Generalization of Self-Control for Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom

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GENERALIZATION OF SELF-CONTROL
FOR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR
IN THE CLASSROOM

by

Darline Haley

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
Department of Psychology

Western Michigan University
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The objective of this study was to produce and evaluate a self-control procedure for disruptive behavior in the classroom which encouraged the generalization of behavior changes to other school settings. The self-control training components of self-recording, self-evaluation, criterion setting, and problem solving were all incorporated into the self-control procedures. This study also controlled for self-recording reactive effects prior to the initiation of the self-control training.

The findings of this study indicate that self-control training may be an effective method for decreasing disruptive behavior in the classroom.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Appreciation is extended to my graduate advisor, R. Wayne Fuqua, for his assistance and helpful guidance with both my thesis and graduate studies. A special thanks to the staff and students of Valley Center for their interest and support of this study. To my husband, Dave, and sons, Matthew and Joshua, a loving thanks for their encouragement and patience.

Darline Haley
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Disruptive classroom behavior has traditionally been dealt with through the programming of punishing consequences such as punishment, detention, suspension, or expulsion from school. These methods may have short term effect on disruptive behavior; however, they are ineffective in maintaining a decrease in disruptive behavior following the removal of the punishing consequences (Millman, Schefer, & Cohen, 1980). Two other commonly used methods for the control of disruptive behavior are contingency management and token systems. Many problems exist with these systems such as: (a) a decrease in disruptive behavior does not necessarily mean there will be decrease in disruptive behavior in other settings such as the student's home (Millman et al., 1980); (b) these methods necessitate the involvement of another person to dispense the contingencies such as a teacher, family member, or therapist (Kanfer & Goldstein, 1975); (c) immediate reinforcement of the target behavior in the classroom may not be realistic due to the delays between the behavior and the teacher presentation of the consequence (Salzberg, Hopkins, Wheeler, & Taylor, 1974); (d) in extreme cases, the methods might have to be quite extensive to provide for a systematic behavior change and therefore the student or client may require institutionalization (Kanfer & Goldstein, 1975); (e) many behaviors may not be brought under control because the behavior is not public and .

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therefore cannot be observed or verified by others; (f) the behavior may occur at such a low rate that it is impractical to have a therapist or school personnel available for modification of the behavior; (g) last and perhaps most importantly, these methods do not necessarily train the student to be responsible for behavior change and maintenance, nor for independence from an externally imposed contingency system (Kanfer & Goldstein, 1975).

Self-control has been defined as the "overt performance of one sort of behavior in order to change the probability of later engaging in another sort" (Rachlin, 1970, p. 206) and refers to "certain forms of environmental control of behavior" (Rachlin, 1970, p. 206). Self-control training procedures appear to offer a promising behavior change method as an alternative to externally imposed contingency systems. Self-control procedures successfully bypass many of the difficulties experienced with punishment procedures, contingency management, and token reinforcement systems. It has been demonstrated that an individual may successfully use various self-control techniques to increase the frequency of a selected behavior (Drabman, Spitalnik, & O'Leary, 1973). Among the advantages claimed for self-control procedures are (a) self-control maintains behavior change progress beyond the treatment period (Epstein & Goss, 1978); (b) self-control alters undesirable reactions to particular occasions, breaks sequences of responses, and alters the consequences of undesirable behavior (Kanfer & Goldstein, 1975); (c) self-control also arranges for the monitoring of behaviors which are at such a low rate that it would be costly and impractical for an outside person
to observe; (d) self-control allows for behavior change of private events; and last, (e) the responsibility for change is with the student rather than with the therapist or classroom teacher, allowing the student to act independently from externally imposed control systems. Advantages for self-control procedures in the classroom are: (a) easy administration in a classroom setting; (b) increases the emphasis on individualized curriculum, particularly with special education students; and (c) the classroom teacher is able to spend less time with one disruptive student and more time with other students (Lewis, 1976).

There are many components which could make up a self-control procedure. For the purposes of this study the four most relevant self-control components are: self-recording, self-evaluation (do-say paradigm), criterion setting (say-do paradigm), and problem solving.

Self-recording is the deliberate and accurate attending to one's behavior and the recording of that behavior (Kanfer & Goldstein, 1975). Typically, self-recording is used as part of a self-control training procedure. However, self-recording of the target behavior has been demonstrated to have a reactive effect by itself on the target behavior (Jeffrey, 1974; Kanfer & Goldstein, 1975; Kazdin, 1974). In order to separate the reactive effects of self-recording from behavior changes due to the other components of self-control training procedures, some have suggested that self-recording should be a separate procedure prior to the implementation of the self-control procedure (Jeffrey, 1974).
In a study by Piersel and Kratochwill (1979), two students with behavior problems (disruptive talk and interruptions) used self-observation as an intervention. The results demonstrated improved student behavior. Unfortunately, there are no follow-up data to this study. In another study (Maletsky, 1974), five students were able to decrease their rate of disruptive behavior by self-recording the occurrences of disruptive behavior with a wrist counter. Upon the removal of the wrist counters, however, an increase in disruptive behavior occurred. Self-recording was again instituted and again disruptive behavior decreased. Other studies dealing with self-recording as an intervention demonstrate that self-recording will either have a desirable effect or no effect on target behaviors (Rosenbaum & Drabman, 1979). Desirable effects of self-recording have also been demonstrated to be short term and require additional contingencies for the maintenance of any behavior change (Rosenbaum & Drabman, 1979).

Self-evaluation is a discrimination response matching what one has done previously with one's verbal report. Self-evaluation typically is one component of a self-control procedure (Bolstad & Johnson, 1972; Drabman et al., 1973). In one study by Epstein and Goss (1978) a fifth grade boy was taught to accurately self-evaluate his talk-out, in-seat, and on-task behaviors. A self-evaluation matching procedure was used in which the boy's accurate self-evaluation was rewarded by classroom bonus points. A 6-week follow-up to this self-control procedure demonstrated that behavior improvements were being maintained. However, a study (Santogrossi, O'Leary,
Romanczyk, & Kaufman, 1973) in which disruptive adolescents in a psychiatric hospital were responsible for rating their behavior according to the classroom behavior codes, did not produce any substantial behavior change.

Correspondence training is the use of verbal behavior to produce nonverbal behavior (Israel, 1978) or to decrease an undesirable behavior (Israel, 1978; Karlan & Rusch, 1982). There appears to be a positive functional relationship between increasing an individual’s ability to produce his own verbal cues (say, say "not") and his ability to increase (do) or decrease (not doing) the corresponding nonverbal behavior (Israel, 1978; Karlan & Rusch, 1982). Correspondence training plays an important role in self-control training by increasing the potential for generalization and maintenance of behavior change (Israel, 1978). In a study by Epstein, Repp, and Cullinan (1978), six "emotionally impaired" students, demonstrating a high rate of obscene language, were able to decrease their rate of obscenity to zero levels after a 40-day program. The program used an already present classroom token system for reinforcing the student’s establishment of a criterion level for obscenity (saying "not") and then keeping the level of obscenity below the predesignated criterion (not doing). This type of procedure rewarded the reduction in the rate of inappropriate behavior rather than using punishment for its occurrence.

Problem solving has been demonstrated to be an effective means for dealing with situational difficulties individuals face (Goldfried & Davison, 1976). Problem solving is a form of self-control
training helping individuals develop a larger set of effective alternative behaviors for dealing with problematic situations in which they were previously ineffective (Goldfried & Davison, 1976). The goal of problem solving is to train the client to think independently and demonstrate decision-making skills. Thoresen (1976) developed problem solving as part of an overall self-control training procedure. Problem solving was presented in a training manual which taught "predelinquent" children decision-making steps. The results indicate that the majority of the children were able to reproduce the decision-making steps, develop possible alternatives, and anticipate possible consequences for their behavior.

Even though self-control research demonstrates a promising behavior change method, there are some research weaknesses in the area of self-control which must be noted. Methodologically, self-control research has lacked follow-up studies to determine whether self-control gains are maintained beyond the treatment period (Jeffrey, 1974; Thoresen & Mahoney, 1974; Rosenbaum & Drabman, 1979). Many of the follow-ups presented are purely subjective reports given by classroom teachers or family members. The second area of weakness in self-control research is the tendency for many self-control procedures to combine self-recording within the self-control procedure without controlling for potential reactive effects of self-recording (Jeffrey, 1974). A third issue is the lack of research regarding the actual "programming" for generalization of self-control (Stokes & Baer, 1977). Self-control has been discussed as a method which increases the probability of generalization and
maintenance of behavior change; however, there is very little re-
search supporting this hypothesis (Thoresen & Mahoney, 1974). A
fourth weakness in past self-control research is the lack of repli-
cation studies (Jeffrey, 1974).

The present study attempted to take into consideration many of
these issues and produce and evaluate a self-control procedure for
disruptive behavior in the classroom which would encourage general-
ization of behavior changes to other settings. The self-control
training components of self-recording, self-evaluation, criterion
setting, and problem solving were all incorporated into this study.
This study also controlled for self-recording reactive effects prior
to the initiation of self-control training. This study was an
attempt to assess a self-control training procedure and the effects
of self-control training in one school setting on the generalization
of self-control in other school settings.
CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

Subject 1

Steve is an 11-year-old, black fifth grader who has been enrolled for 3 years at a school for the severely emotionally impaired. Steve functions at approximately the fourth grade level in reading, math, and spelling. Three years ago Steve was referred to the Valley Center School by his urban, mid-city public school district. Reasons for referral were Steve's high rate of "distruptive behavior," "short attention span," "difficulty relating to peers," "problems with self-control," "aggressive behavior," and "abusive language." Steve was involved with the complete self-control training and generalization programming for three settings.

Subject 2

Jim is a white, 16-year-old 10th grader at Valley Center. Jim was also in the Valley Center program 3 years prior to being referred by his classroom teacher as a possible subject for this study. Jim was referred to Valley Center by his rural, public school district. Reasons for Jim's referral to Valley Center were "physical aggression towards peers," "verbally abusive to both peers and adults," "over reactive to minor criticism," "lack of
participation in school," and "lack of completion of homework and assignments." Jim functions above his grade level academically (reading, 12.9; spelling, 11.0, English, 10.0, history and math, 10.5). Jim was involved with the complete self-control training procedure in one setting only due to Jim's shortened class day at Valley Center when he returned half-day to his public school on February 14.

Both Jim and Steve's disruptive behavior had previously been consequated by a loss of points which are exchangeable for edibles, toys, records, special privileges, etc. If disruptive behavior occurs at a high rate it may result in exclusionary time-out (quiet chair). Severely disruptive classroom behavior (physical aggression) is consequated by placement in seclusionary time-out (booth). These systems were ineffective in maintaining any long term decrease in Steve or Jim's disruptive behavior.

Both Steve and Jim have been certified "emotionally impaired" through the Kalamazoo Valley Intermediate School District according to Michigan Special Education criteria. (See Appendix A for the Michigan Special Education definition of emotionally impaired.)

Prior to the initiation of observation the primary researcher met with each student and his parents. The nature of the research, the confidentiality policy, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice of services from Valley Center were explained. Both student and parents signed the consent form. (See Appendix B for a copy of the informed consent form.)
Setting

Valley Center is an intermediate school district program for the severely emotionally impaired, special education student. Valley Center serves 30 students, ages 8 to 17, who have been certified emotionally impaired and require a highly structured educational environment. Students at Valley Center are referred to the program by their local school district. The Valley Center program offers a school program and a home-intervention program through Family and Children Services.

Each student at Valley Center is in a classroom with similar aged peers. Classroom enrollment does not exceed 10 students and each of the three classrooms are staffed by one full-time teacher and two full-time classroom aides.

Data were collected during recreation, free-time, and lunch activities. Recreation time occurred in a room which measured approximately 25 feet by 20 feet. Available activities in the room are a pool table, two foos ball tables, a pingpong table, one T.V. video game, and a table for small games. A stereo/radio system was also available to students in the room. Students usually grouped together at one activity area; however, were allowed access to any area in the room. Free time usually occurred in the classroom and involved group activities such as group games, group discussions, art activities, movies, or individual activities in different areas of the classroom. Students normally were grouped together, however,
for some activities sat individually at their desks. The lunch area was in the hallway and students sat together at bench style tables.

Apparatus and Materials

A wrist counter was used by Steve to record occurrences of verbal aggression. Reinforcers used in this study were (a) classroom points exchangeable for edibles, clothing, posters, art activities, special privileges, etc.; (b) tokens for video machines; and (c) edibles (candy bars, cookies).

A self-instructional training manual on self-control was developed by the primary researcher. (See Appendix C for a copy of the self-control training manual.) This manual incorporated training in feeling identification, problem solving, antecedent and consequence identification, and the development of alternative behaviors to verbal aggression.

Dependent Variables

The disruptive behavior of interest in this study was verbal aggression. Verbal aggression was defined as any audible vocalization directed to a listener (either student or staff) which:

1. Implied intent to harm the listener (student or staff). Example: "You better watch out." (Negative tone of voice.)

2. Expressed intent to harm the listener (student or staff). Example: "I'm going to kick your butt after school."

3. Vocalized an unkind statement to the listener (student or staff). Example: "What an ugly shirt you have on."
4. Gave a directive to the listener in a negative tone of voice. Example: "Get out of my way." (Negative tone of voice.) Example: "Don't sit by me." (Negative tone of voice.)

5. Called the listener a name. Example: "You dog." "Narc." "Spaz."

The speaker's verbalization had to be made directly to the listener and had to be audible for the listener. Example: John tells Tim, "You're a jerk." Non-Example: John tells Joe, "Tim's a jerk." (Tim is in another classroom and does not hear John's statement.)

The use of "man" alone is not considered name calling unless it is paired with one of the previous conditions for verbal aggression. The use of "man" appears to be a fairly common verbalization for the age group and population being studied. Non-Example: "Hey man what are you doing?" Example of verbal aggression: "Man you're stupid."

Observation Procedure

Verbal aggression was recorded as the number of occurrences during each 15-second interval within a 15-minute session for each setting. The 15-minute session/setting interval time varied somewhat according to the student's arrival time to the activity setting. Disciplinary action during the session also shortened the activity time. The onset of recording occurred as the student walked through the door of the activity area and the offset of recording occurred upon the student walking out the classroom door to go on to the next activity. If the student left the classroom or was in time-out, no data were taken for that period of time.
Data were recorded on sheets divided into rows of squares, each square representing a 15-second interval. (See Appendix D for an example of the data recording sheet.) The two students involved in the study were aware of being observed. The primary observer stood within hearing distance (15 feet) of the students. Observation occurred daily unless the student was absent from school or the activity setting.

Observation was made by the primary researcher for all settings/sessions. Two graduate psychology students acted as outside observers to determine interobserver agreement. The outside observers were unaware of the procedures being used or what phase the study was in. Outside observers were trained in the definition of verbal aggression. Their understanding and accuracy of identifying verbal aggression was tested by having them score a list of 14 examples and non-examples of verbal aggression. Both observers identified all examples and non-examples with 100% accuracy and were able to describe why the verbalization was an example or non-example of verbal aggression.

Interobserver agreement was measured by percentage agreement between occurrences and nonoccurrences. An agreement was considered to have occurred when both observers agreed on the same number of occurrences or the nonoccurrence of verbal aggression for each 15-second interval. The total number of intervals of agreement were divided by the total number of intervals observed and this figure was multiplied by 100 to obtain a percentage figure. Interobserver reliability agreement for this study ranged from 79% to 100%.
Reliability checks were made at least once during each phase of the study. During these checks both the primary and outside observer made simultaneous and independent observations. Both observers stood apart yet within equal distance to the student being observed.
CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Baseline

Occurrences of verbal aggression were recorded during each setting by the primary observer. Throughout baseline, the classroom contingencies for verbal aggression were in effect.

Self-Recording

Jim and Steve completed a five-page training package on the definition of verbal aggression. Each page of the package consisted of a short vignette describing a type of verbal aggression and three examples and non-examples of verbal aggression. Prior to the start of the training package both students determined the amount of points or tokens to be received for working on and completing the package. Bonus points were given for 90% accuracy on the identification of the examples and non-examples of verbal aggression. It was necessary to develop two different training packages due to the difference in age and reading levels of Jim and Steve. (See Appendix E for copies of the training packages.) Steve was given a multiple choice (Form A) package and Jim completed a short answer (Form B) package. Both students exceeded the criterion of 90% accuracy.
The modes of recording were quite different for each student. Steve willingly wore a wrist counter and was unconcerned about peer reaction to the wrist counter or self-recording. Jim, on the other hand, did not wish to have his peers aware of his self-recording. Jim agreed to make a visible signal (rubbing his shoulder) to the primary observer which indicated an occurrence of verbal aggression. The primary observer then recorded an occurrence of verbal aggression as self-recorded by Jim.

A 1-day self-recording phase was added to Steve's training due to the potential "novelty effects" of the wrist counter. During this phase Steve was instructed to record a behavior which was at a high rate and unrelated to verbal behavior (i.e., the number of times he hit the pool ball, bites of food taken at lunch).

Steve received 10 classroom points and Jim received a candy bar for accurately self-recording 70% of the occurrences of verbal aggression. Reinforcers were also received for the accurate verbal report of zero occurrences of verbal aggression during an activity. Reinforcement for self-recording was unrelated to the rate of verbal aggression. For Steve it was necessary to initiate a phase utilizing prompts to self-record.

Self-recording continued throughout the study with the exception of the follow-up phase.

Self-Control Training

A self-control training package was used which contained units on (a) feeling identification; (b) analysis of antecedents,
short-term consequences, and long-term consequences; (c) problem solving and decision making; and (d) developing alternatives to verbal aggression. Training consisted of reading and completion of the training package, behavior rehearsal during recreation time, role playing, and modeling behavior for the student. The primary researcher and student met for 15-30 minutes a day to complete the training package. Steve determined the amount of classroom points or type of edible to be received for his completion of a unit. Jim determined the number of video game tokens to be received for his completion of a unit. A brief quiz was given at the end of each unit and an 80% accuracy criterion was set. If the criterion was not met the student would review the unit and take a second test. Reinforcers were also distributed for the use during the recreation period of alternative behaviors to verbal aggression or for the occurrence of a positive verbalization (i.e., "nice shot").

Self-Control Analysis Sheet

During this phase, Steve continued to self-record occurrences of verbal aggression. Steve also met with the primary researcher approximately 10 minutes prior to free time to identify a recent occurrence of verbal aggression and work through the analysis sheet. (See Appendix F for a copy of the analysis sheet.) The analysis sheet prompted the use of problem-solving skills and the generation of alternative behaviors to verbal aggression. Points were received during this phase for accurate self-recording and completion of the analysis sheet.
Criterion Setting

During this phase Steve determined a criterion level for occurrences of verbal aggression during recreation and selected the type and amount of reinforcer (edible or classroom points) for not exceeding this criterion. This phase demonstrated the use of correspondence training for inhibiting behavior in the sense the student verbalized a criterion which he did not want to exceed (verbal aggression "will not" occur) and then carried through by "not doing" or exhibiting the undesirable behavior. If a decrease in the first intervention setting was demonstrated but generalization did not occur in the other settings, criterion setting was sequentially implemented in the other settings.

Follow-Up

Data were taken the week following termination of the criterion setting phase for Steve and the self-control phase for Jim. During follow-up the standard classroom procedures and contingencies were in effect for appropriate behavior and disruptive behavior. Simultaneously to follow-up the classroom teacher had initiated an additional aversive control procedure for Steve's noncompliance and "speaking unkindly." This procedure consisted of a teacher-determined criterion of four occurrences of disruptive behavior each hour and a half. If Steve exceeded the criterion level he received one swat with a paddle. This procedure occurred outside of the
classroom and out of view of Steve's classmates. Steve's parents had to consent to this special aversive control procedure.

Experimental Design

A multiple baseline design across three settings was used to assess the effects of self-recording, self-control training, and the generalization of self-control for Steve. Since only one experimental setting was available for Jim, a multiple baseline across subjects design was used to assess experimental control by inserting a temporary delay between the intervention for Steve and the later intervention for Jim.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Observation Periods and Data Collection

As may be seen data were not collected on consecutive days and very seldom collected for each setting on the same day. Students were often absent from a setting or school due to appointments with staff members, parent-teacher conferences, disciplinary action, make-up of homework or classroom assignments, school vacations, or student illness. Data were also not taken when an activity was incompatible with the occurrences of verbal aggression (i.e., movies in the classroom, the student playing alone in the recreation room). Out of 55 calendar school days, data were taken on 42 days for Steve and 43 days for Jim. Observation interval time also varied due to the student arriving late to an activity area, leaving an activity early, or being involved with disciplinary action (time-out).

Jim and Steve were both "mainstreamed" (integrating of "handicapped" students into regular education) back to their public schools on a part-time basis during this study. Jim lost two settings of interest (lunch and free time) due to "mainstreaming" and therefore was involved in only one setting (recreation) for self-control training. "Mainstreaming" did not change Steve's available settings but it should be noted as a major academic change which occurred during this study.
Interobserver agreement percentages or the dependent variables for this study ranged from 79% to 100% over 22 observations.

Baseline

A wide range of variability in data was demonstrated during baseline for both students. Steve demonstrated a range from 0 to 1.75 occurrences of verbal aggression per minute during eight observations of recreation, .20 to .76 occurrences of verbal aggression per minute for four observations of lunch, and .07 to .62 occurrences of verbal aggression per minute for nine free-time activities. Jim's baseline data during 23 recreation periods also demonstrate wide variability, with a range of 0 to 1.40 occurrences of verbal aggression per minute of observation.

Interventions

As may be seen in Figure 1, Jim's occurrences of verbal aggression demonstrate a downward trend from baseline levels ($\bar{X} = .46$), to the self-recording phase ($\bar{X} = .11$), and occurrences almost cease during the self-recording and self-control training phase ($\bar{X} = .06$). Steve's occurrences of verbal aggression also demonstrate a downward trend from baseline ($\bar{X} = .52$), self-recording phase ($\bar{X} = .40$), and self-control training ($\bar{X} = .18$). A major difference between the two subjects was the necessity to continue intervention with Steve due to his continuation of verbal aggression following the self-control training phase, whereas Jim's levels of verbal aggression reached zero levels and did not require further intervention following the
Figure 1. Occurrences of verbal aggression per minute of observation.

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self-control training phase.

Follow-up data demonstrated a slight increase in occurrences of verbal aggression for both Jim ($\bar{X} = .08$) and Steve ($\bar{X} = .11$, $\bar{X} = .09$, $\bar{X} = .00$) after termination of the self-control training phase for Jim and the criterion setting phase for Steve.

Accuracy of Self-Recording

Both students were able to accurately identify instances of verbal aggression and were given two retests during the study to determine their continued understanding of verbal aggression. Steve's scores were as follows: initial test prior to self-recording, 94%; first retest, 100%; and second retest, 100%. Jim's scores were: initial test prior to self-recording, 94%, first retest, 100%; and second retest, 100%. Jim self-recorded without prompting. Steve did not reliably implement self-recording. Steve required frequent prompting to self-record; and when prompts were removed, Steve would discontinue self-recording.

Self-Control Training Phase

Jim demonstrated a marked decrease in occurrences of verbal aggression during the self-control training. At the end of the self-control phase, verbal aggression had ceased during the recreation period; therefore, this was the last phase for Jim. Self-control training did not completely eliminate Steve's occurrences of verbal aggression; therefore, subsequent phases were implemented.
Self-Control Analysis Sheet Phase

This phase was implemented for Steve only due to his continued occurrences of verbal aggression. This phase lasted 5 days and resulted in a rapid increase in Steve's occurrences of verbal aggression which approximated the baseline levels of verbal aggression. Simultaneous to the Self-Control Analysis Sheet Phase, Steve's father became seriously ill and Steve was experiencing home problems. These variables may have had some influence on the results of this phase.

Criterion Setting and Contingency Management Phase

Steve always set a stringent criterion level of zero occurrences of verbal aggression for each setting. Steve determined a zero occurrence criterion level for eight settings of recreation, meeting criterion five times. Next, criterion setting was initiated in the lunch setting for 4 days. Again a zero occurrence of verbal aggression criterion level was set and criterion was met three times. Last, a zero occurrence criterion level was set for 2 days in free time and was met both days. As may be seen occurrences of verbal aggression decreased to zero levels during the criterion plus contingency management phase.

Generalization Across Settings

Results of this study indicate that a decrease in verbal aggression did not generalize across Steve's lunch and free-time settings.
when self-control training was implemented in the recreation setting. Generalization also did not occur across the lunch and free-time settings when criterion setting was implemented in the recreation period. Only when criterion setting was sequentially implemented in the lunch and free-time activities did a significant decrease in verbal aggression occur in these settings.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that it is possible to decrease disruptive behavior in the classroom through the use of self-recording, self-control training, criterion setting, and contingency management. Both students demonstrated a marked decrease in the occurrences of verbal aggression between baseline levels and the final phase of this study. For Steve self-recording and self-control training alone were not sufficient to decrease verbal aggression. The reasons for this lack of effect are not clear. One possible explanation for the lack of effect is that Steve did not reliably implement the self-recording procedure. For Steve self-recording became a very laborious event and resulted in a great deal of prompting to self-record and the frequent nonoccurrence of self-recording when prompts were not given. In future self-recording research, one issue that should be addressed is what role does prompting to self-record play in changing behavior.

Generalization of a decrease in verbal aggression across settings did not occur as a "passive event" in this study. It appears that generalization of self-control needs to be "programmed" (Stokes & Baer, 1977). During the self-recording and self-control training phase there was a decrease in the occurrences of verbal aggression across settings and across subjects. For Steve verbal aggression did not cease until criterion setting and contingency management
were applied sequentially to each setting. The follow-up data show a slight increase in the occurrences of verbal aggression; however, occurrences of verbal aggression were still significantly lower than during baseline. Two possible influences on the maintenance data must be taken into consideration. One, an aversive control procedure for Steve was put into effect simultaneously with follow-up, and two, follow-up was taken the week immediately following the study. Maintenance of behavior change would be more convincing if follow-up data demonstrated a continued decrease 1 or 2 months following the study; however, due to time constraints, a 2-month follow-up was not possible.

Observation of student behavior was obtrusive due to the necessity of the observer standing within hearing distance of the student. This brings up the issue of reactivity to observation which suggests that the observed change in the dependent variable might have been the result of the observation procedure. This interpretation seems unlikely since the observation procedure was held constant throughout this study. Baseline conditions were extended for a sufficient period of time prior to introducing the independent variable to detect any reactive effects. Both of these considerations suggest that the reactive effect of observation was held constant throughout the study and, therefore, not a source of extraneous influence (Johnston & Pennypacker, 1980).

Although based on replications across settings with but one of the two subjects of this experiment, criterion setting (correspondence training), paired with contingency management, appears to be
an effective procedure to decrease the occurrences of verbal aggression following a self-control training procedure. There is limited research in the area of correspondence training for inhibiting behavior and it appears from this study to offer an effective method in conjunction with self-control training for decreasing disruptive behavior. Further, research should be conducted to determine if correspondence training and contingency management alone are successful in decreasing disruptive behavior and maintaining the decrease without self-control training.

There are several methodological issues which must be taken into consideration when interpreting the results of this study and are important for inclusion in future research. First, this study should have incorporated several control settings for each student where the dependent variable was not influenced by self-recording, self-control, etc. From these control settings it might be possible to determine any change in the occurrences of verbal aggression outside of the settings of interest in the study. This would have been important because on several occasions the classroom teacher reported that Steve was demonstrating an increase in "speaking unkindly" and noncompliance in settings outside the study. The second methodological issue which this study should have addressed was the change in rate for other behaviors which may co-vary with verbal aggression (i.e., physical aggression, noncompliance, off-task, nonverbal teasing). Due to the low rate of other types of disruptive behavior at the onset of this study, data were not taken on other types of disruptive behavior. At times during this study Steve's
noncompliant behavior appeared to be increasing as his verbal aggression began decreasing. To validate this observation, measurement of a variety of other disruptive behaviors should occur throughout the study. Unfortunately, it is difficult to predict which behaviors might increase as the target behaviors decrease, but the analysis of co-variation between disruptive behaviors is an important topic for future research.

Overall, a combination of self-recording, self-control training, and criterion setting with contingency management appear to offer a promising intervention for decreasing disruptive behavior in the classroom. Some of the advantages of these procedures over more commonly used classroom control methods are (a) the self-control training procedure could easily be presented to a group of students; (b) the student would be actively involved with his or her own behavior change; (c) students may impose more stringent criteria for their own behavior than do classroom teachers; and (d) it is possible that less teacher time would be required for control of disruptive behavior.
Appendix A

Determination of Emotionally Impaired
(b) Scores approximately within the lowest 8 percentiles on a standardized test in reading and arithmetic.
(c) Lack of development primarily in the cognitive domain.
(d) Impairment of adaptive behavior.

(2) A determination of impairment shall be based upon a comprehensive evaluation by a multidisciplinary evaluation team which shall include a psychologist.

(3) A determination of impairment shall not be based solely on behaviors relating to environmental, cultural, or economic differences.

R 340.1706 Determination of emotionally Impaired.

Rule 6. (1) The emotionally impaired shall be determined through manifestation of behavioral problems primarily in the affective domain, over an extended period of time, which adversely affect the person's education to the extent that the person cannot profit from regular learning experiences without special education support. The problems result in behaviors manifested by one or more of the following characteristics:

(a) Inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships within the school environment.
(b) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
(c) General pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
(d) Tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

(2) The term "emotionally impaired" also includes persons who, in addition to the above characteristics, exhibit maladaptive behaviors related to schizophrenia, autism, or similar disorders. The term "emotionally impaired" does not include persons who are socially maladjusted unless it is determined that such persons are emotionally impaired.

(3) The emotionally impaired shall not include persons whose behaviors are primarily the result of intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

(4) A determination of impairment shall be based on data provided by a multidisciplinary team which shall include a comprehensive evaluation by both of the following:

(a) A psychologist or psychiatrist.
(b) A school social worker.

(5) A determination of impairment shall not be based solely on behaviors relating to environmental, cultural, or economic differences.

R 340.1707 Determination of hearing impaired.

Rule 7. (1) The hearing impaired shall be determined through manifestation of a hearing impairment which adversely affects educational performance.

(2) A determination of impairment shall be based upon a comprehensive evaluation by a multidisciplinary evaluation team which shall include an otolaryngologist and an audiologist.

(3) A determination of impairment shall not be based solely on behaviors relating to environmental, cultural, or economic differences.

R 340.1708 Determination of visually impaired.

Rule 8. (1) The visually impaired shall be determined through the manifestation of both of the following:

(a) A visual impairment that interferes with development, or adversely affects educational performance.

(b) One or both of the following:

(i) A central visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after routine refractive correction.
Appendix B

Consent Form
Consent for Student Participation in a Thesis Research Project

A student has been selected to be involved with a self-control training procedure for disruptive classroom behavior. This study will be conducted by Janelle Haley, a graduate student in Clinical Psychology.

The goal of this study is to teach the student techniques of self-control for disruptive classroom behavior. Each student will be taught to accurately identify his/her own disruptive behaviors (talk-outs, noncompliance, verbal aggression, and profanity). The student will then record his/her disruptive behavior. Following the student's self-recording, the student will complete a self-instructional training manual on self-control techniques such as problem-solving, analyzing behavioral antecedents, consequences to their behavior, activities during which his/her behavior occurs at a higher rate, and alternative methods for handling disruptive behavior. After completing the training manual, the student will then apply these techniques to actual classroom situations.

One risk that this research may present is the student's failure to achieve self-control skills and thereby he/she will lose access to potential classroom bonus points and naturally occurring social consequences such as teacher praise, positive peer interaction, and other adult and staff approval.

The student will have the opportunity to remediate any unsuccessful attempts at understanding self-control procedures and techniques during self-control training. During the actual use of self-control procedures if the student is unsuccessful in controlling an incident of disruptive behavior then the student will have the opportunity to analyze the incident to determine what he would do differently the next time and will receive points for his analysis.

If this research is successful, the student will learn to control his/her own disruptive behavior. By decreasing his/her involvement in disruptive behavior the student will be better able and have more time to spend involved with academic activities.

The student will only be identified by initials on all data sheets and any information gathering systems. Information regarding the student's participation in this self-control procedure will be kept in his/her Valley Center school file. The director of the Valley Center program, the classroom teacher, and the student's home-school interventionist will be the only persons having access to this file.

We understand that we may withdraw from this research study at anytime without prejudice of services from Valley Center staff and program.

Student: [Signature] Date: [Date]
Parent: [Signature] Date: [Date]
Witness: [Signature] Date: [Date]
Appendix C

Self-Control Training Manual
An antecedent to speaking unkindly is something which occurs BEFORE.

Example - Before saying "Get out of my way" (mean voice), another student has to be standing in your way.

Example - Many times BEFORE getting mad, people will change the expression on their face to look mad.

A consequence to speaking unkindly is something which occurs AFTER.

Example - AFTER telling another student that you are going to "kick his butt", you may lose points in the classroom.

AFTER telling another student that you are going to "kick his butt", the other student probably will get mad at you.

There are long term consequences and immediate consequences to speaking unkindly to other people.

Long term - other people may begin to not want to be with you. After awhile you will have trouble keeping friends.

Immediate - you might lose classroom points.

Cover the top part of this page with a piece of paper and answer the following questions. (circle the right answer)

Antecedents to speaking unkindly occur

1) BEFORE
2) AFTER
3) DURING

Consequences to speaking unkindly occur

1) BEFORE
2) AFTER
3) DURING

What are the two types of consequences for speaking unkindly to other people?

1) IMMEDIATE
2) THERE ARE NO CONSEQUENCES
3) LONG TERM
4) THERE ARE GOOD CONSEQUENCES
Today I spoke unkindly to ____________________.
What I said was ________________________________________.
What did the other student say back to you? ____________________
How were you feeling just before you spoke unkindly to _______?
__________________________________________________________
What were you doing just before you spoke unkindly to _______?
__________________________________________________________
What kind of expression did you have on your face?______________
If you had been ____________ how would you have felt if someone had said that to you? _________________________________
What kind of day have you been having?_______________________
If you were mad today, what were you mad about?_______________
Did you speak unkindly to other students today?_______________
List all the things that were bothering you today before you spoke unkindly to ____________.
1) ____________________________________________________________________
2) ____________________________________________________________________
3) ____________________________________________________________________
4) ____________________________________________________________________
(use another page if there are more)
Think of the last time you got mad and were speaking unkindly. List everything you can think of that happened before you got mad and could have been a signal that you were mad or more likely to have a bad day.

Example - making a mean face
Example - having an argument with your mom before coming to school

(1 point for every correct idea)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
WHY is this a problem?

If this happened ten years from now what would the consequences be? What would happen? How would these people feel?

If this happened today what would the consequences be? What would happen? How would these people feel?

At Work (to the boss)

Friend

Wife/Husband

Child

At School (to your teacher)

Friend

Mom/Dad

Brother/Sister
I am more likely to get mad and speak unkindly (which classes, activities, and time) -

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<th>SCHOOL</th>
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Nellie

If I were Nellie I would feel ________

(Circle all the right answers)

1) sad
2) happy
3) mad
4) like Joe didn't like me very much
5) like I was ugly
6) like Joe really liked me and was kidding me

Joe

"You dog!"

Denny

"I'm going to kick your butt!"

If I were Denny I would feel ________

(Circle all the right answers)

1) Denny was being nice to me
2) scared
3) mad
4) happy
5) sad

Dave

Maxy

If I were Lisa I would feel ________

(Circle all the right answers)

1) like Mary was being mean to me
2) bad that Mary didn't want me to sit with her and the other students
3) glad
4) left out
5) happy

Mary

"Don't sit by me!" (mean voice)
"I hate you!"

Joe

Joe is feeling -

Jeff

Jeff is feeling -

(List as many feelings as you can think of)
OTHER WAYS OF HANDLING GETTING MAD
(alternative behaviors)

1. Think of a student in your class who gets mad but knows how to control it. What does that person do that you could do to control your anger?
   1)_____________________________________________________________
   2)_____________________________________________________________
   3)_____________________________________________________________

2. When you feel yourself getting mad tell yourself "I'm getting mad". What could you do then?
   1)_________________________________________________________________
   2)_________________________________________________________________
   3)_________________________________________________________________

3. Identify things or people who make you mad. Why do they make you mad?
   1)________________________________________ Why?
   2)________________________________________ Why?
   3)________________________________________ Why?
   4)________________________________________ Why?
   5)________________________________________ Why?
   6)________________________________________ Why?

Knowing that these people or situations make you mad is one way to handle your anger and speaking unkindly. When you are with these people or in the above situations, you can be more careful not to become angry. You should know that you are more likely to say something unkind.

4. If you feel yourself becoming mad or feel like you are going to speak unkindly, ask the teacher if you can take a break or go to another area.
What are some other ways to handle getting mad and speaking unkindly?

5. ____________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

6. ____________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

7. ____________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

8. ____________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________
Did you speak unkindly to another student yesterday? Describe what happened and what was said.

Explain how you could have handled this situation differently.
Today I got mad at ____________________ and said _________________________________________.

List three other ways you could have handled this situation.

1) ________________________________________________________________

2) ________________________________________________________________

3) ________________________________________________________________
Today I will attempt to do three "good deeds" for (1)__________, (2)_________________, and (3)_________________.
I will do these during ____________________________________________

Today I will attempt to pay a compliment to (1)__________, (2)_________________, and (3)_________________.
I will do these during ____________________________________________

OWN ASSIGNMENT

__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
What could John do to avoid a fight with Joe?

**Decision #3**

John could say (acceptable)

John could say (unacceptable)

Consequences

Consequences

Situation:

John and Joe are playing pool. Joe accidentally hits John's cue stick with his cue stick. What could John do to avoid a fight with Joe?
Things I Do Really Well Are -


Things That Are Important to Me Are -


Appendix D

Recording Sheet
Appendix E

Training Package for Self-Recording
VERBAL AGGRESSION IS _______________

1) MAKING A THREAT TO ANOTHER STUDENT OR STAFF

"I'm going to kick your butt!"

Denny and Dave begin arguing during rec. Dave tells Denny, "Get out of my way or I'll put you out of my way."

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1  Dave is talking to a person.
2  Dave doesn't make a threat.
3  Dave was being nice to Denny.

The teacher asks Jim to get his math out and get to work. Jim slams his desk top loudly and tells the teacher he isn't going to do his math.

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1  Jim made a threat to his teacher.
2  Jim doesn't want to do his math.
3  Jim was talking to his desk.

Mary keeps turning Denny's tape deck on and off. Denny states, "You better keep your hands off my stuff or you'll be sorry!"

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1  Denny made a threat to Mary.
2  Denny is talking to a book.
3  Denny is glad Mary is turning the tape deck on and off.
While playing pool, one student says to the other, "I don't want to play pool with you. You couldn't hit the ball if you tried!".

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1. The student thinks his pool partner is a really good pool player.
2. One student is insulting the other student's pool playing.
3. The students are playing foosball.

While sitting at his desk, Kevin mutters to himself "I hate this school".

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1. Kevin is talking to himself.
2. Kevin is talking to another student.
3. Kevin is calling another student a name.

During freetime Joe says to Terry, "What an ugly shirt. Where'd you get it?".

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1. Joe likes Terry's shirt.
2. Joe is speaking unkindly to Terry by telling him that he has an ugly shirt.
3. Joe is being nice to Terry.
Jenny and Terry are working together on a geography assignment. Jenny says to Terry, "this assignment is dumb".

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1. Jenny likes the geography assignment.
2. Jenny is calling Terry a name.
3. Jenny doesn't like the geography assignment.

Joe tells the teacher that Mike is not doing his work. Mike yells across the room to Joe, "You narc!".

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1. Mike called Joe a name.
2. Joe is speaking unkindly to the teacher.
3. Mike thinks Joe is a nice guy.

Ann and Mary are arguing about the card game they are playing. Mary yells "I quit!".

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1. Mary doesn't want to play cards because she is mad.
2. Ann is calling Mary a name.
3. Mary called Ann a name.
4) SOMETHING WHICH IS SAID AND MAKES NOISE. GESTURES AND HAND MOTIONS ARE NOT VERBAL AGGRESSION.

"XXXXXXXX!
 XOXOXOXO! OOOXX!

 XXXXXXXOX!
 OOOXXOOXXOX!

The teacher is standing at the blackboard with her back to the class. Paul shakes his fist at Tom.

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1 Paul talked to Tom.
2 Paul is mad at Tom.
3 Paul called Tom a name.

Tom yells at Paul, "Put your fist down or I'll come over and put it down for you."

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1 Tom is threatening Paul.
2 Tom likes Paul.
3 Tom wants Paul to hit him.

Paul yells back to Tom, "You jerk!"

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1 Paul thinks Tom is a nice guy.
2 Paul called Tom a name.
3 Paul gave Tom a compliment.
(5) TELLING ANOTHER STUDENT TO DO SOMETHING IN A MEAN VOICE.

"Don't sit by me!" (mean voice)

Mary is having trouble with her art project. Lisa says, "Let me help you."

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1 Lisa is being mean to Mary.
2 Lisa is being nice and wants to help Mary.
3 Lisa called Mary a name.

Mike and Joe are playing pool. Mike walks to the other side of the pool table where Joe is standing. Mike says to Joe, in a mean voice, "Get out of my way."

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1 Mike is telling Joe to do something in a mean voice.
2 Joe called Mike a name.
3 Mike is being nice to Joe.

During rec. Joe calls over to Denny, "Give me your album and I'll play it during rec." (normal voice)

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1 Joe is being nice to Denny.
2 Joe called Denny a name.
3 Joe used a mean voice when he talked to Denny.
VERBAL AGGRESSION IS ____________

1) MAKING A THREAT TO ANOTHER STUDENT OR STAFF

"I'm going to kick your butt!"

Denny and Dave begin arguing during rec. Dave tells Denny, "Get out of my way or I'll put you out of my way."

Is this verbal aggression?________________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression.________________________

The teacher asks Jim to get his math out and get to work. Jim slams his desk top loudly and tells the teacher he isn't going to do his math.

Is this verbal aggression?________________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression.________________________

Mary keeps turning Denny's tape deck on and off. Denny states, "You better keep your hands off my stuff or you'll be sorry!"

Is this verbal aggression?________________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression.________________________
While playing pool, one student says to the other, "I don't want to play pool with you. You couldn't hit the ball if you tried!".

Is this verbal aggression? ______________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. __________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

While sitting at his desk, Kevin mutters to himself "I hate this school".

Is this verbal aggression? ______________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. __________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

During freetime Joe says to Terry, "What an ugly shirt. Where'd you get it?".

Is this verbal aggression? ______________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. __________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

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3) CALLING ANOTHER STUDENT OR STAFF A NAME

Two students are working together on a geography assignment. One student says to the other, "this assignment is dumb!".

Is this verbal aggression? ________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Joe tells the teacher that Mike is not doing his work. Mike yells across the room to Joe, "You narc!".

Is this verbal aggression? ________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Ann and Mary are arguing about the card game they are playing. Mary yells "I quit!".

Is this verbal aggression? ________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
4) SOMETHING WHICH IS SAID AND MAKES NOISE. GESTURES AND HAND MOTIONS ARE NOT VERBAL AGGRESSION.

The teacher is standing at the blackboard with her back to the class. Paul shakes his fist at Tom.

Is this verbal aggression? ________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. ____________________________________________

Tom yells at Paul, "Put your fist down or I'll come over and put it down for you."

Is this verbal aggression? ________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. ____________________________________________

Paul yells back to Tom, "You jerk!"

Is this verbal aggression? ________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. ____________________________________________
Mary is having trouble with her art project. Lisa says, "Let me help you."

Is this verbal aggression? ___________________________
Explain why it is or is not verbal aggression. _________________________________________________________

Mike and Joe are playing pool. Mike walks to the other side of the pool table where Joe is standing. Mike says to Joe, in a mean voice, "Get out of my way."

Is this verbal aggression? ___________________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. _________________________________________________________

During rec. Joe calls over to Denny, "Give me your album and I'll play it during rec." (normal voice)

Is this verbal aggression? ___________________________
Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. _________________________________________________________
JOE MAKES A FIST AT MIKE.

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1 This is verbal aggression because Joe is mad at Mike.
2 This is not verbal aggression because Joe did not say anything to Mike.

DAVE TELLS JOE "Get away from me dogface."

(CIRCLE THE RIGHT ANSWER)
1 This is verbal aggression because Dave called Joe "dog face" and told him to get away.
2 This is not verbal aggression because Dave was trying to help Joe.
1  This is verbal aggression because Joe threatened Mike.
2  This is not verbal aggression because Joe just wants to meet Mike after school to have some fun.

THE TEACHER ASKS MIKE TO TAKE OUT HIS MATH AND GET TO WORK. Mike takes out his math and mumbles "I hate this."

1  This is verbal aggression because Mike said he hates math.
2  This is not verbal aggression because Mike was talking to himself and not another student or staff.
JOE MAKES A FIST AT MIKE.  Is this verbal aggression? ______

Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. ____________

DAVE TELLS JOE "Get away from me dog face."  Is this verbal aggression? ______

Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression. ____________
JOE MAKES A FIST AT MIKE AND SAYS "YOU BETTER WATCH OUT AFTER SCHOOL!"

Is this verbal aggression?

THE TEACHER ASKS MIKE TO TAKE OUT HIS MATH AND GET TO WORK. MIKE TAKES OUT HIS MATH AND MUMMLES "I HATE THIS."

Is this verbal aggression?

Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression.

Explain why this is or is not verbal aggression.
Circle the statements that are verbal aggression.

"Don't sit next to me!"
(mean tone of voice)

"Get out of my way or I'll put you out of my way!"

"That's the object of it stupid!"

"I can't stand math."
Appendix F

Analysis Sheet
Describe one speaking unkindly that occurred today.

__________________________________________________________

What happened just before I spoke unkindly was__________________

I was feeling______________________________________________

What happened after was_____________________________________

I wish I had handled the situation differently by_________________

The next time this same thing happens I will____________________

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BIBLIOGRAPHY


