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# Who's More Cruel, Johnny or Jenny? Sex Differences in Adults' Perceptions of Cruelty to Animals by Children

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WHO'S MORE CRUEL, JOHNNY OR JENNY?  
SEX DIFFERENCES IN ADULTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CRUELTY TO ANIMALS BY CHILDREN

by

Teresa Michelle Thompson

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

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Teresa M. Thompson

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## **INTRODUCTION**

As a symptom of Conduct Disorder, cruelty to animals (DSM IV, 1994) is often assessed via parental checklists (e.g., Child Behavior Checklist). However, little information exists on the criteria that adults use to make judgments of cruelty.

Previous research has shown that adults do make attributions about a child's behavior based upon the child's sex (Condry & Condry, 1976). This is probably because human beings work at organizing information in such a way as to understand or make sense of their world. One of the ways that we do this is through grouping like things together and then attaching a label with its associated meanings and expectations. This is common not only for "things" but also for people. We often call the label a stereotype, which is a cognitive belief that associates groups of people with certain traits (Brehm & Kassin, 1990).

A common stereotype is associated with a person's biological sex. Phrases such as "boys will be boys" are evidence of stereotyping and sex-influenced expectations. Parents are usually extremely interested in knowing the sex of their newborn child. This information elicits for them a set of expectations that coincide with their beliefs about sex appropriate traits that they can expect in their child (Rubin, Provenzano, & Luria, 1974). These expectations can form the basis for gender schemas, which are cognitive structures that organize and guide perception

(Bem, 1981). This can have a powerful impact on not only the parents perception of their infant's behavior but in how they treat the infant based on that perception (Fagot, 1978; Condry & Condry, 1976; Rubin et al., 1974).

Aggression is one trait that seems to be heavily attributed to boys but not to girls. This distinction has been researched by many (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Oetzel, 1966; Tieger, 1980). One of the potential reasons for the differences in aggression perceived by adults in boys and girls is that we expect boys to be aggressive and so we "see" aggression, perhaps because we are more attuned to those behaviors, while we might miss aggressive behavior in girls because we do not expect them to act aggressively.

Shuller and McNamara (1976) illustrate the power of expectations in a study they did with adults who were well trained in observational recording. These individuals were assigned to observe a child playing with a group of children on a videotape. Some of the subjects were told that the child was hyperactive, some were told the child was aggressive, and others were told the child was normal. Behavioral recordings appeared to be resistant to expectancy bias drift. However, after the observational ratings were recorded the subjects were asked for a subjective evaluation of the child. Their opinion of the child was significantly influenced by the biasing information even though their objective recording was

not. Mischel (1968) states that, "...naive observers as well as sophisticated researchers and clinicians frequently assume persistent dispositional or trait attributes in others, whether or not the confirming behaviors are actually displayed at a particular moment of observation" (p. 520).

Observer bias was also illustrated in research completed by Lyons and Serbin (1986). They asked forty adults (20 men and 20 women) to look at a series of line drawings, in the first condition there were two drawings with 12-13 children depicted in a playroom scene, some children were playing alone and others were interacting in groups of two or three. Embedded in the first picture was an illustration of one child who was kicking another child, in the other picture one child was illustrated pushing another child away from an easel. Everything about the scenes and the children in the scenes were identical except the hairstyle and clothing of the two aggressive children, these were changed so that the aggressing child was depicted as a boy or a girl.

The second condition consisted of a set of drawings depicting an aggressive interaction between two same-sex children. Five of the pictures involved girls with the remaining five involving boys. Once again the only differences in the scenes depicted were hairstyle and clothing. All facial expressions and body postures were identical.

The stimuli were presented via slide projector and each participant was given a coding booklet to record their answers, the authors found that both men and women reported that they saw more aggressive acts in pictures with boys as the actors rather than girls. They also discovered that the men in their sample rated the boys in the pictures as significantly more aggressive.

Lyons and Serbin (1986) replicated their study and introduced a new variable by dividing their new sample into three groups. The first group operated under the same conditions as the previous study, the second group were told specifically to use the same criteria for rating boys as they rate girls, and the third group was told that, in the past, subjects had a tendency to rate boys and girls differently, especially on qualities like aggression and they were told to avoid this tendency.

The results for the first group replicated the findings from the first study, the second group showed no tendency to rate boys or girls differently by either the men or the women, but the third group demonstrated both men and women rating boys as significantly more aggressive. The authors discussed the fact that this group possibly had the sex role dimension, relating to aggression, activated due to the warning that they were given.

In research conducted by Condry and Condry (1976) a videotape of an infant responding to a variety of stimuli (buzzer, teddy bear, jack-in-the-box, doll) was shown to adults. Half of the time the researchers referred to the child as a boy and the rest of the time they referred to the child as a girl. The adults who viewed the tape (n=209) reported that they saw the infant as displaying different emotions and different levels of emotional arousal depending upon the sex attributed to the child, the sex of the rater, and the raters experience with young children. In the scene where the child responds by crying when the jack-in-the-box pops up the raters tended to rate the crying as indicative of anger if the infant was labeled "boy" and fear if the infant was labeled "girl".

Condry and Condry (1976) suggest that in relation to attributing emotions, "if you think a child is angry do you treat "him" differently than if you think "she" is afraid?" (p. 817). They also state that "...we often see what we expect to see...we usually act on what we think we see, and when those actions are directed toward another person, they affect the other person in a variety of ways" (p.812).

Meyer and Sobieszek (1972) also looked at the effect that a child's sex would have on adult interpretations of its behavior. In their study they argue for the assumption that an adult will project onto a child dispositions and orientations appropriate for male and female sex roles. They used a technique similar to the

previous study (85 adults were shown videotapes of a 17 month-old child who was described as a boy half of the time and as a girl the other half of the time).

The subjects were given a checklist with a number of masculine and feminine adjectives as well as a few neutral adjectives. The subjects were told to watch the child and check those attributes or characteristics they felt the child displayed. Male subjects who had low contact with children showed a slight tendency to assign adjectives that were more male oriented to a child described as male. Female subjects who reported high contact with children tended to describe the child as lower on characteristics of their described sex. Subjects overall tended to describe a same-sex child as having more qualities, both male and female. Neither sex reported more "negative" qualities for a same-sex child. It appears that when rating a same-sex child raters may be drawing from a more complete frame of reference, themselves, and therefore project more qualities, male and female, onto the child.

It would also appear that level of contact with children may influence raters perceptions to some degree. For example a man who has not been around children very much may draw from stereotypes more frequently, due to lack of exposure to normal child behavior. It also seems that when the behavior is more ambiguous (e.g. Condry & Condry's (1976) child crying at the jack-in-the-box) both men and

women may utilize what they know of stereotypic behavior to understand the situation.

Susser and Keating (1990) felt that something other than just the sex of the adult might be affecting their perception. They administered the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974) to adults and then used 30 men and 43 women who had been classified sex-typed or androgynous according to the BSRI and had them watch a videotape of a pair of fraternal twins (a boy and a girl), as the children performed some aggressive, scripted behaviors. The adults rated the children on a variety of scales dealing with intent of the child's behavior, whether the behavior was masculine or feminine, how aggressive the behavior appeared, how important it was to reprimand the child, and how severe the reprimand should be.

The authors' findings were, in some cases sex role orientation interacted with the sex of the child being rated and that the perception of the adult and the judgement made, based on that perception, could play a part in how the child is treated and therefore influence the process of socialization of aggression.

Sex-typed subjects (men who scored very high on masculine scales and women who scored very high on feminine scales) perceived boys' aggression as more intentional. Androgynous individuals (scoring equally on both masculine and feminine scales) perceived intent of aggression as equal for the boy and girl. When

boys performed the aggressive behavior the act was seen as more masculine than when the girl performed the same behavior by all subjects. Male subjects, regardless of orientation perceived more aggression by boys. Subjects overall felt it was more important to reprimand the boy for aggressive behavior than to reprimand the girl for the same behavior. Sex-typed subjects however recommended more severe reprimands for boys while androgynous subjects recommended a similar response regardless of the child's sex.

The issue of differential perception and treatment appears to be more complicated than just sex of the rater, and may in fact be impacted by many variables, of which one may be sex role orientation. This study seems to suggest that the more traditional (masculine or feminine) your orientation is the more rigid your expectations and defined range of acceptable behavior may be for yourself as well as others.

Another component that may affect adult perceptions of aggression may be the type of behavior the child is engaged in. Willemsen and van Schie (1989) looked at sex stereotypes and adult responses to juvenile delinquency. The authors felt there were two potentially conflicting hypotheses in regards to perceptions and responses to juvenile delinquency. The first hypothesis was that because crime is viewed by many to be a masculine activity (attributed to the male nature), that

boys will be punished more severely for delinquent behavior. The second hypothesis was that because criminal or delinquent activity deviates so far from the feminine stereotype that girls who exhibit this type of behavior would be punished more severely.

In fact, they found that boys received more harsh punishment for aggressive crimes than did girls but that girls received more harsh punishment for noncriminal delinquent behaviors. For example, for status offenses (truancy, runaway, staying away one night, drunk on a bicycle, hanging around discos, having many different boy/girlfriends) boys often received no punishment while girls were most often sent to a social worker.

When acts of violence were in question boys were most often sent to jail while girls received punishment described as reeducational. It appeared almost as though there were something in the boy that you could do nothing with but lock him up and the girl just needed to be taught better. The authors described it somewhat as needing to protect society from the boy and needing to protect the girl from herself.

It would appear that differences in attribution can have important personal and social consequences for youth engaged in delinquent behavior. Behavior that seems to be consistent with stereotypes (aggressive males punished harshly,

truancy not punished) seems more likely to be viewed as stable and something inherent to the individual's nature. Behavior that is inconsistent with stereotypes (aggressive females need reeducation, truant behavior punished through reeducation) seem more likely to be attributed to circumstantial factors.

The implications of these types of biases are important and far reaching. Statistics from the Ontario Child Health Study (Boyle et al., 1987) show that first, the number of adolescent girls who report conduct disorder is two to four times the number reported by their parents. Second, the differences of conduct disordered behaviors between sexes is reduced when you compare girls reports with boys reports. Finally, only 7% of the conduct-disordered adolescent girls receive mental health or social services compared to 19% of the boys. The discrepancy is even greater for special education where girls are placed in these classes at only 7% compared to boys at 32%.

There are some evident problems in assessment related to observational bias, parental reports, and youth reports. With the growing body of research on the relationship between cruelty to animals in childhood and later aggression against people (Ascione, 1993; Felthous, 1986; Kellert & Felthous, 1985), as well as cruelty to animals' use in diagnosing Conduct Disorder (DSM IV, 1994), it seems important to ascertain whether adults have different expectations, make sex-

specific attributions or display sex biases when rating whether or not a given behavior is cruel. If such differentiation in this area exists it could affect identification, referral, and treatment of children who are cruel to animals.

We decided to explore how adults might perceive a child who was maltreating a family pet to see if they saw that behavior as cruel and if so, how cruel they deemed it to be. We also wanted to know if men and women would offer different ratings on the behavior of same-sex or opposite-sex children. Another variable we were interested in was developmental expectations, would the rating of cruelty increase the older a child was. The last concern was the act itself, how might it influence ratings.

## METHODS

### Participants

Students from two undergraduate courses at Utah State University were recruited for this study. The principle investigator and two assistants went to an introductory psychology class and asked for participation. The instructor had already advised them that they would receive extra credit points for their participation, two hundred ninety-one elected to participate.

The second group were students enrolled in a child abuse and neglect class in which the P.I.'s advisor was presenting a guest lecture on the relationship between child abuse and animal abuse, one hundred seventy-three students chose to complete the survey.

The total sample number was four hundred seventy-one, the mean age of the sample was 22 years-old, 91% were Caucasian, and 61% were women (see Table 1).

Table 1

### Summary of Participants

Sample Source	Men	Women	TOTAL
Introductory Psychology	36	137	173
Child Abuse & Neglect	145	146	291
TOTAL	181	283	464

\*(seven participants did not indicate whether they were male or female)

## **Materials**

There were four versions of the questionnaire, each participant received only one of the four versions to complete. Each questionnaire had two scenarios, one depicting mild cruelty to a pet (holding a family pet off the floor by the tail) and the other depicting severe cruelty to a pet (choking a recently-produced offspring of a family pet until it quit moving). Order of severity of story (e.g. mild scenario presented first or severe scenario presented first) was varied between participants. The sex of the child depicted was also varied between questionnaires by using either a boy's name (Johnny) or a girl's name (Jenny) for both scenarios. After reading each scenario the participant was presented with a question regarding how cruel they believed the behavior to be if the child in the scenario were a five-year-old. Participants circled their response on a five-point scale marked 1-not cruel to 5-very cruel. The next question was the same except participants were asked to rate the level of cruelty as if the child depicted in the scenario were a ten-year-old, using the same five-point scale. The last question for that scenario was rated as if the actor was a fifteen-year-old child. We also gathered basic demographic information from each participant regarding age, sex, ethnic affiliation, past and present pet ownership, and major in school. (See Appendix A for a sample of the questionnaire.)

### **Procedure**

The questionnaires were handed out to students at the beginning of both classes. The questionnaires had been collated so that version #1-#4 followed one another consecutively throughout the stack. Students were instructed to take the top questionnaire and then pass the rest down the row. They were asked to immediately complete the questionnaire then fold it in half and pass it to the end of the row. The researcher and her assistants then collected them and left the room. The students in the introductory psychology class had a small piece of paper stapled to their survey on which they wrote their name and student ID number so they could receive 5 points of extra credit. These slips of paper were removed from the questionnaire before coding began, the names were given to the instructor for appropriate credit. The child abuse class received no extra credit for their participation.

### **Analysis**

The participant ratings were analyzed using multivariate repeated measures analysis of variance for each scenario. The major independent variables were (1) the order of the two scenarios (which story was presented first), (2) the sex of the child in the scenario, (3) the sex of the respondent completing the questionnaire, and (4) which class the respondent was enrolled in.

Within each scenario the three ratings for the different ages of the depicted child were treated as dependent repeated measures. This was due to the fact that (1) although they were not the same measures taken at different times they were closely related and (2) the three related measures were expected to demonstrate a linear trend related to the question of increasing age of the actor. A trend such as this would lend itself nicely to this type of analysis.

## RESULTS

The factor of the age of the child depicted in the story (five-, ten- or fifteen-year-old) yielded a significant between subjects effect for both mild and severe scenarios [ $F(2,462)=645.82, p<.0001$ ;  $F(2,462)=304.51, p<.0001$ ], respectively. A linear trend indicated that cruelty severity ratings increased as age increased (see Table 2).

Table 2

### Subjects' Mean Ratings of Severity for Mild & Severe Scenarios

Scenario	5-year-old			10-year-old			15-year-old		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
Mild sev. rating	2.99	1.11	471	4.27	.80	471	4.78	.52	471
Severe sev. rating	3.68	1.15	471	4.74	.57	471	4.96	.23	471

The sex of the participant rating the stories yielded a significant effect but only for mild cruelty [ $F(1,462)=13.02, p=.0003$ ]. Mean severity ratings for women were greater than men's mean (see Table 3).

Table 3

Mean Severity Ratings of Men and Women for the Mild Scenario

Sex of Rater	5-year-old			10-year-old			15-year-old		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
Women	3.1	1.1	283	4.36	.72	283	4.85	.37	283
Men	2.81	1.08	181	4.12	.89	181	4.66	.68	181

The factor of the child's sex (i.e. whether the two stories used a boy's name or the two stories used a girl's name) was not significant alone or in interaction with the participant's sex. However, there was an interaction effect involving child sex and child age for the mild scenario [ $F(2,468)=4.52$ ,  $p=.0114$ ]. Boys were rated as more cruel at the ten-year-old age level but sex of the child had no effect at the other two age levels (see Table 4).

Table 4

Mean Severity Ratings for Boy & Girl Actors in the Mild Scenario

Sex of Actor	5-year-old			10-year-old			15-year-old		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
Boy Actor	3.01	1.14	236	4.33	.81	236	4.76	.59	236
Girl Actor	2.97	1.09	235	4.21	.79	235	4.79	.44	235

We also found that for the mild severity scenario, participants from the child abuse class rated the scenarios as more cruel than the participants drawn from the introductory psychology class [ $F(1,469)=18.56, p=.0001$ ] (see Table 5).

Table 5

Mean Severity Ratings for the Mild Scenario: Comparison of Classes

Class	5-year-old			10-year-old			15-year-old		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
Child Abuse	3.28	1.14	176	4.41	.73	176	4.87	.35	176
Intro. Psychology	2.82	1.06	295	4.18	.83	295	4.72	.60	295

## **DISCUSSION**

It is clear that factors other than the specific behavior depicted can influence adults' ratings of childhood cruelty to animals. Age of the child impacted adults judgment of severity as evidenced by increasing severity scores with increasing child age. Sex of the rater also manifested differences, with women tending to rate acts of maltreatment as more cruel than did men. Exposure to information about abuse in general also appeared to influence scores as the two samples differed in their cruelty ratings, with the Child Abuse and Neglect class rating the behaviors as more cruel than did the Introductory Psychology class.

There appeared to be no interaction between the sex of the rater and the sex of the actor. This could be due to the fact that the developmental focus, as demonstrated by age, was more prominent to the raters than was the child's sex. It is also possible that the range of animal maltreatment was restricted enough that a ceiling effect occurred.

This research raised many questions. If an adult judges an act of animal cruelty by a boy and a girl to be equally severe, would their reaction to the boy and girl be the same? Would the adult be more worried or concerned about a boy or girl who demonstrated cruel behavior? We are currently researching these and other questions with a large sample of parents.

One of the problems with checklist approaches is that there may be discrepancies between parents' reports and children's reports. Statistics from the Ontario Child Health Study (Boyle et al., 1987) show that, (1) adolescent girls report conduct disorder at two to four times the rate reported by their parents, (2) the differences of conduct disordered behaviors between sexes is reduced when you compare girls reports with boys reports, and (3) only 7% of the conduct-disordered adolescent girls receive mental health or social services compared to 19% of the boys. The discrepancy is even greater for special education where girls are placed in these classes at only 7% compared to boys at 32%. The long-term impact of not diagnosing and treating aggression in girls is powerful.

Discrepancies also appear within reports made by parents, in another study (Ascione, Thompson, & Black, in review) we found that parents would sometimes report that animal cruelty was not a problem or only somewhat/sometimes a problem with their child but after further probing discovered behavior with animals more severe than the initial response indicated.

Given that checklist approaches for assessing children are so widespread, and the implications of potential biases far reaching, it seems very important that we understand what criteria adults use when making judgements about animal cruelty by children and what variables may influence adults to respond in the way that they do.

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Appendix A: Sample Questionnaires

**PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS**

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gender: Male Female Ethnicity: Caucasian Hispanic Asian African-American Native-American Other  
Did you own a pet when you were a child? Yes No Do you currently own a pet? Yes No

PLEASE READ THE SCENARIOS AND MARK YOUR ANSWERS BELOW.

While sitting on the floor watching a litter of offspring that the family pet had recently produced, Jenny reached out and picked one of the litter up by the neck. She then proceeded to choke the animal while it wiggled and kicked until it went limp. Jenny then dropped it back into the basket with the rest of the litter and walked out of the room.

Using the scale answer the following questions **BY CIRCLING YOUR RESPONSE.**

If Jenny were 5 years old how cruel would you say her behavior was?

1 2 3 4 5  
Not cruel Very Cruel

If Jenny were 10 years old how cruel would you say her behavior was?

1 2 3 4 5  
Not cruel Very Cruel

If Jenny were 15 years old how cruel would you say her behavior was?

1 2 3 4 5  
Not cruel Very Cruel

While walking through the living room Jenny saw the family pet sitting on the floor. She walked over to the pet and grabbed it by the tail lifting it off the floor and suspending it in the air. During this time the pet made noises of distress while it twisted and turned trying to escape. Jenny held the pet by the tail in this position for 5-10 seconds before letting it drop back to the floor.

Using the scale answer the following questions **BY CIRCLING YOUR RESPONSE.**

If Jenny were 5 years old how cruel would you say her behavior was?

1 2 3 4 5  
Not cruel Very Cruel

If Jenny were 10 years old how cruel would you say her behavior was?

1 2 3 4 5  
Not cruel Very Cruel

If Jenny were 15 years old how cruel would you say her behavior was?

1 2 3 4 5  
Not cruel Very Cruel





**PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS**

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male Female

Ethnicity: Caucasian Hispanic Asian African-American Native-American Other

Did you own a pet when you were a child? Yes No

Do you currently own a pet? Yes No

**PLEASE READ THE SCENARIOS AND MARK YOUR ANSWERS BELOW.**

While walking through the living room Johnny saw the family pet sitting on the floor. He walked over to the pet and grabbed it by the tail lifting it off the floor and suspending it in the air. During this time the pet made noises of distress while it twisted and turned trying to escape. Johnny held the pet by the tail in this position for 5-10 seconds before letting it drop back to the floor.

Using the scale answer the following questions **BY CIRCLING YOUR RESPONSE.**If Johnny were 5 years old how cruel would you say his behavior was?

1	2	3	4	5
Not cruel				Very Cruel

If Johnny were 10 years old how cruel would you say his behavior was?

1	2	3	4	5
Not cruel				Very Cruel

If Johnny were 15 years old how cruel would you say his behavior was?

1	2	3	4	5
Not cruel				Very Cruel

While sitting on the floor watching a litter of offspring that the family pet had recently produced, Johnny reached out and picked one of the litter up by the neck. He then proceeded to choke the animal while it wiggled and kicked until it went limp. Johnny then dropped it back into the basket with the rest of the litter and walked out of the room.

Using the scale answer the following questions **BY CIRCLING YOUR RESPONSE.**If Johnny were 5 years old how cruel would you say his behavior was?

1	2	3	4	5
Not cruel				Very Cruel

If Johnny were 10 years old how cruel would you say his behavior was?

1	2	3	4	5
Not cruel				Very Cruel

If Johnny were 15 years old how cruel would you say his behavior was?

1	2	3	4	5
Not cruel				Very Cruel

**VITA**

**Name:** Teresa M. Thompson      **Citizenship:** United States of America

**Spouse:** Tom Thompson

**Children:** Sarah, Emily, Rebecca, Thomas, & Michael

**Home Address:** 113 South Center, Hyrum, Utah 84319      (801) 245-4761

**University Address:** Department of Psychology  
Utah State University  
Logan, Utah 84322-2810  
(As research assistant)  
(801) 797-1460

**EDUCATIONAL HISTORY**

Utah State University, Logan, Utah

Major: Psychology  
Degree: Bachelor of Science (anticipated June 1995)  
Honors: Summa Cum Laude and Departmental Honors (anticipated)  
Honors Thesis: Who's Meaner, Johnny or Jenny? Adult Perceptions of Cruelty to Animals by Children.  
Cum. GPA: 3.98

**AWARDS & HONORS:**

1992-93 "A" Pin (Academic Achievement), Utah State University  
1992-95 National Dean's List  
1992-95 College of Education Scholarship, Utah State University  
1992-93 Psi Chi Service Award, Utah State University Chapter  
1993-94 Psi Chi Service Award, Utah State University Chapter  
1994-45 Department of Psychology's Outstanding Student  
1994-95 College of Education's Outstanding Student  
1994-95 Scholar of the Year for the College of Education  
1995 Utah State University Scholar of the Year, Robins Award

**HONORS ASSOCIATIONS:**

1991 Alpha Lambda Delta, National Academic Honor Society for Freshmen  
1991 Utah State University Honors Program  
1993 Psi Chi, National Psychology Honor Society (Chapter President 1993-94)  
1993 Golden Key, National Academic Honor Society  
1994 Blue Key, National Academic Honor Society  
1994 Pinnacle, National Academic Honor Society for Non-Traditional Students  
1994 Mortar Board, National Academic Honor Society for Seniors  
1994 Phi Kappa Phi, National Academic Honor Society

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

1992-present Southwestern Society for Research in Human Development (Student Member)  
1992-present American Psychological Association (Student Affiliate)  
1993-present Rocky Mountain Psychological Association (Student Affiliate)  
1995-present Society for Research in Child Development (Student Member)

**UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Council of Student Clubs and Organizations (1993-94)  
Psychology Club (President 1993-94)  
College of Education Council (1993-94)

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

**March-May 1993**

**Lab Assistant** for Analysis of Behavior (Psy. 140)  
Supervisor: Ken Bell

**Sept. 1992-March 1993**

**Supplemental Instructor** for Introductory Psychology (Psy. 101)  
Duties: Attended regular class periods, held three extra class periods per week, instructed students on psychological concepts as covered in lectures, text, and films. Taught learning strategies, test-taking skills, etc.  
Supervisor: Carol Green, Director of Academic Services

**June-August 1992**

**Instructor's Apprentice** for Social Psychology (Psy. 351)  
Supervisor: Dr. Tamara J. Ferguson

**Sept. 1991-June 1992**

**Instructor's Apprentice** for Adolescent Psychology (Psy. 210)  
Supervisor: Dr. Frank Ascione

**June-December 1991**

**Instructor's Apprentice** for Human Development (Psy 110)  
Supervisor: Roger Graves and Dr. Frank Ascione

**RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:**

**August 1992-Present**

**Research Assistant**, USU, Cruelty to Animals in Childhood and Adolescence: Phase 1 - Development of an Animal Cruelty Assessment Instrument

Duties: Library research and reading on animal cruelty, research and assessment procedures. Provided assistance during development of Cruelty to Animals Assessment Instrument, assisted in development of protocol for interviewing parents and children from the general population, womens shelter facilities, and juvenile secure facilities. Interviewed adults, children and adolescents, maintained confidential files, and wrote clinical reports on research participants.

Supervisor: Dr. Frank R. Ascione

**January 1992-Present**

**Research Assistant**, USU, Guilt and Shame-Proness in Children.

Duties: Supervised and trained students in recruiting and interviewing subjects, collecting, entering, and analyzing data. Wrote protocol manuals for use in interviewing parents and children, and interviewed children aged 5-12 and one of their parents. Communicated with P.I. while she is overseas via e-mail.

Supervisor: Dr. Tamara J. Ferguson

**June 1991-June 1992**

**Research Assistant**, USU

Duties: Library research on topics such as animal cruelty, ritualistic abuse, and child witnesses of spousal abuse.

Supervisor: Dr. Frank Ascione

**June-Sept. 1991**

**Research Assistant**, USU, paid part-time position. Humane Attitudes and Empathy: One Year Follow-Up.

Supervisors: Claudia Weber & Dr. Frank Ascione

**APPLIED EXPERIENCE**

**May 1994-June 1995**

**Peer Counselor** through the USU Counseling Center

Duties: Received training in appropriate helping, communication, and outreach skills. Under supervision of professional staff conducted needs assessments of assigned students (individuals and groups) and planned and conducted educational and supportive workshops.

Supervisor: Dr. Jan Neece

**March 1994-Jan. 1995**

**Helpline Volunteer**

Duties: Received training and provide crisis help and resource information to individuals who call the hotline and those who walk into the office.

Supervisor: Jaynan Chancellor

**January 1994-May 1995**

**Court Appointed Special Advocate** for Cache and Box Elder Counties

Duties: Represent the best interests of a child whose case has been assigned to me by a Guardian Ad Litem for the Juvenile Court. Research child's background, develop/present recommendation to the court regarding placement of child, treatment plans, and follow up assessments. Meet regularly with the child addressing their needs throughout entire course of the case. Attend all trainings and court proceedings pertaining to the child I represent.

Supervisor: Dianne Balmain, Attorney at Law

**Dec. 10 & 11, 1993**

**Personnel Director and Small Group Leader**, Breakthrough workshop for Life Management Seminars.

Duties: Oversee workshop facilitators. Lead a small group of participants through experiential processes and discussions. Follow-up after workshop for support and information.

Supervisor: Bill Birely, Pres. Life Management Seminars

**Sept. 1991-Dec. 1991**

**Peer Counselor** for the Women/Reentry Student Center, USU

Duties: Provide interested women and reentry students with support and information about USU and aspects of their educational endeavors.

Supervisor: Janet Osborne

**OTHER EXPERIENCE**

**June-August 1994**

**Think Tank Committee Member** for the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC).

**May-June 1993-'95**

**Conference Assistant** for Infancy & Early Childhood Conference: Current Directions in Theory, Research, and Application.

Supervisor: Dr. Frank R. Ascione

**April-March 1992**

**Program Assistant** for Southwestern Society for Research in Human Development Biennial Meeting held in Tempe, Arizona, March 9-21, 1992.

Supervisor: Dr. Frank R. Ascione

**SPECIAL SKILLS AND TRAINING**

Q-Sort Methodology	Child Behavior Checklist	Semi-Structured Clinical Interview for Children
Projective Measures	Social Desirability Scales	Psychiatric Diagnostic Interview
Empathy Scales	Attitude Scales	Cruelty to Animals Assessment Instrument

**PUBLISHED PAPERS**

Goodrich, G. A., Damin, P. B., Ascione, F. R. & Thompson, T. M. (1993). Piagetian visual-spatial representation for verticality and horizontality. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 154, 449-458.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Ascione, F. R., Thompson, T. M. & Black, T. (1993). Children and adolescents who are cruel to animals: An overlooked form of juvenile violence. Paper presented at the 1993 Child Advocacy Conference, Salt Lake City, April.

Ascione, F. R., Thompson, T. M. & Black, T. (1995). Childhood cruelty to animals: Assessing cruelty dimensions and motivations. Paper to be presented at the 7th International Conference on Human- Animal Interactions. Geneva, Switzerland, September.

Ferguson, T. J., Thompson, T. M., Riggs, A. T., & Walker, J. (1994). Self-conscious emotions in children and parental socialization. Poster presented at the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada, April.

Ferguson, T. J., Stegge, H. & Thompson, T. M. (1993). Socialization of guilt and shame in young children. Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, New Orleans, March.

Goodrich, G. A., Ascione, F. R., & Thompson, T. M. (1994). Knowing which way is up: Gender differences in verticality and horizontality. Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the Southwestern Society for Research in Human Development, Austin, Texas. February 24-26.

Thompson, T. M., Ascione, F. R., Fan, X. (1995). Childhood cruelty to animals: In the eye of the beholder? presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Indianapolis, April.

Thompson, T. M., Puopolo, N., Stepan, J., Miller, E., & Harris, K. (1994). A hierarchical solution in addressing the needs of the psychology student. Poster presented at the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada, April.

**FUNDED RESEARCH**

<u>Title</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Parental Perceptions of Childhood Animal Cruelty (1995) (P.I.)	Undergraduate Research Creative Opportunity & USU Psychology Dept.	\$550

**ADDITIONAL RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Relationships existing between animal cruelty and child sexual abuse.

Sex differences in perceptions of child-to-animal aggression.

**CONFERENCES ATTENDED**

Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, March 1995, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Preserving the Innocence of Children: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Preventing Child Abuse, August 1994, Ogden, Utah.

Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Annual Conference, April 1994, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Southwestern Society for Research in Human Development Biennial Meeting, February, 1994, Austin, Texas.

Western Psychological Association and Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Annual Conference, April, 1993, Phoenix, Arizona.

1993 Child Advocacy Conference, April, 1993, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Second Utah Conference on Violence, September, 1992, Weber State University.

Southwestern Society for Research in Human Development Biennial Meeting, March, 1992, Tempe, Arizona.

Infancy and Early Childhood: Current Directions in Theory, Research, and Application, June 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, & 1994 Utah State University.

Health Psychology Seminar, Utah State University, June 1990