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The relationship between abused adolescents and their pets

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University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1993

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ABUSED
ADOLESCENTS AND THEIR PETS

by

Simone G. Williams

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Psychology

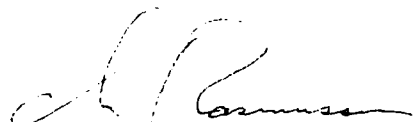
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August, 1993

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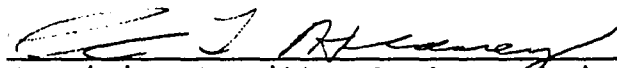
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Abstract

The purpose of the current research was to investigate the relationship between abused adolescents and their pets as reported on the Child-Pet Relationship Questionnaire. Specifically, the differences in the human-animal and human-human relationships among abused adolescents and non-abused ("normal") adolescents were investigated. Additionally, for both types of relationships, differences among owners of abused and non-abused pets were analyzed. Subjects consisted of 47 identified victims of maltreatment and 55 "normal" teenagers. All subjects were 13 to 17 years of age and currently owned a pet. Results show that abused adolescents differed significantly from non-abused adolescents in both child-pet and human-human relationships. Non-abused owners of non-abused pets reported a weaker child-pet bond and stronger human-human bond than either of two abused owner groups; however, the abused owner groups did not significantly differ from each other in either type of relationship.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Even though relationships between humans and animals can be found around the world and are centuries-old, until relatively recently the importance of this relationship has been virtually ignored by the scientific community. As one explanation for the lack of interest and research, Katcher suggested that keeping a pet is too common and too cute, and that cute is not considered to be good science (Cusack, 1988).

Owning a pet is a relatively common occurrence. Approximately 60% of American families have a pet in their home (Cain, 1985). Given the relatively high rate of pet ownership, it can be assumed that having a pet in one's home must provide some benefits for its owner. In an effort to find the reported benefits of pet ownership, many of the initial inquiries yielded similar results.

In a 1987 study conducted by Davis, pet owners reported the following benefits for pet ownership: love, companionship, protection. Similar benefits were found in a survey conducted by Quigley, Vogel, and Anderson (1983), in their attempt to identify the most advantageous aspects of

pet ownership. The pet owners in this study reported companionship (75%), love and affection (67%), pleasure (58%), and protection (30%) as the major advantages of pet ownership. The greatest disadvantage to owning a pet was cited as responsibility for the pet. It appears that these elements are also present in our relationships with humans as well as animals, but their all-encompassing definition makes them difficult to evaluate scientifically (Cusack, 1988).

In an attempt to further discern the difference between aspects of the human-animal relationship from those of the human-human relationship, Katcher (1983), identified four elements of the human-animal bond that relate to the larger concepts of companionship, love and affection, pleasure, and protection. These elements are safety, intimacy, kinship, and constancy. Each element can be viewed as a major factor in an individual's psychological health and well-being.

The first element of the human-animal relationship, according to Katcher (1983), is safety. Safety is not synonymous with protection. Feeling safe is as much a perception of security as an actual physical state. Having a pet near them or merely knowing that the pet is in the home can provide people with a sense of security.

Katcher's (1983) second factor is intimacy. In the human-animal relationship context, intimacy is characterized by both touching and talking. Intimacy can also be

described as the emotional importance, and physical proximity of a pet (Holcomb, Williams, & Richards, 1985). Katcher suggests that intimacy with an animal does not require prior consent from the animal as it does in human-human relationships. Intimacy experienced by people tends to rely on the willingness of both parties; whereas, intimacy with a pet tends to rely only with the owner. With regard to communicating with animals, people often more freely express feelings to their pet, than to other people. The pet does not judge what is said, nor does the animal talk back.

For adolescents, intimacy with a pet provides a friend and a confidant that will not betray nor make fun of the teenager. Parker and Gottman (1989) suggest that the most important social process during adolescence is honest, intimate self-disclosure. Self-disclosure implies the need for a confidant. The pet can be such a confidant, with which the teenager can feel safe to tell secrets and intimate details that may be too difficult or too uncomfortable to share with another human being.

The third element of the human-animal relationship is that of kinship (Katcher, 1983). Kinship with an animal refers to the tendency of individuals to regard their pets as family or as people. Many people even call their pets their "babies." A pet's birthday can be celebrated, just as a child's birthday would be acknowledged.

The final element of the human-animal bond identified by Katcher (1983) is constancy. Constancy is perhaps the most striking difference between people-pet and people-people relationships. Constancy is highly sought out and idealized, but the human condition makes it virtually impossible to attain (Cusack, 1988). Animals, however, do not change in the way that humans do. As Katcher and Savishinsky (1983) point out, in spite of advancing years, animals are never expected to grow up. We do not expect our pet to change, nor does our pet expect us to change. Even if we do change, whether it be developmentally, physically, or emotionally, these changes will not damage the pet's relationship with us. An animal gives us unconditional, and non-judgmental love. As Cusack (1988) aptly puts it, "the pet is, therefore, as constant as death and taxes." p. 15.

Overall, the benefits of pet ownership (i.e., safety, kinship, intimacy, and constancy), appear to provide psychologically healthy and desired outcomes for people. One would expect that the benefits of owning a pet, particularly the element of constancy, would be most appreciated and most needed during the time in our lives when our bodies and our self-identities are in transition--adolescence.

The developmental stage of adolescence is often a turbulent time. As a teenager struggles between dependence and autonomy, a pet can function as a transitional object by

serving as a substitute for a parent's affection and by offering security and comfort, much as a teddy bear does for an infant. Robin, ten Bensel, Quigley, and Anderson (1984) suggest that a pet can make the adolescent feel safe without the presence of parents and is a far more acceptable "security blanket" for an older child than a stuffed animal. As Fogle (1983) and Levinson (1972) have noted, during the adolescent years, a pet can be a confidant, a love object, a protector, a social facilitator, or even a status symbol.

The relationship children have with their pets can be an important transitional element towards relationships with other people. The object of the child's focus is the pet, whereas, the adult's focus is on people. Searles (1960) suggests that developmentally, the foci of object relatedness can be arranged along a continuum from inanimate objects, to nonhuman animate objects (e.g., animals), to human objects, and finally to significant others. Searles further suggests that adolescence is the period when the central object of a person's affections becomes human rather than animate in nature. In other words, "healthy" adolescents should be forming bonds with people, particularly with peers. Forming human-human bonds does not necessarily mean that human-animal bonds are totally abandoned, rather the child-pet relationship should assist in the forming of human-human relationships.

For adolescents, having a pet may produce a

relationship that provides the psychosocial benefits of friendship, companionship, emotional support, and unconditional love (Kidd & Kidd, 1990; Robin & ten Bensel, 1985; Robin, ten Bensel, Quigley & Anderson, 1983; Robin, ten Bensel, Quigley & Anderson, 1984). These same components are desired in our relationships with others. The child-pet relationship that provides adolescents with the psychosocial benefits, should not, however, come at the expense of the benefits provided from human-human relationships.

Even at the preadolescent stage of development, the child should be beginning to transcend from the child-pet bond to the human-human bond. Davis and Juhasz (1985) suggest that a preadolescent may use a companion animal to provide intimate friendship when the child's social system fails to meet the child's developmental needs. The child may be unable or unwilling to leave the security of the pet and may avoid human relationships during the preadolescent period. Davis and Juhasz further suggest that when the pet becomes the sole support for the preadolescent, the child-pet relationship should be viewed as unhealthy. The presence of a strong child-pet bond may indicate an external social system that is deficient in providing the child with developmental resources. A dysfunctional family system, in which abuse is occurring, may be one such deficient social system.

Veevers (1985) suggests that when interaction with animals takes the place of human interaction, the animals have become "surrogates" in that they have become substitutes for humans. Veerers further suggests that the degree to which the animal is anthropomorphized, or given human characteristics, may be a method of identifying the level and or strength of the animal's surrogate function. Veevers' idea of the "surrogate" is quite similar to Katcher's (1983) element of kinship.

One indicator of a tendency towards anthropomorphization might be giving the animal a human name; however, a pet with a human name is by no means a conclusive indicator of anthropomorphism. Harris (1983) found that approximately one-third of the names given to dogs and cats were human names; however, the researcher failed to find any systematic relationship between the pets' names and the relationship people have with their pets.

Talking to the pet, expecting it to understand, and confiding in the pet is a second indicator of the tendency to anthropomorphize the pet (Veevers, 1985). Some support for this indicator was found by Beck and Katcher (1983). These researchers report that 30% of their subject group of pet owners confide in their pets.

Veevers (1985) suggests that a third indicator of anthropomorphism can be seen when the pet is treated as a surrogate friend. A person can engage in many of the

activities one would perform with human friends. For example, a person can talk, walk, relax, and sleep with a pet no differently than with a human companion. Veevers further suggests that the pet, in the role of surrogate friend, is especially important for persons who for one reason or another do not have many human friends, a suggestion shared by Davis and Juhasz (1985).

The pet can also serve as a surrogate parent. The pet may show the child more patience and provide more contact comfort than the child's mother in some instances. A pet may act as a peer substitute with whom a child can practice a variety of interactions which can later be incorporated into "real people" social relationships.

Veevers (1985) also contends, as does Katcher (1983), that a pet can also be a source of continuity. Schowalter (1983) suggests that the pet not only has the time to spend with the child, when the parent may not, but the child also believes the pet to be permanent. The animal is always there for the child. On a similar note, Brickel (1985) suggests that pets are enlisted as sources of emotional support. In addition, parents, family, and friends all change in the way they relate to developing adolescents--animals do not. Thus, as Brickel notes, pets provide much needed stability in the youth's ever-changing world.

Pets are stable and provide us with continuity, especially during the adolescent period of development;

however, the nature of the human-animal bond is far from being explained by the current literature. Veevers (1985) suggests that the attention of research should focus on the interactions between people and pets, and the way such interactions can affect or shape the interactions these individuals have with other people. Veevers' suggestion closely approximates Searles' (1960) continuum of object relatedness.

Searles (1960) views all relationships on a continuum. The child-pet relationship is of utmost importance to the "healthy" psychosocial development of preadolescents. The child-pet bond also serves as a transitional period from which the preadolescent learns to relate with people. The experience and knowledge gained at the child-pet stage is carried forward to the adolescence stage of relatedness, where developing "healthy" human-human relationships becomes most important.

The period of adolescence is a crucial transitional period for any "normal" adolescent. Adolescence may be even more turbulent for abused teenagers. Do the elements of the child-pet relationship differ for abused adolescents? According to Robin, ten Bensel, Quigley, and Anderson (1983), the characteristics or elements found in "normal" adolescent-pet relationships have also been found with abused adolescents. Robin and his colleagues compared the attitudes of 238 abused adolescents, institutionalized for

delinquency and/or emotional problems, to those of 269 traditional high school students. The researchers found that almost all (99%) of the institutionalized youths they surveyed expressed very positive feelings about their pets. Furthermore, the abused adolescents were more likely than the traditional high school teens to discuss their problems with their pets. The researchers also found that the pet was often the abused youth's only comfort during times of stress, loneliness, or boredom, whereas, the traditional high school students tended to view the pet as a means of enhancing and encouraging family togetherness.

The literature clearly indicates that abused adolescents have a strong relationship with their pets. What is of interest, however, is that previous research has not focused on why the relationship between abused adolescents and their pets differs from that of "normal" adolescents. It is possible that pets serve a different function or role for abused adolescents than for "normal" youths. The pet may serve as a best friend and a confidant, for these emotionally isolated youth. Additionally, the safety and comfort experienced in the human-animal relationship may outweigh the disappointment and difficulties experienced in the abused teen's human-human relationships.

The failure of adolescents to move from human-animal relationships to human-human relationships (i.e., peers),

may indicate a delay in the psychosocial development of the teenagers. Following Searles suggestion that "healthy" adolescents should have transcended from child-pet bonds to human-human bonds, Okoniewski (1984) looked at emotionally disturbed adolescents' perceptions of human-animal and human-human relationships. Okoniewski hypothesized that emotionally disturbed adolescents may not have moved from the human-animal relationship to human-human relationships. The researcher found that the adolescents perceived communication with animals to be easier than with people. The youths also reported a belief that animals cannot argue or be cruel. Overall, the teenagers perceived communication with animals as less threatening than with people. Okoniewski concluded that emotionally disturbed adolescents had not transcended from human-animal relationships to those of human-human relationships.

In an abusive family, communication with people may be additionally threatening to the adolescent. Family members may be both verbally and physically mistreating the youth. In a child-abusing family, the pet may be the adolescent's only source of unconditional love and acceptance. If the pet is also a victim of abuse from family members, the adolescent-pet bond may be further strengthened in an effort to maintain the psychosocial support provided by the animal.

Indications of concurrent child and pet abuse within the family have been documented. For example, Robin and his

colleagues (1984) found that the pets of institutionalized adolescents were more likely to be abused than the pets of non-institutionalized high school students. In addition, these researchers found that, of the abused adolescents who were closely attached to their pets, 34% of these animals were brutally killed by a parent or guardian. The finding that pet abuse occurs within child-abusing families has also been documented by DeViney, Dickert, and Lockwood (1983) in their study of 53 child-abusing families. These researchers found 60% of the pets within abusive families were maltreated. Furthermore, 88% of the families who physically abused their children had pets that were also abused. Unfortunately, DeViney and her colleagues did not include a comparative sample of "normal" families in their research. In a similar study conducted in the United Kingdom, Hutton (1983) found that of the 23 families surveyed that had a documented history of animal abuse, 82.6% were known to social services and 60.8% were known to probation. Hutton does not provide information regarding the types of offenses committed by the pet-abusing families; however, the indication is that families that abuse their pets also abuse other family members.

The abuse of a pet, in addition to abuse of a child, may add to an already dysfunctional family system. It is hypothesized that this additional abuse may further stagnate the youth's ability to nurture human-human relationships,

which are required to develop psychologically and socially into "normal" adulthood. In an effort to deal with the many changes that occur during adolescence, abused teenagers may actually cling to the human-animal bond while socially and emotionally isolating themselves from people, particularly same-age peers.

Failure to establish healthy peer relationships can lead to socialization difficulties. Reduced social skills and emotional/mental health problems may result in delinquent or even criminal behavior. Previous research using juvenile delinquents (Robin & ten Bensel, 1985; Robin et al., 1984), and adult criminals (Kellert & Felthous, 1985; ten Bensel, Ward, Kruttschnitt, Quigley, & Anderson, 1984) suggests that childhood abuse is a common thread in these two populations. Many criminals indicated having a close attachment to at least one pet while growing up. Unfortunately, this special pet tended to be abused and/or killed, often by another family member. The strong human-animal bond with the special pet may indicate that these criminals had difficulty nurturing human-human relationships, particularly with family members who both abused them and their special pet.

Early detection of unhealthy child-pet relationships, particularly during adolescence, where human-human relationships should be stronger than the child-pet bond, may provide professionals with an indicator of potential

abuse and the need for intervention. However, the initial step of developing such an assessment device first requires finding the difference in the child-pet and human-human relationships between "normal" and abused adolescents. Such differences have not been uncovered.

For the present study, the difference between abused and non-abused adolescents' reported strength of the child-pet and human-human relationships will be analyzed. Searles (1960) continuum for adolescent relationships will be used as the basis for evaluating the teenager's present placement on the child-pet and human-human relationship line. In viewing this continuum, from left to right, the farthest point on the left represents a strong human-animal relationship; whereas, the extreme right indicates a strong human-human relationship. During adolescence, psychosocially "healthy" teenagers should have proceeded along the continuum to a point where human-human relationships are stronger than human-animal relationships.

For the present research, it is believed that abused adolescents will fall along the left-hand side of the continuum; whereas, non-abused teens will be found on the right. Robin et al. (1984) found that delinquent teenage boys had a strong relationship with their special pets and that many of these pets were also abused. The integration of Robin's findings on abused adolescent pet owners, with Deviney's (1983) and Hutton's (1983) findings of pet abuse

within child-abusing families, would suggest that abused adolescents may have a stronger child-pet relationship than non-abused adolescents. For the current study, the presence of pet abuse is thought to further bias the placement of the abused adolescents to the left side of the continuum.

Keeping the child-pet and human-human relationship continuum in mind, the problem encountered for the present study was finding a test instrument that could assess the human-animal and human-human relationships of abused/non-abused adolescent owners of abused/non-abused pets. In addition, questions were needed to assess the various elements of the child-pet and the human-human relationships.

To address the first issue, that of finding an appropriate assessment device, a thorough review of the literature was completed. The results of this search indicated that over the past 15 years, a number of human-animal relationship assessment devices have been developed. Most notable are, the Pets and Personal History questionnaire (Bustad, 1981), the Ory/Goldberg Pet Inventory Assessment (Ory & Goldberg, 1983), the Companion Animal Project Survey (Largo, Knight, & Connell, 1983), the Pet Attitude Scale (Templer, Salter, Dickey, Baldwin, & Veleber, 1981), and the Pet Attitude Inventory (Wilson, Netting, & New, 1987). In every case, however, these tools were designed for different purposes, for use with different populations, and measure different aspects of the human-

animal relationship.

Despite some of its limitations, the Wilson Pet Attitude Inventory (PAI), with modifications, was selected for this project due to its encompassing selection of items pertaining to the human-animal relationship, particularly for the concepts of caring, love, and friendship. In addition, the PAI was also easily modified into a self-report measure for use with teenagers. The PAI is also published and is available for use by researchers.

The purpose of the current research is to investigate the relationship between abused adolescents and their pets. The following hypotheses are postulated: 1) abused adolescents are more likely to own abused pets than are non-abused adolescents; 2) abused adolescents will report a stronger child-pet relationship than "normal" teens; 3) abused adolescents will report a weaker human-human relationship than "normal" teens; 4) owners of abused pets will report a stronger child-pet relationship than owners of non-abused pets; and 5) owners of abused pets will report a weaker human-human relationship than owners of non-abused pets.

In order to limit the scope of the current research to the level of and characteristics of the relationship adolescents have with their pets, differences between type and length of child maltreatment and differences in past ownership characteristics will not be analyzed.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Subjects

The sample consisted of 102 adolescents between 13 and 17 years of age ($M = 15.00$, $sd = 1.39$). There were 45 males (44.1%) and 57 females (55.9%). The ethnicity of the subjects included: 73 Caucasian (71.6%); 16 Black (15.7%); 6 Hispanic (5.9%); 4 Asian (3.9%); and Other (2.0%). One subject did not give his ethnicity. In addition, all participants currently owned a pet. The breakdown for favorite pet currently owned by type was: 68 dogs (66.7%); 24 cats (23.5%); 3 birds (2.9%); and 7 (6.9%) other. The type of pets reported in the other category were fish, a turtle, a spider, a lizard, and a hamster. All but one subject indicated having grown up with at least one pet in their home.

The abused subjects ($n = 47$) were recruited from Child Protection Services of Las Vegas. All abused subjects were authority-identified victims of maltreatment. There were 20 males (42.6%) and 27 females (57.4%). Type of child abuse reported was: 22 (46.8%) physical; 16 (34.0%) sexual; 6 (12.8%) both physical and sexual; and 3 (6.4%)

emotional/mental.

The "normal" adolescent population ($n = 55$) was recruited from the local community. The non-abused group consisted of 25 males (45.5%) and 30 females (54.5%). No significant demographic differences (i.e., gender, race, age, type of pet owned) were found between the abused and non-abused owners, nor between the owners of abused and non-abused pets.

Data from seven subjects were not included in this study. Four subjects, identified by authorities as victims of maltreatment, denied having been abused, and hence, were dropped from the study. Three "normal" subjects self-reported being abused which necessitated that their questionnaires not be used in the data set as they could not be included in the non-abused control group, nor the authority-identified abused population.

Materials

The Child-Pet Relationship Questionnaire (CPRQ), designed for use in this study, consists of portions of the PAI (Wilson, Netting, & New, 1987), with questions pertaining to child abuse, pet abuse, and friendships included. The Pet Attitude Inventory (PAI) was developed for use in community settings and proposes to measure pet ownership attitudes and attachment levels. The PAI consists of two sub-measures; one for current pet owners, the other for non-owners. Wilson and her colleagues report the PAI

has content validity; however, only preliminary reliability claims have been reported to date (Lago, Kafer, Delaney, & Connell, 1988).

Child abuse was determined by Child Protection Services and confirmed by the adolescent's response given to the question "Have you ever been abused?". Pet abuse was defined in this study as mistreatment and/or abuse of the pet, while owned by the reporting adolescent. Threatening to harm the pet without mistreatment or actual abuse was not considered pet abuse.

The strength of the human-animal relationship was determined by responses to items assessing: 1) caring; 2) love; and 3) friendship. Caring was defined as responsibility for the pet (i.e., "Who usually is the main caregiver of this pet?"), amount of time spent with the pet (i.e., "How much time [on an average daily basis] do you spend doing something with or for your pet, such as grooming it, petting it, walking or feeding it?"), and perceived ownership of pet (i.e., "Do you consider this one special pet to be your pet or does it belong to the entire family?").

Love was measured in terms of strength of love reported (i.e., "Do you love your pet?"); and level of intimacy and trust (i.e., "Do you confide in your pet?"). Friendship was measured by the amount of reported companionship (i.e., "How much companionship does your pet give you?"), amount of

communication with the pet (i.e., "Do you talk to your pet?"), and whether or not the pet was reported as being the youth's best friend (i.e., "Do you think of your pet as your best friend?").

The strength of the human-human relationship was determined by responses to items measuring reported preference for human companionship (i.e., "Would you rather spend time talking and/or playing with your pet than with other people?", "Do you spend more time talking and/or playing with your pet than with your friends?", and "Do you spend more time talking and/or playing with your pet than with your family?").

The CPRQ was employed to assess differences in the adolescent-pet bond between owners of abused and non-abused pets, and between abused and non-abused pet owners (see Appendix I for complete questionnaire). The CPRQ questions consist of response alternatives that are either Likert-type scale items (e.g., "almost always", "sometimes", "seldom", and "never"), or responses that were weighted according to salience levels (e.g., "less than 1 hour" = 1; "1-2 hours" = 2; and "more than 2 hours" = 3).

The coding system employed for the questionnaire was designed such that response choices were rank ordered according to perceived strength (e.g., "always" = 4, "sometimes" = 3, "seldom" = 2, "never" = 1; and "yes" = 2, "no" = 1). For the question concerning the main caregiver,

the response "self" was determined to indicate the strongest level of responsibility for the pet. "Mother" was ranked second with other family members receiving lower rankings. For owner of the pet, the response "self" was determined to indicate the strongest level of ownership with "whole family" ranking second and "other" ranking last.

For questions on the human-human relationship, however, responses indicating a preference for pet were ranked higher than responses indicating a preference for humans. High scores, for questions that comprise the human-human relationship measure, indicate a low level of strength, and hence, a weaker human-human bond.

Procedure

The 47 abused subjects from Child Protection Services were recruited by an agency worker. The investigator responsible for the project distributed the questionnaires to the agency worker. The agency worker was instructed by the investigator on recruiting procedures (i.e., no form of coercion to be used; voluntary participation). Informed consent was obtained in written format from the agency, which serves as the guardian, and informed assent was verbally given by each adolescent. Completion of the questionnaire constituted informed consent from the adolescent. The 47 abused subjects received a \$5.00 participation fee. Disbursement of the monies was determined by the institution.

The 55 "normal" subjects were recruited from the community by University of Nevada, Las Vegas students participating in the Psychology department's subject pool. Written and verbal instructions regarding recruitment of subjects were given to each student by the investigator. Written informed consent was obtained from one parent and informed assent was given by the adolescent. Completion of the questionnaire constituted informed consent from the adolescent (see Appendix II for recruiter information sheet and consent forms).

Questionnaires were completed anonymously and no identifying information was obtained on any individual subject. Completion time for the questionnaire was approximately 20 minutes. Approval from the Social Behavioral Subcommittee of the Institutional Review Board, regarding policies and procedures on the use of human subjects research, was granted on February 8, 1993. Data was collected from February, 1993 to April, 1993.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Given the design of the study, several levels of analyses were possible. Some analyses focused on the type of adolescent (abused versus non-abused), henceforth referred to as the child abuse dyad. Some analyses looked at the status of the pet (abused versus non-abused). The remainder of the analyses were conducted on the interaction between the type of adolescent and the status of the pet (abused owners of abused pets, abused owners of non-abused pets, non-abused owners of non-abused pets). Interactive analyses will be referred to as the child/pet triad. Group differentiation based on the type of child abuse was not possible due to the limited size of the sample.

The most frequently used analyses, the Chi-square, was employed to analyze the differences in responses to individual questions between abused and non-abused adolescents, and between the child abuse/pet abuse combinations. For all post-hoc tests on the chi-squares, a Bonferroni procedure which tested all comparisons at .05 level of significance, was employed to determine the appropriate significance level for each z analysis.

In addition to the Chi-square analyses, t-tests were done to assess the differences between abused and non-abused adolescents on the child-pet relationship scales of caring, love, and friendship. T-tests were also employed to analyze group differences for the combined measure of child-pet relationship and the overall measure of human-human relationship.

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were used to assess differences across the child/pet triad. Post-hoc analyses were done in the child/pet combination, using the Tukey-HSD (honestly significant difference) range tests. Statistical significance was set at .05 for all analyses conducted in this study.

Presence of Pet Abuse

There was a significant difference between abused adolescents and non-abused adolescents with regard to owning an abused pet ($\chi^2(3) = 4.54, p < .05$). The abused population own a significantly larger number of abused pets than the non-abused population (78.9% vs 25.0%). Four non-abused adolescents, who reported their pet was abused, stated that the abuse occurred prior to the pet being in their home (i.e., abused by the previous owner), and hence, were not included in any further analyses. Only one abused adolescent, a male, indicated that he abused his pet.

Child-Pet Relationship

Child abuse dyad. The difference between abused and non-abused adolescent pet owners in terms of the child-pet bond was analyzed. Table 1 shows the breakdown of responses given for each question that comprised the variable caring. Significant differences between abused and non-abused teens were found for each question of the caring scale.

Table 1. Response Frequencies for the Caring Scale of the Child-Pet Relationship for Abused and Non-Abused Adolescents.

	Abused	Non-Abused	
<hr/>			
A. Who usually is the main caregiver of this pet?			
Self	39	23	
Mother	1	15	
Father	1	7	
Other	6	10	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	55	21.38**
B. How much time (on an average daily basis) do you spend doing something with or for your pet?			
< 1 hour	7	21	
1-2 hours	13	26	
> 2 hours	27	8	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	55	21.12**
C. Do you consider this one special pet to be your pet or does it belong to the entire family?			
Self	35	20	
Family	8	32	
Other	4	2	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	54	18.76**
<hr/>			

*p < .05 **p < .01

A significantly different pattern of responses was found for the question regarding reported caregiver of the pet between the abused and non-abused adolescents ($\chi^2(3) = 21.38, p < .001$). Abused adolescents reported themselves as the main caregiver of the pet more frequently than did non-abused adolescents; however, the obtained frequency did not significantly differ from the expected frequency ($z = 1.95, p > .05$). In addition, abused teens tended to under-report their mother as the main caregiver; however, the obtained response did not quite reach significance ($z = 2.35, p < .05$). It was also expected that non-abused teens would more frequently report their mother as the main caregiver; however, due to the conservative nature of the Bonferroni post-hoc tests, the obtained frequency did not reach significance ($z = 2.17, p > .05$).

The question regarding the amount of time spent with the pet each day produced a significant difference between the abused and non-abused adolescents ($\chi^2(2) = 21.15, p < .001$). Abused adolescents reported spending more than two hours per day with their pet significantly more than expected ($z = 2.71, p < .05$); whereas, the non-abused teens under-reported this response choice, though not significantly less than expected ($z = 2.50, p > .05$).

From Table 1, the results of the relationship between abused/non-abused adolescents and the final question regarding perceived ownership of the pet revealed a

significantly different pattern of results for the abused and non-abused subjects ($\chi^2(2) = 18.76, p < .001$). The abused teens considered their entire family to own the pet significantly less often than expected ($z = 4.31, p < .05$).

Results of the analyses conducted on the love scale questions of the child-pet relationship are presented in Table 2. Both questions of the love scale produced significantly different patterns between the abused and non-

Table 2. Response Frequencies for the Love Scale of the Child-Pet Relationship for Abused and Non-Abused Adolescents.

	Abused	Non-Abused	
<hr/>			
A. Do you love your pet?			
Not at all	0	1	
A little bit	2	4	
Somewhat	1	14	
Very much	44	36	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	55	13.19**
 B. Do you confide in your pet?			
Almost never	5	21	
Not very often	8	10	
Sometimes	17	12	
Almost always	17	11	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	54	11.79**
<hr/>			

*p < .05 **p < .01

abused adolescents. In terms of the amount of reported love for the pet, abused and non-abused teenagers significantly differed in their responses ($\chi^2(3) = 13.19, p < .005$). Both

abused adolescents and non-abused adolescents reported loving their pet very much (93.6% versus 65.5%). Abused youths reported loving their pet "somewhat" more frequently than non-abused youths; however, the difference in expected frequencies for the two group failed to reach significance ($z = 2.08, p > .05$; $z = 2.25, p > .05$). Only one teenager, a non-abused adolescent, reported not loving the pet.

The child abuse dyad (abused adolescent versus non-abused adolescent) also differed in their responses to how often they confide in their pet ($\chi^2(3) = 11.79, p < .01$). Twenty-one (38.9%) of the non-abused teenagers stated that they never confide in their pet, whereas, only 5 (10.6%) of the abused youths gave this response. Although the relative frequencies for the abused and non-abused teenagers who never confide in their pet were different, the differences were not large enough to reach significance ($z = 2.04, p > .05$; $z = 1.90, p > .05$).

The results from the analyses of the friendship scale are presented in Table 3. Regarding the amount of companionship the pet was considered to give the adolescents, a significantly different pattern of responses was found for the abused and non-abused youths ($\chi^2(2) = 14.48, p < .001$). Of the abused adolescents, 100.0% reported that their pet provides them with companionship. Three (5.5%) of the non-abused teens reported that no companionship was provided by their pet. No significant

differences in specific cell frequencies for the companionship question were found.

Table 3. Response Frequencies for the Friendship Scale of the Child-Pet Relationship for Abused and Non-Abused Adolescents.

	Abused	Non-Abused	
<hr/>			
A. How much companionship does your pet give you?			
None	0	3	
A little	6	23	
A lot	41	29	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	55	14.48**
 B. Do you talk to your pet?			
Almost never	0	3	
Not very often	5	7	
Sometimes	11	20	
Almost always	31	25	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	55	6.00
 C. Do you think of your pet as your best friend?			
No	10	40	
Yes	36	14	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	46	54	27.21**
<hr/>			

*p < .05 **p < .01

A significantly different pattern of responses was not found between abused and non-abused teens with regard to amount teens talk with their pet ($\chi^2(3) = 6.00, p > .05$). The majority of both abused (100.0%) and non-abused youths (94.5%) reported talking to their pet.

The final friendship question, "Do you think of your

pet as your best friend?", produced a very different pattern of responses for the child abuse dyad ($\chi^2(2) = 27.21, p < .001$). Significant differences were found for both the abused and non-abused teenagers in the "yes" and "no" response frequencies: abused/yes ($z = 2.71, p < .05$); abused/no ($z = 2.71, p < .05$); non-abused/yes ($z = 2.50, p < .05$); and non-abused/no ($z = 2.50, p < .05$). Over three-fourths (78.3%) of the abused adolescents considered their pet to be their best friend, whereas, almost the same percentage of non-abused teenagers (74.1%) reported "no" to the final question of the friendship scale.

To run the t-tests on each of the three scales of the child-pet relationship for abused and non-abused adolescents, response choices were weighted according to pre-determined salience levels of strength for each question (e.g., "always" = 4; "sometimes" = 3; "seldom" = 2; "never" = 1). Each subject's response to each question that comprised a scale were then combined to achieve an overall score for the strength of that scale. Each subject's total scale scores were then combined to produce an overall child-pet score. T-values were calculated on the resulting group means for the abused and non-abused adolescents for each scale, as well as for the overall child-pet relationship measure.

The caring scale produced a significant difference between abused and non-abused teens ($t(100) = 4.40, p < .05$).

Also, significant differences between abused and non-abused adolescents were found for the love scale ($t(100) = 3.86$, $p < .05$), and the friendship scale ($t(100) = 4.79$, $p < .05$).

When the scales for caring, love, and friendship were combined to produce an overall child-pet relationship measure, a significant difference was found between the abused and non-abused adolescents ($t(100) = 5.12$, $p < .001$). Results of the analyses for the three scales, as well as the overall measure, are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values for the Child-Pet Relationship Measure for Abused and Non-Abused Teens.

	Abused N = 47	Non-Abused N = 55	t
<hr/>			
A. Caring			
Mean	8.64	6.99	
Sd	2.05	1.76	4.40**
B. Love			
Mean	6.87	5.75	
Sd	1.24	1.64	3.86**
C. Friendship			
Mean	8.17	6.93	
Sd	1.20	1.39	4.79**
<hr/>			
D. Overall Measure			
Mean	23.68	19.65	
Sd	3.93	3.98	5.12**
<hr/>			

*p < .05 **p < .01

Child/pet abuse triad. A significantly different pattern of responses was obtained for the child/pet abuse combination on the first caring scale question ($\chi^2(6) = 23.25, p < .001$). Although not one abused owner of a non-abused pet reported their mother as the caregiver of the pet, the difference did not reach significance ($z = 2.07, p > .05$).

Table 5. Response Frequencies for the Caring Scale of the Child-Pet Relationship for the Child/Pet Abuse Triad.

	No Abuse	Child Only	Both	
<hr/>				
A. Who usually is the main caregiver of this pet?				
Self	20	22	14	
Mother	15	0	1	
Father	7	1	0	
Other	7	2	4	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	49	25	19	23.25**
 B. How much time (on an average daily basis) to you spend doing something with or for your pet?				
< 1 hour	18	3	3	
1-2 hours	24	8	5	
> 2 hours	7	14	11	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	49	25	19	19.34**
 C. Do you consider this one special pet to be your pet or does it belong to the entire family?				
Self	17	22	11	
Family	31	3	4	
Other	1	0	4	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	49	25	19	32.81**

*p < .05 **p < .01

Time spent with the pet also produced a significantly different pattern of responses for the child/pet abuse triad ($\chi^2(4) = 19.34, p < .001$). The percentage of adolescents reporting that they spent more than two hours each day doing something with their pet was as follows: abused owner of abused pet (57.9%); abused owner of non-abused pet (56%); and non-abused owner of non-abused pet (14.3%). The significant pattern of responses was not carried by any particular response category; however, a trend was noticed in that non-abused adolescents tend to spend a maximum of one to two hours with their pet, as the non-abused group's obtained frequency for the more than two hours response was almost significantly less than expected ($z = 2.40, p > .05$).

Results presented in Table 5 show that the child/pet abuse combination also produced a significantly different pattern of responses in the ownership question ($\chi^2(4) = 32.81, p < .001$). A greater percentage of abused teenage owners of non-abused pets considered themselves be the owner of the pet than either of the other two groups of the triad, though the obtained frequency, for abused teens who reported themselves as the owner of the non-abused pet, was not significantly greater than expected ($z = 2.33, p > .05$). A trend for the non-abused group to consider their entire family to own the pet was found ($z = 2.45, p > .05$). Of significance was that abused owners of abused pets reported another family member to be the pet's owner much more

frequently than expected ($z = 2.95$, $p < .05$).

The child/pet abuse triad also produced a pattern of responses that significantly differed on the love scale question regarding the amount of love for the pet ($\chi^2(4) = 13.01$, $p < .05$). Table 6 reveals that 100.0% of the abused owners of non-abused pets reported that they loved their pet

Table 6. Response Frequencies for the Love Scale of the Child-Pet Relationship for the Child/Pet Abuse Triad.

	No Abuse	Child Only	Both	
<hr/>				
A. Do you love your pet?				
Not at all	0	0	0	
A bit	4	0	2	
Somewhat	12	0	1	
Very much	33	25	16	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	49	25	19	13.01*
 B. Do you confide in your pet?				
Never	18	1	4	
Not often	9	5	3	
Sometimes	12	10	5	
Always	9	9	7	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	48	25	19	11.60
<hr/>				

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

very much. As predicted, subjects in the triad reported loving their pet at least a little. None of the triad's frequencies of responses differed from expected ($z < 2.80$, $p > .05$). Furthermore, no significant difference in the pattern of results was found for the child/pet abuse

combination when asked how much the respondents confided in their pet ($\chi^2(6) = 11.60, p > .05$).

Results of the analyses performed on the friendship scale of the child-pet bond for the child/pet abuse combination are presented in Table 7. A significantly different pattern of results was found regarding amount of companionship the pet provides ($\chi^2(4) = 13.25, p < .05$).

Table 7. Response Frequencies for the Friendship Scale of the Child-Pet Relationship for the Child/Pet Abuse Triad.

	No Abuse	Child Only	Both	
<hr/>				
A. How much companionship does your pet give you?				
None	2	0	0	
A little	21	2	4	
A lot	26	23	15	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	49	25	19	13.25**
 B. Do you talk to your pet?				
Never	3	0	0	
Not often	5	2	3	
Sometimes	19	6	4	
Always	22	17	12	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	49	25	19	7.19
 C. Do you think of your pet as your best friend?				
No	36	4	6	
Yes	12	21	12	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	48	25	18	25.55**

*p < .05 **p < .01

One hundred percent of both groups of abused owners reported that their pet provided them with companionship. The significant pattern of responses for the companionship question was not carried by any particular response category.

Responses obtained regarding the amount of communication the teen has with pet did not result in a significantly different response grouping for the child abuse/pet abuse variations ($\chi^2(6) = 7.19, p > .05$); however, responses by the triad for considering their pet to be their best friend did produce significantly different patterns of responses ($\chi^2(2) = 25.55, p < .001$). The response frequencies, presented in Table 7, indicate that 75.0% of non-abused owners of non-abused pets do not think of their pet as their best friend, whereas, 84.0% of abused owners of non-abused pets, and 66.7% of the abused child and pet group do consider their pet as their best friend. Although individual cells did not differ in obtained and expected frequencies, two trends did appear in the responses on the best friend question.

The first trend was that non-abused owners of non-abused pets do not consider their pet as their best friend ($z = 2.38, p > .05$). The second trend was that abused owners of non-abused pets do consider their pet as their best friend ($z = 2.46, p > .05$).

As reported in Table 8, an ANOVA analysis, run on the

caring scale, produced a significant variation among the three groups of the triad ($F(2,90) = 9.23, p < .05$). Significant variations among the child/pet abuse combinations were also found for the love scale ($F(2,90) = 7.14, p < .05$), and the friendship scale ($F(2,90) = 11.06, p < .05$).

Table 8. Means, Standard Deviations, and F Ratios for the Child-Pet Relationship Measure for the Child/Pet Abuse Triad.

	No Abuse N = 49	Child Only N = 25	Both N = 19	F
<hr/>				
A. Caring				
Mean	7.08	9.00	8.11	
Sd	1.64	1.53	2.60	9.23**
B. Love				
Mean	5.80	7.08	6.53	
Sd	1.54	0.86	1.65	7.14**
C. Friendship				
Mean	6.94	8.36	7.84	
Sd	1.33	1.00	1.46	11.06**
<hr/>				
D. Overall Measure				
Mean	19.82	24.44	22.47	
Sd	3.78	2.68	5.15	12.55**

*p < .05 **p < .01

Post-hoc analyses using the Tukey-HSD procedure, with a .05 level of significance, revealed that non-abused owners

of non-abused pets are significantly less caring, less loving, and report a weaker friendship with their pet than abused owners of non-abused pets. The non-abused owners of non-abused pets differed from abused owners of abused pets only on the friendship scale. The non-abused group was found to have a significantly weaker level of reported friendship with their pet than the abused child and pet group. Abused owners of non-abused pets reported higher levels of caring, love, and friendship with their pet than did abused owners of abused pets; however, the abused owner groups did not significantly differ from each other, in terms of strength, on any of the three child-pet relationship scales.

When the scales for caring, love, and friendship were combined to produce an overall child-pet relationship measure, a significant variation was found among the three child/pet abuse groups ($F(2,90) = 12.55, p < .001$). Post-hoc analyses conducted on the overall human-animal relationship measure revealed that non-abused owners of non-abused pets have a significantly weaker child-pet relationship than either of the abused owner groups. In addition, no significant difference in the strength of the overall child-pet relationship was found between abused owners of non-abused pets and abused owners of abused pets.

Human-Human Relationship

Child abuse dyad. The difference between abused and

non-abused adolescent pet owners in terms of the human-human relationship was analyzed. Results of the analyses performed on the three questions that constituted the human-human relationship are presented in Table 9. The child abuse dyad significantly differed in their response patterns to the question regarding preference for spending time with people over pet ($\chi^2(3) = 15.28, p < .005$).

Table 9. Response Frequencies on the Human-Human Relationship for Abused and Non-Abused Adolescents.

	Abused	Non-Abused	
<hr/>			
A. Would you rather spend time talking and/or playing with your pet than with other people?			
Almost never	3	13	
Seldom	7	19	
Sometimes	25	18	
Almost always	12	5	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	55	15.28**
 B. Do you spend more time talking and/or playing with your pet than with your friends?			
No	14	48	
Yes	33	6	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	54	37.03**
 C. Do you spend more time talking and/or playing with your pet than with your family?			
No	6	46	
Yes	41	8	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	47	54	52.76**

*p < .05 **p < .01

Significantly different patterns of responses were also found for the questions regarding actual time spent with friends versus pet ($\chi^2(1) = 37.03, p < .001$), and with actual time spent with family versus pet ($\chi^2(1) = 37.03, p < .001$). Post-hoc analyses revealed that abused adolescents reported spending more time with their pet than with either their friends ($z = 3.49, p < .05$), or their families ($z = 3.81, p < .05$), significantly more frequently than expected; whereas non-abused teenagers reported spending more time with their friends ($z = 2.58, p < .05$), and families ($z = 3.45, p < .05$), more frequently than expected. Abused adolescents also reported spending significantly less time than expected with their friends ($z = 2.76, p < .05$), or their families ($z = 3.70, p < .05$), than with their pet. On the other hand, non-abused teenagers reported spending significantly less time than expected with their pet than with their friends ($z = 3.25, p < .05$), or families ($z = 3.56, p < .05$).

A single scale consisting of three questions constituted the human-human relationship measure. To run the t-test on the abused and non-abused adolescents, response choices were weighted according to pre-determined salience levels of strength for each question (e.g., "always" = 4; "sometimes" = 3; "seldom" = 2; "never" = 1). For the human-human relationship questions, salience levels were keyed in the opposite direction such that a high score

on any question, or on the overall measure, indicated a weak human-human bond. A subject's response to each of the three questions pertaining to preference of humans over pet, were combined to produce an overall human-human relationship score. T-values were then calculated on the resulting group means for the overall measure of the human-human relationship for the abused and non-abused adolescents.

Table 10 presents the results of the overall measure of the human-human relationship. A significant difference between the abused and non-abused adolescent groups was found ($t(100) = 8.17, p < .001$). Abused adolescents reported a weaker human-human relationship than non-abused adolescents.

Table 10. Means, Standard Deviations, and t-value for the Human-Human Relationship Measure for Abused and Non-Abused Adolescents.

	Abused N = 47	Non-Abused N = 55	t
A. Overall Measure			
Mean	6.55	4.49	
Sd	1.38	1.17	8.17**

*p < .05 **p < .01

Child/pet abuse triad. Results of the analyses conducted on the child/pet combination are shown in Table 11. The triad produced significantly different patterns regarding the responses given to preferring to spend time

with people versus pet ($\chi^2(6) = 17.89, p < .01$). Post-hoc examination of the cells revealed that no individual cell was responsible for the significant pattern of responses that was found for the question regarding preference for spending time with people versus pet.

Table 11. Response Frequencies on the Human-Human Relationship for the Child/Pet Abuse Triad.

	No Abuse	Child Only	Both	
<hr/>				
A. Would you rather spend time talking and/or playing with your pet than with other people?				
Never	12	0	3	
Seldom	16	3	4	
Sometimes	18	15	7	
Always	3	7	5	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	49	25	19	17.89**
 B. Do you spend more time talking and/or playing with your pet than with your friends?				
No	44	5	7	
Yes	4	20	12	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	48	25	19	41.25**
 C. Do you spend more time talking and/or playing with your pet than with your family?				
No	42	2	4	
Yes	6	23	15	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	48	25	19	50.93**

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

Responses to whether the adolescents actually spent more time with their pet than with their friends also

produced significantly different patterns for the triad (χ^2 (2) = 41.25, $p < .001$). The non-abused group reported spending significantly more time than expected with their friends ($z = 3.41$, $p < .05$) than with their pet, and significantly less time with their pet ($z = 2.73$, $p < .05$). Abused owners of non-abused pets reported spending significantly more time than expected with their pets ($z = 3.27$, $p < .05$), but not significantly less time than expected with their friends ($z = 2.18$, $p > .05$).

The non-abused group also spent significantly more time with their families ($z = 3.39$, $p < .05$) and significantly less time with their pet ($z = 3.54$, $p < .05$), than expected. The reverse was found for abused owners of non-abused pets ($z = 3.06$, $p < .05$; $z = 3.19$, $p < .05$). Response frequencies for abused owners of abused pets did not reach significance on any of the three human-human relationship questions.

Table 12. Means, Standard Deviations, and F Ratio for the Human-Human Relationship Measure for the Child/Pet Abuse Triad.

	No Abuse N = 49	Child Only N = 25	Both N = 19	F
A. Overall Measure				
Mean	4.41	6.88	6.16	
Sd	1.12	0.97	1.80	36.32**

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

As can be seen from Table 12, the overall measure of human-human relationship for the child/pet abuse triad produced a significant difference among the groups ($F(2,90) = 36.32, p < .001$). The Tukey post-hoc analyses revealed that non-abused owners of non-abused pets significantly differed from both groups of abused owners. The non-abused group was found to have a stronger human-human relationship than either of the abused adolescent groups. Abused owners of non-abused pets reported a weaker human-human relationship than abused owners of abused pets; however, the difference between the two abused groups, in terms of the overall strength of the human-human relationship, was not significant. A significant difference, between the abused groups, may have been found with a less conservative post-hoc test than the Tukey-HSD.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis, that abused adolescents would be more likely to own abused pets than would non-abused adolescents, was supported. Abused adolescents reported owning an abused pet significantly more frequently than reported by non-abused owners. The presence of pet abuse within child-abusing families supports the results found in previous research (DeViney et al., 1983; Hutton, 1983; Robin et al., 1984).

In addition, not a single non-abused teenager reported that their pet was abused by a family member. Of the non-abused youths that did report pet abuse, the abuse took place prior to the pet's placement in their home. Contrary to previous findings that abused adolescents tend to abuse their animals (Felthous, 1980; Hellman & Blackman, 1966; Kellert & Felthous, 1985; Schowalter, 1983; Tapia, 1971), the abused adolescents in the current research did not report abusing their pets. Only one abused male stated that he mistreated his pet.

The second hypothesis, that abused adolescents would report a stronger child-pet relationship than "normal"

teens was also supported. The results indicate that abused adolescents have a significantly stronger overall relationship with their pet than did non-abused teens. Abused teenagers were also found to have a significantly stronger child-pet bond than non-abused teenagers on each of the three child-pet relationship scales of caring, loving, and friendship.

The child-pet relationship scale of caring for the pet produced important differences between abused and non-abused pet owners. Trends in the data for reported caregiver of the pet were found to be consistent with previous findings. Abused adolescents tended to report themselves as the main caregiver of the pet (Robin et al., 1983), whereas, non-abused teenagers tended to report their mother as the main caregiver (Davis, 1987; Kidd & Kidd, 1990).

Results for the caring scale question of amount of time spent indicate that a "healthy" child-pet relationship may include spending no more than one to two hours per day doing something with or for a pet. A large percentage of abused adolescents, on the other hand, reported to spend more than two hours per day with their pet. As the response choices only differentiated time spent with the pet up to two hours, it is not known how many abused teenagers would have reported an even longer period of time.

For the final caring scale question, Robin and his colleagues' (1983) finding that abused adolescents more

frequently reported themselves as the owner of the pet was also found in the present study. Support for previous research that concluded that non-abused teenagers considered their entire family to own the pet was also found (Davis, 1987; Kidd & Kidd, 1990; Robin et al., 1983).

For the love scale questions of the child-pet relationship, both abused and non-abused adolescents reported to love their pet and that they confided in their pet. On the other hand, the friendship scale question of whether or not the adolescents considered their pet as their best friend resulted in dramatic differences between the two groups. Approximately 75% of the abused adolescents thought of their pet as their best friend; whereas, about 75% of the non-abused adolescents reported the opposite. The variable of best friend appears to be the strongest indicator of the strength of the child-pet relationship.

The findings of the present research also lend support to the third hypothesis, that abused adolescents would report a weaker human-human relationship than "normal" teens. In terms of the human-human relationship, abused adolescents preferred to spend more time with their pets than with people, and actually spent more time with their pets than with their friends or families. The preference for pet over humans by abused adolescents strongly indicates that abused teenagers have not transcended to human-human relationships.

The fourth hypothesis, that owners of abused pets would report a stronger child-pet relationship than owners of non-abused pets, was only partially supported. When the variable of pet abuse was added to the variable of child abuse, the following group differentiation resulted: non-abused owners of non-abused pets; abused owners of non-abused pets; and abused owners of abused pets. The resulting child/pet abuse triad produced significant differences on the child-pet relationship measure.

Abused adolescents with abused pets were found to have a stronger overall human-animal bond than non-abused adolescents with non-abused pets; however, the child-pet bond was not significantly stronger for the abused owners of abused pets group than for the abused owners of non-abused pets group on any of the child-pet relationship questions. In fact, the child/pet abuse group was found to have a weaker child-pet bond, though not significantly weaker, than the child abuse only group. A possible explanation could be that an abused pet may be more unstable in its behavior than a non-abused pet, and hence, may be more difficult to establish intimacy with.

A second explanation for the finding that abused owners of abused pets are not as attached to their pets may be that abused pets tend to run away, be disposed of, or die more readily than non-abused pets (DeViney et al., 1983; Robin et al., 1984). If the pet is not in the home for any extended

period of time, Katcher's (1983) element of constancy can not be established and maintained. The sense of stability that a pet normally gives an adolescent is gone.

A third possibility for the finding that abused owners of abused pets have a weaker child-pet bond than abused owners of non-abused pets may be that owners of abused pets may be victims of a different type of abuse than owners of non-abused pets. DeViney and her colleagues (1983) found that families with physically abused children were more likely to own abused pets than were families with sexual abused children.

The final hypothesis, that owners of abused pets would report a weaker human-human relationship than owners of non-abused pets, was partially supported. Abused owners of abused pets were found to have a weaker human-human bond than non-abused owners of non-abused pets; however, as was the case for the child-pet bond, the strength of the human-human relationship was not significantly different for the child/pet abused group than for the child abuse only group. Abused adolescents with abused pets did report a somewhat stronger human-human bond than abused owners of non-abused pets, though not significantly stronger.

Overall, the idea that the presence of pet abuse would push the child-pet bond and the human-human bond farther to the left of the continuum, particularly for abused adolescents, appears to be incorrect. Almost the opposite

occurred, in that abused adolescent owners of abused pets were found to have a weaker child-pet bond and a stronger human-human relationship than abused adolescent owners of non-abused pets.

In terms of the child-pet/human-human relationship continuum, the findings of this study indicate that abused adolescents are still on the child-pet side of the continuum. Non-abused adolescents, conversely, have moved in the developmentally appropriate direction--to the human-human relationship side.

Although the differences in the child-pet and human-human relationships between the abused groups were not significant, owning an abused pet rather than a non-abused animal, would appear to be less developmentally detrimental for abused adolescents; however, these abused teenagers still have a stronger relationship with their abused pet and a weaker bond with people, than do non-abused adolescents. In other words, the abused owners of abused pets should not be considered "healthy" in their psychosocial development.

For abused adolescents, having a pet should produce a relationship that provides the psychosocial benefits of friendship, companionship, and love. However, adolescence is a stage when the foci of bonding should have transcended from the human-animal stage to human-human (Searles, 1960). The present findings tend to indicate that abused adolescent owners of abused pets may be psychosocially, and

developmentally, more age-appropriate in terms of the foci of object relations than are abused adolescent owners of non-abused pets; however, abused owners of abused pets have not moved along the continuum of relationships, in the "healthy" manner that non-abused adolescents have transcended.

Before one concludes that it is "healthier" for abused adolescents to own abused pets than non-abused pets, or to make any generalizations from the results of this study, a closer examination of limitations of the present research must be completed. Five limitations will be discussed.

Firstly, the questionnaire employed in this study has not been tested for validity or reliability. In addition, information on the proposed validity and reliability of the PAI, from which the CPRQ was developed, has not been published (Lago et al., 1988; Wilson et al., 1987). Despite the lack of validation, significant results were obtained in the direction predicted by previous research.

Secondly, the present research was conducted on a relatively small sample ($N = 102$). An increased number of subjects may have produced significant differences where only trends could be reported. Despite the small sample size, significant differences between abused and non-abused adolescents were found on each scale of both the child-pet and human-human relationship measures. In addition, the hypotheses were effectively tested regardless of the

relatively small number of subjects.

Thirdly, the type of child abuse may account for some of the differences found, or conversely, could have negated some of the differences between the groups. The small sample size removed the possibility of further group differentiation based on the type of child abuse; however, no significant differences between type of child abuse and ownership status of an abused/non-abused pet were found.

Fourthly, the abused subjects in this study may not be representative of an abused population, in that the adolescents suffered such severe mistreatment that Child Protection Services removed them from their homes. Generalizations to other research, that employed abused adolescents who were institutionalized and/or in treatment centers, may not be appropriate. Conversely, the abused sample in the present research may be more representative of an abused population in that these adolescents have not been out of the home for an extended period of time and are not in treatment centers, and as such, may have attitudes and feelings about their pets that have not been affected by the passage of time. In addition, self-reported victims of child abuse were intentionally excluded from the analyses, so that a more homogeneous group of abused adolescents would be maintained.

Finally, there are no current studies on the differences between abused/non-abused owners of abused/non-

abused pets with which to compare the present findings. In addition, research has not been conducted on developmental differences between preadolescents and adolescents for the child-pet bond, particularly in terms of Searles (1960) continuum of object relatedness. Therefore, one cannot determine if abused and non-abused adolescent owners of abused and non-abused pets differ from their preadolescent counterparts. Generalizations made from this study are, therefore, limited in nature. However, the findings presented here can be viewed as new information, even if limited to being descriptive in nature.

Despite the limitations of the current study, conclusions can be made based on the findings. The first conclusion is that a strong human-animal relationship, for abused adolescent pet owners, is made up of a combination of variables. Some probable indicators of a stronger than normal child-pet bond for adolescents would include reporting to be the main caregiver of the pet, considering self rather than family as the pet owner, and considering the pet as best friend.

The second conclusion can be made regarding the human-human relationship. The findings of this study indicate that a weak human-human relationship, for abused adolescent pet owners, may be assessed by finding a preference for spending time with the pet rather than with other people, and actually spending more time with the pet than with

friends and family.

The third and main conclusion that can be drawn from the current research is that when the pet, particularly an abused pet, becomes the strongest support for teenagers, this unhealthy bond may indicate an external social system that is deficient in providing the adolescent with developmental resources. The presence of age inappropriate human-animal and human-human bonds could be used by professionals as possible indicators of inadequate socialization.

Research indicates that socialization skills are weakened with the lack of peer relationships (Gottman, Gonso, & Rasmussen, 1975; Parker & Gottman, 1989; Rolf, Sells, & Golden, 1972). For example, the literature suggests that a history of child abuse and poor socialization skills has been found to be common denominators in persons who commit delinquent and criminal behaviors (Kellert & Felthous, 1985; Robin & ten Benschel, 1985; Robin et al., 1984; ten Benschel, Ward, Kruttschnitt, Quigley, & Anderson, 1984). In addition, a significant inverse relationship has been found between social competence and some forms of psychopathology (Bellack & Hersen, 1979; McFall, 1982).

Insight into mistreated adolescents' relationships with their pets, in terms of strength and level of adjustment, will benefit professionals such as psychologists,

psychiatrists, and social workers, in the detection of social and/or mental health problems of abused adolescents. The detection of delayed or inappropriate human-animal and human-human relationships may be used as an additional method for the early detection of inadequate socialization in abused teenagers. Early treatment for emotional difficulties and skills deficits may reduce the chance of later delinquency and/or criminal behavior.

APPENDIX I

CHILD-PET RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTIONS: You must be between 13 - 17 years old AND currently have a pet in order to complete this questionnaire. Please complete all questions honestly. Your answers are **completely confidential** (only the researcher will see this form). This questionnaire is strictly for research purposes. Participation is strictly voluntary. You have the right not to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

Do **NOT** write your name anywhere on this form or on the envelope. Mark your answers by placing a check mark () on the line next to your response. Some questions will require you to write in an answer. When you have finished completing this questionnaire, seal it in the envelope provided and give it back (in the sealed envelope) to the person who asked you to fill out this questionnaire.

1. What is your sex?

_____ 1) female

_____ 2) male

2. What is your race?

_____ 1) Black

_____ 2) White

_____ 3) Hispanic

_____ 4) Native American

_____ 5) Asian

_____ 6) Other, specify _____

3. How old are you? _____

4.a. Do you have any brothers and/or sisters living in your home?

_____ 1) No

_____ 2) Yes

4.b. IF **YES**, how many brothers and sisters and what are their ages?

_____ Brothers age _____

_____ Sisters age _____

5.a. Did you grow up with pets?

_____ 1) Yes _____ 2) No

5.b. If **YES**, what kinds of pets did you have? (Mark ALL that apply)

_____ 1) Birds

_____ 2) Cats

_____ 3) Dogs

_____ 4) Other, specify _____

6.a. How old were you when you first had pets in your home?

State your age at the time _____

6.b. What kind of pet was it? (If you had more than one pet, think of your **favorite pet** when you answer the questions).

_____ 1) Bird

_____ 2) Cat

_____ 3) Dog

_____ 4) Other _____

6.c. How attached were you to this pet?

_____ 1) Very attached

_____ 2) Attached

_____ 3) Not very attached

6.d. What happened to this pet?

_____ 1) Died (Reason: _____)

_____ 2) Gave it Away (Reason: _____)

_____ 3) Ran away (disappeared) _____)

_____ 4) I still have it

_____ 5) Other _____)

6.e. If the pet is no longer in the home, was this pet replaced? (Did you get another pet?)

_____ 1) No

_____ 2) Yes

6.f. If YES, how soon after this pet was gone from the home did you get another pet?

_____ 1) Within one week

_____ 2) Within one month

_____ 3) Within six months

_____ 4) Within one year

_____ 5) over one year later

7. Do you have any pets now?

_____ 1) No

_____ 2) Yes

8. How many animals do you have now?

1) I have _____ Birds

2) I have _____ Cats

3) I have _____ Dogs

4) I have _____

9.a. If you have MORE THAN ONE pet now, which one are you most attached to? If you cannot choose only one, please answer the rest of the questions based on the animal you have had the LONGEST.

_____ 1) My Bird named _____

_____ 2) My Cat named _____

_____ 3) My Dog named _____

_____ 4) My _____

9.b. If you currently have MORE THAN ONE pet, is this pet the one you have had the longest?

_____ 1) No

_____ 2) Yes

9.c. Do you consider this one special pet to be YOUR pet or does it belong to the entire family?

_____ 1) I consider myself to be the owner of this pet.

_____ 2) My whole family owns this pet.

_____ 3) Other (Please specify) _____

10. Why did you give it this name?

- ☐ 1) Do not know why I named it that.
- ☐ 2) First name that came to mind.
- ☐ 3) It looked like its name (e.g., Spot because it had spots).
- ☐ 4) I named it after a friend or relative.
- ☐ 5) To explain a characteristic (e.g., He was always getting into trouble, so I named him Trouble).
- ☐ 6) Was already named when I got it.
- ☐ 7) _____ named it.
- ☐ 8) Other _____

11. Have you ever had another pet with this name?

- ☐ 1) No
- ☐ 2) Yes

12. Is this currently owned pet male or female?

- ☐ 1) Male
- ☐ 2) Female
- ☐ 3) Don't know

13. How long have you had this pet?

- ☐ 1) Less than one year
- ☐ 2) 1-5 years
- ☐ 3) 6-10 years
- ☐ 4) More than 10 years

14. How old were you when you got this pet? _____

15. How old was this pet when you got it?

- ☐ 1) Less than 6 months old
- ☐ 2) Less than 1 year old
- ☐ 3) 1-2 years old
- ☐ 4) 3-5 years old
- ☐ 5) 6-10 years old
- ☐ 6) More than 10 years old

16. How did you get this pet?

- ☐ 1) Adopted from animal shelter/pound
- ☐ 2) Born to a pet I already owned
- ☐ 3) Bought the pet myself
- ☐ 4) Was a gift to me
- ☐ 5) Stray (just showed up)
- ☐ 6) Other _____

17. What is the **ONE** main reason for having your pet? (Mark only ONE).
- ☐ 1) I enjoy (love) animals
 - ☐ 2) I wanted a pet for protection
 - ☐ 3) I wanted some companionship
 - ☐ 4) I wanted something I could take care of
 - ☐ 5) I wanted something to keep me busy (occupy the time)
 - ☐ 6) I wanted one because other people had one
 - ☐ 7) It seemed like the thing to do at the time
 - ☐ 8) I was given this pet
 - ☐ 9) Other _____
-
18. How much time (on an average daily basis) do you spend doing something with or for your pet, such as grooming it, petting it, walking or feeding it? (Just being in the same room with the animal does not count).
- ☐ 1) Less than one hour
 - ☐ 2) 1-2 hours
 - ☐ 3) More than 2 hours
19. When are you **MOST** likely to touch (hold or pet) your animal? (Choose **ONLY ONE** answer.)
- ☐ 1) When I am sad
 - ☐ 2) When I am happy
 - ☐ 3) When I am angry
 - ☐ 4) When I am sick
 - ☐ 5) When I am bored
 - ☐ 6) Other _____
-
20. When you physically feel bad, does your pet
- ☐ 1) make you feel better?
 - ☐ 2) make no difference in how you feel?
 - ☐ 3) make you feel worse?
21. When you are feeling sad, does your pet
- ☐ 1) make you feel better?
 - ☐ 2) make no difference in how you feel?
 - ☐ 3) make you feel worse?

22. When I am angry or frustrated, I sometimes (Mark ALL that apply).

- ☐ 1) Yell at my pet
- ☐ 2) Yell at and hit my pet
- ☐ 3) Hit my pet
- ☐ 4) Stroke or hold my pet to calm me down
- ☐ 5) Purposely avoid my pet
- ☐ 6) Talk (not yell) to my pet
- ☐ 7) Other _____

23. Do you worry about your pet's future if something were to happen to you?

- ☐ 1) No ☐ 2) Yes

24. If you could find someone who would care for your pet in a loving manner, would you give up your pet?

- ☐ 1) No ☐ 2) Yes ☐ 3) Don't know.

25.a. Do you talk to your pet?

- ☐ 1) No, almost never
- ☐ 2) Yes, but not very often
- ☐ 3) Yes, sometimes
- ☐ 4) Yes, almost always

25.b. If YES, when do you talk to your pet?

- ☐ 1) When I am upset
- ☐ 2) When I am happy
- ☐ 3) When there is no one else to talk to
- ☐ 4) Other _____

25.c. If YES, does your pet respond when you talk to it?

- ☐ 1) No, almost never
- ☐ 2) Yes, but not very often
- ☐ 3) Yes, sometimes
- ☐ 4) Yes, almost always

26.a. Do you confide in your pet?

- ☐ 1) No, almost never
- ☐ 2) Yes, but not very often
- ☐ 3) Yes, sometimes
- ☐ 4) Yes, almost always

26.b. If YES, what is the ONE major reason why you confide in your pet? (Mark ONLY ONE).

- _____ 1) Does not judge me
- _____ 2) Does not talk back to me
- _____ 3) Loves me regardless of what I say
- _____ 4) No one else to talk to
- _____ 5) Other _____

27. How much companionship does your pet give you?

- _____ 1) A lot _____ 2) A little _____ 3) None

28. Would you rather spend time talking and/or playing with your pet than with other people?

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| _____ 1) Almost always. | _____ 3) Seldom. |
| _____ 2) Sometimes. | _____ 4) Almost never. |

29. Do you spend more time talking and/or playing with your pet than with your friends?

- _____ 1) Yes _____ 2) No

30. Do you spend more time talking and/or playing with your pet than with your family?

- _____ 1) Yes _____ 2) No

31. Do you find it difficult to make friends?

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| _____ 1) Almost always. | _____ 3) Seldom. |
| _____ 2) Sometimes. | _____ 4) Almost never. |

32. How many people do you consider to be your really close friends?

(Please give the NUMBER in each category)

- _____ 1) same age girls (13-17 yrs)
- _____ 2) younger girls (under 13 yrs)
- _____ 3) adult females (over 18 yrs)
- _____ 4) same age boys
- _____ 5) younger boys
- _____ 6) adult males

33. Do you think of your pet as your **BEST** friend?

_____ 1) No

_____ 2) Yes

34. Do you love your pet?

_____ 1) Yes, very much

2) Yes, somewhat

_____ 3) Yes, a little bit

4) No, not at all

35.a. Has anyone ever mistreated this pet or threatened to harm the pet?

_____ 1) No, no one has threatened nor mistreated my pet.

_____ 2) Yes, threatened to harm my pet.

3) Yes, has mistreated my pet.

4) Yes, threatened AND mistreated my pet.

35.b. If YES, who was it? (Mark ALL that apply).

1) Father

2) Mother

3) Older brother or sister

4) Younger brother or sister

5) Neighbour

6) My friend

7) Aunt or Uncle

8) Friend of parent

9) Myself

10) Other

36. Who usually is the main caregiver of this pet? (i.e. feeding, cleaning, exercising)

1) Friend or relative not living in household

2) Mother

3) Father

4) Older brother or sister

5) Younger brother or sister

6) Myself

7) Other

37. Which member of your household usually disciplines your pet?

1) Father

2) Mother

3) Older brother or sister

4) Younger brother or sister

5) Myself

6) Other

38.a. Has anyone ever abused your pet?

_____ 1) Yes

_____ 2) No

38.b. IF **YES**, which member of the household abused your pet?
(Mark ALL that apply).

_____ 1) Father

_____ 2) Mother

_____ 3) Older brother or sister

_____ 4) Younger brother or sister

_____ 5) Myself

_____ 6) Other _____

38.c. If **YES**, how long has your pet been abused?

(Please specify years/months) _____

38.d. If **YES**, how often was your pet abused?

_____ 1) More than once a day

_____ 2) Once a day

_____ 3) 3 or 4 times per week

_____ 4) Once or twice per week

_____ 5) Once or twice per month

_____ 6) Other (please specify) _____

38.e. If **YES**, when was the last time your pet was abused?

_____ 1) Less than 1 week ago.

_____ 2) Between 1 week - 1 month ago.

_____ 3) Between 1 - 6 months ago.

_____ 4) Between 6 months - 1 year ago.

_____ 5) Between 1 - 2 years ago.

_____ 6) Between 2 - 5 years ago.

_____ 7) More than 5 years ago.

38.f. IF **YES**, was this animal hurt bad enough that it
needed medical care? (Not necessarily that it went to
the vet.)

_____ 1) Yes, but only once

_____ 2) Yes, 2 or 3 times

_____ 3) Yes, 4 or 5 times

_____ 4) Yes, more than 5 times

_____ 5) No, it was never hurt that bad.

39.a. Have you ever been abused?

- ☐ 1) Yes, both physically AND sexually abused
- ☐ 2) Yes, I've been physically abused
- ☐ 3) Yes, I've been sexually abused
- ☐ 4) No, I've never been physically or sexually abused
- ☐ 5) Other _____

39.b. IF YES, who abused you?

- ☐ 1) Father
- ☐ 2) Mother
- ☐ 3) Older brother or sister
- ☐ 4) Younger brother or sister
- ☐ 5) Other _____

39.c. If YES, how long have you been abused?

(Please specify years/months) _____

39.d. If YES, how often were you abused?

- ☐ 1) More than once a day
- ☐ 2) Once a day
- ☐ 3) 3 or 4 times per week
- ☐ 4) Once or twice per week
- ☐ 5) Once or twice per month
- ☐ 6) Other (please specify) _____

39.e. If YES, when was the last time you were abused?

- ☐ 1) Less than 1 week ago.
- ☐ 2) Between 1 week - 1 month ago.
- ☐ 3) Between 1 - 6 months ago.
- ☐ 4) Between 6 months - 1 year ago.
- ☐ 5) Between 1 - 2 years ago.
- ☐ 6) Between 2 - 5 years ago.
- ☐ 7) More than 5 years ago.

***** I M P O R T A N T *****

Answer questions #40 a., b., c., and d., ONLY IF BOTH YOU AND YOUR PET have been abused.

40.a. Was your pet abused shortly before you are abused?

- ☐ 1) Yes, usually within 15 minutes
- ☐ 2) Yes, usually within 1 hour
- ☐ 3) Yes, but usually more than 1 hour later
- ☐ 4) No
- ☐ 5) Other, please specify _____

40.b. Did this person abuse your pet because he or she was angry with you?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Almost always | <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Seldom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Sometimes | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Almost never |

40.c. Have you ever hurt your pet after you have been abused?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Yes, every time | <input type="checkbox"/> 3) No, but I wanted to |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Yes, sometimes | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) No |

40.d. Have you ever been abused because you tried to keep your pet from being abused (e.g. You stepped between the person and the pet OR you started fighting with the person while he or she was hurting your pet)?

- ☐ 1) Yes, but only once
- ☐ 2) Yes, 2 or 3 times
- ☐ 3) Yes, more than 3 times
- ☐ 4) No

****THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT****
YOUR COOPERATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

APPENDIX II

INFORMATION/INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

Information Sheet for Research Participants

The current research project you have volunteered to participate in will require you to recruit a subject to complete a questionnaire. You are to find subject(s) that are: 1) between the age of 13 and 17 years old (inclusive); **AND** 2) currently have a pet animal in their home.

You are to instruct the subject to fill out the Child-Pet Questionnaire, stressing that participation is completely voluntary on their part. Please read the following information to each subject:

You are being asked to fill out a questionnaire about you and your pet. Your participation is completely voluntary. No one will see your answers except the person who is doing this research. The person who is asking you to fill out this questionnaire will not see what you have written down. It will take you about 20 minutes to finish this questionnaire. When you are done, put the questionnaire in the envelope and seal it closed. You then give it back to the person who asked you to fill it out. Do you understand what you are

being asked to do? (Please re-read the instructions if subject answers "no".) Do you wish to fill out the questionnaire?

IMPORTANT: If the subject does not want to complete the questionnaire, do not force him/her. Please find another subject.

When the subject returns the questionnaire to you, please ensure that the subject seals the questionnaire in the envelope before you receive it. Return the sealed envelope to my mailbox located in the psychology department office (Wright Hall, Room 337).

Your professor will receive your extra credit participation form AFTER the questionnaire has been returned to my mailbox. Thank you for participating in this research project. If you have any questions, please contact Simone Williams at 895-3305 (Psychology Department, UNLV).

Parental Informed Consent for Research Participation

Your child(ren) is being asked to participate in a study measuring the relationship children have with their pets. Your child(ren) was selected on the basis that s/he is between the ages of 13 and 17 years old and currently has a pet. Your child(ren) will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about the following subjects:

- demographic information (e.g., gender, age, race);
- history/information about pet;
- relationship with pet;
- information about current friendships.

Completion time for the questionnaire is about 20 minutes. All data will be confidential, and will be collected anonymously. No one will know an individual adolescent's responses.

Participation will be completely voluntary on the part of the adolescent(s). They can choose not to participate, not to answer questions which they do not wish to answer, or to withdraw from this study at any time. If you agree that your child(ren) can participate, please complete the bottom portion of this form and return it to the recruiter.

If you have any questions relating to this research, please feel free to contact me:

Simone Williams, Research Investigator
Department of Psychology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Dept. phone # 895-3305

Respectfully,

Simone Williams

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

I have read the above consent form and understand the proposed study. I give consent for my child(ren) _____ to participate in this study. I understand that participation is voluntary, and that I or my child(ren) have the right to withdraw from this study at any time.

_____ (SIGNATURE)

_____ (DATE)

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