

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS DURING ADOLESCENCE

Edited by

RAYMOND MONTEMAYOR

GERALD R. ADAMS

THOMAS P. GULLOTTA

ADVANCES IN ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

An Annual Book Series Volume 6

1994



SAGE PUBLICATIONS

International Educational and Professional Publisher
Thousand Oaks London New Delhi

6. Casting Adolescent Crowds in a Relational Perspective: Caricature, Channel, and Context

B. Bradford Brown
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Margaret S. Mory
University of Wisconsin-Madison

David Kinney
Research for Better Schools, Inc.

For most individuals in our society, the transition from childhood to adolescence, often heralded by entry into middle school or junior high school, is accompanied by major transformations in peer relationships. Not only does the new school feature a much larger population of peers (by combining students from several elementary schools), but the daily routine of moving from class to class brings students into contact with a greater number of peers than they typically saw in the self-contained classrooms of elementary school. What is more, youngsters soon discover that the adolescent social world is a heterosexual world, so that opposite-sex peers, who have been largely ignored in middle childhood (Hartup, 1983), must become part of their social network—and they must become proficient at interacting with both sexes. At the same time, adult supervision of peer relationships recedes, leaving the young person to negotiate this expanded peer context with its new relational demands without the guiding or controlling hand that adults provided in earlier years.

Such momentous transformations in the peer social system could easily overwhelm a young person if programs, institutions, and cultural forms did not evolve to help adolescents adjust to them. One such "evolution" is the emergence of peer "crowds." Crowds refer to collections of adolescents identified by the interests, attitudes, abilities, and/or personal characteristics they have in common. They differ from other groupings of adolescents, such as friendship groups or "cliques," in that they are based on a person's

reputation rather than interaction patterns (Brown, 1990). A crowd defines what a person is like more than who she or he "hangs around with." Of course, because "birds of a feather flock together" it is common for adolescents to interact with peers from the same crowd and avoid relationships with peers from other crowds with markedly different reputations. Yet such interaction patterns are not a prerequisite of crowd affiliation.

For many decades, social scientists have debated the functions that crowds serve without reaching clear consensus. From our perspective, however, crowds have two major functions: They foster individuals' development of identity or self-concept, and they structure social interactions. In this chapter we are concerned primarily with the second function, the ways in which crowds serve to regulate social relationships among adolescents. Some investigators have regarded this as the major organizing principle of adolescent crowds. For example, several authors have argued that high school crowds cluster adolescents into the socioeconomic strata (Buff, 1970; Eckert, 1989; Hollingshead, 1949) or the racial and ethnic groupings (Ianni, 1989; Matute-Bianchi, 1986) that structure social interactions in the surrounding (adult) community. Others have portrayed crowds as a major mechanism for socializing young people into adult social roles. The most classic example is Dunphy's (1963) portrait of how crowds evolve across adolescence to facilitate heterosexual orientations and dating patterns.

In much of this work, authors cast their depictions of crowds in relational perspective: How do various crowds get along with each other? What is the quality of relationships within each crowd? Rarely, however, are these relational issues the focus of analysis. Rather, they are a mechanism by which researchers can address the larger sociological or social psychological issues with which they are concerned: socioeconomic stratification, generational conflict, socialization into adult roles, and so on. As a result, our understanding of adolescent crowds from a relational perspective is rather fragmented.

Our intent in this chapter is to provide a more systematic analysis of how relational principles reveal the structure and function of adolescent crowds. We perceive three major ways in which crowds may be cast in relational perspective. First, adolescents construct an image, or *caricature*, of each crowd that reflects their perceptions of the typical or stereotypical traits of its members. These caricatures trace the symbolic relationships that exist among crowds: How

crowds are different from one another and how well crowds get along with each other. This helps teenagers to understand the alternative "social identities" that are available, as well as to appreciate the norms governing relationships and peer interactions within their social milieu. Second, in a more concrete fashion, crowd affiliation serves to *channel* teenagers toward forming relationships with certain peers rather than others. Crowds are arranged in "social space" in such a way that relationships between teenagers in different crowds are facilitated in some cases and inhibited in others. Finally, crowds serve as *contexts* for peer relationships in which systematic variations in the quality of relationships can be observed as a function of the group's norms, orientations, and status position. Thus whereas adolescents in one crowd may form lasting and caring friendships, adolescents in another crowd may display superficial and competitive relationships.

In the sections that follow, we will sketch out the relational issues that emerge when one approaches crowds as caricatures, channels, and contexts. Empirical evidence will be cited that seems to illustrate each of these perspectives. Yet it is important to acknowledge that this is a relatively new approach to adolescent crowds; research evidence that bears upon this approach is still quite limited. Our commentary is intended to be more suggestive and provocative than definitive. Before embarking on this relational analysis, it seems wise to clarify our perspective on the nature or essence of adolescent crowds.

THE NATURE OF ADOLESCENT CROWDS

From ethnographic depictions one often gets the impression that adolescent crowds are very concrete entities (e.g., Cusick, 1973; Eckert, 1989; Eder, 1985). They have widely acknowledged labels and readily identifiable memberships. They lay claim to a particular hangout at school or in the neighborhood—a lunchroom table or hallway or street corner. They have implicit control of certain school activities: The politicos preside over the student council, while the burnouts dominate the auto shop. To be sure, such depictions reflect a concrete and visible reality in most American high schools, namely, cliques that embody the attitudes, behaviors, and lifestyles that define a particular crowd.

Yet such depictions have perplexed other ethnographers, who witness blatant contradictions between the spoken norms of a crowd and crowd members' observable behavior. Varenne (1982), for example, was bemused that members of two crowds routinely depicted as archrivals could often be observed interacting with each other, or that a student widely regarded as a member of the popular crowd, known for its trendy style of dress, often came to school in blue jeans and a work shirt—the signature apparel of a very different crowd. Such contradictions led Varenne to propose that crowds seemed to exist much more “in teenagers’ heads” than in reality.

How visible and distinctive are adolescent crowds? Certainly, individuals or cliques that are widely acknowledged representatives of a particular crowd can be easily located in most schools. They also can easily become the target of ethnographic or participant observer studies. But to a certain degree, adolescent crowds exist more profoundly at the cultural and symbolic level than at the level of definitive individual behaviors (Lesko, 1988). Crowds stipulate (in stereotypic ways) a set of alternative value systems, lifestyles, and behavioral repertoires that are readily recognizable within the adolescent social system. In other words, each crowd represents a different prescriptive identity or identity prototype. Thus teenagers may feel quite comfortable characterizing jocks as individuals who are “out for” sports teams, out for a good time on the weekend, into the latest styles, and only moderately concerned with academic achievement, even though they recognize that several peers associated with the jock crowd do not manifest all of these characteristics.

In fact, a teenager’s *actual* attitudes and behaviors are unlikely to jibe perfectly with the normative image of *any* single crowd in his or her social milieu. If a teenager’s characteristics are highly similar to the prototypic attitudes and behaviors of a specific crowd, he or she is likely to be associated with that crowd by most peers. But for many, if not most, adolescents, the fit between personal attitudes and behaviors and the prototypic characteristics of a given crowd is an imperfect one. As a result, a certain teenager may be viewed as a member of crowd X by some peers, a member of crowd Y by other peers, and a member of *both* crowds by still other peers. In other words, although some adolescents fit neatly into a specific crowd, many others seem to have multiple or partial crowd affiliations, often of varying intensities.

This helps to define adolescent crowds as distinctive in several ways from most other groups that social scientists study. In the first place, membership in adolescent crowds is not as obvious and exclusive. By occupation, one is a lawyer or a hairdresser or a physician or a construction worker or whatever. By religious affiliation, one is an Orthodox Jew or an Episcopalian or a Roman Catholic or an atheist, and so on. But by crowd, an adolescent can easily be both a “jock” and a “Mexican.”

Second, exclusive membership in a particular crowd is readily disavowed by adolescents. Few adults would deny their occupation or their neighborhood of residence. They might “waffle” a bit about their political party affiliation or their socioeconomic status. Rarely, however, do social scientists encounter the sort of reluctance or denial that we and others (Lesko, 1988; Varenne, 1982) have observed when asking adolescents, “What crowd do *you* belong to?” “I really don’t belong to any crowd” or “I mix with several crowds” are common responses. There are several reasons for such responses. One is that students are reluctant to appear close-minded and exclusionary, as if they only interact with peers in one particular crowd. Another is that because they mix with several crowds during the school day (even if they tend to hang out with one specific group after school or on weekends) it is difficult for them to see themselves as belonging to just one crowd. What’s more, because crowds are meant to depict one’s global identity, or basic reputation with peers, rather than just one facet of self (as occupation or religious affiliation or political party membership do for adults), being “typecast” too rigidly into one crowd violates the American emphasis on individuality, autonomy, and personal uniqueness.

Finally, some crowds are legitimate, meaningful categories but are—almost by definition—unobservable. The “loners,” for example, comprise a crowd of adolescents who are described as having no friends, no hangouts, no group activities; yet they possess (in the minds of adolescents) as clear a prototypic identity as any other group (Brown, Lohr, & Trujillo, 1990).

Such characteristics give teenage crowds a different dynamic than other groupings of adolescents or adults. They also affect the effort to examine and understand the relational characteristics of crowds. For one thing, they encourage analyses on a symbolic as well as a behavioral level. That is, researchers must attend to adolescents’ “social construction” of peer crowds, to the way that teenagers

employ crowd labels, and to crowd characterizations to explain and understand their social world. It is to this symbolic level that we now turn attention.

CROWDS AS CARICATURES

Those who have studied teenage crowds have found most adolescents to be willing if not eager to characterize the crowds that dominate their social milieu. From our own interviews with teenagers come these portrayals of various crowds: "Oh, yeah, they all wear these tight-fitting jeans and sit around the commons in between classes like they own the place!" "You'd be crazy to walk down the B-wing by yourself because the headbangers, they, like, attack you." "They all wear glasses and 'kiss up' to teachers, and after school they all tromp uptown to the library, or they go over to somebody's house and play some stupid computer game until 9:00 at night—and then they go right to bed 'cause their mommies make 'em!" Such depictions appear to be more elaborated and animated when elicited from dyads or groups of teenagers rather than from individuals.

What are teenagers attempting to accomplish with these pronouncements? Are these earnest attempts at accurate depictions of various crowds, or whimsically oriented exaggerations of reality? The answer depends in part on one's perspective on how individuals make sense of the world around them—an issue that has bred considerable controversy over the years (Gerger, 1984). Rather than aligning with either the logical positivists, who contend that knowledge accurately maps the realities of the world, or the phenomenologists, who counter that human beings fit reality into the categories they have created to make sense of the world, we prefer an alternative perspective derived from symbolic interactionist theory. It suggests that meaning emanates from the process of interactions between people, such that individuals construct reality (or come to an understanding of reality) through interactions with each other (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Blumer, 1969). Youniss (1980) describes how young people collaborate with peers in consensual validation of their interpersonal world. At adolescence, this world include building an understanding of crowds. Thus one's image of a crowd is honed not simply through personal observation and interpretation of crowd members' attitudes and activities, but also through conversations

about and evaluations of the crowd with friends. The result is an image of a crowd that is not entirely subjective (personally unique), nor so objective that it is widely shared. In short, through social interactions, teenagers construct *caricatures* of crowds, somewhat distorted but consensually validated images of groups that serve to structure social interactions and facilitate identity development.¹

How can teenagers maintain an image of crowds that is avowedly inaccurate? Why would a caricature of crowds (including their own group) serve their developmental agenda better than accurate portrayals of peer groups? To answer these questions we draw upon principles of social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981). This theory was crafted by European social psychologists to explain principles of group formation and intergroup or intragroup interaction. Among its major tenets are that once group membership has been established, individuals will tend to (a) accentuate differences between one's own group and other groups, (b) overstate the positive characteristics of one's own group, and (c) overstate the negative characteristics of other groups. The exaggerated images of the "in-group's" strengths and the "out-group's" shortcomings are worked out and reinforced through in-group interactions; that is, they are consensually validated. Their expression reaffirms group membership and builds the solidarity of the group as a whole.

We can easily observe these principles at work. Consider, for example, how sports fans celebrate a goal or touchdown with the enthusiastic chant, "We're number one!" even when their team is far from first place in league standings or experts' ratings. A more classic example concerning children's peer group interactions comes from the "Robbers' Cave" experiments (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). In this study, a sample of preadolescents in a summer camp was assigned to groups that competed with each other for desirable rewards. Soon after group assignments the investigators observed remarkable changes in social interaction patterns within the sample. Each group coalesced into a relatively cohesive unit, began denigrating the other group with inaccurate and exaggerated portrayals of their shortcomings (caricatures), and spurned social interaction with the other group's members. Only by creating a situation in which the groups had to work together to achieve a desired reward were the investigators able to overcome the intergroup rivalries and reestablish friendly social relationships across group membership lines.

Ethnographic accounts of interrelationships among adolescent crowds offer additional support for the tenets of social identity theory. Willis (1977) detailed the unflattering terms by which one working-class crowd of youth, the "lads," described their working-class peers who were more school oriented and compliant with adult authority. Even the name that the lads gave to this group, the "ear 'oles," reflected their disdain for their rivals. Similarly, both Eckert (1989) and Lesko (1988) underscored the rather hostile relationship between a high-status, school-oriented crowd (jocks or populars) and a more alienated, deviantly oriented group (burnouts) with reference to the derogatory caricatures that members of each crowd drew of the other crowd. In each case the authors argued that the unduly negative image of the out-group exacerbated tensions and hostility between the rival crowds. Yet it was also an especially effective means of affirming the credibility and superiority of one's own crowd. As Tajfel (1972, pp. 293-294) notes, "The characteristics of one's group acquire their significance only in relation to their perceived differences from other groups and the evaluation of these differences."

To be sure, these ethnographic accounts are intriguing and revealing. Yet by focusing narrowly on rather cohesive cliques of teenagers they may oversimplify the nature of symbolic relationships among adolescent crowds, thus overstating the degree to which such crowds fit the group dynamics described by social identity theory. As stated earlier, many teenagers maintain multiple crowd affiliations or avoid being associated with any crowd at all. Thus, rather than being clearly differentiable clusters of individuals, crowds exist as identity prototypes whose memberships are nonexclusive and partially overlapping. With divided group loyalties, teenagers may not so readily manifest patterns of "in-group" favoritism and "out-group" denigration. Instead, the nature of one group's caricaturing of another should be moderated by the degree of affinity the crowds have for each other.

These more complicated patterns are revealed in two survey studies of peer group stereotyping. Brown, et al. (1990) asked junior and senior high school students in one Midwestern community to name the major crowds in the school, then describe each crowd on six behavioral and interpersonal traits (dress and grooming, orientation toward achievement, sociability, extracurricular participation, school hangouts, and weekend activities) by indicating which

of several descriptors fit the crowd the best (e.g., would a crowd's dress and grooming style be best described as following the latest styles, casual/athletic, neat and clean, tough or messy, or outdated or in poor taste?). Although each of six crowd types that were examined had a unique profile on these traits, consensus on the specific traits of each crowd was not overwhelming. For only 15 of the 36 distributions examined (six traits for each of six crowd types) did at least two thirds of respondents select the same descriptor for the crowd.

In a recent reanalysis of the high school portion of this data set, Mory (1992) helped to explain the lack of consensus. Using another item in the questionnaire (self-professed crowd affiliation), Mory divided the sample into four comparison groups: elites (members of the jock or popular crowd, which enjoyed high status among peers), druggies, normals (the undifferentiated mass of average students who don't stand out on any trait), and others. Comparisons of the way that each group characterized its own and other crowds revealed two notable patterns. First, confirming a basic tenet of social identity theory, members of a given crowd tended to portray their own crowd in a more positive light than nonmembers. Of course, this diluted consensus on each crowd's characteristics. More interesting, however, was the rather complicated set of dynamics governing out-group stereotyping. For example, Mory examined how each of the comparison groups described the elites and the druggies. On every trait, elites and normals held a remarkably similar image of the druggies. By contrast, druggies and normals had more discrepant images of the elites, and in most cases the normals tended to be more inclined than either the druggies or miscellaneous others to adopt the elites' own impression of the elite crowd. For example, elites portrayed themselves as having a generally (but not excessively) positive orientation toward school and described the druggies as hating school. Druggies saw themselves as being lukewarm or moderately positive about school achievement, and the elites as being *very* achievement oriented. Normals concurred with elites: Druggies hated school and elites were generally positive about achievement. In more general terms, out-groups sometimes shared a very common image of a particular crowd, but in other cases the image of a particular crowd differed noticeably among out-groups.

Mory interpreted this as evidence that normals were more closely aligned with elites than with druggies, perhaps because of greater overlap in crowd membership between elites and normals than

between normals and druggies. It could also be, however, that many teens in the normal crowd emulated the elites in an effort to gain membership in that crowd (Kinney, 1993). In either case, the implication is that social identity theory principles bear some modification when applied to the stereotyping or caricaturing of adolescent crowds. The inclination to overstate the positive characteristics of one's own group is extended to crowds with whom one feels some affinity or partial affiliation. The inclination to denigrate out-groups is reserved for crowds with whom one feels no affinity or partial affiliation.

To be sure, there are several good reasons for adolescents to appraise crowds objectively and strive for consensus on each crowd's characteristics. Crowds stipulate the range of identities or identity prototypes that are readily recognized by peers. They indicate how one's attitudes and behaviors would have to change in order to shift from one social identity to another. And by providing a system for categorizing unknown peers into social types with predictable characteristics, they allow teenagers to anticipate the sort of relationship that would develop if one were to engage a particular unknown peer in social interaction. Yet these reasons for accurate appraisals of crowds are offset by the need to cast one's own group (which is often tantamount to one's own provisional identity) in a positive light and the need to understand the relationships among crowds from the perspective of one's own group. In other words, adolescents' depictions of each crowd are filtered through the biases of their own personal and social identity. The result is a set of caricatures that sketch out the *symbolic relationships* that exist among crowds. They serve as an abstract "road map" of the interrelationships among crowds in the system, based on one's own place within the system.

It is worth emphasizing that crowd caricaturing is an inherently relational activity: First, it occurs *within social relationships*. That is, adolescents do not form their impressions of crowds independently and autonomously; they coconstruct caricatures with peers who share their crowd affiliation. Thus caricatures make sense only with reference to the crowd from which they emerge; and one often observes that individuals from disparate crowds will construct very different caricatures of a given group. Second, caricaturing is often *predicated on relational statements*. DesChamps (1982, p. 87) proclaims that "groups exist within a system of mutual dependence; they acquire a reality which is defined in and through their interdepend-

ence." Crowds are often described not in absolute terms but in relation to characteristics of other crowds. For example, "The partiers goof off a lot more than the jocks do, but they don't come to school stoned like the burnouts do." Third, caricatures are frequently *explicit about intergroup affinities and hostilities*: "The Asians get along real well with the brains and the normals, but not so much with the jocks and definitely not with the Mexicans!"

In sum, we propose that adolescents' caricatures of crowds serve a variety of functions. They clarify the alternative identity prototypes that exist in the social system; they bolster the identity prototype that one has selected (at least tentatively) for oneself; they demarcate probable friends and foes, collaborators and competitors in social interactions; and they predict the relative ease or difficulty of switching identities or forming friendships across crowds. They encode a great deal of subjective information about the teenage social system. That is, they trace the symbolic relationships that exist among crowds. But these symbolic relationships, in turn, affect actual relationships an adolescent has with agemates. In large measure, they do so through their capacity to channel adolescents toward interacting with certain peers and not others, an issue to which we now turn our attention.

CROWDS AS CHANNELS

Although caricatures sketch out symbolic rather than literal relationships between crowds, they are by no means divorced from reality. They may provide overgeneralizations that flatter one's own crowd and other groups with whom one bears some affinity, but they are basically accurate portrayals of relationships among individuals in the social milieu. For example, it may not always have been true, as students in one school we studied maintained, that populars would only date fellow populars, or maybe a jock (their neighbors in the social status hierarchy). Yet, generally speaking, if you weren't in the popular or jock crowds, you just weren't on a popular kid's date list. The general accuracy of caricatures is what makes them useful road maps to adolescent relationships. Crowds do indeed help structure social interactions for teenagers. One of the major means of doing so is to *channel* adolescents into relationships with certain peers and away from interactions with others.

The combined activities of recognizing and caricaturing crowds and then sorting peers into these groupings help adolescents predict whether a given peer will be open or hostile to interpersonal overtures and whether one's friends are likely to encourage or protest one's association with a particular peer. This is accomplished by encoding three key features into crowd caricatures: the degree to which persons from a particular crowd have much in common (attitudes, interests, activities) with members of one's own group, the degree to which that crowd is receptive to association with one's own crowd (or any other crowd), and the degree to which it would be socially desirable to be associated with that crowd or its members. In other words, crowd affiliations direct adolescents toward associations with peers whose crowds are *proximal*, *permeable*, and *desirable*. This section will explain and illustrate these three major principles by which crowd affiliations channel adolescents into or away from associations with particular peers.

Evidence of Channeling

Before considering each principle, it would seem wise to ascertain that channeling does indeed occur. Evidence of channeling is admittedly paltry, but is sufficient to lend credence to this relational feature of crowd affiliation and to give guidance to our discussion of the operation of channeling principles.

Eder (1985) traced the roots of channeling to the emergence of the popular crowd in middle school. Girls who made it into this crowd found themselves highly sought after by classmates, so much so that it was practically impossible to respond to all the overtures for friendship. What is more, the popular girls worried that befriending certain classmates would endanger their stature in the popular crowd because of the negative opinions fellow populars had of these classmates. As a result, most popular girls became very selective in cultivating friends, preferring to confine most relationships to girls in their own crowd. As they began ignoring outsiders or snubbing friendship overtures, they earned a reputation as snobs, and their "popularity" (likability) among classmates declined. In time, many girls began snubbing the populars, partly, Eder concluded, to avoid the rejection that their friendship overtures were likely to engender. In short, girls who achieved membership in the popular crowd became very selective in their friendships, limiting their social net-

work to a manageable set of relationships, mostly with peers in their own crowd. Girls who aspired to membership in the popular crowd attempted to use friendships with populars as a point of entry, but as their overtures met with rejection they lowered their opinion of populars and channeled their efforts at forging friendships toward peers in other crowds. It is quite likely that similar dynamics underlay the tendency of popular girls to ignore African-American peers in the middle school that Schofield (1981) studied.

Eckert (1989) also argued that the channeling function of crowds emerged in middle school or junior high school, but in her study it was more the result of the bifurcation of the student body into two basic crowds: jocks (similar to Eder's populars) and burnouts, who constituted the more rebellious and alienated students in the school. According to Eckert, as students entered junior high school they had the opportunity to become affiliated with the jocks or the burnouts, or to remain in the amorphous and rather anonymous middle ground between these two crowds. Eckert (1989, p. 86) observed that "many friendships broke up over [crowd] affiliation, as those who did not want to get into trouble moved away or were left behind by their more daring Burnout friends."

Like most ethnographies, Eder's and Eckert's accounts offer a constrained view of the ways in which crowd affiliation channels relationships because of their emphasis on one or two of the more diverse array of crowds that typically exist in secondary schools. To broaden this perspective, Clasen and Brown examined the friendship patterns of students in a wider array of crowds in one junior high school. Each student in this school was asked to list his or her closest friends at the school ("the students you hang around with most often"); students could list as many friends as they wished. In a separate portion of the study, all students were classified into crowds according to a revised version of Schwendinger and Schwendinger's (1985) "Social Type Rating" procedure (Brown, 1989a). Clasen and Brown then examined how students in each of the school's five major crowds—preppies (individuals who enjoyed high peer status and exhibited a "yuppie" lifestyle), brains (bright students who focused on school achievement), dirtballs (teens who were alienated from school and "into" drug use and deviant behavior), outcasts (whose shyness, poor social skills, or "out of vogue" interests earned them reputations as loners or nerds), and normals (average students who were not distinctive on any characteristic)—

distributed their friendship nominations among members of various crowds. The crowds also were compared to students classified as hybrids (whose reputation among peers was split between two crowds), floaters (who were not consistently associated with any particular crowd), or outsiders (who were not known well enough by peers to be placed in any crowd; see Brown, 1989b).

In this school, the crowds differed dramatically in size: Twenty-four percent of the student body was associated with the preppie crowd, compared to only 3% who were classified as brains. To adjust for these differences, we converted friendship nominations to percentage scores (the percentage of friends each respondent nominated who were members of each major crowd), then divided these scores by the percentage of the student body affiliated with that crowd. The resulting figures indicate whether the proportion of one's friends who come from a particular crowd is above (numbers greater than 1.00) or below (numbers less than 1.00) what would be expected by chance. Results are reported in Table 6.1. Except for the normals, students drew their friends disproportionately from within their own crowd. What is more, friends outside of one's own crowd were not drawn evenly from other crowds, nor were they distributed in a similar manner for members of different crowds. For example, normals were overrepresented in the friendship networks of preppies and dirtballs but underrepresented in the networks of preppies and dirtballs. The uneven and inconsistent distribution of friendships across crowds also characterized the networks of floaters, hybrids, and outsiders.

Because these results come from just one school, their generalizability is uncertain at best. Yet they clearly confirm ethnographic observations that crowd affiliation does channel friendship selection, and they give us a more elaborated view of the connections between crowd affiliation and friendship choice by which to consider the effects of major principles of channeling. In other words, the question is how proximity, permeability, and desirability might explain the crowd differences that we observed in this school—or that ethnographers have reported in their studies—in the distribution of friendships among peers in particular crowds.

Proximity: Mapping "Social Distance" Among Crowds

To be sure, one of the key ingredients in the formation of friendships is physical proximity: Two people are more likely to become

Table 6.1 Crowd Differences in the Proportionate Share of One's Friendship Network Drawn From Each Major Crowd

R's Crowd Classification	Proportionate Share of Close Friends Who Were				
	Preps	Normals	Brains	Dirtballs	Outcasts
Preppies	3.04	0.50	0.33	0.17	0.00
Normals	0.83	1.50	1.67	0.67	0.75
Brains	0.67	1.44	6.67	0.17	0.50
Dirtballs	0.21	0.83	0.00	4.67	0.50
Outcasts	0.17	1.11	0.67	0.67	3.00
Floaters	0.71	1.17	0.00	0.67	0.87
Hybrids	0.83	1.11	0.67	0.83	1.12
Unknowns	0.46	0.89	0.67	0.83	1.25

friends if they live near each other or work near each other—or, for adolescents, if they attend the same school or occupy the same classroom (Newcomb, 1961; Priest & Sawyer, 1967). We would argue that this principle can be extended to peer groups: Two teenagers are more likely to be friends if they are part of proximal crowds (or better yet, the *same* crowd). In this case, however, proximity is not measured in terms of physical distance but "social distance." That is, crowds are arranged in what might be termed "symbolic social space." Adolescents who enter a social system complex enough to feature crowds must not only construct an image of each crowd (through the caricaturing described earlier) but also locate each crowd in social space. The closer two crowds are on this social map, the more compatible their memberships will be, and thus the more receptive members of one crowd should be to forging relationships with peers in the other crowd. It is not entirely clear, however, just how adolescents construct these social maps. What are the key dimensions by which teenagers determine the proximity of two crowds in symbolic social space?

Some investigators have argued for a unidimensional arrangement of adolescent crowds, ordering groups in terms of peer social status (e.g., Coleman, 1961) or adult socioeconomic status (e.g., Hollingshead, 1949). Eckert (1989) even attempted to synthesize these two by characterizing the peer group system in the high school she observed as anchored at one end by the high-status jocks, who reflected a middle-class values orientation, and at the other end by

the burnouts, whose working-class roots seemed to contribute to their low prestige among peers. Regrettably, Eckert essentially ignored the several crowds between these two extremes, largely because she regarded them simply as offshoots of the two "anchor" groups. Because of their oppositional relationship, it was very difficult for members of the jocks and burnouts to befriend each other, but Eckert did not provide information on the ease of striking up a friendship with a member of a more proximal crowd.

Not all investigators have been satisfied with a unidimensional scheme. Rigsby and McDill (1975) suggested that there are actually two distinct reward structures to which students in American high schools must attend: the formal reward system that emphasizes academic achievement and compliance to adult authority and the informal reward system that emphasizes conformity to the "teen culture" as formulated by Coleman (1961). From these two dimensions they derived four student types: the "well rounded," who were high on both dimensions; the "studious," who were strongly oriented toward the formal reward system but weakly oriented toward the informal reward system; the "fun culture," who showed the opposite orientation; and the "uninvolved," who were low on both dimensions. Though conceptually derived, these types seem quite similar to the basic image of common adolescent crowds. In fact, in exploratory data derived from high school students in a community quite similar to the one from which our friendship network data were derived (Table 6.1), we attempted to map the school's major crowds onto Rigsby and McDill's schemes by asking students how respected and well liked by teachers each crowd was and how much status and prestige each crowd enjoyed among peers. The resulting map, depicted in the left half of Figure 6.1, placed most crowds in what appeared to be the appropriate quadrant of Rigsby and McDill's model.

Of course, all of these arrangements of adolescent crowds in social space have been conceptually rather than empirically driven. Indeed, authors have been less concerned with the structural arrangement of crowds than with a specific conceptual issue: the transmission of class-oriented culture across generations (Eckert, Hollingshead), the success of social elites in subverting academic objectives in high schools (Coleman), or the consequences of coping with two distinct value systems in secondary schools (Rigsby and McDill). It would be wise to complement these approaches with a

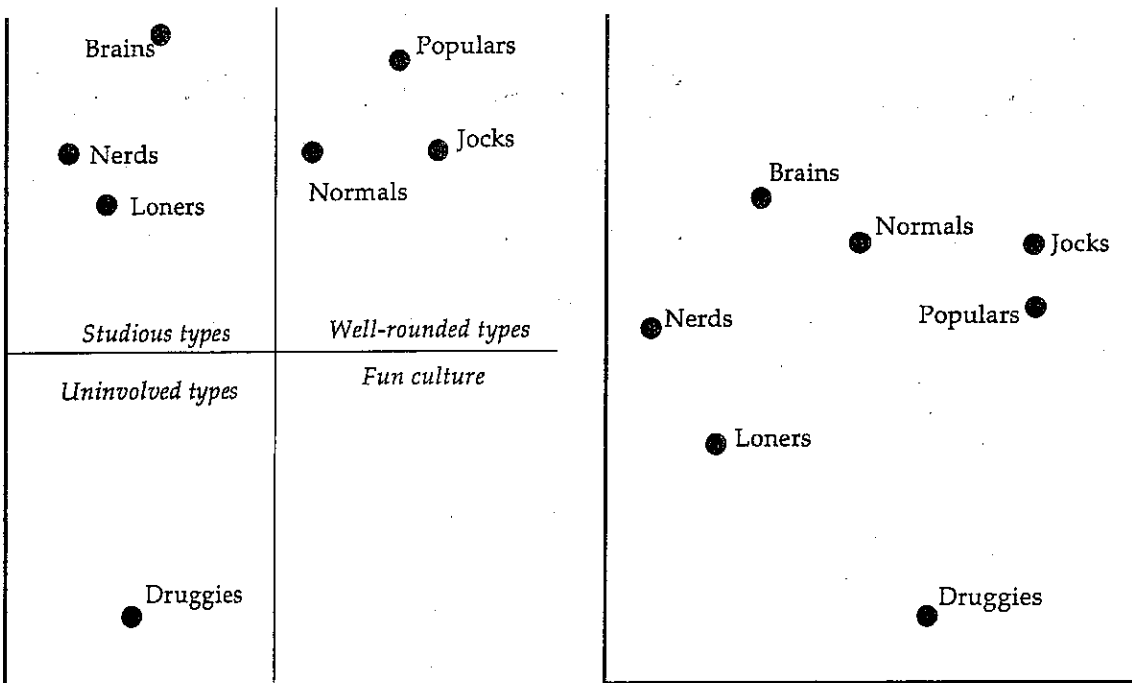


Figure 6.1 Two-Dimensional Social Maps of Adolescent Crowds. On the left is a map according to Rigsby and McDill's (1975) conceptual scheme; on the right is the result of MDS analyses of college sample data.

more empirical effort to capture teenagers' own perceptions. As a modest step in that direction, we asked a sample of 108 college undergraduates to recall the relationships among crowds in their high schools. After identifying eight major crowd types common to most of the diverse array of high schools the sample had attended, we asked respondents to rate the similarity of each possible pair of crowd types. Data analyses using multidimensional scaling techniques revealed a two-dimensional solution that fit the data fairly well; it is presented in the right half of Figure 6.1. It is strikingly similar to the two-dimensional scheme reflecting Rigsby and McDill's conceptual scheme, except for the shift in quadrant location for the druggies.

The question remains, however, as to whether the proximity of two crowds in symbolic social space affects the likelihood of relationships between the crowds' members. To illustrate the type of work that needs to be done in this area, we can examine how the various social maps proposed above compare to the pattern of friendship selection in the junior high school described earlier (see Table 6.1). Assuming that proximity is the key to friendship selection, then a rank ordering of crowds by their proximity to the target crowd ought to correspond to the rank ordering of crowds by their relative contribution to one's friendship network.

We were able to construct unidimensional maps of the arrangement of crowds, based on students' assessments of the status ranking of each crowd (peer status) and on crowd members' description of their parents' occupation and education (socioeconomic status). We could also "plug" the school's crowds into the two-dimensional maps derived conceptually from Rigsby and McDill's model, or empirically from the college student multidimensional scaling data (Figure 6.1). We expected that the largest share of the junior high students' friends would come from their own crowd, the next largest share would come from the most proximal crowd (based on Euclidian distance in the case of two-dimensional maps), the next largest from the next most proximal crowd, and so on. Transforming the data in Table 6.1 to these rank orderings, we assessed how the actual ordering of crowds (by their contribution to the friendship network of students in a particular crowd) compared to the rank ordering predicted by each mapping scheme: the one-dimensional orderings of crowds by peer status or family socioeconomic status, the location of crowds along Rigsby and McDill's two dimensions,

and the two-dimensional array empirically derived by multidimensional scaling.

None of the conceptual mapping schemes consistently matched the observed rank orderings. The one-dimensional schemes were particularly unimpressive, even though they were based on data from the same school as the friendship data. Interestingly, however, although the multidimensional scaling model was derived from a very different sample (college students), it accurately predicted the rank ordering for two crowds (preppies and normals) and came close for a third crowd (brains). Rigsby and McDill's model, also derived from a different sample, came close to the appropriate ordering for four of the five crowds but consistently misplaced the outcasts (see Table 6.2).

It is likely that the social maps that teenagers construct—and consequently the proximities or "social distances" between crowds—differ from one context (school or neighborhood) to the next; they may also change across age groups in one context (e.g., grade differences in one school). Thus it is not surprising that the two-dimensional schemes that were "imported" for these analyses did not fit the junior high school data perfectly. Yet their ability to supersede the fit of one-dimensional models leads us to recommend that investigators consider multidimensional social maps in future, more rigorous analyses of the effects of proximity among crowds on the channeling of peer relationships.

In sum, just as physical proximity affects the likelihood that two individuals will initiate an interpersonal relationship, "reputational" proximity—the comparative similarity of two crowds—appears to channel adolescents into relationships with peers from certain crowds more so than others. Most adolescents are predisposed to select close friends from within their own crowd; when they venture beyond this group it is more often to peers in neighboring crowds than peers in crowds that bear little similarity to their own group. Yet social distance is not the only facet of crowds to affect friendship selection. Even among neighboring crowds, teenagers must be able to cross the boundaries between their groups in order to strike up a friendship.

Permeability: The Receptiveness of Crowds to Outsiders

One of the consequences of the "in-group favoritism" and "out-group denigration" that, according to social identity theory, characterizes

Table 6.2 Each Crowd's Observed Ordering of Other Crowds by Their Proportionate Contribution to Members' Friendship Networks, as Compared to the Ordering Predicted by Various Social Maps

Crowd Mapping Model	Rank Ordering of Crowds From Which Friendships Are Drawn			
	1	2	3	4
Preppies				
Observed	Normal	Brain	Dirt	Outcast
Rigsby & McDill	Normal	Brain	Outcast	Dirt
MDS model	Normal	Brain	Dirt	Outcast
Normal				
Observed	Brain	Preppie	Outcast	Dirt
Rigsby & McDill	Preppie	Brain	Outcast	Dirt
MDS model	Brain	Preppie	Outcast	Dirt
Brain				
Observed	Normal	Preppie	Outcast	Dirt
Rigsby & McDill	Normal	Outcast	Preppie	Dirt
MDS model	Normal	Outcast	Preppie	Dirt
Dirthead				
Observed	Normal	Outcast	Preppie	Brain
Rigsby & McDill	Outcast	Normal	Preppie	Brain
MDS model	Preppie	Normal	Brain	Outcast
Outcast				
Observed	Normal	Brain/Dirthead	Brain/Dirthead	Preppie
Rigsby & McDill	Brain	Normal	Preppie	Dirthead
MDS model	Brain	Normal	Preppie	Dirthead

relationships between groups is the tendency of group members to "close their doors" to outsiders. This raises the expectation that adolescent crowds would be equally impermeable. Forging relationships across crowds should be a formidable task. Yet as we have already mentioned, the ambiguous, dynamic, and nonexclusive nature of crowd affiliations forces some modifications in the principles of this theory. This raises questions about how rigidly boundaries are maintained across crowds. Perhaps adolescents tend not to befriend peers in

proximal crowds, choosing instead peers in groups that, although more distant, are more receptive to intercrowd associations.

Interestingly, ethnographers disagree about the permeability of adolescent crowds, and their contrasting portrayals seem to be as much a function of their conceptual focus as the reality of intercrowd relationships. Those who have focused on two groups that engage in antagonistic relationships or display markedly different normative attitudes and behaviors emphasize impermeability. Cusick (1973) contrasted the lifestyle of a male clique from the jock crowd with one from a more alienated crowd of underachievers; according to Cusick, the two crowds were hostile, exclusive, and impermeable. Schofield (1981) emphasized the barrier that European-American girls in the popular crowd constructed to cross-racial associations; African-American girls were systematically ignored by the popular crowd, contributing sharply to the de facto segregation that existed within this ostensibly integrated school. Eder (1985) regarded the construction of boundaries between the populars and the normals as a mechanism for popular girls to contend with the overload of friendship overtures and a mechanism for normals to respond to the rejection they encountered in attempting to befriend populars.

On the other hand, ethnographers who have considered a wider array of crowds provide a more complex portrait of permeability. Larkin (1979), for example, found a fair amount of intermingling among members of the three crowds that formed the social elite of the high school he observed, but he also noted that these groups were rather unresponsive to interactions with peers in crowds at the other end of the status hierarchy: the greasers and the blacks. In fact, when out of earshot of black students, elite crowd members frequently made remarks that revealed their racial prejudices.

Thus although it is possible to conceive of crowd permeability in absolute terms—all crowds are equally impermeable, or some crowds are open to outsiders while others remain rather impermeable—it is likely that permeability operates in a more relative fashion: A given crowd is open to interactions with members of certain crowds but not receptive to relationships with members of other crowds. The most compelling evidence for this perspective comes from Kinney's (1993) recent efforts to trace the evolution of the peer group structure and the interrelationships among crowds in one Midwestern community. Based on conversations with and observations of adolescents in a variety of crowds in the community's high school,

Kinney formulated a composite map of the crowd structure that effectively integrates the principles of proximity and permeability. He found that the structural arrangement of crowds evolved through three phases from students' middle school to late high school years (see Figure 6.2).

In middle school, the crowd system consisted simply of two crowds: The high-status and relatively small group of "trendies," and the balance of the student body, known as "dweebs." A clear and stringent boundary was drawn between these two crowds. The transition to high school, with its more elaborated social structure and broader range of extracurricular activities, gave dweebs an opportunity to gain admission to one of a variety of new crowds: "normals," "headbangers," "grits," and "punks." Headbangers began to vie with trendies for top social status, while the grits and punks drifted to the bottom of the status hierarchy. Each group remained rather impermeable although the boundaries between trendies, normals, and headbangers were not as strong as between these groups and the grits or punks. By the end of high school, peer status played a less prominent role in differentiating crowds, leading Kinney to depict the crowd structure in a more "flattened" egg shape (compared to the tall pyramid of middle school). Headbangers were essentially equal in status to the trendies, and normals had made inroads to higher status as well. Although the normals remained effectively isolated from the headbanger crowd, the boundaries between each of these groups and the trendies became more permeable. The boundary between grits and headbangers effectively disappeared with the emergence of a hybrid group known as the "grit-headbangers." What is more, a number of individuals actually transferred crowd affiliations (as indicated by the arrows between crowds in Figure 6.2), which further served to break down barriers between crowds. Yet such barriers did not disappear completely; boundaries between the grits and both the trendies and the punks, for example, remained rather impenetrable.

The important lesson to be learned from this study is that only through the joint consideration of proximity and permeability among crowds can one account for the pattern of social relationships that is observed among teenagers in a given social context. Crowds must not only be similar to each other but also open to each other for adolescents from different crowds to easily negotiate a friendship (or, probably, a romantic relationship).

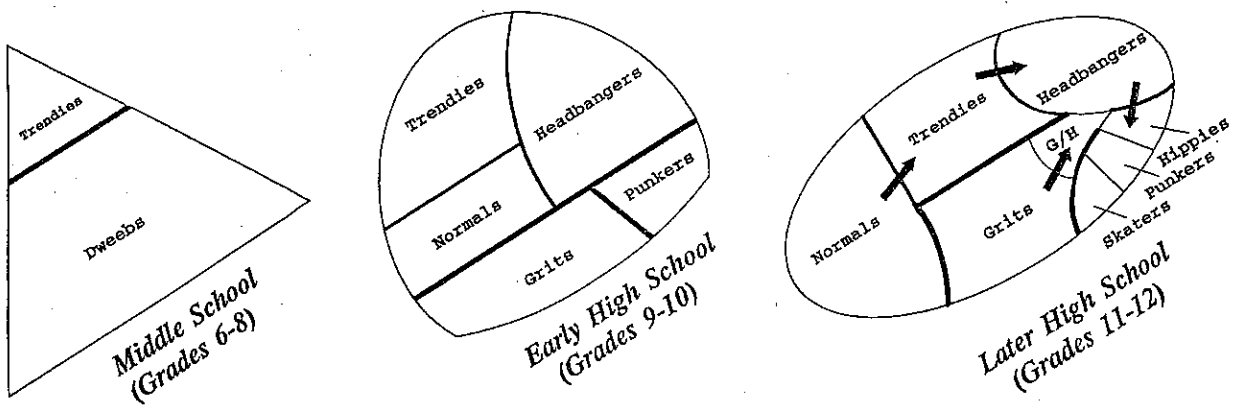


Figure 6.2 Developmental Changes in Crowd Structure. This is a composite view, combining the perspectives of students from a variety of crowds. Line widths represent degree of impermeability between crowds. Vertical location indicates each crowd's position in the school's peer status hierarchy. "G/H" = Grit-Headbangers.

Desirability

However powerful the principles of proximity and permeability are in channeling adolescents to relationships with peers in particular crowds, teenagers' befriending behavior still seems to frequently defy these principles. A boy will conscientiously court a girl from a crowd that is not only very dissimilar to his own but also unresponsive to associations with members of his crowd (a standard plot line in films about teenage romance, e.g., "Say Anything," "Stand By Me," "Grease"). A girl will studiously avoid associations with members of a crowd that is both proximal and permeable. How can one account for these apparently aberrant relational behaviors? A third principle, desirability, seems to be a key factor. Sometimes, affiliation with a certain crowd is so desirable that an adolescent is willing to ignore the great social distance between the crowd and his or her own group and risk rebuffs from the crowd's cliquish membership. Other times, membership is so undesirable that a teenager will pass up associations with a crowd that is open and close at hand.

To understand the role of desirability, it helps to bear in mind the tentativeness and uncertainty of crowd affiliation in adolescence and the power of social relationships to establish or validate one's location in the crowd system. Unlike other group memberships, crowd affiliation is not obvious, indisputable, and immutable. There is always the possibility that by changing one's attitudes, activities, or associates, one will be recognized as a member of a different crowd. Befriending, or being befriended by, members of another crowd is one of the primary mechanisms by which such shifts in crowd affiliation occur. In Eder's (1985) study, for example, the primary motive for normal girls' efforts to make friends with popular girls was to achieve recognition as a member of the popular crowd. A major reason that these overtures were usually rebuffed was popular girls' concerns that by associating with normals they would lose stature among fellow populars and be perceived as "dropping" or defecting into the normal crowd.

To be sure, desirability is related to status: The higher a crowd is on the status hierarchy, the more desirable it is (Coleman, 1961; Eckert, 1989; Eder, 1985). Eder (1985), for example, noted that although ignoring peers was a common feature of interpersonal relations in the junior high school she observed, she only heard complaints from girls about being ignored by members of the popular crowd—a subtle affirmation of the high-status popular crowd's

desirability. Yet we sense there is more to the principle of desirability than status strivings. An additional dimension is suggested by ethnographic observations of how adolescents avoid associations with a certain crowd because of its *undesirability*. Fordham and Ogbu (1986) found that students in one inner-city high school, attended primarily by economically disadvantaged African-American youth, conscientiously avoided behavior and friendship patterns that would tie them to the "brainiacs." This crowd was derided by peers as weak and effeminate, as well as supercilious in their efforts to "act white." Although Fordham and Ogbu did not really entertain the concept of crowds in their work, their depiction of brainiacs suggested it was a low-status group. Thus students' efforts to avoid association with its members could be interpreted as more evidence that desirability simply reflects peer status.

We, however, have noted a similar disinclination to be labeled a brain among European-American students (Brown, 1989c). In such populations the brain crowd is *not* a low-status group; in fact, it consistently occupies a middle position in the peer status hierarchy (Brown, 1989b). What is more, the brains are commonly caricatured with a mixture of positive and negative traits (Brown et al., 1990). According to our conversations with adolescents, the reluctance to associate with brains (or to be labeled a brain) stems not from reservations about the brain crowd per se but from its close proximity to another crowd that is at or near the bottom of the peer status hierarchy: the nerds. More specifically, students worry that by being associated with the brain crowd they will be misperceived as nerds. Their worries seem well founded. In both two-dimensional renditions of the symbolic social map of crowds, brains and nerds emerge as fairly close neighbors (see Figure 6.1). In fact, in our pilot study with college students who were reflecting back on the crowd structure of their high school, the brains were rated as more similar to the nerds (6.82 on a scale from 1 to 10) than any other crowd. The pair's similarity rating was surpassed only by perceived similarity among populars, jocks, and partyers, and between nerds and loners. As a result, brains may scrupulously avoid contact with nerds for fear of being misperceived as part of a less desirable, neighboring crowd. What is more, many students may avoid contact with brains because of their close proximity to the low-status nerd crowd. Thus in this instance, associations with a very proximal and permeable crowd (nerds) is avoided (by brains) because of the undesirability of that crowd.

The more complicated dynamics of desirability are also illustrated in data we gathered from middle and high school students in two Midwest communities. A group of students who had been classified by peers as members of major crowds in their school was given a questionnaire that asked them to rate how willing they would be (from 1 = "no way" to 5 = "definitely willing") to be members of each major crowd in their school. The desirability of major crowd types varied somewhat by sex (girls were more willing than boys to be normals and populars but less willing to be jocks) and grade level (from Grades 7 through 12 the desirability of nerds traced a u-shaped pattern, whereas the desirability of populars and jocks followed an inverted u-shaped pattern). Of greater interest to this discussion, however, are how ratings of the desirability of a given crowd differed among respondents associated with various crowds. Table 6.3 summarizes these results.

Desirability did not follow the peer status hierarchy. Normals had the highest and druggies the lowest desirability ratings, despite the fact that both groups occupied middle positions in the status hierarchy. Also, with one exception (outcasts), a given crowd's highest rating came from the crowd's own members; this served to validate the classification of respondents into crowds because, by principles of cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), one would expect that current members would have the strongest attraction to a given group. In some cases, the disaffection between crowds appears to be mutual: The brains were less willing to be druggies, and the druggies were less willing to be brains, than were members of any other crowd. In other cases, mutuality was lacking: The lowest desirability rating for populars came from druggies, but populars gave the druggie crowd a higher rating than any group except druggies themselves.

The curious relationship between brains and nerds is also reflected in these data. Loners and nerds are generally regarded as very similar, proximal crowds. Here, however, brains gave loners a higher rating than any other crowd, but they gave nerds the lowest desirability rating of any group.

The data in Table 6.3 are just a modest first step toward understanding how desirability of crowds affects adolescents' friendship choices, but they reaffirm that desirability does not operate in an absolute manner (e.g., according to a crowd's position on the peer status hierarchy). Instead, it varies according to an adolescent's own crowd affiliation. Maturè-Bianchi (1986) found something similar in

Table 6.3 Differences Among Students Associated With Various Crowds in the Mean Desirability Rating Given to Each Crowd Type

Rs Crowd	Mean Desirability Rating Given to:						
	Brains	Druggies	Jocks	Loners	Nerds	Normals	Populars
Total	3.01	1.44	3.22	1.91	1.52	3.46	3.45
Brains	3.80	1.09	3.27	2.13	1.15	3.41	3.50
Druggies	2.54	1.91	2.68	1.78	1.71	3.03	3.19
Jocks	3.21	1.26	4.23	1.77	1.51	3.55	3.59
Outcasts ^a	2.95	1.39	2.99	2.05	1.62	3.81	3.32
Populars	2.95	1.45	3.52	1.88	1.46	3.23	3.97
Others	2.80	1.41	3.02	1.88	1.49	3.52	3.30

NOTE: Ratings indicate how willing Rs would be to be a member of the crowd in question (1.00 = "no way"; 5.00 = "very willing").
^aClassifications of Rs into crowds are based on peer ratings. The outcasts includes Rs classified as loners or nerds.

her study of various crowds of Mexican-descendent youth. For those in the "Mexican-oriented" crowd, terms such as *cholo* and *homeboy* were considered derogatory; friendships with peers who personified these labels were scrupulously avoided. Chicano crowd members, however, were happy to associate with *cholos* and *homeboys* because they considered these terms to be complimentary.

Summary

Empirical evidence is too limited for researchers to stipulate in a clear and concise fashion just how crowd affiliation channels adolescents into or away from relationships with particular peers. The data are clear enough to indicate that channeling does indeed occur, but at this point still only suggestive of the complex interplay of factors that account for channeling. In highlighting the effects of proximity, permeability, and desirability, we hope to have provided some direction for the more comprehensive studies in this area that can be expected in the future. In such efforts it would be prudent for investigators to be sensitive to contextual factors that can alter channeling mechanisms.

For example, researchers have been intrigued but perplexed by the developmental pattern in cross-race relationships from child-

hood through adolescence. Studies indicate that the incidence of cross-race relationships declines across the elementary school years, then remains low through the middle and high school years—even in the face of increasing diversity in friendship networks on other background variables, such as age and sex (Hallman & Williams, 1989; Shrum, Cheek, & Hunter, 1988). We suspect that the coalescence of crowds at the outset of adolescence helps explain these patterns. In multiethnic schools, ethnicity can emerge as a major variable by which crowds are defined (Brown & Mounts, 1989; Ianni, 1989), accentuating differences between races through caricatures that seem to place each group at some distance from the other on adolescents' maps of symbolic social space. Normative pressures to affirm the primacy of one's own ethnic heritage, and normative sanctions in various minority groups against "acting white," may diminish the permeability between these crowds and those dominated by European Americans. They may also diminish the desirability of provisional identities dominated by another ethnic group, making individuals less receptive to friendship overtures from members of crowds that symbolize these "other-ethnic" identities. In such a scenario, proximity, permeability, and desirability could easily combine to solidify the disinclination toward cross-race friendships that develops through the elementary school years.

Yet such forces are undoubtedly contingent on characteristics of the immediate context. Rival gangs may heighten the social distance between ethnically defined crowds; joint participation in extracurricular activities may diminish it.

CROWDS AS CONTEXTS FOR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The relational feature of crowds that has attracted the most attention from researchers—primarily ethnographers—is the manner in which crowds provide a context for peer interactions. Ethnographers are fond of contrasting the quality and character of relationships that are displayed by members of different crowds. They have considered relationships with adults (particularly school personnel) as well as peers, and relationships with members outside one's crowd as well as with fellow crowd members. Indeed, the implicit message of these studies often has been that it is through probing

members' *relationships* that one can come to understand the motivations and behavior patterns that typify a crowd.

As we have already mentioned, many ethnographies have been organized to contrast two rival crowds in a school—usually a group high in peer status that draws from the ranks of the middle class or upper middle class in the community, and a lower status crowd that is often populated by students from lower socioeconomic strata. These studies have spanned more than a decade and have addressed adolescents in a variety of communities. The labels ascribed to the high- and low-status crowds are not consistent across studies. Yet descriptions of the quality of relationships within each crowd have been surprisingly similar.

Within the high-status group—populars, jocks, trendies, preppies, politicos, and so on—relationships are usually characterized as superficial and competitive, more "instrumental" than "expressive." Adolescents in this crowd often use friendships to establish and maintain their social position, which means that one must be prepared to cast aside friends (or be cast aside as a friend) when a better candidate comes along. Eder (1985) found populars to be rather wary in their friendships, especially with peers outside their own crowd. They were conscious of and concerned about how associations would affect their image and standing in the popular crowd. Lesko (1988) noted that populars were so status conscious that they even jockeyed for position within their own crowd, which made for unstable friendships. Our own interviews with adolescents reflect this instrumental orientation. One boy explained that to be popular one must "learn how to score points with every group." The objective is to develop a large network of friendships across crowds that can be exploited to extend or maintain one's status—an interesting twist on Granovetter's (1973) conception of the "strength of weak ties." Such an orientation discourages relationships based on loyalty, trust, and self-disclosure.

What accounts for the superficial nature of peer relationships among members of the elite crowd? Eckert (1989) linked it to their socialization into middle-class culture. Parents and teachers, she argued, had trained these youth to adopt a hierarchical, corporate orientation to relationships—an awareness of power and status differentials among interactants. One must be aware of who is above and below oneself in the corporate hierarchy and how these individuals should be treated to enhance one's own success in the corporate

structure. In effect, interpersonal relationships were to be viewed as a social means to personal ends. Friendships were secondary to students' academic or extracurricular objectives, so it was reasonable to keep them superficial. Yet it is also possible that the superficiality that ethnographers have observed is a response to the intense relational pressures that confront youth in high-status crowds (Eder, 1985). Perhaps the only rational way—or at least the most expedient way—to cope with the steady barrage of friendship overtures is to settle for short-term, superficial relationships that allow one to be wary of one's partner's motives.

Whatever the reason is for the superficial quality of populars' peer relationships, they are a stark contrast to ethnographers' impressions of friendships among the "contrast" crowd—greasers, burnouts, headbangers, drugies, or whatever. In these crowd contexts, relationships are usually characterized by depth, stability, loyalty, commitment, and honesty. Lesko (1988) portrayed burnouts' peer relationships as blunt and undiplomatic, but egalitarian and enduring. These students did not cultivate a large network of friends and usually drew friendships exclusively from within their own crowd. Eckert (1989), again, found an explanation for these friendship patterns in the class culture of the lower status crowd. The emotionally distant relationships that working-class parents cultivate with their teenage offspring encourage young people to rely more upon peers than family for emotional and instrumental support and gratification. As a result there is a strong sense of solidarity with peers and an inclination to pool resources within the friendship group. One's friendship network becomes a surrogate family, linking individuals across grade levels and even across schools to a much greater extent than is observed among members of high-status crowds. This familial organization of peer networks is reminiscent of relational styles in deviant gangs (e.g., Campbell, 1984), which, of course, draw a considerable portion of their membership from these lower status crowds.

In sum, ethnographers have argued that crowds at different ends of the status hierarchy provide sharply different contexts for peer relationships, contexts that tend to foster friendships of markedly different character. The different relational styles that typify youth in these two contexts are partly the result of the demands or expectations of their status position and partly the consequence of family interaction patterns or socialization strategies.

We suspect, however, that the different styles also stem from discrepancies in the level of social skills that characterize one crowd or another, discrepancies that may actually be nurtured by the structure of elementary school education. Schwartz (1981) observed classroom interactions in several elementary and junior high schools that "tracked" students into academic ability groups. She noted that students could be differentiated not only by their academic behaviors (their ability, concentration, motivation to do well in school, etc.) but also by their styles of interacting with peers. High-ability students had the capacity to remain "on task" and to appear to be attentive to and compliant with the teacher even when engaging in secretive interactions with peers. They also worked effectively in groups and carried their work-group identity into noninstructional time. Low-ability students, on the other hand, were openly noncompliant, if not hostile, to teachers and squandered much of the class time reserved for individual or group work by socializing with peers. During free time, they displayed an antagonistic interaction style with peers, in which they belittled classmates' academic abilities or efforts and exaggerated their own aptitude and skills (academic or otherwise). The separation of these students into ability groups served to isolate low ability students from peers who might otherwise have served as role models of more effective social skills. This helped reinforce the social interaction patterns that teachers obviously attended to in making tracking assignments. By adolescence, the different ability groups had developed incompatible interactional styles, creating as much of a social as an intellectual chasm between groups.

Although Schwartz did not follow her samples into adolescent crowds, the low ability students that she observed seem to have much in common with the greasers and burnouts that Eckert (1989) and others have described—except in terms of their social skills. Schwartz, however, provides a much less flattering portrait of this group than Eckert does.

Others who have observed the emergence of deviantly oriented peer groups in preadolescence have noted relational skill deficits among members of this group. Cairns et al. (1988), for example, found a tendency for aggressive youngsters who are low in peer status (classified as "rejected" by sociometric ratings) to coalesce into cliques that are characterized not only by deviant activity but also by unstable and antagonistic relationships among group members.

Giordano, Cernkovich, & Pugh (1986) found that both deviant and nondéviant youth manifest a number of positive features in their friendships, but these are complemented by negative characteristics only among deviant youth. Dishion (1993) confirmed this distinction, but also found that the positive features of deviant youths' friendships were often in the service of negative behaviors. That is, delinquents are most cordial and accepting, in conversations with their friend, when the friend is discussing deviant behavior! Discourse focusing on prosocial behaviors goes unrewarded by the dyad.

In any event, the roots of the contrasting interactional styles that characterize different adolescent crowds seem to lie in the social skills and interpersonal orientations that crowd members develop well before adolescence. This helps explain why some adolescents will actually "defect" from a particular crowd when its interactional norms become too onerous to the individual's own sensibilities. Kinney (1992) traced several such defectors in his ethnographic study. He describes one group of females who became disenchanted with the pressures of being a trendy—the need to "look perfect every day and have the right friends" (Kinney, 1992, p. 16). They were attracted to the headbangers (similar to Eckert's burnouts) because of the loyalty, intimacy, and trust that seemed to characterize their friendships. But they became disaffected by the crowd's negative attitudes toward outsiders and disaffection from academics. So, they developed a new crowd, based on the "hippie" culture of the 1960s, which featured a genuine openness to individuals in all crowds. In this context, and with support of the prototypic hippie identity ("do your own thing," etc.), they were able to nurture a different sort of friendship relationship than they found possible to pursue in other crowds in their school.

Certainly, these studies provide fascinating accounts of the different patterns of peer and adult relationships that characterize adolescents from different crowds. But our understanding of crowds as contexts for interpersonal relationships is constrained by the restricted range of crowds and relationships that they have considered. In this regard, three factors are especially worrisome. First, in most cases, investigators have focused on members of the most socially prominent crowd in a school (populars, jocks, etc.) and their alienated and deviantly oriented counterparts at the other end of the status hierarchy (burnouts, headbangers, greasers, and so on). In such studies, comparisons of crowds are confounded (often

rather intentionally) by the distinctive class cultures from which the crowds draw, and this serves to obscure the contribution that crowds make to teenagers' interpersonal orientations. Like Larkin (1979) and Kinney (1992), investigators need to consider the broader array of crowds that exist in most schools. Researchers also need to venture into multithnic schools to discover how crowd affiliation and ethnicity interact to shape the relational styles that adolescents display.

Second, researchers have relied upon relatively small samples of students—one or two prominent cliques from each crowd—to form their impression of the crowd. A well-established and widely recognized clique of populars may not truly reflect the norms and interactional styles of the broader membership of the popular crowd. We have found, for example, that students often view the popular crowd as consisting of two factions: "stuck-ups" or "snobs," who form the sort of tight-knit cliques on which ethnographies tend to focus, and the "nice populars," who remain friendly, approachable, and relatively humble for their high station. It would be wise, then, to complement ethnographic work with methodologies that can reach a broader representation of crowd members.

Finally, few investigators have ventured beyond the study of intracrowd friendships and what might be called intercrowd "acquaintanceships" (the treatment of outsiders); other types of relationships, most notably romantic relationships, have been virtually ignored. Because crowds have been proposed as the primary socializing agent of adolescent heterosexual relationships (Dunphy, 1963), this is a glaring deficiency for future research to address.

As a modest step in this direction, we offer findings from our own self-report survey of a sample of over 800 adolescents (Grades 7-12) in two midwestern communities. The sample was drawn primarily from five of the most prominent crowds in these schools: brains, druggies, jocks, populars, and outcasts (a combination of loners and nerds); participants' crowd affiliations were ascertained by peer ratings (Brown, 1989a). The survey included several basic questions about best friends and romantic (boyfriend/girlfriend) relationships. It also contained scales to assess the importance that respondents attached to socializing with peers, the amount of peer pressure they felt to socialize with peers, and the degree to which they actually engaged in socializing behaviors (going out with friends, conversing with friends on the phone, attending school dances and sporting events, etc.). Respondents also indicated, on a 4-point

Likert scale (1 = none; 4 = a great deal), how much time on weekends they spent with different categories of associates. Finally, they noted how often in the past month they had gone out with someone of the opposite sex, both in the company of other peers and just as a couple; scores on these items ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (almost every day).

Whereas ethnographers have highlighted the different relational styles of groups that in our schools were called populars and druggies, we found these crowds to be strikingly similar on the questions we asked. We found the most consistent differences between populars and druggies on the one hand and brains and outcasts on the other. Crowd members did not differ significantly in whether they had a best friend (80% to 90% of each crowd did) or how long this person had been their best friend (from 3 to 3.5 years), but there were significant differences in time spent with one's best friend. The average for druggies (13 hours per week) was over 50% higher than that for brains (8 hours); the other groups averaged between 9.5 and 11 hours per week.

The contrast was even sharper with regard to romantic relationships (see Table 6.4). Nearly two thirds of the druggies claimed to have a boyfriend or girlfriend at the time of the survey, compared to just over one quarter of the brains. Among those with a boyfriend or girlfriend, the relationship had lasted twice as long for druggies as for brains, and occupied considerably more of druggies' free time each week. The incidence of dating, whether with a group of peers or just as a couple, was considerably higher for among druggies than brains. On all of these items, responses of brains and outcasts did not differ significantly, nor did the responses of druggies and populars. The only indications of superficiality in the relationships of elites was in the slightly (but nonsignificantly) lower duration of best friendships among jocks and populars (just over 3 years, compared to at least 3½ years in other crowds).

These contrasts carried over to respondents' allocation of time among social network members on weekends (Table 6.5). Brains and outcasts appeared to balance their time more evenly between family and peers (lovers and close friends), whereas druggies and populars tipped the balance more clearly in favor of peers. In the scale scores, although brains accorded comparatively low importance to peer interactions and reported a low incidence of socializing with peers, the pressure they felt from friends to spend time with peers was relatively high. On these scales, outcasts reflected their image as social isolates,

Table 6.4 Crowd Differences in Self-Reported Characteristics of Romantic Relationships

Characteristic	Brains	Druggies	Jocks	Outcasts	Populars	Others
% who have had a boy/girlfriend this year	58	94	84	60	88	73
% who currently have a boy/girlfriend	28	64	46	33	55	40
Duration of relationship (in months)	5	10	7	6	8	5
Hours per week spent with boy/girlfriend	8.85	13.64	9.23	11.03	13.58	10.78
Frequency of dating:						
with a group	1.86	2.97	2.57	1.97	2.90	2.44
just as a couple	1.63	2.89	2.36	1.91	2.49	2.17

reporting comparatively little pressure from friends to socialize with peers and a lower incidence of peer social activities than other groups. It also appeared as if jocks were more oriented toward group relationships than other crowds. Unlike other respondents with a boyfriend or girlfriend, jocks devoted almost as much time on weekends to their friendship group as their romantic relationship.

Of course, these data lack the depth of insight that is provided by ethnographic work. Yet they broaden the perspective of characteristics to indicate that each crowd has a distinct profile of characteristics in peer relationships. These distinctions undoubtedly affect the ease with which adolescents can move among crowds. A teenager whose lack of interest in romantic relationships caused little concern among fellow brains would probably feel very uncomfortable amidst the more intense dating pressures of the druggies or populars. A loner, accustomed to focusing interaction on a few close friends, might find membership in the jock crowd, with its emphasis on group interactions, to be a major adjustment. If future studies can integrate the more qualitative relational focus of ethnography with the broader sampling of survey research, they can provide a more comprehensive portrait of the distinctive contexts for social relationships that are inherent in the peer group system within a particular community.

In sum, we are beginning to understand how adolescent crowds nurture different patterns of social relationships among their members.

Table 6.5 Crowd Differences in Allocation of Weekend Time and Peer Socializing Scale Scores

Item or Scale Score	Brains	Druggies	Jocks	Outcasts	Populars	Others
Time on weekend spent with:						
Closest friends	2.78	3.09	2.91	2.61	2.97	2.78
Boyfriend/girlfriend	2.73	3.20	2.82	2.81	3.01	2.85
Friendship group	2.20	2.66	2.71	2.21	2.67	2.31
Peer crowd	1.64	2.30	1.99	1.76	2.20	1.95
Family members	2.71	2.22	2.46	2.63	2.36	2.50
Alone	2.38	2.03	2.11	2.29	2.03	2.20
Scale scores:						
Importance of socializing	3.61	4.04	3.84	3.70	3.95	3.81
Peer pressure to socialize	2.10	1.85	2.10	1.87	2.00	1.93
Peer socializing behavior	2.64	3.06	3.04	2.58	3.16	2.84

NOTE: Scores for items reflecting time on weekends spent with various portions of the social network ranged from 1.00 ("none") to 4.00 ("a whole lot"). Scale scores ranged from 1.00 ("not at all important") to 5.00 ("extremely important") for the importance of socializing with peers, 1.00 ("no pressure from friends") to 4.00 ("strong pressure") for peer pressure, and 1.00 ("never") to 5.00 ("almost every day") for peer socializing behavior.

These differences are not simply a function of crowd norms, but a consequence of a variety of factors: the level of social skills and socializing interests of crowd members, the expectations and orientations of other members of their social network (especially family members), the attractiveness of crowd members as partners in relationships, and so on. We have barely begun to explore the factors that shape the nature of social relationships in the diverse array of crowds that comprise adolescents' social system. It is clear, however, that crowd affiliation is a significant factor in the quality of adolescents' social relationships. It would be difficult to fully appreciate the nature of adolescents' relationships with peers and adults without taking their crowd affiliation into consideration.

THE DYNAMIC NATURE OF CROWDS

One of the special challenges for those who study adolescent crowds is that they are chasing a moving target. Crowds are a dynamic, not a stable and static feature of adolescence. The structure

of the crowd system and an individual's place within it change from one year to the next, especially, it seems, when individuals make the transition from one school to another. Few investigators have taken a dynamic perspective on crowds; fewer still have attempted longitudinal studies. Yet the data from these few, along with findings from cross-sectional and retrospective analyses, are sufficient to give us some understanding of the dynamic features of crowds. In particular, four such features should be borne in mind by those attempting a relational analysis of adolescent crowds.

First, *peer group structures change* across adolescence. One of us (Kinney, 1993), for example, discovered a marked transformation in the crowd structure between middle school and high school in one midwestern community. From a two-crowd system in middle school (the populars and the dweebs), the structure blossomed into a more diverse array of crowds in high school: normals, punkers, headbangers, grits, and so on. This permitted those who had not "made it" into the popular crowd in early adolescence to find a more self-enhancing crowd identification than their default middle school classification as dweebs. One consequence of the broadening array of crowds was that over time the popular crowd lost exclusive rights to the top rung of the status hierarchy. By senior year, the status differential between populars, normals, and headbangers was barely noticeable (see Figure 6.2).

There are too few studies of the structure of crowds across middle school and high school to determine how common this sort of diversification really is. In other middle schools we have studied, students seem to be aware of a more diverse set of crowds. Yet we have also found that the number of crowds students name increases across adolescence. Also, the proportion of crowds named that fit into what might be called "major" crowds (groups that are common to a number of studies: populars, jocks, brains, drug-oriented youth, and so on) peaks around eighth or ninth grade, the point of transition between junior and senior high school (Brown & Clasen, 1986). Thus there seem to be changes across adolescence in the number and types of crowds that are available to adolescence—or at least in the salience of these groups in the minds of teenagers—as well as in the status ranking of crowds.

A second dynamic feature that investigators have described involves *changes in relational characteristics* of crowds. We have already noted shifts in the status hierarchy (Brown & Clasen, 1986; Kinney,

1993). Yet even during middle school, when populars retain undisputed possession of top rung on the status ladder, individuals' feelings toward and treatment of the populars seems to change (Eder, 1985; Schofield, 1981). Envy and ingratiation turn to resentment and avoidance as young people become disenchanted with populars' snobbery and cliquishness.

Several researchers have noted an increase with age in the permeability of crowds. As one of Larkin's (1979) high school respondents explained:

It's not so tight that you feel uncomfortable when you go into somebody else's group if you know someone there. You know, there are floaters—people who go around to just any particular group they feel like that particular day. And you just go in and you start talking and it doesn't matter. Nobody really cares. I think that's really good. It's quite an improvement over junior high. (p. 88)

Gavin and Furrman (1989), who examined students' perceptions of same-sex cliques between Grades 7 and 12, attributed this to the fact that, with age, adolescents tended to treat "out-group" members in a more positive fashion. This is also reflected in sociometric data suggesting that the tightly bounded cliques of early adolescence give way to a looser pattern of interaction, with more individuals acting as "liaisons" between several friendship groups (Shrum & Cheek, 1987). Kinney (1992), however, cautioned that the increasing permeability may be selective; the boundaries between certain crowds (e.g., populars and headbangers in his study) may start to diminish while the boundaries between other crowds (e.g., punkers and "grits") remain strong.

These structural and relational changes in the crowd system are accompanied by developmental changes in adolescents' orientations toward crowds. One of these (the third dynamic feature) is a *shift in the salience of crowd affiliation*. Both Coleman (1974) and Brown, Eicher and Petrie (1986) found an age-related decline in the importance of belonging to a crowd. According to Brown et al. (1986), early adolescents found reassurance in a crowd's norms and conformity demands, whereas older adolescents felt that crowds frustrated their efforts to express their own personal attitudes and interests. Such a drive toward individuality helps explain the age-related decline in conformity pressures from peers that Clasen and Brown (1985) reported.

Finally, *crowd affiliation itself changes*, that is, it appears as if individuals do not remain attached to the same crowd across adolescence. In one recent longitudinal study (Brown, Freeman, Huang, & Mounts, 1992), over half of a sample of 7th- through 12th-graders changed the crowd with which they claimed affiliation over a two-year period. Interestingly, the likelihood of changing crowds not only varied substantially by initial crowd affiliation but also diminished steadily across grade levels. Perhaps this was because, as crowd boundaries became more permeable, older youth felt less of a need to change affiliations in order to broaden their circle of associates or express an identity that commingled the norms of several crowds.

Developmental analyses are still very much the exception rather than the rule in studies of adolescent peer groups. Yet the need to approach relational features of crowds from a developmental perspective is absolutely clear. Generalizing to adolescence as a whole on the basis of a study of middle school students or, worse yet, high school seniors, is simply not tenable. What is more, the dynamic nature of crowd structures and crowd affiliations is one of the strongest indicators of the relational nature of adolescent peer groups. Just as dyadic relationships evolve over time, so does the adolescent crowd system.

CONCLUSIONS

Some people regard adolescent crowds as a curiously amusing feature of the rather obscure world of American teenagers. Others consider them to be a potent and dangerous force, mandating conformity to teen culture at a time when individuals should be striving for an autonomous identity and integration into adult society. From our perspective, crowds are an important and usually very effective mechanism by which teenagers structure social interactions and forge meaningful social relationships within the new and sometimes confusing social system of adolescence. There are, we believe, four important lessons to be learned from the review that we have undertaken in this chapter.

First, *crowds are an inherently relational construct*. In defining crowds as reputation- rather than interaction-based entities, we seem to be distancing ourselves from a relational perspective. We argue that crowds categorize adolescents by *individual* interests,

abilities, attitudes, or ethnic heritage—not by social interaction patterns. Yet the label applied to a crowd and the caricatures that accompany it take on meaning only when compared to another crowd. A jock or a druggie or a Korean is not someone with a rigid and absolute set of characteristics, but someone with more of this and less of that than members of some other crowd. What is more, adolescents come to understand crowds through social interaction; crowd images are crafted through mutual consensus, not individual insights. As Lesko (1988, p. 74) has remarked, "Through groups, that is, through associations with people similar to oneself and those who are different, personal and social identities are wrestled with and visualized." Adolescents perceive crowds in relational terms, so for researchers and practitioners to understand the function of crowds, a relational perspective must be adopted.

This brings us to the second lesson, that *adolescents use crowds to construct a symbolic road map of prototypic peer relationships*. Most teenagers recognize the limitations of responding to peers simply as crowd caricatures rather than as unique individuals. Yet they find that the crowd system gives them a language by which to understand and express the complicated and sometimes confusing patterns of social relationships with peers (Schwartz & Metten, 1967; Varenne, 1982). Crowds create abstract models of peer relationships that can provide order and predictability—and therefore a sense of personal control—to actual interactions with friends, acquaintances, and strangers. The symbolic road map of crowds stipulates the ease or difficulty of interacting with certain peers, and what is risked, gained, or lost by nurturing particular peer relationships. These are valuable commodities among individuals whose world is filled with uncertainties. Thus whereas adults may decry the tendency of crowds to compel conformity, reinforce prejudices, and restrict exploration in social interaction patterns, teenagers seem to find that crowds nurture social skills and foster satisfying peer relationships.

A third lesson is that, despite their abstract nature, crowds do affect teenagers' actual social relationships. That is, *a teenager's crowd affiliation and understanding of the crowd system affect the choice of peer associates and the features of peer relationships*. Particularly in the early adolescent years, one's allegiance to or interest in a particular crowd and one's awareness of the social distance among crowds effectively channel a teenager toward particular peers and away from others as candidates for friendship and romance. Teenagers use their sym-

bolic road map of crowds not only to understand peer relationships in general, but also to help decide which peers to pursue for relationships, and which offers of affiliation to accept or ignore. We pointed to proximity, permeability, and desirability as three factors by which adolescents use the crowd system to make choices about peer associates.

What is more, crowd affiliation affects the quality or character of social relationships. The distinguishing features of friendship and romance—and even relationships with adults—are not consistent across adolescents, but contingent upon the norms and social pressures within their crowd. Friendships may be superficial or intense and enduring. Romantic attachments may be instrumental or altruistic. Such variability can be explained, in large measure, by the context that one's crowd affiliation(s) supplies for social relationships.

A final lesson is that crowds are not universal and enduring features of adolescents. Rather, *the crowd system is a dynamic phenomenon that is sensitive to contextual features of a social milieu*. The structure and interrelationships of crowds can change dramatically across the adolescent years. So, too, can a particular teenager's pattern of affiliation with crowds. For example, an adolescent may negotiate middle-school as a dedicated member of the populars, become disaffected in early high school and transfer affiliation to the druggies, then drift toward the end of high school into marginal memberships with several groups. The forces that prompt a teenager to remain loyal to a particular crowd or to be constantly seeking new affiliations are not well understood. Yet the flexibility of crowd affiliation and the developmental nature of crowd structure are undoubtedly essential to the capacity of crowds to nurture teenagers' social skills and social relationships (see, e.g., Dunphy, 1963).

By the same token, crowds are sensitive to their social and historical milieu. Coleman (1961) found substantial variation among communities in the capacity of academic achievement to propel someone into or away from membership in the popular crowd. Larkin (1979) reported a remarkable transformation in the character of the politics that corresponded to historical shifts in the American political climate across a 10-year period. Brown and Mounts (1989) discovered significant differences across communities in adolescents' descriptions of the number, types, and size of crowds in their school. There are even contexts in which adolescent crowds simply do not exist: small, stable, rural populations, for example, in which classmates

have grown up together and know each other so well that crowds are unnecessary. Certainly, such contextual variation should make researchers cautious about generalizing from observations of crowds in one particular school or community, just as the developmental nature of crowds limits generalizations from studies of one age group.

For most teenagers, crowds are an important component of negotiating the social world of adolescence. They transform strangers and acquaintances into recognizable types. They channel individuals toward engaging certain peers in social relationships and not others. They provide a context that influences the quality and character of these relationships. They change developmentally and respond to contextual cues in ways that, hopefully, better nurture teenagers' relational skills and interpersonal experiences. Approaching crowds from this relational perspective will not only help researchers to understand the place of crowds in adolescent development, but also provide insights about the character of young people's social relationships.

NOTES

1. We use the term *caricature* because it brings to mind a portrait that exaggerates prominent characteristics in a humorous if not unflattering way. This fits the typical depiction of crowds other than one's own, based on social identity theory principles that are explained in the next paragraph. Admittedly, however, portrayals of one's own crowd are likely to exaggerate characteristics in a flattering way. Still, caricature seems more descriptive than alternatives such as *characterization*, which implies a more objective portrayal, or *stereotype*, which is commonly understood as a naive or simplistic overgeneralization.

2. Some may suspect that the large number of friendship overtures that popular crowd members receive is a function of their superior social skills rather than their location in a particular crowd. This would be an appealing alternative explanation for what Eder observed, were it not for evidence (detailed later) that the quality of popular girls' friendships was not necessarily superlative.

REFERENCES

Berger, P., & Luckman, T. (1967). *The social construction of reality*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Blumer, H. (1969). *Social interactionism: Perspective and method*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Brown, B. B. (1989a). *Social type rating manual*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Madison, National Center on Effective Secondary Schools.
- Brown, B. B. (1989b, March). Can nerds and drugies be friends? Mapping "social distance" between adolescent peer groups. In G. Ladd (Chair), *Peer relationships and school adjustment*. Symposium presented at the annual meetings of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.
- Brown, B. B. (1989c, March). Skirting the "brain-nerd" connection: How high achievers save face among peers. In J. Braddock (Chair), *The ecology of student achievement in high schools: Noninstructional influences*. Symposium presented at the annual meetings of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.
- Brown, B. B. (1990). Peer groups and peer cultures. In S. S. Feldman and G. R. Elliott (Eds.), *At the threshold: The developing adolescent* (pp. 171-196). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brown, B. B., & Clasen, D. R. (1986, March). *Developmental changes in adolescents' conceptions of peer groups*. Paper presented at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research in Adolescence, Madison, WI.
- Brown, B. B., Eicher, S. A., & Petrie, S. (1986). The importance of peer group ("crowd") affiliation in adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence*, 9, 73-96.
- Brown, B. B., Freeman, H., Huang, B. H., & Mounts, N. S. (1992, March). "Crowd hopping": Incidents, correlates, and consequences of change in crowd affiliation during adolescence. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Adolescence, Washington, DC.
- Brown, B. B., Lohr, M. J., & Trujillo, C. M. (1990). Multiple crowds and multiple lifestyles: Adolescents' perceptions of peer group characteristics. In R. E. Müss (Ed.), *Adolescent behavior and society: A book of readings* (pp. 30-36). New York: Random House.
- Brown, B. B., & Mounts, N. (1989, April). *Peer group structures in single versus multi-ethnic high schools*. Paper presented at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development, Kansas City.
- Buff, S. A. (1970). Greasers, dupers, and hippies: Three responses to the adult world. In L. Howe (Ed.), *The white majority* (pp. 60-77). New York: Random House.
- Cairns, R. B., Cairns, B. D., Neckerman, H. J., Gest, S. D., & Garlepy, J. L. (1988). Social networks and aggressive behavior: Peer support or peer rejection? *Developmental Psychology*, 24, 815-823.
- Campbell, A. (1984). *The girls in the gang*. New York: Basil Blackwell.
- Clasen, D. R., & Brown, B. B. (1985). The multidimensionality of peer pressure in adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 14, 451-468.
- Coleman, J. C. (1974). *Relationships in adolescence*. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Coleman, J. S. (1961). *The adolescent society*. New York: Free Press.
- Cusick, P. A. (1973). *Inside high school*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- DesChamps, J.-C. (1982). Social identity and relations of power between groups. In H. Tajfel (Ed.), *Social identity and intergroup relations* (pp. 85-98). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Dishon, T. J. (1993, March). Boys' close friendships and early adolescent problem behavior: Geographic and parenting contexts. In L. Steinberg (Chair), *Interactive influences of parents and peers on adolescent misbehavior*. Symposium conducted at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development, New Orleans.

- Dumphy, D. (1963). The social structure of urban adolescent peer groups. *Sociometry*, 26, 230-246.
- Eckert, P. (1989). *Jocks and burnouts: Social categories and identity in the high school*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Eder, D. (1985). The cycle of popularity: Interpersonal relations among female adolescents. *Sociology of Education*, 58, 154-165.
- Festing, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Evanston, IL: Row Peterson.
- Fordham, S., & Ogbu, J. U. (1986). Black students' school success: Coping with the burden of "acting white." *Urban Review*, 18, 176-206.
- Gavin, L. A., & Furman, W. (1989). Age differences in adolescents' perceptions of their peer groups. *Developmental Psychology*, 25, 827-834.
- Gergen, K. (1984). Theory of the self: Impasse and evolution. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 17, 49-115.
- Giordano, P. C., Cernkovich, S. A., & Pugh, M. D. (1986). Friendships and delinquency. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91, 1170-1202.
- Granovetter, M. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78, 1360-1381.
- Hallinan, M. T., & Williams, R. A. (1989). Interracial friendship choices in secondary schools. *American Sociological Review*, 54, 67-78.
- Hartup, W. W. (1983). Peer relations. In P. H. Mussen (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 4. Socialization, personality and social development* (pp. 103-196). New York: John Wiley.
- Hollingshead, A. B. (1949). *Elmton's youth*. New York: John Wiley.
- Ianni, F. A. J. (1989). *The search for structure*. New York: Free Press.
- Kinney, D. A. (1992, March). Coming together and going your own way: Delineating diversity and change in adolescent crowd associations. In B. Brown (Chair), *Stability and change in adolescent peer relations: Characteristics and consequences*. Symposium conducted at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research in Adolescence, Washington, DC.
- Kinney, D. A. (1993). From "nerds" to "normals": Adolescent identity recovery within a changing social system. *Sociology of Education*, 66, 21-40.
- Larkin, R. W. (1979). *Suburban youth in cultural crisis*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lesko, N. (1988). *Symbolizing society: Stories, rites, and structure in a Catholic high school*. Philadelphia: Falmer.
- Matute-Bianchi, M. E. (1986). Ethnic identities and patterns of school success and failure among Mexican-descent and Japanese-American students in a California high school: An ethnographic analysis. *American Journal of Education*, 95, 233-255.
- Mory, M. S. (1992, March). "Love the ones you're with: Conflict and consensus in adolescent peer group stereotypes." Paper presented at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Washington, DC.
- Newcomb, T. (1961). *The acquaintance process*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Priest, R., & Sawyer, J. (1967). Proximity and peership: Bases of balance in interpersonal attraction. *American Journal of Sociology*, 72, 633-649.
- Rigby, L. C., & McDill, E. L. (1975). Value orientations of high school students. In H. R. Stub (Ed.), *The sociology of education: A sourcebook* (pp. 53-75). Homewood, IL: Dorsey.

- Schofield, J. W. (1981). *Black and white in school: Trust, tension, or tolerance?* New York: Praeger.
- Schwartz, F. (1981). Supporting or subverting learning: Peer group patterns in four tracked schools. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 12, 99-121.
- Schwartz, G., & Merten, D. (1967). The language of adolescence: An anthropological approach to youth culture. *American Journal of Sociology*, 72, 453-468.
- Schwendinger, H., & Schwendinger, J. S. (1985). *Adolescent subcultures and delinquency*. New York: Praeger.
- Sherif, M., Harvey, O. J., White, B. J., Hood, W. R., & Sherif, C. R. (1961). *Intergroup conflict and cooperation: The Robber's Cave experiment*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, Institute of Group Relations.
- Shrum, W., & Cheek, N. H. (1987). Social structure during the school years: Onset of the degrouping process. *American Sociological Review*, 52, 218-223.
- Shrum, W., Cheek, N. H., & Hunter, S. M. (1988). Friendship in school: Gender and racial homophily. *Sociology of Education*, 61, 227-239.
- Tajfel, H. (1972). La categorization sociale. In S. Moscovici (Ed.), *Introduction à la psychologie sociale* (Vol. 1, pp. 272-302). Paris: Larousse.
- Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human groups and social categories: Studies in social psychology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Varenne, H. (1982). Jocks and freaks: The symbolic structure of the expression of social interaction among American senior high school students. In G. Spindler (Ed.), *Doing the ethnography of schooling* (pp. 213-235). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to labor*. London: Columbia University Press.
- Youniss, J. (1980). *Parents and peers in social development*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.