A Social Dominance Approach
- Youth may use aggression to win dominance competitions and gain power within the peer group (e.g., Hawley, 2003; Pellegrini, 2001)
- Yet, some aggressors occupy high status positions (e.g., Paris, 2012), whereas others are socially marginalized (e.g., Lee, 2009)
- To understand the circumstances under which aggression is socially successful, we considered aggressors’ targeting behavior – i.e., their choice(s) of victims

Aggressors’ Targeting Behavior
- Targeting a high status victim may provide the aggressor more social gains than a low status victim (e.g., Peets & Hodges, 2014)
- Targeting many victims may convey power (e.g., Graham et al., 2009) and thus improve the aggressor’s social status

Goals were to assess whether aggressors’ targeting tendencies related to their social status, both concurrently and over time
- Social status was conceptualized as social network prestige (i.e., importance, influence, power; Zhang et al., 2014)

Participants and Procedures
- 406 7-8th grade aggressors (as nominated by peers)
- 51% female, 51% Latina/o, 88% eligible for free/reduced price lunch
- Participants completed grade-level peer nominations at 3 waves

Aggressors’ Social Network Prestige
- Perhaps increased monitoring of these aggressors is needed,

Participants nominated each aggressors’ victims
- Longitudinal model fit: χ² (8) = 7.25, p > .05; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = .02; RMSEA = .00, (90% CI = .00 to .06)

Covariates
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Concurrent</th>
<th>Longitudinal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-.01^* (-.10)</td>
<td>.00 (.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-.01 (-.09)</td>
<td>.01 (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>-.01 (-.05)</td>
<td>-.02 (-.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnicity</td>
<td>-.02 (-.09)</td>
<td>-.02 (-.09)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade Eight</td>
<td>.00 (.04)</td>
<td>.01 (-.09)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.00 (.01)</td>
<td>-.01 (-.09)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SNP (W1)</td>
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<td>.60*** (.59)</td>
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Predictors
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<tr>
<td>Victims’ Mean SNP</td>
<td>.40*** (.32)</td>
<td>.22*** (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Victims</td>
<td>.02*** (.25)</td>
<td>.01* (.14)</td>
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Interaction
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number by Victims’ SNP</td>
<td>-.02 (-.01)</td>
<td>-.17* (-.09)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = .20***

Note. N = 406. Unstandardized beta coefficients are shown (standardized betas in parentheses). Ethnicity is coded with Latino as the reference group. Gender is coded as girls = 0, boys = 1. Note that coefficients for covariates and predictors are from models without interaction terms added. Concurrent model fit: χ² (8) = 7.23, p > .05; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = .02; RMSEA = .00, (90% CI = .00 to .05). Longitudinal model fit: χ² (8) = 7.25, p > .05; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = .02; RMSEA = .00, (90% CI = .00 to .06)

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Social Network Analysis was used to

Participants completed grade

Concurrent and longitudinal path models were run in Mplus

Concurrent Results
- Targeting more victims and victims higher in social network prestige was associated with high prestige for the aggressor

Longitudinal Results
- Targeting more victims and victims higher in social network prestige was associated with increases in aggressors’ prestige over time

Implications and Conclusions
- A social dominance approach to aggression considers the use of aggression as a strategy, but focuses solely on the aggressor; we expanded upon this theoretical notion by considering the victims as well as the aggressors
- As expected, aggressors who targeted prestigious peers and more peers were higher (and increased) in their own social network prestige
- Perhaps increased monitoring of these aggressors is needed, given that they are socially benefitting from aggression and thus likely have little impetus to decrease their use of aggression

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The Role of the Victim in Dominance Theory: Associations between Aggressors’ Targeting Behavior and their Social Network Status
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