Adventures With Sport Rivalry Man: Initial Testing of a Classroom Method Using Comics and Cartoons to Teach about Rivalry and Fan Behavior

Cody T. Havard & Skylar S. Workman
The University of Memphis

Abstract

The current study used a quasi-experimental design to initially test a method for teaching about rivalry and fan behavior. Results showed that people who were exposed to and learned about rivalry and fan behavior using comic strips and cartoons on www.SportRivalry.com (a) rated rival fan behavior more negatively, (b) experienced less satisfaction when their favorite team beat the rival team, and (c) were more likely to stop someone attempting to steal a rival fan's belongings than people in the control group. Implications include support for the development of a curriculum to teach about rivalry and fan behavior. Future directions for research are also presented.

Adventures with Sport Rivalry Man: Initial Testing of a Classroom Method Using Comic Strips and Cartoons to Teach about Rivalry and Group Behavior

Following a game between the Dallas Cowboys and Green Bay Packers in the 2016 National Football League playoffs, fans started arguing which resulted in a physical altercation (Mendoza, 2017). Video of the incident went viral and has now been viewed over 1.6 million times. Leading up to the 2017 Iron Bowl between the Alabama Crimson Tide and Auburn Tigers, two fans started arguing about which team was better, and the disagreement resulted in one fan shooting the other in the thigh (Scarborough, 2017). These are but two examples of fan deviance at sporting events and surrounding sport teams.

The ever-growing popularity of social media further exacerbates the amount of negativity shown to out-group members. For example, if one reads articles or sees videos about fan deviance and violence at sporting events, they can also see user comments that mock or in some way glorify or legitimize the fan behavior. Further, a search for articles about fan deviance pulls up stories in which the narrative sometimes describes the deviance in a humorous way, which is also dangerous as it may desensitize viewers to the negative behavior. The countless examples of fan deviance and violence mire the sporting landscape and not only threaten sport fans and organizations, but also mirror some of the incidents that occur outside of sport as well.

With examples of group member deviance and violence in mind, the current study used a quasi-experimental design to initially test the viability of a method for teaching individuals about the rivalry phenomenon and fan behavior. Creating and testing a method for teaching about rivalry and fan behavior is important as rivalry can

lead to out-group derogation and fan deviance (Lee, 1985), and caution should be shown when promoting contests between rival teams (Dalakas & Melancon, 2012; Havard, 2018). Specifically, the study investigated a method that used comic strips and short cartoon movies that teach about (1) the rivalry phenomenon and (2) proper fan behavior. Comic strips and short cartoon movies found on www.SportRivalry.com were prepared for the purposes of using a popular medium to teach people about in-group behavior and bias. The rationale for the project is the view that the use of comic strips and cartoon shorts about sport rivalry will help teach individuals about the rivalry phenomenon and the underlying causes of in-group bias. Further, the use of comic strips and cartoons will help illustrate to people the proper way to behave toward someone from the out-group, a supporter of a rival team in this instance. A goal of the teaching method is, by using contemporary mediums such as comics and cartoons, combined with the popularity of sport and superhero stories, people can learn about perceived group differences, and model appropriate behavior toward out-group members both in and outside of the sport setting.

Background

Social identity states that a person seeks membership in groups that are going to reflect positively on them (Tajfel, 1978). For instance, if a person wants to be perceived by others as having specific positive characteristics, they will seek membership in a group they believe embodies those attributes. Further, when a person identifies as a member of a group, they can begin to take on the characteristics of said group (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990). As people take on ownership of group membership, they may begin to show favoritism toward others in the same group, and derogation toward members of

an out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). One way of doing this is to verbally assign positive member actions to the in-group and negative actions to the out-group (Maass, Salvi, Arcuri, & Semin, 1989). Another way to do this is by showing outright negativity toward members of the out-group. This can be seen in many areas such as religion, politics, and racial makeup. For example, a review of Internet discussion boards during the 2016 presidential election will find people supporting in-group members and attacking out-group members, sometimes at an alarming rate. The current study used sport as the setting as it has been contemporaneously credited as both a mirror and an influencer of the greater society.

The notion that individuals will treat others differently based mostly, if not entirely on their group membership (Turner, 1982), lays the foundation for understanding rivalry in sport. Within the sport context, rivalry has been defined as “a fluctuating adversarial relationship existing between two teams, players, or groups of fans, gaining significance through on-field competition, on-field or off-field incidences, proximity, demographic makeup, and/or historical occurrence(s)” (Havard, Gray, Gould, Sharp, & Schaffer, 2013, p. 51). Further, researchers have identified antecedents and characteristics of rivalry such as historical competition, parity, cultural similarities and differences, and defining moments as important influences of the formation and maturation of rivalry (Kilduff, Elfenbein, & Staw, 2010; Tyler & Cobbs, 2015).

Rivalry can cause sport fans to interact with their favorite and rival teams in various ways. Aside from the many affects rivalry can have on fan consumption (Ambrose & Schnitzlein, 2017; Havard, Eddy, & Ryan, 2016; Havard, Shapiro, & Ridinger, 2016; Sanford & Scott, 2016; Reams & Eddy, 2017; Tyler, Morehead, Cobbs,

& DeSchriver, 2017), rivalry plays a significant role in determining how people react to and treat participants and fans of their favorite and rival team. For example, fans have reported being less likely to help others in emergency situations if they are fan of the rival team rather than the favorite team (Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005). Additionally, people that believed a player was enrolling at their favorite school reported the player's performance more favorably than if they believed the player was enrolling at a rival school (Wann et al., 2006). Sport fans also report experiencing joy when their rival team loses to a neutral team (Cikara, Botvinick, & Fiske, 2011; Dalakas & Melancon, 2012; Havard, 2014) or experience some type of failure or loss (Dalakas, Melancon, & Sreboth, 2015).

Specific to fan behavior, conference and league affiliation influence the way people feel toward their rival teams at the college (Havard, 2016; Havard & Reams, 2016) and professional levels (Cobbs, Sparks, Tyler, 2017). Perhaps most alarming, rivalry can influence fan likelihood to consider committing anonymous acts of deviance or violence against members of the out-group (Wann & Waddill, 2013). For example, the more identified a person is with their favorite team, the more likely they are to consider anonymous aggression (Wann, Haynes, McLean, & Pullen, 2003; Wann, Peterson, Cothran, & Dykes, 1999). Additionally, college fans reported stronger likelihood of considering anonymous acts of aggression toward rivals that they share a long history with rather than teams they adopted as a rival during the latest conference realignment phenomenon (Havard, Wann, & Ryan, 2013, 2017).

Taking current examples of group member deviance and violence into account, and the increased importance placed on group membership, the purpose of the current

study was to initially test a teaching method that uses comic strips and cartoons to teach about the rivalry phenomenon and fan/group member behavior. The current study utilized a quasi-experimental approach to investigate the rival phenomenon and test the hypotheses (Havard & Dalakas, 2017). Comics and cartoons have been used to increase student literacy (Norton, 2003), recall (Liu, 2004), as well as constructive, cooperative, and collaborative learning (van Wyk, 2011). Because previous researchers have displayed that comics and cartoons are successful methods for teaching subject matter, the interest in this initial investigation was to determine if learning about rivalry and fan behavior would make people report different feelings toward their favorite team's rival. First, it was expected that individuals that learned about rivalry using the comic strips and cartoons would report different perceptions of their rival teams than individuals that were not exposed to the comics and movies. Therefore, the following hypothesis is offered:

> H1: Exposure to and learning about rivalry and fan behavior through comic strips and cartoons will significantly influence individuals' perceptions of their rival teams.

Based on the findings of Levine et al. (2005), fan likely reactions to rival fans were investigated. However, because the focus of the current study was a new teaching method, it was appropriate as a research question rather than hypothesize expected findings. The following research question is offered:

> RQ1: How will exposure to and learning about rivalry and fan behavior through comic strips and cartoons influence individuals' behavioral intentions toward rival team fans in various situations?

Method

To initially test the influence of the teaching method, students enrolled in sport management and fan behavior classes at a university in the mid-south were exposed to the experimental design. Based on class sizes, and the two-group experimental design, a total of 31 students provided results that could utilized to test the hypotheses. Students were recruited from four classes: (1) an undergraduate, on-campus sport marketing class, (2) an undergraduate, online sport marketing class, (3) an undergraduate, on-campus fan behavior and rivalry class, and (4) a graduate, online sport marketing class. The sample was made up of majority male (64.7%), Caucasian students (676%), aged 18 to 56 (M = 22.74, SD = 6.63).

Setting

To initially test the influence of learning about rivalry through comic strips and cartoons, two experimental groups were set up. It is important to note that the quasi-experimental design was worked into the normal class structure to keep from potentially biasing student effort or survey responses. Students taking sport management classes online served as the control group and were not exposed to the comic strips or cartoons as part of the class. The treatment group was made up of (1) students that were enrolled in either on-campus sport marketing or on-campus fan behavior classes (a total of two classes) that (2) completed the requested exposure and learning program. The exposure and learning program was offered to students in the on-campus classes for extra credit and required that students review two types of comic strips or cartoons on www.SportRivalry.com (see below). Students had to turn in notes on three comic strips or cartoons about historical rivalries and five *Adventures of Sport Rivalry Man* stories.

Students in the treatment group read/watched and submitted notes on a total of 8 comic strips and/or cartoons. To foster comprehension and retention, and to demonstrate proper note-taking procedures, students in the treatment group watched one historical story and one *Adventures with Sport Rivalry Man* story in class and were led in a brief discussion of rivalry and the stories.

Comic Strips and Cartoons. The comic strips and cartoons used in the study can be found on www.SportRivalry.com. This is a website dedicated to teaching the public about the rivalry phenomenon. The website contains research on rivalry, student-produced podcasts about rivalry games, instructional information on rivalry, and the comic strips and cartoons used in the current study. It is important to note that the cartoons are animated versions of the comic strips, which mean students could use either medium to learn about rivalry and fan behavior.

Two types of comics strips and cartoons are available on www.SportRivalry.com. First, comic strips and cartoons about historical rivalries detail the competitive histories of the relationships between rival teams. These comic strips and cartoons contain information about both on-field and off-field occurrences that have influenced the rivalry throughout history. For example, a brief description of the stand-off between militia groups in Texas and Oklahoma over a land dispute is provided to inform readers about was led to the name *Red River Rivalry*, as well as a description of the *A Mountains* significance in the rivalry between Arizona and Arizona State. Each historical story ends with a brief description of a term or psychological theory that helps explain why people experience rivalry toward out-group members. At time of the study, thirty comics and

cartoons on historical rivalries in college athletics, two in Major League Baseball, and two in the National Football League were available on www.SportRivalry.com.

The second type of comic strips and cartoons are labeled *Adventures with Sport Rivalry Man* and were created to tell stories about appropriate behavior toward rival teams and their fans. In each story, a character is faced with a dilemma in which they find, with the help of Sport Rivalry Man, the appropriate way to react to a rival fan. The stories end with a summary addressing the appropriate way fans should behave toward fans of rival teams. Five such stories were found on www.SportRivalry.com at the time of the study that addressed contemporary vignettes or ones grounded in theory. For example, one story addressed a person helping a rival fan change a flat tire, while another showed a fan learning not to cheer a rival player's injury at a game. Three stories used children as the main characters, and addressed bullying both at school and online, and how to help a friend that loses a hat following a rivalry game.

Experiment. Students enrolled in an undergraduate on-campus sport marketing class and those enrolled in an undergraduate on-campus rivalry and fan behavior class were exposed to the comic strips and cartoons. To help increase student involvement and retention, students in the on-campus classes were given an option to receive extra credit for watching or reading and completing brief summaries on three historical and five *Adventures with Sport Rivalry Man* comic strips or cartoons. First, all students in the two on-campus classes watched one historical and one *Adventures with Sport Rivalry Man* cartoon. Second, the students that decided to complete the rest of the learning program were awarded extra credit. For example, students were asked to provide descriptions of the main characters and scenarios discussed (e.g., on-field or off-field

incidences in historical comics/cartoons; problem faced in *Adventures with Sport Rivalry Man* comics/cartoons), and to explain in their own words what the comics or cartoons meant (e.g., the psychological term or theory; the moral of the story). Students enrolled in online graduate and undergraduate sport marketing classes were not exposed to or asked to provide description of the comics or cartoons, and therefore served as the control group. At the end of the semester, students in both experimental groups were then given a chance to earn extra credit by completing the survey instrument. Students in both groups were offered the same amount of extra credit.

The instrument used in the quasi-experiment contained four sections. The first section asked participants to identify their favorite teams, rival teams, and indicate their level of identification with their favorite team using the Sport Spectator Identification Scale (SSIS, Wann & Branscombe, 1993). It was important to allow participants to identify their own rivals rather than identify a priori (Sierra, Taute, & Heiser, 2010), as fans can perceive different teams as rivals and vary in their perceptions of those teams (Tyler & Cobbs, 2017; Wann et al., 2016). The SSIS is a scale that measures the level of identification a person feels toward a favorite team. Responses to the seven-item scale are scored on an 8-point Likert Scale (1 = *Strong Disagreement* to 8 = *Strong Agreement*). Examples of questions used in the SSIS include, “How strongly do you see yourself as a fan of the (Favorite Team)?”, “How important is it to you that (Favorite Team) win?”, and “How important is being a fan of the (Favorite Team) to you?”.

In the second section, participants provided perceptions of their rival teams using the Sport Rivalry Fan Perception Scale (SRFPS). The SRFPS is a twelve item, four-factor scale that measures the way fans perceive their rival teams (Havard et al., 2013).

In particular, the SRFPS provides insight on (1) how likely fans are to support the rival team against other teams (Out-Group Indirect Competition, OIC), (2) their perceptions of rival prestige (Out-Group Prestige, OP), (3) their perceptions of rival fan behavior (Out-Group Sportsmanship, OS), and (4) the satisfaction they receive when their favorite team defeats the rival team in direct competition (Sense of Satisfaction, SoS). For all subscales excluding OIC, higher scores indicate stronger negative perceptions. Lower scores on the OIC subscale indicate stronger negative perceptions. Example questions from the SRFPS include:

- (OIC) “I would support the (Rival Team) in a championship game.”
- (OP) “The prestige of the (Rival Team) is poor.”
- (OS) “Fans of the (Rival Team) demonstrate poor sportsmanship at games.”
- (SoS) “I feel a sense of belonging when the (Favorite Team) beat(s) the (Rival Team).”

The third section exposed participants to seven vignettes addressing various situations and asked participants their likelihood of reacting to a rival fan in each instance. The seven vignettes read, “Please indicate how likely are you to react to a fan of the (Rival Team) in the following instances: (1) Help them change a flat tire on their car, (2) Help them up after they trip and fall, (3) Help them pick up things they have dropped, (4) Tell others to stop making inappropriate jokes at their expense, (5) Make inappropriate jokes at their expense, (6) Laugh with others when someone is making fun of them, and (7) Stop someone you see trying to steal their belongings.” Responses were measured on a 7-point Likert Scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*). The fourth and final section contained demographic questions. Participants in both the

treatment and control groups took approximately 15 minutes to complete the surveys, which were constructed using Qualtrics and distributed via email.

It is again important to note that participants in both experimental groups were asked to complete the same survey instrument. Because the method of using comic strips and comics to teach about rivalry was the independent variable, participants were able to complete the same survey instrument.

Results

Scores for the SSIS and SRFPS subscales were combined to provide an average for each measure. Descriptive data can be found in Table 1, and all scales proved reliable, with alphas ranging from .740 to .849.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Measures Used for Analysis

Item	*M*	*SD*	α
Sport Spectator Identification Scale (SSIS)	6.50	1.09	.849
Out-group Indirect Competition (OIC)	2.82	1.73	.833
Out-group Prestige (OP)	2.79	1.35	.740
Out-group Sportsmanship (OS)	3.95	1.26	.831
Sense of Satisfaction (SoS)	6.41	0.84	.828

Overall, participants were highly identified with their favorite teams (M = 6.50, SD = 1.09), were unlikely to support their rival against another team (M = 2.82, SD = 1.73), disagreed that rival prestige was poor (M = 2.79, SD = 1.35), were neutral regarding rival fan behavior (M = 3.95, SD = 1.26), and experienced high levels of satisfaction when their favorite team beat the rival team (M = 6.41, SD = 0.84).

Regarding participant reactions to rival fans in varying situations, fans reported they were likely to (a) help a rival fan change a flat tire (M = 5.28, SD = 1.61), (b) help a

rival fan after they trip (*M* = 5.28, *SD* = 1.67), (c) help a rival fan pick up items they dropped (*M* = 5.56, *SD* = 1.70), (d) and attempt to stop someone stealing a rival fan's belongings (*M* = 5.41, *SD* = 1.98). Conversely, participants were not likely to make inappropriate jokes at a rival fan's expense (*M* = 2.97, *SD* = 1.51), and were neutral regarding whether they would laugh with others at a rival fan's expense (*M* = 3.78, *SD* = 1.50) and stop someone making an inappropriate joke at a rival fan's expense (*M* = 3.94, *SD* = 1.52).

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that participants who had been exposed to and learned about rivalry using the comic strips or cartoons would report significantly different perceptions of their rival teams than those in the control group. Previous research indicates that team identification significantly influences fan rival perceptions (Havard, Eddy, & Ryan, 2016; Wann et al., 2016), therefore a Multivarite Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) was run using participant SSIS scores as a covariate. Results of the MANCOVA were significant (Wilks' Lambda .593(4, 25) = 4.293, *p* = .009), indicating that exposure to and learning about rivalry using the comic strips or cartoons influenced fan rival perceptions. Univariate results showed that differences were present regarding OS (*F*(1, 28) = 5.053, *p* = .033 and SoS (*F*(1, 28) = 5.137, *p* = . 031). Participants exposed to the comic strips or cartoons reported that their rival fans behaved more poorly (*M* = 4.31, *SD* = 1.20) but experienced less satisfaction when their favorite team beat the rival (*M* = 6.12, *SD* = 0.93) than those not exposed to the comic strips or cartoons (OS – *M* = 3.42, *SD* = 0.95; SoS – *M* = 6.60, *SD* = 0.71). Means and standard deviations are available in Table 2, and Hypothesis 1 was partially supported.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations for Comic Strips/Cartoons Influence on Rival Perceptions

	OIC		OP		OS		SoS	
	M	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***
Comics/Cartoons	2.89	1.11	3.04	1.58	4.31*	1.20	6.12*	0.93
No Comics/Cartoons	3.31	2.06	2.46	1.05	3.42*	0.95	6.60*	0.71

Note. $*p < .05$

Research Question 1

Means and standard deviations are available in Table 3. Research question 1 asked how exposure to and learning about rivalry through the comic strips or cartoons would influence participants' likely reactions to rival fans in various situations. As this is an initial investigation of the teaching method's influence, it was deemed appropriate to use an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the hypothesis. Results showed that significant differences were present regarding participant likelihood to stop someone

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations to Comic Strips/Cartoons Influence on Fan Likely Reactions

	Comics/Cartoons		No Comics/Cartoons	
Fan Likely Reactions	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***
Help change Rival Fan's Flat Tire	5.25	1.44	5.31	1.82
Help Rival Fan after they Trip and Fall	5.69	1.40	4.88	1.86
Help Rival Fan pick up Items the Drop	5.69	1.35	5.44	2.03
Stop Others making Inappropriate Jokes at a Rival Fan's Expense	4.00	1.71	3.88	1.36
Stop Someone Trying to Steal a Rival Fan's Belongings	6.13*	1.15	4.69*	2.39
Make Inappropriate Jokes a Rival Fan's Expense	3.31	1.35	2.63	1.63
Laugh at a Rival Fan's Expense	3.75	1.48	3.81	1.50

Note. $*p < .05$

attempting to steal a rival fan's belongings $F(1, 30) = 4.715$, $p = .038$, where participants that were exposed to and learned about rivalry through the comics or cartoons were more likely to stop someone attempting to steal a rival fan's belongings ($M = 6.13$, $SD = 1.15$) than participants in the control group ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 2.39$).

Discussion

The current study was an initial investigation testing the effectiveness of a method that uses comic strips and cartoons to teach about the rivalry phenomenon. In particular, the study used a quasi-experimental design to test the influence of exposure to comic strips or cartoons on fan rival perceptions and likely reactions to rival fans. Results indicate that exposure to and learning about rivalry through the comic strips and cartoons caused fans to report that rival fans behaved more poorly, experienced less satisfaction when their favorite team beat the rival team, and made them more likely to stop someone attempting to steal a rival fan's belongings.

Hypothesis 1 was partially supported, and the significant differences follow logic. First, it makes sense that participants that were exposed to and learned about rivalry using the comic strips and cartoons rated rival fan behavior more negatively than those not exposed to the independent variable. Many of the historical comics and cartoons detailed *real* stories that dealt with rival fan behavior, whether fans playing pranks on rival teams, or out-and-out fan violence in the form of riots. For these reasons, it is not difficult to see why the experimental group would report stronger negative perceptions of rival team fan behavior. The result that participants exposed to the comic strips or cartoons experienced lower levels of satisfaction when their favorite team beat the rival team than those not exposed to the dependent variable suggests that learning about

rivalry through comics or cartoons may cause fans to experience more compassion for the rival team and their fan base.

Second, research question 1 showed that exposure to the comic strips and cartoons made people more likely to stop someone attempting to steal a rival fan's belongings. First, this result indicates that at a basic level, exposure to the comic strips or influenced fan likelihood to help rival team fans in various situations. This supports the finding that fan willingness to help others in emergency situations is influenced by rivalry (Levine et al., 2005). It is also noteworthy that overall, fans reported they were likely to help rival fans in most presented situations.

Implications and Future Directions

The current findings provide support for the continued study of the teaching method's influence on fan rival perceptions and likely reactions to rival fans. Initially showing that the comic strips and/or cartoons can be used to teach about rivalry and influence fan perceptions and behavior means researchers can now move into advanced stages within the project. Namely, researchers can use findings from the current quasi-experiment to work on developing curriculum that can be used in the classroom to teach about the rivalry phenomenon. Additionally, the influence of the comic strips and cartoons on rival perceptions supports previous findings of independent variables impact on fans. For example, fan perceptions of rival teams have been influenced by promotional titles and logos (Havard, Wann, & Grieve, 2018) and mediated messages about rivalry games (Havard, Ferucci, & Ryan, 2018).

Following the current study, the next step is the development of a curriculum that can be used to teach about the phenomenon at different levels of education. One such

group that is of special interest is elementary-age students. Research has found that children as young as five years old can start to exhibit stereotyping and bias (Williams & Steele, 2017). This finding, along with the effectiveness of comics and movies to teach important concepts (Liu, 2004; Norton, 2003; van Wyk, 2011) indicates that using the method may be effective at lower levels. It is now important to determine the most appropriate level of education and age that will provide the most effective results. Additionally, because participants in the treatment groups were taught about rivalry and what causes the phenomenon, results indicate that more education on rivalry and group behavior is needed. This instruction can occur through developed classroom curriculum and short lessons that can be distributed online. Examples of such videos and commentary are available on www.SportRivalry.com, along with the corresponding *Sport Rivalry Man* curriculum. The *Sport Rivalry Man* curriculum is also available on www.TeachersPayTeachers.com.

As previously stated, a goal of the current study, and of the comic strip and cartoon project, is to use the popular mediums of sport and comic strips and cartoons to teach about an important phenomenon and group behavior. The findings can be promising that using such mediums may help educate people regarding in-group and out-group membership and teach the ever-important lesson about inclusion and group membership. For example, if exposure to the comic strips and cartoons can help people better understand what causes feelings of rivalry, and the appropriate fan behavior lessons taught in the *Adventures with Sport Rivalry Man* stories, then this and similar approaches may help illustrate that group membership does not necessarily indicate that individuals are different. Additionally, if young children can be exposed to and learn

about rivalry and group behavior using the teaching method, their perceptions and behaviors may help form future relationships with others in relevant in-groups and out-groups.

In this regard, the current project and findings could supplement positive fan behavior campaigns currently being executed by leagues, conferences, and organizations. For example, the Big Ten Conference ran a commercial during the 2017 football season in which a high school student trying to decide which Big Ten school to attend is first confronted by family members trying to convince her to attend their favorite school, then is told by a family member that no matter where she attends the family will support and love her. Another example is the campaign Chick-fil-A ran during the 2017 college football season and the 2018 Peach Bowl. First, a commercial shows Chick-fil-A setting up a restaurant on the Alabama/Georgia state line to get fans of Auburn and Georgia to eat together. The second commercial run during the 2018 Peach Bowl shows fans being exposed to a scenario in which they encounter a fan of the rival team (either Alabama or Florida State because those two teams played in the Chick-fil-A Kickoff Classic) having car trouble. The commercial highlights the individuals that choose to help the fans of the rival team to show that kindness is more important than team affiliation. Outside of sport, the experiments aired on *What Would You Do?* regularly highlight positive group member behavior. The use of comic strips and cartoons to teach about rivalry and fan behavior and help spread the message about positive fan interaction in educational and popular culture settings.

Implications for School Counselors

The findings in the current study are particularly interesting to and carry implications for school counselors for a variety of reasons. First, school counselors work with students in individual or small group settings. Within this group, many counselors are working with students on a repeated and regular basis. This allows a school counselor the opportunity to engage in-depth conversations with individual students more frequently than a classroom teacher, who is responsible for a large group of students. Many of the stories and accompanying lessons require open conversation and sharing of observations, all of which is better facilitated in a small group or one-on-one setting. As such, counselors may have a greater ability to discuss the outcomes of the stories and cater lessons to individual students.

Second, depending on the student, school counselors may have access to individuals or groups of students that have exhibited some of the behaviors addressed in the stories (e.g., bullying, helping others, appropriate decision-making, etc.). For these reasons, counselors may better be able to deliver the lesson plans and stories used on a student-by-student basis. For example, if a student is seeing a school counselor because of repeated accusations of bullying others, the counselor could use prior knowledge of the individual to choose which videos on bullying in the online and school settings. This type of individual or small group interaction is also important in understanding what type of medium and subject matter would best engage students. If a student that does not regularly engage in the classroom setting is interested in sport or superhero comic stories, they perhaps would be more comfortable talking about their

likes, and what they learned from the stories to a counselor and small group of classmates than in front of a larger group.

Third, the ability of school counselors to meet with students on a regular basis, and engage in frequent in-depth conversations and analysis, they can better monitor student retention and progress of learning through the stories. This allows counselors to focus on stories and lessons that would be particularly helpful to the intended audience. Additionally, the frequent meetings in a smaller group or individual setting also allows school counselors to adjust the stories and lessons being used to provide the most beneficial outcomes to the student.

From curriculum development and implementation perspectives, consulting with school counselors, rather than classroom teachers, may help the learning and professional development process. Rather than training many classroom teachers and monitoring each to ensure proper and consistent use of the stories and implementation of the program, working with counselors allow more in-depth training and the open exchange of ideas. Further, a more consistent, efficient, and ultimately effective feedback loop can be established between the developers and school counselors because the number of trained professionals is smaller than that of classroom teachers. For example, rather than train seven elementary teachers, and then monitor that each teacher uses the stories and lessons in a consistent manner, the developers can work closely with school counselors since there are fewer within a school, and trust that the stories and lessons are presented in a more consistent manner.

Finally, adding to the importance of a real-time feedback loop, curriculum and story developers can consult with school counselors to address contemporary issues

facing children. For example, school counselors are typically on the *front lines* of understanding student behaviors and learning. For this reason, regular communication between researchers, story and curriculum developers and counselors can better cater to the needs of school children. Additionally, school counselors can communicate upcoming trends and issues that should be addressed using the *Sport Rivalry Man* program.

Limitations and Further Investigation

It is important to point out possible limitations to the current study. Namely, due to the class sizes used in the quasi-experiment, sample size could have impacted results and future investigators should strive for larger sampled in both experimental and control groups. To address this limitation, future investigations could employ larger sample sizes. Further, the group assignments may have influenced the findings, where the type of subject matter being taught may impact students differently. For example, someone taking a class in an on-campus setting may be doing so to have more engagement and interaction with the instructor. Additionally, students taking a course in an online setting may have more outside responsibilities that keep them from engaging in a similar manner with the instructor as an *on-campus* student.

Self-reporting was used in the current study, meaning that students were able to take time during the testing period to form their responses. Students may have responded differently if actions were measured rather than survey-based responses. To address this limitation, an experiment like the one employed by Levine et al. (2005) could be used. Finally, the current quasi-experiment was conducted on a college

setting, and future investigations, given proper coordination with school counselors, could be conducted in grade a school setting.

Conclusion

The current quasi-experiment was an initial investigation testing the effectiveness of using comic strips and cartoons to teach about rivalry and fan behavior. Results indicate that exposure to and learning about the phenomenon through comic strips and cartoons can influence perceptions and likely reactions toward members of the out-group. More research and development of a teaching curriculum is needed, and the current study helps researchers and practitioners move toward future research and implementation.

References

Ambrose, S. C., & Schnitzlein, N. (2017). What makes for the best rivalries in individual sport and how can marketers capitalize on them? *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, *26*(4) 223-234.

Cikara, M., Botvinick, M. M., & Fiske, S. T. (2011). Us versus them: Social identity shaped neural responses to intergroup competition and harm. *Psychological Science, 22*, 306-313. doi:10.1177/0956797610397667

Crocker, J., & Luhtanen, R. (1990). Collective self-esteem and ingroup bias. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 58*(1), 60-67.

Cobbs, J., Sparks, D., & Tyler, B. D. (2017). Comparing rivalry effects across professional sports: National Football League fans exhibit most animosity. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, *26*(4), 235-246.

Dalakas, V., & Melancon, J. P. (2012). Fan identification, *schadenfreude* toward hated rivals, and the mediating effects of Importance of Winning Index (IWIN). *Journal of Services Marketing, 26*, 51-59. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/08876041211199724

Dalakas, V., Melancon, J. P., & Sreboth, T. (2015). A qualitative inquiry on schadenfreude by sport fans. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 38*(2), 161-179.

Havard, C. T (2014). Glory Out of Reflected Failure: The examination of how rivalry affects sport fans. *Sport Management Review, 17*, 243-253. doi:10.1016/j.smr. 2013.09.002

Havard, C. T. (2016). Rivalry among teams and conferences in intercollegiate athletics: Does a conference pride phenomenon exist? *Journal of Contemporary Athletics, 10*, 19-32.

Havard, C. T. (2018). *Rivalry: How it impacts fans, teams, and sport managers*. Retrieved from www.sportrivalry.com/textbook.

Havard, C. T., & Dalakas, V. (2017). Understanding the marketing implications of sport rivalry: What we know and where we are headed. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, *26*(4), 199-203.

Havard, C. T., Eddy, T., & Ryan, T. D. (2016). Examining the impact of team identification and gender on rival perceptions and behavior of intercollegiate athletics fans. *Journal of Applied Sport Management, 8*(2), 33-49. doi:10.18666/JASM-2016-V8-I2-6444

Havard, C. T., Ferucci, P., & Ryan, T. D. (2018). Influence of mediated stories on fan rival perceptions. *Manuscript under review*.

Havard, C. T., Gray, D. P., Gould, J., Sharp, L. A., & Schaffer, J. J. (2013). Development and validation of the Sport Rivalry Fan Perception Scale (SRFPS). *Journal of Sport Behavior, 36*, 45-65*.*

Havard, C. T., & Reams., L. (2016). Investigating differences in fan rival perceptions between conferences in intercollegiate athletics. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 39*, 126-146.

Havard, C. T., Shapiro, S. L., & Ridinger, L. L. (2016). Who's our rival? Investigating the influence of a new intercollegiate football program on rivalry perceptions*. Journal of Sport Behavior, 39,* 385-408*.*

Havard, C. T., Wann, D. L., & Grieve, F. G. (2018). Rivalry versus hate: Measuring the influence of promotional titles and logos on fan rival perceptions. *Manuscript under review*.

Havard, C. T., Wann, D. L., & Ryan, T. D. (2013). Investigating the impact of conference realignment on rivalry in intercollegiate athletics. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 22*(4), 224-234.

Havard, C. T., Wann, D. L., & Ryan, T. D. (2017). Reinvestigating the impact of conference realignment on rivalry in intercollegiate athletics. *Journal of Applied Sport Management*, *9*(2), 25-36.

Kilduff, G. J., Elfenbein, H. A., & Staw, B. M. (2010). The psychology of rivalry: A relationally dependent analysis of competition. *Academy of Management Journal, 53*, 943-969. doi:10.5465/AMJ.2010.54533171

Lee, M. J. (1985). From rivalry to hostility among sports fans. *Quest, 37*(1), 38-49.

Levine, M., Prosser, A., Evans, D., & Reicher, S. (2005). Identity and emergency intervention: How social group membership and inclusiveness of group boundaries shape helping behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *31*, 343-353. doi:10.1177/1046167204271651

Liu, J. (2004). Effects of comic strips on L2 learners' reading comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly: A journal for Teachers of English to speakers of Other Languages and of Standard English as a Second Dialect*, *38*(2), 225-243.

Maass, A., Salvi, D., Arcuri, L., & Semin, G. (1989). Language use in intergroup contexts: The linguistic intergroup bias. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57*, 981-993. doi:10.1037/0022-5314.57.6.891

Mendoza, M. (2017, Jan. 16). Videos show Dallas Cowboys fans cope with Green Bay loss by fighting, breaking TV. *My San Antonio*. Retrieved from:

http://www.mysanantonio.com/sports/nfl/article/Videos-show-Dallas-Cowboys-fans-Green-Bay-loss-10860174.php

Norton, B. (2003). The motivating power of comic books: Insights from Archie comic readers. *The Reading Teacher*, *57*(2), 140-147.

Reams, L., & Eddy, T. (2017). The impact of rivalry antecedents on mediated demand for an individual sport. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, *26*(4), 247-260.

Sanford, K., & Scott, F. (2016). Assessing the intensity of sport rivalries using data from secondary market transactions. *Journal of Sports Economics, 17*(2), 159-174. doi:10.1177/1527002514527112

Scarborough, A. (2017, Nov. 16). Alabama fan shoots Auburn fan over which team is better, police say. *ESPN*. Retrieved from: http://www.espn.com/college-football/story/_/id/21436815/fan-shot-alabama-crimson-tide-auburn-tigers-better-spat

Sierra, J. J., Taute, H. A., & Heiser, R. S. (2010). Personal opinions and beliefs as determinants of collegiate football consumption for revered and hated teams. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 19*, 143-153.

Tajfel, H., (1978). *Differentiation between social groups: Studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations*. London: Academic Press Inc.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, pp. 33-48. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Inc.

Turner, J. C. (1982). The determination of collective behavior. In H. Tajfel (Ed.), *Social identity and intergroup relations*. Cambridge, G.B.: Cambridge University Press.

Tyler, B. D., & Cobbs, J. B. (2015). Rival conceptions of rivalry: Why some competitions mean more than others. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 15*(2), 227-248. doi:10.1080/16184742.2015.1010558

Tyler, B. D., & Cobbs, J. B. (2017). All rivals are not equal: Clarifying misrepresentations and discerning three core properties of rivalry. *Journal of Sport Management*, *31*, 1-14.

Tyler, B. D., Morehead, C. A., Cobbs, J., & DeSchriver, T. (2017). What is rivalry? Old and new approaches to specifying rivalry in demand estimations of spectator sports. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, *26*(4), 204-222.

Wann, D. L., & Branscombe, N. R. (1993). Sports fans: Measuring degree of identification with their team. *International Journal of Sport Psychology, 24*, 1-17.

Wann, D. L., Havard, C. T., Grieve, F. G., Lanter, J. R., Partridge, J. A., & Zapalac, R. K. (2016). Investigating sport rivals: Number, evaluations, and relationship with team identification. *Journal of Fandom Studies, 4*, 71-88.

Wann, D. L., Haynes, G., McLean, B., & Pullen, P. (2003). Sport team identification and willingness to consider anonymous acts of hostile aggression. *Aggressive Behavior, 29*, 406-413. doi:10.1002/ab.10046

Wann, D. L., Koch, K., Knoth, T., Fox, D., Aljubaily, H., & Lantz, C. D. (2006). The impact of team identification on biased predictions of player performance. *The Psychological Record*, *56*, 55-66.

Wann, D. L., Peterson, R. R., Cothran, C., & Dykes, M. (1999). Sport fan aggression and anonymity: The importance of team identification. *Social Behavior and Personality, 27*(6), 567-602.

Wann, D. L., & Waddill, P. J. (2013). Predicting sport fans' willingness to consider anonymous acts of aggression: Importance of team identification and fan dysfunction. In C. Mohiyeddini (Ed.) *Contemporary topics and trends in the psychology of sports* (pp. 139-151). Hauppauge, NY: Nova.

Williams, A., & Steele, J. R. (2017). Examining children's implicit racial attitudes using exemplar and category-based measures. *Child Development.* doi:10.1111/cdev.12991

van Wyk, M. M. (2011). The use of cartoons as a teaching tool to enhance student learning in economics education. *Journal of Social Science*, *26*(2), 117-130.

Biographical Statements

Cody T. Havard, Ph.D. is an associate professor of sport commerce in the Kemmons Wilson School of Hospitality and Resort Management at The University of Memphis. He researches rivalry, and its influence on sport fans and stakeholders. For questions or comments, please contact via email at chavard@memphis.edu.

Skylar S. Workman is a graduate student at The University of Memphis working on her graduate degree in school counseling. She holds a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from Mississippi State University.