

● ● ● | Adolescence

Chapter Five: Peer Groups

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● ● ● | 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



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Contemporary Adolescent Peer Groups: Origins

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

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The Nature of Adolescent Peer Groups

- o Changes in Peer Groups during Adolescence
- o There is a sharp increase during adolescence in the time spent with peers versus adults.
- o Sex cleavage disappears

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Organization of Peer Relations

- o Dyads
- o Cliques
- o Crowds

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● ● ● | 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

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● ● ● | 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

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● ● ● | 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

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Crowds

- o Crowds as Reference Groups
 - Crowds contribute to the definition of norms and standards for clothing, leisure, and tastes in music among other things



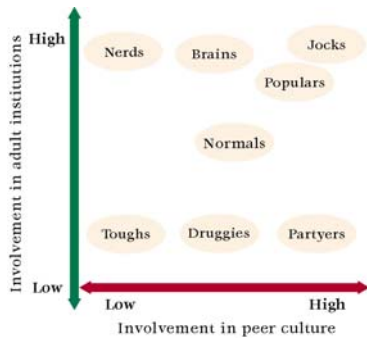
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Functions of crowds

1. Place in a location in the social structure
 2. Channel one toward certain peers
 3. Reward some lifestyles and disparage others
- o Ingroup-Outgroup dynamics
 - o Racial-Ethnic diversity & perceived differences
 - o Ways to combat stereotyping?

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A model for mapping the social world of adolescent peer groups



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Cliques: Common Interests among Friends

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

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Features of peer organizations

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

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Research methods for studying peer groups?

- Ethnography
- Sociometric techniques
- Self-report

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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

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Sociometric status data

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

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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

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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

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