CHAPTER 5

GROUPS
SOCIAL GROUPS

- The clusters of people with whom we interact in our daily lives
SOCIAL GROUPS

- **Two or more people** who:
  - Identify with one another
  - And interact

- People with **shared** experiences, loyalties, and interests
Social Groups
Your Groups
Not Groups

- Not every collection of individuals forms a group

- **Category**: People who share a status
  - Women
  - College Graduates
  - Baptists

- **Crowd**: Loosely formed collection of people
Category: Late Night Comedians
Category: Serial Killers
Crowd:
Loosely formed collection of People of people
"A huge crowd gathers outside The New York Times building in Times Square to hear play-by-play bulletins of the World Series between the Cleveland Indians and the Brooklyn Robins (Oct. 12, 1920)."
Primary & Secondary Groups

- Two types of social groups

1. PRIMARY GROUP:
   - Small social group
   - Personal
   - Lasting relationships

2. SECONDARY GROUP
   - Large
   - Impersonal
   - Pursue specific goal or activity
Primary groups:

- Personal
- Spend time together
- Tightly integrated
- Group is an end in itself
- View each other as unique & irreplaceable
Primary Groups
Families
Secondary Groups

- Goal Oriented
- Weak emotional ties
- Little personal knowledge
- Do not think of as “we”
Secondary Groups
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary Group</th>
<th>Secondary Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of relationships</td>
<td>Personal orientation</td>
<td>Goal orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of relationships</td>
<td>Usually long-term</td>
<td>Variable; often short-term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breadth of relationships</td>
<td>Broad; usually involving many activities</td>
<td>Narrow; usually involving few activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of relationships</td>
<td>As ends in themselves</td>
<td>As means to an end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Families, circles of friends</td>
<td>Co-workers, political organizations</td>
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Group Leadership

**TWO LEADERSHIP ROLES**

1. Instrumental Leadership

2. Expressive Leadership
1. Instrumental Leadership

Focus: Completion of tasks

- Makes plans
- Gives orders
- Gets things done
2. Expressive Leadership

- Focus: Group’s well-being
  - Personal ties
  - Minimizes tension & conflict
THREE LEADERSHIP STYLES

1) Authoritarian

2) Democratic

3) Laissez-faire
1. Authoritarian Leadership

- Provides clear expectations for:
  - What needs to be done
  - When it should be done
  - How it should be done
Authoritarian Leadership

- **Clear division** between leader and followers
- **Group members** obey orders
- Little affection from the group
- Effective in a crisis
2. Democratic Leadership

- Expressive
- Followers vote
  - Time consuming
- **Best when** followers knowledgeable
- Identify new ways to do things
- **Less successful** in crisis situations
3. Laissez-faire Leadership

- “Hands-off” style
- Little or no direction
- Gives followers freedom & authority

**Followers:**

- Determine goals
- Make decisions
- Resolve problems
Laissez-faire Leadership

- Effective when followers are:
  - Highly skilled
  - Experienced
  - Educated
  - Trustworthy
Group Conformity

- Groups influence behavior of members
  - Change attitudes & beliefs
  - Identify leader
  - Member fails to conform → loses credibility
Group Conformity Examples

“A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.”
-Ralph Waldo Emerson
GROUPTHINK
GROUPTHINK (Irving L. Janis)

- Tendency of group members to conform
  - Results in narrow view of an issue

Example:

- Challenger Space Shuttle disaster (1/28/86)
  - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfnvFnzs91s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfnvFnzs91s)
Groupthink

- Disregarded engineers’ concerns about faulty O-rings
- Launched shuttle anyway
Groupthink

- Sense of invulnerability

- Reluctant to:
  - Suggest alternatives
  - Be critical of other's ideas
  - Express unpopular opinions

- Desire for group cohesion hinders:
  - Critical thinking
  - Good decision-making
  - Problem solving
Groupthink Happens When There Is:

- Strong, persuasive leader
- High group cohesion
- Intense pressure from outside to make decision
Solutions to Groupthink

- Subgroups report to larger group
- Small groups & discuss
- Outside experts
- “Devil's advocate”
- “Second-chance meeting" final opportunity to choose another course of action
Reference Groups

- *In making evaluations and decisions*
- *Assessing our attitudes & behavior*
  - Groups to which we **belong**
  - Groups to which we do **not belong**
    - Strategy to win acceptance
Reference Groups
In-Groups and Out-Groups

**IN-GROUP**
- *Respect and loyalty*

**OUT-GROUP**
- *Competition or opposition*
In-Groups

- Pride and self-esteem
- Social identity
- Enhance status of group

For example:

- The U.S. is the best country in the world!
Out-Groups

- Increase self-image by:
  - Discriminating against out-group
  - Prejudiced against out-group

- For example:
  - British, French etc. are losers!
Group Size

- Influences Interaction
- **DYAD**: Group with 2 members
  - More intense interaction than in larger groups
  - Unstable
    - If either person leaves, group disappears
THE TRIAD: Social group with 3 members

- More stable than dyad
- Less intense interaction
- Fewer personal attachments
- More formal rules & regulations
- Coalition formation
- Power structure possible
Effects of Group Size on Relationships
Social Networks

- Web of weak social ties
- Includes people we *know of* or who *know of us*
  - With whom we *rarely interact*
Social Networks
Social Networks

Social Media Landscape
Social Networks

Network ties may be weak, but powerful resource

People’s colleges, clubs, neighborhoods, political parties, and personal interests
Gendered Social Networks

- **Women’s ties** not as powerful as typical “old boy” networks

- As gender equality increases
  - Male and female networks become more alike
# Theory in Everyday Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Approach to Groups</th>
<th>Case Study: Fraternities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONALISM</strong></td>
<td>Life in groups helps to regulate and give meaning to individual experience, contributing to social cohesion and stability.</td>
<td>Affiliation groups like fraternities help create social cohesion in the context of a larger, possibly alienating, university system by bringing young men with shared values together.</td>
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<td><strong>CONFLICT THEORY</strong></td>
<td>Group membership is often the basis for the distribution of rewards, privileges and opportunities in our society. An individual may be treated preferentially or prejudicially based on his or her group membership.</td>
<td>In-group and out-group dynamics can contribute to stereotyping and conflict as fraternity brothers develop an “us vs. them” perspective regarding other frats and non-Greeks.</td>
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<td><strong>SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM</strong></td>
<td>Group norms, values, and dynamics are generated situationally, in interaction with other members.</td>
<td>The pressure to conform to group culture (as in the cases of peer pressure and groupthink) can lead individuals to do things they might never do alone, and can have negative consequences, as in the case of fraternity hazing and binge drinking. It can also lead to positive actions, such as when fraternity members volunteer or raise money for charity.</td>
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