


Adolescent Development

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Chapter Five: Peer Groups


1



Outline/Overview

- Peer groups/relations
 - Origins
 - Organization
- Dyads
- Cliques
- Crowds
- Research methods
- Popularity & rejection
- Mechanisms of peer influence

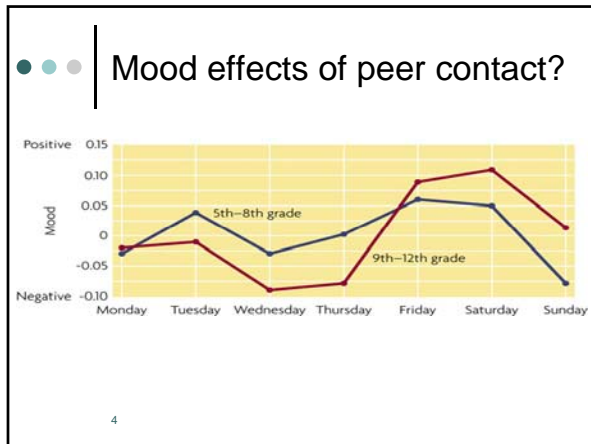
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Peer Groups

- Groups of people who are roughly the same age
- Modernization has led to more age segregation
 - Schools
 - Workplace
 - Community
- U.S. high school seniors < 15% of waking hours spent with family
- Mood effects of peer contact

3



- ### Contemporary Adolescent Peer Groups: Origins
- Educational Origins of Adolescent Peer Groups
 - Age grading in public schools
 - Impact on social life has been staggering
 - Organized activities outside of school contribute to age segregation
 - Separation of adults and adolescents
 - Adults at work
 - Teens at school
 - Youth Culture
- 5

- ### The Nature of Adolescent Peer Groups
- Changes in Peer Groups during Adolescence
 - There is a sharp increase during adolescence in the time spent with peers versus adults.
 - Sex cleavage disappears
 - Schools become larger, more anonymous
- 6

● ● ● | Organization of Peer Relations

- Dyads (Steinberg doesn't really discuss much in this chapter)
- Cliques
- Crowds

7

● ● ● | Dyads

- individual friendships
- 90% of youth can name a close friend
- majority will list at least one person who reciprocates
- Involvement in romantic relationships increases as move through adolescence

8

● ● ● | Cliques vs. Crowds - Difference

- Cliques are small groups defined by common activities or simply by friendship
- Crowds are larger, more vaguely defined groups, based on reputation

9

Cliques: Similarity among Members

- Adolescents' cliques typically are composed of people of the
 - same age
 - same race
 - same socioeconomic background
 - same sex - at least during early and middle adolescence
- Three factors in determining clique membership
 - orientation toward school
 - orientation toward the teen culture
 - involvement in antisocial activity
- Stability of membership

10

Crowds

- Crowds as Reference Groups
 - Crowds contribute to the definition of norms and standards for clothing, leisure, and tastes in music among other things
 - Based on image, reputation, some common feature.

11

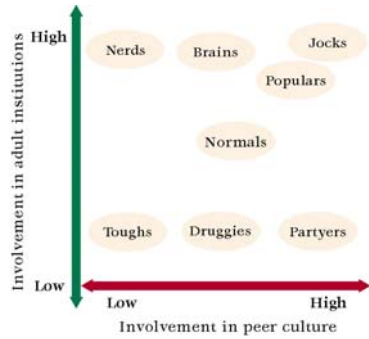
Functions of crowds

1. Place in a location in the social structure
2. Channel one toward certain peers
3. Reward some lifestyles and disparage others

- Ingroup-Outgroup dynamics
- Racial-Ethnic diversity & perceived differences
- Ways to combat stereotyping?

12

o A model for mapping the social world of adolescent peer groups



13

Cliques: Common Interests among Friends

- o Similarity Between Friends: Selection or Socialization?
- o Which comes first: Joining a clique or becoming interested in a clique's activities?
- o With regard to antisocial activities, such as delinquency or drug use, it appears as if "birds of a feather flock together"
- o How stable are friendships over time?
- o Moderate stability over the school year

14

Features of peer organizations

- o Contingent on broader social & cultural context
- o Dynamic system of peers
- o A single, coherent social network??
- o Relationships at one level affect those at other levels

15

● ● ● | **Research methods for studying peer groups?**

- Ethnography
- Sociometric techniques
- Self-report

16

● ● ● | **Popularity and Rejection in Adolescent Peer Groups**

- Chief determinant of popularity during adolescence:
Social skills
- Three types of unpopular adolescents
 - Aggressive
 - fights with other students, bullies others
 - Withdrawn
 - exceedingly shy, timid, and inhibited
 - Victims of bullying
 - Aggressive-Withdrawn=combination
 - Hostile, but nervous about initiating friendships
- Behaviors as a cause or consequence of problems?
- Social skills training can help

17

● ● ● | **Sociometric status data**

- Peer nominations of most/least liked
 - Popular
 - Rejected
 - Neglected
 - Controversial
- Most stable?
- Least stable?

18



Modes of peer influence

- How do peers exert their influence?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.

- Complicating factors
 1. Reciprocal processes
 2. Diversity of networks
 3. Interdependence and reinforcement

19



Peer Group and Psychosocial Development

- In promoting normal development, peers
 - Provide models and feedback in regard to identity
 - Influence self-image
 - Assist the development of autonomy
 - Provide a context for decision-making skills
 - Interact in intimate and sexual relationships
 - Influence one another regarding achievement

20
