ON PARENTS, PEERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND ADVISERS:

DEVELOPING A SYSTEM TO UNDERSTAND SELF-CENSORSHIP OF

CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL PRESS

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by

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School,

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ON PARENTS, PEERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND ADVISERS:

DEVELOPING A SYSTEM TO UNDERSTAND SELF-CENSORSHIP OF

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, who provided exceptional support, even when I questioned whether the Ph.D. path was right for me. This is especially dedicated to the memory of my father, Joseph W. Maksl. He passed away in December 2008, before I started the Ph.D. program, but his influence was felt throughout the process. He encouraged me to follow my dreams and to always be thankful for the wonderful gifts God has provided for me.

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ABSTRACT

Two surveys of young college students (N_1=134; N_2=372) were used to examine what perceived familial and educational factors influenced former high school journalism students' comfort levels with controversial stories running in the student newspaper. Using theory from developmental psychology, newsroom sociology, communications, and legal studies, this dissertation develops a model for understanding both direct and indirect influences on freedom of expression in the scholastic press. Specifically, results suggest that perceptions of peers' and advisers' comfort with publishing controversial stories influences individual comfort levels. Contrary to suggestions from other scholastic journalism research, former scholastic journalists' perceptions of their principals' opinions were not predictive of individual comfort levels with running controversial stories. Both theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The freedom to express oneself is of such importance to modern civilizations that it is generally regarded as a basic human right (United Nations, 1948). Yet this freedom is often weighed against other values, and restriction of expression may be instituted if an authority deems those other values to be more important. This is true for young people, especially those who have yet to reach the legal age of majority, whose speech rights are weighed against society's need for socialization. Among the places in modern society where competing values trump free speech are public high schools. There, administrators are faced with balancing the value of free speech, embodied in school mission statements that include the importance of developing good citizenship, with the value of maintaining a safe and effective learning environment. At times these two values conflict. As school administrators are increasingly charged by parents and politicians to protect children from such social problems as cyber-bullying or school violence, the first place that many administrators look to resolve a conflict between values is limiting student free speech (Hudson Jr., 2003).

When administrators heed one value over another, such as discipline over free expression, they do so at a cost. School principals, by necessity perhaps, are often worried about the present day. But overlooking the importance of the value of free expression, especially during students' sociologically and psychologically formative high school years, creates a potential risk that those students will develop increased predispositions against expressing themselves. If school authorities constantly threaten

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social isolation and punishment for expression, through both overt as well as implicit action, students are taught to keep quiet. Legal scholars often refer to the chilling effect, or the likelihood of speech restrictions to result in silencing of speech beyond the original scope of a restriction. This term is similar to the concept of self-censorship. Self-censorship, as defined here, is the withholding of one's true thought, desire, or opinion simply for fear of some form of punishment, including social isolation.

This dissertation explores self-censorship among young people, specifically former high school student journalists. Borrowing theoretical frameworks from psychology, sociology, legal studies, and communication, this dissertation asks two overarching questions: 1.) How do family and school environments predict the development of a general predisposition to self-censor?; and 2.) How do perceptions of hostile versus supportive reporting environments, journalistic role perceptions, and individual willingness to self-censor predict comfort level with covering controversial topics?

This research is important for two reasons. One of the primary arguments against administrative censorship is that it can lead to self-censoring behavior among students (Journalism Education Association, 2009), yet there is no quantitative empirical evidence to support this claim. The first goal of this study, therefore, is to provide theoretically based and empirically tested grounding for student press advocates. Secondly, it seeks to bridge the gap among different areas of the literature, primarily communications law, psychology, and journalism sociology, building empirical theory useful in all these areas.

Many advocates of a free high school press warn that exposure to control-oriented school administrations has the potential to weaken basic educational goals and

democratic tenets. For example, the Journalism Education Association's statement on prior review says that administrative censorship leads to self-censorship and "undermines critical thinking (and) encourages students to dismiss the role of a free press in society" (Journalism Education Association, 2009). This statement is presented as part of a larger proscription of prior review and administrative censorship. However, the subtext of this statement begs for empirical review. This dissertation does not explore the question of whether censorship leads to self-censorship. Instead, it examines control environments and potential chilling effects. Rather than asking whether a scholastic journalist has experienced overt administrative censorship, this study focused on whether the individual perceived various actors, including her principal, as being supportive of her ability to be autonomous and make decisions for herself. Autonomy support is not the same as being "anti-censorship." However, the opposite of being autonomy-supportive is being control-oriented, which presumes a desire to direct the actions of another. When one censors others, the censor directs their actions. Censorship requires control. So, it can be said that while a school environment low in autonomy support is not necessarily a censored environment, the controlling nature of such an environment presents a necessary, though insufficient condition for censorship. Therefore, this dissertation aims to test the theory that exposure to a school environment low in support for student expression leads to a chilling effect on student voices.

Scholars and student press advocates have often largely focused on remedying this controlling-administrator/lack-of-free-expression-for-students problem by studying and even trying to change laws, either through legislative or judicial means. However, this approach has had limited success. For example, Kozlowski (2011) found that even

when courts used the student-friendly *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1988) Supreme Court decision as a primary precedent, students still lost many First Amendment cases. Legal scholars have found that the judiciary often gives deference to executive agencies when it comes to limiting civil liberties such as First Amendment rights, especially in times of conflict and war (e.g. Epstein, Ho, King, & Segal, 2005; Wells, 2004). With such issues as cyberbullying and school violence, Hudson (2003) would characterize school administrators as living in a similar state of conflict, and Koslowki's (2011) study shows evidence of courts' deference. Thus, arguments to "increase" student expression that are based on normative philosophy supported by legal reasoning simply are not effective most of the time.

Some of the most cited research in scholastic journalism uses empirical data to show a relationship between involvement in high school journalism and academic performance (e.g. Dvorak & Changhee, 2009; Dvorak, Lain, & Dickson, 1994), and this research has been used by countless teachers to argue for the importance of school journalism programs. However, similar evidence simply does not exist for other arguments that journalism teachers make, especially those issues related to freedom of student expression. What is needed, then, is a tool useful in those situations, and empirical research provides such a solution. Not only does empirical work provide another possible source of support for free expression based in post-positivism, another epistemological home, but also it provides evidence that is likely to be more compelling to the high school administrators making the decisions. Administrators tend to care about outcomes, especially in an era of high-stakes testing and results-based evaluation, so the focus should be on the possible negative consequences that might come from controlling

school environments and the possible positive, pro-social outcomes that can come from more supportive environments.

As a second goal, this dissertation aims to extend the research literature by drawing connections between various scholarly fields. In particular, this research examines legal and normative assertions under an empirical light, using theories and research from developmental and motivational psychology and journalism sociology to better understand the process of self-censorship. Some free expression and First Amendment theorists talk about the importance of such legal protections and rights by focusing on the consequences of having or not having them (e.g. Blasi, 1977; Meiklejohn, 1948; Mill, 1859/1975; Trager & Dickerson, 1999). Much attention has been given to the "chilling effect" that can result in overregulation of speech; in the free speech context, the chilling effect is synonymous with self-censorship. This is where psychology plays a part, to examine that self-regulation of expression. Moreover, journalists' own self-concepts, especially with regard to their professional identity, determine what they share with editors and then with the public. These areas come together to help explain how journalistic content – in this case, high school publications – is influenced by various contextual and psychological factors.

Traditionally, the dominant paradigm within mass communication has been media effects. In the last couple of decades, though, scholars (e.g., Gitlin, 1997; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009) have argued for a look at the factors that influence media content. This research does that within the context of high school media, asking the broad question of what factors influence the likelihood that controversial topics will be published in high school newspapers. In addition to providing an in-depth

look into the process that influences high school media, using theories from the various disciplines makes this work more ecologically valid. Building theory with such real-world validity makes research more useful to journalism teachers and student press advocates, indeed a primary goal here.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Society's balancing of expressive rights with other societal concerns is a "complex mechanism," legal theorist Thomas I. Emerson (1970) said, because the rights of one individual must be reconciled with the rights of another. Emerson said that our society's reverence for freedom of expression is based on the premise that such freedom is necessary for four essential things: self-fulfillment, discovery of truth, democratic governance, and social stability. Moreover, he said that a basic theory of the First Amendment rests on two additional principles: 1.) that freedom of expression is an end in and of itself, rather than a means to an end; and 2.) that there is a distinction between speech or expression and some action, and society has a greater ability to restrict action.

While most people agree on the basic notion of these principles, controversy arises when these principles conflict with other societal needs or desires. For example, when freedom of expression conflicts with society's desire to remain safe from external threats, controversy arises. In Emerson's view, legal theory, as articulated by the Supreme Court throughout the early 20th century, provided confusing and sometimes contradictory directives to citizens as to what was protected and what was not. Emerson, therefore, argued for a legal theory that took into consideration the complex relationship the First Amendment has with various conflicting issues, such as national security and commerce. Whereas Emerson argued for a *legal* theory about the relationship between freedom of expression and other issues, this dissertation posits and tests *empirical* theory.

Developing lofty legal philosophy to protect freedom of speech is a necessary yet

insufficient condition to actually protecting it:

> It is not enough merely to formulate the broad principles or simply to incorporate
>
> them in general rules of law. It is necessary to develop a framework of doctrines,
>
> practices, and institutions which will take into account the actual forces at work
>
> and make possible the realistic achievement of the objectives sought. Although
>
> we have had long experience with these aspects of the problem, we have done
>
> little to explore the dynamics of operating a system of free expression (Emerson,
>
> 1970, p. 4).

Thus, this dissertation operates on the notion that focusing on legal principles, sans

understanding of social contexts, provides limited understanding of free speech in

schools.

However, like Emerson's work, this dissertation embraces the complexity of the

system. While the units of analysis in the present study are individuals and their

perceptions of their past environments, these perceptions exist in a larger social context.

There is no First Amendment dispute that takes place outside such an environment. In a

school context, the principal has a role, but so does the adviser, so do peers, so does the

community, so do parents, and so on.

Building theory across disciplines requires understanding of at least the basics of

how similar constructs work in each area. More importantly, such multidisciplinary work

requires one to be able to translate from one area to another and show how processes

transcend normal scholarly divisions. In arguing for the need of communication law work

to be more multidisciplinary, Cohen and Gleason (1990) noted the difficulty in working across disciplines because it truly requires the scholar to be at least a quasi-expert in multiple areas. It requires depth of knowledge not only to understand divergent areas of the literature, but also to be able to critique those areas so as to make them more convergent. Given the multidisciplinary goals of this dissertation, this literature review aims to develop such depth in knowledge. First, a section about the state of free expression in American high schools provides an overview of the research problem, particularly as it relates to scholastic journalism. The second section explicates the primary concept at hand, self-censorship, and provides a rationale for its conceptualization as an individual trait. A third section shows how the psychology literature can help explain the process by which that trait is developed. Fourth, a section explores how social contexts influence self-censorship decisions, including a discussion of opinion climates and journalistic role conceptions. The final section provides a rationale for the conceptualization of comfort levels with controversial topics as a logical condition in which self-censorship may or may not occur, and also it provides an overview of the predictive model to be tested in this study.

Freedom of Expression in Schools

The strongest legal statement of support for student free expression came from the Supreme Court in its *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969) decision. The case centered around a group of three Iowa public school students who were suspended from school for wearing black arm bands, quietly and without disruption, to protest U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The Court famously said that students

and teachers do not lose First Amendment rights to freedom of expression "at the schoolhouse gate." Yet academic institutions, at all levels and in a variety of forms, have been places where resrictions routinely appear inside the gate. The *Tinker* Court recognized some limitations on speech in light of the special purpose society places on the school system, suggesting that speech that creates a "substantial disruption" could be restrictied. Since the *Tinker* decision, though, various court cases have chiseled some of those rights away, especially with regard to high school students, giving education officials much greater latitude to impose strong barriers to freedom of speech (see *Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser,* 1986; *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier,*1988; *Morse v. Frederick,* 2007).

In *Bethel,* the Court upheld the punishment given to student Matthew Fraser for sexual innuendo made in a speech during a student aseembly. The *Bethel* Court reasoned that unlike *Tinker*, where students were prohbited from wearing black armbands to protest the Vietnam War, Fraser's speech was not politcal, and therefore the school had the authority to prohibit speech that was "wholly inconsistent with the 'fundamental values' of public school education." In *Hazelwood*, the Court ruled that the principal at Hazelwood East High School in suburban St. Louis had not violated the First Amendment when he ordered that two pages in the school newspaper be deleted. The principal had objected to stories about teenage pregnancy and divorce, which he felt were inappropriate for some students and violated the privacy of others. In a 5-3 decision, the Court said with school-sponsored speech, such as the student newspaper, officials had the authority to regulate content "so long as their actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns." In *Morse*, the Court ruled that the punishment given to Joseph

Frederick for holding a nonsensical banner, with the words "Bong Hits 4 Jesus," was within the authority of the school principal Deborah Morse because it contained a message that could be interpreted as promoting drug use. Moreover, the Court dismissed Frederick's claim that the speech took place outside of a school-sponsored event, despite the fact that he was on a public sidewalk across the street from the school and had not attended school on the day in question.

Tinker does still protect student speech, and it has been used in recent years to do so, especially when the facts of contemporary situations mirror the political nature of the facts of the Tinker case. For instance, federal courts in recent years have relied on Tinker to protect the ability for students to wear t-shirts protesting the Iraq War and the presidency of George W. Bush (see Barber v. Dearborn Public Schools, 2007; Guiles v. Marineau, 2006). And, at face value, Bethel, Hazelwood, and Morse might not seem like they would have had much effect on student speech, especially given that limited reading would reveal only that the cases prohibit disruptive speech, that which is lewd or indecent, or that which advocates drug use. However, each of these decisions has chipped away at the wide protection of Tinker and its goals to prevent schools from becoming, as Justice Abe Fortas wrote in the majority opinion, "enclaves of totalitarianism." As the legal scholar Edwin Chemerinsky (2004, p. 124) said, Tinker "was a high water mark of the Supreme Court protecting the rights of students." Subsequent cases have shallowed the waters, giving school officials almost complete deference in determining the standards of what would constitute a disruption or legitimate pedagogical concern. What's more troubling, however, is that lower courts have applied these cases beyond the original scope of on-campus speech. In July 2011, the Fourth Circuit decided that Tinker

applies to off-campus speech, upholding a punishment given to a high school student for something she had posted on the MySpace social networking site from her home computer (*Kowalski v. Berkeley County Schools*, 2011). While the Third Circuit ruled in favor of students in two cases involving off-campus online speech (*J.S. v. Blue Mountain School District, 2011; Layshock v. Hermitage School District, 2011*), the court did not decide on the applicability of *Tinker* to such cases. The Supreme Court in January 2012 denied a certiorari petition to review *Kowalski*, *J.S.*, and *Layshock*, creating some uncertainity regarding administrators' authority outside the schoolhouse.

Student press scholars have argued that *Tinker'*s ability to protect student speech has been limited in the 43 years since it was decided. For instance, Dan Kozlowski (2011) argued that in addition to the limits imposed by Supreme Court and circuit court decisions, *Tinker* has been weakened because of the lax standards lower courts apply when determining whether speech created or would create a "substantial disruption." Specifically, Kozlowski found that in reviewing cases from 2005 to 2010, students lost 65% of First Amendment cases in which *Tinker* was a controlling precedent. Legal scholar Clay Calvert (2009) remarked that the famous case is in a "midlife crisis," arguing that for *Tinker* to survive, major shifts need to take place in how courts interpret the precedent, especially in modern times when issues such as school violence seem to make it easy for schools to request and be granted deference.

Freedom of the high school press. In the scholastic journalism research literature, much attention has been given to *Tinker* and *Hazelwood*, especially the changes in the operation and content of student publications as a result of each of the decisions. *Tinker* was often considered to have had a positive effect on the content of the

student press, allowing it to cover sensitive topics while under a cloak of protection.

Noted student press scholar Robert Knight (1988, p. 43) said that as a result of *Tinker*,

"Publications turned from prom queens to issues and problems: drugs, sex, suicide and

much more." However, while *Tinker* gave students legal protections and some scholars

observed a newfound drive to tackle substantive and even controversial stories,

censorship remained a widespread problem, sparking the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial in

1973 to convene a commission to study the state of the scholastic press. They found that

administrators often ignored the law or interpreted it in such as way that gave them more

restrictive power (Nelson, 1974). Several empirical studies in the 1970s and 1980s

mirrored these commission findings (Broussard & Blackmon, 1978, 1980; Zirkel, 1978).

For example, Broussard and Blackmon presented hypothetical student speech cases to

high school student editors, teachers, and principals, asking whether the respondents were

aware of the legally "correct" response (e.g., "The school's student editorial board votes

to run an anti-war advertisement in the school newspaper. The principal says that such

ads will not be run in the paper as long as he is principal of the school. Can he stop

publication of the ad?"). They found that principals scored the lowest of the groups,

scoring an average of 54% correct, compared to advisers at 60% and editors at 63%.

In addition to the issue of principals' misunderstanding of student speech law,

several scholars in this post-*Tinker* era conducted empirical analyses of the state of the

student press, specifically in terms of whether America's high school publications were

being reviewed and/or censored by administrative authorities (e.g. Kristof, 1983; Nelson,

1974; Trager & Dickerson, 1980). For example, Trager and Dickerson (1980) found that

about 15% of principals, advisers, and student editors from states within the Seventh

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Circuit (Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin) reported that the school newspaper was always reviewed by the school administration. With controversial issues, the respondents reported that administrators reviewed the content 50% of the time. Two nationally representative surveys are of particular note. A survey of 630 English teachers found that newspaper censorship occurred at about 32% of respondents' schools (Burress, 1979). Kristof (1983) conducted a nationally representative survey of high school newspaper editors, in which he constructed an 11-point index using six questions that assessed the censorship experiences of students. The questions in the index directly asked about instances of censorship in recent years and how restricted students would feel if they covered controversial topics. In the question directly asking about censorship, 51% reported at least one instance in the last three years. However, of the 49% who reported no instances of censorship, nearly two-thirds said they would still experience some restrictions if they covered controversial topics.

Indeed, while *Tinker* provided legal protections for students, including student journalists, not all schools were quick to follow the law. However, one could say that the law followed the practice with the Supreme Court ruling in *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier*, the only case decided by the High Court that focused on student media and school-sponsored speech. In essence, *Hazelwood* relaxed the *Tinker* "substantial disruption" standard when dealing with speech that is subsidized by the school, establishing the standard that restrictions are permissible so long as they are related to "legitimate pedagogical concerns." For student press advocates, this was a dark day, establishing a new era in which many feared administrators would take complete control over school publications (Abrams & Goodman, 1988; Eveslage, 1988; Knight, 1988). In fact, some empirical

studies shortly after the Court decision suggested that administrators would use the newfound authority to keep a closer eye on school publications. For example, Dickson (1989) found that 20% of Missouri high school principals said they would pay more attention to the content of their school newspapers given the *Hazelwood* decision. Like empirical studies after the *Tinker* decision, studies in the wake of *Hazelwood* found many principals misunderstood their legal authority over student newspapers. Specifically, *Hazelwood* relied in part on a forum analysis of the student newspaper in question, finding that the Hazelwood East *Spectrum* newspaper was not a public forum. Those schools that would be determined public forums, however, would be more likely to be freer and more resistant to administrative censorship. Click and Kopenhaver (1990) found that in their nationally representative survey of principals, 52% incorrectly stated that they could still censor the paper. Most recently, some studies have found that principals still do retain some control of the school papers (Click & Kopenhaver, 2001; Paxton & Dickson, 2000). For example, in a comparison of states with anti-*Hazelwood* statutes (state laws that provide more protection to students than the First Amendment under the *Hazelwood* ruling) versus those that do not, Paxton and Dickson (2000) found that 24% (in states with a law) and 32% (in states without a law) of advisers reported that the principal at some point has said not to run a story. In some cases, principals expect advisers to be the censors. Click and Kopenhaver (2001) found that nearly two-thirds of principals agreed that advisers have a "professional obligation" to censor stories that "may embarrass the school's administration."

Controversy in the high school press. Censorship at any point in scholastic journalism history – before or after *Tinker* or *Hazelwood* – has been more pronounced

when dealing with so-called controversial topics. That is, the story announcing the Homecoming court probably does not make too many waves, but the one examining the school budget or covering racial tensions on campus likely will. Controversial topics have probably always been in some school publications, but it really was not until the late 1960s and the post-*Tinker* era in the 1970s when scholastic press organizations and high school journalism textbooks actively encouraged these topics to be covered. Before this era, several textbooks included lists of topics that should be avoided, such as critical reviews of plays or concerts, discussion of school policies, or discussion of the operation of the school cafeteria (e.g., Adams & Stratton, 1963; Spears & Lawshe, 1956). After the cultural shift of the 1960s coupled with the Constitutional rights articulated by *Tinker*, the normative roles of high school journalists espoused by organizations and books started to take on a tone that was amenable to in-depth stories about topics that affected students' lives, including those that would be considered controversial:

> School papers have changed in recent years, for the better, we think. No longer can school papers interest readers with stories that are only reports of curricular and extracurricular activities. We doubt that very many papers ever had the interest of their readers if that is all they were, especially those papers that because of printing deadlines could not really be newspapers in a timely sense. Most of the better papers today are more than reports of what has happened or is to happen in their own schools. They reflect today's students' concerns about their own education and the community and world about them. (English & Hach, 1972, p. v)

English and Hach's work, which was the first comprehensive high school journalism textbook published after *Tinker*, included sections on student press law and covering in-depth issues. While they did not specifically mention "controversial topics" per se, they did include a list of possible in-depth stories that certainly would fall under a controversial heading — such topics as drugs, integration, the environment, the draft, war, school finances, teacher strikes, and adolescent crime in the community (English & Hach, 1972, p. 145).

Scholars have studied controversial stories in the high school press, developing lists of topics that tend to be the subject of much administration action. Among the topics scholars have found to be the most controversial are stories about administrative policy (Arnold, 1995; Freedom Forum, 1994; Lattimore, 2001; Nelson, 1974); birth control and abortion (Dickson, 1993; Lain, 1992); drugs and substance abuse (Lain, 1992; Nelson, 1974), homosexuality (Nelson, 1974), and sex (Arnold, 1995; Dickson, 1993; Lain, 1992; Maksl, Filak, & Reinardy, 2008; Nelson, 1974). In its comprehensive study of scholastic journalism that included a content analysis of 233 high school newspapers from across the U.S., the Freedom Forum (1994) found that newspapers were often censored or shut down for topics that questioned or criticized administrative decisions and actions. Even the title of the report, "Death by Cheeseburger," referred to a case where a school newspaper was closed after it published a satirical article about food in the school cafeteria. Lattimore (2001) found that among 71 censorship cases reported on the Student Press Law Center's website, half were the result of a story critical of the school administration. Filak and colleagues found that among both high school journalism

teachers and principals, the topic of sex – especially oral sex – was the most controversial (Filak & Miller, 2008; Filak, Reinardy, & Maksl, 2009; Maksl, et al., 2008).

Discussing controversy within school walls is indeed an issue that itself creates sparks. Scholars have found that some schools spend staggeringly little amounts of time teaching and discussing controversial topics (e.g., Hahn & Torney-Purta, 1999; Kahne, Rodriquez, Smith, & Thiede, 2000). In three separate representative surveys of high school students – two samples from California and one national – Kahne and Middaugh (2006) found that socioeconomically disadvantaged students were far less likely to have been taught civics through pedagogy that included discussing controversial issues. They argue this "civic opportunity gap" relates to the relatively low political power possessed by groups with low socioeconomic statuses. Education scholar Diana E. Hess has written extensively about the teaching of controversy in the classroom, particularly controversial political issues. She defined "controversial political issues" as being those that are likely to "spark significant disagreement," are related to authentic public problems, and are public in the sense that they require deliberation to come to a reasonable solution (Hess, 2009a, p. 37). Hess noted these topics do not necessarily deal with only political topics like elections or government officials; rather, a term such as "controversial *public* issues" could be used. She argued that students benefit from discussing such issues in the classroom because they learn how to engage in "high-quality public talk," vital to full participation in a deliberative democracy (Hess, 2009b, p. 62).

Schools are particularly good places for this discussion of public issues, Hess said, because students are more likely to be exposed to opposing and diverse viewpoints in a classroom than they might in other spheres of life, such as peer groups, where

students might be more likely to select only people with homogenous viewpoints. School newspapers and other student-run media outlets are similarly ideal places for discussion of public issues. They have a responsibility for leading opinion, for provoking discussion, and for providing a forum for a diverse range of opinions (Ward, 1968). If schools are ideal places for public discussion because of their heterogeneity, school newspapers' ability to reach beyond the classroom and school walls gives them even more potential to spark discussion among different stakeholders, including underrepresented or disadvantaged persons who might not be exposed to controversial topics otherwise. In classrooms, teachers sometimes avoid the discussion of controversial topics because they are expressly told not to, but more often they withhold discussing controversial issues for fear of public ridicule, especially in an era when pundits publish lists of "radical" educators (e.g., Horowitz, 2006) and legislators propose laws that would punish even the slightest sign of a teacher showing her political opinion (e.g., Verschoor, 2007). Likewise, student journalists more often avoid controversial topics because they too feel some sense of pressure in the form of fearing social isolation or possible punishment, even though there are rarely explicit prohibitions against such conduct.

Self-censorship in the high school press. Most scholarly examinations of scholastic journalism have focused on the issue of censorship, often defined as the principal or adviser expressly prohibiting content from being published by reviewing stories prior to publication and censoring those that are controversial or inconsistent with what that authority thinks is appropriate for the student body. The issue of self-censorship has rarely been studied, as least from a rigorous scientific basis. In the *Captive Voices* report, the Commission of Inquiry into High School Journalism found through extensive

interviews with students and teachers that self-censorship, caused by explicit censorship, "had created passivity among students and made them cynical about the guarantees of a free press under the First Amendment" (Nelson, 1974, p. 48). In Kristof's (1983) study of high school newspaper editors, many respondents wrote extensive comments at the end of the survey about the implicit nature of the censorship at their schools. Kristof summarized their notes:

> Many students mentioned this desire to avoid incurring the principal's displeasure, and administrations clearly exploited the students' meekness. Instead of blatantly forbidding the staff to print certain articles, many principals use their positions of authority to intimidate editors into acquiescence. Occasionally the threats are explicit; more often they are implicit: that the adviser might be fired, that the newspaper might be shut down, or simply that the editors might fall into disfavor. Even the last threat can be frightening to an adolescent trying to impress the chief authority figure in his school, so this intimidation has a "chilling effect" that keeps the students in line. (Kristof, 1983, p. 29)

Student editors told stories of being called to the principal's office to be harassed and worn down; "He (the principal) would literally keep me in his office for hours," one student said (p. 30). Another editor said that while writing for the publication, students felt as if there were "an omnipresent hand over our head, not actually telling us what we can print and what we cannot, but letting us know all the same" (p. 30).

Only one post-*Hazelwood* study has explored self-censorship in the high school press from a social science perspective. Dickson (1994) conducted a nationally representative survey of 323 high school newspaper editors and 270 high school newspaper advisers. His survey focused on typical censorship-related issues, such as prior review or prior restraint by the administration, but it also presented questions related to three dimensions of self-censorship: adviser pressure, intimidation, and student deference to authority. Adviser pressure included the adviser "suggesting" to the editor that an editorial or controversial story not be published without explicitly telling the editor not to run it; about a third said that had occurred a few times. With student deference, about half of the editors thought they would get in trouble for running a controversial story, with 12% saying the trouble would be with the adviser and 39% saying it would be with the school administration. About 47% of editors said that a fairly important factor in deciding to run a story would be whether the adviser thought the story was objectionable. Finally, with the self-restraint dimension, more than half of the editors said they had avoided stories because they thought the adviser would find them objectionable, with 50% saying it happened occasionally and 10% saying it happened often. More than a third of the student editors said they had failed to run an important story because they thought they would be prohibited from publishing it.

Dickson interpreted his results to suggest that self-censorship was not as widespread as it was generally assumed to be by scholastic press advocates. After all, a majority of editors and advisers reported that important stories were not being withheld for fear of administrative reprisal. Of the 40% who reported that important stories were withheld, the vast majority (35%) said it had occurred only a few times. However, self-

restraint still occurred in more than a third of schools, and editors in more than half of schools perceived the possibility of getting in trouble for wanting to print controversial stories. These data suggested that a substantive amount of self-censorship occurred, at least enough to warrant future research. Perhaps more importantly, the questions regarding self-censorship of controversial or important topics failed to address what exactly was a controversial topic. For example, a story about oral sex might land an editor in the principal's office, whereas a story on immigration could be published without problems. Understanding topical differences is important to assessing the prevalence of self-censorship. Additionally, while Dickson's work does broadly conceptualize self-censorship as multi-dimensional, it is assessed only as a reaction to a particular social context, such as what the adviser or principal thinks. What's missing is the degree to which individual personality differences influence decisions to self-censor. This dissertation takes several of these factors into consideration.

Defining Self-Censorship

When discussing the concept of self-censorship, it is important to break down the concept to component terms. In other words, any conceptualization of self-censorship must define censorship. Censorship is the process of one person or entity overtly restricting what another says or does. However, in the complete conceptualization of censorship, one must attend to the content of the message or messages in question. Reichman (1988) defined censorship as "the removal, suppression, or restricted circulation of literary, artistic, or educational materials – of images, ideas, and information – on the groups that these are morally or otherwise objectionable in light of a

standard applied by the censor" (p. 2). The reason why censorship is often controversial, certainly in democracies that embrace negative conceptualizations of individual liberties (Berlin, 1958), is because the standards applied by censors vary greatly; there is no universally agreed-upon notion of what is and what is not objectionable or offensive (White, 1997).

Self-censorship, on the other hand, is the process by which one simply chooses not to express his or her thoughts. It is related to censorship because, as Mintcheva and Atkins (2006) said, self-censorship is the "interiorization" of all the processes embodied in overt censorship. In other words, the processes of imposing sometimes obscure and mostly indefinable standards occur when we are censoring ourselves; thus, self-censorship exists in the unit of a group or community, just as censorship does. Just as an external force can overtly restrict what one is allowed to say or publish, so too can implicit social pressure coerce an individual into doing the censor's job for him by preventing speech before it happens.

With censorship, one person is restricting the actions of another; there are two actors. Paradoxically, with self-censorship, one person is both the censor and the one being censored (Miller, 2006). Whereas one person censoring another is an *inter*personal conflict, self-censorship is really about an *intra*personal conflict. Or, rather, it is an intrapersonal conflict based on the threat of possible future interpersonal conflicts. With censorship, the unit of analysis is usually the situation or the relationship, as it is truly a sociological question being raised. With self-censorship, the unit of analysis is both the relationship and the individual. In other words, self-censorship exists as both a state reaction and a personality trait. Moreover, it varies both over time in individuals and

across individuals in a population; self-censorship can be explained in terms of both process and cross-sectional variance. We change the degree to which we withhold our opinion because of various aspects of our situation. For example, one would be less likely to self-censor if his perception of the dominant opinion in a group is in line with his opinion. This is an example of self-censorship, or the lack of it, working as a function of the state. However, there are people who express their opinions even when they are surrounded by others who disagree with them. In this case, a state reaction would dictate silence, but some aspect of that individual's personality interacts with the social context to overcome any fear of social ostracization.

The term "self-censorship" has not been discussed as such in much of communication literature. And unfortunately, much of the discussion of self-censorship, when the concept is invoked by those exact words, is hardly explicated. For example, Johnson and Fahmy (2009) wrote of embedded reporters' experiences with self-censorship while on assignment. In their survey of 159 journalists, most reported little to no experience of self-censorship with covering the Iraq war. While this study alluded to a definition of self-censorship that exists as a function of the friendship between journalists and troops, there is no explicit definition offered. The study was sparked in part by the criticism that embedded reporters feel pressure to self-censor because of the close relationships they develop with soldiers. Critics worry that when journalists rely on the military for such necessities as food and safety, there is a pressure to keep critical information out of the public sphere. Respondents said they rarely experienced self-censorship, but they also did not experience overt censorship or access limitations.

Perhaps the lack of external controls equated to a lack of pressure to exert internal controls.

Of the limited scholarship on the concept of self-censorship, much of it comes from critical cultural studies, which perhaps provides the most complete explications. Splichal (2006) defined self-censorship as a "self-protective communicative behavior" (p. 105). However, he suggested that the concept is somewhat confusing because it presumes that the decision to withhold one's opinion is based on one's own decision and not influenced by other, societal factors. Instead, he said, self-censorship is fairly dependent on the fear of censorship or other negative consequences that might come as a result of expressing one's opinion. Splichal discussed Freudian views of censorship, and said that Freud made a point to not distinguish between the two concepts because such suppression of thoughts is "always a resistance to a certain external power" (Splichal, 2006, p. 105). Childress (1996) agreed, suggesting that, at least in a legal sense, the concept of self-censorship is embodied as a part of censorship. He said that with any speech, there are costs associated with expressing it. With speech that is prior reviewed, the associated cost may be overt censorship. With speech that is not prior reviewed and would be subject to an individual's own mechanism for deciding whether to express it, the cost could be possible future censorship. Therefore, self-censorship, he said, is part of censorship because the former results from fear of the latter. Nonetheless, while self-censorship can be considered part of censorship, the examination of the former is difficult because it is studying an internal process rather than a theoretically observable action.

Among the theories that have been used to examine self-censorship, none has been as popular as spiral of silence (Glynn, Hayes, & Shanahan, 1997; Scheufele & Moy,

2000). The theory, developed by Noelle-Neumann (1974, 1993), posits that for fear of social isolation, humans tend to conceal opinions perceived to be in the minority of a given group. However, Noelle-Neumann noted that not all individuals conceal their opinions in the face of a majority that holds different opinions. She called these people the "hardcores," who regard social isolation as the price that must be paid for opinion expression, or the "avant-gardes," who do not fear social isolation. Based on this suggestion of individual differences in the degree to which people respond to the prospect of social isolation when confronted with differing opinion, Hayes and colleagues developed willingness to self-censor, a construct that treats self-censorship as an individual difference (Hayes, Glynn, & Shanahan, 2005a, 2005b). This individual difference, and the hardcore/avant-garde aspect of the underlying spiral of silence theory that inspired the explication of the construct, is compatible with the notion that a decision to self-censor is a function of both a state reaction and a personality trait.

Hayes and his colleagues conceptualized WTSC in light of conformity and individuation literature, which suggests individual characteristics do influence the extent to which one expresses oneself around others with differing opinions and even mimics group behavior to avoid standing out. While similar to other constructs like conformity, willingness to self-censor is conceptually distinct. Conformity is best defined as the changing of one's behavior to match the behaviors or expectations of others (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), as could be observed in several classic experiments on the concept where participants clearly expressed a statement they knew to be wrong because others around them were expressing it (e.g. Asch, 1956; Crutchfield, 1955). Like self-censorship, conformity is concerned with communicative decisions in situations where

the majority opinion of a group is presumably counter to one's own opinion. However, the conceptualizations explicitly state that conformity occurs when one adopts the opinions of others, often for some social reason such as to fit in. When people self-censor, they do not necessarily adopt the opinion of others. Rather, they more likely simply withdraw from the conversation. In most studies examining conformity, participants are given only the options to conform or not to conform; there is no third option to self-censor, which is an option that would be available in real life. In addition to face validity, Hayes and colleagues showed how the construct empirically relates to such similar measures of self-esteem, shyness, and social anxiety (Hayes, et al., 2005b). Indeed, those high in willingness to self-censor had lower self-esteem, were shyer, and had higher levels of social anxiety. However, a substantial portion of the variance in WTSC was unexplained by each of these concepts, and confirmatory factor analyses showed that models conceptualizing WTSC as a distinct factor from similar concepts fit the data better than when forcing both concepts on the same factor.

Willingness to self-censor has been shown to moderate the effect of opinion climate on expression of minority opinion. In a series of experimental studies, Hayes and colleagues (Hayes, et al., 2005a; Hayes, Uldall, & Glynn, 2010) found being in an opinion environment perceived to be hostile to one's own opinion predicted willingness to express an opinion, *especially* for those with high WTSC. In other words, those with low WTSC scores were able to withstand the effects of opinion climate relative to those with high scores. Scholars have also found that willingness to self-censor has predicted comfort level with sharing controversial topics among high school (Filak & Miller, 2008; Filak, et al., 2009) and college (Filak & Reinardy, 2009) journalism advisers, as well as

college journalism students (Filak, 2012). Therefore, this dissertation tests the relationship between willingness to self-censor and comfort with running controversial topics among former high school journalists:

> H1: Those with higher willingness to self-censor scores will show lower comfort levels with the school newspaper covering controversial topics.

Indeed, self-censorship as an individual trait has been theorized as a predictor or moderator variable, but no work has examined its development. In their original article explicating and operationalizing the willingness to self-censor construct and measurement, Hayes, et al. (2005b) indicated that WTSC, even as a relatively stable trait, deserves developmental examination. "To what extent is the development of a self-censoring communication style affected by culture, family environment, past experiences, or other features of a person's psychological and social upbringing?" they wrote (p. 319). This dissertation seeks to broach this question. To do so, however, first requires some discussion of the role such antecedents have played in developing communication traits.

Effects of Psychological and Social Processes on Opinion Expression

Communication theorists have long been interested in how different aspects of one's social experiences influence how they communicate. Many of these scholars have focused on understanding how families, in particular, influence such things as political socialization or media habits. Perhaps the most famous such concept within communication circles is family communication patterns (FCP). While this dissertation does not employ family communication patterns in examining the overarching research

questions, its background in the communication literature and the reasons for disregarding it deserve some attention. The construct was first developed in the early 1970s as a way to examine the influence that communication behaviors within the family had on children's political socialization (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972). FCP initially argued for a two-dimensional structure: concept-orientation and socio-orientation. Concept-oriented communication patterns tended to be focused on the topic of conversation, with parents encouraging children to develop their own views about the world and to consider different sides of an issue. Socio-orientated communication, on the other hand, focused on creating and maintaining harmony within the family, usually characterized by a child mimicking parents' social views.

From this model, McLeod and Chaffee (1972) created a typology of family communication patterns based on the degree to which a family fit with the two dimensions. Pluralistic families were high on concept-orientation but low on socio-orientation, so they tended to emphasize the free exchange of ideas with little relational constraints. Consensual families were high on both dimensions, which meant that free expression could be tolerated as long as family harmony was maintained. Protective families were high on socio-orientation but low on concept-orientation. They tended to focus almost exclusively on relational harmony. Finally, laissez-faire families were low on both orientations. With very little parent-child communication in laissez-faire families, neither free-thinking about a topic nor familial harmony was emphasized. Nearly 20 years after the measure's initial development, Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990) suggested some conceptual flaws based on empirical findings during the first two decades of FCP research and reorganized socio-orientation into conformity-orientation, and concept-

orientation into conversation-orientation in their creation of the revised family communication patterns (RFCP) scale.

With the original measure, researchers have found support for the positive relationships between concept-orientation and political outcomes, such as knowledge and interest, and ability to process political knowledge (Chaffee, McLeod, & Wackman, 1973; Chaffee & Tims, 1976; McLeod & Chaffee, 1972); between high socio-orientation and susceptibility to persuasive messages (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972; V. A. Stone & Chaffee, 1970); and between high concept-orientation and development of consumer competencies (Moschis, 1985). Researchers have found the RFCP related to adolescent's use of deception (Bristol & Mangleburg, 2005), the styles with which families deal with conflict (Dumlao & Botta, 2000; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997), young adults' perceptions of their parents communication competence (Schrodt, et al., 2009), adjustment issues among adopted children (Reuter & Koerner, 2008), and college students' level of conflictual independence from parents (Orrego & Rodriguez, 2001). Related to the development of friendships and romantic relationships, Koesten (2004) found that survey respondents who perceived their RFCP while growing up to be more strongly conversation-oriented tended to show greater competence in developing interpersonal relationships. Perhaps most related to the current examination of literature, several authors have found RFCP related to willingness or unwillingness to communicate (Avtgis, 1999; Hsu, 1998; Huang, 1999). For example, Avtgis (1999) reported that those respondents whose conversation-oriented scores were lower had a greater general tendency to avoid communication.

Despite the widespread use of FCP and RFCP, they are quite limiting for the current use. The most obvious reason is that it focuses only on family communication. While this is an important socialization context, the current research question explores the influence both parents and schools have on minority opinion expression. Therefore, a tool to explore the questions in this dissertation must have the ability to be translatable across such domains. More importantly, family communication pattern, as a theoretical construct, explains only the nature of a social context and not the process through which those contexts influence the individual. In other words, it helps us describe the family context, but it does not explain the process through which individual family contexts influence outcomes measured in the individual child.

The requirements of constructs and related theories that look beyond specific contexts and into interpersonal/intra-individual processes point in the direction of motivation research. In particular, self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2002) provides a particularly useful insight into social contexts and motivational processes. The forthcoming sections will therefore provide an overview of motivation research in general and self-determination theory in particular.

Overview of motivation. Whether or not we express an opinion is ultimately a decision, and understanding the reasons and motivations behind such a decision to express an opinion is essential to helping understanding why some opinions, especially controversial ones, are kept quiet. As discussed previously, deciding whether to express an opinion is based on both contextual characteristics of a given social situation as well as factors that are more static qualities of the individual. In other words, the decision to communicate is a function of both external and internal conditions. A given outcome

(e.g., communicating a minority opinion) can be a hindered or supported by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. Extrinsic motivation refers to stimuli that are external to oneself, such as the promise of reward or the fear of punishment. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, refers to internal drives to do something because of the inherent joy or interest one experiences by engaging in such an activity. For example, an intrinsic reason to exercise might be the happiness that one experiences after a good workout. Extrinsically motivated reasons for exercise, on the other hand, might be to lose weight because friends are pressuring you to do so. Motivation theorist Richard de Charms (1968) called this personal causation, referring to the knowledge one has of himself or herself as a causal or motivated person. Those with such knowledge are thought to act autonomously, or with an internal locus of causality. Controlled behaviors, on the other hand, have an external locus of causality.

Behavior that is intrinsically motivated is generally thought to be better, meaning that such behavior is likely to be sustained over long periods of time and is likely to have pro-social results. Scholars from fields such as education, business management, and health care have found that behavior that is in concert with one's own self-concept is more likely to hold relative to behavior that is motivated by external factors. For example, several scholars (e.g., Amabile, 1988; Collins & Amabile, 1999; Hennessey, 2000) found that extrinsically motivated behavior, such as that which is motivated by rewards like money or praise, tends to have negative effects on fostering creativity. Indeed, those who are intrinsically motivated to perform tasks for their own enjoyment in accomplishing them tend to display more vitality, more creativity, better learning practices, and better general psychological well-being.

However, knowing the virtues of intrinsic motivations and understanding how such motivation is encouraged or developed are two entirely different issues. In the current study, there is an underlying democratic tenet that society requires of one of its citizens the tendency to express herself even if her opinion is perceived to be in the minority, despite possible negative social consequences of expressing an opinion. Put in terms of motivation psychology, society needs citizens to be intrinsically motivated to express opinion, despite possible extrinsic factors such as fear of social isolation that might otherwise keep someone quiet.

Self-determination theory. Self-determination theory provides a good framework from which an individual's motivations and the developmental context of those motivations can be examined. Self-determination theory rests on having three basic psychological needs met (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2002). Those needs are for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Autonomy refers to one's feeling that he is the originator or source of his own behavior; relatedness refers to the feeling of connectedness or belongingness to others and to a community; competence refers to the feeling that one is effective in interactions he has with the social world. Self-determination theory posits that when these three basic needs are met, intrinsic motivation occurs. In other words, being intrinsically motivated "to do, to assimilate, to seek and master challenges," requires the ability to choose, to connect with others, and to be self-confident (Grolnick, Deci, & Ryan, 1997, p. 138).

One of the primary goals of self-determination theory (SDT), according to Ryan and Deci (2002), is that it bridges the gap between the psychological theories that conceptualize a purely active individual that is the drive behind his own development,

and behavioral and cognitive theories that suggest that the individual plays a more passive role compared to social or cultural factors. SDT is a theory that takes an organismic approach to human motivation. SDT conceptualizes a "need" as an inherent necessity of human beings, rather than acquired "desires" (Deci & Ryan, 2000). More importantly, though, an organismic theory is one that conceptualizes the individual as active and focuses on the "interplay between flexibility and boundedness in behavior" (Deci, 1980, p. 49). In other words, while self-determination theory views an individual as a full participant in his or her own development, it does not ignore social factors in influencing behavior. SDT suggests that the individual is active in the process of meeting psychological needs, but contextual factors, such as parenting environments, can support or thwart the needs being met.

SDT has several sub-theories, though one, cognitive evaluation theory, is of particular interest here. Cognitive evaluation theory (CET) suggests that individuals are exposed to social environments that can either support or thwart meeting of these basic needs (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Specifically, CET rests on two processes: perceived locus of causality and perceived competence. A locus of causality refers to the origination of an action. It is related to the basic psychological need for autonomy. Perceived competence is the degree to which a context is supportive of that psychological need, and it is related to the need of the same name. These perceptions shape the "functional significance," or meaning, an individual ascribes to a given context (Ryan & Deci, 2002, 2008). This functional significance can be either primarily informational or primarily controlling, though a given context would have some aspects of both. Social factors are thought to have both a controlling and an informational aspect. A functionally informational context

could be a situation in which a person's autonomous self-regulation is supported by providing positive information to better make a decision. For example, a teacher giving a student positive feedback on an assignment and choices for how to further improve would likely be construed as functionally informational. On the other hand, controlling environments are those that try to push a person toward a particular outcome. If a teacher tries to motivate students to perform better academically by providing threat of punishment, the context will likely be perceived by the student as functionally controlling. Controlling environments undermine the need for autonomy and therefore decrease levels of intrinsic motivation.

CET developed out of a desire to understand the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and in particular, early empirical work focused on the role extrinsic rewards, such as money or praise, would play on the behaviors of those already intrinsically motivated to do something. Indeed, Deci (1971) found that external rewards that were functionally controlling undermined preexisting intrinsic motivation. For example, one of Deci's experiments compared two groups of headline writers on a college newspaper, one paid for their work and the other not. Those who were paid exhibited less intrinsic motivation, measured by time it took them to perform their job, compared with the non-paid group. These types of findings were somewhat controversial, though a meta-analysis of subsequent empirical work found, on average, that extrinsic rewards do indeed have an undermining effect (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). Other work found that similar negative effects on intrinsic motivation come from other events perceived to be primarily controlling, such as deadlines (Amabile, DeJong, & Lepper,

1976), surveillance (Enzle & Anderson, 1993; Plant & Ryan, 1985), competition (Deci, Betley, Kahle, Abrams, & Porac, 1981), and punishments (Deci & Cascio, 1972).

Despite the early work on the undermining effects of extrinsic factors on those who were already intrinsically motivated, other research has suggested that the support of autonomy and competence needs – and thus making a context more likely to be taken with an informational rather than controlling functional significance – has positive effects of fostering intrinsically motivated behavior and therefore positively relates to various pro-social outcomes. Scholars (Deci & Ryan, 1987; Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003) have suggested that contexts tend to be seen as more functionally informational when autonomy is supported by providing choice, giving rationale for decisions, and taking another's perspective. Additionally, competence needs are met when motivators (e.g., teachers, parents, bosses) show that they care about and believe in the success of the ones to be motivated (e.g., student, child, employee). Research has shown that pro-social outcomes come as a result of autonomy- and competence-supportive actions from motivators in contexts such as healthcare (Sheldon, et al., 2003), education (Black & Deci, 2000; Chirkov & Ryan, 2001), and parenting (Clark & Ladd, 2000; Dresner & Grolnick, 1996; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989). For example, Black and Deci (2000) examined autonomy-support in a college-level organic chemistry class and found that students who perceived the teacher to be more autonomy-supportive tended to perform better in the class and felt more intrinsically motivated to learn. Grolnick and Ryan (1989) found that parents who said they believed their parenting styles were less controlling and more autonomy-supportive had children who tended to exhibit more self-regulation and therefore better scholastic achievement and more confidence in performing schoolwork.

In their study, autonomy support was assessed by coding interviews on three dimensions: 1.) parent's expressions for the value of autonomy versus obedience, 2.) discipline style, and 3.) the democratic versus authoritarian nature of the home.

Focus on autonomy support. The issue of autonomy is widely accepted as an important aspect of psychological development, though its definition is difficult to specify, as scholars have explicated the concept in many different ways (Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). Some of the earliest definitions focused on autonomy as detachment from parents (A. Freud, 1958) or resistance to parental and peer pressure (Berndt, 1979). Greenberger and Sorenson (1974) used the term "self-reliance" to refer to psychological maturity that would be evident when there is an absence of dependency on others. However, more contemporary scholars have defined the term in how it works within the context of relationships with other people. For example, Hill and Holmbeck (1986) defined behavioral autonomy not as a "freedom from others, but freedom to carry out actions on one's own behalf while maintaining appropriate connections to others." (For a complete review of autonomy and its related terms within the developmental psychology literature, see Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003).

Autonomy is often confused with the idea of independence (Ryan & Deci, 2002; Ryan & Solky, 1996). Independence is akin to being completely separate from any outside influences. Self-determination theory, on the other hand, requires connections to others in its needs for relatedness and competence. SDT, in its focus on the influence of social contexts on needs-fulfillment and thus intrinsic motivation, more fully provides concepts that match the real world than relying simply on the concept of independence. A self-directed person is one who is the originator of her own behavior *in a social context,*

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whereas an independent person is one who may also decide her own actions, but not necessarily in such a context. Indeed, it is a social context that provides support for self-direction.

Much of the research in needs-support has focused on autonomy-support. Ryan and Solky (1996) suggested, in fact, that other needs cannot be met if autonomy is not supported. For instance, they suggest that the need for relatedness can be met only if one can self-initiate the process of relating to another. Autonomy support can facilitate development and self-expression, not just in children but across the lifespan, because through autonomy support we are given the room to self-initiate the development of relationships with others, as well as the competence to feel like we can effectively manage those interactions. That is, as Ryan and Solky pointed out, one who does not experience autonomy support will probably not experience support for the other basic needs.

Autonomy support is typically characterized by Person A taking Person B's perspective or providing Person B with a choice when possible (Deci & Ryan, 1987; Ryan & Solky, 1996). These are the supports that make a social context likely to be perceived as having greater informational rather than controlling significance. In addition to those qualities, autonomy support includes "an absence of attempts to control the other's experience and behavior" (Ryan & Solky, 1996, p. 252). It is through this definition that autonomy support provides a useful construct to explore how amenable family and school environments may be to fostering development of lower predispositions to self-censor. Scholastic journalism scholars and First Amendment advocates might choose a different concept, such as "support for free expression" or

"support for individual liberties." At the core of these concepts, however, is the notion that an individual's abilities and rights to make choices for herself are supported by the institution. A school that supports these needs would also, by logical inference, be less likely to provide an environment that would be perceived by a student as functionally controlling.

Autonomy support and trait autonomy. Indeed, these supports facilitate an individual meeting basic psychological needs and therefore feeling more competent and autonomous in his or her actions and behavior. In other words, those whose social contexts are more autonomy-supportive will report a tendency to function in a more self-determined way. This can be thought of as a relatively stable construct that refers to trait autonomy (Sheldon, Ryan, & Reis, 1996). Specifically, Sheldon and colleagues explicated this trait as tapping into two dimensions: one's awareness of her own sense of self and one's feelings of choice regarding her behavior. While no one has explored the development of this trait, it stands to logical reason that autonomy-supportive environments, especially at developmentally important stages such as childhood and adolescence, would foster individuals who are more likely to be self-determined, even when those individuals are in a more functionally controlling context. Therefore, the following hypotheses suggest such a relationship between perceived past parental and high school autonomy support and current trait-level autonomy:

H2: Perceived past parental autonomy support will be positively related to trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "awareness of one's sense of self" dimension of the trait.

H3: Perceived past parental autonomy support will be positively related to trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "feeling-of-choice" dimension of the trait.

H4: Perceived high school autonomy support will be positively related to trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "awareness of one's sense of self" dimension of the trait.

H5: Perceived high school autonomy support will be positively related to trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "feeling-of-choice" dimension of the trait.

To fully explore the ability of self-determination theory to explain the effects of parental and educational contexts to the concept of self-censorship, it is important to look beyond the antecedents of trait-level autonomy to its consequences. Indeed, previous research has shown a positive link between trait autonomy and overall life satisfaction (Sheldon, et al., 1996), need for achievement (Thrash & Elliot, 2002), and creativity (Sheldon, 1995). Closely in step with current research questions, one study found there to be a positive relationship between trait self-determination and resistance to peer pressure (Grow, 1994). Given previous work, especially the Grow finding, the following hypotheses suggest that this trait will be related to another, willingness to self-censor:

H6: Trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "awareness of one's sense of self" dimension, will be negatively related to willingness to self-censor.

H7: Trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "feeling-of-choice" dimension, will be negatively related to willingness to self-censor.

Most importantly, it is through an individual's feeling of being self-determined and in charge of one's own actions that any social context influences intrinsic motivation, including the motivation one has to express unpopular opinion. Therefore, any relationship between perceived autonomy support in past school or home life and predisposition to self-censor should be at least partially if not fully mediated by trait-autonomy:

> H8: Trait-level autonomy will mediate the relationship between perceived past parental autonomy support and willingness to self-censor.
>
> H9: Trait-level autonomy will mediate the relationship between perceived past high school autonomy support and willingness to self-censor.

Assessing the State: Contextual Factors and Self-Censorship

Perceptions of the public and the powerful. While individual differences influence a person's decision to express minority opinion, they do so by interacting with social factors. The willingness to self-censor individual difference measures the degree to which a person is likely to express opinion in very specific environments where his opinion is perceived to be in the minority. Human beings are social creatures, and therefore avoid behavior that jeopardizes their ability to feel connected to others: "Our social nature causes us to fear separation and isolation from our fellows and to want to be respected and liked by them" (Noelle-Neumann, 1993, p. 41). Personal desires, such as opinions, can be withheld from others because of a need to feel connected to those others. Because of this "social nature," Noelle-Neumann (p. 115) said that humans all possess a "quasi-statistical sense" that allows them to easily develop frequency distributions of

dominant opinions in a social environment. It is this sense, she said, that connects the individual to the collective, to allow the individual to avoid isolation. These assumptions form the core of spiral of silence theory, which broadly states that for fear of social isolation that comes with expressing deviant opinion, human beings constantly assess opinion climates and keep quiet expression that is counter to the perceived dominant opinion.

While some research has found support for the spiral of silence with expressing opinions about controversial topics, such as gays in the military (Gonzenbach & Jablonski, 1999), abortion (Salmon & Neuwirth, 1990), and affirmative action (Moy, Domke, & Stamm, 2001), most research has found that surveys using hypothetical opinion climates show relatively weak relationships between one perceiving a climate to have a similar opinion and expressing that opinion (Glynn, et al., 1997). Still, while Glynn and colleagues' meta-analysis found mostly weak relationships, the relationships were statistically significant. In other words, some of the variance in whether a minority opinion was expressed could be explained by the perceived climate.

In the very limited work on spiral of silence and self-censorship in student media environments, opinion climate has been much more predictive of willingness to speak out as measured by comfort with covering controversial topics. In Filak, Reinardy, and Maksl's (2009) study testing willingness to self-censor's ability to predict high school newspaper advisers' comfort levels with covering various controversial topics, teachers were asked to estimate how comfortable they thought their principals might be with each topic. Essentially, this variable assessed advisers' quasi-statistical senses, specifically as it related to their bosses. Used primarily as a statistical control, hierarchical regression

revealed advisers' perceptions of principals' comfort levels with controversial topics were highly predictive of advisers' own comfort levels. These perceptions accounted for 21% of the variance in one's comfort level with sex topics, 25% of the variance for substance abuse topics, 19% of the variance for topics about student misdeeds, 17% of the variance for curriculum topics, and 17% of the variance for administrative topics. Filak (2012) found that among college student newspaper editors, perceptions of their advisers' comfort levels with controversial topics were highly predictive of their own comfort levels. In the Filak, et al. (2009) study, advisers ranked their own comfort levels as being significantly higher than their perceptions of their principals', and in the Filak (2012) study, college student journalists ranked their comfort levels higher than their perceptions of their advisers' levels. In the college study, in fact, advisers' self-reported comfort levels were higher than the students' self-reported levels. In other words, respondents tended to believe they were more comfortable with controversy than those in higher positions of authority. This strong ability of perceptions of an authority figure's comfort levels to predict one's own comfort levels should also be observed in this study:

> H10: Perceptions of principals' comfort levels will be positively related to
> students' comfort levels with the paper covering controversial topics.

Journalistic role conceptions. The way a journalist understands his or her role influences how he or she chooses what stories to publish and what stories to keep off the front page. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) referred to studies of journalistic role conceptions to explain how these factors influence gatekeeping decisions, or what a journalist decides to let go through to his or her editor or to the public. One of the first studies they

referenced was that of Johnstone, Slawski, and Bowman (1972), who asked journalists to rate the extent to which they agreed with eight items that were consistent with the researchers' conceptualizations of participant versus neutral journalistic roles. Weaver, Wilhoit, and colleagues replicated the study in the mid-1980s (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986), mid-1990s (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996), and finally in the middle part of the last decade (Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes, & Wilhoit, 2007), significantly expanding on Johnstone and colleagues' original participant and neutral perceptions into new categories. Their 1980s study found three roles: disseminator, which focused on simply being a conduit through which information flowed to the public; adversarialist, which not only focused on the watchdog role but also embraced the idea of influencing public opinion; and interpreter, which emphasized journalism's ability to influence public affairs and act as a public service (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986). In the 1990s, they added populist mobilizer, which valued connections with the community and emphasized civic responsibility (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996).

Most literature in the realm of high school journalism has focused on expressing normative roles of the student journalists and the publications they produce. The most complete overview of roles comes from the well-known book *Journalism Kids Do Better,* by Dvorak, Lain, and Dickson (1994). They suggest that the role of the high school paper changes from school to school (and, perhaps more importantly, from administration to administration). And that variation has changed over time. Dvorak, Lain, and Dickson introduced two broad perspectives: the utilitarian and the conceptual. The utilitarian perspective focuses on outcomes and includes the following viewpoints: mechanistic, which focuses on journalism as a mechanism for teaching English and composition;

vocational, which focuses on using journalism programs as a training ground for a career as a journalist; public relations, which emphasizes the role the school newspaper has in promoting good news coming from the school; and informational, which focuses on the strength of the paper to inform school audiences, just as a professional paper might inform a community. The conceptual perspective, they said, focuses on the process. It includes an integrative viewpoint, which focuses on the ability for the school journalism program to foster critical thinking skills, and a free-expression viewpoint, which presents the school publication as a vehicle for all students to express opinions. These normative theories of the role of the scholastic press have been expressed in a variety of sources during the course of the last century, though most notably through textbooks (e.g., Adams & Stratton, 1963; Dillon, 1918; English & Hach, 1972; Rolnicki, Tate, & Taylor, 2009). More contemporary literature suggests the free expression and informational roles are most dominant. Organizations such as the Freedom Forum and the Student Press Law Center also recognize a watchdog role as being important, especially as it relates to covering local government and schools (e.g., Freedom Forum, 1994; Student Press Law Center, 2010)

Dvorak, Lain, and Dickson's (1994) work suggested a wide variance in how journalistic roles of the scholastic press are conceived, and certainly most textbooks at least recognize that varying roles might exist. Yet little empirical work has explored just how stakeholders such as students, administrators, and teachers view the purpose of the student press. One survey of a random sample of schools in the United States found that about 80% of both advisers and principals found the student newspaper to be a valuable public relations tool for the school; about a third of the principals said that this PR role

outweighed any free expression purpose (Click & Kopenhaver, 1988). A recent qualitative study explored roles by conducting in-depth interviews with student journalists. The authors found that student journalists had two main goals for the newspaper: to discuss topics that concerned students and to provide information that would have positive effects on student readers' lives (Fischman, Solomon, Greenspan, & Gardner, 2004). Maksl (2011) used a similar method as the Weaver, et al. role conception studies, where he created a variety of items meant to measure how roles were understood. Some items were adapted from Weaver and colleagues' work, while others were written based on the normative roles espoused in Dvorak and colleagues' work. These items were then presented to 365 newspaper advisers who were members of the Journalism Education Association. After running factor analyses, Maksl found three dominant roles: school watchdog, critical thinking, and arm of school. The school watchdog role was the most dominant, explaining nearly a third of the common variance. However, Maksl's paper, like the Weaver, et al. studies after which it was modeled, focused only on the antecedents of the roles, specifically what demographic and environmental factors predicted advisers' attitudes about the school newspaper. Scholars have proposed theories that suggest that role conceptions, among other individual-level factors, do indeed influence messages (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). A few scholars have found some evidence of a relationship between role conceptions and role enactment, through self-reports of journalists (Culbertson, 1983), a field experiement with college journalism students (Starck & Soloski, 1977), and a mixed-method survey of U.S.- and foreign-based Washington correspondents with a related content analysis of their work (Tandoc, Hellmueller, & Vos, 2012). This current study employs the self-

report method to assess whether the strength of the school watchdog role conception relates to feeling comfortable with the school newspaper covering controversial topics:

H11: Students with stronger watchdog conceptions of the role of the school newspaper will report being more comfortable with the paper covering controversial topics.

Bringing Theories Together to Predict Self-Censorship

Previous research, such as that done by Filak and colleagues, has found antecedents to comfort levels with controversial topics, particularly individual traits and perceptions of the opinions of superiors. This research seeks to do more than simply replicate those findings. First, it attempts to add another factor to the model that predicts comfort levels, specifically role conception, further testing aspects of gatekeeping and hierarchy-of-influences theories. More importantly, however, it seeks to build a predictive model that helps explain the position that school and family environments play in developing young journalists who are willing to speak out, even in unfriendly opinion climates. Therefore, this dissertation seeks to test overall model fit of the proposed causal model (See Figure 2.1):

H12: All aforementioned hypothesized relationships will hold when simultaneous analysis of all variables in the model is conducted.

Figure 2.1. Full Study One model predicting comfort levels of covering controversial topics
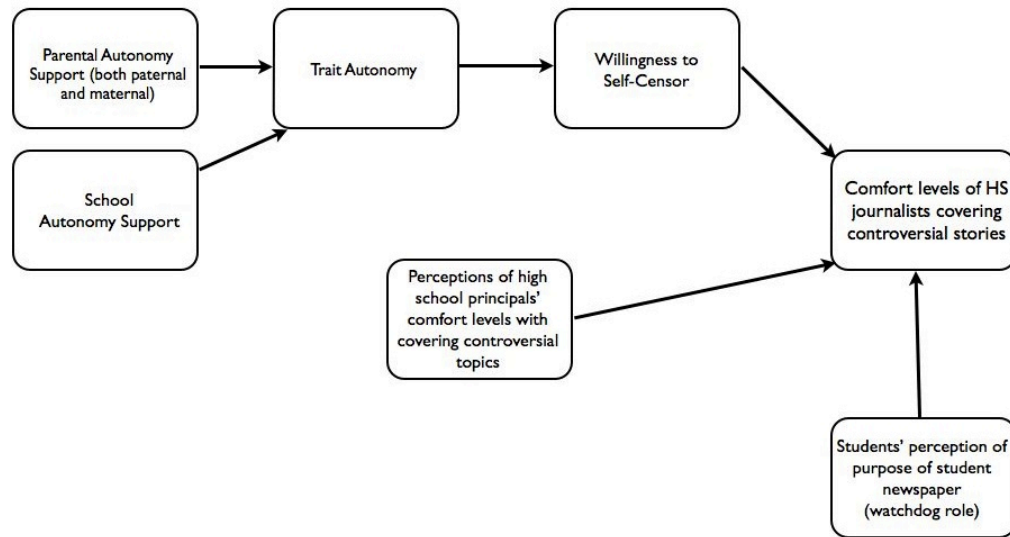
Why one chooses to self-censor stems from a variety of factors, and studying a complex model of these factors helps add ecological validity to the examination of this phenomenon. Additionally, understanding the primary sources of variance in each component helps student expression advocates better direct outreach resources. This study seeks to explore these possible sources of variance in feeling comfortable with controversial topics.

Given the exploratory nature of this study – especially given the section testing developmental hypotheses about the relationship between autonomy-supportive environments, trait autonomy, and willingness to self-censor – a series of two studies will be conducted. The first study (Study One) will be a pre-test, used primarily to test the effectiveness of the measures in operationalizing theoretical constructs. The second study (Study Two) will use methods and measures revised based on the results from the first study to allow for more valid operationalizations. Additionally, it will contribute to

building a more complete conceptual model to predict comfort levels with controversial

topics in the school paper.

Chapter 3
Study One

Methods

To explore these theoretical relationships and test these hypotheses, this study surveyed young college students, still in their first year and close to high school age. Surveying college students as opposed to high school students was done for two reasons: 1.) This study relies in part on variance in perceived school autonomy support, which is best attained through a sample of students with different high school experiences; and 2.) Gaining access to such a heterogeneous sample would require sampling from different high schools. This presented a major logistical problem, particularly with regard to ethical regulations regarding the use of human participants. As most students in high school are minors, research with them as participants would require parental consent in addition to student assent. This could unduly influence the degree to which parental autonomy support could be measured, as those who are less supportive may not be as willing to grant permission for their children to participate. Additionally, for a wide variance in school environment, the data would have to be collected from many different schools, which would require an additional logistical barrier, especially with attaining access to more control-oriented schools. Finally, this project is normatively founded on the notion that all citizens, even those younger than 18 years of age, have free speech rights, so there is some irony in having to ask young people to get permission from authorities, such as teachers or parents, before they can respond to questions about whether they self-censor.

This project, however, takes a more exploratory or pilot-study approach and surveys young college students, primarily freshmen, who recently matriculated to college. Doing so avoided the logistical challenges imposed by surveying high school students because most college students have recently turned 18 and can provide their own informed consent. It also provided variance in high school experience. Student participants were young college students, so as to lessen the socializing influence of college on their responses. Certainly surveying a heterogeneous sample still in high schools would be useful, and research in this area must move in that direction, but given the semi-exploratory nature of this study, surveying young college students was appropriate.

Given that the purpose of this first study was to pre-test measures, especially those dealing with the developmental aspects of the theoretical model, not all students in the current sample were former high school journalists. Specifically, students in two introductory, freshman-level journalism classes at a large Midwestern university were chosen – one for majors and another for non-majors. In total, 142 students took the online survey. Of that number, one was removed because that person did not attend a high school in the year immediately preceding taking the class. Another seven were removed because their responses represented substantial outliers on various dependent variables. Of the 134 students used in the analysis, 22 said they had worked for the school newspaper; 96 said they did not work for the paper, but the school had one; and 16 said they did not work for the school newspaper because the school did not have one. Most analytical procedures were performed on data from all 134 participants.

Fewer than half of the respondents (41%) of the current sample were male. Mean age was 18.75 (*SD*=.836). Most respondents were fairly good students in high school, with as average high school grade point average of 3.53 (*SD*=.413) on a four-point scale. The vast majority (78.4%) attended a public high school, with the rest having attended a private high school. Students reported coming from families with fairly high incomes, with nearly a quarter of household incomes above $150,000 a year, whereas just 10% made less than $50,000 a year. Only 13 students reported not knowing how much their parents made. Parents were fairly well educated, with about 55% of mothers and about 60% of fathers having earned at least a bachelor's degree. (See Table 3.1 for a complete demographic breakdown of the Study One sample.)

Table 3.1

Descriptive statistics for data from Study One

N	134
Age – Mean (SD)	18.75 (.836)
Gender	
Male	41%
Female	59%
High School GPA – Mean (SD)	3.53 (.402)
Public/Private	
Public	78.4%
Private	21.6%
Parent's Household Income	
Less than $25,000	2.99%
$25,000 to $34,999	2.24%
$35,000 to $49,999	4.478%
$50,000 to $74,999	17.91%

$75,000 to $99,999	15.67%
$100,000 to $124,999	16.42%
$125,000 to $149,999	6.72%
$150,000 or more	23.88%
Don't know	9.7%
Mother's Education	
12th grade or less	1.49%
Graduated high school or equivalent	17.91%
Some college, no degree	14.93%
Associate degree	10.45%
Bachelors degree	35.07%
Post-graduate degree	18.66%
Not applicable	1.5%
Father's Education	
12th grade or less	1.49%
Graduated high school or equivalent	14.93%
Some college, no degree	15.67%
Associate degree	7.46%
Bachelors degree	34.33%
Post-graduate degree	20.90%
Not applicable	5.2%

Measures. This study deals with the relationships among six primary concepts: perceived school autonomy support, perceived family autonomy support, trait autonomy, willingness to self-censor, student journalism role conceptions, and comfort levels with controversial topics in the high school press. Some of these concepts have been well conceptualized in the literature, with valid and reliable operationalizations available for

use. Other concepts have been studied much less often and thus require creation of new measures or adaptation of existing related measures. What follows is an outline of each of the concepts and each operationalization within the context of this study.

Perceived school autonomy support. Autonomy support was measured using an adapted version of the Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ; Black & Deci, 2000), which has been used to measure the degree to which a learning environment is supportive of autonomy needs. Typically, the scale has been used to assess the autonomy support of a given person, usually a teacher or group leader. The 15-item scale has been shown to have one underlying factor with high internal consistency. Items used here have been adapted to ask about the perceived autonomy support of high school experiences in general. Examples of the items include "I feel that my high school provided me choices and options" and "My high school teachers tried to understand how I saw things before suggesting new ways to do things." Respondents were asked to indicate on a seven-point Likert scale the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement. Studies using a version of this scale have found that students who perceive their instructors to be more autonomy-supportive tended to develop more autonomous motivation for the class, leading to greater enjoyment with and competence in the course (Black & Deci, 2000) and attainment of course-related outcomes (Standage, Duda, & Ntoumanis, 2005). In the current study, the scale was shown to be highly internally consistent ($\alpha = .941$). A mean score of all LCQ items was computed for analysis.

Perceived parental autonomy support. Autonomy support was measured using the Perception of Parents Scale (POPS; Robbins, 1994). As developed, the POPS measures three dimensions of a child's perceptions of his or her parents: autonomy

support, involvement, and warmth. Though there are three dimensions, only the autonomy support dimension was used in the current study. The scale includes 18 items, nine each measuring perceptions of one's mother and father. Items included "My mother tries to tell me how to run my life" and "My mother, whenever possible, allows me to choose what to do" (questions for fathers were identical except for the substitution of the word "father"). Respondents were asked to indicate on a seven-point Likert scale the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement. Measuring each parent separately was important because previous research indicates that parents differ in various aspects of their relationship to children. Indeed, in the current study, while the perceptions of maternal and paternal autonomy support were correlated, the relationship was rather weak (r=.382). Both the maternal ($\alpha = .894$) and paternal ($\alpha = .897$) scales were shown to be highly internally consistent. Each set of nine items was computed into a mean score.

Trait autonomy. Trait autonomy was measured through the use of the Self-Determination Scale (SDS; Sheldon, 1995; Sheldon, et al., 1996). The SDS has two dimensions, awareness of self and feeling of choice. The scale includes 10 questions total, five for each dimension. The scale presents respondents with two semantic differential statements (e.g., "A. I feel pretty free to do whatever I choose to do, and B. I often do things that I don't choose to do."). Each side of the scale was marked with either "Only A feels true" or "Only B feels true." Respondents were asked to indicate on a seven-point scale which statement felt more true. Both the feeling-of-choice ($\alpha = .780$) and awareness-of-self ($\alpha = .783$) dimensions were internally consistent.

Willingness to self-censor. Willingness to self-censor was measured using the scale of the same name developed by Hayes and colleagues (Hayes, et al., 2005a, 2005b). The scale includes eight Likert-type items, where respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with items meant to measure their general orientation toward expressing opinion when they feel it is in the minority. This scale operationalizes the individual differences in minority opinion expression. A high scorer would be more likely to succumb to fear of social isolation if his or her quasi-statistical sense perceived the dominant opinion in a social context to be dissimilar to his or her own views. Items include "When I disagree with others, I'd rather go along with them than argue about it" and "I'd feel uncomfortable if someone asked my opinion and I knew that he or she wouldn't agree with me." These items were shown to be internally consistent in the present sample ($\alpha = .770$).

Comfort levels with controversial topics. College students were asked to indicate how comfortable they would be if, when they were in high school, the school newspaper ran a story about a specific controversial topic. Students were told that they should assume that the story was free of errors and met all expectations of newsworthiness. Their response, they were told, was supposed to be about the topic itself. For former high school journalists (N=22), the question asked them to assess the degree to which they would have been bothered if an administrator or teacher had told them they could not run a story on said topic. For those high school graduates who were not journalists (N=112), they were simply asked to assess the degree to which they would have been comfortable with each topic appearing in the high school paper. While these prompts ask different questions of the respondents, the responses get at the same issue: the degree to which

respondents feel that a story about a controversial topic – a story that would be free of errors and meet the standards of newsworthiness – should be in a school newspaper. All items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale.

In total, 32 possible topics were presented. These topics were partially based on previous research by Filak and colleagues (Filak & Miller, 2008; Filak & Reinardy, 2009; Filak, et al., 2009; Maksl, et al., 2008). However, items were slightly adapted to be more specific as to the type of story that would be run. For example, instead of simply presenting a possible story being about "oral sex," the question in the current research asked about "A story about the dangers of oral sex." This was done for two reasons. First, upon pre-testing the entire survey instrument, several colleagues suggested that some of the topics lacked sufficient context, and that a story about "oral sex," for example, could be a journalistically sound piece about the trend of teenagers engaging in the activity, or it could be a racy column more suited to *Maxim* or *Cosmopolitan*. Therefore, providing a bit more context reduces some measurement error that could result out of vastly differing interpretations of the topic. Additional topics were also included to match some recent controversial stories in the high school press, as observed by reviewing stories published on the Student Press Law Center's website.

While there was some a priori theorizing on possible controversial categories that would emerge – which was based on the previous controversial topics research in the high school press – an exploratory factor analysis was conducted because of the inclusion of several new items. Specifically, a principal axis factor analysis was conducted with Promax rotation (an oblique rotation method that allows factors to be correlated). Conceptually, factors should be correlated with each other because thinking one type of

story is controversial probably explains some variance in thinking another type of story is controversial. After examining eigenvalues of factors, as well as a scree plot, two factors emerged, and subsequent analyses were constrained to extracting that number of factors. Oblique rotations such as Promax produce both pattern and structure matrices. Here, the pattern matrix was examined and reported, as some scholars suggest that the pattern matrix tends to produce a simpler, more interpretable structure (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Factors with loadings above .6 were retained, which meet Comrey and Lee's (1992) criteria for "excellent" and "very good" factor loadings. Additionally, items that cross-loaded on both factors, defined as the difference in loadings being less than .15, were removed. After eliminating such items with low or cross-loaded factor scores, 17 items were reanalyzed using identical factor analysis technique (See Table 3.2). The first factor was "social issues," and it included 10 items (a=.949). The second factor was "school issues," and it included seven items (a=.901). A score for each factor was computing by taking the mean of the scores on all items within each factor.

Table 3.2

*Factor loadings based on a principal axis factoring with Promax rotation for controversial topics (*N = 134)

	Social Issues	School Issues
A story about abortion	**.949**	-.167
A story about the dangers of oral sex	**.915**	-.212
A story about birth control	**.860**	.014
A story about homosexual students and their experiences in school	**.835**	.040
A story about the hooking up trend among students, including a discussion about the dangers of such activity	**.777**	.078
A story about a local landlord accused of racist renting practices	**.771**	.025
A story about sexting (sending nude photos via cell phones)	**.769**	.112
A story about teenage pregnancy	**.755**	.133
A column written by an openly gay student about his/her experiences coming out	**.730**	.134
A story about students charged with a serious crime, such as rape or murder	**.611**	-.023
A story about school policy	-.096	**.859**
A story discussing school athletic eligibility requirements	-.118	**.859**
A story about recent thefts in the school	.091	**.731**
A story taking an in-depth look at the school budget	.113	**.716**
A story about curriculum change	-.057	**.681**
A story about the school community rallying around a fired coach	-.001	**.677**
A story about the school's random drug-testing policy	.121	**.675**
Eigenvalues	8.477	2.843
% of variance	49.87%	16.72%
α of scale	.949	.901

In addition to asking college students how comfortable they would have been with the school newspaper running a story on the aforementioned topics, respondents were also asked to indicate how comfortable they think their high school principals would have been with a school newspaper publishing such a story. The list asking for perceptions of principals' comfort levels was identical to the list presented to assess one's own comfort levels. A principal axis factor analysis using these items was performed to confirm a similar factor structure as observed with personal comfort levels. Within the perception of principals' comfort levels, mean scores of items in both factors found in personal comfort levels were computed. Each of the factors within perceived principal comfort levels was found to be internally consistent (social issues, α=.924; school issues, α=.826).

Role conceptions. Various journalistic role conceptions have been found among professional journalists, such as neutral and participant (Johnstone, et al., 1972); or disseminator, interpreter, adversarialist, and populist mobilizer (Weaver, et al., 2007). Among high school journalism teachers, research has shown three roles to be most dominant: school watchdog, critical thinking, and arm of school (Maksl, 2011). Maksl (2011) found that the school watchdog role was the most dominant. Additionally, his study found that the watchdog role was also the one for which scores has the largest variance and the one that most closely resembled a normal distribution, whereas the critical thinking role was heavily negatively skewed, and the arm of school role was heavily positively skewed. Therefore, this study primarily concerned itself with the school watchdog role. That role was measured by asking participants the extent to which they agreed or disagreed (on a seven-point scale) with statements about the purpose of a high school newspaper. Items included "The school newspaper should report on all

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important issues, even if they could potentially put the school in a bad light" and "The school newspaper should discuss school policy while the policy is still being developed." Essentially, these items measure the extent to which one agrees that the scholastic press should operate as an independent source of news about important topics, no matter the potential negative impact for those in power at the school. In total, there were seven items, and reliability analysis revealed the items to be internally consistent (α=.852). A school watchdog role score was computed by taking the mean of all seven individual indicators.

Additionally, given the likely relationship between school watchdog role conception and comfort levels with covering controversial topics about the school, which tend to be within the realm of the duties of the watchdog, comparisons of the two constructs were analyzed to develop adequate discriminate validity. Indeed, simple bivariate correlations shows that watchdog role conception is highly correlated with comfort with covering controversial stories about the school (r=.478). However, squaring this number only shows that about a 23% of the variance would be explained by this one variable, leaving quite a bit of the model unexplained. More importantly, however, if the watchdog role were measuring the same thing as comfort levels with covering school issues, then there would be either no relationship between it and feeling comfortable with running social issues in the school paper, or such as relationship would be quite smaller than between the watchdog role conception and comfort with controversial school issues. However, the relationship between watchdog role conception and comfort with social issues was only slightly less (r=.459) than the aforementioned relationship. Therefore,

watchdog role conception seems to be measuring something different than either of the scales measuring comfort with running controversial stories.

Control variables. Basic demographic variables were measured to use as controls. These included gender, age, high school GPA, whether a respondent went to a public or private high school, parental household income, mother's education, and father's education. After data collection, a table of Pearson product moment correlations was computed between each variable and all other variables to determine which control variables should be included in each analysis (See Appendix B for complete correlation table). The purpose of this table was to assess which of these variables would be useful in regression models as statistical controls. Gender was positively correlated with the awareness dimension of the self-determination scale ($r=.247$), so this was used in the model with awareness as the outcome variable. The type of school attended, parental income, and parent's education were not associated with any dependent variables, so they were not used as controls for any analysis.

Analytical procedures. Most individual hypotheses were tested using basic hierarchical linear regression. Each block was slightly different for each hypothesis. In general, though, demographic controls (if any) were entered in the first block and theorized predictors were entered in the second and subsequent (if applicable) blocks.

Hypotheses 8 and 9 predicted that any relationship between school or parental autonomy support would be mediated by trait autonomy. Linear regressions could be used to test this mediation hypothesis, by using Baron and Kenny's (1986) techniques. However, doing so would require multiple tests and would increase chances of making a Type I error. Preacher and Hayes (2008) suggest bootstrapping techniques to eliminate

this problem. Still, their method, while maintaining power by not reducing the error rate as the Baron and Kenny method does, still operates on the faulty assumption upon which all regression analyses rely: that variables are measured independently and without error. Therefore, indirect effects, as well as overall model fit, were assessed using structural equation modeling (SEM).

SEM provides benefits to this research project for several reasons (Byrne, 2010). First, regression calculations are performed simultaneously on the entire causal model within SEM, rather than one after another in typical regression. While each causal relationship was first tested in this paper using regular regression, interpreting the entire model as a compilation of several tests would unnecessarily increase the likelihood of making a Type I error (rejecting the null hypothesis when it should be accepted, or saying some effect exists when in reality it does not). Secondly, SEM allows for multiple indicators or dimensions of a latent construct to be modeled. For example, this dissertation includes trait autonomy, which is measured by two dimensions. SEM provides the ability to model those two dimensions as part of a higher-order latent construct. Thirdly, SEM provides the ability to model measurement error of observations, as well as residuals of latent constructs. This ability to model covariance between or among exogenous (independent) variables provides more ability for theorized models to match the complexity of real-world problems they attempt to study.

Results

      Data cleaning. Before analysis took place, data were examined to make sure they

fit assumptions of linear regression modeling, which is used as a primary analytical

procedure. In particular, descriptive analyses were performed to check for outliers and

univariate normality. No cases were outliers within any of the independent or dependent

variables.[1] Skewness and kurtosis were examined, as were basic histograms. All such

values were within an acceptable range (i.e. < 3.29), so no variable was transformed. (See

Table 3.3 for mean and standard deviations of all variables used in the model.)

Table 3.3

Descriptive statistics for independent and dependent variables used in the Study One model.

Variable	Mean	S.D.
Perceived Maternal Autonomy	5.27	1.15
Perceived Paternal Autonomy	5.01	1.28
Trait Autonomy (Awareness-of-Self Dimension)	5.58	1.09
Trait Autonomy (Perception of Choice Dimension)	5.01	1.12
Willingness to Self-Censor	3.77	0.97
Comfort Levels – Social Issues	4.45	1.58
Comfort Levels – School Issues	5.41	1.20
Perception of Principal's Comfort Levels – Social Issues	3.32	1.55
Perception of Principal's Comfort Levels – School Issues	4.31	1.28
Watchdog Role Conception	4.70	1.27

Note: All measurement take using a seven-point (1 to 7) scale.

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[1] Given the path analysis nature of the research, individual variables could be both
independent and dependent variables

Hypothesis tests with controversial topics as the outcome variable.

Hypotheses 1, 10 and 11 all posited relationships with comfort levels of controversial topics running in the high school newspaper. Specifically, Hypothesis 1 dealt with the effect of WTSC, Hypothesis 10 with the effect of perceptions of principal's comfort levels, and Hypothesis 11 with the effect of the watchdog journalistic role conception. None of the demographic variables were significantly correlated with either outcome variable; therefore, none were used to test these hypotheses. The first block included one's perception of his or her principal's comfort level with the same topic as the dependent variable in each individual test. The second block included willingness to self-censor. The third and final block included journalistic role conception.

For social topics, perceptions of principal's comfort level, WTSC, and the watchdog role conception were all significant predictors of one's own comfort level with such a topic appearing in the school paper (See full results in Table 3.4). Specifically, those who had higher perceptions of their principal's comfort levels and those who believed strongly in the watchdog role of the school press tended themselves to have higher comfort levels, while those with high WTSC tended to have lower comfort levels. Therefore, with social topics, all three hypotheses were supported. The full model with the three predictor variables accounted for 34.1% of the variance in one's own comfort levels with sex topics, with perceptions of principal's comfort levels individually accounting for 11.4%, WTSC accounting for 2.9%, and watchdog role conception accounting for 19.9%.

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Table 3.4.

Study One hierarchical regression predicting one's own comfort levels with stories about social issues running in the school newspaper. (N=134)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	b	se$_b$	β	b	se$_b$	β	B	se$_b$	β
Perception of Principal's Comfort Level	.343	.083	.338 ***	.308	.084	.302 ***	.271	.074	.267 ***
WTSC				-.281	.134	-.173 *	-.318	.118	-.196 **
Watchdog Role Conception							.554	.089	.447 ***
R^2	.114			.143			.341		
R^2 Change	.114			.029			.199		
Adjusted R^2	.107			.054			.326		

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

For stories about school issues, perceptions of principal's comfort level, WTSC, and the watchdog role conception were all significant predictors of one's own comfort level with such a topic appearing in the school paper (See full results in Table 3.5). As with social topics, those who had higher perceptions of their principal's comfort levels and those who believed strongly in the watchdog role of the school press tended themselves to have a higher comfort level, while those with high WTSC tended to have lower comfort level. Therefore, with school topics, all three hypotheses were supported. The full model with the three predictor variables accounted for 29.5% of the variance in one's own comfort levels with school topics, with perceptions of principal's comfort levels individually accounting for 4.6%, WTSC accounting for 2.6%, and watchdog role conception accounting for 22.4%.

Table 3.5.

Study One hierarchical regression predicting one's own comfort levels with stories about controversial school topics running in the school newspaper. (N=134)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	B	se_b	β	b	se_b	β	B	se_b	β
Perception of Principal's Comfort Level	.199	.079	.213*	.174	.080	.187*	.141	.070	.151*
WTSC				-.202	.105	-.164 †	-.229	.092	-.186*
Watchdog Role Conception							.447	.070	.474 ***
R^2	.046			.072			.295		
R^2 Change	.046			.026			.224		
Adjusted R^2	.038			.057			.279		

† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .01$

Hypothesis tests with trait autonomy as the outcome variable. Hypotheses 2 through 5 all hypothesized about the relationships between perceived school and parental autonomy support and each dimension of the self-determination scale (SDS), which was used to measure trait autonomy. One hierarchal regression was conducted for each dimension of the SDS. In the first test, with the awareness-of-self dimension as the dependent variable, gender was entered into the first block because of the significant correlation found between the two variables in an earlier analysis. School autonomy support was entered into the second block, and both maternal and paternal autonomy support were entered into the third block. In the model predicting the feeling-of-choice dimension of the scale, age was not included, so that model contained only two blocks.

For the awareness-of-self dimension, only gender and maternal autonomy support were significant predictors in the final model including all four independent variables (See full results in Table 3.6). Specifically, women and those who perceived their mothers to be more autonomy supportive had higher levels of trait autonomy as measured by the awareness-of-self dimension of the scale. School autonomy support was a significant predictor of awareness of self before parental autonomy support was entered into the model, but it was non-significant when controlling for parental autonomy support. Therefore, H2, which posited that perceived parental autonomy support would predict awareness of self, was supported. H4, which posited that perceived school autonomy support would predict awareness of self, was not supported. Parental autonomy support individually accounted for 11.1% of the variance, while gender accounted for 6.7%.

Table 3.6.

Study One hierarchical regression predicting awareness-of-self dimension of trait autonomy. (N=134)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	b	se_b	β	b	se_b	β	B	se_b	β
Gender	.580	.193	.258**	.530	.189	.236**	.450	.180	.200
School AS				.234	.087	.227**	.117	.089	.114
Maternal AS							.300	.083	.315***
Paternal AS							.073	.079	.084
R^2	.067			.118			.229		
R^2 Change	.067			.051			.111		
Adjusted R^2	.059			.104			.204		

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

For the feeling-of-choice dimension, only maternal autonomy support was a significant predictor in the final model including all three independent variables (See full results in Table 3.7). Specifically, those who perceived their mothers to be more autonomy-supportive had higher levels of trait autonomy as measured by the feeling-of-choice dimension of the scale. School autonomy support was a significant predictor of feeling of choice before parental autonomy support was entered into the model, but it was non-significant when controlling for parental autonomy support. Therefore, H3, which posited that perceived parental autonomy support would predict feeling of choice, was supported. H5, which posited that perceived school autonomy support would predict feeling of choice, was not supported. Parental autonomy support individually accounted for about 15% of the variance.

Table 3.7. Study One hierarchical regression predicting the feeling-of-choice dimension of trait autonomy. (N=134)

	Model 1			Model 2		
	b	se_b	β	B	se_b	β
School AS	.203	.090	.196*	.068	.091	.066
Maternal AS				.371	.084	.387 ***
Paternal AS				.059	.080	.067
R^2	.038			.195		
R^2 Change	.038			.157		
Adjusted R^2	.031			.176		

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

Hypothesis tests with WTSC as the outcome variable. Hypotheses 6 and 7 posited direct relationship between each dimension of the self-determination scale and

WTSC. Because each hypothesis only posited a simple relationship between two variables, simple bivariate correlations were computed. The awareness dimension of the self-determination scale was significantly correlated with WTSC ($r=-.180$, $p<.05$), as was the choice dimension ($r=-.190$, $p<.05$). Therefore, both hypotheses were supported.

Testing mediation and overall model fit. Hypotheses 8 and 9 posited that the relationship between parental and school autonomy support and WTSC would be mediated by trait autonomy. Basic bivariate correlations between each measure of autonomy support and WTSC show that there is no direct relationship (with school AS, $r=-.059$, $p=.502$; with paternal AS, $r=-.129$, $p=.145$; with maternal AS, $r=-.069$, $p=.430$).

To test the indirect relationship, structural equation modeling was used. Because paternal autonomy support was not a significant predictor of either of the trait autonomy dimensions, that variable was removed from analysis, leaving only maternal autonomy support as the sole indictor of autonomy support from parents. Also, given the two-dimensional nature of the self-determination scale, it was logical to model each observed dimension as being caused by a latent construct of trait autonomy. Based on these new model details, an SEM was modeled using AMOS 19 (See Figure 3.1). Individual models were built and analyzed for each category of controversial story. The structure of the model for each remained identical to the hypothesized model in Figure 3.1, except that the "Controversy Comfort" and "Perceptions of Principal's Controversy Comfort" variables used computed measures for each of the two controversial categories.

Figure 3.1. Study One hypothesized structural equation model
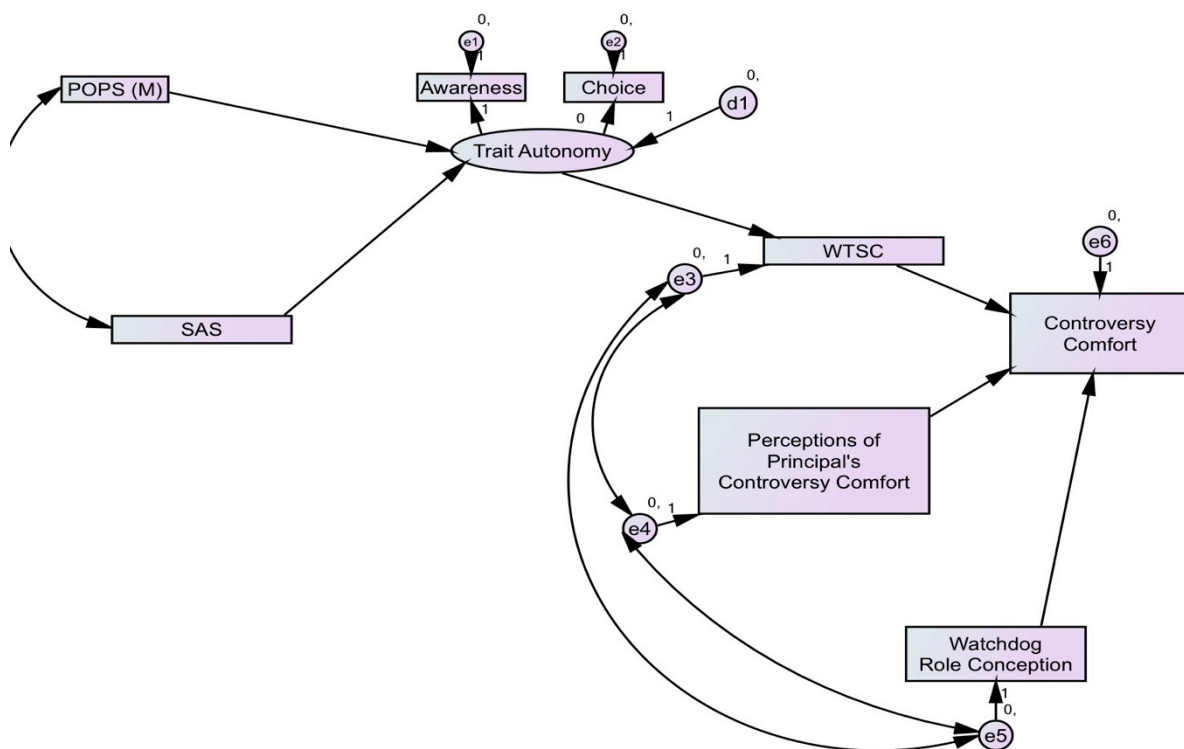
The models were analyzed using the maximum likelihood method. The traditional overall Chi-square test for model fit was used, as well as comparative fit indicators. Byrne (2010, p. 78) suggested that Bentler and Bonett's (1980) normed fit index (NFI) and Bentler's (1990) comparative fit index (CFI) were some of the most common statistics used for evaluating the fit between the data and a hypothesized model. NFI and CFI both range from zero to 1, and scores closer to 1 indicate better fit. Although there is some discussion among statisticians as to a practical cutoff point, Bryne said that recent literature (Hu & Bentler, 1999) suggest a cutoff of .95. Bryne also mentioned root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) as a useful tool. RMSEA that is equal to or lower than 0.05 is considered a great fit, RMSEA between 0.08 and 0.1 is considered a moderate fit, and RMSEA above 0.1 is considered a poor fit (Byrne, 2010).

SEM analyses indicated a good fit for both models. For the model predicting comfort level with the school newspaper publishing stories on controversial school topics ($\chi2 = 20.157$, df $= 16$, $p =.213$), the normed fit index (NFI $= 0.868$), the comparative fit index (CFI $= 0.965$), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA $= 0.044$) indicated a good fit between the data and the model. For the model predicting comfort level with the school newspaper publishing stories about social topics ($\chi2 = 14.703$, df $= 16$, $p =.546$), the normed fit index (NFI $= 0.908$), the comparative fit index (CFI $= 1.0$), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA $= 0.000$) indicated a good fit between the data and the model.

The hypothesized relationships within each model mirror those found within each of the hypothesis tests performed in earlier analysis using normal hierarchal linear regression. See Figures 3.2 (for school topics) and 3.3 (for social topics) to see standardized regression coefficients from the SEM. With the model predicting comfort levels with stories about controversial social topics, all three predictors shown in the regression analysis (See Table 3.4) remain significant, with similar standardized effect sizes, in the SEM. Perhaps more interesting is that by modeling trait autonomy as a latent construct, eliminating the paternal autonomy support measure, and specifying a covariance structure between perceived maternal autonomy support and school autonomy support, the latter is approaching significance in its prediction of trait autonomy. In general, H12, which specifies that hypothesized relationships will hold when simultaneously analyzing relationships in SEM, is supported.

Figure 3.2. Study One SEM predicting comfort levels with stories about school topics
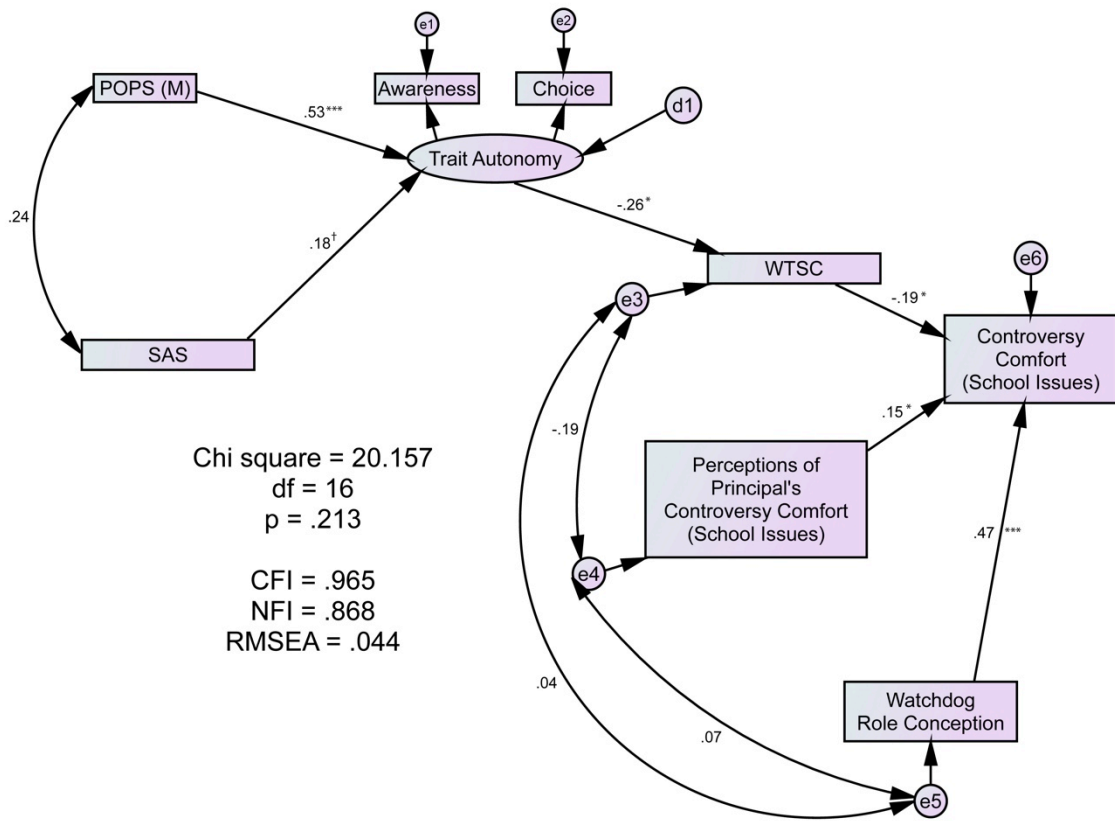
* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, † p<.10

Figure 3.3. Study One SEM predicting comfort levels with stories about social topics
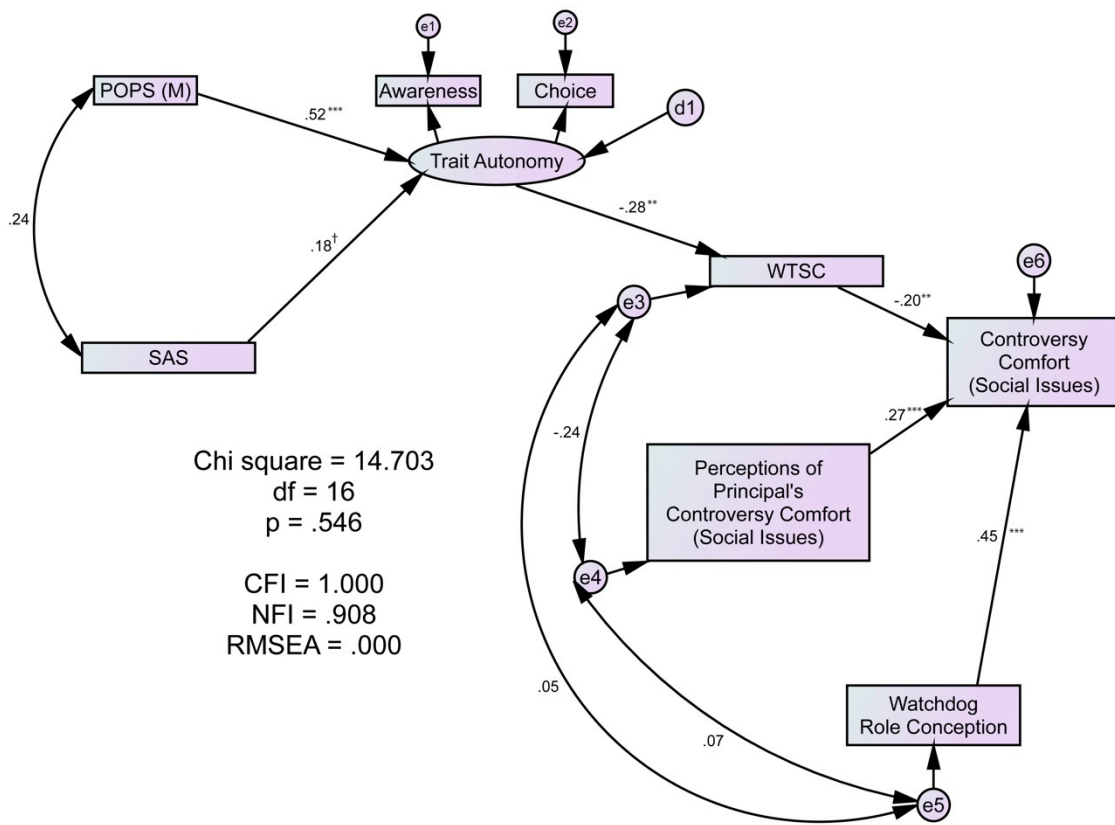
* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, † p<.10

Chapter 4

Additional Hypotheses and Research Questions

The purpose of Study One was to test the measures and analytical techniques for the overall high school controversial topics model. Results from Study One replicate empirical work from the literature in support of the influence of willingness to self-censor and perceptions of other's comfort levels with controversial topics (i.e., a function of the quasi-statistical sense) on one's own comfort levels with the newspaper publishing controversial topics. However, the study adds significant support for the influence of role conceptions on comfort with controversy, certainly a factor that could influence what one chooses to publish. While the data support the theory in the existence of role enactment with comfort with controversy, the effect sizes are quite surprising. In many cases, the amount of variance explained by the watchdog role conception was double or triple that of the other predictors. With overall comfort levels with all controversial topics, the watchdog role explained more than a quarter of the variance (R^2=.264). Study Two was expected to confirm this model.

One of the primary goals of Study One was to explain the antecedents for willingness to self-censor by using trait autonomy and the support of that need in the home and in schools. While ample support was shown for parental autonomy support's direct influence on trait autonomy and its indirect influence on WTSC, virtually no support was found for the influence of school autonomy support on the development of trait autonomy. This could be a correct inference, but given the strong theory suggesting

the contrary, it seems more likely that a Type II error is being made, primarily due to possible measurement error.

The statements used to measure school autonomy support were adapted from the Learning Climate Questionnaire, which has been used in the past to measure autonomy support for relatively small groups. For instance, Black and Deci (2000) used the scale to measure perceived autonomy support from individual instructors of organic chemistry. Study One attempted to adapt the measure to tap into perceived autonomy support regarding one's overall high school experience. Upon further reflection, it seems that such a construct might be too amorphous to be measured validly with such a simple adaptation. A respondent might have a hard time measuring autonomy support from the school in this kind of "overall" sense, because he or she might have experienced some contexts that were more functionally informational and others that were more functionally controlling. For example, one school teacher who provided adequate opportunity for students to make their own choices, provided rationale when such choices could not be offered, and took the perspective of students whenever possible would likely be rated as very autonomy-supportive. On the other hand, a principal who shouted orders at students and never took their perspective on issues would likely not be rated very high on the LCQ.

Given the need for the source of school autonomy support to be more specifically named, it makes sense that this dissertation focus on the two school actors upon which much of scholastic journalism censorship research is based: the newspaper adviser and the principal. Therefore, each respondent will be asked to indicate the perceived level of autonomy support from both his high school newspaper adviser and his high school

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principal. Autonomy support from these two sources replaced the more general school autonomy support construct already in the model. Therefore, Hypotheses 4 and 5 were revised to incorporate perceived autonomy support from advisers and perceived autonomy support from principals separately. Hypothesis 4, which stated that there would be a positive relationship between school autonomy support and the "awareness of one's sense of self" dimension of trait autonomy, were divided into the following two hypotheses:

> H4a: Perceived principal autonomy support will be positively related to trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "awareness of one's sense of self" dimension of the trait.

> H4b: Perceived adviser autonomy support will be positively related to trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "awareness of one's sense of self" dimension of the trait.

Likewise, Hypothesis 5, which stated that there would be a positive relationship between school autonomy support and the "feeling-of-choice" dimension of trait autonomy, were divided into the following two hypotheses:

> H5a: Perceived principal autonomy support will be positively related to trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "feeling-of-choice" dimension of the trait.

> H5b: Perceived adviser autonomy support will be positively related to trait-level autonomy, as measured by the "feeling-of-choice" dimension of the trait.

Additional Influences on Opinion Climate

So far, the literature review and related hypotheses have examined psychological and opinion expression processes without paying much attention to the developmental stage high school and young college students find themselves in, namely late adolescence and emerging adulthood. In particular, the quasi-statistical sense has been estimated by measuring only a student's perceptions of his or her principal's comfort levels with the newspaper running a story on a controversial topic. Missing is a student's perceptions of how peers in the school will react to such topics. Additionally, for former high school journalists, perceptions of the newspaper adviser's comfort levels are equally as important as the principal's. The perceived opinions of a school administrator certainly influence the environment in which student journalists operate, as well as their own opinions – as could be seen from the relationship reported in Study One between students' comfort levels and their perceptions of their principals' comfort levels. However, adding measures for peers and the newspaper adviser help develop a more comprehensive picture of the opinion climate. The developmental psychology literature provides support for these theoretical statements.

Adviser influence. Only recently have scholars started to examine how experiences in schools influence feelings, identities, and social-emotional behaviors of adolescents; most of these outcomes are studied in family contexts, and most scholarship in the school domain focuses on intellectual development (Eccles & Roeser, 2003). In the school context, much research has focused on the support of teachers. Perhaps not surprisingly, the research examining the role of the "average teacher" has consistently produced little evidence to suggest that these relationships are very significant in an

adolescent's life (Darling, Hamilton, & Shaver, 2003). After all, many high school teachers meet with more than 100 students a day, over the course of several time blocks. Nonetheless, adolescents tend to view teachers as authority figures, particularly when it comes to certain issues such as moral (e.g., stealing, making fun of another student, etc.) or conventional concerns (e.g., dress codes, appropriate speech, etc.). For example, in Smetana and Bitz's (1996) study of adolescent's conceptions of teacher's authority, 86% of high school juniors and 84% of freshmen surveyed saw the school as having legitimate authority to regulate moral issues. With conventional issues, 76% of juniors and 71% of freshmen saw teachers and administrators as having legitimate authority. While controversial stories often seen in the school press do not perfectly fit with the operational definition of conventional or moral domains as they are presented by social domain theorists (e.g., Smetana, 1999), they come close. For instance, moral issues tend to be based on the concepts of harm, justice, and rights. Many stories about controversial issues (such as a story criticizing the school leadership or one covering abortion) could do harm if not done well. Additionally, students may see some of these issues as being in the domain of the conventional, or what is "acceptable" in the school environment. In these domains, teachers and administrators have some authority.

While there is no research examining the role of journalism teachers, research that examines the role of adult leaders of youth groups provides support for environments where adults and youth interact in a more collegial manner. In a qualitative analysis of data from interviews and observations of 12 youth programs (e.g., art, media, leadership programs, etc.), Walker (2011) found that group leaders tended to take on several roles, ranging from a traditional teacher role to that of an influential mentor, trusted friend, or

even caring parent. While adult leaders sometimes were thought of as authority figures, youth participants perceived those relationships to be less hierarchical than the relationships they had with parents or teachers: "In the intermediate zone of youth programs, program leaders appeared to be able to transcend traditional reciprocal roles, straddle the adult and youth worlds, and position themselves in a range of ways that allowed them to meet the varied needs of the youth" (Walker, 2011, p. 652). Non-related adults, particularly teachers, tended to be perceived by adolescents as significant when the relationships between them were seen as personal, with deep and extensive communication, where the adolescents were viewed more like peers than children (Galbo, 1989).

Other developmental research has suggested that students view teachers as "epistemic" authorities, or reliable sources of legitimate, factual, truthful knowledge (Raviv, Bar-Tal, Raviv, Biran, & Sela, 2003; Raviv, Bar-Tal, Raviv, & Peleg, 1990). In other words, teachers are often viewed as sources of authority with formal knowledge, though the degree to which they are viewed as such decreases with increased student age. Perhaps most relevant to the current examination, Raviv and colleagues (2003) found that student interest in the subject was the strongest predictor of perceptions of the teacher being an epistemic authority. In most schools, working for the school newspaper is an elective, and presumably students who do not enjoy or are not interested in journalism elect to abstain from the activity. It stands to reason, then, that students on the school newspaper exhibit a strong interest in the subject matter, and therefore they likely perceive their journalism teacher as having a high degree of formal knowledge in the

field. Given these findings, students' perceptions of journalism teachers' comfort levels with controversial topics should be related to their own comfort levels:

> H13: Perceptions of advisers' comfort levels will be positively related to students' comfort levels with covering controversial topics in the school newspaper.

Peer influence. In addition to significant adults, such as principals and advisers, perhaps the most likely influences on personal comfort levels with controversial topics are the perceived comfort levels of other students in the school. After all, these students are likely seen as the primary audience of the school newspaper. Part of journalistic routine is asking what the perceived audience will find acceptable and compelling (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). There is some evidence from qualitative studies of high school journalism that these young reporters think about the wants or needs of the readers. For instance, journalists interviewed by Fischman et al. (2004) described their two main missions – to cover issues important to students, and to provide students with information that would have an impact on their lives – in reader-centric terms. Moreover, unlike professional journalists, high school journalists operate in an environment where they are likely to have somewhat closer connections to readers. Schofield Clark and Monserrate (2011, p. 425) found that involvement in high school journalism gave those students the opportunity "to come to know and appreciate others in their school community." Given that high school journalists regularly think about their readers when making content decisions, it makes sense that some variance in an individual's comfort level with a topic will be influenced by how they perceive their audience:

H14: Perceptions of other students' comfort levels will be positively related to former student journalists' comfort levels with the paper covering controversial topics.

While journalistic routines provide a foundation and explanation for the influence of peers on comfort levels, research from developmental psychology provides additional support on which to build this hypothesis. Additionally, though, it provides some direction in theorizing how the magnitude of perceived peer comfort levels might compare to one's own comfort levels.

Peer influence studies tend to focus on individual levels of adolescent friendship: dyadic relationships between two friends, small group interaction (cliques), and influence from the larger group social system (crowds) (Brown & Klute, 2003). Adolescents easily traverse the levels, though much research focuses on only one level or another. The issue of crowd influence is probably most relevant to the current question of peer audiences. According to Brown (2004), crowds are social groups that form by adolescents gathering in large enough numbers that each individual might not know everyone else (unlike cliques, which are very close-knit groups of 10 or fewer people). Crowds are often exemplified in movies such as "The Breakfast Club" or "American Pie," and they consist of groups such as jocks, brains, druggies, populars, etc. (Brown, 1990). These groups tend to be more cognitive than behavioral. That being said, peer crowds – like dyadic friendships and cliques – influence the development of behavioral norms, which influence how individuals interact with one another. Peer groups also exert behavioral influence through antagonistic behaviors, such as bullying or making fun; behavioral

reinforcement, or explicit encouraging of actions; or structural opportunities, such as

providing the environmental means (e.g., a un-chaperoned party) for certain behaviors

(e.g., experimenting with drugs) (Brown, Bakken, Ameringer, & Mahon, 2008). Another

way peer crowds influence is through the process of individuals developing identities and

self-concepts (Brown, Mory, & Kinney, 1994), including through the development of

social identities (M. R. Stone & Brown, 1999).

Most research on crowds has focused on classification of the groups (For a

review, see Sussman, Pokhrel, Ashmore, & Brown, 2007). What's much less studied is

the way groups interact with one another; social identity theory provides a backdrop upon

which to ask such questions. Social identity theory suggests that we develop attachments

to our own "in-groups" while emphasizing the pitfalls of other groups, or so-called "out-

groups" (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). High school journalism classes and clubs operate in

fairly close-knit communities, and despite the apparent reader-oriented normative goals

of the young reporters, it is likely that other groups in the school are seen by high school

journalists as out-groups, and thus as being less comfortable with controversial topics.

Additionally, this theory is supported well in the communication literature by third-

person effect studies, which say that people tend to underestimate the effect mass media

have on themselves and overestimate the effect it has on others (Davison, 1983; Perloff,

2009). Given the peer influence and third-person effect literature, former high school

journalists should evaluate such out-groups as less comfortable with the paper covering

controversy than they themselves are:

> H15: The magnitude of former high school journalists' perceptions of peers'
>
> comfort levels with the school newspaper running controversial stories will be

significantly lower than the magnitude of the former journalists' own self-reported comfort levels with such stories.

Comparing effects. While H10, H13, and H14 predict that an individual's comfort levels with the newspaper covering controversial topics are influenced by his perceptions of his principal, adviser, and peers, respectively, no difference among these effects has been posited. In other words, among these three sources of influence, what source explains the most variance in a former journalist's reported comfort levels? Little research exists comparing the influence of different sources of influence on adolescents' behaviors or attitudes. Most scholarship focuses on just one source of influence, such as parents, non-related adults, or peers (as has been briefly reviewed above). Smetana and Bitz (1996) compared adolescents' endorsement of authority from such varied sources (i.e., self, parents, friends, teachers, school administrators, and law) on rule-making in five conceptual domains (i.e., moral, conventional, personal, contextual convention, and prudential). Friends' authority trumped parents, teachers, and administrators in only the personal domain, which deals with issues such as what hairstyle to choose, how to spend money, or who to sit next to in class. Friends' authority was also more strongly endorsed than parents in items that related to school conventions, such as leaving class without permission or kissing in the hall, though teacher and administrator authority was the most legitimate in this domain. In examining contexts that thwart suppression of voice (or, conversely, support outspokenness), Harter (1996) found that adolescents are most often their "true selves" with friends, followed by peers, followed by teachers. In other words,

support from friends or other peers, compared with support from teachers, had a larger effect on supporting opinion expression.

Raviv et al. (1990) compared adolescents' perceptions of parents', teachers', and friends' epistemic authority in three areas: formal knowledge, social knowledge, and general life knowledge. Among the high school seniors in their study, friends' epistemic authority ranked lowest compared to parents and teachers on formal knowledge and general life knowledge. For social knowledge, friends' authority ranked highest.

As mentioned earlier, coverage of controversial topics does not fit perfectly into any of the conceptual domains used by Smetana and others. However, it is likely that different parts of each controversial topic straddle multiple domains. For instance, a story about abortion likely falls under both the moral and conventional domains, and for some it might fall under the personal domain. Running controversial topics in the school newspaper likely straddles several epistemic domains. For instance, several topics are valued-laden, and values exist under the umbrella of general life knowledge; on the other hand, choosing to run a controversial topic could have social consequences for a student journalist, clearly a decision that exists under the social domain. Given the ambiguity in domain of controversial topics, together with the finding that adolescents act most "themselves" with peers, it is difficult to develop a strong hypothesis to suggest one source of influence is stronger than another. Therefore, this dissertation simply asks a research question comparing the effects of the different perceptions:

RQ1: How do the effects of perceived comfort levels of principals, advisers, and peers on one's own comfort level compare to each other? Which source of influence explains the most variance?

Exploring parental and adviser autonomy support as possible moderators.

In Study One, the role of parents was used primarily as a statistical control so that the analysis could focus on the effect of school autonomy support on trait autonomy and, indirectly, willingness to self-censor. However, the question remains as to how parental autonomy support might explain some part of how former student journalists might perceive the comfort levels of school influences, particularly teachers and administrators. Developmental research suggests that adolescents who described their parents as more supportive tend to believe their parents hold more legitimate authority, especially with personal and prudential issues (Darling, Cumsille, & Martinez, 2008). But this finding does not get at how parenting practices interact with the effect of one's perceptions of social environment. In recent years, scholars have started to explore the interactions between in-home and out-of-home factors on childhood and adolescent development (e.g., Cook, Herman, Phillips, & Settersten, 2002). Several recent studies have examined the influence of parenting practices on the strength of peer influence, especially on engaging in delinquent behaviors, often finding that parental warmth moderated one's susceptibility to peer influence (e.g., Vitaro, Brendgen, & Tremblay, 2000; Wood, Read, Mitchell, & Brand, 2004). However, other scholars have found no evidence of a direct effect of parenting style or practice on the strength of peer influence (e.g., Trucco, Colder, & Wieczorek, 2011), sometimes finding only an indirect effect on such susceptibility through personality characteristics like self-esteem (e.g., Yang & Laroche, 2011). No research has examined the relationship between parenting practices, including autonomy support, and the specific influence of teachers or administrators. Because of

the lack of such research, as well as the mixed and tangentially related results of peer influence, the following research question is posed:

RQ2: How does perceived parental autonomy support interact with perceptions of peers', administrators', and advisers' comfort levels to predict one's own comfort levels?

The aforementioned research question essentially asks whether the relationship between perceptions of others' comfort levels will be influenced by the degree of a parent's autonomy support. However, it stands to reason that the degree to which respondents are influenced by advisers, administrators, and peers will be affected by the degree to which one had an autonomy supportive journalism teacher. Therefore, the following research question is posed:

RQ3: How does perceived adviser autonomy support interact with perceptions of peers', administrators', and advisers' comfort levels to predict one's own comfort levels?

Additionally, given the question of interaction of parenting and adviser practices with other possible influences, the first part of the model, predicting trait autonomy – and indirectly, willingness to self-censor – should be reanalyzed to look for interaction among perceived parental, adviser, and principal autonomy support.

RQ4: In addition to the direct effects posited in H2 through H5 (including H4b and H5b posited in this chapter), what statistical interactions are evident among autonomy support from parents, principals, and advisers?

Finally, H12 in Study One posited that when performing simultaneous analysis of all variables in the model, all previously found relationships would stay significant. This hypothesis is restated with additional constructs added in this section (See Figure 4.1)

H12: All aforementioned hypothesized relationships (including those added in this chapter) will hold when simultaneous analysis of all variables in the model is conducted.

Figure 4.1. Full Study Two model predicting comfort levels of covering controversial topics
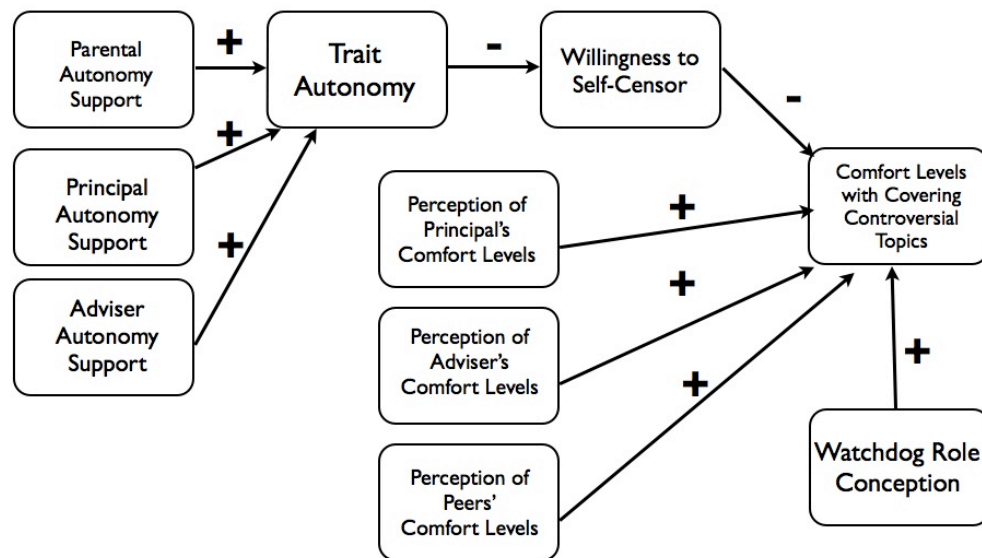
Chapter 5

Study Two

Methods

Similar to the first study, this study surveyed college students enrolled in their freshman year. However, more care was taken to ensure a large enough number of former high school newspaper journalists was in this sample. In total, 391 responses were collected via a web survey from three introductory-level journalism courses at a large Midwestern university. Two responses were removed because the respondents had not attended a high school before coming to college (e.g., they were homeschooled), and seven additional were removed because respondents were 21 or older, indicating that they had not been in high school in the year immediately preceding college. An additional 10 responses were removed because of lack of engagement with the online survey instrument. Such respondents were first identified because they took a comparatively low amount of time (less than two minutes) to complete the instrument. The mean completion time for the survey was 17 minutes (after removing outliers of more than 45 minutes), with a standard deviation of 7.5 minutes. Those who took less than two minutes were two standard deviations below the mean. Secondly, some scales included reverse-coded items, so respondents who consistently "straight-lined" answers in a grid (e.g., answering "strongly agree" for all answers even in the presence of multiple reverse-oriented items) were removed from analysis. Both of these techniques for removing respondents with low engagement were identified by Baker et al. (2010) as effective solutions to

accomplish this task. These techniques left 372 responses upon which analyses could be performed.

Of those 372 respondents, nearly half (N=171) had worked for their high school newspaper. Given that many of the additional hypotheses and research questions added in Chapter 4 pertain to those who worked on the high school newspaper (e.g., assessing adviser autonomy support or the comfort levels of the advisers), only those former high school journalists' responses were used for those tests, including the examination of the entire model using SEM. However, some post hoc tests examining the influence of high school journalism training on comfort levels with controversial topics used the entire 372-participant dataset.

As mentioned, about half of the 372 total respondents mentioned they had scholastic newspaper experience. Additionally, about a third (N=125) reported having worked for the school yearbook, a quarter (N=88) worked for the school TV/radio program, and about 10% worked for their local community paper (N=34). Including school newspapers and all the other sources of journalistic education, more than three-quarters (N=283) of respondents reported some journalistic education or experience.

Of the overall sample, about a third (30.4%) were male, and the mean age was 18.77 (*SD*=.599). Most respondents did well in high school, with an average GPA of 3.62 (*SD*=.346) on a four-point scale. Most attended public school (81.2%). Nearly a quarter (23.9%) came from families earning more than $150,000 a year, with only 9.7% from families making less than $50,000 a year. About 69% of mothers and 67% of fathers had at least a bachelor's degree. Demographic characteristics of the smaller former high

school newspaper journalist subset were similar to the larger sample. (See Table 5.1 for a

complete demographic breakdown for both samples.)

Table 5.1

Descriptive statistics for entire dataset as well as former high school journalist subset of Study Two

Variable	Overall Sample	Former High School Newspaper Journalists
N	372	171
Age – Mean (SD)	18.77 (.599)	18.74 (.579)
Gender		
Male	30.9%	34.3%
Female	69.1%	65.7%
High School GPA – Mean (SD)	3.62 (.346)	3.59 (.340)
Public/Private		
Public	81.2%	83.8%
Private	18.8%	16.2%
Parent's Household Income		
Less than $25,000	1.9%	1.8%
$25,000 to $34,999	2.7%	1.2%
$35,000 to $49,999	5.1%	4.7%
$50,000 to $74,999	12.6%	11.7%
$75,000 to $99,999	11.8%	12.9%
$100,000 to $124,999	14.2%	15.2%
$125,000 to $149,999	11.8%	9.9%
$150,000 or more	23.9%	28.7%
Don't know	16%	14%
Mother's Education		
12th grade or less	1.9%	0.6%
Graduated high school or equivalent	9.4%	7.6%

Some college, no degree	11.8%	15.8%
Associate degree	7.8%	8.8%
Bachelors degree	46.8%	43.9%
Post-graduate degree	21.8%	23.4%
Not applicable	0.5%	0.0%
Father's Education		
12th grade or less	1.6%	1.8%
Graduated high school or equivalent	10.5%	9.9%
Some college, no degree	9.7%	10.5%
Associate degree	8.6%	9.4%
Bachelors degree	36%	32.2%
Post-graduate degree	30.9%	35.1%
Not applicable	2.7%	1.2%

Measures. For the most part, operationalizations from Study One remain the same in Study Two, with a few notable exceptions. For school autonomy support, Study One measured the concept through an adaptation of the Learning Climate Questionnaire meant to tease out general perceived autonomy support from overall school experience. This concept was slightly re-conceptualized (See Chapter 4) to include autonomy support from advisers and principals as two separate sources of influence. Like the "school" autonomy support from Study One, principal and adviser autonomy supports were each measured by adapting the LCQ. Additionally, both were shown to be internally consistent (α=.969 for principal autonomy support; α=.973 for adviser autonomy support).[2]

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[2] Reliability analyses were completed on the subset of sample with only former high school newspaper journalists. This was done because adviser autonomy support was measured only from those students. Nonetheless, principal autonomy support was still highly internally reliable in the overall sample (α=.967).

Secondly, in addition to perceived comfort levels of principals, which was assessed in Study One, perceived comfort levels of advisers and peers were measured. The same controversial items were used to measure both social- and school-oriented topics (See Chapter 3 for information about the development of these scales). Both scales were shown to be highly internally consistent (α=.928 for peers' comfort with social issues; α=.898 for peers' comfort with school issues; α=.960 for adviser's comfort with social issues; α=.920 for adviser's comfort with school issues).[3]

All other operationalizations used in Study One were unchanged in Study Two, including maternal (α=.911) and paternal (α=.901) autonomy support, trait autonomy (α=.790 for the feeling-of-choice dimension; α=.756 for awareness of sense of self dimension), willingness to self-censor (α=.856), perception of principal's comfort level with controversial topics (α=.950 for social issues; α=.895 for school issues), personal comfort level with controversial topics (α=.927 for social issues; α=.926 for school issues), and watchdog role conception (α=.882).[4]

Additionally, all demographic variables measured as controls in Study One were again measured in Study Two. These included gender, age, high school GPA, whether a

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[3] Cronbach's Alpha scores were computed on the former high school newspaper journalist subset, though scales were internally consistent with the overall sample as well (α=.928 for peers' comfort with social issues; α=.898 for peers' comfort with school issues; α=.960 for adviser's comfort with social issues; α=.920 for adviser's comfort with school issues).

[4] Cronbach's Alpha scores were computed on the former high school newspaper journalist subset. Scores for each scale using the overall sample: maternal (α=.887) and paternal (α=.900) autonomy support, trait autonomy (α=.809 for the feeling-of-choice dimension; α=.747 for awareness of sense of self dimension), willingness to self-censor (α=.841), perception of principal's comfort level with controversial topics (α=.841 for social issues; α=.879 for school issues), personal comfort level with controversial topics (α=.923 for social issues; α=.922 for school issues), and watchdog role conception (α=.866).

respondent went to a public or private high school, parental household income, mother's education, and father's education. After data collection, a table of Pearson product moment correlations was computed between each variable and all other variables to determine which control variables should be included in each analysis (See Appendix C for complete correlation table using the former high school journalist subset of the larger sample). The purpose of this table was to assess which of these variables would be useful in regression models as statistical controls. Parental income (r=-.171, p<.05) and mother's education (r=-.206, p<.01) were both related to personal comfort levels with school-oriented controversial topics, so these were used as controls for models predicting that outcome variable. Also, whether the student attended a private school (as opposed to a public school) was significantly correlated with personal comfort levels with both social- (r=-.308, p<.01) and school-oriented (r=-.264, p<.01) controversial topics. Therefore, this was also used as a control for models predicting comfort levels. Gender, age, GPA, and father's education were not associated with any dependent variable, so they were not used as controls for any analysis.

Analytical procedures. Like Study One, most individual hypotheses were tested using basic hierarchical linear regression. Each block was slightly different for each hypothesis. In general, though, demographic controls (if any) were entered in the first block, and theorized predictors were entered in the second and subsequent (if applicable) blocks. Moreover, with models that sought to predict influence from multiple possible social sources (e.g., predicting trait autonomy from principal, adviser, and parental autonomy support; or predicting comfort levels from principals', advisers', and peers' comfort levels with topics), variables were entered in order of social distance. Those

"closest" were entered into the regression model last. Specifically, influence from principals (with the most social distance from students) was entered in first after demographic controls were entered, following by influence from advisers, followed by influence from parents or peers. This was done to assess the degree to which principals' and advisers' influences, in particular, would hold up even after entering "closer" influences into the model. Also, like Study One, mediation hypotheses and full model fit were assessed using SEM.

Unlike Study One, Study Two sought to answer research questions that deal with interactions. This was analyzed by entering interaction terms into the previously analyzed model. First, however, the variables that were to be included in the interactions – those measuring autonomy support and those measuring perceptions of others' comfort levels, were centered. This was done both to improve the interpretability of the results and to lessen the problem of multicollinearity (Agresti & Finlay, 1997; Howell, 2012). Not centering would mean that any interaction effect for one variable would be evaluated at a value of zero for the other variable. For instance, without centering, a test on whether maternal autonomy support moderated the effect of perceptions of peers' comfort levels on one's personal comfort level would be a test of this effect when a respondent had no maternal autonomy support. Centering allows for interpretation when the moderator (e.g., autonomy support) is at a mean level rather than at zero. After centering variables that would be used in the interaction, a new interaction variable was created by taking the product of each individual variable. The new centered individual variables, as well as the interaction, were entered into the hierarchical regression in separate blocks.

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To assist in interpreting statistically significant interactions, proposed moderators were divided into two groups (e.g., low and high parental autonomy support). Scores were bifurcated at the mean. A scatterplot with best-fit line for each group was produced, and slopes were analyzed to assess the degree the proposed moderator changed the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

For interactions among adviser, principal, and maternal autonomy support in prediction of trait autonomy, an analysis of variance was conducted using the bifurcated groups of high and low support.

All hypotheses and research questions were analyzed using the former high school newspaper journalist subset (N=171). However, post-hoc tests were conducted to analyze individual parts of the model using the larger population including those who did not work for their high school newspaper (N=372). Specifically, two tests were performed to explore whether non-newspaper journalistic experience (e.g., working for the high school yearbook or broadcast program) also influenced personal comfort levels with controversial topics running in the school newspaper. Therefore, variables measuring whether or not a respondent had such experience was entered into regression equations predicting personal comfort levels.

Results

  Data cleaning. Before analysis took place, data were analyzed to make sure they fit assumptions of linear regression modeling. Like in Study One, descriptive analyses were performed to check for outliers and univariate normality. No cases were outliers

within any of the independent or dependent variables.[5] Skewness and kurtosis were

examined, as were basic histograms, to check for univariate normality. All such values

were within an acceptable range (i.e., < 3.29), so no variable was transformed. (See Table

5.2 for mean and standard deviations of all continuous variables used in the model.)

Table 5.2

Descriptive statistics for independent and dependent variables used in the entire Study Two model. Statistics are reported for the former high school newspaper journalist subset.

Variable	Mean	SD
Perceived Maternal Autonomy Support	5.39	1.19
Perceived Paternal Autonomy Support	5.11	1.30
Perceived Principal Autonomy Support	4.65	1.52
Perceived Adviser Autonomy Support	5.93	1.29
Trait Autonomy (Awareness-of-Self Dimension)	5.46	1.12
Trait Autonomy (Perception of Choice Dimension)	5.28	1.06
Willingness to Self-Censor	3.33	1.13
Watchdog Role Conception	4.99	1.27
Comfort Levels – Social Issues	5.00	1.39
Comfort Levels – School Issues	6.03	1.04
Perception of Principal's Comfort Levels – Social Issues	2.95	1.53
Perception of Principal's Comfort Levels – School Issues	4.17	1.57
Perception of Adviser's Comfort Levels – Social Issues	4.10	5.48
Perception of Adviser's Comfort Levels – School Issues	5.48	1.40
Perception of Peers' Comfort Levels – Social Issues	4.03	1.38
Perception of Peers' Comfort Levels – School Issues	5.58	1.13

Note: All measurement take using a seven-point (1 to 7) scale.

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[5] Given the path analysis nature of the research, individual variables could be both independent and dependent variables

Hypothesis tests with controversial topics as the outcome variable.

Hypotheses 1, 10, 11, 13, and 14 all posited predictions of personal comfort levels with controversial topics running in the school newspaper. Specifically, Hypothesis 1 dealt with the effect of WTSC, Hypothesis 10 with the effect of perceptions of principals' comfort levels, Hypothesis 11 with the effect of the watchdog journalistic role conception, Hypothesis 13 with the effect of perceptions of advisers' comfort levels, and Hypothesis 14 with the effect of perceptions of peers' comfort levels.

For social topics, perceptions of adviser's comfort level, perceptions of peers' comfort level, WTSC, and the watchdog role conception were all significant predictors of one's own comfort level with such a topic appearing in the school paper (See full results in Table 5.3). Specifically, those who had higher perceptions of their adviser's comfort level and higher perceptions of their peers' comfort levels and those who believed strongly in the watchdog role of the school press tended themselves to have higher comfort levels, while those with high WTSC tended to have lower comfort levels. Perceptions of principal's comfort level was not a significant predictor of one's comfort level. Therefore, H1, H11, H12, and H13 were all supported with their predictions of one's own comfort level with social-oriented controversial topics appearing in the student newspaper; H10 was not supported. Additionally, those who had attended a private high school reported that they would have been less comfortable with seeing controversial social issues in the school newspaper. In total, the entire model explained 51% of the variance in one's comfort levels with social-oriented controversial topics. Adding in one's perceptions of his adviser and peers collectively added about 25% to the amount of variance explained by the model, compared to WTSC's 3% and the watchdog role's 7%.

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Table 5.3

Study Two hierarchical regression predicting one's own comfort levels with stories about social-oriented controversial issues running in the school newspaper. (N=171)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			Model 5			Model 6		
	b	se_b	β	b	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β
Attended a private HS	-1.159	.279	-.308	-1.113	.268	-.296 ***	-.984	.246	-.261 ***	-.811	.228	-.215 ***	-.736	.223	-.195 **	-.466	.216	-.124 *
Perception of Principal's Comfort Level				.247	.064	.274 ***	-.008	.074	-.009	-.092	.069	-.102	-.095	.067	-.106	-.024	.065	-.027
Perception of Adviser's Comfort Level							.371	.064	.472 ***	.266	.062	.339 ***	.265	.060	.337 ***	.173	.059	.220 **
Perception of Peers' Comfort Level										.397	.071	.397 ***	.381	.069	.381 ***	.355	.065	.355 ***
WTSC													-.227	.072	-.185 **	-.171	.068	-.140 *
Watchdog Role Conception																.332	.068	.304 ***
R^2	.095			.169			.310			.423			.456			.527		
R^2 Change	.095			.075			.141			.112			.033			.071		
Adjusted R^2	.089			.159			.298			.409			.439			.510		

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

For school-oriented controversial topics, perceptions of adviser's comfort level, perceptions of peers' comfort level, WTSC, and the watchdog role conception were all significant predictors of one's own comfort level with such a topic appearing in the school paper (See full results in Table 5.4). Specifically, those who had higher perceptions of their adviser's comfort level and higher perceptions of their peers' comfort levels and those who believed strongly in the watchdog role of the school press tended to have higher comfort levels with school-oriented controversial topics, while those with high WTSC tended to have lower comfort levels. Perceptions of a principal's comfort

level was not a significant predictor of one's own comfort level, though in the final model

it was approaching significance (p=.052). Therefore, H1, H11, H12, and H13 were all

supported with their predictions of one's own comfort level with school-oriented

controversial topics appearing in the student newspaper; H10 was not supported, though

the p-value for this finding was approaching significance. In total, the entire model

explained 60% of the variance in one's comfort levels with school-oriented controversial

topics. Adding in one's perceptions of advisers and peers collectively added about 40% to

the amount of variance explained by the model, compared to WTSC's 2% and the

watchdog role's 4%.

Table 5.4

Study Two hierarchical regression predicting one's own comfort levels with stories about school-oriented controversial issues running in the school newspaper. (N=171)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			Model 5			Model 6		
	b	se_b	β	b	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β
Attended a private HS	-.725	.239	-.252**	-.725	.235	-.252**	-.397	.201	-.138*	-.235	.174	-.082	-.197	.171	-.068	-.089	.166	-.031
Parent's Household Income	-.046	.051	-.081	-.037	.050	-.065	-.049	.042	-.086	-.057	.036	-.100	-.056	.035	-.099	-.041	.034	-.072
Mother's Education	-.103	.071	-.125	-.097	.070	-.118	-.057	.059	-.069	-.013	.051	-.016	-.022	.050	-.027	-.027	.048	-.033
Perception of Principal's Comfort Level				.116	.052	.177*	-.056	.049	-.086	-.121	.043	-.185**	-.123	.042	-.187**	-.082	.042	-.125†
Perception of Adviser's Comfort Level							.441	.056	.593***	.290	.053	.390***	.277	.052	.372***	.226	.052	.304***
Perception of Peers' Comfort Level										.458	.065	.492***	.451	.064	.484***	.395	.063	.424***
WTSC													-.131	.052	-.144*	-.117	.050	-.128*
Watchdog Role Conception																.193	.053	.229***
R²	.110			.141			.406			.566			.585			.623		
R² Change	.110			.031			.265			.159			.020			.038		
Adjusted R²	.091			.116			.384			.546			.564			.601		

† *p* < .10, * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .01

Hypothesis tests with trait autonomy as the outcome variable. Hypotheses 2 through 5 all hypothesized about the relationships between perceived school and parental autonomy support and each dimension of the self-determination scale, which was used to measure trait autonomy. Unlike Study One, Study Two re-conceptualized school autonomy support as coming from both the school administration and the newspaper adviser. Each of these dimensions of school autonomy support was measured separately,

and each was entered into the regression analyses in a separate blocks. One hierarchal regression was conducted with each dimension of the SDS as the DV. In each test, principal autonomy support was entered into the first block, followed by adviser autonomy support, and both maternal and paternal autonomy support together were entered into the third block.

For the awareness-of-self dimension, both adviser and maternal autonomy support were significant predictors in the final model (See full results in Table 5.5). Specifically, those who perceived their high school journalism teachers and their mothers to be more autonomy supportive had higher levels of trait autonomy as measured by the awareness-of-self dimension of the scale. Principal autonomy support was only approaching significance ($p = .10$) in the first model, though any effect that may have been present was eliminated when entering adviser and parental autonomy support into the equation. Therefore, H2, which posited that perceived parental autonomy support would predict awareness of self, was supported. H4a, which posited that perceived principal autonomy support would predict awareness of self, was not supported, though H4b, which said that perceived adviser autonomy support would predict awareness of self, was supported. Adviser autonomy support accounted for about 11% of the variance, whereas parental autonomy support accounted for about 13%.

Table 5.5

Study Two hierarchical regression predicting awareness-of-self dimension of trait autonomy. (N=171)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	b	se$_b$	β	b	se$_b$	β	B	se$_b$	β
Principal AS	.097	.058	.130 †	.026	.058	.034	-.062	.056	-.083
Adviser AS				.291	.067	.339 ***	.208	.064	.242 ***
Maternal AS							.311	.077	.330 ***
Paternal AS							.109	.070	.127
R^2		.017			.123			.259	
R^2 Change		.017			.106			.136	
Adjusted R^2		.011			.112			.240	

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

For the feeling-of-choice dimension, only maternal autonomy support was a significant predictor in the final model, though both paternal ($p = .06$) and adviser ($p = .07$) autonomy support were approaching significance (See full results in Table 5.6). Specifically, those who perceived their mothers to be more autonomy-supportive had higher levels of trait autonomy as measured by the feeling-of-choice dimension of the scale. Therefore, H3, which posited that perceived parental autonomy support would predict feeling of choice, was supported. However, neither H5a nor H5b, which posited that perceived principal and adviser autonomy support, respectively, would predict scores on the feeling-of-choice dimension of trait autonomy, was supported. Parental autonomy support individually accounted for about 19% of the variance.

Table 5.6

Study Two hierarchical regression predicting feeling-of-choice dimension of trait autonomy. (N=171)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	b	se$_b$	β	b	se$_b$	β	B	se$_b$	β
Principal AS	.131	.054	.191*	.086	.054	.125	.007	.053	.011
Adviser AS				.186	.063	.235**	.110	.061	.139†
Maternal AS							.254	.073	.291***
Paternal AS							.125	.067	.156†
R^2		.036			.087			.212	
R^2 Change		.036			.051			.125	
Adjusted R^2		.030			.075			.192	

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

Hypothesis tests with WTSC as the outcome variable. Hypotheses 6 and 7 posited a direct relationship between each dimension of the self-determination scale and WTSC. Because each hypothesis only posits a simple relationship between two variables, simple bivariate correlations were computed. The awareness-of-self dimension of the self-determination scale was significantly correlated with WTSC ($r = -.280, p < .001$), as was the feeling-of-choice dimension ($r = -.191, p < .05$). Therefore, both hypotheses were supported.

Testing mediation and overall model fit. Hypotheses 8 and 9 posited that the relationship between parental and school autonomy support and WTSC would be mediated by trait autonomy. Additionally, the restated Hypothesis 12 stated that all relationships (including those added only for Study Two) would hold when simultaneous

analyses were conducted. Like Study One, these mediation and whole-model hypotheses were assessed using structural equation modeling with AMOS 19 (See Figure 5.1). Also like Study One, individual models were built for each category of controversial topics, and the maximum likelihood estimation technique was used.

Figure 5.1. Hypothesized structural equation model for Study Two
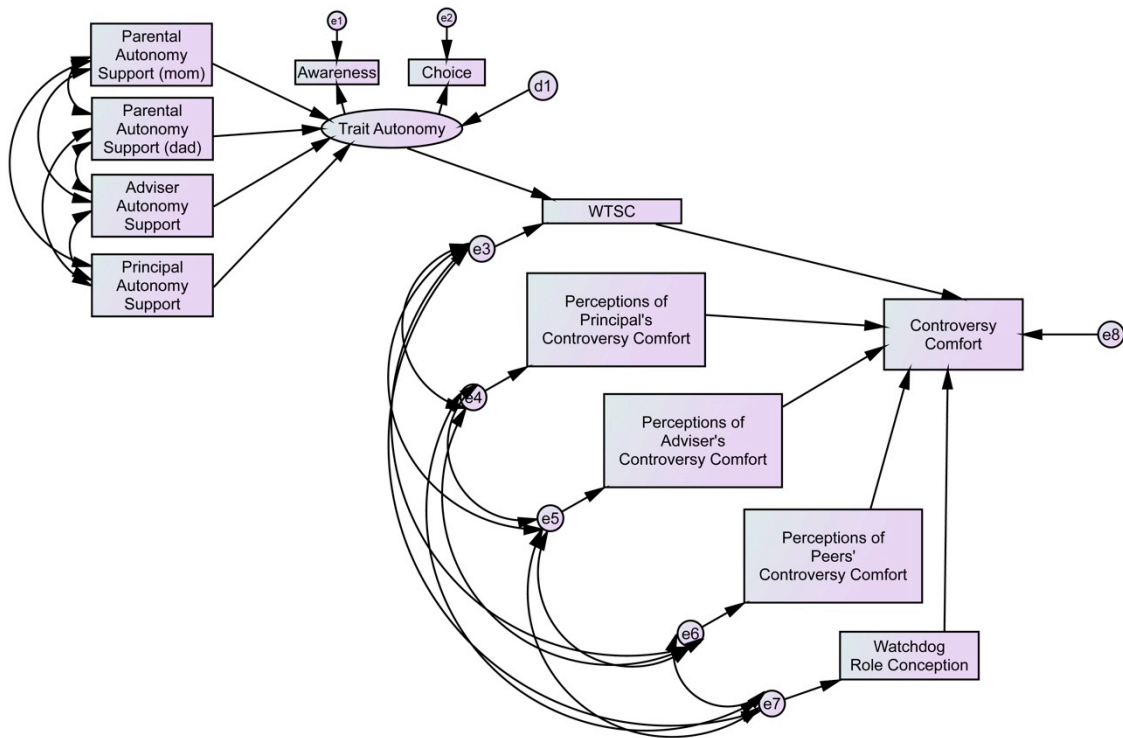
SEM analysis indicated a moderately poor fit using absolute measures (i.e., Chi-Square test) as well as the standard rules-of-thumb for comparative fit indices. For instance, for the model predicting comfort levels with school-oriented controversial topics ($\chi2 = 153.942$, df $= 32$, $p < .001$), the normed fit index (NFI $= 0.775$), the comparative fit index (CFI $= 0.809$), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA $= 0.134$) indicated a less-than-ideal fit between the data and the model. The model predicting social-oriented controversial topics produced slightly better results,

though still outside of commonly accepted guidelines for good fit ($\chi2 = 110.611$, df = 38, $p < .001$; NFI = 0.818; CFI = 0.863; RMSEA = 0.106).

However, fit indices such as NFI, CFI, and RMSEA are comparative in nature, so the best way to assess fit is often in developing alternate models to determine which better fits the data. Therefore, given the less-than-ideal SEM results for Study Two's hypothesized model, SEM tests were rerun using the model originally built for Study One. That is, the current dataset (former high school newspaper journalists from Study Two) was reanalyzed without perceptions of advisers or peers in model. Indeed, doing so produced a worse fit for both the social ($\chi2 = 80.488$, df = 26, $p < .001$; NFI = 0.781; CFI = 0.826; RMSEA = 0.111) and school ($\chi2 = 130.310$, df = 26, $p < .001$; NFI = 0.685; CFI = 0.709; RMSEA = 0.154) models. Therefore, despite the poor fit using conventional criterion of the Study Two model, comparatively, adding in measures of peers' and advisers' comfort levels better fits the data.

SEM analyses show support for the hypotheses being tested. Hypotheses 8 and 9 posited that trait autonomy would mediate the relationship between parental and adviser autonomy support and willingness to self-censor. Higher parental autonomy support, especially maternal autonomy support, relates to high levels of trait autonomy, which then relates to lower willingness to self-censor. Similarly, adviser autonomy support relates to high trait autonomy, which relates to lower willingness to self-censor. Therefore, both H8 and H9 were supported.

Additionally, H12 said that all previously supported relationships would hold when simultaneous analysis was performed. This was supported. All predictors that were significant in the regression analyses remained significant in the SEM analysis. See

Figures 5.2 (for school topics) and 5.3 (for social topics) to see standardized regression

coefficients from the SEM.

Figure 5.2. Study Two SEM predicting comfort levels with stories about school topics
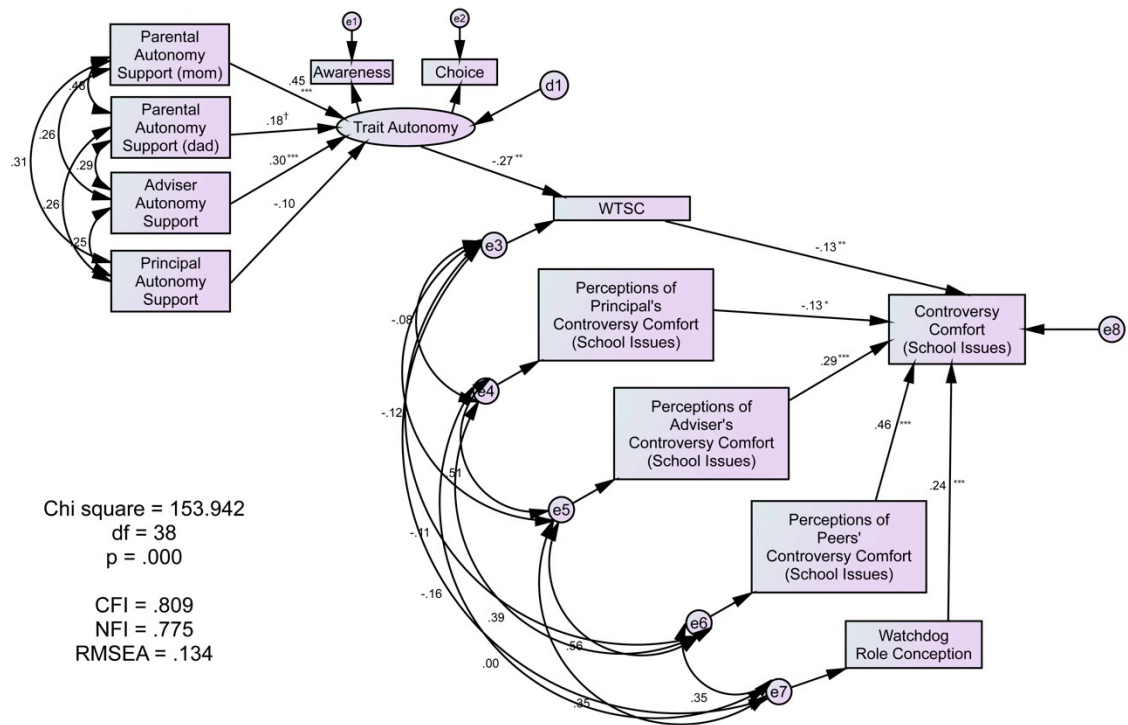
* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, † p<.10

Figure 5.3 Study Two SEM predicting comfort levels with stories about social topics
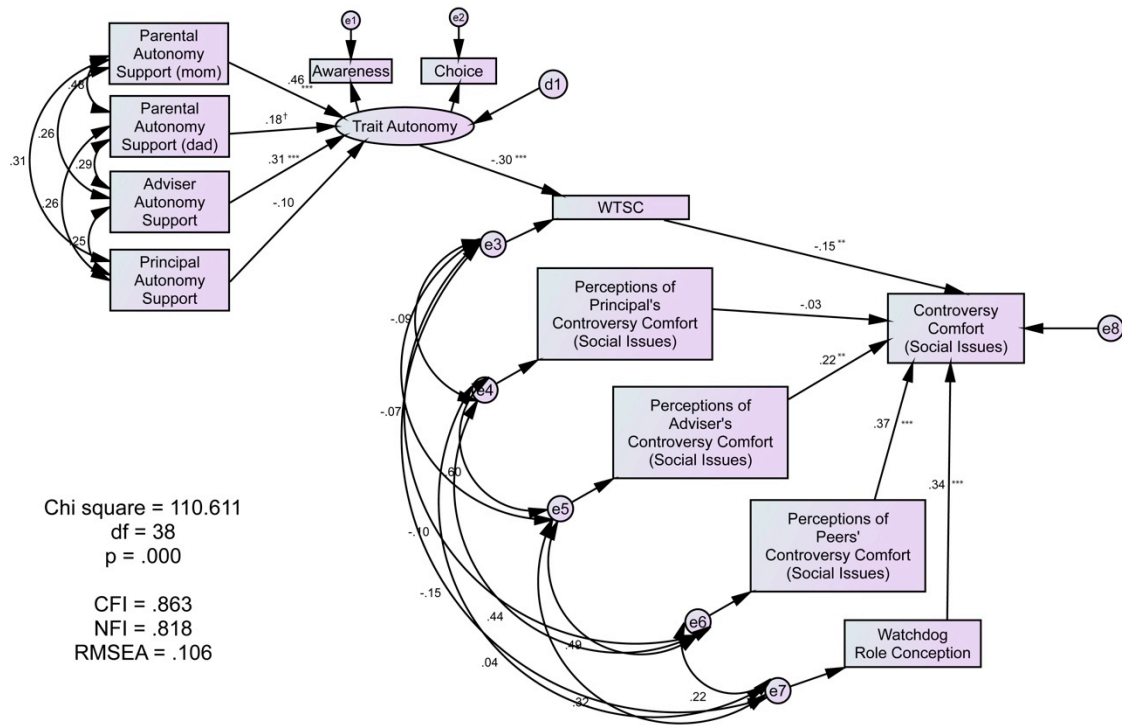
* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, † p<.10

Comparing peer comfort levels to personal comfort levels. Hypothesis 15 posited that former high school newspaper journalists would report having higher comfort levels with the school paper covering controversial topics than they would perceive their peers to have. Means scores for each group and each category of topic were analyzed, and t-tests were performed to determine whether any difference in scores were statistically significant. Indeed, former high school newspaper journalists reported having a higher comfort level with both social, $t(171) = 9.13$, $p < .001$, and school, $t(170) = 5.65$, $p < .001$, topics. Specifically, mean personal comfort level with social issues was 5.00 (SD=1.393), compared to 4.03 (SD=1.381) for perceptions of peers' comfort levels. For

school issues, mean personal comfort level was 6.03 (*SD*=1.036), compared to 5.58 (*SD*=1.127) for peers. Therefore, H15 was supported.

Comparing influences on comfort level. The first research question asked which of the hypothesized effects would have the largest effect size on predicting the dependent variable. This was assessed by squaring semi-partial correlations. This provides an estimate for the change in a dependent variable that is explained by one independent variable while controlling for the effects of all other IVs. This is slightly different than change in R-squared, which provides an estimate of the effect of adding in a particular independent variable without taking into consideration the effect of IVs added in subsequent blocks. For both models, perceptions of peers' comfort levels explained the most amount of variance in one's own comfort levels. For example, with school-oriented controversial topics, perception of peers' comfort levels explained 11.15% of the variance in one's own comfort levels with such topics, compared to 5.37% for perceptions of advisers' comfort levels, 1.56% for WTSC, and 3.77% for the watchdog role conception. With school-issues, principals' comfort levels, which was only barely non-significant, explained 1.08% of the variance. With social-oriented issues, perceptions of peers explains 8.91% of the variance, compared to 2.52% for advisers, 1.86% for WTSC, and 7.13% for the watchdog role. In general, this suggests that the most important "others," in terms of influencing one's own comfort levels, are peers. In other words, relative to advisers and administrators, peers play the most important role in constituting opinion climate with regard to coverage of controversial topics.

Exploring interactions. The second, third, and fourth research questions all asked about the interactions between or among different types of autonomy support.

Specifically, RQ2 and RQ3 asked whether parental and adviser autonomy support, respectively, would moderate the relationship between peers, administrators', or advisers' comfort levels and personal comfort level.

To assess the second research question, a hierarchical model similar to that used to test hypotheses predicting comfort levels was used (See Tables 5.3 and 5.4). However, for each perception of others predictor, the new centered variable was used. Additionally, an additional block was added to include the interaction terms.

In answering RQ2, the first model predicting comfort levels with school-oriented issues showed an interaction between maternal autonomy support and perceptions of peers' comfort levels, $\beta = -.154$, $t(140) = -2.43$, $p < .05$. Specifically, the relationship between the effect that perceived peer comfort levels with school topics has on one's own comfort levels is greater for those who reported mothers being less autonomy supportive (See Figure 5.4). Those with autonomy-supportive mothers, therefore, seem to be able to withstand some bit of peer influence on their own feelings about controversial school issues appearing in the school newspaper.

Figure 5.4 Scatterplot showing best line fit for the effect of perceived peer's comfort levels with school-oriented controversial issues on personal comfort levels, for both high and low maternal autonomy support.
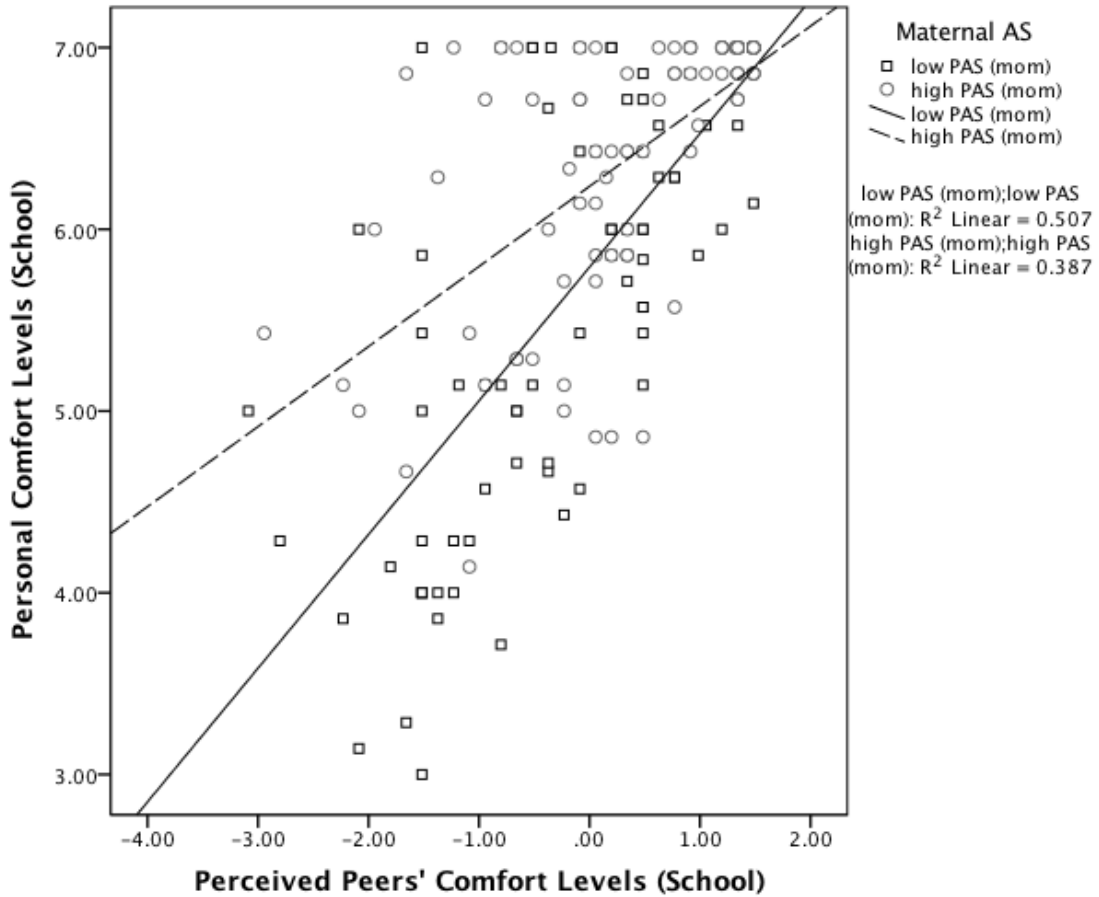
With social-oriented controversial topics, there was a similar interaction effect, $\beta = -.133$, $t(140) = -2.01$, $p < .05$. However, analyzing the best fit line for both the high and low maternal autonomy support groups shows that the effect is very minor (See Figure 5.5). In fact, the p-value for the interaction in the regression was only barely significant ($p=.046$). Nonetheless, it seems that having a more autonomy-supportive mother slightly reduces the influence of peers on being comfortable with social-oriented controversial topics running in the school newspaper.

Figure 5.5. Scatterplot showing best line fit for the effect of perceived peer's comfort levels with social-oriented controversial issues on personal comfort levels, for both high and low maternal autonomy support.
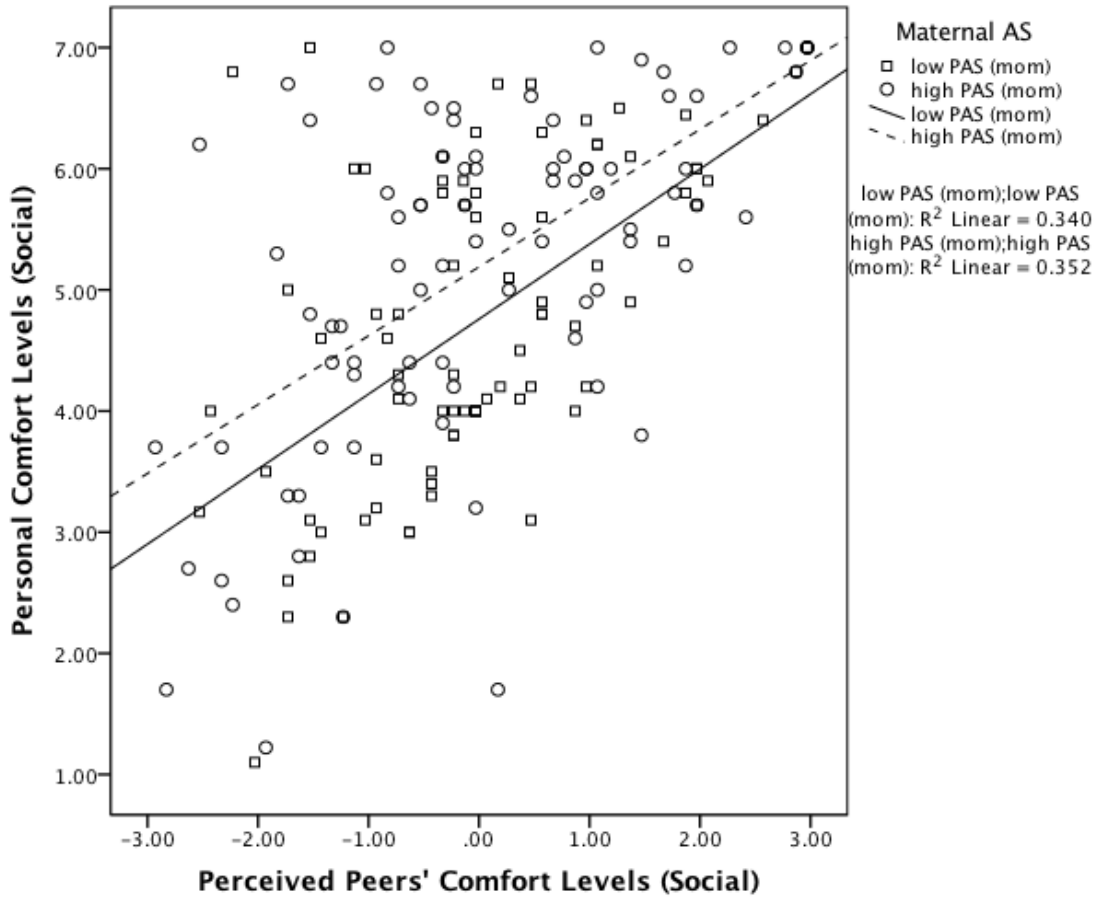
In answering RQ3, the model predicting comfort levels with school-oriented issues showed an interaction between adviser autonomy support and perceptions of peers' comfort levels, $\beta = -.202$, $t(142) = -3.38$, $p < .01$. The relationship between the effect that perceived peer comfort levels with school topics has on one's own comfort levels is greater for those who reported advisers being less autonomy supportive (See Figure 5.6). In other words, those whose advisers are more autonomy-supportive tend to be less influenced by peers with regard to their feelings in running school-oriented controversial

topics. There were no significant interactions between perceptions of others and adviser autonomy support on social-oriented controversial issues.

Figure 5.6. Scatterplot showing best line fit for the effect of perceived peer's comfort levels with school-oriented controversial issues on personal comfort levels, for both high and low adviser autonomy support.
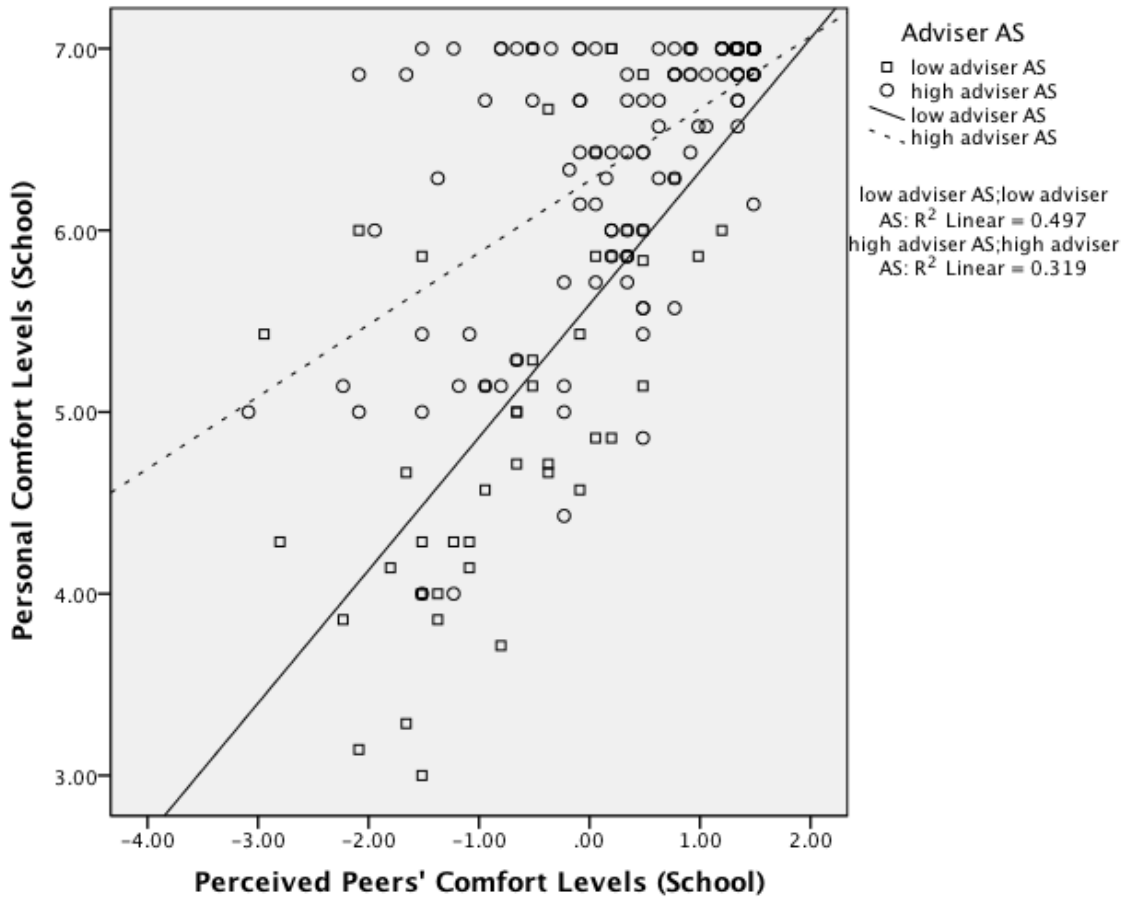
Finally, interactions among principal, adviser, and maternal autonomy support were examined in predictions of each dimension of trait autonomy. Only one interaction was found between maternal autonomy support and principal autonomy support in the model predicting the feeling-of-choice dimension of trait autonomy, $F(1, 159) = 6.95, p >$

.01. Specifically, those who perceived their mothers to have low autonomy support but perceived their principals to be supportive (*M*=5.29, *SEM*=.189) tended to have higher scores on the feeling-of-choice dimension of trait autonomy compared to those with low maternal support and low administrative support (*M*=4.72, *SEM*=.134).

Post-Hoc Tests

Finally, the survey used in Study Two asked whether respondents had high school journalistic experience other than working on the student newspaper. This was used to determine whether simply having been involved in some journalism training made a difference in personal comfort level with the newspaper covering controversial topics. The same hierarchical linear regression model used in the main analyses was replicated, with high school journalism experience added into the first, demographic block. Specifically, four new independent variables were added, all dummy-coded to indicate whether a respondent did or did not have experience with a given journalistic activity. The four categories were worked for a high school newspaper, worked for a high school yearbook, worked for a high school broadcast program, and worked for a local community newspaper.

High school journalism experience was not a significant predictor of comfort levels with either social- or school-oriented controversial topics in the final models with all independent variables included (See Tables 5.7 and 5.8 for complete results). In the model predicting social-oriented comfort levels, working for the high school newspaper was a significant predictor in the first model with only the demographic variables entered, though that effect was eliminated after adding in other IVs. Therefore, simply having

some sort of journalistic experience does not seem to influence comfort levels with

running controversial topics.

Table 5.7

Study Two hierarchical regression predicting one's own comfort levels with stories about social-oriented controversial issues running in the school newspaper, with high school journalism experience added to the demographic model. (N=372)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			Model 5			Model 6		
	b	se_b	β	b	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β	B	se_b	β
Attended a private HS	-.880	.194	-.248 ***	-.771	.189	-.217 ***	-.584	.178	-.165 ***	-.460	.168	-.130 **	-.456	.163	-.129 **	-.303	.151	-.085 *
Worked for school NP	.333	.157	.118 *	.254	.154	.090 †	.071	.145	.025	.045	.136	.016	-.063	.135	-.022	.020	.124	.007
Worked for school yearbook	-.122	.166	-.040	-.129	.162	-.042	.040	.152	.013	-.001	.143	.000	.056	.139	.019	.090	.128	.030
Worked for school broadcast	-.146	.179	-.045	-.184	.174	-.056	-.162	.162	-.050	-.172	.152	-.053	-.178	.147	-.054	-.207	.135	-.063
Worked for community NP	.177	.269	.036	.312	.263	.065	.250	.245	.052	.307	.229	.063	.347	.223	.072	.310	.205	.064
Perception of Principal's Comfort Level				.235	.052	.242 ***	-.039	.062	-.040	-.122	.060	-.125 *	-.114	.058	-.117 *	-.080	.053	-.083
Perception of Adviser's Comfort Level							.381	.054	.462 ***	.271	.054	.328 ***	.274	.052	.332 ***	.222	.048	.269 ***
Perception of Peers' Comfort Level										.382	.058	.370 ***	.367	.056	.354 ***	.329	.052	.318 ***
WTSC													-.258	.058	-.202 ***	-.203	.054	-.159 ***
Watchdog Role Conception																.378	.049	.331 ***
R^2	.085			.141			.258			.350			.389			.488		
R^2 Change	.085			.056			.117			.092			.039			.099		
Adjusted R^2	.071			.125			.242			.334			.372			.472		

† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .01$

Table 5.8

Study Two hierarchical regression predicting one's own comfort levels with stories about school-oriented controversial issues running in the school newspaper, with high school journalism experience added to the demographic model. (N=372)

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			Model 5			Model 6		
	b	se$_b$	β	b	se$_b$	β	B	se$_b$	β	B	se$_b$	β	B	se$_b$	β	B	se$_b$	β
Attended a private HS	-.424	.178	-.149*	-.421	.174	-.148	-.072	.154	-.025	-.025	.134	-.009	-.039	.132	-.014	.027	.126	.009
Parent's Household Income	-.027	.039	-.045	-.018	.039	-.031	-.025	.033	-.043	-.022	.029	-.037	-.021	.028	-.036	-.011	.027	-.018
Mother's Education	-.079	.059	-.089	-.075	.057	-.085	-.038	.049	-.043	.002	.043	.003	-.009	.043	-.010	-.018	.041	-.021
Worked for school NP	.224	.140	.100	.177	.137	.079	.053	.119	.024	.043	.103	.019	.001	.103	.000	.029	.098	.013
Worked for school yearbook	-.096	.148	-.040	-.137	.145	-.057	.005	.126	.002	-.015	.109	-.006	.005	.108	.002	.027	.103	.011
Worked for school broadcast	-.011	.160	-.004	-.042	.157	-.016	.123	.136	.047	.057	.118	.022	.051	.116	.020	.051	.111	.020
Worked for community NP	-.051	.238	-.013	.057	.235	.015	.117	.202	.031	.202	.176	.053	.214	.174	.056	.173	.165	.045
Perception of Principal's Comfort Level				.153	.044	.210***	-.052	.043	-.072	-.116	.038	-.159**	-.123	.038	-.169***	-.108	.036	-.149**
Perception of Adviser's Comfort Level							.469	.049	.590***	.280	.047	.352***	.276	.046	.347***	.245	.045	.308***
Perception of Peers' Comfort Level										.483	.053	.509***	.472	.052	.497***	.422	.050	.445***
WTSC													-.125	.045	-.126**	-.110	.043	-.110*
Watchdog Role Conception																.217	.041	.237***
R²	.052			.095			.336			.501			.516			.564		
R² Change	.052			.043			.241			.166			.015			.048		
Adjusted R²	.027			.067			.312			.482			.495			.544		

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

Chapter 6

Discussion

To fully understand the system for freedom of expression for school environments, multiple sources of possible influence must be examined, including principals and teachers, but also others students and parents. All of these and other factors influence the culture of a community, and culture contributes to the notion of what speech is deemed as acceptable in a given social context. The results presented here focused on two interrelated processes. First, it explored the direct relationship of opinion climate on how comfortable former high school journalists felt about controversial stories running in the school newspaper. Opinion climate was assessed by exploring how these students perceived peers', advisers', and administrators' comfort levels with these topics, and by drawing a link between others' perceived comfort and one's own comfort. Secondly, this project explored how adult authorities (who also function as socialization agents) influence these comfort levels indirectly through the development of general predisposition to self-censor.

Given that the scholastic journalism literature points primarily to principals as sources of influence, their influence should be discussed first. In general, principals have little to no effect on personal comfort levels with covering controversial topics, either directly or indirectly through the development of willingness to self-censor. While perceptions of principals' comfort levels were predictive of one's own comfort levels in Study One, the model assessed in Study Two – with perceptions of advisers' and peers' comfort levels – eliminated any effect for principals. Indirectly, perceived autonomy

support from principals was not related to trait autonomy when controlling for parental and adviser autonomy support, and therefore it did not influence the development of willingness to self-censor.

These results, however, do show that other sources of influence in the school are predictive of comfort levels. In models directly predicting comfort levels, perceptions of one's newspaper adviser and one's peers play quite a major role in predicting one's own comfort levels. In particular, adding perceived comfort levels from these two sources increased the amount of variance explained in comfort with social-oriented topics by about 25%. With school-oriented topics, perceptions of these two sources' comfort levels increased the amount of variance explained by about 40%.

Indirectly, perceived autonomy support from advisers was related to lower willingness to self-censor through the development of trait autonomy. In other words, former high school journalists with autonomy-supportive advisers tend to have lower willingness to self-censor, which is slightly predictive of comfort levels with covering controversial topics. Perhaps more importantly, those with autonomy supportive advisers tend to be able to withstand some bit of peer influence on feeling comfortable with the newspaper covering controversial school topics.

Advisers perhaps also have an indirect influence in developing a culture where student journalists see the newspaper as fulfilling certain duties within the school. Specifically, results here show that believing that the school newspaper plays a greater "school watchdog" role relates to higher comfort levels with the newspaper covering controversial school and social topics. It should be noted, however, that the development

of students' role conceptions was not studied, so the adviser's role in developing this opinion among the students is only a possible explanation.

Finally, the role of parents in the high school system of freedom of expression is virtually never explored in the literature beyond simply asking questions about household income, parent's education, or parent's political affiliation. Some communication concepts, such as family communication patterns, have been used widely to understand issues like political socialization, but such works tend to focus only tangentially on environments that foster appreciation and use of speech freedoms. With coverage of controversial topics in the school press, parental autonomy support plays a role in indirectly contributing to differences in willingness to self-censor. More importantly, parental autonomy support moderates the effect to which individuals are influenced by peers in their comfort levels with the newspaper covering controversy.

In general, this project develops a comprehensive system for understanding why former high school journalists are comfortable (or, rather, uncomfortable) covering controversy. At the very least, by adding in the role of perceptions of peers and advisers and exploring the moderating role of parental autonomy-support practices, this research provides a more complete picture of the free speech environment than other studies and arguments that have focused primarily on the actions of school administrators.

Theoretical Contributions

A main goal of this study was to bridge several academic areas, notably communications, psychology, sociology, and the law. Indeed, the findings presented here further develop theory in each area.

Firstly, this research adds primarily to the discussion of self-censorship, especially with regard to spiral of silence theory and willingness to self-censor. Spiral of silence, as discussed in the literature review, tends to be an often-criticized theory, particularly in that it operates on an assumption that human beings are motivated by fear of social isolation. However, not everyone operates in the exact same way. The hard-cores and avant-gardes, as Noelle-Neumann (1993) herself pointed out, tend to express minority opinion despite possible negative social consequences. Hayes, Glynn, and Shanahan (2005a, 2005b) developed the willingness to self-censor scale to measure this individual difference, and that measure has been validated in several studies, including some related to scholastic journalism. However, no work has explored the question of *development* of willingness to self-censor. This study makes an important first step down that path. By linking willingness to self-censor to a conceptualization of autonomy, it allows for the construct to be explored through developmental psychology. This project uses self-determination theory as a tool because of its applicability to both family and school environments, which were of particular interest here. Additionally, by using self-determination theory to help create an explanatory process for how willingness to self-censor develops, this work bridges communication and psychology research.

Secondly, this research further develops the concept of journalistic roles within the high school context, particularly in how different role conceptions might explain how comfortable journalists are in running stories about certain topics. There is little research linking role conception and role enactment, and this study provides some additional empirical support for this relationship. However, it is important to note that the role of scholastic journalism was defined as existing on one continuum, on a single dimension

measuring the extent to which respondents thought the school newspaper served a watchdog function. Recent literature about general journalistic roles is much more nuanced (e.g., Weaver et al., 2007), establishing many roles that are not independent of one another. For example, one might display some characteristics of a populist mobilizer and some characteristics of a disseminator, and those two roles can be held simultaneously. Unequivocally linking role conception with certain behaviors makes functionalist assumptions that could be problematic when functions of one valued role are antithetical to another valued role. That being said, studies can empirically test whether holding certain role conceptions relate to certain functional behaviors. Doing so can provide further support for holding this assumption in other role conception scholarship. While comfort levels with covering controversial topics are not behaviors, per se, they do represent conditions that foster coverage of such stories. Nonetheless, future research should be careful about assuming the link between roles and functions without first testing them.

Thirdly, this research makes theoretical strides in the field of communication law. In particular, this dissertation takes Cohen and Gleason's (1990, 2006) call to further explore communication law concepts, especially freedom of speech, through multi-disciplinary methods. Moreover, this work further develops Emerson's (1970) notion of a system of freedom of expression, but it does so in the context of high school student journalism. In this system, parents, peers, administrators, and advisers all play important parts in developing a positive environment where young journalists feel comfortable covering controversial topics. These parts are not all of equal importance, nor do they play the same role in exerting influence. Some relationships are direct, and some are

indirect. As Emerson (1970, p. 3) noted, such a system is a "complex mechanism." This dissertation took a first step in embracing this complexity within the context of high schools.

Finally, while there is much literature about high school journalism, very little of it employs formal academic theory in exploring and explaining processes. Doing so, especially in a way that bridges academic disciplines, allows for research that follows a programmatic path. Without theory, work is conducted with poorly explicated concepts, which often leads to poorly developed operationalizations. Lack of theory and poor methodology lead to errors in inference. This dissertation seeks to apply theory and validated measures to work to make valid inferences that are useful in making practical recommendations for the field.

Practical Applications

One effect of the lack of social science research in the field of student expression is that scholastic journalism supporters and advocates have one less tool through which greater expression can be argued. A goal of this dissertation was to test whether principals' actions in developing supportive school environments really do lead to self-censorship, as is argued by scholastic press organizations (e.g., Journalism Education Association, 2009). If such a theory were supported, advocates would have a much-needed empirical arrow in their quiver to argue for a free school press. At first glance, the results here might seem like bad news for these groups: Principals' autonomy-supportive actions do not seem to relate to development of lower predispositions to self-censor, and

young journalists' perceptions of the topics their principals' will find uncomfortable do not seem to affect students' own comfort levels.

However, the results here do point to another important source of influence within school walls: the adviser. Indeed, a student's perceptions of his adviser's comfort levels with covering controversial topics influence his own comfort levels. Additionally, higher adviser autonomy support indirectly leads to lower willingness to self-censor, and having a more supportive adviser helps attenuate the influence of perceptions of peers. Scholastic press organizations have traditionally worked to educate teachers to advise in ways that students would be more likely to perceive as functionally informational, rather than functionally controlling. Nonetheless, variance exists in the degree to which advisers are perceived this way, and certainly there are many teachers whose techniques might be more controlling.

Additionally, this research further supports the notion that the adviser's opinion does matter to student journalists, whether their methods are autonomy-supportive or not. Therefore, scholastic press organizations should continue to remind teachers of this fact, and to whatever extent possible, encourage teachers to develop strategies that work to weaken this influence.

Future Research

Perhaps the main finding here that strikes against commonly held beliefs is that the effect of perceptions of principals is very small, or nonexistent, compared with the role of other socialization agents. However, this work, in addition to examining the direct relationship between perceptions of principals' comfort levels and individuals' comfort

levels, only explored the indirect relationship of principal autonomy support through willingness to self-censor. It is possible that the administrator is in fact not supportive of autonomy or is very uncomfortable with controversial topics, but an autonomy-supportive adviser shields students from being influenced by the school chief. Likewise, it is possible that a school principal's influence is entirely felt by the advisers, who might interact with the principal more often, whereas students, who interact with the principal less, might overestimate the principal's support. For example, an adviser might fully or partially shield students from the influence of a principal, thereby possibly causing students to get a skewed view of the principal's support, or lack thereof. Future research should develop and test models that conceptualize the influence of principals, and other authorities such as superintendents or school boards, mediated by the adviser or other actors.

This project makes advances theoretically, and in the field of scholastic journalism, methodologically. In both areas, scholars can build upon this work. First, scholars should continue to incorporate developmental psychology literature and theory into the study of freedom of expression. In recent years, advocacy organizations such as the First Amendment Center and the Knight Foundation have given special attention to measuring the free speech attitudes of young people, with the latter organization having conducted three massive, representative surveys over the last seven years (Dautrich, 2011; Dautrich, Yalof, & López, 2008). However, this work only tracks trends in how students' and teachers' support for First Amendment values have changed over time. It pays no attention to the developmental process through which these attitudes are created. More importantly, the reports pay little attention to the developmental contexts in which

attitudes are formed. In fact, only schools are discussed in most of this literature, with little to no attention given to non-school environments. If scholars are to continue the work of trying to understand free speech attitudes of young people, that should be done with full knowledge and appreciation for similar work done in developmental psychology literatures.

Additionally, work should further explore journalistic role conception in the high school context. This research and several qualitative pieces have pointed to the fact that high school journalists perform their jobs in ways that are highly influenced by the wants and desires of their student audiences. However, role conceptions like the "school watchdog" presented here primarily define the role of scholastic journalists in terms of their relationships to powerful people or institutions, such as school administrations. What reader-centric roles can be observed, and what specific functions emanate from those roles? Additionally, a more thorough understanding of the various sources of influence in the content of the high school press should be explored, possibly using levels proposed by hierarchy of influence and gatekeeping scholars (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009).

Future work also should attempt to validate measures used in this study. Because of the ad hoc nature of much of scholastic journalism research, valid and reliable scales are difficult to come by. Consequently, several scales in this dissertation were created specifically for this project, or they were scales used in only one other piece of research. Even previously validated scales used here had never been used in the high school journalism context. Steps were taken here to the extent possible to maximize internal

reliability as well as develop content, construct, and criterion-related validity of scales, but that work must continue.

Finally, this research was predicated upon the assumption that when environments are supportive of students and their abilities to make decisions about what to publish, those students will produce better journalism. In short, lack of controls produce better journalism. This assumption, however, can be tested. Additional work should explore whether the quality of work products differ between autonomy-supportive and controlling scholastic journalism environments. Do journalists in these situations cover controversial topics more often, and are they conceived and completed in journalistically sound ways? These are empirical questions that must be explored.

Limitations

A major limitation of this dissertation is one that is difficult to avoid: using a convenience sample of former high school journalists. Ideally, this research would be conducted on a large random sample of current high school journalists from a random sample of schools. Doing so would measure perceptions of participants who are currently involved in the activity being studied. More importantly, if some measures of school culture could be developed, hierarchical linear modeling could be used to parse out between-school differences and whether those factors influenced individual students' comfort levels with controversial topics. However, logistics, including time and money, as well as the likelihood that less-supportive parents and schools would be less likely to grant access to students, prevent this from happening.

Additionally, this study is limited by the lack of well-developed measures. As mentioned above, however, this is both a limitation of the current study as well as a potentially productive area of future scholarship.

Finally, this dissertation is limited by the fact that the independent variables that measure support for student speech are measured through students' perceptions. The original plan for this research project involved creating a system to classify schools as supportive or not supportive of student rights. That system would include various factors that influenced the extent to which students enjoyed freedom of speech, and it would be similar to the quantitative scale published by Freedom House every year, which classifies nations around the world as free, partially free, and not free. This plan was scrapped because it was outside the scope of the project, which sought to first focus primarily on the support concepts through students' perceptions. However, relying on perceptions creates real problems, as perceptions do not necessarily reflect an objective reality of the school environment. At the very least, they provide only a part of the concept of school culture. Additional work must be done to explore whether other factors of school culture, such as urban/rural, average socioeconomic status of community, or size of a high school, influence comfort levels directly or through influencing perceptions of autonomy support. This dissertation employs an extremely limited conceptualization of school culture, and that must be further developed in other work.

Conclusions

The primary impetus for this research project was the glaring lack of empirical work exploring how high school journalists make the decision of whether or not to cover controversial topics. Much scholastic journalism research focuses on the role of the principal (e.g., Click & Kopenhaver, 1988; Dickson, 1989; Kopenhaver & Click, 2001), and a good number of scholarly pieces argue the existence of the devastating effect that principals and other administrators have on the quality of the school press (e.g., Nelson, 1974; Kristoff, 1983; Freedom Forum, 1994; Click & Kopenhaver, 2001; Paxton & Dickson, 2000). Those studies use primarily anecdotal evidence to suggest that even in situations where student journalists are not explicitly told not to publish a story on a particular topic, the young reporters know what they should and should not do, or more to the point, what will and will not make the administration cringe. The student participant in Kristoff's (1983, p. 30) study who referred to the "omniprescent hand" exerting influence on the school newspaper's content likely was referring to such a process. However, empirical evidence presented here suggests that the principal's role in shaping content decisions through implicitly fostering self-censorship may be less important than the role of others in the school, primarily newspaper advisers and other students.

In fact, this finding seems to at least partially echo Dickson's (1994) study of self-censorship in the high school press. Indeed, Dickson found that more than half of editors surveyed had avoided stories because they thought the adviser would have found it objectionable. In other words, student editors developed perceptions of how their advisers would have felt about various topics – their advisers' comfort levels – and they decided to cover or not cover a given topic based upon those perceptions. However, Dickson's study focused, at least in part, on the role of principals. He interpreted there to be little

self-censorship in the school press because most students said that they had not avoided topics for fear of administrative punishment. This is not surprising, as so much scholastic journalism literature focuses on this role in limiting the school press. However, the fact that some topics were avoided because of advisers presents another type of self-censorship. While this exists outside the dominant paradigm of focusing on administrative influence, it still shows how high school journalism content is shaped.

In addition to finding additional support for the important influence advisers have on school newspaper content decisions, this dissertation finds quantitative evidence for the role peers might play in such decisions. Indeed, recent qualitative work has suggested that student journalists perform their jobs in very reader-centric manners (e.g., Fischman et al., 2004; Schofield Clark & Monserrate, 2011). However, the exact influence of peers on covering, or not covering, certain topics has not been explored. Professional journalists' relationships and perceived commitments to readers have been studied (e.g., Weaver, et al., 2007). The contribution of this dissertation to the area of peer influence in minimal, but it does present one of very few first steps in focusing on this source of influence.

The secondary purpose of this work was to bridge divergent areas of social science literature to explore questions rooted in the freedom of speech law. This goal was best articulated by Cohen and Gleason (1990, 2006), who said that research bridging the two areas could help support or refute legal arguments that involve First Amendment questions. More importantly, they said that research in this newly developed cross-disciplinary field should focus on building both scientific and legal theory. However, this is a difficult goal: "Communication research seeks to understand processes that govern

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rather than to create a governing process" (Cohen & Gleason, 1990, p. 111). This dissertation focuses primarily on the first goal, helping to explain underlying assumptions made by scholastic journalism scholars who have relied on normative legal principles. It provides an explanation for how concepts function within the context of the current legal state of student speech. However, this work sets the stage for others to apply these findings to the development of legal theory. For example, one might observe advisers' strength in influencing decisions when crafting new anti-*Hazelwood* laws to specifically apply to the actions of advisers in addition to administrators. Or, if future research supports the notion that students are shielded from controlling administrators by supportive advisers, legal theorists might propose legislation that protects advisers from administrative retribution for supporting students.

The overarching aim of this research was to bridge across literatures to provide empirical support for the ways that school free speech advocates argue for greater freedom for young people. While the evidence falls short of providing support for the assertion that principals play a major role in influencing coverage of controversial topics in the school press, the totality of the model provides a more complete picture of the forces potentially influencing the coverage of such stories. While the evidence points to advisers, parents, and peers as most important, the practical implications and potential future scholarship make these findings valuable to advocates and scholars alike.

Appendix A: Complete Survey for Study One

Journalism Student Communication Survey -- Nov. 2011

Introduction
Journalism Student Communication Survey - November 2011
University of Missouri School of Journalism
Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study designed to explore how young college students communicate. Your participation is entirely voluntary. All the information you provide will be kept completely confidential. There are no known risks in participating. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete.

If you are taking this survey to receive extra credit in your J1000 class, you will be asked for your name and PawPrint at the end of the survey. This information is collected separate from your survey responses, and there is no way that your responses can be personally identified. Therefore, your survey responses will be anonymous. The PawPrint information will only be used to inform your instructor that you took the survey.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Adam Maksl, doctoral candidate, Missouri School of Journalism at ammaksl@mizzou.edu or by phone at 573-416-0683. You may also contact Charles N Davis, associate professor, Missouri School of Journalism, 205 Neff Hall, Columbia, MO 65211; tel. 573-882-5736.

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Campus Institutional Review Board, 483 McReynolds, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211 or by phone at 573-882-9585.

If you agree to participate, please answer the following question and click the "Next" button below to continue.

[attended_hs] **Which of the following options best describes your educational experience in the year immediately before you came to college.***
( ) I attended a public or private high school.
( ) I was home-schooled.
[attended_hs_other]( ) Other (Please describe): _____

High school experiences
[hs_journo] **When you were in high school, did you work for the school newspaper?***
( ) Yes
( ) No, I didn't work on the school newspaper, but my school did have one.
( ) No, I didn't work on the school newspaper. My high school did not have one.

The following items are related to your experience in high school. Teachers have different styles in dealing with students, and we would like to know more about how you felt about your high school teachers. Your responses are confidential. Please be honest and candid.

Tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	1 - Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Strongly agree
[school_lcq1] I felt that my high school provided me with choices and options.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq2] I felt understood by teachers at my high school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq3] I was able to be open with my high school teachers.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq4] My high school teachers conveyed confidence in my ability to do well their courses.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq5] I felt that my high school teachers accepted me.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq6] My high school teachers made sure I really understood the goals of their courses and what I needed to do.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq7] My high school teachers encouraged me to ask questions.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq8] I felt a lot of trust in my high school teachers.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq9] My high school teachers answered my questions fully and carefully.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq10] My high school teachers listened to how I would like to do things.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq11] My high school teachers handled people's emotions very well.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[school_lcq12]	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

I felt that my high school teachers cared about me as a person.

[school_lcq13] **(R)** I don't feel very good about the way my high school teachers talked to me.

[school_lcq14] My high school teachers tried to understand how I saw things before suggesting new ways to do things.

[school_lcq15] I felt able to share my feelings with my high school teachers.

( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Family Experiences
Please answer the following questions about your experiences with your parents when you were growing up.

Tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	1 - Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Strongly agree
[pcq1] I felt that my parents provided me with choices and options.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq2] I felt understood by my parents.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq3] I was able to be open with my parents.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq4] My parents conveyed confidence in my ability to do things well.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq5] I felt that my parents accepted me.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq6] My parents made sure I really understood what I needed to do.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

[pcq7] My parents encouraged me to ask questions.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq8] I felt a lot of trust in my parents.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq9] My parents answered my questions fully and carefully.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq10] My parents listened to how I would like to do things.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq11] My parents handled emotions very well.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq12] I feel that my parents cared about me as a person.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq13] **(R)** I don't feel very good about the way my parents talked to me.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq14] My parents tried to understand how I saw things before suggesting new ways to do things.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pcq15] I felt able to share my feelings with my parents.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[fcp1] In our house, kids were often asked their opinions about family decisions.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[fcp2] In our family, kids learned it was OK to disagree with adults' ideas about the world.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[fcp3] In our family, kids were taught not to upset adults.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

[fcp4] Kids did not question parents' rules in our family.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

More on Family Experiences

Please answer the following questions about your mother and your father. If you do not have any contact with one of your parents (for example, your father), but there is another adult of the same gender living with your house (for example, a stepfather) then please answer the questions about that other adult.

If you have no contact with one of your parents, and there is not another adult of that same gender with whom you live, then mark questions about that parent as "N/A" (not-applicable).

First, questions about your mother.

	1 - Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Strongly agree	N/A
[pop_m1] My mother seems to know how I feel about things.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_m2] **(R)** My mother tries to tell me how to run my life.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_m3] My mother, whenever possible, allows me to choose what to do.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_m4] My mother listens to my opinion or perspective when I've got a problem.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_m5] My mother allows me to decide things for myself.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_m6] **(R)** My mother insists upon my doing things her way.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_m7] My mother is usually willing to consider things from my point of view.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

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| [pop_m8] My mother helps me to choose my own direction. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| [pop_m9] **(R)** My mother isn't very sensitive to many of my needs. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Now, questions about your father.

	1 - Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Strongly agree	N/A
[pop_f1] My father seems to know how I feel about things.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_f2] **(R)** My father tries to tell me how to run my life.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_f3] My father, whenever possible, allows me to choose what to do.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_f4] My father listens to my opinion or perspective when I've got a problem.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_f5] My father allows me to decide things for myself.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_f6] **(R)** My father insists upon my doing things his way.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_f7] My father is usually willing to consider things from my point of view.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_f8] My father helps me to choose my own direction.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[pop_f9] **(R)** My father isn't very sensitive to many of my needs.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

How you make choices
Instructions: Please read the pairs of statements, one pair at a time, and think about which statement within the pair seems more true to you at this point in your life. Indicate the degree to which Statement A feels true, relative to the degree that Statement B feels true, on the 7-point scale shown after each pair of statements. If Statement A feels completely true and Statement B feels completely untrue, the appropriate response would be 1. If the two Statements are equally true, the appropriate response would be a 5. If only Statement B feels completely true and Statement A feels completely untrue, then the appropriate response would be 7.

[SDS1] (R)
A. I always feel like I choose the things I do.

B. I sometimes feel that it's not really me choosing the things I do.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

[SDS2]
A. My emotions sometimes seem alien to me.

B. My emotions always seem to belong to me.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

[SDS3] (R)
A. I choose to do what I have to do.

B. I do what I have to, but I don't feel like it is really my choice.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

[SDS4]
A. I feel that I am rarely myself.

B. I feel like I am always completely myself.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

[SDS5] (R)
A. I do what I do because it interests me.

B. I do what I do because I have to.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

[SDS6]
A. When I accomplish something, I often feel it wasn't really me who did it.

B. When I accomplish something, I always feel it's me who did it.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

[SDS7] (R)
A. I am free to do whatever I decide to do.

B. What I do is often not what I'd choose to do.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

A. My body sometimes feels like a stranger to me.

B. My body always feels like me.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

(R)
A. I feel pretty free to do whatever I choose to.

B. I often do things that I don't choose to do.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

A. Sometimes I look into the mirror and see a stranger.

B. When I look into the mirror I see myself.
Only A feels true
( ) 1
( ) 2
( ) 3
( ) 4
( ) 5
( ) 6
( ) 7
Only B feels true

Roles of the school newspaper
Whether or not your high school had a student newspaper, think about the purpose and roles of student newspaper in a high school. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	1 - Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Strongly agree
[role_watch1] School newspapers should function as a watchdog against those in power in the school, including administrators and teachers.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_watch2] School newspapers should expose unethical practices of school officials.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_watch3] School newspapers should be a voice for those who are critical of school policies.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_watch4] The school newspaper should report on all important issues, even if they could potentially put the school in a bad light.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_watch5] The school newspaper should investigate claims and statements made by the school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_watch6] The school newspaper should discuss school policy while the policy is still being developed.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_watch7] The school newspaper should help set the school political agenda.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_crit1] Working on a school newspaper requires students to use higher-order thinking skills.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	1 - Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Strongly agree
[role_crit2] School newspaper programs can help build critical thinking skills among students.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please continue. Thinking about the roles of your school newspaper, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement.

	1 - Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Strongly agree
[role_crit3] Students who work for the school newspaper have the opportunity to not only learn knowledge of journalism, but also practice and evaluate what they've learned.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_crit4] The school newspaper should give ordinary students a chance to express their views on public affairs.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_crit5] Motivating ordinary students to get involved in public discussions of important issues is an important role of the school newspaper.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_crit6] School newspapers should be a place where students can express themselves.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_crit7] Developing intellectual and cultural interests of students is an important role of the school newspaper.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_arm1] The primary purpose of the school newspaper is to promote school functions.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
[role_arm2] Fostering school spirit is an important role of the school press.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_arm3] The school newspaper is best viewed as simply an extension of the English curriculum.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[role_arm4] The primary purpose of the newspaper is to teach students how to write well.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Break Time

<div align="center">

TAKE A BREAK

**You've completed the first half of the survey,
and you deserve a break.
Please take a couple minutes to relax or walk around.
When you are ready to continue,
please push the "Next" button below.**

</div>

How You Communicate
For each statement, indicate the level at which you agree or disagree with the statement. Don't spend too much time on any question. Simply answer with your first impression.

	1 - Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Strongly agree
[wtsc1] It is difficult for me to express my opinion if I think others won't agree with what I say.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[wtsc2] There have been many times when I have thought others around me were wrong but I didn't let them know.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[wtsc3] When I disagree with others, I'd rather go along with them than argue about it.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[wtsc4] **(R)** It is easy for me to express my opinion around others who I think will disagree with me.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[wtsc5] I'd feel uncomfortable if someone asked my opinion and I knew that he or she wouldn't agree with me.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[wtsc6] I tend speak my opinion only around friends or other people I trust.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[wtsc7] It is safer to keep quiet than publicly speak an opinion that you know most others don't share.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[wtsc8] **(R)** If I disagree with others, I have no problem letting them know it.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Controversial Topics - Non-HS Journalists
The following section will ask you questions regarding your own comfort level with the student newspaper at your high school covering controversial topics. Even if your high school did not have a school newspaper, assume for the purposes of this exercise that it did.

For the sake of this exercise, please assume stories are related to genuine issues students are facing and not done for shock value. Also, assume that all information in the story is true and verified, the story was free of errors, and it met the burden of being newsworthy. Thus, express your opinion based solely on the topic.

In high school, if your student newspaper had covered a story on a topic below, how comfortable would you have been with them covering that story (assuming that the story is free from errors and newsworthy)?

	1 - Not at all comfortable	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Very comfortable
[con_nj_crime1] A story about recent thefts in the school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_crime2] A story about a former teacher facing criminal charges.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

[con_nj_crime3] A story about students charged with a serious crime, such as rape or murder.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_crime4] A story about illegal gambling going on at school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_substance1] A story about illegal drug trends and dangers of their use.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_substance2] A story about the prevalence and dangers of underage drinking.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit1] A story about a student athlete who had died as a result of an injury sustained during a game or match.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit2] A story about the school's random drug-testing policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit3] A story about a local couple suing the school district.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit4] A story about school policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit5] A story about the school community rallying around a fired coach.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit6] A story taking an in-depth look at the school budget.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit7] A story discussing school athletic eligibility requirements.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit8] A story about teacher assessments.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_schoolcrit9] An in-depth story examining equality in punishments given to athletes versus non-athletes.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please continue.

In high school, if your student newspaper had covered a story on a topic below, how comfortable would you have been with them covering that story (assuming that the story is free from errors and newsworthy)?

	1 - Not at all comfortable	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Very comfortable
[con_nj_curriculum1] A story about curriculum change.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_pol1] An editorial or column endorsing a candidate for school board.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_pol2] An editorial or column critical of school administration policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_pol3] An editorial suggesting that student athletes should not have to take PE classes.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_pol4] An editorial suggesting the removal of a coach or an administrator.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_sex1] A story about the dangers of oral sex.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_sex2] A story about teenage pregnancy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_sex3] A story about birth control.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_sex4] A story about abortion.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_sex5] A story about the "hooking up" trend among students, including a discussion about the dangers of such activity.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_sex6] A story about "sexting" (sending nude photos via cell phones).	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_social1] A story about a local landlord accused of racist renting practices.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_social2] A story about homosexual students and their experiences in school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

[con_nj_social3] A column written by an openly gay student about his/her experiences "coming out."	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_social4] A story about students who have tattoos, including stories of why they got the tattoos.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_social5] A story about students' religious beliefs.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_nj_social6] A story about the War in Iraq or Afghanistan.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Controversial Topics - Former HS Journalists

The following section will ask you questions about how much it would have bothered you if when you were in high school, someone (e.g. an principal or teacher) told you that you couldn't do a story on a variety of topics.

For the sake of this exercise, please assume stories are related to genuine issues students are facing and not done for shock value. Also, assume that all information in the story is true and verified, the story was free of errors, and it met the burden of being newsworthy. Thus, express your opinion based solely on the topic.

In high school, if a teacher or principal had told you that you COULD NOT do a story on the following topics, how much would it have bothered you?

	1 - Not at all bothered	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Very bothered
[con_jo_crime1] A story about recent thefts in the school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_crime2] A story about a former teacher facing criminal charges.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_crime3] A story about students charged with a serious crime, such as rape or murder.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_crime4] A story about illegal gambling going on at school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_substance1] A story about illegal drug trends and dangers of their use.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
[con_jo_substance2] A story about the prevalence and dangers of underage drinking.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit1] A story about a student athlete who had died as a result of an injury sustained during a game or match.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit2] A story about the school's random drug-testing policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit3] A story about a local couple suing the school district.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit4] A story about school policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit5] A story about the school community rallying around a fired coach.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit6] A story taking an in-depth look at the school budget.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit7] A story discussing school athletic eligibility requirements.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit8] A story about teacher assessments.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_schoolcrit9] An in-depth story examining equality in punishments given to athletes versus non-athletes.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please continue.

In high school, if a teacher or principal had told you that you COULD NOT do a story on the following topics, how much would it have bothered you?

	1 - Not at all bothered	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Very bothered
	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_curriculum1] A story about curriculum change.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

[con_jo_pol1] An editorial or column endorsing a candidate for school board.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_pol2] An editorial or column critical of school administration policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_pol3] An editorial suggesting that student athletes should not have to take PE classes.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_pol4] An editorial suggesting the removal of a coach or an administrator.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_sex1] A story about the dangers of oral sex.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_sex2] A story about teenage pregnancy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_sex3] A story about birth control.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_sex4] A story about abortion.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_sex5] A story about the "hooking up" trend among students, including a discussion about the dangers of such activity.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_sex6] A story about "sexting" (sending nude photos via cell phones).	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_social1] A story about a local landlord accused of racist renting practices.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_social2] A story about homosexual students and their experiences in school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_social3] A column written by an openly gay student about his/her experiences "coming out."	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

[con_jo_social4] A story about students who have tattoos, including stories of why they got the tattoos.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_jo_social5] A story about students' religious beliefs.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
con_jo_social6] A story about the War in Iraq or Afghanistan.							

Controversial Topics - How Your High School Principal Would Have Responded
Now think about how the PRINCIPAL AT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL would have responded to these topics.

Again, for the sake of this exercise, please assume stories are related to genuine issues students are facing and not done for shock value. Also, assume that all information in the story is true and verified, the story was free of errors, and it met the burden of being newsworthy. Thus, express your opinion based solely on the topic.

In high school, how comfortable do you think YOUR PRINCIPAL would have been with a story about the following topics running in the school newspaper?

	1 - Not at all comfortable	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Very comfortable
[con_prin_crime1] A story about recent thefts in the school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_crime2] A story about a former teacher facing criminal charges.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_crime3] A story about students charged with a serious crime, such as rape or murder.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_crime4] A story about illegal gambling going on at school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_substance1] A story about illegal drug trends and dangers of their use.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_substance2] A story about the prevalence and dangers of underage drinking.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
[con_prin_schoolcrit1] A story about a student athlete who had died as a result of an injury sustained during a game or match.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_schoolcrit2] A story about the school's random drug-testing policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_schoolcrit3] A story about a local couple suing the school district.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_schoolcrit4] A story about school policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_schoolcrit5] A story about the school community rallying around a fired coach.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_schoolcrit6] A story taking an in-depth look at the school budget.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_schoolcrit7] A story discussing school athletic eligibility requirements.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_schoolcrit8] A story about teacher assessments.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_schoolcrit9] An in-depth story examining equality in punishments given to athletes versus non-athletes.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please continue.

In high school, how comfortable do you think YOUR PRINCIPAL would have been with a story about the following topics running in the school newspaper?

	1 - Not at all comfortable	2	3	4	5	6	7 - Very comfortable
[con_prin_curriculum1] A story about curriculum change.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_pol1] An editorial or column endorsing a candidate for school board.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_pol2] An editorial or column critical of school administration policy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_pol3] An editorial suggesting that student athletes should not have to take PE classes.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_pol4] An editorial suggesting the removal of a coach or an administrator.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_sex1] A story about the dangers of oral sex.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_sex2] A story about teenage pregnancy.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_sex3] A story about birth control.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_sex4] A story about abortion.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_sex5] A story about the "hooking up" trend among students, including a discussion about the dangers of such activity.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_sex6] A story about "sexting" (sending nude photos via cell phones).	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_social1] A story about a local landlord accused of racist renting practices.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_social2] A story about homosexual students and their experiences in school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_social3] A column written by an openly gay student about his/her experiences "coming out."	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
[con_prin_social4] A story about students who have tattoos, including stories of why they got the tattoos.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

| [con_prin_social5] A story about students' religious beliefs. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| [con_prin_social6] A story about the War in Iraq or Afghanistan. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Last Page

Please tell us a little information about yourself**.**
[gender]

What is your gender?
(1) Female
(2) Male

[age]

What is your age?: _____

Please tell us a little information about your high school**.**
[gpa]

About what was your high school GPA (on a 4.0 scale -- A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0; for example, one might say 3.3 for a B+ average): _____

Did you attend a public or private high school?
[pub_priv]

(1) Public
(2) Private

[hs_name]

What is the name and city/state of the high school you graduated from? (This information will only be used to gather census-type information from your high school, such as average test scores.):

_____

Please tell us a little information about your parents.
About what was your parents' household income when you were growing up?
[parent_income]

(1) Less than $25,000
(2) $25,000 to $34,999
(3) $35,000 to $49,999
(4) $50,000 to $74,999
(5) $75,000 to $99,999
(6) $100,000 to $124,999
(7) $125,000 to $149,999
(8) $150,000 or more
(99) Don't know/Not sure
Choose the highest level of education that YOUR MOTHER has?

(1) 12th grade or less
(2) Graduated high school or equivalent
(3) Some college, no degree
(4) Associate degree
(5) Bachelor's degree
(6) Post-graduate degree (Master's, Doctorate, M.D., law degree, etc.)
(99) Non-Applicable (N/A)
Choose the highest level of education that YOUR FATHER has?
[father_educ]

(1) 12th grade or less
(2) Graduated high school or equivalent
(3) Some college, no degree
(4) Associate degree
(5) Bachelor's degree
(6) Post-graduate degree (Master's, Doctorate, M.D., law degree, etc.)
(99) Non-Applicable (N/A)

[ZIP]

What is the ZIP code of where you grew up (the house you lived in when you graduated from high school)? (This information will only be used to gather census-type information about your home community.):

_____

[comments]

Please use the following space to share any thoughts about this survey. Are there portions that you found to be confusing? Any comments are helpful to the researcher.

This is the end of the survey.

If you are taking this survey for extra credit for J1000 (with Professors Steffens and Li), mark the appropriate box below and click "Next." You will be taken to a page where you can enter your PawPrint and name to get the extra credit.

If you are not taking this for extra credit, mark that appropriate box below to finish the survey.
[extra_credit]

(1) I am taking this survey for extra credit for J1000 (with Professors Steffens and Li).
(2) I am not taking this survey for extra credit.

You are finished with the survey. Please click the "Next" button below to end.

Thank You!

Appendix B: Correlations Between All Variables in Study One

	Gender	Age	GPA	Public/Private	Parent's Income	Mother's Education	Father's Education	School LCQ	Maternal AS	Paternal AS	Trait Autonomy (Awareness)	Trait Autonomy (Choice)	WTSC	Comfort Levels (social issues)	Comfort Levels (school issues)	Perceived Principal's Comfort Levels (social issues)	Perceived Principal's Comfort Levels (school issues)	Watchdog Role
Gender	1																	
Age	-.119	1																
GPA	.211*	-.145	1															
Public/Private	.040	-.047	.099	1														
Parent's Income	-.106	-.087	.169	-.041	1													
Mother's Education	.217*	-.016	-.031	.001	.229*	1												
Father's Education	.043	-.106	-.045	-.039	.257**	.371**	1											
School LCQ	.058	-.077	.134	-.128	.148	.084	-.006	1										
Maternal AS	.116	-.124	.230**	-.108	.034	.100	.054	.243**	1									
Paternal AS	.102	.067	.162	-.085	.118	.145	.030	.373**	.382**	1								
Trait Autonomy (Awareness)	.247**	.007	.124	.040	-.129	.157	-.078	.236**	.384**	.270**	1							
Trait Autonomy (Choice)	.066	.095	.222**	.010	.070	.153	-.005	.200*	.415**	.254**	.461**	1						
WTSC	.075	-.046	-.012	.043	-.076	-.017	.177*	-.059	-.069	-.129	-.180*	-.190*	1					
Comfort Levels (social issues)	.151	-.166**	.031	.005	-.122	-.009	-.037	-.042	.112	-.084	.056	.186*	-.235**	1				
Comfort Levels (school issues)	.058	-.093	.048	-.049	-.058	.051	.003	.190*	.151	-.012	.249**	.160	-.194*	.483**	1			
Perceived Principal's Comfort Levels (social issues)	-.098	-.078	-.160	.009	-.158	-.298**	-.322**	.018	-.083	-.020	-.139	-.101	-.203*	.338**	-.022	1		
Perceived Principal's Comfort Levels (school issues)	-.068	-.022	-.053	-.019	-.024	-.242**	-.209*	.104	-.119	-.070	-.103	-.036	-.163	.158	.213*	.600**	1	
Watchdog Role	.130	-.100	.031	.137	-.075	.161	.101	.040	.031	-.129	.013	.036	.035	.459**	.478**	.069	.068	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Notes: LCQ=Learning Climate Questionaire; AS=Autonomy Support; WTSC=Willingness to self-censor

Appendix C: Correlations Between All Variables in Study Two

	Gender (Female)	Age	GPA	Public/Private School	Parent Income	Mother's Education	Father's Education	Principal AS	Adviser AS	Maternal AS	Paternal AS	Trait Autonomy (Awareness)
Gender (Female)	1											
Age	-.156**	1										
GPA	.203**	-.096	1									
Public/Private School	.052	.068	-.035	1								
Parent Income	.033	-.016	-.145*	.177**	1							
Mother's Education	-.031	-.023	-.086	.111*	.371**	1						
Father's Education	-.016	-.033	-.102	.121*	.399**	.465**	1					
Principal AS	-.010	-.030	.093	.205**	.011	.019	-.015	1				
Adviser AS	.044	-.073	.077	-.130*	-.066	-.157**	-.066	.207**	1			
Maternal AS	.067	-.025	.027	.079	.110	.081	.038	.244**	.094	1		
Paternal AS	.096	-.033	.067	.070	.145*	.050	.056	.229**	.202**	.428**	1	
Trait Autonomy (Awareness)	.029	-.028	.069	-.001	.059	-.006	.030	.171**	.210**	.347**	.334**	1
Trait Autonomy (Choice)	-.014	.100	-.036	-.064	.069	-.066	-.048	.136*	.195**	.310**	.303**	.440**
WTSC	.101	-.068	.012	.034	.001	-.030	.015	-.069	-.073	-.144**	-.084	-.265**
Watchdog	-.040	-.019	-.020	-.149**	-.074	-.041	.021	-.081	.265**	.102	-.002	.123*
Personal Comfort (social issues)	-.033	-.067	-.133*	-.237**	-.004	-.072	-.041	-.052	.216**	.112*	.003	.135**
Personal Comfort (school issues)	-.001	-.083	.029	-.134*	-.089	-.118*	-.060	.106*	.290**	.265**	.142*	.295**
Perceived Peer Comfort (social issues)	-.020	.041	-.027	-.162**	-.002	-.030	-.061	-.001	.114*	.012	-.029	-.022
Perceived Peer Comfort (school issues)	.042	-.056	.113*	-.085	-.084	-.155**	-.137**	.171**	.242**	.188**	.072	.248**
Perceived Adviser Comfort (social issues)	-.113*	-.002	-.043	-.202**	.061	-.023	-.019	-.037	.264**	-.050	-.052	-.039
Perceived Adviser Comfort (school issues)	.001	.024	.158**	-.183**	-.059	-.108	-.090	.129*	.354**	.127*	.022	.181**
Perceived Principal Comfort (social issues)	-.134*	.023	-.052	-.115*	-.012	-.004	-.058	.154**	.115*	-.049	-.059	-.102*
Perceived Principal Comfort (school issues)	.035	-.018	.083	-.023	-.099	-.059	-.121*	.403**	.164**	.110*	.083	.062

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

	Trait Autonomy (Choice)	WTSC	Watchdog	Personal Comfort (social issues)	Personal Comfort (school issues)	Perceived Peer Comfort (social issues)	Perceived Peer Comfort (school issues)	Perceived Adviser Comfort (social issues)	Perceived Adviser Comfort (school issues)	Perceived Principal Comfort (social issues)	Perceived Principal Comfort (school issues)
Gender (Female)											
Age											
GPA											
Public/Private School											
Parent Income											
Mother's Education											
Father's Education											
Principal AS											
Adviser AS											
Maternal AS											
Paternal AS											
Trait Autonomy (Awareness)											
Trait Autonomy (Choice)	1										
WTSC	-.328**	1									
Watchdog	.104*	-.133*	1								
Personal Comfort (social issues)	.209**	-.227**	.449**	1							
Personal Comfort (school issues)	.264**	-.228**	.455**	.593**	1						
Perceived Peer Comfort (social issues)	.049	-.083	.190**	.500**	.162**	1					
Perceived Peer Comfort (school issues)	.223**	-.154**	.315**	.328**	.668**	.357**	1				
Perceived Adviser Comfort (social issues)	.086	-.051	.213**	.479**	.193**	.531**	.205**	1			
Perceived Adviser Comfort (school issues)	.187**	-.106	.231**	.288**	.509**	.247**	.569**	.512**	1		
Perceived Principal Comfort (social issues)	-.037	-.006	.097	.282**	-.020	.486**	.108*	.637**	.260**	1	
Perceived Principal Comfort (school issues)	.096	-.093	.101	.148**	.223**	.276**	.440**	.296**	.511**	.543**	1

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VITA

Adam M. Maksl was born in Columbus, Ohio, and he grew up there and in Indianapolis, Indiana. He graduated from Indiana University Bloomington with a degree in secondary education, focusing on the teaching of scholastic journalism. He briefly taught high school journalism before pursuing a master's degree in journalism from Ball State University. Both during and after receiving his M.A. from Ball State, he was the assistant director of journalism workshops at the university, running outreach programs for high school students and teachers. He also taught as an adjunct professor in the school's journalism department. After participating in some research projects at Ball State, Maksl decided he wanted to learn more about research and subsequently joined the doctoral program at the University of Missouri.

He recently married his wife, Renée Petrina, who is also a journalism educator. Starting in August 2012, the two will live near Louisville, Kentucky, where Maksl will become as assistant professor of journalism and student newspaper adviser at Indiana University Southeast.