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Cohesiveness and Aging: An Empirical Test

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PREFACE

The research on which this report is based was conducted during the summer of 1969 and funded by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Administration on Aging through the Omaha Parks, Recreation and Public Property Department. It was the last in a series of three research projects undertaken at yearly intervals to evaluate a recreation program operated in five high-rise Public Housing Authority apartment buildings for the elderly. I am grateful to Dr. Wayne Wheeler, Director of the Center for Urban Affairs at the University of Nebraska at Omaha for the opportunity to become involved in this research.

I wish to thank Dr. George Barger of the Sociology Department at the University of Nebraska at Omaha for his help in all phases of the research and writing process. He willingly shared his knowledge of the area of social psychology which deals with small group processes, and was a great help in leaping statistical hurdles. Not a small item among his contributions was his promptness in reading and constructively criticizing the rough draft of this report. Another member of the Sociology Department, Mr. William Clute, with his interest in social gerontology was particularly supportive in the early stages of defining the sociological problem and in selecting relevant literature to be reviewed.

Miss Nancy Wilson, a co-worker and the author of another report based on the same research, offered intellectual and moral support which I consider invaluable. We spent many hours preparing the interview schedule, interviewing, analyzing data, and discussing theoretical and

methodological problems. In this instance at least two heads were better (and worked faster) than one.

Without the competence of Miss Linda Harder who typed the report, its completion would have been considerably delayed. Miss Harder's grasp of manuscript style and her conscientiousness about meeting deadlines are assets which separate the expert from the run-of-the-mill typist.

Appreciation is also extended to Mr. Jerry Parks of the Omaha Parks, Recreation and Public Property Department for his assistance, and to the Omaha Housing Authority for providing us with a list of the persons living in the buildings.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

Relationships between persons are the strands out of which society is fashioned. An understanding of the macro-world of social behavior must be firmly grounded in an understanding of the relationships between persons in small face-to-face groups as they define their immediate social world.

Relatively little research has been undertaken to describe and evaluate the social life of particular persons. Up to the present, sociologists have tended to investigate large scale societal and institutional patterns or small group processes usually under artificial conditions. Analysis of immediate social systems as they influence persons day by day has been neglected. Williams (1968) suggests that an important sociological approach is to build out from the individual to patterns of social relations. With whom does a person interact, with how many persons, for how long, and how intimately? Are these others similar to or different from himself (Williams, 1968:379)? Do shared expectations evolve and does pressure toward compliance with them occur in groups which are attractive to their members (Homans, 1961)?

Small group processes are becoming an area of increasing interest in social psychology. There are several approaches to the study of small groups. Group dynamics is an attempt to understand and change individual behavior by employing group resources. Action and therapy are usually

the goals of group dynamics, but these are not the concern of the present investigation. A second type of small group study is undertaken in formal group settings such as meetings or classrooms. Interaction in groups of this nature can often be viewed under very controlled conditions. Laboratory experiments of course allow the greatest degree of control since they involve the construction of artificial groups for the precise purpose of observing group interaction patterns and the effects of group influence on individual behavior. In sharp contrast to tightly controlled laboratory experiments is the study of small informal groups in natural settings. Friendship relations, cliques, and colleague circles are naturally occurring small groups. Gross (1954, p. 24) notes that these latter have not been extensively studied precisely because they cannot be artificially constructed, and because they require observation over a period of time. At times it is also quite difficult for the researcher to gain access to such groups because they tend to be exclusive.

In addition to constituting a more strictly sociological approach to group interaction, knowledge gleaned from studying the informal group in its natural setting makes possible a broader interpretation of the empirical findings of laboratory experiments (Rose, 1965:708). The present investigation is an attempt to determine by survey methods the interaction patterns of a naturally occurring small group. While the study does not involve an extended observation period, it does capitalize on the investigator's prior acquaintance with the population (Kessler and Barger, 1968), residents of five public housing apartment buildings for the elderly. The investigation takes advantage of a very special situation though not an

artificial one. Previous knowledge of the population is a definite advantage in discovering the right questions to ask and in the construction of research instruments.

An influential thinker in the field of sociology in the past two decades has been George C. Homans. His primary interest has been the origins of informal group interaction and its effects on group members and on the formal group structure (Homans, 1950 and 1961). Homans states his theory in terms of behavioristic psychology and an exchange system of reward and cost borrowed from elementary economics. He deals with social behavior rather than with individual behavior. Social behavior occurs when a person acts in a certain way and is rewarded or punished by the behavior of another person (Homans, 1961:2). What this writer refers to as informal social behavior, Homans calls elementary social behavior.

In The Human Group (Homans, 1950) detailed descriptions of groups were presented and then propositions were stated which "seemed empirically to hold good for the data" (Homans, 1961:14). As his theory developed, Homans reversed his approach, choosing to begin with a statement of his general propositions followed by illustrations of these propositions from previously conducted research (Homans, 1961:14). Either of these approaches appears to this writer to result in a theory supported only by ex post facto interpretation of research. If this is so, then it is sociologically important to test the propositions in Homans' theory of social behavior by beginning with the testable hypotheses and determining whether they can be empirically supported when tested in various group situations.

This study is an attempt to find support for four propositions dealing with group cohesiveness and its influence on conformity to group norms.

Added to the significance of subjecting a widely acclaimed and also much criticized theory of social behavior to an empirical test, there are several reasons for studying the group processes of an older population. First of all there have not been many studies of informal groups in natural settings and yet it is these groups which are primary, in Cooley's (1909) sense, for the development of the social self and for social control. As Rosow (1967:26) mentions, information on friendships among the elderly is sparse in contrast to the amount of research that has been done on their family relationships. The retired elderly are fast becoming a larger proportion of the population as medical advances increase life expectancy and as workers are forced out of the labor market when they reach their mid-sixties. Leisure time interests and the extent of social interaction among the elderly are of vital importance in arriving at an understanding of what is involved in successful aging.

Data on informal social groups or friendships among the aged might throw additional light on the currently popular disengagement theory of aging (Cuming and Henry, 1961). The theory is well-documented, yet often attacked. Perhaps this study will provide indirect evidence against this theory which suggests that with increasing age there is a withdrawal from social interaction. Supposedly such withdrawal is voluntary and enhances the individual's adjustment as his physical capacities slow down. Disengagement from some groups may be more rapid and more complete than from other groups. If the formation of informal social relationships continues

to occur among the elderly and if they are fairly cohesive relationships then this is evidence that calls into question whether the process of disengagement (at least disengagement from informal social interaction) is a naturally occurring process.

Investigators in the field of social gerontology have failed to devote sufficient attention to the capacity of elderly persons to form the complex types of relationships which are demanded for participation in a group. Nor, according to Anderson (1967:166), have they attempted to observe the development of shared expectations and of a group structure among older persons. Both of these are aspects of the major question to which the present research is directed: Do members of a highly cohesive group display more conformity to a group norm (a shared expectation) than members of a less cohesive group?

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Any review of the literature in the area of small group processes is necessarily highly selective. The present review will be concerned first with the theories of Charles H. Cooley and George Herbert Mead concerning the process by which an individual becomes a member of a group and takes on the values, goals, and norms of the group. Secondly, this writer will consider the findings of several studies of small groups which have been conducted in natural settings. One of these investigations is that of Leon Festinger, et al (1950), who discuss informal relations in a student housing project. The principle variables in their study were cohesiveness, group norms, and conformity to those norms. These are the variables with which the present investigation will deal.

Even though this study is a field survey the review of the literature will also be concerned with the findings of some laboratory experiments and carefully controlled situations dealing with the concept of group cohesiveness and with conformity to group norms. George Homans' theoretical framework is consistent with this approach to reviewing the literature for he is of the opinion that experimental findings in sociology do have bearing on real life situations. While the results of group interaction in artificial settings and in natural settings may differ somewhat due to the unique circumstances, there is no reason for thinking that the findings will be inconsistent once these circumstances are taken into account. It is much more likely that findings from carefully controlled laboratory experiments and from field studies will be complementary. In Homans' own words: "Experimental studies and field studies each can do some things the other cannot do. Each illuminates the other, and I propose to give due regard to both" (Homans, 1961:15-16). This investigator intends to do the same in the review of the literature which follows.

What is a group? How do persons become group members? The term group is so broadly used that it must be very narrowly defined in order to employ it meaningfully either operationally or theoretically. While a group refers in general to any collection of persons who are bound together by a relatively distinctive set of social relations (Broom and Selznick, 1963:24), in this paper it is the small informal group which is to be investigated. Such a group can be variously referred to as a peer group, a primary group, or a friendship clique. The informal social group ordinarily arises simply out of the desire for sociability even though the

the setting in which it develops may be a more formal one such as a work situation or a classroom.

The Cooley-Mead theoretical framework presents an interactionist view of the process through which an individual becomes a group member by becoming aware of the appropriate behavioral responses and of the desires and needs of other group members which he then takes into consideration in his own behavior. Cooley (1922) introduces the concept of the looking glass self, by means of which an individual acquires a social self as he interacts with other persons. An individual goes through three mental steps in arriving at a social self: he first imagines his appearance to the other person, then imagines how the other judges that appearance, and finally arrives at some sort of self-feeling based on the imagined appearance or judgment (Cooley, 1922). Only by having other persons around can an individual come to know what he is like and how to respond to other human beings and even to objects and ideas. This development of the social self as described by Cooley takes place first in the family and then in other primary groups (Cooley, 1909) which are characterized by intimacy, whole person relationships, small numbers, and informal social control. Families, friendship groups, cliques, and peer groups are primary in the sense of being first in importance for the human being as he develops a social self and becomes a member of a group.

George Herbert Mead (1934) sees the development of the social self occurring in a process called role taking. A child first learns what he is like and how to respond to himself from the way that persons important to him, such as mother and father, significant others as Mead calls them,

respond to him. He takes the role of the other. In addition to learning what he is like, the child learns the appropriate behavioral responses connected with various other social roles by taking these roles in what Mead refers to as the play stage of social development. The child plays doctor, farmer, father, or policeman, and comes to know what responses go with these roles. In time a child's cognitive capacities are developed to the point where he can begin to recognize his role in relation to many others rather than to one other at a time. The expectations of many others is developed in the game stage in the emergence of the social self. The person's behavior in relation to others comes to be colored by his perception of their response to and expectations of him.

Linking the sociological and the psychological perspectives the pioneer field theorist Kurt Lewin (1948) notes that it is the child's relation to the group to which he belongs and his status in it which are the most important factors for his feelings of security. The group of which a person is a member exerts great influence on his behavior, and social factors to a large extent determine what space of free movement a person has and what his personal style of living will be (Lewin, 1948:2).

Socialization is not completed at some magical age, but continues throughout life. With each new role that a person takes on there is a socialization process in which he learns the appropriate responses for his newly acquired social position. Taking up the theoretical framework of Cooley and Mead who are primarily concerned with the development of the self image or social self in the child, Ruth Cavan (1962) suggests that satisfying adjustment to retirement for the older person involves the same

process as the development of the original self image. In this connection she notes that the basis for the new self conception in old age would be provided by a culturally approved set of values for old age. These values should be accepted and respected by society in general and by specific groups to which the retired person belongs if the new self image is to be a positive one. In addition, new roles must be discovered through which the retired person can find expression for his new self image. A self image emerges as a person is evaluated by the groups of which he is a member. An organized group such as a recreation club may in time form its own informal social group and foster the development of some new self concept. Such a possibility is of particular interest in the current study because part of the question deals with the attitude toward and activity in an organized recreation program for the elderly. It is the opinion of the investigator that the formal recreation agenda will be found to be of less importance for sociability among the apartment residents than the spontaneous friendship groups which arise apart from the formal recreation.

George Homans (1950) refers to a formally organized social situation as the external system and calls the spontaneous informal interaction which occurs within the formal setting the internal system. He theorizes that the external system is modified by the internal system of a group. This distinction of external and internal systems is a useful one to make for purposes of analyzing both informal group formation and the development of group norms. The external system is the behavior of group members that allows the group to survive in its environment (Homans, 1950:109-110). Group members seldom if ever continue to relate to one another only in

terms of the kinds of activity and interaction which are necessary for survival. Instead this behavior is elaborated, acting as a springboard to viable and rewarding informal social relations which are referred to as the internal system. A simple example to illustrate the process can be built around a college classroom situation. Students enroll in a class, the external system, for a variety of reasons ranging from pure interest in the subject to the fulfillment of a requirement. As a result of enrolling the class members are required to perform certain activities together and to interact in certain ways. They may be divided into groups and assigned to present a panel discussion, they may go on field trips together, or simply listen to andtake notes on the same lectures. Such activities and interaction are part of the external system. However, activity and interaction are not likely to remain on this level for all group members. Subgroups or cliques may arise. The group may decide to study together or to meet for a drink after class. Such interaction and activity take place at the level of the internal system and tend to modify the external system by the spontaneous development of norms. Informal group norms arising out of the interaction of class participants might be exemplified in such things as an unspoken agreement among class members about the acceptable length of a term paper or the conditions under which lecture notes are lent to persons who have missed class for different reasons.

Without interaction in an environmental setting, without an external system, there would be no chance for friendships to evolve and for group standards to develop.

Florian Znaniecki (1939) notes that groups are brought into existence by the cooperation of many individuals and continue to be maintained in existence by their members' continuing cooperation. He refers to a group as a suprapersonal system of values and activities common to group members. The pattern of values and activities includes normative standards which members tend to apply in practice (Znaniecki, 1939:807). Though he does not discuss at length the process of the origin of normative standards, his formulation provides a theoretical antecedent to George Homans' (1950) theory of the rise of group norms on the level of the internal system of a group due to the interplay among interaction, activity, and sentiment. At one point, in reference to the formation of normative standards, Znaniecki says:

> . . . in the beginning of the process of group formation those activities which make it a cultural product are experienced as spontaneous performances of voluntarily co-operating individuals. But as the group is formed and its makers become its members, such activities are normatively standardized and systematized until they come to be regarded as group institutions, the whole system of which constitutes the dynamic organization of the group (1939:807).

This statement affirms the sociological conception that norms arise in the process of group interaction.

Some of the universals involved in group behavior which are pertinent for the present study are the number of persons forming the group, the functioning locale, the interaction of members necessary to explain the dynamic aspects of the group, and standards of behavior of members toward one another and toward the group as well as standards of behavior for the group itself in interaction with other groups (Bogardus, 1954). Primarily, the present study will be concerned with the informal group standards which

arise to govern the residents' reactions to a formal recreation program and a tenant organization in the apartment buildings.

In a consideration of small group studies in natural settings, Arnold Rose (1965) mentions that contributions to the field of small group research have been made by both psychologists and sociologists. Gestalt field theory and behavioral psychology have particularly focused on small groups. These frameworks provide the theoretical basis for Festinger, et al (1950) and Seashore's (1954) work with different types of natural groups which will be discussed later in this review. Rose goes on to take the position, in contrast to the behavioral view, that the only true sociological model of the group is one in which the group is seen in terms of patterns of interaction or in terms of shared meanings and values (Rose, 1965:708).

Included among the studies of groups in a natural setting are the well known Hawthorne studies conducted at the Western Electric plant. Particularly relevant to this review is the description of the informal group structure which developed in the Bank Wiring Room experiment (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939). The interaction demanded by the work arrangement in which one man's task was dependent on the completion of another's provided a framework conducive to the development of informal social patterns. Games, production norms and a status system developed which were outside of the arrangement provided by the work set-up of the plant. Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939) were studying group norms and informal social control. They employed sociometric techniques to determine the informal social structure of the bank wiring room. The investigators observed who talked

with whom, who took part in what type of games, and which workers exchanged help. Having established these patterns of interaction, it was possible to reconstruct the informal structure of the group. This study is important because it provides a framework for a better understanding of how group norms emerge and how they are enforced (Broom and Selznick, 1963).

A somewhat different setting and research procedure are involved in William F. Whyte's (1943) classic participant observation study of an Italian slum neighborhood in an Eastern city. This investigation has provided a vast amount of information on the process of informal group formation and on the operation of group norms. With regard to group formation Whyte notes:

> The corner-gang structure arises out of the habitual association of the members over a long period of time. This nuclei of most gangs can be traced back to early boyhood, when living close together provided the first opportunities for social contacts. School years modified the original pattern somewhat, but I know of no corner gangs which arose through classroom or school-playground association. The gangs grew up on the corner and remained there with remarkable persistence from early boyhood until the members reached their late twenties or early thirties (Whyte, 1943:255).

In this instance geographical proximity played a vital part in determining who became members of which gang. The opportunity for informal association provided by propinquity should not be underestimated as a factor in group formation.

Informal association over a period of time gave rise to unwritten codes or group norms in the Norton Street gang. An example of one such norm was the expectation in the minds of group members that those who stood higher in the status hierarchy of the group would be the best bowlers. And in fact, in team bowling the performance of group members coincided closely

with their prestige ranking within the gang even though certain members low in the status hierarchy proved to be better bowlers when bowling alone or with someone other than fellow gang members. Here is evidence for the pressure which a group norm can exert on group members to behave in certain ways (Whyte, 1943).

Another field study, this one dealing specifically with the operation of group norms is Festinger, Schachter and Back's (1950) investigation of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology student housing development. The research focused on two housing projects named Westgate and Westgate West. Westgate was composed of one story houses arranged around nine courtyards. It was the older of the two housing projects and had been occupied for fifteen months. Westgate West was a series of two story apartment buildings with no central area such as Westgate's courtyards. It had been more recently built and had housed engineering students for a considerably shorter time. Festinger, et al, discovered by means of a sociometric instrument that friendship groups in Westgate centered around the courts and that in Westgate West the ease of contact provided by entrances and stairways in the apartment buildings was a factor in the formation of friendship groups (Festinger, et al, 1950). Geographic factors and physical proximity tend to be important elements in the formation of friendship groups when the group under consideration is a homogeneous one with regard to age, interests and sociometric status. The student population constituted such a homogeneous grouping. It is speculated that the elderly population being studied at this time also constitutes a homogeneous group.

Having discovered where the friendship groups were situated, Festinger et al (1950) proceeded to inquire into how membership in those groups affected attitudes and behavior. They set out to determine whether there were group standards regarding attitudes toward and activity in the tenant organization which had been created at the two housing projects. What they found was that certain attitudes and behavior tended to be similar among those living in the same court in Westgate, though the attitude/behavior pattern might vary considerably from one court to another. For example, a majority of the residents in one court might be favorable toward and active in the tenant organization while in a neighboring court the majority of couples might be unfavorable and inactive. Another finding was that attitudes and behavior tended to be more homogeneous where residents reported having many friends living in their own court. In addition, those who differed from the attitudes and behavior of the majority of the court tended not to be chosen by the others as friends. From these findings Festinger et al (1950) proposed as a hypothesis for further testing that group standards existed in each court and that the strength of the standards was dependent on the cohesiveness of the group living in the court, the price of deviation being rejection.

Before turning to a consideration of the various work which has been done on cohesiveness and on conformity to group norms it may be wise to point out that Cartwright and Zander (1960) among others have elaborated on the limitations of the field study as a means for eliciting sociological information. The first question raised is that of whether the group under study is typical. Can the study of one housing group justify the assumption

that group standards will operate in the same fashion in all kinds of groups or even in all housing projects (Cartwright and Zander, 1960:49)? This very limitation suggests a justification for the sociological significance of the present study in which the existence and operation of informal group norms in an apartment complex for the elderly are investigated. The study will contribute to the accumulation of research findings from which empirical generalizations about the operation of group norms can be made. A second limitation of the field study is the difficulty in showing the direction of causality from statistical correlations. Only under controlled experimental conditions can variables be manipulated so as to determine which is the causal variable and which the effect (Cartwright and Zander, 1960:49). Since the present study is a survey of a naturally occurring group it is fraught with the limitations of survey research including the possibility that interviewees may respond falsely in a deliberate attempt to mislead or because of failure to understand the questions. Interviewer bias and sampling error are additional problems to be dealt with. These limitations must be recognized, but the drawbacks are more than offset by the advantages of the field study approach.

With the field study method there is little disruption of the natural group. Field studies can provide a variety of data on the processes occurring in the group under investigation and, if data are carefully gathered from "real life" situations their sociological import can be great (Cartwright and Zander, 1960:49).

The next section of this review is concerned with the concept of cohesiveness. Empirical work on small group cohesiveness has been extensive. Reference has already been made to Festinger et al (1950) and their

study of group standards in a student housing project. Their general finding was that in Westgate group standards regarding the attitude toward and participation in the tenant organization arose, while in Westgate West they did not. How effectively the influence of the group was exerted on its members depended to a large degree on how cohesive the group was (Festinger et al, 1950:11).

Cohesiveness has been defined as the "total field of forces working to keep members in a group" (Festinger et al, 1950:164). One of the factors at work in establishing cohesiveness is the attractiveness of the group for the members. Put in terms of field theory this attractiveness is the extent to which the group is a goal in itself and has positive valence. In an informal group the attractiveness which the group exerts for group members can be ascertained by discovering the extent to which the group provides access to goals which are important to the members of the group. These goals are often difficult to ascertain in an informal group, so the principal criterion of cohesiveness in this paper will be that of attractiveness of the group rather than "means control."

Cohesiveness can also be defined as "that group property which is inferred from the number and strength of mutual positive attitudes among the members of a group" (Lott and Lott, 1965:259). They are of the opinion that there are probably a number of independent factors at work in cohesiveness but that liking for other group members is central to cohesiveness (Lott and Lott, 1965:259). Interpersonal liking and attraction to the group can probably be equated, and Bonner has this to say on the important of attractiveness:

> If we analyze group cohesiveness . . . in terms of a group's attractiveness for its members, we are confronted by the obvious fact that without at least a minimal attraction of members to each other a group cannot exist at all (Bonner, 1959:66).

According to Libo (1953), the most direct measure of an individual's attraction to the group would be his behavior with respect to membership in the group if he were given a free choice. Does an individual continue to show up at group gatherings or not? While such a measure might work for a formal group such as a club it is not feasible for informal social groups whose purpose is primarily sociability. It would be very difficult, for example, to decide what constitutes a group gathering among people who are neighbors. The frequency with which one gets together with acquaintances within easy access might be utilized as a measure of group attraction however.

Other measures of group cohesiveness include questionnaire methods and sociometric techniques. Schachter et al (1951) conducted an experiment in which attractiveness was manipulated by means of verbal instructions which included a statement of whether group members had been successfully or unsuccessfully matched for congeniality. At the end of the experiment a questionnaire was administered which asked how the subject liked the team of which she was a member, and whether the subject would like to work with the same girls if she were to take part in another experiment. From the answers a measure of group cohesiveness was calculated.

In an attempt to ascertain the "we-ness" or cohesion in a group, Lippitt and White (1960) in their leadership studies counted the number of "we" versus "I" remarks made by group members. They also counted the number of friendly comments or expressions of discontent and the frequency

of group minded remarks (Cartwright and Zander, 1960). Libo (1953) measured group cohesiveness by means of a projective device in which subjects were asked to tell a story about a picture. It was assumed that the immediate environment would tend to influence the feelings of members in the same direction and that similarities in feelings would be reflected in stories written in group meetings. This device distinguished well between members of the group who stated that they wanted to remain in the group and those who chose to leave. Such techniques would be unfeasible in the present situation due to the investigator's lack of familiarity with this type of technique and also due to the fact that the group under study is an informal group.

Measures of cohesiveness that can be employed with naturally occurring informal groups seem to be centered on sociometric techniques since these can deal directly with interpersonal choice and liking. Leon Festinger et al (1950) measured group cohesiveness by the number of friendship ties within the group. A total cohesiveness rating in the Westgate housing project was calculated by finding the percentage of within court choices out of the total number of selections which residents of one court made. Dimock (1937) had employed a similar ratio in the study of an adolescent group.

Bernice Eisman (1959) did a study of fourteen ongoing groups at the University of Colorado including six sororities, four fraternities, one academic club, and three religious clubs. The purpose of her study was to determine the correlations among different measures of cohesiveness. She employed five measures, justifying their use by the extent to which they

had been used in previous research and by their logical derivation from Festinger's nominal definition. She specifically called attention to the fact that "We can make little progress in increasing the significance of the concept of cohesiveness, until or unless we have first been able to establish the empirical meaning of the concept by agreeing on its objective referents (Eisman, 1959:183)." Empirical measures employed by Eisman included a sociometric index based on friendship, a direct rating of group attractiveness by group members along a five-point rating scale, calculation of the average number of reasons for belonging to the group given by all members, calculation of the number of same reasons for group membership given by the majority of members, and calculation of the degree of similarity existing among group members with respect to values as reflected by the Allport-Vernon revised scale. Using Kendall's tau, Eisman found that none of the correlations between the five measures was significant at the .05 level. Reliability of the measures used is unknown except for the Allport-Vernon scale. It is highly possible that the conceptual definition of cohesiveness is too vague to allow for an adequate operational definition at this time. Cohesiveness may not be a unitary concept and would perhaps be best measured by a composite instrument to tap all of the forces at work. However, to measure the product of all of the forces present in group cohesiveness, perhaps a simple question such as "How much do you like this group?" or "Do you want to continue being a member of this group?" can be used (Gross, 1952). It is this total force or the result of all the forces at work to keep members in a group with which the present study is concerned.

Sociometric techniques were also employed by Powell and Associates (1956) in a study of enlisted Naval trainees. Their questionnaire included five sociometric items concerning free time, bunkmate, future assignment, section leader and confidence situations. Role taking questions were also included to determine how accurately subjects perceived the reactions of others to themselves. After the initial questionnaire was administered two experimental groups were set up, one composed of fifteen men who had been highly chosen, the other composed of nine men of low choice status. The control group was made up of the rest of the company. All three groups went to school together and ate together but were separated for sleeping and for work assignments. There were no restrictions placed on association. "This created an external situation lacking in coercive influence excepting convenience of association with one another. By the nature of the situation group integration was encouraged though not enforced" (Powell, 1956:162). After four weeks the first questionnaire was administered again and it was found that a definite informal social structure had emerged in both of the experimental groups and that the number of in-group choices had increased. Also the number of choices given to persons outside the group had decreased while rejection of outsiders increased significantly with the development of in-group cohesiveness (Powell, 1956:163-164).

Stanley Seashore (1954) was concerned with the effects of cohesiveness in an industrial work group situation. He gathered data from two hundred twenty-eight groups which were formally designated work sections in a machinery factory. The groups ranged in size from five to over fifty members. A questionnaire was completed by all of the members of these

groups for a total sample of 5871 (Seashore, 1954:98). The measure of cohesiveness was an index based on the number of men in a section who said that they felt as though they were part of the group, desired to stay in it, and thought it was better than other comparable groups (Seashore, 1954:36-38). Seashore's "index of cohesiveness" can be justifiably so called because, according to George Homans (1961), it "evidently tried to measure the reward workers got from associating with others in their section" (Homans, 1961:26). Results indicated that cohesiveness as measured was positively related to several different aspects of the group.

As the previous discussion suggests there are numerous definitions of group cohesiveness and equally numerous ways of measuring this social phenomenon. The best that any investigator can do at the present is to state clearly his operational definition of the term and then use it consistently. It is to be hoped that accumulated research findings will lead to a clarification of the concept of cohesiveness rather than to an array of disconnected generalizations.

Several of Seashore's findings point to a relationship between group cohesiveness and norms of production in the industrial work group. The finding that highly cohesive groups display less variation among members in productivity level is regarded as evidence of the existence of a more effective group standard in the highly cohesive condition (Seashore, 1954:98).

"Group standard" or "group norm" is the second major concept to be considered in the present review of the literature. Theoretical definitions of group norms are easier to come by than are operational definitions of the concept.

Thibaut and Kelley (1959:129) define a norm as a behavioral rule that is accepted in some degree by both members of a dyad or by a sizable number of a larger group. However, just what constitutes "some degree" or a "sizable" number of members is left unspecified. Investigators who wish to employ this conceptual definition of a norm in an empirical study are left with making this decision. George Homans (1950) calls a norm an idea in the minds of group members which can be stated as an indication of what members or others are expected to do under specified conditions. Norms imply that departure of real behavior from the norms is followed by some punishment.

Other researchers note that members of face-to-face groups exhibit relative uniformity with respect to specified opinions and modes of behavior. This uniformity is somehow derived from influences which the group manages to exert over its members (Festinger et al, 1950).

> The fact that members of some social set all have relatively similar tastes in, for example, selecting recreational activities, has generally been explained on the basis of inter-individual or group influences rather than on the basis of similar circumstances producing similar but independent reactions in a number of people (Festinger et al, 1950:72).

A group standard tends to develop as a friendship network is formed. Because friends share a common communication channel they subsequently share information and opinions, and common attitudes and values arise (Festinger et al, 1950:168).

Festinger et al (1950) are careful to make it explicit that it is not defensible to simply assume that a group norm exists rather than a uniformity which is based on individual assessments of similar situations. One of the housing projects in their study displayed no over-all pattern

with regard to the amount of activity in and attitude toward the tenant organization but there were patterns within subgroups and these patterns differed from one subgroup to another. Subgroups were found to develop in the respective "courts" in Westgate. Within each court, reactions to the tenant organization were relatively homogeneous. Evidence for a group norm was said to exist because the residents had lived together for a period of time so that norms would have had time to be formed. Westgate had been inhabited for about fifteen months. Also there was evidence for group norms because different subgroups in Westgate had different reactions to the same situation even though members of all subgroups were relatively homogeneous (Festinger et al, 1950:85-86).

There is considerable evidence that group influences do apply pressure toward uniformity of reaction among group members. The autokinetic effect has been utilized to discover how an individual reacts to an unstructured and unstable situation. In a situation where an objective basis of judgment is lacking people are influenced chiefly by what they perceive to be the judgment of the group (Sherif, 1936). Asch (1960) demonstrated that a person will state judgments contrary to fact and to his own sense perception when confronted by a unanimous judgment of his group which contradicts his independent judgment. Even groups which are experimentally contrived and in which members are aware that their interaction will be limited to the lab situation manage to exert an immense influence on individual judgment. Given a group with a certain amount of sustained interaction among members it might be expected that an even greater degree of influence toward uniformity will be exerted.

Back (1951) set out to measure the effect of various degrees of cohesion[1] on pressure toward uniformity in the group. Results showed that with increased cohesion there was more effort on the part of subjects to reach an agreement on the best story about a set of pictures, even though the story was not to be one group product but the best story written by each member after an opportunity to discuss the pictures with other group members. Behavior in the highly cohesive groups was more affected by the situation than by individual or personal factors and discussion in these groups was more effective in changing one partner's position (Back, 1951), than was true in the less cohesive groups. A finding by Lott and Lott (1961) indicated that there was a significant relationship between the strength of mutual positive attitudes among group members and conformity to a perceived group standard on an opinion question. There is support here for the hypothesis that group cohesiveness as measured by interpersonal attraction among group members is related to conformity to group norms.

There are some negative findings with regard to a relationship between group attractiveness, which is equivalent to group cohesiveness, and conformity to group standards (Rotter, 1967). In one instance subjects who were told they were liked by other group members found the group significantly more attractive than those led to believe they were disliked.

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[1]He varied cohesion on three dimensions by varying the preliminary instructions given to experimental groups. The dimensions were:

1 - attraction to partner
2 - mediation of other goals (task direction)
3 - prestige of the group itself (Back, 1951)

When subjects were asked to judge line lengths there was no significant difference in the frequency of conforming behavior between those who felt they were liked and those who were led to believe that they were disliked. There is no evidence here that group attractiveness leads to conformity.

Eva Kahana (1969) is critical of studies on conformity such as those just discussed. She says: "These studies have typically focused on determinants of conformity as a modal response and paid little attention to individual differences in reactions to social pressures or to conforming behavior in non-laboratory, real life situations" (Kahana, 1969:77). Investigations of conformity in everyday situations are necessary to add to the understanding of conformity already gleaned from experimental situations. Her own study was undertaken in a home for the aged and dealt with the amount of conformity to official regulations as measured by the number of times a subject was rated by the staff as disregarding the rules. The present study deals with conformity as a variable but in a different setting. It is concerned with conformity to norms arising within the informal group rather than with external norms or regulations. While the group norms may be found to be similar to those of the official staff this is not necessarily so. Kahana did describe interviews with the subjects in which they were questioned about whether they agreed with the rules, the extent to which they identified with other residents and the frequency with which they participated in activities (Kahana, 1969:77). However, she did not attempt to ascertain whether a group norm existed but dealt instead with individual reactions and conformity to official policy.

The field study of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology student housing (Festinger et al, 1950) stands as one of the most important treating the relationship between cohesiveness and conformity to group norms. In Westgate the investigators found that courts scoring high on group cohesiveness also scored consistently high on the proportion of group members who adhered to the prevailing standard in the court concerning attitude toward and activity in the tenant organization. While it is often difficult to show that a group standard is in operation, the study of group norms is at least made simpler where there is homogeneity in the population under consideration (Festinger et al, 1950:74). A discussion of social homogeneity will be taken up later in this review. Festinger et al (1950) did not actually test for homogeneity in their population, but concluded from qualitative evidence that the population was indeed homogeneous. The strongest indication of homogeneity was that the population was composed of young engineering students who were of roughly similar backgrounds. The present study also deals with a relatively homogeneous population composed of elderly persons in a public housing setting. An attempt is made to measure the degree of homogeneity so that the subgroups can be compared with respect to the degree of homogeneity they display. The relationship between homogeneity and the amount of interaction within subgroups is also explored.

Seashore (1954) notes that George Homans makes a distinction between group norms and group standards, group norms referring to actual behavior and group standards referring to ideal behavior (Homans, 1950:124-125). There is likely to be a discrepancy between the two and it is expected

that there will be greater uniformity on the verbal standard than on the behavioral norm. Seashore's data do not, however, support this supposition. Actual work output and verbal standards representing a reasonable level of productivity in the industrial work groups were found to have about the same variability.

> It seems more useful to conceptualize group standards in terms of group-induced uniformities of behavior regardless of whether the behavior in question is overt physical behavior, verbal behavior, or private attitudinal response. This does not deny the utility of Homans' conception in a context of societal norms and the precedence of behavior change over ideal change (Seashore, 1954:99).

The next section of this review is a brief discussion of the portion of George Homans' theory having to do with conforming behavior. The most comprehensive statement of Homans' theory of human behavior and the one on which the present investigation draws is presented in Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms (1961). His propositions are based primarily on behavioral psychology and elementary economics. Social behavior is viewed as an exchange of activity between two or more persons which is relatively rewarding or costly to each of them. The chief descriptive terms in Homans' exchange theory are activity, which simply refers to things people do, sentiment, which is overt behavior representing internal feelings, and interaction, which results when the activity of one man is rewarded or punished by the activity of another man (Homans, 1961).

Might conformity to group norms be understood by exploring the interrelationships among activity, sentiment, and interaction? Eva Kahana and Rodney Coe note that the social phenomenon of conforming behavior is not well understood.

> While individuals in any group--and, in some instances, whole groups--may deviate from the customs, norms, or laws of their societies, it is almost axiomatic that at any given time most members of a group will behave in accordance with the standards of their respective groups (Kahana and Coe, 1969:76).

Why does social behavior come to display great similarity? Homans (1961) sets forth his explanations of conforming behavior in terms of exchange theory.

One feature of groups in practical equilibrium is that a number of members are similar in their behavior. Practical equilibrium refers to a state in which the behavior of the members of a group has settled down or reached some degree of stability. Persons exhibit similar behavior because they find it rewarding to do so just as they perform any activity because they find it rewarding. Similarity of behavior among group members is what Homans (1961:114) calls conformity. A group norm is "a statement made by some members of a group that a particular kind or quantity of behavior is one they find valuable for the actual behavior of themselves, and others whom they specify, to conform to (Homans, 1961:116)." Norms are specific to a particular situation and arise in informal groups in the process of group interaction. Group norms differ from one group to another, and Homans (1961:46) attributes these discrepancies to differences in the past history of the members of the groups involved.

People often reward conformity with social approval, a sentiment which is a generalized reinforcer. A generalized reinforcer is simply any activity or sentiment which is used to reward many different types of behavior. Homans equates "social approval" with an expression of liking (Homans, 1961:89), and goes on to say:

> People that find conformity valuable reward conformers with social approval, but they withhold approval from those that will not conform, or even express positive dislike for nonconformists as having denied them a reward they had the right to expect (Homans, 1961:129).

A desire for social approval from other members is one of the things which may attract a person to a group. His interest in the activities the group performs and the absence of an alternative group to which he might belong may also increase his attraction to the group. In Homans' terms:

> . . . cohesiveness refers to the values of the different kinds of rewards available to members of the group: the more valuable to a group's members are the activities (or sentiments) they receive from other members or from the environment, the more cohesive it is (Homans, 1961:88-89).

The amount of social approval or liking being exchanged by group members could then be taken as a measure of the cohesiveness characterizing a group.

Closely paralleling Homans' discussion of rewards derived from group membership, Dittes (1959:77) says that the type of gratification which persons most commonly receive from group membership is social acceptance plus the rewards of support, recognition, security and esteem from other group members. Group attractiveness is a function of both the strength of an individual's needs and the extent to which these needs are satisfied by the group.

While Homans' theory has received much criticism, and while he has been accused among other things of dealing with purely common sense propositions it would seem that scientific knowledge about the simplest kind of social behavior, the kind he calls elementary social behavior, is essential as a foundation for the understanding of more complex social behavior. It

is also to be noted that sociological and psychological approaches to human behavior cannot be exclusive of one another but are most effective for explanation when combined.

A review of the literature on small group cohesiveness would not be complete without a treatment of the influence of geographic proximity on interaction and interpersonal attraction. In noncoerced social relationships, liking, a component of cohesiveness, is a function of the amount of interaction that occurs between two or more persons (Homans, 1961:182). Authority relationships are one obvious exception. Among equals, however, it is to be expected that if opportunity for interaction is high the amount of interaction and also the amount of liking expressed will be greater than where opportunity for interaction is limited. Physical proximity is one of the obvious and important factors increasing the opportunity for interaction.

The general hypothesis that interpersonal attraction or liking is a positive function of interaction is supported by a number of studies. Maissonneuve, Palmade and Fourment (1952) found that physical proximity in boarding school classes, which facilitated interaction, was related to liking choices. In a study of a married veterans' student housing project the major factors affecting friendship were distance between houses and the direction the houses faced (Festinger, 1953). Sherif and Sherif (1953) broke up budding friendships to form two groups and found that friendship choices shifted toward members of one's own group. A now famous study by Deutsch and Collins (1958) provided indirect evidence for the hypothesis that interpersonal contact facilitated by proximity results in increased

liking. In a housing project involving increased interracial contact there was a reduction in the negative attitudes of whites toward Negroes. Where a reduction in negative attitudes occurs it can reasonably be hypothesized that an increase in positive attitudes or liking will follow although this hypothesis was not empirically tested by Deutsch and Collins. Bovard (1951) suggested that increased interaction among group members may have been the factor which led to expressions of greater liking for fellow class members in college classes which had group centered as opposed to leader centered teachers.

It would be sociologically naive to conclude that physical proximity will always lead to interpersonal liking, but across the board the probability is high that liking rather than antipathy will result from contact between persons. A setting in which geographic proximity would be insufficient for interpersonal attraction to occur is described in a study by Festinger (1953). He found that in one housing project where residents felt forced to live because of a housing shortage, individuals held negative rather than positive attitudes toward their neighbors and toward the community. There were very few instances of club membership among the residents and they had few social contacts with one another. A feeling that one has been coerced into a situation is likely to be a strong deterrent to the formation of positive attitudes toward those in the same situation. Friendship circles would be less likely to develop in a coercive as compared to a freely chosen setting. For interaction to lead to attraction, then, it should take place in a relatively neutral setting where opportunities for verbal communication and for observation of the other's behavior is possible.

Newcomb (1956) contended that the reinforcement which a person experiences in interaction is the major independent variable determining attraction to the other. Behind the relationship between propinquity and attraction is the fact that when persons interact the reward/punishment ratio is more likely to be reinforcing than extinguishing. Proximity contributes to interpersonal attraction to the degree that it makes easier the development of perceived similarity of attitude.

Two types of proximity and their relation to interaction and liking choices were discussed by Festinger et al (1950). Physical distance between apartments or homes was one factor in the probability that a contact would occur between persons and make interaction possible. Functional distance referred to common access to laundry facilities, stairways, and elevators, all of which increased the probability of contact. This distinction between physical and functional distance is not being made in the present study because the primary concern is with the relationship between group cohesiveness and conformity to group norms rather than with ecological factors other than residence on the same floor of the apartment building.

Geographic proximity tends to facilitate contacts between persons thus increasing the probability that friendships and informal social groups will form. Festinger et al (1950:160-161) define an informal social group as a more or less cohesive pattern of friendship relations among a number of people. Ecological patterns are more influential in the formation of friendships where the community or residential area is homogeneous (Festinger et al, 1950:160), than where the population is heterogeneous.

Research evidence suggests that two variables, social homogeneity and residential proximity, may be sufficient to account for the majority of local friendships. Rosow (1967:38) is of the opinion that the potential friendship field consists of social similars and that one usually makes friends with the eligibles, defined in terms of social similarity, who live closest. Friendship circles consist of people who occupy similar social positions and have similar life styles and beliefs. Rosow assumes that friendship is important because it integrates people into the group thus making the group cohesive. In this assumption lies the rationale for using sociometric techniques to arrive at a measure of group cohesiveness (Rosow, 1967:27). His study of older persons in three residential areas varying in the proportion of older residents in the total population also indicates that informal social activity is conducive to high morale (Rosow, 1967:27). This finding contradicts a popular theory of aging known as the disengagement theory (Cumming and Henry, 1961), which suggests that successful aging involves a voluntary withdrawal from social activity.

Prior to Rosow's concern with similarity and proximity, Gordon Aldridge (1959) had done a study of a Florida community in which almost 50 percent of the population was over sixty. Informal social activities were found to be of increasing importance over formal contacts such as those occurring in clubs for the formation of new friendship ties among the elderly. He also found that:

> For older people, clique relationships that were not simply a carry over from club membership tended to be on the basis of interests and neighborhood,[2] and were almost entirely with other older persons (Aldridge, 1959:70).

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[2] "Interests" would be one aspect of Rosow's concept of social similarity, and "neighborhood" is what Rosow calls residential proximity.

Informal social relations tend to be a source of support for individuals, and they function as mutual aid groups in addition to being recreation and social groups. Aldridge discovered no evidence that would lead to the conclusion that old people are isolated. Most subjects said that they had as many as six friends and one-half of the respondents said that they had either as many friends as before moving or more friends than before (Aldridge, 1959:71).

Rosow suggests that there are four conditions under which integration into the local group is likely to occur among the elderly:

1. Persons are long-term residents of the neighborhood.

2. They live in a relatively stable, unchanging neighborhood.

3. The neighborhood is socially homogeneous, especially for social class, race, ethnicity, and religion.

4. The person's local primary groups of family, relatives, friends and neighbors are relatively intact (Rosow, 1967:29).

Rosow's use of the term integration refers to a general process which results in group cohesiveness, a concept central to the present study. Thus, it is possible to identify four external social factors which lead to increased cohesiveness of the informal social group: length of residence, stability of population as evidenced in low resident turnover rates, homogeneity of residents, and continued presence of enduring primary groups such as family and old friends.

The three types of residential areas from which Rosow gathered his data were defined in terms of the proportion of elderly residents in the area. Persons were considered elderly if they were men over sixty-five or

women over sixty-two. Residential areas having elderly persons composing one to 15 percent of the population were referred to as having normal density of elderly persons. Those locales having 33 to 49 percent of the population in the elderly age bracket were termed concentrated, and those with 50 percent or more in the elderly age group were classified as dense. A preliminary analysis of the data supported the hypothesis that there is more dependence on local friendships among members of the working class than among the middle class (Rosow, 1967:382). How might such a finding be explained? One possible interpretation is that members of the working class are financially unable to seek social contacts outside of the neighborhood. While the middle class businessman can afford to belong to lodges and country clubs the working class male is often restricted to visiting in the neighborhood, chatting over the roar of a lawn mower or dropping into a local bar for a beer on his way home from work. Friendship groups do indeed tend to form among people of similar status. Rosow (1967: 384) defined similar status in terms of similarity in age, sex, marital status, social class, beliefs, and life style. Persons of similar social background and age share a common frame of reference and are capable of exhibiting activity and sentiments which are rewarding to one another.

In a study of college students, Theodore Newcomb (1961) described the influence of similarity and propinquity on liking. Persons who are alike in objective respects[3] are likely to have similar attitudes. They are also likely to discover this fact and attraction to one another is

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[3]He used as measures of objective similarity age, college (department) enrollment, religion, and urban or rural origin (Newcomb, 1961:86).

likely to increase. George Homans would phrase this description a bit differently. In his terms similarity is rewarding and interaction with persons who are similar is rewarding. Newcomb (1961) also noted that at the college studied room assignments were arbitrary, and he assumed that proximity would speed up the acquaintance process and so provide an earlier opportunity for the discovery of common interests and attitudes among floormates. In Homans' theoretical framework it can be said that interacting with persons to whom physical access is easy involves less cost than searching out persons at a greater distance. It is to be expected then that proximity and similarity or homogeneity are particularly influential in the formation of friendships. Social similarity or homogeneity tends to result in the formation of cohesive groups. When the population is homogeneous there is reason to believe that physical proximity will be of particular importance in determining where friendship lines are drawn.

A finding which opposes the current evidence of friendship formation among persons of similar status is that of Margaret Clark (1967). She suggests that elderly subjects seek out younger persons for companionship. She also notes, however, that there seems to be little exploration for new friends in old age and states that this could be due to the fact that previously formed friendships remain intact and satisfying while inadequacy of living quarters and lowered income restrict entertaining (Clark, 1967). However, if exploration for or seeking out new friends does not occur is there not still more justification for suggesting that those friendships which do develop will be concentrated where access to others is easy?

In addition to objective indicators of social similarity, perceived similarity is a factor to be considered in assessing the extent of informal group contacts with one's neighbors and becomes less important for membership in secondary groups. This perceptual dimension is frequently overlooked as social scientists strive for strict objectivity in their research. Tomeh concludes that:

> Observed differences in behavior can be explained when behavior is analyzed not simply in terms of behavioral characteristics but also in terms of the perceptual context in which it occurs (Tomeh, 1969:75).

The importance of perception for the assessment of group cohesiveness is evident from Tomeh's statement:

> When each member of a group perceives the other as sharing some common interest of importance to all of them and knows that he is perceived in the same way, they have an essential ingredient for group solidarity or cohesiveness (Tomeh, 1967:66).

George Homans' specifically states why similarity is likely to be a factor in group cohesiveness:

> . . . people that are similar in background--and age is one way of being similar--are apt to be people who have learned to emit and to enjoy the same kinds of activities, and so are well able to reward one another (Homans, 1961:128).

Socialization into any group results in some degree of uniformity of both attitude and activity. As has already been discussed individuals often find it rewarding to have others exhibit behavior and sentiments similar to their own. Persons with backgrounds which are alike in important ways are able to reward one another with minimum cost to themselves in terms of energy expended in learning new activities. Familiarity with the social situation and the persons in it makes rewarding behavior less costly to emit and so maximizes the actors' rewards as well as the alters' rewards.

In order to pursue the aim of this paper which is to study the effect of group cohesiveness on the degree of conformity to group norms the first step is to confirm the existence of a group. Defining a group poses both theoretical and methodological problems.

> In terms of the definition of the group, the historical perspective seems to point up a simple lesson. Any definition of the group is arbitrary, but the definition in any specific instance must be determined by its usefulness, with full awareness of the limitations involved (Borgatta, 1958:89).

Theoretically the numerous definitions of the term group foster confusion in the effort to build explanations of social behavior which are simple and clear. Sociologists have been plagued by the proliferation of conceptual definitions of basic terms, and the term group is no exception. Methodologically the many conceptual definitions of a group make operational definition of the term difficult. There are, however, certain agreed upon universals involved in the operational definition of a group. Among these universals is the requirement that group members be involved in social interaction of at least a relatively enduring kind in which they share certain meanings, values, and goals.

Borgatta says that sociologically the minimum definition is that "a group consists of two or more persons in some form of interaction, and recognizable as possessing a unity" (Borgatta, 1958:84). Leon Festinger defines a group as "a number of interacting and sociometrically connected people" (Festinger et al, 1950:58). Homans offers this definition of group:

> We mean by a group a number of persons who communicate with one another often over a span of time, and who are few enough so that each person is able to communicate with all the others, not at secondhand, through other people, but face-to-face. Sociologists call this the primary group (Homans, 1950:1).

It is Homans' theoretical framework which forms the background for the present investigation of the operation of group cohesiveness and conformity in an informal social situation.

HYPOTHESES

These hypotheses represent an attempt to discover the relationship between social homogeneity and geographic proximity in determining informal interaction and the extent to which the cohesiveness of a group influences the degree of conformity to a group norm. The hypotheses under consideration have been stated by George Homans (1961) and applied ex post facto to research conducted in both experimental and natural group settings. Investigations of natural groups discussed by Homans (1961) include such varied social situations as a student housing project and an industrial work group. From the review of the literature it does not appear that these specific hypotheses have been empirically tested to determine the extent to which they are applicable to an elderly population in a public housing setting. The social psychological theory of elementary social behavior as set forth by Homans (1961) deserves to be empirically tested in as many settings as possible. The procedures used to operationalize the concepts and to test the hypotheses are in part a replication of those employed by Festinger, et al (1950) in their study of two student housing projects at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Hypothesis 1:

> The more homogeneous the group, the more that geographic proximity affects the interaction of group members (Homans, 1961:211).

"Group" will be defined for present purposes as all residents of a single floor of the high rise apartment buildings for the elderly. "Homogeneity," the independent variable, will be determined by floor residents' similarity on ten characteristics: living arrangement, sex, race, marital status, age, education, religion, occupation (present or former), work status, and health. If 60 percent or more of the respondents on a floor fall into the same category on any one characteristic, the floor will be considered homogeneous on that trait. The floors in the sample will then be assigned ranks according to degree of homogeneity. For example, a floor having 60 percent or more of its residents in the same category in six out of ten traits will receive a higher homogeneity rank than one similar in only four out of ten traits.

The dependent variable in this hypothesis is "the more that geographic proximity affects the interaction of group members." "Geographic proximity" will be defined as residence on the same floor of an apartment building for the elderly. "Interaction of group members" will refer to the amount of informal social contact occurring among floor residents. Interaction will be measured by means of a sociometric question adapted from the Festinger, et al (1950) study: "What three people in the building do you see most of socially (Appendix, question 20)?"

The reliability and validity of sociometric measures has been seriously questioned (Rose, 1965:715). Essentially sociometry is a technique in which group members are asked to rate one another on some criterion of desirability. In this case the choice criterion is simple sociability. Lorber (1969) reviews the research that has been conducted to throw light

on the reliability/validity question. He notes that Jennings (1950) found a correlation of .70 between mutual choices given on sociometric tests administered eight months apart. Stability in friendship ratings over a two-year period was discovered by Wodder (1958). Perhaps one reason that sociometric responses tend to remain stable over a period of time is that these choices are given with reference to some relevant situation and involve significant others who are not likely to change rapidly for an individual. Validation of sociometric instruments in the conventional sense, Lorber (1969) believes is unnecessary. Validity figures are important when research instruments are indirect measures of some type of social behavior. However, sociometric questions are direct measures of a specific type of social behavior, namely choice behavior. Sociometric choices mean precisely what they say: that person A chooses person B for such and such an activity, provided that the activity is a significant one for the respondent and that choices are not artificially limited. Lorber (1969) concludes that sociometric instruments are highly reliable and that validity is not a vital issue in their use because they are specific to a given social situation. Homans (1961:154-155) expresses confidence that sociometric responses approximate very closely the sentiments that a person experiences.

In order to test this first hypothesis the amount of interaction occurring among residents of the same floor will be calculated by finding the proportion of sociometric choices given to residents of their own floor by floor occupants. The floors included in the sample will then be ranked according to the amount of on-the-floor interaction and a rank order correlation between floor homogeneity and interaction will be

calculated. Spearman's rho or Kendall's tau will be used for this purpose, depending on the number of tied ranks.

Hypothesis 2:

> The more cohesive the group, the larger the number of its members that conform to a group norm (Homans, 1961:126).

"Cohesiveness" is the independent variable and will be operationally defined as the attractiveness of a group for its members. A measure of cohesiveness will be based on the number of informal social contacts on the floor as indicated by the sociometric question: "What three people in the building do you see most of socially (Appendix, question 20)?" The index of floor cohesiveness will be the proportion of choices given by floor residents to residents of their own floor. Mutual choices may lower group cohesiveness because they indicate a tendency toward formation of subgroups. A correction will therefore be introduced as Festinger, et al (1950) suggested. Because reciprocal choices can make some contribution to cohesiveness, it is not necessary to eliminate their effect entirely, so the correction will involve subtracting one-half the number of mutual choices from the number of on-floor choices in the numerator of the index (Festinger, et al, 1950).

The dependent variable in this hypothesis is "the larger the number of its members that conform to a group norm." "Group norm" will be operationally defined as the attitude and activity shared by a majority of floor residents on issues of concern to them. The two "issues of concern" will be the attitude toward and amount of activity in the tenant organization and in the city sponsored recreation program in the apartment buildings.

A majority of residents on each floor will hold either a positive or a negative attitude toward the tenant organization as indicated by answers to the question, "How do you feel about the tenant organization (Appendix, question 40)?" A majority will also be either active or inactive in that organization as indicated by responses to the question, "Do you attend most of the tower's tenant meetings and activities (Appendix, question 36)?"

The indicator for the attitude toward the recreation program held by a majority of the floor residents is the question, "How do you feel about the recreational program here (Appendix, question 25)?" Attitudes will be dichotomized into positive and negative. Again a majority of residents on each floor will be found to be either active or inactive in the recreation program. Question three is a list of leisure time activities, and those which are part of the tower's recreation program as opposed to being individual or outside leisure pursuits are starred in the Appendix. A value of zero will be assigned if a respondent says that he never takes part in a given activity, a value of one if he answers "occasionally," and a value of two if he responds "often." There are sixteen items, so the total score can range from zero to thirty-two. A score equal to or above the mean score for the entire sample will be used to indicate that a respondent is active, and a score below the mean will be an indication of inactivity.

Clear patterns then will emerge for each floor regarding attitude toward and activity in the tenant organization and in the recreational program. The possible patterns are Positive/Active, Negative/Active,

Positive/Inactive, and Negative/Inactive. Degree of conformity to the group norms will be calculated by finding the percentage of floor residents who deviate from the floor patterns. For example, if a floor has fifteen residents and fourteen hold a positive attitude toward the tenant organization there will be one deviate and if twelve are active this will mean three additional deviates for a total of four or 37 percent of the floor. Rank order correlations will be used to test for a relationship between the indices of cohesiveness and the percentage of deviates on each floor for the tenant organization norm and for the recreation program norm. Spearman's rho or Kendall's tau will be employed as the rank-order statistic, and because conformity will be measured in terms of the amount of deviation it is expected that a negative correlation will be found.

> Hypothesis 3:
> Those who deviate from the group norm are more likely to seek their social activities outside the group (Homans, 1961:124).

The measure of deviation from the group norms has already been described under Hypothesis$_2$. The dependent variable, "seeking social activities outside the group," will be defined as a preference for off-the-floor socializing or for leisure pursuits outside the tower. Three questions will be utilized as indicators to determine a preference for out-of-group interaction: "Where do you do most of your socializing (Appendix, question 13)?", "Do you ever go to Senior Citizens centers like the one at 41st and Grand (Appendix, question 32a)?", and "Do you keep in touch with your old neighbors (Appendix, question 43a)?" Any answer to the first of these questions which shows that a respondent does most of his socializing off

of his own floor, and a "yes" answer to the second and third questions will be indications of seeking outside social activities. A Chi-square test of significance will be run to determine whether a significant relationship exists between deviation from the two group norms under consideration and each of the three indicators of outside social contacts. In the event of such a relationship the contingency coefficient will be used to measure the strength of association. The contingency coefficient is based on the Chi-square value and can be employed without making assumptions about linearity or normality of marginal distributions (Mueller and Schuessler, 1961:267).

Hypothesis 4:
The well-liked members of a group are more likely to conform to group norms than are isolates (Homans, 1961:123).

"Well-liked members of a group" will be operationally defined as those floor occupants frequently chosen by other residents of their own floor on the sociometric question (Appendix, question 20). Three or more choices received will indicate a well-liked resident, one or two choices will be considered average, and those receiving no choices will be designated social isolates. The sample will be trichotomized into well-liked, average, and isolate subjects.

"Conformity to group norms," the dependent variable, will again be defined by the proportion of apartment dwellers in the sample who deviate from their respective floor patterns of attitude and activity in the tenant organization and in the recreation program. Chi-square values will be figured to discover whether a difference significant at the .05 level exists between isolates and well-liked floor residents with respect to conformity

to or deviation from their group norm. In the event a significant difference is uncovered, the contingency coefficient will be employed as a measure of association.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

The working universe for this study was composed of the 703 residents of five Omaha Housing Authority apartment buildings for the elderly. Cluster sampling was utilized to draw an approximately 10 percent sample of residents. In cluster sampling there is no exact control over the final size of the sample. A cluster was a single floor of an apartment building, and the number of residents on a floor in this sample ranged from nine to fifteen. One floor from each of four buildings was randomly selected and all residents of these floors then became part of the sample. In the fifth building which was slightly larger than the others, two floors were selected in order to bring the number of persons in the original sample to 10 percent of the total population. Seventy-seven persons were included in the original sample (See Table I). Due to the refusal rate

TABLE I

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Building	No. of Residents	Total No. of Floors	No. of Floors Selected	No. of Residents in Sample
Burt	155	14	2	21
Evans	134	11	1	13
Kay Jay	140	11	1	14
Park Tower North	129	10	1	15
Park Tower South	145	11	1	14
Total	703	57	6	77*
Evans			1	11
Park Tower South			1	12
Total	703	57	8	100**

*original sample

**final sample

and to those sick or unable to be contacted it was necessary to add two more floors for a final sample size of 100. Both building and floor were randomly selected for the enlarged sample.

Cluster sampling was chosen over simple random sampling primarily because prior knowledge of the population led the investigator to believe that the individual floors probably constitute social groups (Kessler and Barger, 1968), and the locus of social groups is an important part of the question under consideration here. There is impressionistic evidence suggesting that "floor groups" exist. Residents of the various floors take turns planning and preparing refreshments for parties held in the downstairs recreation room. At tenant organization meetings the roll is called by floors, and when the investigator attended meetings there seemed to be a good bit of friendly rivalry over which floor could have the most residents present.

Cluster sampling in this case should not greatly affect the randomness of the sample because the population is fairly homogeneous and also because the housing applicants are not assigned to the various floors in any systematic way. While applicants can request a specific floor, a Housing Authority official said that when assignments to the apartments are made these requests do not carry much weight.

There are several advantages connected with the use of cluster sampling. One of these is the lowered field costs when clusters are geographically defined (Miller, 1964:49). With the population restricted to five high-rise buildings, cost in sampling is not a particularly salient factor in the present investigation. Secondly, sampling by clusters requires that only individuals in the selected clusters be listed. Then

characteristics of clusters as well as those of the population can be estimated (Miller, 1964:49). The primary concern in the present study is with the social interaction occurring among the elements (individuals) who make up the clusters.

Among the important characteristics of this universe is the fact that residents of the five high rise buildings are at least sixty-two years old with rare exceptions. In addition occupants must meet the other qualifications for application for public housing, including an annual income below $2400 and provable assets not in excess of $5000 for a single person or $7500 for a married couple. Residents must be capable of caring for themselves since the Housing Authority does not provide services such as help with cleaning and cooking.

Data were gathered by the author of this study and another graduate student who is investigating the same population (Wilson, 1969). The orally administered interview schedule consisted of seventy-three questions, the majority of them having closed choice answers. After two pretests several deletions and revisions were made in the schedule to achieve clarity and avoid redundancy. The number of pretests was kept small in order to avoid contamination of the sample. Because many of the questions were specific to life in the buildings it was impossible to pretest the interview schedule on individuals from outside the buildings. Respondents were not notified ahead of time that they would be interviewed. The interview was introduced as a survey to help evaluate a city-sponsored recreation program in the buildings and to gain information on leisure activities in general. Time required to complete a single interview ranged from twenty

minutes to an hour and a half with most of them taking about thirty minutes. Both interviewers worked in the same building at the same time in order to cut down on the amount of contamination which might result from conversation among respondents and potential respondents before all interviews on a floor were completed. Where two persons occupied an apartment, they were interviewed simultaneously by different interviewers when possible. Because every floor resident was included in the sample no individual substitutions could be made for respondents who could not be reached or who refused to be interviewed.

Three attempts were made to contact respondents, and seventy-eight interviews were completed out of the sample of one hundred. Six persons were too ill to be interviewed and seven refused for a variety of reasons. Three residents were not found at home on any of the attempts to contact them, five were in the hospital, and one had recently died.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Data gathered in the present investigation were punched on IBM cards and a straight frequency distribution was run using the computer facilities at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The proportion of the sample (N=78) giving the various responses to each question can be found in the interview schedule itself which is presented in the Appendix of this paper. A card sorter was used to facilitate cross tabulations, and the remainder of the data analysis was accomplished by hand with the aid of an office calculator.

Results of this study cannot be generalized beyond the population under investigation since the population has a number of special characteristics. This investigation has the same limitations which plague any survey research and the findings are viewed in the light of these limitations. Among the complicating factors which must be taken into account is the fact that a young interviewer may not be able to evoke a completely candid response from an elderly respondent. There is always the possibility also that the questions asked are not understood by the respondent or that the answers given are incorrectly interpreted by the interviewer. Social acceptability could easily be a motive behind certain answers given to questions referring to religion, relations with children, or interaction with friends. As with any survey a wealth of information is lost when responses to questions are forced into categories and closed choices.

In general respondents were quite receptive to the idea of being interviewed after their curiosity was satisfied as to the purpose of the interview and the status of the investigators. Providing respondents with enough information about the research so that they would be willing to spend their time answering questions while at the same time not giving out information which would structure the interview situation so as to prompt responses of a particular kind was vital to the research outcome. Some of the residents of the high-rise apartment buildings, which are also referred to hereafter as "towers," gave the distinct impression that they felt they had been "surveyed to death" since moving in. Although this attitude made some subjects hesitant about consenting to an interview, the initial hostility disappeared in nearly every case once access was gained and the interview was under way.

Characteristics of the sample which were gleaned from the survey overwhelmingly supported the implicit hypothesis that the population was indeed a homogeneous one. Of the seventy-eight respondents 67 percent were living alone at the time that they were interviewed, 32 percent were living with a spouse, and 1 percent was living with a child. Three (4 percent) respondents were single, twenty-five (32 percent) were married, forty-five (58 percent) were widowed, and five (6 percent) were divorced or separated. A vast majority of the subjects were women. They made up 81 percent of the sample. One floor in the sample, which also happened to be the smallest one in terms of the number of residents, had no male residents. This situation drew a comment from one of the floor residents to the effect that their floor was "close-knit" because it was "all girls."

Race was another factor on which the sample was homogeneous, with 88 percent of the subjects being white. The nine non-white respondents lived in the same building. Though there is no effort to separate the races when applications for housing are made, the neighborhoods in which the buildings are located tend to influence the distribution of the residents with most of the Negro applicants living in the tower located in a predominantly Negro neighborhood. A finding of some interest was that there were no refusals in this building, even though two floors in the sample were chosen from this building, and 27 percent of the total sample were living here. Only one other tower had an equally high representation in the sample.

There was a fairly even split among the respondents concerning the amount of formal education which they had received. Thirty-eight (49 percent) persons in the sample had eight years of school or less, thirty-three (42 percent) had at least some high school, and seven (9 percent) had schooling beyond high school level. Educational breakdown by floor is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

AMOUNT OF EDUCATION BY FLOOR IN FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES

Floor	No. of Respondents	8 years or less		Any high school		Beyond high school	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
A	7	3	43	4	57		
B	8	2	25	5	63	1	13
C	11	5	45	5	45	1	9
D	10	8	80	2	20		
E	11	5	45	5	45	1	9
F	10	4	40	5	50	1	10
G	11	5	45	5	45	1	9
H	10	6	60	2	20	2	20
Total Sample	78	38	49	33	42	7	9

Religious preference, another significant factor in social homogeneity, was recorded simply in terms of Protestant, Catholic, or Jew. Sixty-four percent of the subjects were Protestant, 33 percent Catholic, 1 percent Jewish, and another 1 percent gave answers not falling into any of these three categories. It is highly possible that some of the respondents do not in fact practice a religion but that social convention coerced them to make a choice when the three alternatives were given, even though they could have denied affiliation. Some evidence for this assumption that some respondents do not practice a religion is provided by the answers to a question which was really introduced to determine whether tower residents had experienced a change in life style as the result of their move to the public housing project. The question was, "Do you go to the same church you used to before you moved here (Appendix, question 44)?" In response, 6 percent said that they had not attended church before moving to the tower. While this response may merely indicate that declining health or physical disability was involved, the general impression which this investigator received was that there were several respondents who did not now and had not previously been active in a denomination although they did choose one of the three religious preferences. Three of the eight floors had a higher proportion of Protestant respondents than the proportion of the entire sample who said that they were Protestant. Table III indicates this and also the finding that four floors had a considerably higher proportion of Catholic respondents than the proportion of Catholics in the whole sample. Ethnic background of the residents could account for some of the differences in religious preference among

the subjects in different towers. For example, floors G and H were in the building located in a predominantly colored neighborhood where the overall

TABLE III

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE BY FLOOR IN FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES

Floor	No. of Respondents	Protestant Freq.	Protestant Percent	Catholic Freq.	Catholic Percent	Jewish Freq.	Jewish Percent	Other Freq.	Other Percent
A	7	5	71	2	29				
B	8	4	50	4	50				
C	11	4	36	6	55			1	9
D	10	5	50	5	50				
E	11	6	55	5	45				
F	10	6	60	3	30	1	10		
G	11	11	100						
H	10	9	90	1	10				
Total Sample	78	50	64	26	33	1	1	1	1

proportion of Protestants would be likely to be high. Floor D on the other hand was in a tower having a large percentage of Polish occupants and so it was reasonable to expect that a rather high proportion of floor residents would be Catholic.

Inquiry into the work status of the individuals in the sample revealed that 91 percent of the subjects were retired and that none were working full time. Occupations in which respondents had been engaged ranged from farming to machine maintenance in factories to packing house work among the men and from nursing to laundry and domestic work among the women. Only 5 percent had been employed in what could be called professional fields. The high proportion of women in the sample influenced the type of occupations reported because many of them had been engaged in domestic work or in clerical and sales positions.

In the original interview schedule eight occupational categories were used. Distribution of the subjects in the various occupational areas is given in Table IV. For computational purposes in assessing group

TABLE IV

OCCUPATIONS OF RESPONDENTS
IN PERCENTAGES

Clerical or sales	18
Farming	3
Professional	5
Proprietors	6
Service workers	14
Craftsmen	17
Laborers (unskilled)	19
Domestic	18
Total	100

homogeneity these occupational classifications were later collapsed into three: farming, professional and proprietors; clerical or sales, service workers and craftsmen; and laborers and domestic workers.

In a question used to ascertain health status each subject was asked to indicate how many of the following applied to him: bothered by some active illness or ailment, limited in activities, can't walk up or down one flight of stairs, can't do heavy work, can't walk half a mile, can't go out to a movie or church (Rosow, 1967:270). If five or six of the above were applicable the respondent was judged to be in poor health. Sixty-nine percent of the sample were classified as possessing good health, 19 percent were in fair health and only 12 percent gave answers suggesting that they were in poor health. This finding is about what would be expected

since living in an apartment such as those provided by the Public Housing Authority requires that one be capable of caring for oneself or be living with someone who can care for him.

While the health status of the sample was generally good, the age distribution among the respondents was top heavy. Over 55 percent of those interviewed were between seventy and eighty, as Table V shows.

TABLE V

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE IN FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES

Age	Frequency	Percent
60-64	9	11.5
65-69	13	16.7
70-74	25	32.1
75-79	18	23.1
80 & up	12	15.4
No answer	1	1.3
Total	78	100.1*

*Total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

The foregoing descriptive findings confirm the assumption that a population of elderly Public Housing Apartment dwellers is a homogeneous one. Because the entire sample was highly homogeneous it was difficult to rank the floors for homogeneity. Table VI gives some idea of the degree of homogeneity among the residents of the several floors.

An analysis of variance of the ten characteristics used to determine homogeneity of residents on each of the eight floors was not significant.

TABLE VI

HOMOGENEITY OF FLOOR RESPONDENTS ON
TEN TRAITS IN PERCENTAGES

Trait	Floor A	Floor B	Floor C	Floor D	Floor E	Floor F	Floor G	Floor H	Entire Sample
EDUCATION (8 years or less)	43	25	45	80	45	40	45	60	49
OCCUPATION (clerical or sales, service, and craftsmen)	43	13	64	50	64	70	45	30	49
WORK STATUS (not employed)	57	100	91	90	91	100	100	90	91
HEALTH (good)	71	50	64	70	73	70	73	80	69
AGE (65-74)	83	50	54	30	36	60	36	50	49
RELIGION (Protestant)	71	50	36	50	55	60	100	90	64
RACE (white)	100	100	100	100	100	100	70	55	88
LIVING ARRANGEMENT (alone)	71	88	70	55	55	60	64	80	67
MARITAL STATUS (widowed)	57	75	45	60	55	60	45	70	58
SEX (female)	71	100	80	82	73	70	82	90	81

The analysis of variance is summarized in Table VII. It was necessary to retain the null hypothesis that there is no difference among the floor groups on the degree of homogeneity, but an effort was still made to rank the eight floors on similarity. On four of the floors 60 percent of the

TABLE VII

SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE
OF FLOOR HOMOGENEITY

Source of Variance	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F
Between groups	7	232.9	33.27	.68*
Within groups	72	3536.06	49.11	

*Not significant. An F value of 2.17 is required for p=.05.

respondents fell into the same category in six of the ten traits. Three more floors tied with 60 percent or more of the subjects in one category in seven of the ten traits. The remaining floor was the most homogeneous having 60 percent or more respondents in one category on nine out of ten indicators of homogeneity.

A sociometric question used to discover where the informal interaction within the buildings was focused produced some interesting results. Subjects gave 209 choices in response to the question, "What three people in the building do you see most of socially (Appendix, question 20)?" Of these, 136 choices were given to residents of the same floor as the respective respondents. Thus, 65 percent of the sociometric choices went to persons defined as being geographically proximate by reason of occupying the same floor of an apartment building. Responding to the question,

"Where do you do most of your socializing (Appendix, question 13)?", 35 percent of the sample said that their social contacts take place mainly on their own floor, while another 35 percent mentioned the downstairs recreation room and lobby as the major focal point for their visiting. These proportions support the hypothesis that informal social interaction takes place primarily among those who are geographically proximate when the group under consideration is homogeneous.

There were other indications that the residential floors tend to be the center of informal social interaction in the towers. When a general question was asked about how well the people in the tower know one another only 15 percent said "very well" and 49 percent said "fairly well" (Appendix, question 15a). In contrast, 50 percent of the subjects felt that the residents of their own floor know each other "very well," and an additional 40 percent responded that floor residents are "fairly well" acquainted (Appendix, question 15b). Fifty-eight (74 percent) subjects said that they know all the people on their floor by name, but forty-seven (60 percent) admitted that there are no persons on their floor with whom they spend an afternoon or evening now and then. The type of neighboring which occurs was reflected in remarks such as, "We mostly meet in the hall," or "We run back and forth for a few minutes at a time." In general the people in the sample do not eat meals together or have one another over for snacks or coffee except on rare occasions. Some of the reticence about eating with friends seemed to revolve around health problems. Subjects frequently made references to special diets and mentioned that they hesitated to eat "out" because they feared being served dishes which they were not supposed to have.

While the total amount of social interaction among the tower residents did not appear to be extensive, those social groups which did develop occurred primarily on the respective floors where neighbors had easy access to one another.

Based on the sociometric question, "What three people in the building do you see most of socially (Appendix, question 20)?", the proportion of the total number of choices which was given to residents of the respondents' own floor was computed. The results are shown in Table VIII. These ratios were used as measures of the extent of "on-the-floor" informal social interaction.

TABLE VIII

INFORMAL SOCIAL INTERACTION BY FLOOR AS INDICATED BY A SOCIOMETRIC QUESTION

Floor	Total Choices Given by Respondents	On-Floor Choices	Ratio
A	17	9	9/17=.53
B	23	18	18/23=.78
C	31	22	22/31=.71
D	31	21	21/31=.68
E	31	24	24/31=.77
F	27	16	16/27=.59
G	26	11	11/26=.42
H	23	15	15/23=.65
Total	209	136	136/209=.65

To test the hypothesis that the more homogeneous the floor the more that geographic proximity will affect the interaction pattern, floors were assigned ranks indicating the degree of homogeneity and the amount of social interaction occurring on the floor. Due to the number of tied ranks

Kendall's tau rather than Spearman's rho was used for a rank order correlation. In computing Kendall's tau it has been suggested that the number one be assigned to the lowest rather than to the highest rank (Bruning and Kintz, 1968). The value of Kendall's tau was .26 as Table IX shows.

TABLE IX

RANK-ORDER CORRELATION BETWEEN HOMOGENEITY AND ON-THE-FLOOR INTERACTION

Floor	Homogeneity Rank (1=low homogeneity)	On-Floor Social Interaction (1=low interaction)
A	1	2
C	1	6
G	1	1
H	1	4
B	2	8
D	2	5
E	2	7
F	3	3

Kendall's tau=.26

A tau of .26 does not represent a particularly high correlation between floor homogeneity and the amount of social interaction occurring on the respective residential floors. There is little statistical support here for the initial hypothesis that the more homogeneous the group the more that geographic proximity affects the interaction of group members. For an added check Kendall's tau was also computed separately for the amount of interaction on the floors and each of nine of the ten traits used as indicators of sample homogeneity. Race was the characteristic not considered in these calculations because only two floors had any non-white residents. Table X gives the resulting tau values. Health, religion and

occupation are most closely correlated with variation in the degree of interaction among persons who are in close gepgraphic proximity. As the proportion of persons on the same floor having the same type of work

TABLE X

KENDALL'S TAU FOR FLOORS RANKED ON DEGREE OF HOMOGENEITY ON NINE TRAITS AND DEGREE OF ON-THE-FLOOR INTERACTION

Trait	Kendall's tau	Trait	Kendall's tau
Education	.15	Religion	-.59
Occupation	.59	Living Arrangement	.07
Work Status	.08	Marital Status	.30
Health	-.52	Sex	.15
Age	-.07		

background increases, the proportion of persons on the floor who choose other floor residents for socializing also increases. However, the results for health and religion show a decidedly different trend. As the proportion of individuals on a floor who are of the same religious background increases, the degree of on-floor socializing decreases. It could be that the broad classification "Protestant" covered up important differences which are reflected in the negative correlation. Sociometric choice of persons on one's own floor also decreases as the proportion of respondents in the same health category increases. Perhaps this finding can be partially explained by the fact that on every floor the largest proportion of respondents fell into the category of "good health," and so they could easily seek out friends on different floors or go downstairs to the lobby or recreation room to visit.

The second hypothesis stated that the more cohesive the group the larger the number of its members that conform to a group norm. A slight correction introduced into the ratio of on-the-floor interaction to the total number of sociometric choices given by floor residents was sufficient to yield a cohesiveness index for each floor. The correction involved subtracting one-half the number of mutual choices from the numerator of the ratio. This factor was introduced because reciprocal choices could represent a tendency toward clique formation which would lower the over-all floor cohesion. Cohesiveness indices for all eight floors are shown in Table XI.

TABLE XI

COHESIVENESS INDICES FOR FLOORS

Floor	Total Choices Given by Floor Respondents	On-Floor Choices Given	Mutual Choices	Ratio of On-Floor Choices Minus $\frac{1}{2}$ Mutual Choices, to Total Choices	Cohesiveness Index
A	17	9	1	8.5/17	.50
B	23	18	7	14.5/23	.63
C	31	22	4	20/31	.65
D	31	21	4	19/31	.61
E	31	24	4	22/31	.71
F	27	16	6	13/27	.48
G	26	11	2	10/26	.38
H	23	15	5	12.5/23	.54
Total	209	136	33	119.5/209	.57

The first group norm considered was each floor's attitude toward and activity in the tower's tenant organization. All residents of each apartment building are automatically members of the tenant organization.

Officers are elected by tower residents and serve for a one year term. A representative of the Omaha Housing Authority who acts in the capacity of a supervisor in the housing units for the elderly is present at the monthly meetings which are conducted by the president of the organization. Business taken up at the meetings includes planning social activities and fund-raising projects, discussing various facets of life in the tower such as the fire regulations and methods of trash disposal, and various committee reports including one which informs those present of the names of fellow residents who are ill or in the hospital and who would appreciate a visit or a card. In an effort to spur attendance at tenant meetings a rotating trophy is given each month to the building with the best attendance at their meetings. Each floor has a person who is designated "floor captain" who keeps apartment dwellers informed as to the date and time of tenant meetings and encourages attendance.

In response to the question, "Do you attend most of the tower's tenant meetings and activities (Appendix, question 36)?", 51 percent said yes and so were classified as active in the tenant organization. Table XII gives the proportion of active residents by floor. When the query was

TABLE XII

ACTIVITY IN TENANT ORGANIZATION BY FLOOR

Floor	N	Active Frequency	Active Percent	Floor	N	Active Frequency	Active Percent
A	7	7	100	E	11	5	45
B	8	3	38	F	10	4	40
C	11	7	64	G	11	9	82
D	10	3	30	H	10	2	20

put a slightly different way and subjects were asked how often they attend tenant meetings, 35 percent said that they never go, 22 percent indicated that they go occasionally, and only 43 percent stated that they go often. As Table XII also shows, only three floors had more than one-half of the respondents classified as active in the tenant organization, and all three of these had a rather high proportion active. An interesting finding is the fact that Floors G and H are in the same building and yet are widely divergent in the proportion of subjects taking an active interest in the tenant organization.

Group norms have not only a behavioral constituent but also an attitudinal dimension. Thus a second component of the norm concerning the tenant organization was the attitude toward the organization held by floor members. The question used to elicit an expression of attitude was, "How do you feel about the tenant organization (Appendix, question 40)?" The answers, "think residents could get along just as well without it," and "indifferent" or "don't know" were considered to reflect an essentially negative attitude. Sixty-nine percent of the entire sample held a positive attitude toward the tenant organization. Attitudinal breakdown by floor is given in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII

ATTITUDE TOWARD TENANT ORGANIZATION BY FLOOR

Floor	N	Positive Attitude Frequency	Percent	Floor	N	Positive Attitude Frequency	Percent
A	7	6	86	E	11	10	91
B	8	4	50	F	10	6	60
C	11	5	45	G	11	10	91
D	10	6	60	H	10	7	70

Based on the stated attendance at tenant meetings and the feeling toward that organization expressed by a majority of floor respondents, floor patterns emerged. Although the pattern for the entire sample based on the majority of responses to the two questions measuring activity and attitude was Active/Positive, only two floors matched this pattern and the most frequently occurring floor pattern was Inactive/Positive which was found on four floors as Table XIV shows. This disparity among floors in

TABLE XIV

DEVIATES FROM TENANT ORGANIZATION FLOOR PATTERN

Floor	N	Floor Pattern	Deviates Frequency	Deviates Percent
A	7	Active/Positive	1	14
B	8	Inactive/Negative	5	63
C	11	Active/Negative	9	81
D	10	Inactive/Positive	7	70
E	11	Inactive/Positive	6	55
F	10	Inactive/Positive	7	70
G	11	Active/Positive	3	27
H	10	Inactive/Positive	5	50

a sample which has been shown to be extremely homogeneous is a good indication that a group norm is at work.

Having established the floor patterns the next step was to determine the extent of conformity to those patterns. Conformity to both the behavioral dimension and to the attitude was necessary for an individual to be classified as a conformist. The extent of deviation from the prevailing group norm on each floor is given in Table XIV.

There were no tied ranks among floors either for the cohesiveness indices or for the degree of deviation from the group norm. A Spearman's rho was calculated and yielded a value of .45 meaning that as cohesiveness increased conformity to the norm actually decreased. The value .45 is not however statistically significant. With an N of eight rho would have to reach .738 in order to reject the null hypothesis of no difference at the .05 level. In this case the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between group cohesiveness as measured and the degree of conformity to a group norm must be retained. As it stands, however, the data suggest that group cohesiveness and conformity to a group norm are negatively related in this instance. Such an unusual relationship could call into question the existence of a true group norm.

Using the same procedure as for the tenant organization patterns, an activity/attitude pattern for each floor regarding the recreation program in the buildings was discovered. The City of Omaha Parks and Recreation Department sponsors the recreation program for the residents of the towers. Activities provided include bowling, picnics, outings to historical sites, and classes in ceramics, leathercrafts and art.

Participation scores to ascertain how active the subjects were in the recreation ranged from zero to seventeen out of a possible range of zero to thirty-two. Mean participation score for the entire sample was seven. The sample was dichotomized with those scoring seven or above considered high participators and those below seven classified as low participators. Forty-two (54 percent) respondents scored at or above the mean. Table XV shows the proportion of respondents from the eight floor groups who were high participators.

It is well to remember that while the sample was dichotomized into those with high and low participation scores, even those with high scores were not extremely active in the recreation program. Actually members of

TABLE XV

PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION PROGRAM BY FLOOR

Floor	N	High Participation Frequency	Percent	Floor	N	High Participation Frequency	Percent
A	7	5	71	E	11	8	73
B	8	4	50	F	10	7	70
C	11	5	45	G	11	8	73
D	10	3	30	H	10	2	20

the sample were compared with one another rather than being classified on the absolute amount of participation. A "high participation" score means that in relation to the other subjects this person scored high, and it does not necessarily mean that he takes part in very many activities very often. Respondents recognized that they did not engage to a great extent in the activities provided for their "enjoyment" by the Parks Department. In response to the question, "Are you quite active in the recreational program in the building (Appendix, question 2a)?", 74 percent of the sample said no, although only 46 percent were rated as low participators as a result of the participation score.

In response to the query, "How do you feel about the recreational program here (Appendix, question 25)?", 85 percent of the subjects gave statements indicating a positive attitude. Typical remarks from respondents were, "I think it's wonderful," and "They do a good job." There

were some indifferent and negative expressions which often took the form of comments such as, "It's O.K. for those who want it," and "I don't need that sort of thing." In a very few cases residents gave the impression that they preferred to follow their own leisure pursuits and felt that pressure was placed on them to attend functions which they would just as soon skip. Others insisted that one of the nice things about the recreation set-up was that those could go who wanted to and that one did not feel that he had to take part in something if he preferred not to. The frequencies and percentages of positive attitudes on each of the floors are given in Table XVI.

TABLE XVI

ATTITUDE TOWARD THE RECREATION PROGRAM BY FLOOR

Floor	N	Positive Attitude Frequency	Positive Attitude Percent	Floor	N	Positive Attitude Frequency	Positive Attitude Percent
A	7	5	71	E	11	11	100
B	8	8	100	F	10	10	100
C	11	6	55	G	11	10	91
D	10	7	70	H	10	9	90

The floor patterns which emerged when both attitude and activity in the recreation program were considered were overwhelmingly positive and evenly-split between active and inactive. Once again each floor respondent was classified as either a deviate or a conformer to the group standard or pattern. Remember once again that a person would have to have both the attitude and activity stance of the majority in order to qualify as a

conformer. Table XVII gives the floor patterns and the amount of deviation from these patterns for each floor.

TABLE XVII

RECREATION PROGRAM FLOOR PATTERNS
AND AMOUNT OF DEVIATION

Floor	N	Pattern	Deviates	
			Frequency	Percent
A	7	Active/Positive	4	57
B	8	Inactive/Positive	4	50
C	11	Inactive/Positive	8	73
D	10	Inactive/Positive	6	60
E	11	Active/Positive	3	27
F	10	Active/Positive	3	30
G	11	Active/Positive	3	27
H	10	Inactive/Positive	3	30

A rank-order correlation between floor cohesiveness and deviation from the recreation program standard on the floors failed to provide evidence in support of the hypothesis that the more cohesive the group the larger the number of its members that conform to the group norm. What little correlation there is actually runs in the opposite direction from the expected. There is a negative correlation between cohesiveness and conformity to the group norm; that is, the more cohesive the group the less likely group members are to conform to the pattern of behavior and attitude characterizing a majority of the floor members. Table XVIII summarizes the Spearman's rho computation. Failure to find statistical evidence of a positive relationship between cohesiveness and conformity to a group norm suggests that conformity is not particularly important to older persons, or

it could mean that a true group norm is not in operation. This possibility will be discussed further in the section on interpretation.

TABLE XVIII

RANK-ORDER CORRELATION: COHESIVENESS AND DEVIATION FROM RECREATION PROGRAM FLOOR PATTERN

Floor	Cohesiveness Rank (1=lowest rank)	Deviates from Floor Pattern (1=lowest rank)
G	1	1.5
F	2	3.5
A	3	6
H	4	3.5
D	5	7
B	6	5
C	7	8
E	8	1.5

Spearman's $rho = 1 - \frac{6 \Sigma D^2}{N(N^2-1)} = .27$

Festinger et al (1950) suggested that deviates are more likely than conformers to seek their social activities outside of the group. The theory is that deviates will find more compatible social relationships in a setting outside of a group which is pressuring them to conform to a pattern of behavior and attitude to which they do not subscribe. There is some question of course as to whether deviates seek outside social contacts because they are deviates or whether they have always had outside social interaction and so are deviates because the issues are not particularly salient and because they find reinforcement elsewhere. In a test of the hypothesis that deviates tend to seek their social activities outside the group, three questions were used to indicate a subject's preference for social activities on or off of his own floor. Table XIX shows the number of deviates

and conformers to their respective floor patterns regarding the recreation program who socialize on the floor and the number who do their

TABLE XIX

NUMBER OF DEVIATES AND CONFORMERS ON RECREATION PROGRAM PATTERNS WHO SOCIALIZE ON AND OFF THEIR FLOOR

	Deviates	Conformers	Total
Socialize on the floor	11	16	27
Socialize off the floor	23	28	51
Total	34	44	78

Chi-square = .14 (not significant)

socializing elsewhere. The question was simply, "Where do you do most of your socializing (Appendix, question 13)?" In response to the question, "Do you keep in touch with your old neighbors (Appendix, question 43a)?", the answers given by deviates and conformers on the recreation program patterns were distributed as indicated in Table XX. A chi-square test of significance run on the distribution of deviates and conformers to the recreation program standard on their respective floors who go to Senior Citizens Centers yielded a value of .024 which was not statistically significant (Table XXI). It is highly possible that health and transportation problems contribute to the finding that only twelve out of seventy-eight respondents go to Senior Citizens' centers. However, the numbers in the cells are too small to control for health and do a chi-square test.

TABLE XX

DEVIATES AND CONFORMERS ON RECREATION PROGRAM PATTERNS WHO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH OLD NEIGHBORS

	Deviates	Conformers	Total
Keep in touch with old neighbors	23	33	56
Do not keep in touch with old neighbors	11	11	22
Total	34	44	78

Chi-square = .51 (not significant)

TABLE XXI

DEVIATES AND CONFORMERS ON RECREATION PROGRAM PATTERNS WHO GO TO SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTERS

	Deviates	Conformers	Total
Go to Senior Citizens' Center	5	7	12
Do not go to Senior Citizens' Center	29	37	66
Total	34	44	78

Chi-square = .024 (not significant)

As it stands the evidence offers no support for the hypothesis that deviates from a group norm seek social activities outside the group. Hence the null hypothesis that there is no difference between deviates and conformers regarding the locus of their social activities must be retained.

To test the last hypothesis that the well-liked members of a group are more likely to conform to group norms than isolates, each floor was trichotomized into well-liked, average, and isolate residents. Well-liked residents were those receiving three or more sociometric choices from other residents of their own floor; one or two choices was considered average, and those receiving no choices were obviously isolates. Table XXII shows the distribution of sociometric choices between deviates and

TABLE XXII

SOCIOMETRIC STATUS OF DEVIATES AND CONFORMERS ON TENANT ORGANIZATION PATTERNS

	Well-liked	Average	Isolates	Total
Deviates	10	23	9	42
Conformers	8	14	14	36
Total	18	37	23	78

Chi-square = 3.059 (not significant)

and conformers to the tenant organization patterns. A chi-square value of 5.991 would be necessary to reject the null hypothesis with $p=.05$. When the non-respondents on the floors were considered in addition to the

known deviates and conformers because they had also received sociometric choices from fellow residents, the chi-square value was higher but still not significant as Table XXIII shows. With four degrees of freedom a chi-square value of 9.5 is required to reject the null hypothesis with p=.05.

TABLE XXIII

SOCIOMETRIC STATUS OF DEVIATES, CONFORMERS AND NON-RESPONDENTS ON TENANT ORGANIZATION PATTERNS

	Well-liked	Average	Isolates	Total
Deviates	10	23	9	42
Conformers	8	14	14	36
Non-Respondents	3	10	9	22
Total	21	47	32	100

Chi-square = 4.36 (not significant)

When the same procedure was followed using the recreation program floor patterns as the base for figuring the number of deviates and conformers the results were similar. Once again the hypothesis under consideration was not supported by statistical evidence (Table XXIV). Deviates and conformers in this elderly sample do not appear to differ as Festinger et al (1950) found that deviates and conformers among MIT student couples differed.

A brief summary of the findings presented above is in order in concluding this chapter. Inquiry into the general characteristics of the

respondents supported the implicit hypothesis that the sample of Public Housing residents was a homogeneous one. Of the ten traits used to

TABLE XXIV

SOCIOMETRIC STATUS OF DEVIATES, CONFORMERS, AND NON-RESPONDENTS ON RECREATION PROGRAM PATTERNS

	Well-liked	Average	Isolates	Total
Deviates	7	14	13	34
Conformers	11	23	10	44
Non-Respondents	3	10	9	22
Total	21	47	32	100

Chi-square = 3.57 (not significant)

indicate homogeneity only three had fewer than 50 percent of the entire sample falling into one category. An analysis of variance of the ten characteristics on the eight floors in the sample was not statistically significant, leading to the conclusion that the floors were about equally homogeneous. Geographic proximity was found to be an important factor influencing friendship patterns in the apartment buildings. Informal social ties tended to develop on the residential floors where apartment dwellers had easy access to one another. Sixty-five percent of the sociometric choices went to persons living on the respondents' own floors.

None of the four hypotheses were strongly supported by the statistical tests employed. The first hypothesis stated that "The more homogeneous the group, the more that geographic proximity affects interaction."

In testable form the hypothesis read: "The more similar floor residents are on certain traits, the more they choose persons on their own floor for social contacts." A Kendall's tau of .26 indicated a positive but weak correlation between increasing floor homogeneity and increasing on-the-floor socializing.

Hypothesis$_2$ was, "The more cohesive the group, the larger the number of its members who conform to a group norm." The testable form of this hypothesis was, "The more social contacts there are among floor residents, the fewer floor residents who deviate from the floor's majority attitude toward and participation in the tenant organization and in the recreation program." Spearman's rho was .45 for floor cohesiveness and deviation from the floor patterns regarding the tenant organization and .27 for cohesiveness and deviation from the recreation program norm. Thus the more cohesive floors actually tended to have more deviates than less cohesive floors, and the hypothesis was not supported by the evidence.

"Those who deviate from the group norm are more likely to seek their social activities outside the group," was the third hypothesis to be tested. Operationally this hypothesis said: "Deviates from their respective floor patterns with respect to the recreation program are more likely to socialize off their floor or outside the building." Chi-square values testing for a relationship between each of three indicators of outside social activity and deviation from floor patterns were .14, .024, and .51, all of which were far-removed from a significant relationship. Deviates were thus found to be no more likely than conformers to seek outside social activities.

The final hypothesis tested was, "Well-liked group members are more likely to conform to group norms than isolates." It was translated into a testable form stating that, "Floor residents who are highly chosen by other floor occupants on a sociometric test conform to their floor pattern on issues of relevance." A chi-square value of 4.36 was not an indication of a significant difference between highly chosen and isolate residents on deviation or conformity to the tenant organization floor pattern. When the recreation program attitude/activity patterns were substituted for the tenant organization patterns the chi-square value was 3.57, also not significant at the .05 level.

CHAPTER IV

INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

Where do friendship ties spring up among an elderly population? How important is geographic proximity as compared with participation in formal social functions for the formation of friendship ties? What kind of sociability is valued by the "older set?" Is conformity important to persons in the category we label "aging?" A few conclusions about these questions can be drawn from the present investigation. However, it is well to recall that this is a population with some very special characteristics and that strictly speaking conclusions to be drawn in this chapter cannot be applied to persons in other age categories or in other types of living situations.

The majority (65 percent) of friendship choices went to persons living on the respondents' own floors. "Oh, we're all well-acquainted on this floor," and "I wouldn't want to be anywhere else," were typical comments from apartment dwellers which suggested that the residential floors were indeed the locus of sociability in the buildings. One woman put it quite clearly when she said, "The floor is where you get acquainted mostly." Another respondent remarked, "We're just about one family on this floor."

Figures 1 through 8 (supplement) show how sociometric choices were distributed among residents of the same floor. Apartments face each other up and down the hall except where an elevator divides each floor roughly in half. Apartments are also arranged so that the lower numbers are at one end and the higher numbers at the other end of the corridor. The eight figures

are laid out so that choices which appear close together actually do represent choices of persons spatially proximate to the chooser. Some of the floors, notably Floors B and D, seem to be divided into two friendship clusters at opposite ends of the corridor.

The discovery of friendship ties on the floors is consistent with Homans' exchange theory of elementary social behavior (Homans, 1961). The public housing apartment buildings and their formal arrangements are the external system. Individuals enter this external system out of a variety of motives. Probably the most prevalent motives, at least the ones which are most frequently expressed, are a desire for lower rent rates, inability to keep up a house and yard, loss of other living quarters because of highway or commercial construction, and the need for special facilities such as elevators, occasioned by health problems. Once individuals are settled in the external system an elaboration of behavior occurs and an internal system develops. The internal system involves the give and take, the cost and reward, of simple day-to-day interaction on the floors. Neighbors may meet in the corridor and exchange views on the weather, discuss the up-coming monthly birthday party for building residents, exchange advice and family news, or share freshly baked pastries and candies.

In a homogeneous population such as elderly residents of public housing projects, a person living close by is as likely to be able to perform activities which another finds rewarding and to exhibit rewarding sentiments as someone who lives at a considerable distance. Interaction with those to whom one has easy physical access is also less costly than

interaction with persons who are farther away, other things being equal. The most important "other thing" is the caliber of reward which the persons are capable of providing. Profit is maximized by interacting with persons near by as long as those farther away are not offering substantially greater rewards. Taking into account the homogeneity of the population and the age category of the population which suggests that there may be some physical or health reasons for not seeking social contacts at a great distance, the discovery of friendship ties on the floors is indeed consonant with exchange theory. The low Kendall's tau value (.26) received when floors were ranked for homogeneity and for the amount of on-floor socializing could simply be due to the fact that the population is so highly homogeneous that the attempt to rank the floors was artificial and forced.

Homans (1961) theorizes that with increasing group cohesiveness there is decreasing deviation from a group norm. Indeed, Festinger et al (1950) found a rank-order correlation of -.74 between group cohesiveness and deviation from a group norm in one of the student housing projects at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. However, the findings of the present investigation more closely resemble those which Festinger et al (1950) came up with in the second MIT student housing project where the Kendall's tau value was -.27 and not significant. In the present study a Spearman's rho of .45 was not significant at the .05 level and the conclusion drawn is that no true group norm exists on the floors concerning the attitude to be held and the degree of participation in the tenant organization. Festinger et al (1950) concluded that in the housing project

where the rank-order correlation between group cohesiveness and deviation from a group norm was not significant, there had not been time for a group norm to develop because students had been living there for only a few months. They felt that given time a cohesive group system and group norms would develop. This explanation cannot be invoked in the case of the present study because the buildings have been occupied for over three years and the turn-over of residents has been low. In fact, 83 percent of the sample have lived in their building for three years or longer, and seventy-four of the seventy-eight respondents have lived in the same apartment since moving into the tower. The housing development where Festinger et al (1950) found a significant relationship between cohesiveness and conformity to group norms had only been occupied for about fifteen months, and this was considered sufficient time for group norms to be formed.

George Homans makes a statement which it might be well to consider in attempting to explain the absence of a significant correlation between cohesiveness and conformity to a group standard in the present situation:

> What is really important about conformity is not just that it is conformity; what is really important about help is not just that it is help. Instead the thing that is important about both is what they have in common: both are activities that, in different degrees, are valuable to other members who find them rewarding to receive (Homans, 1961:163).

It is true that conformity can be a valuable and rewarding activity when the behavior under consideration is of importance to the group. Perhaps the crucial question raised by the present research is: Is conformity a valuable activity for older persons? Conformity and group cohesiveness may not be related at all in an elderly population simply because conformity

may not be as important or as "valuable" an activity to older persons as to younger persons. Respondents in these interviews frequently came up with comments to the effect that they preferred to stick to their own way of doing things and that they believed that their neighbors and friends should be left to their own opinions. The general conclusion is that there are not "group norms" at work at all in the sense that floor occupants band together in holding and enforcing a particular attitudinal and behavioral position toward the tenant organization and toward the recreation program.

Although the present study was not set up to check for other kinds of norms, it is conceivable that one group norm among the elderly might well be that independence and differing opinions are to be respected by fellow residents.

The high proportion of deviates to the respective floor patterns also leads the writer to the interpretation that these patterns are not operating as group standards. On the tenant organization issue all but two floors have more than one-half of the respondents deviating from their floor pattern. The floor patterns of attitude and behavior in the tenant organization then seem to be the result of individual assessments rather than the result of group pressures.

It could also be that the two issues which were used as a focus of attention, the tenant organization and the recreation program, are simply not issues of sufficient importance to the residents of the towers so that they would hold strong opinions which could provide the impetus for the formation of a "group norm." While it is true that the tenant organization

and the recreation program are activities which are familiar to all of the residents and involve them all at least to some minor degree, it may be that these are activities which the residents feel are imposed from outside. If this is the case the sample subjects may not have a great deal of involvement in these programs because they did not have a part in initiating them. As a matter of fact, in several instances when subjects were asked who really runs the tenant organization, the name of a Housing Authority employee was given (Appendix, question 37). A question which might be suggested for further research is: Does a group norm have a chance to develop in a case where the issue under consideration originates outside the group? Homans' theory of the internal and external systems in group relations proposes that group norms do indeed arise in the course of informal social interaction in settings which are at the start formal and highly structured (Homans, 1950). The Bank Wiring Room experiment at the Western Electric Plant can be cited as an illustration of a highly structured situation being considerably modified by the informal relationships which occurred within the more formal setting (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939).

What are the issues which are of importance to a group of low-income elderly public housing dwellers? An investigation into this question would demand the use of some less structured techniques than the over-worked questionnaire or an interview schedule composed of closed-choice questions. With flexible research instruments it may be possible to discover, for example, that it is much more rewarding to have one's neighbor refrain from knocking on the door during the hours from two to four in the

afternoon than to have him attend a tenant meeting. It may be more rewarding to the individual for that same neighbor to share a piece of freshly baked lemon pie than for him to be favorably disposed to going on bus tours of historical sites around the area because the majority of floor residents are in favor of such activities. More extensive investigation deserves to be undertaken in the area of determining what kinds of social relations among elderly persons are the most rewarding. There is no indication from the present investigation that confidantes and friends are unnecessary for the elderly. In fact, those respondents who talked most of being lonely and depressed were those who said that they did not know many people in the tower or on their floor. At the same time it did not appear that these oldsters found scores of acquaintances necessary to provide them with a sense of companionship and belonging. If the amount of participation in the recreation program and in the tenant organization is taken to indicate whether a person is disengaged (Cumming and Henry, 1961), this sample is about evenly divided between active and inactive or engaged and disengaged individuals. Fifty-four percent scored at or above the mean score for participation in the recreation activities, and 51 percent were active in the tenant organization. Such a split does not allow the investigator to make any definitive statement about the disengagement theory of aging.

Of course, what is considered active for this sample may be relatively inactive for another sample. The type as well as the quantity of leisure pursuits and social interaction which is considered also affects the degree of engagement or disengagement which is found to exist among a given segment of the elderly population.

Persons who deviated from their floor patterns of attitude and behavior were not more likely than conformers to seek social activities outside their group. Deviation from a pattern of attitude and behavior which is not operating as a true group norm and which has been shown to be merely the result of individual assessments of a similar situation rather than the result of group pressure might be of far less import than other factors for explaining why the subjects do not seek outside social activities. Health problems, physical incapacities, financial difficulties, and lack of transportation facilities complicate efforts to go visiting outside the towers. For example, fear of venturing out after dark was frequently alluded to. Barger (1968) found that concern for personal safety, even in one's own neighborhood and particularly at night, was fairly widespread among Omaha residents. Fear tended to decrease as distance from the center of the city increased. The buildings in which the present investigation was undertaken are all located near downtown or close to other business and industrial areas and on main thoroughfares. This fact plus the age category and the preponderance of females in the sample make it hardly surprising that fear of going out, especially after dark, was frequently mentioned.

Once we have concluded that true group norms are not in operation on the floors with regard to the tenant organization and the recreation program, it is no longer surprising that deviates do not tend to seek outside social interaction any more than conformers. What it amounts to is that the "deviates" are not really deviates because there is not a group norm operating from which to deviate.

The fact that deviates were not "punished" by being accorded significantly fewer friendship choices also is evidence against the existence of group norms. Homans (1950:123) says that a statement about what persons are expected to do in certain circumstances is a norm only if departure from the norm in real behavior is followed by some punishment. Punishment is a type of cost, and it would be expected that a common form of punishment for failure to comply with a group norm would be withdrawal of friendship choices or social interaction from the persons deviating. Since punishment in this form does not appear to be meted out, there is probably not a group norm in operation here.

A finding which is not specifically related to the existence of group norms but which may be related to group cohesiveness is the distribution of the persons who refused to be interviewed in this sample. The one tower in five which did not contribute to the refusals was the racially mixed building. What is it about the occupants of this tower which makes them more amenable to being interviewed? This could be a subject of importance to investigators who are concerned with group cohesiveness, with attitudes toward "professional" persons, and with race relations. A number of factors might be involved here. First, it is possible that residents of this tower are drawn from the surrounding neighborhood and are accustomed to being interviewed by personnel from welfare and other service agencies. If this explanation is true it is possible that the answers given in the interviews were framed in terms of what the subjects felt that the interviewers wanted to hear. Although an attempt to explain the purpose of the study was made, it is possible that respondents were

intimidated and felt that they had to agree to being interviewed because they feared that the investigator in some way had power over their financial resources or living arrangements.

This tower, which is located in the predominantly colored section of the city, did have an atmosphere which was somewhat different from that in the other towers, although the difference was difficult to pinpoint. Residents, both white and non-white, were amiable and eager to cooperate as has already been noted. There were also indications that white/non-white social contacts among residents occurred frequently. Out of some twenty-six on-floor sociometric choices given in this building, eleven were choices across the color line. There were remarks about how well the residents get along in the building. On the other hand, a few white subjects openly bemoaned the fact that they had been put "up here with these people." Still, the general impression was that residents live in relative harmony. They seemed to be united in fear of "young hoodlums" who, according to respondents, loiter near the building, and they often mentioned their fear of walking outside in "this neighborhood." Such fears were voiced not only by white occupants of the tower, but also by colored persons who had lived in the area for years and who commented that they had not previously been afraid but that the situation had deteriorated in recent years.

Common problems which were frequently mentioned by the members of the sample included inadequate transportation and the difficulty in getting groceries. It seems that even though grocery stores may be within walking distance, they are too far, at least if one is carrying a bag of groceries

on the return trip. This, coupled with the expense of transportation and the fear of venturing out alone compounds the problem of getting food supplies. In many cases the residents said that their families take them out shopping once a month or pick up groceries for them. Some inquiry could be made into the possibility of providing a delivery service for persons who cannot get to a store to do their own shopping. This problem may appear to be somewhat removed from the study of cohesiveness and group norms, but it is certainly importance to those who are engaged in planning for the well-being of elderly citizens. It is also possible that group cohesiveness may be fostered by the existence of common problems confronting oldsters, and research into these problems may throw light on the concept of cohesiveness.

Part of Homans' conclusion in The Human Group is worthy of reproduction in closing this chapter on interpretation and conclusions:

> We have offered our analytical hypotheses only as hypotheses. A statistician would require much more validation before he would accept them as proven theorems. He would have to be shown that they hold good for many more groups than our small sample of five . . . Further study may well show that our hypotheses are incorrect; it will certainly show that they can be more precisely formulated, and that many additional hypotheses are necessary for an adequate analysis of even the simplest group. We have not pretended to tell the whole story. Yet it is an article of our faith that, correct or incorrect, sufficient or insufficient in number though they be, our hypotheses are of the kind that a developed social science will formulate, in that they are statements of uniformities underlying the superficial differences in the behavior of human groups (Homans, 1950:443).

The step to be taken now that four hypotheses from Homans have gone unsupported in a study of an elderly group of persons is to study other elderly groups to determine under what conditions the hypotheses do and do not hold. Do they perhaps hold for upper class but not for working

class elderly? Do they perhaps hold for those living in established community settings but not in public housing situations? Is conformity to group patterns unnecessary or unimportant to an elderly population? If so, what takes the place of this need to conform which seems to be so prevalent among younger persons? Is it possible then for a cohesive group to exist without the development of group norms? Or are the group norms among an elderly population just of a different type than have so far been dealt with by social psychologists? Answers to these questions may be some time in coming, but at least a start has been made by Homans' theory and hopefully this investigation has illuminated some of the problems in the theory.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

The interview schedule employed in this investigation appears on the following pages. Percentage of the sample giving the various responses to the closed questions is shown.

BUILDING:
13 Kay-Jay Tower (1)
27 Park Tower South (2)
14 Park Tower North (3)
19 Burt Tower (4)
27 Evans Tower (5)

RESPONDENT LIVES:
67 alone (1)
32 with spouse (2)
1 with child (3)
0 other (4)

SEX OF RESPONDENT:
19 male (1)
81 female (2)

RESPONDENT'S RACE:
88 white (1)
12 non-white (2)

MARITAL STATUS:
4 single (1)
32 married (2)
58 widowed (3)
6 divorced or separated (4)

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

Center for Urban Affairs

EDUCATION: years completed _____

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE:
64 Protestant (1)
33 Catholic (2)
1 Jewish (3)
1 Other (4)

OCCUPATION (or husband's)-present or former:
18 Clerical or sales (1)
3 Farming (2)
5 Professional (3)
6 Proprietors (4)
14 Service workers (5)
17 Craftsmen (6)
19 Laborers (unskilled) (7)
18 Domestic (8)

NATIONALITY: _____

REASONS FOR NONCOMPLETION:
___ not at home (1)
___ ill (2)
___ refused (3)
___ deceased (4)
___ moved (5)
___ other (specify) (6)

Interviewer _____

Date of interview _____

Apartment number _____

CUA/JK, NW
7/69

1. Are you presently employed full or part time?

0 full time (1)
9 part time (2)
91 not employed (3)

2. How many of these apply to you?

___ bothered by some active illness or ailment
___ limited in activities
___ can't walk up or down one flight of stairs
___ can't do heavy work (shovel snow, wash walls)
___ can't walk half a mile (6 blocks)
___ can't go out to a movie, church, etc.

2a. Are you quite active in the recreational program here? 26 yes(1) 74 no(2)

3. We are interested in what sort of things you do in your leisure time. I will read a list of recreational activities to you and would like to have you tell me which of them you do:

never (1) occasionally (2) often (3)

ACTIVITY	MOST LIKED
*Playing pool (in tower) ___	_____
*Dancing (in tower) ___	_____
Radio or TV alone ___	_____
Radio or TV with others ___	_____
*Playing cards (in tower) ___	_____
*Choral group (in tower) ___	_____
Needlework (sewing, knitting, crocheting, etc.)	
--alone ___	_____
* --with others ___	_____
Movies, public ___	_____
in tower ___	_____
Letter writing ___	_____
Tenant meetings ___	_____
*Bowling ___	_____
*Playing bingo (in tower) ___	_____
Visiting outside tower ___	_____
Telephone visiting ___	_____
Special hobbies (stamps, coins, etc.) ___	_____
*Crafts (leather, etc.) in tower ___	_____
*Ceramics class (in tower) ___	_____
Art work (individual) ___	_____
*Art class (in tower) ___	_____
*Volunteer work ___	_____
Reading ___	_____
Sitting and thinking ___	_____
*Birthday parties (in tower) ___	_____

ACTIVITY		MOST LIKED
*Fund-raising activities (in tower)	___	___
*Pot luck parties in tower	___	___
Church activities (e. g. ladies' aid, etc.)	___	___
*Lectures and travelogues (in tower)	___	___
Clubs outside the tower (e. g. lodges)	___	___
What clubs?	_____	
Gardening	___	___
*Tours and outings (e. g. races, wrestling, park, zoo)	___	___
Taking walks alone	___	___
Taking walks with others	___	___
Physical fitness program	___	___
Other (specify)	_____	___

4. In general, do you think of yourself as elderly or old?
   - 58 chooses one of the two (1)
   - 42 denies identification (2)

5. How old do you feel--what age? ____ 5a. How old are you? ____
   (Code: 60 or over (1); other, (2)

6. Do you have children?
   - 80 Yes (1)
   - 20 No (2)

6a. If yes, ask: Do they live in or near Omaha?
   - 58 yes (1)
   - 26 no (2)
   - 17 not applicable

7. Do you keep in touch with them at least once a week by phone, letter, or in person?
   - 65 yes (1)
   - 15 no (2)
   - 4 don't know (3)
   - 15 not applicable (4)

8. With whom do you spend holidays?
   - 71 with family (1)
   - 5 with friends (2)
   - 21 alone (3)
   - 4 other (specify) (4)

Now I am going to read you some statements regarding your children. Please tell me if you agree or disagree.

9. All or most of my children have kept in close touch with me since they left home.
   - 72 agree (1)
   - 9 disagree (2)
   - 19 not applicable (3)

10. My children are very devoted and do whatever they can for me.
   73 agree (1)
   8 disagree (2)
   19 not applicable (3)

11. I enjoy seeing my children more than anything else.
   78 agree (1)
   3 disagree (2)
   19 not applicable (3)

12. All children should take parents along when they go out with <u>their own</u> friends to a movie, restaurant, or picnic.
   13 agree (1)
   85 disagree (2)
   2 no answer (3)

The next questions are about your friends and the people who live here.

13. Where do you do most of your socializing?
   35 on this floor (1)
   35 downstairs in the recreation area or lobby (2)
   5 with friends outside the tower (3)
   14 with family (4)
   0 at the Senior Citizens' Center (5)
   12 other (specify) (6)

14. Are the people in this tower pretty much alike, or are they quite different?
   24 alike (1)
   59 different (2)
   17 don't know (3)

15a. How well do you think the people in the tower know each other?
   15 very well (1)
   49 fairly well (2)
   12 not very well (3)
   0 not at all (4)
   24 don't know or no answer (5)

15b. How about on this floor?
   50 very well (1)
   40 fairly well (2)
   4 not very well (3)
   0 not at all (4)
   6 don't know or no answer

16a. About how many people in this tower would you say you know by name?

   _____

   10 under 10
   54 10-30
   10 31-50
   8 51-70
   1 71-90
   10 over 90
   6 don't know or no answer

16b. About how many people on this floor would you say you know by name?

_____

1 none
17 under one-half
8 over one-half but not all
74 all

17. About how many people on this floor do you spend a whole afternoon or evening with every now and then?

_____

60 none
35 1-4
5 5-9

18. If you had your choice would you continue living in this tower?

78 yes (1)
22 no (2)

19. If you had your choice would you continue living on this floor?

88 yes (1)
5 no (2)
6 no answer (3)

20. What three people in the building do you see most of socially?

Names: _____ _____ _____
Apt. # _____ _____ _____

21. Whom do you visit in his apartment often?

Names: _____ _____ _____
Apt. # _____ _____ _____

22. With whom do you have a meal or snack?

Names: _____ _____ _____
Apt. # _____ _____ _____

23. With whom do you spend the most time in the downstairs recreation room or lobby?

Names: _____ _____ _____
Apt. # _____ _____ _____

24. What did you do for recreation before you moved here?

25. How do you feel about the recreational program here?

85 think it's a good thing to have (1)
8 think residents could get along just as well without it (2)
8 indifferent or don't know (3)

26. Who teaches classes in such things as ceramics, art, leatherwork, knitting, etc.?

28 gave a name or position
72 don't know

27a. Do you ever visit with these teachers about things other than the class?

6 yes (1)
9 no (2)
85 don't go to any classes (3)

27b. If no, what is the main reason?

1 the teachers are busy during class (1)
3 the teacher is not around before or after class (2)
0 the teacher is unfriendly (3)
3 I do not care to visit with the teacher (4)
1 other (specify) (5)
92 not applicable (6)

28. Do you think the teachers enjoy their work?

17 yes (1)
0 no (2)
83 don't know (3)

29. Do you happen to know if any tower residents have replaced professional leaders in tower recreational activities?

8 yes, they have (1)
10 no, they haven't (2)
82 I don't know if it has ever happened (3)

30. Have you joined any organizations that are for older people only?

8 yes (1)
91 no (2)
1 don't know (2)

31. Do you think there ought to be more clubs and organizations for older people?

41 yes (1)
33 no (2)
24 don't know (3)
1 no answer (4)

32a. Do you go to Senior Citizens centers like the one at 41st and Grand?

5 often (1)
10 occasionally (1)
85 never (2)
0 don't know (2)

INTERVIEWER: if answer to 32a is "never" and a reason is given, note reason.

32b. If never, would you like to if you were able?

47 yes (1)
41 no (2)
4 don't know (3)
8 not applicable or no answer (4)

33. Did you take part in any of the activities during Senior Citizens week this year? (e. g. chorus at auditorium)
   8 yes (1)
   90 no (2)
   2 don't know (2)

Now a few more questions about living in the tower:

34. How long have you lived here? _____
   83 3 years or more
   17 less than 3 years

35. How did you happen to move to the tower?

36. Do you attend most of the tower's tenant meetings and activities?
   51 yes (1)
   49 no (2)
   0 don't know (2)

36b. If answer to 36a was "yes", ask: Do you make any effort to get others to attend tenant meetings?
   35 yes (1)
   21 no (2)
   6 don't know (2)
   38 not applicable (3)

37. Who really runs the tenant organization?
(Interviewer: don't read alternatives to respondent--just code)
   45 only club members (1)
   13 professional leaders (2)
   9 both members and professionals or volunteers from outside (3)
   0 other (specify) (4)
   8 not applicable (5)
   26 don't know

38. Are you or have you been an officer in the tenant/Senior Citizens organization?
   12 yes (1)
   86 no (2)
   1 don't know (2)
   1 not applicable (3)

39. Do you ever serve as a member or chairman of committees in the organization?
   23 yes (1)
   74 no (2)
   1 don't know (2)
   1 not applicable (3)

40. How do you feel about the tenant organization?
69 think it's a good thing to have (1)
9 think residents could get along just as well without it (2)
22 indifferent or don't know (3)

41. Do you tell other people either in or outside the tower about the activities of the tenant organization/Senior Citizens club?
51 yes (1)
49 no (2)
0 don't know (2)

42a. Do you happen to know if people from outside the tower participate in any of the organized activities here?
27 they do (1)
35 they don't (2)
38 don't know (3)

42b. Do you make any effort to get people from outside the tower to take part in the tower's recreational program?
13 yes (1)
86 no (2)
1 don't know (2)

43a. Do you keep in touch with your old neighbors?
72 yes (1)
28 no (2)

43b. Do they live in this neighborhood?
17 yes (1)
76 no (2)
8 don't know (3)

44. Do you go to the same church you used to before you moved here?
42 same church (1)
31 different church (2)
6 did not attend church before (3)
21 no longer attend church (4)

45. Compared with when you were 50, do you have more or fewer recreational and social activities?
17 more (1)
51 fewer (2)
29 about the same (3)
3 don't know or no answer (4)

46. In tenant/Senior Citizens Club meetings, do you spend any time discussing things like social security benefits, old age assistance, clinic or other health facilities, how to get transportation when needed, etc.?
23 yes (1)
42 no (2)
4 don't know (2)
31 don't attend meetings (2)

47. Do you have a caseworker from one of the social agencies in Omaha?
15 yes (1)
82 no (2)
3 don't know (3)

48. As you get older, would you say things are getting better or worse than you thought they would be?
24 better (1)
15 worse (2)
55 about the same (2)
5 don't know or no answer

49. How do you usually solve your present problems?
(Code: individualistic 73 (1) 5 don't know or no answer
collective 1 (2) 21 no problem

50a. Do you usually vote in elections?
78 yes (1)
21 no (2)
1 no answer

50b. When was the last time you voted?
71 1968 or 1969 election (1)
27 earlier election (2)
1 never voted (3)
1 no answer

51. Do you think older people ought to be more active in politics?
64 yes (1)
19 no (2)
15 no answer (3)
1 don't know

52. Do you believe that older people ought to organize to demand their rights?
40 yes (1)
49 no (2)
10 no answer (3)
1 don't know

53. Do you believe that older people who are in good health are prevented from doing things they are able to do because younger people run everything?
28 yes (1)
59 no (2)
13 no answer (3)

54. Do you feel that younger people should show more respect for older people?

65 yes (1)
27 no (2)
6 no answer (3)
1 don't know

55. Do you believe that older people as a group are treated badly by younger people?

14 yes (1)
68 no (2)
17 no answer (3)
1 don't know

Would you agree or disagree with the following statements?

56. Old people blame young people for their position, but it's really their own fault. 67 agree (1) 15 disagree (2) 10 no answer 8 don't know

57. Old people are always talking about their rights, but have nothing to offer.

45 agree (1)
29 disagree (2)
13 don't know
13 no answer

58. Generally speaking, old people are fussy and self-centered.

46 agree (1)
41 disagree (2)
6 don't know
6 no answer

59. Old people shouldn't go places where they think they're not wanted.

76 agree (1)
17 disagree (2)
5 don't know
2 no answer

I have just two more items that you can answer yes or no.

60. I don't worry much about the problems of aging because I know I can't do anything about it. 95 yes (1) 4 no (2) 1 no answer

61. Do you ever get the feeling that it is just not worth fighting for equal treatment for old people? 15 yes (1) 63 no (2) 9 don't know 13 no answer

SUPPLEMENT

Figures 1 through 8 on the following pages show the distribution of sociometric choices among residents on each of the sample floors. Although the question eliciting sociometric preference was phrased, "What three people in the building do you see most of socially?", only the on-floor choices are considered in these figures.

Key to Symbols Used in the Figures

"a" and "b" after the apartment number indicate that the apartment has two occupants.

△ = not interviewed

O = male

X = non-white

↔ = mutual choice

Sociometric Choices Received

Figure 1 Floor A

Choices Given By

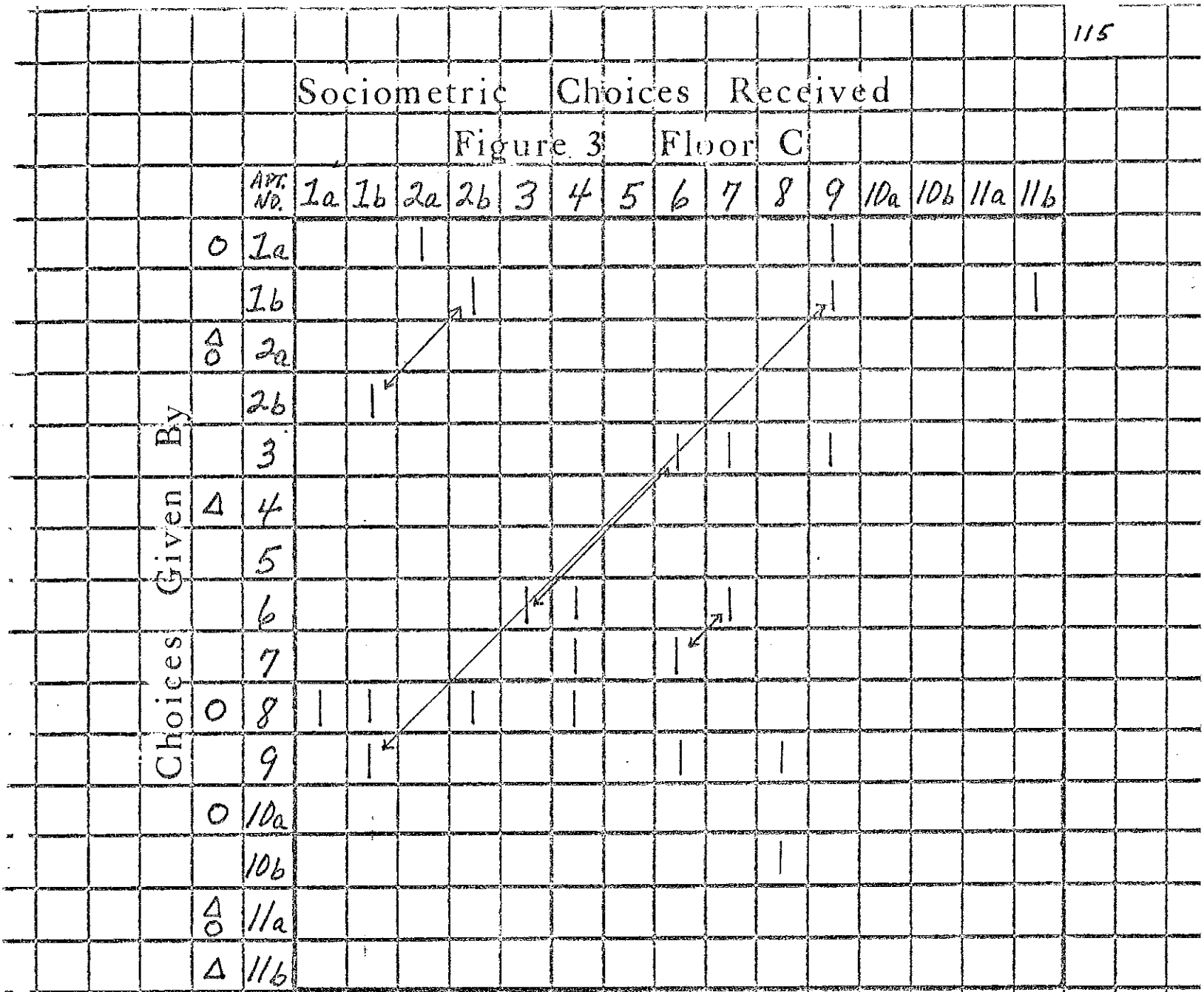
	APT. NO.	1	2	3a	3b	4a	4b	5	6a	6b	7	8	9
△	1												
	2												
○	3a												
	3b					1	1						
△	4a												
△	4b												
○	5								1				
△ ○	6a												
△	6b												
	7					1	1						
	8											1	1
	9					1	1					1	

Figure 2 Floor B

	APT. NO.	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	6	7	8
	1									
	2				1					
	3		1		1					
	4	1	1	1						
△	5a									
	5b		1						1	1
	6						1		1	1
	7						1	1		1
	8							1	1	

Sociometric Choices Received

Figure 3 Floor C



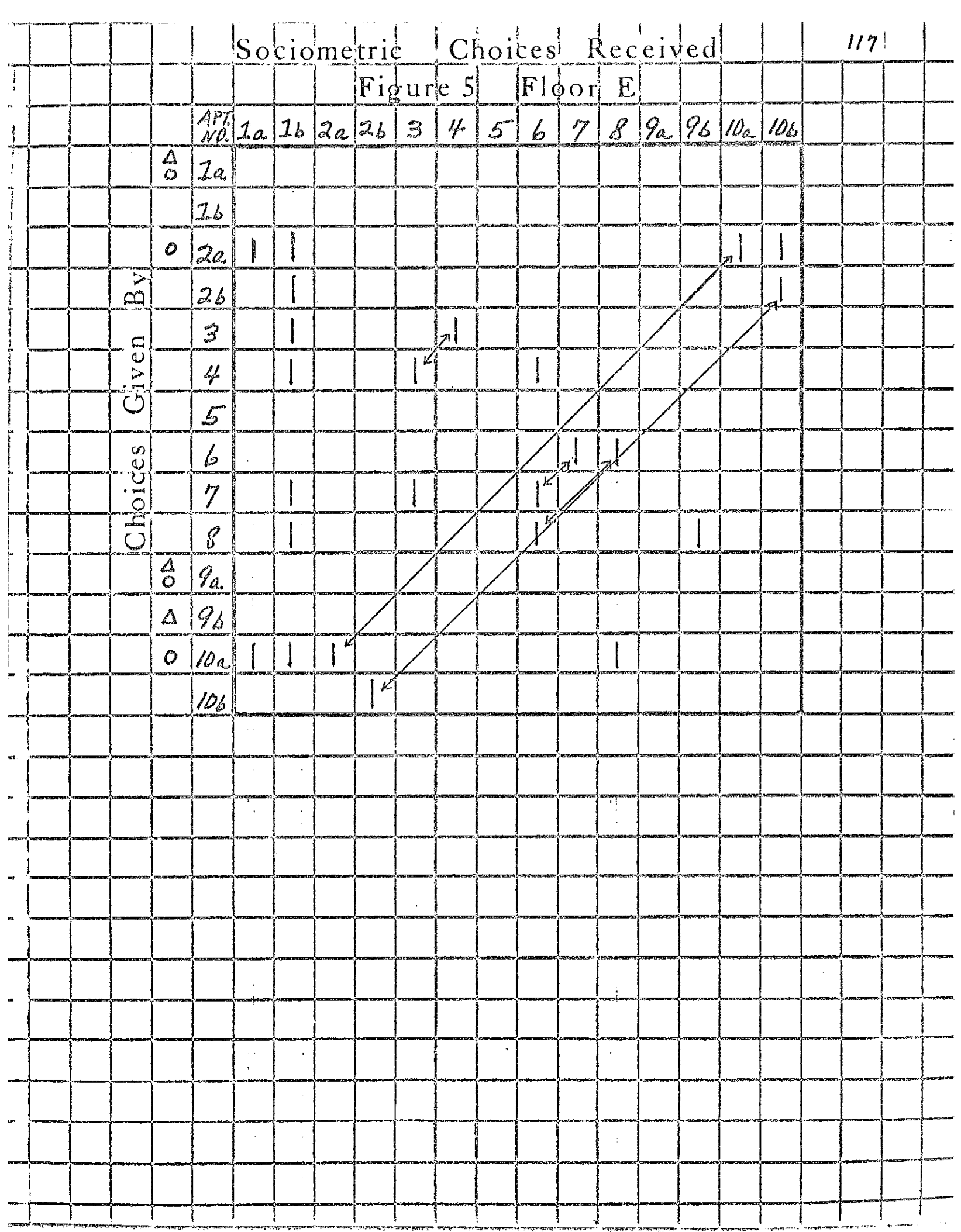
Sociometric Choices Received

Figure 4 Floor D

Choices Given By	APT. NO.	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	6a	6b	7	8	9a	9b	10	11
	1		1	1											
	2	1		1											
	3	1	1		1										
	4		1	1											
△	5a														
△	5b														
○	6a														
	6b									1			1		1
○	7						1							1	1
	8			1								1			1
△ ○	9a														
△	9b														
	10						1						1		1
	11														

Sociometric Choices Received

Figure 5 Floor E



Sociometric Choices Received

Figure-6 Floor G

Choices Given By

	APT. NO.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10a	10b	11a	11b
x	1			1										
x	2	1												
	3											1		
Δ	4													
	5													
x	6													
x	7			1					1					
	8					1						1		
Δ	9													
	10a													
	10b		1	1					1					
	11a													
	11b									1				

Sociometric Choices Received

Figure 7 Floor F

Figure 8 Floor H