

3-1986

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Friendships and Delinquency¹

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Major delinquency theories differ significantly in the ways in which they have portrayed the friendship patterns of male and, more recently, female delinquents. Psychological studies and control theory have depicted delinquents' peer relationships as inadequate or exploitive and cold, whereas subcultural theories generally emphasize the intimacy and solidarity of the delinquent gang. In spite of its pivotal theoretical role, few studies have actually examined delinquents' friendships and the ways in which they differ from those of more conforming adolescents. Multiple dimensions of friendship are identified that allow examination of adolescents' perceptions of the rewards and vicissitudes of their relationships and the patterns of interaction and influence that characterize them. The data reveal many similarities in the friendship patterns of adolescents with significant differences in their levels of self-reported delinquency involvement and challenge the conception of female delinquents as socially disabled. These data suggest that both the "cold and brittle" and "intimate fraternity" images may have oversimplified the nature of delinquents' friendship relations. Similarities and differences in the friendship styles of black and white respondents are also examined.

Peer relationships have been central to the logic of most delinquency theories. There is general agreement that delinquency occurs most often within a group context, but there is much less consensus about the nature and quality of the relationships delinquents have with their friends. Early subcultural and differential association theorists emphasized the delinquent group's primary character and relied on such terms as "solidarity" and "esprit de corps" to describe it. This viewpoint is perhaps most firmly anchored in the work of Thrasher, who described the emotional closeness

¹ This research was supported by PHS Research grant no. MH 29095-03, National Institute of Mental Health, Center for Studies of Antisocial and Violent Behavior. We wish to thank the anonymous reviewers of *AJS* for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this manuscript. Requests for reprints should be sent to Peggy Giordano, Department of Sociology, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio 43403.

and intimacy of the Chicago gangs he studied. He saw a rapport that was sometimes so complete that one "receives the impression of interpenetration of personalities, if such a mystical conception is possible" (1963, p. 210). In Shaw's case study, *The Jackroller*, Stanley echoes this view in describing his own relationship with fellow jackrollers: "We were like brothers and would stick by each other through thick and thin. We cheered each other in our troubles and loaned each other dough. A mutual understanding developed, and nothing could break our confidence in each other" (Shaw 1966, p. 66).

Recent investigators have criticized this image of the delinquent group as reflecting "the vicarious gratifications of adult investigators and their own childhood fantasies to a greater extent than they do the perspectives of gang members" (Short and Strodbeck 1965, p. 231). Perhaps partly in reaction against the earlier rosy imagery, Short and Strodbeck offered a more complex portrait. While agreeing that the delinquent group "likely offered these youngsters a larger measure of . . . play and interpersonal gratification than any alternative form of association of which they are aware and which is available to them by virtue of preparation and other reality considerations" (p. 233), they stressed the lack of interpersonal skills of many gang boys as part of their more general theory of social disability: "Even within the gang, upon which the boy comes to be dependent for a large share of interpersonal gratification, interaction in many respects is not rewarding and lacks characteristics essential to the fulfillment of these [interpersonal] needs" (Short 1963, p. xlii). Klein and Crawford (1967) also depicted the gang's cohesion as fragile and as generated more by external forces (e.g., threats from rival gangs) than by personal regard.

But it is control theory that departs more completely from the early subcultural view; indeed, much of its uniqueness as a theoretical position is derived from the way in which it differs from earlier explanations precisely on the peer issue. Hirschi in particular believes that the causal significance of friendships has been overstated, arguing that "since delinquents are less strongly attached to conventional adults than non-delinquents they are less likely to be attached to each other. . . . The idea that delinquents have comparatively warm, intimate social relations with each other (or with anyone) is a romantic myth" (1969, p. 159). Instead, these relationships are described as "cold and brittle" (p. 141). Psychological treatments of delinquency, although differing in etiological emphasis, often describe delinquents' peer relations in a similar fashion. Hartup, in a recent review of research on peer relations, declared unequivocally: "Delinquency among adolescents and young adults can be predicted mainly from one dimension of early peer relations . . . not getting along with others" (1983, p. 165).

The issue of the nature and quality of delinquents' peer relations is thus largely unresolved, but it keeps surfacing because of its theoretical and applied implications. To the degree that delinquents' relationships are found not to be in any real sense primary, cohesive, or solidary, the causal significance of group processes in the etiology of delinquent behavior is believed to be minimized. A well-entrenched finding in the social psychological/experimental literature is that highly cohesive groups are more able to exact conformity from their members than are more ephemeral or loosely structured ones.²

Thrasher not only described the intimacy he believed to be characteristic of the Chicago gang boys but also linked these characteristics to the gang's ability to exert influence on its members: "The individual member of a gang is almost wholly controlled by the force of group opinion. The way everybody in the gang does or thinks is usually sufficient justification or dissuasion for the gang boy. In such cases he is really feeling the pressure of public opinion in that part of his own social world which is most vital to him and in which he wishes to maintain status" (1963, p. 204). Using the same logic, Hirschi reaches opposite conclusions: "It seems reasonable to conclude that persons whose social relations are cold and brittle, whose social skills are severely limited, are incapable of influencing each other in the manner suggested by those who see the peer group as the decisive factor in delinquency" (Hirschi 1969, p. 141).

In addition to its pivotal role in theories of delinquency causation, the image of the delinquent as socially deficient and lacking close relationships also has implications for treatment. The emphasis on the social maladjustment of delinquents, in at least implicit comparison with other adolescents, sustains the view of intrinsic differences between the two groups (see Matza 1964). While this conception fits well with current juvenile justice treatment strategies that continue to emphasize individ-

² In the real world, it is probable that there is something a little less orderly than a linear relation between intimacy and influence. Glaser (1956) emphasizes situations where individuals may be most influenced by groups of which they are not even members. One's location in the group (whether as a central or marginal actor) can also affect the way in which the group seeks to exert control (Giordano 1983). Ridgeway points out that, under some conditions, cohesiveness, while increasing conformity pressures on members, "at the same time can potentially increase their freedom to rebel against those pressures" (1983, p. 105). Nevertheless, we agree with the basic premise that some amount of intimacy in general enhances the group's ability to exert influence because (1) the more cohesive the group, the higher the level of interaction and communication within it—this maximizes the opportunities for group members to express their views of things—and (2) the more attractive individuals find their membership in a group, the more they may be willing to accede to such influence attempts in order to maintain or enhance their standing.

ual counseling, psychological classification schemes, and so on, it has yet to be demonstrated adequately as an empirical reality.

We agree with Empey, who argued in 1967 and again in 1983 that "definitive research on the precise character of delinquent, as contrasted with conventional, groups is desperately needed" (1982, p. 274). Previous empirical attempts to examine the qualities of friendships of delinquents are less than definitive for several reasons: (1) there has been a kind of cavalier and interchangeable use of potentially very different friendship processes. Psychological studies often equate "peer relations" with sociometric rank (i.e., popularity), usually within the classroom setting. Hirschi (1969) developed the pivotal concept "attachment to peers," but this is variously referred to as "sensitivity to others," "loyalty," "warmth and intimacy," "cohesion," "solidarity," and "dependence on peers." (2) Many of the earlier studies relied primarily on direct observation of delinquent gangs. This methodology allowed a detailed and dynamic analysis of gang behavior. However, in the absence of meaningful control groups, it is impossible to determine whether the relational qualities observed (positive or negative) would not also be found within other adolescent friendship networks. (3) More recent surveys, while providing a comparison across different levels of self-reported delinquency, have relied on very narrow measurement strategies, usually tapping only one aspect of peer involvement (e.g., time spent with friends) or skirting the friendship relations entirely.³

Another typical measurement strategy confounds peer relationships with delinquency involvement itself, focusing on the extent to which the youth is involved with delinquent peers (see, e.g., Short 1957; Jensen 1972; Elliott, Huizinga, and Ageton 1982). A related method has been to compare the subjects' levels of self-reported delinquency directly with the reported levels of their friends' involvements (e.g., Poole and Regoli 1979). These studies are important in that they usually demonstrate high levels of behavioral concordance within friendship networks. We know that delinquents spend considerable time with other delinquents, but the qualities of their relations remain unclear.

While research on the relationship between adolescent male friendship processes and delinquency is, at the least, inadequate, there are almost no

³ Hirschi (1969), e.g., based his conclusions about delinquents' lack of attachment to friends primarily on responses to two items (the amount of respect for best friends' opinions and whether respondents would like to be the kind of person that their best friends are). Wiatrowski, Griswold, and Roberts (1981), in another test of control theory, relied on two items about the "importance" of friends and the importance of spending time with friends. Because these items were not predictive of delinquency, they concluded that this reflected "the unimportance of friends to delinquent youth" (p. 535).

data about females. The few descriptive studies of gangs that include females as members are old (e.g., Bowker, Gross, and Klein's [1980] analysis of unpublished 1964 data) or very narrow, usually centering on females' marginal participation in male gangs or groups (Miller 1973). Nevertheless, the female delinquent is even more likely than her male counterpart to be placed on the socially disabled list: "The need to 'belong' is as great as hunger and thirst. Yet to the youngster who already has problems—either because of belonging to a discriminated racial group or because of inner problems or because of a difficult family relationship—the way to friendship groups is almost totally closed or the hurdles so great she cannot take them" (Konopka 1966, p. 88).

Due to her basic "incapacity for friendship with contemporaries" (p. 123), the delinquent girl will cope with her incredible loneliness by temporarily "losing [herself] in the crowd" (p. 123) or creating a love relationship to fill an interpersonal void. Rittenhouse (1963) provided some empirical support for this view in her finding that "relational strivings" were more characteristic of the delinquent girls she studied, while "status striving" was more typical of delinquent boys. Wattenberg (1956), in an examination of case files of boy and girl "repeaters," found that in their relations with peers, boys "were more often reported to be active in games, members of gangs and getting in trouble with their gangs. More of the girls quarreled with their peers and were 'lone wolves'" (p. 143). Campbell, in a cogent review of existing female delinquency literature, concludes that "there is a complete absence of any theoretical formulations to explain group delinquency among girls. . . . Most writers on the subject have proceeded from the assumption that delinquent girls are isolates and misfits" (1980, p. 380).

CONCEPTUALIZING FRIENDSHIP

Our goal here is to examine characteristics of the friendships of male *and* female adolescents who vary in the extent of their involvement in delinquent behavior. We begin with two assumptions: (1) Friendship relations are complex social bonds that will likely always be described incompletely with reference to a single dimension or construct such as "attachment" or "importance of friends," and (2) attempting to derive a set of comprehensive and meaningful friendship components exclusively from the delinquency literature would probably be misguided intellectual loyalty. This is so because most of our knowledge of how previous delinquency theorists viewed these relationships must be gleaned from bits and pieces of rather evocative imagery (Konopka's [1966] delinquent girls lost in the crowd, the fraternity atmosphere of Thrasher's [1963] gang boys, the excessive dependence of Cohen's [1955] frustrated lower-class boys) in-

stead of from a comprehensive examination of what these friendships were really like.

The developmental and social-psychological literature offer more fully developed analyses of how friendship is actually experienced by adolescents and of similarities and differences in the friendship styles of males and females. Our own interviews with a wide variety of adolescents were also helpful in pointing us away from “our childhood fantasies” or, worse yet, our own middle-aged perspectives on what youthful friendships are or should be like. In addition to these interviews and the developmental literature, exchange theory provided a useful orienting framework. As Burgess and Huston note, “an explicit look at exchange processes sets the stage for considering the relationship itself—rather than the individuals or the larger system as a unit of analysis” (1979, p. 9). A basic characteristic of adolescent friendships is that they are relatively voluntary.⁴ Thus, we need first to consider what the participants get out of the relationship, what they enjoy about it—in short, what are its *rewards*?

Exchange theory also underscores the importance of considering *reciprocal effects* in social interaction. Instead of viewing peer influence as a one-directional process (i.e., the monolithic group pressuring the adolescent to dress in a certain way, use drugs, have intercourse, etc.), this theory considers the actor as both recipient and producer of influence in the group (Burgess and Huston 1979).

Finally, exchange theory has also noted a tendency toward *imbalance* in relationships (Chadwick-Jones 1976). Intimacy should not be equated with the absence of problems or conflict in a relationship, nor should perfect reciprocity be a necessary criterion for friendship.⁵ As Rubin suggests, “Children’s friendships rarely contain only positive sentiments. Because they involve such extensive contact and interdependence, close friendships invariably give rise to negative feelings as well. . . . Among older children, although friends may be expected to be constantly loyal and supportive, to respect each others’ rights and needs, and to agree on just about everything, such expectations cannot be fulfilled in reality” (1980, pp. 73–74). It is important for us to include some of these presumably negative relational qualities because of the assumption that they

⁴ Kimmel (1974) suggests that reward-cost considerations may be most salient in adolescence, where friendship alliances often shift. In middle and old age, commitment and investment in relationships become more critical and may outweigh reward-cost calculations. But it is incorrect to regard peer affiliations as entirely voluntary. Many adolescents whom we interviewed expressed a desire to change or at least expand their friendships, but for a variety of reasons (especially those concerning the feelings of existing friends) they felt unable to do so.

⁵ Although Cicero defined friendship as “a complete accord on all subjects human and divine,” few relationships we know would qualify.

would be more typical of delinquent than of more conforming friendship groups.

Next we describe the specific elements of friendship that we derived from our general interest in capturing the reward structure of the groups, their characteristic patterns of interaction and influence, and the vicissitudes or the more problematic aspects of these relationships.

Rewards

McCall and Simmons (1978) outline three kinds of rewards present in intimate relationships: intrinsic rewards (those rewarding in themselves), extrinsic rewards (those having some value independent of the giver), and a third category, the support of role identities.

Intrinsic rewards.—One of the most basic intrinsic rewards of friendship is the opportunity it provides for conversation and the sharing of confidences, or what has been referred to as *self-disclosure*. Chaikan and Derlega (1976) contend that as interpersonal exchange progresses from superficial to intimate levels, the information exchanged is a “barometer of the state of the relationship” (p. 184). According to Jourard, “the amount of personal information that one is willing to disclose to another appears to be an index of the closeness of the ‘relationship,’ and of the affection, love and trust that prevails between two people” (1971, p. 33). In order to fit the image of having cold and brittle relationships delinquents should be less likely than other adolescents to share privacies with one another. Are they?

In addition, research suggests that females disclose more information and more intimate information than males (Pederson and Higbee 1969; Jourard 1971; Marks and Giordano 1978; but see Davidson, Balswick, and Halverson 1980). But do delinquent girls (also consistent with existing literature) evidence a departure from the generally high self-disclosure rates characteristic of other adolescent females?

Basic feelings of *caring and trust* offer a further index of intimacy. Chadwick-Jones (1976) suggests that trust is an essential element in differentiating social from economic exchange. Following Blau’s lead, he also notes how “trust tends to build up gradually through cumulative commitment to a relationship.” Bell (1981) found support for this in interviews in which respondents indicated that trust was the most important element in their friendships. It is thus important to gauge the extent to which delinquents may differ from other adolescents on what might be called a basic underpinning of intimate friendships.

Extrinsic rewards.—McCall and Simmons define extrinsic rewards as “events and objects [that] are gratifying to the individual simply because they are useful to him in pursuing his various endeavors. Money, labor,

information, material goods, privileges, favors, social status, all these elements and more may be helpful to him in carrying out his various enterprises" (1978, p. 147). Our interviews with adolescents suggest a number of ways in which friends "use" one another, even while they protest that this is not a primary basis of their relationships. We include questions about the extrinsic benefits youths may derive from their friendships in order to emphasize that, in addition to their qualitative characteristics, these friendships also have an agenda or content. Sentiments like caring and trust aside, a friend is also someone to sit with in the cafeteria, to copy a math problem "off of," or to get the car when you cannot. These types of benefits derived from a relationship afford a somewhat less lofty view of adolescents' connectedness, or interrelatedness. Cohen alludes to the intrinsic/extrinsic rewards distinction in noting that "the working class child [and by inference the delinquent boy] is more dependent emotionally and for the satisfaction of many practical needs upon his relationship to his peer groups" (1955, p. 101). But do delinquent youth derive more and/or different kinds of extrinsic or practical benefits from their friendships than their less delinquent counterparts?

Identity support.—McCall and Simmons suggest that a crucial function in any intimate relationship is that of providing identity support. As symbolic beings, we fancy ourselves in a variety of roles, but it is important that others provide us with enough support to keep up these visions of the roles that we rank highly. This addition to the usual intrinsic-extrinsic rewards distinction is attractive, given the important identity work that occurs during adolescence: "The adolescent is about to crystallize an identity and for this needs others of his generation to act as models, mirrors, helpers, testers, foils" (Douvan and Adelson 1966, p. 179; see also Foot, Chapman, and Smith 1980; Seltzer 1982; or even Thrasher, who notes how "the boy sees himself through the gang's eyes" [1963, p. 207]). Thus a group will be rewarding to the extent that it provides a comfortable arena in which to explore identity concerns. One woman interviewed by Bell nicely summarizes the *self-confirmation* role of friendships: "My friends give me a sense of who I am. They do this by letting me express myself and sort of reflect off of them. What I mean is that I can be whoever I want to be and they let me be me" (1981, p. 15).

Are delinquent youths less likely to believe they receive this kind of identity support from friends than adolescents involved in more conforming peer relationships?

Patterns of Interaction and Influence

It is important to examine more closely the particular nature and extent of the interactions within friendship networks because these can be taken as

additional indexes of interdependence and of the degree to which we can legitimately assign the primary group level to them. They also have an advantage (in terms of measurement) in being grounded more in behavior than in sentiment. A basic feature of interaction is the sheer amount of *time* friends spend in each others' company. Although time is in itself a rather qualitatively neutral index of friendship, it is unlikely that youths who have extremely low rates of interaction have the same kinds of opportunities to experience the rewards of friendship, both tangible and intangible, as those who interact more frequently. Do delinquents spend less time with friends than do other adolescents?⁶

A second characteristic that may differentiate friendship styles is how long the relationships last—their *stability*. This appears to relate directly to the “cold and brittle relationships” argument (presumably, what is brittle is more likely to break). Short and Strodtbeck and even Thrasher have commented on the fluidity and instability of many of the gang affiliations they observed. But should delinquents' friendships be characterized as any more ephemeral than those of less delinquent youth? We would caution here against necessarily regarding greater stability as being inherently somehow more positive, especially during adolescence. Bigelow and LaGaipa (1980) note, for example, that children's friendships are not typically characterized by stability until about the age of 16, and they criticize the use of such words as “breakdown” and “instability” in describing children's friendships as implying an unnecessary value judgment.⁷

A third qualitative characteristic of friends' interaction patterns is defined as the degree to which individuals are affected by their friends in making choices about their own behavior—what is usually called *peer pressure* or influence. We have already discussed the presumed link between intimacy and the possibilities for influence, what Thrasher has called “control through rapport” (1963, p. 209). Are delinquents more likely to feel under pressure from friends, and, considering the reciprocal

⁶ Cohen (1955) suggests that lower-class youths (and, by inference, delinquents) spend *more* time in each other's company than middle-class youths who are often involved in a more formal and varied agenda (such as clubs or athletics). On this dimension, Hirschi appears to be in agreement. In the course of suggesting that if cohesiveness is defined as mutual attraction or respect, delinquent gangs would be characterized by low cohesiveness, he notes that “if cohesiveness is defined by the frequency or duration of interaction among group members, the ‘cohesiveness’ of the delinquent gang is no doubt often impressive” (1969, p. 160).

⁷ Sex differences in stability have also been noted. Bell believes that boys' relationships tend to be more stable and lasting, which he hypothesizes may stem from a lower degree of intensity and hence less chance for conflict. Viewed this way, then, stability is produced by a relative lack of intimacy.

nature of group influence, are they more, or less, likely to believe that they exert social power in these friendship networks themselves?

The Vicissitudes of Friendship⁸

Roll and Millen (1979) have noted the tendency within the existing literature on friendship to see the world of friendship through rose-colored glasses and “were struck by the absence of any attention paid to the everyday travails of friendship” (1979, p. 259). Other writers have alluded to the fragility and vulnerability of children’s friendships (Hartup 1975) or characterized them as “tempestuous and changeable” (Douvan and Adelson 1966), but empirical work has been restricted to their more positive aspects. We need to include attention to the strains and imbalances fostered by intimacy as well as to its more obvious satisfactions. We have included three such problem areas. The first is *conflict*, or the extent to which friends have arguments or disagreements with each other. This dimension also figures in the cold and brittle relationships argument. Empey (1967), for example, points to the practice of sounding (trading insults) in delinquent groups and suggests that “primary groups, ideally are supposed to provide warmth and support. With the constant sounding that goes on it is questionable whether lower-class gangs are conducive to close friendships.” It is not clear that conflict is necessarily antithetical to intimacy. Indeed, in our own earlier study of friendships of college students, we found that both degree of contact and comfort with friends were associated with higher levels of disagreement (Marks and Giordano 1978; see also Rubin 1980, p. 74). Moreover, it has not been established empirically that the levels of conflict and discord in delinquent groups are any higher than those found within other adolescent friendship networks.

A second problematic aspect of friendship is *imbalance*, which encompasses a lack of equality or reciprocity in the friendship, as well as feelings of jealousy or competition. As with conflict, there is no a priori reason to believe that imbalanced relationships cannot be rewarding or that participants in such relationships will not influence each other. Reisman (1979), for example, makes the distinction between friendships of reciprocity and friendships of receptivity. He contends that the latter are no less important (especially, of course, to the more dependent participant) as a friendship form than are more perfectly reciprocal relations. Thus, the notion of imbalance simply offers another mechanism through which we can better define the contours of these friendships.

⁸ We borrowed this term from Roll and Millen (1979).

A third problematic aspect of friendships we term *loyalty in the face of trouble*. Thrasher (1963) notes that "loyalty is a universal requirement in the gang, and squealing is probably the worst infraction of the code. . . . Most boys prefer to take a beating rather than stool on their associates" (p. 202). Douvan and Adelson (1966) also found that loyalty was a particularly important component of friendship; boys in particular often defined a friend as "one who will support you when trouble comes" (p. 196). (In their view this usually meant trouble with adult authority, parents, teachers, police, etc.) Are there significant differences between delinquents and other adolescents in the salience of this kind of loyalty?

THE NEED FOR COMPARATIVE DATA

Our research strategy here involves an assessment of the differences in the friendship experiences of youths who represent a broad range of delinquency involvement. However, within this general framework, it is particularly important to examine the extent and nature of sex differences. Historically, the female offender has been neglected at both the theoretical and empirical levels, but, nevertheless, highly stereotypical images flourish in the literature. These data will allow us to confront directly the image of the female delinquent as a lonely and asocial misfit.

We also see a real need to compare the friendship experiences of black with those of white adolescents, in general and in relation to delinquency involvement. The delinquency literature has not often tackled race differences (as evidenced by the sheer volume of studies that exclude all minorities from the analysis). Studies that do include attention to race have primarily been outcome oriented (more interested in the differences or similarities in *rates* of delinquency involvement by racial category than in the processes leading to those outcomes). The friendship literature is also surprisingly weak in this area. Most of the research studies on adolescent friendships have used samples of whites or, if they have included race, have emphasized the nature and dynamics of cross- versus same-race interactions and friendships, particularly in the school setting (Singleton and Asher 1979). While this interest no doubt stems from concerns about school desegregation and interracial acceptance, the fact that most friendships tend to be intraracial suggests the need for more work on the everyday social networks of black (as well as white) youths and on the ways in which these friendship patterns link up to other behaviors (including but not limited to that of delinquency involvement). (See Kleinman and Lukoff [1978], who also see a need for this kind of analysis.)

The Sample

The data for this study were derived from personal interviews conducted in 1982 with a sample ($N = 942$) of all youth 12–19 years of age living in private households in a large north central SMSA. A multistage modified probability sampling procedure was employed, in which area segments were selected with known probability. Census data were used to stratify by racial composition and average housing value. Within segments, eligible households and respondents were selected to fill specified sex and race quotas. The respondents were equally divided among males and females, blacks and whites, and lower/middle socioeconomic status respondents. This sampling strategy reflects our interest in simultaneously examining differences in friendship patterns based on ethnicity and gender as well as in delinquency involvement.⁹

The Measures

Our data come from respondents' own perceptions of the nature and characteristics of their relationships instead of from direct observations of friendship networks (the methodological strategy that was more typically employed in much of the early gang research). Either methodology involves "letting go" of potentially important data. Direct observation can most effectively capture the dynamic element of interactions and/or relationships, and it can provide a richer contextual base from which to understand group life. Observational strategies also allow the researcher to check on whether the verbal descriptions youth offer in an interview setting correspond to the reality of their ongoing friendship relations. This discrepancy is perhaps most beautifully illustrated in Liebow's (1967) discussion of friendships on Tally's corner. Although the neighborhood men accorded great importance to their friendships, Liebow observed and documented how certain harsh realities, economic and otherwise, often intruded on their more idealistic perceptions of intimacy.

But the interview approach also has some important advantages. In this research, we are most interested in how youths experience the rewards and vicissitudes of friendship. Some aspects of this must be viewed as subjectively experienced or determined (and to remove all the subjective elements from analysis would represent another kind of distortion). Thus, the adolescents themselves (and not outside observers) are particularly well placed to determine whether they have the trust of their friends,

⁹ For further details regarding sampling procedures, see Cernkovich, Giordano, and Pugh (1983).

can be themselves in their presence, or sometimes feel left out or marginal.

Some of our other dimensions do have a more objective base. Here we have tried to avoid the global and socially desirable in favor of the specific and, wherever possible, the behavioral (e.g., a question such as "How often do you speak with your friends about the following subjects . . . ?" is preferable to "Do you feel that you and your friends can truly communicate with one another?"). Another general strategy has been to include specific attention to the more problematic aspects of relationships—conflicts, jealousy, and the like. The assumption that such problems are common to all relationships should also have the effect of moving respondents off the socially desirable "my friendships are perfect" response set.

Another advantage of this procedure is that it facilitates the kinds of comparisons that are much needed in theory development in criminology. Liebow, for example, observed a small group of lower-class black men living in a particular section of Boston. We do not know very much about the friendships of the women of Tally's corner, except in relation to each of the men. Neither do we know whether the kind of intimacy that Liebow observed, the levels of conflict, or even the discrepancies (between their ideal and real friendship patterns) would not also be found in more middle-class settings. Our sample size and characteristics allow us to specify the nature of similarities and differences by level of delinquency involvement without bracketing off the possible effects of sex and/or race-ethnicity.

The specific friendship items included in our final interview schedule were developed from unstructured interviews over a 14-year period with a variety of adolescent males and females. Interviews were conducted with youths who ranged in age from sixth graders through high school students, who varied in terms of delinquency involvement, location in the school prestige hierarchy, race, socioeconomic status, and so forth. Interviews were also conducted with institutionalized females and with youths on probation. In addition to these individual interviews, discussions were held with small groups of adolescent friend networks. These small groups served also as consultants throughout the period of developing the more structured interview schedule.

Another source of items was a pool of essays by high school and college students who wrote about things that they liked and disliked about their friends. An earlier study by Marks and Giordano (1978) and the developmental and delinquency literature were also sources for item development. A factor analysis of all the pooled items resulted in 13 distinct dimensions of friendship (see App. A for a complete list of the items that compose each scale). In addition to these qualitative dimensions, youths were asked about the *background characteristics* of their friends. At the

beginning of each interview, the respondent provided interviewers with a list of names (first names, nicknames, or initials, to assure anonymity) of the group of friends they usually hang around with.¹⁰ Respondents indicated whether each person listed was male or female and whether most of their friends were either older, about the same age, or younger than themselves. These background variables were included primarily as a check to determine whether there were basic differences in the composition of their friendship groups that might have influenced the qualitative characteristics we have outlined.

Delinquency involvement was measured by a 27-item self-report instrument that is a revised version of that used by Elliott et al. (1982). It contains a broad range of items that include minor as well as major offenses. However, we avoided the use of summated scale scores as the measure of delinquency involvement because of the wide range of seriousness captured by the items (with such a method youths who score in the high-frequency range on status or other nonserious offenses would have been equated with youths who have committed serious felonies). Instead, we developed a categorical offender typology that takes into account the dimensions of both frequency and seriousness. Five offender categories were defined as follows: (1) *Nonoffenders* are youths who have committed no more than one or two minor offenses and no major offenses during the past year. Minor offenses were defined as behaviors that would usually be treated as a misdemeanor (e.g., running away, petty theft, disorderly conduct), whereas major offenses were defined as those behaviors that would be treated ordinarily as felonies (e.g., grand theft, aggravated assault, breaking and entering). (2) *Low-frequency minor offenders* are youth who scored relatively low (under the median) on the minor offense scale and indicated they had committed no major offenses during the preceding year. (3) *High-frequency minor offenders* have a score above the median on the minor offense scale but admit no involvement in major offenses. (4) *Low-frequency major offenders* had a score below the median on the major offense scale. (5) *High-frequency major offenders* were defined as those who had a score above the median on the major offense scale.

¹⁰ We adopted this strategy instead of focusing on other social units (such as the best friends' dyad or the gang), because we are interested in the context in which most of the respondent's social activity actually takes place. Although restricting attention to the dyad has some methodological advantages (see Kandel 1980), it minimizes the role of the larger group and one's place in it. Also, the gang may be highly visible, but even gang members spend much of their time in smaller networks (see Short and Strodtbeck 1965). Differences between our findings and those of earlier researchers could reflect at least in part the use of this unit of analysis, whose size is essentially determined by the respondent.

For our purposes here, it is appropriate to consider 1 as the most conforming group, with a gradual increase in level of delinquency involvement to 5, which is the highest level of involvement. For example, although category 5 is defined solely on the basis of participation in serious offenses, we know that the majority of youths in this group have also participated in a wide range of nonserious or status offenses as well. (App. B presents the distribution of offender categories by race and sex.)

FINDINGS

Tables 1–3 present three-way analyses of variance for each of the components of friendship by sex, race, and level of delinquency involvement.¹¹ Because of the potential for age differences even within the period of adolescence (see, e.g., Honess 1979; Bigelow and LaGaipa 1980; Mannarino 1980; Sharabany, Gershoni, and Hofman 1981), age is controlled as a covariate.¹²

The Rewards of Friendship

Table 1 presents mean scores as well as *F*-values for the major comparison groups as they relate to the intrinsic, extrinsic, and identity support rewards of friendship.

The two intrinsic rewards scales—self-disclosure and, more particularly, caring and trust—are most relevant to the cold and brittle relationships argument. Contrary to what control theory would predict, there were no significant differences across increasing levels of delinquency involvement in the extent to which respondents believe their relationships contain these elements of caring and trust.

Although there was a significant difference in self-disclosure rates, it reflects a slightly *lower* self-disclosure rate among the least delinquent category, the nonoffenders. Sex differences on these scales are more pronounced. Females are much more likely to self-disclose in intimate ways and to characterize their friendships as consisting of caring and trust than are males.¹³ It is important to underscore the lack of interaction between

¹¹ Separate analyses of variance revealed no significant differences across levels of delinquency involvement in youths' descriptions of their groups' basic structural features, such as size, age, and sex composition. Thus, any qualitative differences found should represent more than a simple artifact of the structural makeup of these groups.

¹² For a discussion of age differences in friendship processes using the present data, see Kinney (1984).

¹³ There is also a race by sex interaction for the self-disclosure scale, produced primarily by the particularly high scores of white females.

TABLE 1
FRIENDSHIP REWARDS BY SEX, RACE, AND LEVEL OF DELINQUENCY INVOLVEMENT (Age Controlled)

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	INTRINSIC REWARDS				EXTRINSIC REWARDS				IDENTITY SUPPORT			
	Self-Disclosure ^a		Caring and Trust		Tangibles		School		Status Striving ^b		Self-Confirmation ^c	
	Mean	F	Mean	F	Mean	F	Mean	F	Mean	F	Mean	F
Sex:												
Female	3.04	17.15***	4.03	38.00***	1.61	1.85	3.42	32.38***	2.82	8.20**	1.89	6.60**
Male	2.82		3.72		1.71		3.09		3.02		2.08	
Race:												
Black	2.90	1.44	3.76	23.80***	1.60	7.28**	3.24	.53	2.94	.61	2.03	1.58
White	2.97		4.02		1.72		3.28		2.89		1.93	
Level of delinquency:												
1. Nonoffender	2.68	3.71**	3.75	1.14	1.27	21.73***	3.34	.59	2.62	5.04***	2.02	.54
2. Low-frequency minor	2.98		3.88		1.51		3.30		2.94		2.04	
3. High-frequency minor	2.97		3.98		1.74		3.29		2.85		1.91	
4. Low-frequency major	2.90		3.85		1.77		3.14		3.04		1.91	
5. High-frequency major	3.08		3.88		2.09		3.18		3.13		2.04	

^a Sex-by-race interaction ($F = 12.49$).***

^b Sex-by-race by delinquency interaction ($F = 2.49$).*

^c Race-by-delinquency interaction ($F = 2.55$). * A higher mean score indicates greater agreement that "they can't be themselves with friends."

* $P < .05$.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

TABLE 2
 PATTERNS OF INTERACTION AND INFLUENCE BY SEX, RACE, AND LEVEL OF DELINQUENCY INVOLVEMENT (Age Controlled)

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	LEVEL OF CONTACT ^a		STABILITY		PEER INFLUENCE			
	Mean	F	Mean	F	(Group → Actor)		(Actor → Group)	
					Mean	F	Mean	F
Sex:								
Female	3.21		5.09		2.54		2.42	
Male	3.03	16.90***	5.66	5.53*	2.71	7.81**	2.60	3.08
Race:								
Black	3.08		5.82		2.52		2.55	
White	3.18	3.75	4.85	15.80***	2.74	19.80***	2.46	2.50
Level of delinquency:								
1. Nonoffender	3.00		4.75		2.43		2.15	
2. Low-frequency minor	3.15	1.78	5.54	.54	2.58	6.03***	2.41	9.77***
3. High-frequency minor	3.17		5.42		2.66		2.48	
4. Low-frequency major	3.10		5.52		2.64		2.75	
5. High-frequency major	3.18		5.37		2.83		2.82	

^a Delinquency-by-sex interaction ($F = 3.10$).

* $P < .05$.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

TABLE 3
VICISSITUDES OF FRIENDSHIP BY SEX, RACE, AND LEVEL OF DELINQUENCY INVOLVEMENT (Age Controlled)

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	CONFLICT		IMBALANCE		LOYALTY IN THE FACE OF TROUBLE ^a	
	Mean	F	Mean	F	Mean	F
Sex:						
Female	2.41		2.55		3.28	
Male	2.73	5.50*	2.71	10.17***	3.14	4.85*
Race:						
Black	2.58		2.62		3.35	
White	2.54	.35	2.64	.46	3.06	42.91***
Level of delinquency:						
1. Nonoffender	2.10		2.50		3.58	
2. Low-frequency minor	2.53	5.26***	2.71	3.36*	3.35	20.43***
3. High-frequency major	2.61		2.55		3.13	
4. Low-frequency major	2.69		2.64		3.02	
5. High-frequency major	2.90		2.72		2.93	

^a Delinquency-by-race interaction ($F = 5.15$). *** A higher score reflects a greater likelihood that the respondent would drop friends if they were headed for trouble or would be unlikely to lie to protect them (i.e., the higher the score, the less loyal).

* $P < .05$.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

sex and delinquency in these respects: There were no significant differences among females in rates of caring and trust across the five levels of delinquency, and females at almost every level of delinquency (except black females in the low-frequency minor offender category) are more intimate than are males at a similar level of delinquency involvement (See fig. 1).

In addition to these sex differences, a significant main effect for race was obtained: Whites in our sample scored significantly higher on the caring and trust scale than did blacks.

The analysis of covariance of extrinsic rewards revealed, as expected, that youth in the more highly delinquent categories are much more likely to say that they reap certain tangibles from their relationship than are less delinquent youth. (This is one dimension that obviously did not escape our general desire to be independent of delinquency involvement.) What is perhaps more revealing is that there was no significant difference across delinquency levels in the extent to which youths discussed or related to each other on school matters (although the mean scores are somewhat lower for the major offender categories, this difference is not significant). This suggests that, although such youths may not be as school oriented or successful as nondelinquents, youths who do engage in delinquency have not abandoned the concerns of school altogether. Interestingly, more delinquent youth also scored higher on the status-striving scale, which indexed the degree to which they received certain rather adult-oriented benefits from their friendships (e.g., discussions of job plans for the future, help in meeting members of the opposite sex, etc.).¹⁴

With regard to sex and race differences, the only main effect for race occurred in the area of tangible rewards, where whites were more likely to agree that their friends helped them. Sex differences in the analysis of extrinsic rewards consisted of a much higher score for females in the extent to which they discussed and relied on friends for school-related matters and a significantly higher score by males on the status-striving scale. The lack of any significant difference by gender on the tangibles scale should not be overlooked: females indicated that they are about as likely as males to get drugs or alcohol from friends, to hang out at a friend's house when parents are gone, and so on. Although females as a group are not as delinquent as males, these responses do point to a relatively greater degree of participation by girls and their friends in what are usually considered "hedonistic/youth culture activities" than is generally assumed.

In the extent to which respondents felt a lack of identity support (felt

¹⁴ There is a three-way interaction on the status-striving scale, the result primarily of the higher scores of black male delinquents.

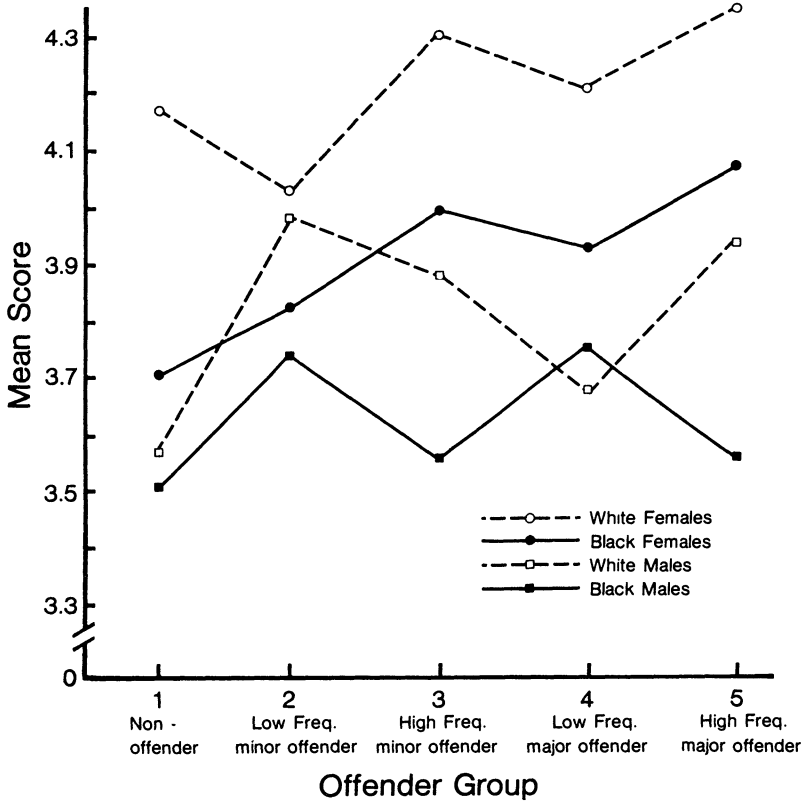


FIG. 1.—Levels of caring and trust by delinquency involvement, race, and sex

that they couldn't be themselves within their friendship groups) there were no significant differences across levels of delinquency involvement. That is, more delinquent youths believe that they enjoy the rewards of self-confirmation within friendships about as much as less delinquent adolescents do. Similarly, there were no main effects for race; however, as a subgroup, males were significantly more likely to believe that they couldn't be themselves while with their group.¹⁵

Patterns of Interaction and Influence

As table 2 suggests, there were no significant differences across delinquency levels in the frequency of reported interaction with friends. Fe-

¹⁵ A significant delinquency-by-race interaction is produced by the somewhat higher agreement of blacks with a higher delinquency score.

males do report higher levels of contact; however, this difference is in large part attributable to their much higher rates of "talking on the phone with friends."¹⁶ Although the relationships of delinquents have often been described as tenuous and unstable, we find no significant differences across delinquency levels in the length of time respondents reported being friends. On the other hand, main effects were found for both race and sex. Consistent with Bell's (1981) research, males reported that they had been friends for somewhat longer average times. In addition, the friendships of blacks were found to be significantly more stable than those of white youths.

In general, the findings reported above suggest a lack of significant differences across many qualitative indexes in the ways in which youths who vary significantly in delinquency involvement describe the levels of intimacy and interaction within their friendship groups. However, delinquent youth did report higher levels of susceptibility to peer influence than did their less delinquent counterparts (See table 2). A higher level of susceptibility was also reported by whites and males in our sample.

In addition to reporting a significantly greater level of susceptibility to peer influence, we also obtained an interesting main effect for the reciprocal peer influence measure. Delinquents were significantly more likely to believe that they "often pressured their friends to behave in certain ways" than were the less delinquent youths. Males were also slightly more likely to believe that they exerted social power, as were blacks, but these differences were not significant.

The Vicissitudes of Friendship

Regarding the extent to which disagreement or conflicts were found in these friendships (see table 3), there was a significant main effect for delinquency: delinquent youths reported higher levels of disagreement than did less delinquent adolescents. Males also reported significantly higher levels of conflict, whereas there were no differences in conflict levels reported by black in contrast to those reported by white adolescents.

In addition, there was a significant difference by delinquency in the scale indexing feelings of imbalance (as well as jealousy and competition in the group), but the means do not form a simple linear pattern. There were no main effects for race, but males were more likely as a group to experience these feelings.

¹⁶ There is also a significant sex-by-delinquency interaction, which is produced by the relatively low contact scores of nonoffender males.

Finally, the more delinquent youths, not unexpectedly, believed that they would be more loyal to their friends in the face of trouble. (This is another scale in which the findings should not be altogether surprising, given the likelihood that delinquents may have had more previous experience with trouble, lying to police, etc.). On the other hand, blacks, as well as females, scored somewhat lower on these items, indicating they would be less likely either to stick by friends heading for trouble or lie to protect them.¹⁷

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this article, we have developed several dimensions along which to make basic comparisons of the qualities and behaviors that characterize adolescents' friendships. The factor analysis of all the pooled friendship items corroborated our suspicion that it is impossible to capture the essence of these relationships using a single attached-unattached, or positive-negative, dimension. Nevertheless, these friendship components have allowed us to examine the validity of many of the images about delinquents' relationships that have emerged from our major delinquency theories.

The data present a picture more complex than that provided by control theorists, who have depicted the friendships of delinquents as "exploitive rather than warm and supportive" (Empey 1982, p. 273) or, alternatively, by earlier subcultural theorists who may have idealized the gang as a noble fraternity characterized only by camaraderie and we-feeling. Overall, we find that youths who are very different in their levels of involvement in delinquency are nevertheless quite similar in the ways in which they view their friendship relations. There were no differences in the average length of time respondents reported being friends (stability) or in the ongoing frequency of their interactions (contact). Delinquents were somewhat more likely than their less delinquent counterparts to share privacies with one another (self-disclosure) and were about as likely to believe that they can "be themselves" while in the company of these friends (self-confirmation). Contrary to the central assertion of the cold and brittle relationships argument, delinquents were no less likely than others to believe that they have the trust of friends and that these friends "really care about them and what happens to them."

At the same time, delinquents did report significantly higher levels of disagreements (conflict) with friends. This finding is important in a methodological sense, in that it demonstrates that the delinquent respon-

¹⁷ A significant delinquency-by-race interaction is the result of the higher loyalty scores of white delinquents.

dents (as well as other subgroups, including males, who score higher on conflict) are capable of perceiving and describing their relationships in a relatively complicated way instead of adapting a uniformly positive or negative response set. That these adolescents are willing to talk about some negative aspects of their relationships gives added weight to the validity of their more positive responses. But beyond this methodological note, what meaning should be attached to these conflict scores? One interpretation is that these responses represent at least partial support for the control theory conception of delinquent friendships. But there is an alternative explanation. Viewed in the contexts of the levels of contact, self-disclosure, and caring and trust already reported, the somewhat higher conflict levels may be taken as additional indicators of intimacy and the importance of the friendships to these youths. A more neutral conclusion is that these results simply reflect a different friendship style that should not be viewed as either positive (attached) or negative (cold and brittle). Another difference in style is reflected in the greater emphasis on loyalty in responses of the more delinquent youths. A stronger belief in such values as lying to protect friends may be based more on their greater familiarity with such situations than on a particularly deep fraternal bond or code (à la Thrasher).

An examination of what we might call the interactive content of the friendships also reveals a mixed pattern. Delinquents indicated that they were more likely to reap certain tangible as well as social (status-striving) extrinsic benefits from their friends, but there were no significant differences found for the extrinsic rewards scale measuring school concerns. The higher scores on two extrinsic rewards scales do not indicate that delinquents' relations are inherently more important (or extrinsic) than are those of less delinquent youth. We obviously did not exhaust the list of all the extrinsic rewards youth might derive from friends. But taken together, the scores of delinquent youth on *both* intrinsic and extrinsic factors suggest that delinquents, at least as much as other adolescents, derive a variety of significant benefits from their friendship relations.

On the basis of these findings, we would reverse Hirschi's previously quoted statement concerning the link between attachment and influence. It is reasonable to conclude that when adolescent friendships are relatively warm and intimate and provide some combination of intrinsic, extrinsic, and identity support functions for the participants, actors are likely to exert considerable influence upon each other. An examination of the pattern of responses of group 1 (the nonoffenders) is illustrative. On almost every dimension, members of this most conforming group are least attached to friends. Generally, they have the lowest levels of interaction, the lowest levels of caring and trust, the lowest rates of self-disclosure; also, they are the least likely to admit to the group's influence on their

own behavior. In contrast, the more delinquent groups are more likely to believe that they may be influenced by friends and that they exert considerable influence on the group. This finding is important, in that it suggests a pattern of mutual reinforcement within these groups rather than a one-way influence process. The control theory conception of peer attachment may have emerged largely as a reaction against the earlier image of the delinquent group as being all powerful in its effects. The individual actor seemed to be a passive agent who, on entering the group, took on its attitudes and values.

The findings presented here are consistent with the contention of control theory that individuals may bring certain delinquent values to the group at the outset. This would explain youths' responding that they often pressure their friends, as well as the reverse. Although we have not dealt directly with the important issue of what causes the initial attraction to the delinquent or any group, most of the developmental/friendship literature favors the concept of a similarity in values (value homophily) preceding entrance into the friendship. But we believe with Kandel (1980) that there are important processes that continue to work once the individuals have been drawn together; elements of mutual reinforcement and influence that strengthen delinquent patterns beyond what would be expected from their initial values. As Hirschi himself concludes, "there are group processes important in the causation of delinquency whose automatic operation cannot be predicted from the characteristics of persons" (1969, p. 230). This attempt to modify his earlier position about the role of peers is not linked to control theory or quoted as often as are his data that empirically demonstrated a lack of attachment in delinquent friendships. The data presented here seriously contradict the lack-of-attachment thesis. Other contributions of control theory (namely, the view that important processes such as family attachment precede the group's influence) might be integrated with the somewhat more complicated images of the delinquent and his friends that emerge from this study.

Sex Differences

It is important to view even the significant differences across delinquency categories against the often more dramatic variations in friendship style and influence attributable to the basic demographic variable of sex. The experiences associated with gender in our society appear to frame the style and content of friendships. Females, regardless of their level of involvement in delinquency, are likely to be involved in more intimate relationships. In addition to casting doubt generally on the cold and brittle relationships argument, these data also question the image of the female delinquent as a lonely and asocial misfit, unable to establish ade-

quate peer relations. The similar or generally higher scores of females on these friendship dimensions also call into question a popular explanation for the overall gender differences in criminality, namely, that females are not as peer oriented as are their male counterparts: "Sutherland maintains that most criminal behavior is learned within intimate personal groups. . . . The family has traditionally been the group with which females are most intimately connected, even during adolescence. They are also likely to be more carefully supervised within the family. If crime is learned within intimate personal groups, and for most females the crucial primary group is a restrictive family, they are much less likely to learn criminal behavior" (Leonard 1982, p. 107).

The data here (and in other developmental studies) would lead us to suggest that the statement above somewhat oversimplifies the importance of peer friendships to adolescent girls. Females spend as much (if not more, counting phone conversations) time in the company of their friends as do males. They reap many rewards, both intrinsic and extrinsic, from these friendships. Therefore, rather than discount their peer involvements, we must discover more about the differential dynamics within these networks that seem to amplify delinquency in the case of boys but generally inhibit it among girls (but not always, because some girls do develop delinquent patterns). These data offer some clues. It will be recalled that males as a group were more likely to believe that friends exerted a variety of pressures on them; their conflict scores were also higher. If we conceive of delinquent acts as a set of behaviors requiring some risk taking or daring—that is, some sort of push (Short and Strodtbeck 1965)—it may be that the friendship styles of males are most conducive to the kind of group processes that move individual members to the point of collective action. In contrast, females are less likely to indicate that these overt pressures and conflicts characterize their relationships. These differences in the norms governing appropriate friendship style may serve to inhibit delinquency among females even in the presence of other factors that might otherwise promote it (e.g., poor family relations, economic marginality, contact with delinquent opportunities, and the like). Females who do become involved in delinquent acts, then, would have to adopt both a set of attitudes in which they saw delinquency as appropriate, possible, or desirable behavior (Harris 1977; Giordano 1978) and a friendship style in which they would encourage each other as a group to act on these orientations.

Race Differences

Variations in the friendship patterns of black and white respondents also suggest the possibility of ethnic differences in the role of group processes

in the etiology of delinquent behavior. At the risk of oversimplification, we would describe the responses of blacks as being similar in many ways to those of whites but also as reflecting a less intense friendship style. That is, blacks were less likely to believe that their friends pressured them to behave in certain ways, they were less likely to believe that they would lie to protect friends, and they scored significantly lower on the caring and trust scale. At the same time, their friendships had greater average stability than those of whites. As noted previously, there is very little literature examining the friendship patterns of black adolescents, but what we have found appears consistent with these findings. Berg and Medrich (1977) observed friendship patterns in a predominantly black low-income neighborhood and in an affluent white neighborhood. They found friendships in the former to be less exclusive and more spontaneous than those of the white youths. Iscoe and Harvey (1964) found that black youths were less likely to respond (in an experimental setting) to peer pressure on a task that involved counting a metronome click than were whites. They also found that the peak age at conformity occurred almost three years earlier for black than for white subjects. Finally, Billy and Udry (1983), in a study of factors affecting sexual behavior, found that among whites there was a more direct relationship between the sexual intercourse behavior of same-sex friends and respondents than for blacks in their sample. These few findings suggest the need to develop more refined theories that take into account differences in the salience of friendships and in the style of being friends for black in contrast to white youth. Our speculation is that, even though delinquent acts might be equally likely to occur within a group context, peer pressure will play a more direct role in the delinquency of white than in that of black adolescents. However, more interview-observational data on the specific situational and social contingencies that produce delinquent action among blacks, in comparison with whites or other ethnic groups (as well as for males in contrast to females), is obviously needed.

Toward a Sociology of Nerds

Another line of research suggested by the present study is a more systematic follow-up of the adolescents who really can be classified as loners and misfits within the adolescent stratification system. We have shown here that delinquents appear to be fairly successful in negotiating and maintaining a set of social relationships (even if, as Sherif and Sherif [1964] note, it makes some people uncomfortable to think that "antisocial" people can actually be quite social). However, more research needs to be focused on those youths who score very low on these or similar friendship dimensions. We need to know a great deal more about the social (as

opposed to purely clinical or psychological) factors that give rise to being considered marginal or, worse, being ignored entirely. Following from this, we need to assess the consequences of this lack of peer support, particularly as it may be connected with emotional distress or illness. We would hypothesize that these outcomes are more likely results of poor peer adjustment than is delinquency involvement.¹⁸

APPENDIX A

Dimensions of Friendship

The factor analysis of all the pooled items yielded the following dimensions, each with a simple factorial complexity.

1. *Intrinsic rewards*

- a. Self-disclosure: How often do you talk to your friends about the following things? Questions or problems about sex; how your parents treat you; whether your parents understand you; things you have done about which you feel guilty (a revised version of West and Zingle's [1969] self-disclosure scale, for use with adolescent samples).
- b. Caring/trust: "I feel comfortable calling my friends when I have a problem; I can trust them—I can tell them private things and know they won't tell other people; they care about me and what happens to me; they're easy to talk to."

2. *Extrinsic rewards*

Because extrinsic rewards, almost by definition, have a content and are not value free, we attempted in the original extrinsic rewards scale to include a wide range—from the more pro-social ("They help me with my school work") to the more antisocial ("They get drugs for

¹⁸ Terms used by adolescents to refer to these marginal youth, along with their own descriptions of who belongs in these categories offer a glimpse into the potentially devastating consequences for individuals so labeled. Terms include: wastes or waste products, glugs, grimers, dirt balls ("didn't do drugs or alcohol but should have"), scum, trashheads, grubbers, nobodies ("they stay out of everyone's way"); speds ("the special education students—they can be found helping the janitor in the cafeteria"); queers ("nonathletic males with wimpy bodies who are not into partying"); the bores ("they make high grades, go to school dances, wear drab clothes, are usually ugly and just kind of there"); nerds ("don't dress in style, scummy looking, no one knows who they are, they don't know what alcohol and drugs are"); loners ("people who don't have any friends at all, just faces"); losers ("they just don't fit in anywhere. But people don't physically abuse them. Mostly they like to intimidate them and make fun of them while kiddingly trying to be their friend to impress other students"); "we never bothered to give them a name; they were just left completely alone" (these descriptions were taken from diagrams made by undergraduates who were asked to depict the stratification systems within their high schools).

me”). Other items were more neutral in that both delinquent and nondelinquent youth might, e.g., “talk about problems at school.” The factor analysis resulted in three distinct clusters of rewards:

- a. Tangibles: “They get a car for us to use; they get booze for me; they get drugs for me; when their parents go out, we hang out at their house.”
 - b. Help with school: This includes how often respondent talks with friends about how well he or she gets along with his or her teachers; how often respondent talks with friends about problems he or she has at school, and how often friends help with schoolwork.
 - c. Status striving: This includes how often respondent talks with friends about job plans for the future, gets their help in meeting people to date, feels that people look up to him more because of his
3. *Identity support*
 - a. Self-confirmation: “I can’t really be myself if I want to stay friends with these people.”
 4. *Patterns of Interaction*
 - a. Contact: How often during the week do you spend time with your friends other than at school? How often during the week do you speak to your friends on the telephone?
 - b. Stability: In general, how many years have you been friends with most of these people?
 - c. Peer influence (group → actor): Sometimes people are influenced by their friends as to how they act and think about things. Please tell me the number on this card that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements: I sometimes do things because my close friends are doing them; I sometimes do things because that’s what the popular kids in school are into; I sometimes do things so my friends won’t think I’m chicken; I sometimes do things because my friends give me a hard time or hassle me until I do them; I sometimes do things so my friends won’t think I’m immature; I don’t like being different or sticking out in a crowd so I sometimes go along with things for that reason; I sometimes do things not because my friends pressure me but just because I think it will impress them; I sometimes do things because I don’t want to lose the respect of my friends.
 - d. Peer influence (actor → group): “I probably pressure my friends to do things more than they pressure me; I sometimes talk my friends into doing things they really don’t want to do.”
 5. *The vicissitudes of friendship*
 - a. Conflict: How often do you have disagreements or arguments with your friends? How often do you purposely not talk to your friends because you are mad at them?

- b. Imbalance: “Sometimes they just won’t listen to me or my opinion.” “I think I like most of the people in my group more than they like me.” “Some people in the group are always trying to impress people outside our group.” “There is too much competition in the group.” “There is too much jealousy in the group.”
- c. Loyalty/trouble: If you found that your group of friends was leading you into trouble, would you still hang around with them? If your friends got into trouble with the police, would you be willing to lie to protect them? (Minor, n.d.)

APPENDIX B

TABLE B1
 DISTRIBUTION OF OFFENDER CATEGORIES BY RACE AND SEX (N = 884)

	Nonoffender (1)	Low-Frequency Status Offender (2)	High-Frequency Status Offender (3)	Low-Frequency Major Offender (4)	High-Frequency Major Offender (5)	Total (6)
Males:						
White	20	47	39	54	36	196
Nonwhite	28	74	49	41	41	233
Females:						
White	34	67	70	30	16	217
Nonwhite	48	78	48	38	26	238
Total	130	266	206	163	119	884

NOTE.—Because of their relatively small number, minorities other than blacks have been excluded from the present analysis.

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