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Conformity and Peer Rejection

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

School of Psychology  
University of Ottawa  
Ottawa, Canada  
1994

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## Abstract

This study examined adolescent conformity involving peer rejection in the face of a negative group opinion. 192 adolescents rated the likability of a hypothetical peer prior to and after exposure to an apparently negative group opinion of the peer. The measure of conformity was derived from the difference between likability ratings of the hypothetical peer before and after exposure to the negative group norm. Subjects participated in either friendship cliques or non-clique groups, and expected either that the other group members would see their opinions (public condition) or that their opinions would be kept to themselves (private condition). Overall, subjects conformed more in clique groups than in groups comprised of non-clique members. However, this effect was dependent on both sex and surveillance variables. Females conformed the most when they both were in their cliques and expected their group members to see their opinions. Conversely, males conformed most when they were also in their cliques, but expected their opinions to be kept to themselves. Fear of negative evaluation did not correlate significantly with conformity behaviour. Implications of these findings for the role of conformity in peer rejection are discussed.

## Acknowledgements

Group behaviour has held fascination for me since my childhood. My doctoral dissertation has enabled me to examine, in a detailed and systematic manner, a specific process which has always been of intrinsic interest to me. Group behaviour is an important area of study, as we strive to understand ourselves, one another and ultimately to belong.

Completing my doctoral dissertation marks the completion of the last phase in my doctorate degree. This ending represents the accomplishment of the major long term goal of my adult life. It also spells a very exciting new beginning in my life. My commitments to understanding human behaviour and to serving others with compassion, which were formed before I began undergraduate work in Psychology, will continue to develop and grow, as will I, as a result of my work with others.

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## CONFORMITY AND PEER REJECTION

## Introduction

The aim of this study was to contribute to an understanding of the processes at work in the peer group when a child is rejected. Recently, researchers have begun to point out the limitations of the individual deficit model of rejection (see Hymel, 1986 for a review). This model identifies social information processing deficits in rejected children, and indicates how the resultant aggressive behaviour leads to social rejection (Dodge, McClaskey, & Feldman, 1985; Dodge, Murphy, & Buchsbaum, 1984; Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey, & Brown, 1986; Richard & Dodge, 1982). Some researchers, however, prefer to view negative social status in children as a result of multiple factors (Hymel, Wagner, & Butler, 1990). This perspective looks at the contribution the peer group makes to a child's social difficulties. It also emphasizes the social structure of the peer group and how biases related to prior reputation or social status operate within it (Hymel, 1986; Wagner, 1986).

The present study was designed to complement this recent multifactor model of rejection by investigating a group-level phenomenon that has not yet been explored. The specific process under investigation was

conformity by peers to a negative group consensus about a child.

Conformity to group norms develops in all groups to create stability and cohesion (Hartup, 1983). In the peer group, however, conformity to norms can have negative repercussions, because it may lead to the suppression of personal views held by children concerning the rejected child -- views that may be less negative than the views one may think are held by peers. Individual children may therefore disown their less negative views after exposure to the negative group opinion, perhaps for fear of disturbing group alliance. Thus, the rejected child's negative reputation may go unchallenged and thereby be perpetuated by the group.

The emphasis of the current study was not on children who become rejected because of aggressive behaviour (although a similar process may be involved in the rejection of aggressive children). Rather, the goal was to understand peer group processes contributing to negative status in children about whom others may initially feel ambivalent, or positive with some hesitancy. Children who may be susceptible to

this rejection process may be those who do not fit into the culture of the peer group through adopting its norms governing physical appearance, clothing style, jargon, and attitudes. In fact, children in the peer group may actually like some aspects of a child who has become rejected, but may not express these positive feelings because they assume their opinion is deviant and they do not want to disturb group alliance or risk rejection. Thus, a peer's motive to avoid being rejected from the group may be resolved by conforming to the negative group opinion.

In order to understand how this hypothesized process plays a role in peer rejection, it is necessary to review research from several areas. This review will begin with an examination of current thinking about peer rejection and the role of reputational biases within it. This will be followed by a discussion of peer group pressure and how it relates to peer rejection. The evolution and importance of cliques for the social identity of children and how this impacts on rejection will then be discussed, as well as how norms and values are developed and conformed to within cliques. Relevant research on

conformity in adults and children will be presented, followed by a discussion of conformity as a negative aspect of group membership. The research on conformity, while conducted with adults, may help us to understand similar group processes in operation in children's peer groups, such as conformity in rejecting a peer. This section will emphasize how group membership may lead to decisions with which individual group members do not agree, but to which they adhere in order to preserve group cohesion. According to Buys (1978), groups promote "a deterioration in individual thinking as group members begin to let others think for them" (p.123).

#### Peer Rejection: The Development of Current Thinking

The plight of the rejected child has received considerable attention during the past decade. Researchers have attempted to discover what factors lead to peer rejection and what can be done once rejection is attained. Traditionally, studies have focused on behavioural and social-cognitive differences between popular and unpopular children (see Dodge & Feldman, 1990; Ladd, Price, & Hart, 1990 for reviews),

suggesting that unpopular children's lack of social competence leads to their rejection (see Dodge, 1986; Hymel & Rubin, 1985, for reviews). Efforts have been made to modify rejected children's deficiencies in social functioning, to determine if this would result in greater peer acceptance (Oden & Asher, 1977; Gresham & Nagle, 1980; Ladd, 1981; Bierman & Furman, 1984; Bierman, 1986). Although such attempts have produced mixed results, it appears that improving social skills does not guarantee peer acceptance (La Greca & Santogrossi, 1980; Ladd, 1981; Hymel, 1986).

#### Reputation Biases

More recently, it has been suggested that reputation biases in the peer group play a role in peer rejection (Hymel, 1986; Wagner, 1986; Olthof, Ferguson & Luiten, 1989; Hymel et al., 1990; Waas & Honer, 1990). Proponents of this perspective contend that once a child's social status or reputation has been established, peers then respond and interact with that child in accordance with his or her reputation. Thus, children may bias their perception of a peer's behaviour such that it confirms and reinforces the

reputation (Hymel, 1986; Waas & Honer, 1990). Such biases include interpreting behaviour -- whether positive or negative -- as congruent with the rejected child's reputation (Hymel et al., 1990). Negative behaviours performed by unpopular peers are attributed to underlying negative intentions (Hymel, 1986). Positive behaviours, on the other hand, are explained away as the result of situational factors (Hymel, 1986; Wagner, 1986). Moreover, children may even selectively attend to and recall instances of negative behaviour displayed by rejected peers, and "forget" positive behaviours that such peers have displayed (Butler, 1984). Such interpretations of and explanations for behaviour -- especially for behaviour that is inconsistent with the negative reputation of a rejected child -- serve to maintain the bias held by a child's peers, even in the face of possible changes in his or her behaviour.

This research has given us a new frame through which to view rejection. It has changed the emphasis from the unpopular child as the sole architect of his own difficulties (Ladd, 1985), to what has come to be called an intergroup perspective on peer relations

(Wagner, 1986). The peer group is seen as a social system with an ingroup and an outgroup and the opinions of members of the ingroup are seen to play a role in a child's rejection (Wagner, 1986).

This new direction, while valuable in contribution, only focuses on cognitive biases that operate within individual members of the peer group. While regarding peer rejection as a function of biases by both the unpopular child and his or her peers, the new perspective views the biases as individual cognitive errors in social perception (i.e., Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983; Butler, 1984; Wagner, 1986; Hymel, 1986; Waas & Honer, 1990), and does not explore group biases.

In the present study the focus on reputational bias in the peer group was extended to include a process that functions at the group level -- specifically conformity to a negative norm. This process is hypothesized to occur when group members conform to one another's opinions as a result of their desire to maintain membership in the group. The process may also be fuelled by group members' desires not to appear different from the rest of the group, as

the desire to "fit in" is great during the adolescent period (Fine, 1980; Hallinan, 1980). It was felt that this extension would complement reputation bias effects described by Hymel et al. (1990), by adding a further dimension to the growing model in which peers contribute to the emergence and perpetuation of rejection.

#### Peer Pressure in Cliques

Group membership fulfills many vital roles for an adolescent. It expands his or her feelings of self-worth, prevents loneliness and gives an adolescent more influence than he or she would have as an individual (Newman & Newman, 1979). However, peer group affiliation comes at a cost, because adolescents must open themselves up to the pressures and social influences of the group, and must be willing to suppress their individuality (Newman & Newman, 1979). Although the group relies on some level of individual uniqueness to build roles within itself, it places considerable importance on conformity to its norms in order to bolster group structure and define group boundaries (Newman & Newman, 1979).

Coie (1990) speculated that when group boundaries are being defined, rejected children may serve a specific purpose. He suggested that they may serve as scapegoats for the group. Whatever the child's personal inadequacies, he or she may be rejected less because of his or her own behaviour and more for the peer group's need to have a target for negative affect. The result, Coie suggests, is an increased sense of cohesiveness and stability in the group.

It is during adolescence that peers become especially susceptible to pressure from group members (Berndt, 1979; Brown, Eicher, & Petrie, 1986) and this influence often manifests itself in cliques. Erikson (1968) views identity development as the major psychosocial crisis of adolescence, which leads adolescents to develop a sense of solidarity with peers in order to avoid being alienated as they diminish their reliance on parents. Adolescents describe peer group influence as affecting decisions about appearance, illicit acts, attitudes, and values (O'Brien & Bierman, 1988). Indeed, Berndt (1979) found that conformity to peers peaked at the sixth and the ninth grades.

One of the best examples of group functioning among adolescents is the friendship clique. Cliques hold a great deal of power in determining the status of children in the peer group, and it may be within the clique itself that the notion of rejection becomes salient to children. According to Allen (1981) it is only in groups of three or more individuals that group-level phenomena such as rejecting a deviate and majority pressure can emerge.

Brown, Eicher, and Petrie (1986) defined cliques as interaction-based peer groups of a small number of adolescents who "hang around" together and develop close relationships. They usually number from five to ten individuals, all of whom understand and appreciate each other better than do people outside the clique. Cliques come into existence over time, after children have observed and evaluated each other's behaviour and have interacted with one another. Once established, the continuation of group norms is ensured by choosing new members who are similar to existing members, and by adopting the behaviours of other group members to maintain sameness (Britt & Campbell, 1977). Indeed, some researchers have found the single most important

determinant of popularity in the peer group to be the extent to which one conforms to the group's norms by doing the same things, dressing the same way, and holding the same attitudes (Sebald, 1981). By contrast, one who is different in terms of physical characteristics, values, behaviour, and appearance tends to be seen as an "oddball" (Sebald, 1981).

Cliques are most often made up of children of the same sex and grade (Cairns, Perrin, & Cairns, 1985; Dunphy, 1963). Studies suggest that "cliquing" intensifies in early adolescence (Crockett, Losoff, & Peterson, 1984; Eder, 1985; Hallinan, 1980). This may be because attaining the social status of being popular is only available to a few children whereas membership in a clique is open to the majority of children (Hallinan, 1980). Indeed, membership in a clique may be more important to a child than being popular. As well, being excluded from a clique can impair an adolescent's self-esteem and can have negative consequences in terms of social and academic achievement (Hallinan, 1980).

Within the clique, pressure is exerted on individuals to conform to the group's norms and

standards (Newcomb, 1952; 1961). It is likely that clique members will adopt the attitudes and values of the group (Hallinan, 1980), even if they do not personally agree with them (Jersild, 1963). Given this, in the present investigation, greater conformity might be expected to occur in cliques than among children grouped with peers who were only acquaintances. It is felt that acquaintances would not have as much invested in maintaining sameness as those in cliques, and, therefore, would not conform to the same degree.

In order to understand the factors that lead individuals to conform to one another's attitudes it is necessary to review findings from empirical conformity studies.

## Conformity

### Research with Adults

Overall, the literature on conformity provides more evidence of the existence of conformity than reason for it. Conformity is generally described as "a changing of feelings, opinions, and behaviour on a

person's part as a result of physical or symbolic pressures exerted by a leader or a group" (Moscovici, 1985, p. 347). For instance, people often say or do things in a group that they would not consider doing on their own.

Research on conformity was pioneered by Asch's (1952; 1956) classic experiments on judging line lengths, wherein individuals were required to match the correct line, of several lines of varying lengths, to a reference line. Asch found that subjects gave responses that were contrary to their personal opinion and objectively incorrect simply because experimental confederates who answered before the subject unanimously gave that incorrect answer. In these studies, subjects were faced with a dilemma of choosing between their own belief and an opposing group response. The results of numerous similar studies have shown that people often conform to the unanimous group response, even when they realize that in doing so they ignore objective reality (Moscovici, 1985). Furthermore, the individual's tendency to conform does not appear to depend on the size of the group. Conformity has been shown to occur in groups as small

as three people or as large as 16 people (Allen, 1965; Asch, 1952).

Although Asch (1956) contended that people are rational and objective in their choices and do not blindly adopt others' suggestions, he was unable to find evidence for this notion. Rather, he found that, even when subjects were given the correct answer which confirmed their own perceptions, they were inclined to go along with the group choice which conflicted with the correct one. Sherif (1935) claimed that conformity arose when individuals were deprived of a social frame of reference and at the same time were confronted with an ambiguous situation. When this occurred, the independent estimates of several individuals converged and a norm was gradually established. Group members then used the norm as a reference point for decision making, which ensured stable judgments in the absence of objective coordinates.

Schachter (1951) and Festinger, Schacter, and Back (1950) introduced the notion of pressure toward uniformity to explain conformity. These researchers suggested that people behave in a manner that they believe will lead to smooth interaction because they

feel uncomfortable with differences between group members. Insko, Drenan, Soloman, Smith, and Wade's (1983) explanation for conformity was slightly different. They claimed that conformity to a group opinion was a joint function of an individual's concern with being liked by the group and his or her concern with making a correct judgment.

Situational and Subject Factors. Research in conformity and social influence has looked at various characteristics of group members and situations that affect conformity. Among these are sex, surveillance of one's opinion by others, the amount of support received for one's opinion, and the anticipation of future interaction with group members.

Investigations into sex differences in influenceability are reported frequently in the literature (see Eagly, 1978; Eagly & Carli, 1981 for reviews). Most studies have used high school or college students as subjects. Sistrunk and McDavid (1971) have been critical of findings of sex differences in conformity, stating that many studies contain a methodological artifact that biases the results toward greater conformity for women. They

claim that much of the content in the studies is masculine and because women are not as familiar with the content they conform to a greater degree than do men.

According to Eagly and Carli's (1981) meta-analysis of group pressure conformity experiments, women conform more than men only when other people will have surveillance over their opinions, but not when they are able to keep them private. Surveillance, they maintain, affects males' and females' conformity behaviour differently. When men's opinions are under surveillance by group members, they conform less than women, even to the extent that when men's or women's opinions are not under surveillance by the group, men's behaviour when under surveillance is the least conforming of all.

Eagly, Wood, and Fishbaugh (1981) speculated that sex functions as a status cue in newly formed groups: people who have higher status characteristics (males as opposed to females; older people as opposed to younger people) are not as easily influenced by those whose status characteristics are lower. Indeed, Eagly and Chrvala (1986) found that younger subjects conformed

more than older subjects. Eagly, Wood, and Fishbaugh (1981) offer this as a possible explanation for men's low rates of conformity when their opinions are under surveillance by others.

A second explanation for sex differences under surveillance conditions has revolved around gender-role expectations (Eagly & Chivala, 1986). Women are socialized to be more communal (i.e., concerned with others, and desiring to relate harmoniously with others), whereas men are encouraged to possess agentic qualities, such as self-assertiveness and mastery (Bakan, 1966). Men conform less under surveillance, therefore, because they have been socialized to be independent and not to be influenced by others in reaching a decision (Eagly, Wood, & Fishbaugh, 1981).

Maslach, Santee, and Wade (1987) have also tried to explain sex differences in conformity and draw conclusions which fit with the notions which Eagly and Chivala (1986) have proposed. They have claimed that an individual's gender role and not biological sex is a more exact predictor of conformity. They used personality scales which yielded masculinity and femininity scores, as well as gender role scores for

subjects. They found that those individuals who scored high on masculine gender role were much more willing to deviate from the group majority. Furthermore, these individuals, regardless of their biological sex, possessed a high level of individuation, meaning that they were willing to make decisions independent of the group. Conversely, individuals who scored high on feminine gender role were much more reluctant to deviate from the group. Scores high on feminine gender role did not correlate with individuation. These authors, therefore, regard an individual's possession of masculine versus feminine traits to be a major influence in conformity behaviour.

To summarize the findings, it appears that people who are not as susceptible to conformity are those who possess leadership qualities, regardless of their biological sex. They are not as influenced by others' opinions because they are more self-reliant. Maslach et al. (1987) refer to these people as "individuated". Eagly and Carli (1981) and Eagly and Chrvala (1986) have come to this same conclusion claiming that status is the differentiator between those who conform and those who do not. Men, they argue, are viewed by new

group members as possessing a higher status, are looked to by others for decision making and are, therefore, more willing to deviate from the group.

Another factor found to be important in conformity is social support. Julian, Ryckman, and Hollander (1969) found that the more the members of a group supported an individual on the judgments he or she made in prior interactions, the more likely an individual would be to conform. However, Hancock and Sorrentino (1980) found that the relation between social support and conformity was mediated by whether the individual anticipated future interaction with the group during the experiment. Thus, people whose position received no support from the group were more likely to conform if they anticipated future interaction with group members, but did not conform if they did not anticipate future interaction. On the other hand, people who received prior support from the group experienced increased feelings of confidence and acceptance and were less likely to conform to incorrect judgments if they anticipated future interaction with the group. Conversely, when group members received no prior support from their group, conformity to incorrect

judgments was greater if they anticipated future interaction with the group. The authors concluded that when future group activity is expected by group members, the tendency to reciprocate past treatment from the group is reduced.

Although it is generally assumed that people conform to group pressure only after a norm has been established, Sheehan (1979) demonstrated that subjects can gear their behaviour to their expectations of forthcoming group behaviour. He concluded that group members anticipated the response mode of the group and geared their responses accordingly. In his study, subjects were asked to choose the line that matched the length of a reference line. When the target subjects were shown the choice made by others who had previously done the experiment, the targets displayed a consistent bias toward favouring a slightly shorter line than was accurate. Consistently, the target subjects chose a shorter line than was correct when it was their turn to answer.

This notion of conformity even before the establishment of a group norm may apply to peer rejection. Children may determine their responses

toward a peer in accordance with an opinion which they assume group members hold. In other words, children may gear their responses toward a disliked peer on the basis of what they anticipate others feel about him or her, without substantial evidence that others hold such a view.

#### Research with Children

Conformity has been implicated in several domains of child and adolescent behaviour, including the initiation of smoking (Dielman, Campanelli, Shope, & Butchart, 1987; Friedman, Lichtenstein, & Biglan, 1985) drug abuse (Kozicki & Zigmond, 1986; Sarvela, Takeshita, & McClendon, 1986), misbehaving in class (Bixenstein, DeCorte, & Bixenstein, 1976), and school performance (Delgado-Gaitan, 1986). This literature illustrates the tremendous pressure exerted by groups on their members to yield to the group norm and to suppress their individual opinions. However, conformity has yet to be linked to processes involving rejection by a peer.

According to Hartup (1983) the pressure to conform in children's peer groups may occur passively, as group

members observe one another, or actively as they engage in discussions of their ideas or viewpoints.

Age Differences. Like the adult conformity literature, various situational and subject factors have been studied in children. In addition, investigators have looked at the effects of age on conforming behaviour to determine if at certain ages children are more likely to conform to peers than at other ages.

On easy tasks, children conform to one another by the age of 5 or 6 -- even when the judgments made by peers are obviously incorrect (Hartup, 1983). In middle childhood, however, conformity on these easy tasks begins to decline (Allen & Newtson, 1972; Cohen, Bornstein, & Sherman, 1973).

In adolescence, the findings in studies are not consistent. For instance, some studies have reported decreased conformity beyond puberty (Landsbaum & Willis, 1971; Patel & Gordon, 1963), whereas others have not. Hamm & Hoving (1969) found increases in conformity from early childhood through puberty, whereas Cohen et al. (1973) found no changes with age.

These inconclusive findings have indicated to

researchers that factors other than age affect conformity. According to Hamm and Hoving (1969) factors such as a need to be correct and a need for approval may interact with the difficulty or ease of the task to determine whether or not an adolescent conforms to peer opinions or rejects them.

According to Hartup (1983), on easy tasks, or those with which the individual is familiar, adolescents shun peer influence, whereas on more difficult or unsolvable tasks they seem more willing to conform. This may be because when the task is easy and they know the correct answer they are concerned with being right. It is unlikely that they will gain peer approval for endorsing the group's choice when it is clearly wrong. By not adopting the choice of group members, they are maximizing their chances of being both correct and being approved of by the group. On difficult tasks, or those with which the adolescent is unfamiliar, Cohen et al. (1973) and Hoving, Hamm and Galvin (1969) have found that the need for approval and need to be correct render one more likely to adopt the consensus of the group.

Situational and Subject Factors. Newton and Allen (1971) proposed that age differences in social influence are mediated by situational factors. Specifically they found that seventh-grade children who were assigned to a condition that stressed group identification and awareness were influenced more by group members than were those in a minimal awareness condition.

Pasternack (1973) found that older children (eighth-grade) who changed their opinion did so in public but not in private, as compared to the younger children who tended to change their opinion in private as well. This research points out the difference between public compliance and private belief change. Compliance is when one adopts the group opinion in public, but keeps his or her own opinion privately. This is distinct from changing one's opinion not only in public, but also in private, which would indicate a change in personal belief. Adolescents are more likely to comply publicly but maintain an unchanged private belief.

Endler and Marino (1972) examined antecedent conditions affecting conformity and concluded that the

type of prior experience, such as being supported or agreed with, was not as important in subsequent conforming behaviour as was the source of prior experience (i.e., who the people were they had interacted with). These researchers found that subjects who had previously interacted with peers conformed significantly more than those who had previously interacted with an authority figure, (such as the experimenter). This reinforces the notion that peers regulate each other's behaviour and have a strong influence on one another (Hallinan, 1980). It could be argued, however, that anticipation of future interaction played a role in this study, and this differentiated the peers from the experimenter. In other words, subjects may have anticipated their future interaction with these peers, which may have then been the factor influencing their greater conformity.

Social status is a factor that affects conformity in terms of both the person being influenced and the person doing the influencing. Lippitt, Polansky, and Rosen (1952) found that peers imitated boys with high social power even when the high-power boys did not intend to initiate conformity. High-power boys were

more directive in their influence methods, and tended to resist direct influence attempts from others more frequently.

This resistance to direct influence may be because high-status persons are more accustomed to imposing their way of seeing things on others, whereas low-status persons may be more accustomed to accepting others' opinions (MacNeil & Pace, 1973). However, once group norms have been established, children holding high status are staunch supporters of the norms and are highly resistant to change when the norms are considered important by the group (Sherif & Sherif, 1969).

Typically, subjects in the studies reviewed above were formed into groups with peers from the same class or the same school, so the degree of future interaction anticipated varied somewhat. However, none of the groups were naturally formed (such as cliques). Therefore, the use of cliques in the present study adds an important dimension to the study of conformity.

### Negative Aspects of Group Membership

Buys (1978) quotes a remark made by noted anthropologist, Weston Labarre (1972) concerning the detrimental effects of group membership. According to Labarre, "If anything, group membership blunts ethical perception and fetters moral imagination, because we then uncritically and passively let others think for us. The function of the group ethic, of course, is simply to maintain the group" (Buys, 1978, p.123).

While group mechanisms such as favouring fellow members more than outsiders (intergroup biases) promote cohesion and stability and also serve to maintain a positive self-identity for members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), these and other group-preservation mechanisms also negatively affect individual members. Much social psychological research has underscored the notion that groups discourage individual thinking in order to maintain a cohesive, likeminded unit (Buys, 1978; Janis, 1972). The process most often associated with this is "deindividuation," which occurs when group members function not as individuals, but only in terms of their group identity (Festinger, Pepitone, & Newcomb, 1952).

Groups reduce individual members' feelings of responsibility for the outcome of an act, through a "diffusion of responsibility" across all members (Aronson, 1976). The anonymity that results from these processes allows groups to engage in riskier, more extreme behaviour than individuals would if they were acting on their own (Diener, Westford, Diener, & Fraser, 1973; Zimbardo, 1970). For example, people have been found to increase their agreement with controversial issues such as capital punishment after discussing the issue in a group that favoured it, or to become more prejudiced after interacting with others who share a particular prejudice (Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969). In addition, social pressure for consensus serves to suppress individual thinking, allowing members to endorse decisions that they would not endorse privately. Such suppression of individual opinion has been aptly labelled "groupthink" (Janis, 1982).

The dominant feature of groupthink is a wish to remain loyal to the group by sticking with the decisions to which the group has committed itself, despite one's private disagreement. However, given the

unspoken nature of this process, members often engage in groupthink without actually being aware of it. A desire for unanimity overrides the motivation to appraise alternative courses of action realistically.

According to Janis (1982) the principles of groupthink can explain some of the poor decisions made by large committees of individuals, including governmental agencies. Examples of this include "federal agencies that have mistakenly authorized the use of chemical insecticides that poison our environment, and White House executive committees that have made ill-conceived foreign policy decisions that inadvertently bring the major powers to the brink of war" (p.2).

Implications for the Peer Group. Given the strong need children and especially adolescents have to belong to a group in order to feel accepted and liked (Sebald, 1981), and the likelihood that group preservation mechanisms such as groupthink take place in adolescent groups, it may also be that these variables play a role in the process of rejection. This is speculative in nature, however, since literature on the negative aspects of group membership has been limited to

adulthood. However, because children's personal attitudes are closely tied to their perceptions of the attitudes of the peer group (Wagner, 1986), it is likely that children make inferences concerning how others evaluate a specific child, and from this decide how they will behave toward that child. This process could come about through observing a negative interaction between a peer group member and the rejected child, which then triggers the notion that the child is unlikable. It could also come about through gossip or hearing a peer make a derogatory comment about characteristics of a target child, such as his or her unusual name, way of behaving, culture, clothes, etc.. In other words, in some cases rejection by the peer group may emerge when group members adhere to a negative evaluation that they observe indirectly and then assume is shared by others.

Underlying this process of yielding to an assumed group opinion may be the fear that holding a different or less negative opinion of a target child than held by the peer group is a result of having missed something negative about the child of which one's group members are aware. Children and adolescents may even believe

that possessing differing opinions threatens their membership in the group and that they may face rejection for being different.

If children adopt the attitudes they assume others have, because they regard their private opinions as less astute and less accurate than those of their peers or because they fear rejection by the group, they may never reveal their private, potentially lesser negative attitudes. Instead, these attitudes may only be expressed in private interaction with the target child, where real or imagined threat of rejection by the peer group is less likely (perhaps on a walk home from school or when placed together to work on a project that is removed from the peer group). However, when the children are back in the peer group, interactions with the rejected child may take place as they had before, based on the negative bias.

Allport used the term "pluralistic ignorance", (cited in Schanck, 1932) to describe situations where individuals were unaware of the attitudes of others and yet assumed a consensus existed among group members. For example, Allport reported that an entire community maintained a public attitude about certain issues that

the majority of residents did not hold privately. However, all members assumed that this was the consensus in the town and acted on this basis, despite their private disagreement. Other research has shown that once a consensus is adopted by a group, it pervades the decision making and behaviour of individuals even when they are alone (Sherif, 1935).

The presence of an assumed consensus in the peer group that is not held in private is revealed in results reported by Wagner (1986). Wagner observed that when asked privately, children rated the behaviour of unpopular children more favourably than they anticipated others in the peer group would. Based on the literature just reviewed, it would be expected that if these children had been asked to announce their opinion to the group they would have switched to the opinion they thought was held by the group. In the same study, Wagner (1986) quoted one child's remarks that summarized the concern children have about going against the group opinion: "Well, (Name) isn't very popular, like nobody plays with him, and if I'm nice to him then the other kids will reject me too." (p.248). This implies that a motive children may have to avoid

social rejection by peers is to conform to the opinion of others.

The peer group holds a great influence over an individual's opinions about others, choice of friends, and behaviour toward unpopular children. Pasternack (1973) found that it was not unusual for early adolescents to publicly act in accordance with a group opinion, but when in private to revert back to their own opinions.

A fear of negative evaluation may prevent children from expressing their own opinion about a peer who is disliked and may cause them to comply with the group. This has been seen frequently among adolescents with regard to activities like smoking and drinking. Many teens say that, to be part of the group, they will go against their own values. As one teen said, "It's hard to say, 'I don't care to', when all the rest of the gang say, 'Ah, come on.'" (Jersild, 1963, p.207).

One implication of these observations is that individual attitudes and reactions toward children who are arbitrarily disliked are unlikely to change unless there is a comparable shift in attitude within the group. Given that a person's social status remains

fairly stable through the years (Coie & Dodge, 1983), negative social status may be perpetuated, so that the prognosis for rejected children may be unfavourable.

Based on the literature reviewed, conformity appears to be a valuable process to examine with regard to peer rejection. The study of conformity adds a group-level dimension to the already well established reputational biases that occur at the level of the individual. It makes sense that children would use one another's attitudes and perceptions of peers upon which to base their own reactions and behaviours. By examining conformity (which is essentially a group held bias), our understanding of the group's role in rejection is further clarified. Also, this underscores the notion that negative social status in childhood is not attributable solely to social deficits on the part of a rejected child.

#### Overview of the Present Study

This study examined adolescent conformity involving peer rejection in the face of a negative group opinion. A group of seventh and eighth grade students rated the likability of a hypothetical peer

prior to and after exposure to a negative alleged group opinion concerning the peer. Students participated in either their friendship cliques or non-clique groups so that the effect of group cohesion on conformity could be assessed. The effect of others having surveillance over one's opinion (public condition) versus not having surveillance (private condition) was also examined to see whether this affected conformity.

Since conforming is often motivated by a desire to avoid being disapproved of or negatively evaluated by others (Watson & Friend, 1969), it was considered to be of interest to determine if there was a systematic relationship between scores on the conformity task and an individual's score on a scale measuring one's Fear of Negative Evaluation.

#### Research Hypotheses and Theoretical Rationale

The present study was designed to investigate the following predictions:

- 1) Early adolescents, when faced with a negative norm about a peer, will suspend their private opinions of the peer and will conform to the negative norm.

Individuals at this age strive to be like one another

in terms of their attitudes and behaviour (Britt and Campbell, 1977; Bukowski, Gauze, Hoza, & Newcomb, 1993; Sebald, 1981). Furthermore, early adolescents experience significant pressure from peers to conform to the norms established by their group (Brown, 1982; Brown, Lohr, & McClenahan, 1986; Clasen & Brown, 1985; Gavin & Furman, 1989). Such pressure is often conveyed subtly, and communicates the message that all members should be alike in order to maintain a likeminded unit. Therefore, it was expected that adolescents would suspend their private opinions and conform to the negative norm.

2) Conformity will be more likely to occur in cliques of early adolescents as compared to non-cliques. Clique members, unlike non-clique members, have a vested interest in conforming to group norms because they are accountable to one another and will interact with each other in the future. Hancock and Sorrentino (1980) found that individuals changed their opinion to that of their group if they anticipated future interaction with one another, and it appears that this is especially prominent among clique members (Hallinan, 1980).

3) Conformity will be more likely to occur when early adolescents expect others to have surveillance over their opinion (public condition) rather than when they do not expect this (private condition). This second experimental variable was termed Surveillance. Surveillance was included in the study to create an analogy of peer pressure where, when faced with their opinions being exposed in the group, adolescents would find it necessary to decide to stick with a personal opinion (thereby risking disapproval from peers) or adopt the group norm. If conformity to reject a peer operates to avoid the public discomfort of deviating from the group, greater conformity might be anticipated when adolescents expect their opinions to be known publicly versus when they expect to keep them private.

## Method

### Participants

Ninety-six (48 females, 48 males) seventh-grade and ninety-six (48 females, 48 males) eighth-grade students taken from five schools participated in the study. The mean age of the participants was 13.2 years. The ages ranged from 11.11 years to 15.2 years. This range include several outliers in age (children much older or younger than most of the group). A short presentation was made in each classroom and subjects were asked if they wanted to participate. Written consent from both a parent and the child was required for participation in the study (see Appendices B and C for a copy of the consent forms for parents and participants). A statistical Power Analysis (Kirk, 1982) was used to determine the number of subjects needed for the experiment (see Appendix A for the computed Power Analysis).

## Materials

### Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE) Questionnaire.

This 30-item instrument, designed by Watson and Friend (1969) measures an individual's apprehension about the possibility of negative evaluations from others.

Items, marked true or false by respondents, include such statements as "When I am talking to someone I worry about what they may be thinking of me.", "I often worry that I will say or do the wrong things." or "I brood about the opinions my friends have about me."

Scores on this scale can range from 0 to 30.

Reliability estimates of the FNE are good.

Corcoran and Fischer (1987) reported satisfactory internal consistency of the scale. Item scale correlations have averaged .72. Kuder - Richardson internal consistency correlations varied around .94 for a sample of 205 college students and .96 for a separate sample of 154 subjects. Watson et al. (1969) reported a test-retest reliability of  $r=.78$  for the FNE in a sample of 154 college students over a one-month period. Warren, Good, & Velten (1984) used the FNE with junior high school students. They found that seventh, eighth,

and ninth-grade adolescents reported similar levels of fear of negative evaluation to college students and the amount did not vary significantly between these grades. See Appendix D for the Fear of Negative Evaluation Questionnaire.

#### Formation of Cliques

Participants were asked to nominate four same-sex classmates with whom they considered themselves to be good friends and with whom they associated often (see Appendix E for the question used to form the cliques). They were also asked if anyone of the group members they had nominated was considered to be like a leader and if so, to name that individual. This factor was assessed as a possible confounding variable. The presence of a strong leader may increase conforming behaviour in the group. From the four nominations made, 24 cliques of same-sex, mutually nominated peers were selected (12 female, 12 male). In order to qualify as a clique, at least three reciprocal nominations had to be made. The resultant groups were, therefore, made up of members who were closely associated with each other and inclusion of peripheral members was prevented. Twenty-four (12 female, 12

male) same-sex, non-clique groups were chosen at random from a pool of participants who did not nominate one another as friends. Non-clique members were often taken from different classes within the same grade. Any participant who was chosen to be with a member whom he or she had nominated as a friend was put in another group.

#### Conformity Task

The conformity task used in this study was modified from one used in an experiment by Feldman (1972). In Feldman's experiment, children were given a question asking them to correctly name a drawn symbol they had been shown. They were given twelve possible answers from which to choose. In fact, the correct name was not among the twelve choices. When everyone had made a choice, the experimenters gave the subjects false feedback on the most popular group choice. The two "leading answers" that were reported by the experimenters were those least often chosen by the group, but the members were led to believe that almost everyone, except themselves, had chosen one of these two leading answers. They were then given a second chance to choose the correct name and were told that

this time they would have to announce their choice to the group. Conformity was determined by whether or not the subjects switched their answer to match one ostensibly chosen by the group.

In the present study, subjects were asked to give an opinion of a hypothetical peer. When everyone had made a choice, the experimenter gave the subjects false feedback on the opinions of their group members.<sup>1</sup> They believed that everyone, except themselves disliked the peer. They were then given a second chance to choose the correct name, and half were told that this time they would have to announce their choice to the group. Conformity in the present study was determined by whether or not the subjects switched their answer to match one ostensibly chosen by the group.

1. Because of ethical considerations concerning providing false feedback, participants were actually informed that they might be given false feedback concerning the other group members' opinions and that they would be given all the details in the debriefing session. A debriefing procedure (Mills, 1976) which was particularly sensitive to false feedback was chosen.

Stimulus Characters. Descriptions of two hypothetical peers (one female, one male), who were the same age and same sex as the participants, were prepared to serve as stimulus characters against which opinions were measured. (See Appendices F and G for the male and female character descriptions, respectively).

The descriptions were initially presented to a group of eight, Grade 8 girls who helped the experimenter refine the language and add appropriate personal characteristics. The completed descriptions depicted a peer who was different (e.g., had an odd name, did not fit in with others at school), and who had some characteristics seen as unlikable by adolescents (e.g., tagged along with others who did not like this behaviour, was unpopular), as well as some positive characteristics (e.g., offered to help others who were having difficulty with school work, was trustworthy). The inclusion of both positive and negative characteristics in the peer description was intended to produce an ambiguous character who would be difficult for participants to rate either very positively or very negatively, therefore increasing the

likelihood that participants would conform to a negative group opinion concerning that individual.

### Procedure

The study consisted of two sessions, separated by a 1-week interval. In the first session, children's friendship nominations were collected, the Fear of Negative Evaluation questionnaire administered, and thereafter, the clique and non-clique groups were assembled. In the second session, children participated in the conformity task, which was conducted in a separate testing room and lasted approximately 15 minutes (see Appendix H for instructions for the conformity task). The children participated in groups of 4, comprised either of their clique or non-clique members. The investigators were blind to the clique or non-clique status of the participants. The participants were told that the research concerned how adolescents form opinions about others. They were told that they would be asked to give their opinion of a hypothetical peer about whom they would read, then they would be shown the opinions of their group members. They were then presented with

the description of the hypothetical peer and were asked to rate his or her likability: Boys rated a male peer, girls rated a female peer. Participants were given a first question to obtain their opinion before exposure to the group's opinion, following which they were given a second, similar question to assess opinion change after exposure to the negative group norm.

Both questions asked the participant for his or her opinion of the peer, using slightly different wording. This was done to avoid asking identical questions before and after, which may have revealed to participants that the research was about conformity. Throughout the research, efforts were made to avoid revealing the true intent of the study until the end of the experiment so that the results would not be rendered invalid. One question asked, "Would you like Edwin/Edwina?. For instance, would you eat lunch with him/her in the cafeteria or work with him/her on a project?." The other question asked "Would you be friends with Edwin/Edwina? For instance, would you be seen walking and talking to Edwin/Edwina in the halls at school and at your locker?" The order of the two questions was counterbalanced across all groups.

Participants indicated their opinion on a 7-point scale, the answers to which ranged from "Definitely Like" to "Definitely Not Like" for Question 1 and "Definitely Would" to "Definitely Would Not" for Question 2. Appendices I, J, K and L contain the questions given to participants. All participants were seated facing away from each other to ensure that they did not look at one another's opinions. All participants were then taken into the hallway by the research assistant, who ensured that they did not disclose their opinions to one another. Each participant was then called into the room individually and told that the opinions of his or her group members could now be viewed. The participant's own sheet and three other answer sheets indicating a dislike for the stimulus character were available for viewing. After viewing these sheets, the participant was asked to answer the second of the two questions. Prior to answering the second question, half of the participants were told that their group members would have surveillance over their opinions at the end of the experiment (public condition), and half were not given this instruction (private condition).

When all tasks had been completed, participants in the public condition were told they need not, in fact, divulge their opinions to the group; all participants were also told not to talk about the experiment until everybody had participated. They then returned to their classrooms. The participants were debriefed in a 15-minute session at the end of the testing day in their classrooms using a modified version of a procedure by Mills (1976) for use in experiments involving false feedback. During the debriefing session, participants were told fully about the meaning of the experiment and the true opinions of their peers. They were also provided with an opportunity to ask questions about the research. The discussion of the study was placed in the context of a general discussion of peer pressure including that people often go against their own opinions to be like the group they belong to, and how this can result in both positive and negative consequences for the group members. Examples of these consequences were given and an opportunity for discussion was provided (see Appendix M for the script used for debriefing participants).

## Results

To determine if any differences in likability ratings for the hypothetical peer existed between any of the groups before the experimental manipulation was introduced, a 3-way (Sex x Group x Surveillance) analysis of variance was conducted on all likability scores on Question 1 (which preceded exposure to the negative group norm). As can be seen in Table 1, there were no significant main effects or interactions between any of the three variables on these initial likability scores. Any differences on Question 2 should be attributable, therefore, to the experimental manipulation. Table 2 shows the mean rating for Question 1, as well as Question 2, for each condition. Overall, the mean rating for question 1 was 2.93 (SD=1.05). This falls on the positive side of the 7-point rating scale.

Table 1: Analysis of Variance of Likability Scores on Question 1 (before exposure to the negative norm).

Source of variation	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig of F
<b>Main Effects</b>	1.224	3	.408	.361	.78
Group	1.172	1	1.172	1.036	.31
Surv	.005	1	.005	.005	.95
Sex	.047	1	.047	.041	.84
<b>2-Way Interact</b>	.682	3	.227	.202	.89
Group Surv	.005	1	.005	.005	.95
Group Sex	.047	1	.047	.041	.84
Surv Sex	.630	1	.630	.557	.46
<b>3-Way Interact</b>					
Grp Surv Sex	.005	1	.005	.005	.95
<b>Explained</b>	1.911	7	.273	.241	.97
<b>Residual</b>	208.208	184	1.132		
<b>Total</b>	210.120	191	1.100		

Table 2: Correlated t-test for Females and Males, Comparing Scores on Question 1 and Question 2 (means and standard deviations before and after exposure to the negative group norm).

SEX	GROUP	SURV	N	Question 1	Question 2	t-Value	Sig.
F E M A L E	Clique	Public	24	$\bar{X}=3.00$ SD=(1.10)	$\bar{X}=4.33$ SD=(1.49)	5.78	.001
		Private	24	$\bar{X}=3.08$ SD=(0.78)	$\bar{X}=3.67$ SD=(1.20)	2.93	.007
	Non- Clique	Public	24	$\bar{X}= 2.79$ SD=(0.98)	$\bar{X}= 3.38$ SD=(1.53)	2.70	.013
		Private	24	$\bar{X}= 2.92$ SD=(1.14)	$\bar{X}= 3.79$ SD=(1.25)	4.53	.001
M A L E	Clique	Public	24	$\bar{X}= 3.04$ SD=(1.30)	$\bar{X}= 4.00$ SD=(1.28)	4.92	.001
		Private	24	$\bar{X}= 2.92$ SD=(0.88)	$\bar{X}= 4.42$ SD=(1.28)	7.51	.001
	Non- Clique	Public	24	$\bar{X}= 2.92$ SD=(1.21)	$\bar{X}= 3.83$ SD=(1.24)	5.79	.001
		Private	24	$\bar{X}= 2.79$ SD=(1.02)	$\bar{X}= 3.67$ SD=(1.27)	4.14	.001

Before analyzing the differences between the experimental groups, it was necessary to determine if, in fact, participants had changed their opinion in a negative direction significantly from Question 1 to Question 2 (before and after exposure to the negative norm). A correlated t-test was run on each of the eight experimental cells to determine change before and after. Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations and t-values for Questions 1 and 2, for each of the four conditions for females and males. The findings demonstrate that male and female participants in all four conditions adopted a significantly more negative opinion of the hypothetical peer after exposure to the negative group norm.

A residual gain score (Cronbach & Furby, 1970) was computed for each participant based on Question 1 and Question 2 ratings. To measure the amount of change in likability ratings from Question 1 to Question 2 that was attributable to exposure to the negative norm, a residual gain score was computed to serve as the dependent variable in the following analyses. The transformation of a score to a residual gain score produces a more accurate measure of change than using a

raw difference score because it removes the amount of the post score that is attributable to the pre score. The score remaining, therefore, contains less error than would a raw difference score (Cronbach & Furby, 1970).

The residual gain scores were computed by regressing the likability rating for Question 2 on the rating for Question 1. This new variable, which reflects the change in likability rating from Question 1 to Question 2, was given the label "Conformity Score". Conformity scores were then used in an analysis of variance to determine the effects of sex, group membership, and surveillance. These scores were analyzed in a 2 (Male vs. Female) X 2 (Clique vs. Non-Clique) X 2 (Public vs. Private) ANOVA. Table 3 presents results of this analysis.

There was a significant main effect for group membership  $F(1,184)=4.71, p<.05$ , with subjects in cliques conforming more than subjects in non-cliques. There was also a significant Sex x Group Membership x Surveillance interaction,  $F(1,184)=8.44, p<.01$ . No other main effects or interactions were significant. See Table 3 for a summary of the ANOVA. This 3-way

interaction was then analyzed in terms of its simple effects, as follows. Table 4 presents means and standard deviations for Conformity Scores. To help with interpretation of the Conformity Scores, these tables also contain means and standard deviations for raw differences in likability scores between Question 1 and Question 2.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance of Conformity Scores  
 After Exposure to the Negative Group Norm:  
 Effects of Sex, Group Membership and  
 Surveillance.

Source of variation	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig. of F
Main Effects	6.661	3	2.220	2.347	.07
Sex	2.199	1	2.199	2.325	.13
Group	4.458	1	4.458	4.713	.03
Surv	.004	1	.004	.004	.95
2-Way Interact	3.128	3	1.043	1.102	.35
Sex X Group	.108	1	.108	.114	.74
Sex X Surv	2.373	1	2.373	2.509	.12
Grp X Surv	.648	1	.648	.685	.41
3-Way Interact					
Sex Grp Surv	7.983	1	7.983	8.439	.004
Explained	17.772	7	2.539	2.684	.004
Residual	174.051	184	.946		
Total	191.823	191	1.004		

Table 4: Residual Gain and Raw Difference Scores for Females and Males by Group Membership and Surveillance.

Sex	Group	Surveillance	N	Residual gain	Raw difference
F E M A L E	Clique	Public	24	$\bar{X} = .39$ SD=(1.12)	$\bar{X} = 1.33$ SD=(1.13)
		Private	24	$\bar{X} = -.35$ SD= (.97)	$\bar{X} = .58$ SD=(.97)
	Non-Clique	Public	24	$\bar{X} = -.39$ SD=1.08	$\bar{X} = .58$ SD= (1.06)
		Private	24	$\bar{X} = -.08$ SD=(.91)	$\bar{X} = .88$ SD= (.95)
M A L E	Clique	Public	24	$\bar{X} = .02$ SD= (.89)	$\bar{X} = .96$ SD= (.95)
		Private	24	$\bar{X} = .54$ SD= (.98)	$\bar{X} = 1.50$ SD= (.98)
	Non-Clique	Public	24	$\bar{X} = -.04$ SD= (.74)	$\bar{X} = .92$ SD= (.78)
		Private	24	$\bar{X} = -.10$ SD= (1.01)	$\bar{X} = .88$ SD=(1.03)

### Group Membership X Surveillance Effects

The simple effects of group membership and surveillance were analyzed separately for females and males. Tables 5 and 6 show these effects for females and males, respectively.

Females. For females, simple main effects of group membership and of surveillance were not significant [ $F(1,92) = 1.50, p > .05$ ;  $F(1,92) = 1.04, p > .05$ , respectively]. The simple interaction between group membership and surveillance, however, was significant,  $F(1,92) = 6.24, p < .05$ . Examination of the simple, simple effects comprising this interaction revealed a significant effect of surveillance for girls in cliques,  $F(1,46) = 6.24, p < .05$ , but not for girls in non-cliques,  $F(1,46) = 1.15, p > .05$ . Girls in cliques who expected to have to share their opinion (public condition) showed a higher Conformity Score than those who did not expect to (private condition). The interaction also revealed a significant effect of group membership for girls in the public condition,  $F(1,46) = 5.99, p < .05$ . Girls in cliques in the public condition showed a higher Conformity Score than girls in non-cliques in the public condition. The effect of

Table 5: Analysis of Variance of Conformity Scores for Females Only: Simple Interaction Effects of Surveillance and Group Membership.

Source of variance	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Signif. of F
Main Effects	2.684	2	1.342	1.270	.28
Surv	1.094	1	1.094	1.035	.31
Group	1.590	1	1.590	1.505	.22
2-Way Interact	6.589	1	6.589	6.237	.01
Surv X Group	6.589	1	6.589	6.237	.01
Explained	9.273	3	3.091	2.926	
Residual	97.187	92	1.056		
Total	106.460	95	1.121		

Table 6: Analysis of Variance of Conformity Scores for Males Only: Simple Interaction Effects of Surveillance and Group Membership.

Source of variation	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig. of F
Main Effects	4.259	2	2.130	2.549	.08
Surv	2.976	1	2.976	3.562	.06
Group	1.283	1	1.283	1.536	.22
2-Way Interact	2.042	1	2.042	2.444	.12
Surv X Group	2.042	1	2.042	2.444	.12
Explained	6.301	3	2.100	2.514	.06
Residual	76.864	92	.835		
Total	83.164	95	.875		

group membership for girls in the private condition was not significant,  $F(1,46)=.96, p>.05$ . See Table 5.

Males. For males, neither the simple main effects of group membership,  $F(1,92)=1.54, p>.05$ , nor of surveillance was significant,  $F(1,92)=3.56, p=.06$ . The simple interaction between group membership and surveillance was not significant,  $F(1,92)=2.44, p>.05$ . See Table 6.

#### Sex x Surveillance Effects

The simple effects of sex and surveillance were analyzed separately for cliques and non-cliques. Tables 7 and 8 show these effects for cliques and non-cliques, respectively.

Cliques. Neither the simple main effects of sex nor of surveillance were significant [ $F(1,92)=1.65, p>.05$ ;  $F(1,92)=.28, p>.05$ , respectively]. The simple interaction between sex and surveillance, however, was significant,  $F(1,92)=9.58, p<.01$ . Examination of the simple, simple effects comprising this interaction revealed a significant effect of surveillance for girls in cliques,  $F(1,46)=5.9, p<.05$ . Girls who expected to share their opinion (public condition) had a higher

Table 7: Analysis of Variance of Conformity Scores for Cliques Only: Simple Interaction Effects of Surveillance and Sex.

Source of variation	Sum of squares	DF	Mean squares	F	Sig. of F
Main Effects	1.917	2	.958	.963	.38
Sex	1.640	1	1.640	1.649	.20
Surv	.276	1	.276	.278	.60
2-Way Interact	9.530	1	9.530	9.582	.003
Sex X Surv	9.530	1	9.530	9.582	.003
Explained	11.447	3	3.816	3.836	.01
Residual	91.506	92	.995		
Total	102.953	95	1.084		

Table 8: Analysis of Variance of Conformity Scores for  
 Non-Cliques Only: Simple Interaction Effects  
 of Surveillance and Sex.

Source of variation	Sum of squares	DF	Mean squares	F	Sig. of F
Main Effects	1.042	2	.521	.581	.56
Sex	.667	1	.667	.743	.39
Surv	.375	1	.375	.418	.52
2-Way Interact	.826	1	.826	.920	.34
Sex X Surv	.826	1	.826	.920	.34
Explained	1.867	3	.622	.694	.56
Residual	82.545	92	.897		
Total	84.412	95	.889		

Conformity Score than those who did not (private condition). The effect of surveillance for boys in cliques was not significant,  $F(1,46) = 3.71, p > .05$ . See Table 7.

Non-Cliques. Neither the simple interaction between sex and surveillance,  $F(1,92) = .92, p > .05$ , nor either of the simple main effects of sex or surveillance, [ $F(1,92) = .74, p > .05$ ;  $F(1,92) = .42, p > .05$ , respectively] was significant. See Table 8.

#### Group Membership x Sex Effects

The simple effects of group membership and sex were analyzed separately for public and private conditions. Tables 9 and 10 show these effects for the public and private conditions respectively.

Public. In the public condition, the simple main effects of group membership were significant,  $F(1,92) = 4.47, p < .05$ . The Conformity Score for subjects in cliques was higher than for those in non-cliques. Neither the simple main effects of sex nor the simple interaction of group membership by sex was significant, [ $F(1,92) = .002, p > .05$ ;  $F(1,92) = 3.28, p > .05$ , respectively]. See Table 9.

Table 9 : Analysis of Variance of Conformity Scores for Public Only: Simple Interaction Effects of Sex and Group Membership.

Source of variation	Sum of squares	DF	Mean squares	F	Sig. of F
Main Effects	4.254	2	2.127	2.24	.11
Group	4.252	1	4.252	4.47	.04
Sex	.002	1	.002	.002	.97
2-Way Interact	3.118	1	3.118	3.28	.07
Group X Sex	3.118	1	3.118	3.28	.07
Explained	7.371	3	2.457		
Residual	87.558	92	.952		
Total	94.930	95	.999		

Table 10: Analysis of Variance of Conformity Scores for Private Only: Simple Interaction Effects of Sex and Group Membership.

Source of variation	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig. of F
Main Effects	5.424	2	2.712	2.885	.06
Group	.854	1	.854	.908	.34
Sex	4.571	1	4.571	4.862	.03
2-Way Interact	4.973	1	4.973	5.290	.02
Group X Sex	4.973	1	4.973	5.290	.02
Explained	10.397	3	3.466	3.686	.02
Residual	86.493	92	.940		
Total	96.890	95	1.020		

Private. In the private condition, the simple main effects of sex,  $F(1,92)=4.86$ ,  $p<.05$  and the simple group membership by sex interaction,  $F(1,92)=5.29$ ,  $p<.05$ , were significant. The simple effects of group membership, however, were not significant,  $F(1,92)=.91$ ,  $p>.05$ .

Examination of the simple, simple effects comprising the Sex x Group Membership interaction revealed that the effect of group membership was not significant for girls,  $F(1,46)=.96$ ,  $p>.05$ , but was for boys,  $F(1,46)=5.02$ ,  $p<.05$ . Boys, in private, in the clique condition had a higher Conformity Score than boys in the non-clique condition.

In the private condition, for subjects in cliques, there was a significant simple, simple effect of sex,  $F(1,46)=9.99$ ,  $p<.01$ ; the mean Conformity Score for boys was higher than that of girls. For subjects in non-cliques the simple, simple effects of sex were not significant,  $F(1,46)=.005$ ,  $p>.05$ . See Table 10.

### Fear of Negative Evaluation

The relation between Fear of Negative Evaluation and Conformity Scores was examined using a Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis. Scores on the Fear of Negative Evaluation scale did not correlate significantly with Conformity Scores ( $r = -.02$ ,  $p = .772$ ). Because the effect of surveillance was different for males and females, and because it was expected that FNE would most likely be affected by surveillance, Pearson correlations were computed on FNE and Conformity Scores separately for males and females. In both cases, scores on the Fear of Negative Evaluation scale did not correlate significantly with Conformity Scores (for males,  $r = .09$ ,  $p > .05$ , for females,  $r = -.06$ ,  $p > .05$ ). A t-test for independent groups also showed that the clique and non-clique groups did not differ on the Fear of Negative Evaluation scale,  $t(190) = -.04$ ,  $p > .05$ .

Finally, a Pearson correlation showed that conformity scores did not correlate significantly with age, ( $r = -.002$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

### Discussion

Results of this study clearly support the first hypothesis of this research by showing that early adolescents adopt a more negative opinion of a hypothetical peer when they are exposed to a consensually held negative opinion among their peers. Overall, participants in all conditions adopted a significantly more negative opinion after learning that the group opinion was more negative than their own. The study also shows that this is affected by whether or not one is in a clique, whether or not one's peers will have exposure to one's opinion, and is related to one's sex.

As predicted, the majority of participants did not start out disliking the child, but rated him or her neutrally or even mildly favourably. Their opinions of the child became more negative only after they were exposed to the negative opinions supposedly held by their group members. This finding suggests that once early adolescents become aware that a child is not liked by members of their group, they begin to reevaluate their own opinion, and change it in light of the opinion held by their peers.

Also as hypothesized, clique membership is an important variable in an early adolescent's tendency to conform to a more negative opinion. Participants changed their opinions significantly more when they were among friends in cliques rather than among those who were merely their acquaintances. However, of interest was the finding that when they believed they would have to share their opinions with clique members, boys and girls in cliques behaved in different ways. Early adolescent girls, consistent with predictions, conformed to a negative group opinion significantly more if they were part of a clique than if they were not. Furthermore, they conformed more when they expected to have to share their opinion with the other members of the clique than when they did not. The behaviour of boys, on the other hand, was contrary to prediction. While they conformed more when they were among their clique members than when among non-clique members, this conformity was greatest when they did not expect to have to share their opinions with clique members than when they did. Thus, these results suggest that while an early adolescent's friendship ties have substantial influence upon that child's

adoption of a more negative attitude toward a peer, boys and girls are not influenced in the same ways by their peers having exposure to their opinions.

As indicated in the studies reviewed in the introduction, adolescent girls are concerned with others' opinions of them (Rosenberg & Simmons, 1975) and do not want to deviate from the norm set by others, preferring rather to be like one another (Crockett et al., 1984). It is distressing for them to elicit negative reactions from close friends (Crockett et al., 1984) and they avoid those situations in which such negative reactions are likely to be elicited (Rosenberg & Simmons, 1975). It is fitting, therefore, that when an adolescent girl is faced with a choice between acting in a way that may exacerbate her feelings of insecurity and self-consciousness, versus adopting a route which will promote feelings of security and ease anxiety, such as going along with the group, she chooses the latter.

It was predicted that boys in the presence of their peers would, like girls, want to "go along with the gang" (Fine, 1980). The results, however, did not entirely support this prediction. It would seem that

while boys conform, they do not want to appear to their friends to be conforming. The findings of the present study suggest that the opinions of boys are actually less likely to change when they expect their opinions to be exposed to their clique members than when they do not. This is the opposite of what was observed for girls. This finding is at first counterintuitive and appears to contradict the third hypothesis of this research. In fact, the differences between girls' and boys' conformity behaviour under surveillance in the present study provides some interesting and important issues for consideration.

These findings fit well with the adult literature on sex differences under conditions of surveillance, discussed earlier. As mentioned in the introduction, Eagly, Wood, and Fishbaugh (1981) and Eagly and Chrvala (1986) have reported that men and women have different conforming response styles under surveillance conditions. These researchers found that when men expected others to have surveillance over their opinions they conformed significantly less than women. These authors would likely interpret the similar findings of the present study showing less conformity

for boys under the public condition than in the private condition, as due to the traditional sex roles prescribed for boys. They have argued that characteristics such as independence and standing apart from others are reinforced in boys, whereas girls are taught to foster harmony in interpersonal relationships and to fit in and not create conflict. Thus, girls' greater tendency to conform in cliques when they expect others to be aware of their opinions, and boys' lesser tendency to conform under the same conditions, fits this socialization theory.

In addition to revealing the important role of conformity in peer rejection, the present study raises a number of questions. It shows that conformity especially to peer pressures is already well-established by early adolescence. It remains to be determined in further research the point in development at which the impact of cliques on conforming behaviour begins to emerge. It also remains to be determined in future research the factors which shape this interesting differentiation and also the point in development at which this differentiation between the sexes in conformity emerges.

The present study failed to find a significant relationship between fear of negative evaluation and conformity for either sex. This seems to indicate that fear of negative evaluation is not clearly a motive underlying conformity behaviour in early adolescence. However, it is not clear if the lack of significance actually reflects a lack of relationship between the two variables or reflects the inadequacy of the scale for use with participants at this age. Despite efforts to simplify the language in the scale, participants still had difficulty understanding some of the items. It is not clear, therefore, which motives do underlie conformity behaviour. In spite of the commonly expressed view that conformity is motivated by fear of what others may think of one, it may well be that some other motives in fact operate to foster conformity. Certainly, such related motives as a positive desire to be accepted, to be perceived as group-participating, to support the group's cohesiveness and/or to maintain an "in-group" would seem to be interesting candidates as underlying motives for future research to explore.

One may speculate from the findings of the present analogue study that the overtures of boys and girls

toward an actual rejected child might be quite different when they are in the presence of their peers compared with being on their own. However, before extrapolations from these findings can be made, it is necessary first to examine this phenomenon with adolescents in real social settings, such as the classroom or on the school playground. The phenomenon of conforming to reject a peer would need to be monitored as it emerged in response to a negative norm. How the norm develops and is conveyed among peers would also be important to determine. For instance, the method of conveying dislike for a child may occur through peer gossip, or it may occur through one observing an interaction where a peer displays open dislike of a child and communicates this in words or actions. Therefore, examination of the process would involve studying children as they observe interactions among other peers. It may be that only some children make their opinion known to others while the majority of peers stay quiet, watching and waiting for an emerging consensus.

It might also be important to examine whether there are subsets of rejected children who are

differentially susceptible to the process of rejection by conformity. The present study focussed on peers who possessed both positive and negative characteristics, however, none of the behaviours by the hypothetical child involved aggressivity or hostility. Since the aggressive/disruptive subset of rejected children has been considered to be an important group for intervention (Coie & Koepfle, 1990) it may be useful to determine how conformity is related to the rejection of these children. If a rating scale were used to determine likability, as in the present study, it would become important to determine whether the changes in a peer's likability rating of a child (before and after the negative norm emerged in the peer group) co-occurred with any behavioural changes on the part of the peers over this same period. For instance, if a peer had neutral feelings toward a child before exposure to the negative peer group norm, and his or her attitude became more negative afterwards, it would be interesting to determine whether the shift was accompanied by behavioural changes on the part of the peer toward the child. Perhaps more interesting would be the question of whether the change in likability on

the questionnaire reflected an actual shift in one's private attitude toward the child, or merely compliance with the group opinion.

This issue was considered important by Pasternack (1973) who showed that it was not uncommon for children to behave publicly in accordance with a group norm, but to revert back to their own opinion once they were in private. It would be interesting to determine if in an actual situation there are behavioural changes on the part of peers which accompany the negative attitudes that have developed toward a child. This would involve obtaining a peer's attitudes and a measure of his or her behaviour toward the child at several intervals; at an initial point, at a point after exposure to the negative norm, and then once again after that to determine whether the peer was behaving on the basis of the negative norm established by the group.

Because cliques were composed of children who provided reciprocal nominations for one another, whereas non-cliques did not, it remains a possibility that children in the cliques had a greater number of friends than children in the non-clique group. Examination of the friendship choices provided by the

children in the cliques and non-cliques who participated in the study indicated, not surprisingly that those in the clique groups were more frequently chosen than those in the non-clique groups,  $t(180)=7.12, p<.001$ . Future research should therefore evaluate possible differences in sociometric status for the effect of clique and non-clique status on conformity.

Finally, the findings of the present study are consistent with Coie's (1990) remarks that the dynamics of peer rejection seem to dictate that some children will be rejected less because of how they act and more because of the fact that a scapegoat is needed for the group to remain cohesive. During the debriefing sessions in the present study, it was interesting to hear participants comment on the prevalence of conforming to what others think within their own peer groups. Many participants acknowledged the presence of this process in their class regarding classmates and some noted the speed with which it developed in their group, once negative statements had been made about a child. Some participants were even eager to discuss their own experiences of breaking ties with a peer with

whom they had once associated, after their friends made negative comments about the child. These discussions reinforced the importance of understanding the group dynamics of rejection.

Also of importance was these students' suggestions that it would only have required one or two statements by their classmates in support of their original, more positive opinion, for them to abandon the negative opinion and once again be friendly with the child. This provides hope for interventions which could aim at educating students on the importance of being true to their own opinion of a classmate. This was done in the present study in the form of a debriefing/education session. Fruitful discussions about maintaining one's own opinion in the peer group gave the researchers reason to believe that interventions aimed at open discussion of this process would be useful to develop in the schools. The research of Julian et al. (1969) and Hancock and Sorrentino (1980), discussed earlier, shows the powerful impact of social support in helping an individual maintain his or her opinion and not give in to the group norm which runs counter to his or her own belief. Intervention efforts aimed at developing a

student's level of empathy for a child caught in the process, would likely also prove beneficial.

The findings of the present study support the idea put forward by Hymel et al. (1990) that group dynamics may not only relate to social rejection, but also may play a part in creating it. In this case, the dynamic of conforming to one another's negative perceptions most likely does play a part in rejection, and research efforts aimed at furthering our understanding of this process among actual peer groups would be of benefit to researchers and clinicians working with rejected children.

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## Appendix A

## Power Analysis

The number of subjects required for the experiment was determined using a method described by Kirk (1982) for calculating the power of an  $F$  test in analysis of variance (ANOVA). This procedure does not require a priori knowledge of effect size ( $\sigma_e$ ), instead differences among treatment effects are specified as a multiple of  $C$ , of the unknown  $\sigma_e$ .  $N$  is determined by trying various sample sizes in the formula

$$\phi = \sqrt{n} \sqrt{c^2/2\rho}$$

when  $C$  is set at 1.00 and  $\alpha = .05$  until a power level of .80 is reached. The degrees of freedom are calculated as  $v_1 = p - 1$  and  $v_2 = pqr(n - 1)$ , where  $p$  = the number of levels of treatment A,  $q$  = the number of levels of treatment B, and  $r$  = the number of levels of treatment C. In this case,  $v_1 = 2 - 1 = 1$  and  $v_2 = 2 \times 2 \times 2 (20 - 1) = 152$ . Using the power function of ANOVA tables, with  $n = 20$ , and  $\phi = 2.23$ , we find that the probability of correctly rejecting the null hypothesis ( $1 - \beta$ ) is just beyond .80.

Appendix B  
Parental Consent Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian:

A project concerned with how children's opinions of others are developed and maintained is being conducted by researchers in the School of Psychology at the University of Ottawa. This letter is to request your permission for your child to participate in this research.

Your child's participation will entail:

1. A 20 minute session, done in class, which involves completing two brief questionnaires on whom the child associates most with in his or her class, and how he or she feels in social situations.

2. A second 20 minute session, conducted in small groups during the school day. The children will be asked to give their opinion of an imaginary peer, using a rating scale. They will then get feedback about the opinion of others in the group, some of which will be accurate and some of which will not. Their responses will then be assessed again. Shortly thereafter, the children will be told which responses were accurate and which were not and will be given a complete explanation of the study.

The children's answers will be kept strictly confidential, will be seen only by the researchers involved with the study, and are to be used solely for research purposes. Participation is completely voluntary, is not connected to school grades or any other service provided by the school, and your child may withdraw at any time. This study has been approved by the Roman Catholic School Board and the principal of your child's school. It will not cause any embarrassment or harm, in fact, children usually enjoy participating with their classmates in projects like this. We would be grateful for your co-operation. Please complete the attached form indicating whether your answer is Yes or No, and have your child return it to his/her teacher by this Wednesday. A summary of the study findings will be available to you, should you wish. Please do not hesitate to call Jayne Hanna (564-2463) if you have any questions. Thank you for your time.

Jayne Hanna  
Ph.D student

Alastair Younger, Ph.D  
Assistant Professor

\_\_\_\_\_  
I have read and understood this request for my child to participate in the study of children's friendships.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for my child to participate.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not give permission for my child to participate.

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C  
Child Consent Letter

Dear Student:

I am doing a project to find out how people your age form opinions of others. I will be able to tell you more about the study after you have completed it, if you participate. Anytime that a study is done we have to get written consent from the participants. This doesn't mean that the study will embarrass or harm you, it is just a way to let us know that you would like to participate.

If you would like to take part, it will involve;

1. A 20 minute session, done in class. This involves completing two brief questionnaires on whom you associate most with in class and how you feel in social situations.
2. A second 20 minute session, conducted in small groups during the school day. You will be asked to give your opinion of an imaginary peer by using a rating scale. You will then get feedback about the opinions of others in the group, as well as some kids whom you don't know. Some of the opinions will be real and some of them will be made up. You will then be asked another question about your opinion of the imaginary peer.
3. A short session where the study and its purpose will be explained to you.

All information will be seen only by myself and my helper. No one in your class will see any of it. You only have to participate if you want to and you can withdraw at any time, if you wish. Whether you participate or not is not in any way connected to school grades or any other service provided by the school, but we would be grateful for your participation. Please do not hesitate to call Jayne Hanna (564-2463) if you have any questions.

Jayne Hanna  
Student

Alastair Younger, Ph.D  
Assistant Professor

I have read and understood this letter for me to participate in the study of children's friendships.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to participate.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would not like to participate.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

## FNE

For the following statements, please answer each in terms of whether it is true or false for you. Circle T for true and F for false.

- |   |   |     |   |
|---|---|-----|---|
| T | F | 1.  | I rarely worry about seeming foolish to others.                                       |
| T | F | 2.  | I worry what people will think of me even when I know it doesn't make any difference. |
| T | F | 3.  | I become tense and jittery if I know someone is evaluating me.                        |
| T | F | 4.  | I am unconcerned even if I know people are forming an unfavourable impression of me.  |
| T | F | 5.  | I feel very upset when I commit some social error.                                    |
| T | F | 6.  | The opinions that important people have of me cause me little concern.                |
| T | F | 7.  | I am often afraid that I may look ridiculous or make a fool of myself.                |
| T | F | 8.  | I react very little when other people disapprove of me.                               |
| T | F | 9.  | I am frequently afraid of other people noticing my faults.                            |
| T | F | 10. | The disapproval of others would have little effect on me.                             |

- T F 11. If someone is evaluating me I tend to expect the worst.
- T F 12. I rarely worry about what kind of impression I am making on someone.
- T F 13. I am afraid that others will not approve of me.
- T F 14. I am afraid that people will find fault with me.
- T F 15. Other people's opinions of me do not bother me.
- T F 16. I am not necessarily upset if I do not please someone.
- T F 17. When I am talking to someone, I worry about what they may be thinking of me
- T F 18. I feel you can't help making social errors sometimes, so why worry about it.
- T F 19. I am usually worried about what kind of impression I make.
- T F 20. I worry a lot about what my superiors think of me.
- T F 21. If I know someone is judging me, it has little effect on me.
- T F 22. I worry that others will think I am not worthwhile.
- T F 23. I worry very little about what others may think of me.
- T F 24. Sometimes I think I am too concerned with what other people think of me.
- T F 25. I often worry that I will say or do the wrong things.

- T F 26. I often don't care one way or the other what opinions others have of me.
- T F 27. I am usually confident that others will have a favourable impression of me.
- T F 28. I often worry that people who are important to me won't think very much of me.
- T F 29. I worry about the opinions my friends have about me.
- T F 30. I become tense and jittery if I know I am being judged by my superiors.



## Appendix F

## Male Character Description

Edwin is a guy in the same grade as you. Edwin is the kind of person who would help you if you were having trouble in a subject at school. He would offer to meet you after school to help you catch up. He isn't very popular though, and he doesn't have too many friends. He doesn't really fit in with the others at school. He kind of hangs around people and tags onto them and they don't really like it. He's a person you could count on though, if you needed someone to talk to.

## Appendix G

## Female Character Description

Edwina is a girl in the same grade as you. Edwina is the kind of person who would help you if you were having trouble in a subject at school. She would offer to meet you after school to help you catch up. She isn't very popular though, and she doesn't have too many friends. She doesn't really fit in with the others at school. She kind of hangs around people and tags onto them and they don't really like it. She's a person you could count on though, if you needed someone to talk to.

## Appendix H

## Verbatim Instructions For Conformity Task

"I'm doing a project to find out how people your age decide whether they like someone or not. What we are going to do will not take long. I will ask you to rate how much you would like an imaginary peer who you will read about. Then I will show you the answers that the others in your group put. Then I will ask you to answer a second question about the peer and to give your opinion, and then we will be finished. It is important that you remain quiet once we begin this task, and if you have any questions about it you can ask me at the end of the session. Then at the end of the day we will talk about the study and you can ask questions and share your opinions. Now, this description of the peer was made up by myself. This is not someone you know, but you may know someone like this. I'd like you to imagine this person in your head. Try to get a picture of this person in your mind and then answer the question. Now, go ahead and read the description I'm handing out and answer question #1."

---When they have finished answering the question the researcher says,

"Now I am going to gather up your answer sheets and look at what you've put. I would like you to leave the room with my assistant and I will call you in one by one when I want you to answer question #2."

---All four participants stand in the hall with the research assistant who directs the conversation away from the study and ensures that no answers are exchanged. Meanwhile, inside the room, the experimenter puts three bogus answer sheets side by side on her desk, in addition to a real answer sheet,

belonging to the participant who will be called in once everything has been put in place. The first participant then comes into the room and closes the door, while the others wait outside with the assistant. The researcher then says,

"Come on in and sit down. I want to share with you what the other people in your group thought of Edwin/Edwina."

---Points one by one to the answer sheets, and says,

"You see, here is your answer sheet and here are the sheets of your group members. Now I'm going to ask you to answer question #2, and then you will be finished. Make a check mark next to the opinion that matches yours."

---If the participant has been assigned to the private condition, he or she will then have finished the task, will be thanked and sent out in the hall with the group to wait until all have finished the task. The next participant's real answer sheet will then be placed on the desk by the researcher, along with the three bogus ones, and that participant will come in. However, if the participant has been assigned to the public condition he or she would be brought into the room and told,

"Come on in and sit down. I want to share with you what the other people in your group thought of Edwin/Edwina. You see, here is your answer sheet and

here are the sheets of your group members. Now I'm going to ask you to answer question #2. Make a check mark next to the opinion that matches yours. After everyone in your group has had a turn at answering this next question, I'll call you all back into the room and ask each of you to tell the other members of your group what you put. You will do this, one by one, out loud."

---When the participant has finished answering question #2, he or she is sent back into the hall and the next child is sent in by the assistant until all four group members have been given question #2. All conversation in the hall continues to be supervised by the assistant until all participants have been tested.

When all four participants in the public condition have completed the task they are brought back into the room and are told,

"Well, actually, I'm running a bit short on time this morning so you don't have to share your answers with one another. I will see you later on this afternoon, and we will talk about the study."

## Appendix I

## Question 1 for Male Participants

Question 1: Would you like Edwin? For instance, would you eat lunch with him in the cafeteria or work with him on a project?

Please read the following choices and put a check mark by the one that matches your opinion. Only choose one please.

1.  Definitely Yes (I am 100% sure I would like Edwin)
2.  Probably Yes (I am 85% sure I would like Edwin)
3.  Maybe Yes (I am 70% sure I would like Edwin)
4.  Not Sure (I am 50%-half sure/half not sure I would like Edwin)
5.  Maybe Not (I am 70% sure I would not like Edwin)
6.  Probably Not (I am 85% sure I would not like Edwin)
7.  Definitely Not (I am 100% sure I would not like Edwin)

## Appendix J

## Question 2 for Male Participants

Question 2: Would you be friends with Edwin? For instance, would you be seen walking and talking to Edwin in the halls at school and at your locker?

Please read the following choices and put a check mark by the one that matches your opinion. Only choose one please.

1.  Definitely Would (I am 100% sure I would be friends with Edwin)
2.  Probably Would (I am 85% sure I would be friends with Edwin)
3.  Maybe Would (I am 70% sure I would be friends with Edwin)
4.  Not Sure (I am 50%-half sure/half not sure-I would be friends with Edwin)
5.  Maybe Would Not (I am 70% sure I would not be friends with Edwin)
6.  Probably Would Not (I am 85% sure I would not be friends with Edwin)
7.  Definitely Would Not (I am 100% sure I would not be friends with Edwin)

## Appendix K

## Question 1 for Female Participants

Question 1: Would you like Edwina? For instance, would you eat lunch with her in the cafeteria or work with her on a project?

Please read the following choices and put a check mark by the one that matches your opinion. Only choose one please.

1.  Definitely Yes (I am 100% sure I would like Edwina)
2.  Probably Yes (I am 85% sure I would like Edwina)
3.  Maybe Yes (I am 70% sure I would like Edwina)
4.  Not Sure (I am 50%-half sure/half not sure I would like Edwina)
5.  Maybe Not (I am 70% sure I would not like Edwina)
6.  Probably Not (I am 85% sure I would not like Edwina)
7.  Definitely Not (I am 100% sure I would not like Edwina)

## Appendix L

## Question 2 for Female Participants

Question 2: Would you be friends with Edwina? For instance, would you be seen walking and talking to Edwina in the halls at school and at your locker?

Please read the following choices and put a check mark by the one that matches your opinion. Only choose one please.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Definitely Would (I am 100% sure I would be friends with Edwina)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Probably Would (I am 85% sure I would be friends with Edwina)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Maybe Would (I am 70% sure I would be friends with Edwina)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure (I am 50%-half sure/half not sure-I would be friends with Edwina)
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Maybe Would Not (I am 70% sure I would not be friends with Edwina)
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Probably Would Not (I am 85% sure I would not be friends with Edwina)
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Definitely Would Not (I am 100% sure I would not be friends with Edwina)

## Appendix M

## Script for Debriefing Participants

"First of all, I'd like to thank you for participating in my project. Did you have any ideas about what you thought I was trying to do?"

"In this project I'm trying to find out if people's opinions can be affected by those around them. In other words, does what other people think affect what you think? So I made up the opinion I showed you and said was your group members'. Those opinions may or may not have been what they really put. I just wanted to see if what I told you would affect your opinion. I wasn't interested so much in specifically what you put. I'm getting a lot of kids to do this and I'm interested in what most people do."

"Now, is there anything you wanted to ask me about what you did today?"

The child is allowed to see the opinions of the others if he or she wants to, and a discussion about the project and an opportunity for sharing personal experiences then ensues.