
This study examined depictions of betrayal in young adult fiction across the genres of realistic fiction, science fiction, and fantasy. Similarities and differences were analyzed to unearth conventions or parallels that appear in the texts. Relevant Psychology literature was consulted to determine whether the reactions, emotions, and experiences that characters encounter throughout these novels accurately reflected the observed behavior of young adults in the research. A literary sample of twelve novels was examined using a set of researcher-created guidelines. Data analysis utilized emergent coding based on the texts, and a priori coding based on the research. Results indicated that while content differs between genres, the depictions of betrayal, relationships, and emotions were consistent. Similarly, the sample texts displayed characteristics and themes that were accurate appropriate in accordance with relevant psychology literature. Therefore, it is highly likely that these texts would be useful to adolescent readers struggling with betrayal.

Headings:

Readers’ Advisory
Young Adult Literature
Teenagers
Research – Psychology
Bibliotherapy -- Teenagers
DEPICTIONS OF BETRAYAL ACROSS GENRES IN YOUNG ADULT FICTION

by
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A Master's paper submitted to the faculty of the School of Information and Library Science of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Library Science.

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Approved by:

________________________
Brian Sturm
Introduction

While Young Adult literature is a relatively new genre compared to other literary classifications, many librarians, teachers, and readers agree that one of the main goals of this genre has been to provide texts that will resonate with adolescent readers through experiences they can relate to and characters with whom they can identify. This study was designed to determine whether texts related to betrayal can be useful to adolescents who are experiencing betrayal in their own interpersonal relationships. One of the most important jobs of public librarians is to stock their library's collection with effective resources for readers, and provide comprehensive readers’ advisory to patrons on a variety of topics and issues. Young Adult librarians in particular focus heavily on the link between adolescent development and the need for reading material that speaks to the experiences of adolescent readers.

Adolescents are going through a period in their lives that is fraught with changes, new experiences, and shifting variables. Throughout adolescence, young adults grapple with raging hormones, fights with friends, rapidly changing social dynamics, struggling to master new information, social isolation, a fear of the unknown, and a desire to find a place in the world. Throughout this period of heightened emotions, there are sometimes traumatic events that leave teens feeling that other elements of their lives have been changed or tainted. In the wake of these experiences, whether positive or negative, adolescents may reach out to books fo
comfort and solace. By including texts in the collection that may resonate with readers, youth librarians can provide teens with a level of bibliotherapy, or even just the pleasure of some recreational reading that may comfort them.

For some, reading is a way to connect with characters who are experiencing similar difficulties or emotions, and for others, reading is an escape from their familiar lives into a world of possibilities and adventures. The texts in this study occupy an interesting niche – they feature many emotions, reactions, and relationships that may seem familiar to readers in one way or another, but many of these texts contain abstract environments, fantastical elements, high adventure, or severe situations. Therefore, in these books, adolescent readers are provided with the opportunity to escape their familiar world while encountering some elements that echo back to experiences that they may be grappling with in their personal lives. Therefore, these texts enable the reader to wrestle with their own complex emotions in a detached form, allowing for a reading experience that is both recreational and therapeutic, and hopefully ultimately useful in the future.

In order to determine the effectiveness of the texts used in this study, relevant psychology literature related to betrayal, adolescent emotions, and adolescent friendships, was examined for trends and parallels in the observed behavior of teens encountering these issues. Following the research, an examination of betrayal texts sought to reveal ties to the relevant psychology literature, and
unearth similarities and differences across genres between betrayal texts. The sample involved twelve novels, with four texts each from the genres of science fiction, fantasy, and realistic fiction.

**Betrayal Texts and Psychology Literature**

Before describing the findings from the examination of the psychology research, some term definitions are necessary to form a better understanding of the topics that will be covered in this paper.

**Term Definitions:**

- **Young Adult:** Most commonly referred to as “adolescents.” According to Erik Erickson’s (1993) theories of development, an adolescent is a person between the ages of 13 and 19, and while there are many definitions and theories, the research will target this age range.

- **Young Adult Literature:** Somewhat of a misnomer; young adult literature is specifically geared towards children and teens aged 13-19, so it would be more appropriate in some cases to call it “adolescent” literature. This research examined the young adult literature genres of science fiction, fantasy, and realistic fiction.

- **Dyadic Friendships:** In layman’s terms, ‘friendship pairs.’ This term refers to friendships that occur between two people, as opposed to friendships between three or more people. The large majority of research discussed in this proposal focuses on dyadic friendships, but the friendships in the texts will likely vary in numbers.

- **Betrayal:** The research examines the following types of betrayal in the texts:
- **Betrayal of a confidence**: Telling a secret, or using information to do wrong to another person.

- **Betrayal of a friendship or relationship**: Leading someone on to believe that a relationship/friendship with them is solid, and then betraying their trust. This covers both infidelity and lying between friends, allies, relationships, and family members.

- **Ideological Betrayal**: When the protagonist believes that another character is loyal to a cause or ideal, only to find they were actually serving an opposing side or set of beliefs.

This study will not be discussing sexual betrayal, such as abuse or molestation, because the resulting emotions and behaviors differ in many ways from those resulting from the above betrayals, and because this particular topic is so large and sensitive that doing it justice would result in that topic overwhelming the other types of betrayals mentioned in this paper and examined in the texts.

- **A priori coding vs. emergent coding**: In a priori coding, categories are established prior to the analysis based upon theory, whereas in emergent coding, categories are established during the examination of the data.

**Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to examine similarities and differences between genres in novels dealing with betrayal, and analyze whether the depictions of betrayal and the resulting trauma for characters in young adult novels are accurate and representative of the real-life experiences of betrayal as studied in psychology and library science disciplines. Adolescents are at a time in their lives
where their emotions are running high, and their sense of self is largely connected to the relationships they have with others. By examining the texts that are presented for young adults relating to betrayal and interpersonal relationships, this study sought to determine whether the literature that is available to them at this time is capable of speaking to them with accuracy, and what texts might be most helpful to adolescents and representative of their current emotions and experiences. Currently, there is a large volume of work available to adolescents related to interpersonal relationships, and many of those texts have focused on instances of betrayal and trust issues between characters. One of the issues that was addressed in the course of this study is the concept of whether those texts are realistic enough that they may be helpful to teens seeking catharsis for similar experiences.

Three research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Does the depiction of betrayal in Young Adult fiction differ across science fiction, fantasy, and realistic fiction genres?

2. Are these depictions of betrayal and the resulting emotions and behavior consistent with the observed behavior for the age group in the relevant psychological and library science research?

3. Can these texts be useful and helpful to adolescents who are going through similar experiences?

In this study, the first question took priority in the research and the resulting paper, while the following questions informed the research and gave direction for examining the relevant scholarly articles, studies, and the texts involved in this paper. However, that does not mean that the latter questions are unimportant. It is
necessary for librarians to be aware of which texts may speak to their adolescent readers who are experiencing difficult situations, and it is also necessary that they be aware of the developmental experiences of their readers so they may recommend truly helpful texts during reader’s advisory.

**Literature Review**

In order to identify relevant research, databases such as LISA, SAGE eReference, and PsycInfo were used. However, once it was revealed that research pertaining to betrayal in YA novels did not exist, and therefore the field of search must also include searches pertaining to YA relationships and betrayals themselves, it was also necessary to utilize UNC’s “Articles +” search function to open up the research field to a wider set of options. Some of the search terms that were used in order to find relevant scholarly studies and articles were: “Betrayal + teens,” “Betrayal, teen novels,” “Teen friendships,” and “Teen friendships + betrayal.” Some searches were more effective than others, but these terms were mostly jumping off points. It was determined through trial and error that more specific search phrases (such as ‘teen novels about betrayal’) yielded no results. Therefore, it was often more helpful to use broader search terms such as “teen +friendship” and then spend more time going through the larger list of results to find useful publications. From there, citation tracking was used for each article to find other studies or articles that might be relevant to the research at hand.

There were several themes that were present in many of these articles, and while these articles seemed to draw conclusions that supported one another, it was helpful to examine each study and article individually, and then build a larger
background and framework in order to analyze the novels more effectively. Some of the articles and studies that were consulted for the purpose of the literature review discuss friendships and their impact on the mental and emotional growth and health of adolescents, other articles discuss betrayal and its effect on adolescents, and a few articles discuss both relationships and betrayal. Most of the readings discuss adolescent psychology and how the psychological health of an adolescent is either positively or negatively impacted by the relationships that they form with others, and their experiences within those relationships.

In their study “Aggressive Responses to Betrayal: Type of relationship, victim’s sex, and Nature of Aggression,” Haden and Hojat (2003) examined betrayal in interpersonal relationships, and discussed the differences in emotions and actions related to victim’s sex, and the nature of the betrayal and the response. Haden and Hojat used primarily sexual betrayal (cheating) in relationships and lying between friends as their forms of betrayal, and they discovered that while there were marked differences in the intensity of the reaction (infidelity produced a more extreme reaction than lying), there was not a significant difference in response between males and females to either betrayal. This article is particularly useful for the betrayal study because it discusses differences between reactions in the sexes, and since the study will be examining texts where protagonists from both genders are wronged, this article aided in comparing their research to the texts for parallels.

In order to examine gender differences and similarities between the way that adolescents approach friendship, one might look to Kathleen Vail’s (2002) “Relational Aggression in Girls” to learn a few facts about negative aspects of female
friendship, or one could look to Niobe Way's (2012) “Close Friendships Among Adolescent Boys” to read about both positive and negative aspects of friendship between adolescent males, and how those aspects change as adolescent males become young men. While Vail’s article paints a negative picture of teenage girls' friendships, it is important to remember that she is discussing only a certain negative set of activities between teen girls, and she is not attempting to make a larger generalization about all female friendships. Instead, Vail discusses how society's continual insistence (either through personal relationships, day-to-day enforcement of social norms, or through advertising) that young women should be demure, should not fight, and should not outwardly demonstrate emotions such as anger or frustration, robs young women of the ability to feel that they are allowed to express their emotions as they truly feel them. Vail argues that being deprived of the right to act out competitive impulses or outwardly express these emotions causes adolescent girls to internalize their more volatile feelings and impulses, and this in turn causes some young women to act duplicitous, unkind, and catty towards their friends because they do not have appropriate outlets for their feelings. While Vail's observations stem from observations and interviews, and she does not cite specific data sets (which ultimately causes her work to feel more editorial than concretely factual), her findings are sound when examined in relation to other scholarly works about adolescent friendships. Likewise, this piece is important when examining the bounty of texts for teens in which adolescent girls fight, gossip about one another, and continually betray each other socially to get ahead.
In a more balanced approach, Niobe Way’s (2012) “Close Friendships Among Adolescent Boys” depicts a longitudinal study of boys’ friendships over two decades. Way’s findings revealed that boys have and/or want intimate male friendships, and that those friendships are critical to their mental health. However, as they head into adolescence, boys become wary of their peers. Way writes: “As the pressures of stereotypic manhood intensify, boys disconnect from the very relationships that support their mental health. The numerous challenges faced by boys in school and at home are in part a reflection of this disconnection.” (p.1) Way mentions that when close friendships between males are discussed in the context of scholarly or academic literature, they are often mentioned offhandedly, as superficial ‘buddy’ type situations, and that they are often defined in contrast to girls’ friendships. However, according to studies, positive male and female friendships are quite similar, including the way both types share a desire for emotional closeness, a sharing of secrets, and a large amount of time spent together. This distinction that male and female friendships are more alike in some ways than they initially seem is useful for the study, as there may be texts that speak to these kinds of friendships, and this research indicates both their accuracy and the likelihood that teens will identify with these works.

Vail (2002) and Way (2012) both noted that societal and social projections of how boys and girls are ‘supposed’ to act makes teens feel pressured to behave counter to their own desires. Both male and female adolescents desire close friendships with their peers, but they are also wary of their friends. This can be detrimental to their mental health in the long run, but it is an inevitable part of their
growth. This vulnerability created by the tension between the desire for closeness and the wariness of others makes it very difficult for adolescents to fill their need for healthy relationships during this time of growth and turmoil. Similarly, it is this tension and this vulnerability that make it particularly painful and traumatizing for young adults when they are betrayed by those close to them during their adolescence. This research reinforces the theories that these relationships are crucial to adolescents, which is useful for the betrayal study because it highlights how a violation of these relationships can be damaging to adolescents, and it gives several talking points to be used during the a priori analysis to determine the accuracy of texts used in the study.

For general reference and talking points, Rachman’s (2009) “Betrayal: A psychological Analysis” was useful in building a solid vocabulary and background for discussing reactions to betrayal. This was a case study examining patients suffering from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and their reactions to betrayal, and ways that betrayal had influenced their behavior. Rachman defines betrayal in this context and provides several displayed reactions to betrayal, which is useful as a baseline in considering other research related to betrayal and mental health. Rachman found that patients would exhibit severe instances of feeling dirty or needing to wash repeatedly after experiences in which they felt betrayed. In many of the texts the betrayal study will consult, it is very unlikely that these characters (or that the average adolescent) will be suffering from severe OCD or PTSD like the people used in Rachman’s case study, but their severe behavior gives
credence to the theory that betrayal can cause extreme feelings and emotional problems in adolescents.

In order to get a fuller picture of the effects that betrayal can have on the interpersonal relationships of adolescents (both in literature and in real life) it is important to study healthy interpersonal relationships in the lives of adolescents to form a basis for comparison and a larger understanding of the effect that relationships have on an adolescent’s sense of self. Therefore, it is helpful to consult “Adolescent Friendship Pairs: Similarities in Identity Status Development, Behaviors, Attitudes and Intentions” by James F. Akers, Randall M. Jones, and Diana D Coyl (1998). This study examines the importance of friendship to adolescents, and the link between adolescent friendship and identity. A survey was conducted of high-school students in Utah, involving questions about friendship and life experiences, and this study found that there were marked similarities in best friends across many spectrums such as activities, academics, and identity. This reinforces the theory that one’s perception of self as an adolescent can be tied to their relationships with others, and their perceptions of those relationships. This research is also useful for the charts that will assess the accuracy of the novels used in this study, and in gauging whether betrayals in the texts have a profound affect on the protagonists’ sense of identity.

Another resource that addresses betrayal within friendships is Tina Daniels, Danielle Quigley, Lisa Menard, and Linda Spence’s (2010) study on betrayal within dyadic friendships, which focused on victimization that occurs in friendship pairs. Traditionally, this victimization grows from an imbalance of power. Likewise,
victimization in friendships can be particularly harmful because of the intimacy of the friendships. While bullies usually only have surface information with which to victimize others, friends and allies have access to more private information, which can be much more damaging when used against someone who already feels vulnerable due to their increased trust in their allies. Crick and Nelson (2002) found that boys were more likely to be physically victimized, whereas girls were more likely to be relationally victimized. One of the reasons this research is particularly important is that these types of relationships may serve as a framework for later relationships, and so these findings work in correlation with other articles discussing the importance of friendships for adolescents later in life. This study notes that in many ways, being victimized by a close friend is similar to being in an abusive romantic relationship. This echoes claims made by other studies that friendships made in adolescence are much like serious romantic relationships in that both parties feel intense emotions and a serious level of closeness and attachment. However, this study also found that for girls in relational abuse situations, these relationships can have long-term detrimental effects, but it can often be difficult for these young women to convince themselves to leave these relationships because they do sometimes experience positive moments of companionship, caring, and intimacy within the friendship.

The volatile nature of several of these relationships speaks to many of the problems that teens face in trying to balance a need for friendship with their constantly-changing emotions and their fear of displaying vulnerability. Because friendships are so intense at this age, a break in friendship or a betrayal of one friend
by another can have traumatic, long-range consequences. By examining this research and then comparing and contrasting the findings with the texts that were used in the study, the study can strive to answer the aforementioned questions related to differences between texts, accuracy in literature related to adolescent friendships and betrayal, and the ability of these texts to be truly helpful and cathartic to adolescents when they desperately need these texts. In studying the scholarly literature, it should be noted that there is a significant gap in the research and articles related to novels about betrayal and their relation to teens – mainly, the gap would be that there appear to be no scholarly articles related to betrayal in YA novels. Therefore, it was necessary to examine articles about adolescent development, adolescent friendships, and scholarly research relating to betrayal between adolescent friend pairs or in romantic relationships, and the findings from that research will in turn inform an examination of the YA novels in the set used for the study.

**Study Procedures**

**Research Design and Methods**

Following an examination of research related to the aforementioned topics, relevant texts were chosen for the study, and then read and analyzed according to the a priori and emergent coding checklists. The emergent checklist was finalized during the course of the study, (since emergent coding would rely on information from the texts themselves), and a sample checklist is attached in the appendix. Theories of development were used for a priori coding in one examination of all the texts, and emergent coding was used in a second examination of the texts. The data
gathered from the texts themselves was used to draw conclusions on what messages and information the works convey as a whole. Since the primary method used to study these texts was content analysis, the study includes a selection of twelve adult novels from the genres of science fiction, fantasy, and realistic fiction, and an examination of these texts for information and assertions related to the research questions.

Additionally, it is important to note that in the course of selecting texts, about fifty novels were originally researched for summary and content, and fifteen other texts were read (either partially or in full) and then discarded when it was determined that they were unsuitable for the purpose of the study. A few texts that were originally considered and then discarded include Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, because the writing style may be too advanced for many adolescents, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* because it lacked a singular protagonist, and Michael Buckley's *The Everafter War* because it is part of a series, and while this text can be read and enjoyed by young adults, the majority of the series is for younger readers and is therefore ultimately unfit for this study. The reading list remained slightly fluid as the study was conducted, but the themes and assertions noted in the study are representative only of the twelve novels that were chosen as the best examples of betrayal texts. The decision to select twelve novels for this study was made following a suggestion from the Master's Paper advisor; a sample of twelve novels allows for four novels per genre, and this figure is large enough to allow for proper study and examination, but not so large that the results will be dwarfed by the number of variables present in a larger collection of texts.
When a text from a series was used in the study, only one text from the series was used. However, it may be necessary for readers to refer to events in other books in the series in order to build a larger understanding of the trajectory of the story and the character's experiences for readers. In order to choose the books that were used in this study, a variety of sources was utilized, including NoveList, NoveList K-8, *School Library Journal*, the Children’s Literature Comprehensive Database, and source lists from various libraries. There was also a reliance on previous reading knowledge and recommendations from colleagues, librarians, and readers.

**Data Collection**

As previously mentioned, two checklists were used to examine each of the texts read within this study. One checklist focused on coding related to the texts' handling of adolescent development on an academic level, the likelihood of the text to be useful to an adolescent, the realism with which each text approached the delicate topics of betrayal and its effect on adolescent development, and each text’s relationship to its genre conventions. The second checklist utilized emergent coding to evaluate trends and assertions found within the sample texts related to conventions of the works, relationships between characters, realism of actions and emotions in the text, and the potential for usefulness to adolescent readers. A sample of a question from the a priori survey reads: “Were the depictions of friendship in this text reflective of the Psychology literature related to this type of friendship?” whereas a question from the emergent checklist reads: “Did the betrayer in this text have a large amount of inside knowledge about the protagonist, and if so, was any of this information used in orchestrating the betrayal?”
A double set of checklists was the most effective method for this study because a dual examination of the texts provides a wider view of the materials in this study, and allows for analysis based on multiple factors. However, there are several variables involved that complicate the study and make it slightly more difficult to draw uniform conclusions from the data. Some variables that affected the study include varying ages of protagonists, types of relationships between characters, and experiences within the novels’ plots that may color the reaction that protagonists will have to their betrayals in each text. The largest variable in this study was the choice of novels involved in the study. Much like any research study, the ‘population’ consulted in the study has the ability to influence the outcome in a significant way. One set of twelve books might reveal that there is no difference across genres in relation to adolescent betrayal, where another set of twelve books may reveal that there is a stark and severe difference between genres. Therefore, it was important to create a balanced sample of texts for this study, but it is accepted as the nature of the study that as a content analysis sample, the conclusions were influenced entirely by the texts selected. It is important to note that a wider pool of resources may provide a greater chance for balance, so if a more extensive version of this study were to be conducted, it would need to include a much larger sample of young adult literature.

The study was conducted over a period of eight weeks. The first six weeks were spent reading an average of two books a week. Each text was read in its entirety, and notes were taken during the reading process to analyze trends and determine recurring themes. The remaining two weeks in the study were spent analyzing the data gleaned from the reading process and collated in the checklists.
This analysis involved looking for trends and patterns in the findings, as well as links to the research to determine their accuracy in regards to adolescent behavior. Analysis of the data discovered several links to the research and many emerging trends that were common to these betrayal texts.

The reliability of this study was increased by the use of a concrete textual medium for content analysis, and the larger study and variety of genres increased the likelihood of varied responses and materials from which to draw conclusions. The validity of this study was increased by consulting research related to the development of adolescents and adolescent behavior and comparing the research to the events in the texts in the study.

The finalized list of texts used in the study sample is included in the chart below:

**Titles Used in Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title and Author</th>
<th>Realistic Fiction</th>
<th>Fantasy</th>
<th>Science Fiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please Ignore Vera Dietz; King, A.S.</td>
<td>The Golden Compass; Pullman, Philip</td>
<td>Shade's Children; Nix, Garth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of My Mind; Draper, Sharon</td>
<td>The Goose Girl; Hale, Shannon</td>
<td>Unwind; Shusterman, Neal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangerine; Bloor, Edward</td>
<td>The Lightning Thief; Riordan, Rick</td>
<td>Among the Betrayed; Haddix, Margaret Peterson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running Out of Time; Haddix, Margaret Peterson</td>
<td>Charmed Life; Jones, Diana Wynne</td>
<td>The Compound; Bodeen, S.A.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Findings and Results**

This study yielded several interesting results, including themes and elements that were common across genres, and many tie-ins to the research, which proved that many of the novels were correct in their treatment of characters’ emotions,
experiences, and interpersonal relationships. The findings can be divided into several categories, as will be clear in later sections. As previously noted, the study involved using a priori checklist to analyze each text for parallels to psychology research related to adolescents and betrayal. Before delving into a more detailed description of the results of the a priori coding study, a presentation of the results of the checklist may help readers to see marked trends more clearly.

**A Priori Checklist Findings:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist Questions</th>
<th>Realistic Fiction Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Tangerine</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Characters Display Friendship Behaviors Found in The Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendships in Texts Consistent with Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Betrayals Present in Text</td>
<td>Lying, Betrayal of Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of the Primary Relationship Between Characters in the Text</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic or Multi-Person Relationship/Friendship</td>
<td>Multi-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are Characters’ Reactions to Betrayal Accurate According to Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Themes In The Text Are Relevant to Adolescent Readers?</td>
<td>Heightened emotions, the struggle to belong, distrust of adults, family dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Might a Teen Identify with this Text?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy Titles</td>
<td>The Lightning Thief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Characters Display Friendship Behaviors Found in The Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendships in Texts Consistent with Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Betrayals Present in Text</td>
<td>Ideological Betrayal, Betrayal of a Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of the Primary Relationship Between Characters in the Text</td>
<td>Allies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic or Multi-Person Relationship/Friendship</td>
<td>Multi-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are Characters’ Reactions to Betrayal Accurate According to Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Themes In the Text Are Relevant to Adolescent Readers?</td>
<td>Sense of self, searching for a sense of purpose, close friendships essential to survival, family issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Might a Teen Identify with this Text?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science Fiction Titles</th>
<th>The Compound</th>
<th>Shade's Children</th>
<th>Unwind</th>
<th>Among the Betrayed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do Characters Display Friendship Behaviors Found in The Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendships in Texts Consistent with Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Betrayals Present in Text</td>
<td>Betrayal of Trust, Ideological Betrayal</td>
<td>Ideological Betrayal</td>
<td>Ideological Betrayal, Betrayal of Trust</td>
<td>Ideological Betrayal, Betrayal of a Relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of the Primary Relationship Between Characters in the Text</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Allies</td>
<td>Friends/Allies</td>
<td>Allies/Boyfriend and Girlfriend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic or Multi-Person Relationship/Friendship</td>
<td>Multi-person</td>
<td>Multi-person</td>
<td>Multi-person</td>
<td>Multi-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are Characters’ Reactions to Betrayal Accurate According to Research?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Themes In the Text Are Relevant to Adolescent Readers?</td>
<td>Family issues, fear of the future</td>
<td>Struggling to belong, dealing with shifting environments and situations</td>
<td>Heightened emotions, forming friendships under pressure, understanding one’s place in the world</td>
<td>Heightened emotions, distrust of adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Might a Teen Identify with this Text?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Priori Questionnaire Trends:

In examining the charts, a few trends appeared during analysis. In this sample, ideological betrayals are most common in science fiction texts, betrayals of trust are most common in realistic fiction texts, and fantasy texts share a combination of betrayal types. All texts were deemed useful for teens, and all texts contained at least one element that was accurate in accordance with research on adolescent friendships/relationships and betrayal. Realistic fiction texts primarily featured friendships and family relationships as the most common type of protagonist relationship, whereas science fiction texts predominantly featured allies as the most common type of protagonist relationship. Once again, fantasy contained a mixture of relationship types. It is possible that this trend emerged because people are less likely to be fighting for their lives in the realistic fiction texts used in this study, so friendships occurred more naturally. However, in the science fiction texts sampled, there were several high-stakes situations in which characters were forced to make alliances out of necessity. Fantasy texts contained a combination of high-and-low-stakes action, and therefore some friendships in these texts were made from necessity, and some appeared naturally. Throughout the texts, there did not seem to be a consistent trend in any genre related to whether interpersonal relationships were dyadic or multi-person, and the study contains a scattering of both types of relationships in every genre. While these charts illustrate the study’s a priori findings to a certain degree, further analysis and emergent coding results are detailed in the following sections.
Text vs. Research:

Haden and Hojat’s work examined lying and infidelity, which is a theme that appeared in many texts, most notably *Tangerine, Charmed, The Lightning Thief, The Goose Girl, Shade’s Children*, and *The Compound*. However, Haden and Hojat remarked that there were significant differences in the responses to infidelity and lying among adolescents; namely that infidelity produced more extreme reaction than lying. This is somewhat true in the texts, though interestingly, some of the most extreme reactions came from protagonists who discovered that someone was both disloyal and a liar -- for example, when Percy Jackson of *The Lightning Thief* discovers that his friend Luke is not only not really his friend, but that he is also working to actively start a war between the Gods, which would literally end the world, and put Percy and his family and friends in danger. Infidelity is not so much an issue in these texts when it comes to relationships, but the notion of infidelity is related to the fact that many of the protagonists in these texts suffer at the hands of an Ideological Betrayal, and in that way, they learn that a type of infidelity has occurred, because the people they trusted were loyal to different sides of the same issue.

The fact that Haden and Hojat did not observe a marked difference between females and males in terms of the intensity of their reactions is also distinctly true in these texts. Both males and females rise to the occasion when it comes to processing their betrayals emotionally, and both sexes appear to keep their heads on, as it were, when presented with challenging opportunities. Many of the protagonists of both genders experience moments of devastation and anger, such as Melody in *Out of My Mind*, or Eli in *The Compound*, but while these moments give readers further insights
into the inner turmoil and emotions of these characters, these momentary losses of control do not keep the protagonists from reaching their larger goals. The chart below provides a complete picture of the gender breakdown of the protagonists in the literature sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Lightning Thief</em></td>
<td><em>The Golden Compass</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tangerine</em></td>
<td><em>Please Ignore Vera Dietz</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Unwind</em></td>
<td><em>Out of My Mind</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Shade’s Children</em></td>
<td><em>Among the Betrayed</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Charmed Life</em></td>
<td><em>Running Out of Time</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Compound</em></td>
<td><em>The Goose Girl</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gender breakdown is divided equally between the texts, with six female protagonists and six male protagonists. There are two texts, *Unwind* and *Shade’s Children*, where it is arguable that there are several protagonists, and they are both male and female, so it may be posited that there is also an equal breakdown of five texts with male protagonists, five texts with female protagonists, and two texts with mixed gender protagonist groups.

Kathleen Vail’s article about negative female friendships corresponds to *Out of My Mind*, where Rose appears to be Melody’s friend, but when stakes are high, Rose is more concerned with how other people perceive her than she is with her friendship with Melody. Vail’s point that young women are frustrated by outward pressure to conform expresses itself in *The Goose Girl* and *The Golden Compass* frequently. The protagonist of *The Goose Girl*, Ani, has an ability to talk to animals, which is deemed inappropriate for a lady (although it becomes one of her greatest strengths), and Lyra of *The Golden Compass* is constantly escaping the scholarly halls.
of the college she resides in to run along the rooftops with her best friend.

There are several parallels in the texts to Niobe Way’s descriptions of the close friendships among adolescent boys. As the young men in *Unwind* encounter a series of increasingly dangerous situations as they run from their assigned fates, they become friends with one another out of necessity. The friendships between the protagonist, Paul Fisher, and his male friends on his new soccer team in Edward Bloor’s (2006) *Tangerine* are made more complex by hormones and the desire to protect positions in the social circle. However, there is a definite strength to the bonds in this text, and the characters find ways to express their willingness to support one another through deeds and words. When a member of Paul’s soccer team is attempting to make Paul understand that the team supports him, he states “Listen, Fisher, here it is. If you’re a War Eagle, then you’re a War Eagle. You got brothers to back you up” (p.124). However, the societal pressures created by fighting between social cliques and differing economical brackets causes tension for all members of the friendship, and these issues make it more difficult for the young men involved to feel that they can express their true feelings.

Studies which indicate that adolescents are torn between a desire for closeness and a desire to be wary of their friends are not only useful for studying these texts, but highly relevant. The high-stakes situations created in some of these texts are dangerous, frightening, and overwhelming. Many protagonists in these texts have to make friends out of the necessity for allies when fighting a larger evil. However, since these friends are made out of necessity and the protagonists do not often know much about these people, they are cautious about these friendships. They
align themselves with others because they have to, and they trust them if they need to, but the caveat of that trust is that it may disappear at any moment if the characters feel that they are no longer in a safe space, or that they have a reason to distrust their new allies. In some ways, these friendships are very healthy for the protagonists because they can begin to learn to trust other people again. However, there is the odd occasion where someone finds someone to trust during a heightened circumstance, only to have their new ally betray them as well. For example, Ani of Shannon Hale’s (2003) *The Goose Girl* felt betrayed by her mother after she discovered that her mother was sending her to wed a prince in a neighboring kingdom without her consent, but she fully trusted her lady in waiting, Selia, as a friend and confidante. During the journey to the other kingdom, Ani is betrayed by Selia and her guards, and forced to flee into the forest when they attempt to murder her. The protagonist of Margaret Peterson Haddix’s (1995) *Running Out of Time*, Jessie, escapes the faux-pioneer village in which she is living in order to find help for the sick and dying children in the town. She has been sent to find a family friend who will help the village, but the man she finds turns out to be an impersonator who is planning to murder her. As she overhears the conversation in which she discovers they are planning to kill her because she knows too much, she thinks, “This was Mr. Neely! Ma said he would help!” (p.130) Jessie’s betrayal is two-fold: She learns that the pioneer life she had been living is not real, and when she is outside that false world, it is proven that she cannot trust people in the real world, either.

Akers’ point that friends are typically similar to each other resonates with some of the texts in this study, but the manifestations of these similarities in the texts
are expressed more through similarity of situation and shared goals, instead of personality traits or having common interests. However, the theory that perception of self is based on one’s encounters with those around them is a theme that presents itself in all of the texts. Many of the protagonists find that others’ opinions of them shape their belief in their own abilities, as well as their own positive or negative self-esteem. Melody, the protagonist of Sharon Draper’s (2009) *Out of My Mind*, is incredibly bright, but paralyzed (except for her thumbs) and confined to a wheelchair. For most of her life, she has been unable to communicate with others, so while she knows that she is intelligent, her inability to communicate, and the inability of others to understand her, has led her to feel frustrated, and unsure of her place in the world. During a doctor’s appointment, Melody tells the audience “Doctors really don’t get me,”(p. 18) and mentions that she hates the way that people talk about her as if she is not in the room. She remarks, “Sometimes people never even ask my name, like it’s not important or something. It is. My name is Melody.”(p. 4) However, when a doctor refers to her as a burden, she has a sudden change of heart, because she had never considered herself that way. As her mother speaks to the doctor, she thinks to herself “Was I a burden?”(p. 25) Melody is bullied by classmates and ignored by adults, but the few positive role models in her life, such as her tutor and family friend Mrs. V, encourage her and through their continued insistence that she is smart, Melody is able to hold onto the hope that someday, others may learn that she is bright as well. In time, Melody acquires a device that allows her to speak to others, but there are many students who still refuse to believe that she is able to think for herself. Her appearance blinds them to her potential, and
several times throughout the novel, Melody wishes that she could be “normal.” Eventually, Melody learns to love herself as she is, but the fact that her journey to do so is heavily influenced by the negative and positive people in her life is representative of Aker’s theories on relationships and self-perception.

Studies pertaining to victimization between friends are pertinent to the study of the texts, though it is important to note that the trends of the victimization of the protagonists and their non-friends also appeared in these texts. Crick and Nelson mentioned that males are more likely to be physically victimized, whereas females are more likely to be relationally victimized, and these themes appeared frequently in the study. The male protagonists in Tangerine and The Lightning Thief are physically victimized by their brother and friend, respectively, whereas the female protagonists of Out of My Mind and Among the Betrayed are both relationally victimized by people they trusted. In Among the Betrayed, the protagonist is told that her boyfriend betrayed her secrets to a group that would hunt her down and kill her, and in Out of My Mind, the protagonist is purposefully left behind by her teammates before the biggest competition of her young life. However, there are exceptions to these trends, and many of these texts feature adolescents of both genders experiencing a threat to their lives. In Shade’s Children, Unwind, Among the Betrayed, Running Out of Time, The Goose Girl, The Lightning Thief, Charmed Life, and The Golden Compass, all of the protagonists are in danger of being killed at least once throughout their journeys. There are several common reactions to the threat of death in these texts; namely fear, anger, devastation, frustration, running, and hiding. However, it should be noted that all of the aforementioned protagonists survived,
and the actions, experiences, and emotions that led to their survival will be discussed more fully in later sections.

In terms of relational abuse, Cat Chant of Diana Wynne Jones' (1977) *Charmed Life* is one of the most significant examples of this type of victimization. Cat’s victimization is both physical and relational; he depends completely on his sister Gwendolen, who is manipulative, unkind, and rash. Gwendolen frequently insults Cat and causes him to feel useless and untalented, and therefore his conception of self is shaped entirely by Gwen's insistence that he has no magical skill. In truth, Cat is capable of great magic, has nine lives, and could be a great wizard, and Gwendolen has been stealing magic from him for years in order to do her own spells and magical acts. By stealing his lives, she was able to harness his magic, and her eventual plan was to sacrifice him alive in order to aid other evil magicians to attain greater power. On some level, Cat realizes that Gwendolen is unkind, but he has convinced himself that he needs her, and the occasional moments in which she had comforted him or shown interest in him cause him to believe that his familial relationship with her is healthy and essential for his happiness. This harkens back to Daniels’ point that it can be difficult for people in abusive situations to leave those relationships because they sometimes experience moments of companionship and caring within the relationship. At first, Cat is unable to separate himself from Gwendolen until he is able to recognize his own strengths and gifts, and recognize that she does not care for him.
Trends

While reading and analyzing the texts, several trends appeared across genres, including characters’ emotions, experiences, and reactions to betrayal. There were also several recurring themes and motifs common to these texts that speak to traits that betrayal texts may share. While it is not possible to say that all betrayal texts share these characteristics, the twelve texts surveyed for this study displayed the following trends.

**It can’t be true... Or can it?** Before acknowledging their betrayals, many of the characters go through a period where they try to convince themselves that it cannot be true that someone would betray them. In Haddix’s (2002) *Among the Betrayed*, the protagonist, Nina, reassures herself, “Jason loves me.” (p. 10) As time goes on, she begins to doubt this, and eventually she comes to a different conclusion: “He hadn’t loved her... Jason’s love was fake.” (p. 27) It is possible that these betrayals are so painful because many of these characters want to be loved, and they do not want to believe that they have been betrayed because it means that on some level, someone that they trusted felt that something or someone else was more important than they were. This belief that they are not important makes them feel useless and hurt, and it takes many of these characters a long time before they can feel like they have worth again. When Cat Chance of *Charmed Life* (1977) discovers his sister Gwendolen’s true intentions, he immediately feels hopeless: “Now that he knew how little Gwendolen cared about him, he was not sure he wanted any lives at all.” (p. 239). In Shusterman’s (2007) *Unwind*, Lev recalls his true feelings about his parents’ decision to ‘tithe’ him to an Unwinding facility; a place where thirteen year
olds are physically dismantled and their organs are put in new bodies. Lev admits, "They loved God more than they loved me, and I hate them for it." (p. 130) Acknowledging these emotions is often the first step for these characters in accepting that someone has betrayed them, and that they need to respond to that betrayal in order to move forward with their lives.

'Til you use me up. A common trend in texts such as *Tangerine*, *Charmed Life*, *Shade's Children*, *Unwind*, *Among the Betrayed*, *The Golden Compass*, *The Lightning Thief*, and *Running Out of Time* is that the 'betrayers' tend to think of others solely in terms of how other people can be useful to them, whereas the betrayed characters are just trying to find a way that they can prove to be useful to themselves. In *Shade's Children*, the protagonist and his team members discover that their leader, Shade, has been using them for his own purposes, and in explaining this to another team member, one of them remarks that Shade is "still an enemy of the Overlords, but not a friend of ours anymore." (299) In *Charmed Life*, Cat notices that his sister Gwendolen is distancing herself from their caregiver, who had given her a chance to learn magic in the first place, when Gwendolen has the chance to learn from a more talented sorcerer: "he suspected that Gwendolen might already be casting Mrs. Sharp off like an old coat." (p. 29) In *Tangerine* (1997), Paul observes his brother Erik's attitude towards his most prominent comrade: "Now he can take Erik mud running. And he can take Erik to practice. And he can take Erik wherever else Erik says to take him." (p. 41) While the 'betrayers' are capable of thinking of others only as tools for their own goals and objectives, the betrayed protagonists are struggling to figure out how they can be a resource for themselves. Ani of Hale's
The Goose Girl voices a desire to “hold something real in your hands that felt like a measure of your worth” (p. 280). Paul of Tangerine watches another soccer player on his team and remarks “That’s what I think when I watch Sandra in goal – how sharp she looks, how big she looks, like one of those American Gladiators. What must people think when they see me in goal? How small I look? How goofy I look in my goggles?” (p. 134) Whether the protagonists in these texts begin with a complete lack of belief in themselves, or whether they begin from a more neutral ground, the struggle to prove their worth to themselves appeared in all of the texts in the study.

**Sense of self worth.** A common trajectory in all of the texts involved in this study is the evolution of the protagonist’s sense of self and their conception of their own worth throughout the novels. This trajectory is as follows: The protagonist’s sense of self is initially framed by others, changed by experiences, reinvented by the protagonist, and then the strength of their sense of self propels the protagonist towards happiness and self-actualization. Though this trend exists in all the novels, it is most notable in *The Goose Girl, Tangerine, Out of My Mind, and Please Ignore Vera Dietz*. For the sake of brevity, only one text will be used in this paper to demonstrate this trajectory. In King’s (2010) *Please Ignore Vera Dietz*, the protagonist, Vera, and her best friend (and future betrayer), Charlie, exclaims, “I don’t know how I’d have turned out without you being my best friend.” (p. 181) Vera’s belief that she has a responsibility to Charlie after his death, and that it is her mission to clear his name, stems from this belief that he has instilled in her; that her purpose is to be his best friend. However, as their friendship deteriorates, her sense of self does as well. When she confronts Charlie about the choices he is making and he hits her, Vera
recounts the evening by stating: "The night Charlie hit me, I bisected. Half of me will never trust another living soul. The other half already didn’t." (p. 241) It is not until Charlie dies and Vera's life provides her with experiences without him that she begins to understand and embrace who she truly is. She is able to regain her self respect, even in the midst of a vicious series of rumors about her spread by her nemesis, Jenny Flick, by reminding herself, “the one thing Jenny Flick couldn’t buy, no matter what currency she used, was a ticket to drive on the high road next to people like me.” (p. 226) One of Vera’s steps in reinventing herself is the decision that she is going to give birth to herself. Vera was left by her mother several years earlier, and in deciding to ‘birth’ herself, she decides that she is going to be her own mother, and finally take care of herself the way that her mother should have. In this process, she thinks, “Today I am in control because I want to be.” (p. 279) Part of Vera’s process in learning to accept herself comes from being ready to accept her family’s dark secrets, and from forgiving herself for not being able to help Charlie. When she and her father take a road trip after clearing Charlie’s name posthumously, Vera proclaims “We will learn to forgive ourselves in tandem.” (p. 319)

**To betray, or not to betray.** High stakes are created frequently when these characters are betrayed, and there is a common trajectory that arises in texts such as *Among the Betrayed*, *Unwind*, and *Please Ignore Vera Dietz*. When the protagonists are betrayed, they feel instant hurt and anger, but later in the story, they are presented with the option to betray others in order to ensure their own safety. However, possibly due to the fact that they understand what it feels like to be betrayed, these protagonists choose not to betray others. In the world of Haddix’s
(2002) *Among the Betrayed*, society has enforced a rule that families can only have a certain amount of children, and surplus children, referred to as “shadow children,” are found and eliminated by the Population Police. Nina, a shadow child and the protagonist of *Among the Betrayed*, is captured by the Population Police, and informed that her boyfriend had revealed her secret to them. Upon her capture, she is given the choice to either be killed, or to convince three other captured children to admit that they are also shadow children, at which point she will be spared. While considering her dilemma, she compares herself to the Miller’s Daughter, but finds the comparison wanting because “the miller’s daughter wasn’t supposed to hurt anyone else. She was just supposed to do something impossible, not wrong.” (p. 35) Eventually, Nina decides to escape, and she takes the children with her. This decision reflects the desire to protect others from the same betrayals that she has suffered, and a refusal to perpetuate the cycle of betrayal that was hoisted upon her.

**Rebuilding of trust.** After their trust is shattered by the betrayals that they have suffered, the protagonists in these texts often find themselves needing to make friends or allies. In realistic fiction, these friendships are often made out of the desire for companionship, whereas in the science fiction and fantasy texts, these friendships and alliances are formed in order to battle a greater evil. A common thread in attempting to form these alliances is the protagonist’s struggle to believe in other people again. When Ani of Hale’s (2003) *The Goose Girl* attempts to make new friends in the village where she is hiding, she realizes “she had no practice at making friends. And, she discovered, her own trust had been drained dry.”(p. 139) However, these friendships do occur, and they can be an incredible source of strength for the
adolescents involved. When Lev of Unwind is on the run, he encounters another adolescent boy who is also alone in the wild, and over time, the two form a bond that reaffirms Lev's belief that he can trust people, and that there are people in the world who will truly care about him, with no ulterior motive for doing so.

**Empowerment.** Protagonists who are betrayed in this study tend to start out with a negative sense of self, and a belief that they are essentially worthless. Although the protagonists in these texts may suffer from a variety of betrayals, and a variety of circumstances cause them to suffer from a negative sense of self, the experiences that the protagonists have following their betrayal often cause them to experience a reversal of spirits, and they emerge from their journeys profoundly changed. One of the key experiences that propels this change is the ability to acknowledge and develop a skill set. Many of these protagonists have great gifts that others have refused to acknowledge or appreciate, and as a result, the protagonists live in continual ignorance or intentional avoidance of using those gifts. Melody's incredible intelligence, Ani's gift for speaking to animals, Paul's bravery, Cat's magic, Vera's determination, Lyra's cunning and perception; all of these traits were always within these characters, but it is not until they are betrayed and are forced to fend for themselves that they are able to truly use their skills and respect them. Through the use of these skills, these characters become not only useful to themselves, but stronger and more empowered because they finally believe that they have the ability to do something good and worthwhile. When Ani first goes into hiding in Hale's (2003) *The Goose Girl*, she runs across a fortune-teller in town who is discussing magic. Ani knows that she can speak to animals, though she has been forbidden to do
so, and she asks the woman: “Is it magic, what I have?” to which the woman responds, “Do you know what you have?” (p. 121). At the time, Ani does not. However, in tending the geese, she begins to use her gift for animal speaking again, and in learning that she can also understand the song of the wind, Ani begins to respect her gifts, and to feel comfortable using them again. When men come to steal the geese she is tending, she stands against them and says that they cannot steal the geese, “they're protected.” (p. 256) In this simple statement, it is clear that Ani has begun to recognize that her skills give her strength – the geese are protected because she is protecting them, and she is confident in her ability to do so. When Cat Chant of Jones’ (1977) Charmed Life confronts his sister Gwendolen, and begins using his own magic to fight for good against her and her evil compatriots, Gwendolen becomes enraged and yells at him to stop. Cat proclaims “Shut up! It's mine!” (p. 244) By taking control and literally harnessing his own magic and life for himself, Cat is finally able to carve out a positive sense of self and use his skills to his advantage. The ability to embrace their skills, believe in themselves, and triumph against odds is empowering for the protagonists in our texts, but it is also empowering for readers who may be struggling to convince themselves that they are not worthless, and that they can be strong in the face of betrayal. By seeing examples of other adolescents rising above their harsh situations, readers can identify with their struggles, and begin to look for ways to find hope again in their own lives.
Conclusion

In this study, it was determined that while the betrayal texts that were surveyed from these genres differ in terms of content, the themes and motifs involved in the protagonists’ experiences were common across genres. The trajectory of emotions and experiences followed many similar patterns. While the particular texts that were surveyed showed that the science fiction and fantasy texts tended to involve situations of high-stakes danger and life or death situations, whereas realistic fiction tended to involve personal betrayals and day to day trials, the emotions of anger, fear, and sadness were common to all texts surveyed, as were the emotions of hope, the desire to triumph over the situation at hand, and a strong sense of empowerment that emerged through the protagonist’s journey. In an interesting discovery, almost all of the texts included at least one sentence where the protagonist either was, or felt, completely alone. While it may seem like an incidental fact, reading about characters that feel isolated when the reader feels similarly isolated can provide a reader with the sense of connection to the text that can empower readers and help them to feel less alone themselves. The literature presented in the literature review resonated strongly with the experiences in the texts used in this study, specifically the psychological observations related to interpersonal relationship dynamics, sense of self being framed by relationships with others, and the experiences that friends and allies have as they progress through adolescence. The accuracy of the texts surveyed in this study indicates that these twelve novels would be useful to teens who are going through difficult situations related to betrayal in their personal lives. Similarly, the theory that teens use
literature to escape would still allow these texts to be useful and therapeutic to adolescents because many of the experiences mentioned in these texts are severe or abstract enough that it will still allow the reader to escape their world while experiencing a text that resonates with them.

Youth services librarians are constantly consulting one another about ways to find constructive resources that their teen populations will be able to identify with and enjoy. These librarians are also constantly justifying (to concerned parents, teachers, etc.) their purchases of young adult novels with difficult themes such as betrayal and difficult relationships. The findings in this study may be able to point youth services librarians towards particularly useful and poignant texts for adolescents in difficult situations, which will enhance the librarians’ reader’s advisory resources. These texts may also help adolescents cope with particularly difficult moments between friends and in relationships during their teen years, and through their reading experiences they may be able to seek catharsis in these texts and face these experiences more readily. By comparing and contrasting genres, and examining these works for accuracy and relevance, it can be determined whether texts for teen readers dealing with betrayal are communicating these situations in a realistic and constructive way, and which genres and novels may be most effective in helping teen readers. In pursuing this research further, this study could be reenacted with different texts on several different occasions to build a broader knowledge base and more concrete conclusions, and eventually the findings may be synthesized to create an effective reading list for these troubled adolescents.
References


Appendices

Appendix A: A Priori Checklist

- Do the characters presented in this text display friendship behaviors that have been found in the relevant research?
- Do the friendships in these texts appear consistent with the research about friendships for adolescents?
- What kinds of betrayal are present in this text, and do they reflect the betrayals that are mentioned in scholarly literature?
- What is the nature of the primary relationship in this text?
- Is the relationship/friendship defined in this text dyadic, or are multiple people involved? Does this affect the nature of the betrayal?
- Are the reactions that the protagonist displays as a response to the betrayal accurate in accordance with the research?
- Given the research and the events present in the text, is it likely that a teen would identify with this text? Why or why not?
- What themes in this text are relevant to adolescent development?
Appendix B: Emergent Coding Checklist

- What is the nature of the particular relationship in this text?
- What is the nature of the betrayal in this text?
- Does the protagonist confide in their betrayer?
- How much inside information does the betrayer possess about the protagonist?
  Was that information used to aid in the betrayal?
- What outside forces impact the protagonist’s reaction to the betrayal?
- Does the protagonist have other allies fighting with them to respond to the betrayal, or are they working alone?
- Does the protagonist’s betrayal lead them to betray anyone?
- Does the betrayal involve a disguise or a set of misconceptions, or is the betrayal straightforward? - For example, is the protagonist betrayed by someone they know who was pretending to be someone else, or does the betrayer retain their identity throughout their betrayal?