smith, 1993), which in general are negative emotions. The negative emotion of envy may be projected onto the friend and therefore lead to conflict within the friendship.

Lastly, envy is predicted to correlate with intimacy and companionship; however, the direction of the correlations remains unclear. On one hand, two individuals who share a friendship that is high in intimacy and companionship may have many similarities that would provide an environment conducive to social comparison and therefore possibly envy. On the other hand, a friendship high in intimacy and companionship may be a particularly strong and supportive friendship that acts as a buffer against envy and other negative emotions that may arise between individuals.

Method

Participants

A total of 113 seventh grade students participated in the study, including 61 female adolescents and 52 male adolescents. Data were analyzed for only 109 students (60 female adolescents and 49 male adolescents) because several students failed to complete all portions of the measure. The students were between the ages of 12 and 14 years, with a mean of 12.45 years. The racial make-up of the sample was extremely homogenous—97% of the students identified themselves as white, 1% as African American, 1% as Hispanic, and 1% as other. The students were recruited from two schools in a rural area about twenty miles from Springfield, Illinois. Only students who returned permission slips from their parents participated in the study.

Measures

Development of the Best Friend/Non-Friend Envy Survey

The Best Friend/Non-Friend Envy Survey (BFNFES) was developed for the purpose of this study. The initial pilot version of the survey contained 27 items intended to quantitatively evaluate an individual's level of envy with regard to a specific person. Each item was rated using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (*Not at all true of me*) to 4 (*Really true of me*). The format of the scale was adapted from Parker, Low, Walker and Biggs (2005) self-report questionnaire to assess jealousy; however, the items were rewritten to reflect envy specifically. Two-thirds of the statements directly measured envy. An example of a direct statement is "I feel upset when _____ performs better than me at the after-school activity that we're in together." One-third of the statements indirectly measured envy by assessing positive sentiments of friendships, such as pride and happiness. An example of an indirect measurement is "I feel proud of _____ when he/she gets a good grade on a test, whether or not I do well on the test too." These items were reverse coded to provide an assessment of envy.

The pilot study was administered to 47 university students (14 male students and 33 female students). The mean age of the participants was 19.47, ranging from 18 to 22 years old. The ethnic distribution of students was largely Caucasian (Caucasian, N=39; African American, N=1; Asian American, N=4; Other, N=3). Each participant completed two surveys, one responding with a best friend in mind and one responding with a non-friend in mind. For the purpose of the study, a non-friend was defined as "an individual you do not get along with." Half of the participants completed the survey for the best friend first, and the other half completed the survey for the non-friend first.

Item analyses were conducted to assess the internal consistency of each item and the scale as a whole. The scale was fairly reliable ($\alpha = .88$). Ten of the strongest questions were used to develop the BFNFES to measure envy in seventh graders. The envy scale developed for the seventh graders was only slightly less reliable, but still strong ($\alpha = .85$).

Friendship Grid

A friendship grid measure was utilized to identify best friends (see Appendix A). Adolescents were instructed to fill out a small chart with the first and last name of up to six of their closest friends at school. Additionally, adolescents provided the gender, age, length of friendship and whether that friend is a family member (e.g., a cousin) for each friend listed. Once the friendship grids were complete, each grid was examined to identify reciprocal pairs of friends. This step ensured that when the adolescents responded to questions about a “best friend,” they were all thinking about a similar type of best friendship—one that is reciprocated.

Friendship Qualities Questionnaire

Friendship qualities of seventh graders were assessed using a measure developed from Parker and Asher’s (1993) Friendship Qualities Questionnaire (see Appendix B). The measure evaluated intimacy, companionship, reliable alliance, enhancement of worth, exclusivity, instrumental aid, and conflict. The scale consisted of 34 items. Each item was rated on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*Does not describe my friendship*) to 7 (*Very much describes my friendship*). An example of an item for intimacy is “There are important secrets we have shared.” An example of an item for companionship is “We enjoy spending time together.” An example of an item for

reliable alliance is “He or she would like me even if others do not.” An example of an item for enhancement of worth is “He or she tells me that I am good at things.” An example of an item for exclusivity is “I would prefer to interact with only my friend and not with his/her other friends as well.” An example of an item for instrumental aid is “We help each other do chores.” An example of an item for conflict is “One of us sometimes annoys the other one.”

BFNFES

The BFNFEES was used to measure envy (see Appendix C). The scale consisted of 10 items evaluating an individual’s level of envy with regard to a best friend and non-friend. Each item was rated using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (*Not at all true of me*) to 4 (*Really true of me*). Some examples of the items are: “I feel upset when _____ gets a better grade than me on a test” and “I try harder to succeed at my after-school activities because I want to be more like _____.”

Procedure

The instruments for this study were administered as a component of a larger study of friendships. The surveys were administered in three separate sessions for each of the schools. In the first session, participants completed the friendship grid so that reciprocal pairs of friends could be identified. Then, participants were instructed to complete two copies of the FQQ with one reciprocal friend in mind for each copy. The name of each selected friend was written on each survey for the participant.

Next, participants completed three versions of the BFNFEES. For the first two surveys, reciprocal friends were identified (the same friends selected for the FQQ) and their names were written in the blank space in the directions (see Appendix D). Each

student was instructed to complete both surveys with each particular friend in mind. The initials of the friend were written into each statement to ensure that the students were only thinking of one individual. Another copy of the BFNES evaluated envy between the individual and a non-friend. The participants were instructed to think of a person they do not get along with and write his or her name on the instruction sheet (see Appendix E). Then, they wrote the initials of the non-friend into the blank space on each of the statements. Then the participant proceeded with the non-friend questionnaire, answering all questions with a non-friend in mind.

This time, all students completed the three envy surveys in the same order—two best friend surveys first, and then the non-friend survey. This order prevented the students from confusion about which person they had in mind for the statements. By having all subjects participate in each condition, error variance should have been greatly reduced and the sensitivity of the measure increased.

Results

In order to more precisely define a best friend, reciprocal pairs of friends were identified and selected for each participant to consider when completing the subsequent questionnaires. In the sample, 96 pairs of reciprocal friends were identified. In the case of students who chose friends who were not reciprocated, unilateral friendship pairs were included so they could still participate in the study. Forty-four pairs of non-reciprocal friendships were included.

A 2 (friendship status) x 2 (gender) mixed design was used to measure the difference between envy of best friends and envy of non-friends, with the friendship status (best friend or non-friend) as the within factor and gender as the between factor. A

mean score for degree of envy in best friends was computed by combining the ratings from friend one and friend two. Best friends were expected to experience envy to a higher degree than non-friends.

The data revealed that there was no significant difference between best friends and non-friends for degree of envy, $F(1, 107) = .005, p = .943$. Female adolescents were expected to experience more envy than male adolescents. The data showed that there was no significant gender difference for degree of envy, $F(1, 107) = .977, p = .325$. Additionally, the data was analyzed to see if any interaction effects occurred between friendship status and gender for degree of envy. No significant interaction effects emerged, $F(1,107) = 1.32, p = .253$.

For exploratory purposes, each item on the BFNFEES was analyzed separately to see if any differences could be detected between friends and non-friends (Table 1). The data revealed contradictory results between individual items. Of the ten items, six reached significance for differences between friends and non-friends. Three items supported the hypothesis that best friends experience more envy than non-friends (Item 8, $F(1, 107) = 8.403, p < .01$; Item 9, $F(1,107) = 4.78, p < .05$; Item 10, $F(1, 107) = 10.165, p < .01$). Alternatively, three items revealed that non-friends experience more envy than best friends (Item 3, $F(1,107) = 6.636, p < .05$; Item 4, $F(1,107) = 4.22, p < .05$; Item 7, $F(1,106) = 3.997, p < .05$).

Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to evaluate whether the emotion of envy is tied to any of the seven friendship characteristics of interest (Figure 1); furthermore, correlations were broken down by gender. First, correlations were calculated separately for each friend—friend one FQQ scores were correlated with friend

one envy scores (Table 2) and friend two FQQ scores were correlated with friend two envy scores (Table 3). Next, correlations were calculated between the mean of the two friends' envy scores and the reciprocated friends' FQQ scores (Table 4).

The friendship characteristics that were of particular interest were intimacy, companionship, enhancement of worth, and conflict. Intimacy was predicted to correlate with envy, but no direction was specified. The data showed that intimacy did not significantly correlate with envy for either friend (friend one, $r = .16, p = .10$; friend two, $r = .11, p = .24$) or for reciprocal friends, $r = .12, p = .25$.

Companionship was predicted to correlate with envy, but similarly to intimacy, no direction was specified. The data revealed that companionship did not significantly correlate with envy for either friend (friend one, $r = .09, p = .33$; friend two, $r = .06, p = .52$) or for reciprocal friends, $r = -.05, p = .63$.

Enhancement of worth was expected to correlate negatively with envy; however, no significant correlation emerged from this analysis for either friend (friend one, $r = .07, p = .48$; friend two, $r = .10, p = .31$) or for reciprocal friends, $r = .00, p = .99$.

Finally, conflict was predicted to correlate positively with envy. This hypothesis was supported by data for friend one, $r = .25, p < .01$ and also supported for reciprocal friends, $r = .30, p < .01$. Thus, for friend one and for reciprocal friends, as envy increased within the friendship, conflict also increased. Interestingly, when correlations were broken down by gender, female adolescents seemed to account for the significant positive correlation between envy and conflict in friend one only, $r = .33, p < .01$. On the other hand, the hypothesis was not supported at all for friend two, $r = .15, p = .13$.

One unanticipated significant positive correlation that emerged for friend one was between envy and exclusivity, $r = .24, p < .05$. Therefore, if participants valued exclusivity in a relationship, they were more likely to also experience envy. Female adolescents seemed to account for the positive correlation between envy and exclusivity, $r = .31, p < .05$. On the other hand, no significant correlation existed between envy and exclusivity for friend two, $r = .12, p = .19$ or for reciprocal friends, $r = .12, p = .24$. As hypothesized, no significant correlations existed between envy and instrumental aid or envy and reliable alliance for either friend.

Discussion

Envy between Best Friends and Non-Friends

The main hypothesis, that greater envy is experienced in best friendships than in non-friendships, was not supported. It is important to consider four possible reasons that may explain the primary results. First, envy may not be a prominent feature of adolescent friendships. Second, participants may have masked feelings of envy because of its social inappropriateness. Third, variable amounts of envy may be evoked in different social situations. Finally, the BFNFEES may not have accurately measured envy. Each of these possibilities will be considered below.

The obtained results may correctly portray that envy is not a phenomenon of adolescent friendships. Most participants reported very low levels of envy, regardless of the relationship they were evaluating. However, it seems unlikely that adolescents in particular do not experience envy due to the frequency of social comparison during adolescence. Adolescents are keenly aware of how they measure up to others in their peer group based on a variety of characteristics, such as popularity and achievement

(Berndt, 1996b). Since social comparison is the foundation of envy (Parrott, 1991), logically adolescents may be prone to experiencing feelings of envy; therefore, it is important to take into consideration other possible explanations for the unsupported hypothesis.

The second possible explanation for the absence of a significant difference between friends and non-friends is that the participants were hesitant to report negative feelings such as envy. This hesitancy seems to be reflected in the fairly low means for all of the items on the BFNFEES—only one item out of thirty actually reached the value of one point on a four-point scale. The low envy scores make it difficult to believe that adolescents were accurately reporting envy. The participants may have been less likely to describe feelings of envy toward peers because envy is seen as socially unacceptable (Masse & Gagne, 2002; Mouly & Sankaran, 2002). Envy is viewed as an inappropriate emotion because it may lead to belittling or backstabbing, stemming from the desire to remove or destruct the envied object or quality. The aforementioned relational aggression that results from envy can be linked to peer rejection (Tassi & Schneider, 1997); therefore, adolescents may monitor their expression of envy to prevent others from rejecting them.

The third possible explanation for these results is that the survey was investigating a variety of situations, some that could have been more envy-provoking for best friends, and some that could have been more envy-provoking for non-friends. The BFNFEES was broken down and analyzed by each item; upon closer examination, it was apparent that some questions detected significantly more envy in friends and other questions detected significantly more envy in non-friends. Masse and Gagne (2002) identified differences in

envy across domains. For example, the participants were more envious of popularity and financial well-being than academic achievements. Individuals may be particularly envious of friends in certain circumstances, but more envious of non-friends in other situations. In this particular study, for example, participants were significantly more envious of friends when the participants were not included in group activities. On the other hand, participants were significantly more envious of non-friends in terms of attention from teachers for academic achievement.

A final reason for not detecting significant differences between friends and non-friends may have been because the measure was not actually measuring envy. The measure was found to be reliable but because there was no previous measure similar to the BFNFE, its validity could not be assessed. In order to prevent any negative stigma from the word “envy,” the items on the scale were fairly indirect; unfortunately, the roundabout way of measuring envy might have contributed to the inaccuracy of the measure. It is useful to consider item 8 and item 9 (see Appendix C), as they were quite direct in asking about envy, and these statements showed significantly more envy in best friends compared to non-friends. Although these results do not give enough support to draw any substantive conclusions, they do suggest that asking candidly about envy may be more beneficial than trying to be indirect. On the other hand, it is important to consider the fact that item 8 and item 9 both asked questions that would seem only characteristic of friendships; rarely would individuals feel guilty about not supporting someone they do not consider a friend. The results therefore remain inconclusive; however, it is important to note that many participants did in fact admit to experiencing envy within their friendships.

After considering the results from testing the primary hypothesis, one main limitation is clear—the BFNES needs to be improved in order to better capture the construct of envy. Perhaps the brief hypothetical situations that were given in each item did not really capture envy. It may be beneficial to conduct another pilot study with vignettes that give detailed descriptions of situations that may evoke feelings of envy. Participants in the pilot study could be asked to rate the degree of envy evoked from each particular situation; subsequently, these ratings could be used to create brief statements that tap into the construct of envy more accurately. Alternatively, the primary measure could be lengthened and be composed of the vignettes. Then individuals could imagine the vignettes occurring with a best friend and rate their envy experienced, and next imagine the vignettes occurring with a non-friend. However, a downfall of both of these methods is that the situations are merely hypothetical.

Perhaps an optimal alternative measure would be for students to self-report specific instances of envy. For example, they could fill out daily diaries that simply ask questions about situations that happened between a named best friend and a named non-friend. Among the questions would be “Did you feel envious of _____ today?” Then subsequent questions could inquire about the specific situation that evoked envy, how strongly the participant felt envious, and other emotions that may have accompanied the envy. This measure may also detect envy more accurately because it directly asks about envy instead of indirectly asking about feelings that may lead to envy. Moreover, since conflict and envy were correlated, another reasonable option would be for participants to give descriptions of recent conflicts that occurred between friends and non-friends. Then the descriptions could be coded for occurrence of envy and measure which conflicts

experienced more incidents of envy. However, this measure may require a large number of participants because conflicts can occur for a lot of other reasons besides envy.

Envy and Gender Differences

In addition to evaluating how envy might be experienced to a greater degree between best friends compared to non-friends, several secondary hypotheses were generated. Girls were expected to experience more envy than boys, however, the hypothesis was not supported. This result contradicts what Masse and Gagne (2002) reported. However, Gibbons and Buunk (1999) did not find any significant difference in gender for tendency for social comparison, a construct closely related to envy. Instead, individual differences for social comparison were based more on personality characteristics, like uncertainty of self and tendency to value others' opinions. Envy, similarly, may be more related to unspecified personality traits rather than gender. Alternatively, the lack of a significant difference between male and female students may have also been an artifact of the previously mentioned low means on each of the three versions of the BFNFEs. Although no significant gender differences emerged on the BFNFEs, it is important to note that when evaluating the correlation between envy and friendship characteristics, the significant correlations in friendship one seemed to be attributed to females (Table 2). Therefore, although female adolescents do not necessarily experience envy to a higher degree than male adolescents, envy may be more likely to influence female friendships compared to male friendships.

Envy and Friendship Characteristics

Envy was predicted to correlate with certain friendship characteristics, including enhancement of worth, conflict, intimacy and companionship. Of these four friendship

qualities, a weak but significant positive correlation existed only between conflict and envy. Although the direction of causation was not determined, it can be inferred that envy leads to conflict. Envy is often accompanied by anger, resentment and aggression (Parrot, 1991), emotions that can easily create conflict within a friendship. It is also possible that envy and conflict are correlated, but caused by a third variable, for example competitiveness. It would be interesting to conduct a study that explores envy, conflict and competitiveness together.

It is difficult to interpret the results of the insignificant correlations between envy and enhancement of worth, intimacy, and companionship. Because most of the envy ratings were so low, it was hard to detect what individuals' friendship characteristics were like if they were rated high in envy. However, one unanticipated link did emerge between envy and exclusivity. Only the data gathered from friend one found a weak but significant positive correlation between envy and exclusivity. Grotper and Crick (1966) found that exclusivity and relational aggression were linked and that the relational aggression that stemmed from exclusivity violations reflected a strong tendency towards jealousy. Similarly, violations of exclusivity may also reflect an inclination towards envy because individuals might be envious of the other peer that is intruding on the friendship. For example, individuals may wonder if the other peer has specific desirable qualities that make him or her a more appealing friend.

An important factor to consider from the above mentioned results is that exclusivity only positively correlated with envy for friend one; therefore, friendship one and friendship two may be qualitatively different from one another. In most cases, the first friend that the participants responded to (friends were listed in the same order for the

BFNFES and the FQQ) was the first friend that they listed on their friendship grid. (The only time the first friend from the friendship grid was not chosen was if the first friend was not reciprocated and the participant listed a different friend later that was reciprocated.) It may be gathered that the first friend the participant listed was a closer or better friend than subsequent friends listed. In that case, exclusivity and envy were only correlated in closer friendships. However, because participants were not instructed to rank friends and it is not definite that the first friend was the better friend, this conjecture is not completely supported.

Methodological Concerns

In addition to examining the limitations that occurred when testing specific hypotheses, it is useful to analyze shortcomings of the study on a whole. One key issue to keep in mind was the homogeneity of the sample. First of all, only seventh-grade students were included in this study. Perhaps envy is more noticeable with different grades. It might have been worthwhile to include elementary school students and high school students.

Secondly, the sample was predominately Caucasian. It would be interesting to see how other ethnicities experience envy and if they contribute to an increased variance of degree of envy. Finally, the sample was taken from a rural area. Envy may be experienced differently for students in a more urban area because the increased variety of students may allow for more social comparison simply because there are more people to compare themselves against. In the future, working to increase the heterogeneity of the sample will improve the ability to generalize the results to other populations.

General Conclusions

The current study provides rudimentary groundwork for later studies examining envy within friendships. It may be fruitful to examine envy between friends and non-friends from the perspective of the envied or the outperformer. Outperformers may give insight into how envy has played a role within their friendships; for example, they could give more information about how envy and conflict were related. Also, considering the fact that significant differences were not identified in the current study between best friends and non-friends, it may be useful to start from a different angle to gain more background information about envy for adolescents. For example, taking a case study approach could give more detail about envy itself in order to better understand the construct before measuring envy in a survey format.

Although the current study did not provide data to support the original hypotheses, it has contributed to our understanding of envy within adolescent friendships. It is important to continue to research envy within friendships because of the implications that may exist for envy increasing conflict and relational aggression. Unfortunately, adolescence has been a stage of life that has historically been characterized by storm and stress; however, by gaining a better understanding of common challenges for individuals, adolescence has the potential for being viewed more positively if adolescents can learn to effectively cope with issues such as envy within their friendships.

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Appendix A

Friendship Grid

ID _____

School Friends

Think about the people that you consider to be your close friends at school. On this grid, list the first and last names of people in your school that you consider to be a close friend and provide some information about them. Do not worry about the number of people you list. The number does not matter. Some people have close friends that go to other schools.

[illegible]

Appendix B

Friendship Qualities Questionnaire

ID _____ Sex: Male or Female

Friendship Questionnaire

This questionnaire asks you about the characteristics of your best friend. Rate the following statements in regards to your friendship with the specific person listed:_____

Answer the following questions about your friendship with your best friend using this seven point scale

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Does not describe my | | Only partly describes. | | | Very much describes | |
| friendship | | my friendship | | | my friendship | |
-
- ___1. We do fun things together
- ___2. He or she tells me that I am good at things
- ___3. He or she helps me with my schoolwork
- ___4. We often argue
- ___5. My friend and I prefer to have other people join us in our activities
- ___6. There are important secrets that we have shared
- ___7. I can be sure that he/she will be my friend, even in bad times
- ___8. He/she helps me with tasks so that I can get done more quickly
- ___9. This friendship makes me feel good about my self
- ___10. We know secrets about each other
- ___11. We prefer to spend time together than to have others who are not close friends join us
- ___12. One of us sometimes annoys the other one
- ___13. He or she would like me even if others do not
- ___14. We help each other do chores
- ___15. I know that my friend will keep the promises that he/she has made to me

- ___16. We tell each other private things
- ___17. We enjoy spending time together
- ___18. If one of us needs money, the other will loan or give it to each other
- ___19. We are sure that each other will always support each other
- ___20. He or she communicates to me that I am pretty smart
- ___21. We disagree about things
- ___22. We tell each other things that we would not tell other people
- ___23. If one of us needs help to do something, the other will do it
- ___24. I would prefer to interact with only my friend and not with his/her other friends as well
- ___25. He/she makes me feel good about my ideas
- ___26. One of us has violated the trust of the other one
- ___27. Our friendship is more fun if it is just the two of us and others are not with us
- ___28. When I do a good job on something, my friend compliments or congratulates me
- ___29. We tell each other about our problems
- ___30. We have conflicts that we have not yet resolved
- ___31. If one of us needs a favor, the other will do it
- ___32. I know that my friend will always be loyal to me
- ___33. We make each other feel important and special
- ___34. We like to sit near each other during class, meals, or other activities

Appendix C

Best Friend/Non-Friend Envy Survey

1. I feel upset when _____ gets a better grade than me on a test.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

2. I feel upset when _____ performs better than me at the after-school activity that we're in together.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

3. I feel angry when the teacher says _____ did a good job on an assignment and doesn't say anything to me.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

4. I feel upset when _____ has a better outfit than me for the school dance.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

5. I wish I could be more popular like _____.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

6. I try harder to succeed at my after-school activities because I want to be more like _____.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

7. I feel upset when a boy/girl calls _____ on the telephone instead of me.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

8. I feel guilty sometimes because I am not happy for _____ when he/she succeeds in something.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

9. I think I should be more supportive of _____'s accomplishments because often I am jealous of him/her instead of being happy for him/her.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

10. I feel upset when I find out that _____ and a lot of other people were all hanging out and I was not able to be there.

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all true of me	A little true of me	Somewhat true of me	Mostly true of me	Really true of me

Appendix D

*BFNFES Instructions for Best Friend*Directions

For each of the following statements, please think about your friendship with _____. As you read each statement, think of how true or untrue that statement is of you and your feelings.

If something is not at all true of how you would feel, circle **0**.

If it is only a little true of how you would feel, circle **1**.

If it is somewhat true of how you would feel, circle **2**.

If it is mostly true of how you would feel, circle **3**.

If it is really true of how you would feel, circle **4**.

Please circle only one number for each question.

Remember that your identity remains **anonymous**—this means that no one knows which questionnaire is yours and no one knows what responses you choose about your peers. There are no right or wrong answers. We only want your truthful opinion.

Appendix E

*BFNFES Instructions for Non-Friend*Directions

This survey is a little different from the first two you have already filled out.

This time, we have **not** written a name in each blank for you—you have to choose which person you will respond to the statements about.

Please think of a same-sex person you **do not get along with** and write his or her name down in this blank here: _____. For each of the following statements, continue to write his or her initials in each blank. This will help you remember to only think of that one person as you respond to the statements. As you read each statement, think of how true or untrue that statement is of you and your feelings.

If something is not at all true of how you would feel, circle **0**.

If it is only a little true of how you would feel, circle **1**.

If it is somewhat true of how you would feel, circle **2**.

If it is mostly true of how you would feel, circle **3**.

If it is really true of how you would feel, circle **4**.

Please circle only one number for each question.

Remember that your identity remains **anonymous**—this means that no one knows which questionnaire is yours and no one knows what responses you choose about your peers. There are no right or wrong answers. We only want your truthful opinion.

Table 1

Differences in Degree of Envy between Best Friends and Non-friends Broken Down by Each Item

Item	BF Mean	NF Mean	F	Significance
1. I feel upset when ___ gets a better grade than me on a test.	.45	.65	3.87	.05
2. I feel upset when ___ performs better than me at the after-school activity that we're in together.	.70	.94	3.14	.08
3. I feel angry when the teacher says ___ did a good job on as assignment and doesn't say anything to me.	.50	.76	6.64	.01*
4. I feel upset when ___ has a better outfit than me for the school dance.	.40	.59	4.22	.04*
5. I wish I could be more popular like ___.	.49	.45	.16	.69
6. I try harder to succeed at my after-school activities because I want to be more like ___.	.42	.34	2.22	.14
7. I feel upset when a boy/girl calls ___ on the telephone instead of me.	.34	.55	4.00	.05*
8. I feel guilty sometimes because I am not happy for ___ when he/she succeeds in something.	.82	.45	8.40	.01**
9. I think I should be more supportive of ___'s accomplishments because often I am jealous of him/her instead of being happy for him/her.	.68	.47	4.78	.03*
10. I feel upset when I find out that ___ and a lot of other people were all hanging out and I was not able to be there.	.98	.57	10.17	.00**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 2

Correlations between Envy and Friendship Characteristics for Friend One

Friendship Characteristic	Pearson Correlation	Significance
Intimacy	.16	.10
Males	.25	.07
Females	-.01	.96
Companionship	.09	.33
Males	.07	.62
Females	.08	.56
Reliable Alliance	.09	.34
Males	.16	.27
Females	-.03	.83
Enhancement of Worth	.07	.48
Males	.10	.50
Females	-.02	.91
Exclusivity	.24	.01*
Males	.14	.34
Females	.31	.02*
Instrumental Aid	.03	.78
Males	.10	.50
Females	-.09	.49
Conflict	.25	.01**
Males	.15	.31
Females	.33	.01**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

N = 112

Table 3

Correlations between Envy and Friendship Characteristics for Friend Two

Friendship Characteristic	Pearson Correlation	Significance
Intimacy	.11	.24
Males	.18	.20
Females	-.02	.86
Companionship	.02	.52
Males	-.03	.83
Females	.14	.30
Reliable Alliance	.11	.24
Males	.05	.74
Females	.12	.37
Enhancement of Worth	.10	.31
Males	.05	.74
Females	.13	.33
Exclusivity	.12	.19
Males	.18	.21
Females	.16.	.21
Instrumental Aid	.11	.26
Males	.15	.30
Females	.07	.58
Conflict	.15	.13
Males	.25	.08
Females	.06	.67

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

N = 112

Table 4

Correlations between Mean of Envy Scores for Friend One and Two and Friendship Characteristics for Reciprocal Friends

Friendship Characteristic	Pearson Correlation	Significance
Intimacy	.12	.25
Males	.27	.08
Females	-.17	.24
Companionship	-.05	.63
Males	-.02	.90
Females	-.10	.49
Reliable Alliance	.01	.96
Males	.06	.68
Females	-.09	.54
Enhancement of Worth	-.00	.99
Males	-.02	.92
Females	-.04	.79
Exclusivity	.12	.24
Males	.18	.25
Females	.10	.50
Instrumental Aid	-.02	.86
Males	.83	.59
Females	-.17	.24
Conflict	.30	.00**
Males	.29	.06
Females	.25	.07

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

N = 96

Figure Caption

Figure 1. Correlations between envy scores and friendship characteristics.

