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**Attitude Change in Correctional Groups**

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**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology**

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## **Abstract**

**Group polarization is a phenomenon in which moderate attitudes or opinions espoused by a social group tend to become more extreme in the course of interactions and discussions within the group. Using a modified form of the group polarization paradigm, the present study examined the conditions under which group polarization or related phenomena may operate within correctional treatment or discussion groups to inadvertently foster the amplification of procriminal attitudes or beliefs. Inmates at a correctional treatment facility were assigned to small discussion groups on the basis of their pre-experimental scores on psychometric tests measuring either identification with the inmate code (High vs. Low Inmate Solidarity) or antisocial/prosocial personality traits (High vs. Low Criminality). Each group then engaged in brief discussions of (a) topics preselected to elicit or trigger categorizations along a prosocial-procriminal dimension ("prototypical" topics), and (b) neutral topics. Group-mediated attitudinal shifts were affected by both the type of group composition and by the discussion topic. Only homogeneous groups of High Inmate Solidarity subjects showed significant strengthening of procriminal attitudes and this was the case only for discussions of prototypical topics, not for neutral topics. All other group compositions tended to exhibit shifts toward the mid-point of the rating**

scale (i.e., more neutral or ambivalent post-discussion attitudes), regardless of the type of topic discussed. The results are interpreted as providing evidence for Self-Categorization Theory, which posits that group-mediated attitude change is a phenomenon of conformity to local ingroup norms -- representing what group members perceive to be the group consensus -- and factors influencing the salience of ingroup-outgroup categorizations or group identity. The clinical implications of these findings for correctional treatment groups and implications for future research are discussed.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Recent reviews and meta-analyses of the correctional treatment literature (e.g., Andrews, 1989; Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990; Andrews, Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau, & Cullen, 1990; Gendreau & Ross, 1979, 1981, 1987) have achieved some success in identifying characteristics which differentiate between effective and ineffective correctional treatment programs. Nonetheless, it is clear that social interactions between offenders during treatment group sessions may sometimes lead to undesirable results. Of particular concern is the possibility of group reinforcement of criminal values or attitudes and attitude shifts in a procriminal direction.

This phenomenon is by no means unique to correctional groups. Research with other populations has shown that "groups somehow produce emergent normative tendencies which are not reducible to an aggregation of individuals' responses as they exist in isolation" (Turner & Oakes, 1989, p. 257), so that the group outcome may differ significantly from the initial views, attitudes, etc., of the participants. This phenomenon is known in the social psychology literature as "group

polarization". Specifically, group polarization occurs when attitudes shift following group discussion to become more extreme relative to initial pre-discussion attitudes in the direction previously favoured by the group (Doise, 1969; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Isenberg, 1986; Lamm & Myers, 1978; Myers & Lamm, 1976; Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969; Rejecki, 1990; Turner et al., 1989). In the case of incarcerated criminal offenders, this would be seen as a shift toward more extreme procriminal views.

First reported by Stoner (1961, cited in Rejecki, 1990) and initially termed the "risky shift" phenomenon (Wallach, Kogan, & Bem, 1962), group polarization effects have been observed repeatedly (Isenberg, 1986; Myers & Lamm, 1976). Recent attempts to explain the phenomenon have been framed in terms of conformity to an ingroup stereotypical, consensual, polarized norm where specific contextual cues activate an awareness of group membership and shared group characteristics which in turn defines expectations for the participants. This perspective stresses not only individual characteristics (e.g., "criminogenic needs", "criminal sentiments", etc.; see Andrews et al., 1990), but also the extent to which any characteristic becomes relevant

for group-definition in the immediate discussion context. It is argued in this thesis that situational factors in correctional groups (e.g., the topic of discussion) may interact with latent individual procriminal tendencies, to the extent that these latent characteristics are shared, in order to induce anti-rehabilitative group polarization.

Two evaluative studies on short-term structured correctional group counselling (Andrews et al., 1973, 1977) have indirectly examined the role of perceived group characteristics in therapeutic outcome by manipulating group composition -- mixing inmates and prosocial volunteers. These studies found that inmates participating in mixed group discussions with prosocial volunteers tended to show greater prosocial attitude changes.

Despite the potential clinical benefits of this technique, practical considerations (e.g., security concerns, availability of volunteers, etc.) have limited its use. An alternative strategy was used by Andrews et al. (1977) where the group composition was varied on the basis of client characteristics (first adult incarcerates versus recidivists). However, they found that first incarcerates could be differentiated from recidivists on only two of several outcome measures (tolerance for law violation and

alienation). Aside from the fact that juvenile criminal records were not taken into account in the definition of "first incarcerates," the limited differences observed by Andrews et al. may have been because the group manipulation was insufficient in this case to trigger differential perceptions of group membership among participants. A more promising strategy might be to group inmates according to more relevant individual characteristics (e.g., personality or attitudinal measures related to being "criminal" or being "an inmate").

In correctional settings, inmates may often feel pressured to adhere to or may actively identify with some of the informal norms comprising in the so-called "inmate code", a process sometimes termed "prisonization" (Buehler, Patterson, & Furniss, 1966; Clemmer, 1940; Culbertson, 1975; Goodstein, 1979; Kassebaum, Ward, & Wilner, 1971; Street, 1965; Sutherland & Cressey, 1970; Thomas, 1973; Thomas & Zingraff, 1976; Wheeler, 1961). The inmate code has been defined as "a system of norms, values, and directives which serves to [guide] the behaviour of the inmate in his relations with fellow prisoners and custodians" while incarcerated (Sykes & Messinger, 1960, p. 5). It is generally described in terms of two somewhat independent dimensions:

loyalty to other inmates (inmate solidarity), and collective opposition to prison staff (Clemmer, 1940; Fry, 1976; Garofalo & Clark, 1985; Jones, 1962; Sykes, 1958; Tittle, 1972; Tittle & Tittle, 1964; Wellford, 1967; Wheeler, 1961).

[The inmate] code, above all else, prescribes behaviour that is contrary to the behaviour patterns expected by the administration.... Adherence to the inmate code means rejection of the administrative code of conduct.... In prison, the norms are mutually exclusive, in that the inmate must either behave in accordance with administrative rules or inmate rules. (Wellford, 1967, pp. 197-198)

It is clear that inmates are not all prisonized to the same degree and that some may not be prisonized at all. However, when inmates are grouped on the basis of their tendency to adhere to certain aspects of the inmate code, one might anticipate that such a group might be more vulnerable to procriminal group-mediated shifts. Similarly, one might predict that groups of inmates showing strong conformity to or acceptance of criminal values and attitudes might also be more vulnerable to anti-rehabilitative attitude shifts.

Fortin and Baxter (1993) have recently outlined a model of persistent delinquency and criminality which conceptualizes adherence to the inmate code or to procriminal values and attitudes in terms of an individual's social identity. The model incorporates three theoretical perspectives: Sutherland's Differential Association Theory (DAT, 1939, 1947); Patterson, De Baryshe, and Ramsey's (1989) developmental model of delinquency; and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Although strongly influenced by the structure of Patterson et al.'s developmental model, the model relies primarily on the construct of social identity and related theoretical assumptions.

Social identity refers to "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1978, p. 63). In the Fortin-Baxter model, the notion of a criminal social identity, based on criminal sentiments and activities and association with other criminals, is used to explain how significant criminal peer groups are represented in the individual's self-concept and to explain what guides and motivates the acquisition of and conformity to relevant group procriminal norms and behaviours.

Extrapolating from this, it is hypothesized that the occurrence of group-induced procriminal polarization (or conformity to antisocial ingroup norms) is partly a function of factors controlling the activation of a "criminal group identity" and/or an "inmate group identity" among ingroup members. It is further hypothesized that, in the absence of such factors, polarization will be minimal or absent.

The activation during a group discussion of latent and shared criminal or inmate identities may be context-dependent. In fact, Andrews et al. (1977) found that when discussions between incarcerated offenders and prosocial volunteers took place either in recreational groups or in more structured discussion groups in mixed groups of volunteers and inmates, specific types of group discussions actually reduced criminal attitudes by challenging the inmates' antisocial opinions (cf. Cressey, 1955). However, the Andrews study does not permit any conclusions as to whether topics other than those specifically challenging criminal attitudes might also trigger the perception of inmate or criminal group characteristics hypothesized to influence antisocial group polarization. More specifically, it is argued here that certain types of discussion topics may have the power to trigger group tendencies to

adhere to inmate or criminal norms depending on the extent to which it is applicable to, representative of, or stereotypical of these groups (e.g., inmates or criminals).

The present study extends the previous line of research by Andrews et al. by using a modified group polarization paradigm (see below) to examine the effects of type of discussion topic and characteristics of group members on attitude shifts in offender groups. It is anticipated that the use of this experimental paradigm will help to explain the failures of some rehabilitative programs, to identify characteristics of offender groups which are more conducive to effective correctional treatment, and to suggest suitable therapeutic strategies for minimizing criminogenic group-mediated attitudinal changes.

## Chapter 2

### Group Polarization

Group polarization can occur in a wide range of group interactions, including prosocial decision-making such as giving money to charity, or antisocial decision-making such as inflicting pain. It can occur along various dimensions including attitudinal, perceptual, and judgmental (see reviews by Lamm & Myers, 1978; Myers & Lamm, 1976). The effects of group polarization on individual decision-making are relatively durable, evident as long as 6 weeks later. Moreover, Wallach, Kogan, and Bem (1962) found that polarization effects in a risk-taking situation were not merely a reflection of overt compliance in the group setting but also extended to covert acceptance when an individual made subsequent post-group decisions. Similarly, McCauley (1989) found that group polarization is not just a compliance phenomenon (public acceptance without private agreement -- compliance conformity) but also one of internalization (private acceptance of group consensus -- personal acceptance conformity). The standard research paradigm used to study polarization includes three phases: pre-discussion measures, group

discussion, and post-discussion measures. Early studies used the Choice Dilemmas Questionnaire (CDQ), developed by Wallach, Kogan, and Bem (1962). This consists of twelve dilemmas, e.g., "An electrical engineer may stick with his present job at a modest but adequate salary, or may take a new job offering considerably more money but no long-term security." First, subjects complete the questionnaires individually, indicating preference for one of two possible courses of action which differ in degree of risk and potential rewards for success: This provides a pre-discussion group mean. During the group discussion, a group consensus is achieved. Finally, following the discussion, the CDQ is administered again to furnish a posttest group mean (Turner & Oakes, 1989). Group polarization is defined as a shift in the group mean from pretest to posttest; individual polarization is defined as a shift in an individual response from pretest to posttest.

Two principle explanations have emerged to account for polarization phenomena -- one emphasizes informational influences (the Persuasive Argument explanation), while the other is framed in terms of normative influences and is derived from Social Comparison

Theory. These are examined separately below, followed by a review of some criticisms of these explanations and an alternative based on Self-Categorization Theory.

Persuasive Argument Theory. The persuasive argument explanation of group polarization, emphasizing informational factors, has been advanced and studied primarily by Burnstein and Vinokur (Burnstein, 1982; Burnstein & Vinokur, 1977; Vinokur & Burnstein, 1974, 1978). This theory assumes that individuals confronted by an ambiguous stimulus are motivated to reduce uncertainty and to seek social validation. Group-mediated attitude changes are viewed as a rational, highly cognitive process where members of a group function "rather like information-processing machines calculating the status and originality of material" (Wetherell, 1987, p. 145). Prior to the group discussion, people are assumed to retrieve plausible pro/con arguments from memory, derived from a cultural pool of arguments. Then, during the group discussion, pro/con arguments are exchanged and evaluated according to their perceived persuasive merit, which tends to vary with factors such as novelty of the argument. When new arguments are encountered, the pool of arguments supporting

the initial position adopted by each discussant expands. If several ingroup members are convinced of the merit of an argument or a position, a choice shift (cognitive change) occurs, in either a conservative or a risky direction but generally in the direction originally favoured by the group. Overall, shifts seem to depend, at least partially, on the sharing of information and the diffusion of new material (Turner et al., 1989), as well as the perceived validity and novelty of the arguments in the direction originally favoured by ingroup members (Isenberg, 1986).

Social Comparison Theory. In contrast, social comparison theorists explain group polarization by emphasizing the normative influences and motivational effects of intragroup comparison, i.e., discussants comparing themselves with other ingroup members (Jellison & Arkin, 1977; Sanders & Baron, 1977). There are several versions of this explanation but the general assumptions are (1) that during group discussion individuals are motivated to present themselves in a socially desirable light on some dimension (e.g., Hogg et al., 1990; Jellison & Arkin, 1977; Myers, Bruggink, Kersting, & Schlosser, 1980; Pruitt, 1971; Sanders & Baron, 1977; Turner et al.,

1989); (2) that individuals are somewhat aware of views, opinions, and behaviours that are socially/culturally acceptable, desirable, valued, or admired; and (3) that they express views which they believe other ingroup members expect to hear in order to obtain social approval (cf. Hogg & Abrams, 1988) and to distinguish themselves among other ingroup members, referred to as social differentiation.

An individual must be continually processing information about how other people present themselves, and adjusting his or her own self-presentation accordingly... Once we determine how most other people present themselves, we present ourselves in a somewhat more favourable light. When all members of an interacting group engage in the same comparing process, the result is an average shift in the direction of greater perceived social value. (Isenberg, 1986, p. 1142)

Self-Categorization Theory. The persuasive argument and social comparison perspectives have both been challenged, primarily on the lack of adequate specification of what is considered a persuasive or novel argument or a desirable, valued position (Wetherell, 1987; cf. Mackie, 1986). For instance, several properties

of an argument, e.g., qualities of logic (validity and consistency), lack of triviality or redundancy, and originality, might all potentially influence the perception of persuasiveness (Wetherell, 1987).

However, Wetherell argues that whether a position is considered valuable or an argument persuasive is also contextually dependent on how the person presenting that argument is categorized, i.e., as an ingroup member or an outgroup member.

In response to the limitations of the two earlier explanations of group polarization, a somewhat different explanation based on self-categorization theory has recently been proposed (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Turner, 1982). It is argued that polarization is in fact a conformity phenomenon mediated by the referent informational influence processes. More precisely, group polarization is viewed as conformity to an ingroup norm which is itself determined by the referent informational influence (Turner, 1981, 1982). Hogg and Abrams (1988) describe three phases to the referent informational process:

First, people categorize or define themselves as members of a distinct social category or assign themselves a social identity;

second, they form or learn the stereotypical norms of that category; and third, they assign these norms to themselves and thus their behaviour becomes more normative as their category membership becomes salient. (p. 172)

Although conformity occurs through referent informational influence, the more fundamental underlying process is one of self-categorization or identification (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Cognitive representations of the social self take the form of self-categorizations -- cognitive groupings of oneself with respect to some class of stimuli, or social category. These groupings or structures are referred to as social identifications or social identities. However, unlike self-categorizations, social identities are more than just cognitive representations emerging from the individual's awareness of group membership or internalization of a social category. Social identities also include emotional reactions attached to a specific group membership (or self-categorization) and to the status or position of that group in a specific intergroup context. These emotional reactions are critical since, according to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978: Tajfel & Turner, 1979), it is the achievement and maintenance of

distinct and positive social identities which motivates individuals in social situations. Self-categorizations per se are not assumed to have such an impact on individuals.

Turner (1981, 1982, 1985; Turner et al., 1987) postulated a cognitive process of self-categorization: Just as we categorize objects, experiences, and other people, we also categorize ourselves along various dimensions. This process accentuates similarities between the self and other ingroup members, but also differences between the self and outgroup members. Thus, we come to perceive ourselves as somewhat "identical" to other group members and to share a common social identity with them -- "it places oneself in the relevant social category, or places the group in one's head; and it generates category-congruent behaviour on dimensions which are stereotypical... of the category" (Hogg & Abrams, 1988, p. 21).

During a group discussion, perception of group membership and the emotional significance of or reactions to this membership (cf. Tajfel's definition of social identity) direct and control social processes (e.g., self-categorization, general social categorization, social comparison) and inform the subject of what information is important,

why it is valued by the group, how it should be interpreted, etc.

(Mackie, 1986). Moreover, when individuals share a specific social identity (self and others are categorized as similar or identical), they anticipate collective agreement on various issues. Such expectations among ingroup members facilitate normative consensus -- the process of arriving at norms perceived as correct or objectively appropriate -- thus influencing the likelihood that an ingroup member will conform. In addition, if a perceived or actual disagreement occurs within the group, pressure to conform to the ingroup norm is greater when individuals have a similar social identification. Thus, social identity also influences the representation and assignment of ingroup norms.

Self-categorization and social comparison are mutually dependent and complementary processes: The separation of stimuli into classes depends on perceptions of similarities and differences among these stimuli, but stimuli can only be compared insofar as they have already been categorized as similar or dissimilar at some higher level of abstraction (Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987). Self-categorizations, "like all categories, are based on the perception of intra-class similarities and inter-class differences between stimuli"

(Turner, 1985, p. 95). The formation of any perceived category or entity depends on the comparison of stimuli and follows the principle of metacontrast:

Any collection of individuals in a given setting is more likely to categorize themselves as a group (become a psychological group) to the degree that the subjectively perceived differences between them are less than the differences perceived between them and other people (psychologically) present in the setting, i.e., as the ratio of intergroup to intragroup differences increases. These comparisons will be made on relevant dimensions selected from the common features of the relevant self-category that include all those under comparison. (Turner, 1985, p. 101)

Thus, for a given stimulus, as the ratio of intergroup differences increases, the likelihood that the stimulus will be perceived as prototypical for the group also increases: "The extent to which a stimulus is perceived as exemplary or representative of the category as a whole, is defined by the metacontrast ratio between the average difference perceived between the target stimulus and outgroup

members and the average difference between the stimulus and ingroup members (the higher the ratio, the more prototypical the stimulus)" (Turner, 1985, p. 97).

Ingroup norms, like any other social norms, are sets of consensual and stereotypical expectations concerning appropriate or acceptable attitudes, beliefs, and modes of conduct for a particular group of people (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). In general, norms help to simplify, anticipate, and regulate social encounters. They also serve to define ingroup and outgroup characteristics, to differentiate the ingroup from outgroups in various ways, to evaluate behaviours of ingroup and outgroup members, and to prescribe behaviours which dictate how members of a particular group should behave (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). They are sometimes explicit (e.g, the laws and rules of society), but more frequently they are implicit, 'taken-for-granted', 'hidden agendas' derived from the context within which social interactions occur (see Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

In the course of a group discussion, the ingroup norm or achieved consensus fulfils various functions (e.g., synthesizing information, prescribing, differentiating) to the extent that it is

perceived as prototypical for that group. A prototypical norm is one which represents the shared normative views of group members, or which summarizes what the group as a whole has in common. The relative prototypicality of an ingroup norm or of a member's position on a specific issue is defined and quantified by means of the meta-contrast principle. The more a group norm or an individual's standing differs from outgroup norms and the less it differs from ingroup norms, the more it typifies the ingroup on a particular issue. For example, an inmate may espouse attitudes very different from these of outgroup members (e.g., correctional officers). However, that inmate's position must not be too idiosyncratic or distinct from that of other ingroup members (inmates) if it is to represent the prototypical group position.

The process by which individuals assign ingroup norms to themselves is termed self-stereotyping (Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987). Self-stereotyping also refers to the tendency of the individual to increasingly internalize relevant characteristics or stereotypical dimensions defining the ingroup, thus reducing differences between self-perceptions and perceptions of other group members. When self-

categorization and self-stereotyping occur during a group discussion, there is a change in the level of inclusiveness that is a shift "from a more personal to a more social aspect" of the self-concept (Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

Social psychologists refer to issues related to the conditions under which an individual embodies the norms of a group and adheres to social norms as the study of conformity; sociologists speak of it in terms of socialization to emphasize the internalization of societal norms (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). According to self-categorization theory, the group polarization phenomenon is one of conformity to ingroup norms, which means essentially that the individual adopts a position or point of view which approximates the prototypical ingroup norm emerging from the discussion (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). In contrast to most traditional views of conformity, this is not considered to be a passive unidirectional process where individuals are pressured to adhere to a well-established majority position (the latter would be a case of compliance conformity rather than private acceptance: see above). Rather, there is a dynamic "intragroup 'negotiation' of prototypicality or normativeness" (Hogg & Abrams, 1988, p. 174):

Discussants are influenced by group norms but they also influence the group norms through negotiation and consensus. Moreover, a discussant's behaviour may deviate from other ingroup members and still be considered as normative or conformist even if it does not conform to actual observable behaviours of 'prototypical' individuals, provided that it conforms to the representation of the ingroup norm (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). When individuals conform to the negotiated ingroup norm, the norm may be displaced away from the pretest mean. If we visualize the issue as a bipolar continuum or dimension with a neutral midpoint, and displacement occurs in the same direction as the location of the pretest mean, the change in the norm is polarization. A norm which is displaced in the opposite direction from the pretest mean but without crossing the neutral mid-point would be an example of depolarization. Finally, when the norm is displaced in the opposite direction from the pretest mean and also crosses over the neutral mid-point, the effect is known as counterpolarization.

Self-categorization theory postulates that perceived contextual and personality variables mediate the dynamic process of conformity

to ingroup norms. The objective presence of an outgroup constitutes a salient intergroup context triggering a specific ingroup-outgroup categorization. This affects how the group defines itself and how group membership is perceived (Turner & Oakes, 1989). Conformity is often manifested as group polarization in a direction opposite to the position of the outgroup (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). For example, for a group of individuals moderately favouring criminal activities, the group norm would be roughly the mean of their individual positions on crime. However, if the group were confronted by an outgroup with extreme procriminal views, the ingroup norm might shift toward less extreme criminality. Conversely, confronted by an outgroup of prosocial individuals, the ingroup might polarize in the opposite direction, toward more extreme criminality. In either case, the ingroup norm would no longer be the mean of the original individual ingroup positions: Rather, it would be displaced from the mean in a direction away from the relevant outgroup.

The objective physical presence of an actual outgroup is not necessary for discussants to form and negotiate an ingroup norm, assign it to themselves, and conform to it, although it greatly

facilitates the process. Hypothetically, the cognitive representation alone of an outgroup category is sufficient (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Wetherell, 1987), even when the outgroup exists only by default. That is, of all possible views on a subject that anyone could hold on an issue, ingroup members espouse only a subgroup of those views; any opinions not held by the ingroup implicitly represent the views of some outgroup -- it is almost always possible to visualize "an implicit outgroup from which to be differentiated" (Hogg & Abrams, 1988, p. 178). For example, the existence of a group espousing moderate procriminal views implies the existence of outgroup individuals who hold more extreme criminal opinions and also of individuals holding more prosocial views.

Behavioural Convergence. Previously, it was believed that polarization was associated with a clear majority of individuals in a group initially sharing similar views on a particular topic, referred to as a homogeneous group on this particular dimension. However, it has been shown that a clear majority is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for group polarization to occur (Turner et al., 1989). In addition, Hogg and Abrams (1988) note that the phenomenon of

group polarization itself involves a process of homogenization or convergence of opinions on the estimated ingroup norm. That is, compared to pre-discussion opinions, there is less variance in post-discussion scores because discussants converge on this perceived group norm following group discussion. Hogg and Abrams also argue that this process is one of convergence on the estimated group consensus rather than convergence on some theoretical prototype.

The estimated consensus is considered to be a more accurate measure of the relevant perceived group norm. The metacontrast method used to calculate the theoretical group norm or prototype does not incorporate a number of other subjective factors which influence specific group members' perceptions of the group norm. (Hogg, Turner, & Davidson, 1990, p. 93, Note 3)

In sum, according to self-categorization theory, group polarization occurs because "people seek to conform to what defines their social group as a whole in contrast to other groups" (Turner & Oakes, 1989, p. 264). Referent informational influence produces conformity through the self-categorization process responsible for

identification with the ingroup in contrast to perceived outgroups. Conformity is increased by salient ingroup-outgroup categorization (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Social identification influences the discussant's expectation about who he or she is likely to agree with (normally similar others) or achieve a consensus with, even in times of perceived or actual disagreement, and also influenced the content of the consensus (ingroup norm), as well as the way it is represented and internalized in the form of self-stereotypes. A consensual ingroup norm is perceived as a prototype with inherent qualitative properties (e.g, prescriptive, integrative, differentiating the ingroup from others, etc.) making it different from the simple sum or average of all the pretest arguments (cf. Turner & Oakes, 1989). Finally, it is this dynamic process of conformity to a polarized ingroup norm which explains polarization.

### Chapter 3

#### Empirical Research on Group Polarization

More than 25 years of research in this field has produced empirical evidence to support both the social comparison and persuasive argument explanations of group polarization (Turner et al., 1989). Most of the relevant studies have been systematically reviewed by Isenberg (1986). This section therefore reviews only selected studies which have investigated hypotheses derived from or related to the self-categorization/social identity approach.

To recapitulate, a process of social identification or self-categorization -- the extent to which an individual categorizes him/herself as a member of a group and identifies with the group -- is seen as a necessary condition for the occurrence of conformity to a polarized ingroup norm leading to group polarization, and thus for the occurrence of group polarization. Both group membership and perceived similarity with other ingroup members are basic components of identification (Wetherell, 1987).

It is now well established in the group polarization literature that individuals are persuaded more by information attributed to

similar others than by information attributed to dissimilar others (Mackie, 1986; Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell et al., 1985, cited in Wetherell, 1987), and more by information attributed to ingroup members than by information attributed to outgroup members (Mackie, 1986; Mackie & Cooper, 1984; Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell et al., 1985, cited in Wetherell, 1987). Mackie and Cooper (1984) instructed subjects to listen to a taped discussion attributed either to a group the subject was preparing to join, or to (1) a group with which the subject was to compete (Experiment 1), or (2) an unrelated group (Experiment 2). For Experiment 2, they were told that they would be listening to a tape of a typical discussion session from a previous study to familiarize themselves with the experimental task before being part of a related but separate study. Mackie and Cooper found that attitudes polarized in the direction advocated on the tape only for the ingroup condition, i.e., when subjects believed they were listening to the views of their future ingroup members. Polarization did not occur for the unrelated group condition. Additionally, when subjects believed that the views were those of a competing group,

they shifted away from the advocated position, rejecting the outgroup position.

In a subsequent study (Mackie, 1986), identical messages were attributed to one of three different sources: individuals not associated with any group; an outgroup of individuals from another group in the experiment; or an ingroup they were preparing to join. Attributing the discussion to individuals from either an ingroup or an outgroup had the effect of facilitating endorsement of a more extreme attitude position on an issue. In addition, more attitude polarization occurred when subjects believed the information came from their ingroup than when they believed it came from an outgroup or from separate individuals. Furthermore, in the outgroup condition, a significant but unexpected shift of attitude was observed: Subjects who perceived themselves to be similar to the outgroup (a basis for identification) showed significantly more attitude polarization than those rating themselves as less similar to members of the outgroup. Mackie concludes that "this finding underlines the importance of the perception of group membership. Regardless of nominal group

membership, the subjects who perceived the norm held by the group to be self-relevant adopted it" (Mackie, 1986, p. 723).

Wetherell et al. (1985, cited in Wetherell, 1987) also studied the effect of identification on group polarization. They asked subjects to listen to a taped discussion with participants identified either as a group they were expecting to join (ingroup) or a group they would be debating against (outgroup). In addition, subjects were told that members of the ingroup or outgroup were either similar or dissimilar to themselves with respect to general opinions. In fact, subjects were randomly assigned one of four conditions: similar ingroup, dissimilar ingroup, similar outgroup, or dissimilar outgroup. Wetherell et al. found that subjects were more likely to be persuaded by the same arguments from an ingroup rather than an outgroup, and from a similar rather than a dissimilar group. Thus, it would appear that identification, or more specifically perceived similarity of opinion or salient categorization, mediates group polarization regardless of informational content (Turner, Wetherell, & Hogg, 1989).

In another study, Hogg, Turner, and Davidson (1990) varied characteristics of the outgroup in relation to a given ingroup. They

found that, when an ingroup is confronted by a risky outgroup, the polarization effect is toward caution (the opposite direction). When confronted by a cautious outgroup, the ingroup tends to polarize toward risk. Finally, an ingroup in the middle of the social frame of reference, confronted by both risky and cautious outgroups, tends to converge on its pretest mean, showing no polarization effect.

Group polarization also occurs when individuals are categorized in such a way as to focus on ingroup-outgroup differentiation rather than on the distinctiveness of individual ingroup members. For example, in her second experiment, Mackie (1986) manipulated the salience of group categorization by providing specific instructions to induce either intergroup competition (likely to increase group membership salience) or individual-intragroup-interpersonal competition (likely to decrease salience). Group polarization occurred when subjects paid attention to their group performances, but not to their individual performances. Conversely, increasing the attention given to individual performance shifted attitudes toward a more neutral position.

In a similar vein, Turner, Wetherell, and Hogg (1989) categorized subjects prior to a discussion of risky or cautious choice dilemmas on the basis of decision-making styles. In one condition, subjects were told that decision-making style was an individual characteristic reflecting personality differences between people. In the other condition, they were told that decision-making style was a shared group characteristic or tendency reflecting differences between groups of people. Subjects were then characterized by the experimenter as being part of a 'risky' or 'cautious' group (group condition) or as being 'risky' or 'cautious' individuals (individual condition). It was predicted that shared, appropriate, and valued characteristics which served to distinguish one group from another would lead to perceptions of a salient ingroup-outgroup categorization along a specific dimension. In contrast, an idiosyncratic personality trait which is not shared by other members, serving only to differentiate one individual from another, was expected to decrease the salience of ingroup categorization. Both predictions were supported: It was found that group polarization occurred only when decision-making style was perceived as a stereotypical group

characteristic. Moreover, the direction of shift depended on the content of the assigned initial stereotypical characteristic (risky or cautious) and not on the actual initial pretest tendency: "Risky" groups shifted towards risk and "cautious groups" toward caution. In contrast, individuals told that they had a distinctive idiosyncratic decision-making style, either risky or cautious, showed either no shift or a shift in the reverse direction from their idiosyncratic defining style (see also Van Knippenberg & Wilke, 1988).

On the other hand, Paicheler (1977) found that with no salient initial ingroup-outgroup categorization, the presence of a single extreme anti-feminist female confederate resulted in the spontaneous splitting of an initially "homogeneous" group into two identifiable distinct subgroups -- moderates and extremists -- polarizing their attitudes in opposite directions. Some subjects conformed to the norm advocated by the anti-feminist confederate while others radically opposed it. Paicheler coined the expression bipolarization to describe this phenomenon. Moreover, the moderate subjects showed the largest and most stable change, maintaining this change both during and after the interaction: The pro-feminists "resisted the

confederate's influence by returning, after the interaction, to their initial positions, and even beyond, submitting only temporarily in front of the necessity of attaining a consensus" (Paicheler, 1977, p. 11). Thus, even where ingroup-outgroup categorization is not initially salient, it may emerge spontaneously during the course of a group discussion under some circumstances.

Paicheler (1979) observed that subgroups of men and women brought together for a group discussion polarized their attitudes prior to the discussion. However, later during a group discussion with the presence of a consistent anti-feminist female confederate, the subgroup divisions collapsed. Discussants, male and female, opposed the confederate, confronted her "old-fashioned" views, rejected her, and showed a counter-polarization effect in relation to her -- strong polarization by both subgroups in the direction opposite to the confederate. In contrast, a male anti-feminist confederate was not rejected with such intensity. In spite of the fact that their attitudes had polarized during the pre-discussion phase, both subgroups moderated their views slightly during the discussion with the male confederate, converging toward one another. One explanation of

these findings is that the female confederate was perceived as not behaving in accordance with the 'standards' of the ingroup or in a normatively consistent manner, as prescribed by the content of her category or stereotype. Since her position was so far removed from the prototypical ingroup position, it was rejected and derogated. In such circumstances, it is argued that another categorization, different from the initial one, may become salient. Discussants recategorize the confederate and themselves using a profeminist-antifeminist categorization, replacing the initial male-female categorization. On the other hand, the male confederate is perceived as behaving normatively for his gender or as an ingroup member (recall that half of the discussants in the group were men) and thus he becomes influential: Both subgroups of discussants move in his direction, and the salient ingroup-outgroup categorization continues to be extreme anti-feminist versus moderate feminist.

Perceiving the confederate as an ingroup or an outgroup member can therefore affect the outcome of polarization studies and may lead to bipolarization or counterpolarization (where post-discussion attitudes are in the opposite direction to a pre-discussion

attitude). However, the dynamic nature of ingroup-outgroup categorization during a group discussion also appears to be crucial. Changes in coalition between discussants can either unify subgroups or split an initially homogeneous group into divergent subgroups. Such spontaneous categorization shifts affect the frame of reference, and it seems that it is the final ingroup-outgroup categorization, not the initial one, which determines the direction of attitudinal shifts.

A related factor is the emergence of perceived shared or common group characteristics during the actual group discussion. In some cases, it appears that the shared group characteristic stems from latent self-categorizations or social identities. Most experiments in the group polarization literature have been concerned with situations in which membership in one group excluded membership in another. Despite efforts to neutralize the effect of any latent social identities in the subjects' repertoires, unexpected shifts in some studies have been attributed to these common social identities (Wetherell, 1987; also, see the review of prototypical items below). Thus, when discussants have a common latent social identity, it can emerge as a shared frame of reference or ingroup characteristic

regardless of their initial ad hoc categorizations. It is therefore imperative that we identify the conditions under which a specific latent shared group identification can become salient or operative in the self-perceptions of group members to act as the immediate influence on perception of ingroup-outgroup categorization and group polarization.

Factors influencing the salience of social category/identity. As noted, individuals generate and internalize self-definitions related to a specific group membership; those internalizations are also referred to as social identities. Once a social identity is part of the individual's repertoire, whether or not it is active or influential depends on its salience. In this context, salience refers to "the conditions under which some specific group membership becomes cognitively prepotent in self-perception to act as the immediate influence in perception and behaviour" (Turner, 1985, p. 102). Salience can be described as the general issue raised by questions such as "When does a black female inmate feel strongly 'Canadian', as opposed to 'black', 'female', 'inmate', 'criminal', etc." (cf. Oakes, 1987). Applied to the context of group polarization, the question of immediate

concern has to do with when and how a specific latent social category or social identity becomes salient among group members so as to affect ingroup-outgroup categorizations during a group discussion and in turn conformity to perceived group norms.

Oakes (1987), inspired by research on salience in group membership and the role of categorization in perception (Bruner, 1957), has identified some of the determinants of salience: "The salience of some ingroup-outgroup categorization in a specific situation is a function of an interaction between the 'relative accessibility' of that categorization for the perceiver and the 'fit' between the stimulus input and the category specifications" (Turner et al., 1937, p. 54; see also Turner, 1985). In situations where there are two equally 'fitting' categories, the more 'accessible' one will become operative and, conversely, given two equally 'accessible' categories, the one that better 'fits the stimulus input will be 'switched on'.

The fit of a categorization refers to "the degree to which reality actually matches the criteria which define the category" (Turner, 1985, p. 55). Social categories which best fit the available relevant

information are likely to become salient. The degree of fit is established using the meta-contrast principle of minimizing perceived intragroup differences and maximizing perceived intergroup differences. It is important to emphasize again that although social categories are different from self-categorizations, where the individual accepts and internalizes an externally imposed social categorization in order to define the self (Turner & Oakes, 1989), Oakes' ideas should nonetheless applied to self-categorization. Fit has to do with the extent to which observed similarities and differences between people (e.g., defining group characteristics) or individuals' positions on some issue are perceived to correlate or match in a stereotype-consistent manner with an ingroup-outgroup categorization (Oakes, 1987).

Accessibility, on the other hand, is defined as "the readiness with which a stimulus input with given properties will be encoded or identified in terms of a category... the more relevant the categorization, the wider the range of stimulus characteristics that will be perceived as congruent with category specifications and the more likely that other less accessible categories which also fit stimulus input will be masked" (Turner et al., 1987, p. 55). According to

Oakes, there appear to be several key determinants of the relative accessibility of a social category: (1) the probability of particular types of stimuli occurring in the most immediate environment of the perceiver closely related to his/her past learning of what tends to go with what in the surrounding, i.e., learned expectations; (2) the person's current motives; (3) stored cognitive norms, constructs or information-processing factors; (4) the degree of internalization of (socialization) or identification with an ingroup-outgroup categorization; (5) the relative centrality or evaluative importance of a particular group membership to an individual's self-definition (Boyanowsky & Allen, 1973); and (6) the current emotional or value significance of a given ingroup/outgroup categorization (Tajfel, 1972; Tajfel & Wilkes, 1964, see Oakes, 1987). It is assumed that these determinants are equally relevant for determining the relative accessibility of a self-categorization.

The self-categorization explanation of group polarization primarily emphasizes contextual factors in the determination of salience. In Oakes' (1987) conceptualization of category salience, both the relative accessibility of social categorizations and the fit

between input and a specific stored category are highly context-dependent. For instance, in order to trigger a social categorization, something has to be initially perceived in the environment to activate the relevant social-cognitive processes. According to Oakes (1987), manipulations aimed at affecting the salience of an ingroup-outgroup categorization are attempts at changing the situation-specific relative accessibility of that categorization. On the other hand, once a categorization is activated, the individual checks the cognitive-structural and normative aspects of the fit, which also are highly context-dependent.

Fitting input with a social categorization is situation-specific.

We are not discussing whether given social categorizations are more or less highly correlated with differences in attitudes or behaviour in a chronic, actual sense (although the same ideas can be applied to this end), nor suggesting that a given attitude or behaviour is always perceived as related to the norms of one particular category. On the contrary, perceived structural fit always depends upon the contrast differences between categories with differences within categories for

individuals and behaviour currently under consideration.

Similarly, the normative fit between a given characteristic or action and a given categorization depends on the intergroup comparison being made and on context: what is normatively relevant to one category membership in one context may be irrelevant, or relevant to a different membership, in another context. (Oakes, 1987, p. 131)

The salience of an ingroup-outgroup categorization is therefore determined not only by the local context but also by psychological characteristics of the perceiver and, most importantly, the interaction between the context and the characteristics of the perceiver. However, studies in group polarization and attitude change, have generally not considered such interactions in examining the relative salience of a given ingroup-outgroup categorization. The present research proposes to remedy this by examining the interactions between two major variables: (a) the degree to which group members share a specific characteristic -- the tendency to adhere to either procriminal or inmate norms; and (b) the nature of the topic under discussion.

Tendency to conform to procriminal norms. Previous research (e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 1994; Andrews & Wormith, 1989; Baxter, Motiuk, & Fortin, 1995) has shown that among the strongest predictors of persistent criminal behaviour are (1) association with criminal peers and (2) the presence of attitudes, values, beliefs, and/or personality traits supportive of criminal behaviours. In the context of social categorization theory, it can be argued that the extent to which individuals have internalized procriminal norms (viewing criminal acts as justifiable or even desirable) and adhere to those norms might increase the likelihood that a procriminal-prosocial categorization will become accessible to the individual and shared among group members. That is, in general, it would be expected that procriminal polarization would be more likely to occur in cohesive groups of individuals who tend to adhere to procriminal norms.

Tendency to conform to inmate norms. In a prison setting, the categories of procriminal vs. prosocial norms and attitudes are one of the major variables potentially affecting group polarization. However, in view of the literature on the salience and accessibility of social identities, and given the milieu in which the present study was

conducted, it was also necessary to consider a major local or situation variable in incarcerated subjects: the degree to which inmates are "prisonized". Prisonization refers to the process by which inmates adapt to and/or are assimilated into the prison subculture (Clemmer, 1940), operationalized as the tendency to adhere to the inmate code.

Clemmer (1940) argues that every inmate undergoes some degree of prisonization and that no inmate can remain completely unprisonized, although the degree of prisonization may vary even within an individual over time (Sykes & Messinger, 1960). Several factors have been identified as contributing to individual differences in prisonization, including type of institution and security level; phase of incarceration; staff attitudes toward inmates and the nature of inmate-staff interactions; inmate perceptions of self-determination and self-control; values, attitudes, and socialization prior to incarceration; outside contacts during incarceration; and individual expectations about the future. Thus, prisonization should be considered more a situational or "state" variable than an enduring personality trait. Nonetheless, in the context of self-categorization theory, it might be expected that such situational variables would be more powerful

predictors of group-induced attitudinal shifts than less immediate characterological factors.

There are two primary and somewhat independent dimensions to prisonization: identification with other inmates (solidarity), and opposition to prison staff (Clemmer, 1940; Fry, 1976; Garofalo & Clark, 1985; Jones, 1962; Sykes, 1958; Tittle, 1972; Tittle & Tittle, 1964; Wellford, 1967; Wheeler, 1961). Clinically, these two factors seem to operate rather independently of one another, so that an individual may show strong opposition to staff but low identification with other inmates, or vice versa, or he may be high on both factors or low on both factors.

There is general agreement in social psychology as to the major features of psychological group formation (e.g., Cartwright & Zander, 1968; Turner & Giles, 1981; Turner, 1985): These may be summarized by the concepts of identity (collective awareness of the distinct social unit by both members and non-members, sharing of common identity), positive interdependence ("sticking together", mutual attraction, mutual satisfaction of needs, etc.), and structure (regulation through a system of role and status differentiations,

development of shared values and norms prescribing attitudes and conduct congruent with the group). Inmate solidarity can be interpreted as a measure of interdependence among inmates and thus would be expected to contribute to group polarization phenomena, but opposition to staff does not necessarily imply any such cohesiveness or interdependence. Although it may not be a necessary condition for group formation (Turner, 1985), this interdependence nevertheless provides an indication that group belongingness and identification with other inmates might be important to the inmate. Moreover, according to Turner, the basic process of self-stereotyping underlies group phenomena such as polarization and ingroup cohesiveness. Inmates who are high in solidarity with other inmates might be more predisposed to self-stereotyping, and consequently more likely to be influenced by this implicit normative frame of reference during group interactions. This in turn would lead to conformity to a procriminal ingroup consensual norm.

However, knowing the extent to which an inmate identifies with other inmates might not be as powerful a predictor of group behaviour as knowing the extent to which other inmates in the same

treatment group share this characteristic. In other words, a common sense of solidarity shared among discussants might have more impact on the salience of inmate-staff or inmate-noninmate categorization, affecting the type of ingroup norms emerging in group discussions, and consequently the intensity and/or direction of attitudinal shifts. In the context of treatment groups, if procriminal polarization occurs repeatedly within a session or over several sessions, it may sabotage treatment goals, particularly if systematic strategies are not used to counteract the effect.

The relationship between conformity to procriminal norms and conformity to inmate norms. It may be that greater procriminal attitudinal shifts will be observed in groups of incarcerated subjects who conform strongly to inmate norms (i.e., who show strong identification with the inmate code, or high inmate solidarity) than in groups of incarcerated offenders who show strong conformity to more general procriminal norms. The rationale for this prediction is that since group activities are occurring specifically in a correctional setting with groups of incarcerated men -- some of whom may be described as "career criminals" and some of whom are more circumstantial or

situational in their criminal offenses -- the local inmate norms should predominate or have more immediate influence on perception of ingroup-outgroup (inmate-noninmate) categorization. Additionally, it could be argued that inmate solidarity may be more specific since the number of possible inmate groups/subgroups based on an inmate-noninmate categorization is less than the number of groups/subgroups based on criminal offenders types/subtypes. Thus, inmate solidarity groups may discourage the splitting into subgroups which could supplant the ad hoc categorization based on group composition.

Moreover, while inmate solidarity is a rather direct measure of conformity to ingroup norms, conformity to procriminal norms does not necessarily imply allegiance to or solidarity with other criminals. In fact, it is quite conceivable that an individual could adhere to procriminal norms (e.g., exhibiting opposition to conventional or prosocial society, distrust of prosocial individuals) without being loyal to other criminals, or actively seeking/maintaining membership in any procriminal group. Thus, contrary to groups of inmates who are high in inmate solidarity, groups of highly procriminal subjects may be homogeneous on this dimension, and somewhat heterogenous with

respect to the degree of interdependence between ingroup members or solidarity. Perceived heterogeneous group composition on some dimension may reduce the salience of an ad hoc ingroup-outgroup categorization.

Both cognitive and affective aspects of solidarity may be required to create the kind of secure atmosphere which can lead to a salient inmate-noninmate frame of reference, and promote procriminal attitudinal changes. Conversely, conformity to procriminal norms is a more general tendency where the cognitive dimension may be more apparent than the affective one. Consequently, knowing that discussants share a tendency to conform to some procriminal norms does not necessarily give us any information about the type of atmosphere that is likely to stem from high criminality groups.

Characteristics of discussion topics. The nature of the topic under discussion is another situational or contextual variable which should in principle affect salience and fit, trigger specific ingroup-outgroup categorizations, and in so doing influence the direction and magnitude of any attitude shifts that occur. Despite some awareness of this factor and some efforts toward manipulation of topic as a

variable (e.g., Kaplan & Miller, 1987; Mackie, 1986; Mackie & Cooper, 1984; Paicheler, 1977, 1979; Van Knippenberg & Wilke, 1988; Vinokur & Burnstein, 1978), research to date has largely ignored the possibility of interactions between type of discussion topic and other variables, perhaps because it has been well established over the years that a variety of different discussion items can produce the polarizing effect (Myers & Lamm, 1976). Nonetheless, there have been a few attempts to investigate how different categories of items interact with other variables to affect collective attitudinal shifts (Kaplan & Miller, 1987; Turner, Wetherell, & Hogg, 1989; Vinokur & Burnstein, 1978). In fact, Vinokur and Burnstein (1978) specifically explored the relationship between item type and the magnitude and direction of group polarization. In a preliminary study, subjects were asked to distribute 100 points among three alternatives so as to reflect the perceived relative importance of the alternatives: (1) social and moral values; (2) personal preference and individual tastes; and (3) facts and knowledge. Subgroups favouring one side or the other of the item were formed and instructed to discuss a given "question" and to reach a consensus. Vinokur and Burnstein found that the type

of discussion item influenced the magnitude but not the direction of polarization. The "popularity" of the item (determined in the preliminary experiment) was inversely related to the magnitude of the depolarizing effect. The most popular or interesting items were those with some social significance or value (e.g., 'Is capital punishment justified?') and these items produced the least amount of depolarization. Items moderate in social significance or popularity, such as those reflecting personal taste (e.g., 'Is attending a classical music concert more interesting than visiting an art museum?') produced a modest depolarization. Finally, items which were low in social significance, related to matters of fact (e.g., 'How far below sea level is the town of Sodom?'), produced the strongest depolarization.

Turner, Wetherell, and Hogg (1989) have also argued that item type plays a minimal role in affecting the direction of the polarizing effect. Rather they hypothesize that the direction is influenced by the tendency for discussants to move in the direction of the content of their experimentally-assigned stereotypical group characteristics, increasing the salience of ingroup identification or categorization.

Turner et al. instructed subjects to complete a decision-making test in order to establish their decision-making style. However, individuals and/or groups were randomly identified as "risky or cautious group decision-makers" or "risky or cautious individuals," and were asked to discuss either risky or cautious choice-dilemma issues. They found no significant interaction between the item and group characteristics: Groups categorized on the basis of a tendency to make risky or cautious decisions tended to shift or polarize in the direction of their stereotypical norm. Individuals tended to polarize in the direction opposite to their personality trait regardless of the item type or pretest tendency. Thus, shifts depended on the content of experimentally assigned norms influencing movement towards a shared or common attribute of the group (group identification), and not on item type. In addition, it was found that item type had only a slight effect on the magnitude of the shift: "The tendency to polarize in the direction of the pre-test tendency (the main effect for type of item) increases or decreases the observed shifts due to the group/individual x type of attribute interaction, and vice versa" (Turner, Wetherell & Hogg, 1989, p. 143).

Kaplan and Miller (1987) examined the relationship between the item type (intellective versus judgmental) and the mode of influence espoused by the group (informational versus normative influences). To reiterate, informational influence is primarily based on factual information while normative influence has more to do with adherence to group expectations. Issues were selected based on where they were situated on a continuum suggested by Laughlin and his colleagues (Davis, Laughlin, & Komorita, 1976; Laughlin, 1980; Laughlin & Earley, 1982). Intellective issues, situated at one extreme of this continuum, refer to issues for which there are correct and incorrect answers. Judgmental issues, found at the other extreme, are concerned with "behavioral, ethical, or aesthetic judgments for which there are no demonstrably correct answers" (Kaplan & Miller, 1987, p. 307). According to Kaplan and Miller, when discussing intellective issues, the group seeks to uncover the "true" or "correct" answer; with judgmental issues, the group has to decide on the "moral," "valued," "proper," or "preferred" rather than logical position and is concerned with reaching a consensus. Kaplan and Miller found that informational influence tended to be the dominant factor when

subjects discussed intellectual issues while normative influence was more important for judgmental issues.

The findings of Vinokur and Burnstein (1978) and Turner, Wetherell, and Hogg (1989) suggest the conclusion that item type is largely irrelevant, since it does not appear to affect the direction of group polarization and has little or no impact on the magnitude of polarization. However, such a conclusion is probably premature, in view of Kaplan and Miller's (1987) finding that informational and normative influences are activated by different types of items. In addition, some recent polarization studies have found that item type does affect the magnitude and direction of polarization. Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg, and Turner (1990) criticized Vinokur and Burnstein's study on several grounds (e.g., type of issues used, instruction to reach a consensus) but primarily on the basis of a poor or inadequate categorization manipulation. They hypothesized that a more salient categorization manipulation would inhibit convergence of opinion between subgroups. They found that subjects in uncategorized subgroups tended to converge to a much larger extent than categorized subjects, but most importantly that such

convergence occurred on only four of the five items. On the fifth item, both categorized and uncategorized subgroups strongly converged. It would appear, therefore, that some distinctive feature of item 5 encouraged depolarization in spite of the salient experimental categorization manipulation and the absence of a motivation to reach a consensus. As suggested by Abrams et al., this item ('I do not believe that parents and guardians should have control over our age group to the extent of determining friends and the time allowed out. Our age group should be free to determine its own activities') may have triggered a common adolescent categorization -- teenagers versus parents -- eliminating the effect of the ad hoc subgroupings and thus emphasizing the referent informational mode of influence. More specifically, as compared to the other issues selected by Abrams et al., item 5 might differ in its capacity to trigger a specific and shared ingroup-outgroup categorization (common identity and common opponent) among the discussants, who were all teenagers (age 16-17), compared to other topics of discussion in this experiment which involved anti-feminism, health, censorship of certain types of adult material, or university tests of creativity.

In fact, earlier findings that the direction of group polarization is not affected by type of item can be explained with this line of reasoning. Assuming that the choice-dilemma items can trigger a specific social identity, it could be that discussants either do not share that particular social identity or simply do not have it in their repertoires. When a choice-dilemma item does not evoke any specific and accessible category, the experimentally assigned group categorization should function as the salient frame of reference for the group discussion.

Reid and Sumiga (1984) found that when students were identified as 'group representatives' and anticipated engaging in an intergroup debate (although the actual debate never took place), they moderated their views on issues relatively more important to the ingroup i.e., attitudes depolarized or converged in the direction of the group they anticipated competing against rather than away from it. On the other hand, when subjects anticipated an intragroup debate, a polarizing effect was observed.

Whereas the expected intragroup debate enhanced ingroup identification and led to polarization on the stereotypical

attitudes defining ingroup identity, the 'intergroup' debate between student groups may in fact have made the higher level ingroup category of 'student' salient and redefined the relevant norms of behaviour to be presenting a competent, winnable case -- the point of a debate being after all to persuade one's opponents (or at least the audience), which implies according to the present theory some attempt to identify 'common ground' for discussion. (Wetherell, 1987, p. 162)

In addition to the manipulation of a specific intergroup context, the items themselves could also have contributed to triggering the 'student' category. That is, regardless of the experimental contextual manipulation, specific discussion items related to ingroup definitions may change the intergroup context considerably, when they are perceived as highly group-applicable (see Wetherell, 1987). Reid and Sumiga had asked subjects to rate a number of items on level of importance, and then selected those which obtained high importance ratings -- 'In time of economic crisis it is right that women should give up their job to men'; 'The evils of war far exceed any conceivable benefits that war might bring' -- versus items with low importance

ratings -- 'The best way to succeed is to join a firm at the bottom and work your way up'; 'Most people are out for what they can get.' At first glance, these issues do not seem likely to be solely applicable to students, so that one can envisage several possible ingroup-outgroup categorizations being triggered by the items. Thus, it is not enough for an item to be perceived as important to the individual or the ingroup: it is also necessary to consider the specificity or uniqueness of the ingroup-outgroup categorization elicited by the item. Thus, Reid and Sumiga's findings can be explained in terms of lack of item prototypicality, and the selected items may have acted as important local situational cue to trigger, the perception of a more salient 'student' category, supplanting the initial ad hoc ingroup-outgroup categorization.

The counterpolarization observed by Paicheler (1979), where men and women holding pro-feminist attitudes joined against the female anti-feminist confederate, could also be at least partially explained on the basis of the stereotypicality of the item (Paicheler, 1979). Similarly, in Van Knippenberg and Wilke's (1988) experiment, moderates and extremists may have moved away from the

"exploitive" outgroup because the attitudes of the subjects (young university students age 18 to 30) toward regulation of energy consumption were prototypical to the context: After a few trials on a social dilemma game, subjects were made aware that they would not receive the expected monetary bonus due to overuse of energy or exploitive behaviour by the outgroup ('overusers'). Subjects in the categorized condition were told that they would be classified either as 'over user' or as 'optimal user', depending on their energy use while playing the game. In the control condition, there was no mention of categorization. A single attitude item was used to determine group assignment -- 'Energy use in society should be regulated by the government' versus 'Energy use in society should not be regulated by the government'. This item was therefore prototypical and served to define the ingroup in relationship to the outgroup; it was also a shared frame of reference among the participants.

In sum, prototypical items are stereotypical issues which can trigger specific ingroup-outgroup categorizations. Prototypical items trigger a categorization which then prescribes how an ingroup and a specific outgroup should react to a given issue. Prototypical items are

those which best exemplify intergroup normative conflicts regardless of degree of importance to the ingroup, and/or which are most likely to trigger a single, specific ingroup-outgroup categorization. In contrast, "neutral" items are likely to trigger more than one ingroup-outgroup categorization, if they trigger any at all, for a given group. That is, neutral items are those which are unrelated to the dimensions underlying a particular ingroup-outgroup categorization, and thus are either irrelevant to a group or non-unique in that they tend to elicit a variety of subcategorizations within the group.

Finally, a prototypical item can be defined by a relatively large and consistent difference between the responses of the ingroup members and the perceived or estimated (by the ingroup) responses of outgroup members. On the other hand, an item is neutral in relationship to a specific ingroup-outgroup categorization (a) when there is little or no difference between how most ingroup members would themselves respond to an item and their estimates of how most outgroup members would respond; (b) when there is little consistency in the way ingroup members respond to the item; or (c) when there is

little consistency in the subjects' perceptions or estimates of how outgroup members would respond to the item.

Behavioural convergence. Proponents of self-categorization theory contend that the influence of specific local norms is responsible for the homogenization of post-discussion responses, and hence the direction and intensity of group-induced attitudinal shifts. Wetherell (1987) states

The norm of some superordinate cultural identity... may well determine an individual's pretest response, but intragroup opinion shifts... reflect the immediate normative context: social values are transformed into specific group norms through the combination of individuals' pretest tendencies. Correspondingly, if the initial response tendencies are not perceptually combined in the group to form a shared consensual reaction or stereotypical ingroup norms, but remain as differing individual responses, they will exert no persuasive impact. (p. 163)

Hogg, Turner, and Davidson (1990) found that subjects tended to show behavioural convergence on the estimated ingroup consensus. This was only slightly correlated with the degree to which

subjects identified with their group. Similarly, Mackie (1986) affirms that behavioural convergence may be more a process of conformity to a perceived ingroup norm, so that the more subjects diverge initially from that perceived norm, the higher the probability of behavioural convergence: "The discrepancy between a subject's pretest position and his or her estimation of the group norm was correlated with attitude change" (Mackie, 1986, p. 723).

Thus, if group polarization and more generally speaking any group-mediated attitude shift is to be explained in terms of a conformity phenomenon, we need to know to what extent polarization effects depend on behavioural convergence on the estimated group consensus, i.e., on specific local, proximal norms rather than on other more general or more distal norms. It is also important to examine whether variations in group composition and discussion topics, singly or in combination, affect the degree of behavioural convergence on the estimated group consensus, and/or the estimated group consensus itself.

The present experiment. This experiment examined attitude changes in adult male incarcerates following participation in small discussion groups. Three independent variables were manipulated: First, the importance of the nature of the discussion topic was examined by including two types of items: neutral and prototypical (operationally defined below). Second, the importance of group composition was examined by comparing homogeneous groups of High vs. Low Inmate Solidarity or Criminality subjects with a heterogeneous control group. Third, bearing in mind the arguments about local versus distal norms and behavioural convergence, two dimensions were used as the basis for determining group composition: (1) a measure of identification or solidarity with other inmates was used to reflect the local, proximal norms corresponding to an inmate-noninmate categorization; and (2) a measure of general antisocial/procriminal personality traits was used to reflect the more distal norms corresponding to a criminal-noncriminal categorization.

Several general hypotheses were evaluated in this study:

**Hypothesis 1.** It was predicted that (a) greater individual polarization (opinions becoming more extreme following group discussion), (b) larger antisocial/procriminal attitude shifts, and (c) greater convergence on the estimated group consensus would be observed in homogeneous groups of High Solidarity or High Criminality inmates than for groups of Low Solidarity and Criminality inmates.

**Hypothesis 2.** More specifically, it was predicted that (a) greater individual polarization (opinions becoming more extreme following group discussion), (b) larger antisocial/procriminal attitude shifts, and (c) greater convergence on the estimated group consensus would be observed in homogeneous groups of High Solidarity subjects than for groups of High Criminality subjects.

**Hypothesis 3.** Regardless of the basis for determining group composition, it was predicted that polarization effects and significant attitude change should occur only for prototypical discussion items, not for non-prototypical (neutral) items.

**Hypothesis 4.** Finally, it was predicted that behavioural convergence would be observed only on the estimated group consensus, and not on the estimated inmate and societal norms.

## Chapter 4

### Method

The basic experimental design was a 5 (Group Composition) x 2 (Item Type) between-subjects design, with subjects allocated to conditions as outlined below (see Table 1). For the first factor, Group Composition, subjects were assigned to groups according to their pre-experimental scores on psychometric scales reflecting either criminal traits or identification with other inmates, and, in the case of the Unselected Group, subjects were assigned to groups with no foreknowledge of these psychometric scores. Subjects were volunteers recruited from consecutive admissions to the RTC Assessment Unit over approximately a 10 week period of time.

#### Subjects

Prior to the main experiment, 37 volunteers served as subjects in a pilot study pretesting two questionnaires (see below). These subjects were recruited from among residents in the Assessment Unit and the Treatment Unit at Rideau Treatment Centre (RTC), a medium security provincial correctional institution at Merrickville, Ontario. Subjects were asked to complete two brief written questionnaires

Table 1

Research design.

|                                | Item Type                                                      |                                                                |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                | Low                                                            | High                                                           |
| Low Inmate<br>Solidarity       | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group |
| High Inmate<br>Solidarity      | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group |
| Low<br>Criminality             | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group |
| High<br>Criminality            | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group |
| Unselected<br>(Mixed)<br>Group | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group | n = 4 per group<br>x 3 replications = 12<br>4 topics per group |

indicating their opinions about several issues, half of which were specifically related to criminal offenders. They were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and anonymous, and that it would require 10-20 minutes of their time. Subjects agreeing to participate were asked to sign a consent form (Consent Form 1, Appendix C).

Subjects for the main experiment consisted of 120 volunteer male inmates admitted to the RTC Assessment Unit. Of the 127 inmates approached, only 5 initially refused to volunteer for the study, while two other inmates were unable to complete the study because they were transferred to other facilities. The characteristics of inmates who volunteered for the study and those who declined did not differ in any important respects (e.g., age, education, criminal history, or psychometric test scores).

Participation in the experiment followed completion of a standard pre-treatment assessment battery, which included the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2), the Criminal Sentiments Scale (CSS: Andrews & Wormith, 1984; Andrews, Wormith, & Kiessling, 1985; Roy & Wormith, 1985), the Socialization (So) scale (Gough, 1960; Gough & Peterson, 1952), the Inmate Code

Scale (ICS: Baxter, 1993), and the Attitudes Toward Correctional Treatment Scale (ACT: Baxter, Burchill, & Tweedale, 1992; Baxter, Marion, & Goguen, 1995).

### Measures

#### Conformity to the inmate code: The Inmate Code Scale (ICS).

Each inmate completed the ICS (Baxter, 1993) indicating agreement-disagreement on a 5-point Likert scale with items reflecting various components of the inmate code (see Appendix A). The ICS is a 36-item scale originally based on a questionnaire developed by Sieverdes and Bartollas (1986) to measure adherence to the inmate code in a juvenile institution, and modified for use with adult males with several new items added. The items reflect attitudes about inmate solidarity, opposition to prison staff, manipulation of the system, acceptance of interpersonal aggression, and trust in other inmates or staff.

Statistical analysis of the ICS based on over 700 adult inmates reveals three primary factors -- Opposition to Staff, Solidarity with Other Inmates, and Trust/Affiliation -- with good internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .88, .77, \text{ and } .72$  respectively). Two composite scores are derived from the subscales: a Total Identification score ( $\alpha$

= .88) and a Total Susceptibility score ( $\alpha$  = .79). Preliminary research with the scale has shown that ICS scores correlate significantly with independent ratings of institutional adjustment and with various measures of antisocial attitudes including the MMPI-2 Pd, CYN, and ASP scales (Butcher, 1991; Graham, 1991), the CPI So scale (Gough, 1960; Gough & Peterson, 1952), and the CSS (Andrews & Wormith, 1984; Andrews, Wormith, & Kiessling, 1985). For the present study, scores on the Solidarity scale were used as estimates of identification with other inmates, with subjects scoring at the 60th percentile or higher assigned to the High Solidarity group and subjects scoring at the 40th percentile or lower assigned to the Low Solidarity group.

Antisocial-procriminal traits: The Pd-So index. This index was originally devised by Heilbrun (1979). Noting (1) that the MMPI Pd scale and the So scale both correlated modestly with psychopathy ratings (So somewhat better than Pd), (2) that the two scales sampled different behavioural and personality traits associated with psychopathy, and (3) that high scores on Pd and low scores on So suggested higher levels of psychopathy, Heilbrun suggested that a

composite index derived from the arithmetic difference between T-scores for the two scales should provide a better estimate of psychopathic traits than either scale alone.

How well the index predicts or measures psychopathy remains to be seen. However, the composite index does tap several traits associated with proneness for persistent delinquent or criminal behaviour and criminal recidivism, including undersocialization, egocentricity, impulsivity, rebelliousness, authority problems, poor delay of gratification, etc. It was used in the present study as a measure of relatively enduring personality traits conducive to criminality. Subjects scoring at the 60th percentile or higher were assigned to the High Criminality group, while subjects scoring at the 40th percentile or lower were assigned to the Low Criminality group.

Item type. A prototypical item for any social group is an issue or topic which differentiates in a stereotypical way between an ingroup and some outgroup, i.e., it maximizes intergroup differences. For the present study, a pool of potential discussion items were generated on the basis of several dimensions thought likely to differentiate criminals and/or inmates from "prosocially oriented

groups" (e.g., external locus of control, neutralization or blaming strategies, loyalties to other criminals, etc.). Items were selected from several sources including Sykes and Matza (1957) and Hemphill's index of group dimensions (see Miller, 1991), with other items added on the basis of clinical experience with criminal offenders. Some items described criminal attitudes or behaviours, while others described more general issues about average individuals or human beings; no references were made to any specific social groups (see Appendix B).

Subjects in the pilot study were asked to rate each of the potential discussion items along three dimensions:

This questionnaire asks about three things: (1) what you personally think about certain issues, (2) what you think most other offenders think about those issues, and (3) what you think most people in the community think about those issues.

We don't want you to try to judge whether the issue is good or bad, right or wrong; simply indicate your opinions about what you think and what you believe other people would think. After reading each statement, think first about your own opinion, and

then try to imagine how other offenders and other people in the community would respond to it.

Subjects rated each statement using a scale ranging from 1 (Does not apply to or describe me/others at all) to 3 (Uncertain) to 5 (Exactly describes/applies to me/others). Specific items to be used in the main experiment were then selected from the item pool on the basis of the mean difference between the presumed responses of "individuals who break the law" and of "individuals who respect the law": the larger the intergroup difference, the higher the presumed degree of prototypicality of an item for a procriminal-prosocial categorization. For example, an appropriate item for use as a prototypical item might be one where the mean estimated opinion for "lawbreakers" was 4 or 5 while the mean estimated opinion for "non-lawbreakers" was 1 or 2.

An additional requirement was that items selected as prototypical were required to be rated by all subjects at the same end of the rating scale (i.e., 1-3 or 3-5), indicating some consistency or agreement in inmate opinions. Thus, items which showed a split in mean estimated scores for inmates or lawbreakers, e.g., with some

subjects rating the item as 1 or 2 and others as 4 or 5, were not selected for use as prototypical items, since the bimodal frequency distributions for such items suggested a lack of consistency among inmates.

Finally, items with little or no difference between estimated societal norms and inmate norms (e.g., mean estimate for "lawbreakers" of 2.5, mean for "non-lawbreakers" of 3.2) were selected for use as neutral items.

Using this procedure, eight items were selected to represent the category of prototypical items, and eight items with the lowest intergroup differences were selected to represent neutral or non-prototypical items (see Appendix D).

#### Procedure

The experiment was conducted over a 10 week period. Following completion of the standard test battery, recent admissions to the Assessment Unit were approached in small groups and asked if they would be interested in participating in an experiment on group decision-making. They were informed that the experiment required them to complete some additional questionnaires before and after

small group discussions, that participation was entirely voluntary, and that all responses would be kept confidential and would be unrelated to any institutional files or to their assessments (Consent Form 2, Appendix C). They were also informed that the entire experiment required approximately one hour and that they could withdraw their participation at any time during the experiment without penalty, although data from subjects who did so would not be usable for subsequent statistical analyses.

The procedures used for group assignments in the present experiment differed slightly from the standard group polarization format. Instead of grouping subjects according to pretest scores on discussion topics, subjects were assigned on the basis of scores obtained on either the Inmate Code Scale (Inmate Solidarity) or the Pd-So index (Criminal Traits), or, in the case of the Unselected group, assigned with no foreknowledge of their psychometric scores. That is, subjects were assigned to one of the 10 cells (see Table 1 above) according to the availability of homogeneous groups of 4 subjects on one of the measures on a given day (e.g., 4 High Solidarity or 4 Low Criminality subjects) from among the pool of inmates admitted to the

Assessment Unit that week. On certain days, the CSS and ICS test scores were unavailable, and in those cases subjects who had volunteered were arbitrarily assigned to an Unselected discussion group (two of these were run at the very beginning of the study and two others at about the mid-point of the 10-week period). At the end of the 10 week period, all of the cells except two of the Unselected cells had been filled; at that point, these remaining cells were filled, again with no knowledge of the ICS or CSS test scores.

Subjects were then convened in groups of 4 for a series of 4 discussion topics each, selected using a quasi-random procedure from among the 8 preselected items for that category or cell until all experimental conditions were filled. Each discussion group therefore considered 4 issues, consisting either of prototypical items or neutral-non-prototypical items.

On arrival, subjects were seated individually and were instructed not to communicate with one another except when asked to do so. Then, in line with the standard pre-testing procedure used in group polarization experiments, subjects were asked to indicate their individual personal views on an opinion questionnaire consisting

of the four issues to be discussed later, and to give an estimate of what they believed most other offenders would think about the issue, and what they believed most other (non-criminal) people in the community would think about the issue (cf. Link & Cullen, 1983).

Following the pretest, the study was introduced as being an investigation on group-decision-making. Subjects were told that they would be discussing four topics, and that, although there was no requirement to reach agreement in their group, they should try to consider each item in depth, to examine the pros and cons of each issue, and to listen carefully to what the other participants had to say and the reasons for their opinions. In addition, they were told that after a short period of time (8-10 minutes), the experimenter would indicate that the discussion was finished for that particular topic. After each discussion, subjects were instructed to complete a brief posttest questionnaire (see below). They were reminded that all responses were confidential and that they should not feel bound by their previous views on the issue or by their previous ratings, but rather should indicate what they felt about the issue now. After completing the posttest questionnaire following the final group

discussion, subjects were asked a series of questions designed to assess the adequacy of the manipulations and related variables.

Post-discussion measures. Subjects were first asked to indicate their individual post-discussion opinions on the issue just discussed: "Indicate your own position. It may be the same as before, or may have changed as a result of hearing the different arguments of your fellow group members" (cf. Hogg, Turner, & Davidson, 1990, p. 88). Again, answers were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Subjects were then asked: "You have heard other members expressing their opinions during the group discussion. Indicate which position you feel best represents the views of your group (including yourself) or the position you feel your group is most likely to agree upon" (cf. Hogg, Turner, & Davidson, 1990; Mackie, 1986). The third question had to do with the perceived importance of the issue for the ingroup: "How important is this issue to your group (including yourself)?"

Final post-experimental questionnaire. The final questionnaire was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the experimental manipulation:

(i) Identification with the group. The first item was intended to indirectly monitor group identification (see Hogg, Turner, & Davidson, 1990; Mackie, 1986): "In your own opinion, how similar are you to other members of your discussion group in terms of the issues you've just discussed?". Subjects gave their responses to this question on a scale ranging from "Not at all similar" (1) to "Extremely similar" (4).

(ii) Perception of shared group characteristics. Two additional items evaluated awareness of shared group characteristics: (a) "Did you feel you had something in common with other members of your group when you discussed the issues?" (Likert-type scale ranging from "Nothing in common" (1) to "A great deal in common" (4); and (b) "If so, list some important characteristics you shared with other group members".

(iii) Motivation and involvement in the task. Finally, subjects were asked three questions tapping motivation and involvement in the experimental task: (a) "In general, how interested were you in the discussions of the various issues with the other members of this group?". Subjects gave their responses to this question on a scale ranging from "Not at all interested" (1) to "Extremely interested" (4);

(b) "How much did you actually participate in the discussions?", using a scale ranging from "Not at all involved" (1) to "Extremely involved" (4); and (c) "List the issues or topics discussed by this group" (cf. Mackie, 1986, p. 721-722; Mackie, Worth, & Asuncion, 1990, p. 814).

Finally, subjects were thoroughly debriefed to evaluate the extent to which they were aware of the experimental hypotheses and other aspects of the procedures. They were also informed that some of their peers would be participating in future discussion groups for this experiment and were asked, therefore, not to discuss any aspect of the experiment with other inmates. (As a further precaution, different groups discussed slightly different items or issues, with 4 items randomly selected from 8, as described above).

## Chapter 5

### Results

Basic demographic and criminal history statistics for the present sample are summarized in Table 2. These data appear to be comparable to those obtained in other studies conducted at Rideau Treatment Centre (Marion, 1995; McKenzie, 1992; Tweeddale, 1990), although it should be noted that in general the inmate population at RTC probably contains a higher proportion of subjects with identified histories of alcohol/drug abuse (approximately 90-95%) than the populations of other correctional facilities. There were no significant differences among groups for any of these variables.

Recall that subjects were asked to report their initial opinions (Pre-discussion opinion) on four different topics, and then, immediately after each discussing each topic, they were asked again to report their opinions (Post-discussion opinion), to estimate the group consensus on that topic (Estimated group consensus), and to rate the degree of importance of the issue. In order to obtain a single score for these dependent measures, the four scores for the pre-discussion opinions were averaged (i.e., across the four topics), the

four scores for the post-discussion opinions were averaged, and the four scores for estimated group consensus were averaged.

For each analysis described below, a 5 X 2 (Group Composition X Item Type) univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed first, followed by Student-Newman-Keuls post-hoc comparisons to identify specific differences among groups. The principle statistical analyses for the study are summarized in Table 3.

Pre- and post-discussion opinions and pre-post shifts. The two-way ANOVA revealed a significant interaction between Group Composition and Item Type for both Pre-Discussion opinions,  $F(4, 110) = 2.53, p < .05$ , and Post-Discussion opinions,  $F(4, 110) = 3.32, p < .05$ . These interactions primarily reflected the fact that differences among groups approached significance or were significant for the prototypical items for both pre-discussion opinions,  $F(4, 59) = 2.47, p = .055$ , and post-discussion opinions,  $F(4, 59) = 2.55, p < .05$ , but not for neutral items. Post-hoc tests revealed that the Low and High Solidarity groups differed significantly from one another for both the pre-discussion and the post-discussion opinions; none of the other group differences were significant.

Table 2.  
Means and *F*-Statistics for one-way univariate ANOVAs on descriptive variables as a function of Group Composition.

|                                 | Low<br>Criminal | High<br>Criminal | Low<br>Solidarity | High<br>Solidarity | Unselected | <i>F</i> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|----------|
| Age                             | 34.21           | 30.42            | 34.44             | 30.08              | 30.58      | 1.253    |
| Education                       | 10.33           | 9.83             | 10.58             | 9.75               | 10.21      | 1.234    |
| # Previous Offenses             | 11.25           | 14.42            | 11.21             | 14.75              | 18.39      | .670     |
| Total # Convictions             | 14.46           | 19.87            | 14.79             | 19.17              | 22.22      | .841     |
| Longest Prior Sentence (months) | 5.42            | 8.79             | 8.75              | 9.29               | 12.52      | .893     |
| Current Sentence (months)       | 10.40           | 10.42            | 12.29             | 10.48              | 11.34      | .595     |
| # Property Offenses             | 4.13            | 8.61             | 4.13              | 8.92               | 10.61      | 1.515    |
| # Assault Offenses              | 1.25            | 2.00             | 1.46              | 1.17               | 2.43       | 1.100    |
| # Alcohol/drug Offenses         | 3.67            | 2.91             | 3.29              | 3.00               | 2.26       | .596     |
| # Sexual Offenses               | .00             | .04              | .00               | .00                | .08        | .800     |
| # Other Offenses                | 5.42            | 6.30             | 5.92              | 6.08               | 6.83       | .159     |

Table 3.  
Means and *F*-statistics for two-way univariate ANOVAs on Pre- and Post-Discussion  
Opinions, Pre-Post Shifts, Polarizing Shifts, and Estimated Group Consensus as a  
function of Group Composition and Item Type.

| Group<br>Composition | Item<br>Type       | Pre    | Post   | Pre-Post<br>Shifts | Polarizing<br>Shifts | Estimated<br>Group<br>Consensus |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Low                  | P                  | 2.77   | 2.94   | -.17               | -.08                 | 3.31                            |
| Criminal             | N                  | 3.38   | 3.44   | -.06               | -.23                 | 3.40                            |
| High                 | P                  | 3.19   | 3.29   | -.10               | -.60*                | 3.42                            |
| Criminal             | N                  | 2.94   | 3.04   | -.10               | -.77*                | 3.17                            |
| Low                  | P                  | 2.29   | 2.73   | -.44*              | -.35                 | 2.88                            |
| Solidarity           | N                  | 3.23   | 3.31   | -.08               | -.33                 | 3.48                            |
| High                 | P                  | 3.42   | 3.73** | -.31*              | -.19                 | 3.71**                          |
| Solidarity           | N                  | 3.19   | 3.06   | .13                | -.38                 | 3.23                            |
| Unselected           | P                  | 2.75   | 2.90   | -.15               | -.65*                | 3.19                            |
|                      | N                  | 3.00   | 3.23   | -.23               | -.77*                | 3.13                            |
| <i>F</i> values      | Group<br>Type      | 1.623  | 0.976  | 0.239              | 4.043**              | 1.304                           |
|                      | Item<br>Type       | 3.243  | 0.574  | 1.569              | 1.190                | 0.042                           |
|                      | Group<br>X<br>Item | 2.534* | 3.324* | 0.602              | 0.111                | 3.254*                          |

Notes

P = Prototypical items  
\*  $p < .05$

N = Neutral items  
\*\*  $p < .01$

Moreover, following discussions of prototypical items, only one group -- the homogeneous High Inmate Solidarity group -- expressed post-discussion attitudes which were procriminal and significantly different from the mid-point "3", i.e., the point representing a neutral, ambivalent, or uncertain point on the rating scale,  $M = 3.73$ ,  $t(11) = -3.87$ ,  $p < .01$ . For all other conditions, pre- and post-discussion opinions on prototypical items did not differ significantly from the mid-point, in either a prosocial nor a procriminal direction.

The prediction that the High Solidarity and High Criminality groups would show greater procriminal-prosocial attitudinal shifts than the Low or Unselected groups was not supported, since there were no significant group differences for procriminal-prosocial pre-post shifts. However, two of the Group Compositions did show pre-post shifts which differed significantly from zero for prototypical items only, the same two groups which emerged in the previous analyses (see above): The High Inmate Solidarity group became significantly more procriminal in their attitudes,  $M = -.31$ ,  $t(11) = -2.32$ ,  $p < .05$ , and the Low Inmate Solidarity group moved toward the mid-point to become more neutral or ambivalent,  $M = -.44$ ,  $t(11) = -2.68$ ,  $p <$

**Figure 1.** Mean Pre-Discussion Opinions as a function of Group Composition and Item Type.

## Pre-Discussion Opinions

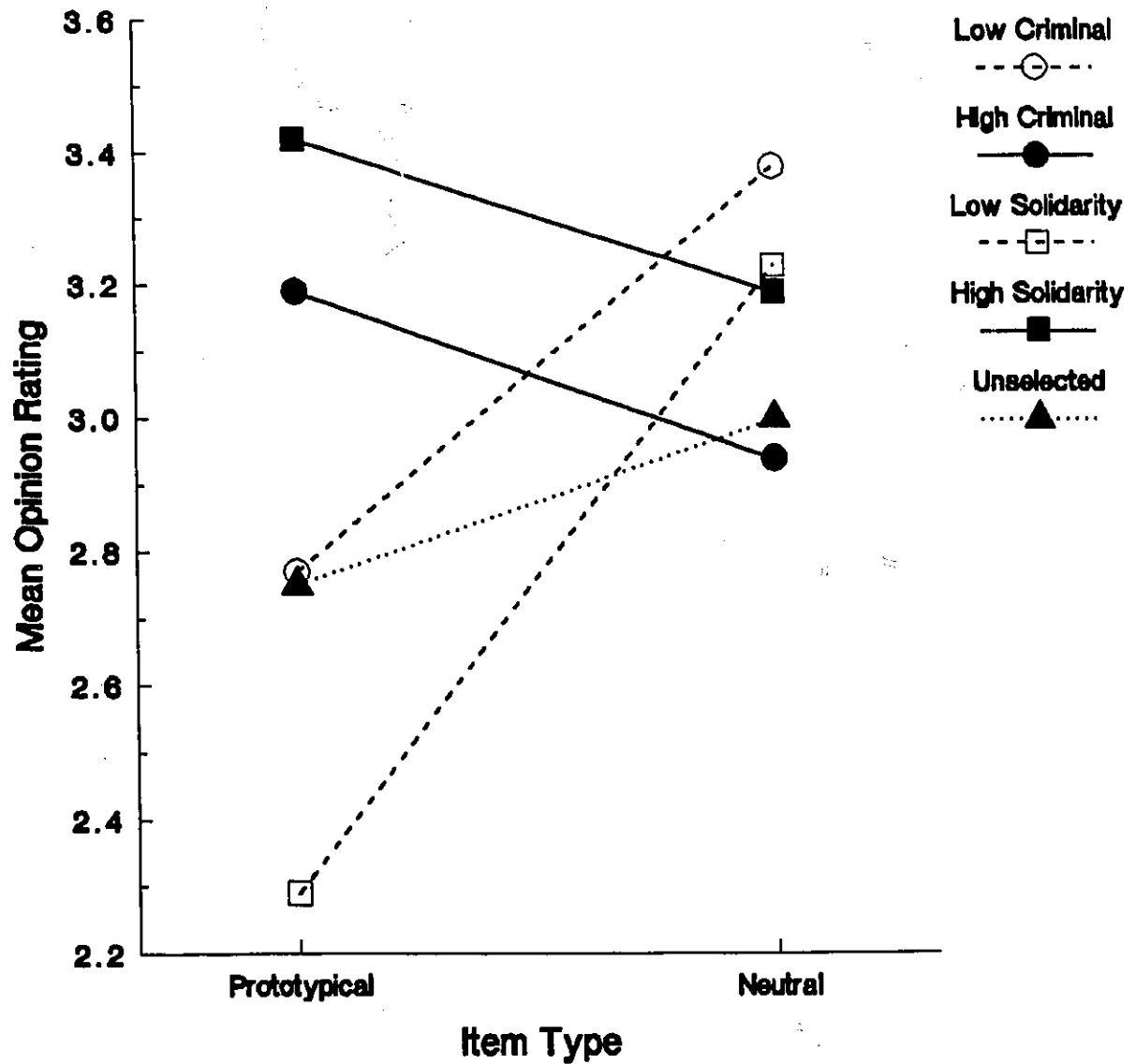


Figure 1

**Figure 2.** Mean Post-Discussion opinions as a function of Group  
Composition and Item Type.

## Post-Discussion Opinions

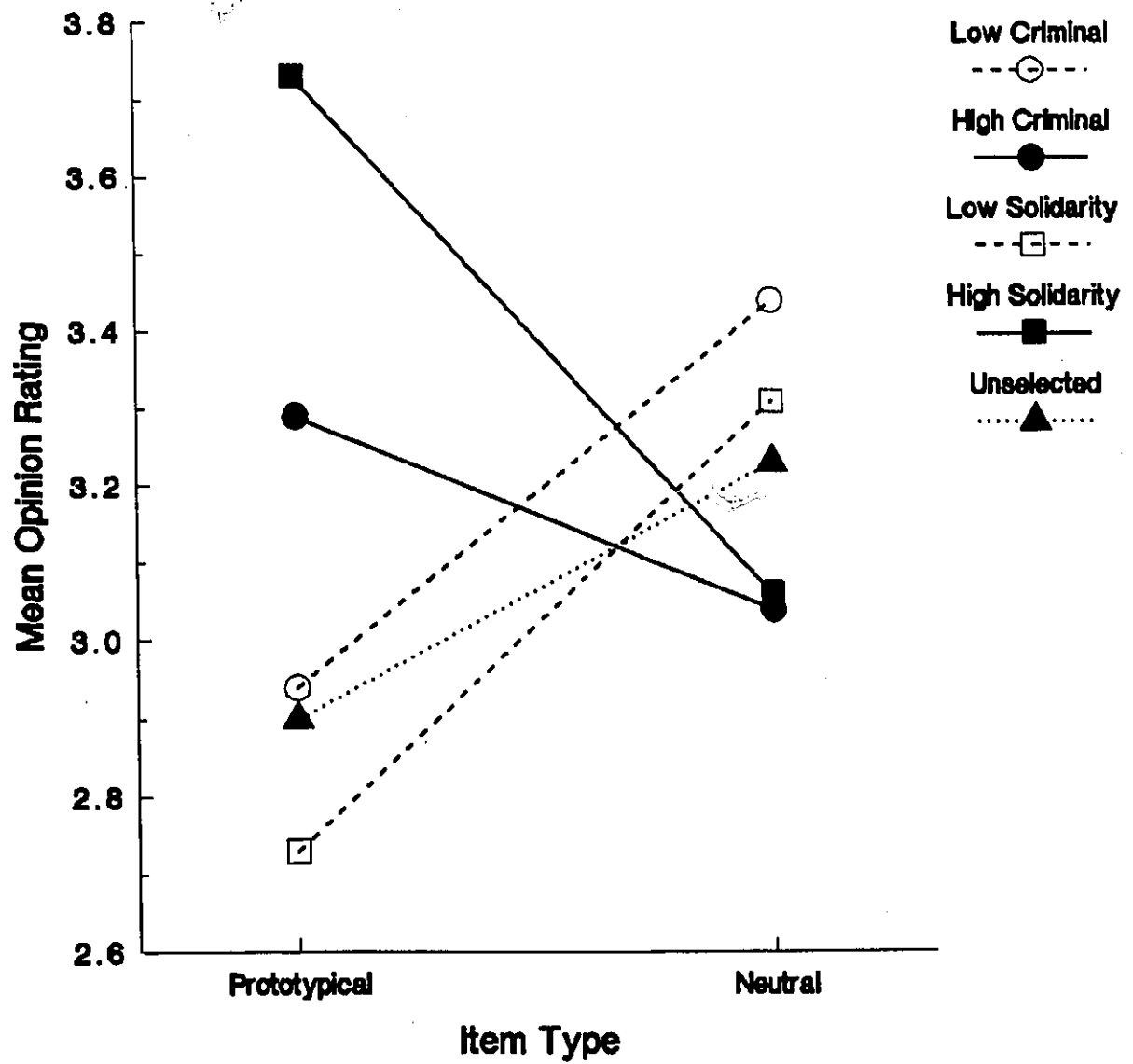


Figure 2

**Figure 3.** Mean Pre- and Post-Discussion opinions for Prototypical  
Items as a function of Group Composition.

## Pre- vs. Post-Discussion Opinions for Prototypical Items

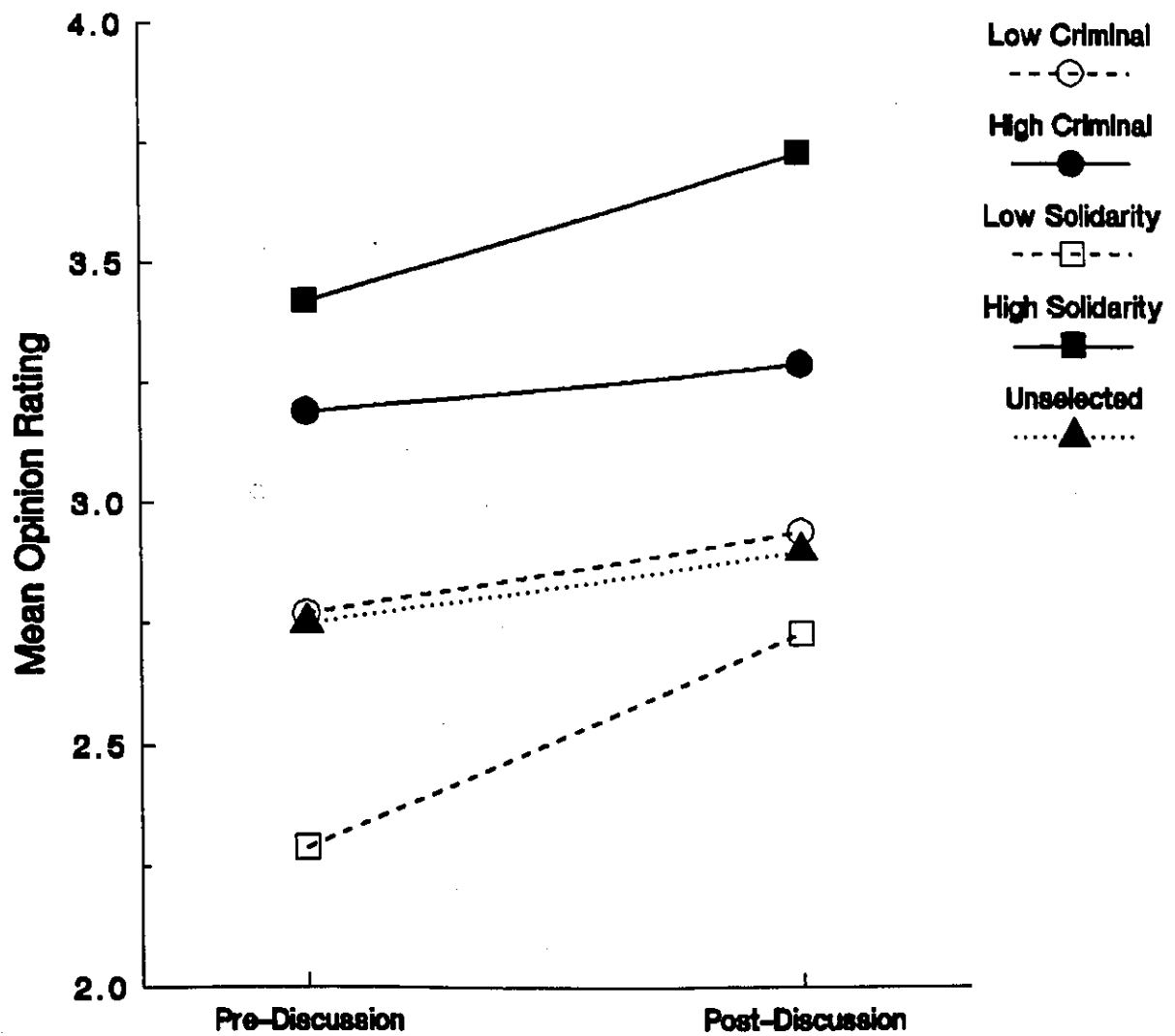


Figure 3

.05.

To further examine the hypothesis that the High Solidarity and High Criminality groups would show the greatest polarization, all responses for each subject were coded on the basis of whether the subject adopted a more extreme attitude following discussions, which could include shifts in either the prosocial or the procriminal direction. The absolute value of Pre-Post shifts were then coded using the following scheme: Shifts toward more extreme opinions, referred to as polarized shifts, were coded positively. When the Post-Discussion opinion was less extreme than the Pre-Discussion opinion, it was coded negatively and categorized as a depolarized shift in the case where the shift did not cross over the mid-point of the rating scale, or as a counterpolarized shift where the shift did cross over the mid-point. Attitudes which showed no significant change from Pre to Post were coded as zero.

For this analysis, the hypothesis was not supported: There was a significant Group Composition effect for type of shift (polarized, counterpolarized, or depolarized),  $F(4, 110) = 4.04$ ,  $p < .01$ , but it was not in the direction predicted: Regardless of Item Type, inmates

in the Low Criminality group depolarized or counterpolarized their opinions ( $M = -.16$ ) significantly less than inmates in the High Criminality ( $M = -.69$ ) or Unselected ( $M = -.71$ ) groups, as revealed by Student-Newman-Keuls post-hoc comparisons. No significant polarized shifts were observed for either the High Criminality or the High Inmate Solidarity groups for prototypical items. For prototypical items, only two groups showed degrees of depolarization or counterpolarization which were significantly different from zero: the High Criminality group,  $M = -.60$ ,  $t(11) = -2.98$ ,  $p < .05$ , and (unexpectedly) the Unselected group,  $M = -.65$ ,  $t(11) = -2.74$ ,  $p < .05$ . The other groups showed only marginal and non-significant depolarization or counterpolarization effects (Low Criminality,  $M = -.08$ ; Low Inmate Solidarity,  $M = -.35$ ; and High Inmate Solidarity,  $M = -.19$ ).

#### Behavioural convergence and the estimated group consensus.

According to Hogg, Turner, and Davidson (1990), behavioural convergence occurs when Absolute Post-Consensus differences (Post-Discussion Opinion minus Estimated Group Consensus) are smaller than Absolute Pre-Consensus differences (Pre-Discussion Opinion

minus Estimated Group Consensus). A positive sign indicates that behavioural convergence has occurred, while a negative sign signifies behavioural divergence. Similar composite scores were calculated for the present study to determine the extent to which there was behavioural convergence or divergence, or the absence of either convergence or divergence, on the Estimated Societal and Inmate Norms.

Contrary to expectations, there was no evidence in the present study that the High Criminality groups converged any more on the Estimated Group Consensus than High Inmate Solidarity groups or any other groups as evidenced by the two-way ANOVA revealing no Group Composition by Item Type interaction for this measure. Rather, all groups converged or diverged about equally on the Estimated Group Consensus, and on both Estimated Inmate and Societal Norms<sup>1</sup>.

However, the hypothesis that convergence would be observed only on the estimated group consensus, and not on the estimated inmate norms or societal norms, was supported. First, the overall mean of the degree of convergence on the estimated group consensus was both positive and significantly different from zero,  $\bar{M} = .33$ ,

$t(119) = 6.73, p < .001$ . Second, the post-discussion responses of subjects also diverged significantly from their Estimated Societal Norm<sup>1</sup> as evidenced by a mean which was negative and significantly different from zero,  $M = -.19, t(119) = -3.90, p < .001$ . Finally, inmates showed neither divergence nor convergence on the Estimated Inmate Norm, since the overall mean was not significantly different from zero ( $M = -.04$ ). It should also be noted that the mean convergence/divergence scores for the three estimated norms -- In-group, Inmate, and Societal Norms -- were significantly different from one another at the .01 level.

In approximately half of the 240 cases (i.e., 60 subjects x 4 discussions each), no significant Pre-Post shift was observed. However, even in these cases, inmates were somewhat influenced by the Estimated Group Consensus given that their Post-Discussion opinions (which were in fact equal to their Pre-Discussion opinions) were as close to the Estimated Group Consensus as those of inmates

---

<sup>1</sup> There was a small but significant Group Composition effect for degree of convergence on the Estimated Societal Norm,  $F(4,110) = 2.572, p < .05$ . However, Student-Newman-Keuls post-hoc comparisons did not reveal any significant differences between specific groups.

who did show Pre-Post attitude shifts. That is, the mean Absolute Pre-Consensus for inmates who did not show a Pre-Post shift ( $M = .68$ ) was much smaller than the mean for inmates who did show some type of Pre-Post shift ( $M = 1.36$ ), and this value differed only slightly from the Absolute Post-Consensus for subjects who shifted ( $M = .63$ ).

Clearly, conformity in the present experiment was to an Ingroup Consensual Norm (the estimated group consensus) and not to more distal general criminal/inmate or societal norms. More specifically, subjects conformed to an Estimated Group Consensus which was either ambivalent/neutral or procriminal. While the degree of convergence remained fairly constant across experimental conditions for prototypical items, the two-way ANOVA revealed a significant Group Composition x Item Type interaction for the estimated group consensus,  $F(4, 110) = 3.25, p < .05$  (see Figure 4). Subsequent separate one-way ANOVAs on neutral and prototypical items showed a significant difference among groups for prototypical items only,  $F(4, 59) = 2.60, p < .05$ , and post-hoc tests revealed that this was due

to a significant difference between the High and Low Solidarity groups only.

Finally, the mean Estimated Group Consensus for the High Solidarity subjects,  $\bar{M} = 3.71$ ,  $t(11) = -4.21$ ,  $p < .001$ , was the only mean which was significantly different from the mid-point "3", and was more procriminal than the mean Estimated Group Consensus for all other conditions (Low Criminality,  $\bar{M} = 3.31$ , ns; High Criminality,  $\bar{M} = 3.42$ , ns; Low Inmate Solidarity,  $\bar{M} = 2.88$ , ns; Unselected,  $\bar{M} = 3.19$ , ns).

Salience of the ingroup-outgroup categorization. The present findings also suggest that, with the exception of homogeneous groups of High Inmate Solidarity subjects, prototypical items may have facilitated or encouraged a process of subcategorization -- the spontaneous splitting of groups into subgroups. When this occurs, the ingroup-outgroup categorization based on group composition becomes less salient, and the result is likely to be somewhat greater neutrality, uncertainty, or ambivalence in the Post-Discussion opinions, and hence smaller Pre-Post shifts. In fact, heterogeneous

**Figure 4.** Mean Estimated Group Consensus as a function of Group Composition and Item Type.

## Estimated Group Consensus

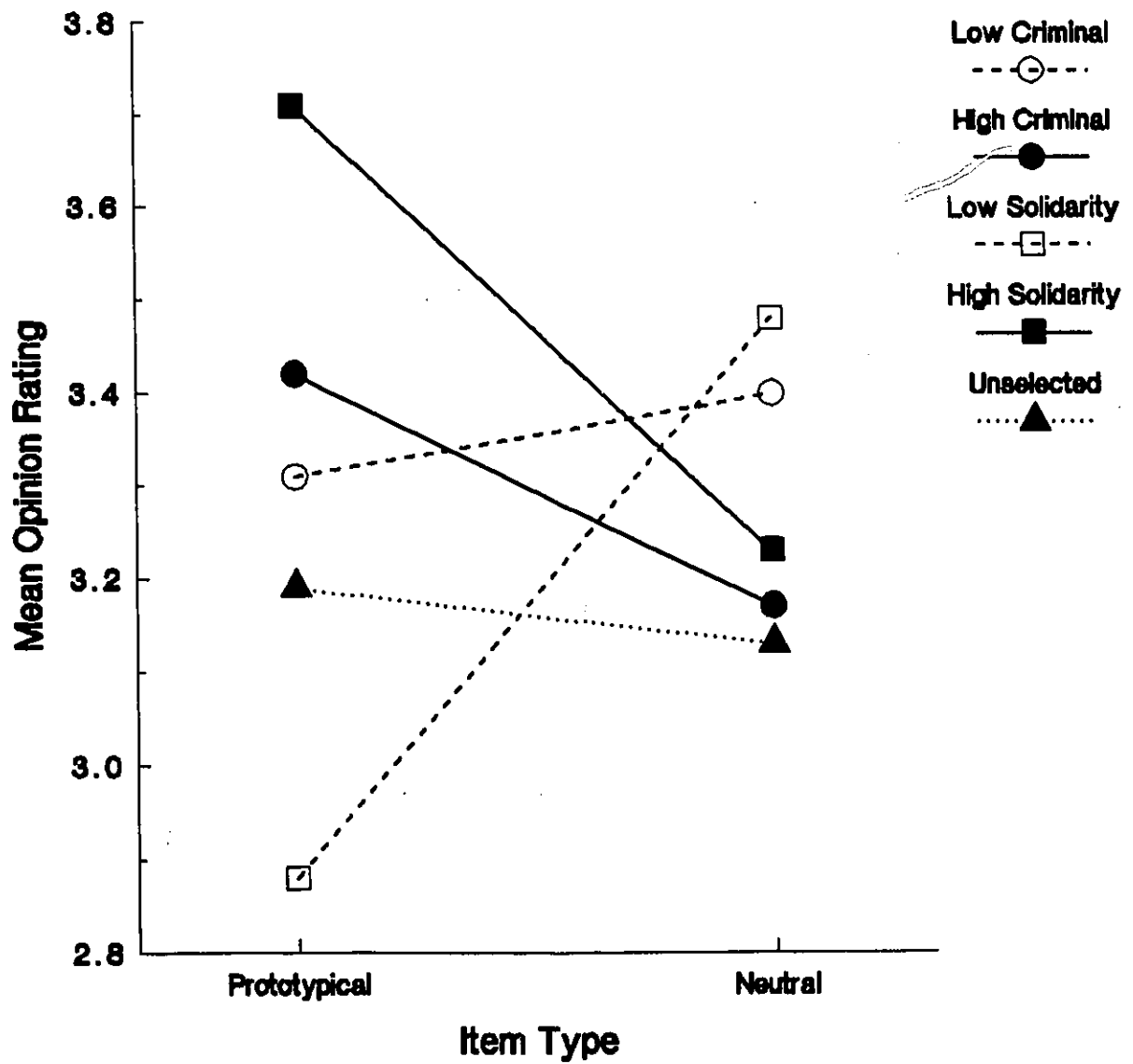


Figure 4

groups consisting of equal numbers of subjects split on the basis of latent characteristics or Pre-Discussion opinion scores did exhibit ambivalent or neutral Post-Discussion opinions for prototypical items.

More specifically, groups composed of two Low Criminality members and two High Criminality members (5 groups of 4 subjects,  $n = 20$ ) were found to hold neutral or ambivalent Post-Discussion opinions for prototypical items ( $\bar{M} = 2.74$ , ns). Similarly, groups composed of two High Inmate Solidarity members and two Low Inmate Solidarity members (3 groups of 4 subjects,  $n = 12$ ) also held neutral or ambivalent Post-Discussion opinions for prototypical items ( $\bar{M} = 2.75$ , ns). Finally, groups in which there were identifiable subgroups of opposing opinions (e.g., two members on one side of the issue and two members on the other side: 26 group discussions with 4 subjects each, total  $n = 104$ ) also exhibited neutral or ambivalent Post-Discussion opinions following discussion of prototypical items ( $\bar{M} = 3.29$ , ns). This suggests that the experimentally manipulated ingroup-outgroup categorization may have failed to be triggered during discussions of prototypical items.

Moreover, the present results suggest that ingroup-outgroup categorization might be triggered only in homogeneous groups of High Inmate Solidarity subjects, i.e., groups with all four members exhibiting such tendencies. Although groups composed of three High Inmate Solidarity subjects and one Low Inmate Solidarity subject (8 groups of 4 subjects,  $n = 32$ ) held procriminal Post-Discussion opinions,  $\underline{M} = 3.36$ ,  $t(31) = 2.32$ ,  $p < .05$ , the mean was found to be different from the mid-point. However, these groups did not show a significant procriminal Pre-Post shift, i.e., the mean Pre-Post shift was not significantly different from zero ( $\underline{M} = -.19$ ). Similarly, groups composed of three High Criminality subjects and one Low Criminality subject (6 groups of 4 subjects,  $n = 24$ ) also held procriminal opinions,  $\underline{M} = 3.52$ ,  $t(23) = 3.15$ ,  $p < .05$ , as evidenced by a significant difference between the overall mean and the mid-point "3", but these groups failed to show a significant procriminal Pre-Post shift ( $\underline{M} = -.14$ ).

There is some additional evidence for the contention that homogeneity may affect the perception of a shared group characteristic. High Inmate Solidarity subjects in heterogeneous

groups ( $n = 19$ ), that is, in groups composed of both Low and High Inmate Solidarity subjects) exhibited no significant shifts in personal opinions ( $M = -.06$ ). In contrast, as noted earlier, homogeneous groups of High Inmate Solidarity subjects shifted their personal opinions significantly in a procriminal direction ( $M = -.31$ ,  $t(11) = -2.32$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It appears therefore that, to induce attitudinal change, the High Inmate Solidarity characteristic must be shared by all group members. In more general terms, we can conclude that groups lacking an intragroup division or some other individualizing factor are more likely to exhibit a specific ingroup-outgroup categorization which will become a shared frame of reference when triggered by a specific item.

Misidentification. Tajfel and Turner (1979) have suggested that individuals may try to distance themselves psychologically or even physically from ingroup members when they become dissatisfied with their membership in that group. For example, a classic phenomenon known as misidentification was reported by Clark and Clark (1947, cited in Brown, 1988), who described how black children in the United States were observed to distance themselves psychologically

from other blacks and to identify with and show a preference for the dominant white group, a phenomenon which has been replicated several times for children and adults from minority groups in several countries (see Brown, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The present results suggest that inmates may also exhibit misidentification under some circumstances.

More specifically, it would appear that some inmates tried to distance themselves psychologically from a stereotypical inmate group as evidenced by their failure to conform to what they believed would be the responses of other inmates for a given item (Estimated Inmate Norm). Prior to any group discussions and regardless of group composition, inmates' Pre-Discussion opinions on prototypical items tended to be closer to the Estimated Societal Norm (mean Pre minus Estimated Societal Norm = 1.90,  $t(59) = 4.72$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than to the Estimated Inmate Norm (mean Pre minus Estimated Inmate Norm = -3.43,  $t(59) = -7.83$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This was also evidenced by non-significant Group Composition x Item Type interactions for Pre minus Estimated Societal Norm,  $F(4, 110) = 1.53$ , and for Pre minus Estimated Inmate Norm,  $F(4, 110) = 2.00$ . However, for

homogeneous groups of High Inmate Solidarity subjects, it would seem that misidentification did not occur. Specifically, groups composed of High Inmate Solidarity subjects tended to move closer to the Estimated Inmate Norm for prototypical topics than any of the other groups, as evidenced by a Group Composition x Item Type interaction which approached statistical significance for mean Post minus Estimated Inmate Norm scores,  $F(4, 110) = 2.25, p = .069$  (see Figure 5). For mean Post minus Estimated Societal Norm scores, this interaction was not significant,  $F(4, 110) = 1.965$ .

Manipulation checks for group composition. The five major groups differed significantly from one another on several measures of procriminal characteristics and identification with the inmate code, confirming the validity of the Group Composition manipulation (see Table 4). Univariate ANOVAs revealed several significant Group Composition effects: Pd-So index,  $F(4, 116) = 13.35, p < .001$ ; ICS Inmate Solidarity scale,  $F(4, 118) = 13.46, p < .001$ ; ICS Opposition to Staff scale,  $F(4, 118) = 4.76, p < .001$ ; CSS Law, Courts, & Police scale,  $F(4, 116) = 4.80, p < .001$ ; CSS

Identification with Criminal Others scale,  $F(4, 116) = 3.45, p < .05$ ; and the Total LSI score,  $F(4, 119) = 3.11, p < .05$ .

For the Pd-So index, Student-Newman-Keuls post hoc comparisons revealed that the High Criminality group had significantly higher Pd-So scores than all other groups, while the Low Criminality group had significantly lower scores than all other groups except Low Solidarity. As expected, the mean Inmate Solidarity score for the High Inmate Solidarity group was significantly higher than the High Criminality, the Low Criminality, and the Low Inmate Solidarity groups, but not the Unselected group. In addition, the High Solidarity and High Criminality groups both obtained higher scores on the ICS Opposition to Staff scale than either the Low Solidarity group or the Low Criminality group. However, there were no significant differences among groups for the ICS Trust/Affiliation scale.

The Unselected and High Inmate Solidarity groups obtained higher scores than the Low Inmate Solidarity group on the CSS Identification with Criminal Others scale, but were not significantly different from the Low Criminality or High Criminality groups on this measure. Additionally, subjects in the Low Inmate Solidarity group

**Figure 5. Mean Post-Discussion opinions minus Estimated Inmate  
Norm as a function of Group Composition and Item Type.**

## Post-Opinion minus Estimated Inmate Norm

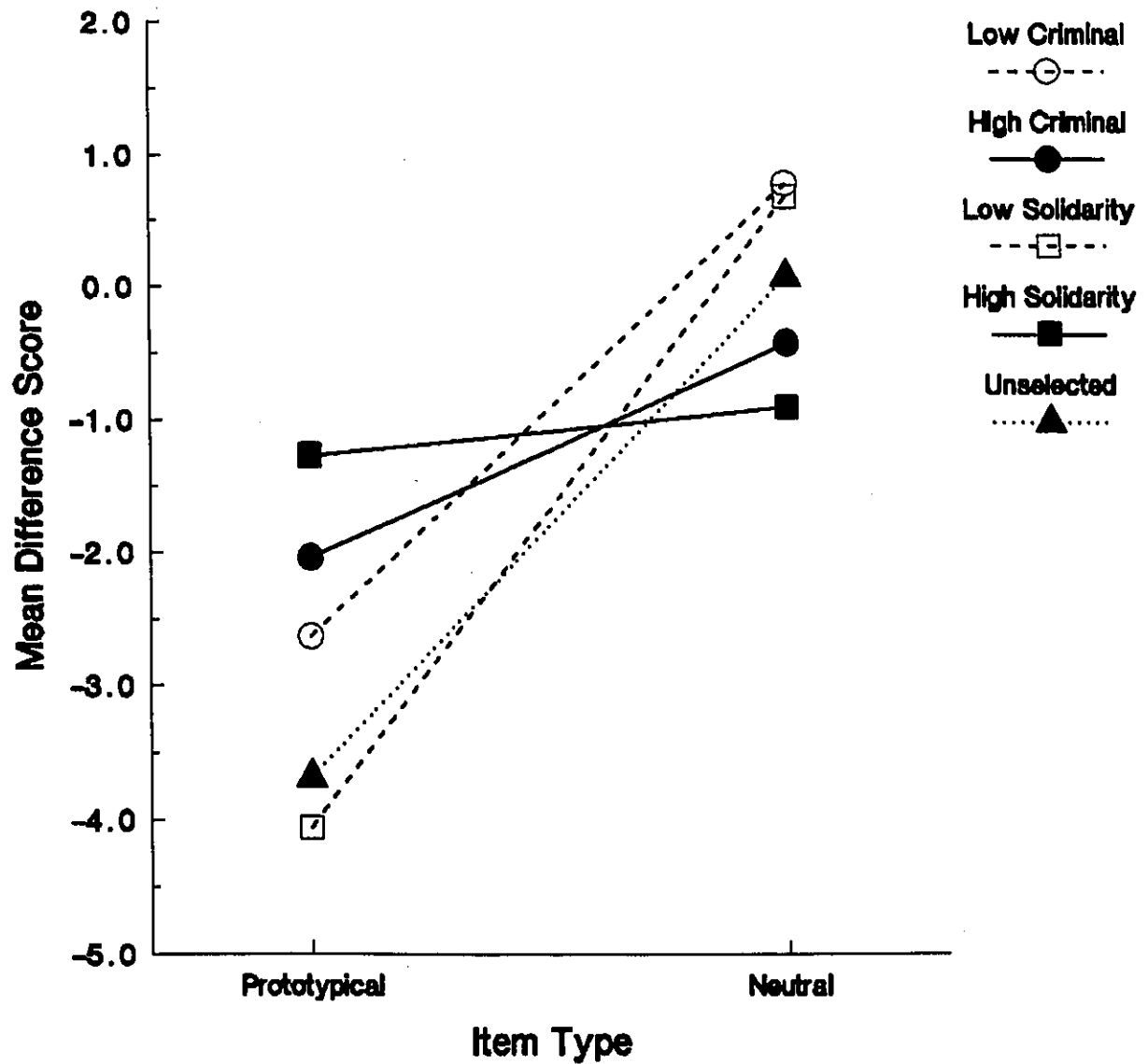


Figure 5

Table 4.  
Means and *F*-statistics from one-way univariate ANOVAs on measures of Criminality and Inmate Identification as a function of Group Composition.

|                              | Low Criminality | High Criminality | Low Solidarity | High Solidarity | Unselected | <i>F</i>   |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| Pd-So Index                  | 14.67           | 53.57            | 25.00          | 29.67           | 29.57      | 13.345 *** |
| ICS' Solidarity              | 34.29           | 36.00            | 29.21          | 39.50           | 35.83      | 11.860 *** |
| ICS Opposition               | 28.04           | 32.88            | 26.00          | 32.33           | 31.78      | 4.757 ***  |
| ICS Trust/Affiliation        | 27.88           | 25.83            | 29.83          | 26.58           | 27.00      | 2.296      |
| CSS LCP <sup>2</sup> Score   | 93.67           | 83.43            | 98.00          | 85.54           | 94.13      | 4.798 ***  |
| CSS TLV <sup>3</sup> Score   | 24.46           | 27.83            | 24.00          | 27.42           | 26.17      | 2.139      |
| CSS ICO <sup>4</sup> Score   | 15.04           | 16.22            | 14.78          | 17.17           | 17.35      | 3.455 *    |
| LSI <sup>5</sup> Total Score | 22.79           | 29.75            | 22.88          | 26.25           | 27.17      | 3.104 *    |

**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Inmate Code Scale

<sup>2</sup> Criminal Sentiments Scale (CSS) Law, Courts, & Police subscale

<sup>3</sup> CSS Tolerance for Law Violations subscale

<sup>4</sup> CSS Identification with Criminal Others subscale

<sup>5</sup> Level of Supervision Inventory (recidivism risk)

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

obtained higher scores on the CSS Law, Courts, and Police scale than subjects in the High Criminality, Unselected, or High Inmate Solidarity groups, but were not significantly different from the Low Criminality group on this scale.

Finally, subjects in the High Criminality group scored significantly higher on the LSI (i.e., indicating a higher risk for criminal recidivism) than subjects in the Low Inmate Solidarity or Low Criminality groups, but did not differ significantly from subjects in the Unselected or High Inmate Solidarity groups for this measure.

Perceived item importance and degree of involvement.

Analyses of the data from the post-experimental questionnaires, administered as additional manipulation checks, indicate that the present results cannot be attributed to differences in perceived importance of the various discussion topics, or to differences in degree of involvement by the subjects in the discussions. There were no differences in importance ratings for prototypical items and neutral items, indicating that they were perceived as equally important,  $F(1, 110) = 2.103$ , ns. Recall that items were selected on the basis of their capacity to elicit a unique (prototypical items) vs. several (neutral

items) ingroup-outgroup categorization. Moreover, subjects in all groups reported equal levels of involvement in the experimental tasks whether discussing prototypical items or neutral items (see Table 2).

On the other hand, subjects listed significantly more prototypical items ( $M = 2.88$ ) than neutral items ( $M = 2.32$ ),  $F(1, 110) = 7.10$ ,  $p < .01$ . This, however, might be a reflection of differential topic familiarity: Neutral items were selected to be inherently less specific in order to minimize the likelihood of triggering specific criminal ingroup-outgroup categorizations. They may, therefore, have had less relevance in terms of the experiences of individual subjects and consequently may have been somewhat less memorable and more difficult to recall. Prototypical items, on the other hand, dealt with issues of immediate relevance to many inmates, having to do with some of the circumstances of criminal activities and incarceration.

## Chapter 6

### Discussion

There were two major findings in this experiment. First, group-induced attitudinal changes in small groups of incarcerated criminal offenders were determined jointly by characteristics of the topics discussed, certain characteristics of individual group members, and the extent to which groups were homogeneous or heterogeneous with respect to those characteristics. Second, significant procriminal attitude shifts occurred only for homogeneous groups of inmates with strong conformity to the inmate code (high solidarity with other inmates), and only during discussions of topics which were prototypical for criminal offenders and therefore capable of triggering a specific inmate-noninmate or criminal-noncriminal categorization.

Group polarization per se was not observed in any of the group compositions based on latent individual group characteristics. Instead, subjects tended to show individual depolarization and counterpolarization of attitudes following group discussions. None of the various group compositions encouraged significant prosocial shifts following discussions of prototypical items. Even the most prosocial

groups prior to group discussion, i.e., groups composed of subjects low in conformity to the inmate code, tended to show neutral or ambivalent post-discussion opinions. In fact, except for the homogeneous high inmate solidarity group, all other groups exhibited such neutral or ambivalent post-discussion opinions.

There were also some significant differences among groups with respect to pre-discussion opinions, which appeared to be consistent with stereotypical normative values or attitudes for each of the group compositions. These initial opinions are presumably determined by past values, beliefs, and experiences. However, it is clear from the present results that group composition by itself is insufficient to explain group-induced attitudinal changes.

Post-discussion opinions of high inmate solidarity subjects shifted in a more procriminal direction, in contrast to high criminality subjects who showed no significant change from pre- to post-discussion. This finding suggests that inmate solidarity, a factor measuring conformity to the inmate code may be a potent dimension for influencing procriminal attitudinal shifts, probably because it is a more specific dimension compared to criminality: Inmate solidarity is

solely a measure of conformity to solidarity to other inmates, whereas criminality may be simultaneously measuring conformity to several procriminal norms. In addition, inmate solidarity may be a more immediately relevant dimension given that it reflects a dynamic feeling of "sticking together," while criminality may be less related to potential group feeling, and measuring more static personality traits conducive to criminal behaviour.

The results can be interpreted as reflecting a process of convergence on the perceived local ingroup consensus or norm rather than on the more distal norms of general criminality or conventional society, or even general inmate norms. This process of convergence was fairly constant across groups in the present study, regardless of type of discussion item or group composition. However, degree of convergence did tend to be weaker when inmates in a group shared similar initial views on an issue than when the group lacked such consistency in initial opinions.

The observed effects appeared to depend in part on the extent to which a specific ingroup-outgroup categorization or group identity became salience during a discussion. Apart from the prototypicality

of an item, several other related factors affect the salience of a group identity or a specific ingroup-outgroup categorization. One of these is the extent to which the composition of the group is homogeneous or heterogeneous on some relevant dimension, which in essence dictates whether the group is able to find some common ground for a positive and distinct group identity. The present results suggest that the extent to which a given ad hoc characteristic is perceived as a shared group characteristic determines the salience of a given ingroup-outgroup categorization; this in turn affects the location of the estimated group consensus along a dichotomized continuum, rather than directly affecting the degree of behavioural convergence per se.

When there are several possible dimensions for group categorization, salience is reduced for groups which are homogeneous on one dimension and heterogeneous on other dimensions. Such group compositions tend to encourage subcategorization, where the apparently homogeneous group spontaneously splits into subgroups (e.g., based on agreement vs. disagreement with pre-discussion opinions, high vs. low inmate solidarity, high vs. low criminality, etc.). When no specific outgroup is clearly identified, so that there is no

clear group which group members must oppose, these subgroup categorizations may also fail to become salient, with the result that no specific or distinct group definition or identity emerges, and ambivalent or neutral post-discussion opinions are observed.

Following this line of reasoning, it would appear that in the present study only the inmate vs. noninmate categorization became salient during group discussions, and only for prototypical items and only in the high inmate solidarity group. The remaining groups apparently failed to form any distinct ingroup identity, presumably because none of the ingroup or subgroup categorizations emerged as salient during their group discussions.

Hogg, Turner, and Davidson (1990) found that ingroups in the middle of a social frame of reference, confronted by both risky and cautious outgroups, tended to converge on their pretest mean, showing no polarization effects. It is possible that a similar effect occurred in the present study: Some inmates may have felt confronted during group discussions by both extreme stereotypical prosocial views and extreme stereotypical procriminal views, leading them to perceive an ambivalent (divided) group consensus and thus to

exhibit neutral or ambivalent post-discussion opinions. In fact, it may be that inmates in correctional treatment facilities are often faced with such dilemmas, and that many inmates cannot be categorized as either stereotypically prosocial or stereotypically procriminal. Moreover, they may be well aware of their own ambivalence about membership in either of these social categories. Further, it is conceivable that some of the group discussions in the present study, more than others, may have increased the perception among such subjects that their ambivalence was in fact shared by other group members. If this were to become a perceived shared group characteristic, it could in turn promote group categorization somewhere between the perceived prosocial and procriminal extremes. Thus, one plausible explanation for the present findings is that the initial ingroup-outgroup categorization was supplanted by non-salient subcategorizations for some groups and by salient local categorizations for other groups where inmates perceived that some group members shared their ambivalence.

The centrality of a social identity. Aside from external factors determining the salience of a perceived group identity (e.g., the

homogeneity of the group composition and the type of item discussed), at the individual level the direction and magnitude of a pre-post shift may be influenced by the extent to which an ingroup categorization or social identity is central for self-definition. The centrality of a social identity reflects the degree to which a membership is subjectively accepted by the individual. According to Gurin and Marcus (1988), "regardless of the terminology used (centrality, degree of development or elaboration or complexity, self-relevance, ego-involvement, importance), psychologists have repeatedly noted that psychological functioning depends not only on the presence of an internal structure but also on its centrality to the individual" (p. 272). According to Self-Categorization Theory, solidarity among group members is possible when the processes of self-categorization and self-stereotyping (the internalization of norms appropriate to a given social categorization) have occurred. Following this line of reasoning, one could argue that for subjects who are actively conforming to inmate norms (i.e., high solidarity inmates), a perception of membership in local inmate groups (belongingness) is central for their self-definition and group definition, at least at this

point in their lives, in contrast to other inmates for whom solidarity with other inmates may be less important.

Individual vs. collective coping strategies. As noted earlier, when subjects are dissatisfied with their perceptions of a current group (or subgroup) membership, and yet are associated in various ways with that group (as in the present study), they may adopt different strategies to acquire a distinct and positive social identity. Group or collective strategies tend to increase identification and solidarity within the group by reinterpreting or redefining the dimensions relevant to ingroup categorization. Individual strategies (e.g., misidentification), on the other hand, tend to reduce ingroup identification and solidarity by emphasizing differences between the individual and other ingroup members. Mackie (1986) found that an emphasis on group performances (collective coping strategies) encouraged polarization by increasing the salience of ingroup categorization, while an emphasis on individual performances (individual coping strategies) decreased salience and thus encouraged attitudes to shift to a more neutral position. Similarly, Turner, Wetherell, and Hogg (1989) reported that the presence of

individualistic traits, not shared by other members, decreased the salience of ingroup categorization.

It is possible therefore that subjects in groups which became more neutral or ambivalent in their attitudes following discussions of prototypical items may have included individuals with a less central inmate identity. Such individuals would likely have a preference for coping strategies which are less group focused and more individualistic in nature, distancing themselves psychologically from other inmates (misidentification) and particularly from those who adhered strongly to the inmate code.

In contrast, inmates who adhere strongly to the inmate code are probably more inclined to use collective or group coping strategies to enhance their social identities. In fact, identification with or conformity to the inmate code can in itself be interpreted as a collective coping strategy, a group response to the shared problems of incarceration (Baxter, 1992). In the present study, high solidarity subjects exhibited attitudes which were closer to the perceived inmate norm than those of subjects in other groups, the psychological equivalent of moving closer to other inmates.

**Prosocial inhibition.** Another motivational element, prosocial inhibition, might explain why there were no prosocial shifts following discussions of prototypical items. It is conceivable that subjects may have been reluctant to state any prosocial opinions publicly for fear of being embarrassed, ridiculed, or even threatened by their inmate peers. These fears, real or imagined, may be due to a perception that their peers were more procriminal than themselves, or they may be rooted in feelings of insecurity or ambivalence regarding their own social identities.

Moreover, even among inmates with relatively strong, central prosocial identities, there may be limited histories of exposure to prosocial others, and hence a poor repertoire of prosocial arguments to draw upon in group discussions. Thus, it would appear that not only a central social identity but also a general knowledge about the norms associated with a given group may influence the accessibility of a social identity, either prosocial or procriminal, and consequently the likelihood that a prosocial-procriminal categorization will be salient in a given context. In fact, even with considerable exposure to prosocial norms, the repertoire of prosocial arguments may be poorly

developed relative to the repertoire of procriminal arguments in subjects who are strongly procriminal. As Sykes and Matza (1957) have noted, criminals generally have a well-developed repertoire of rationalizations, justifications, and distorted cognitions (termed "neutralization" strategies) which enables them to commit crimes without disabling guilt or remorse. Thus, in any group of convicted offenders, especially recidivists, it may well be the case that strong arguments in favour of criminality are much more accessible and cogent than arguments for the other side.

To summarize, it is plausible that the high inmate solidarity subjects in this study became more procriminal in their attitudes for a number of related reasons: (1) they converged on an estimated group consensus which they perceived to be procriminal; (2) the fit between the ad hoc inmate-noninmate categorization and the prototypical discussion items increased the salience of the procriminal ingroup categorization or identity; (3) they adopted a strong inmate-noninmate categorization which discouraged subcategorization or the splitting of discussants into subgroups; (4) they were opposing to a specific noninmate outgroup category; (5) a sense of membership in the local

inmate group had a high degree of importance to these subjects in their current circumstances, helping to alleviate the "pains of imprisonment" (cf. Sykes, 1958; Wheeler, 1961); (6) they tend to rely on collective strategies (involving the inmate group) to cope with problems related to negative social identity; (7) the high inmate solidarity groups tended to strongly inhibit any prosocial opinions emerging during discussions because of their strong procriminal frame of reference (prosocial inhibition); and (8) relative to their repertoire of prosocial arguments, such subjects have a well-articulated repertoire of procriminal arguments, and were thus able to dominate and to be perceived as more persuasive during group discussions of prototypical topics.

Conversely, inmates assigned to other groups which were not high in inmate solidarity became more neutral or ambivalent in their attitudes because (1) they were already close to the estimated group consensus or because they converged on an estimated group consensus which they perceived to be neutral, ambivalent, or mildly prosocial; (2) the ad hoc group characteristic was not triggered by prototypical items in these groups; (3) the groups tended to

subcategorize, splitting into subgroups or individuals leading to a non-salient post-discussion ingroup-outgroup categorization; (4) group opposition to both extreme stereotypical procriminal and prosocial outgroups may have encouraged a less specific group identity; (5) membership in local inmate groups was less important for these subjects than for the high inmate solidarity subjects; (6) they tended not to rely on collective (group) strategies to cope with problems related to a negative social identity, preferring individualistic coping strategies; (7) they were less inhibited in expressing prosocial opinions than subjects in homogeneous high inmate solidarity groups; and (8) for some reason, their repertoire of accessible arguments included prosocial arguments which were better articulated than was the case for the high solidarity groups, though perhaps still somewhat weak relative to procriminal arguments.

Clinical implications. It is important to emphasize, first, that the present results are based on a single series of rather short discussions among incarcerated inmates. This is consistent with the usual paradigm for studying polarization phenomena but there are, of course, several important and perhaps critical differences between

treatment groups and the sort of ad hoc discussion groups used in the present study (e.g., in actual treatment groups, there is a more formal structure with an active prosocial group leader/therapist who, through training and experience, has access to a repertoire of well-articulated prosocial arguments and to other strategies for counteracting procriminal forces). Moreover, based on the present findings there is no way to predict what would be the effects of longer and repeated discussions over a period of weeks or months, as is more likely to be the case in correctional treatment groups.

Nonetheless, the present study identified three related factors which may influence the outcome of correctional treatment groups: group composition, the focus of discussions within the group, and the processes involved in establishing ingroup consensual norms. To begin with, clinicians would be advised to pay particular attention to group composition, avoiding wherever possible the formation of homogeneous groups of inmates identifying strongly with the inmate code. Such groups were shown here to be particularly vulnerable to procriminal attitude shift. Thus, groups composed solely of "problem inmates" are not recommended, since these inmates are likely to be

those who most strongly adhere to the inmate code and such groups may therefore provide optimal conditions for promoting antisocial group phenomena. On the other hand, the present findings suggest that homogeneous highly prosocial groups may have little or no advantage over heterogeneous (mixed) groups in this regard.

In the present study, focusing on more neutral (non-prototypical) topics neither encouraged nor discouraged ingroup cohesiveness or prosocial/procriminal attitude polarization. This might suggest that group leaders should be encouraged to focus on discussions of more personal or neutral issues (e.g., moral dilemmas) with the aim of activating alternative latent social identities (e.g., father, husband, religious, sport, cultural, etc.). However, while this strategy may be helpful in promoting subcategorization and hence reductions in ingroup identification, clinicians should bear in mind that this is unlikely to lead to successful community adjustment unless they also address issues specifically related to procriminal identity, attitudes, and values (cf. Andrews & Bonta, 1994; Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990; Andrews, Zinger, et al., 1990).

The experimental paradigm used in this study could become a suitable therapeutic tool for helping inmates to gain insight into the process of amplification of procriminal attitudes and in general the shaping of attitudes by social peer group influences. By asking group members to record their initial attitudes before and after group discussions on given issues and to estimate the group consensus, therapists can help the client become more aware of tendencies to conform to ingroup norms even when privately he/she may have rejected a certain opinion or attitude. It could also be used for monitoring group influences and progress of individual clients. Moreover, some inmates, especially those experienced in correctional treatment groups, may be quite skilled at concealing procriminal attitudes. As an alternative to relying solely on the overt expression of personal opinions, which in fact may be tapping only the client's knowledge of how he/she should feel, or his/her "ideal" attitudes, a therapist might ask clients to estimate the group consensus at various points during treatment. This estimated group consensus, because it is a more indirect measure, might provide information as to the direction of important attitude changes occurring within the group.

Future research. As with any experiment, the generality of the present findings may be limited by certain methodological, clinical, or theoretical factors. However, several procedures were used here to minimize such limitations. For instance, the true purpose of the experiment was partially revealed to the subjects in an attempt to reduce demand characteristics: Subjects were told that the experiment was about small-group decision-making. Later debriefing sessions with each group of subjects revealed that they were naive as to the Group Composition and Item Type manipulations. In fact, during the debriefing session, some subjects spontaneously suggested various other factors which may have influenced the process of group decision-making (e.g., the number of subjects per group and amount of time spent discussing a given issue). In order to reduce unrealistic prosocial self-presentation, subjects were reminded to respond as honestly as possible at several points throughout the study. Moreover, issues regarding anonymity and confidentiality of responses were stressed initially and upon request by the subjects. Finally, all subjects completed the opinion rating forms individually to minimize

the possibility of contamination of their written responses by prosocial inhibition.

The fact that the current subjects were recruited from inmates recently admitted to an assessment unit might raise questions about whether inmates who have been involved for some time in a treatment group would respond similarly. This is essentially an empirical issue, which could be satisfactorily addressed by applying the experimental paradigm at various points during the course of a treatment program. It is possible that group-induced attitudinal changes might be affected (either decreased or increased) by longitudinal changes in solidarity among ingroup members, which of course could in turn influence the perception of the estimated group consensus.

In the present study, the individual discussion groups were composed of four subjects. The average size of actual correctional treatment groups is probably closer to about 6-12 inmates. Although again this is an empirical question, there are few reasons to believe that group-induced attitudinal changes would be different with a larger treatment group. However, it must be acknowledged that little

research has been done to date specifically examining the effects of group size on polarization phenomena. Mullen (1983, 1987, cited in Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992) suggested that when ingroup size is proportionately smaller relative to the outgroup, individuals tend to focus their attention more on the immediate relevant social group. However, this may have limited implications for situations where variations in group size are on a small scale (e.g., 4 to 15 group members). Nevertheless, the empirical question of whether group size is an important factor in determining attitude shifts certainly needs to be addressed in future research.

Moreover, in the present experiment, the topics were discussed over a rather brief period of time compared to the amount of time devoted to core or central issues in a typical group therapy session, particularly when group members have had time to get more comfortable with one another. It is also conceivable that repeated discussions on similar or related issues among the same group members over time might have a significant impact on group-induced attitude change.

In addition, there were no "therapists" acting as group leaders in this study, and it is certainly possible that specific strategies employed by a therapist to counteract anti-rehabilitative effects might significantly moderate the kinds of attitude shifts observed here. Future research should explore the effects of variations in therapist style and specific therapeutic strategies on group-induced attitude shifts (e.g., taking an extreme anti-criminal position vs. expressed tolerance of "minor" antisocial behaviours).

Finally, group compositions based on other measures which may influence the accessibility or salience of a social identity should be scrutinized. These might include direct measures of the centrality of a social identity for the individual (including the possibility of a transient treatment identity), perceived group status, and general individual tendencies to conform.

In a broader view, the present thesis contributes to a developing picture of the phenomenology of being in a group, and helps to clarify the interaction between individual and group processes underlying attitudinal shifts which occurred in brief group discussion and in the absence of an assigned group leader. The results provide

the first empirical evidence that a shared latent individual characteristic among discussants can be naturally triggered during the course of a group discussion by prototypical items, so as to become a salient ingroup defining characteristic. Additionally, the results demonstrate that, as predicted from the Self-Categorization model, group-mediated attitude changes are related to the phenomenon of conformity to an estimated ingroup consensus rather than conformity to more distal sociocultural norms.

The results also point to the fact that cognitive processes associated with social categorizations are important factors in determining how social groups perceive and stereotype each other, and highlight the essential role played by motivational factors (e.g., inmate solidarity) in the process of group-mediated attitude change. It is worth noting that adherence to the inmate code by groups of inmates has often been targeted by staff in correctional facilities to explain negative rehabilitative outcomes. The current findings might be interpreted as constituting some empirical support for this "clinical wisdom", although it is not clear that the relationship between

adherence to the inmate code and poor treatment outcome is necessarily fixed or certain.

Finally, the value of this study also lies in the fact that explanations of group polarization phenomena based on Self-Categorization Theory are expanded to incorporate Oakes' conceptualization of category salience (e.g., the importance of a social identity) and elements of Social Comparison Theory and Social Identity Theory to explain group-mediated attitude shifts. This integrated frame of reference should help to promote a better understanding of group-mediated attitude change in applied settings.

Despite its introduction over 30 years ago, the concept of group polarization and more generally group-mediated attitude change has generated remarkably little applied research, especially on this continent. It is hoped that the present work will encourage the use of this modified version of the group polarization paradigm, which integrates elements of both applied/clinical and "pure" experimental research designs in a cost- and time-efficient package. It is also hoped that the present study will encourage the use of assessment and treatment strategies that are empirically supported, and that it will

provide group leaders with some guidelines in the assignment of inmates to various treatment programs and in the selection of strategies to prevent or counteract the amplification of procriminal attitudes. Finally, it is hoped that this study will encourage future research aimed at identifying specific group compositions and/or other specific individual and group characteristics which might promote prosocial rather than procriminal attitude change.

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**Attitude change in correctional treatment groups**  
**147**

**Appendix A**

**Inmate Code Scale**

## ICS Questionnaire

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
148Strongly  
Disagree  
1Disagree  
2Uncertain  
3Agree  
4Strongly  
Agree  
5

- \_\_\_ 1. I would never rat on another inmate.
- \_\_\_ 2. If someone insulted me or a friend, I would have to take serious action against them.
- \_\_\_ 3. Sometimes I like to see how far I can push the staff.
- \_\_\_ 4. Other inmates here usually talk about you behind your back.
- \_\_\_ 5. I trust the staff here more than I trust other residents.
- \_\_\_ 6. Fighting is usually a pretty good way to get people off your back.
- \_\_\_ 7. I enjoy seeing other people get nervous or scared.
- \_\_\_ 8. Most staff here don't care if I live or die.
- \_\_\_ 9. It's easy to con the staff here.
- \_\_\_ 10. I would be willing to fake an injury or illness to get better treatment.
- \_\_\_ 11. The best way to get along here is to agree with everything staff says. (\*\*\*) not scored (\*\*\*)
- \_\_\_ 12. You can always expect someone to rat on you here.
- \_\_\_ 13. The staff here give me a lot of static.
- \_\_\_ 14. I try to let staff think that I am going straight. (\*\*\*) not scored (\*\*\*)
- \_\_\_ 15. Staff here will leave you alone if you don't mess up.
- \_\_\_ 16. Most inmates here have only one or two close friends.
- \_\_\_ 17. I would be willing to fake getting religion in order to get an early release or transfer.
- \_\_\_ 18. I find it easy to play one staff member off against another.
- \_\_\_ 19. Most staff think of me as a troublemaker.
- \_\_\_ 20. The worst kind of person to be is a rat.
- \_\_\_ 21. Most staff here like to act tough.

## ICS Questionnaire

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

- \_\_\_ 22. Sometimes I like to see how far I can push other residents. (\*\*\*)  
not scored \*\*\*)
- \_\_\_ 23. I enjoy hassling staff just to see what they will do.
- \_\_\_ 24. If you reveal too much about yourself to a staff member, the  
information will probably be used against you.
- \_\_\_ 25. The best way to do time is to "grin and bear it" and not let staff  
know that anything is getting you down.
- \_\_\_ 26. In jail, I keep pretty much to myself.
- \_\_\_ 27. I don't think I have very much in common with other inmates here.
- \_\_\_ 28. There are very few inmates I really trust.
- \_\_\_ 29. The best people to talk to about personal problems are staff.
- \_\_\_ 30. When inmates stick together, it's a lot easier to do time.
- \_\_\_ 31. Staff get a lot of information about inmates from group therapy  
which is used against the inmate.
- \_\_\_ 32. Being with other inmates give me a sense of not being totally  
alone.
- \_\_\_ 33. Most inmates are not really loyal to each other when the chips are  
down.
- \_\_\_ 34. In jail, generally you're better off talking to other inmates  
about personal problems than talking to staff.
- \_\_\_ 35. The best way to do time is to mind your own business and have as  
little to do as possible with other inmates.
- \_\_\_ 36. These days, you don't really know who you can count on.
- \_\_\_ 37. I can't think of any situation where I would report another inmate  
to staff.
- \_\_\_ 38. I can't see myself ever having a friendly conversation with a  
staff member.
- \_\_\_ 39. There really isn't anyone in this institution that I'm close to.
- \_\_\_ 40. It's important to me to be liked and accepted by other inmates.

**Attitude change in correctional treatment groups**  
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**Appendix B**

**Item Prototypicality Survey**

**Opinion Questionnaire**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please read the statements on the following pages and indicate

- (1) whether YOU PERSONALLY agree or disagree with the statements;
- (2) whether you think most other offenders would agree or disagree; and
- (3) whether you think most other people in the community would agree or disagree.

Indicate your answers by entering 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 next to each statement using this scale:

|                      |          |           |       |                   |
|----------------------|----------|-----------|-------|-------------------|
| Strongly<br>Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly<br>Agree |
| 1                    | 2        | 3         | 4     | 5                 |

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
152

| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

1. Aggression (fighting) is a good way of settling most conflicts.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

2. Physical attractiveness is critical if you want to be successful in today's society.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

3. We break the law because we've learned this when we were growing up, because of bad influences, bad neighbourhoods, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

4. Children and teenagers shouldn't carry weapons to protect themselves when they go to school

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

5. People who have more than others often get what they have by ripping off people.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

6. Breaking into a family home when no one is in and stealing jewellery or a VCR doesn't really hurt anyone.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

7. All children should learn to respect their teachers.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

8. There really isn't anything terribly wrong with driving home after a party when you've had too much to drink.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

9. Women are no longer discriminated against.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

10. I would admire someone who is able to get away from the police after a high speed chase.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

11. Because there are so many couples separating or divorcing, it is now a serious social problem.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

12. Since most people and businesses have insurance coverage, there are no real victims in a theft or B & E.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

13. Everything in life is pretty much a matter of luck.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

14. The church is no longer important in modern society.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

15. Once somebody is labelled, that's it -- people won't give you a break and it's impossible to get out of the vicious circle.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

16. In some ways, people who break the law are more honest and trustworthy than other people.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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- | Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
17. Most people are easily influenced by the opinions, values, and attitudes of those around them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion
- \_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say
- \_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say
18. Sometimes I like to push people, especially those who claim they never break the law.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion
- \_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say
- \_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say
19. There's nothing wrong with beating up a child molester.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion
- \_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say
- \_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say
20. A man with a large family to support isn't doing anything really wrong if he occasionally helps himself to food and supplies in the warehouse where he works -- everyone else does it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion
- \_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say
- \_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

21. The family is the most important unit of modern society.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

22. My friends and family are more important than my personal happiness.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

23. People who break the law trust each other and stick together.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

24. On the job, it is best to do only what you are required to do, no more and no less; otherwise, your co-workers will resent you.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

25. Married women shouldn't work outside the home.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

26. The use of soft drugs shouldn't be illegal.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

27. I've done some bad things in my life but who hasn't -- If you take into account all the good things I've done it balances out.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

28. Society should step up the war against drugs -- they ruin people's lives.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

29. Physical force is never a good way to deal with a personal problem.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion  
\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say  
\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

30. I feel guilty for taking time off work.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion  
\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say  
\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

31. When times are tough, it's only right that women should give up their jobs to men.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion  
\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say  
\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

32. The best way to succeed (get ahead) is to start at the bottom and work your way up.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion  
\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say  
\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
160

| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

33. Most people are just out for what they can get.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

34. The evils of war far outweigh any advantages or benefits that war might bring.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

35. The average person lacks responsibility, has little ambition, and seeks security above all.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

36. If I saw someone committing a crime, I would probably call the police.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

Attitude change in correctional treatment groups  
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| Strongly<br>Disagree<br>1 | Disagree<br>2 | Uncertain<br>3 | Agree<br>4 | Strongly<br>Agree<br>5 |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

37. Most people dislike work and will avoid it if possible.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

38. If we turn out the way we do, it is not always our fault.  
Overall, we can say that we turn out pretty good considering  
where we come from.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

39. If I saw someone robbing a store, I would not think of  
calling the police.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

40. Some people often have no choice: In order to get what they  
want they have to break the law.

\_\_\_\_\_ My personal opinion

\_\_\_\_\_ What most offenders would say

\_\_\_\_\_ What most people in the community would say

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**Appendix C**

**Consent Forms**

**Attitude change in correctional treatment groups**  
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**Consent Form 1**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in an experiment which will involve completing two brief written questionnaires indicating my opinions about some issues related to being criminal offenders. This experiment is being conducted by Sylvie Fortin of the University of Ottawa, School of Psychology. I understand that participation in this experiment is entirely voluntary and will take about 10-20 minutes in all. I understand that all of my responses on the questionnaires will be strictly anonymous and confidential, and that no information obtained in this experiment will become part of any official or institutional file. I also understand that under no circumstances will my name or identity be used in or associated with any reports concerning this experiment. I retain the right to withdraw from the experiment at any time without penalty of any kind, and that if at any time I have any questions or concerns about my participation in the experiment I may contact Dr. D.J. Baxter or Sylvie Fortin in the Assessment Unit at Rideau Treatment Centre.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed \_\_\_\_\_

Consent Form 2

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in an experiment on group decision-making conducted by Sylvie Fortin of the University of Ottawa, School of Psychology. I understand that this experiment will involve completing some opinion questionnaires before and after the experiment and participating in four (4) brief discussions with other Rideau Treatment Centre residents; these discussions will last about 60 minutes in all. I understand that all of my responses on the questionnaires or in the group discussions will be strictly confidential and that no information obtained in this experiment will become part of any official or institutional file. I also understand that under no circumstances will my name or identity be used in or associated with any reports concerning this experiment. I retain the right to withdraw from the experiment at any time without penalty of any kind, and that if at any time I have any questions or concerns about my participation in the experiment I may contact Dr. D.J. Baxter or Sylvie Fortin in the Assessment Unit at Rideau Treatment Centre.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix D

Neutral and Prototypical Discussion Topics

Neutral and Prototypical Discussion Topics

Neutral items A:

1. Most people are easily influenced by the opinions, values, and attitudes of those around them.
2. Married women shouldn't work outside the home.
3. Under proper conditions most people will be willing to treat other as equal.
4. Because there are so many couples separating or divorcing, it is now a serious social problem.

Neutral items B:

1. Children and teenagers shouldn't carry weapons to protect themselves when they go to school.
2. The average person lacks responsibility, as little ambition, seeks security above all.
3. My friends and family are more important than my personal happiness.
4. Most people are just out for what they can get.

Prototypical items A:

1. A man with a large family to support isn't doing anything really wrong if he occasionally helps himself to food and supplies in the warehouse where he works -- everyone else does it.
2. If I saw someone committing a crime, I would not think of calling the police.
3. A successful criminal is adventurous, independent, powerful, tough, in control, and gets respect.
4. There's nothing wrong with beating up a child molester.

Prototypical items B:

1. I admire someone who is able to get away from the police after a high speed chase.
2. Society should step up the war against drugs -- they ruin people's lives.
3. Some people often have no choice: In order to get what they want they have to break the law.
4. If a poor man with a family finds \$100 accidentally dropped on the sidewalk by a man ahead of him, he should keep it.