Claire Marie Arbour
"I'm Not Afraid of Storms,
for I'm Learning to Sail My
Ship": Building Resilience
and Therapeutic Community
with the Tall Ship Semester
for Girls

ABSTRACT

This mixed methods study explores psychological resiliency, social support and community development in adolescent girls who completed an adventure program at sea (Tall Ship Semester for Girls or TSSG). Individuals from two graduating classes, 2005 and 2006, responded to an online Resiliency Scale survey and participated in an in-person interview. Thirteen individuals responded to the survey (2005 n=7, 2006 n=6). Thirteen individuals participated in an interview (2005 n=7, 2006 n=6). Eight participants completed both survey and interview. Five participants completed only the survey and five completed only the interview. Participants in the study are female adolescents, ages 17 years to 20 years old.

This study addressed the following questions: (1) Do the girls perceive themselves as more resilient after TSSG?; (2) How do they perceive the support they received while at sea and from whom did they gain support?; (3) What did they learn from their experiences with the shipboard community?; and (4) How have they changed as a result of their interactions with that community?

I hypothesized that, for teens, community experience can be therapeutic and living in an intensely challenging and structured community allows each student to grow in developmentally appropriate ways.

Findings were divided into two categories for thematic analysis: Resilience and Challenge, and Social Support and Therapeutic Community. Themes included structure, work ethic, positive attitude, openness and genuineness, confidence, communication, responsibility, identity, and community. This study showed that TSSG has characteristics of a therapeutic community and all of its participants experienced positive change and improved resilience as a result.

"I'M NOT AFRAID OF STORMS, FOR I'M LEARNING TO SAIL MY SHIP":

BUILDING RESILIENCE AND THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY

WITH THE TALL SHIP SEMESTER FOR GIRLS

A project based upon an independent investigation,
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When intact adolescents who possess superior intuitive and intellectual potential
are placed in a safe, supportive, and structured environment with unrelentingly
high demands for constructive and creative change, it becomes a self-fulfilling
prophecy….Before these adolescents who project a tough exterior will
contemplate personal change, they will test before they trust; they will resist
before they respect; they will antagonize before they admire; they will denounce
before they depend. But once they begin to have faith…then they will achieve the
greatness of which they were capable.
(Bratter, Bratter, Radda and Steiner, 1993, p. 303)

Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp,
drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing
before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and
especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a
strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street,
and methodically knocking people's hats off--then, I account it high time to get to
sea as soon as I can.
--Herman Melville

Adolescence is a developmental stage defined by enormous growth, and often,

upheaval. Adolescents experience drastic changes in their biological, cognitive and

emotional functioning as they develop the ability to incorporate new thoughts, feelings

and a sense of themselves in relation to their environment (Allen & Land, 1999). Tasks

that are commonly tackled during this phase include an adolescent's separating and

redefining attachment to family (specifically parents), which result in detachment from

familial relationships and increased attachment and identification with peers.

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Adolescents develop autonomy, a new sense of identity, a moral standpoint, as well as increased capacity for intimacy and sexuality with others.

It has been shown that, due to the stressful nature of growth during this time, adolescents who have encountered psychological challenges during their developmental journey experience greater turmoil and difficulty in achieving appropriate developmental tasks. Some of these challenges may include socio-economic strain, stressful life events, loss of important relationships via death or abandonment, family crisis or dysfunction, and/or trauma (i.e. accidents, illness, physical or sexual abuse, neglect). Mental health issues can emerge during adolescence due to the rapid rate of change and transition. Often, teens are referred to treatment services (therapy, therapeutic groups, tutors or school counselors) for symptoms that include lack of adequate coping skills; re-emergence of earlier developmental issues (attachment issues, emotion control and management, rejection/acceptance); disclosure of or reactions to traumatic life events; and regression to earlier or age inappropriate stages of development (Crisp & O'Donnell, 1998).

Frequently, adolescents are referred to treatment due to school failure or "irresponsibility." Prelow, Weaver and Swenson (2006) report that "depression increases in prevalence during adolescent years, with 15% to 20% of teens having a depressive episode by mid-adolescence" (p. 507). Difficulties and symptoms such as these prevent adolescents from being able to "learn peer or adult relationship skills that are prerequisites for success in many important spheres of adult life" (Crisp & O'Donnell, 1998, p. 347). It has been shown that individuals who do not develop resilience or the ability to cope with stress during childhood and adolescence are prone to a pervasive

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sense of loss or loneliness, depression, fear for personal safety and susceptibility to ongoing stressors (including daily concerns such as financial stress or other burdens) (Grotberg, 2003).

These findings can be overwhelming and discouraging to those who either have responsibility for or provide care for adolescents and children. As a social worker, I ask, what will help challenged children grow up to be able to "bounce back" from difficult times? How can we protect our youth from chronic low-level depression, low self-esteem and suffering resulting from a lack of social skills or self-affirming life experience?

This study will explore issues of psychological resiliency, social support and community development in a group of adolescent girls who have participated in an outdoor adventure program at sea (Tall Ship Semester for Girls). All participants were members of the 2005 and 2006 TSSG graduating classes. Twenty-four Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG) graduates were invited to participate in this study. Of those 24, eighteen individuals responded. Eight girls completed both the online Resiliency Scale survey and an in-person interview. Five girls completed only the online survey and five participated only in the interview. In this way, there were two distinct samples in this study. Overall, 13 subjects completed the online survey and thirteen subjects were interviewed about their experience and its perceived impact on their lives. The girls who completed the online survey gave detailed demographic information while those who only participated in an interview gave limited demographic information.

This mixed methods study addressed the following questions: (1) Do the girls perceive themselves to be stronger, more resilient individuals after completing the Tall

Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG); (2) How did they perceive the support they received while at sea and from whom did they gain the least or most support?; (3) What did they learn from their experiences with the community onboard the boat; and (4) How do they believe they have changed as a result of their interactions with that community? The participants in the study are all female adolescents, ages 17 years to 20 years old. At the time of the program, they ranged in age from 15 to 18 years old.

For educators and therapists, adolescent clients can be the most challenging because adolescents desire autonomy and connection with their peer group. As they develop independence and a sense of their own community, they may become isolated from adults or other support systems. It has been shown that treating adolescents in a community context that includes their peers as well as adult supervisors can be culturally and developmentally appropriate. Bratter et al (1993) state that Therapeutic Communities (TCs) can be particularly effective for teens because they "utilize the collective resources of its members to mobilize the positive power of peer pressure" (p. 299). TCs can be used in hospitals, prisons, group homes, rehabilitation facilities or in educational settings. This model stresses role expectations and individual empowerment for its participants, while giving them a voice (and some leadership) in how order is maintained in the community in which they live.

The therapeutic community model is based on the premise that "adolescents are not unmotivated or incapable of change but remain unconvinced" that taking responsibility and control of themselves is a good idea. Fostering community experiences and challenges for adolescents requires a faith in children's ability to grow into responsible and positive members of society. Adolescence must not be treated as a

disease or psychological disorder, but as a phase in life that offers tremendous opportunity for the development of strong, resilient leaders.

How are strong, resilient leaders developed?

Adopting a community model of treatment and education helps to emphasize resources and support as opposed to individual powerlessness and failings. Community can provide a "holding environment" for teens that includes providing boundaries for appropriate behavior and expression, an atmosphere of giving and tolerance in relationship "so that people will feel genuinely cared for and…looked after," containment of anxiety and emphasis on clear communication that "aims to clarify and resolve any misunderstandings or confusions as soon as possible" (Ward, 2006, p. 31). It is in this safe environment that resilience may be enhanced.

Programs that utilize outdoor settings and adventure programming for the purpose of education and personal growth have been conducted for decades and are based on the notion that "adolescents who feel that they are needed [by others] will naturally manifest motivation and responsible behavior. Conversely, the unneeded teenager will behave in a variety of inappropriate ways" (Kimball & Bacon, 1993, p. 17). Currently in the US, there are many models of adventure education, ranging in intensity and purpose from wilderness therapy (for individuals who meet hospital or residential-treatment level care) to school-affiliated day trips on ropes courses (for students who are learning risk-taking and team-building skills). Each type of program is conducted differently, serves a different population, and has different goals in mind for its participants, based upon the program's resources and values. Regardless of a program's particular structure, effective programs contain some similar traits. Crisp and O'Donnell (1998) state, "Wilderness

adventure therapy provides a challenging and novel situation that forces clients to relate to others in an adaptive way, allowing for a natural 'reconstruction' of developmental gaps as clients correct fundamental assumptions and misconceptions about themselves and others" (p. 1).

In order to effectively reach the population that adventure education and therapy can help, programs must understand what (and how) they contribute to adolescent development. Adventure programs are designed to "simulate family living, as all clients learn and practice self care and personal responsibility, effective peer interaction, and are led by wilderness guides and therapists modeling effective adult communication and parenting skills" (Russell & Hendee, 1999, p. 13). This direct intervention around relational styles addresses the communication habits and patterns of both adolescents and relevant authority figures. In this way, adventure programs are similar to therapeutic communities in that "community provides a wide range of life-like situations in which the difficulties a member has experienced in their relations with others outside are re-experienced and reenacted, with regular opportunities…to examine and learn from these difficulties" (Kennard, 2004, p. 296). Typically, during wilderness adventure programs, each child learns leadership skills and has opportunities to practice communicating with all members of the community, thereby cultivating and strengthening skills that help her negotiate home relationships with parents, family, authority figures and peers.

My study will discuss the therapeutic value of a program that does not create treatment plans for its participants and relies heavily on community dynamic to create change in each adolescent. In order to explore the community aspect of the TSSG program, the girls will answer questions about how helpful they found parts of their

group throughout the course (individuals, the group itself, and staff), how they were affected by their experiences in community with each of the aforementioned parts of the group and what lessons they took home from the trip as a result. I hypothesize that the students' community experience is therapeutic in and of itself, and that living in an intense community allows each student to grow in ways that make the most sense for her. She is affected by the dynamics that catch her attention most readily --things that are salient for her life and development at that moment in time-- and she learns lessons related to those developmental moments. Each participant follows her own "treatment plan" despite the fact that it is not pre-planned or orchestrated by the leaders; she goes (emotionally and physically) where she needs to go to grow in this experience. In this way, each girl is part of a greater whole that pushes her to challenge herself in very personal and developmentally appropriate ways.

One particular type of community-based wilderness adventure program is the tall ship sailing experience. This is a program that takes place on a traditionally rigged boat and combines the unpredictability of life at sea with the stability of a constant community living closely together. Students experience both long passages at sea (at times out of sight of land) and the unique experience of entering a new port city, country and/or culture via the sea. The American Sail Training Association describes sail training and tall ships programs as unique in the following ways:

> A ship at sea has been described as a microcosm of the planet. Resources are finite, waste must be managed responsibly and success depends on one's ability to work as a team. One quickly learns that many hands lighten a load. In a similar way, so do good shipmates --those who are focused, considerate, and good humored….Aboard a sail training vessel, as in life, our small piece is a critical part of the whole. The quality of work, and the spirit in which we do it, has a profound effect on the well-being of everyone else aboard. Leadership,

paradoxically, is arrived at by learning to take direction. Becoming a team player. Pulling your share of the load. Being absolutely responsible. Dependable. And, learning to depend on the responsibility of others. For no matter what the particular mission of a ship might be, it is essential that she be safely navigated and handsomely attended. (Smith, 2007, What is sail training? section, para. 6 & 8).

Sail training programs in the US are often similar to each other in structure; however, each program has its own mission statement. While each program has an interest in educating adolescents and purports to believe that an adventurous, hands-on experience on the sea will help teens grow into socially responsible and resilient members of society, whether these programs actually succeed in these goals is not documented. My study is concerned with the following question: Does TSSG, which is based on community living and adventure learning, promote resilience and personal growth in teens? It will explore this question by asking past participants of the program to reflect on whether they feel they would answer True/False statements differently after the program than before. The statements are expressions of resilience, including perceptions about whether they are able to function under duress, recover from stressful situations, and maintain their positive outlook, self-confidence, and sense of humor across different situations.

The Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG) is a sail training and education program based in San Francisco, CA. TSSG is run by the Tall Ship Education Academy (TSEA) whose Mission Statement states: "TSEA teaches personal growth through experienced-based academic programs for youth of diverse backgrounds, with an emphasis on girls. TSEAs rigorous programs enhance students' self-reliance and teamwork capabilities" (Tall Ship Education Academy, 2006, p. 3). TSSG is unique in that it is the only all-girls long-term sailing program in the US; it is also dedicated to offering opportunity to girls

who represent ethnically and economically diverse backgrounds (Sammet, 2005). Each year, 12 to 15 female juniors or seniors in high school participate in an 18-week-long semester program that replaces their high school classroom work. Two-thirds of TSSG participants are students of color and 90% of them are low-income students who qualify for, and receive, financial aid (Sammet, 2005). The girls earn high school credit for the lessons that they complete during this semester.

Six of the eighteen weeks are spent at sea aboard a traditional sailing "tall ship." The girls are taught by 15 (female and male) professional sailing crew and are accompanied on their journey by two of their on-shore teachers, who participate in the sailing experience and continue to conduct academic lessons while on the boat. The girls learn to navigate the boat and make two to three day port stops at various Caribbean islands where they connect with local schools, getting to know students, making cultural comparisons, experiencing global economies, and seeing life in another country. By the end of the voyage, the girls can run the boat and its operations without much guidance. During this six-week at-sea phase they create a solid community in which rapid growth and change occur. Onboard the ship, they are members of a closed community that exists in very close quarters (30 people within approximately 100 square feet at all times). They work hard and receive constant feedback, both from the movement of the boat (for which they are responsible) and from their shipmates.

Berman, Finkelstein and Powell (2004) describe the features of a tall ship sailing experience that contribute to program participants' identity development. These include "temporal and spatial constraints that accompany living in a small communal space" including shared resources (limited fresh water, supplies, fresh food) and a demanding

physical environment (p. 2542). The girls had to master sea-sickness and sleep

deprivation while almost completely lacking privacy: "Both call for unusual individual

responses of adaptation and self-management as youth crew are fully expected to

participate in all activities regardless of whether they are tired, sick, unhappy or resistant"

(Berman, Finkelstein & Powell, 2004, p. 2542). Through all of this, they manage not

only themselves but also their relationships with their peers and instructors while

simultaneously experiencing the isolation of being on a remote vessel at sea.

TSSG is primarily an education experience for which the girls receive academic

credit. While it is an accredited academic program, part of the program's goals include

individual emotional, moral and relational growth for each participant. The program's

Executive Summary from August 2006 states:

> In collaboration with community stakeholders, TSEA prepares each of our
> students to become whole individuals who are self-confident, feel physically
> capable, approach new situations with flexibility, respond to criticism
> constructively, and choose healthy, engaged lives. [We also cultivate] responsible
> community members who are both leaders and followers, work collaboratively,
> communicate effectively with peers and adults, take responsibility for their impact
> on others, and see themselves as global citizens. [TSEA develops] intellectual
> achievers who possess intellectual curiosity and flexibility, think critically and
> creatively, take the initiative to be self-directed learners, and hold themselves to
> high academic standards (p. 3).

These qualities are academic skills as well as life skills, and TSEA has hopes of

influencing the lives of their graduates beyond their time in the TSSG program. The

long-term effects that TSEA hopes for include an improvement in the empowerment,

determination and flexibility of each of their graduates. They do not know for sure if

they are succeeding in these goals. One way of measuring several of these qualities at

once is to investigate the girls' resilience, which takes into account an individual's

feelings about herself as well as her ability to "bounce back" in the face of adversity, discomfort and challenge.

I am interested in the possibility that sail training programs generally --and TSSG specifically-- provide a therapeutic or reparative community for adolescents who are in need of a holding environment in which to discard their maladaptive behaviors and adapt relationships that can address their attachment (and developmental) needs. I believe that adventure therapy, and specifically sail training programs, can create an environment that addresses the specific developmental needs of adolescents. With its combination of group and individual goal-setting, risk-taking and personal challenge, time for self-reflection, a culture of constant feedback and natural consequences, and time to make emotional and cognitive connections in a community-focused setting, this modality provides adolescents with a substrate for achieving developmental tasks that are vital for their health and growth.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resilience is a much-discussed psychological concept that has been defined in several different ways over the years. Measuring resilience is a way of recognizing and examining positive adaptation in the face of adversity, as opposed to measuring stress and hardship by resulting psychopathology or physical illness (Luthar, 1991; Schoon, 2006). There is debate in the psychological community about whether resilience is directly measurable as a singular trait, or if it is, in fact, a combination of psychological factors and practical skills that contribute to an individual's mental health and well being (Neill & Dias, 2001). Related concepts include hardiness, resourcefulness, ego strength, and the ability to bounce back (stronger) from trying situations (Neill & Dias, 2001; Schoon, 2006). Schoon (2006) cautions against assuming that resilience is a fixed personality trait because such an approach carries the risk of blaming the victim of stressful events. She emphasizes, "positive adjustment in the face of adversity is dependent on the person-environment interactions that bring about adaptation" (Schoon, 2006, p. 17). In this way, resilience is a dynamic process of growth and change.

Some researchers believe that resilience is only achieved if an individual is psychologically stronger after a traumatic event (Grotberg, 2001); others believe that resilience is evidenced simply by an individual's ability to adapt to life after a stressful event (Neill & Dias, 2001; Schoon, 2006). Neill & Dias (2001) report that Ryff, Singer,

Dienber, Love & Essex (1998) assess resilience as "an individual's capacity for maintenance, recovery or improvement in mental health following life changes" (p. 35). This approach assumes that "some individuals are doing well, despite being exposed to an adverse risk situation, while others fail to adapt" (Schoon, 2006, p. 7).

From a developmental perspective, a resilient individual is one who masters appropriate developmental tasks despite serious threats to development. From an individual-in-environment or systems perspective, a resilient individual is one who adapts well to a situation despite being subjected to particular stress or extenuating circumstances (Jew, Green, Kroger, 1999). Such threats to development or extenuating circumstances may include poverty, socio-economic challenge, racism, violence, serious illness, political unrest, abuse, and/or neglect.

Jew, Green and Kroger (1999) describe Mrazek and Mrazek's (1987) cognitive appraisal theory of resilience in which an individual's:

> Responses to stress are influenced by appraisal of the situation and by the capacity to process an experience, attach meaning to it, and to incorporate the experience into one's belief system. Promotion of resiliency lies in encountering stress at a time and in a way that allows a person to experience mastery and appropriate responsibility, thus increasing his or her sense of self-confidence and competence. Resilient people cope with stress better because they use particular skills and abilities in stressful situations (p. 76).

This theory suggests that mentally processing a situation using an experiential and skills-based approach can promote and maintain resilience, thereby raising several questions. What are the factors or skills necessary to resolve traumatic experiences? Under what circumstances can those skills be used effectively? And finally, if individuals can be taught skills that promote or maintain psychological hardiness, can resilience itself be learned?

Andrews (2006) reported that the Resiliency Project at the University of Pennsylvania, begun in 1990, has been studying whether resiliency can be taught to children ages 6 to 12 years old. Seventy children in public schools were taught "resilience skills" which included learning how to avoid pessimistic thinking and how to practice basic problem solving skills. Based on conflict or instability in their home environments, all of the 70 subjects were considered at risk for depression.

After two years, only 22% of the subjects in the Resiliency Project program felt depressed. In a control group of similar children who were not taught "resilience" skills, 44% felt depressed (Andrews, 2006, p. 1). Andrews (2006) asks, who is responsible for teaching children these positive thinking and problem solving skills? She says that traditionally, parents have been expected to teach these skills in the home but she found that, in a study of 1225 children in 30 countries, only one-third of children learned these skills at home. Data like this supports the need for further research about how to promote resilience in children and adolescents. This study will explore which aspects of resilience the TSSG program addresses --and by extension perhaps, in similarly structured sail training programs.

Studies have been designed to explore which factors contribute to positive adjustment in the face of adversity. Resilience has been measured in vastly different populations, in terms of culture and physical location. Frequently, resilience has been measured according to a child's school performance because school performance is considered a measurable and somewhat standardized variable. Following children's school records allows researchers (Schoon, 2006) to conduct longitudinal studies because students are in constant relationship with schools over time. Good school performance

despite social, economic and personal challenges is seen as a sign of resilience (Schoon, 2006).

Other studies looked at short timeframes in order to examine factors that contributed to strength of spirit and the ability to recover from stress. Rather than examining school performance in children, researchers collected data about participants' perceptions of their ability to recover from traumatic events. They also examined participants' level of functioning and ability to connect with community supports after stressful events (Grotberg, 2001, 2003; Neill and Dias, 2001). Grotberg (2001) conducted surveys with children (0-3, 4-6 and 9-11 years old) and their parents in 22 countries including Russia, Vietnam, Namibia, Finland, Chile and Canada. Surveys included demographic questions, constructed situations and descriptions of stressful events with a battery of questions about these events and their hypothetical aftermath. The hypothetical nature of the questions is a weakness in this study. While it is clearly unethical to subject participants to actual trauma in order to study their responses, answers to the study's questions are only speculative about the effect of traumatic events on human action.

In 2003, Grotberg conducted a study of resilience in refugee children and their families. She gathered data about children and families living in refugee camps in Peru and Vietnam. From her information she developed ideas about what familial and environmental factors promote resilience in children. Such factors include: a supportive and positive family with strong adult role models and a battery of practical skills –such as planning for the future, expressing feelings appropriately, using healthy coping skills to

calm themselves, talking about challenges and thinking of solutions, and seeking help and guidance– that may prevent emotional vulnerability.

Most studies resulted in ideas about how individuals learn resilience. Models of resilience promotion were developed to include teaching practical skills that are thought to prevent depression and poor mental health. Grotberg's (2003) model includes what she calls the "I HAVE, I AM, I CAN" model of promoting resilience in which children recognize their external supports (I have), inner strengths (I am) and interpersonal and problem solving skills (I can). Grotberg (2003) reports, "at least one factor from each category is needed to deal with an adversity, but people generally use more than one from each category" (p. 28). Individuals in the refugee camps who were not able to utilize "I have, I am, I can" skills due to lack of support or emotional stability often developed social and psychological problems as they faced further challenges and difficulties.

Grotberg takes her study one step further and discusses resilience skills in a developmental framework, describing the order in which children are capable of learning the social skills that promote resilience. Her developmental model emphasizes resilience skills as building blocks that protect against depression. She suggests that, while we gain the capacity to exercise resilience as we age, these skills can be taught or re-enforced at any point in life. Her model includes five stages: 1) Trust, 2) Autonomy, 3) Initiative, 4) Industry, and 5) Identity. She describes each stage and the importance of the skills acquired during each step.

The ability to trust and rely on another person allows individuals to create support systems that ensure an individual's strength and sense of belonging. Autonomy is freedom and independence, as well as responsibility for one's own behavior. Autonomy

that contributes to resilience includes the recognition that one will make mistakes, but that something can be learned from those mistakes in order to avoid similarly negative experiences in the future. Initiative, the third stage, is important for resilience because the willingness to take action contributes to an individual's ability to find creative responses to stress. Industry is the ability to work diligently at a task. Industry is strengthened by one's ability to draw on autonomy and independence, develop cooperation, improve communication, practice assertiveness, and learn to listen (Grotberg, 2003). Grotberg (2003) defines the Identity stage as one that corresponds with the teen years. She recommends promoting the development of personal identity and resilience by maintaining family ties while making changes in familial relationships (more privacy, ideas taken more seriously). She also highlights the importance of developing good social and problem-solving skills (making new friends, learning to express feelings), and working on long-range planning during this phase (Grotberg, 2003).

Common factors that promote resilience include having hope, planning for the future, and experiencing feelings of control (Grotberg, 2003; Jew et al, 1999). It is also important to have supportive social relationships (Grotberg, 2003; Jew et al, 1999; Neill & Dias, 2001), feel deserving of love and caring, take responsibility for risky decisions, manage strong affect, and learn about one's environment, and its risks, in order to reach out for help (Grotberg, 2003; Jew et al, 1999). The factors described here can be supplemented or addressed in almost any environment (a strength of Grotberg's model). They are, in fact, traits of individuals and systems. While helpful in working therapeutically with traumatized populations, Grotberg's (2003) study does not establish

a framework for creating experiences that strengthen or teach resilience without (further) exposing people to trauma.

The overarching conclusion in all of these studies is that resilience is not a fixed trait. It can be developed, reinforced and/or supported by attending to aspects of community, problem solving skills and social supports that promote positive adjustment and growth in the face of adversity. Jew, Green and Kroger (1999) posit that:

> Resiliency emerges from a system of specific beliefs that interact with environmental stressors to determine an individual's coping skills. These beliefs include perceptions about oneself, one's abilities, one's relationships, and goodness in the world. The development of this belief system may be influenced by variables such as personality, environment, and developmental stage" (p.76).

Grotberg (2003) further states that "it has been found to be more effective to think in terms of the person in a group and in a community, and not only in terms of a particular problem the person is experiencing" (p. 32). This community focus emphasizes resources and support as opposed to individual powerlessness and failings. Schoon (2006) also concludes: "resilience is not some mysterious trait or characteristic of the individual, but a dynamic and interactive process. Individual attributes may contribute to adaptive functioning, but they themselves are shaped by conditions and circumstances experienced by the individual" (p. 148).

If resilience is enhance-able throughout life, mental health, problem solving skills, and abilities to grow stronger can be cultivated through programming and life choices. Grotberg (2001, 2003) found that up until the age of nine years, children rely on their parents to support their resilience; after age nine, children are capable of promoting their own resilience and often rely more on their peers for support and recovery from challenges. This finding has particular significance for social workers and those who

support, educate and therapeutically treat youth as they transition from childhood to adulthood.

Evidence showing that resilience can be taught means that children who have not experienced resilience-enhancing environments can be placed in environments that can provide a corrective emotional experience. At-risk adolescents represent a group who are particularly in need of, and potentially receptive to, social support that promotes resilience and a sense of identity.

In adolescence, children experience a rate of growth and change that is matched in intensity and speed only by the development that occurs during infancy. Teens struggle to mediate new feelings and changes in their brains as they gain the ability to think in more complex ways. During this time, adolescents attempt to increase their independence as well as their reliance on peers for support. It has been observed that adolescents may rely on their primary attachment figures in time of extreme stress or they may actively avoid their primary attachment figures in an attempt to gain a sense of independence and self-reliance. Allen & Land (1999) state that:

> Attachment bonds to parents are treated by many adolescents more like ties that restrain than like ties that anchor and secure, and a key task of adolescence is to develop autonomy so as no longer to need to rely (as much) on parents' support when making one's way through the world (p. 319).

Schofield & Brown (1999) suggest that the attachment style established in early childhood influences adolescents' abilities to transition into adulthood. They say that, for individuals whose early relationships enforced the idea that intimacy equaled anxiety, establishing stable relationships can be more difficult (Schofield & Brown, 1999). These individuals, as adolescents, may have difficulty establishing multiple attachments with

peers, which is a task that creates balance and aids an adolescent in seeing him/herself as a being separate from caretakers (Allen & Land, 1999). It has been shown that ecological risk --such as poverty or low socioeconomic status, dangerous living situations, trauma, and/or racism-- reduces an adolescents' ability to maintain positive relationships with her family of origin and may push youth to identify with groups that are widely devalued by society (Prelow, Weaver, & Swenson, 2006). There is evidence that female adolescents report greater loss of self-esteem during adolescence than males report. Girls' loss of self-esteem seems more dramatic and lasting, and it leads to lower self-confidence, academic interest and career planning (Hurtes, 2002).

Russell & Hendee (1999) report that, "four million of 26 million adolescents between the ages of 12 and 19 have emotional problems severe enough to require treatment" (p. 5). They cite Tuma (1989) as saying that 70% to 80% of the children with mental disorders requiring treatment may not be getting adequate services (Russell & Hendee, 1999). Some practitioners refuse to work with "this difficult population, particularly the group of adolescents referred to as 'severely disturbed,' 'acting out' or 'difficult'" (Bettmann, 2005). Neill (2000) states that "the disturbing prevalence of adolescent psychopathology and sub-clinical states of psychological distress" (p. 2) indicates that adolescents are not being taught how to be resilient and are unable to cope with the challenges of adulthood.

Teens who struggle to build healthy social relationships, who cope with their day-to-day stress by using drugs or alcohol, who are failing or struggling with academics, who experience chronic conflict with authority or "have a bad attitude", but may not be in trouble with the law or qualify for psychiatric medication or hospitalization, can be

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considered "sub-clinical". They do not qualify for a psychological diagnosis but are experiencing psychological distress. The idea that some adolescents experience a sub-clinical state of psychological distress suggests that there are adolescents who do not present as out of control or unruly, but may have mental health needs that are overlooked.

Social work practice with adolescents can be confounding and riddled with "resistance" and communication difficulties (Kaplan, 1999; Shaw, 2005). Often this is due to developmental challenges as adolescents' executive brain functioning is still growing, making it difficult for them to verbally process their experiences (Kimball & Bacon, 1993). It is the task of practitioners and clinicians to establish treatment modalities and interventions that address the particular needs of adolescents who may be overlooked by, or resistant to, traditional methods of psychological treatment.

Crisp (1998) defines such an intervention as one that "addresses the core of [adolescents']…mental health issues in a way that minimizes stigma, but also promotes development in crucial areas of competency and performance, responsibility, judgment, social orientation, motivation and identity" (p. 56). When it comes to the education and/or treatment of adolescents, issues of personal power are also especially pertinent. Ward (2003) states that treatment for adolescents and young people should help them "rediscover their own potential for relationships, intimacy and development, all of which involve being able to handle issues of power appropriately, and to confront experiences of powerlessness appropriately" (p. 40). Living in community seems to address these developmental milestones and needs.

Bratter, Bratter, Radda and Steiner (1993) describe a Residential Therapeutic Caring Community (RTCC) in which a community of peers and staff create a safe,

growth-inspiring therapeutic setting for its members. The premise of therapeutic

community is to create "an interactive social model of healing" to replace models of

therapy and behavior modification that are authoritative or rule-heavy.

Therapeutic communities (TCs) were created to replace hospital and prison

systems that contained people and their maladaptive behaviors without striving to adjust

their behavior and relationships in a pro-social way. Originally, TCs were used to treat

substance abuse, but they have since been adapted to work with several different

populations, using the concept of community and group dynamic to address a wider

therapeutic goal of growth and change. Essentially, TCs bring together psychodynamic

theory (creating a "holding environment") and a group-centric model of care (Kennard,

2004; Ward, 2003). Within a therapeutic community:

> Each member develops interpersonal, negotiation, supervisory and leadership
> skills…Adolescents [in particular] learn to depend upon each other while
> becoming autonomous. They learn how to love and be loved, trust and be trusted,
> help and be helped, respect and be respected (Bratter et al, 1993, p. 300).

The therapeutic value of TCs is generated by the members of the group and is enforced

through their mutual responsibility for the community dynamic. Members of the

community are given a voice in how things are carried out, and they all share

responsibility for making the community run smoothly. The challenging reality of

maintaining relationships and routines within a community can take the focus off of

"expert" therapeutic interventions while creating opportunities for natural learning and

growth. Ward (2003) states, "it is the *whole community* which is therapeutic, rather than

it just being a place in which 'expert' staff perform therapy on patients or clients" (p. 33).

The community or group may play the part of a positive parent in order to provide a

corrective emotional experience (Bratter et al, 1993). In this setting, clients (students) and staff participate equally in a culture of enquiry, in which all members work together to understand and resolve issues that arise in the course of community development and group functioning.

The community and its goals become the focus of the group, creating a situation in which participants are forced to take control of themselves. No one "will excuse failure by commiserating how 'unlucky' or unjust life can be" (Bratter et al, 1993, p. 301) because everyone is equally responsible for creating positive progress. Without space for excuses or helplessness, the focus of the work for community members becomes "realizing and applying their own ability to help as well as to be helped" (Ward, 2006, p. 34). This can be particularly true when communities accept appropriate levels of challenge and novelty so that students are stretched to learn and grow. For many young people, adventure education in wilderness settings provides just such a unique community experience.

Currently in the US, there are many models of adventure education, ranging in intensity and purpose from wilderness therapy (for individuals who meet hospital or residential-treatment level care) to school-affiliated day trips on ropes courses (for students who are learning risk-taking and team-building skills). Each type of program is conducted differently, serves a different population, and has different goals in mind for its participants, based upon the program's resources and values. Programs tend to be categorized in groups: wilderness therapy programs (expedition-based therapy interventions with individualized treatment plans, as well as group, individual and family therapy with licensed clinicians); 21- to 60-day expedition wilderness trips without

treatment plans or therapy (Outward Bound, Tall Ship Semester for Girls); and day programming that includes ropes courses or short physical challenges. For the purpose of this study, it is most pertinent to look at studies concerning wilderness therapy and 21- to 60-day programs because the survey and interview questions being asked relate to the therapeutic value of a six week (42-day) long adventure education program.

Crisp & O'Donnell (1998) suggest that wilderness programs can address adolescents' attachment and social needs. They state that "wilderness adventure therapy provides a challenging and novel situation that forces clients to relate to others in an adaptive way, allowing for a natural 'reconstruction' of developmental gaps as clients correct fundamental assumptions and misconceptions about themselves and others" (p. 1). Adventure therapy and adventure education are modalities that strive to meet the specific needs of adolescents who struggle to control their behavior and to develop positive or appropriate social connections with others. Kimball and Bacon (1993) state, "Wilderness therapy assumes that attitudinal changes and perceptions of self-worth best follow provocative experiences that dramatically reveal psychological strengths and capabilities" (p. 34).

Adventure experiences that inspire change and therapeutic outcome are experiences "that are conducive to the natural and spontaneous emergence of prosocial values. Students [are] not to adopt a code of ethics 'on faith' or through compulsion; rather, they…independently discover the validity and utility of such a code through experience" (Kimball & Bacon, 1993, p. 12). Independent discovery is another way of saying "learning through doing." This concept is central to each theoretical approach to

adolescent treatment cited in this paper: resilience-building, therapeutic communities and adventure therapy/education.

Schoon (2006) describes one of the methods of acquiring resilience skills as "the challenge model" in which "low levels of risk exposure may have beneficial or steeling effects, providing a chance to practice problem-solving skills and to mobilize resources" (p. 75). Neill and Dias (2001) also ascribe to this model, describing it as "'development-by-challenge' philosophy" (p. 35) or psychological inoculation (Neill & Dias, 2001; Schoon, 2006). Neill and Dias, and Schoon, describe this teaching method as a controlled exposure to risk such that participants feel uncomfortable but are able to learn skills that help them overcome adversity. In this way, they become confident in their abilities to solve problems and master challenges in their lives in general. Neill and Dias (2001) describe this as the "underlying justification for adventure education" (p. 35) and a method of promoting positive mental health in children and adolescents. They state that "the cutting edge of challenge…can and does make people stronger, particularly when the salve of social support is applied" (Neill and Dias, 2001, p. 40). Social support is garnered through building a community that nurtures a sense of responsibility for one's own fate and success.

Adventure therapy experiences are based on problem-solving activities in which problems are planned, prescribed, and managed, structured incrementally (building on skills previously learned), concrete and manageable. In adventure settings, problems offer real consequences (ensuring natural and immediate feedback) and solutions consist of holistic tasks that require cognitive, physical and emotional engagement and resources. Problems always carry an element of stress, which heightens the experience of solving

them: "When failure-oriented adolescents summon the courage, discipline, and resolve to master a difficult challenge, they have challenge their self-definition as well…Either consciously or unconsciously, mastery experiences set the stage for new psychological perceptions" (Kimball & Bacon, 1993, p. 21). In this way, a student's internalized perception of herself changes, creating possibilities for achievement and confidence that did not exist before. An individual's self-perception and internalized self-image can also be called "self-concept" and has been one of many positive changes attributed to adventure programming.

In 1997, Hattie, Marsh, Neill and Richards conducted a meta-analysis of 96 outcome studies of adventure programs that were published between 1968 and 1994. Hattie et al (1997) included studies that defined adventure programs as containing the following: "(a) wilderness or backcountry settings; (b) a small group (usually less than 16); (c) assignment of a variety of mentally and/or physically challenging objectives….;(d) frequent and intense interactions that usually involve group problem solving and decision making; (e) a non-intrusive, trained leader; and (f) a duration of 2 to 4 weeks" (p. 44). This study does not address issues of "therapy" but it does address issues of adolescent development and adventure/wilderness programs as developmental aids for children and adults. The purpose of the study was to identify which traits (of character, cognitive process, and self) were affected most by adventure programming, to look at differences between programs, and to discuss the educational processes that influenced change in the participants.

The researchers of this meta-analysis excluded studies that they deemed "low quality" and those that evaluated programs that were significantly different from the

others (short term programs, for instance). One strength of this study is its large sample size; researchers tallied a total of 12,057 participants. Both the large sample size and the variety of programs measured in this study may create a more accurate overview of the effect of adventure programming on participants. Seventy-two percent of the sample was male, 28% female. The minority of results from female participants is a weakness of this study. Most of the sample was comprised of adults (mean age: 22 years, range: 11-42 years). Hattie et al's (1997) results may not be generalizable to an exclusively adolescent population. The median length of adventure program measured in the meta-analysis was 22 days. Seventy percent of programs included in the study were greater than 20 days long. Effects were greater for longer programs both immediately after programming and in follow-up surveys.

In this study, researchers isolated 40 traits in the sample studies that were reported as being affected by adventure programming. Hattie et al (1997) narrowed these 40 traits into six general subheadings of areas that were changed during an adventure experience: academic, leadership, self-concept, personality, interpersonal, and adventuresome qualities. Within each subheading, specific areas were identified and defined. These sub-subheadings may allow future researchers to establish how to test for change in such qualities. Hattie et al (1997) made the observation that 46% of participants who mentioned "effort" (how much effort they applied to aspects of the program) also mentioned "self", indicating that changes in self-concept were related most strongly to how much effort participants invested in the program. Hattie et al (1997) also state that students with very high and very low levels of anxiety may have had trouble attending to

their learning processes. Those with the highest anxiety had the closest and most satisfying relationships with leaders.

The authors state, "adventure programs had greatest immediate effects on most dimensions of leadership, academic, independence, assertiveness, emotional stability, social comparison, time management and flexibility" (Hattie et al, 1997, p. 63). Positive effects from adventure programming were maintained over time in these areas, except in the category of "adventuresome". According to Hattie et al's (1997) study, aventuresomeness includes: openness to challenge, flexibility, environmental awareness and physical fitness. Academic gains were found in the areas of motivation and problem solving skills. The greatest effects on self-concept were expressed as changes in "independence, confidence, self-efficacy, and self-understanding" (p. 67). These changes were maintained over time, though it is unclear exactly how much time passed before follow-up studies were done (range: 1 to 24 months), so it is hard to know for how long these effects were maintained.

Differences were reported between adult and youth participants regarding how long they maintained the programs' positive effects. Over time, adults continued to achieve higher levels of leadership while youth perceived a loss in their leadership skills. Leadership skills include conscientiousness, decision-making, general leadership, teamwork leadership, organizational ability, time management, values and goals. Over time, youth maintained (and in fact, gained) positive changes in their personality (areas: achievement motivation, emotional stability, aggression, assertiveness, locus of control, maturity, neurosis reduction). Adults also gained further positive change in personality but at a lower rate than youth did. It is impossible to know how much of this change can

be attributed to adventure experiences and how much would have happened naturally due to normal development or other factors. Control groups were not included in the meta-analysis. In the realm of interpersonal changes, youth had greater gains over time than did adults (who continued to gain positive effect, but to a lesser degree than youth). Interpersonal change includes cooperation, interpersonal communication, social competence, behavior, relating skills and reduction in recidivism (or rates of re-offending in cases where adventure programs were part of rehabilitation following criminal activity or school absenteeism) (Hattie et al, 1997).

Hattie et al (1997) propose that one of the greatest gains coming from wilderness learning is the requirement that participants develop self-control due to the unpredictability of their physical surroundings. Gains in self-control were maintained over time. Traits related to self-control include (in order from greatest change to least change) independence, decision-making, assertiveness, self-understanding, confidence, self-efficacy, and internal locus of control (Hattie et al, 1997). Based on this evidence, Hattie et al (1997) state, "adventure programs appear to be most effective at providing participants with a sense of self-regulation" (p. 70).

They further conclude that the effects of adventure learning on personality traits are greatest in the realms of assertiveness, reduction of aggression, emotional stability, achievement motivation, internal locus of control, maturity and reduction in neurosis. They do not, however, go into detail about what evidence they have for these changes (i.e. how is a student assessed as more emotionally stable?); results are all based on student self-report. Their general conclusions stated that adventure programming inspires positive change in participants, with the biggest variables being length of programming,

location of program (in US or not) and whether participants were adults (over 18 years old) or not. They state that the most effective programs are longer (20+ days) with adults, in Australia. It is unclear how many of the studies included in the meta-analysis were about Australian programs.

Hattie et al (1997) report that most studies in their meta-analysis gave little or no demographic information about their participants. This is a major weakness of their study and I will include demographic information in my study. The researchers note that their youth participant data may be confounded by the fact that youth may have been volunteered by their parents and may not have chosen to attend these programs, whereas all of the adult participants chose to engage in adventure programming (Hattie et al, 1997). My study will be comprised of youth who applied for a program and so, were willing participants. In terms of gender, Hattie et al (1997) cite only one article in which 86 women in an all-female adventure program were compared to a control group of women who did not participate in the adventure program. They report, "Nineteen months after the program, those who had attended were more stable, dependable, critical, lively, and confident, and more of those who had attended had achieved promotion" (Hattie et al, 1997, p. 60).

Hattie et al (1997) posited that studies involving administering pre-tests to program participants were less accurate, because anticipatory anxiety about participating in the program could prevent obtaining a participant's accurate baseline of functioning. This poses an interesting challenge for researchers because, unless researchers or program administrators have contact with program participants well before the start of the program, it is difficult to gain an accurate measure of a participant's "baseline" of

functioning. Hattie et al (1997) also recommend that outcome data not simply be collected in the last days of an adventure experience because the results may be skewed by participants "euphoria" in having completed the program. They recommend that follow-up data collection happen after the program is completed and some time has passed. In this way, my study will address a gap in current research as I am interviewing students one or two years after their adventure experience ended.

Neill and Dias (2001) conducted a study that included pre-trip and post-trip surveys with young adults who participated in a 22-day Outward Bound adventure program. Survey questions asked about the participants' perceptions of their own resiliency and their experiences of social support while on their adventure trip. This study included a control group of individuals close in age to those who participated in the adventure program. The purpose of this study was to find out whether or not adventure education programming can "enhance psychological resilience" (Neill & Dias, 2001, p. 35). It also sought to explore whether group support could be related to changes in resilience. Based upon Hattie et al's (1997) work which showed that support, challenge, goals and feedback are factors that positively affect participants, Neill and Dias (2001) proposed the hypotheses that: "(a) a challenging adventure education program would enhance participants' psychological resilience and; (b) that the growth in psychological resilience would be positively related to perceived social support during the adventure education program" (p. 36).

To test their hypotheses, Neill and Dias (2001) collected data from 41 young adults, 22 males and 19 females. The mean age of participants was 21 years (SD +/- 3.1 years). The control group consisted of 31 students in an undergraduate psychology

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program at a university. Of this group, 4 were male and 27 female. The mean age of the control group was 24 years (+/- 7.1 years). While this control group does not seem a great match in terms of demographics, their initial survey scores were the same as those of the experimental group's, so presumably they were starting in the same place, as were the participants of the adventure education program.

Both groups were given a 15 question Resiliency Scale (RS) that is a revised version of Wagnild and Young's (1993) 25-item Resiliency Scale. Participants answered questions about their self-perceptions regarding their ability to problem solve, overcome adversity, and "bounce back" in the face of challenges. Both groups completed the RS at the same time intervals, before and after the adventure program. The RS is a self-report questionnaire in which all items are stated positively and responses are collected on a Lickert scale, from 1 (agree) to 7 (disagree). Wagnild and Young (1993) report that the RS is valid due to significant correlations between RS scores and "measures of morale, life satisfaction and depression" (Neill & Dias, 2001, p. 37). This same revised RS scale was used in this study (see Appendix A). Neill and Dias (2001) also included a survey about group social support during the adventure experience. There were four items in the social support survey, again taken with a Lickert Scale. The items asked how supportive participants experienced the following people to be: (1) the most supportive member of the group, (2) the least supportive member of the group, (3) the group as a whole, and (4) the staff. Members of the control group were not asked these questions.

Participants in the Outward Bound program were involved in a 22-day outdoor adventure consisting of several challenging physical elements. Activities included planning trips, ropes challenge courses, initiative tasks, navigation, communication skills

sessions, goal setting, caving, canoeing, rock climbing, and a 3-day solo. The primary focus of the trip was personal development for its participants (Neill & Dias, 2001). At the end of the adventure experience, all participants reported very large positive changes in resilience, according to the RS. There was a small to moderate change in resilience for the control group.

The experimental group reported high levels of social support generally (possible range 1 to 10). Following the most supportive member of the group (M= 9.38 +/- 0.95, range 8 to 10) was the instructor (M= 9.21 +/- 1.08, range 7 to 10), then the group (M= 8.87 +/- 0.95, range 7 to 10), and finally the least supportive member of the group (M= 5.56 +/- 2.26, range 1 to 10). Neill and Dias (2001) conducted a multiple linear regression analysis using the RS effect size between the beginning and the end of the program, and the four social support items. They found that the only significantly related predictor of growth in resilience was the least supportive group member.

In other words, "the higher the level of support perceived to come from the least supportive group member, the greater the change in resilience reported by participants" (Neill & Dias, 2001, p. 39). The entire group must work against the negative attitude and influence of an unsupportive member. If the least supportive member of the group is the biggest detractor from group energy and productivity, then the progress of the whole group is impeded (and perhaps determined) by the least supportive member. Neill and Dias' 2001 study showed that, in adventure education, the group is not "only as strong as its weakest link" but is only as strong and productive as its least supportive member. Non-significant effects were found to be influential for resilience in the following order: instructor support, most supportive group member and the group as a whole.

Neill and Dias (2001) highlight the fact that perceived social support was positively related to the growth in resilience during the program. They also reiterate that it is important to address issues of group dynamics and social support early, or at least while the program is still going on, so that individuals can benefit from positive changes in group dynamics. Neill and Dias (2001) emphasize the importance of creating a community that maintains an attitude of "unconditional positive regard" (p. 39) towards its members, so that every member can grow and learn during challenging situations in which they are bound to struggle. This lends a unique lens through which to analyze the experiences of adventure program participants because it leads to questions about how a group interacts and forms community while on an adventure course. It also highlights the connection between the formation of community and the individual therapeutic growth that results from community experiences.

This study has created an example of how social dynamics and community's effect on participant resilience can be measured. One strength of this study is the clarity with which it describes how the group dynamic can be related to whether or not participants gain resilience in challenging settings. A weakness is that this study does not address how much natural developmental progress may be affecting participant resilience. The control group was considerably older than the experimental group --how much did this affect the amount of growth that they experienced during the time period of the study?

Information gained in this study is also a bit limited because of the use of Lickert scales, which do not include any explanations for answers. My study will fill this void, as participants will be asked to describe why they believed people were supportive or

unsupportive, and how that affected their experiences and growth. Neill and Dias' (2001) study was also conducted with Outward Bound students who participated in a variety of activities during their adventure course. Such variety in activities creates multiple learning opportunities for participants, however, it does not directly relate to the program that I am studying. The Tall Ship Semester for Girls program is exclusively focused on sail training for six weeks. There are few studies that focus specifically on tall ship sail training programs and there is a need for further studies. I understand that there are studies currently being conducted that will be published in the future. In the meantime, I will discuss the three available studies that have been conducted specifically on sail training programs.

Norris and Weinman (1996) approach the question about whether resiliency or psychological hardiness is enhanced through a tall ship sail training program by focusing on changes in participants' coping styles, self-esteem and self-efficacy. The purpose of their controlled study was to "examine the role of self-esteem, coping and a number of other psychological functions including emotional well-being, satisfaction with life, optimism and self-efficacy" (Norris & Weinman, 1996, p. 189). They collected data from 43 "trainees" who participated in a three-month-long transatlantic voyage aboard a square-rigged sailing vessel. During their three months on board, "trainees" were required to work on the boat --sailing and navigating the vessel, preparing and cleaning up after meals, and any other tasks assigned by the captain or crew. This included a changing schedule and an environment in which some tasks required all of the trainees to work together in order to accomplish them. This often meant that trainees could be called upon to work, even when they were sleeping or were not technically "on watch".

Forty-three trainees participated in this study. They were between 18 and 24 years old, with the mean age being 20.5 years. Twenty-eight of them were male, 15 female. All of the trainees were "school leavers" (those who left school before graduating) or university graduates who took time to do this trip before starting jobs. Trainees were required to raise money before they came aboard in order to pay for their trip. Most of them attended a rigorous "selection" weekend before the actual trip and some candidates were excluded during this time because they would not have been able to complete the journey (Norris & Weinman, 1996). The control group was composed of 33 university students or graduates. There were 16 males and 17 females in the control group and the mean age was 19 years, 10 months. There were no significant differences between the pre-test scores for the experimental and control groups; both groups' baseline scores were generally the same.

All participants in the study completed the questionnaires immediately before the voyage and directly after the voyage. The control group completed the questionnaires at the same time as the experimental group. The study consisted of the following questionnaires:

> (1) *Satisfaction with Life* (Diener, 1985). A five-item scale producing a measure of the cognitive-judgmental component of emotional well-being which has been conceptualized as life satisfaction.
> (2) *General Health Questionnaire* (GHQ-12, Goldberg, 1978). This is a 12-item measure of psychological distress.
> (3) *Cope* (Carver et al, 1989). This is a 60-item questionnaire measuring the different coping strategies used under conditions of stress.
> (4) *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale* (Rosenberg, 1965). A 10-item questionnaire producing a single self0esteem score (range 10-40) where lower scores indicate higher self-esteem.
> (5) *Generalized Self-Efficacy* (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1993). A 10-item questionnaire measuring self-efficacy.

(6) *Life Orientation Test* (Scheier & Carver, 1985). An eight-item scale with produces a measure of dispositional optimism. (Norris & Weinman, 1996, p. 190)

Results were compared both within groups as well as between the control and experimental groups.

Trainees had significant increases in self-esteem and higher scores in Generalized Self-Efficacy, Satisfaction with Life and the General Health Questionnaire. The control group did not show significant changes in any of these areas. On the questionnaire about coping skills, trainees showed an increase in their use of "positive reinterpretation and growth coping" (Norris & Weinman, 1996, p. 191) while control group participants showed decreases in the uses of these strategies.

Paired *t-tests* showed significant improvement in trainees' self-esteem, self-efficacy and the following coping scales: Behavioral disengagement, positive reinterpretation and growth, and use of humor (Norris & Weinman, 1996). The results of male trainees were compared to female trainees and it was found that males "showed overall higher levels of self-esteem (including in pre-test scores), less psychological distress and less use of humor as a coping mechanism" (Norris & Weinman, 1996, p. 192). Female trainees had a significant increase in their use of humor as a coping mechanism. According to questionnaire results, this change occurred during the sailing voyage. Women had a greater increase in self-esteem over the course of the trip than did men and their initial self-esteem scores were lower than the males'. This result indicates that programs of this kind may have particular benefit for women.

Norris and Weinman (1996) emphasized the results that demonstrate a significant increase in self-esteem for trainees (and not for the control group). They also report

trends that were not significant, but that showed positive change in trainees. These areas include a clear reduction in psychological distress (per the GHQ), and improvement in Generalized Self-Efficacy and Satisfaction with Life scores. The sample size was too small to show a statistically significant result in these areas. The small sample size is a weakness of this study.

While there were trends that showed some change in the control group, there were no significant changes in any of their questionnaire results. This supports the idea that changes in the trainees were not due to developmental progress that could have occurred without the help of the sailing program.

There were several things to consider about this study. Potential students were screened (as they are in most adventure programs, especially long and isolated ones) and were voluntary participants in the program. There was no follow-up data collection so we don't know how lasting these effects were. Strengths of this study include the program length (3 months) and specificity (all sail training). Such a long period of adventure learning can emphasize just how much has changed for the trainees. While the researchers could get quantitative answers to their questionnaires, we have very little information about what actually produced the change that the trainees report. Growth can only be measured in a limited way when psychological concepts are reduced to numbers and quantifiable variables.

This lack of rich qualitative data is a limitation that appears in many studies about adventure education. Since the 1970's, trends in research have been towards being able to quantify a program's effects (for funding and evaluative purposes). My study will address this gap in literature by providing more qualitative data about a sail-training

program. A few recent studies have also attempted to address this issue by including qualitative methods in their studies. Sammet (2005) conducted a mixed method study and program of about the Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG).

Participants in Sammet's (2005) study were all high school girls from the Bay Area in California. Fourteen girls participated in the program in 2004. Sammet (2005) included all 14 participants in her sample. The girls ranged in age from 15 to 18 years old, with the mean age being 16 years. Ten of the 14 participants identified as students of color, reporting that they identify as African American, Latina, Asian or mixed ethnicity (Sammet, 2005). The remaining four students identified as White. All 14 participants completed pre- and post-semester surveys. Of those 14, nine were randomly selected to be formally interviewed. Of the nine girls interviewed, six identified as students of color and three identified as White. When reviewing her results, Sammet (2005) looked for trends in responses along ethnic or racial lines but found that "broad identity categories of race/ethnicity were not found to be either explicitly or implicitly salient to the girls' experiences" (p. 13).

Sammet (2005) used the Life Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ), which was developed specifically to study adventure education programs. Australian Outward Bound schools have been developing this measure for the past ten years (Sammet, 2005). It is a questionnaire that employs a Lickert Scale with a range of 1 (not like me) to 8 (very like me). Participants are asked to answer 29 questions that are grouped into eight categories, or subscales. The eight scales include "locus of control, time management, social competence, achievement motivation, intellectual flexibility, task leadership, emotional control, active initiative, and self-confidence" (Sammet, 2005, p. 12). The

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LEQ was administered on the first day of the semester course and again one week after the completion of the six-week at-sea portion of the trip (13 weeks into the semester).

In addition to the LEQ, Sammet (2005) developed both a post-trip survey and interview. The survey consisted of seven questions that asked each participant to agree or disagree with a statement (e.g. My experience with the TSSG has given me an interest in trying out new experiences and/or taking new risks) and then to explain her answer in writing. The interview was approximately an hour in length and included questions regarding youth development and life skills, transfer of learning (from program to home life), academic learning, physical activity and sense of self as a girl (Sammet, 2005). Sammet (2005) coded the interview answers and presented them in her findings. Based on the articulated goals of the program, Sammet (2005) created four coding categories, including Learning about the Self, Academic Learning, Transfer of Skills and Knowledge, and Program Delivery.

Sammet (2005) reported that she found a very small effect size in her LEQ results, apparently indicating that there were no significant changes in participants' overall "life effectiveness". This may have been due to the study's small sample size, or to the students' changing perspective over time. The girls may have perceived themselves to be extremely competent until faced with new and unusual challenges at which point their confidence got higher than they originally imagined possible.

Sammet (2005) did, however, find small to moderately positive effect sizes in the areas of Task Leadership and Locus of Control (Sammet, 2005). This is a positive and promising result as TSSG states an interest in increasing girls' leadership skills and perception of themselves as powerful people. In other subscale categories, participants

reported a negative effect on their Emotional Control, indicating that they perceived themselves to be un-calm when things go wrong or in stressful situations. Sammet (2005) hypothesizes that this may be due to students overestimating their emotional stability at the beginning of the course, requiring their reevaluation of their ability to stay calm in a new and very stressful situation.

Despite the program's seeming lack of effect on the participants (as per the LEQ results), the interview results indicate very positive impact on participants. The girls reported that TSSG had a "strong and positive affect on their achievement motivation, communication skills, and self-reliance" (Sammet, 2005, p. 19). In the Yes/No survey portion of the study, the girls reported that they learned new social skills and ambitions during their course. If they answered that they had not gained a skill while participating in the program, it was usually because they said that they already possessed the skill in question before the start of the semester. It is notable that, "there was not a single instance where a girl responded No [saying that she did not gain a skill while on the trip] and had a negative comment about the program" (Sammet, 2005, p. 22).

In the interview portion of the study, the girls reported that every single one of them learned something about herself and her abilities while participating in TSSG. They reported improved personal knowledge in the areas of self-reliance, physical stamina and strength, the ability to cope during stressful circumstances, emotional control, self-care, achievement motivation, an appreciation of [their] privilege, and appreciation of personal strengths and weaknesses (Sammet, 2005). All of the students said that they applied skills from their semester to their "normal" home lives, emphasizing that they were able to transfer skills from the program to life in general. Participants expressed their

appreciation for learning academic subjects in an experiential way. They were able to understand and interact with issues of economics, culture and global community by visiting various island countries in the Caribbean. According to the girls, this served to broaden their experience of the world and their perspective on their place in it (Sammet, 2005).

There are several factors that limit this study's generalizability. TSSG is a program with an application process, so all of the girls who participated in this study were self-selecting because they chose to apply to participate in the program. This means that data collected in this study cannot be applied to mandated populations. This study did not involve a control group, so it is impossible to say whether some of the girls' changes are entirely attributable to the TSSG program or to their own natural development (Sammet, 2005). It is also notable that all data collection was done soon after the completion of the at-sea portion of the trip, so it is impossible to know if the effects that the girls reported have been lasting changes.

In her study, Sammet (2005) was both conducting an outcome study and completing a program evaluation for TSSG. She consulted with program staff and administration in order to determine what the program goals were, and then she discussed in her study whether those goals were being reached. Many of Sammet's (2005) suggestions focused changes in the structure of the program that would address shipboard social dynamics, including communication patterns and relationships between students and staff. This focus highlights an area to which too little attention has been paid. In their interviews, students discussed the shipboard community dynamic as something that influenced them greatly. Yet, there are few studies that focus in depth on the group

dynamic and how it affects participants' ability to grow. Neill and Dias (1997) started

this conversation and I will continue to address this issue in my study. Admittedly, social

dynamics are difficult to quantify in a scientific way, but there is room for further

exploration of participants' experiences of social support, community and what the next

paper to be discussed will term "social capital" (Berman, Finkelstein & Powell, 2004).

Berman, Finkelstein & Powell (2004) liken programs that take place on tall ships

to an "environment resembling that of a 'total institution' whereby the youth are taken

out of the familiarity of their home environment and literally launched out to sea" (p.

2538). They propose that shipboard communities create an environment in which youth

can learn or experience trust and tolerance in ways that build civic responsibility and

cultural values. In this study, social capital is the framework used to examine how

youth's experience of a tall ship sailing program is linked to the development of a social

self as well as "alterations in the individual's sense of social membership" (Berman,

Finkelstein & Powell, 2004, p. 2538). This study addresses issues of development and

growth with a sociological approach as opposed to a psychological approach.

Social capital can be defined as the creation of social connections or networks that

produce individual and communal gain by way of those connections (Berman, Finkelstein

& Powell, 2004). Typically, individuals who are rich in social capital are able to gain

entrée into positions of greater responsibility, respect, status or influence in society. Part

of having social capital can be developing one's civic identity (or civic-mindedness) that,

in turn, can clarify one's values and participation in one's community and society.

According to Berman, Finkelstein and Powell (2004):

> The production of 'civic-mindedness' includes: the development of a sense of agency, that one can make a difference or effect change; social responsibility, which pertains to having a concern for other individuals or general societal well-being; and political-moral awareness, which refers to having a capacity to identify problems within the existing social and political order and to then question or challenge that order (p. 2539).

They believe that tall ship programs, beyond simply facilitating higher levels of self-esteem, can instill civic-mindedness in youth.

Study participants were past and present "youth crew" on ten-day trips aboard a square-rigged tall ship in Australia. Each trip included twenty-four 16-24 year old participants. Like most tall ship sailing programs, youth crew were taught how to maintain and run the ship, with the trip culminating in a day of the students being in charge of ship operations. This was a mixed methods study in which present participants were observed during five different 10-day voyages and past participants were interviewed about their on-board experiences.

One hundred and sixty subjects who participated in the program in 1988, 1993, 1997, and 2001 were interviewed via telephone. The sample was selected to equally represent gender and age groups. Interviews were organized into three sections of inquiry: (1) basic demographic information and how or why the participant chose to do the tall ship program, (2) an overview of participants' worldview (re: trust, tolerance, reciprocity and agency), community involvement and social world (social network and skills), and, (3) whether and/or how participants believe the tall ship experience influenced their social skills or involvement in community activities (Berman, Finkelstein & Powell, 2004).

Participants broadly reported that they experienced greater self-confidence or self-belief, new friendships and an opportunity to meet people from backgrounds different from their own, and being able to overcome challenges or fears.

Seventy-six percent of participants reported that the tall ship program improved their social skills and most said that they have good social skills, generally. Ninety-four percent of participants claimed that they can make friendships with people from backgrounds different from their own and referenced the tall ship program as something that helped them to learn this skill. They also said that the program helped them be able to travel, join groups and make friends, generally. Some talked about having an opportunity, whilst sailing, to 'try on' different personas within the shipboard community which helped them to solidify their social identities (Berman, Finkelstein, & Powell, 2004).

Remarkably, only female participants reported great increases in perception of their own agency or self-empowerment. In terms of increasing a girl's social capital, cultivating feelings of capability and openness to reasonable risk or challenge is essential. This study discusses differences in the responses of female and male participants in the tall ship program. Female participants perceived greater gains in the areas of increased confidence, overcoming fears/challenges, and agency/sense of possibility. Male participants thought they gained more skills concerning friendships, and teamwork. Both male and females reported higher levels of self-understanding and development as a result of the sailing program (Berman, Finkelstein & Powell, 2004). These responses serve to highlight the need to know more about how men and women respond differently

to challenge and change in adventure settings, particularly in light of building or teaching resilience.

One of the tenets of social capital is trust. Research has shown that youth, particularly in their teen years, report lower levels of trust in others; one study showed that only 12% of youth would trust a 'generalized other' (Berman, Finkelstein & Powell, 2004). In this study, 71% of participants believed that most people can be trusted and 72% believed that people they meet were more likely to be helpful than to be "looking out for themselves" (p. 2540). This sort of result is significant for youth and may point out that encountering challenge in a group setting and experiencing a supportive community can change individual's beliefs about what they can expect from the world at large.

This study found that, based on their data, "as a fundamental attribute of cooperation, good teamwork was considered of greater importance than great leadership" (p. 2541). Eighty-five percent of participants believed that their views of cooperation were enhanced by their experience onboard the ship. This experience reinforces the lessons of trust in and tolerance for others, which are two important parts of building social capital (and resilience).

In the observation of current participants during a program, subcategories were formed which illuminated key themes, including identity exploration and presentation of self, sharing of resources, seasickness, language and special and temporal constraints. Shipboard life is unique in its isolation from society, and it's emphasis on individual growth while simultaneously encouraging the formation of a complete institutionalized community (i.e. contained with inherent hierarchy). In order for things to run smoothly

on the ship, individuals must override their personal goals for the goals of the group and the best of the community. At the same time, it is within this structure that individuals are helped (by the group) to reach their personal goals as community time and space allow. Berman, Finkelstein and Powell (2004) conclude:

> It is in this role of fostering the creation of networks and alliances that can occur across difference, as well as reinforcing norms of reciprocity and social participation that the ship makes an important contribution to the development of social capital (p. 2543).

All results point towards the positive development of social capital as a result of this sailing program. Participants, both past and present, were able to report development of social skills, agency, increased trust in others, tolerance of difference, an ability to cooperate across those differences and the ability to form effective teams.

A limitation of this study may be the short-term nature of the actual sailing experience. However, ten days away can create great impact, as is shown in the results, and yet a question remains: How does increasing the "dose" of sail training affect the impact of such a program on an individual's life? My study will look at developmental factors similar to those explored by Berman, Finkelstein & Powell (2004), but in participants of a six-week program.

Another point of interest in this study is its departure from a psychological framework. Despite a sociological approach potentially being more appropriate as a discussion point (or marketing tool) for education programs as opposed to therapeutic programs, it ignores the emotional and developmental gains that sail training can affect. In describing therapeutic community for youth, Worthington (2003) points out:

The task of therapy is contained within the wider group function and through the integration of the various aspects of the therapeutic experience: the interplay between the experience of the social, physical and creative environment and the spaces that are provided for reflection, and coming to understand the meaning of what happens in the living, social group and what each child has brought to it (p. 164).

What is lacking in using the lens of social capital but is present in a therapeutic community is attention to the adolescent as an individual who needs help in developing the emotional stability to launch her/him into healthy adulthood.

My study will focus on items that are similar to those explored in the studies conducted by Berman, Finkelstein and Powell (2004), Sammet (2005) and Neill and Dias (1997). I will be looking for resiliency traits and characteristics as well as for elements of social support. The sample size in this study is small, just as in many adventure education studies, and while this sample has some ethnic and racial diversity, all of the girls are from the Bay Area in CA (except for one, who is from Alaska).

While this study will have several things in common with past studies, there are also marked differences. The fact that this is an all female sample is unique. The girls will also have been engaged in a longer at-sea experience than the subjects in Berman, Finkelstein and Powell's (2004) or Neil and Dias' (2001) studies. The other significant different between this study and those done previously is its retrospective nature. There were no pretests administered to this sample. All of the girls completed the TSSG program one or two years ago, so all of their answers are based in a retrospective viewpoint. These girls self-selected as a sample. They were contacted and invited to join the study; those who participated were volunteers who replied to that invitation. This

means that the girls were willing and interested in the program enough, even years after it ended, to give time to discussing their experiences.

Overall, in this study I will be looking for evidence of therapeutic elements that are integral to adventure programming in a community context, specifically in an all-girls semester aboard a traditional tall ship. Berman, Finkelstein and Powell (2004) began to look at tall ship training programs as a social capital model (which includes a focus on community structure and social dynamic). This mixed method study will be the first to qualitatively explore how a shipboard community may behave in a therapeutic way, as reported in participants' own voices.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this mixed-methods study is to determine whether adolescent girls feel more resilient and capable of coping with challenges after completing a semester-long tall ship sailing course. This study also explored how living in community during the program affected the girls' perception of their ability to handle risk and challenge in their lives. Participants in this study were recruited from the 2005 and 2006 graduating classes of the Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG) program in San Francisco, California. Each participant of the program (n= 24) was invited to voluntarily complete an online survey that includes demographic information (including age, ethnic or racial identity) and questions regarding their retrospective beliefs about their resilience, both before and after the program.

Of those invited to participate, 18 individuals responded. Eight girls completed both the online Resiliency Scale survey and an in-person interview. Five girls completed only the online survey and five participated just in the interview. Overall, 13 subjects completed the online survey and thirteen subjects were interviewed about their experience and its perceived impact on their lives. All respondents are currently between the ages of 17 and 20. Demographic data was collected from survey respondents, however, interview participants were only asked to report their age, current occupation

and year of graduation from TSSG. Therefore, the demographic information from these samples cannot be compared because it is incomplete.

Research questions included: 1) Do you feel that your at-sea experiences have influenced your current life? How? 2) What part of being onboard the boat with your classmates influenced you the most? 3) Did this course affect the way you approach problems in your life? If so, how? 4) Did your experiences of social support (from peers, staff, and the group) affect your growth? If so, how? 5) Has completing TSSG affected your relationships (with peers, parents, partners)? If so, how?

Sample

Research participants were selected through a non-random sampling method. Participants of my study were young women who completed the Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG) course in either 2005 or 2006. The Executive Director of TSSG provided contact information for all of the 2005 and 2006 graduates. The Executive Director wrote an introductory email to all of the possible participants, encouraging them to participate in the study. Twenty-four graduates of TSSG were contacted by the Executive Director and the researcher via email and invited to complete the online survey. Of those 24, thirteen responded to the survey and interview portions of the study (54% of the possible sample).

This study had two separate samples, one that answered an Internet survey (n=13) and one that answered interview questions in a one-on-one interview with the researcher (n=13). Eight girls both completed the survey and participated in the interview. The remaining 5 participants were unique to each study. Despite the change in five subjects from one sample to the other, both sets of samples are remarkably similar in make-up.

All but one of the young women who participated in the study are from the Bay Area in California; one participant was from Alaska and lived in the Bay Area for the duration of the program. For more extensive demographic information, see Table 1.

Thirteen Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG) graduates completed the Resiliency Scale survey via the Internet. Out of those thirteen respondents, six graduated from TSSG in 2006 and seven completed the program in 2005. The current age range of 2005 and 2006 graduates is 17-20 years, with the mean age being 18.4 years. When they were experiencing the program, their age ranged from 15-18 years old, with a mean age of 16.5 years. Sixty-two percent of graduates polled (n=13) have already graduated from high school. Of the 38 percent (5 girls) who have not yet graduated high school, 3 girls (23%) will graduate in 2007 and one (8%) plans to graduate in 2008. One girl (8%) reports that she does not plan to graduate from high school.

In the Resiliency Scale sample (n=13), seven girls identified as White (54%). Three identified as Latina (23%) and three identified as African-American (23%). One participant identified as Asian (8%); one identified as Chicana (8%); one identified as Brazilian (8%), and one identified as Native American (8%). Some girls identified as multi-ethnic by indicating that they identify with more than one category. For specific information about the racial and ethnic demographics of participants from each graduating class (2005 vs. 2006), please see Table 1.

Thirteen girls were interviewed for the interview portion of this study. Of those 13, seven of them are 2005 graduates and six are 2006 graduates. While some of these participants (8 girls) also completed the Internet Resiliency Scale, not all of them did; demographic information cannot be assumed to be the same as seen in Table 1. The

researcher only asked for the age, current occupation, and year of TSSG graduation of interview participants. The age range for interview participants was 17 to 19 years, with the mean age being 17.8 years. The ages from each graduating class were the same, with the only difference being that the class of 2005 was represented by one more interview participant. The "extra" or unmatched 2005 graduate was 19 years old.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Resiliency Scale Survey Respondents

Year of Graduation from TSSG		2005 (n=7)	2006 (n=6)	Total (n=13)	Percent (%)
Current Age	17 years	0	2	2	15
	18 years	3	2	5	38
	19 years	3	2	5	38
	20 years	1	0	1	8
Age at start of TSSG	15 years	0	1	1	8
	16 years	3	2	5	38
	17 years	4	2	6	46
	18 years	0	1	1	8
Race/Ethnicity*	Latina	3	0	3	23
	African American	1	2	3	23
	Asian	0	1	1	8
	White/Caucasian	3	4	7	54
	Chicana	1	0	1	8
	Brazilian	1	0	1	8
	Native American	1	0	1	8
Currently doing? *	High School	0	3	3	23
	College – part time	0	1	1	8
	College – full time	6	2	8	62
	Unemployed	1	0	1	8
	Employed, part time	3	0	3	23
	Employed, full time	0	0	0	0
Currently live with	Parents/Family	3	3	6	46
	Boyfriend	1	1	2	15
	Friend	1	0	1	8
	Roommate in Dorm	1	2	3	23

* Some participants identified with more than one category

In 2005 and 2006, 100% of TSSG participants were low income and qualified for, and received, financial aid and scholarship fund assistance. Financial need is determined by the Private School Aid Service standards.

In order to participate in this program, each girl went through an application process that included an application form, essay, two teacher recommendations, a parent/guardian statement, a transcript and an interview; in this way, participants in TSSG were self-selecting and interested in challenging themselves with this program. Applicants to the program were also screened by the Executive Director of the program in order to ensure that the girls were capable of completing the work and being away from home for the sea portion of the trip.

The TSSG admissions committee accepts students who "show both a need for growth and potential for growth in the following areas: Appropriate response to constructive criticism, self-understanding, personal flexibility, perception of internal locus of control, motivation to achieve excellence, self-confidence, social competence, social responsibility, academic achievement, and intellectual maturity" (Tall Ship Education Academy, 2006). Students need not possess these qualities before beginning the semester, but they need to show evidence of being able to grow to learn these skills. Prohibiting factors include "mental or physical conditions which require regular or emergency access to health care practitioners [including, but not limited to] heart conditions or severe asthma, severe and/or untreated depression, bulimia or anorexia and suicidal tendencies" (Tall Ship Education Academy, 2006).

Due to the limited time that I had to complete data collection for this study, I could only conduct face-to-face interviews with candidates who live within two hours of

San Francisco. All of my respondents were able to meet within two hours of San Francisco, except for one who currently lives in Alaska. I conducted and tape-recorded her interview over the phone. Every girl who volunteered to be interviewed was contacted for an interview.

This sample may have been skewed in some way because the participants were all contacted through the program itself. Those graduates who had a less positive experience may have been less likely to respond to my requests for participants, since it came through the Tall Ship Education Academy (TSEA). A larger study, with more time for its completion, would allow for a more complete sampling of TSSG classes. A modification for future studies could be to interview all of the participants in each graduating class, in order to more fully understand the program's impact.

Recruitment Process

I gained access to the girls' addresses and contact information from the Executive Director of TSEA, which runs the Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG). She had contact information for each participant from the 2005 and 2006 programs. For the girls who are under 18 years old, the director emailed and called each girl's parents or guardians to introduce the project to them. She and I mailed each parent an informed consent form and self-addressed stamped envelope for the parent to sign and return via regular mail. The girls brought their signed parental consent forms to their scheduled interview with the researcher. All of the underage graduates who responded to the Internet survey also participated in the interview, so parents signed the consent form granting permission for their child to participate in both aspects of the study.

To contact the TSSG graduates themselves (both under and over 18 years old), the Executive Director of TSSG emailed each young woman a letter of introduction requesting their voluntary participation in my study. The email also included a computer link to the Survey Monkey program where they could complete the Resiliency Scale survey and demographic questionnaire. The first page of the survey was a computer informed consent form, which was explained and was required in order for all participants to continue with the survey. The girls simply completed the survey and the confidential results were sent to me via an encrypted Internet program.

At the end of the survey, I asked each participant if she would volunteer to participate in an audio taped interview in which I would ask about social dynamics and community development during the at-sea component of TSSG. I included my phone number and email address so that the girls could contact me with questions. If they agreed to be interviewed, they wrote their contact information at the end of the survey. Due to the nature of the Survey Monkey program, their names were recorded as an answer to a survey question which could not be linked to their other responses or data.

I contacted, via email and phone, those who were willing to be interviewed by me for the qualitative portion of my study, which looked more closely at social dynamics and their experience of their at-sea community. Those young women who live locally or within a two-hour drive from San Francisco, I met for face-to-face interviews (n=12) near where they currently live. Some of the girls were away at college but we scheduled their interviews to take place when they were in the Bay Area over spring break. For the one participant who lives out of state (n=1), I conducted a telephone interview so that she could participate in the study.

When I only had nine responses from girls who were wiling to be interviewed, the Executive Director called girls who were local to remind them to respond to the survey. In this way, I gained the remaining four interviews. The Executive Director made an effort to connect me with girls who had varied social and economic backgrounds and different experiences while completing TSSG.

Data Collection

Participants were contacted via email and were asked to complete a short survey on the Internet, which included a demographic questionnaire and the Resiliency Scale (via Survey Monkey) (Appendix A). For those participants older than 18 years, informed consent was gained through the Survey Monkey survey. For those who were under 18 years old, I gained informed consent from a parent. Underage participants also provided consent before beginning the survey (Appendix D).

The survey that followed the informed consent included demographic information: age, race, educational status, year of participation in TSSG, current occupation, and living arrangement (with family, friends, or at school). There was also a Resilience Scale (Neill & Dias, 2001) survey in the form of a likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5. Participants were asked to reflect (yes/no) on whether they believed their answers to the Resiliency Scale would have been different before their onboard sailing experience. They were also given space to comment on how their answers would have been different before their sailing experience, if in fact they believe their answers changed based on their sailing trip. It took approximately 20 minutes to complete.

At the end of the survey, they were asked if they were willing to be interviewed regarding the social dynamics and community aspect of their onboard experiences. If

they responded "yes", there was a space for them to record their contact information so that I could contact them for an in-person or telephone interview. Participant contact information was kept separately from the survey responses and answers were not linked to respondent's names.

Audio taped interviews were conducted in various places that were local and convenient to each young woman. I conducted two interviews in participants' homes, one in a café, three at a local high school, and six in a conference room at San Francisco State University. For the participant who did not live locally, I conducted an audio-recorded telephone interview using the same questions using an interview protocol that allows for some flexibility. Interviews were 30 to 50 minutes long. I audio taped the interviews. All of the participants' answers were transcribed by a professional transcriber, who signed a confidentiality agreement before seeing the material (Appendix F).

Data Analysis

In my study, the girls' answers to the Resiliency Scale survey were used as a guide for the interview portion of the study. I looked for patterns in the resiliency answers and summed each response. Did the girls report that this program improved their resilience in some areas more than others? I used the survey to collect basic descriptive statistics and then delved further into how this program affected the girls' resiliency and social structures in the interview segment of the study. I did not have enough quantitative data from the surveys to draw conclusions about statistical significance regarding the girls' overall resilience. Instead, I used the scale data to frame

my interview queries in order to create a more complete picture of how this program affected the participants.

Interviews were transcribed, analyzed, and coded for common and unique themes using content analysis. Research conclusions were drawn from these results, based upon revealed patterns.

Confidentiality

The Survey Monkey survey program protected each participant's identity, as it is an encrypted program that will not trace the origin of the respondent's computerized answers. When a participant completed the survey, her answers were automatically sorted and each answer was added to data that is compiled for each question. Data was only reported after each question's responses were compiled into summated form. In this way, I never saw the participants' answers individually. I only saw compilations of responses to each question. When a participant indicated that she was interested in being interviewed, she wrote her name into a space that was configured as an essay question. Her name and information were reported to me as part of a compiled list of names, without having any connection to any of the other survey answers.

Once I made contact with those willing to participate in interviews, each interview participant was assigned a number between 1 and 15. From that time forward, all responses and data were attached to the assigned number, not to be affiliated with a name again. Consent forms were separated from transcribed interview answers and data in order to protect participant confidentiality. No names were included in the reported results. In the written report, participants' names were omitted. Anecdotes are reported

without including location names, student or staff names. Any information that makes situations obvious has been omitted or summarized without easily identifiable details.

A professional transcriber was used to transcribe interviews. The transcriber signed a confidentiality agreement prior to starting work on any study materials. Only the researcher and my research advisor had access to participant data. Data, audiotapes, notes and consent forms will be kept secure in a locked file cabinet for a period of three years as stipulated by federal guideline after which time they will be destroyed or will continue to be maintained securely.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This study was undertaken to determine whether adolescent females who participated in the Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG) program in 2005 and 2006 perceived themselves to be more resilient after completing the program. This study also explored social support amongst participants and the possibility that this program functions as a therapeutic community for adolescent girls by meeting their developmental needs in a way that is particularly effective for adolescents. These questions were explored through interviews with graduates of TSSG classes 2005 and 2006.

This study had two separate samples, one that answered an Internet survey (n=13) and one that answered interview questions in a one-on-one interview with the researcher (n=13). Eight girls both completed the survey and participated in the interview. The remaining 5 participants were unique to each study. Despite the change in five subjects from one sample to the other, both sets of samples are remarkably similar in make-up. Demographic information for the Resiliency Scale study can be found in Chapter III: Methods (Table 1, p. 53). Demographic information for the interview segment of the study is described in Chapter III: Methods (p. 52).

The results of this study will be divided into two general sections within this chapter: data pertaining to resilience and challenge, and data regarding social support, group development and potential therapeutic outcomes from living and working in

community. Within those two sections, common themes will be identified and outlined

with supporting quotes from the interviews.

<div align="center">Resilience and Challenge</div>

Resiliency was measured using a Resilience Scale survey that was administered

via the Internet (Appendix A), as well as through questions administered during an

interview (Appendix B). Interview topics related to resilience and challenge included:

(1) What part of the at-sea experience had the biggest influence on each girl, (2) How a

girl may have changed as a result of her at-sea experience and what influence that change

has on her current life, (3) How the program may have affected how she approaches

problems in her life, and (4) If and how her relationships have changed as a result of the

program. Several themes emerged between the interviews and the short answer section

that appeared in the Resiliency Scale survey. These themes included (1) discovering

structure, (2) having a *positive attitude* and *openness* that fosters opportunity and

connections with others, (3) increased *confidence*, and (4) improving *communication*

skills, (5) learning *responsibility*, and (6) forming a *community* or team.

<div align="center">*Resiliency Scale*</div>

The Resiliency Scale results show that 100% of the TSSG graduates believe that

they can manage whatever life brings them. Half of them perceive that TSSG made them

more confident in their ability to be flexible and successful when confronted with

challenging situations. Greater than 90% of girls report that they have high levels of

responsibility, reliability, self-satisfaction, determination, confidence, pride in

themselves, and the ability to use humor to relieve tension. Eighty-five percent of

participants report that they are multi-taskers who feel their lives have meaning, are

<div align="center">62</div>

determined and organized, and can use their belief in themselves to get through

challenges. Seventy-seven percent of participants believed that they are self-disciplined

and 64% report that they can look at a situation from multiple angles or perspectives.

Fifty-four percent of participants reported that they are friends with themselves and that

they stay interested in things over time (see Table 2).

Table 2. Resiliency Scale results, reflecting the answers of TSSG graduates (n=13) from
the classes of 2005 (n=7) and 2006 (n=6).

Resiliency Statement	n (%) Agree	n (%) Sometimes	n (%) Disagree	Answer is Different Because of TSSG; n (%)
When I make plans, I follow through with them.	12 (92)	1 (8)	0 (0)	10 (77)
I feel that I can handle many things at a time.	11 (85)	2 (15)	0 (0)	10 (77)
I am determined.	11 (85)	1 (8)	1 (8)	9 (69)
I feel proud that I have accomplished things in my life.	12 (92)	1 (8)	0 (0)	8 (67)
When I am in a difficult situation, I can usually make my way out of it.	12 (92)	1 (8)	0 (0)	8 (62)
My belief in myself gets me through hard times.	11 (85)	1 (8)	1 (8)	7 (54)
I usually manage, one way or another.	13(100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (46)
I have self-discipline.	10 (77)	3 (23)	0 (0)	6 (46)
My life has meaning.	11 (85)	1 (8)	1 (8)	6 (46)
I have enough energy to do what I have to do.	7 (54)	5 (38)	1 (8)	6 (46)
I am friends with myself.	12 (92)	0 (0)	1 (8)	5 (42)
I can usually find something to laugh about.	12 (92)	1 (8)	0 (0)	4 (31)
I usually take things in stride.	9 (75)	2 (16)	1 (8)	3 (25)
I stay interested in things.	5 (54)	6 (46)	0 (0)	3 (23)
I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways.	8 (62)	5 (38)	0 (0)	2 (17)

It should be noted that participants reported not understanding the question phrased, "I usually take things in stride". This is a slang term that most girls were confused about. This may have affected the girls' answers to this question as most of them expressed confusion but answered it anyway; some of their answers reflected their misunderstanding of what the phrase means.

Participants who reported disagreement with resiliency statements disagreed with statements about their level of self-esteem of confidence, saying that they are not determined and lack a belief in themselves, positive self-regard, and enough energy to do what they have to do. These girls did not comment about why they felt this way but indicated that their opinions of themselves and their energy levels did not get worse as a result of TSSG.

Based on the fact that over 50% of participants reported change in the following areas, TSSG seemed to have the greatest ability to affect positive change in, (1) following through with commitments, (2) multi-tasking, (3) determination, (4) pride in accomplishments, (5) confidence that difficult situations are navigable, and (6) belief in self to overcome challenges. It is unclear whether other areas were less impacted by the program because the girls possessed these skills before entering TSSG or because the program does not affect these areas as directly as those mentioned above. It may be assumed that in the cases in which high percentages of the girls report that they posses certain skills and qualities ("agree"), but do not report that they would have answered this question differently before completing TSSG, the girls either had the skill before starting the TSSG program or have acquired them since completing the program, in some other setting.

Structure

In the interviews, the girls talked about their schedule on the boat. Someone is always on duty, 24 hours a day, maintaining the vessel and running the ship's operations (navigating, setting or trimming sails, cleaning, cooking). The girls were woken throughout the night to take their turn working or "being on watch". This was quite a challenge for the girls and overall, 46 percent of participants (n=6) indicated that the strict schedule had the biggest impact on them. One girl said that the biggest impact for her was "being involved in something 24/7, like being a part of something you can't take a break from". Another girl reported,

> Growing up in the city, you just…or at least for me, I just kind of seemed to live by my own rules and on the ship it really wasn't like that. If you were a minute late, it was kind of the end of the world.

The girls focused on how it felt for them at the beginning of the voyage to be in a foreign environment. They were working at all hours of the day and night. Their work was not optional.

> I wasn't used to so much structure. It was kind of like a bombard…this setting, do this, do that, you have to do it at a certain time, a certain amount and a certain way. I wasn't really used to that. I didn't have that kind of thing where I lived, any parents telling you what to do or anything like that, so I was kind of like, I was like really angry at first, I guess, like why are these people telling me what to do? But it was kind of good. It taught me to be responsible. I got used to the schedules and doing things the way they were supposed to be done. It was still hard, but I figured I've got to do it anyway, so I might as well bite the bullet and do it.

The girls rose to the occasion and accomplished tasks that felt overly demanding and structured at first. One girl reports that living in a structured environment helped her to learn how to structure her time and tasks when she returned home.

Energy is dependent on what you eat and your own motivation. I learned that in the program because I wanted to have enough energy to support my crew during watch. I now am able to go to school for 25 hours a week, work for 20 hours a week and still have energy. I take care of myself but I also don't ever use being tired as an excuse. I can feel tired but just like when aboard ship, I push my self to meet the goal, and I accomplish it.

During the trip, the girls could choose how they wanted to handle "being told what to do all the time". It is in reference to this that the girls talk about developing a positive attitude about their at-sea experiences.

Positive Attitude and Openness

The girls talked extensively about their conscious choice to be a positive member of the shipboard community. Most of them learned over time just how much each of them affected the mood of the whole group. While many admit that being negative was easier at times, the effort of being positive was worth the difference that positive energy made to the productivity and comfort level of the group.

> [I've changed] my attitude. I was really unaware of how I came off to people...I just figured out kind of what I needed to do and how I wanted to be. I just was more aware of being positive, cause I felt like in the beginning of the trip I was really negative cause I was sick and I didn't know what I was doing…and I hated it. Then like all of a sudden I just became so positive and even the job I hated in the beginning I had no problem doing and I was just so positive towards everybody, and every day I would think…about ways to bring that home with me.

Being on the boat in a community of women gave the girls a new perspective on their culture and attitudes at home. For some, they became aware of the defenses they felt they needed to maintain in high school.

> I had this bitchy attitude in school…you have a tough attitude and you have to bring this character out to people, you gotta show that, or you're gonna get stepped on…. just being stuck with each other like that [on the boat], I was like okay, maybe if I just spend the time to talk to somebody [I can] not carry this big character to people, showing them that I'm mean.

Thirty-eight percent (n=5) said that they have adopted a more positive attitude and are happier or more content in their lives. Two girls reported that, prior to TSSG, they had been seeing therapists for depression and conflict with their families. They both say that after TSSG they have not needed to be in therapy, citing greater general happiness, purposefulness and the ability to form a more positive relationship with family. One reports, TSSG "taught me to stay positive and optimistic about pretty much everything. Look for the good".

Many of the girls reported that they returned from the at-sea trip friendlier, more outgoing young women who were more open to meeting new types of people. One sums it up by saying,

> I kind of followed our society's like stereotypes towards people…[Now] I've seen the beauty in people out there and I just think everybody has that beauty and I didn't want to bring that negative part and that thing back with me. I have this whole new outlook on how people are.

Another says,

> I used to be this thuggish girl, always carried this bad old frown and ready to fight anybody in a hot second, but [I've] changed so much, and everybody knows [it's] because of TSSG. That's the part of my life that got me where I am today.

The girls often reported being more open and outgoing in the same breath as talking about their increases in self-confidence.

Confidence

Every participant in the study talked about her gains in confidence over the course of the TSSG at-sea experience. They also express that this increase in confidence carries over into their home lives, including school, extracurricular activities or jobs, friendships and social endeavors. One girl says, "Tall Ships helped me to realize that even when I

am faced with a really challenging task, I have the confidence and strength to do almost anything I put my mind to". Their confidence has to do with newly acquired skills or new self-acceptance and some of it has to do with having been part of a community that made them feel genuinely seen and liked.

> TSSG helped me be like more comfortable with being myself with people and at school, I've made some good friends since I was here and I feel more confident about being able to do that, like, instead of thinking, "Oh they might not like me".

Some of the change in confidence was associated with doing something that the girls did not inherently enjoy (sailing). This was a novel experience for them and they had no reason to believe that they would be good at it. One interviewee described the continuing effect that TSSG has on her life by saying,

> Just knowing that you can, like, you can achieve stuff that's not like, [something that] you would normally do. I had never been exposed to sailing ever, so it's like, then you get on a ship and you're like, I've never done this but I can do it now.

The girls spoke of their pride in their accomplishments and how this has led them to take more risks in their lives, because they have more faith that things will work out well for them.

> After I completed the six weeks aboard the ship I felt like, 'Look what I just did! This is crazy. I just did all this stuff I thought I could never do.'… If I can do this, I can do anything with school, college if I want to. TSSG showed me, like, I don't say 'No' to anything. I don't take 'No' for an answer. Anything I want, I will get. If my mindset is on that, like, I'm going to get it. That's just what's gonna make me happy and what I want to do, and that's what the program really showed me.

They also describe having confidence to take action about circumstances in their lives because of their belief in themselves.

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Before I didn't believe in myself, and now I do. I've gone through many obstacles before and since TSSG, the difference is how I've handled them and either turned them into something positive or kicked whatever it was out of my life.

In describing their confidence, the girls mentioned a newfound assertiveness and an ability to express their feelings and needs.

Communication

Sixty-nine percent of participants (n=9) indicated that the girls now approach problems in their lives with better communication skills and that they remain engaged in interactions without "shutting down" or walking away from unresolved interactions.

It showed me that it's not always the best thing to step away from a problem, it's good to confront it and hear both sides of the story, cause when you're living in that kind of environment it's not just *your* way, you really need to put yourself in their shoes and use that and your own views and come out with something that's gonna make it work. A lot of my friends today, they step away from stuff: "Just shut up and stop talking to me." And I'm like, "Well, can we just talk about this?" And once we do, it usually solves stuff.

They talk about the importance of staying calm, not yelling, and using "I" statements. There were several stories about passing along their learned communication skills to others in their home lives --family members, friends, significant others and roommates. The girls report that they have learned how to handle frustration and conflict:

I had to confront people, and that was hard, but I learned how to do that and now because I was able to learn that on the ship, during school, whenever I have a confrontation I kind of work through it a lot better.

Not only did they learn how to communicate their negative feelings, but they came to terms with sharing their affection and genuine, vulnerable emotions with others:

The life lesson I learned was [about] showing your affections also. I cried on the boat, and I have this thing where I cannot cry in public cause that, to me, is a sign of weakness. So, I learned it's okay to show my affection at times, it's okay to cry, it's okay to tell people that you care.

One hundred percent of responses to the question, "How have your relationships changed since the at-sea course?" indicated that the girls perceive themselves to be better, more honest communicators who are more assertive about what (and who) they want in their lives.

> I learned about meeting things more head on, rather than just kind of avoiding them…. I think I almost got more selfish through TSSG, but in a good way. I learned to look out for myself more rather than just trying to preserve the status quo.

There was one outlier in the area of communication that said that she learned to keep her troubles to herself because the group communication process was overwhelming or felt unproductive. This data may represent a trend that was not well represented or expressed in this study, but that may merit further attention in the future.

> I try to deal with [problems] within myself instead of, you know, bringing it all out and trying to resolve it with other people because from my experience it's less constructive because you never really know how the results are gonna turn out and…I've come to the conclusion that it's just easier to kind of find a resolution within yourself instead of trying to resolve it, like openly, and with facilitators.

The previous quote refers to communicating less so as to eliminate the complications that come from involving multiple people in a process. The next quote expresses a new reliance on other people:

> I tried really hard, if we would argue I would try not to get mad and try to be problem solving and try to be like, okay, let's just work this out. I depend on you, you depend on me. I don't think I would have tried to have them understand me [before], but it meant a lot to me to have the girls understand me.

At times, the girls related their need to communicate as a responsibility that they had towards their fellow classmates. They also talked about how difficult it was to be so

consistently responsible for their work and their effects on others, throughout the six

weeks.

Responsibility

Forty-six percent of participants (n=6) indicate that being held responsible for

their actions had the biggest impact on them during the trip. One girl says,

> I am immensely changed. The program makes you change because you are
> working with peers and you're also, like, trying to be very, very responsible, and
> you're just, like, taking initiative for everything that you do. I feel like before,
> like, I felt like I was responsible before the program, but it made me, like, overall,
> every single action I had, there was no excuse for anything, you have to just act to
> the fullest of your…just act responsible and take ownership for everything you do
> and also just know that people depend on you….Before TSSG, I would go to
> work and I would be all responsible, and then I would go to high school and I was
> just the average kid. And then after [TSSG], I was like, overall as a person, I
> could talk to any adult or anything and conduct myself in a way that's, like, I
> know who I am, like, wherever I am. So, yeah, more responsible.

Some of the girls said that having an equal share of the work for, and on, the boat

was what inspired them to become more responsible. They also reported that, after

TSSG, "instead of just starting and then give up, if I'm starting something, I'll finish it".

In conjunction with responsibility, the girls mentioned that their motivation for following

through on their responsibilities was based upon their feelings about living in a small

community for six weeks. One participant summed it up:

> Everything has changed for the good because of TSSG! First of all, the program
> shows you that everything you do and say has an impact [on others] and therefore,
> why not take responsibility for your actions and do everything you can to your
> best ability.

Several girls explained that being part of a shipboard community inspired them to engage

in their work because they did not want to disappoint the classmates who were relying on

them to carry out their responsibilities.

Community

Forty-six percent of participants (n=6) indicated that the biggest impact on the

girls came from the community and teamwork aspect of their TSSG experience. One

said, "I think the sense of community, I mean, really helped us throughout the voyage and

it was something that definitely was the strongest, most memorable part of the voyage".

Within this community setting, girls who relied on others for help a lot in their

home lives were made to make decisions for the group as a leader: "Taking the leadership

role as well as having to be one of the team…definitely opened me up to the world a little

bit". Another reported, "I never really had to be accountable to anyone, and then I had to

be accountable to my shipmates and the captain and the crew and my watch."

Those who relied on few people at home found that they needed to ask for help

from others.

> One of the main parts for me, I think, was that you're working as a team, so you
> can't do it by yourself, and that's something that was kind of hard for me to
> accept in the beginning, cause I'm just the type of person that always wants to be
> independent and get everything done on my own. I don't like to depend on other
> people…So to accept the fact that you can't do this alone was kind of difficult in
> the beginning….the whole ship was depending on you. It was kind of hard to get
> that going at first, but I think once we got the hang of it, it was kind of nice to just
> be in a routine like that.

In this way, TSSG addressed issues of dependence for all of the girls. The girls received

constant feedback from their community and this feedback, delivered in a caring and

direct way, inspired change.

> I used to not give people the time of day to get to know me or for me to get to
> know them. I really didn't care too much who knew me, who didn't know me,
> what people thought of me. And living with all those girls it's like, if we were in
> a classroom I wouldn't care what they thought of me, but living together as close
> as we did and depending on each other and all those kinds of things, I really cared
> what they thought of me….Sometimes [my attitude] can come across to some

people as rude…and I learned a lot on the ship cause when I wasn't trying to be rude people would be like, "You're being rude." And that's never happened to me before. Then I'm gonna change my tone of voice and I'm gonna change my manner and those kind of things.

A few of the girls talked about how they have become more involved in their communities at home after completing TSSG, both because they felt empowered to participate in more activities and because they specifically enjoyed the benefits of belonging to a community. One participant reports being a Youth Commission representative for a local district's Operations Officer. Others talk of having jobs in which they interact with people; one is a customer service representative at a large mall, another is going to be a resident assistant at her college, yet another is teaching a class in communication to middle school children. When I met with one participant, she asked me to deliver fliers for a local community meeting about race, violence and poverty in a nearby neighborhood to the TSSG girls who I was meeting in the local high school. Even girls who did not graduate from TSSG in the same year feel a sense of community with other TSSG alumnae.

Social Support and Therapeutic Community

Types of social support and the possibility of TSSG operating like a therapeutic community were explored via a one-on-one interview with 2005 and 2006 graduates from the program. Interview questions asked about who were the least and most supportive members of the group as well as the perceived support from the group as a whole and from the staff/crew. Questions also explored (1) how the dynamic surrounding each element of the group (least and most supportive, the group itself and the staff/crew) affected individual girls, (2) how the group as a whole responded to each element, and (3)

what the girls learned from each of the dynamics surrounding each group element (see

Appendix B).

Several themes that help to illuminate social dynamics and aspects of community-

inspired change emerged from the interviews. Themes include: (1) *Community*, (2) *Work*

Ethic, (3) *Openness and Genuineness*, and (4) *Identity*. These themes will be outlined

and supported with evidentiary quotes below. Though some of these themes appear the

same as those in the Resilience and Challenge data analysis, they are different. In

answering the questions about social support during the at-sea portion of TSSG, the girls

focused on what made them feel supported or unsupported. The themes detailed below

highlight how the structure of community living affected the girls' overall well-being and

development as opposed to their psychological resilience.

Community

> When we first started the whole program, everybody was on their own side of the room not talking to each other and by the end, every single person was like my sister and we still feel like that even though we're not as close and we don't hang out all the time cause everyone went their separate ways, but we still feel like there's 12 girls that I know are my sisters. It's because of that, the experience of coming together as a group, like everybody related to each other, and it's funny to watch how people that had nothing in common become best friends.

The community aspect of TSSG was the most talked-about theme in this study.

The researcher asked the girls to answer (in detail) questions about their perceptions of

their shipmates. This was an uncomfortable process for some participants because they

did not want to have to single out their classmates as "least" or "most" of anything, which

is tribute to their sense of loyalty to their TSSG community.

When asked about who the least supportive member of their group was for them

personally, the consensus was that those who made teamwork and community living

more difficult were seen as the least supportive. One participant said, "She was really dramatic and really loud all the time…She never shot me down about anything but…she made teamwork difficult so in that way she wasn't really supporting us." Those who were perceived to be self-centered, gossipy, or "drama queens" who perpetuated or escalated drama amongst the ship's company were seen as having a negative influence on the shipboard community.

> For me the least supportive person was one girl who just was so into herself. She didn't care if you new [the answer] as long as she knew it and let everybody know she knew it. She didn't care if you needed help because she knew [the answer] and was going to let people know she knew it. She made it really hard to ask questions or like, if she was really getting something and you were like, "Can you help me?", you knew she would talk behind your back.

Girls who isolated themselves from the group and didn't seem to be a part of the group process ("she just didn't accept the whole teamwork aspect") were also seen as less supportive, sometimes because they made group cohesion harder and sometimes just because the participants reported not knowing them as well as the others.

> She just didn't go along with a lot of the things were trying to achieve and was kind of lazy and it took her a while to really adapt….It was hard and she was kind of a loner and it was very hard to bond with her, to talk to her about things that we had in common, I think.

One girl simply said, "I think it's because I didn't really talk to her…I always knew she was there to talk to if I wanted to really connect. I know she was right beside me…we just never took the time to talk." Those who were described as least supportive affected the group because their lack of contribution was upsetting to the other members. Participants described being frustrated, angry, resentful, disappointed and confused by those who were not fully participating as supportive members of the group. A few (n=4)

girls said that they felt personally disliked by the least supportive person (even though this did not turn out to be true in some cases).

Girls who gave social support to individuals within the group were overwhelmingly reported to be the most supportive members of the group (92% of responses; n=12). Social support included laughing, being welcoming of others, talking during "down time" about non-work related topics, giving honest feedback, behaving "like family". Sixty-two percent of participants (n=8) indicated that the most supportive person encouraged her shipmates and was something of a cheerleader when the girls were feeling tired, unmotivated, uncertain or unhappy. "It was nice to have someone who was always on your side, just like a cheerleader and I think that was really good…[Another girl] would give you honest opinions…She was a different kind of support but still very valuable." Along with being encouraging, she also directly helped others in her group when she saw them struggling.

> I would kind of watch her. Like, the sailing part, the actual mechanics of it, at one point was a little difficult for me, and she would be there and she would have understood it before and kind of explain it, and then I would get it and be able to pass it on to someone else.

When asked about how supportive the staff and crew were of them, the girls indicated that being encouraged (62%; n=8) and noticed (15%; n=2) by the adults on board made them feel supported and part of a larger whole. They also talked about being treated like adults by the crew and feeling, at times, burdened by this responsibility but also respected for their hard work.

Sixty-two percent of responses (n=8) indicate that group dynamics were tough at the beginning of the trip but that the group was very connected by the end of the voyage. One participant reports:

> In the beginning it was a little tough, cause everyone was like, "What do you mean teamwork?" And they didn't really get that, and I didn't really get that in the beginning. But once it started clicking for everyone, like, by the end of the trip people were staying onboard instead of going on land to help other girls be able to pass their quiz or whatever….In the beginning everyone was just kind of on their own and fending for themselves but after a while they got it.

When asked about group dynamics, several girls referred to community meetings that were held in order to address issues that were coming up as the group developed. Many cited these meetings as a pivotal step towards developing a group that could work together and rely on each other like family.

One outlier did not see the benefit of the turmoil that the group went through as they were developing into a community, saying,

> I liked the group much less than I like the individuals…I just felt like people were using [group meetings] as a pedestal to make their speeches rather than going to all the people that were bothering them directly, with is what I felt needed to happen….I think leader personalities are great. I think they become a problem when they find out everyone else thinks of them that way, and then they tend to dominate.

Seventy-seven percent of participants (n=10) said that they were close to their shipmates "like family". One girl reported,

> In the beginning I felt like I didn't have support from, like, anybody. But we had a big discussion in one of our last stops and we just started giving each other a lot more support and then I felt like I got some support from everybody.

Overall, 6 girls (46%) said that the group eventually developed tolerance for each other and they learned to accept all group members, without expecting them to change who

they were. One girl said that her resolution was, "If that's the way she chooses to be, I'm fine with that. I won't judge her for the way she is. I'll accept her". Another said,

> You're like, "Okay, that's fine, do what you gotta do, just make sure you get everything else done. Even if you have to do it in your own way, we're not gonna be frustrated about it or feel held back about it"…You just learn to live with people.

The girls described having to change their social patterns in order to allow a cohesive group to form. One participant said, "I learned how to listen and learn and to how to learn from mistakes, for sure". The girls had to start talking with new shipmates as well as allowing themselves to be known by their shipmates. After taking the risk of getting to know new people, one girl said, "I just felt like people really like me…and I still have what they gave me, which was…knowing that people really could care about me."

The girls frequently spoke of how they learned to be "interdependent" with their shipmates, which was a particular challenge for some of them (see Resilience and Challenge, *Community* section). One participant said, "The reason why I changed was not just me changing. It was everyone making me change, being involved with my transformation." An example of this interdependence for one participant was how well the girls knew each other's habits. She said,

> You kind of feel like other people care about you and they're not just telling you, they're showing you. So that's what I seen at the boat…Towards the end of the trip we said, "I love you" or whatever but we most likely showed it to each other…Like, at sea, we're having trouble pulling the line, other people will see and come help you. They don't even ask. They come help you. You see…they're having trouble, so they show they care about you.

One participants said that despite any conflicts they may have been having, they learned how to put their personal opinions aside in order to get tasks done, together. Another commented,

Seeing the girls, seeing us get it done the first time, all together, that's beautiful. Seeing something grow so much, seeing a group, like, just bounce off each other and feed off each other and just grow and come out such a finished product. It was so cool.

Two outlying participants said that being part of the group made them more

independent and self-reliant, saying, "I learned not to rely on people, that I can't rely on

people all the time, because, like, I love them, but they weren't always that reliable." The

other said,

I definitely learned that you can really only rely on yourself to give yourself an experience that you want to have. So, I definitely became more independent about how I thought about things and kind of, if I wanted to give myself a certain experience or certain outlook on life, I knew that I had to achieve it through my own means or altering things about myself.

Sixty-nine percent of participants (n=9) reported that being supported by the

community and its members made her feel connected, like she belonged.

Everybody just contributed something in the group, so that's what made the group strong; everybody had their own little personal thing they contributed to our group. I guess I just felt real confident. I felt like I'm not by myself. I have my girls on my side, so my confidence level went [up dramatically] in a matter of the first two or three weeks. So by the time of the last six weeks, I came home a different person [than] when I came [to TSSG]. My confidence level boosted way up.

They also said that being supported by others inspired them to support their shipmates in

kind and their sense of community helped to ease tension on board, allowing the girls to

laugh and spend positive time together. One said, "We would have fun, you know, we

would sing songs or whatever to just keep each other's spirits up." Another added, "I just

had the best time with them, so much fun with them."

Work Ethic

The girls reported learning several things about work and their relationship to it. Thirty-eight percent of participants (n=5) indicated that those who did not work hard were seen as the least supportive members of the group. While the girls were understanding of their shipmates' challenges (sickness, reluctance, or emotional preoccupations), they also recognized that the group needed to operate as a functioning whole; any girl who did not do her share of the work forced the rest of the group to work harder in order to ensure the voyage's progress.

Thirty-one percent of participants (n=4) indicated that the most supportive member of the group was a person who worked hard and led her shipmates by example. One girl said,

> She would work so hard, that girl. She would tell everybody, "You can do it! Don't worry. You guys gotta be strong, you guys gotta be positive, you guys are so good!" She would just be a really good leader...I really looked up to her too, she was a really good role model for me.

Being around a shipmate who was enthusiastically working helped the whole ship's company work harder. One participant said, "it just made me more motivated to get my stuff done". Another said,

> She held herself together really well and she has it in her mentality that she can just stay strong even through all these terrible, terrible situations, and I'm like, "Wow. If she can do it, then, y'know, I could probably do it too"…She just worked so hard and you could tell it was hard for her to hold herself together sometimes but she just gave it that extra push and really showed how you can really do anything and be strong.

Girls who were feeling less supported by their shipmates started to notice a correlation between their level of effort and the support that they were receiving from others. One said,

> I guess I wasn't putting 100% in and everybody was kind of noticing it and they're like, "Oh, you're slacking." And during the course I started really putting some more effort in and the group started noticing it so they started supporting me more.

Life on board required learning new tasks, new language and a new environment. There is constant motion on a boat and the beginning stages of living in such a community can be overwhelming. When asked what she learned from this experience, one girl reported, "It takes time to organize….You really gotta persist and keep trying and revising. You just gotta keep working on it, eventually things start to come out more smoothly and work better."

Not only did the girls earn the support of their classmates when they worked hard, they earned the respect of the crew. One girl said, "It took a lot for [the Mate] to compliment you, so when you got a compliment you felt proud of yourself". The girls worked hard to understand their roles on the boat and as they took more responsibility for the ship's operations, they grew to be closer to the adult crew. Many girls spoke of their efforts to earn the respect of the crew. One said that the crew was

> So strict, and down to business but then…sweet at the same time. You got to get everything done and then you can, like, kick back and tell a story or chit chat or whatever….You could really bond and connect with them and if you work hard…you can really gain their respect and they look at you eye to eye. They don't look down at you and they don't look at you like you're a kid anymore. They look at you like another part of their team, working with you, instead of just like a little kid. Yeah, we really gained their respect.

The girls reported that they desired the respect of the crew because they saw the crew as people who were strict with them, but who also cared for them as young learners and young women. "Before, I did not like anybody who was strict. So, [that's] kind of changed, like, you can tell why they're strict, because they care about you." Another girl

compared her onboard experience to other experiences she has had in traditional classroom settings, saying:

> I think on the boat they knew what they were teaching you was important and they believed that you could understand it, and I think that's a really rare conversation. It was really nice to have a good teacher, someone who was really interested in you and helping you come along.

The staff and crew set high standards for the entire ship's company and adults and students alike worked to contribute. Students and staff worked together to maintain the safety and integrity of their whole lives while at sea. Their "whole lives" included every aspect of living: academic pursuits, sailing from place to place, navigating and maintaining all of the ship's systems (septic, fresh water, engines, etc.), sleep, meals, cleaning, as well as entertainment and social support. The students appreciated seeing the dedication and hard work that the adults contributed to their community. Sixty-two percent (n=8) reported that they thought the staff and crew were dedicated, patient and willing to go out of their way to help each girl learn.

> [The director of the program who is also an onboard teacher] was just a really good example for all of us. Like, she works hard and we could all see that and she really likes what she does and likes to teach us and I think we all got that from her.

They also reported how the constancy of the community and having patient teachers helped them.

> Just having them there and you could ask as many questions as you wanted and they would tell you and that just kind of helped me feel more confident in succeeding and doing well and remembering everything on the trip.

All of the girls expressed having gained a sense of personal accomplishment and pride from their work, simply because it was so difficult to achieve their goals, saying:

> You always feel better about stuff you actually worked for, not something that was given to you….If this experience was given to me on a silver platter, as they say, I wouldn't have enjoyed it. I enjoyed seeing my transformation at the end…I worked really hard for it but in the end I really loved it.

Overall, when asked about what they learned from the group's dynamic with the adults onboard, 46 percent of participants (n=6) reported that they felt that they learned that hard work pays off in gains of pride and respect. For girls who were thinking ahead in their lives, living with adults who were caring and dedicated to their work gave them ideas about what is possible for their own futures.

> I saw how passionate they were about what they did and…I really respected that….I guess it made me kind of take chances….and I guess I learned that it's important to have passion for what you want to do and if you do have that, you can definitely achieve whatever it is you want to do.

Thirty-eight percent of participants (n=5) reported that after interacting with the staff and crew of TSSG, they realized that it is possible to work at a job that one feels passionate about – and that they would like to have a passionate level of engagement in their lives and work.

Openness and Genuineness

When answering the question, "What did you learn from the least supportive member of your group?", 62% of participants (n=8) answered that they learned not to judge people and to accept differences in others. They said that in order to connect with others to form a strong community and a functioning team, they had to find a way to support all of their teammates so that they could work well together.

> It did teach me that you kind of have to be supportive of everyone, whenever you're working in a kind of team environment like that. You just really need to support your teammates.

They also had to learn to become more open and less guarded. Thirty-one percent of

participants (n=4) said that they learned this from the most supportive member of their

group (who they perceived to be open and welcoming). The girls had to meet people

about whom they had pre-formed assumptions and they had to allow those people to

know them as well.

In their interviews, several girls spoke of how guarded they feel they need to be in

high school.

> To me it was just a really big shock, I guess, just coming from high school where
> no one really cared about me and I didn't care about them too much either, and
> coming into this group where people did care and people were willing to help me.

Being open to forming relationships with others was a challenge to many of the girls.

One said,

> I feel that school is just kind of difficult on a social level for all of us. Even
> though we've gotten used to it,…you always have to like, watch out, and make
> sure you're protected and you have your guard on. I don't know, we all kind of
> let that go, but we were all there for each other at the same time, so I think that
> was really nice. It was hard work at first because no one wanted to let their guard
> down and we all had to do it, and I don't know, I think once we did it, it was just
> kind of amazing for me. I didn't even think that that was even possible. It didn't
> even cross my mind. So anyways, I definitely think that just coming from a high
> school environment, it's just nice to be around people who you don't have to act
> like someone you're not with.

As a result of becoming more open, they found that they connected with more people

than they expected was possible. Another participant said,

> Realizing that I can completely not know you at all and open myself to people
> really gave me hope. Okay, I can make friends and I can have really close
> friendships with people and I don't have to guard myself all the time….I think
> after [we] got so close, I kind of didn't have that wall. So then I came back here
> with that wall a little more gone, so, I think [the support] helped me to see that I
> can do it.

One girl described her most supportive shipmate: "Throughout everything, I think I also related to her because we're both the kind of people who always put up a wall and we kind of let that wall down on the trip".

Thirty-one percent of participants (n=4) said that what they learned from the most supportive member of their group was that they can connect with someone, anywhere that they go. Thirty-eight percent of participants (n=5) said that learned from the staff and crew to be positive as well as open to new things and people. One girl said, "I've learned not to judge people very quickly before I even know them and I learned I could talk with white girls". Another echoed, "There's always somebody who you can find who you can connect with wherever you go". Still another commented on how she feels about being open to connections in her life now.

> Whatever pre-judgments we had, we were able to look past that, so I think that makes you apply that to anything. You don't want to miss [out] on a friendship or like a person that has a lot to teach you.

A few of the girls included their teachers in the group of people about whom they had assumptions. One participant reported that when she first boarded the boat she was "thinking, like, oh my god, these people, what is their deal? What are they talking about? They smell". Over time, she said,

> If they had something for me to do, I wanted to do it cause I cared for them and I liked them and I didn't want to disappoint them…I was surrounded by adults and I was treated as the same.

Fifty-four percent of participants (n=7) reported that the crew seemed genuine to the girls. This genuineness included working hard and being serious when seriousness was appropriate but also being cheerful and playful when that was appropriate. The teachers were sometimes very honest with the girls about having to engage in the same process of

being open to learning along side them. "Our English teacher…it was his first time

sailing, too, so he always had the attitude that he could learn with us and tried to make

things fun." About the crew, one girl said,

> They're not fake at all. They don't care about being super polite…So, they all
> seem mean at first but just to realize that they were actually the most supportive
> educators I've ever had, that was kind of an eye opener. It's just nice to be
> around people who aren't fake but who do really want to help you.

It is worth noting that some girls had trouble with the crew, who they felt were punitive

and judgmental. Only a few students left the trip feeling as though the crew did not

become more accessible over the course of the voyage. All of the girls reported

respecting the crew on some level, with the most remarkable impact from the crew being

their genuine nature and their "realness" to the girls. "You just saw them as normal

people…When we were off we'd be chilling…and joking…but we knew when it was

time to work, it's time to work."

When talking about how it was to return home, the girls all talked about the

awkwardness of learning how to share their trip with people who could not understand

their experience at sea. They talked about the strain of feeling like they are treated like

children at school, about trying to avoid the drama of teen life, about joining clubs or

teams, making new friends, getting new jobs and convincing their parents to trust them

more by proving their new responsibility. The girls also talked about working to

maintain an openness that they did not have before the trip. One girl says, "I didn't really

have to be fake with everyone anymore. I didn't feel the need." Another adds, "I feel

like I have people on my side, you know, instead of me against the world. Yeah. I don't

think I would have that without TSSG."

Identity

The lessons that TSSG graduates learned while at sea are varied but another common theme that emerged was that of self-exploration and identity development. The girls learned about themselves through the challenges that they faced. Each girl faced different challenges and learned different lessons about herself, as one graduate expressed:

> I think people were at different stages or times in their life or whatever…So I think some people learned the lessons in a tougher way than others did, and some people kind of observed the other people learning the lessons and learned them themselves and took it into themselves, and some people just didn't pay attention and like learned the lessons for a couple of weeks and then came home and forgot it…Some people learned a lesson that's, like, completely different from what the majority would learn…My friend was saying that she learned how to deal with authority and, like, that's not something I was thinking about out there….It's kind of like when you have to argue about something or write an essay and you kind of make it your own issue, so I think that's how it is. If she had a problem with authority, she was going to make it her own, and that's what she took out of it. And different girls, different things.

Another participant specifically highlighted adolescence as a time when this program was particularly helpful for her.

> What I really loved…was the whole purpose thing, because I feel like, on a boat, you have a really clearly defined purpose. You need to wait here, you need to do this, you need to get these things done. If you don't do these things, the boat will not run. There's kind of that clear line…and I feel like, especially as a teenager, you're like, "What do I do with my life?"…You don't have a lot of direction. But on a boat, it's a lot more simple and thought out. This is what I do. It's very clear cut what needs to happen for you to do a good job. This is what a good job looks like; this is what a bad job looks like. It's kind of direct.

Thirty-eight percent of participants (n=5) reported that, through their group experience, they acquired more self-awareness. They said that, ultimately, one of the most powerful lessons of the trip was that they were both known and cared about for who they really are

at all times of day, at their best and at their worst. Thirty-one percent of participants

(n=4) said that they left the trip feeling more confident to "be myself" because they had

explored some of their identity in a safe community. One participant said,

> I guess I think about myself more, but to me that wasn't a bad change at all
> because before I used to put others before me, so…I started to think about myself
> more and that was what I really needed to do.

Sixty-two percent of participants (n=8) reported that they learned how to create a

positive community for themselves based on what they learned about what they,

personally, need in a friend. One girl stated: "I'm not gonna get involved with stupid

stuff so that other people can drag me down." Another said, "you have to be in

friendships and relationships that give and take so that you balance each other

out…otherwise you're just gonna be giving and giving and helping that person so much

that you're not gonna do anything for yourself, so I have to put myself around good

people that are gonna help me and not bring me down." While some girls were focused

on learning how to identify who they wanted to have in their lives, one girl highlighted

that she learned to value those she already has in her life. She said,

> In life you kind of do have to depend on certain people to make you happy, and
> yeah, you can be an independent person, but you need…good strong people in
> your life to make you truly happy. Now I try to hold on to the ones I have in my
> life who make me a better person and help me out and try not to push them away.
> Cause usually when people get too close, I kind of get away, but now I kind of
> want to challenge myself and see what's gonna happen or see what it's like to
> trust people and, you know, I think I learned a lot about that on the ship.

Challenging herself involves being close with people and also inviting positive people

into her life. After TSSG, the girls said that those positive people might be different from

who they might have expected. This realization reflected on their own identities. Many

girls started to see themselves as someone who could get along with a variety of people

for the first time. "I just learned, like, most of the people that I became closest

with…weren't normally the people I would hang out with. So I just felt like, you know, I

could get along with all types of people." By getting to know different people and

developing new faith in themselves to connect with others, the girls learned how they are

in the world.

> I learned…my own personal ways of working with people, like my own style of the way I work with people, what I need to work on in terms of being a better communicator and also, just like how anybody can work with each other. You can't just say, "Oh, they're not going to be able to relate because they don't have a commonality". Anybody can find something in people and talk to people.

Inherent in this post-trip viewpoint is a confidence and self-assurance that many girls

learned or reinforced while at sea. This confidence also included implications for who

the girls saw themselves to be and who they want to become as young women.

> It just made me more confident seeing our confidence. Confidence in other people made me want to be more confident….It still blows me away to this day how, by the end of the trip, we ran the show. We did everything. We pulled up to the dock on Charleston and we did it all by ourselves…It was amazing…It was our victory. We did this!

Many of the girls were impressed by the individuals who made up their community,

including the adult women who taught them how to work and live on the ocean. About

the ship's company, one participant said,

> They believed in themselves a lot. I was kind of amazed by all these young women with so much self-confidence. At first I was kind of like, cowed by that, "Uh, I'm gonna go hide in a corner and be with myself." But eventually you just felt really safe there because having those people around you, like, it gave you more of a chance to…they were confident enough in who they were that they weren't threatened by anything you did, or if they were they'd talk to you about it, "Why are you doing this? That bothers me." I think that attitude was really good for me to be around.

TSSG participants are immersed in a different world at sea and they are forced to form a community of mostly women. This was a change for many of the girls. One girl said that this was difficult for her because "girls are most complicated", but in the same breath she said, "working with a bunch of girls felt really empowering to me". Thirty-eight percent of participants (n=5) reported that they were amazed by what they accomplished as a group of girls. They said that their ideas of what is possible have expanded because of their experience at sea. One girl said,

> I was surprised when they gave [the boat] over to us, basically. They said that they would but I didn't believe that by the time it was time for us to take over, we'd be that achieved and doing it by ourselves, so, that was kind of a surprise for me.

Another participant talked enthusiastically about how inspired she was by the crew and how "those women are so strong". She said, "I know for a fact that I want to help people now because of [the crew]". She went on to say, "I want to continue just, like, living, and getting out there and just embracing the world, doing whatever I can."

Several girls talked about how passionate and content the adults seemed to be with their work; this example helped the girls to look towards their own hopes for the future. The girls were already verbalizing this hope and some already believe that they can achieve what they want. "Hopefully I'll be able to do something I like with my life, too, and work as hard as [the staff]."

When asked what they learned from this experience, the girls talked about how they are integrating their experiences and attempting to bring their TSSG lessons to their home lives in a significant way. One girl stated:

It's taking responsibility for your actions; it's…becoming an adult. I feel like you tend to be, like, "okay, this is how I am around my friends, this is how I am around adults, and it's kind of like playing roles, and you still do that. You play a role with your job or with friends, [but] it's on a different level, because you want to be responsible for any action you take wherever you are.

The girls are working to grow up and into the young women that they want to be in the world. They all expressed a desire to remember the lessons that they learned at sea:

Being aboard and finding out so much about myself and you feel like you learned so much and now you have to come back and be responsible for what you learned, not let it go to waste cause it's such an amazing thing. You want to put it to everything in your life and you also just want to pass that on to people, what you learned, not only just like, "Oh, do this wonderful program" but keep an open mind and just be that example.

Not only did the girls feel that TSSG benefited their own lives and worldviews, but many of them are committed to maintaining the lessons they learned at sea. They intend to share those lessons with others. The girls spoke of this program as though they were lucky to have participated, or as though they had been given a (hard-earned) gift. Each graduate of TSSG acknowledged how changed she is and expressed sincere appreciation for her experiences with TSSG.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to determine whether adolescent

girls perceived themselves to be more resilient after completing a challenging six-week

voyage at sea aboard a traditional tall ship, and to explore the role of social support and

community dynamic on participants' learning and personal development. Graduates of

the Tall Ship Semester for Girls (TSSG) completed an online survey that examined their

current views of their own resilience as compared to what they remember their views

being before they completed the program. The role of social support was also explored

through an interview with TSSG graduates.

Interview questions focused on how each girl was affected by her shipmates, and

what she learned from completing the trip with peers and staff. The researcher was

interested in discovering whether the shipboard community served as a therapeutic

community for participants. If so, the community dynamic would meet developmental

and psychological needs of the participants simply by creating a presence or force of its

own, based on caring, constant feedback, challenge and support. In this environment,

each girl would have the opportunity to interact with the group as a whole and to use the

group to address developmental or social issues that were pressing, relevant or

appropriate to her at the time. For the purpose of presentation, all results have been split

into two areas of interest: Resilience and Challenge and Social Support and Therapeutic Community.

It is important to note that the girls who were interviewed completed the program either one or two years prior to being interviewed. These results reflect their retrospective understanding of what they learned during TSSG. The girls reported that the lessons they discussed in their interviews were maintained for a span of one to two years following their experience at sea.

Resilience and Challenge

> We constantly solved problems aboard ship on a daily basis, so we developed those skills and now we can apply them to everyday life situations.
> -- TSSG Graduate

> With this program, it's crazy what goes on. A bunch of teenage girls from all over the place, totally different, are put on a ship and they just mesh. They totally connect, no matter what; they're just like sisters.
> -- TSSG Graduate

In response to Resilience and Challenge questions both in the survey and in their interviews (Appendix A and B), the girls reported that they were affected by –and experienced gains in-- structure, positive attitude, confidence, communication, responsibility as well as community and teamwork aspects of the trip. These themes addressed skills and attitudes that the girls gained during the at-sea trip.

According to Grotberg's (2003) model of resilience development, individuals gather resiliency skills in five stages: 1) Trust (relying on others, a sense of belonging); 2) Autonomy (responsibility for one's own actions, independence); 3) Initiative (ability to take action and learn from mistakes); 4) Industry (work diligently at a task, cooperation, communication, assertiveness, listening skills); and 5) Identity (development of personal

identity, long-range planning). These stages are not necessarily experienced in sequential order; however, Grotberg (2003) says that they usually are because they are associated with increases in age and biological capacity for complex thinking. She asserts that these skills can be learned or bolstered at any time in life. According to her model, all of these girls should be at the Identity stage of development, as that is the stage associated with adolescence. However, these girls seem to be traversing stages throughout the trip. They each address issues that are pertinent to them, whether that includes building social confidence, the ability to set goals or complete tasks, agility in communicating with others, or negotiating roles in the group (leader vs. follower).

Crisp and O'Donnell (1998) stated that adventure therapy allows for natural reconstruction of developmental gaps as participants change their fundamental views of themselves. Girls in this study reported that they constantly reevaluated their image and self-assessment, both in their own eyes and also as they were reflected back to them through the eyes of the group. Change seemed constant throughout the trip for all of the girls. Based on their feedback, it seems that the TSSG environment creates a multi-faceted experience that allows its participants to address new intellectual and emotional material from the vantage point of their own developmental stage. In the group setting, developmental "gaps" (i.e. lack of self-reflection, inability to take responsibility for one's own behavior, lack of initiative or perseverance) become apparent enough to be actively worked on and filled in. The result is a group of girls who report that they have gained a set of skills, as well as a more expanded or confident sense of themselves, that helps them to be more resilient and focused in their lives one or two years after completing the TSSG program.

The girls reported changes in their confidence level (100%), communication skills (69%), level of responsibility for their own actions and their effect on others (46%), compliance with structure or authority (46%) and attitude (38%). According to Grotberg (2003) these skills could or should have been addressed before adolescence. Issues of openness and trust in one's community fall under the first stage of development. The girls may have had gaps in their initial development of trust that needed to be addressed in this community. It is also possible that entering into a whole new level of stress and foreign environment forced them to return to an earlier stage of development to bolster themselves for their at-sea experience. As adolescents, these girls are also developing new senses of themselves in the world, so they are developing trust of the wider world as individuals away from their comfortable environs and families of origin.

Improved communication skills, in Grotberg's (2003) stages of resilience development, falls in the fourth stage, Industry. Sixty-nine percent of girls reported greater communication skills in general and 100% stated that their relationships with people at home have changed because of their new communication skills. Stage four is seen as the stage before Identity, which is the growth task of adolescents and adults. For these adolescent girls, their sense of identity eclipsed their communication skills and trust in others. They describe being tough on the outside, giving the impression that they were mean or defended, without having the skills to connect with people socially or the belief that it would be safe to do so. Having developed social and communication skills as a result of TSSG, the girls report that they are more comfortable being less defended and closed off from others.

The data from this study points to advances in what Grotberg (2003) would call the Initiative stage. Again, this is an earlier stage in development than she expected to see in adolescents, as it is the third stage. During the Initiative phase, individuals learn about hard work and how attitude affects work outcomes. The girls reported making progress in terms of their work ethics and their attitudes, citing the feedback that they received from peers as their motivation to change. They said that they did not want to disappoint their shipmates so they worked hard and maintained a positive outlook out of consideration for their team. Those who were seen as "the most supportive member of the group" were girls who worked hard and were encouraging to others. This inspired the entire group to work harder towards their goals, and, according to Grotberg (2003), developed resiliency skills that would protect them in future challenges and endeavors.

According to Kimball and Bacon (1993), this also addresses youth's need to have a purpose and some accountability to themselves or others in order to work to their potential. TSSG provides ample work for students to accomplish, accountability to others for how goals are reached and the support to ensure that they are not alone in their efforts. This is evidenced as the girls report that they gained the following skills as a result of TSSG: following through on commitments, multi-tasking, determination, pride in accomplishments, confidence and trust that "things will be okay," and a solid belief in oneself. While we can pinpoint some of the skills that participants are gaining during TSSG, it is also apparent that girls who began the program with different needs, levels of social skills, or desires for closeness and distance in their relationships all learned skills or styles of living that challenged them and helped them to broaden their understanding of themselves and the world.

In their interviews about their experiences of social support while at sea, the girls highlighted the ways in which the trip changed them.

Social Support and Therapeutic Community

As miles bubble under the keel, sailors seem to shed skins one after the other until the scales so necessary for living in crowded cities and towns drop away, leaving just the human creature all but naked under the stars. For most, once those scales are gone, they never grow back as thick and hard as they once were.
– George Day

The reason why I changed was not just me changing, it was everyone making me change, being involved with my transformation, you know?
-- TSSG Graduate

In their responses to Social Support and Therapeutic Community questions, the girls spoke most about changes in their ideas about community, work ethic, openness and genuineness as well as their identities. In this section, the girls talk about their community as though the community itself was a character or a teacher. This may have been because they were being asked direct questions about how the group handled different aspects of the community development process, including the least supportive, most supportive members, staff and the group itself. However, Bratter et al (1993) would say that the community does play its own part in community dynamics. The role of the community is that of parent or teacher, just as the girls were describing it. The TSSG group, and the sense of community that the group created, became a separate entity --something to which each girl could contribute as an individual with unique qualities to offer, and something that actively taught them. The staff became members of the community, contributing both encouragement and equality or respect.

It is possible that outliers who reported opposite answers from their peers were still learning the lessons that they needed to learn in order to move forward in their resilience and social growth. Those few who reported that they became less reliant on others may have been more comfortable trusting and relying on others before going on the trip; their challenge might have been learning the confidence and independence that is needed to rely on themselves while leading others. It may also be true that these girls chose courses of action within the group that felt safest to them, including avoiding some conflict, becoming more independent and rejecting intense group process situations. The nature of this community allowed such differences in coping as members of the group learned what they needed to learn, using the community as a container for their learning.

Bratter et al (1993) state that, within a therapeutic community:

Each member develops interpersonal, negotiation, supervisory and leadership skills…Adolescents [in particular] learn to depend upon each other while becoming autonomous. They learn how to love and be loved, trust and be trusted, help and be helped, respect and be respected (p. 300).

Based on the girls' stories, TSSG is a therapeutic community (TC). At the very least, it is clear that TSSG has the traits of a TC and that these traits provide an environment in which participants learn lessons that they are developmentally ready to learn. Community members take control of their own position in the group and the ship's company falls into a pattern or structure in which everyone knows her role. This only occurs after negotiation amongst all members of the group about how the community will function and who will play which roles. It also requires that, when members forget their roles for protracted periods, other members of their group remind them of how important it is to the group dynamic that everyone participates. In this situation, Bratter et al (1993)

iterate that everyone becomes equally responsible for creating positive progress in the group.

This study agreed with many of the results that Hattie et al (1997) presented in their meta-analysis of adventure programming. According to Hattie et al (1997) the themes that had the greatest immediate impact on participants were leadership, academic, independence, assertiveness, emotional stability, social comparison, time management and flexibility. TSSG graduates reported gains in leadership, independence, assertiveness, social connection and flexibility; these traits were included in larger themes of community, work ethic, openness and identity. One difference between Hattie et al's (1997) study and this study was that TSSG graduates not only reported increased dependence on others, but also greater independence and leadership abilities. Hattie et al (1997) included in their study that great gains were made in the areas of independence, decision-making, assertiveness, self-understanding, confidence, self-efficacy, and internal locus of control. TSSG graduates also expressed gains in each of these areas.

Hattie, et al (1997) reported in their study that 46% of participants in adventure programs related the amount of change they experienced to the amount of effort they expended. Those who worked hard built their concept of themselves as successful individuals. This study demonstrated the same trend, as all of the girls mentioned the hard work required to sail a boat and form a community. Many of the girls (at least 30%) reported that their feelings about who was most and least supportive of them were based upon their assessment of how hard their shipmates were working. They also linked how hard they were working to how supported they were by their shipmates, further

supporting the finding that programs like TSSG elucidate the benefits of hard work to their participants.

Questions for this study were based upon Neil and Dias' 2001 study about resilience and social support during an adventure program. They reported that the least supportive member of a group limited gains in resilience and that an attitude of unconditional positive regard was essential for participants' growth. Resilience scores were not compared to social support in this thesis study, but it was clear that a girl who felt unsupported also felt directly disliked by the least supportive member of the group, regardless of whether the unsupportive member disliked her or not. The girls seemed to take a lack of support more personally than it may have been intended. They reported feeling let down and thinking disappointedly, "Hey, I thought we were in this together".

Both groups of girls interviewed in this study (2005 and 2006 graduates) indicated that least supportive members often inspired a group action of confrontation, communication and reconciliation. Reconciliation either meant that members of the group changed their behavior or that the group accepted a shipmate as she was without expecting her to change. The girls reported that social support helped them to succeed, often making or breaking their experience. Those who felt unsupported reported a significant change in their spirits, attitude, learning and level of sickness when they began to feel more supported by their shipmates. One girl even reported that once she felt supported, she was cured of her persistent seasickness.

This study found similar results as Berman, Finkelstein, and Powell (2004) found in their study about social capitol and sail training programs. Participants reported that they felt gains in their social skills and their ability to meet and befriend different types of

people. Berman, Finkelstein and Powell (2004) also reported that female participants perceived greater gains in the areas of increased confidence, overcoming fears/challenges, and agency/sense of possibility. This proved to be true in this study as well. All of the girls reported gains in confidence and most spoke of gains in skill mastery, assertiveness and a sense of what is possible for their lives. One thing that Berman, Finkelstein and Powell (2004) did not consider is the role of the whole community and each girl's relationship with that community as a possible conduit to her change. In my study, the girls directly address the role of their community in their growth. They spoke of how the group struggled but overcame their challenges. They discussed how having both positive and negative members taught them a little bit more about who they are and who they want to become in their lives, and in society.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study include its small sample size. With only 13 survey responses and 13 interviews, the data from this study is limited in its generalizability. However, it can certainly add information to the already existing, small bank of information about sail training programs. While this study includes some demographic information, the study was too small to do assessment of answers based on the demographic information. There is also demographic data missing from the interview section of the study; interviewees did not report demographic information beyond their age, year of graduation from TSSG and what they are currently doing (high school, college, working). There is no race or ethnicity information about interviewees. This is a common limitation in adventure therapy program literature and there is a lot of room for future studies that record demographic information of program participants.

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One remaining question is whether there are significant differences amongst different years in which the program was run. In this study, data was collected from two TSSG graduating classes, however, due to the limited nature of this study, the researcher was unable to include data analysis that isolated each graduating class' responses. Undoubtedly, each group's community dynamic is slightly different due to changing crew and the magic of individuals contributing to a community in unique ways. Differences between groups may not affect the outcome of the program, aside from the fact that those who withhold support damage the group's progress. However, every community is slightly different and those differences also limit the generalizability of study results.

Participants in this study were volunteers. All of the participants from TSSG classes 2005 and 2006 were contacted and invited to participate. Those who did not respond may have added variability to the study, either with more neutral or negative thoughts about the program. It is possible that a few of the girls who answered the Internet survey (and who did not volunteer to be interviewed) offered a more neutral viewpoint about TSSG. Those who were interviewed keep some contact with the program because they care about the future of the program.

Another limitation is this study's retrospective nature. There were no pre-tests administered for this study and all of the girls' answers were based on their own recollections of their past and present functioning.

The researcher's bias in this study is derived from a background in teaching aboard traditional tall ships. After several years of experiencing and teaching with different sailing programs, it seemed clear that these programs can serve as powerful

change agents for adolescents. Upon returning adolescents to their families, parents would look at their child in astonishment, and then ask us, "My child has grown up! What did you do?!" There are many different answers to this question and this study strove to explore just a few. Hopefully this data will add some new thoughts about how to answer that question for parents, participants and program directors alike.

I expected to hear participants discuss the importance of community but I was surprised to hear the girls confirm my beliefs about what was happening for them while at sea. With little prompting, they expressed their ideas about how and what they learned during TSSG. I was surprised to hear how much they learned about their own life goals and perspectives on community. While I did expect to hear some of what they said, the depth to which they were affected by this experience impressed me. I was also impressed by how clearly *they* reported experiencing the therapeutic value of the program and how inspired they were to continue working towards positive things in their lives, whether that was relationships, careers, or adventures.

Also remarkable to me was how the girls reported being particularly impressed with themselves for completing the program because it was one of the first all girls experience they had ever had. Seeing women in such strong and capable positions was shocking, then thrilling for them. TSSG is the only all-female tall ship sailing program in the United States. The program is committed to helping girls, in particular, navigate adolescence. This study was remiss in not addressing this project with a focus on single-sex education and adventure programming. Future studies about female community development would be useful and a later extension of this study might include analyzing this data in conjunction with female (and/or feminist) socialization theory and research.

In addition, a study that compares all-boys voyages to all-girls voyages would be interesting.

Another direction for future research to pursue might be to investigate, using psychodynamic theory, how shipboard communities create a therapeutic environment. The literature about Therapeutic Communities (TCs) talks about TCs as "holding environments" for participants. Holding environments are described in Object Relations Theory. In reading the girls' responses, it seems logical to also explore Self Psychology in the context of community treatment. Self-Psychology focuses on providing positive reinforcement, role models and twinship (or a sense of belonging) to clients.

Implications for Social Work Practice

This research sought to explore how adolescents perceive their own resilience and social supports during and after a tall ship adventure education program. It was based on the idea that adolescence is a difficult stage in life that requires particular types of support and experiences in order to navigate it safely and productively. The goal of the study was to investigate whether TSSG, as an adventure education program, is providing a therapeutic service to adolescent girls. While this was a small study, it carries implications for social work practice.

Adolescents are transitioning from being children to being adults, so they are establishing themselves as individuals as well as members of a peer group. Adolescents are a high-risk population in our society and those adolescents who face other challenges (such as few socioeconomic resources, racism, school difficulties) are particularly threatened. These youth are at higher risk for depression, school failure, involvement in violence or risky behavior, or substance use.

Programs like TSSG help adolescents to learn the social, coping, and resiliency skills that protect them from the dangers of having little direction, little challenge, little support and no sense of belonging to a larger whole. Young adults can learn a tremendous amount from immersing themselves in a community experience like TSSG. They receive constant feedback, challenge, a sense of having a purpose and belonging to a larger whole. Participants in this study reported feeling accepted and cared for because of who they became in the context of the group, and for who they are as a result of that experience. Based on these factors, this program –and programs like it-- can be used as a preventative measure against depression, boredom, low self-esteem, and other mental health issues that threaten adolescents.

This knowledge is important for social workers who work with adolescents because it can help guide our work with this population. Adolescents are notoriously difficult to reach and can be picky about who they allow to help them. If we know what helps youth to be responsive, resilient and able to grow, we can create treatment that includes those elements. This study highlights aspects of social work that are particularly successful with adolescents, including a challenging environment that is infused with structure, teamwork and a sense of belonging. Because they are (developmentally) so focused on forging stronger connections with peers while growing away from authority figures, adolescents are especially affected by teamwork activities.

Working with adolescents in groups can be challenging because the success of individuals within the group depends upon the group dynamic and culture, but it also can create great change in members of the group. If this study is any indicator, adolescents respond well to approachable adults. They learn most from authority figures who treat

them with respect while demanding from them extraordinary levels of responsibility. They also report that in a group setting in which they feel seen, encouraged and accepted as an equal member of a community, they are free to be themselves –which, for these adolescents, included being positive, open to others, emotionally available and communicative. The girls in this study reported that this was an unusual learning opportunity for them.

Social workers who help adolescents grow into healthy adults who possess a positive, goal-oriented, and insightful sense of themselves can use evidence that programs like TSSG are successful to support their work. This support can come in the form of funding to aid programs like TSSG or in the form of validation of successful treatment and preventative modalities like adventure therapy. It can also serve to help gather the financial and social support needed to replicate helpful, preventative programs that will strengthen adolescents before they encounter trouble in their lives.

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Appendix A

Demographic and Resilience Scale Survey

Demographic Information:

Year of Graduation from TSSG: ____ 2005   ____ 2006
Current Age: _____ years
Age at time of participation in TSSG: _____ years

Race/Ethnicity (please circle): Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American,
                                Caucasian, Latina, Native American, Other_____

Did you graduate from HS?   Yes No

What year did you graduate or what year do you intend to
        graduate?_____

What are you doing now (circle those that apply)?
        High school, full-time college or part-time college, unemployed, full-time
        employed or part-time employed, Other_____

With whom do you live? _____

Resilience Scale:
                        1 = strongly disagree
                        2 = disagree
                        3 = sometimes
                        4 = agree
                        5 = strongly agree

1. When I make plans, I follow through with them: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea
sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed? _____.

2. I usually manage one way or another: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea
sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

3. I feel proud that I have accomplished things in my life: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed? _____.

4. I usually take things in my stride: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

5. I am friends with myself: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

6. I feel that I can handle many things at a time: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

7. I am determined: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

8. I have self-discipline: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

9. I keep interested in things: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

10. I can usually find something to laugh about: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

11. My belief in myself gets me through hard times: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

12. I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

13. My life has meaning: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

14. When I am in a difficult situation, I can usually make my way out of it:
            1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____.

15. I have enough energy to do what I have to do: 1   2   3   4   5

Is your response different from what it would have been before you completed the at-sea sailing portion of TSSG?   Yes   No

If so, how? What changed?_____

Resiliency Scale taken from the following sources:

Neill, J.T. & Dias, K.L. (2001). Adventure Education and Resilience: The double-edged
        sword. Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning, 1(2), 35-42.
Wagnild, G.M. & Young, H.M. (1993). Development and psychometric evaluation of the
        Resilience Scale. *Journal of Nursing Measurement, 1(2),* 165-178.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Resilience and Challenge:
- What part of the at-sea experience do you think had the biggest influence on you during the trip? If you feel that you have changed as a result of the onboard journey, how have you changed? What influence have these changes had on your current life?

- Did this course affect the way you approach problems in your life? If so, how? Can you give an example that demonstrates this change (i.e. How you would have dealt with something before the at-sea trip and how you would deal with it now)?

- How have your relationships changed since the course (family, peers, partners)?

Social Support:
- Who was (no names will be used in the report) the least supportive member of your group? How supportive did you find him/her to be? Why do you feel that way? How did it affect you? How did the group handle this? What did you learn from this?

- Who was the most supportive member of your group? How supportive did you find him/her to be? Why do you feel that way? How did it affect you? How did the group handle this? What did you learn from this?

- How supportive to you personally did you find your group throughout the course? Why do you feel that way? How did it affect you? How did the group handle this? What did you learn from this?

- How supportive to you personally did you find your instructors or staff? Why do you feel that way? How did it affect you? How did the group handle this? What did you learn from this?

Appendix C

Human Subjects Review Approval Letters

February 26, 2007

Claire Arbour
1804 Nason Street
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Claire,

Your revised materials have been reviewed and you have done a careful job in their amendment. All is now in order and we are now able to give final approval to your project.

Please note the following requirements:

Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

Maintaining Data: You must retain signed consent documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

Renewal: You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

Completion: You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Good luck with your study.

Sincerely,

Ann Hartman, D.S.W.
Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

Appendix D

Informed Consent Letters

Informed Consent for Parents of Subject under 18 years of age

Dear Parent/Guardian of TSSG Graduate,

My name is Claire Arbour and I am a student at the Smith College School for Social Work. I am conducting a research study about adolescent girls and the effects that the Tall Ship Semester for Girls has on your daughter's life. I have worked as crew on tall ships for trips like TSSG, and I am particularly interested in the at-sea portion of the TSSG experience. The results of my study will be used to help me earn my Masters' Degree in Clinical Social Work at Smith College School for Social Work and may help to make programs like TSSG better for students. I am interested in finding out whether TSSG has made your daughter feel more able to handle challenges in her life. I am also interested in hearing about how living in a community with classmates and crew, while at sea, influenced the things that your daughter learned while sailing. I will write about my results in my thesis and I hope to present my findings to professionals who run TSSG and other programs like TSSG so that they can learn from your child's experiences and growth. My study will be used to presentation and possible publication.

I am asking your permission to gather data from your child because I am particularly interested in her perspective as an adolescent participant of TSSG. If you agree to allow your daughter be involved in my study, she will fill out a 15-question survey via the Internet (www.SurveyMonkey.com). The survey and a brief demographic questionnaire should take about twenty minutes to complete and it will ask your child about who she is (age, year in school, race, where she lives) and how she thinks about herself and challenges in her life, both before and after her TSSG semester. Your child must read and electronically sign her own informed consent by clicking on the "I consent" option on the webpage before answering any questions on the survey. Once she consents, she will start the survey and her answers will be saved. There is no way to erase her answers once she begins, but she may change them. If you choose to consent, please print out this page, sign it and return it to:
Claire Arbour, 9 Funston Ave, The Presidio, San Francisco, CA 94129.
Please keep a copy of this letter for your records.

The software program used in my study (Survey Monkey) makes your child's participation completely anonymous and her answers cannot be traced back to her or her computer. Her answers will be encrypted and it will be impossible to separate her answers in order to withdraw them from the study once she has completed the survey.

At the end of the 15-question survey, I will ask her if she is willing to participate in the next step of my project, which is an interview with me. If she agrees to be interviewed, she can write her contact information at the end of the survey so that I can contact her in

order to arrange an interview time. Even though she will write her name on the computer so that I can contact her, her name will not be attached to her answers to the survey. This way, her answers will remain anonymous.

The risks of participating in my study are minimal. Your daughter may recall negative feelings about the TSSG program that she would like to talk more about. I will give her a list of professional people who she can talk to about her feelings after the study. There will be no financial benefit for participation in this study, though I may buy her a snack during the interview if we meet in a cafe. Your daughter might enjoy telling me what she really thinks about the program and how it has affected her life. She may feel empowered by being asked her opinion and experience by a researcher. Her answers will provide invaluable feedback for TSSG and other programs like it, so that these programs can be improved in the future.

If you agree to allow your daughter to be interviewed, I will audiotape the interview and I will type out her answers at a later time. I will be the only person listening to the tapes and I will not attach any names or identifying information to her answers, so that your daughter's answers will stay confidential. I will use her information along with information provided by other graduates of the TSSG semester, so that no one will be able to identify her by her answers. Only my thesis advisor and (possibly) a research data analyst will see the raw results of my study, and all personal information will be removed from the data before anyone besides me sees it. All of your child's data and materials will be kept in a locked cabinet for three years as is required by federal rules after which time they can be destroyed. The data will be used for my thesis as well as for professional presentations and publications.

Your child's participation in my study is voluntary and you or she can refuse to participate without any repercussions. She may refuse to answer any questions in either the survey or the interview without penalty. If your child does decide to participate in my study, she can change your mind about participating up until she completes the Internet survey, at which point I cannot isolate her answers from the rest of the data. If she agrees to be interviewed, she can withdraw from that process at any time and she can refuse to answer any questions in the interview. As the parent/guardian of your child, and even if you sign this consent form, you have the right to withdraw your child from the interview portion of this study at any time before April 1, 2007 when I will be writing my results into my thesis. If you sign this form you consent to your child participating in the survey and interview portion of my study if she volunteers to do so. Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns. I am best reached by email at <u>carbour@email.smith.edu</u> or by phone at (415) 677 7946, extension 9. Thank you!

I will also send two copies of this informed consent form to you via post if you are unable to print and send it to me, or if you would prefer to have a paper copy of the forms. I will include a self-addressed, stamped envelope so that you can sign one copy of the letter and mail it back to me. The second copy is for your records.

YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION; THAT YOU HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, YOUR CHILD'S PARTICIPATION AND RIGHTS; AND THAT YOU AGREE TO ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

_____   _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian of Participant   Date

_____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

_____

Printed Name of Child

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WISH TO WITHDRAW YOUR DAUGHTER FROM THE STUDY, PLEASE CONTACT: Claire Arbour
                                                                            9 Funston Ave, The Presidio
                                                                            San Francisco, CA 94129
                                                                            carbour@email.smith.edu
                                                                            (415) 677 7946, extension 9

Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

Dear TSSG Graduate,

My name is Claire Arbour and I am a student at the Smith College School for Social Work. I am writing a thesis, which is a research project, about adolescent girls and the effects that the Tall Ship Semester for Girls has on each of your lives. I have worked as crew on tall ships for trips like TSSG, and I am particularly interested in the at-sea part of your TSSG experience. The results of my study will be used to help me earn my Masters' Degree in Clinical Social Work and may help to make programs like TSSG better for students like you. I am interested in finding out whether TSSG has made you feel more able to handle challenges in your life. I am also interested in hearing about how living in a community with your classmates and crew, while at sea, influenced the things that you learned while sailing. I will write about my results in my thesis and I hope to present my findings to professionals who run programs like TSSG so that they can learn from your experiences. This study will be presented and possibly published after its completion. The current staff at TSSG will also see the results of the study.

I am asking your permission to be involved in my study because I am particularly interested in your perspective. To answer the survey, you must be a 2005 or 2006 graduate of TSSG. If you agree to be involved in my study, you will fill out a survey on Survey Monkey. The survey (15 items) plus a brief demographic questionnaire should take about twenty minutes to complete and it will ask you about who you are (age, year in school, race, where you live) and how you think about yourself and challenges in your life, both before and after your TSSG semester. You must read and electronically sign this informed consent by clicking on the "I consent" option below before answering any questions on the survey. Once you consent, you will start the survey and your answers will be saved. There is no way to erase your answers once you begin, but you may change them. If you choose to consent, please print out this page and keep it for your records. If you click "I do not consent", you will exit the survey.

The software program used in my study (Survey Monkey) makes your participation completely anonymous and your answers cannot be traced back to you or your computer. Your answers will be protected so that I will not know whose answers are whose.

At the end of the survey, I will ask you if you are willing to participate in the next step of my project, which is an interview with me. If you agree to be interviewed, you can write your contact information at the end of the survey so that I can contact you in order to arrange an interview time. Even though you will write your name on the survey so that I can contact you, your name will not be attached to your answers to the survey. This way, your answers to the survey questions will stay anonymous. Due to the time that I have to complete this study, I will interview the first fifteen respondents (seven or eight from each graduating year). Every volunteer will be contacted and the first fifteen will be interviewed.

The risks of participating in my study are minimal. You may experience negative feelings about your program experience that you would like to talk more about. I will give you a list of professional people who can talk to you about your feelings after the study. You won't get any money for agreeing to be involved in my study. However, you might enjoy telling me what you really think about the program and how it has affected your life. I am interested to hear what you have to say. Also, participating in this study will provide good feedback for TSSG and other programs like it, so that these programs can be improved in the future.

Your participation in my study is voluntary and you can refuse to participate without any penalties. You can also refuse to answer any questions in the survey without any penalties. If you are under the age of 18, your parent has already given consent for you to participate in this study. If you do decide to participate in my study, you can change your mind about participating up until you complete the Internet survey, at which point you will not be able to withdraw as I cannot identify or separate your answers (because they won't be attached to your name).

Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns. I am best reached by email at carbour@email.smith.edu or by phone at (415) 677 7946, extension 9. Thank you and I hope that you will decide to participate in my study.

CLICKING "I CONSENT" BELOW SAYS THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS LETTER; THAT YOU HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT MY STUDY, YOUR PARTICIPATION AND YOUR RIGHTS AND THAT YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

PLEASE PRINT THIS PAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS.

____ I CONSENT   ____ I DO NOT CONSENT

Informed Consent for Interview Participants

Dear TSSG Graduate,

Thank you for volunteering to be interviewed! My name is Claire Arbour and I am a student at the Smith College School for Social Work. I am writing a thesis, which is a research project, about adolescent girls and the effects that the Tall Ship Semester for Girls has on each of your lives. I have worked as crew on tall ships for trips like TSSG, and I am particularly interested in the at-sea part of your TSSG experience. The results of my study will be used to help me earn my Masters' Degree in Clinical Social Work and may help to make programs like TSSG better for students like you. I am interested in finding out whether TSSG has made you feel more able to handle challenges in your life. I am also interested in hearing about how living in a community with your classmates and crew, while at sea, influenced the things that you learned while sailing. I will write about my results in my thesis and I hope to present my findings to professionals who run programs like TSSG so that they can learn from your experiences. This study will be presented and possibly published after its completion.

I am asking your permission to be involved in my study because I am particularly interested in your perspective. To be interviewed, you must be a 2005 or 2006 graduate of TSSG. The interview will take approximately one hour and includes about 10 questions about how you think about yourself and challenges in your life, both before and after your TSSG semester.

If you agree to be interviewed, I will audiotape the interview and I will type out your answers at a later time. I will be the only person listening to the tapes and I will not attach any names or identifying information to your answers, so that your answers will stay confidential. I will only use your information along with information provided from other adolescents from the program, so that no one will know who you are from the information that you give me. I will not share any of your information with your parents or teachers or anyone else who knows or works with you. Only my thesis advisor and (possibly) a research data analyst will see the raw results of my study, and all personal information will be removed from the data before anyone besides me sees it. All of your answers will be kept in a locked cabinet for three years as is required by federal rules after which time they can be destroyed or, if I keep them, they will be kept in a locked file.

The risks of participating in my study are minimal. You may experience feelings about the program that you would like to talk more about. I will give you a list of professional people who can talk to you about your feelings after the study. You won't get any money for agreeing to be involved in my study. However, you might enjoy telling me what you really think about the program and how it has affected your life. I am interested to hear what you have to say. Also, participating in this study will provide good feedback for TSSG and other programs like it, so that these programs can be improved in the future.

Your participation in my study is voluntary and you can refuse to participate without any penalty. I will also be the only person who will know if you have been interviewed or not. If you do decide to participate in my study, you can change your mind about participating at any time. During the interview, you can refuse to answer any questions that you don't want to answer. If you decide not to answer questions or to withdraw from the study, your decision will not affect your relationship with anyone at TSSG. After the interview is complete, you can withdraw your answers to the interview questions until April 1, 2007 when I will be writing my results into my thesis. If you decide to withdraw from the study, all materials involving you will be immediately destroyed.

Due to the time that I have to complete this study, I will interview the first fifteen respondents (seven or eight from each graduating year). Every volunteer will be contacted and the first fifteen will be interviewed.

Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns. I am best reached by email at carbour@email.smith.edu or by phone at (415) 677 7946, extension 9. Thank you and I hope that you will decide to participate in the interview portion of my study.

YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION; THAT YOU HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, YOUR PARTICIPATION AND RIGHTS; AND THAT YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

_____
Printed Name of Participant

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY,
PLEASE CONTACT: Claire Arbour
                                       9 Funston Ave, The Presidio
                                       San Francisco, CA 94129
                                       carbour@email.smith.edu
                                       (415) 677 7946, extension 9

Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

Appendix E

Resources for Study Participants

San Francisco Counseling Center
1801 Bush Street
Suite 215
San Francisco, CA 94109
415 440 0500
General Information: Director@sfcouselingcenter.com

San Francisco Psychotherapy Research Group
9 Funston Ave, The Presidio
San Francisco, CA 94129
415 677 7946

Kaiser Permanente 1-800-464-4000
kaiserpermanente.org/

UC Berkeley Psychological Clinic
2205 Tolman Hall # 1650
Berkeley, CA 94720-1650
510 642 2055
psychology.berkeley.edu/resources.clinic.html

Pacific Graduate School of Psychology
The Kurt and Barbara Gronowski Psychology Clinic
El Camino Real, Suite 22, Building C
Los Altos, CA 94022
650 961 9300
mentalhealthclinic.org

Appendix F

Transcriber Confidentiality Contract

STATEMENT OF POLICY:

This thesis project is firmly committed to the principle that research confidentiality must be protected. This principal holds whether or not any specific guarantee of confidentiality was given by respondents at the time of the interview. When guarantees have been given, they may impose additional requirements which are to be adhered to strictly.

PROCEDURES FOR MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY:

- All volunteer and professional transcribers for this project shall sign this assurance of confidentiality.

- A volunteer, or professional transcriber should be aware that the identity of participants in research studies is confidential information, as are identifying information about participants and individual responses to questions. Depending on the study, the organizations participating in the study, the geographical location of the study, the method of participant recruitment, the subject matter of the study, and the hypotheses being tested may also be confidential information. Specific research findings and conclusions are also usually confidential until they have been published or presented in public.

It is incumbent on volunteers and professional transcribers to treat information from and about research as privileged information, to be aware of what is confidential in regard to specific studies on which they work or about which they have knowledge, and to preserve the confidentiality of this information. Types of situations where confidentiality can often be compromised include conversations with friends and relatives, conversations with professional colleagues outside the project team, conversations with reporters and the media, and in the use of consultants for computer programs and data analysis.

- Unless specifically instructed otherwise, a volunteer or professional transcriber upon encountering a respondent or information pertaining to a respondent that s/he knows personally, shall not disclose any knowledge of the respondent or any information pertaining to the respondent's testimony or his participation in this thesis project. In other words, volunteer and professional transcribers should not reveal any information or knowledge about or pertaining to a respondent's participation in this project.

- Data containing personal identifiers shall be kept in a locked container or a locked room when not being used each working day in routine activities. Reasonable caution shall be exercised in limiting access to data to only those persons who are working on this thesis project and who have been instructed in the applicable confidentiality requirements for the project.