**STUDY: Popular high school kids don't become happy adults, nor do losers, nor does anyone**

Researchers from the University of British Columbia were unable to find any predictors of happiness into adulthood because they were unable to find any happy adults. Period.

Ned Petrie



**VANCOUVER, BC—**While teenagers may think being considered cool is of the utmost importance, a recent study suggests high school popularity does not translate into long-term happiness.

In fact, researchers from the University of British Columbia were unable to find any predictors of happiness into adulthood because they were unable to find any happy adults.

Period.

"We went into this study on the hypothesis that teenagers with high self-esteem and large groups of friends would have the highest levels of mental health as adults," said lead researcher Rachel Jacobs.

"But to our surprise, former cool kids had increased anxiety, lower sense of self-worth, and dramatically high levels of depression," she added.

"In the end, the jocks and popular cliques had the same results as the potheads, drama nerds, band geeks, emos, skater punks, honours students, thugs, mean girls, and preppies. Even the weirdly nice religious kids hated life within five years of graduating."

The longitudinal study examined 439 racially and socio-economically diverse students from the same high school over a 20-year period starting at age 15. While the students at first represented a wide range of happiness and self-satisfaction levels, nearly every participant had regressed to the same level of crushing ennui by age 30.

"We might have arrived at a more detailed model to predict future happiness had we been able to find even one person that hadn't been defeated by the dehumanizing forces of modernity," Jacobs explained.

According to the findings, the loss of social status and self-fulfilment was consistent across all demographics – even study participant and former loner Steve Rosati.

"I hated high school," says the now 35-year-old warehouse manager.

"The only thing that got me through it was the knowledge that everything would be better after graduation."

"What the hell was I thinking?" Rosati continued.

"At least back then I got to read books and finish the day at three o'clock, instead of devoting half my waking hours to a job I hate in a world that is indifferent to my existence. I may have been bullied some, but at least those people knew I was alive."

While the researchers were unable to find a correlation between high school status and adult satisfaction, they believe their findings reveal important information about the significance of happiness itself.

"Popularity remains one of the most sought-after qualities among young people, but I hope teenagers learn from this that high school isn't forever," Jacobs concluded.

"Whether you have lots of friends in Grade 11 or just a few, we all become the same lonely, slightly overweight adult in the end. No use fighting it."

Food for Thought:

1. Were you surprised by the information presented in this article? Explain your answer.

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1. If studies conclude that there is no correlation between high school status and adult satisfaction, what do you think creates a “happy” adult?

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1. Do you see yourself fitting into a particular social status? If so, how would you be identified? If not, why?

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1. Although the information in this article could be considered sad, or even depressing, how can this article be thought of in a positive light?

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1. **Ned Petrie** is a Toronto-based writer, actor, and 6-time Canadian Comedy Award nominee. Does knowing the author is a comedian change the way you interpret this article?

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