



DEAR BRNET MEMBERS AND AFFILIATES:

Thank you for being a part of the Bullying Research Network! In our March newsletter, you will find updates from the network.

Be sure to check out our website at <http://cehs.unl.edu/BRNET/> for additional resources and announcements.

BRNET MARCH 2023

NEWSLETTER:

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Featured Spotlight - Dr. Robert (Bob) Faris

Robert (Bob) Faris grew up outside Baltimore, MD, where he spent much of third and fourth grade getting beaten up by a pair of neighborhood toughs. These early experiences sharpened his evasive techniques, attention to escape routes, and knowledge of alternative bus stops, ultimately solidifying a lifelong interest in avoiding blunt force trauma. Years later, at UNC-Chapel Hill, they also informed his doctoral dissertation on the topic, which considered bullying from a social network perspective—as a relationship within a hierarchy rather than an individual proclivity. At UC Davis, where he is currently professor of sociology, he continued to study bullying, garnering media interest that culminated in two Emmy-winning collaborations with Anderson Cooper 360°, one focusing on [bullying](#) (with Diane Felmlee), the other on social media ([#Being13](#), with Marion Underwood).



He posits that much bullying behavior is not deviant, but normal—in the sense that it is not negatively sanctioned by peers—and instrumental rather than reactive. In short, many adolescents are not lashing out because of psychological deficiencies or problematic home environments, but are using aggression tactically to climb social ladders. This simple theory implies several testable propositions which have received empirical support. Among them are the tendency for aggression to concentrate in the core of a



school’s social network instead of its periphery, the escalation of bullying with initial gains in status followed by desistance in the uppermost echelons, and the elevated rates of bullying between *friends* and between friends-of-friends, who are not simply allies but also rivals.

Dr. Faris also documented how bullying boosts status: by combining network data with manifest indicators of high status from school yearbooks (e.g., the royalty at prom and homecoming dances, the students voted “best looking” and “most athletic,” etc., as well as their friends), he identified small friendship clusters of 12th grade elites and modeled upward mobility into those in-crowds over a two-year period. Sophomores who bullied other schoolmates dramatically improved their chances of joining the in-crowd by their senior year—but only if they eschewed physical violence and targeted victims who were high status, aggressive, or from within their own friendship group. Those who used physical violence or targeted lower-status schoolmates did not improve their social standing, and victims were effectively banished from elite social circles.

The utility of strategic aggression for boosting one’s own status while tearing down rivals may help explain why many prevention programs have negligible impact, and why even the most effective ones are unable to alter the behavior of popular bullies. It poses a daunting challenge for future interventions, which might consider ways to celebrate prosocial behavior as a status reward, or alternatively, deemphasize status competition altogether—avenues he hopes to explore in future research. Currently, Dr. Faris is working on an NIH-NIDA R01 grant to collect new data from the original respondents—now in their early 30’s—of a panel survey he helped conduct between 2002-2006. The new data collected from these participants will shed light on the long-term adult consequences of bullying, discrimination, and other adverse experiences of adolescence.

Selected Publications

Faris, Robert, and Liann Tucker. 2022. "Status Motivation, Network Stability, and Instrumental Cruelty." In *Sociology of Bullying, The*, pp. 120-139. New York University Press.

Faris, Robert, and John Faris. 2022. "The Taxonomy of Harm: A Response to Collins." In *Sociology of Bullying, The*, pp. 25-37. New York University Press.

Faris, Robert, Diane Felmlee, and Cassie McMillan. "With friends like these: Aggression from amity and equivalence." *American Journal of Sociology* 126, no. 3 (2020): 673-713.

Faris, Robert and Diane Felmlee. 2018. “Best Friends For Now: Egonetwork Stability and Adolescents’ Life Course Goals.” *Frontiers in Sociology and Social Research, Volume 2: Social Networks and the Life Course*, Duane Alwin, Derek Kreager, and Diane Felmlee, eds.



Felmlee, Diane and Robert Faris. 2016. “Toxic Ties: Networks of Friendship, Dating, and Cyber Victimization.” *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 79:3:243-262.

Smith, Jeffrey and Robert Faris. 2015. “Movement without Mobility: Adolescent Status Hierarchies and the Contextual Limits of Cumulative Advantage.” *Social Networks*, 40:139-153.

Faris, Robert and Diane Felmlee. 2014. “Casualties of Social Combat: School Networks of Peer Victimization and their Consequences.” *American Sociological Review*, 79:2:228-257.

Faris, Robert and Susan Ennett. 2012. “Adolescent Aggression: The Role of Peer Group Status Motives, Peer Aggression, and Group Characteristics.” *Social Networks*, 34:4:371-378.

Faris, Robert. 2012. “Aggression, Exclusivity, and Status Attainment in Interpersonal Networks.” *Social Forces*, 90:4:1207-1235.

Faris, Robert and Diane Felmlee. 2011. “Status Struggles: Network Centrality and Gender Segregation in Same- and Cross-Gender Aggression.” *American Sociological Review*, 76:1:48-73



BRNET New Members!

BRNET has a current total of 269 members from 29 countries!

New Affiliates of BRNET!

BRNET has a current total of 109 affiliates from 18 countries!

Please send recommendations for potential **BRNET members** (i.e., faculty, researchers, and clinicians who are conducting research on bullying or related topics) to Drs. Wendy Craig, Susan Swearer, or to bullyresearchnet@gmail.com. Additionally, you may direct potential BRNET members toward our website for further information: <https://cehs.unl.edu/BRNET/become-member-or-affiliate/>.

If you have recently joined BRNET and have not yet provided your information, please send the following to bullyresearchnet@gmail.com:

1. contact information that can be posted on the website;
2. a brief biography of you and your work that can be posted on the website;
3. a list of current/ongoing projects in this area;
4. an annotated bibliography of your work in this area (i.e., full reference plus a few sentences about the work) or curriculum vitae that can be posted on the website;
5. relevant web-based links you would like to share.

Affiliates of BRNET (formerly known as ‘Friends of BRNET’) is a group of graduate students, administrators, parents, and individuals who are interested in learning more about the Bullying Research Network. Affiliates of BRNET receive our monthly e-newsletter. If you are interested in becoming an Affiliate of BRNET or want to refer someone to Affiliates of BRNET, please email Catie Carney, the BRNET Coordinator, at bullyresearchnet@gmail.com with the following information: name, title, address, and email address.



BRNET Author Exchange - Member and Affiliate Publications

If you would like to share research articles or other publications to be highlighted in our monthly newsletters, please email Catie Carney at bullyresearchnet@gmail.com with the following information:

- Your article citation (with a link to the DOI, if possible)
- Your article abstract
- Your email (so individuals who receive our newsletter can request further information, if desired)

BRNET ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) Request for Measures of Parental Attitudes about School Bullying

BRNET request from Dr. Kevin Runions: Please email recommendations for a measure of parental attitudes and/or beliefs about school bullying: kevin.runions@telethonkids.org.au.

(2) Position Opening: Assistant/Associate in Research (Bullying Prevention Research)

The College of Education Office of Research (OoR) and Department of Educational Psychology and Learning Systems (EPLS) at Florida State University (FSU) are searching for a 9-month Assistant/Associate in Research to contribute to the Bullying Prevention Research Team headed by Dr. Lyndsay Jenkins. Please see the attached PDF for more information.

(3) *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* Special Issue

You are invited to submit an article to *the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* Special Issue entitled, “Bullying and Cyberbullying among Youth.” Manuscripts will be considered until January 31, 2024. You can access more details about the special issue here:

https://www.mdpi.com/journal/ijerph/special_issues/VJYKQ1VQ60

(4) Doctoral Researcher in MCSA project PARTICIPATE: Parents and Technology in Cyberbullying

There is a vacant full-time position (36 months) at the University of Turku’s INVEST flagship research center for a PhD student on cyberbullying. The PhD Fellowships are funded by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Doctoral Networks, titled Parents and Technology in Cyberbullying: Intervention and Prevention for Future Experts (project acronym PARTICIPATE). There will be altogether 10 PhD students based in different partner countries – one of them in Turku. The project includes two planned secondments for the Turku appointee at (1) Irish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC), Ireland, for 3 months and (2) University of Stavanger, Norway, for 3 months. **The candidate must not**



have resided or carried out their main activity (e.g., work, studies) in Finland for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the recruitment date.

The Turku sub-project is to focus on (1) the knowledge and attitudes of mothers vs fathers regarding (cyber)bullying and the weight of importance each gives to the problem; (2) differences in mothers' and fathers' interaction with their children in regards to (cyber)bullying; (3) the role diversity plays in parents' interactions with their children and with the schools in relation to (cyber)bullying.

For more information or to apply, see the following link:

https://rekry.saima.fi/certiahome/open_job_view.html?id=000014445&did=5600&lang=en&jc=14&nav_from_open_jobs_view_new=true

(5) Call for PhD Fellowships in Cyberbullying

Call for three positions in the field of cyberbullying. The positions are within a MSCA doctoral network granted by The European Union. Application deadline is March 15th. For more information, see the following link: <https://www.jobbnorge.no/en/available-jobs/job/234469/phd-fellowship-in-cyberbullying>

(6) Postdoctoral Position Openings at DCU Anti-Bullying Centre

The following postdoctoral positions have been advertised in DCU Anti-Bullying Centre (ABC):

- Postdoctoral Researcher in Self Harming Behaviours and Suicide
- Postdoctoral Researcher in Cyberbullying
- Postdoctoral Researcher in Online Grooming and Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)

These are 2 year contracts created as part of the CILTER project, which is funded by the Government of Ireland's DTIF Fund.

More information is available on the University website: <https://www.dcu.ie/hr/vacancies-current-vacancies-external-applicants>

You can also contact Dr. Tijana Milosevic for further information tijana.milosevic@dcu.ie

(7) Postdoctoral Fellow Opportunity at the University at Buffalo Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention

We are pleased to share that we are recruiting a postdoctoral fellow at the [Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention](#) ([University at Buffalo, The State University of New York](#))! This 2-year position (starting Fall 2023) is ideal for contributing to collaborative interdisciplinary scholarship and translation of



BULLYING RESEARCH NETWORK

University of Nebraska – Lincoln
Queen's University

<http://cehs.unl.edu/BRNET/>

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research to practice in the areas of understanding, preventing, and intervening with bullying abuse and school violence. Scholarly interests may include, but are not limited to, creating positive, safe, and inclusive schools and reducing bullying and violence of marginalized youth. The postdoctoral fellow will conduct original research, collaborate on research and programming, and develop professionally through faculty mentorship.

The postdoc will receive a salary of \$65,000/year, in addition to benefits/insurance and \$5,000/year to support travel and research. If applicable, supervision for licensure as a psychologist is also available. This position is part of an exciting [postdoctoral cluster hire](#) within UB's [Graduate School of Education](#) dedicated to advancing scholarship which addresses and combats structural inequities.

More information can be found on [our website](#) and the official posting and link to apply can be found [here](#). Review of applications will begin immediately, and the position will be open until filled. We anticipate we will begin conducting interviews within the next month. Please spread the word about the postdoc opportunity to your networks or potential candidates. For further information or questions, please feel free to contact me at nickersa@buffalo.edu or 716-645-3448.

Thank you for your involvement in the Bullying Research Network! If you have any news, information, research, suggestions for new members, or other materials that our members would find useful, please do not hesitate to email us at bullyresearchnet@gmail.com and we will include it in our newsletter and/or on our website.

Most sincerely,

Dr. Susan Swearer
University of Nebraska – Lincoln
BRNET Co-Director

Dr. Wendy Craig
Queen's University
BRNET Co-Director